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Brian Behnke, Business Manager, St Jacobs

Brian has over 25 years of dairy cattle industry experience including an in-depth knowledge of dairy cattle genetics, sales and farm management. Brian has vast industry experiences and he and his family have won many breeding awards. He worked as a sire analyst before seizing an opportunity to use more of his skills, becoming the business manager for ABS St Jacobs in July 2016. An accomplished cow-man, Brian has had the opportunity to judge numerous dairy cattle shows both domestically and internationally, including IDW in Australia.

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COVER: Virtual Spectacular Champion cow, Warrabell Blade Lucky with owner Brett Feibig, Strathalbyn, SA. Photograph: Mandy Pacitti



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President's Message

Garry Carpenter
President, Holstein Australia



Looking forward to a brighter year

In preparing my first President's report I have been reflecting on the past 12 months.

This time last year our international borders were closing, we moved to a working from home model for office staff, our classifiers were pulled off the road and the busy show season was cancelled.

Show time

This year is very different, with the caveat that all is subject to change. Looking at the new 'What's On' calendar on the Holstein Australia website, from the Royal to regional and local shows, the season is looking busy.

On that note, remember the Semex-Holstein Australia All-Australian Photographic competition qualifying period has been extended until June 2022.

If you are organising a show or sub-branch event, please give Sarah Keens a call to include it on the calendar so we can promote and support your events. During my term as President it is my intention to support members at grass roots level, telling their stories, and this is a great start point.

Youth programs

After a year with more time on farm than usual, many Holstein Youth members will be heading for the WA Youth Cattle Handlers Camp and Far North Queensland Educational Dairy Camp in April. The postponed Manning Youth Camp is also on the cards for later this year.

Local and international dairy youth events were hit hard over the last year, and it may be some time before the Holstein UK Exchange and European Young Breeders school programs are back. Holstein Australia is currently assessing its youth programs to ensure they meet the needs of those planning a future in the industry. More news on this soon.

Have your say

If you haven't already done so, please take time to participate in our member survey.

It is our intention to make sure the services we offer are fit for purpose and bring value to your businesses. Taking ten minutes to complete the survey will help us do this, to the benefit of all members. Head over to the home page on our website to take part.

Online events and activities

With activities over the past few months including the Semex-Holstein Australia Virtual Holstein Spectacular, Verified Holsteins Online launch, All-Australian People's Choice, member photo competition, Virtual AGM and online Master Breeder announcements, the Holstein Australia comms team has been busy.

I would particularly like to thank everyone who took part in the Virtual Holstein Spectacular. Seeing cows from all over Australia, so many members represented, was fantastic. Congratulations to all entrants, our winners, judges, and of course the incomparable Brian Leslie.

We are all keen to return to in-person events, but there have been some great learnings for the Association and positive feedback to the approach forced on us by COVID-19.

A date has yet to be set for this year's AGM and a National Awards event. The plan is that if Australia maintains its great position with regard to COVID-19, we will get together to celebrate member achievements in person. I believe everyone is looking forward to this as much as I am.

Essential services

Since the resumption of classification the team has been flat out in every region, and are now embarking on return visits.

Unsurprisingly, we are ahead of forecast, with demand continuing to grow.

On registrations Simon Adams and the office team have been busy with registration catch-up, but the figures are down. This is one of my biggest challenges for the year. Bev and I know only too well the struggles of dairy industry paperwork, in particular catching up on registrations due to time factors, ill health or other reasons. Give Simon a call. He can help.

Another issue is being unsure of the easiest registration method for you. To help, Holstein Australia is producing a series of 'how to' videos, starting with how to register animals using Mistro Farm and Easy Dairy.

Genomics continues its consistent growth as more members adopt its use in their breeding programs.

Business as usual

As far as possible it has been business as usual for Holstein Australia in recent months, with a phased office return for our Melbourne-based team underway. From speaking with them, I know they are enjoying the interaction with colleagues again.

On behalf of all of us on-farm, thanks to the classification team for staying on the road in trying times and the office crew in Bundoora for keeping the ship on an even keel, maintaining a high level of service under challenging conditions. It's been a great team effort, and very much appreciated.

As we move through autumn I hope the season continues to be kind to you. Remember, if you've got a great idea for the Association or any issues to discuss, pick up the phone to a Board member, Rohan or any of the Holstein Australia team.

See you soon.

HJ

All Australian Photographic Competition to be run over two years

Holstein Australia's Breed Development and Conformation Committee (BDCC) has decided to extend the current 2020/21 year's All Australian Photographic Competition to run over a two-year period.

The Committee felt that in light of the impact COVID-19 has had on the local, regional and national show circuit with the cancellation of events and the uncertainty to come in 2021, it was best to continue the competition until 30 June 2022.

BDCC Chair Gino Pacitti says it is important not to just cancel the competition this year as it would penalise members who may have entries already underway.

"The Committee understands and appreciates the effort that

members go to when preparing their Holsteins for showing each year and with the uncertainty of 2021 it was logical to extend the competition over two years," Gino said.

He added that nothing really changes running the All Australian over an extended period.

The BDCC acknowledged there may be some duplication of animals across the age categories but felt that did not outweigh the downside by cancelling the competition altogether.

Animals are eligible to compete in the All Australian Photographic Competition if they have been exhibited at any Australian show adjudicated by a member of the National Judges Panel in any Holstein Australia region or sub-branch.

Online sale service off to a flying start

More than 650 animals have been listed on Holstein Australia's newest member service, Verified Holsteins Online, since it was launched in January.

The platform works in a number of ways. Members or their agents can create a listing, from individual animals to multiple lots.

Potential purchasers can view animal details such as BPI, ABVs, traits and full pedigree, and then contact either the agent or vendor.

Angela Varcoe from Vala Holsteins said: "We know it works as we've had someone out on farm to inspect some of the animals we've listed. It's certainly something we'll use into the future for small groups of animals."

Holstein Australia can also work directly with agents, listing registered animals in forthcoming sales. This provides an easy way for people interested in the sale to search on their phone or computer for animals that meet their specific criteria using the Verified Holsteins Online smart filters.

Redmaw Holsteins listed all 160 animals that featured in their February heifer sale on the site to provide an easy way for people to search genomics and pedigrees.

"The set-up was a piece of cake," Redmaw's Jared Ireland said. "We provided the herd book numbers and Holstein Australia created the listing. Couldn't have been easier and done in a moment."

"We know from the post-sale stats that almost 80 people searched our listing on the Verified site and more than 130 people who saw the Verified Holsteins Facebook posts went to either our Facebook page, Nutrien AG Echuca's page or AuctionsPlus."



To find out more about how the site works head to www.verifiedholsteins.online or phone Simon Adams on 0438 505 746.

ABOVE: Jared Ireland used Holstein Australia's Verified Holsteins service for his heifer sale in February.

Classification tour dates for 2021

Classification tours may change in relation to any pending COVID-19 border restrictions.

Late March: Central & Western, NSW, Murrumbidgee, NSW

April: Far South Coast, NSW; South Coast & Tablelands, NSW; Hunter/New England, NSW; Manning/Dorrigo, NSW; Far North Coast, NSW

May: Far North Queensland; South-West Riverina, NSW; Northern Victoria; North West Victoria; North East Victoria

June: WA; Tasmania; Western Districts; Gippsland

July: Gippsland; South & South-East South Australia

More information: John Crowther, email: jcrowther@holstein.com.au, phone: 0428 813 058.

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Online video competition a spectacular success

BY JON HOLLAND

The Semex-Holstein Australia Virtual Holstein Spectacular is a new initiative aimed at providing Holstein Australia members an opportunity to showcase their animals in a safe way during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Holstein community embraced the online format, with regional results reaching more than 103,000 people and more than 21,000 video views, likes, comments and shares.

Holstein Australia's Communication Manager, Adam Sawell, was really pleased with the result. "It was well in excess of what was predicted," he said. "We've had a lot of really positive feedback from members, Semex and others."

The National results were live streamed via the Holstein Australia Facebook page with members from around the world logging in to listen to the remarkable knowledge and enthusiasm of the National overjudge Brian Leslie as he announced his winners. The two national final video posts had more than 3,100 reaches, and in excess of 2,500 combined video views from Facebook and YouTube already,

"Out of something bad comes some good – and this has been a great thing for the



National overjudge Brian Leslie, Dairy Livestock Services.

industry, and a real privilege to judge," Brian said.

"Semex and Holstein Australia should be very proud. The calibre of animals that I judged is the strongest I've ever seen. I expected the quality to be outstanding – but this blew me away! Marvellous, marvellous cows and heifers all the way through the competition.

"It is an absolute credit to the people who owned them and bred them, and a

testament to the way the breed's going – they're getting better and better."

MATURE COW 6 YEARS +

The epitome of dairy strength

For Brian, the aged cow class is always a highlight. "These are the cows that have made their owners a lot of money over a lot of lactations," he said. "They have stood the test of time – yet still look incredibly good."

In a close placing, Brian selected the South Australian entry of Brett Fiebig, Warrabell Blade Lucky-TW EX-91-3E 2xM 1xF 1xP LIFE 1, as his Champion mature cow, describing the 12-year-old as the 'epitome of dairy strength'.

"She's just a flat-out dairy cow. She's got amazing width, she's wide pinned, she's flat thighed, she's deep ribbed, she's long necked – the wedgeness of this cow really excites me!" he said.

Brian also noted the tremendous udder quality, strength of attachments and definition of ligament of his Champion.

"The more I looked at her the more she enthused me," he said. "She is just a mighty, mighty dairy cow."

At the time of the announcements, Brett was hard at work, milking late, unaware of his cow's success.

"I suddenly got all these messages on my phone," he said. "I couldn't believe it! I was just grateful to have something competing at that level. It was such an honour to have my cow among those other cows."

Four years ago, after sharefarming on his parent's farm (Master Breeders, David and Trudy Fiebig, Warramont Holsteins), Brett went out on his own, leasing 100 hectares at Strathalbyn, around 60 km south east of Adelaide on South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula. He took just 20 milkers with him to start his new venture, gradually adding more registered Holsteins to his herd to now milk 150 cows.

Blade Lucky was one of his original 20. "She's always been one of my favourites.



Semex Virtual Spectacular Mature-aged Champion - Warrabell Blade Lucky-TW EX-91-3E 2xM 1xF 1xP LIFE 1, exhibited by Brett Fiebig, Warrabell Holsteins, SA.

She's a super balanced, no fuss cow, and really good production cow – she's a real pleasure to work with" he said.

Scored EX-95 for dairy strength and EX-92 for mammary, Lucky completed a top record as a 6-year-old of 13,292 litres, 3.0% 400 kg protein, 3.6% 474 kg fat with a PI 115, with her lifetime record-to-date exceeding 80,000litres.

As her name suggests, she descends from the renowned 'Lucky' family of Master Breeders, Glomar Holsteins, via the Comestar Lartist daughter, Anstein Lartist Luckyleesa VG89 6*, purchased at the Anstein and Kavyn Holsteins Dispersal Sale in 2004.

Luckyleesa produced three daughters, Warrabell Bolton Leesa VG89 LIFE1, and a pair of Excellent twins, Blade Lucky and her twin sister Warrabell Blade Leesa-TW EX-92-3E STP(Silver) 2* 3xM LIFE 3 who remained with Brett's parents at Mt Gambier.

Brett is a passionate showman but has taken a break over recent years to concentrate on his new business. His last big success was at the 50th anniversary Mt Gambier Fair in 2015 when Blade Lucky was named Champion Cow.

"I used to really enjoy the shows, but since taking on my own farm, I haven't had the time," he said. "That's why competitions like this are so great. It gives me an opportunity to still compete."

Lucky's eldest daughter, Warrabell Lumi Lucky EX-91-1E, scored Excellent in January 2021 with an EX-93 mammary, and is due again in March to sexed Maverick Crush. But it is Blade Lucky's 2-year-old daughter Warrabell Upright Lucky that has Brett most excited. "She's a great young cow with a lot of potential," he said.

