

Northern Ireland-bred bull is crowned king of the rankings in the latest proof run

# Bally good news!

Renowned dairy breeder and NMR/RABDF Gold Cup finalist Willy Ley takes us through the new-look April bull rankings, for both daughter-proven and genomically selected sires.

text **Rachael Porter**

Like a breath of fresh air, is how Willy Ley describes the latest bull proof run. It's all change at the top and the new genomic ranking makes interesting reading. "This is the most interesting proof run there's been for a good while – there's been a bit of a shake up and there are plenty of sound bulls in both lists to pick from," he says, adding that it's always good to see a sire that you've used on your herd top the ranking. He's talking about Northern Ireland-bred Ballycairn Tiergan, a major success for UK breeding. He's top of the pile for

all UK and international bulls whose indexes are based on the performance of milking daughters. Ranked on Profitable Lifetime Index, Tiergan scores an impressive £243, up 27 PLI points as he adds 19 daughter lactations to his proof and gains ground for production, fitness and lifespan. Bred by Andrew McCollum from Coleraine, he is the first UK bull to head the PLI list for many years, and is of truly international calibre, being used as a sire of sons around the world. A son of Goldwyn, he is out of the home-bred Ballycairn Garter Tinnie VG87.



Willy Ley

"I have some cows that are close to calving and I'm hoping for some good heifers. He won't produce show cows, but he has a 'no-holes' proof. He's good on fat and protein, somatic cell count and lifespan. So I can't wait to see what his daughters are like," says Willy. Other major risers in the top 10 are the high type Guarini, another Goldwyn son with a PLI of £229 and transmitting remarkable improvements in cell counts (SCC Index -30); and his full brother Goldfire, who is an exceptional daughter fertility improver (Fertility Index 5.8). "I haven't used him, but he certainly has a solid proof," says Willy. But he has used UK-bred Shottle son, Cogent Twist, whose 15 extra lactations see him climbing into the top 10 for the first time. "I have some 12-month-old heifers by him and they're good heifers. They were born easily too, but they're big calves." Twist offers exceptional fat production at 38.9kg, the highest of all the leading PLI bulls.

### Huge choice

The only complete newcomer to the top 10 is Danillo (Goldwyn x O Man). Willy's first comment about him is that he has high fat and protein and 'decent' life span. Danillo is also the highest type transmitter in the top 10. He has a PLI of £219. "I will have a good look at him and I may even buy a few straws. "In fact there are a lot of bulls in the top 100 with a PLI in the £220 range – we're being a little spoiled for choice at the moment. When you add the genomic rankings to that, there really are a lot of good and promising sires to choose from. I'm sure a lot of breeders will feel like a kid in a sweet shop this time around." |

