

Proven bulls 'somewhat dull' in comparison with young-sire rankings

Genomic sires cause a stir

Lancashire-based Holstein breeder and former NMR/RABDF Gold Cup finalist James Tomlinson shares his thoughts and views on the latest lists of proven and genomically-tested sires.

text **Rachael Porter**

There's nothing particularly exciting about the latest daughter-proven sire rankings, is the honest opinion of Lancashire-based producer James Tomlinson. He readily admits that the genomically-tested young sire list is more 'attention grabbing', following the April bull proof run. "To be fair, April, for some reason, is never the most exciting bull-proof run. But there really was nothing that grabbed me in the proven rankings this time – it's very much 'same old, same old'," he says.

There has been some movement in the proven rankings, published in April by AHDB Dairy. Moving back to the top is Gen-I-Beq Lavaman, with a PLI of £626. Producers aiming to increase milk components will appreciate Lavaman's positive fat (+0.10%) and protein (+0.15%), which he combines with outstanding daughter fertility (Fertility Index +13.5). "He has 'jiggled around' a bit in the rankings and he's been in the top 10 for a while, as has the sire ranking in second position, Kings-Ransom Erdman," says James.

With a PLI of £622, this former number-one sire's daughters are among the least cost to maintain in the top 20, reflected in his Maintenance Index of -19. Erdman



James Tomlinson: "A genomic list like this is just what breeders have been waiting for"

is also one of the breed-leading longevity transmitters (Lifespan +0.7), which he combines with an outstanding Somatic Cell Count Index (SCC -20).

Eye-catching sire

In third position with a PLI of £591 is Teemar Shamrock Alphabet (Shamrock x Ramos). But it's the number-five sire that catches James' eye. No-Fla Emulate 30309 (Bookem x OMan) gains 40 £PLI points to make it into the top 10 (PLI £568), transmitting a high weight of fat and protein and solid fitness all round. "He's the only sire new to the top spot and he's certainly got decent type and good milk production. That said, I don't

think I'll be ordering any straws because, for me, this run has been very much about the genomic sires. That's the list where all the excitement is this time around."

James says that, with every proof run, his confidence in the young-sire list grows: "And the other breeders that I speak to all feel the same. I was cynical at first – it was sensible to dip a toe in to start with. But during the past 12 months our use of genomic sires has gone from 20% of the bulls we use across the herd to 70%.

"Once you have calves on the ground by genomic sires – and certainly once you have them milking in your herd and see their sires making strides up the daughter-proven rankings – it's proof enough for me that the genomic technology is accurate and that it can be trusted.

"You still have to make sure that you pick the sires most suitable for use on your herd, but there are plenty to choose from and the information is all there."

Eagerly awaited

Many in the Holstein breeding industry agree with James that the young genomic sires represent the most eagerly awaited bloodlines and this proof run won't leave them disappointed.

Despite the long-term leader, Sandy-Valley-I Penmanship, retaining his number-one position, with a genomic PLI of £720, there are no less than three brand new bulls in the top five on the list and many more new sires throughout the ranking.