Blade Lucky provided two heifer calves for Brett in 2020, a natural heifer by the high BPI udder specialist, Carenda Pemberton and an ET heifer by the Semex showstopper Oh-River-Syc Crushabull. Currently finishing her 7th lactation, Lucky is due again in the spring to sexed Microchip (Hindlee Picola Goldchipdream 1418). "It certainly makes life a lot easier when they get in-calf like that," Brett said.

The Reserve Mature Cow went to the Gippsland finalist, Yurunga Sid Mandy EX-92-2E 1xEP 1xF, owned in partnership with Avonlea Holsteins and Yurunga Farms. Though Brian admired the style, capacity and youthfulness of his Reserve, Mandy could not match Lucky's overall balance, correctness and angularity of front end.

"What a cow in form!" Brian said of his runner-up. "She's a tremendously capacious cow with a capacious, yet snug udder – a cow that is youthful, yet a cow that looks like a lot of milk."

Mandy used her overall width and power to place over the Southern NSW finalist, Galba Axe Dutchlady 2nd EX-92-1E, entered

by Rocky Allen, Galba Holsteins, Cobargo.

Results: 6 year old and over

Winner: WARRABELL BLADE LUCKY EX-91-3E

Owner: Brett M Fiebig, Warrabell Holsteins

Sub-branch: Fleurieu & Central SA

Region: South Australia

2nd: YURUNGA SID MANDY EX-92-2E

Owner: Gardiner P/L HV & VJ & JH

Sub-branch: West Gippsland

Region: Gippsland

3rd: GALBA AXE DUTCHLADY 2ND EX-92-1E

Owner: AJ Allen, Galba Holsteins

Sub-branch: Far South Coast NSW

Region: Southern NSW

5-YEAR-OLD

A Champion from the west

For members outside of Australia's main dairying regions, participation in nationally recognised competitions is difficult, with most of major events hosted along the country's south eastern coast. The Virtual Holstein Spectacular has provided a unique opportunity for breeders across the country to compete at a National level, with five different State finalists featured in the winners and placegetters.

Among them was the Western Australian entry of two-time Master Breeders Ray and Donna Kitchen, with Carenda Mainevent Vanda EX-91-1E 1xM crowned Champion in the 5-year-old class.

"It can be very difficult in WA to compete in conformation competitions," Ray said. "This style of competition is a lot easier than showing, and it was good to see our animals compete against other cows from all over Australia.

"We've been trying for a long time to breed for an all-round type of cow – something with a good level of production, good health traits and with good conformation. We've found these are the cows that produce and last longer, and it's nice to see this type of cow being recognised."

Rays describes Vanda as 'just a herd cow', and not one that you would really notice. "But conformation wise, she hasn't got a lot of faults," he said.

Scored EX-92 for Mammary and EX-90 Dairy Strength, Vanda took out the 4-year-old class for Western Australia in



Semex Virtual Spectacular 5-year-old Champion - Carenda Mainevent Vanda EX-91-1E 1xM, exhibited by Ray and Donna Kitchen, Carenda Holsteins, Boyanup, WA.

the Semex On Farm Challenge in 2019. Boasting a BPI(g)+367, she completed a second lactation record of 11,421 litres, 3.2% 361kg protein, 3.6% 411kg fat, PI 111.

A 7th generation VG or EX from Carenda's mighty V family, Vanda's dam is the 100,000 litre lifetime producer, Carenda Goldwyn Vonda-ET VG86 1xEP 3xM 3xF 3xP LIFE 4, backed by the mighty star brood cows Carenda Harrier Vogue EX-90-2E 20* 1xEP 3xM 2xF 3xP LIFE 2 and Carenda Ella Vanish EX-4E STP 25* 4xM 4xF 3xP LIFE 4. Recognised for their remarkable dairy strength, high components and quality udders, the V family has provided many bulls to AI over the years, including Vanda's two sons, Carenda Sondalo (BPI+464) and Carenda Tirano-PC (BPI+444), both popular young sires at Genetics Australia.

Ray had two heifer calves born from last year Vanda, an ET daughter by Westcoast Redcarpet, and a natural heifer calf by the young French sire, Nacash. "They're a really nice pair and very similar," Ray said. "I'm really looking forward to getting their genomic test results back."

Over recent years, introducing the polled gene into their herd has been a priority for the Kitchens, with Vanda recently bred to Genetics Australia's high-ranking polled sire Vogue Nipit PP.

Despite the strength of the competition, Brian found his Champion 5-year-old an easy choice. "After looking at the videos, I came to the conclusion that she might have been the clearest winner of every class," he said. "Wow, she is just an absolutely unbelievable cow!"

Describing Vanda's EX-92 mammary as 'unreal', Brian acknowledged Vanda's height and width or her rear udder, praising the snugness of her mammary system and her 'faultless teat placement'.

Brian also noted her ideal balance of strength and dairyness, praising the massive spring to her rib, and her width and length of frame. "Cows with this strength, with this dairyness, and such an outstanding udder, are what we should aim for – this is one of the greatest cows I've ever looked at on video!"

It was Vanda's tremendous capacity and width, depth of frame and openness of frame that gave her the advantage over the Reserve cow, Glomar McCutchen Annecy 5506 EX-90-1E.

Exhibited by Master Breeders, the Johnston family of Glomar Holsteins, Gippsland Victoria, Annecy has been a multiple Royal Melbourne Show Champion, an All Australian, an IDW class winner and multiple OFC winner.

She impressed Brian with her exceptional mammary system and clean dairy frame. "a cow just full of dairyness," he said.

"She is just super sharp, she's tall, she's upstanding, she's long bodied – and an unbelievable udder. So snug, and wide and full of milk."

Annecy was given an advantage in her teat shape and size over the Honourable Mention 5-year-old, the 2019 Tasmanian OFC Champion Cow, Fairvale Goldchip Melody EX-92-1E 1xM 1xP 1xF, entered by Master Breeders Ross and Leanne Dobson, Bracknell, Tasmania.

"Holstein Australia should be really proud of these cows – they are World Class!" Brian said.

Results Table: 5 Year Olds

Winner: CARENDA MAINEVENT VANDA EX-90-1E

Owner: The Kitchen family, Kitchen Farms
Sub-branch: Southern WA
Region: Western Australia

2nd: GLOMAR MCCUTCHEN ANNECY 5506 EX-90-1E

Owner: R Johnston, Glomar Holsteins
Sub-branch: East Gippsland
Region: Gippsland

3rd: FAIRVALE GOLDCHIP MELODY 797 EX-92-1E

Owner: Fairvale Holsteins
Sub-branch: Tasmania
Region: Tasmania

4-YEAR-OLD

Pretty on the eye yet extremely productive

It was the consistency and quality of the udders that especially excited Brian while judging the 4-year-old class. "It's a credit to the breeders and what they've been able to do with the breed," he said.

"These 4-year-olds have marvellous udders that are snug and right up in them – and yet they are so wide, and with so much capacity. They're cows that are 'pretty on the eye', but they're also extremely productive."

It was her exceptional mammary system and overall capacity and dairy strength that placed the Gippsland finalist of Master Breeders John and Cherie Gardiner, Avonlea Sid Dream-ET VG85 1xF, at the top of the class.

"The winner of this class is such a balanced cow," Brian said. "She's such a capacious cow. She is a cow that has enormous width to her and enormous length to her. Just a beautiful, beautiful balance of strength and dairyness."

Sid Dream's dam, Murribrook Goldwyn Dream-ET VG89 STP 2* 3xEP, came to Avonlea from Master Breeder Murray



Semex Virtual Spectacular 4-year-old Champion – Avonlea Sid Dream-ET VG85 1xF, exhibited by John and Cherie Gardiner, Avonlea Holsteins, Cardinia, Victoria.

Sowter as a 10-month-old-calf. John was looking for a pedigree that traced back to Murray's great star brood cow Bedales Linmack Dotty VG89 STP 11* 3xM 2xF 2xP, when he came across the Braedale Goldwyn daughter from Murribrook Storm Dotty EX-90-1E 9* 2xM 3xF 1xP LIFE 2.

Goldwyn Dream proved to be an outstanding brood cow, with her eldest daughter, Avonlea Jasper Dream-ET EX-91-2E 1xEP 1xM 1xF winning the 5-year-old West Gippsland OFC in 2016, while another daughter, Avonlea Conclusion Dream VG85, was 2nd as a Senior 2-year-old at the 2019 NHD Victorian Winter Fair, and named All Australian Senior 2-Year-Old for 2020.

"The Goldwyn bred incredibly well for us," John said. "Her Sid is a great herd cow with a beautiful nature to her. She's developed really nicely on this last calf, and would have been in our Dairy Week team for this year had it been able to go ahead."

Though she has not produced a heifer calf herself, Sid Dream recently provided three ET heifers by Woodcrest King Doc. The Gardiners have recently bred her to the world no.1 GTPI bull, Peak Jagger, with the hope of selling her in their Avonlea Dispersal in September, heavy pregnant and ready to calve in preparation for IDW 2022.

Dream's overall capacity, depth of fore rib and length of frame gave her the advantage over the Reserve cow the North Victorian finalist, Clydevale Solomon Sunset VG85, entered by Master Breeders the Dee family of Macorna. "My second placed cow has a near faultless udder," Brian said. "It's an udder that is so snug and full of quality."

Sunset is a daughter of the 2017 Victorian Winter Fair Champion and 2019 All Australian, Hullabaloo Bolton Sundae 7282-ET EX-93-2E 1xM 1xP. She used her superior mammary system, and overall cleanliness and dairy quality to place ahead of the Western Australian finalist, Carenda Megasire Fundae VG87.

Results: 4 Year Olds

Winner: AVONLEA SID DREAM VG85

Owner: JH & CJ Gardiner, Avonlea Holsteins

Sub-branch: West Gippsland

Region: Gippsland

2nd: CLYDEVALE SOLOMON SUNSET VG85

Owner: The Dee family, Clydevale Holsteins

Sub-branch: North-Western Victoria

Region: Northern Victoria

3rd: CARENDA MEGASIRE FUNDÆ VG87

Owner: The Kitchen family, Kitchen Farms

Sub-branch: Southern WA

Region: Western Australia

3-YEAR-OLD

Firing on all fours

Brian was impressed by the youthful development and obvious production potential of the 3-year-old class. "This was a tremendous class," he said. "These young cows are on their second calf now, and really firing on all fours. Just really productive cows."

The production potential of the Western District finalist, Linsand Dominic Corona VG87 was obvious to Brian when naming her his 3-year-old Champion. "She is just wringing wet. She is as dairy as you'd ever get," he said. "She excels in dairy character, in strength and width and style. I really don't know what more you would want in a 3-year-old – she is just that good!"

Corona had the style, the length of body, and overall balance that Brian was looking for, but what really struck him was Corona's rear udder width, texture, and strength of attachments. "It's a tremendously wide udder with ideal teat size and shape," he said. "It's an amazingly snug udder and so full of milk. She is an exciting young cow – one of the finest young 3-year-olds that I've seen on video."

Corona's success was yet another title

for the great Connie family. Bred by Will and Lisa McKay, Dominic Corona is a great-grand-daughter of the 2009 IDW Champion Avonlea Robthom Connie EX-93-3E 16* 1xEP 1xM 1xF 1xP. The McKays milk 200 cows on their farm at Irrewillipe, south-west of Colac in Victoria's Western District. The Connies are now their most dominant bloodline, with Lisa estimating nearly a quarter of their herd traces back to the great Robthom Connie.

"The Connies are not extreme cows, but really good herd cows and fertile cows," Lisa said. "They are always breeding and getting in-calf, they flush really well and they last a long time - and they can really milk!"

Robthom Connie produced three Excellent daughters, including Linsand Dundee Corona-ET EX-90-1E 1xM, the grand dam of Dominic Corona, and Linsand Aspen Cinnamon EX-92-2E 2* 1xEP 1xM 2xF 1xP LIFE 1, the dam of the 2020 IDW Reserve Champion, and All Australian, Avonlea-YF Windbrook Cinnamon-ET EX-91-1E 2* 1xM 1xP 1xF.

"Corona is typical of all our Connies," Lisa said. "She's super dairy with an udder that's out of this world - and she milks like a train!"

Lisa has been a long-time supporter of the OFC, and really wanted to support Semex and Holstein Australia in this new competition. "We weren't sure at first, but Will did the video and it ended up being not as hard as we thought it might be."

