

Heat tolerance and evaporative cooling in goats, cattle and buffalo under tropical conditions and during exercise

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	VII
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	VIII
SUMMARY	IX
LIST OF TABLES	XVII
LIST OF FIGURES	XXII
LIST OF PLATES	XXX
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	XXXI
Chapter 1: General Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	5
2.1 General	5
2.2 The Effects of Exercise on Physiological Responses in the Different Sexes	6
2.3 The Effects of Exercise on Physiological Responses of Different Breeds	7
2.4 The Effects of Nutritional State on Physiological Responses During Exercise	12
2.5 The Effects of Exercise on Heat Production	15
2.6 The Effects of Exercise on Evaporative Water Loss	21
2.7 The Effect of Season ('wet' and 'dry') on Physiological Responses During Work	27
2.8 The Effects of Exercise on Blood Constituents	29
Chapter 3: General Materials and Methods	33
3.1 General	33
3.2 Rectal Temperature (RT)	33

3.3	Respiration Rate (RR)	33
3.4	Skin Temperature (ST)	35
3.5	Pack Cell Volume (PCV) and Haemoglobin (Hb)	36
3.6	Sweating Rate (SR)	36
3.7	Respiratory Moisture Loss (RML)	37
3.8	Live Weight (LW)	38
3.9	Condition Score (CS)	38
3.10	Animal work	39
3.11	Climate Conditions Experienced	39
3.12	Feed and Feeding	39
3.13	Animals/Exercise	40
3.14	Statistical Analysis	41
3.15	Experimental Animals	41
Chapter 4:	The Effects of Season (hot/dry and cool/humid) on Physiological Responses of Cattle and Buffalo Working in the Field in Bali	42
4.1	Experiment 1 Male and Female Bali Cattle	42
4.1.1	Introduction	42
4.1.2	Materials and Methods	42
4.1.3	Results	43
4.2	Experiment 2 Male and Female Black Swamp Buffalo	48
4.2.1	Introduction	48
4.2.2	Materials and Methods	48
4.2.3	Results	49
4.3	Experiment 3 Female Bali Cattle and Black Swamp Buffalo Yoked Together in the Field	52
4.3.1	Introduction	52
4.3.2	Materials and Methods	53

4.3.3	Results	53
4.4	Experiment 4: Black and Albino Female Swamp Buffalo	59
4.4.1	Introduction	59
4.4.2	Materials and Methods	59
4.4.3	Results	59
4.5	Discussion	65
Chapter 5:	The Effects of Treadmill Exercise on Physiological Responses of Male and Female Goats	70
5.1	Introduction	70
5.2	Experiment 5 Physiological Responses to Exercise in Male and Female Saanen Goats at Different Body Weights and Feed Intakes	71
5.2.1	Materials and Methods	71
5.2.2	Results	71
5.3	Experiment 6 Physiological Responses in Male and Female Saanen Goats at Similar Body Weights and Fed at Maintenance	76
5.3.1	Materials and Methods	76
5.3.2	Results	76
5.4	Experiment 7 Physiological Responses to Exercise in Male and Female Saanen Goats at Similar Body Weights but Different Feed Intakes (400 and 1200 g/d)	79
5.4.1	Materials and Methods	79
5.4.2	Results	80
5.5	Experiment 8 Physiological Responses During Exercise in Male and Female Saanen Goats at Temperatures of 20, 30 and 40°C	83

5.5.1	Materials and Methods	83
5.5.2	Results	83
5.6	Discussion	87
Chapter 6:	The Effects of Treadmill Exercise on Physiological Responses of Different Breeds of Goats	89
6.1	Introduction	89
6.2	Experiment 9: Responses in Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg Goats at Different Body Weights and Feed Intakes	90
6.2.1	Materials and Methods	90
6.2.2	Results	90
6.3	Experiment 10: Responses in Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg of Similar Condition Score and the Same Feed Intake	94
6.3.1	Materials and Methods	94
6.3.2	Results	94
6.4	Experiment 11: Responses of Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg Goats of Similar Condition Scores but Different Feed Intakes (500 or 1000 g/day)	99
6.4.1	Materials and Methods	99
6.4.2	Results	100
6.5	Experiment 12: Responses in Saanen and Toggenburg Goats Exercised on a Treadmill at Temperatures of 20, 30 and 40°C	104
6.5.1	Materials and Methods	104

