

2023 Southdown Sheep Society Year Book

Incorporating the Spring Newsletter

Issue 35

Spring 2023



2022 NATIONAL SHOW WINNER



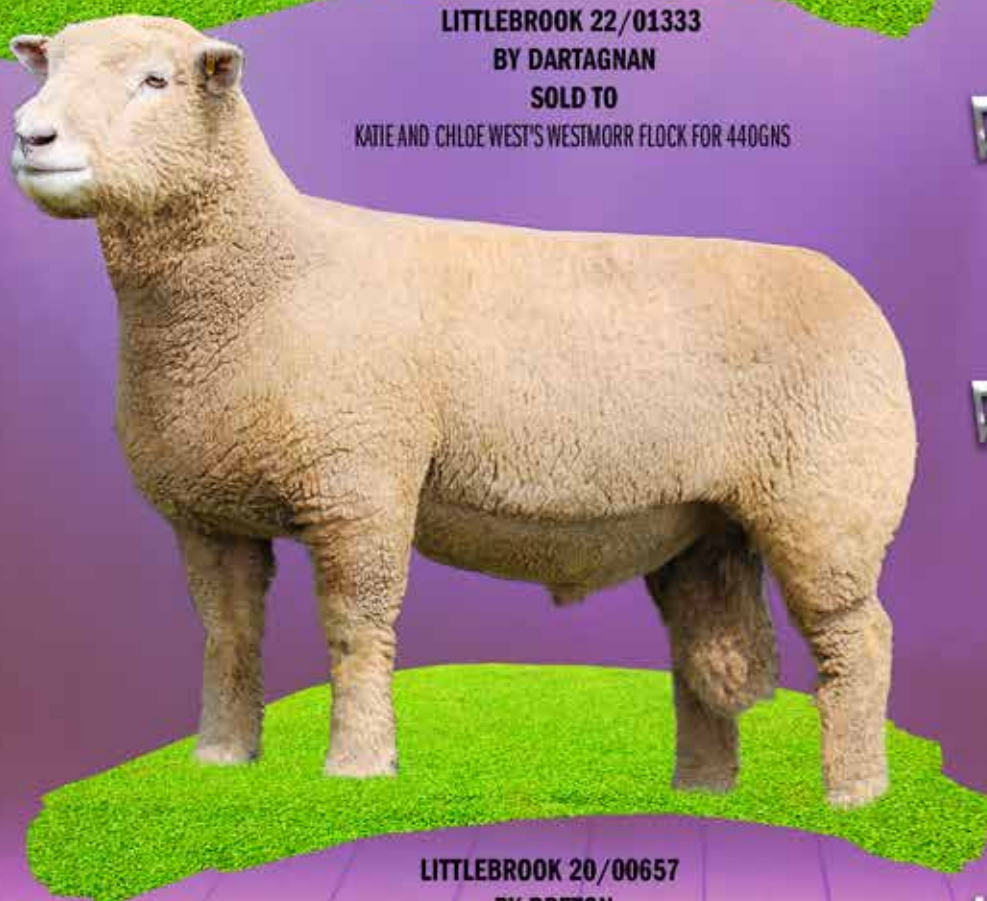


LITTLEBROOK 22/01333

BY DARTAGNAN

SOLD TO

KATIE AND CHLOE WEST'S WESTMORR FLOCK FOR 440GNS



LITTLEBROOK 20/00657

BY BRETON

SOLD TO

BRIAN AND ANTHONY GLAVES' BROMPTON FLOCK FOR 1000GNS



Follow on Instagram
@thejuniorshpherdess

MV ACC

Littlebrook

SOPHIE LONG

Based in Herefordshire

Email: littlebrook2011@gmail.com

Tel: 07974 303306 (Jonathan)

Designed by
log
countrygirlscia.co.uk

From the Chairman

Welcome to the Society's spring update, it gives me, and indeed all Council members, great satisfaction to look back on the successes breeders across the country enjoyed in 2022.

Show rings were once again full of activity and demand at both the Society's sales was robust, with many breeders well rewarded for their efforts.

The Society's stand at last summer's NSA Sheep Event Malvern was a hive of activity, with commercial sheep producers taking a keen interest in the potential the breed offered them.

It is hoped this will translate in to increased demand for stock in the coming years and this year the Society will have a presence at both NSA Sheep South West and NSA Welsh Sheep, giving increased promotion for the breed in these areas.

Anyone involved in sheep production will be aware of the increased costs faced over the last 12 months and once again I believe this is an area the breed can capitalise on, with Southdown sired lambs able to thrive on lower inputs than many other breeds.



The ability of the breed to produce easily fleshed lambs from grass and milk is one which will become increasingly valued in future and is something we must ensure we showcase as the farming world struggles to cope with these higher costs.

It is important to ensure these traits are not overlooked, diluted or lost in the pursuit of other fleeting desires.

Back with Society activity and the breed's National Show this year heads to Lincolnshire Show on 21st and 22nd June and I encourage members to support the event, both as exhibitors and spectators. It should be a great chance for breeders to meet up.

Further opportunities for members to meet up and socialise will also be provided by regional groups over the coming months and members should check the Society website for details of what's happening in their area.

Later in the summer, the Society's Premier Sale will take place at Worcester on Saturday 5th August, while the Society's second sale will take place at Melton Mowbray on Saturday 9th September. Both these sales offer a wide selection of stock from across the spectrum of bloodlines and types within the breed.

I would take this opportunity to remind members of the advantages offered by the Society's official sales, including the reassurance that all animals offered for sale have passed a vet inspection and are fully registered with the Society.

I look forward to seeing many of you at shows, sales and other events this summer and autumn and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of the Society both now and in future.

I wish you all well for the spring and summer and hope you all continue to take enjoyment from your involvement with our great breed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Long'.

Jonathan Long
Chairman of Council

Front page photo credit: chrissie@countrygirlmedia.co.uk

Front cover: 2022 National Show Champion, a ewe lamb bred and shown by Annabel Halcrow



AROUND THE REGIONS

There are a number of regional and local groups of enthusiastic Southdown breeders around the country. Regional Groups are currently planning activities for this year, so keep an eye on social media and look out for the Southdown eNewsletters which also include information about what's on around the regions. If you would like to help organise activities in your local area then please get in touch with any of the regional co-ordinators listed below, or get in touch with the office.

REGIONAL GROUP CO-ORDINATORS

South West Group

Co-ordinators: Adam & Caroline Brown
01398 361245
adamandcaroline@googlemail.com
Simon & Wendy Everdell
01984 624760 / 07732254957
wendyfirman@hotmail.co.uk

West Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: Miriam Parker
01743 884483
miriam@livestockwise.co.uk

Wales Group

Co-ordinator: to be confirmed

East Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: Will Morton
07793 977092
Will_morton05@hotmail.co.uk

East Anglia Group

Co-ordinator: Mark Robertson
07739 091520
Briggsflock1256@gmail.com

North Shires Group

Co-ordinator: Lesley Mead
01525 270135
lesleyhollybar@btinternet.com
Graham Ryves-Webb
07964 294438
grw_southdown@msn.com

South of England Group

Co-ordinator: Paul Humphrey
01243 811518
pmhumphrey62@gmail.com

Southdown Sheep Society approved sales in 2023

Southdown Sheep Society official sales provide the best opportunity to purchase veterinary inspected, high quality sheep from leading Southdown flocks.

Both performance recorded and MV accredited stock are available at Society sales, giving potential buyers an unrivalled selection of quality stock.

Saturday August 5th

**The Premier Breeders Show & Sale at
Worcester Market**

www.mccartneys.co.uk
worcester@mccartneys.co.uk
Telephone 01905 769770

Friday September 8th and

Saturday September 9th

**Traditional and Native Breeds National Show
and Sale at Melton Mowbray**

www.meltonmowbraymarket.co.uk
sales@meltonmowbraymarket.co.uk
Telephone 01664 562971

For more details or to request a paper catalogue please contact the auctioneers or the Southdown Office. Catalogues will be available on line.

BOOK REVIEW

"Wattle Hurdles and Leather Gaiters"
By John Randall

This is a countryman's autobiography. It records a wealth of farming practices in the south of England from the 1920s onwards. The author's father was the local wheelwright and carpenter. He himself mastered rick-making, thatching, hedging, horses, tractors and herding at an early age.