Corona was the McKays only entry in the Virtual Holstein Spectacular this year, but for Lisa she was the 'in form' cow at the time, and an easy choice.



Semex Virtual Spectacular 3-year-old Champion – Linsand Dominic Corona VG87, exhibited by Will and Lisa McKay, Linsand Holsteins, Irrewillipe, Victoria.

Corona is currently milking on her second lactation after producing a heifer by Stantons High Octane. Lisa has decided to give Corona an extended lactation this year to give her extra time to develop. Originally a flush program was not on their radar – “but it might be now!” Lisa laughed.

It was Corona’s cleanliness and balance through her front end, and her exceptional rear udder width that placed her ahead of the Northern Victorian finalist, Gorbros Solobrad Tiffany VG88. Exhibited by Master Breeders the Gordon family, Solobrad Tiffany is backed by three generations Excellent to the 2019 Holstein Australia Cow of the Year, Orchard Vale Informer Tiffany EX-91-1E 21* 1xEP.

“I just really love this young cow,” Brian said of his Reserve 3-year-old. “I love the spring in her fore rib, the power in her front end, the length of her body and the snugness of her udder. What a great young cow with enormous potential.”

It was her strength of front end, and strength of centre ligament that placed Tiffany ahead to the Honourable Mention, the Gardiner family’s entry Avonlea Kingboy Alana-ET VG85.

Results: 3 Year Olds

Winner: LINSAND DOMINIC CORONA VG87

Owner: Linsand Farms
Sub-branch: Western District, Victoria
Region: Western Districts

2nd: GORBROS SOLOBRAD TIFFANY VG88

Owner: RK & JR Gordon, Gorbros Holsteins
Sub-branch: North-Western Victoria
Region: Northern Victoria

3rd: AVONLEA KINGBOY ALANA VG85

Owner: JH & CJ Gardiner, Avonlea Holsteins
Sub-branch: West Gippsland
Region: Gippsland

2-YEAR-OLD

Everything we are looking for

It was another victory for Gippsland Master Breeders, John and Cherie Gardiner, with their entry Avonlea Crush Loyal winning the 2-year-old Championship. John discovered Loyal’s dam at Darren Crawford’s Horizon Holsteins Dispersal in 2018. He was especially drawn to her pedigree, being a descendant of the three-time Royal Winter Fair Champion,



Semex Virtual Spectacular 2-year-old Champion – Avonlea Crush Loyal, exhibited by John and Cherie Gardiner, Avonlea Holsteins, Cardinia, Victoria.

Acme Star Lily EX-94-2E. John remembers seeing Lily in 1999 when she was Reserve at Madison. “In her time, she was one of the greatest framed cows I’d ever seen.”

Horizon Sid Loyal 2-ET VG85 arrived at Avonlea heavily pregnant to Maverick Crush, resulting in Avonlea’s latest Champion. Crush Loyal’s appeal was obvious from the beginning. “Back in the spring, Crush Loyal was a stand-out,” John said. “She would catch your eye whenever you walked through the herd, and I think she would have been our 2-year-old entry for IDW this year.” The Gardiners have now re-bred Loyal to Peak Jagger, to calve in preparation for IDW 2022.

Brian found the 2-year-old class to be the strongest of the competition. “From the 18 video finalists that I saw, these 2-year-olds have everything we are looking for in this industry,” he said.

For his Champion, Brian found Loyal to be a heifer that was very hard to fault. “She is an extremely good heifer, and I think we will hear much more of her in the future,” he said. “I love the flat bone on this heifer, the openness she has, the squareness of front, and that beautiful udder.”

Brian gave his Champion the advantage for her snugness of fore attachment, the shallowness of her udder, and her slightly more correct rump setting that the Reserve heifer, Brett Fiebig’s Warraball Upright Lucky. It was the second cow of

Brett’s to make the finals, with Upright Lucky’s dam, Warrabell Blade Lucky-TW EX-91 winning the mature cow class.

Brian admired the Reserve heifer’s capacity, her spring to her fore rib and width through her front end. “She is ultra-dairy yet having all the power that I like in young cows,” Brian said. “She looks like a tonne of milk to me – yet so youthful.”

Lucky used her width and power to place over the Honourable Mention heifer, Jamala Unix Carmel GP83, the Western District entry of Greg and Kim Wilson, Southern Oak Holsteins. “This is a beautiful heifer that wares a terrific udder and has such balance of dairyness and width, this places her above the balance of this incredible class.” Brian said.

Results: 2 Year Old

Winner: AVONLEA CRUSH LOYAL

Owner: JH & CJ Gardiner, Avonlea Holsteins
Sub-branch: West Gippsland
Region: Gippsland

2nd: WARRABELL UPRIGHT LUCKY-OC

Owner: Brett M Fiebig, Warrabell Holsteins
Sub-branch: Fleurieu & Central SA
Region: South Australia

3rd: JAMALA UNIX CARMEL GP83

Owner: Oakhampton Dairies
Sub-branch: Western District, Victoria
Region: Western Districts

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1. Vedovatto *et al* (2020), Trop Anim Health Prod, 52(2), 881-886 2. Bittar *et al* (2020), Vet Immunol Immunopathol, 110055 3. Mundell *et al* (2012), PAS, 28:82-88 ©Multimin is a registered trademark of Virbac.

Holstein Australia's road map to 2025

This is part 2 of a series explaining the intent of the Strategic Business Plan. Find part 1 in the Summer 2020 issue.

Breed development is at the core of Holstein Australia's mission statement, with the Breed Development and Conformation Committee (BDCC) at the forefront in the decision making process. The BDCC has the responsibility for setting the direction for the present and future production and functional characteristics of the Holstein breed in Australia, and to implement policies to maintain the breed's integrity.

Holstein Australia is also expected to take a leading role in bringing together industry partners, and delivering education and communication strategies to benefit both members and the broader community.

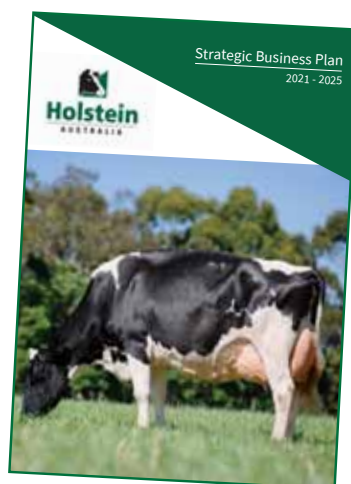
Gino Pacitti is the recently elected Chairperson of the BDCC. Gino and his wife Mandy and son Andrew, manage their Misty Brae Holsteins herd, milking 350 cows on South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula. Since taking on the BDCC Chair role, Gino has relished the opportunity to expand his knowledge of the industry and its challenges.

"Until now I have left a lot of the breeding decisions on our farm to family members and consultants," Gino said. "Being part of the BDCC, I am getting a better understanding of the breeding side of the business, while also allowing me to contribute and relate my personal point of view as a dairy farmer. There is so much information out there – and I am always learning."

Knowledge is power

Holstein breeders have long been at the forefront of advancements in breeding techniques. They have embraced new technologies, from the implementation of artificial insemination and embryo transfer through to sexed semen, IVF and genomic markers.

However, the sudden escalation and pace of change, genetic corporatisation and marketing, and the globalisation of data sharing sees many farmers inundated with information. While some thrive on the ease and accessibility of more



data, others struggle to filter important information from the mass, the facts from the marketing spin, the evidence from the anecdotal.

Holstein Australia is committed to better supporting its members in their decision making, education, communication, and implementing simple reporting systems and this is reflected in HA's Strategic Business Plan.

As BDCC Chairperson, Gino says he is confident in the HA membership and their

Holstein Australia mission statement - 'To ensure the integrity and continual development of the Holstein breed, promoting the benefits of the breed through the provision of high quality, independent and valued information services to the dairy industry.'

knowledge-base surrounding genetics and breeding values. But as a dairy farmer, he understands the need for simplified and standardise delivery methods across the industry to ensure members receive the very best advice.

"Holstein Australia is always evolving, and it's important we keep up with the rapid advances in technology and maintain a strong knowledge base among our members," he said. "As dairy farmers, we are constantly striving to maximise production, performance and profitability – both in business and in our breeding programs. If breeders have confidence in their information, and can identify the genetic potential within their herd,

Holstein Australia's core aspirations 2021-2025

Breed Development

To lead the dairy industry in the breeding of adaptable, productive and profitable Holstein cows.

Community

Holstein Australia to lead the development of a strong sense of community that benefits every member and the wider industry.

Export of Australian Holstein Genetics

Export to remain a consistent and diversified income stream for Holstein Australia members and the Association.

Finance

Holstein Australia to be financially sustainable through the provision of core services.

Governance

Holstein Australia's governance structure and processes encourage and empower members to contribute to the current and future direction of the Association.

Services

Holstein Australia is a provider of essential services and information that creates benefit and value for members and the wider dairy industry.

Youth and Future Leaders

Holstein Australia has a defined pathway focused on developing skills and creating leadership opportunities that equip young people for a dairy industry career..

they can tailor their breeding program to achieve their specific breeding goals and maximise profitability."

"Breeding for better cows is an important tool in our arsenal towards increased profitability. Therefore, we must ensure the latest information is always readily available and encourage our members to seek it."

Reliability and delivery

Gino says Holstein Australia plays an important role as an impartial conduit between farmers, the wider industry and the research bodies. Its close relationship with DataGene and other industry organisations has seen, an evolution in data collection, calculations, reliability and expression.

Holstein Australia's involvement with the Ginfo project has contributed to collecting genomic and real-life data from more than 30,000 cows in 100 herds across Australia. This forms a reference population for improving the reliability of genomic Australian Breeding Values (ABVs) and enabling genomic ABVs to be calculated for traits that are difficult to measure such as health and heat tolerance.

Many Holstein Australia members contribute to Ginfo, including Rick and

Breed Development

Aspiration

To lead the dairy industry in the breeding of adaptable, productive and profitable Holstein cows.

Objectives

- Develop Holstein Australia's position as a trusted industry contributor to ensure that developments in genetic improvement are beneficial to breeders, the breed and industry as a whole.
- Australian Holsteins are recognised and respected as a versatile breed that performs well with all management systems.
- The genetic merit of the Holstein breed coupled with the ability and benefits of being able to draw on the largest global dairy gene pool is understood by Australian dairy farmers.
- Australian Holstein breeders are supported to make independent decisions that optimise their breeding programs.

Tina Wishart of Rowlands Park Holsteins. Their family-run business includes their three daughters, Emmalea, Kaitlyn and April, milking 270 registered Holsteins, south west of Cohuna in North West Victoria. The family are passionate about their cows, with the girls also keen cattle fitters at many major shows and sales.

"It has been good being part of the Ginfo project," Tina said. "Having a better understanding of breeding values and

generic merit is highly important to our business, and it made us really look at our cows and our breeding program."

For Tina, the reliability of the information given to farmers is crucial. She sees the sudden and unexpected changes in sire and cow rankings impacting not only their decision making but can lead to a reduction in confidence in the data and the information that is presented.

"The reliability and accuracy of the data



Rick and Tina Wishart and their Rowlands Park crew at IDW 2020.

is so important, and I think the reliability, and a better understanding of what the reliability means needs to be highlighted more."

When it comes to breeding values, Tina would also like to see a more consistent method of delivery, and more consistent industry standards to make genetic selections easier. She admits the amount of data they receive can sometimes be overwhelming and can find it difficult wading through all the data to find the information she needs.

"We regularly receive spreadsheets with 20 to 30 columns of data, and they're full of abbreviations, acronyms and sub-headings. It can be hard to determine what's most important. I want something that's simple, with priorities highlighted, and is standard across the industry."

Tina has seen the advantages of a face-to-face approach when it comes to information sharing and education. With three young daughters, Tina has found the support from Holstein Australia members, along with events and activities such as youth days, camps, competitions, and International Dairy Week, have been vital in her family's knowledge and skill development.

"Our girls have gained a lot from participating in these sorts of events," Tina said. "We've been lucky to have so many sub-branch members so willing to support them. And they have gained a lot of experience through the youth events."

