

Genomic-sire ranking offers rich pickings

Spoilt for choice

Lancashire-based Holstein breeder and former NMR/RABDF Gold Cup finalist James Tomlinson is excited by the arrival of so many Supershot sons in the genomically-tested top 10.

text **Rachael Porter**

With so many outstanding sires for producers to choose from, it's little wonder that James Tomlinson is transfixed by sire lists, following the latest bull proof run published in August by AHDB Dairy.

A new number-one sire and seven new entries, including the arrival of several sons of Cogent Supershot, all dazzle in the top 10 of the latest genomic young Holstein sire £PLI ranking. "And they're all so good that you really have to dig deep down into their pedigrees to decipher which ones would be best to use on your herd," says James, adding that if you were pick any of them you'd be pleased with the resulting heifers.

His attention was grabbed straight away by the number-one genomically-tested sire Progenesis Unicorn, who makes his debut with the highest ever £PLI score of £728. "You can't ignore that and he is definitely on top of my wish list." An AltaSpring son from a Tango dam, Unicorn excels in daughter fertility (+14.5 Fertility Index) and SCC (-27). "His fertility score is awesome. He has a fantastic sire stack and he ticks all the boxes. So I plan to use him, if I can get my hands on some straws."

Second in the rankings, just one £PLI



James Tomlinson: "All the sires are so strong that it's difficult to choose between them"

point behind at £727, is DG Charley, the first in a list of long-awaited Cogent Supershot sons to make their appearance. And James is certainly excited about him, as well as the other Supershot sires in the top 10. Out of a Mogul dam, Charley combines high production potential (1,023kg Milk, +29.9kg Protein) with a strong Lifespan score (+0.7). "He's living up to his name with figures like that and, with more than 1,000kg of milk, I'll certainly be taking a closer look at him."

S-S-I 1Stclass Flagship, an Alta1stClass bred-bull from a Supersire dam, now ranks third with a £PLI of £725 and the second-highest Type Merit in the top 20

at +3.16. He is only beaten on Type by other Alta1stClass son Silverridge V Allclass in equal 11th position, who scores +4.24. "Again, you can't really go wrong with these sires," says James. But it's another Supershot sire in fourth place – Seagull-Bay-Mj Applejax (£715 £PLI) – that he says is his 'must use' bull. "He has a tremendous sire stack and he's +11.4 for fertility and +0.6 for lifespan. He'll be in my AI flask within the next month or two, for sure."

In fifth place is another Supershot son, Bush-Bros Deify (£711 £PLI). And high Fat (kg) transmitter at +39.7, Triplecrown Gatedancer (Alta1stClass x Supersire), now ranks sixth with a £PLI of £703. He is followed by components specialist Apina Nadal (£698 £PLI), a Rocky son from a Goliath dam.

James says that, compared to the proven list, genomic young sires really do appear to be in a different league. They now form around 55% of Holstein bull semen sales, according to AHDB Dairy, and producer confidence is growing. And with good reason: all top 20 genomic Holstein bulls exceed the top 20 proven bulls on £PLI, and a genomic bull £PLI with reliability of 65% has a correlation of around 0.8 to its eventual proven £PLI of maximum reliability.

Splitting hairs

"I can honestly say that it's the most exciting list I've ever seen and you have to do your homework to decide which ones to use, simply because you can't really use them all. Even when you do find differences, it's like splitting hairs. I really do feel like a kid in a sweet shop. We're being spoilt for choice. For me it may well come down to price – that's how good this top 10 is."

As for the daughter-proven Holstein bull rankings, James is pretty taken by the new number-one sire Kings-Ransom

