



AUSTRALIAN SUPERFINE WOOL GROWERS' ASSOCIATION INC

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ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA AWARDS 2004

Wool, finer than cashmere and vicuna, was produced by Australian ultrafine woolgrowing enterprise, The Wool Factory in Horsham, Victoria, to win the 2004 **Ermenegildo ZegnaVellus Aureum International Trophy** for wool 13.9 micron and finer.

The **25th Ermenegildo Zegna Awards** were presented tonight by Count Paolo Zegna, Joint Chief Executive Officer, of Ermenegildo Zegna Group, Italy at the Sheraton on the Park Sydney in the distinguished presence of His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, and Her Excellency Mrs Marlena Jeffery.

This is the second year the awards have included an international trophy, contested by growers from the world's major fine wool growing nations Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Argentina

The 'Golden Fleece', entered by The Wool Factory measured only 10.6 microns and earned 88.29 out a possible 100. This is a triumph for all fine woolgrowers worldwide whose highly skilled breeding programmes, developed through many years of research and careful selection, have produced ultrafine wool to rate with other rare and exotic fibres such as cashmere and vicuna.

The Wool Factory, a unique community based organisation in Horsham, Victoria is headed by CEO Tony Craig. The ultrafine wool operation's Wool Manager Ian Walter uses Merinos of Saxon bloodlines descendant from sheep brought to Australia by John Macarthur over 200 years ago.

This is a major win for The Wool Factory which commenced operations in 1983 and tops a number of successes they have gained in recent years. Selected bales have been awarded a 1PP rating and have achieved world record prices.

The winner of this trophy receives the Golden Fleece's "weight in gold" and a replica of the Swiss artist Not Vital's sculpture created in 2002 for the Ermenegildo Zegna Vellus Aureum Trophy.

The **Ermenegildo Zegna Vellus Aureum Trophy** also included an entry from New Zealand. Growers Barrie & Yvonne Payne of "Visuela" Maungati, Central Otago who won the New Zealand competition with a fine quality fleece measuring 12.5 microns.

The keenly contested **Ermenegildo Zegna Unprotected Wool Trophy** was won by well-known fine wool producers from the Northern Tablelands of NSW, The Tully Group, from "Tarrangower", Armidale with 95.4 points out a possible 100.

At "Tarrangower", Don & Fay Tully and their family run some 10,000 superfine Merino sheep, based on Merryville, Hillcreston & Ledgerton bloodlines. They are no strangers to receiving the highest accolades for their superfine wool and this win follows a similar award in 2002 and a place in the 2001 Zegna Awards.

Another highly prized award, the **Ermenegildo Zegna Protected Wool Trophy** was won by Ed. & Jill Hundy of "Windradeen" Pyramul, NSW with 96.1 points.

The Hundy family name, famous in Australian wool growing circles and worldwide, is synonymous with consistent production of superior Merino wools.

Ed's father Gus and mother Pearl established their property "Windradeen", in the 1930's in the Central Tablelands of NSW near Mudgee. Their flock development reached its first peak in 1960 when an Australian record price was paid for "Windradeen" wool at auction. The Hundy's dedication to achieving excellence has resulted in numerous successes since then.

In the **Ermenegildo Zegna V. A. Challenge International** for wool 17.9 to 14 micron, launched in 2003 in Argentina, New Zealand and South Africa, winners were Tony & Jillian Jopp of Moutere Station, Alexandra, Central Otago, New Zealand with 91.70 points for a 16.0 micron fleece.

Growers in these countries enthusiastically embraced the concept of the Ermenegildo Zegna Awards. Argentina received 141 entries; New Zealand 57; South Africa 94, well above the participation last year and organisers are confident of even greater interest next year.

In the 25th year of the national Australian competition, established in conjunction with the Australian Superfine Wool Growers Association, 285 entries were received (record 287 in 2003) from all fine wool growing areas of the continent.

All fleeces entered will be purchased by the Zegna Group and made into the finest quality menswear and accessories produced under the Ermenegildo Zegna and Agnona labels.

Since 1963, when the first regional Ermenegildo Zegna Perpetual Trophy in Tasmania, Zegna has encouraged and supported development of a finer, softer and more exotic wool product.

Announcing the winners Count Paolo Zegna said "I am overwhelmed by the keen support we continue to receive for the Ermenegildo Zegna Awards from Australian woolgrowers after 25 years and now internationally in Argentina, New Zealand and South Africa.

