

Media Release

Thursday 18 July 2019

EMBARGOED until 6am Friday 19 July 2019

2019 AUSTRALIAN FLEECE COMPETITION *Long time exhibitor rewarded with Grand Champion*

Glen Brothers P/L, from Wattle Bank Merino Stud, Guildford, Central Victoria, have won the prestigious Grand Champion prize at this year's Australian Fleece Competition.

This is the first Grand Champion title awarded to Glen Brothers, who have supported the competition in each of its 19 years.

The Australian Fleece Competition is the largest fully measured fleece competition in the world, attracting 364 entries from 145 exhibitors.

The competition is a joint effort by the Australian Sheep Breeders Association (ASBA), Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) & Landmark, and is run in conjunction with the Australian Sheep and Wool Show, which will be held in Bendigo this Friday 19 July to Sunday 21 July.

Almost two thirds of the fleeces on show were donated by exhibitors for auction at the completion of the competition, with all proceeds to be donated to this year's nominated charity, CoOperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO). www.cogno.org.au

The Grand Champion 18.0 micron fleece was in the Superfine Merino Stud Ewe or Wether class, and scored 94.65 out of a possible 100 points.

Stephen Glen, from Wattle Bank Merino Stud said that it was a great surprise to win the award with the Stud Show Ewe.

"it is the culmination of a long process, which started when my father travelled to Merryville in 1971 with Stud Classer Keith McColl to generate some extra style and definition into our wool. We continue to work closely with Wal Merriman today" he said

"It shows that if you stick to your guns and stick to your type, good things can happen" Mr Glen said

"We have always supported the Fleece competition, and its charities, and we are particularly proud to win this year with COGCO the nominated charity" he said

Sea-Ori Pastoral Company P/L, Crookwell, NSW, picked up both the Reserve Champion, as well as Commercial Champion, with a 17.3 micron Superfine Merino fleece scoring an impressive 94.20 points.

Judges for this year's competition were Mr Josh Lamb, Director, Endeavour Wool Exports, and Mr Jason Carmichael, Landmark TWG Wool, NSW.

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Mr Carmichael stated that seasonal Conditions throughout Eastern Australia during the past 12 months have dealt woolgrowers many challengers in producing the ultimate fleece. “A large number of commercial fleeces showed signs of the tough seasonal conditions, but exhibitors are to be congratulated for presenting a quality product in spite of this “he said.

“From an exporter’s point of view, it was noted that some entrants were shearing at the optimal time to ensure their fleeces received a high processing score and fleece value, while other excellent fleeces were discounted in the Strength & Hauteur result” Mr Lamb said.

Competition convener, Landmark’s Candice Cordy, praised the achievements of the exhibitors and sponsors who continue to support the competition. “While entries are down on last year, we are very happy with the support shown, particularly when the tough seasonal conditions are taken into account” Ms Cordy said.

Ms Cordy also pointed out the Commercial Value component of the competition, with Merino fleece entries averaging \$110 per fleece this year, compared to \$102 per fleece last year.

Supported by 26 sponsors, the competition offers \$17,000 in prizes, with the Grand Champion fleece exhibitor collecting a \$2000 travel voucher sponsored by Landmark and Gallagher.

The Performance Class, which caters for exhibitors shearing in six to eight-month cycles commercially was again well supported, with this year’s winner being Elanvale Holdings, Pyramid Hill, Victoria.

This years nominated charity is The CoOperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO, with money raised from the sale of donated fleeces going to this worthy cause. COGNO’s main aim is to conduct investigator-initiated and collaborative group trials addressing important clinical questions in patients with brain tumours. “Over the past 18 years, exhibitors in the Australian Fleece Competition have donated over \$167,000 to national charities. This year, COGNO will benefit from the continued generosity of our wool growers & sponsors.” Ms Cordy said.

All competition fleeces were weighed and sampled for objective measurement (including length and strength), under standard procedures of the Australian Wool Testing Authority.

For more information on the Australian Fleece Competition, please contact the below.

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