name	sire	mat. grandsire	supplier	production							functional traits					conformation		
				rel.	milk	fat kg	prot. kg	fat%	protein%	EPIN	EPLI	SCC	lifespan	fertility ind.	dCE	F&L	udder	TM
Ballycairn Tiergan	Goldwyn	Garter	Cogent	93	+444	+34.7	+20.6	+0.21	+0.08	51	243	-21	0.3	1.8	1.4	1.28	1.61	1.66
Lynbrook Jancen	O Man	Manat	Bullsemen.com	75	+406	+31.7	+23.7	+0.19	+0.13	55	238	-12	0.4	1.1	0.5	-0.03	-0.28	-0.18
Morningview Levi	Buckeye	O Man	Genus	82	+668	+30.6	+25.2	+0.05	+0.04	50	233	-16	0.4	1.2	1.4	1.29	0.69	1.09
Guarini	Goldwyn	O Man	Bullsemen.com	75	+505	+20.0	+23.9	+0.00	+0.09	43	229	-30	0.3	2.8	1.4	1.96	2.15	2.35
Goldfire	Goldwyn	O Man	Bullsemen.com	78	+544	+23.8	+21.3	+0.03	+0.04	41	226	-19	0.4	5.8	1.7	2.01	1.10	1.78
D Omar	O Man	Lukas	Viking Genetics	79	+488	+29.9	+23.5	+0.13	+0.09	51	226	-23	0.2	3.1	0.4	0.8	0.14	0.50
Andy	O Man	Zade	Bullsemen.com	82	+357	+27.4	+14.5	+0.16	+0.04	37	226	-25	0.7	4.7	2.3	0.93	0.08	0.40
ALH Dakota	O Man	Durham	Dairy Daughters	85	+953	+31.6	+31.7	-0.07	+0.01	54	224	-11	0.3	-0.3	1.9	1.98	-0.04	0.59
Lynbrook Oman Classic	O Man	Manat	Dovea	70	+561	+35.2	+24.4	+0.16	+0.07	55	224	-19	0.3	-0.8	1.4	-1.24	-0.20	-0.62
Cogent Twist	Shottle	Major	Cogent	95	+608	+38.9	+23.6	+0.18	+0.05	55	219	-11	0.2	-2.5	0.3	1.65	0.69	1.16
Mainstream Manifold	O Man	BW Marshall	Semex	82	+860	+33.6	+25.5	+0.00	-0.03	47	219	-11	0.3	3.5	3.1	0.22	1.05	1.03
Danillo	Goldwyn	O Man	Sterling Sires	78	+529	+24.3	+20.2	+0.04	+0.04	40	219	-19	0.3	3.5	1.6	3.5	2.37	3.13
Long-Langs Man-O-Man	O Man	Aaron	WWS UK	82	+781	+29.6	+30.7	-0.01	+0.06	55	217	-6	0.1	0.1	2.0	1.26	1.69	1.94
Co-Op Oman Logan	O Man	BW Marshall	Bullsemen.com	82	+884	+33.2	+27.2	-0.02	-0.02	49	211	-25	0.3	-2.5	1.0	1.15	0.19	0.63
Woudhoeve 1042 Impuls	O Man	Jesther	Avoncroft Genetics	78	+571	+27.1	+25.9	+0.05	+0.09	51	208	-13	0.1	3.6	0.5	0.37	-0.04	0.20
Omagic	O Man	Lambada	Bullsemen.com	74	+782	+31.7	+25.9	+0.01	+0.01	49	206	-8	0.3	0.5	2.4	1.61	-0.66	0.17
Ufm-Dubs Alta Esquire	O Man	Mark Sam	Alta	85	+531	+38.1	+24.8	+0.21	+0.09	59	203	-7	-0.1	0.5	1.8	1.26	0.29	0.69
Omatido	O Man	Aaron	Bullsemen.com	75	+455	+17.5	+23.6	-0.01	+0.11	42	203	-21	0.3	1.4	0.7	0.91	1.03	1.09
Co-Op Bosside Massey	Mascol	Bret	Bullsemen.com	83	+538	+21.1	+20.7	+0.00	+0.04	38	202	-24	0.3	2.1	0.5	1.74	2.35	2.53
Gran-J Oman McCormick	O Man	Durham	Genus	82	+269	+25.6	+14.4	+0.18	+0.07	38	202	-19	0.3	5.3	1.9	1.39	1.26	1.63
D Oblat	O Man	Morty	Viking Genetics	78	+750	+32.1	+24.6	+0.03	+0.00	48	202	-10	0.1	4.2	1.3	1.37	0.02	0.75
Gomez	Goldwyn	Lancelot	Sterling Sires	72	+332	+28.6	+16.6	+0.19	+0.07	42	202	-8	0.2	5.4	1.4	1.89	0.79	1.28

Table 1: Top 22 sires available in the UK ranked on PLI (source: DairyCo breeding+ and Holstein UK)



A major climber in the top 10 is Guarini



The only complete newcomer to the top 10 is Danillo

## The genomic generation

The young bull topping the genomic index ranking – Gen-I-Beq Lavaman – is another reason for Willy Ley to be cheerful. "I've used some straws. Not a massive amount, but it's good to see him up there at the top." A son of Man-O-Man, Lavaman offers the prospect of good production traits (431kg milk with high fat and protein percentages), outstanding health traits and the best calving ease score on the list, so he'll be an easy bull to use. His PLI is a massive £252. "He is also one of the most fertile bulls I've used recently – every straw has produced a calf. Some of that will be down to him being a young bull, but it's still impressive. And it's a good 'side effect' of using young bulls – it all helps the bottom line," adds Willy. Lavaman stands ahead of a bull with the same cross (Man-O-Man x Goldwyn) in the shape of Pirolo Solemio). This high type transmitter looks equally solid across the board with good milk, fat, protein and health traits.

Third ranking Ladys-Manor RD Grafeeti (PLI £227) is a son of Badger-Bluff Fanny Freddie, a US Oman son who failed to qualify for UK import. Grafeeti excels for daughter fertility, cell counts and overall type, and is again out of a Goldwyn dam. "If you look down the list, Semex has done well here. Canada has been somewhat conservative in recent years, but these bulls are exciting. "But it's important not to get carried away. Remember, these are young and unproven bulls and there are no daughters on the ground to look at. But this ranking should give more producers the confidence to have a dabble. "I'll maintain my careful approach – about a third of the semen in my AI flask is from genomically selected young bulls. But I think sales of this semen will leap forward in the UK following the introduction of this list."

## Ayrshire and British Friesian bulls

A red bull – Finnish Ayrshire, Asmo Tosikko – has broken the £200 Profitable Lifetime Index barrier for the first time. Weighing in with a PLI of £209, his gains come from extra production and an improvement in daughter Lifespan Index to an impressive 0.4. Also qualifying to rank on the Ayrshire list, the Swedish Red fitness specialist, Gunnarstorp, joins the elite with a PLI of £207. This bull combines an impressive daughter Fertility Index (FI) of

8.2 with a good Lifespan Index (LS) and functional type. The top of the British Friesian rankings remain unchanged with Morcourt Hilton retaining his number-one position with a PLI of £203. Lakemead Randolph stands second with a PLI of £183 and LS of 0.7 while Deangate Tarquin, ranked third, has the best FI of the top three, at 7.1.

Gunnarstorp has an impressive daughter Fertility Index