6.5.2	Results	105
6.6	Discussion	108
Chapter 7:	Effects of Treadmill Exercise on the Respiratory Moisture Losses of Goats of Different Breeds and Sexes	114
7.1	Experiment 13: Male and Female Saanen Goats	114
7.1.1	Introduction	114
7.1.2	Materials and Methods	114
7.1.3	Results	115
7.2	Experiment 14: Saanen and Toggenburg Goats	119
7.2.1	Introduction	119
7.2.2	Materials and Methods	119
7.2.3	Results	119
7.3	Discussion	123
Chapter 8:	Effects of Treadmill Exercise on Cutaneous Moisture Losses in Goats of Different Sexes and Breeds	126
8.1	Experiment 15: Different Sexes	126
8.1.1	Introduction	126
8.1.2	Materials and Methods	126
8.1.3	Results	127
8.2	Experiment 16: Different Breeds	130
8.2.1	Introduction	130
8.2.2	Materials and Methods	130
8.2.3	Results	130
8.3	Discussion	133
Chapter 9:	Confirmation of the Importance of Sweating in Goats	138
9.1	Introduction	138

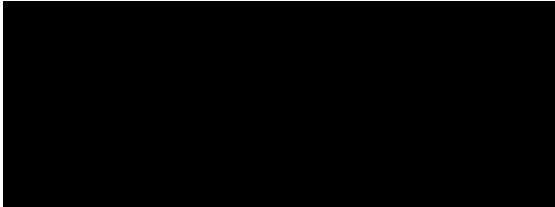
9.2	Experiment 17: Artificial reduction in the evaporation of sweat	140
9.2.1	Materials and Methods	140
9.2.2	Results	141
9.3	Experiment 18: The Effects of Inhaling Air at 45% or 75% RH	144
9.3.1	Materials and Methods	144
9.3.2	Results	144
9.4	Experiment 19: The Effects of Artificially Enhancing Cutaneous Evaporation During Exercise by Sprinkling Goats with Water at Skin Temperature	149
9.4.1	Materials and Methods	149
9.4.2	Results	149
9.5	Discussion	151
Chapter 10:	General Discussion	153
	References	162
	Appendices	180
Appendix 1	Referred journal publications incorporating work presented in this thesis	181
Appendix 2	Papers read to learned societies which incorporate work presented in this thesis	201
Appendix 3	Abstract publications which incorporate work presented in this thesis	215
Appendix 4	Departmental seminars presented by the author	218

PREFACE

The work reported in this thesis was completed by the author while a student in the Department of Animal Science at the University of New England, under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. C. J. Thwaites.

I certify that the substance of this thesis is the original work of the author and has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

I certify that any help received in the preparation of this thesis and all sources of information used have been duly acknowledged in the text.



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SUMMARY

In general, draught animal power (DAP) is provided by cattle, buffaloes, camels, donkeys and horses in many developing countries in Asia and Africa. In Bali (Indonesia), for example, Bali-cattle, buffaloes and horses are preferred: Bali-cattle for ploughing; buffaloes for both ploughing and carting, and horses for carting only. Little is known of the extent or causes of sex and breed differences in the heat stress experienced during exercise. This thesis attempts to rectify this deficiency, and reports studies on animals of different sexes and breeds (Bali-cattle and buffalo) involved in DAP in the field in Bali-Indonesia and on goats in the climate laboratory at UNE, Armidale, Australia.

A series of experiments was carried-out to examine the effects of ploughing and treadmill exercise on heat tolerance and evaporative cooling under tropical conditions. Physiological parameters, sex and breed responses and their possible causes, were investigated. Overall, it is concluded that the male was more stressed than the female, as evidenced by increases in RR, R_{ET} and ST with time, in every test condition. For example, in male and female Bali-cattle (Experiment 1) during ploughing in Bali the RR and RT in males and females averaged 66 vs 61/min ($P < 0.05$) and 39.4 vs 39.2°C ($P < 0.01$) respectively. With time, ST in males was significantly higher than in females ($P < 0.05$) at all intervals after 0.5 h exercise. There were significant differences in PCV between times ($P < 0.05$); after 2.5 hours of work the PCV decreased from 27.4 to 25.6 %, and this was taken to indicate acclimatisation.

