

Two UK bulls rival international leaders in the latest rankings

Vying for the top spot

Former Gold Cup finalist and respected Holstein breeder Willy Ley shares his views on the latest daughter-proven and genomically-tested lists following the August bull proof run.

text **Rachael Porter**

With a former number-one bull, offering outstanding health and fitness traits, returning to his breed-leading position in the latest Holstein bull proofs, published by DairyCo Breeding+, Willy Ley says the rankings make fascinating reading.

“The top-five bulls comprise an offering of four different sires. It’s good to see that O Man’s domination is over and there’s lots of choice again.”

List leader Guarini has earned three extra points for Profitable Lifetime Index (PLI) and this is what pushed this Goldwyn son up from number-two position to head the ranking. He continues to transmit exceptionally low



Willy Ley

daughter somatic cell counts, alongside good production and type. His PLI is £262.

“I’ve used him a lot and he seems to be pretty fertile. I’ve got quite a few cows

waiting to calve at the moment,” says Willy.

He’s also used semen from the two UK-bred and proven bulls that are in second and third place – Cogent Twist and Ballycairn Oman Pello, respectively. Twist edges up to second position with a PLI of £256, while Pello has a PLI of £252. Both bulls exceed 40kg fat in their Predicted Transmitting Ability (PTA), Twist with higher components and Pello with a larger volume of milk. Twist has the distinction of being the highest ranking Shottle son while Pello is the biggest protein improver with a massive 34kg – both against all international sires.

Easy-care cows

“The Twist daughters in my herd are pretty productive. He’s not a flash bull, but he’s great for herds producing milk on a cheese making contract. Fat and protein are good and they’re robust cows too,” says Willy. “They work hard and they’re easy to look after. I’m still using him now and some more calves were born last week.”

Willy has also used some Pello semen on his herd, again due to the good fat and protein and his exceptional milk yield. “But I suspect that his type, although good, will be a bit lacking like his sire Oman. It will be interesting to see how his daughters develop within the herd.”

Another stand-out sire for Willy is high climber Bakombre (PLI £235), in eighth place. Bakombre is a Baxter son from the same family as ALH Dakota, who ranks ninth, with a PLI of £233. “I’ve used some

Comparison across breeds

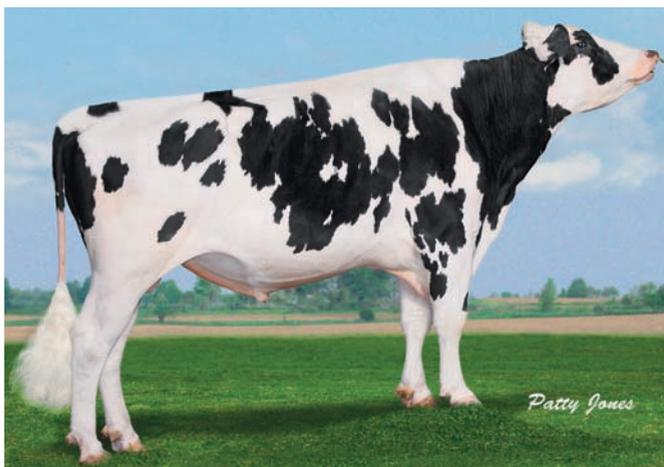
“DairyCo supplies specific conversion formulae for those who want to compare one breed with another for cross-breeding purposes,” says head of genetics Marco Winters.

“It’s important to remember that genetic indexes should not be compared directly across breeds. The

figures for each breed are calculated to relate to that breed average, so comparing figures across breeds would be both meaningless and potentially misleading,” he says.

For more information on conversion formulae please email info@dairyco.ahdb.org.uk

