

Aussie stint made it for new Kiwi shearing hero - December 22 2010

An unbroken run of 79 days shearing in West Australia earlier this year proved the making of the man as King Country shearer Stacey Te Huia came back from a failed World eight-hour ewe-shearing record last January to smash the record today despite torrential rain outside and a 40-minute power cut.

Te Huia, a 32-year-old "happily single" father of two shorn 603 strong-wooled predominantly romney flock to smash the previous record by 25 at Mocketenui Station, between home-town Te Kuiti and Benneydale.

First to congratulate him was Far North shearer Matthew Smith who had shorn the previous record of 578 near Te Pohue, Hawke's Bay, on January 15.

Te Huia missed-out by five sheep in a bid for the record just four days after Smith's effort, and said today that while at the time he did not want to think about another record, he had waited 11 months to get the record back in the family.

Older brother Hayden held the record at 495 for nine years after a day's shearing at Marton in 1999 when the pair set a two-stand record, which ironically is being tackled by Smith's brothers, Doug and Rowland, at Te Pohue, on January 11.

Te Huia, of Maniapoto and Tuwharetoa descent on the sides of both father Dean and mother Jo, said a troubled back had limited his serious training for last summer's attempt to about four months.

Based with Jury Shearing at Kojonup in West Australia from August to the start of November, he not only worked his marathon 79 days, but also ran the roads for an hour before each day in the shed, and did an hour in the gym each night.

"It helped the endurance," he reckoned, as he drooled over his first beer in eight months. He couldn't wait to get the latest record bid out of the way, and was unworried by the rain that had prevailed for much of the last week, nor a power cut with the race almost won and the fourth and final two-hour run about to start at 3pm.

Contractors Michael Cornelius and Mal McQuilkin, from The Lines Co in Te Kuiti, raced more than 20km to the woolshed and discovered an easily-fixed pole fuse fault a few metres from the woolshed. More to the relief of over 100 supporters than the challenger the run-home was soon back on, albeit 40 minutes late.

"I wasn't worried at all," said Te Huia, who had started at 7am and posted 146 in the first two hours to morning smoko, three down on Smith's opening run 11 months ago. But with 39 in less than half an hour just before the break he was into a groove in



Stacey Te Huia, 30 of Te Kuiti, during attempt on World solo eight-hours strongwool shearing record today at Mocketenui Station, Mangapehi, on State Highway 30, between Te Kuiti and Benneydale. Te Huia is chasing a record of 578 and was comfortably on target with 451 shorn and two hours to go. The attempt finishes at 5pm.



Stacey Te Huia quenches the thirst moments after finishing with anew record of 603 ewes in eight hours



The judges (from left) Hugh McCarroll, of Tauranga, Ralph Blue, of Dubbo, NSW, Paul Harris, of Waipara, North Canterbury, and Ian Buchanan, of Te Kuiti.

than half an hour just before the break he was into a groove in which he remained, setting a run record of 152 in the two hours to lunch, going one better with 153 after the meal, and coming home with another 152 to the eventual finish at 5.40pm.

The quality on the sheep, estimated to have averaged about 55kg each and carrying an average of over 3kg of wool each, was among the better seen in record attempts, and no sheep were rejected by World Sheep Shearing Records Society judges Ralph Blue, of Dubbo, NSW, Paul Harris, of Waipara in North Canterbury, Hugh McCarroll, of Tauranga, and Ian Buchanan, of Te Kuiti.

Te Huia, from a family of shearers, had the best of support as he flailed his new Lister Nitro handpiece - shorter and lighter, said the experts. Among those managing the attempt were icon David Fagan, on the 18th anniversary of the day he shored a nine-hour lambs record of 810 in Southland in 1992. Te Huia's woolhandlers were Worlds teams champions Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, and Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu and Te Kuiti, assisted by Hannah Neal, of Te Kuiti.

names of judges, Peter Canterbury, and Ian Buchanan, of Te Kuiti.



Hawke's Bay-based Far North shearer Matthew Smith moves in immediately to congratulate new World ewes shearing record holder Stacey Te Huia. Smith set the eight-hour record of 578 but yesterday saw Te Huia set a new mark of 603 at Motekenui, east of Te Kuiti.