Similar patterns were found when swamp buffalo worked in the field; the RR for males being higher than of females in both the hot/dry and cool/humid seasons (77.7 vs 67.4/minute compared to 30.1 vs 24.9/minute respectively; $P < 0.05$). With time, RR increased during the 2.5 h work period by a mean of 81/min ($P < 0.001$). RT in males was significantly higher than in females ($P < 0.01$) by a mean of 0.3°C, and RT was higher during the hot/dry season (mean values of 39.5°C) than in the cool/humid one (38.6°C). In males, ST was significantly higher than in females ($P < 0.05$) by a mean of 0.5°C. PCV decreased during work (25.6 vs 23.7 %; $P < 0.05$).

When experiments were conducted on a treadmill at 20°C in the laboratory, using goats of different sexes, body weights and feed intakes (Experiment 5), it was found that the RR and RT did not differ significantly ($P > 0.05$). It was concluded that 20°C was too low a temperature to induce stress under the conditions used. However, ST varied between the 3 sites studied: rumen: $37.1 \pm 0.0^\circ\text{C}$; loin: $36.9 \pm 0.1^\circ\text{C}$ and ear: $36.8 \pm 0.1^\circ\text{C}$ ($P < 0.05$). For RR and RT there were significant effects of time during exercise ($P < 0.01$), but the absolute increases were small (16/minute and 0.5°C respectively). Similarly, ST increased with time by less than 1.3°C ($P < 0.05$); final values ranged from 37.1 to 37.3°C . It was concluded that these increases at 20°C represented only a very marginal level of heat stress.

When goats were compared at similar body weights and when fed at maintenance (Experiment 6), mean RR after 120 minutes of exercise was 248 in males and 67/min in females. In that same time RT increased ($P < 0.001$) to reach an overall mean of 40.9°C . LST, RST and EST each increased progressively during exercise ($P < 0.001$), but although the sex differences were significant for both LST ($P < 0.001$) and RST ($P < 0.05$), values for males exceeded those of females by $< 0.4^\circ\text{C}$.

In Experiment 7 goats of similar body weight but different feed intakes (400 and 1200 g/d) were compared, and once again males reacted more than females; after 1 hr RR averaged 163.5 and 115.5/min respectively. RR values were much lower at 400 g/d feed intake than at 1200 g/d (mean values of 38 vs 110/min respectively; $P < 0.001$). In RT, the males were higher than the females in both feeding regimes ($P < 0.05$); at the 1200 g/d feeding level RT in males and females averaged 40.0 and 39.7°C respectively. With time, RT increased progressively by a mean magnitude of 1.4°C after 1h exercise ($P < 0.001$). For both RST and LST there were interactions with feeding levels; values were higher for females than males at 400g/d (both N.S.), but at 1200g/d the reverse was true ($P < 0.05$).

EST for females was uniformly higher than for males ($P < 0.05$), but the difference was greatest before exercise. During the experiments a pattern of acclimation was evident, which is consistent with the ear being an important thermoregulatory

structure. For EST there were significant differences between feed intake levels, with values being much lower at 400 g/d intake than at 1200 g/d (34.4 vs 35.9°C respectively). With time, both RST and LST increased progressively ($P < 0.001$). Before and after 1h of exercise mean values for RST and LST were 36.1 and 37.7°C, and 36.2 and 37.6°C, respectively.

In Experiment 8, the effects of exercise in goats at 20, 30 and 40°C were investigated. After 30 minutes, RR in males (164/min) was higher than in females (103/min). RR increased progressively with increasing ambient temperature (means of 39, 62 and 90/min respectively; $P < 0.001$). As previously, RT increased progressively with time, and was higher for males than females (40.1 vs 39.7°C after 30 min., $P < 0.01$). Between ambient temperatures, RT gradually decreased from a mean of 39.4 at 20°C to 39.2°C at 40°C ($P < 0.05$). RML increased with time ($P < 0.001$), more so in males than females. By the end of 30 mins of exercise the respective values were 606.5 and 375.3 mg/min. RML increased gradually with rising ambient temperature: mean values of 263.9, 310.5 and 346.6 mg/min were recorded at 20, 30 and 40°C respectively ($P < 0.001$). PCV declined ($P < 0.01$) during 30 minutes of exercise from 35.9 to 31.8%.