Crockett-Acres Eight



Pirola Goldwyn Wyman



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
Guarini	Goldwyn	O Man	Bullsemen.com	75	+607	+24.2	+26.7	+0.00	+0.08	49	262	-29	0.5	2.1	1.0	1.84	2.16	2.33
Cogent Twist	Shottle	Major	Cogent	95	+621	+41.0	+25.5	+0.20	+0.06	60	256	-9	0.4	-1.7	-0.2	1.69	0.79	1.23
Ballycairn Oman Pello	O Man	Goldwyn	Genus	93	+1071	+41.6	+34.0	-0.01	-0.01	63	252	-12	0.1	1.7	2.1	1.56	0.73	1.12
Whitm. Awesome Andy	O Man	Zade	Bullsemen.com	85	+404	+32.2	+16.6	+0.20	+0.04	43	248	-24	0.6	6.8	1.8	1.02	0.23	0.52
Morningview Levi	Buckeye	O Man	Genus	83	+609	+30.1	+23.7	+0.07	+0.05	48	248	-17	0.4	6.3	2.7	1.87	0.78	1.35
Lynbrook Jancen	O Man	Manat	Bullsemen.com	75	+378	+30.3	+22.3	+0.19	+0.12	52	243	-11	0.4	5.2	1.0	-0.22	0.01	0.00
Crockett-Acres Eight	O Man	Mtoto	Semex	98	+450	+21.4	+21.5	+0.04	+0.08	42	243	-9	0.4	12	1.8	1.45	1.25	1.48
Bakombre	Baxter	Goldwyn	Cogent	81	+758	+39.0	+26.2	+0.11	+0.02	56	235	-10	0.2	1.3	1.8	1.85	1.14	1.54
Roskilde	Roumare	O Man	Bullsemen.com	74	+365	+29.3	+23.4	+0.18	+0.14	54	233	-14	0.2	1.2	-0.9	1.22	1.54	1.64
ALH Dakota	O Man	Durham	Dairy Daughters	85	+901	+30.8	+30.4	-0.05	+0.01	52	233	-11	0.3	2.3	2.3	2.21	0.27	0.89
Gomez	Goldwyn	Lancelot	Sterling Sires	73	+394	+32.5	+20.2	+0.21	+0.09	50	231	-8	0.2	6.2	1.0	1.85	0.73	1.21
Pirollo Goldwyn Wyman	Goldwyn	O Man	WWS UK	82	+345	+26.6	+19.8	+0.16	+0.11	46	228	-20	0.3	2.4	2.2	2.79	1.70	2.38
Laurehill Classic	O Man	Laudan	Genus	94	+447	+18.0	+19.9	+0.00	+0.07	36	225	-23	0.5	8.1	1.5	-0.01	1.27	1.07
Sherdon Irresistable	Maestro	Zelati	Genus	87	+306	+34.1	+20.0	+0.27	+0.12	53	225	-4	0.2	3.0	0.2	0.68	0.89	1.00
Ufm-Dubs Ellrod	O Man	Lynch	Genus	98	+420	+35.5	+20.8	+0.23	+0.09	53	225	-8	0.1	5.5	1.2	0.48	0.93	0.93
D Omar	O Man	Lukas	Viking/Nordic Gen.	80	+376	+29.3	+20.0	+0.18	+0.09	47	225	-19	0.3	4.0	0.5	0.54	0.57	0.75
D Oblat	O Man	Morty	Viking/Nordic Gen.	78	+757	+32.2	+24.0	+0.03	-0.01	46	224	-8	0.3	6.8	1.4	1.25	0.13	0.79
De-Su 521 Bookem	Planet	Ramos	WWS UK	81	+836	+19.3	+25.4	-0.16	-0.02	36	222	-15	0.6	2.4	1.1	2.39	2.63	2.87
ABS Simon	O Man	Laudan	Genus	91	+598	+26.0	+23.7	+0.03	+0.05	45	221	-11	0.3	7.3	2.2	0.78	0.14	0.37
Ensenada Taboo Planet	Taboo	Amel	Dairy Daughters	97	+1012	+28.3	+27.4	-0.13	-0.06	42	219	-5	0.6	-1.4	1.9	1.86	1.83	2.00

Table 1: Top 20 daughter proven sires available in the UK ranked on PLI (source: DairyCo breeding+ and Holstein UK)

Bakombre and I have calves on the ground. I used him as a genomic bull and now he has a daughter proof, which has exceeded his genomic proof. So I'm really pleased to see him there and with such good figures.

Interesting sire

The genomic young sires' ranking saw a general shuffling of the pack within the top 20, plus a handful of new names making their debut.

The number-one bull is De-Su RB Moonray (Robust x Planet x Shottle), an outstanding fat transmitter (PTA fat 44.5kg) with solid fitness and type, who was ranked in fourth position in the previous index run, and now weighs in with a hefty Profitable Lifetime Index of £279.

Not surprisingly, Willy plans to buy

VJ Lure approaches 50kg fat plus protein

Among the other breeds, it is the Jersey ranking that captures the most attention, with the high fat and protein transmitter, VJ Lure, gaining 17 Profitable Lifetime Index (PLI) points to take the number-one position.

With a PLI of £218 and transmitting almost 50kg fat plus protein, this bull is also predicted to lower cell counts and improve fertility. A son of DJ Lirsk, Lure pushes the former leaders into joint second place, as both DJ Broiler and DJ Hulk have a PLI of £215.

some straws: "I'll have a go with him. It's interesting that there seem to be a lot of Robust sons coming through, particularly as he himself has only just got his first daughter proof."

As a son of Roylane Socra Robust, Moonray is one of five sons of this bull in

the top 20. Robust himself is in part responsible for his genomic sons' rise, as he now has his first milking daughters contributing to his index, which is 19 PLI points above his earlier prediction.

Welcome Armitage Pesky has also captured Willy's imagination. He has risen from number 12 into second position.

With a PLI of £274, Pesky also has the highest daughter Fertility Index in the top 10 at +7.1.

Third ranking Parile Locarno (Pierre x Man-O-Man) has risen from seventh position with solid all-round figures and a PLI of £268, while in fourth position, Rosylane-LLC Altabarney edges downwards from his former number one position and now has a PLI of £266. "Again, he's an interesting bull and I've nothing against using him. But you can't use them all. That said, there's such a wide choice of excellent sires out there now, it's very tempting to try." |

Advertising code to aid clarity

The combination of stability in the rankings and a good showing of UK-proven bulls is particularly encouraging, according to the head of DairyCo Breeding+, Marco Winters. "But with such a wide choice of sires, particularly those strong on health and fitness traits, breeders should look closely at their figures," he stresses. "It's not just about the headline PTAs – it's important that UK producers know the source of the information they're using," he adds.

"It's for this reason that we have introduced an advertising code this month, which has been signed by all the major AI companies. We hope that this will ensure that breeders receive the most appropriate and meaningful information.

"With more sires than ever in the system – some with genomic and others with daughter-proven figures – this new code should ensure breeders are aware of exactly the type of dairy sire they are considering."