

## MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand  
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### CAPTION

Napier shearer Ricci Stevens on Saturday night in Te Kuiti adding the New Zealand Senior shearing title to the woolhandling title he won two days earlier. PHOTO/Doug Laing SSNZ

Stevens' double double at NZ Shears

Napier shearer Ricci Stevens completed a unique double of doubles on Saturday night when he won a New Zealand Senior Senior title final which would almost inevitably have its own special place in shearing sports history whomever won.

The 26-year-old had also on Thursday won the Senior woolhandling title, having also previously won the Junior titles in both aspects of the shearing sports – shearing in 2015 and woolhandling last year.

No other competitor has won New Zealand championships titles in both shearing and woolhandling.

The runner-up was King Country-based Catherine Mullooly, who as a Junior on the same stage in 2014 became the first woman to be named top-ranked competitor in any grade of shearing and who last night was just 1.145pts from becoming the first female Senior winner since the championships were first held as the King Country Shears in 1985.

Third place went to South Island-based Luis Pincol, from Chile, just 2.211pts from scoring the biggest-ever win by a shearer from South America.

The shape of the Senior final changed dramatically when top-ranked Tegwyn Bradley, of Woodville, winner of 14 other finals during the season including the Golden Shears, was eliminated in the semi-finals on Saturday afternoon.

Son-in-law of 2017 World champion and employer John Kirkpatrick, Stevens made his intentions clear, more than 20 seconds clear of nearest challengers Mullooly and Pincol through the halfway stage and ultimately shearing the 12 sheep in 13min 58.38sec, half-a-minute clear of eventual second-man-off and Gore-based fourth placegetter Lionel Taumata, from Taumarunui.

Mullooly was third to finish, in 13min 31.28sec, and was by more than a point the best shearer in the board judging, but suffered in the judging in the pens afterwards.

The 2017 Intermediate champion, Masterton-based Sean Gouk was fifth, and sixth was Whakapunaki (Naki) Maraki, of Flaxmere, who on Thursday was fourth in the Junior woolhandling final won by partner Ngaira Puha.

Stevens has the choice of going up to Open grade in both shearing and woolhandling next season, but is still just short of the threshold for upgrading.