The introduction to the book states that the real strength of the book lies in its detailed account of about fifty years working with sheep, starting with the yearly round of life as a hurdled shepherd managing a pure-bred flock.

This is a fascinating and detailed account of the life of a shepherd as recounted by one of the last true old-school shepherds, the likes of which we shall not see again.

SAVE THE DATE!

**2023 National Southdown Show
at the Lincolnshire Show on June
21st-22nd
at Lincolnshire Showground,
Grange-de-Lings, Lincoln,
LN2 2NA**

Northumbria Southdowns



NORTHUMBRIA TARANIS 20/00176
UK's No. 1 Ranked Southdown Ram 2022



NORTHUMBRIA 21/00247
Multi Breed/Interbreed Champion 2022

Performance and Style

SELECTED 2022 SHOW RESULTS

- **Walker Trophy for Champion Flock**
Staffordshire County Show
- **Supreme Champion**
Royal Cheshire Show
- **Breed Champion**
Derbyshire County Show

**HIGH SIGNET
RECORDED SCORES WITH
SHOW-WINNING QUALITY
Pedigree and Commercial
Rams available**

The NORTHUMBRIA Flock of Pedigree Southdowns

Messrs. G&M SPARKE
WARREN FARM, STEWKLEY
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

SIGNET RECORDED

t: 07968 182020

e: g.sparke@btinternet.com

NOTES FROM THE SOUTHDOWN OFFICE

The Council of the Southdown Sheep Society meets at least twice a year and the Notes from the Office aim to keep members updated on some of the important issues raised and discussed within Council meetings.

LAMB REGISTRATIONS

More and more members are choosing to register their lambs online using the Pedeweb system. Please email the office if you need a reminder of your Pedeweb password.

There is a User Guide available to download from the Southdown Sheep Society website, together with some FAQs. To access the online Flock Book simply follow the link from the Society website.

Lamb registrations

Members should make every effort to register lambs as soon as possible to avoid omission from the next edition of the Flock Book. Please note that all late registrations (ie after the year of birth) remain eligible for registration but at the late fee charge of £30 per registration.

All lamb registrations should be with the office by November 30th 2023, and at the latest, by December 31st. While every effort is made to turn around all registrations promptly, there may be a delay in processing registrations at busy times in the Southdown office.

The Southdown Office is closed for all but emergency enquiries for two weeks over Christmas and New Year.

Please note that registrations cannot be processed until payment has been received and subscription is paid up to date.

2023 REGISTRATION CHARGES

On line registration fee per ewe lamb	£5
On line registration fee per ram lamb	£12
Paper registration fee per ewe lamb	£7
Paper registration fee per ram lamb	£18

Late registration fee on line and/or on paper £30 per animal. Pedigree print-outs at time of registration cost 50p each, print-outs requested later are charged at £1 per copy.

Imports and Exports

Members are reminded that the Office must be notified of any intended exports and imports. The rules as published in the current Flock Book state that: "All sheep sold for export must have a Zootechnical Certificate in accordance with current legislation. The Zootechnical Certificate must be obtained from the Office, at a cost set by Council." The current fee is £20/head.

This zootechnical (export) certificate for pure-bred breeding sheep, their semen, ova and embryos should accompany the animal (or germinal product) where they are traded or entered into the European Union to allow an entry or registration of those animals in other breeding books or breeding registers.

The Southdown Sheep Society, therefore, fulfils its obligations as a DEFRA recognised breed society by issuing the export pedigree certificate to allow entering of pure-breed breeding sheep in flock-books.

Stock for sale

Members may use the Society website to advertise stock for sale at any time. Simply email the office with details. The basic charge for a brief advert on the website for three months is £10, see the more detailed article in this newsletter for further website sales options.

Getting it right

Does the Society have your correct information? Please try and update the Office with any changes of address or contact details. If you spot any errors or inaccuracies in the information included for you in this year's publications please let the Office know.

Email

If your email address changes, please remember to inform the office, this can be done via Pedeweb.

All members for whom we have an email address receive the Southdown e-newsletters throughout the year. The e-newsletters gives the Office a chance to share information with members on a more regular basis in between the paper e-newsletters in Spring and Autumn. If you would prefer not to receive our e-newsletters then please let the Office know.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Many thanks to all those members whose subscriptions are already paid up to date. **PLEASE NOTE –The 2023 subscription is £45.**

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU AMEND YOUR STANDING ORDER WITH YOUR OWN BANK TO REFLECT THE INCREASE IN THE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION.

Standing Order instruction forms are available to download from the website or from the Office. Please ensure that when making a BACS payment, or setting up a Standing Order for subscription payment, that you include your name as a reference with the payment. Just occasionally it is impossible to trace the source of a payment!

BACS payment details can be found on page four of the Flock Book.

GIFT AID

Are you registered with the Southdown Sheep Society for Gift Aid? If you are a tax payer then your membership contribution is worth 25% more to the Society as we can claim Gift Aid on your subscription payment. You can download a Gift Aid form from the website, or simply call to request one from the Southdown office.

The Southdown Sheep Society Flock Competition

The annual Flock Competition is an ideal opportunity to gain an appraisal of your flock, on a one-to-one basis with the Flock Competition judge.

The judge for this year's competition is J Roland Williams. A knowledgeable and experienced judge, Roland's Greenlands flock was founded in 2003. The Greenlands flock is one of the larger Southdown flocks and has exhibited with success at many shows over the years, supporting shows in Wales and beyond.

While the judge has to compare all flocks and select the winners in the respective classes, at the same time the judge is able to offer an informed opinion and answer any questions you may have. The Flock Competition judge is always an experienced sheep keeper and taking part in a Flock Competition should be an enjoyable and educational experience.

It should be pointed out that the competition judges the whole flock, and, therefore, breeders with individual, different groups of sheep within their one flock will necessarily be disadvantaged. The judge is looking to see a flock, rather than a collection of different animals.

The judge follows a marking scheme approved by Council where points are awarded across a number of sections:

A	quality of flock ewes	35
B	intake of shearling ewes	35
C	uniformity	35
D	ewe lambs	20
F	rams	60
E	wool	15
Total		200

Noakes Trophy: Three ewe lambs & three ram lambs sire by a named ram and shown 100

Flock Competition entry forms and rules can be downloaded from the Society website, or email or call the Office if you would like a paper copy sent to you. The entry fee is £25 per flock, and the closing date for entries is September 1st 2023.

The 2023 National Southdown Show Book the date!

The 2023 National Southdown Show will take place at the Lincolnshire Show on June 21st-22nd. The judge for the 2023 National Show is Mr Stephen Humphrey.

The Lincolnshire Show offers a memorable day out for all: "Experience a true celebration of rural Lincolnshire with an eclectic mix of breathtaking entertainment, food, shopping, music, horticulture and farm life".

We encourage all members to consider giving their support to the National Show, whether as exhibitors or spectators.

Members are reminded of the conditions imposed by all shows who offer dedicated Southdown classes:

All animals entered in these classes must be from current members of the Southdown Sheep Society and either be registered or eligible for registration with the Southdown Sheep Society. All animals must be owned by exhibitors for minimum of four months prior to show.'

Full details are available on the Southdown Sheep Society website. Alternatively, contact the Lincolnshire Showground Equine & Livestock Secretary, Helen McGurk, HMcGurk@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk 01522 585511 www.lincolnshireshowground.co.uk

SELL YOUR STOCK ON THE SOCIETY WEBSITE WEBSITE ADVERTS

The cost of placing an advert on the website is £10 per advert

All adverts will include the flock name, breeder's contact details including telephone numbers and email, and a brief outline, totalling no more than 475 characters, including spaces, of what is available for sale.

Descriptions may include pedigree information or other relevant details, including show results and one photograph is included within the £10 charge.

Additional lines of text (no more than 125 characters including spaces) may be purchased for £3/line and additional photographs can be added for £3 per photograph.

Where breeders wish, they may also submit a private catalogue of their animals for sale in pdf format to be included with their advert at a cost of £25. All catalogues must include wording which indemnifies the Society.

Adverts remain on the website for three months. These may be added at any time. Please email the office with details.

