



Bonny Philips — man on the land

For Bonny Philips, farm manager on the 4400 hectare Tiroa E Block in the King Country, love of the land is only equalled by love of rugby.

He says the two pursuits never lose out to each other. This is borne out by the farm's one hundred and five per cent lambing rate, and on the other hand Bonney's successful rugby trip to the United States last year to play for the Kiwi Veterans. Bonny plays for Bush United and is the club's president.

Bonny's spent twenty three years developing and farming on the Tiroa Block, and after joining as a general shepherd, has risen to farm manager of the 1805 hectare Waipa sub-block.

Top quality

The block runs ten thousand top quality romney ewes and last year produced seventy eight thousand kilos of wool. As well the beginnings of a deer herd have been established on land adjoining the ranges.

As part of the main Tiroa E Block, the Waipa sub-block shares in the station's overall nett value of five and a half million dollars, which has produced a annual dividend of one hundred thousand dollars in the last three seasons.

For Bonny it's been a challenge that

couldn't be resisted. Brought up at Makomako near Raglan, Bonny took to the land at an early age getting his share of experience at shearing, fencing and sharemilking.

He took on the job of general shepherd on the Tiroa block when he was 28. The block was then one thousand acres of grass grazing six thousand sheep with the rest of the land in bush and scrub. In 1962 Bonny was promoted to head shepherd.

Harder life

Life was harder in those days says Bonny with no electricity or telephone and petrol-powered hand shears.

In 1969 when the main Tiroa block