

## Skipton Sale - 28th September 2023

The North & East of England Lley Sheep Breeders Club's traditional seasonal finale, the annual registered show and sale at CCM Skipton, saw South Craven breed stalwarts, the Fort family, secure another in a long line of championship successes at their local auction mart, also consigning the 1,000gns top price performer, both shearling rams. (Thurs, Sept 28)

The Steeton-based Forts - *Graham and Mandy, and children, Terry and Beverley* - clinched the title with their first prize shearling ram, Brighton House Levi, a 2022 twin son and among the first crop of shearlings by Lluest Jug-gernaut, a 9,000gns purchase as a show champion two years earlier. Graham remains chairman of North & East England Lley Sheep Breeders Club.

Out of a dam by the home-bred Brighton House Epic, the victor, tapped out by show judge James Danforth, a dual Lley and Charollais sheep breeder from Tadcaster, sold locally for 800gns to R&A Jennings, of Cowling. The adjudicator described his chosen champion as "very correct and stylish, with great legs and feet, a standout shearling ram."

However, it was another Fort shearling ram, Brighton House Legend Leo, a twin by Goldies Inspiration, out of an Emperor-sired dam that topped the sale at 1,000gns. Introducing new bloodlines to the flock and already breeding well, the tup went to the Ribble Valley with J&A Hartley, of Grindleton.

The second prize shearling ram came from North Yorkshire breeders, Ivor and Christine Valentine, who run the Priestcroft flock in Lingdale. Acquired among a top price pen in 2021 and already a minority breeds class winner, the runner-up sold for 700gns. Third prize went to another breed stalwart, John Geldard, who runs the Wray Castle flock with his family at Levens, Kendal. Their shearling ram, a March-born son of Southam Jester, did better at 800gns.

Welsh wizards Will Williams and Wynne Davies, neighbouring farmers who, with their families, run the respective Tacho and Bronallt flocks near Nefyn in the heart of the Llŷn Peninsula, invariably do well at the annual highlight and this year was no exception.

The duo finished first and second in both the shearling ewe and ewe lamb show classes for pens of five, the Williams ewe lambs also going on to stand reserve champions – "a standout pen right from the start, very stylish and correct, very consistent with great skins and conformation" – according to the judge, who went on to claim them at £150 per head section top, with the first prize shearling ewes making £250 to I&S Clough, of Stape, Pickering.

However, it was the Davies second prize shearling ewes that topped the section on price at £255 when falling to repeat buyer P Pennington, of Chisworth, Glossop, who last year bought the Fort family's reserve champion shearling ewes pen.

The Geldards also stepped up with the third prize shearling ewes, making £190, while the third prize ewe lambs from David and Peter Knowles, Cragg flock, New Hutton, Kendal, made £125.

The entry of 249 head sold to a busy ringside, with plenty of good skinned tups away at 500-720gns to an overall average of £542, compared to £560 in 2022.

However, female averages both improved on the year, with shearling ewes meeting a strong purchaser base. Wynne Davies again caught the eye with a pen of 14 at £220, with £200 falling to several pens - 15 from Emrys Jones, Lluest flock, Comins Coch, Powys, ten from H&M Dugdale, Borrins flock, Stackhouse, Settle, and another 14 from the Geldards. The overall shearling ewe average was £202, a tidy rise on the previous year's £162.

Among the ewe lambs, four pens sold at £130 and over, plenty of strong pens of lambs making £125-£135, with running lambs £100-£125. The overall section average was £118, again an increase on £106 last year.

## Top Prices

### **Yearling ewes**

JH Dugdale, £200  
WJ & DJ Williams, £250, £190 - first prize pen  
JA & R Geldard, £190, £200 - third prize pen  
H & M Dugdale, £195  
E & D Jones, £210, £200  
W Davies, £255, £220 - second prize pen

### **Ewe lambs**

P Knowles, £125 - third prize pen  
H & M Dugdale, £122, £120  
JG Morton, £128  
T & B Fort, £130, £122  
W Davies, £135, £122 - second prize pen  
WJ & DJ Williams, £150, £132 - first prize pen

### **Rams**

Lot 9, E & D Jones, 720gns  
Lot 10, E & D Jones, 600gns  
Lot 15, P Knowles, 700gns  
Lot 16, T & B Fort, 800gns - champion  
Lot 17, T & B Fort, 1000gns  
Lot 21, JA & R Geldard, 800gns  
Lot 27, I & C Valentine, 600gns

## **Skipton Pre-Sale Show Results**

Judge: James Danforth

Pen of 5 shearling ewes

1st - WJ & DJ Williams  
2nd - W Davies  
3rd - J Geldard

Pen of 5 ewe lambs

1st - WJ & DJ Williams  
2nd - W Davies  
3rd - P Knowles

Shearling ram

1st - G & A Fort (Lot 16)  
2nd - Mr & Mrs I & C Valentine (Lot 27)  
3rd - J Geldard (Lot 21)

Champion - G & A Fort - shearling ram

Reserve - WJ & DJ Williams - ewe lambs



Fort Champion Ram



Will Williams Reserve Champion Ewe Lambs