Tina also identifies Holstein Australia classifiers as a vital source of education and information. "The classifiers are usually very open in their conversations when they are on farm. We have always found them willing to share their knowledge – particularly with younger people. Whenever our girls are helping on class day, the classifiers were always super keen to help them and answer their questions and explain the scores."

Evidence based

NSW members Justin and Libby Walsh believe a more consistent approach to data sharing and a more evidence-based approach to data delivery should be seen as priorities for helping farmers in their decision making.

"We need to establish more evidence-based links between genetics and increased profits on farm," Justin said.



Justin & Libby Walsh with their daughter Ella – Waljasper Holsteins NSW.

"Genetics can be a key profit driver on farm, and we need to emphasise the short term and long term profits that can be driven by gains through genetics."

Justin and Libby lease their family farm from Justin's parents Col and Sue, milking 280 cows under the Waljasper prefix, on the Southcoast of NSW. For the last few years, the Walshes have been participants in Dairy Australia's Focus Farm project, supported by Dairy NSW. The program involves establishing a support group of farmers and agribusiness professionals, using intensive information sharing and mentoring to assist members achieve their business goals.

Justin is also a member of Australia's National Judges Panel, and a regular participant and contributor to Holstein Australia events and activities which helps him keep up-to-date with the latest in breeding and industry trends and technologies.

"I'm pretty confident in my knowledge of breeding values and the benefits – but that's because I have a personal interest in it – I enjoy breeding cows," he said, "but we can't rely on people 'just being interested'. We need to demonstrate its value and

relevance to those who are not interested."

Justin sees the Holstein breed as an industry leader when it comes to genetics, in particular its ability to pivot according to changes in industry trends and farmer demands.

"The Holstein has a tremendous global gene pool to draw from, and genomics has really levelled the playing field and opened us up to the rest of the world," he said, "but with all this data, it's important for Holstein Australia to remain an impartial source of information – it's very difficult to get impartial advice from anyone these days."

"We need to use our independence to develop strong partnerships with other industry bodies like Dairy Australia and DataGene, and share information and resources. Then the challenge is having a real-life evidence driven approach to data delivery. But it also needs to be simple and streamlined – no one falls in love with a spreadsheet."

HJ

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| USDA 12/20 | TPI: 2751 | | | NMS: 517 | | |
|------------------|--------------|----|---|----------|---|------|
| No. Dtrs: G | No. Herds: G | | | 80%Rel | | |
| Linear | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | |
| Type | | | | | | 2.64 |
| Udder Comp | | | | | | 2.48 |
| Feet & Legs Comp | | | | | | 1.35 |
| Stature | | | | | | 2.24 |
| Strength | | | | | | 1.23 |
| Dairy Form | | | | | | 1.73 |
| Body Depth | | | | | | 0.10 |
| Rump Angle | | | | | | 2.93 |
| Thurl Width | | | | | | 0.31 |
| Legs Side View | | | | | | 1.50 |
| Legs Rear View | | | | | | 1.87 |
| Foot Angle | | | | | | 2.95 |
| Fore Udder Att | | | | | | 3.05 |
| Rear Udder Att H | | | | | | 3.62 |
| Rear Udder Att W | | | | | | 2.28 |
| Udder Cleft | | | | | | 2.19 |
| Udder Depth | | | | | | 2.01 |
| Front Teat Place | | | | | | 2.25 |
| Rear Teat Place | | | | | | 0.22 |
| Teat Length | | | | | | 0.71 |

| TPI | Milk | Pro | Fat | CE | DPR | Type | Udders |
|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
| 2751 | 639 | 42 | 55 | 1.5 | 0.7 | 2.64 | 2.48 |

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Genomic data helps decisions at Kolora

Long before John Pekin (Kinlora Holsteins) started managing his family dairy farm, he knew milking “good” cows was a choice.

At the time, he worked in the herd improvement industry and said it was clear cut which farmers were getting the most out of their genetics.

“The farmers who put the effort into breeding better cows were getting better results,” he said.

“From that I was able to see the benefits of building a good herd genetically. The next step was increasing the amount of information about the herd.”

So, it’s no surprise that John and his wife Kirsten embraced genomic testing at their Kolora dairy farm to gather as much data as possible about their Holsteins.

Examining the genomic results of their heifers and cows has provided reams of information about their genetic merit for a variety of traits.

Genomics also helps them select which animals in their 330-cow milking herd to breed their replacements and those to join to beef.

Ranked in the top 2% of Australia’s 1,387 milk recording Holstein herds for Balanced Performance Index (BPI), the Pekins’ Genetic Progress Report shows their rapid genetic gain.

The BPI is DataGene’s economic index that reflects important business drivers on Australian dairy farms: production, health, fertility and longevity.

The BPI of the Pekins’ heifers increased almost 150% during the past four years.

For example, the herd’s August 2020



John believes improvements in health and fertility traits can help reduce costs.

Genetic Progress Report showed the BPI of the cows born in 2016 was an average of 100, while those born in 2020 had an average BPI of nearly 250.

The breeding decisions driving this gain were underpinned by genomic data.

“Breeding and feeding are the two things you can control,” John said. “Breeding more so; it is one of the few things on a dairy farm that you have absolute control over. A lot of things you don’t have any control over, like feed to a certain extent, if it doesn’t rain. You fully control what you join that cow to and what goals you have in breeding cows.”

The Pekins started using genomics seven years ago, testing heifers initially, before moving on to include the entire herd over the coming years.

Their average BPI, across the 1304 animals they have recorded during the past 11 years, is 119.

Genomics has added an extra tool to their breeding program and has helped inform decisions.

“I use genomics to pick out the ones I am going to sell and export,” John said.

Last year, John sold heifers that had a BPI of 150 or less.

He has also started to notice patterns in the genomic results throughout different generations.

“Generally, if a cow has a low BPI, her daughter will also be low, but that is not always the case,” he said. “You can get the occasional flyer and that is one of the main reasons to genomic test – to capture these heifers that are out of the ordinary, either up or down.”

The Pekins use their genomic data as part of a corrective mating program.

Having genomic data available for their cows and heifers as well as bulls, ensures the best breeding match for each animal.

Using genomics to identify the lowest BPI animals, means they are only breeding from the top portion of their herd.

John said this delivered more breeding consistency with less “undesirable” traits which need correction with bulls.

Tissue samples are taken at the same time as calf disbudding, generally at about five to six weeks of age.

Disbudding is done by a vet while the calves are under anesthetic and given pain relief. The ‘no stress’ approach to disbudding and tissue sampling was not only easier than collecting tail hairs and disbudding without anesthetic, it also delivered better animal health outcomes.

John uses this opportunity to also take an ear notch as a tissue sample for genomic (DNA) testing.

The ear notch samples are sent away and the results are returned in a spreadsheet. John uses the spreadsheet to sort and rank animals for different traits, before deciding which animals to sell.

The Pekins’ average herd production is about 650 kilograms of milk solids per cow per lactation, (about 300 days) with the average liveweight at about 550 kg.

Fed 2-2.5 tonnes of grain per cow per





Genomics helps John Pekin select which animals in his 330-cow Holstein milking herd to breed their replacements and those to join to beef.

lactation, most of the herd's diet consists of homegrown pasture of supplementary fodder.

Breeding focuses on daughter fertility, mastitis resistance, type, longevity, and production. The Pekins' Genetic Futures Report shows huge gains for all these traits from 2016.

John believes improvements in health and fertility traits can help reduce costs.

"There can be less semen costs, less health

issues and treatments for anestrus cows," he said. "With a focus on decreasing mastitis you would need less drugs for mastitis treatment. I believe both the use of hormones and antibiotics are going to become an issue over the next five or 10 years. Everyone's aim is to get to the stage where you are doing fewer treatments on cows. This (genomics) is a way of identifying the best genetics to ensure we breed from those cows."

HJ

"Everyone's aim is to get to the stage where you are doing fewer treatments on cows; this (genomics) is a way of identifying potential problem cows."

John Pekin, Kolora, south-west Victoria, Holstein, 330 cows

Want to genomically test your herd?

All you need to do is provide Holstein Australia with a tissue or ear notch sample to receive genomic breeding values for your animals or to confirm parentage.

Once you receive your genomic assessment results, you will have key information to help you breed strategically, maximising your animals' genetic potential by customising your breeding program to match your breeding goals.

Simply visit the Holstein Australia website and download the genomic testing application form, making sure to include

| Samples to Holstein Australia |
|-------------------------------|
| Monday 29 March |
| Monday 12 April |
| Monday 26 April |
| Monday 10 May |
| Monday 24 May |

the Herd book and National IDs of the animals to be tested.

Also indicate whether you require only Australian genomic breeding values ABV(g)s or ABV(g)s plus international breeding values (Canadian GLPI or US TPI(g)).

Include your completed form along with the clearly marked hair or ear notch samples from each animal to be tested.

Holstein Australia releases ABV(g) results to members weekly.

If you would like your animals included in the next available runs give Miranda Clark a call on 0407 456 489 or visit the services / genomic testing section of the Holstein Australia website.

Make sure to get your samples to Holstein Australia by the due dates (see table) to be included in the next run.



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SHE SELLS

ECLIPSE MOOVIN JENN 9563

(Moovin x Sid EX-90 x Goldwyn EX-91)
Back to Lheros Jenn EX-94 - Res Int Champ, RWF 2008



SHE SELLS

ECLIPSE MOOVIN PRINCESS 9562*RC

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SHE SELLS

ECLIPSE MOOVIN MAE 9548 *RC

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CONTACT DETAILS

Richard Hull

1194 Timboon-Colac Rd, Jancourt East

M: 0419 951 810

E: eclipse_embryo@bigpond.com



SHE SELLS

ECLIPSE MOOVIN MAE 9554

(Moovin x Doc VG85-2yrs x Brokaw VG86)
A2/A2 and from an outstanding Doc dam!



Coolea Holsteins

Crawford Family, Numbaa, NSW Second Master Breeder Award

The Crawford family of Coolea Holsteins, NSW – Jenny, Rodney, Andrew and Abbey – looked up to the Master Breeder Award as an ultimate goal but didn't know if they would ever get there.

Jenny says it means they've achieved something in their career and receiving it twice is pretty special.

Rodney and Jenny began their partnership in 1972 when they took over Rodney's family property in Far Meadow, south of Berry and in 1973 bought their first stud cow.

In April 1981 they sold up their property and moved south of the river to their new 80 ha property in Numbaa for better and more fertile soil. Initially they milked 120 cows but expanded to 250 after building a rotary dairy in 1999.

Over the years, the family acquired an additional six properties and expanded the herd, which is currently 1,050 cows.

In 2018, Jenny and Rodney passed the running of the dairy to their son Andrew and his wife Abbey.

"Rodney and Andrew really brought Coolea Holsteins to the forefront and put us on the map for our breeding and showing success

Farm facts

Farm size: 800 hectares

Herd size: 1,050

Females bred (1997-2016): 4,061

EX: 47

VG: 978

SBC: 35

STP: 172

Production awards: 437

Lifetime production awards: 100

Points required: 4,061

Points earned: 4,065

and for buying high-priced cows," Jennie said.

She says the breeding program played a key role in their achievements. "We always used good bulls! We kept an eye on fat and milk but they also had to be good-uddered and good-type bulls."

Andrew says registration and classification are important. "You've got to keep an eye on the production of the cows and use classification for type and herd recording for production. You can't really go wrong if you study both of them."

Jenny says embryo transfer was essential, recalling the moment Coolea Holsteins first used ET. She travelled to Victoria in 1986 to buy a pricey cow named Vilconna Telmatt Debutante.

"When I got home, we flushed her and we got 12 embryos, 11 pregnancies and nine heifers. We used ET from then onwards which got us a lot of good heifers," she said.

The Crawford family has spent many years in the show ring and still remains heavily involved in showing.

"I love showing cows! It's my biggest interest and I'm always breeding for the next show cow," Andrew said.

Both his parents, Rodney and Jenny, graduated from the NSW State Judging School and Jenny was the first female Holstein Judge in NSW.

"As soon as we could lead a calf, we did and I was probably about five when I went to my first show," Andrew said.