Gen-I-Beq Lavaman



S-S-I Shamrock Mystic



name	sire	mat. grandsire	supplier	production						functional traits					conformation			
				rel.	milk	kg fat	kg protein	% fat	% protein	£PLI	maint.	SCC	lifespan	fertility ind.	dCE	F&L	udder	TM
genomic sires																		
Sandy-Valley-I Penmanship	Enforcer	Numero Uno	Semex	67	+631	+29.1	+25.9	+0.05	+0.06	720	16	-17	0.7	12.2	0.1	1.84	1.60	1.89
S-S-I 1stClass Flagship	1stClass	Supersire	WWS	67	+828	+40.1	+24.8	+0.09	-0.02	720	7	-20	0.6	9.2	0.4	2.12	2.82	3.02
Triplecrown Gatedancer	1stClass	Supersire	Bullsemen.com/AIS	67	+880	+40.5	+30.1	+0.07	+0.02	697	6	-16	0.5	5.4	0.7	1.11	2.77	2.70
Peak Alta Painter	Davinci	Numero Uno	Alta/Global Genetics	67	+665	+32.3	+26.5	+0.07	+0.06	693	7	-18	0.7	5.5	-0.2	1.81	2.11	2.35
Bacon-Hill Hurricane	Chops	Shotglass	WWS	67	+745	+36.0	+25.2	+0.08	+0.01	687	8	-17	0.5	8.2	0.4	2.24	2.80	2.95
Barbarossa	Balisto	Brewmaster	Bullsemen.com/AIS	67	+794	+40.3	+30.4	+0.10	+0.05	682	3	-20	0.4	2.6	0.3	2.41	1.35	1.72
Bush-Bros Deify 355	Supershot	Mogul	Sterling Sires	67	+810	+26.7	+25.8	-0.06	-0.01	680	-4	-12	0.6	11.6	1.2	1.67	1.66	1.93
Apina Nadal	Rocky	Goliath	Genus	67	+449	+32.9	+21.5	+0.18	+0.08	679	14	-16	0.6	9.9	0.4	1.91	1.84	2.19
Larcrest Calumet	Monterey	Numero Uno	Genus	67	+387	+23.9	+18.2	+0.10	+0.07	669	13	-22	0.7	9.0	-0.2	2.04	3.57	3.63
Seagull-Bay-Mj Solaris	Supersire	Numero Uno	Genus	68	+719	+32.4	+25.4	+0.05	+0.02	661	2	-14	0.6	9.4	0.4	1.02	1.34	1.37
daughter-proven sires																		
Gen-I-Beq Lavaman	Man-O-Man	Goldwyn	Semex	98	+346	+22.2	+23.4	+0.10	+0.15	626	-8	-3	0.1	13.5	1.1	1.18	1.14	1.23
Kings-Ransom Erdman	Planet	Ramos	Bullsemen.com/AIS	85	+515	+24.2	+15.6	+0.05	-0.01	622	-19	-20	0.7	13.2	0.6	0.37	0.38	0.43
Teemar Shamrock Alphabet	Shamrock	Ramos	Genus	82	+489	+18.2	+17.8	-0.01	+0.02	591	-16	-6	0.6	13.3	2.3	1.11	0.10	0.40
S-S-I Shamrock Mystic	Shamrock	Shottle	WWS	80	+512	+24.5	+18.8	+0.05	+0.03	574	9	-15	0.5	13.1	-0.3	0.62	1.33	1.23
No-Fla Emulate 30309	Bookem	O Man	WWS	83	+718	+33.7	+22.1	+0.06	-0.01	568	13	-12	0.4	10.0	-0.7	1.75	1.29	1.57
S-S-I Bookem Morgan	Bookem	Shottle	WWS	83	+599	+27.2	+20.6	+0.04	+0.01	565	12	-14	0.5	9.1	-0.8	1.35	1.99	2.11
No-Fla Debut	Shamrock	O Man	Semex	80	+495	+17.4	+15.9	-0.03	+0.00	559	-5	-11	0.6	12.2	2.1	1.40	1.21	1.37
Tollenaars Alta Micro	Plan	O Man	Alta/Global Genetics	76	+483	+19.8	+18.4	+0.01	+0.03	556	3	-17	0.5	11.9	1.0	0.97	0.63	0.94
De-Su Ransom	Robust	Ramos	TAG UK	83	+163	+16.3	+12.4	+0.12	+0.09	552	6	-15	0.7	9.7	1.1	2.01	0.72	1.33
Delta G-Force	Man-O-Man	Jordan	CRV Avoncroft/AIS	84	+469	+25.5	+23.7	+0.08	+0.10	548	6	-12	0.4	4.2	0.9	1.34	1.10	1.46

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

Sharing the number-one spot with Penmanship – who continues to impress with breed-leading daughter longevity (Lifespan +0.7) and excellent daughter Fertility Index (FI +12.2) – is new entrant, S-S-I 1stClass Flagship. “He’s certainly got my attention. Ordering some straws is firmly on my ‘to do’ list,” says James.

Strong cow family

Flagship (Alta 1stClass x Supersire) is the higher milk and fat transmitter of the two bulls, with 828kg milk and a massive 40.1kg fat, and has an impressive Type Merit of 3.02. “And he’s a bit of an outcross and has a strong cow family. He ticks all the boxes.”

The third newcomer is another son of Alta x 1stClass from a Supersire dam. Triplecrown Gatedancer weighs in with a PLI of £697 and transmits a marginally higher weight of fat than Flagship – and the highest in the top 20 – at 40.5kg. He combines this with solid fitness ratings.

Sire stack

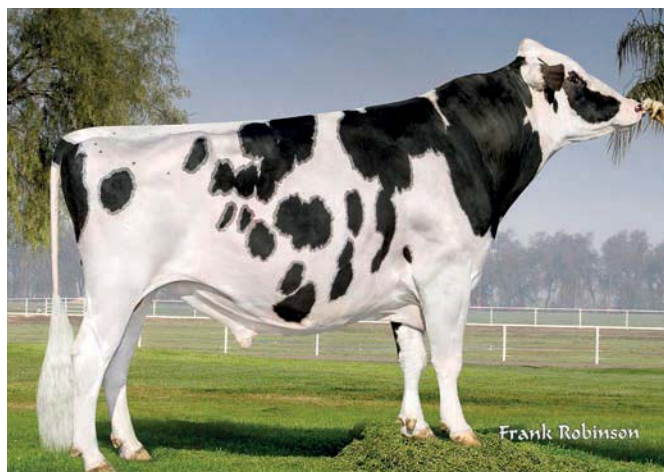
And Peak AltaPainter (Davinci x Numero Uno) makes his debut in fourth position (PLI £693) thanks to outstanding daughter longevity predictions (Lifespan +0.7). “He’s another sire that I’m excited about and he has an interesting sire stack,” says James.

The complete breeding pattern of Bacon-

Hill Hurricane (Chops x Shotglass) earns him fifth position and a PLI of £687. And Barbarossa (Balisto x Brewmaster) is new in sixth place with a PLI of £682 and has the highest weight of protein in the top 10 at 30.4kg and a good SCC of -20.

With such a variety of high genomic young sires on offer, it’s hardly surprising that more than 50% of all UK Holstein inseminations are now with genomically-testing sires. “This wide choice – and quality – is what breeders have been waiting for,” says James. “There’s something for every herd, without compromising on any of the important traits. There are simply so many good sires to choose from.” |

De-Su Ransom



Delta G-Force

