

Rare all-male treble in pre-shears wool shakedown - February 28 2013

Male woolhandlers scored a rare treble in taking all three titles at the Pre-Shears Championships yesterday (Wednesday) on the eve of the start of the Golden Shears in Masterton. The Open final was won by World champion Joel Henare, the Senior title by Logan Kamura, of Marton, and the Junior final by South-Island based Daine Rehe, from Te Teko.

The Open triumph was Henare's sixth win of the season, probably enough to go into Masterton's big event an outright favourite, just hours after the TAB was unable to separate Henare and Te Awamutu woolhandler Keryn Herbert on the top line of odds as each tries to win a Golden Shears Open title for the first time.

In yesterday's event at Massey University's Riverside Farm, north of Masterton, Kimbolton woolhandler and farmer Veronica (Ronnie) Goss loomed even larger as a candidate to win a second Golden Shears Open when she was runner-up.

Reigning New Zealand Open champion Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, was third and Herbert had to settle for fourth.

The Golden Shears start today (Thursday) with an array of Novice to Senior shearing and woolhandling heats, with Open championship heats tomorrow (Friday) leading to the big finals on Saturday night.

TAB forecasts tight woolhandling contest at Golden Shears - February 27 2013

The TAB is forecasting a tight contest for the Golden Shears Open woolhandling title this week, with three competitors who have never won the title vying closely with reigning champion and six-times winner Joanne Kumeroa and at least three other former champions.

In odds released early this afternoon, the TAB has made Gisborne's Joel Henare and Te Awamutu woolhandler Keryn Herbert equal favourites paying \$3 to win, ahead of six-times winner, defending champion and Australia-based Joanne Kumeroa, of Wanganui.

Neither has won the title, Henare coming closest as runner-up the last four years in a row. He beat Kumeroa in the World Championships final in Masterton last year.

Disappointed to miss out on the World Championships team, three-times Golden Shears finalist Herbert topped last season's national rankings.

This season, Henare has won five finals, and Herbert six, while Kumeroa is quoted a cautious third favourite at \$3.50, her competitive career largely on hold as she fights-back against cancer. She is, however, also in a women's invitation shearing event in Masterton.

Reigning New Zealand Open champion and 2008 World champion Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, was fourth favourite, having contested just two Golden Shears Open finals in the past without victory and having won just two of eight finals she's contested this season.

Other former champions Tina Rimene, of Masterton, Ronnie Goss, of Kimbolton, and Huia-Whyte Puna, of Christchurch, are among at least 10 seen as having chances of winning the 29th title since woolhandling competitions were added to the Golden Shears programme in 1985.

Dannevirke veteran Oti Mason, a finalist in 1987 and winner in 1996 and 2000 is this year a \$40 longshot.

Woolhandlers are today (Wednesday) competing in the Pre-Shears Championships in a Wairarapa woolshed, before heading to Masterton where the 53rd Golden Shears, including four Golden Shears woolhandling classes, start tomorrow and end on Saturday night.

About 40 will contest the Open event, the heats of which are on Friday morning. Quarterfinals, semi-finals and the final are all on Saturday.

More than 20 titles in shearing, woolhandling and woolpressing will be decided during the three days, which also feature test matches between New Zealand and Australia in both shearing and woolhandling.

Top six Golden Shears poser - February 27 2013

The TAB has responded to public demand by agreeing to take bets on who will qualify for the Golden Shears Open shearing final in Masterton on Saturday.

While the TAB has been operating books on who will win the title each year for more than a decade, it's the first time there's been an option on who will make the top six, said TAB shearing bookmaker Kieran McAnulty.

The move is seen as an indication that the event is wider open than it has been for some years, despite the general continued domination of major competitions by only a small number of shearers, including four who between them have won 22 of the Golden Shears Open finals in the last 24 years.

Despite the presence of David Fagan (16 wins and 26 finals in 29 years), John Kirkpatrick (four wins), 2006 victor Dion King and 2010 winner Cam Ferguson, the most-favoured shearer to reach the final, and to win, is Rowland Smith, who has shorn in just two Golden Shears Open finals for second in 2011 and third last year, but who has won eight finals around the country since mid-January.

He was quoted yesterday at \$1.10, Kirkpatrick was at \$1.12 with a history of shearing in 15 of the last 16 Golden Shears Open finals, and Fagan was at \$1.17. Ferguson, King, Invercargill shearer Nathan Stratford and World champion Gavin Mutch were also quoted under \$2.

The shortest-priced shearers who have never reached the final were Feilding shearer Murray Henderson and Te Kuiti's Mark Grainger.

The TAB will be running 11 options on events at the Golden Shears which start tomorrow (Thursday) and end on Saturday.