A highlight for the family was winning Grand Champion (4-year-old in milk) at International Dairy Week in 2019 with Fairvale Goldchip Melody.

"It was that moment you always strive for and you never think it's possible and then you get it and you think to yourself, yes, we've done it!" Andrew said.

Jenny describes the experience as unreal. "We got two Champions, one for Holstein and one Guernsey. It was just fantastic!"

Andrew recognises the contribution by his parents, his brother Darren's contributions in achieving the two Master Breeder Awards. Although Rodney and Jenny are retired, they still play a vital role in the future of Coolea Holsteins.

"They live across the road and we still consult with them every day," Andrew said.

"Our family has been very successful in dairy farming. You have to give 110% all the time and it's a lot of hard work but there's a lot of rewards too and we are really pleased to receive this recognition." **HJ**



The Crawford family of Coolea Holsteins: Abbey, Andrew and children Harry, Parker, Bella and Lana.

How long have you been in the industry:

45 years

Farming generation: 3 generations

Important cow families: Frosty, Paradise, Lila-Z and Debutante families

Favourite bull used: Goldwyn

Current bull team: King Doc, Chief, Arrow, Sidekick, Unstoppable

Important traits: Type and production



Clydebank Holsteins

Clydebank Holsteins, Timmering, Vic Second time Master Breeder Award

It all began in 1972, when Ross left school and formed a partnership with his parents Ron and Nancy. In 1980, Linda and Ross moved to the farm in Rochester. About 17 years later, they accomplished their first Master Breeder award.

"We've always aimed to breed a balanced dairy cow," Ross said. "While it's great to have cows that excel in certain traits, it's their weakest trait that limits them from reaching their full potential and a long productive life".

Ross wants cows that are balanced, have good feet and legs to travel long distances and have the capacity and strength to manage in their surroundings.

"We've always tried to breed a nice herd of cows that we think best suit Australian conditions and we feel it put us on the right path in achieving the Master Breeder," he said.

Clydebank Holsteins has concentrated heavily on using brood cows to establish strong cow families.

"We were fortunate to breed Clydebank Gay Lass EX 4-E 40* SBC (Star Brood Cow) and appreciate the impact that one cow can have," Ross said.

Clydebank has used home-bred bulls from their best cow families which has contributed to breeding a consistent herd of cows.

"We find some of the best old cows in our herd, are from our own bulls because we know their traits and we know how to utilise them," he said.

Farm facts

Farm size: 530 ha

Herd size: 300

Females bred (1997-2016): 1,845

EX: 59

VG: 657

SBC: 72

STP: 96

Production awards: 200

Lifetime production awards: 71

Points required: 1,845

Points earned: 3,249

The Somervilles identify strong cow families through classification, production and ability to produce many lactations by using their pedigree information.

"We certainly value classification and herd testing extremely highly," he said.

"The cows we admire most are the ones that classify well as mature cows and obtain the STP Award. They usually have a bit more substance, are easy to manage and have the dairy strength to thrive in Australia's variable environment."

He says that breeding contributes to the business, adding an extra income stream over the past 40 years.

"There's a real market for Holsteins, both here in Australia and for export and that's a big advantage," Ross said.

Ross and Linda have enjoyed being involved with their sub-branch over many years and say they have been fortunate to have a very active sub-branch.

"We've really enjoyed connecting with our community. The friendships we've made with breeders who have like-minded

interests have really lifted us during tough times," Linda said.

The sub-branch annual sale provided opportunity for showcasing Clydebank genetics, a highlight being a heifer that attracted top price at Holstein Australia's 100 year Anniversary Sale at the Winter Fair in Bendigo.

The Somerville family are all currently active within the Holstein community.

Ross and Linda's son, Tim and his wife Maddi, run True Blue Holsteins in conjunction with Clydebank Holsteins.

Their son Brad, and his wife Janelle, established Melaleuca Holsteins on their own property and Brad was president of North West Victorian sub-branch in 2020.

Their other son, Dale and daughter Brooke, have also been actively involved in the farm. Brooke is a well-known photographer with *Journal* covers and Holstein Australia website shots to her credit. She has also travelled overseas to photograph with *Holstein International*.

"Achieving the second Master Breeder has been a real team effort. We've got four children and they've all been heavily involved," Linda said.

The Somervilles have remained resilient throughout years of variable climate, volatile milk prices and water issues and keep moving forward.

"We certainly hope to continue dairying. Our farm is our home and what we've put our life into it; and we've really enjoyed the journey!" Linda said. **HJ**

Farming generation: 4th generation

Important cow families: Lass, Roseblooms, Whynots, Odelias, Gails, Aprils, Carols

Favourite cow: Clydebank Allen Leonie EX-94-2E

Favourite bulls used: Andes Starlite 3, Allen, Clydebank Le Damion

Current bull team: Arrow, Sidekick, Master, Moment, Jacot, Triple Hill Sires Whiteout, Lynch, Jaguar, Lexicon, America & home bred bulls

Priority traits: balanced, good feet and legs, capacity and strength

First EX cow: Clydebank Gay Carolyn



Clydebank Somerville family: Brad, Janelle, Tim, Maddi, Brooke and Dale.



Jessicas sweep IDW 2015 with Champion, Reserve and Honourable Mention Senior Champions, left to right: Elmar Ice Jessica EX-93-2E 1xEP 1xF, Elmar Goldwyn Jessica 11 EX-92-4E 6* 2xEP, Elmar Goldwyn Jessica 4 EX-93-3E 3* 1xEP 2xM 1xF 2xP LIFE 1.

Show business at Elmar Holsteins

BY JON HOLLAND

For many breeders, showing cattle is a passion; whether it is the thrill of competition, the social comradery, or simply the love of the Holstein cow.

But what role does the showing play in modern dairy farming? Is it just a hobby or can it be a justifiable business strategy?

In 2020, more than 40 registered Holsteins across Australia surpassed a \$10,000 sale price, with showing success the

key marketing strategy in achieving this premium price.

Two-time Master Breeders, Steve and Deanne Hore, are now hoping to reap the rewards of nearly 100 years of showing success, when Elmar Holsteins host their first large-scale on-farm selection sale in April 2021.

Masters of success

Founded in 1926 by Martin and Elsie Hore, and continued by Steve's parents, Geoff

and Rosa, the two-time Master Breeder Elmar herd is now transitioning into its fourth generation as Steve's youngest son Brady returns to work on the farm full time, with siblings Marty and Kelsie also heavily involved.

Showing has been part of the Elmar story since the very beginning, with a long tradition of showing cattle locally and at Melbourne Royal. "Shows have allowed us to compare ourselves with the best cattle and management. They gave us something to strive for and motivated us to do better with our own breeding," Steve said.

From Elmar P.C. Farlex EX-1E winning the inaugural title in 1990, through to the recent dominance of their Jessica family, Elmar has become synonymous with International Dairy Week success. Steve attributes their success to decades of strategic breeding, careful management, and a lot of hard work. "The Jessicas started here from one calf I purchased when I was 15. It can just take one to establish something special."

Sentiment vs investment

Steve takes great pride in the presentation of his Elmar cows. "It's a big effort, and takes a lot of preparation on farm, but the really good cows will respond to the work you put in," he said. "You never know when someone's going to remember 'that cow' they saw. It may just lead to an extra inquiry about a bull, or an extra bid at a sale."



IDW 2020 Intermediate Champion - Elmar Solomon Jessica 5 VG87, lad by Brady Hore.



With an established list of return buyers, stud bull sales have been a reliable income stream at Elmar, selling around 50-60 registered bulls annually, including successful sires to AI. This additional \$100,000+ in revenue is then re-invested in on-farm projects.

Though the shows play a pivotal role in attracting buyers, Steve still emphasises the importance of producing a quality product. "You need to produce the bloodlines and the traits farmers want so they are happy with the result."

Steve has long resisted the temptation to sell his maternal lines, preferring to wait until the herd was well established and he was confident of what he had to offer. In 2017, he submitted the four-month-old calf, Elmar Soloman Jessica 6-ET VG86 to the Gorbros Invitational Sale. She reached the second top price of \$18,600 to Master Breeders, the Gordon family, in partnership with Ben and Renee McInnes.

As a young showman, Glen Gordon had honed his skills under Steve's guidance, including working with the great Elmar Leader Jessica EX-3E 16*. When a

descendant of Jessica's became available for auction, Glen knew he had to buy it. But his purchase was more than just sentiment – it was an investment.

Glen has already sold two bulls from Soloman Jessica, at a premium price of \$4,000. Then at the 2020 Gorbros Golden Opportunity Sale, the partnership of Rockstar Holstein's Rocky Allen (NSW), and Weeksdale Holsteins (Canada), paid top price \$22,000 for Gorbros Crushtime Jessica. "I've never had such a fast return on an investment," Glen said.

Glen sees showing as a major contributor to the profitability of his business. "I really enjoy the social side of showing – but it's not a hobby – it has to be profitable," he said.

At a time when quality grade cows were averaging around \$2,000, and stud dispersals \$2,500-\$3,000, the Gordons' inaugural Gorbros Invitational Sale in 2017 averaged a whopping \$7,875, grossing \$422,550 across 54 head. This success was repeated in 2020 at the Gorbros Golden Opportunity Sale grossing \$427,750 at a \$7,504 average. "We never could have

achieved an average like that without the show success," he said.

Showing what the farmers want

Glen believes cows like Leader Jessica were ahead of their time, with the show industry now recognizing a more balanced style cow. "I think Leader Jessica really started that movement," he said, "and that's what farmers want – cows that are balanced, ultra-dairy and smashing udders."

Steve and Deanne are excited by their upcoming sale and hope it will be an opportunity for breeders to share in the fun and experiences they have had in breeding and showing Holsteins.

"Breeders can recognise the hard work and management it takes to produce and present cows at this level. I'm a big believer in using the best cow families you have and breeding them with the best bulls from around the world. We don't specifically breed for a 'show cow'. We want cows that get in calf easily and can give a lot of milk. If you find that balance and you do it right – that 'show cow' will be there for you."

Phil Daniel joins the BDCC

When it comes to breeding Holsteins, Phil Daniel (Cleveland Holsteins, Nathalia, Victoria) is firmly grounded in commercial reality: he wants to breed long-lasting, profitable cows. And to fit that bill he focuses on balanced, functional type, particularly udders and rumps.

"I'm looking for a moderate-sized Holstein that is no fuss in the dairy, year after year. Breeding for good functional conformation goes hand in hand with fertility and productivity," Phil said.

The 180-cow herd is housed all year in a barn and fed a total mixed ration (TMR) on an adjacent feedpad. It's an intensive system with the cows averaging 10,500 litres and 700 kg milk solids.

Cleveland Holsteins is very much a family affair, with Phil's wife Samantha actively involved in calf-rearing, bookkeeping and other on-farm roles. Their son, Aiden has recently returned to work on the farm full time and daughter Mikeala helps on the farm when not at school.

The family are active Holstein Australia members. Mikeala and Samantha are

regulars in the show ring, while Phil loves catching up with like-minded people to talk cows.

He believes breeding cows for the show ring and commercial performance should be one and the same thing.

"A great show cow should also be able to walk through the dairy and pay the bills," Phil said.

A self-confessed 'data lover' Phil believes the genetic evaluation system is only as good as the data provided, and plays his part by registering and classifying animals, herd testing every month, and regularly reporting heifer workabilities. The recent addition of Semex collars exploded herd data insights including activity (heat), rumination (health), fertility and lactation.

Phil has been involved in Holstein Australia's Northern Victoria branch for the past five years, including three as president. He has also represented the region on the Strategic Directions Committee and was recently appointed to the Breed Development and Conformation Committee (BDCC).



Phil Daniel at home on the farm.

Phil says he doesn't bring any specific agenda to the BDCC but hopes to bring a grass-roots perspective. He believes the challenge for the Australian Holstein breed will be maintaining the breeds relevance through the changing commercial realities facing Australian dairy farmers.

"Holsteins need to perform in all Australian systems, whether they be housed or pasture-based. The role of the BDCC is to ensure the Holstein breed evolves with changes in our members' operating environment," Phil said.