In Experiment 13, in which the effects of treadmill exercise on the RML of different sexes were investigated, it was also found that an increase in RR was followed by rise in RML, the correlation between the two was 0.8 in both males and females. RML again increased ($P < 0.01$) with time during exercise, and values in males exceeded those in females by 334, 381 and 418 mg/min after 20, 40 and 60 min respectively. RML/breath decreased gradually with values of 6.1 and 3.4 mg/breath recorded in males and females after 60 mins of exercise ($P < 0.05$).

Experiment 15 investigated variation in SR during exercise, and revealed that values were uniformly higher in males than females. These differences were significant for RSR and ESR (both $P < 0.05$) but not for LSR. In all cases the SR of the goats studied reached peak values of only 60-70 g/m²/h, and the fact that both RSR and ESR declined towards the end of the exercise period is taken to indicate sweat gland fatigue.

Clear breed differences in physiological responses to exercise were demonstrated. In Experiment 4 in the field, it was observed that albino swamp buffalo had consistently lower RR than black ones in all cases except for the final observation (210 min). Values in the cool/humid season were lower than in the hot/dry (21 and 69/minute; $P < 0.01$).

Albinos had consistently higher RT (by from 0.1 to 0.5°C; $P < 0.05$) than black buffalo on most days, and, as for RR, values in the cool/humid season were lower than in the hot/dry (38.6 and 39.1°C). ST in the cool/humid season was also lower than in the hot/dry (37.1 and 37.7°C; $P < 0.01$), and increased during work ($P < 0.01$) to reach an overall mean of 42.1°C after 2.5 hr. Black buffalo had higher ST (37.7 vs 37.2°C; $P < 0.01$) than albino ones. PCV decreased after 2.5 h exercise by 1.3 percentage points ($P < 0.05$).

Experiments were then conducted in the climate laboratory to confirm such differences under controlled conditions, by using different breeds of goats. In Experiment 9 the Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg breeds were compared at different body weights and feed intakes, and it was found that RR was lower in Anglo Nubians than in Toggenburgs ($P < 0.01$) by from 81 to 115/min, while values for the Saanen were intermediate and did not differ significantly from the other 2 breeds. With time, RR increased gradually in all breeds and differed significantly, and after 1h the respective values were 238, 221 and 303/min in the Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg.

Significant differences in RT ($P < 0.01$) between the 3 breeds were found, with values averaging 40.5, 41.0 and 41.3°C in the Anglo Nubian, Saanen and Toggenburg respectively. With time, RT increased gradually in all breeds, and after 1h exercise mean values were 40.8, 41.3 and 40.7°C in the Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg respectively. RST values differed significantly ($P < 0.01$) between Anglo Nubians and Toggenburgs (by from 0.3 to 0.6°C at different times), and increased gradually in Saanens, Anglo Nubians and Toggenburgs to reach mean values 38.4, 39.0 and 38.6°C respectively after 1h exercise.

Responses in Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg goats of similar condition score and at the same feed intake in Experiment 10 revealed differences ($P < 0.01$) in RR between the respective breeds, with means of 288, 235 and 125/min after 60 mins. With time, RT increased gradually by 1.2, 1.9 and 1.4°C ($P < 0.01$) after 1h exercise in the Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg respectively. With time during exercise, there were increases ($P < 0.001$) in each of RST, LST and EST, and after 1h exercise the increases were 1.8, 1.4 and 7.3°C respectively.