Shearer's plea: Rain, rain, go away... - December 19 2010

The pre-Christmas wet providing relief for some North Island farmers couldn't have come at a worse time for King Country shearer Stacey Te Huia as he prepares for unfinished business in his second tilt at the World eight-hour ewe-shearing record on Wednesday[December 22].

It has been "pissing down," the 30-year-old said in a lunch break while working in a woolshed near Otorohanga today[sunday].

The sheep being prepared for the record bid at Motekenui Station, near Benneydale, are wet and the wait is on to see if they will be dry in time for a wool-weigh on Tuesday afternoon, when the fleeces shorn before the judges must not average less than 3kg a sheep.

With the rain expected to ease but dampness adding to the weight of the fleeces, the record could be delayed a day, or until after Christmas.

"Not Christmas Day," Te Huia said. "Wouldn't get the support. No one would be able to come."

Challenging the record of 578 set by Hawke's Bay-based Far North shearer Matthew Smith at Waitara Station, near Te Pohue, Hawke's Bay, on January 15 this year, and having almost claimed the mark with 573 just four days later, Te Huia knows he has a chance and has roped-in big support, with World teams woolhandling champions Sheree Alabaster and Keryn Herbert among the woolhandlers.

Father Dean Te Huia and Te Kuiti contractor Neil Fagan are managing the attempt, but numerous others are also helping as the shearer tries to get the record back in the family, older brother Hayden having once been the man for seven years with a tally of 495, part of a two-stand record set by the siblings at Marton in 1999, when Stacey Te Huia was just 19 years old.

He thought his days chasing records were over when he fell short in his bid at Motekenui last January, and said: "I wanted nothing more to do with it."

A "mate" got him interested again by suggesting a flock "up north" was record-breaking material, Te Huia started specialised training in May, and now he's back at the Motekenui woolshed, at Mangapehi on State Highway 30 between Te Kuiti and Benneydale.

The station is already in the World Sheep Shearing Records Society books for the glamour nine-hour lamb and ewe records set by Hawke's Bay guns Dion King and Rodney Sutton respectively just three weeks apart in January 2007, and the women's eight-hours solo and two-stand lambs records almost two years later by university graduate Ingrid Baynes and mother Marg, a Wairoa farmer.

Starting at 7am and shearing four two-hour runs, with half-hour breaks for morning and afternoon smoko and an hour for lunch, Te Huia will have to average more than 18 sheep a quarter-hour, and will be hoping first to emulate the start Smith got in his first run which ended with 149 on the board - a sheep better for every 15 minutes than the pace set by previous record holder Jimmy Clark when he shored 560 in Southland in January 2008.

Smith was able to moderate his pace for the rest of the day, shearing 143 in each of the other three runs and claiming the record with more than a quarter-hour to go.

Te Huia says he's given no thought to what's next if he breaks the record, or whether he would challenge Sutton's nine-hour record of 721 (averaging over 20 sheep a quarter-hour).

"We've got to get these sheep dry first," he said.

For updates on the day, [go here](#).

Speedshear singlets auction closes Sunday night - December 16 2010

Two singlets from last weekend's Shearing Sports Charity Speedshear are set to well over \$500 more to the Mayoral Fund for families of the Pike River mining tragedy victims as a result of bidding on on-line auction site Trademe.

The singlets are signed by all 10 of the shearers who took part in the Speedshear at Dawson's Hotel in Reefton, raising more than \$12,000 from sponsorship, door takings and auctions on the night.

The on-line auctions close on Sunday night, and late today bidding on one of the singlets had hit \$255.

The shearers who signed the singlets include four World champions, and six of the 10 have held World tally records. They are headed by five-times World individual champion and Speedshear winner David Fagan, of Te Kuiti and who posted the fastest time in the Speedshear which gathered many of the top shearers in New Zealand at just a few days' notice. The other World title winners among them were 1984 champion and Darfield-based Scotsman Tom Wilson, 1994 champion Alan MacDonald, of Pio Pio, and new champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa. The others shearers were Darin Forde, of Winton, Digger Balme, of Te Kuiti, Grant Smith, of Rakaia, Grant Lundie, from Scotland, Sam Win, of Ikamatua, and nephew Rhys Liddell, also of Ikamatua.

[Click here for the first auction](#) and [here for the second auction](#).

