

The Three Nations Suffolk Sale held at Carlisle market was an absolute flier

Of the 88 Suffolk in lamb ewes, gimmers and ewe lambs offered for sale at the 1st three nations sale, 80 were sold as they exited the ring with most of the other eight finding new homes shortly afterwards. This equates to a minimum 91 per cent clearance rate. The ring was packed as buyers from all over the United Kingdom, Ireland and Europe competed for some of the top genetics within the Suffolk breed. When you consider that the Champion Charolais bull sold at Carlisle on the same day for 6,000gns was surpassed by two Suffolk females sold at this sale and one the following day it is clear that the demand for Suffolk genetics is increasing. No fewer than thirty five lots were sold for four figure sums.

M. Evans has been at the top of the Suffolk breed in recent years having purchased the highest priced Suffolk ram ever sold, Ardlea Arbennig for 90,000gns. This was in addition to Bailey's Brigadier the Second and Bailey's BMW which have consistently bred numerous prize winners and sale toppers. The Rhaeadr flock does not usually sell many females so this sale provided a unique opportunity to source foundation stock.

The Northern Ireland contingent, in the form of D. Taylor, Ballynacanon flock and Mark Priestley, Limestone flock, have also stamped their credentials within the breed. A Ballynacanon ram has just won 2014, Sire of the Year, producing the 2014 Stirling champion which was later sold for 20,000gns. The Limestone flock had Champion of the 2013 Stirling sale and brought forward a number of gimmers sired by Rhaeadr Ring a Ding, the first son sold out of Arbennig for 18,000gns.

I&J Barbour, Solwaybank flock, was the Scottish representative who produced the 2013 Sire of the Year and had sheep on offer with bloodlines including Cairness Costello a 62,000gn ram. This flock is also in the top echelons of the breed consistently topping sales and shows.

The sale topper was the first ewe lamb from the Rhaeadr flock, numerous bidders competed but it was finally knocked down for 7,200gns to M&L Liggett from Northern Ireland for use in their Carony flock. This proved an eventful week for the Liggett family having sold two Suffolk ewe lambs at the Ballymena sale for 2,000gns each. Their new addition was sired by Ardlea Arbennig out of a Bailey's BMW dam. The mother of this lamb had been sold earlier in the sale for 2,800gns bought by D&A Callan, Pembrokeshire. The second ewe lamb from Rhaeadr sold for 4,000gns. This Rhaeadr the Real McCoy sired lamb out of a Rhaeadr Star Turn ewe was purchased by R. Fitton, Bolton.

Second highest price at the sale went to an in lamb gimmer from the Limestone flock. This Rhaeadr Ring a Ding sired ewe out of a Kings Theatre dam sold for 6,500gns, carrying twins to Muirton One Direction the new 19,000gn stock ram at Limestone. This modern Suffolk ram with a tight skin, excellent carcass and silky clean black hair had been highly sought after by numerous buyers as the main pedigree flocks reprioritised what is important in the breed. The final bidder J.C. Innes & Sons, Strathbogie flock. The Limestone flock had the highest average at the sale of £2,257.50, a complete clearance for the nine lots presented.

Dennis Taylor's first gimmer in the ring was sold for 3,800gns to B. Nicholson, Highfield Farming Ltd, Berwickshire. This Birness Bacardi sired ewe is out of a dam by Strathisla Shadrach and sold carrying a single to Mountford Mustang. In total Dennis sold ten of his eleven lots forward to average £1,092.

The best from I&J Barbour sold for 1,100gns to E Paxton from Berwickshire. This Rhaeadr Rastafari sired ewe out of a Rhaeadr Rossi dam sold in lamb to the 14,500gn Rhaeadr Rannoch.

M Evans (Rhaeadr Flock)	20 ewes sold to average £1,299.38 18 in lamb gimmers sold to average £924.58 8 ewe lambs sold to £2,185.31
D Taylor (Ballynacanon Flock)	10 gimmers sold to average £1,092.00
M Priestley (Limestone Flock)	9 gimmers sold to average £2,257.50
I&J Barbour (Solwaybank Flock)	7 ewes sold to average £795.00 5 gimmers sold to average £714.00