

MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand,
April 6, 2018

PHOTO: Waikato woolhandler Tyler Hira, of Onewhero, who secured Shearing Sports New Zealand's No 1 Junior woolhandling ranking for the season more than a month before the last competition. She was pictured after winning the New Zealand Spring Shears title at Waimate in October.
PHOTO/Doug Laing SSNZ

Shearing sports annual rankings awards

New Zealand's most successful and committed shearers and woolhandlers of the 2017-2018 season will be recognised in presentations to the top-ranked competitors in each of the grades as the season draws to a close at the national championships today and tomorrow (Friday and Saturday).

The rankings process has been used for about 25 years, to recognise not just the best performances but also the commitment by way of the numbers of events contested by the shearers and woolhandlers.

With a small number of cancellations caused by bad weather, there were 57 shows during the season. With the month of December and the first weekend of January off, mainly because of the heavy workload in woolsheds at that time of the year throughout the country, the 57 shows spanned 26 weeks, from the first show at Alexandra at the start of October to the current championships in Te Kuiti..

They were held at 58 different venues (shearing and woolhandling held separately at one show), the venues including woolsheds, shearing pavilions, sports stadiums, and town hall and community centres.

They've varied from tiny remote settlements such as Ward and Tuapeka in the South Island, and Aria and Paparoa in the North, to the Canterbury Show in Christchurch and the Royal Easter Show in Auckland, from small A and P shows to stand-alone events such as Masterton's World-famed Golden Shears and Te Kuiti's New Zealand championships in the North Island and in the South Island the Otago Shears in Balclutha and the Southern Shears in Gore.

Machine shearing was held at 56 of the shows, and woolhandling at 23, including one dedicated only to woolhandling.

Many competitors, and judges, have travelled thousands of kilometres and spent thousands of dollars to follow their sport, far from being just a walk down to the local park for a game of cricket on Saturday afternoon.

As the records of the top ranked competitors show some have competed on almost every weekend, and in more than a third of the competitions.

The rankings cover the Open, Senior, Intermediate and Junior classes in shearing and Open, Senior and Junior classes in woolhandling.

Three of the categories were particularly close, with the outcomes only being determined during the New Zealand championships. But the top Junior woolhandler was decided more than a month ago as Waikato competitor Tyler Hira, of Onewhero, took an unassailable lead with a series of 14 pre-Golden Shears finals from the Central North Island to Winton, Lumsden and Gore in Southland.

The first presentations will take place at the championships during the Friday night prizegiving ceremonies, starting about 9.30pm today.

Blade shearing is contested only in the South Island, where Timaru's Mike McConnell was presented with the Mark Marshall Memorial Trophy as Blade Shearer of the Year for the first time at the Mackenzie Shears in Fairlie on Easter Monday.



THE SHEARS 2017 ❁
Handling / Vale Terrace
HANDLING - 1ST

Kathmandu