With similar condition scores but different feed intakes (500 and 1000 g/d; Experiment 11), significant differences in RR were found between breeds in RR, with values of 236, 168 and 297/min in Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg respectively after 1h exercise. Feed intake had significant effects on RR ($P < 0.01$); values at 1000g/d feed intake were higher by 43/minute. After 1h exercise, RT averaged 39.7, 40.3 and 39.6°C in Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg ($P < 0.001$). RT responses increased with feeding level; values were higher at 1000g/d than at 500g/d by 0.5, 0.4 and 0.3°C respectively in the Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg. RST values were also uniformly higher ($P < 0.05$) in animals fed 1000g/d; the differences with the 500g/d treatment averaging 0.2, 0.4 and 0.5°C in Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg respectively. There were highly significant differences in RST with time during exercise; the greatest increase (mean 0.5°C) was recorded during the first 15 minutes of exercise.

When experiments were conducted in Saanens and Toggenburgs at ambient temperatures of 20, 30 and 40°C (Experiment 12), the Toggenburgs recorded higher RR than Saanens ($P < 0.01$); the differences averaged 22, 34 and 55/min at 20, 30 and 40°C respectively. At different temperatures RT was also significantly different, but while RT increased progressively with increasing ET the overall difference was only 0.3°C. RT again varied significantly ($P < 0.01$) with breed, the Toggenburg was slightly lower than Saanen (39.4 vs 39.6°C respectively), presumably as a consequence of their higher RR. RT increased progressively with time during exercise ($P < 0.001$) by an increment of 1.3°C after 30 min. Between breeds, RML was higher in the Toggenburg

than the Saanen; at ambient temperatures of 20, 30 and 40°C the respective differences were 46, 76 and 194 mg/min respectively. RML also increased from 156.5 mg/min before exercise to 576.1 mg/min after it ($P < 0.001$). PCV increased during exercise from 32.7 to 35.2 % ($P < 0.05$).

Experiment 14 studied the effects of treadmill exercise on the RML of different breeds, and showed that RML/breath differ significantly ($P < 0.05$), and also decreased gradually by 4.0 and 6.5 mg/breath after 60 min exercise in Saanen and Toggenburg goats respectively. Correlations between RML and RR in Saanen and Toggenburg goats were 0.8 and 0.9 respectively. Both PCV and Hb declined significantly ($P < 0.05$) during exercise by an average of 5.5 percentage points and 1.5 g/dl respectively.

Results from Experiment 15 on the effects of treadmill exercise on cutaneous moisture loss, indicated that Toggenburgs responded most in terms of LSR; particularly in the first 20 minutes of exercise when values increased sharply to 80 g/m²/h. Then followed the Anglo Nubian and Saanen with respective values of 64 and 65 g/m²/h ($P < 0.01$). RSR did not differ significantly between breeds, but ESR did ($P < 0.05$), with the Saanen being most stressed (56.2 g/m²/h) compared to the Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg (55.0 and 50.3 g/m²/h respectively). The absolute differences were, however, very small, and of doubtful thermoregulatory significance.

The above patterns recorded in the hotroom supported the field results, in which RR increased markedly during ploughing ($P < 0.01$) to reach overall means of 83 breaths/minute. In the field, values declined gradually during the recovery period to mean rates after 30 and 60 minutes of 63 and 48 breaths/minute. For RT, there was a consistent trend for values in Bali-cattle to exceed those of buffalo by a mean magnitude of from 0.3 to 0.7°C ($P < 0.05$) during the first 120 minutes, thereafter (150 minutes and recovery period) RT of buffalo exceeded that of cattle by from 0.1 (NS) to 0.3°C ($P < 0.05$). At different times, corresponding ST values increased markedly ($P < 0.01$) to reach overall means of 40.4°C before declining gradually during 30 and 60 minutes of recovery to values of 37.0 and 36.2°C.

A series of experiments was next carried-out to confirm the importance of sweating as a thermoregulatory mechanism during exercise (Experiments 17, 18 and 19). Artificial reduction in the evaporation of sweat by coating (Experiment 17) caused RR to increase gradually with time ($P < 0.05$), with coated animals being more stressed than controls by 5 (NS), 32 and 54/min after 10, 20 and 30 min of exercise. Between breeds, the Toggenburg was more stressed than the Saanen, with mean values of 61 vs 37/min respectively. RT also differed significantly between treatments, coated and control values being 39.2 and 39.0°C respectively ($P < 0.05$). Between times, RT increased by a mean of 1°C after 30 min exercise ($P < 0.001$).