Great Scott! An Irishman goes for big shearing record - December 16 2010

Irish shearing champion Ivan Scott will make a bid for the premier World shearing record near Taupo next month.

The 29-year-old South Island-based gun from Kilmacrennan, County Donegal, will attempt the solo nine-hour strongwool lamb shearing record of 866 held by Hawke's Bay shearer Dion King.

It was confirmed when an application was received this week by the World Sheep Shearing Records Society, and will take place at Opepe, off State Highway 5 just east of the Central North Island lake resort, on January 14, the end of what will be the busiest week in the history of World record shearing.

Hot on the heels of the national lambshearing championships on the competition board at Raglan on January 8, the action switches two days later to a woolshed at Motekenui Station, Mangapehi (between Te Kuiti and Benneydale) where World champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, attempts the eight-hour lambs record of 736 set by Scott at Rerewhakaaitu, south of Rotorua, in December 2008.

On January 11, Hawke's Bay-based brothers Doug and Rowland Smith, of Ruawai in the Far North, will tackle the two-stand eight-hour strongwool ewes record of 986 set in 1999 by Marton brothers Hayden and Stacey Te Huia, now based in Te Kuiti.

The Smiths will make their bid at Waitara Station, near Te Pohue, Hawke's Bay, where brother Matthew Smith set the eight-hours ewes record of 578 last January, a record which Stacey Te Huia will challenge next Wednesday at Mangapehi.

Updates available during each record, [click here on the day.](#)

Speedy shear raises \$12,000 for Pike River families - December 12 2010

A speedshear and charity auction featuring many of the World's fastest shearers in Reefton last night (Saturday) raised more than \$12,000 for the families of Pike River mine disaster victims.

The outcome of the Shearing Sports Charity Speedshear stunned co-organiser Gavin Rowland who commented it had only been seven days earlier that the idea first arose over a few beers at a birthday party in the North Island.

"It was amazing," he said. "These guys never hesitated, and came here all off their own bat, and put on a really great night."

Used to winning prizes of over \$1000 in Speedshears throughout the country, the shearers in last night's event competed only to help the cause, and for a trophy commemorating the occasion.

The event was held in a packed bar at Dawson's Hotel, and brought together 10 of the fastest shearers, including former World individual champions David Fagan, Alan MacDonald and Canterbury-based Scottish shearer Tom Wilson, and new World champion Cam Ferguson.

Age did not weary Fagan who at the age of 49, and winner of 605 Open competition final finals around the World in the last 28 years, won the final with a quickest time of just over 15 seconds.

A Pike River Charity Speedshear singlet signed by the shearers sold at auction for \$750 and a package of singlets and a programme signed by current World teams champions Fagan and Ferguson also sold for over \$700.

Two more singlets worn by the shearers last night and signed by them will be auction on New Zealand on-line auction site Trademe. [Click here for the first auction](#) and [here for the second auction.](#)

Shear stunner for Pike River mine families - December 09 2010

With 18 years behind her as a shepherd in the North of England and setting up a new life running a pub in New Zealand, Sarah Robinson should have been happy to have seen the back of her last sheep.

But unhesitatingly agreeing to host a Speedshear to raise funds for families of the Pike River mining disaster victims she said from Dawson ♦s Hotel in the West Coast town of Reefton : "It ♦s always been an ambition of mine to get sheep into the bar."

But never did she dream of such an event as that on Saturday night now promises to be as the Shearing Sports Charity Speedshear brings not only a flock of sheep through the inn but also 10 of the World ♦s best shearers to take the wool off their backs.

"This is just fantastic," she said as she recalled the moment she was asked just last Monday if she would host the event, just two nights after idea emerged over beers among shearers at birthday party in the North Island.

Within hours financial support was coming-in from around the town, and the selection of mainly World Champion and World record breaking shearers were making their commitments.

As news of the event spread globally Shearing Sports New Zealand received an inquiry about how to donate and how to bid for a singlet worn by World shearing icon David Fagan when he won his 16th Golden Shears open victory in 2009, signed by the Te Kuiti veteran who will head the list of 10 shearing superstars.

Even Ms Robinson ♦s ex-husband called from the UK to select the best bottle of Scotch she could find to go into the charity auction during the night, and he ♦d send her the money.

The shearers, also including new World champion Cam Ferguson and World speedshear and nine-hour lambshearing record holder Dion King, both of Hawke ♦s Bay, will be paying their own way to Reefton, all just for the cause.

