



South Devon Cattle Society of Australia

Newsletter: Issue 1 Autumn 2025

As the saying goes “no news is good news” - there is only news from the Centre and the West in this edition.

From the Central Branch

Congratulations to Davelle, in particular, and the breed, in general, for a magnificent showing and carcass result at the 2024 Royal Adelaide Show.

As we, as a breed, have come to expect the hoof Judges have not yet appreciated the hidden behind the hide quality of our breed and overlook the quality of the carcass which was reflected in this year’s results. The Hoof judge at the outset said that he would be judging his kind of animal, as a Limousin breeder of show steers it was obvious where his eye was drawn and the hoof results reflected this in many ribbons going to that type of animal, but where it counts is what’s under the hide and the South Devons’s excelled there. With a line-up of 14 pure and 4 cross bred animals we were well represented in the overall entries of 241.

The Thomas Foods team of 3, hoof and hook combined scores placed the South Devon team 4th. Higher placings all had winners on the hoof which gives an advantage.

When David Leese (Davelle) left to go home as the steers were transported to the works he said to me, I think tongue in cheek, “you can collect my ribbons on Wednesday night” and I did! First and second ribbons and wide ribbons, the pile kept growing. Then the Championships were announced and the breed was on a roll! Birdwood High School took out the Crossbred Reserve Champion. David had a text forwarded to him saying “Mrs Lines is sure getting

her steps up tonight” as I had barely sat down and had to get up again.
CONGRATULATIONS David and Rochelle on a magnificent result.

Please check the Davelle Facebook page for more specific details.

Mt Gambier’s Tennyson College showed the highest scoring crossbred carcass with a 50 / 50 Ebenezer Park (Sarah Bolte) South Devon Hereford animal, and Burra Community School for a second placing in their class with a Gum Hill steer.

It was an exciting presentation evening for the South Devon Breed and congratulations are extended to the South Australian Beef Committee and Thomas Foods Intl for the organisation and hospitality offered.

Well done to the following Exhibitors for the preparation and presentation of South Devon steers: Davelle, 5 pure bred, 1 cross bred, Nathan Nutt 2 pure from Gum Hill, Ebenezer Park 1 cross bred and the following schools. Bordertown High School (Watinga), Burra Community School (Gum Hill), Coomandook Area School (Watinga) Tennyson Woods College (Ebenezer Park) Gladstone High School (Davelle), Jamestown High School (Davelle), Balaklava High School (Davelle) Birdwood High School (Cross bred, Davelle)

World Conference and Tour

The preliminary itinerary is now out for the World Tour 2026 and the organisers have asked for an Expression of Interest to assist in the continuing planning of a programme of diversity and a great mix of English countryside and South Devon Cattle. Those of us who have had the opportunity to travel to previous World Conferences and Tours would highly recommend this way of travel and encourage you all to consider the 2026 tour. I have been asked, as the World Council member, to assist in getting a list of members from Australia who may be interested in taking part in the tour and Conference, so if, even in your wildest dreams might hope to attend, please let me know by the end of March. An expression of Interest was so valuable when we planned the Australian Tour and the rule of thumb was cut the numbers in half and you are about right. So please, an expression is not binding, drop me an email lgumhill@bigpond.com.

Facebook contributions

The Federal Council have agreed that all the Council members will be the Administrators of the Facebook site, a list can be found further down in this Newsletter. This change will probably occur in the next couple of months and we will let members know when this has happened. It is also anticipated that a new criteria and guidelines will be set out so that what's appropriate content can be covered. These contacts may change after the next Federal Council Meeting so keep tuned.

Quiet on the Western Front

***Please note that this was written in early December 2024!

This year has been a poor to mediocre season for the south west of WA. A very poor start and a mediocre finish. Opening rains were late and intermittent providing little green pasture feed until July. Some areas received reasonable late rains which resulted in quite good pasture, but most did not get enough to provide ample dry feed for the summer and water in the dams is worrying low. Hay crops were good however, and most farmers have adequate supplies. Early in the year shortage of hay saw prices reach \$500 a tonne and hard to find.

Cattle prices are slowly improving which is a relief to all of us. Steers 500-600 kgs are making 240 -310 c/kg with 400 – 500 kg about 10 to 20 c/kg less. Heifers 500 kg plus are averaging slightly more. Medium weight cull cows 400 - 520 kg have been making 120 -180 c/kg. weaner steers 330 -380 kg have been selling at around 340 c/kg and heifers the same weight selling at the usual rip of 90 c/kg less.

We currently only have 2 breeders registering South Devon calves in WA and the social activity has been facilitated by Telstra. The highlight of the year was a much enjoyed visit from Ralph and Betty of Cooper Sampson fame all the way from Canada. We drove around a good section of the southwest through the hills of Donnybrook, the vines of Margaret River and the coast of Busselton and worked in visits to Barooga, Manso Grande, Callanish and Grace Glen South Devon herds

Personal

I have sadly received news that Ann Rees from Wales has recently passed away. Ann, and her husband were on the Canadian and Australian Tours and have contributed greatly to the Welsh division of the UK.

The Queensland news tells that Graham Lindsay has had a couple of trips to the Mackay Hospital. Hope that you are back in the workforce now Graham.

And the spare parts dept. has manufactured a new knee for Glan Lines, he's 2" taller and no longer a buck jumper!

Seasonal Conditions

South Australia has experienced its worst drought in living memory, having been likened to the 1914 drought where it was not uncommon to remove the thatch from the shed roofs to feed the horses, of course they were the real horsepower at that time. Many homes in the areas south of Adelaide are running out of water, both rain and surface and carriers are delivering as fast as they can but may take up to 6 weeks, need to plan ahead. It is one of the first times that the whole State is experiencing such conditions, usually there is some pocket, maybe small, that's OK but not this time. With a 17" rainfall we recorded a little over 6" in 2024 and areas to our north much less.

From the past

The Autumn Newsletter of 1985 contained several articles including the President's Report (Roy Scragg) who commented that again and again the Station areas, despite success with the South Devon, the buyers have vanished as the conservatism of the pastoralists has taken them back to their traditional breed. The headline was Beef Outlook – UP, a Stock and land report saying that there was evidence of rising prices in beef and veal. The Victorian Branch had introduced a requirement that all vendors would require a Vet examination and fertility test as 5-10% of Bulls being sold were infertile, and more comprehensive requirements on fertility in females for sale was to be introduced. WA had exported over \$100,000 to Eastern State breeders. Ray Turner, SA, had been awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia for work on

Churchill fellowship Committees for many years. Entries were invited for the Bendigo sale in May and the first Poll Bull was on its way to Tasmania. Tahaeke Express Ivor at 12 years of age and arthritic was sold at 1060 kgs at 88 cents kg, and Tahake Express Bringood had died from a viral infection at Nardlah. There was also an article on the lean beef impact along with how to assess fat cover.

2025 AGM

The Federal Council have agreed to hold the 2025 AGM during the ECCA in August 2025. A holiday coming up?

Federal Council contacts

James McUtchen

Lee Pippard

Ric McDouall

Gaylene Garratt

Sarah Bolte

David Corker

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In closing I wish you all better seasonal conditions in the 2025. Please send your news if you want others to be kept in touch and know what's happening!

Daphne Lines.

Newsletter Co-ordinator