RML differed significantly ($P < 0.001$) between treatments, coating led to higher values than in controls (313.8 vs 246.5 mg/min respectively), indicating that the goats had the capacity to increase RML in order to compensate for a (forced) reduction in SR. With breed, RML did differ ($P < 0.001$); the Toggenburg being more stressed than the Saanen (320.9 vs 239.4 mg/min respectively).

When goats were allowed to inhale air at 45 or 75% RH (Experiment 18), RR was higher ($P < 0.01$) at 75% than at 45% RH (97 and 59/minute after 30 min exercise). RT also differed significantly ($P < 0.05$), with animals being more stressed at 75% than at 45% RH (39.1 vs 38.7°C and 38.9 vs 38.7°C in Saanen and Toggenburg respectively). RML at 75% was higher than at 45% by magnitudes for Saanens of 81mg/min and for Toggenburgs of 138 mg/min ($P < 0.05$). While RML increased gradually, as observed previously, the rate of increase at 75% RH was higher than at 45% RH and after 30 min the respective means were 514 and 341 mg/min. SR at 75% RH was also higher than at 45% RH, although the respective values were only 31.7 and 26.5 g/m²/h ($P < 0.05$). This result indicates that while the goat has some ability to increase SR in response to a limitation placed on RML, that ability is small in absolute terms, and is consistent with the goat being a species with "low" sweating ability.

Sprinkling the skin of goats with water during exercise (Experiment 19) led to significantly lower RR and RT than in controls (both $P < 0.05$), a result which confirms the suggestion that the low natural SR of goats limits their thermoregulatory capacity.

RML was also lower ($P < 0.05$) in sprinkled animals than in controls (by a magnitude of 41.3 mg/min), a result which confirmed the earlier demonstration (Experiments 17 and 18) that in the goat compensation between evaporative cooling avenues does occur when for some reason one or other of them is defective, or blocked. Viewed overall, the major findings of these studies was that sprinkled animals were less stressed (lower RR, RT, RML and SR) than control ones. At the practical (field) level, that results suggests wallowing, or the application of mud or wet hessian to the body of working animals, as practices that would improve thermoregulation, and thus the performance, of draught animals.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Names and chemical composition of the eight species of roughages fed to the buffalo and cattle used in the field trials on Bali	40
Table 2:	Environmental temperatures during field trials with Bali-cattle at Sangsit village, Bali, Indonesia in the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	44
Table 3:	Mean respiration rates (RR/min) and rectal temperatures (RT °C) of male and female Bali-cattle working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	45
Table 4:	Mean PCV (%) of male and female Bali-cattle working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	46
Table 5:	Environmental temperatures during field trials with Swamp Buffalo at Sinabun village, Bali, Indonesia in the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	49
Table 6:	Mean rectal and skin temperatures (RT and ST °C) of male and female swamp buffalo working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	51

Table 7:	Mean PCV (%) of male and female swamp buffalo working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	52
Table 8:	Environmental temperatures during field trials with Bali-cattle and buffalo at Sinabun village, Bali, Indonesia, in the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	54
Table 9:	Mean skin temperature (ST °C) of female Bali-cattle and swamp buffalo working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	56
Table 10:	Mean PCV (%) of Bali-cattle and buffalo working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons on Bali	56
Table 11:	Environmental temperatures during field trials with albino and black buffalo at Sinabun village, Bali, Indonesia, in the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	60
Table 12:	Mean skin temperatures (ST °C) of albino and black buffalo working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons on Bali	61

Table 13:	Mean PCV (%) of albino and black buffalo working in the field during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons on Bali	62
Table 14:	Mean RR, RT, ST of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3km/h and 20°C environmental temperature	72
Table 15:	Mean RT, RST and EST of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	74
Table 16:	Mean RT and EST of male and female Saanen goats during 3km/h treadmill exercise at 30°C environmental temperature and 600 g feed intake	77
Table 17:	Mean PCV (%) in male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 20, 30 and 40 °C environmental temperature	85
Table 18:	Mean LST of female Saanen, Anglo Nubian and Toggenburg goats during exercise at 3.8 km/h on a treadmill at 30°C	91
Table 19:	Mean RT (°C) of female Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3.0 km/h at 20, 30 or 40°C	106