NEW Eastern Region Early Breeders' Sale

Thrapston Livestock Market, Northamptonshire, NN14 4JU

An **Unofficial** Show and Sale of Pedigree Southdown Sheep
for Southdown Sheep Breeder Members

Saturday 29th July 2023 at 1pm
Judging in pens: Midday



The following flocks have so far indicated that they intend to support the sale:
All Saints, East Dean, Heritage, Holly Bar, Sheepcote, Snowden, Webb Ellis

For More Information Contact:

Patrick Goldsworthy
07711 416312
patrick@goldsworthy-uk.com
Local Organiser
Southdown Sheep Breeder

Alastair Brown
07885 804450
alastair.brown@bletsoes.co.uk
Head of Auctions
Bletsoes

THRAPSTON

www.bletsoes.co.uk

STRATFORD

Est 2005 **Sutherland Southdowns** Flock 896



Amy Readhead-Higgins

House Farm, Leiston, Suffolk, IP16 4TW

Mobile: 07850 830030

Email: amy.readhead@gmail.com

2022 WINTER FAIRS ROUND UP

The breed was well represented in the 2022 winter primestock fairs, with Southdown lambs enjoying success in a number of classes around the country, both in live lamb and carcass classes.

The English Winter Fair, Stafford, saw a pair of lambs from the Long family win the Southdown class, before going on to be reserve champion native lambs. Second in the Southdown class here went to Goodwood Estate, with another pair from the Long family third.

Southdown sired lamb carcasses featured prominently in the carcass line-up at The English Winter Fair, taking the top three spots in the native cross carcass class. Winning this class was Sally Booth, with long-standing supporter of the breed, Bob Cox, gained second place and the Long family following on with a third placing here.

Classes at the Royal Welsh Winter Fair were well supported, with Geraint Davies taking the top ticket in the pair of Southdown lambs class. These lambs went on to claim reserve honours in the pure lowland section.

Second spot in the breed class went to the Long family, with another pair from the same home in third spot.

In the show's carcass classes, the single lamb carcass in the class for any breed or cross not containing any continental breeding was won by a Southdown lamb from Hywel Williams. Meanwhile, the Long family's Chaileybrook flock continued its success with a second place in the pair's carcass section with a pair of lambs Southdown lambs.

And at the South East Primestock Show the a pair of Southdowns from Goodwood Estate took first in their class and went on to be reserve native champions.



The Long family's winning pair at the English Winter Fair



The GREAT FEN FLOCK (no.529)

Traditional Southdowns with no modern French blood, bred for hardiness in the Cambridgeshire Fens since 1994.

In 2023 we will be selling shearling ewes sired by Great Fen Bosch (left picture) and lambs by our new stud ram Chequers Farm Viceroy (right picture), who is pure Holly Bar breeding. Also we have proven rams for hire and sale.

**Mr and Mrs L C Dane
Mobile: 07548 669529**

**Soham, Cambridgeshire
email: lindsay.dane@icloud.com**

YEASIDE FLOCK

— OF —

**PEDIGREE SOUTHDOWN
MV ACREDITED & HEPTAVACED
STOCK ALWAYS AVAILABLE**



—•—
**Contact us for more
information**

Home: 01335 330311

Maria: 07805536781

Peter: 07960209744
—•—

—•—
**Sunny Side Farm
Yeaveley, Ashbourne,
Derbyshire,
DE6 2DT**
—•—



David Craig

August 1933-December 2022

Former Society president and chairman David Craig, Ringmer, passed away at the end of last year aged 89.

A lifelong arable, dairy and sheep farmer, David and his brother John's Ringmer flock was noted among the breed as one of the leading flocks of its time, before they ceased pedigree breeding in the early 1990s by which time the family had been involved in the breed for more than 60 years.

A respected breeder and judge, David was also a former East Sussex NFU County chairman and chief sheep steward at South of England Show.



Get ready for the show season!

The Southdown Sheep Society has teamed up with Show Time who can provide a wide range of Society branded clothing, in any shape, colour and size! There is a link to the Southdown Sheep Society page on the Show Time website where you can see samples of clothing with the Society logo. However, the whole clothing catalogue is available with the Society logo, and members' flock names can be embroidered onto garments too.

Email: sales@showtime-supplies.co.uk

<https://www.showtime-supplies.co.uk/>

TIES - Southdown Sheep Society ties are available from the Southdown office



There's a choice of navy or burgundy, £25 per tie including postage and packing

Trade marks and certification

It may surprise members that the phrase "Southdown Sheep" can be used to describe a wide range of sheep and even the description "Registered Southdown Sheep" only indirectly assures buyers and others that sheep are pedigree Southdowns.

To enhance its membership services the Southdown Sheep Society has now registered a specific trade mark that, if required, makes it explicit in legal terms that a sheep is a registered Southdown.

There are certain trademarks that do not have the same function as an ordinary trade mark. The Society's new trade mark is a certification mark, a specific type of trade mark that provide a guarantee that the goods or services bearing the mark meet a certain defined standard or possess a particular characteristic. Such marks are usually registered in the name of trade associations or similar bodies.

The Society, in registering this trade mark "Southdown Sheep Certification Mark", has explicitly defined in law the standards or characteristics as "Sheep registered with the Southdown Sheep Society". Any claim that a sheep is registered with the Society can be assured by use of this trademark and misuse is a straightforward and primary infringement of trademark law.

Use of this trademark is available only to the Society's members for their registered sheep. Its use is not mandatory, but can be used by members for clarity if they so wish.

If members wish to use this new trademark, please contact the Society's office for information to ensure they adhere to trademark law when using this facility, in accordance with the Society's new Rule 25, see below.

This new trademark has been made available at minimal cost in part by a generous donation to the Society."

Rule 25. Members must only use the exact phrase "Southdown Sheep Certification Mark" in respect of Southdown Sheep registered with the Southdown Sheep Society. This trademark can be used as straightforward plain text in written, electronic and other communications, as well as verbally. Members are advised to obtain guidance on appropriate use which is available from the Society's office. It is a condition of use that the mark shall not be used without indicating that is a certification mark. The main purpose of this certification mark is to guarantee to the relevant public that such certified Southdown Sheep possess the particular characteristic of being registered with the Southdown Sheep Society. The characteristic being certified by the mark is that the goods in question are sheep which are all of the Southdown breed. Members who are considered to have misused the trademark will be referred to the Society's Officers for consideration of further action via the Society's Disciplinary Procedure.



South East Marts

Hailsham Market

Market Street, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 2AG

01323 844874 07890 359622

info@southeastmarts.co.uk – www.southeastmarts.co.uk



Auctioneers

Auctioneers

Auctioneers at Hailsham Market

of Store, Prime & Cull Cattle

Calves & Dairy Stock

Prime, Breeding, Cull, Store Sheep & Pigs.

we also specialize in

On-the Farm Dispersal Sales of
Farm Machinery, Plant & Livestock.

and hold

The biggest one day Sheep Fair in the South East

THE DOLPHIN SHEEP FAIR

at The South of England Showground, Ardingly

Thursday 21st September 2023

as well as

Special Early Breeding Sheep Sale & Rare Breeds

at Hailsham Market, Hailsham

Saturday 29th July 2023 2023

Farewell to Camber Castle

Members may have seen on the Society website recently an advert publicising the sale/ dispersal of the Camber Castle (109) flock of Southdowns run by David Randall and Sarah Mitchell.

This marks the end of the couple's active Southdown breeding and although David and Sarah (the Society's current president) will keep an eagle eye on the breed and its comings and goings, it was felt opportune to try and capture the thoughts, recollections and history of both the flock and David and Sarah.

David's Early Days

Born in Dorset, not far from where he now lives, David was brought up as the son of a shepherd and a dairy farmer's daughter. Naturally he followed his father around various pedigree flocks of sheep: Dorset Downs, Shropshires and later Romneys and then Dorset Horns, living in Shropshire, Kent, Suffolk as well as Dorset. Formal training comprised an NCA at Plumpton and at 17 - the youngest at that time to do it - he attended a specialist sheep course at Ponteland College, Northumberland.

David also picked up much valued learning from other shepherds – so much of sheep keeping learnt is by word of mouth – and although he got a bit from his father, he learned much more from others such as Kenny Riggall (Suffolks), Sid Raiment and Ted Frampton (both Hampshires).

