

Caption

The quagmire and near stranded vehicles at the Arapohue Show on Saturday. The shearing continued regardless. PHOTO/SUPPLIED

Damn the weather, but Hey, this is a rural show

The shearing section of the Northern Wairoa A and P Association's Arapohue Show on Saturday came through with flying colours, despite the rain that made it almost impossible to get in or out.

At least 50mm of rain fell on areas around the showgrounds south of Dargaville but not even the quagmire it created nor the incapacitation of shearing organiser Kevin Boyd, suffering an injured shoulder, could break the will of the tiny community in making sure the their 126th show went on.

It had only ever been cancelled twice, said show president Richard Alspach, who wasn't about to see the next demise on his watch.

"We had a discussion on Friday, and we said: "This is a rural show. We will have a show," he said.

"It was atrocious conditions, it was an absolute bog," he said, telling how three tractors were used hauling trucks in and out, including those carrying the sheep.

But the woolly ones were dry, and stayed dry, much due, Mr Alspach said, to the efforts of organiser's daughter Danielle Boyd, who was to get some reward during the day by winning the Junior event. "The organisers of the shearing did a marvellous job."

Of particular importance was that there was no disruption to the ANZ Northland Shearing Championship, the new teams competition aimed at bolstering show entries in the north.

Although two of the teams were absent in apparent anticipation of a rain-off, there were still 21 shearers who found shelter on the stands of the open-sided boar and kept on despite the lack of spectators.

"I don't think this would have happened in a city," said Mr Alspach as he recounted the community resilience. "They pitched-in, had a laugh, and got on with it."

Neville Osborne, of Dargaville, won the Open final, repeating his win of

a week earlier at Paparoa, as did Wellsford's Alan Boler in the Intermediate grade. The Senior final was won by Dan Berger, of Ahuroa, southwest of Warkworth.

It was through the Northern Wairoa society that the Northland championship was mooted, staff from ANZ being among the few watching on Saturday who were not shearers or judges.

Dargaville branch commercial and agricultural relationship manager Stacey Beattie said the ANZ had been a sponsor of the Dairy Section at Arapohue for "a number of years."

"As part of this sponsorship we were approached by the committee of the A & P Show seeking similar sponsorship for their shearing competition," he said.

"Competitive shearing has been an important part of the A & P Shows for decades," he said. "However as the sheep numbers have declined, so too have the shearers, and shearers have tended to support their local shows but were less inclined to travel to neighbouring shows."

"ANZ saw the importance of shearing in the Northland economy and the role of competition in promoting quality shearing and excellence in the profession," he said. "We see our involvement in line with our support of local farmers within the industry."

He said that already show entries in the region had doubled, and he said: "It has been great to see the competition encourage new shearers to give it a go and to be part of a team. There is some good rivalry between the shows."

RESULTS from the Northern Wairoa A and P Show at Arapohue on Saturday, February 10, 2018:

Open final (12 sheep): Neville Osborne (Dargaville) 15min 40sec, 55.93pts, 1; Gary Rix (Dargaville) 17min 59sec, 66.37pts, 2; Ralph Smith (Dargaville) 22min 10sec, 76.58pts, 3.

Senior final (8 sheep): Dan Berger (Ahuroa) 11min 18sec, 40.15pts, 1; Lee Cheyne (Waitemarimu) 12min 31sec, 45.3pts, 2; Paikea Waller (Dargaville) 12min 30sec, 46.37pts, 3.

Intermediate final (5 sheep): Alan Boler (Wellsford) 7min 42sec, 31.1pts, 1; Courtney Flower (Dargaville) 8min 3sec, 35.35pts, 2; Jayden Mainland (Wellsford) 7min 51sec, 36.35pts, 3.

Junior final (3 sheep): Danielle Boyd (Dargaville) 6min 22sec, 30.44pts, 1; Paul Finlayson (Kai Iwi Lakes) 5min 29sec, 45.45pts, 2; Pania Piwari (Omahu) 8min 8sec, 48.4pts, 3.

Noviuce final (2 sheep): William Titford (Upper Wairewa) 8min 23sec, 43.15pts, 1; Annette Boyd (Dargaville) 7min 42sec, 53.6pts, 2; Adam Dale (Middlemarch) 9min 49sec, 56.95pts, 3.

Veterans final (3 sheep): Ralph Smith (Dargaville): 5min 5sec, 23.25pts, 1; Steve Coop (Wellsford) 6min 43sec, 27.15pts, 2; Gary Rix (Dargaville) 6min 40sec, 36.34pts, 3.

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

Website: www.shearingsports.co.nz