"Fine quality wool has always been crucial in every Zegna fabric collection. Ultrafine wool now rates beside cashmere, and vicuna, as a highly prized exotic natural fibre of fineness and beauty.

"The very exciting developments we see now in rich elegant cloths of extreme fineness suitable for all seasons are only made possible by an assured supply of the finest quality fleeces. Dedicated research and worldwide promotion of wool gives us confidence to assure woolgrowers of a secure future in this highly specialised market" Paolo Zegna concluded.

ASWGA President, Tony Gall thanking Count Zegna said "It is the commitment, dedication and drive from the Zegna company that has inspired Australia's professional superfine woolgrowers to strive for higher goals, sometimes in very difficult times, during these past 25 years.

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA AWARDS

2004 RESULTS

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA VELLUS AUREUM INTERNATIONAL TROPHY

(For fleece 13.9 and finer - Unprotected, Protected & Shedded sheep)

Winner
10.6 Micron
The Wool Factory Incorporated
CEO, Tony Craig & Wool Manager, Ian Walter
HORSHAM VICTORIA AUSTRALIA

**ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA
VELLUS AUREUM TROPHY**

AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, ARGENTINA & SOUTH AFRICA

(Fleece 13.9 micron and finer - Unprotected, Protected & rugged sheep)

PLACE	MICRON	NAME	POINTS
Australia	10.6 Micron	The Wool Factory Incorporated	88.29
New Zealand	12.5 Micron	Barry & Yvonne Payne "Visuela" Maungati TIMARU	81.55

**ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA
UNPROTECTED WOOL TROPHY
AUSTRALIA**

(Fleece 17.4 to 14.0 micron from non-rugged sheep)

PLACE	POINTS	NAME
First	95.4	Tully Group "Tarrangower" ARMIDALE NSW 2350
Second	93.9	Mr & Mrs Allan Phillips "Glen Stuart" DEDDINGTON TAX 7212
Third	93.8	Hamish & Georgina Wallace Uplands Estate

		"Uplands" DEDDINGTON TAS 7212
Fourth	93.1	Bill & Jenny Crawford "Sierra Park" VIC 3294
Fifth	92.2	SR & A Pearson "Abermala Homestead" URALLA NSW 2358
Sixth	92.1	MA & EI Mibus & Sons "Glenara" DUNKELD VIC 3294
Equal Seventh	92.0	GRB Gill "Emua Creek" WALCHA NSW 2354
Equal Seventh	92.0	Edward & Cathrine Pilley "Milandi" WINDEYER NSW 2850
Ninth	90.9	Brett & Susan Picker Hillcreston & Co "Rocton" BIGGA NSW 2583
Tenth	90.8	Mark & Robyn Tonissen "Merryvale" HAMILTON VIC 3300

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA PROTECTED WOOL TROPHY - AUSTRALIA

(Fleece from rugged sheep)

PLACE	POINTS	NAME
First	96.1	Ed & Jill Hundy "Windradeen" PYRAMUL NSW 2850
Second	94.9	Daryl & Irene Croake "Oak Hills" PYRAMUL NSW 2850
Third	94.8	Ray & Claire Schnitzerling "Kirralin" WARWICK QLD 4370

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA V. A. CHALLENGE SOUTH AFRICA, ARGENTINA, NEW ZEALAND

(Fleece between 17.9 and 14 micron)

PLACE	POINTS	NAME
Winner SOUTH AFRICA	87.89	Mr Rodney Austin "Hatfield" GRAHAMSTOWN

		SOUTH AFRICA
Winner ARGENTINA	89.50	Mr Emilio Ferro Estancia La Adela of Estancia Ferro SA Peurto Madryn (Chubut)
Winner NEW ZEALAND	91.70	Mr & Mrs Tony Jopp "Moutere Station" 3rd ALAEXANDRA 9181

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA V. A. CHALLENGE INTERNATIONAL

(Fleece between 17.9 and 14 micron)

Winner	Mr & Mrs Tony Jopp "Moutere Station" 3rd ALAEXANDRA 9181 NEW ZEALAND
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ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA AWARDS

HISTORY

In 2004 the fine wool industry celebrates the 25th anniversary of the national Ermenegildo Zegna Awards launched in 1980.

