

AUSTRALIAN SOUTH DEVONS

NEWSLETTER 4 – AUGUST 2018.

Welcome to the latest newsletter.

In this edition we have results from Brisbane Ekka – where the McUtchen family's South Devon cross steers had their best results ever.

Also, there is a carryover story from last edition on SD cross steers in the School Steer section at Farmfest (Qld).

South Devon cross led steers have great success at Brisbane Ekka.

The first week of Brisbane Ekka 2018 was definitely McUtchen week. Not only did the family take out the Champion Lightweight steer with Jambili Dude, but they also won the Reserve Champion Middleweight steer with Jambili Redfoo, capably handled by 6-year-old Callum.

On Wednesday morning 8th August, centre ring at the Ekka became a mass of steers of all colours, sizes and breed configurations, all vying for the honour of being named Champion in their respective divisions (of which there were 9; three each in light, middle and heavy weight). All steers had been weighed and ear tagged so that they were competing in the correct weight classes. There were over 300 steers entered and the Open steer classes at Ekka are Australia's largest Led Steer competition. Most breed societies support their breed by offering a 'bonus' of from \$100 - \$500 for steers entered as e.g. Brahman x (\$500 bonus for them).



Jambili
Dude
was in
Class 3;
led by
Kath he
was
placed
first in
his
weight
division
and then
won the
coveted
purple
ribbon

for Champion Lightweight steer. Dude is by an Ashlea bred South Devon cross bull and out of a Belgian Blue x Brahman cow.

Class 4 saw Callum and Jambili Redfoo in action. This was Callum's first foray into the Ekka showring – he is a veteran of country shows, and Redfoo is his special steer. They also won their class, to everyone's



delight, including the attending media who made Callum a bit of a poster boy for the next few days. He handled the media attention very well and was an excellent ambassador for our breed. Because the media already knew him, he attracted their attention as soon as he entered the ring, so our South Devon contingent in the Parade of Champions and Grand Parade was guaranteed invaluable media coverage on TV news and newspapers. It would have been a fairy-tale ending to have Redfoo take out the Middleweight Steer Championship, but he had to settle for Reserve – still an excellent effort made even more rewarding because the McUtchen family have been breeding and showing steers for many years and have stuck to their breeding programme, not being influenced by trends and fads. Redfoo is by a Shorthorn bull out of a SD cross cow.

Unfortunately, neither Dude nor Redfoo were placed in the carcase section, but the McUtchen family won class 2b (Carcass 351 – 375 kg) with a Belgian Blue x Shorthorn steer who had also placed second in his led section.

Bracken Ridge Tavern purchased Dude at the auction following the judging. The McUtchen family have been invited to their 'Champion Steer Luncheon' on 10th October, where they will be invited to speak about Dude, their farm, their breeding programme, how the drought is affecting them etc. The afternoon will be hosted by Billy J Smith (well known Brisbane radio personality) with all proceeds going to Drought Charities.

This is an excellent opportunity for the McUtchens to fly the flag for South Devons and a fitting reward for their dedication and faith in the breed over many years of preparing and showing led steers.

Friday 10th August saw the 6-strong contingent of South Devon stud cattle judged in centre ring about midday. Although we were down in numbers this year, mainly due to the terribly dry weather – something must give, and it costs a lot of money to prepare and show cattle to Royal Show standard – the standard of the cattle was excellent. **It was Kildare day as they won three of the four broad ribbons on offer. Congratulations Rick and Sue.**



Winner of the heifer class and therefore Champion SD female was **Kildare Lyn 5** (by Davelle Prog Blackrock H17 out of Kildare Lyn 86). This black heifer is bred and owned by Rick and Sue McDouall of Kildare South Devons and was prepared and shown by the McUtchen family.



Second in the heifer class and therefore reserve Champion SD female was **Jambili Nala**, bred, owned, and shown by the McUtchen family, Jambili South Devons. Nala is by last years Ekka Champion bull Torr Down Merlin 20 and out of Athlone

Gardenia. Nala is often shown at local shows by one or other of the McUtchen boys, but on this occasion was handled by Kath.



The first of the bull classes was won by **Jambili Nonu**, by MJB United 333U and out of Davelle Fearless Iris. Nonu is 16 months old; weighs 826 kg, has fat of 11/7 and an EMA of 124. He is owned, prepared and shown by the McUtchen family and is pretty well bombproof. The kids often use him as a lounge.



The Senior bull class had three entrants, all well prepared and presented and all slightly different in appearance. The winner was **Kildare Monsieur** who has had such a good show season. Monty as he is known, is by Kildare Jade out of Kildare Dianna 36, was bred and is owned by Rick and Sue McDouall of Kildare and was prepared and shown all year by the McUtchen family. He is 24 months old, weighed 802 kg, fat 13/8,

EMA 130. He went on to be **Champion South Devon Bull** (sashed by Thames Delaforce son of the late Doug Delaforce) and was placed **Top Ten in the Interbreed** later in the day.