David's first memories of sheep were of two Shropshire rams being collared and chained a yard apart to stop them fighting. His first encounters with Southdowns were in 1965 when his father bought five Southdown wethers to fatten for Smithfield and again in 1966. David and his father finally succumbed to the lure of the Southdown when they bought five in-lamb ewes from Charlie Goodger's Flock No. 33, at Manor Farm, Chidham, Chichester. They cost £10 apiece. The flock had been their source for the wethers and supplied tups to a number of local farms, so they knew they were pretty good animals. To accompany these, the Randalls bought for 38 guineas (a fortnight's wages) the last "Ford" ram bred by Lady Jean Philips out of a Ford ewe by a Ford ram. (The Ford flock owned by Walter Langmead, was in its time one of the top Southdown flocks).

Sarah's Early Days

Sarah's pathway into Southdowns is slightly more unusual. Her father came from a successful Nottinghamshire - based heavy engineering company. Following her Hampshire-born mother's ultimatum, her father, in his fifties and not a farmer by instinct, migrated south in the early 1970s buying 152 acres and derelict house on the Isle of Wight. The farm had been bankrupt three times before the Mitchells bought it, was severely rundown and by all accounts not an easy farm. The Island's indigenous breed were "Horns" (Dorset Horns) but the Mitchells acquired 32 in-lamb Southdowns around Christmas 1974 from local MP Stephen Ross who was giving up Southdowns. They were, according to Sarah, 'as fat as pigs'. Having left boarding school early, Sarah vividly remembers walking them up and down the farm lane (a mile each way) to get them fit. This was to become the Godshill (151) flock. Sarah recalls that only three lambed without assistance in spite of all the exercise she gave them. Even now the in-lamb ewes are still walked out in the morning after they have had a little bit of home mix-corn (local oats and field beans mixed to a 20% protein).

Having gained her O' levels with relatively little schooling Sarah did an NCA and further sheep qualifications at Sparsholt. And, after a little bit of recreational travelling often involving agriculture and the inevitable misogyny, Sarah settled into a life in and around farming and got involved with Dexter cattle as

David Randall

David having sheared for England, and shepherded all over England and South Scotland is regrettably, retiring from Southdown sheep. This is due to ill health: sixty years of Type One Diabetes, requiring control of blood sugar every night and day that has eventually resulted in his total loss of sight. David, is also waiting for a new hip, which, due to diabetic ulcer on his foot cannot happen until it is healed. It could be long wait.



well as Southdowns. In Sarah's view Dexters are very similar: 'Chuffing stubborn, but convert rubbish very nicely, and both can survive in hard quarters'.

That Special Ram

Asked about a favorite ram, David recalls Bloxworth D86 (M31320) bought in 1968 from Roland Harris. It was at the time when some of the first New Zealand rams were being imported and had been used extensively in the Bloxworth flock.

David visited Roland to buy a shearing machine and saw two ewes with single ram lambs both by a traditional English tup from the Ringmer flock at three days old and took a fancy to him. However, when he went to collect the ram in August, Melvin the shepherd had failed to tag any of the

100 tup lambs. Fortunately David easily spotted both ram lambs. D86 was especially important as he was the sire of the first of David's championship winners at the Royal – Jasper as named by his subsequent owner - was a ram lamb and the start of David's winning streak. D86 also helped David to be the first to win the championship at the Royal with a pair of ewe lambs. The same pair went on to repeat the success at Royal Welsh a week later. David recalls they were fantastic as lambs, but sadly they were no good as ewes!



Getting together, winning and merging Camber Castle and Godshill

Sarah and David got together in 1987 and started working their flocks together in the same year, although prior to that the Godshill and Camber Castle flocks had been using the same stud rams. However, it was not until 1998 that David and Sarah decided to formally merge the Camber Castle and Godshill flock – primarily to make the paperwork easier for the then breed secretary. As the flocks had effectively merged many years earlier, there were no difficult decisions to be made.

The Camber Castle flock was never very big, typically 10 ewes kept as a "pack flock" - the shepherd's own flock kept with the employer's main flock. However, when David had his own land he was able to get up to around 100 briefly around the time of the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak. Over the last few years the flock has numbered about 20 ewes on 30 acres, split into paddocks and grazed rotationally - seven days in and 28 days rest, as this minimises the worm burden.

They have been at Wells Farm, four miles from Bridport, Dorset, since December 1996. Starting out with no fences and redundant poultry sheds they were able to set up things as they wanted using their experience from previous farms and systems, although Sarah admits now a few things need repairing – especially as the race is also used to wrestle her English Goats!

David's championship winning days with Southdowns were in the 1970s and 1980s and latterly he has won championships with Bluefaced Leicesters and Suffolks.

Expert eye, a preference for the traditional type, folding and the Golden Hoof

In terms of breeding strategy David has avoided French breeding lines, but has introduced a bit of New Zealand in a Spratton ram and he has found these give a few more lambs, and a lot more milk and lambings are a bit easier and closer together. David believes Southdowns have always had a lack of milk, with thick, sticky colostrum and can do a single very well, but sometimes struggle with a twin.

When choosing stock David primarily uses his experienced judgement. "It's got to be right. Genetics and breeding come second, but if it was good sheep and a French ram I would walk away from it." In David's opinion the French type of Southdown are a different sheep: "The coats are wrong, the body shape is wrong, the colour is wrong and the size is totally wrong. You might as well buy a Texel!"

David believes changes in the sheep industry have affected the Southdown and indeed all down breeds in the last 40 years. Attributing this to the decline/loss of the professional shepherds. "These sheep were meant to work on arable farms with a sequence of crops that fitted with folding.

“Ram lambs at the front, ewes lambs at the side and the ewes behind working through an acre¹. With varied crops such as vetches, clover and sainfoin. David recalls that Dorsets were folded most of the year; lambed in December then folded on dairy grass until lambs were six weeks old, this was followed with swedes and kale until end of March, then Hungry Gap kale.

“When the lambs were weaned they would go to red clover and in the first week in June they would move on to vetches until the end of July, then they would be back on to kale. Ewes came in briefly for lambing and were put out when lambs were three days old, although the ewes would come in at night. This was ‘The Golden Hoof’ converting grass and any vegetable matter into meat to eat and adding fertility to grow cereals.”

The place for Southdowns and wishes for the future

David believes Southdowns are a small niche market with high quality butcher's lambs that produce carcasses at 32-35lbs (14-16kg). “That gives the size of joints people can afford.”

Historically, Sarah adds, different markets want different size lambs. In the South and South West smaller lambs would fetch better prices than the bigger lambs, whereas in the East and North where they needed to feed industry and larger families larger lambs were more in demand.

Thinking about the future David is not sure what the future means for the breed or sheepkeepers in general. Everything has changed from what David grew up with. He admits it would be nice to see some larger (in hundreds) commercial flocks of Southdowns, but to do that farmers need land and quite bit of money. And for breeders to focus on the traditional type of Southdown. February² born lambs would be ready for the Royal (1st week of July) ram lambs would weigh 100-110lbs and ewe lambs between 80-90lbs.

“It's very hard to pass on advice to the next generation the way farming is these days, especially as government policy and the public demands are so conflicting and confusing,” he adds.

1 A great irony today is that with the current promotion of “Regenerative Agriculture” arable farmers are now looking to re-introduce livestock into their rotation. Not an easy job with fences gone, water gone, shepherds gone and no infrastructure of markets or vets.

2 Valentine's Day was the traditional day to lamb Southdowns, as this meant the ram lambs and shearlings would be well grown and ready to sell at Findon Sheep Fair – the second Saturday in September.



