

MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand  
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Kiwis win woolhandling and blades shears tests

New Zealand's best woolhandlers and blade shearers have taken payback by winning their transtasman test matches during the Australian national shearing and woolhandling championships in Bendigo.

In the two tests last night the World woolhandling champion New Zealand team of Gisborne pair Joel Henare and Maryanne Baty beat Australians Mel Morris and Sophie Huf, while South Canterbury blades shearers and World championships runners-up Tony Dobbs and Phil Oldfield wore their black singlets to triumph over the established Australian pairing of John Dalla and Ken French.

Both wins were by about seven points, and restored some Kiwi honour after Shearing Sports New Zealand shearers Rowland Smith, John Kirkpatrick and Troy Pyper were beaten by Australian team Daniel McIntyre, Shannon Warnest and Jason Wingfield by more than 40 points in the machine shearing test.

New Zealand has now won 39 of the 38 transtasman woolhandling tests since 1998, and all nine blades shearing tests since regular transtasman contests in the historic craft began in 2010. Australia has a 32-30 advantage in the machines tests since a regular home-and-away series started in 1974.

The blades win completed a double after Dobbs and Oldfield won their first test at Waimate on October 14, but the second of the season's machine shearing and woolhandling tests will be held at the Golden Shears in Masterton in March.

Meanwhile, Henare moved a step closer to a career tally of 100 Open-class wins by winning the Bendigo Open woolhandling final, taking his total to 94, while Geraldine blades shearer Allan Oldfield was runner-up to French in the Bendigo Blades final, beating both Dobbs, who was third, and father Phil, who was fifth.

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