

MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand

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(with apologies to anyone who may have been expecting this one – seems to have been held up in an out box)

Alabaster wins in Taumarunui title defence

Taihape woolhandler Sheree Alabaster has started the lead-in to the Golden Shears next week by successfully defending the Open woolhandling title at the Taumarunui Shears on Friday.

With defending Golden Shears champion Joel Henare absent, Alabaster claimed her fourth win of the season, with a surprise runner-up in first-year Open competitor and two-times New Zealand Championships Senior winner Brittany Tibble, from Gisborne.

The winner of the 2008 World final in Norway, and teams titles that year and in Wales two years later, Alabaster now has 53 Open wins to her name, dating back to her first – the New Zealand Open championship in 2004.

Despite winning the New Zealand Championships Open final in Te Kuiti seven times, she is yet to win the Golden Shears title.

It was a good day for the family, with cousin Reuben Alabaster winning the Junior shearing final.

Raniera Whare relished the home Taumarunui conditions to win her first final of the season, taking the Senior final by just 0.58pts from Ricci Stevens, of Napier.

The Junior final was won by Ngaira Puha, of Kimbolton. The runner-up was Tyler Hira, of Onehweru, whose result was however enough to guarantee her Shearing Sports New Zealand's No 1 Junior woolhandling ranking for the season, a possible first being before both the Golden Shears and New Zealand championships.

Rowland Smith continued his demolition of the dreams of Open shearing final opposition, with his 34th finals win in a row. But it was close, the 2014 World champion beating 2012 World champion Gavin Mutch by just 0.39pts.

Mutch won the 20-sheep race by seven seconds, finishing the job in just under 17min 12sec. Third was David Buick, of Pongaroa, and there was an interesting result from fellow Wairarapa shearer Paerata Abraham, who uncharacteristically was last to finish the six-man final but claimed the best quality points both on the board and in the pens. Last to finish, he was, however, 5th overall.

Woodville shearer Tegwyn Bradley had his sixth win in a final in a row when he claimed the Senior title, by over 2pts from Stevens, Southland shearer Brandon Maguire Ratima scored his fourth Intermediate win in a row, beating runner-up Dane Fredrickson, from South Australia, by half-a-point, and in the Junior final Reuben Alabaster beat runner-up Brook Hamerton, of Hastings, by over two points.

Most of the competitors will be at the Apiti Sports Shears north of Feilding tomorrow.

RESULTS from the Taumarunui Shears at Athletic Rugby Club, Taumarunui, on Friday, February 23, 2018:

Shearing:

Open final (20 sheep): Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 17min 18.8sec, 61.49pts, 1; Gavin Mutch (Scotland/Whangamomona) 17min 11.88sec, 61.834pts, 2; David Buick (Pongaroa) 17min 32.75sec, 62.938pts, 3; Mark Grainger (Te Kuiti) 17min 39.29sec, 63.015pts, 4; Paerata

Abraham (Masterton) 18min 46.08sec, 64.904pts, 5; John Kirkpatrick (Napier) 18min 0.21sec, 69.111pts, 6.

Senior final (10 sheep): Tegwyn Bradley (Woodville) 11min 37.99sec, 44.5pts, 1; Ricci Stevens (Napier) 12min 21.38sec, 46.969pts, 2; Connor Puha (Kimbolton) 12min 7.15sec, 50.158pts, 3; Jade Maguire Ratima 12min 41.98sec, 50.299pts, 4; Sean Gouk (Masterton) 12min 21.6sec, 50.98pts, 5; Logan Burton (Taumarunui) 13min 9.99sec, 52.5pts, 6.

Intermediate final (5 sheep): Brandon Maguire Ratima (Winton) 7min 31.7sec, 30.985pts, 1; Dane Fredrickson (South Australia) 8min 1.75sec, 31.488pts, 2; Jeremy Leygonie (France) 7min 20.488sec, 31.844pts, 3; Ruka Braddick (Eketahuna) 7min 6.16sec, 33.308pts, 4; Jayden Paul (Taumarunui) 6min 34.63sec, 33.532pts, 5; Liam Lowry (Glen Murray) 8min 13.45sec, 38.873pts, 6.

Junior final (4 sheep): Reuben Alabaster (Taihape) 7min 4.29sec, 30.215pts, 2; Brook Hamerton (Ruawai/Hastings) 7min 22.47sec, 32.624pts, 2; Jonathan Painter (Pahiatua) 8min 10.7sec, 34.035pts, 3; Liam Pritchard (Pongaroa) 8min 30.09sec, 35.755pts, 4; Daniel Biggs (Mangamahu) 8min 50.19sec, 39.769pts, 6.

Woolhandling:

Open final: Sheree Alabaster (Taihape) 28.75pts, 1, Brittany Tibble (Gisborne) 40.344pts, 2; Logan Kamura (Marton) 40.66pts, 3; Pagan Karauria (Alexandra) 41.41pts, 4; Anita Phillips (Taumarunui) 49.762pts, 5.

Senior final: Raniera Whare (Taumarunui) 31.95pts, 1; Ricci Stevens (Napier) 32.53pts, 2; Angela Stevens (Napier) 41.22pts, 3; Bianca Hawea (Masterton) 57.1pts, 4; Azuredee Paku (Masterton) 57.59pts, 5.

Junior final: Ngaira Puha (Kimbolton) 37.97pts, 1; Tyler Hira (Onewhero) 47.8pts, 2; Taylor Ham (Taumarunui) 51.968pts, 3; Whakapunaki Maraki (Flaxmere) 52.09pts, 4; Lee George (Piopio) 64.6pts, 5.

Doug Laing
Media Officer
Shearing Sports New Zealand
Ph 0274-690644
media@shearingsports.co.nz

Website: www.shearingsports.co.nz