Novice flock is Champion Flock in the 2022 Flock Competition

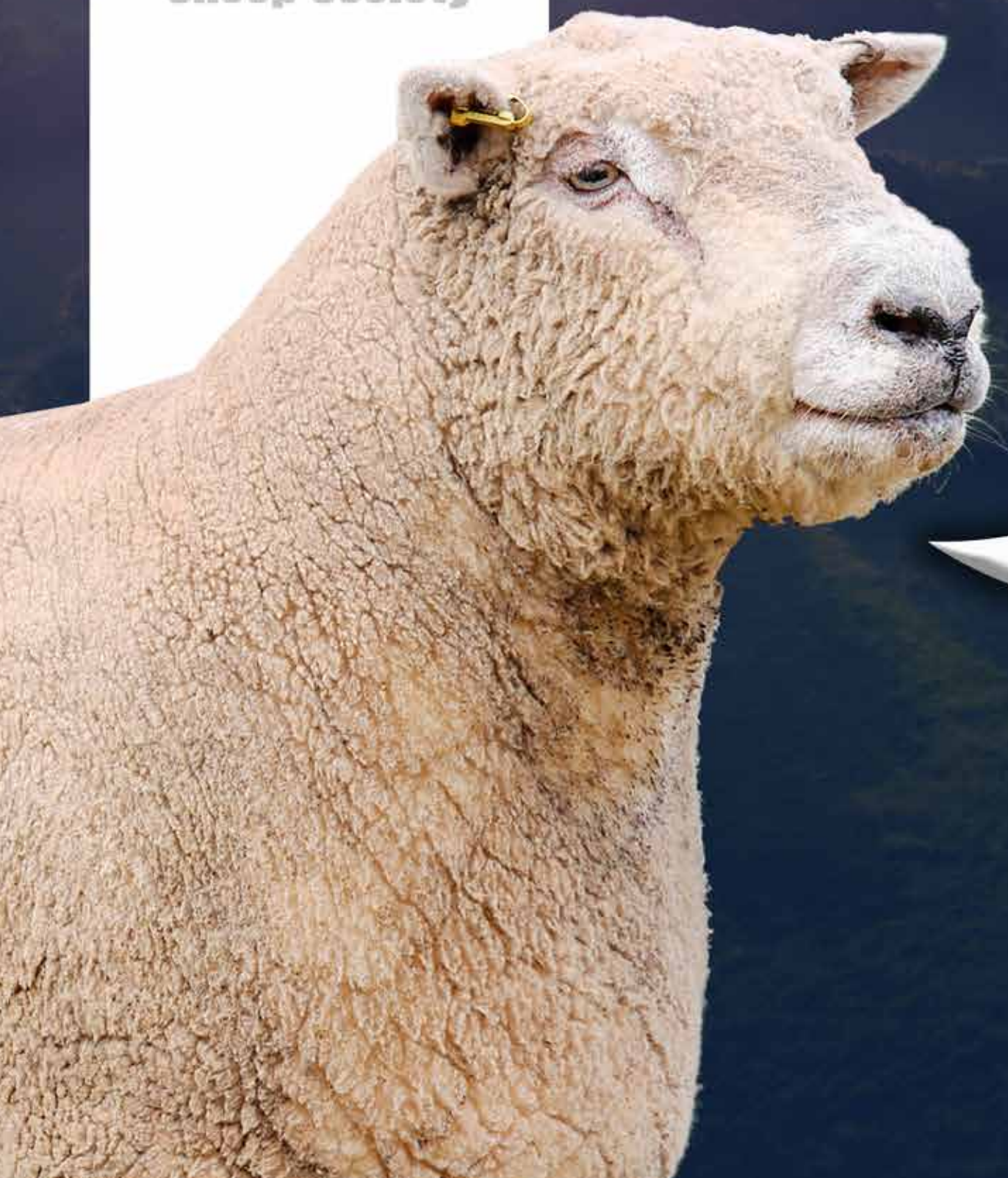
Freddy Bethley's High Green Flock was declared The Champion Flock in the 2022 national flock competition. Well Done Freddy!



Freddy is currently in Year 11 studying for his GCSEs and plans to head off to agricultural college as part of an apprenticeship in September. He is hoping to find a farm willing to take him on for his apprenticeship, ideally within an hour's travelling time of his home in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

So, if anyone might be able to help then please contact Freddy on 07710 874186.

Southdown
SS
Sheep Society



BUY WITH CONFIDENCE AT THE FOLLOWING SOCIETY SALES

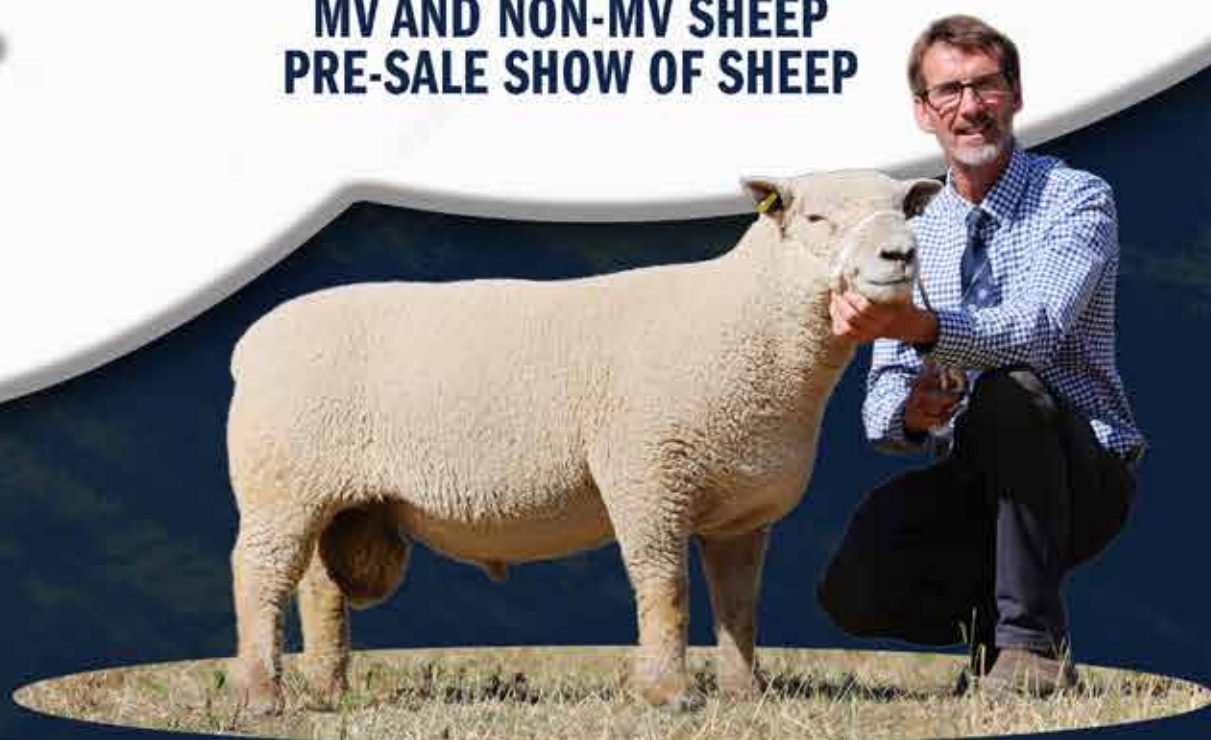


PREMIER SALE, WORCESTER, 5TH AUGUST 2023



**MELTON MOWBRAY SALE
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MV AND NON-MV SHEEP
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Selling Butcher's Lambs Privately

Having written about local livestock market prices for Southdown butcher's lambs in a past newsletter I thought it might be helpful to share my experience of private sales. Between July and December, I sell 20-24 butcher's lambs privately a year. It's usually 4-6 lambs once a month excluding August when everyone is away. These sales help provide me with a steady, reliable, loyal and mostly unfussy market. Customers nearly always appreciate the quality of the lamb. Many regulars describe it as the "best lamb ever", though one or two would like it a little leaner. The customer is of course always right, even though they are wrong! As, for me, a bit of fat improves the taste and texture, but to keep them happy I quietly get the butcher to trim the chops.

Building a Client Base

It can take a while to build up a client base, but it is worth it. Word of mouth is a good starting point, and certainly I have found local friends who do coffee mornings have been able to rope in a few more to buy half a lamb. I am lucky enough to have a community shop and sell quite a few through that. I provide adverts for their notice board and on the counter, there is a list where buyers put their name and phone number down, the month they would like the lamb and if they want a whole or a half lamb. In exchange for their support, I donate £5.50/half lamb to the shop. I also provide the shop with a Q and A to answer any queries, such as how much space does it take in the freezer.



