



Why Have a British Futurity?

*The British Alpaca Futurity is a brand new show on the alpaca circuit that will take place at Newbury Racecourse in November 2006. It is designed to be a showpiece for all British breeders and a cracking weekend for those who attend, with show classes, an auction, excellent speakers, a dinner accompanied by as fireworks display out on the racecourse and a chance for alpaca breeders to have fun. Joint organiser, **John Potts**, provides more details.*

The British Alpaca Futurity, the first event of its kind in Europe, takes place over the weekend of November 4th and 5th at Newbury Racecourse. It is designed to be a showpiece for all British alpaca breeders, large or small and will consist of alpaca show classes, a firework display, a gala dinner and raffle and an auction.

It is open to the general public who will be able to see the best alpacas in the United Kingdom, meet the breeders and buy a multitude of Christmas presents made out of luxurious alpaca fibre.

The event is being organised by a group of breeders - The Alpaca Stud, Alpacas of Wessex, Bozedown Alpacas, EP Cambridge UK, Classical MileEnd Alpacas and Langaton Alpacas.

Australian breeder and international judge Jude Anderson will be giving the keynote speech titled 'How anyone can create a viable alpaca business' and she will judge the show classes alongside the British international judge Val Fullerlove.

Winners of the show classes will be rewarded with high cash prizes and the money is being raised by a series of internet auctions of stud services. Every week a new group of studs goes up on the site www.britishalpacafulurity.com and breeders can bid for their services.

The Futurity is a different kind of show in that only progeny from nominated herd sires can enter and the Supreme Champion of the show is the sire whose progeny have won most money.

The aim is to create a quality sale advertised at home and abroad, to set up a spectator friendly Futurity to showcase juvenile and yearling and adult alpacas and to attract new people to the industry.

Futurities are big business in the USA and Canada and act as a showplace for all American and Canadian owners. They bring together breeders who want to show off their best stock and buyers who can view alpacas bred by a large number of farms in one place and in a cost effective manner. This year's Futurity, held in Kentucky, had 925 alpaca show entries and the average auction price was \$42,000, the highest selling animals went for over \$100,000 and \$200,000 was raised for charity at the evening banquet.

There will be a small number of first class alpacas sold at the auction on the evening of November 4th plus two 'wild card' slots where animals that have been shown at the British Alpaca Futurity can go into the auction. A donated animal will also be sold to raise money for two charities, the British Camelids Association and the Quechua Benefit, based in Peru. The alpacas will be paraded at the dinner (on deep pile carpet) during the auction and will be available for further inspection on the dining floor and in the main hall during the day. The

raffle will have some enviable prizes including flights to Australia, an alpaca, a box at Newbury Racecourse and so on.

The British Alpaca Futurity is a non-profit making event. All entry money will be returned in prizes after costs are met. In the unlikely event that there is a surplus it will be put towards next year's event.

Will another show be an unnecessary burden on our season and breeders generally? I don't believe so. The Futurity is in November when a lot of breeders will already have cria reaching six months of age, all alpacas will have a reasonable amount of fleece and it provides a fillip to that long stretch between the Royal and next year's season. If it becomes a regular event it could become a showcase for alpaca sales whether in the auction itself or round the pens. Breeders will have had time to digest the season's show results and start looking at their needs for improvement and herd additions for next year

Is it a show mainly for the bigger breeders? Absolutely not! It is an occasion where all breeders, however small, can participate. There is no limit on numbers. The facility can be adjusted to take almost any number of alpacas and judging can be provided—although we don't expect to be overwhelmed, at least in the first year. We hope breeders will attend who only have one alpaca to show—or even none at all, to be able to see the showing, listen to our keynote speaker and experience the excitement of the auction.

It is an occasion for everyone to have a good time. There will even be a grand firework display before dinner that can be watched from the glass fronted 3rd floor dining suite, well away from the alpacas who will be safely housed in the grandstand building. A series of workshops will be run, subject to demand.

For more information on any aspect of the Futurity please contact John Potts on 01903 891425 or go to www.BritishAlpacaFuturity.com