Since the young Italian entrepreneur Ermenegildo Zegna founded his wool mill in 1910 his company has been an enthusiastic promoter of the finest quality raw materials.

To produce the finest fabrics in the world he needed to establish direct contacts with markets supplying the very best natural fibres the world had to offer and in the 1920's he visited Australia in search of the finest Merino wool. A long tradition and historical connection with Australia has resulted.

Now the Ermenegildo Zegna Group is world renowned for its leadership in men's clothing and fine fabrics under the labels **Ermenegildo Zegna**, and **Agnona** in womenswear, and is one of the world's largest users of extrafine Merino wool.

Ermenegildo Zegna also uses other exotic natural fibres such as cashmere from Inner Mongolia; mohair from South Africa and through Agnona, Zegna is one of only three Companies in the world allowed by the Peruvian Government to produce, promote and re-introduce vicuna products into international markets..

The first **Ermenegildo Zegna Perpetual Trophy** which commenced in 1963 was a regional competition for woolgrowers in Tasmania (Australia) for "Superfine Skirted Merino Fleece".

In 1980 the first national Ermenegildo Zegna Award, the **Ermenegildo Zegna Trophy for Extrafine Wool Production (renamed Ermenegildo Zegna Unprotected Wool Trophy)** was launched, with the Australian Superfine Wool Growers' Association (ASWGA), for wool 17.9 micron and finer, to salute the outstanding effort by woolgrowers dedicated to continued improvement of their product.

In 1998, an **Ermenegildo Zegna Protected Wool Trophy** was added for fleeces from sheep coated to protect the fleece from the elements, dust and vegetable matter.

In 2002 celebrating the incredible advancements made by Australian woolgrowers, the **Ermenegildo Zegna Vellus Aureum Trophy** was launched for 13.9 micron and finer. This award recognised that dedicated group of Australian woolgrowers whose continuing quest for excellence produces wool of such beauty, softness and fineness to equal other exotic fibres cashmere and vicuna.

In 2003 the next logical step; a global award and the **Ermenegildo Zegna Vellus Aureum International Trophy** was launched simultaneously in the world's major fine wool producing countries Australia, Argentina, New Zealand & South Africa. Competing for the title of producer of the world's finest and best Golden Fleece, the winner receives gold in equivalent weight to the winning fleece and a replica of the Vellus Aureum sculpture by the famous Swiss sculptor Not Vital.

Another competition, the **Ermenegildo Zegna V. A. Challenge** for wool of 17.9 to 14 microns was established in Argentina, New Zealand and South Africa, inviting producers to enter fleeces in a competition similar to the very successful Australian awards.

Winners from each country receive travel and accommodation to attend the Ermenegildo Zegna Awards gala presentation in Australia.

A panel of independent judges uses ASWGA criteria. In Australia entry numbers have grown significantly since the national Zegna Trophy competition was established. In 2004 - 285 entries were accepted for judging in three categories. (record 287 - 2003).

In Argentina 141; New Zealand 57 and South Africa 94 entries were judged.

Since the national Ermenegildo Zegna Awards commenced in Australia, strong bonds have developed between the Zegna family and Australian woolgrowers working closely to improve this exotic fibre to their mutual benefit.

In the other three countries that have joined the competition recently, the enthusiasm to have their wool judged in such keenly contested competitions is already apparent.

A perfect example of successful niche marketing has resulted.

THE TROPHIES

Fine works of art have been an important feature of the Ermenegildo Zegna Awards and artists of international acclaim were commissioned to create works for each new trophy. Australian museums have been the beneficiaries.

In 2002 famous Swiss sculptor, **Not Vital** was commissioned to create a work for the Vellus Aureum Trophy and his magnificent bronze sculpture, "Vellus Aureum", a replica has become part of the annual prize. The original work was donated to the **Powerhouse Museum in Sydney**.

In 1979, world acclaimed English artist, the late **Graham Sutherland**, was commissioned to produce the "Rams Head" gouache, from which lithographs were produced to form part of subsequent prizes. The gouache, and a ceramic plate also produced from the "Ram's Head" design and donated to the Australian Superfine Wool Growers' Association have been donated to the **National Museum of Australia in Canberra**.

In 1963, Australian sculptor **Steven Walker**, who had studied in Rome and Florence, created an intricate work in platinum, gold and silver piece for the first trophy which is housed in the **Tasmanian Wool Museum**.