Half a lamb is roughly half a freezer shelf

One more thing I occasionally do is to offer a half lamb as a charity auction or raffle prize, though I make it clear the buyer collects (I have no wish to deliver to John O'Groats or Lands End!).

Keeping in Touch

I don't do any regular emails, newsletters. A deliberate policy – I get enough junk mail and don't wish to add to anyone else's burden; but with regular/past clients I will usually follow up by text a year later asking if they want another half. Most buyers seem happy to buy a half or whole lamb once a year. I have a couple of customers who seem to live off lamb and may buy 2-4 times a year if I have any spares going. In the week before killing customers are texted with a reminder – checking how they want the lamb cut up – usually as before – and confirming collection day and times. Then on collection day I follow up with a reminder that their lamb is ready.

Keeping it Simple

I am lucky in that my local slaughter-house and butcher is small scale and only 15 minutes away, so I try to keep it simple to keep costs low and minimise the time and effort. The butcher supplies the lamb – offal apart – in a large plastic bag (though he does do lamb boxes). In the early days I used to repack the bag, but this is a faff: how many chops does the customer want in a bag? And there is the food hygiene issue. Customers are given the choice of joints halved or whole, neck is left on the shoulder and the breast stuffed and rolled (extra £3.00) or deboned. Odd bits of breast, neck boned or otherwise were always the last bits of lamb in my mother's freezer and an excuse not buy any more lamb so I am keen to make sure that the less exotic cuts are used up sooner rather than later!

Offal varies partly due to the meat hygiene inspector and partly on customer preference. Most will take some liver – it usually works out at 250-350g sliced liver per half lamb and there are one or two who want the lamb hearts. One enterprising customer wanted everything that was going, as they were going to make their own haggis! I no longer make a charge for the offal though did increase my lamb price a few years back to cover the marginal extra cost.

Fair Pricing

My lamb price depends on the local market price for butcher's lambs. I know Southdown lamb should really be at a premium, but my customers are locals and often friends so I try as far as possible to do what seems fair. My butcher tells me what he is charging for half a lamb – he never specifies a weight! I then take account of the prevailing market price for lamb, slaughter and cutting charges and charge at price per kg for the uncut half lamb. The uncut point is important as roughly a quarter of the lamb's weight is bone, so if you are selling deboned meat you could end up out of pocket. Although lamb prices do fluctuate during the season I have usually just worked at a set price for the year, for the record my butchered lamb price in 2022 was £9.50/kg Dwt.

Delivery

I do my best to avoid delivery, though once a year I do a mini trek round Cambridgeshire for loyal friends and former colleagues. It's so much easier and cheaper if people collect. I give them a time window usually 3-6pm on a Friday and most are able to collect it. However, it is not too much of a problem to drop half a lamb off in the village especially as it is sometimes more convenient for me.

Getting Paid

One of the silver linings of COVID was that everyone has got more used to BACS payments, and I also learned to deposit cheques through the bank app on my phone. Almost all clients now pay by BACS and most are pretty prompt – i.e. within 48 hours of collection. There are one or two who “lose the invoice” but after a week I chase them. No bad payers so far (phew!). It may be riskier than cash, but in the old days it was a real pain doing a 40-minute round trip to the bank, as well as finding coins for the car park.

Economics

Butchery costs are typically £38-40/head; market costs £3-4/lamb. Transport costs - except for my Cambridgeshire Grand tour are very similar. My smaller 28-32kg lambs sell for 20% less than average at market and fortunately some of my private sales prefer smaller lambs so preferentially my smaller lambs go to private sales. Overall, my private sales will - depending on lamb weight - earn me 50-75% more per lamb. But, and here's the rub, my private sales take roughly 2-3 hours more time, than market sales, this is offset by the positive feedback and appreciation contact you get from your customers .



Half a lamb: two whole joints, stuffed breast, 13-15 chops (cutlets, loin & chump), liver and a kidney

Patrick Goldsworthy

Traditionally Compact and Easy to Finish

Conserving the traditional Southdown

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Ideal for smallholders... and vineyards!



Webb Ellis Sheppard M57924
A well-muscled and very correct son of
Spratton Wren SB M56181



A Heritage ewe ..and her ewe lamb
by Sheepcote Everard M58179

Traditional rams and breeding stock available. All Signet Recorded.

Visitors and Enquiries Welcome

Heritage Southdowns



Flock No.1435 Est.2019

Patrick Goldsworthy MBE
Ambleside, Church Road, Grafham, Huntingdon, Cambs PE28 0BB



SOUTHDOWN ENTENTE CORDIALE



Ram Shopping in France

There was a time when a trip to France meant visits to vineyards and a long lunch at an Auberge before returning home with the boot laden with wine. However now with my son, Matthew, passionate about improving his Southdown flock, a French visit is for sheep shopping!

Our first purchase of a French ram three years ago was conducted via email using photos and performance records. This time, however, Matthew was determined to get 'hands-on' in choosing his next stock ram, so off we set in mid-December on a 3-day trip. An Easyjet flight to Lyon and the hire of a car was very straightforward. Our destination - Benoit Poillot's farm - was conveniently situated only 45 minutes west of the Burgundy wine region. An enjoyable night in Beaune was a great stopover prior to arriving 'chez' the Poillot family for a delicious lunch.

Benoit runs a flock of 55 breeding ewes and had a good selection of twelve ram lambs from which to choose. We were able to view the breeding flock as well as assess both the sire and dam of our shortlisted rams. Decision made and an amiable dinner as well as an overnight stay with the Poillot family was very much appreciated and enjoyed.

Following Brexit the paperwork required for the importation of sheep from the EU has changed a little, but is still relatively straightforward. Benoit arranged all the vaccinations and veterinary checks in France whilst I had the most challenging aspect of importing a ram, arranging transport. Hopefully the effort will be worthwhile and we can look forward to some exceptional progeny in 2024.

Gordon Sparke



The Joys of Sheepkeeping - A Young Person's View

Thirteen-year-old sheep enthusiast Owen Thomas has been helping Southdown breeder Patrick Goldsworthy with his two flocks of Southdowns. Here Owen explains why he likes sheep, amongst other things!

"My first memories of sheep were when I was on holiday in Wales; we stayed in a cottage and on the other side of the wall in a field, there were sheep giving birth. That same week we went to see some friends on the Gower in South Wales, where I bottle fed some of their lambs. When I was 10, I started helping two farmers called Martyn and Helen, who I'd met at the Great Gransden show. I helped them for two years with their small flock of Suffolks and Poll Dorsets. I helped to worm them, weigh them, tag them and Crovect them. I also helped them at shearing and lambing time.

"Recently, over the past few months I have been helping Patrick with his Southdowns, weighing, vaccinating, worming, showing, scanning and lambing".

"Some jobs in sheep keeping that I would like to have a go at are shearing and vaccinating. However, I am a bit nervous about vaccinating. Jobs that I enjoy are lambing because there's always lots to do and it's nice to see lambs being born. I would like to gain more experience in showing and it would be nice to get a rosette one day".

"If I had my own sheep, then I would probably choose a rare or native breed as I think it's good to keep those different traits in different breeds going. I've enjoyed working with both the Southdowns and the Suffolks, but if I had to choose one breed it would be Derbyshire Gritstones. I like the look of them and they seem very hardy."

"Apart from sheep, I also enjoy sailing, rugby, gardening and sprinting with Bedford Athletics Club. I also help my Mum with her horse. "

Owen Thomas

Patrick Goldsworthy adds: "It's great having Owen to help me. He has a lovely gentle touch with the sheep, lots of interested questions and his running ability saves me having to get a sheep dog. I am not sure what he will make of a Gritstone if he can catch one!"



Owen in the young handler's competition at Great Gransden with one of Lesley Mead's very well-behaved ewe lambs

To welcome new members

D & R Barnard	Attleborough, Norfolk	Robin & Jo Ransome	Knighton, Powys
Louisa Campbell	Washington, West Sussex	R Sawyer & L J Beech	Rhiwderin, Newport
Robert Carter	Coedkernew, Newport	J & FF Stiles	Upland Arms,
Stephen Cobbald	Sudbury, Suffolk		Carmarthenshire
Grace Denning	Bridgwater, Somerset	Sarah Sweeting-Dawson	Shepley, Huddersfield
Matthew Fox	Grinstead, West Sussex	Sioned Thomas	Whitland, Carmarthenshire
Holmes Lane Livestock	Thetford, Norfolk	Hannah Tolley	Alfrick, Worcestershire
Rebecca Meredith	Hoarworthy, Herefordshire	Charlotte Tucker	Milford on Sea, Hampshire
Evie Paulson	Kedleston, Derbyshire		

Andersey Flock wins The Cresswell Crook for 2022 lamb crop

The Cresswell Crook, which is awarded for the most improved Recorded Flock*, has been won at last by Rob Beaumont's Oxfordshire based Andersey flock. The Andersey flock has frequently been the runner up, and this win represents years of hard work.