Harklaje's correct and long-lasting Tricias

BY JON HOLLAND

Nearly 40 years ago Terry Clark, in the search of 'something better', decided to buy his first stud cow, Kardinia Rockbuster Tricia VG86 5*. Terry and his wife Janine now run 300 registered Holsteins under their Master Breeder prefix, Harklaje Holsteins. Over the years other prominent cow families have been added, however the Tricia bloodline remains as one of their most prolific, appreciated for their slow maturity, longevity and consistently correct conformation.

Harklaje Holsteins can be found in the heart of Gippsland's dairy region, at Nerrena, about 15 km south-east of Leongatha, at the base of the Strzelecki Ranges. Dairying is a major employer in the district, with the rich soils and annual 950 mm rainfall making the area along the Tarwin River ideal for growing lush pastures and year-round grazing.

The pasture-based operation runs a split calving pattern of one-third autumn and two-thirds spring calving. About 700 tonnes of wet silage is grown on farm, supplemented by 1.83 tonnes of grain per cow per year. Any feed gaps are filled with bought-in protein and cereal hay.

Terry's original family farm has been expanded to incorporate 200 hectares (180 hectares effective milking area), with another 45 hectares of leased country. The family business employs a casual farm hand, along with help from Terry and Janine's sons Ryan and Mitchell and daughter Ella.

The Semex Mating Program has been at the heart of the Clark's breeding program for a number of years, thanks largely to a long standing friendship with former Semex Area Manager and local South Gippsland Sub Branch member Stu Mackie. More recently, the Clarks have been contributors to Datagene's ImProving Herds project as one of the 27 Genetic Focus Farms. All calves are now genomically tested at weaning, with particular attention to fertility, immunity,



Master Breeders Terry and Janine Clark, Harklaje Holsteins.

fat and protein percentages and somatic cell count.

"The type of cow that we like to breed is one that calves as a Junior 2-year-old, and that looks like a Junior 2-year-old. We have found that these heifers will last. They don't need to break any production records as young cows. They have proven time and time again that these are the type that will mature beautifully and put together solid lifetime production records," Terry said.

"Cow families are very important to us, as with each generation we have always tried to improve on the previous one. Our goal is to keep improving the herd, with emphasis on narrowing the gap between the best and worst cow in the herd."

Wanting something better

Terry began his farming apprenticeship after leaving school in 1977, working on his family's farm milking 100 cows through an eight-a-side zig-zig herringbone. "The herd was put together without much expense or expertise with a mixture of

Jerseys, Holsteins and Holstein-Jersey cross," Terry said.

By the early '80s, Terry had finished his apprenticeship, and started a sharefarming arrangement on a one-third share. They began herd testing and Terry noticed that some of the cows he thought were his 'better cows' were actually just 'tough, fleshy and slow milking'.

"I decided I wanted to milk something better than what we had," he said.

At that time, Janine's family was running a small stud north of Leongatha. They had been using Holstein bulls from respected local Master Breeders Avonlea and Taraglen, further encouraging Terry's interest in better quality cows.

Terry's quest to improve his herd began by attending a local stud dispersal with Janine's father Alan. The Hedgeley-Dene dispersal of Bob Green at Fish Creek was held over two days, but Terry found himself overwhelmed by the size, scale and pace of the auction, and left without placing a bid.

The next auction was Margaret

Stephenson's Gudjiwa Holsteins dispersal, where Terry bought three pregnant appendix heifers. His new-found fixation on stud Holsteins then led him to the West Gippsland Sub Branch 'Select Black and White Sale', where Terry had his eyes on a young New Zealand bred cow, Tahora Leger Lyonaise ET-IMP VG 86 6*.

"I was hoping to spend \$2,000 or less, but when the bidding started at \$2,000 that idea went out the window," Terry said.

Soon after his first choice sped beyond his reach, a 'rangy dry three-year-old' cow entered the ring. It was late in the sale and bidding had slowed at \$1,200. Terry entered the race, with a finishing bid at \$1,600, for Kardinia Rockbuster Tricia VG86, bred by Ken and Carol Good of Finley NSW.

"She was a big tall thing but had a really nice udder and a proven lactation record, which made her more reliable," he said.

Terry's impulse buy proved to be a 2-for-1 deal, with Tricia carrying a heifer calf by the high-type sire Paperman Oregon. Harklaje Oregon Teena VG85 3* was the first of 11 daughters of Rockbuster Tricia. Terry and Janine have since bred nine Excellent and more than 100 VG descendants from Terry's original stud cow.

Slow maturing

Tricia's impact as a brood cow soon became evident with her daughters and granddaughters consistently demonstrating her trademark qualities - slow maturing, long lasting cows with Excellent dairy strength.

A flush to the global Holstein sensation Hanoverhill Starbuck resulted in Harklaje Starbuck Tiffany-ET VG88 STP 4*. Scored EX-90 for dairy strength, Tiffany milked for nine lactations, exceeded 66,000

litres lifetime, and produced 100% GP+ daughters, two of which scored Excellent, including the Clark's first Excellent cow Harklaje Horace Tempamy EX-4E 1*. Scored EX-94 for dairy strength and EX-93 rump, Tempamy was named Reserve Champion at the Leongatha Feature Show in 2001.

Tempamy's maternal sister, Harklaje Lindy Tikki EX-90-1E STP also carried the trademark Tricia dairy frame, earning an EX-95 for dairy strength. Also boasting the trademark longevity, Tikki completed seven lactations with a lifetime record exceeding 58,000 litres and an average PI of 107. Her daughter, Harklaje Jayjump Tikeela VG89 STP 1* managed 10 lactations, and was the dam of the impressive Harklaje Boliv Teneka VG88.

Lindy Tikki's Bosside Rueben daughter, Harklaje AltaBoss Tikkel VG88 STP Life1, exceeded 73,000 litres across nine lactations, and was the dam of Harklaje Spirtie Tikani EX-90-3E STP(Silver) Life1. Fresh on her 10th lactation, Tikani scored EX-95 for dairy strength, and completed five generations of the family to exceed seven lactations.

"Tikani was slow to mature, so didn't make Excellent until she was a mature cow," Terry said. "But now she's a cow that stands out - I remember the classifiers fighting over who got to score her last class day."

Another favourite of the classifiers was Harklaje Holee Topsy EX-90-3E STP(Gold) 2* Life 4. Sired by Comestar Lee from the brood cow Harklaje Backa Toto VG87 2*, Topsy only recently left the herd after reaching the remarkable age of 17 years, calving for the last time at 15 years and 10 months!

"Topsy started out as a very immature young cow, but then didn't change much

from when she was 5 years old to 15 years old," Terry said. "She was never a cow that would catch your eye, but when you really looked at her, you couldn't find anything wrong - she was very correct."

Topsy boasted regular calving intervals across 12 lactations, finishing with a lifetime record of 107,390 litres, 3,280 kg protein and 3,858 kg fat. Her best daughter was by the Etazon Lord Lily son, Himster Grandprix. Like her dam, Harklaje Grandprix Tapestry VG88 STP 1* has calved consistently, and has already amassed a lifetime to-date of 55,000 litres with an average PI of 105.

"Tapestry is a very similar cow to her mother," Terry said. "Slow to develop but looks like she is going to hold her age really well."

Already Tapestry has three daughters in milk, a GP83 2-year-old, Harklaje Control Toni, the stylish Harklaje Shadow Toto VG85, and the 88 point 3rd lactation Harklaje Superpower Tabatha VG88.

A potent combination

The homebred sire Harklaje Ladino Nyke-ET EX-90 made a significant impact on the Harklaje breeding program. The Ladino Park Talent son of Harklaje Malachite Nyrobi EX-90-2E 2* traces back to the great Niome family of Master Breeders, the Johnston family, Glomar Holsteins - a bloodline that later expanded to create the now famous Lucky family at Glomar.

Classified Excellent with EX-93 for feet and legs and EX-90 dairy strength, Nyke consistently passed his superior type to his offspring, including two Excellent daughters, one VG89, and three VG88, boasting a commendable 94% GP+ progeny.



Kardinia Rockbuster Tricia VG86 5*.



Harklaje Horace Tempamy EX-4E 1*.

Australian Holstein Cow Family



Harklaje Lavanguard Tarena EX-90-1E, second in the 5-year-old South Gippsland Semex OFC 2016.



Harklaje Superpower Tabaret VG85.

Nyke proved particularly potent when combined with the Tricia bloodlines. Harklaje Allen Tarena VG87 STP 3* had two high-performing Nyke daughters in Harklaje L Nyke Terena-OC VG89 STP 1* and Harklaje L Nyke Tenae VG87.

Harklaje L Nyke Trina EX-90-3E STP, was a Nyke daughter of Harklaje Hoexport Trinity VG88 STP. Her next dam was Harklaje Glenmar Trinity VG89 STP, making her a third generation Superior Total Performance cow.

Nyke Trina's maternal sister, Harklaje Jayjump Tritan VG85 became the dam of the stylish Regancrest Reginald daughter, Harklaje Reginald Tasma VG89, who in turn is the dam of the highest BPI member of the family, Harklaje Rossi Tahiti VG85 BPI(g) +258.

Harklaje L Nyke Taree EX-90-1E was a granddaughter of Harklaje Wiseman Tayla VG86, the maternal sister to the Clark's first Excellent cow Harklaje Horace Tempany EX-4E. As a young cow, Terry thought Nyke Taree was a little immature, but as with most members of the Tricia family, she developed with age, reaching 90 points thanks to an EX-92 mammary.

"Taree was not a big cow," Terry said. "But she was black and silky-hided with a really soft udder."

Taree's silky texture is also evident in her daughter Harklaje Lavanguard Tarena EX-90-1E. Recently moved to Excellent in January 2021, the Comestar Lavanguard daughter boasts an EX-92 mammary and a top lactation of 9,428 litres, 321kgs protein, 352 kg fat in 304 days with a PI

111. A consistent producer, Tarena has already surpassed 50,000 litres from her first five lactations.

"Tarena is all dairy," Terry said. "Particularly through her udder. She is so clean and silky."

In 2016, Tarena placed 2nd in the 5-year-old class in the South Gippsland Semex On Farm Challenge, before returning in 2018 to place 3rd as a mature cow. Her eldest daughter, Harklaje Rafale Thanasi VG87 has an exciting yearling daughter by Progenesis Blizzard, as well as a milking 2-year-old daughter, Harklaje Bardo Theory, scored GP84 on her first lactation. As with most members of the Tricia family, Terry describes Theory as "a young cow you don't notice, but when you do break her down is very, very correct".

For Terry, the standout is Tarena's youngest daughter, Harklaje Superpower Tabaret VG85. Scored VG on her second lactation, including VG87 for dairy strength and a VG86 mammary, Terry loves Tabaret's silky textured udder and her perfect balance of refined strength.

"Tabaret is a big, strong young cow – yet she's also super refined and has a real softness to her," he said. "She's a lot like her mother, and you can see she has so much potential as she matures."

Tabaret is due to calve in March 2021 to the Semex young sire Progenesis Summerday. This high type, high milk flow genomic sire was only available on limited release in Australia, adding further anticipation to the pending pregnancy. **HJ**

Tricia family tree

Kardinia Rockbuster Tricia VG86 5*

14/08/1980

(Barold Rockbuster EX)



Harklaje McNair Tanya VG86

18/10/1984

(Avonlea Noble McNair)



Harklaje Quality Tanya VG85

11/07/1988

(Quality Ultimate EX)



Harklaje Ned Toni VG85

13/05/1991

(Ganook Ned HT VG)



Harklaje Totti GP81

01/08/1993

(Harklaje Southern Dylan)



Harklaje Backa Toto VG87 2*

24/04/1995

(Reads Blackstar Aussie GP)



Harklaje Wiseman Tayla VG86

14/04/2000

(Fiorendino Mascot Mark GP)



Harklaje Million Tara VG86

29/07/2003

(Riverview Park Emorys Millionaire GP)



Harklaje L Nyke Taree EX-90-1E

15/08/2008

(Harklaje Ladino Nyke EX)



Harklaje Lavanguard Tarena EX-90-1E

19/05/2011

(Comestar Lavanguard GP)



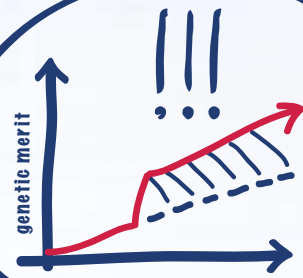
Harklaje Superpower Tabaret VG85

13/03/2016

(Misty Springs Superpower)



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Eclipse Holsteins leading the charge in a global market

BY JON HOLLAND

Genomic breeding values have become the global equaliser, allowing breeders to benchmark their animals against all the major index systems, focusing on an individual's genetic potential rather than their country of origin.