Delta G-Force



Gen-I-Beq Lavaman



name	sire	mat. grandsire	supplier	production								functional traits					conformation		
				rel.	milk	fat kg	prot. kg	fat%	protein%	EPIN	EPLI	SCC	lifespan	fertility ind.	dICE	F&L	udder	TM	
genomic sires																			
Progenesis Unicorn	Spring	Tango	Semex	67	+626	+28.5	+21.3	+0.04	+0.01	728	5	-27	0.6	14.5	-0.2	1.89	2.34	2.61	
DG Charley	Supershot	Mogul	Genus	67	+1023	+35.8	+29.9	-0.05	-0.04	727	4	-20	0.7	8.6	0.7	1.86	2.00	2.25	
S-S-I 1stclass Flagship	1stClass	Supersire	WWS	67	+789	+38.7	+24.1	+0.09	-0.02	725	10	-20	0.7	9.0	0.2	2.19	2.92	3.16	
Seagull-Bay-Mj Applejax	Supershot	Número Uno	Genus	67	+748	+28.4	+26.7	-0.01	+0.03	715	7	-23	0.6	11.4	0.3	1.64	1.86	2.02	
Bush-Bros Deify 355	Supershot	Mogul	Sterling Sires	67	+828	+28.6	+27.0	-0.05	+0.00	711	-2	-13	0.6	11.9	1.1	1.87	1.84	2.11	
Triplecrown Gatedancer	1stClass	Supersire	Bullsemen.com/AIS	67	+846	+39.7	+29.8	+0.07	+0.03	703	7	-17	0.5	5.7	0.5	1.14	2.90	2.82	
Apina Nadal	Rocky	Goliath	Genus	67	+451	+33.1	+21.7	+0.18	+0.08	698	14	-17	0.6	10.8	0.3	1.96	1.79	2.18	
Mr Pre Director 57512	Predestine	Robust	King Street Sires	67	+399	+27.4	+19.7	+0.14	+0.08	697	-3	-12	0.7	10.9	0.7	1.76	1.81	1.99	
Peak Alta Trueshot	Supershot	McCutchen	Alta Genetics	67	+728	+31.8	+28.7	+0.04	+0.06	694	11	-17	0.6	8.5	0.6	1.33	1.58	1.80	
Co-Op Aardema Black Jack	Supershot	Número Uno	Bullsemen.com	67	+546	+32.9	+21.5	+0.14	+0.05	687	3	-19	0.6	9.9	0.1	1.55	1.97	2.15	
daughter-proven sires																			
Kings-Ransom Erdman	Planet	Ramos	Bullsemen.com/AIS	85	+513	+24.2	+15.2	+0.05	-0.02	645	-22	-20	0.9	12.3	0.5	0.26	0.37	0.36	
Lepacha Loberry	Shamrock	Man-O-Man	Semex	79	+588	+26.2	+19.4	+0.04	+0.00	618	-17	-14	0.5	10.2	1.2	1.48	0.95	1.12	
Gen-I-Beq Lavaman	Man-O-Man	Goldwyn	Semex	99	+276	+22.4	+20.7	+0.14	+0.14	610	-5	-3	0.2	12.7	0.6	1.56	1.16	1.39	
De-Su Rookie 11057	Bookem	Bronco	WWS	81	+630	+37.9	+21.5	+0.15	+0.01	608	10	-21	0.4	7.4	-0.2	1.56	1.78	1.81	
Delta G-Force	Man-O-Man	Jordan	CRV Avoncroft/AIS	84	+478	+26.6	+24.2	+0.09	+0.10	597	5	-14	0.5	4.7	0.6	1.37	1.12	1.48	
United-Pride Erdman Evan	Erdman	Wizard	AIS	81	+578	+26.0	+18.7	+0.04	+0.00	596	-22	-17	0.6	11.9	0.2	-0.63	0.07	-0.30	
Co-Op Robust Cabriolet	Robust	Planet	Bullsemen.com/AIS	84	+431	+33.1	+18.3	+0.19	+0.05	595	-16	-3	0.5	7.4	1.4	0.90	0.99	0.99	
De-Su Ransom	Robust	Ramos	TAG	83	+122	+15.0	+11.5	+0.13	+0.09	590	7	-12	0.7	14.5	1.2	2.13	0.75	1.35	
Tollenaars Alta Micro	Plan	O Man	Alta/Global Genetics	80	+466	+21.2	+17.7	+0.03	+0.03	589	-10	-16	0.5	13.4	1.1	0.97	-0.04	0.38	
Teemar Shamrock Alphabet	Shamrock	Ramos	Genus	82	+496	+16.4	+17.7	-0.04	+0.02	587	-17	-6	0.6	13.6	2.4	1.12	0.10	0.42	

Table 1: Top 10 daughter-proven and top 10 genomic sires available in the UK, ranked on PLI (source: AHDB Dairy and Holstein UK)

Erdman, with a £PLI of £645. “But, just because I can be so picky, I won’t use him because he’s a little low on type for our herd. He’s a fantastic sire though.” This Planet son and breed-leading Lifespan transmitter now scores an outstanding +0.9 for this important trait, equivalent to an extra nine months of productive life.

The sire in second place, however, may make an appearance in James’ AI flask, if he can get hold of a few straws of semen from all-rounder Shamrock son Lepacha Loberry.

He confirms his earlier genomic predictions with a £PLI of £618, and transmits a nice balance of production and fitness traits with a strong

Maintenance score of -17. “I need to do a little more digging into his pedigree, but he looks great.”

Former number one Gen-I-Beq Lavaman moves to third place. He is the highest ranked reliability sire. He transmits high milk quality and with the best TB Advantage score in the top 20, around 2.8% fewer of his daughters are predicted to become infected during a TB breakdown.

Wish list

Another ‘definite’ on James’ wish list is new entry and fourth-place sire De-Su Rookie 11057 with a £PLI of £608. A son of Bookem, who transmits high Fat at +37.9kg and an excellent SCC score

(-21), he is also the third-highest Type Merit transmitter in the top 20 at +1.81, the highest being +1.98 from other Bookem son S-S-I Bookem Morgan at number 12. “He really does tick all the boxes and looks extremely promising,” he says.

James says that he spends far more time looking at and ‘researching’ the sires in the genomic rankings, compared to the proven.

“Selecting sires used to be easy. But now there are so many exceptional bulls to choose from it takes a lot more thought to select the very best. But the difference and the distance between proven and genomic sires is really opening up. So it’s well worth the extra effort.” |

S-S-I 1stclass Flagship



Lepacha Loberry