Having gone MV accredited in 2015, Rob closed the flock and since almost exclusively used his own high-performance rams while culling low index ewes and rams quite ruthlessly. Patrick Goldsworthy's Heritage flock was placed a close second.

In analysing the 2022 lamb crop Signet Breeding specialist Samuel Boon also reviewed the performance of rams (with at least 10 progeny) that have been used over the last 12 months. Sam highlighted Andersey Norman IIX (M58692) as the top performing ram lamb, while both Northumbria Taranis (M58143) as top shearling ram and Ridings Acrobat (M57263) as the top mature ram have repeated their performance from previous years.

*Only flocks (and rams) that are performance recorded, have had least 10 lambs ultra-sound scanned for muscle depth and have been recording for three or more years are eligible to enter.

Northumbria Flock's 2021 success



At last, The Cresswell Crook normally presented to last year's winner at the Southdown AGM was finally delivered to Gordon Sparke of the Northumbria flock this February. Here Gordon shows the crook to some of the rams that contributed to his success in 2021.

2023 DATES FOR THE DIARY

May 10th

NSA Sheep South West at Peterhayes Farm, Yarcombe, Honiton, EX14 9LW.
The Society stand will be present with sheep.

May 16th

NSA Welsh Sheep at Red House, Aberhafesp, Newtown, Powys
[https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk / forthcoming-events](https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/forthcoming-events).
The Southdown Sheep Society stand and sheep will be attending.

June 21st-22nd 2023

National Southdown Show at the Lincolnshire Show at Lincolnshire Showground, Grange-de-Lings, Lincoln, LN2 2NA.

Saturday August 5th

The Southdown Sheep Society Premier Breeders Show & Sale at Worcester Market
worcester@mccartneys.co.uk

September 8th – 9th

Traditional Native Breeds National Show and Sale at Melton Mowbray
info@meltonmowbraymarket.co.uk

November 18th - 19th

English Winter Fair at the Staffordshire County Showground, Stafford, ST18 0BD
For more information contact 01785 258060
Email: enquiries@staffscountyshowground.co.uk

November - South Eastern Prime Stock

Winter Fair at South of England Showground, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6TL
For more information contact Amie Dickson on 07816 866362
(NB date to be confirmed, 2022 date was November 24th)

November 27th - 28th

The Royal Welsh Winter Fair
For more information contact RWAS
On 01982 553683
Email: requests@rwas.co.uk

Please note: dates are correct at time of going to press.

The Paris International Agricultural Show

(Salon International de l'Agriculture)

It was a great honour, alongside Susan Harmer, to be invited by the French Association of Southdown Sheep to judge at the Paris International Agricultural Show 2023. A weekend trip to Paris therefore took place at the end of February with the 'pleasure' of sharing fights with a group of Scottish rugby supporters.

The Paris Show takes place over nine days at the Porte de Versailles and is spread across eight massive exhibition halls featuring livestock, crops, food and drink as well as agricultural trades and even cats and dogs. A surreal experience was seeing cows being led to the show ring through the packed exhibition hall and between the food stands. The overriding impression was how integral to French culture the agriculture sector is. There appears to be a real affinity for the industry with the general public.

The Southdown showing experience is very different to that in the UK. No indulgence in washing, trimming or even halter training here! While the ram lambs are sheared a month prior to the show, mature rams and ewes are presented 'au naturelle'. The sheep were all wearing a leather collar and on a rope lead. While the large number of ram lambs were penned in a group in the centre of the ring, the rest of the classes were tied up at stalls around the show ring. With the help of a couple of young farmers the ram lambs were all led out and tied to a rail in preliminary order prior to final consideration and decisions.

Although relatively few in number, French Southdown flocks are on the whole larger than our flocks and range from 40 to 200 ewes. The breeders are all very committed and the quality of their sheep is on a par with the best flocks in the UK.

A big thank you to our French Southdown brothers and sisters for both the kind invitation and the first-class hospitality!

Gordon Sparke



Paris Show Champion



Breeders Lining up their Ewe Lambs



Top three Ram Lambs



Judges and winning contributors.

Inbreeding vs line breeding

Many breeders will be familiar with the phrase ‘When it works it’s line breeding, when it doesn’t work it’s inbreeding’ which is often bandied about by those discussing the merits or otherwise of close matings within a breeding programme.

However, while this throw-away line is often nearer to the truth than many may wish to acknowledge, there are some parameters which are often used to define the two scenarios which may help breeders better understand the objective behind line breeding.

What is line breeding?

Line breeding is the carefully planned breeding of close relatives with the aim of locking in desirable traits, be they phenotypic or genotypic.

The desired outcome is the passing of outstanding genetics from one generation to another while, at the same time, minimising the transfer of undesirable traits.

One of the early pioneers of line breeding was Robert Bakewell when establishing his Dishley Leicesters and Longhorns. A man regarded as ahead of his time, Bakewell used line breeding to fix a type within his flocks and herds, ensuring uniformity at a time when most breeding was more luck than judgement.

How does it differ to inbreeding?

While line breeding is, in general terms, a form of inbreeding, it is generally accepted that the difference between line breeding and inbreeding is the degree of separation between the two animals to be bred together.

Inbreeding is generally thought of as a mating of father on daughter, son on mother or brother on sister.

Whereas, linebreeding works with more distantly related animals, such as first cousins or uncles and nieces. Half sibling matings (half-brother to half-sister) are also popular matings in line breeding programmes.

That being said, some breeders from previous generations would advocate mating son on mother as the best way of testing a potential line breeding programme. Arguing that, if that mating was successful, then all other matings would work too.

The screenshot shows the 'Grassroots Southdown Sheep' software interface. It displays a pedigree chart with several levels of breeding. The top level shows 'Challaybrook 18/00278' (MS7579) and 'Challaybrook 16/0035' (87968). Below these are 'Challaybrook 16/00278' (91144) and 'Challaybrook 16/0018' (87956). The chart also includes 'Sutton Valley 18/0019' (78119) and 'Rutledge 16/0078' (71618). The interface has a search bar, a 'Check Mate' button, and a 'Check Mate' dropdown menu. The background is white with red and yellow highlights for certain entries.

Why use line breeding?

Use of line breeding in modern breeding programmes is based around the same logic as it always has been, to maximise the impact of desirable genetics in a flock, herd or even across a breed.

It is also a useful way of maintaining genetic lines where there is a chance certain lines may become diluted and difficult to maintain due to other lines becoming more popular.

Ultimately, in any purebred population some level of inbreeding is largely inevitable due to the sharing of common ancestors in previous generations. This isn't an issue when breeders are aware of the levels of potential inbreeding in their planned matings.

Is any level of inbreeding acceptable?

As explained above, the likelihood is that some level of inbreeding will occur in any purebred population.

It is important to remember that high levels of inbreeding can result in 'inbreeding depression' which impacts on a number of fertility and productivity traits, so careful management of matings is important.

However, there are generally accepted levels at which breeders shouldn't be concerned and these are expressed through 'inbreeding coefficients'.

These 'inbreeding coefficients' are expressed as a percentage of the level of inbreeding within an animal's pedigree, with the table below explaining inbreeding coefficients for various matings.

Mating	Inbreeding coefficient
Father x daughter, mother x son or brother x sister	25%
Grandfather x granddaughter or grandmother x grandson	12.5%
Half-brother x half-sister	12.5%
Great-grandfather x great-granddaughter or great-grandmother x great-grandson	6.25%
Half-uncle x niece or half-aunt x nephew	6.25%
First cousins	6.25%
Half-first cousins	3.125%
Second cousins	1.56%

It is accepted that an inbreeding coefficient of 7% or below is an acceptable level of inbreeding in an animal and it should be remembered that mating two animals with high inbreeding coefficients does not necessarily result in progeny with increased inbreeding levels if the two animals come from different genetic lines within a breed.