Leading the charge for Australia in this globalised marketplace has been Eclipse Holstein's Master Breeder, Richard Hull. His chart-topping bulls have demanded that international markets include Australia as a potential source of the next 'big thing'.

The breakthrough

Richard has spent years sourcing the very best genetics from around the world,

creating headlines in 2014 with his new global 'type' leader, Eclipse Atwoods Archrival. Archrival debuted at No. 1 in the US with +4.84 PTAT (g) and No.2 for overall type in Canada at +22. In April 2018, another sire from the Eclipse stable broke through, with Eclipse Milio debuting at +4.59 PTAT (g), earning him the No.1 position for type in the USA, France and Italy.

In partnership with ST Genetics (STG) Australia, led by General Manager Peter Semmens, Milio is housed in Western Victoria at the Total Livestock Genetics (TLG) collection centre in Camperdown. "Since Archrival's initial breakthrough, the Eclipse bulls have continued to perform

well in their niche market both locally and internationally," Peter said.

STG has established Australia as their southern hemisphere bastion for their bovine department, implanting more than 200 male embryos a year. "ST Genetics is committed to the Australian industry," Peter said. "Over the past two years we have placed more than 20 bulls bred by Australian breeders through our sexing labs. This, combined with the Eclipse sires, has helped deliver us a diverse and powerful team of bulls."

Paving the way

Milio's genomic predictions of show winning type and exceptional udders has seen strong demand across Northern America and Europe. Backed by the renowned Windy-Knoll-View Pledge EX-95, Milio's dam, Eclipse Octane Princess 13 VG89, topped the Eclipse Winter Sale in 2018 at \$30,000, selling to the Patten/Moscript/Salmon/Acuity syndicate.

"Princess 13 has proven to be a great investment for us," syndicate partner Declan Patten said. "We've had continuous demand for her progeny, with embryos selling locally as well as buyers from Canada and New Zealand."

With a debut udder score of +3.71 UDC(g) and +4.41 PTAT(g), the son of Eclipse Octane Princess 9-ET VG87 1*, Eclipse Blackwood, shot to prominence in April 2019 alongside his maternal brothers, Eclipse Royalcrush and Eclipse Firstcrush. Royalcrush is now STG's No.7 bull available in the USA for type at +3.02PTAT(g), and holds the highest Australian genomics ranking of the Eclipse team at +317 BPI(g) and +325 HWI(g).

Now these three have been 'eclipsed' by Richard's latest offering, Eclipse Perennial. In September 2019, genomic results of the Oh-River-Syc Crushabull brother to Firstcrush and Royalcrush came in at +3.69 PTAT(g), making Perennial STG's new No.1 udder bull at +3.26 UDC(g).

"Perennial has been getting a lot of attention by combining brilliant udders



Master Breeder, Richard Hull - Eclipse Holsteins with Eclipse Jordy Lotto VG87 RC (1st lact).



Eclipse Blackwood Princess 9553 – The No.1 TPI(g) Blackwood in the world.

with more capacity and more correct rump setting,” Richard said. “He’s just another great example of what the Princess family can do – breeders can really put a lot of trust in this family.”

Opening doors to new opportunities

Once the Eclipse team opened the door, Australian sires have continued to break through on the international scene. Coomboona Zipit Mirand PP, is the latest

local hero to capitalise on his niche opportunities, topping the international polled charts, and providing breeders with an alternative source of elite type and production, combined with the A2A2 gene, red factor and homozygous polled. Recognised as an international sire of sons and with more than 1,000 daughters already in Canada, Mirand’s impact on the breed is guaranteed.

Richard jumped on Mirand early, with some of the oldest daughters in the world standing at Eclipse. Among them is Eclipse Mirand 9 Princess I-ET-RC-PO, Richard’s latest No.1 with +3.09 PTAT(g) and +2.95 UDC(g).

“Having bulls like Milio and Mirand top the charts really makes the world look at what we’re doing over here,” Richard said. “We’re now comparing apples with apples – genomics has really opened everything up and created more opportunities for breeders to get a bigger return on their investment.”

The Eclipse Dispersal Series 2 on 18 May will be one of the final opportunities for breeders looking to access these global leaders.

HJ

Interested in improving your livestock genetics and breeding opportunities?

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Major jump in sexed, polled semen sales

A strong 2020 for Australia's AI industry saw total dairy semen sales increase by 10% year-on-year from 1,957,221 to 2,154,064 doses, according to the National Herd Improvement Association of Australia's (NHIA) annual Semen Market Survey.

Underpinning the overall growth in semen sales were some significant trends, including:

- 60% increase in sexed semen sales year-on-year, from 201,356 to 321,777 doses
- 53% increase in sales of polled (daughter proven and genomic combined) semen from 105,465 to 160,989 doses
- 21% increase in A2 bulls from 964,291 to 1,166,432 doses.

NHIA chair, Graeme Gillan, says the growth in sales reflects the position of the industry, with farmers investing in their breeding programs.

"The marked increase in sexed and polled semen sales is indicative of a real focus on improving production efficiencies and developing sustainable breeding strategies," Graeme said.

"Prior to this year the annual increase in sexed semen sales was around 12 to 15%.

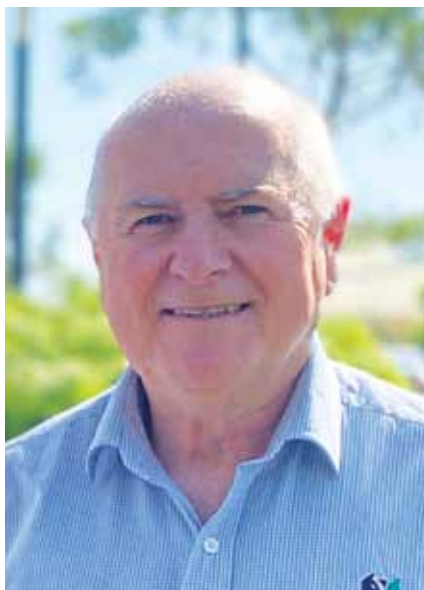
"Rapid improvement in the quality and reliability of sexed semen has seen wider adoption across industry with breeders using it to accelerate herd expansion, improve animal welfare, minimise waste production and increase profitability as well as increasing genetic gain within their herds, hence the 60% leap in sales this year.

"It's a similar story with the increase in use of polled semen, driven by health and safety factors, animal welfare and production efficiencies."

Genomics

The continued uptake of genomics on Australian farms was confirmed by a 12.3% increase in genomic semen from young genomic bulls (without milking daughters) up from 869,155 doses to 976,298.

Sales of proven semen increased 7% from 684,169 doses to 732,175, underscoring the reliability and continued appeal of the



NHIA chair, Graeme Gillan says sexed semen sales have bolted, increasing by 60% in 2020, compared with 12-15% annual increases in the past.

'tried and tested' daughter proven bull approach and its appeal to many breeders.

"By now, all Holstein bulls on the Australian market – including daughter proven bulls – have been genotyped, so genomics contributes to their breeding values."

"There isn't any doubt that genomic selection has allowed for rapid acceleration of genetic progress," Graeme said.

"What we are seeing now, reflected in the steady growth in use of genomic semen, is increasing use of genomic selection to predict future performance of cows and heifers.

"Nowhere is this clearer than in the use

of polled genomics, with polled genomic semen sales increasing by 48% this year."

The 2020 NHIA Semen Market Survey also confirms the continuing demand for A2 products by dairy consumers and the premium paid for A2 progeny with A2 sires accounting for more than half (53.1%) the total semen sold for the first time.

Looking at the individual dairy breeds Holstein semen accounted for 80% of the total of 2,154,064 doses sold over the year, roughly in line with the proportion of Holsteins that make up the national dairy herd.

Overall, Holstein semen sales increased by 14% and Aussie Reds by 10%, with all other dairy breeds seeing a decline in sales.

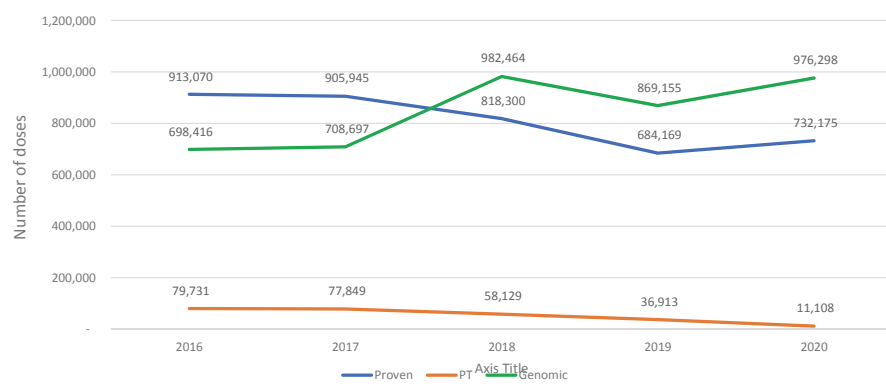
Beef semen sales increased by 28.3%, from 280,539 doses to 359,802 year-on-year, with the five year trend seeing a 118% increase. With the AI industry's increased engagement with and servicing of the beef industry, plus increased sale reporting, this is a trend that is likely to continue and grow into the future.

"At this stage we believe the use of beef straws in dairy herds is a significant contributor to this trend," Graeme said.

Exports

In a positive sign for the Australian dairy genetics, international export sales of dairy semen increased 6% year-on-year from 285,658 to 307,430 doses. A steady increase in export sales since 2016 when just 127,998 doses exported, has resulted in a cumulative increase of 140% over the past four years.

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Semen sales by category

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MASTER BREEDER MASTER BREEDER



Kelsie Hore
PHOTOGRAPHY & DESIGN

Dairying on Shade River, Mardella

Geoфф and Trish Manning milk around 300 cows year-round in the Mardella locality, with all of the farm's milk going to nearby Mundella Foods, Mundijong, WA, since 2005.

With Master Breeder status for their Shade River Holsteins, Geoff said he had always been interested in breeding since showing in his younger days. When asked what he looks for in a cow, he said he wanted 'everything'.

"But we're quite strong on overall type, with positive deviation for milk, plus positive fat and protein to meet our specific processor requirements that stipulate minimum butterfat, protein and lactose, plus coliform and cell count.

"We've recently focused hard on reducing cell count and the herd is now much younger as a result."



The Shade River milking herd averages 30 litres per cow per day on a mixed diet of byproducts, hay, silage, triticale and lupins.

Geoff said the long-term milk price for WA dairy farmers hadn't been good since

deregulation, so the family had changed their management and the way they

Colostrum a gift for baby giraffes

For decades, Western Australian Holstein Australia members Geoff and Tish Manning (Shade River Holsteins) have been donating backup colostrum to the Perth Zoo for newborn giraffes.

Geoff said they first heard about the zoo's need when they joined the Murdoch University's herd-health scheme many years ago.

"It could be about 40 years we've supplied it, but not every year – only when a baby giraffe is being born at the zoo. We've been very happy to provide it free of charge so that they have supplies on hand, just in case the mother is unable to provide her calf with sufficient colostrum," Geoff said.

"My understanding is that cows' colostrum is similar to the giraffes', so is a reasonable substitute. When a baby giraffe is about to be born, Murdoch drops about eight one-litre bottles out to the farm. We fill them with colostrum and freeze for them to pick up."

Geoff, his daughter Claire and grand-daughter Jeanie paid a visit to the zoo to see the latest baby giraffe who had the 'insurance' of back-up colostrum supplies from the Manning farm. The male giraffe Inkosi was born on 7 October 2019, but COVID-19 restrictions meant it was only two months ago before they could visit. But Geoff says it was well worth the wait.