Among the others will be New Zealand-based Scots shearers Tom Wilson (the 1984 World champion) and Grant Lundie, both keen to take part in tribute to fellow Scots Peter Rodger and Malcolm Campbell who were among the 29 men lost in the mine disaster on November 19.

Reefton shearing identity Sam Win said that even though the event seemed likely to raise over \$10,000, there wouldn ♦t be any prizemoney, just a trophy.

Ms Robinson said she and her community were "blown away" by the shearers ♦ initiative.

"I think for the first two weeks or so after the disaster everyone here was just shell-shocked," she said. "Now the community is starting to learn how to deal with it, but to see this initiative coming from the shearers themselves, from outside the area, it ♦s just like ♦ Whoa!"

Despite her own involvement in the sheep industry, there are still uncharted waters, and by the time the first shearer steps-up sometime after 7pm on Saturday, a hole will have been taken out of the low ceiling to make room for the taller competitors on the especially-built raised shearing board, and a screen will have been erected elsewhere around the small-town pub so that anyone can see.

"How many people will we get in the bar?" said Ms Robinson. "I don ♦t know, but I think we ♦re about to find out."

The milk lambs will be brought from a nearby farm, some likely to be shorn in under 20 seconds, Mr Win said

World shearing champ lines up tally record bid - December 09, 2010

Shearer of the moment Cam Ferguson has confirmed he will go for a place in woolshed history with a World tally record bid next month, less than six months after winning the ultimate competition goal, the World Championship.

The 27-year-old from Waipawa, who stunned the shearing World with a meteoric rise in competition shearing this year, including victories in the 50th Golden Shears Open in Masterton in March and the World title in Wales in July, will make his attempt bid for woolshed supremacy on South Island-based Irish shearer's eight-hour lamb shearing record of 736 on January 10 at Motekenui, the King Country station used for a string of record-breaking performances in recent years.

A prolific Speedshear winner, with most of his 60-plus wins in the popular short competition version done with times under 25 seconds a lamb, will need to average about 39 seconds a lamb, including catching time, throughout the standard eight-hour day of four two-hour runs.

The date for the bid was confirmed this week with his application and payment of a \$US1800 fee to the World Sheep Shearing Records Society which will appoint four judges to oversee the event, including one from overseas.

Also confirmed is a bid just a day later, on January 11, on the two-stand eight-hour ewe shearing record of 986 held for 11 years by brothers Hayden and Stacey Te Huia, formerly of Marton but now based in Te Kuiti.

The bid will be challenged by Hawke's Bay-based Far North brothers Doug and Rowland Smith, who have fronted with a \$US2700 fee to stage their day at Te Pohue, between Napier and Taupo, where brother Matthew last last January broke the solo eight hour ewes record once held by Hayden Te Huia. Last month Stacey Te Huia confirmed he will be trying to get the record back into the family with an attempt on new mark of 578 on December 22, also at Motekenui.

Eight-hour lambs record holder Ivan Scott is yet to set a date for a bid for the glamour nine-hour lambs record of 866 shorn by Hawke's Bay shearer Dion King at Motekenui in January 2007, just 10 months after winning the Golden Shears Open final.

Rotorua shearing contractor Jeff Dorset said Scott's bid will take place in mid-January at Opepe, beside State Highway 5 southeast of Taupo. He said the vagaries of the season had led to uncertainty about when it could take place, relying on the lambs being able to reach the minimum average wool weight of 0.9kg per lamb.

SPARC and wool levy pool back Kiwi shears stars - December 9, 2010

Shearing Sports New Zealand is pleased all six members of its successful World Championships team are targeting repeats of their successes at the next championships in Masterton in 2012 - recognising SPARC and other funders' support for shearing and woolhandling development as national sports.

Chairman John Fagan, who won a World teams title in England in 1984 and recalls the struggles for recognition of that era, was speaking after confirmation of two years of funding from Beef+Lamb NZ's allocation of the residual wool levies pool.

B+LNZ chief operating officer Cros Spooner announced last month that Shearing Sports NZ would receive \$70,000 over the two years to foster competitions which over the last 50 years have become a major part of developing woolcraft skills throughout the country. A further sum has been committed to wool-classing.