How can breeders assess planned matings?

At a simple level the potential for inbreeding can be assessed by simply looking at the pedigrees of those animals you plan to breed together and looking for common ancestors. A five-generation pedigree will be sufficient to assess any immediate potential for inbreeding.

However, breeders can also make use of the Grassroots Check Mate system accessible as part of the Grassroots online registry (see page 28).

In addition, breeders can ask the Southdown office to perform a kinship report on potential matings, giving an extra level of information and guidance on the potential for inbreeding to occur.

Jonathan Long



Pedigree & Commercial Livestock Auctioneers

5 SUCCESSFUL LIVESTOCK MARKETS

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SOUTHDOWNS



CHAILEYBROOK 21/01030

Champion Royal Three Counties Show
Champion Burwarton Show
Reserve champion Royal Bath
and West Show
Reserve champion (to Beaujolais)
at Hanbury Show



First prize Southdowns and
reserve champion native lambs at
English Winter Fair 2022.
Sired by Beaujolais



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CHAILEYBROOK
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- www.chaileybrook.co.uk -

Get help with selecting a suitable ram



Breeding advice is available to all members –with Check Mate and Kinship Analysis

Breeders have tools at their disposal to help make decisions as to choice of rams and possible matings, using the tools offered by the Southdown Sheep Society and Grassroots.

Kinship Analysis

The Southdown Sheep Society office, via Grassroots, offers the facility to run a full kinship analysis to help members understand the results of potential matings and to highlight where animals might be too closely related to be used for breeding. The kinship report is a probability calculation, but it can be skewed when pedigrees are incomplete or of different lengths. There is also no absolute number above or below which it is safe to breed. The standard kinship report explains this and makes comparison with the mean inbreeding coefficient for the current live population. However, there is also the potential for this to be skewed when not all breeders record all deaths. Simply contact the office with details of the potential matings, ie the ram/s you might be considering and your flock females, and the office can run a kinship report to reflect the levels of inbreeding.

Check Mate

Check Mate is a simple system developed to help members

avoid mating closely related animals. It is simple to use and accessible to all members via Grassroots online. It can be found in the 'Manage my Animals' menu at top right of the screen. Simply select any male and one of your own females.

Click on calculate and you will be offered the four generation pedigree of the prospective offspring with common ancestors highlighted.

Common ancestors who first appear in the first or second generation are in orange, in the third generation are yellow and the fourth are green.

It is simple, all you need to do is click on the button and follow the instructions on the screen.

Check Mate is a quick and easy way to check potential matings.

However, there is a manual and video on the Grassroots website for how to use the whole system and further information on the Southdown Sheep Society website too.

Home.grassroots.co.uk

Click on For Farmers or click on Online Registry

STONERIDGE



SOUTHDOWNS

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e-mail: keith@stoneridgesouthdowns.co.uk

www.stoneridgesouthdowns.co.uk



RamCompare update – Southdown

Bridget Lloyd, RamCompare Project Coordinator

The national progeny test project, RamCompare is about to enter an exciting new phase meaning successful ram nomination applicants will benefit from integrated data from a wider range of sources.

The seventh year of data collection is almost complete with updated results due in May. Through this joint-levy funded project, more than 38,500 commercially reared lambs have contributed to the RamCompare dataset, sired by 401 different rams. This includes 13 Southdown rams used on the project to date with a total of 1120 progeny.

Rams from top 20% of Breed

RamCompare uses nominated performance-recorded rams from various terminal sire breeds on commercial farms across the UK. The project selects rams with Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) in the top 20% of the breed.

Southdown rams used in the project for last year's progeny tests are listed below. Data from their 300 progeny was collected last season and will be published in May.



Andersey 20/1113 was used in Leicestershire

Signet Flockbook Number	Sire Name	Terminal Sire EBV (% accuracy)	Farm	Live lambs born in 2022
883:170607	ANDERSEY	335 (95%)	Ian Robertson (Hants)	23
883:201064	ANDERSEY	230 (96%)	H L Nelles (Northumberland)	126
883:201113	ANDERSEY	352 (90%)	C R Sercombe (Leics)	39
968:1900562	WEBB ELLIS CROMPTON	128 (95%)	Ian Robertson (Hants)	24
968:1900568	WEBB ELLIS FLATMAN	327 (95%)	Ian Robertson (Hants)	35
968:2000654	WEBB ELLIS COWLING	349 (94%)	Mark Exelby (Yorks)	80

Some of these rams will also be used in this year's lamb crop with the addition of two new rams, both placed at Chawton Park Farm in Hampshire:

Andersey 883:2101248 with a 7.18 Scan Weight EBV and 2.55 Muscle Depth EBV and a Terminal Sire Index of 402 (72% accuracy)

Ridings 218:2108072 with a 7.48 Scan Weight EBV and 1.54 Muscle Depth EBV and a Terminal Sire index of 346 (72% accuracy)

We look forward to the new season lambs and following their growth over the coming months.

National Terminal Sire Evaluation

Data collected from the projects commercial progeny continues to strengthen the pedigree evaluation, enhancing sire prediction in terms of his genetic potential and accuracy value, enhancing breeding values generated through the National Terminal Sire Evaluation.

- RamCompare highlights traits which drive productivity and optimise flock profitability.
- Abattoir data has been used to create a series of new breeding values, which highlight the most profitable sires.

- The project has identified differences in progeny values worth £4-£6 per lamb – demonstrating the opportunity that exists to enhance flock profitability through careful ram selection.

The project has shown how commercial farmers can improve efficiency and reduce the cost of lamb production through the selection of superior rams, while providing breeders with important information to enhance their breeding policies and increase rates of genetic gain.

Summary

The commercial value of traits varies from farm to farm, but by selecting those Signet recorded sires with the right combination of EBVs, producers can identify the most profitable rams for their business.

- High Scan Weight EBV = Increased growth rates and reduced days to slaughter.
- High Scan Weight/Muscle Depth EBVs = Increased carcase weights.
- Superior Muscle Depth/Gigot Muscularity EBVs = Enhanced carcase conformation.
- Fat Depth EBV = Reliable indicator of the fat classification achieved by sire progeny.
- High genetic merit sires demonstrate increased progeny values worth around £5/lamb which equates to £1200-£1500/ram during their working lifetime.

Careful ram selection can enhance flock profitability, but few rams can do it all - some will excel for carcase conformation, others for speed of finish. Producers should evaluate their system and determine which sires have the potential to make the biggest financial impact.

For more information: [The RamCompare Project \(signetdata.com\)](http://TheRamCompareProject(signetdata.com))

Larger Leaner Leggier and Well Muscled

Breeding for the commercial market

Eblex Most Improved Flock: Inaugural Southdown Winner

Rams selected for AHDB RamCompare Project

Melton Show and Sale 2022: Ewe lamb: First in Class

Flock Competition 2022: Runner Up Class A

Flock Competition 2015: Winner Class C Frank Grantham Trophy



Webb Ellis Mallet M58772
Terminal Sire EBV in Top 10%
Maternal Index EBV Top 10%



Webb Ellis 17/368
Terminal Sire EBV in Top 25%
Maternal Ability EBV Top 25%



Webb Ellis 18/468
Terminal Sire EBV in Top 25%
Maternal Ability EBV Top 10%



Wonderful
Webb Ellis
SOUTH
Southdowns
Flock No. 968

Est. 2008

High EBV Signet recorded rams, semen and breeding stock available

Visitors and Enquiries Welcome

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07711 416312
patrick@goldsworthy-uk.com

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top Signet performance...

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SHOW RESULTS 2022: Heathfield – breed champion and supreme champion / South of England – breed champion / Norfolk – breed champion / Kent – interbreed group / Edenbridge – breed champion / Bucks County – breed champion and reserve interbreed group / South East Winter Fair – champion and reserve champion native carcass / Flock competition – best large flock, reserve champion overall and best intake of ewe lambs



Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer, Elizabeth Sargent, Edward Harmer
Offham Farm, Lewes BN7 3QE. Tel: 07980 624 196 / 07976 068 094

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