

Exceptional demand as Robinson claims 'Premier' success

THE NI Branch Premier show and sale in Ballymena on Tuesday evening brought premier success for a number of Province's leading Suffolk breeders, no more so than County Down flock owners Alfred and Norman Robinson who once again scooped the highest accolade with yet another outstanding ram lamb from the Benrahton stable.

The supreme champion was a superbly-conformed eight month ram lamb that had been sired by the highly-renowned Jubilee Jethro and bred from an outstanding Glenho Gurka ewe and beat off stiff competition from an exceptional presentation of ram lambs and shearlings.

The champion later changed hands in a packed sale ring at Ballymena for 1500 guineas, the second highest price of the day. The top honour in the sale arena for the second year in succession went to Antrim breeder Alastair Gault whose reserve champion lamb, bred by Cairness New Approach, attracted considerable interest before being knocked down for 2300 guineas.

The sale itself had once again been a raging success with a phenomenal clearance rate of 95% which saw exactly 100 ram lambs and six shearlings change hands for respective averages of 632 and 714 guineas.

The four-figure barrier was broken on no fewer than 11 occasions as breeders and commercial producers alike were prepared to dig deep for the outstanding quality on offer.

Newtownabbey breeder Gault featured prominently in the sale ring, selling two other eye-catching ram lambs, bred by Cairness New Approach and Cairness Kanine, for 1100 and 1050 guineas respectively while Crumlin breeder David Duncan sold a sixth prizewinning lamb for 1450 guineas and another for 1000. Both lambs had been bred by Cairness New Approach.

Other leading prizes included Denis Taylor selling a Carragh Viagra lamb for 1350 guineas, William Tait off-loading a Forkins Ferrari lamb for 1150 while Gary Beacom and Robin McAdoo respectively sold Glenho The Genuis and Threeways Gladiator bred lambs for the big note.

The first prizewinning shearling, belonging by L & D Aiken, Dromora also fetched 1000 guineas.

Earlier in the show ring the Aiken camp got the afternoon off to the perfect start by claiming first and second prizes in the shearling ram class with Rodney Blair, Ballymoney in third, John Murnion, Newry, fourth and William Moore, Ardstraw, Co Tyrone fifth.

In the Signet Recorded ram lamb class Castlederg breeder Hunter Stewart scooped first and third prizes to win the RH Stewart Memorial Cup that had been presented in memory of his late father. Runners-up spot was claimed by fellow Tyrone breeders Stephanie and William Tait.

By this stage competition was hotting up as judge Steve Buckley, of the Sitlow flock in Derbyshire carried out his deliberations in the most professional manner. In the Novice Cup ram lamb class the Englishman handed the first prizewinning rosette to chairman of the NI Branch and Newtownards breeder Anthony Patton, with L & D Aiken, second, John Murnion, third, Alan Bothwell, Fermanagh, fourth, Martin Conway, Plumbridge, fifth and Randalstown breeders David and Andrew McNeilly in sixth.

In the Open class prospective buyers got their first glimpse of Robinson's champion that claimed the top honour ahead of Gault while Denis Taylor secured third place in the class. The remaining prizes in order went to Norman Robinson, S & M Liggett, Drumquin and David Duncan.

When it came to the leading prizes in the Group of Three category and the chase for the Allam's Cup the positions were reversed, the Gault stable this time shading the verdict with the names Robinson, Beacom, Taylor, Tait and Blair following in behind.

Prizes

Shearling ram (Kinbally Cup): 1 & 2, L & D Aiken; 3, R Blair; 4, J Murnion; 5, W Moore.

Signet Recorded ram lamb (RH Stewart Cup): 1 & 3, SH Stewart; 2, S & W Tait.

Ram lamb (Novice Cup) : 1, A Patton; 2, L & D Aiken; 3, J Murnion; 4, A Bothwell; 5, M Conway; 6, D & A McNeilly.

Open ram lamb(Suffolk Sheep Society Cup): 1 & 4, N Robinson; 2, AR Gault; 3, PDW Taylor; 5, S & M Liggett; 6, D Duncan.

Group of Three (Allam Cup); 1, AR Gault; 2, N Robinson; 3, G Beacom; 4, PDW Taylor; 5, S & W Tait; 6, WR Blair.

Norman Orage Cup: N Robinson.

Arthur N Boccock: N Robinson.

Blossomhill Cup: AR Gault.

Leading prices (Guineas)

Ram lambs

AR Gault: 2300; 1100, 1050, 820; N & J Robinson, 1500, 800, 750, 700; D Duncan, 1450, 1000; PDW Taylor, 1350, 820, 780, 780, 750;

S & W Tait, 1150, 750; G Beacom, 1000, 780, 720, 700; R McAdoo
1000, 750; M Conway, 900; A Patton 850.
Shearling rams: L Aiken 1000, 750; J Murnion, 780; WR Blair, 600; W
Moore 500; S & W Tait, 450.



Stephen Kane Ulster Bank, Raymond Irvine Pfizer,
S J Buckley the judge with Norman Robinson owner of the
Supreme Champion



Raymond Irvine Pfizer, Conor McNeill Ulster Bank with Jack & Alistair Gault and their Reserve Champion Ram Lamb.



Conor McNeill Ulster Bank, Raymond Irvine Pfizer with Jonathan Aiken who is holding the 1st prize Shearling Ram



Raymond Irvine Pfizer, Conor McNeill Ulster Bank and Hunter Stewart with his 1st prize signet recorded ram.

Raymond Irvine Pfizer , Conor McNeill Ulster Bank with Anthony and Mark Patton and their Novice Cup winner.





Alistair Gault's winning pen of three rams.

Dennis Taylor keeping an eye on his pen.



Jan van Dijk