

The Making of Champions Private Selection Sale



By Dale Peterson

Leaving the Deep South at 30 degrees and arriving in Phoenix, Arizona, at 70 degrees was a shock to the system. Leaving Phoenix at 88 degrees and arriving back in the Deep South at 28 degrees was even more of a shock. But the best shock of all was attending the very well organized and orchestrated Snowmass Alpaca Sale. What a grand event!

Upon entering the Corona Ranch just outside Phoenix where the event was staged, participants were subjected to a bit of Southwestern history. The Ranch is the venue of choice for all types of high end sales and corporate events. The Snowmass Alpaca Sale lived up to its reputation as an event not to be missed. There were of course many notables in attendance from the alpaca community. Also present were

some well known names from the llama community. These included Michael Pierce, Mike and Wendy Gerken, Lew and Jennifer McGinnis and Dale and Kathy Peterson.

Although Dale and Kathy Peterson were constantly in the hunt, Michael Pierce was the only successful bidder of the llama notables.

The event kicked off Friday with sale animals available for viewing and seminars conducted by Jane Wheeler, Eric Hoffman, and Dr. Raul H. Rosadio. The relaxing, educational day ended with a deli-

More participants continued arriving early Saturday to view the alpacas and to attend more seminars given by Wheeler, Hoffman and Rasadio. The parking lot began to fill and tension began to build. Most were talking in low tones with excitement about which alpacas would command premium prices. Some predicted that Snowmass Legacy Gold would be in the running to command the top bid. There were predictions that Snowmass Nova would give Legacy Gold a run

for the money. At one point many were saying it would be a toss up between these two as to which one would fetch the top bid. Others were whispering that a female by the name of Snowmass 8622 6Peruvian Hallmark would slip in and steal the sale. Still others said there were too many premium alpacas in the auction to make a call.

Promptly at 4 p.m. Saturday "The Making of Champions Private Selection Sale" started with the introduction of hosts, Don and Julie Skinner. The Skinners certainly had



cious dinner and was topped off by entertainment provided by a Mexican band that played while walking through the courtyard.

brought a first class event to the camelid industry. It was obvious they were parting with some of their finest alpacas.



Bidding started with lot A, a male and female pair, with proceeds donated by the Skinners to Conopa, a research organization headed by Jane Wheeler, to establish and preserve the true alpaca. The first hand in the air was that of Michael Pearce. Although not the successful bidder at \$52,000 for the pair, Michael was the successful bidder on two other alpacas before the auction was over

Prices averaged more than \$47,000 on the first six lots. Then Lot 7 walked onto the stage. You could have cut the tension with a knife. It was obvious that this alpaca, Snowmass Legacy Gold, a proven, fawn herd sire, was going to command a price few, if any, alpacas had commanded before. The bidding started at \$50,000 and jumped in large increments for about the first 30 seconds until the bidding hit \$350,000. Tom Simmons gave everyone a moment to catch their breath while he extolled more facts about this great male. Then bidding started again. When the hammer fell at \$500,000, Legacy Gold's new owners were Ryen and Ursula Munro of Tripping Gnome Farm and Ian and Jennifer Lutz of Cas-Cad-Nac Farm. The excitement was extraordinary as the audience exhaled as if they had been under water, holding their breath for

the past five minutes.

As the sale continued, bidding was brisk and prices remained strong. As Lot 22, a striking black male named Snowmass Nova, entered the sales ring the audience braced itself for another wild ride as Tom Simmons talked. It was apparent from the whispers in the audience that Nova was about to give Legacy Gold a run for the money. The bidding started and didn't skip a beat until it reached \$300,000. Within a minute after that, the hammer fell at \$335,000. Nova's new owner, Nancy Johanson from Alpacas of Brookhollow Farm, seemed thrilled with her purchase.

Sales Statistics	
Total Sales	\$3,958,000
Number of Lots	67
Average Sales Price	\$59,075

After 13 more lots had sold, an awesome female, 8622 6Peruvian Hallmark, from the fourth importation, walked onto the stage. The audience rocked back in their chairs, preparing for yet another tidal wave of bidding. And that is exactly what happened. We were so impressed with this female that Anthony Stachowski and I took the bidding to \$300,000. At that point Peruvian Hallmark would have been the high-



est selling female at public auction, in history. It was not to be; Jim Webb had decided that this wonderful female was going home with



him. And she did for \$305,000. With so many quality alpaca bomb shells going off the audience was in a state of constant anticipation. "The Making of Champions Private Selection Sale," will go down in history as a sale that establishes the benchmark for other sales to aspire to.

One cannot say enough about the Skinners' first class event and the abundance of quality alpacas they parted with. It is obvious that the breeding program that they have established over the years will inspire others in the pursuit of excellence.

Thank you, Julie and Don for a wonderful time and a spectacular sale!