Second in the senior bull class, and subsequently Reserve Champion bull was **Kildare Redwing**, by DLCC Durango 26Z and out of Kildare Red 13. Redwing is 26 months old, weighed 932 kg, had fat of 20/13 and an EMA of 138. As with all the Kildare cattle, Redwing was prepared and shown by the McUtchen family



Third place in the Senior class went to **Athlone Mr Nat** (20 months). He was bred, owned and shown by the Lindsay's of Athlone South Devons. Mr Nat weighed 806 kg, fat 10/8; EMA of 120. He should be in his new home at Koumala south

of Mackay by the time this newsletter comes out.

As I mentioned earlier Callum McUtchen was our plaque bearer for the parades. Here are Callum and Monsieur relaxing in centre ring while we were waiting to take part in one of the Parades of Champions. James was just out of photo to the left so there was no chance of a problem cropping up, and Kath was there too - she took the photo. Because we were small in numbers, it was all hands on deck for Parades and moving to and



from the ring. Of invaluable assistance was the McUtchen offsider Sandra Spies – she is always there to help, whether in the ring or shovelling manure.

‘FARMFEST PURCHASE LEADS TO FARMFEST CHAMPION

My family has always been involved with breeding beef cattle. Originally, the herd was based on British breed composites (mainly Red Poll and Murray Grey). In the 1990s, the use of a Limousin bull improved muscling and conformation. Subsequent crossing between the three breeds produced a uniform type of red or grey cattle. A Blonde d’Aquitaine bull was also used for a season. Our selection criteria was always based on fertility, sound conformation, quiet temperament and a preference for polled cattle that were early maturing. We always selected the best heifers as replacements and sold the balance of progeny as vealers at seven to eight months of age.

In 2015, we needed a new bull. We run three bulls in single sire groups (for three months) with the 100 cows. While at Farmfest with our Dorper sheep display, we inspected the variety of breeds in the livestock area. Ross and Del Cauley of “Ashlea” Brymaroo, had a South Devon X Red Angus bull for sale. This bull “Red Statement” appeared to meet our selection criteria, so we purchased him.



He produced some beautiful calves; many heifers have remained in the herd and the first ones will calve this year. Downlands College purchased a few of our lighter steers in 2016, and one of these was sired by the South Devon composite bull. It performed very well in the carcass competition at the Ekka in 2017. Subsequently, Downlands returned to purchase six of the top steers born in 2017. Four of these were by the same composite bull

(others by Limousin and Murray Grey bulls). The steers were delivered at the end of March, at six to eight months of age. Just over two months later, they were all paraded by the

students at the Farmfest Led Steer Competition.



The four lighter weight steers were place 2nd, 3rd and 4th in their class. The two heavier steers were place 1st and 3rd in the next class. Finally, the steer that won his class, secured Champion out of the three classes. This particular steer

was red, well muscled and a blend of five breeds:

25% South Devon

25% Red Angus

25% Limousin

12.5% Murray Grey

12.5% Blonde d'Aquitaine

Interestingly, the breeding of these steers represented all the breeds that we have used over the years, with each cow (steer mothers) being by a different bull. Most of the assessments that we have made with our cattle over the years have been based on visual appraisal, and knowledge about the cow lines for many generations. The South Devon breed definitely has some good attributes to offer so fits in very well in our herd. We now have a pure South Devon bull and the first 50% SD calves have arrived recently.

Helen Darlington

“Yarrabee”

Goombungee Qld 4354’

NEWS FROM VICTORIA



John and Sue Harvey from Torr Down report some very ordinary weather in their area, including snow. On a positive note, they have sent the following news.

TORR DOWN MARVEL 3 SEMEN TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Marvel has 150 straws of semen awaiting dispatch to the Miller family, of the Winston South Devon stud.

John Miller is the President elect for the World South Devon Society.

Photo shows Torr Down Marvel 3 still a wonderful specimen at 10 years old.

Australian members who went on the last World Convention tour would remember their visit to the Winston Herd. The annual Winston bull sale was held on 17th August and was an outstanding success. There was a 40% increase in prices and all bulls were sold, with a new South African record price for a South Devon bull being set.

(Ed note; Along with John and Sue, I will be watching with interest to see the progeny that results from this purchase and wish the Miller Family all the very best. I will cheerfully admit to being a big fan of Marvel 3; he is the sire of our own Torr Down Merlin

20 as well as four daughters we have in the stud (one of which is the dam of Athlone Mr Nat).)