WA Master Breeder, Geoff Manning, his daughter Claire and grand-daughter Jeanie have a special connection with Perth Zoo's giraffes, supplying backup colostrum to the zoo when baby giraffes are about to be born.

"We had a fantastic day. I hadn't realised how large these creatures are, tall enough for a man to walk underneath them (not that we did). And their extremely long tongue (apparently up to half a metre long) was a surprise when it came right out of their mouth to grasp the carrot from your hand. I guess it's handy for doing all that browsing in the wild.

"Such gentle animals, we really enjoyed meeting with them.

"The baby giraffe was there – he's quite huge – but we didn't get to feed him, as the adult giraffes kept pushing the younger ones out of the way to get to the food."

had run their farms to adjust, including switching processor and delivering their own milk to Mundella Foods.

"Our two farms, 4 km apart, both consist of several small blocks on separate titles, which has always been the way in this area. We used to milk six months a year on each farm – one in summer, the other in winter. But shifting from one to the other every six months was a big job.

"About eight years ago we tried basing the milking herd on our 100 ha of dryland country, building a new 20-a-side herringbone dairy. It worked well as our year-round dairy, and since then we've run all of our heifers and dries on the other."

Every year the Mannings spray out some of the milking property and direct-drill all of it with abundant annual ryegrass and clover.

Being near the metropolitan area, a major part of the milking cows' feed supply is supplementary biproducts including brewers' grain, bread, rolled oats, potatoes, pumpkins, carrots and other vegetables and fruit salad which are put through the mixer wagon, balanced with hay and silage.

Geoff said they pay for some of the biproducts, for some they are paid to cart it away.

"The only time it changes is summer to winter and back again, or when the supplies are taken by someone else.

"We make a lot of silage – about 1000 rolls a year. We also make 500 bales of hay and buy-in around 500-600 big square bales of barley hay to put some roughage in the diet.

"In the dairy we feed triticale and lupins."

The herd rarely averages less than 30 litres per cow year-round.

Breeding

The Mannings having been using a lot of sexed semen, with the Chinese market for heifers 'going gangbusters' according to Geoff.

"Every month there are new orders, with our 7-10-month old (200 kg) heifers making \$1,850 a head.

"We have always used frozen sexed-semen to capitalise on this heifer market, but this year tried fresh sexed-semen, looking to improve conception rates. This last round we achieved 42% conception, which is a good rate.

"The semen has to be used fresh within the same day, with the bulls milked every day, the semen transported and used within 24 hours.

"Because our supplier is in Victoria, the small numbers of planes travelling to WA due to COVID made it difficult to coordinate with our synchronisation program, but we managed to do it.

"We do three sexed-semen programs a year, on 50 to 60 heifers and cows at a time, and selecting a different bull each time."

Geoff said that while there are not many companies that will send fresh sexed-semen to WA, he still goes through the catalogues looking at BPI, etc, to select bulls.

"I used to worry about calving-ease in my selections, but we don't get many problems these days.

He said that for a long time, at every monthly herd test their top cows (about 10 to 15 of them) produce 50 to 60 litres per day.

Geoff said every farmer does things differently and that it's good to 'look over the fence' and see what others are doing.

"So about four years ago we took part in Dairy Australia/Western Dairy's business analysis Taking Stock to see how we were going. It's unusual to be bringing in so much feed, so the consultant considered it was likely we could be growing more grass and producing cheaper milk.

"But he said no matter which way he analysed and tweaked the figures, he advised us it was best that we 'just keep doing what we do 'on our small acreage, including our number of workers."

Geoff pays tribute to their farm team of manager Russell Stone; two fulltime milkers Bronte Holmes and Abigail Lindsey; fulltime feed mixer and milker Colin Geffrey; part-time truck driver Jim Lloyd; plus a couple of part-time workers Sarina Maring and Belinda Austen.

"We have a very good team in place. The girls in the dairy have been here a while and work together well. Often I walk into the dairy and wonder why it's so quiet and find them out in the yard patting the cows, not rushing or pushing them. It's fantastic. The cows like it too."

Geoff said that since 2005 they had always carted their own milk to Mundella Foods, using their own tanker and prime mover, for an extra 2 cents a litre and a better basic price.

"But we stopped carting in the last 12 months with the milk now picked up by a contractor, which has freed up another person and prime mover for the farm."

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Holstein Australia

competitions and awards

Distinguished Service Award

Recognises sustained commitment over an extended period to HA, both within and beyond the member's designated role.

Closing date: 30 June 2021

Winner announced: AGM (September)

HA contact: David Jupp

Email: djupp@holstein.com.au

Phone: 03 9835 7600

Semex-HA All-Australian

A national photographic competition that recognises excellence in conformation and showing.

Closing date: 30 June 2022

Winner announced: AGM (September)

HA contact: Head Office

Email: dworth@holstein.com.au

Phone: 03 9835 7600

Master Breeder Award

Recognises the long-term achievement of individuals who have bred at least 300 registered animals over a minimum of 20 years.

Closing date: 30 June 2021

Awards announced: AGM (September)

HA contact: Head Office

Email: enquiry@holstein.com.au

Phone: 03 9835 7600

MASTER BREEDER



Cow of the Year

Recognises all-round excellence in production, classification, breeding and overall contribution to the Australian Holstein breed.

Closing date: 31 May 2020

Winner announced: AGM (September)

HA contact: Head Office

Email: enquiry@holstein.com.au

Phone: 03 9835 7600

IDW Youth Challenge

A competition involving all aspects of the show ring (clipping, judging and handling) and teamwork.

Timing: held at IDW 2022

Winners announced: IDW 2022

HA contact: Head Office

Email: enquiry@holstein.com.au

Phone: 03 9835 7600

Semex-HA On-farm competition

Unlike conventional livestock judging events, cattle are assessed for their structural correctness on their home property.

Closing date: Each Sub-branch conducts its own competition in spring. The winners are then 'over-judged' to determine regional or state champions, with the results announced at events held in each state during November and December.

Winners announced: Holstein Journal (Summer)

Contact your local Sub-branch or Head Office

Email: enquiry@holstein.com.au

Phone: 03 9835 7600



Carenda Holsteins

Kitchen family, Carenda Holsteins Boyanup, WA

Second time Master Breeder Award

Ray Kitchen of Kitchen Farms has been dairying for years.

Born into the dairy and breeding industry, his parents Jack and Mary began farming in the mid-1950s, and started registering their herd in 1960.

Over the life of the dairy farm, many members of the family have contributed to the farm's success and the business has stayed within the family.

Today, Ray and his wife Donna are in partnership with his brother Mal and his wife Leslie and their 91-year-old mother, Mary, is still actively helping out with milking and calf feeding.

"I'm sure Mum appreciates being involved in the achievement that she's worked so long towards and I think my father would have been very pleased, proud and delighted that we've won the award," Ray said.

Ray says one of the key elements to his farm's success is time.

"It takes generations of improving your herd to be able to breed the type of animal you would like on the farm," he said.

Ray and his family have been classifying and herd recording since the early days of dairying. He says another important contributor their achievement is working towards a goal of breeding cows with high quality valued genetics.

"When it comes to breeding, we strive for good health, fertility and less mastitis. Our objective is to breed cows that are easily managed, who have less problems but are also more profitable," Ray said.

Ray says genomic s is a key tool used in his breeding program.

"Genomics brings reliability into your decisions" he said. "Over time, information can change depending on how well the animal and its parents perform.

Genomic breeding values are a good guide to selecting bulls and the female replacements for a herd, he says.

The Kitchens genomic test females and some bulls bred on the farm. Heifers are mated heifers to the best artificial breeding bull available. Every year in the past 40

Farm facts

Farm size: 650 hectares (owned & leased)

Herd size: 400 cows

Females bred: 1402

EX: 31

VG: 441

SBC: 113

STP: 27

Production awards: 703

Lifetime production awards: 80

Points required: 1,402

Points earned: 4,078



Jack and Mary Kitchen.

years they have also undertaken flush work for embryo transfers.

"Our sire selection has been a key to our herd improvement, along with utilising our best cows though embryo transfer (ET)" Ray said.

In the past six years, they have used close

to 100% of young genomic bulls and rarely use a proven bull.

"Cows are going into calf quicker and they are having less cell count and mastitis problems," Ray said.

Kitchen Farms have also invested in their feeding program, using a grazing system for half the year and feeding a total mixed ration during the hotter months; they conserve their own silage in a pit, make hay and also buy extra hay and grain that is mixed through the TMR.

"It's a bit of grind sometimes and you do feel tired and it does wear on you but I still enjoy the challenge of breeding good cattle – you wouldn't do it unless you loved it," Ray said.

Farming generation: Third generation (on this farm)

Important cow families: Faith family & Vanessa family

Favourite bull used: Informer, Shotime & Goldwyn

Current bull team: Tirano (polled bull), Sondalo, Amalfi, Chevvy (PP) Vogue CFP (PP), Vogue Nipit (PP), Peak Magicball (PP), Peak & Hermes, Progenesis Proceed

Important traits: Milk fat and protein, fertility, polled genetics – establishing a few polled cattle now. Feed saved (feed efficiency)

First EX cow: 2 EX cows on the first day – Carenda Quality Black Magic, Carenda Quality Jemima



Ray Kitchen is a great supporter of local shows and the annual Boyanup Holstein bull sale.

Encouraging our next generation of dairy scientists

Congratulations to Rachel Dickson, (Little Miss Holsteins, Terang Victoria) on receiving a Gardiner Foundation scholarship.

Rachel was one of seven regional Victorians to receive the 2021 scholarship of \$10,000 annually for up to three years to contribute towards costs associated with their studies. She has enrolled in a Bachelor of Science, majoring in animal science at Melbourne University.

Rachel – the daughter of Bryan and Jo Dickson (Emu Banks) – will be known to many members from her involvement in Holstein Australia youth activities, first as a participant and then taking a leading role in helping younger students develop their skills. She also volunteered in Timor-Leste teaching English to young children.

Gardiner Dairy Foundation, Chief Executive, Dr Clive Noble said the scholarships were awarded annually to students who have shown a commitment to leadership and personal development and who intend to return to regional Victoria at the completion of their studies. In addition, they must demonstrate sound academic achievement and having contributed to their community.

"Rural students face high costs associated with living away from home to undertake higher education and training," Dr Noble said.

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"These scholarships support the development of young professionals who may not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue higher education."

The Tertiary Scholarships program encourages students to return to Victoria's dairy regions upon graduating, or after gaining further work experience, to ensure a diverse range of essential skills within these regions.

"These scholarships align with the Australian Dairy Plan in encouraging people who have obtained tertiary qualifications to make their careers in the dairy industry and its varied communities," Dr Noble said.

After graduating Rachel plans to work in the dairy industry in areas that involve animal health.

Rachel Dickson received a Gardiner Foundation Scholarship to support her university studies.



North Victoria Heifer Classic Show: Bec and Jayke Fisher's son Max (Quality Ridge Holsteins) leading Beclan Park Tatoo Fanta.

HOLSTEIN JOURNAL ADVERTISING

Advertising enquiries:

phone Sarah Keens on 03 9835 7600, or e-mail skeens@holstein.com.au

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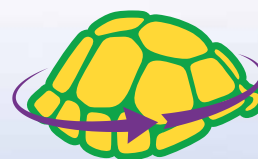
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- ✓ **SELECTIVE** - MINAZEL PLUS targets mycotoxins. Does not bind vitamins, minerals, amino acids, or micronutrients.
- ✓ **AFFORDABLE** - proven **cost-effective** in dairy cows under various climatic conditions (Australia and overseas).



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| FB1 - Fumonisin | 24.8 - 92.5 | 91.4 | 22.9 - 95.7 | 2.9 | 1.1 - 45.6 | 88.7 |
| T-2 | 7.1 - 21.1 | 69.1 | 25.0 - 61.6 | 0 | 3.2 - 8.1 | 69.1 |
| ZEN - Zearalenone | 54.8 - 63.2 | 87.1 | 10.4 - 16.7 | 2.0 | 45.6 - 56.6 | 85.4 |
| OTA - Ochratoxin A | 54.9 - 84.4 | 83.8 | 33.7 - 48.9 | 3.9 | 36.4 - 43.1 | 80.5 |
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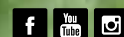
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