

MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand
October 28, 2017

Australia wins first test in Bendigo

The New Zealand shearing team has again had to bow to Australian supremacy on the western side of the Tasman in losing the first test of the 2017-2018 transtasman series.

Shearing last night on the first day of the Australian National Shearing and Woolhandling Championships in Bendigo, Vic., the Australian team of Shannon Warnest, of Willalooka, S.A., Jason Wingfield, of Cobram., Vic, and Daniel McIntyre, of Glen Innes, NSW, all beat Kiwi shearers John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, Rowland Smith, from Northland and now based at Maraekakaho, near Hastings, and Troy Pyper, of Winton.

Led by Wingfield, shearing the sheep 12 sheep (six merino wethers and six crossbred ewes) in 18 minutes, four minutes ahead of last-men-off Kirkpatrick and Smith, the Australians were the first three to finish, posted the three best sets of shearing board points, and Warnest and McIntyre had the two best sets of points in judging in the pens.

Australia thus claimed a win by a wide margin of 43.2pts, bouncing back from defeat at the Golden Shears in Masterton in March but extending to seven the number of Australian home wins since the black singlets last won a test in Australia in 2010.

While Wingfield was first to finish, in his 17th transtasman test, it was McIntyre who claimed the best individual points overall, for the fourth time in his eight consecutive tests. He was just 1.2pts ahead of legendary two-times World champion and Merinos guru Warnest who has shorn 30 transtasman tests, the last 28 in a row since 2004 and including being top individual at least 15 times.

The best of the New Zealanders was new World champion Kirkpatrick, shearing in the series for a 13th time since first making the team in 2002.

Pyper, the quickest of the Kiwis, was in his third transtasman test, and 2014 World champion and reigning Golden Shears and New Zealand Opens champion Smith, who dominated the last match in an all-conquering night in Masterton seven months ago, was in his fifth test in the series.

Despite the defeat last night, New Zealand was the favourite for today's woolhandling and blades shearing tests.

Result of the 62nd Transtasman machine shearing test in Bendigo, Vic., on Friday, October 27, 2017 (six merino wethers, six crossbred lambs): Australia 247.47pts (Daniel McIntyre 19min 41sec, 80.8pts; Shannon Warnest 20mins, 81.92pts; Jason Wingfield 18min, 84.75pts, 3) beat New Zealand 290.67pts (John Kirkpatrick 21min 59sec, 93.87pts; Troy Pyper 20min 11sec, 101.75pts; Rowland Smith 22mins, 101.75pts) by 43.2pts.

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For further information:

Doug Laing

Media Officer

Shearing Sports New Zealand

Ph 0274-690644

media@shearingsports.co.nz

Website: www.shearingsports.co.nz