Table 20:	Mean PCV (%) in Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 20, 30 or 40°C	107
Table 21:	Mean RT (°C) of male and female Saanen goats of similar body condition during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	115
Table 22:	Mean PCV and Haemoglobin concentration (Hb) in male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 30°C environmental temperature	117
Table 23:	Mean PCV and Haemoglobin (Hb) values in Saanen and Toggenburg goats before and after treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30 °C environmental temperature for 1 hour	121
Table 24:	Mean RT (°C), rump sweating rate (RSR=g/m ² /h) and ear sweating rate (ESR=g/m ² /h) of male and female Saanen goats of similar body condition during 3km/h treadmill exercise at 30°C environmental temperature	128

Table 25:	Mean RT (°C), rump sweating rate (RSR=g/m ² /h) and ear sweating rate (ESR=g/m ² /h) of female Anglo Nubian, Saanen and Toggenburg goats with 3 km/h treadmill exercise at 30°C environmental temperature	132
Table 26:	Mean RT (°C), RML (mg/minute) and SR (g/m ² /h) of Saanen and Toggenburg goats when covered with a plastic coat, or uncovered, during treadmill exercise at 3km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	142
Table 27:	Mean SR (g/m ² /h) of Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	146
Table 28:	Mean RR (breaths/minute), RT (°C), RML (mg/minute) and SR (g/m ² /h) of Saanen and Toggenburg goats with 3km/h treadmill exercise at 30°C environmental temperature	150

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1	Thermoregulation in a normal Merino lamb and a Merino lamb without sweat glands from measurements during the first week of life (from ALEXANDER and WILLIAMS, 1962)	25
Fig. 2	Relationship between RR, RML and RML per respiration in Merino lambs. The horizontal line represents the RML during normal shallow panting, assuming a constant loss of 4 mg per respiration (from ALEXANDER and WILLIAMS, 1962)	26
Fig. 3	Changes in the concentration of glucose in arterial blood during exercise at different speeds on either 0° or 90° incline (3 km/h ○—○, 5 km/h ●—●, 7 km/h □—□ and 9 km/h ■—■. Values are mean ± s.e.m. for 5 sheep (After PETHICK <i>et al.</i> , 1991)	31
Fig. 4	Typical thermocouple circuit for measuring RT and ST in goats in the climate laboratory (—— copper; ----- constantan wire)	34
Fig. 5	Diagram of the circuit used to measure the RML of goats in the climate laboratory	37

Fig. 6	Mean ST of male and female Bali-cattle working for 150 minutes in the field on Bali during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons, and during a subsequent 60 minute recovery period	47
Fig. 7	Mean RR of male and female swamp buffalo working in the field in Bali, Indonesia, during the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons	52
Fig. 8	Mean RT and RR of female Bali-cattle and swamp buffalo working in the field of Bali, Indonesia (mean of cool/humid and hot/dry season values)	57
Fig. 9	Mean RT of female Bali-cattle and swamp buffalo working in the field of Bali, Indonesia during the cool/humid and hot/dry season and during the course (days 1-6) of the experiment (means for both seasons)	58
Fig. 10	Mean RR of female albino and black swamp buffalo working in the field on Bali (mean of the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons)	63
Fig. 11	Mean RT of female albino and black swamp buffalo working in the field on Bali (mean of the cool/humid and hot/dry seasons)	64

Fig. 12	Mean RR and LST of Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	75
Fig. 13	Mean RR of male and female Saanen goats during 2h of treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 600 g/d feed intake	78
Fig. 14	Mean LST of male and female Saanen goats during 2h of treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 600 g/d feed intake	78
Fig. 15	Mean RST of male and female Saanen goats during 2h of treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 600 g/d feed intake	79
Fig. 16	Mean RR of male and female Saanen goats during exercise (mean of the 3 days) on a treadmill at 3 km/h	81
Fig. 17	Mean RT of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h speed and at either 400 or 1200 g/d feed intake	81
Fig. 18	Mean RST of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and at either 400 or 1200 g/d feed intake	82

