



RAFF ANGUS STORMS TO \$20,000 SUCCESS

2010 Bull Sale

102 bulls av \$6088, top \$20,000, 100% clearance

By BRAD COOPER ~ Editor QCL 20th September 2010

CONSOLIDATED Pastoral Company's Isis Downs complex has secured a Raff Angus bull to serve as one of its leading sires in an ongoing bid to inject more British meat quality into their northern herd.

Isis Downs manager Alex Walsh was at Monday's annual on-property Raff Angus sale at Drillham to pay the top \$20,000 price for Raff Prime D359, a rising 24 month old bull by imported sire USA 12568988 Shady Brook Prime 251F and from imported dam USA 13119135 Hoff Moriah SC 635. Raff Angus have retained Prime's embryo flush brother for use within herd stud duties.

Weighing 930kg, with 123sq/cm EMA and rib and rump fat of 8 and 13mm, Raff Prime provoked an intense bidding duel before being snapped up by CPC, who have plans to use their new acquisition over straight Angus cows to produce terminal sires for use over Charbray females.

Mr Walsh, who said he had earlier been to Angus sales in NSW without opening the chequebook, said Raff Prime was a standout prospect that would fit well as part of CPC's leading sires.

"I didn't come here with a budget in mind, we pay what the bull is worth and I liked him as soon as he came out - his type and thickness are what impressed me the most," he said.

Mr Walsh was among a heavy contingent of northern Australian buyers, who had made the long trek to the Raff family's Mundibulanga property east of Roma to assess the draft of 102 bulls with an average age of 16 months. And through the rain and unseasonably heavy mist, which rolled through the sale ring mid afternoon, they liked what they saw, clearing the entire catalogue in less than two hours to post a \$6088 average price.

The ever-expanding stature of black Angus cattle and soaking rain made for a heady cocktail of success. The first wet sale in the history of Raff bull selling did nothing to deter the rapid fire bidding and a conveyer belt of high prices throughout the auction conducted by Elders.

In a further breakdown of the result, the top 20 lots averaged \$11,025; 18 to 27 month bulls averaged \$7627; 13 to 15 1/2 month yearling bulls averaged \$4550; 21 imported bulls averaged \$7000; 10 sons of J&C Appeal averaged \$8100 topping \$19,000 for a 2010 show bull; 8 bulls over \$10,000; 12 bulls sold between \$8000 and \$10,000 and 23 bulls sold under \$4000.

Among 76 registered buyers, eleven bulls sold to NSW, three bulls sold to Victoria and one to South Australia, with the balance bound for Queensland operations.

The top price was closely pressed by the second top of \$19,000 paid four lots later for Raff Appeal E88, by BCHA10 J & C Appeal A10 and from QRFZ2 Raff Burnette Z2, weighing 825kg, with 120sq/cm EMA and rib and rump fat of 10 and 12mm.

The buyers were Dixon Grazing, Bagstowe Station, Einasleigh in North Queensland - further evidence of the widespread geographic demand for modern Angus.

Stud principal Andrew Raff, who is increasingly assuming operations of the Drillham stud from founder, mentor and father, David, said the consistency of the result and the diversity of buyers had given him enormous confidence in their breeding direction.

"On paper our best result was in 2006 but I would rate this higher," he said. "In 2006 we released our first Limited Edition sons which topped at \$32,000 and brought the average higher but this sale across the board has been far more consistent and solid."

The final outcome produced a stunning success result of 102 bulls grossing \$621,000 to average \$6088, consigning to history's scrap heap the grim days a few decades ago when black Angus bulls could hardly be given away - in Queensland at least.

This was further demonstrated by the pattern of big volume buying, the biggest consignment of eight bulls going to the McDonald family's MDH Pty Ltd, Devoncourt, Cloncurry, for a total outlay of \$25,500 to average \$3125.

Also buying in volume were Aurifer Partnership, Aurifer Downs, Bungunya, talking six bulls for \$32,000 to average \$5333, and Topend Partnership, Blackwater, also selecting six bulls for \$29,000 to average \$4833.

Taking five each were C. J. & E. M Reddie, Zahl, Hughenden (av \$7180) and TVF Pastoral, Minnie Downs, Tambo (av \$6200).

The power drive of new Angus demand also was revealed in enthusiastic purchases by several studmasters and commercial buyers previously dedicated to other breeds.

"The Angus breed is certainly going through an amazing period of growth. We've always known the benefits of the breed and today it's been reinforced," Mr Raff said. "The brand has no doubt been cemented in people's minds as the superior beef breed and there has been a flow on-effect to us from that very successful marketing.

"If more northern people in the production of live export cattle can manage British cattle then they too will also be able to ride on the Angus momentum and chase those premiums."

"But buyers have also given our commercially oriented, heavier framed cattle a massive tick of approval. There is no clearer evidence of this than our top price bull, with his masculine head and large muzzle. His weight for age, eye muscle and carcass data is comparable to a European animal. He has triple the fat and double the carcass merit. It shows we're delivering what the modern beef industry is looking for."