It came soon after SPARC confirmed all six members would receive Performance Enhancement grants, as part of the High Performance Strategy recognising the commitments and sacrifices made by elite athletes in achieving their international successes.

The Shearing Sports team won medals in all six events at their championships in Wales in July, including three wins - the individual machine shearing title to Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, the teams title won by Ferguson and King Country icon David Fagan, and the woolhandling teams title win by Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, and Keryn Herbert, of Te Kuiti.

All four have won events in the new domestic season, while bronze-medal winning blades shearers Brian Thomson and Allen Gemmell, both from Canterbury, have both been in good form on both sides of the Tasman.

All six expect to contest qualifying events leading to selection of the New Zealand team for the next championships at the 2012 Golden Shears. John Fagan said the chance of representing their country had become a major motivation for improvement among New Zealand shearers and woolhandlers, who also as individuals develop considerable recognition of the New Zealand wool industry as they work and compete around the World.

"While we wouldn't want to be seen as taking anything away from other sports, there is a number of countries where New Zealand is recognised by the singlets of our shears as much as it is by the black jersey of our All Blacks," he said.

"And then we have events like the Golden Shears, which in themselves are significant New Zealand brands on the international stage, with benefits reaching out into tourism and other aspects of the New Zealand economy."

The Beef+Lamb NZ grant came from a \$2.8 million pool remaining from levies collected from wool growers until farmers booted the scheme out in a vote last year, resulting in major changes for the organisation, until that time known as Meat+Wool NZ, which had also supported Shearing Sports NZ.

After consulting farmers and considering 21 submissions mainly supporting proposed use of the pool, Beef+Lamb also allocated \$1.8 million (at \$450,000pa) for information and analysis, market access and farm activities supporting the wool sector through its economic service over the next four years, and established an \$870,000 contestable fund for co-funded wool-specific projects beneficial to farmers.

Mr Spooner said in a statement last month his board considered the money should be used for activities consistent with the 2003 wool levy mandate

Speed shearers do their bit for Pike River families - December 9, 2010

Several of New Zealand's top shearers are paying the respect to their brothers from another of New Zealand's toughest occupations by staging a fundraising Speedshear in Reefton on Saturday night (December 11) in support of the families of the Pike River mine disaster.

The event started as an idea over a few beers at the weekend, and in a few days commitments have been made from four World champions, and a range of others who will make-up the greatest gathering of top shearers ever on the West Coast, all of them "making their way there under their own steam," according to co-organiser and former New Zealand team manager Gavin Rowland.

Among those fronting-up is the World's most prolific shearing champion, 49-year-old King Country gun, David Fagan, now aged 49 and who 605 titles around the World include six World teams titles and five World individual championships, and a long list of Golden Shears, New Zealand and other championships.

Among those joining him will be current World champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, close friend and 1994 World champion Alan MacDonald, and 1984 World champion Tom Wilson, a New Zealand based Scotsman who with fellow-Scot Grant Lundie is taking part to help the family of Scotsmen Peter Rodger and Malcolm Campbell who have been lost in the mine, entombed since in an explosion on November 19.

Also committed to the Shearing Sports Charity Speedshear are World nine-hour lambshearing record holder and 2006 Golden Shears champion Dion King, of Hastings, South Island greats and World record holders Darin Forde, of Winton, and Grant Smith, of Rakaia, veteran crowd-pleaser and former record holder Digger Balme, of Te Kuiti, and promising West Coast shearer Rhys Liddell.

Mr Rowland, of Rakaia, said the shearers' response had been unhesitating, and all were keen to do their part for the cause, as were sponsors.

"It is possibly the greatest gathering of New Zealand's top shearers in a Speedshear for a few years, and one that probably won't be repeated," he said.

It will certainly be the greatest gathering of New Zealand's top shearers on the West Coast and Mr Rowland said: "They'll all be making their way to the Coast under their own steam, and while I can't speak for the individuals I wouldn't be surprised if a fair bit of the prizemoney goes back to the cause as well."

Several have also donated items for a charity auction, including the singlet worn by Fagan when he won the 2009 Golden Shears open final, at the age of 47.

The Speedshear, a contest for speed over a single sheep but with judges on hand to ensure quality standards are still maintained, will be held at Dawson's Hotel in Reefton starting at 7pm on Saturday.