Fig. 19	Mean LST of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and at either 400 or 1200 g/d feed intake	82
Fig. 20	Mean EST of male and female Saanen goats during 3 days of treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and at either 400 or 1200 g/d feed intake	83
Fig. 21	Mean RR (/minute) of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h (Mean of values at 20, 30 and 40°C)	85
Fig. 22	Mean RT (°C) of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h (Mean of values at 20, 30 and 40°C)	86
Fig. 23	Mean RML (mg/minute) of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h (Mean of values at 20, 30 and 40°C)	86
Fig. 24	Mean RR of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats at different body weights and feed intakes during treadmill exercise of 3.8 km/h speed and 30°C	92
Fig. 25	Mean RT of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats of different body weights and feed intakes during treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h speed and 30°C	92

Fig. 26	Mean RST of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats of different body weights and feed intakes during treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h speed and 30°C	93
Fig. 27	Mean EST of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats of different body weights and feed intakes during treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h speed and 30°C	93
Fig. 28	Mean RR of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h and 30°C, and when of similar condition score and feed intake (750 g/d)	96
Fig. 29	Mean RT of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h and 30°C, and when of similar condition score and feed intake (750 g/d)	97
Fig. 30	Mean RST and LST of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h and 30°C, and when of similar condition score and feed intake (750 g/d)	98

Fig. 31	Mean EST of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats *4Xduring treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h and 30°C, and when of similar condition score and feed intake (750 g/d)	99
Fig. 32	Mean RR of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3.8 km/h and 30°C for 1 hour (values are means from feed intakes of 500 and 1000 g/d)	101
Fig. 33	Mean RT of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise for 1 hour at 3.8 km/h and 30°C, and at feed intakes of 500 or 1000 g/d	102
Fig. 34	Mean RST of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise for 1 hour at 3.8 km/h, 30°C, and feed intakes of 500 or 1000 g/d	103
Fig. 35	Mean LST of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise for 1 hour at 3.8 km/h, 30°C (values are means at feed intakes of 500 or 1000 g/d)	103
Fig. 36	Mean EST of Saanen, A.Nubian and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise for 1 hour at 3.8 km/h, 30°C, and at feed intakes of 500 or 1000 g/d	104

Fig. 37	Mean RR (/minute) of Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h as affected by time (top) and ET (bottom)	107
Fig. 38	Mean RML (mg/minute) of Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and either 20, 30 or 40°C	108
Fig. 39	Mean RR (/minute) RML (mg/minute) and RML/breath (mg/breath) of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	118
Fig. 40	Mean RR (/minute), RT (°C) and RML/breath (mg/breath) of Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	122
Fig. 41	Mean RML of Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	123
Fig. 42	Mean RR (/minute) and LSR (g/m ² /h) of male and female Saanen goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	129

Fig. 43	Mean RR (/minute) and LSR (g/m ² /h) of A.Nubian, Saanen and Toggenburg goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	133
Fig. 44	Mean RR of coated and normal goats during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	144
Fig. 45	Mean RR and RT of goats inspiring air of 75% or 45% RH during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	147
Fig. 46	Mean RML of goats inspiring air of 75% or 45% RH during treadmill exercise at 3 km/h and 30°C environmental temperature	148

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1:	Apparatus for measuring RR in goats in the climate laboratory. A pneumograph-belt (S) and recording tambour (T)	34
Plate 2:	Papergraph record of the RR of a goat in the climate laboratory	35

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CS	=	Condition score
DAP	=	Draught animal power
DAs	=	Draught animals
ESR	=	Ear sweating rate
EST	=	Ear skin temperature
ET	=	Environmental temperature
Hb	=	Haemoglobin
LSR	=	Loin sweating rate
LST	=	Loin skin temperature
LW	=	Live weight
PCV	=	Packed cell volume
RML	=	Respiratory moisture loss
RR	=	Respiration rate
RSR	=	Rump sweating rate
RST	=	Rump skin temperature
RT	=	Rectal temperature
SR	=	Sweating rate
ST	=	Skin temperature