NEWS FROM COUNCIL;

During the recent council meeting, it was decided that **classified advertising will be added to the newsletter**. This will be a maximum of two lines at \$10/line +gst for each advertiser. Advertising will need to be prepaid to the SD society account. **The BSB is 082407 and the account number is 047341515**. David McDonald and I will liaise to confirm payment prior to publication. Please note that this is classified advertising only – no photos. These advertisements must be supplied to me two weeks prior to publication. Newsletters are usually published at the end of February, April, June, August, October and December.

Also from the meeting; Daphne Lines suggested that if any South Devon members were thinking of attending Beef 2021 in Rockhampton, it might be a good idea to think about booking accommodation in the very near future.

But wait, there's more: NSW will have a South Devon group again – name yet to be decided on (possibly South Devons East), but it's really good to see the old NSW branch being revived in some form. There is a strong possibility that the AGM for 2019 will be hosted by this new entity.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR BREEDERS REGARDING USE OF OVERSEAS SEMEN.

There have been enquiries from overseas breeders regarding sale of semen into Australia. The rules regarding registration of calves from overseas semen are as follows;

'According to the Regulations of the South Devon Cattle Society of Australia Inc (SDCS), Australian members wishing to register progeny sired by South Devon semen sourced from overseas need to check that the overseas bull has been registered with SDCS. Such registration involves having the overseas bull first registered in its country of origin.

To register such a bull in Australia, there must be prior payment of relevant fees, submission of the DNA report for the bull and submission of a copy of its overseas pedigree information. Overseas bulls need only be registered once with SDCS. An "Australian equivalent" identification will be issued by the SDCS as reference to this bull for subsequent recording purposes.'

Next issue will have results from both Adelaide and Melbourne Royal Shows, including some school and open steer stories.

Also a report on the Farm walk undertaken by Queensland SDPG members and friends. We will be learning about the new Ceres ear tags as well as the latest technology (Australian made – a bonus) for controlling and monitoring electric fences and solar pumps via either a computer or mobile phone.

As always, I need news and photos from members, especially in areas where I am not – which is most of Australia!

If you are out and about promoting the South Devon breed, tell me about it and send photos. We like to read about what other people are doing with their South Devon cattle.

The next newsletter is due out at the end of October – I need articles and photos two weeks prior to give me time to put it together.

BITS AND PIECES FROM HERE AND THERE.

Enough of us are battling horrendous drought that I think we all could do with a bit of a laugh (see the last page). Kildare in particular is the driest it has ever been, and they are feeding everything. That is a huge task, must be done every day, and meant that neither Rick nor Sue could get away to support their winning team at the Ekka. On a positive note, the local butcher is quite happily buying their Red Wagyu cross calves.

I have checked with Mick Hamilton, and at the time, the bushfires in Southern NSW hadn't impacted on any of our members.

Parts of Victoria is suffering from being too cold and wet – what a land of contrasts we live in!!

It sounds like WA is having at least some rain – hopefully it is beneficial.

At the AGM, Colin Chevalley asked for support from SD members to try and have a display of some form at the Primex Field Day in Casino next June. If you can offer support in any way, feel free to contact Colin.



John and Sue Harvey sent me a couple of photos of their Red Wagyu x South Devon calves. They plan on having them on display at the end of January next year (with scan figures) for the Beef

Week farm visits if anyone down there is interested in seeing how they are growing.

These are the two Casino High School SD heifers having parading practice prior to the next round of shows in the area.

Apparently, the students are extremely fond of their small South Devon herd because of their nature and personalities.



IF ANYONE ELSE HAS PHOTOS OF STUDENTS/KIDS AND SOUTH DEVONS, PLEASE SEND THEM IN.

I am going to include a poem supplied to me anonymously – anyone who has used AI should appreciate the humour.

A VIRGIN COW'S LAMENT

I've just given birth to a heifer, of pride and milk I am full,
But it's sad to relate my late little state was not brought about by a bull.

I've never been naughty, I swear it, despite the calf that I've borne,
Like Farmer Brown's tractor, I'm virgo intacta, I've not had a bull by the horns.

How drab are the farmyards and meadows, the paddocks seem empty and grey,
The one bit of fun in life's dreary run, has by science been taken away.

If what I have heard is the truth, and natural to all it must seem,
A cow's female passion is all out of fashion and bull is naught but a dream.

I know that the farm is a business, in which we must all pull our weight.
Well I'd pull, and I'd pull for a strongly built bull, but this phoney business I hate

No bull has ever caressed me, I've not had the ghost of a binge.
I've never been loved, but brutally shoved, by a bloody great plastic syringe.

It must be thought that I'm jealous, there are things a cow mustn't say,
But those female tarts, that handle my parts, still get theirs the old-fashioned way.
Stay strong everyone – it will rain. Hopefully very, very soon for those of us who are desperately dry.

DON'T FORGET TO KEEP AN EYE ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE – AUSTRALIAN SOUTH DEVONS

Until next time – happy reading.

Heather Lindsay Newsletter Editor/Communications.