

The Australian Fleece Competition 2008

Conducted as part of the Australian Sheep and Wool Show, the Australian Fleece Competition is the world's largest fleece competition. Last year a record 501 entries were received from across all states of Australia and from New Zealand.

By Tim Steere

The competition, now in its 8th year, is jointly run by AWTA Ltd, wool brokers Landmark Ltd and the Australian Sheep Breeders Association. It was established with the objective of developing a more modern and commercially relevant fleece competition. Traditionally, the judging of fleece competitions has been based almost entirely on the subjective assessment of attributes that had become increasingly less relevant to the modern commercial requirements of wool processors.

The Australian Fleece Competition uses objective measurement results to calculate the commercial processing potential of each entry. The key measures of Hauteur, CVH and Noil are calculated using TEAM-3 formulas. Production potential is also rewarded through the allocation of points for Clean Fleece Weight using a schedule that compensates for gender, breed and micron. Up to 65% of all points are allocated objectively using measured or calculated results.

The Grand Champion of last year's competition was a fleece entered by CD & NM Pearson of the Glen Brook Stud in NSW. The fleece measured 16.5 microns and scored a total of 92.20 points out of a possible 100. This is the second major success for Mr Pearson, who also won the competition in 2006.

The Australian Fleece Competition, and other similar events provide AWTA Ltd with a forum for explaining the use and benefits of objective measurement, not only to stud breeders but importantly, to commercial woolgrowers. Linking sheep breeding and wool growing to the commercial requirements of textile processors provides a practical means of understanding the value of wool testing.

"This year's Australian Sheep & Wool Show runs from 18th to 20th July 2008. Entries for the Australian Fleece Competition close on Friday, 13th June 2008."



Winner of the AWTA Ltd trophy for Most Successful Exhibitor 2007 was RJ & GC Meaton of Misty Hills, WA



Last year's Australian Fleece Competition, Bendigo 2007

Royal Flying Doctor Service

Each year the Australian Fleece Competition selects a charity to receive the proceeds from the sale of the fleeces entered in the competition. Many of the fleeces are graciously donated by the competitors. In 2008, the nominated charity is the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service celebrates 80 years of service to the people of Australia in 2008. From small beginnings on May 17, 1928 when the first flight travelled from Cloncurry to Julia Creek, a distance of 85 miles (137 kilometres) to the 50 aircraft of today that travel over 20 million kilometres saving lives.

Founded by Presbyterian Minister the Reverend John Flynn whose vision it was to provide medical support to the people of this expanding nation, the Royal Flying Doctor Service now has 27 bases, and treats an average of 650 patients per day, equal to that of a major metropolitan hospital.

Today's modern service provides excellence in aero medical emergency and primary health care across 80% of Australia and is a service for the growing demands of people who live, travel and work in rural and regional areas of Australia.

Royal Flying Doctor Service Week will be celebrated from 12 May to 18 May across Australia.



Photo: RFDS

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Download entry forms and competition schedules from www.awta.com.au