Already also open are six other options on the Open shearing final, including the winner, top-three placings, and four head-to-head options. There is also winner and top-three betting on the PGG Wrightson Nation Circuit final, New Zealand has been made favourite to regain some mana in a bi-annual trans-tasman shearing test, and betting is expected to open late today on the winner of Saturday night's Open woolhandling final.

More than 300 competitors will compete in the annual championships which start tomorrow (February 28). They comprise over 30 events, including multiple Golden Shears titles in shearing, woolhandling and woolpressing, a Triathlon for competitors entering all three disciplines, the PGG Wrightson national all-breeds championship, shearing and woolhandling test against Australia, traditional Young Farmers Clubs events, and North Island Circuit woolhandling events.

Defending shears champion goes for fifth win - February 26 2013

Napier shearer John Kirkpatrick reaffirmed his claims to a fifth Golden Shears Open title this week as Hawke's Bay shearers dominated the final pre-shears shakedown in Pahiatua on Sunday.

But it was close as the 42-year-old Kirkpatrick beat event favourite and 26-year-old Hastings shearer Rowland Smith by just 0.058pts after a 20-sheep final with the second Hawke's Bay quadrella in three-days as the country's top shearers prepared to battle for the sport's most-famous title at the Shears which start in Masterton on Thursday and end on Saturday.

The first four were from Hawke's Bay with former Golden Shears champions Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, and Dion King, of Hastings, third and fourth, in a near carbon-copy of the Taumarunui Jamboree Shears final two days earlier, won by Smith, followed in order by Kirkpatrick, King and Ferguson.

Fifth and sixth in both finals were 16-times Golden Shears champion David Fagan and new hope Mark Grainger, together a shadow of the King Country domination of the Golden Shears in the 1980s and 1990s.

Between the two finals, Smith, Kirkpatrick, Ferguson and Fagan were second, third, fourth, and sixth in the Apiti Sports Open final won by Pongaroa shearer David Buick, who will be missing from the Golden Shears because of a friend's wedding.

Dannevirke shearer Adam Brausch was fifth at Apiti, and the major Golden Shears title contenders missing from the three finals were Invercargill shearer Nathan Stratford, aiming this week to become the first shearer from the South Island to win the Golden Shears Open since 1989, and Taranaki-based Scotsman and World champion Gavin Mutch, a four-times Golden Shears Open finalist hoping to become its first winner from overseas.

Significantly, the 37-year-old King headed Kirkpatrick to be first off the board in both the Taumarunui and Pahiatua finals, with Kirkpatrick winning the race at Apiti after King failed to make the final, ensuring a keen pace if both make the final in Masterton.

With Kirkpatrick having taken all season to win a title in the North Island, and 2006 winner King absent from the competition board for much of the season until last week, the favourite to win in Masterton is Smith, who has been the most successful Open-class shearer on the current Shearing Sports New Zealand calendar of more than 60 competitions throughout the country.

In five weeks he's won eight finals, at Levin, Taihape, Rotorua, Marton, Te Puke, Gore, Pukekohe and Taumarunui, generally similar to the strength of the field at the Golden Shears, where he was Junior champion in 2004, Senior champion in 2006, and Open runner-up to Kirkpatrick in 2011, a few weeks before turning the tables in the New Zealand Open final in Te Kuiti.

King won two finals early in the season at the Poverty Bay and Hawke's Bay shows, and Ferguson has also won two finals, in Waipukurau and Wairoa, and was runner-up last year in both the Golden Shears and World championship finals, which he had won in 2010.

The 51-year-old Fagan fronts up with a continuing astounding record, his four wins this season taking him to a career tally of 618 victories around the World in 31 years of Open-class shearing. Since finishing runner-up to brother John in the 1984 final's he's only failed to reach the final three times, in 1985, 1987, and 2006, filling all the placings except sixth.

Grainger, son of 1985 winner Paul Grainger, will be hoping to become one of the few who've shorn Golden Shears finals in all four of the classes which were in the championships when they were first held in 1961. He had successive Junior, Intermediate and Senior finals in 2007-2009 and has become a regular Open-class finalist this year in his fourth season at the top level.

Stratford, a regular winner in the south in 16 seasons of Open-class shearing, has blossomed since winning the New Zealand Circuit final in Te Kuiti last year, with particularly notable wins in the Corwen Open in Wales on the New Zealand team tour last July, and this year's national longwool championship in Lumsden and the Otago Open in Balclutha, the latter an event won by the eventual Golden Shears winner six times in the last 10 years.

The Open championship heats will be held on Friday afternoon, followed by the Top 30 Shootout that night. The remaining 12 shear the semi-final on Saturday afternoon with six named soon afterwards for the final starting soon after 9pm.

Fagan is the most successful shearer in the event's history with 16 wins from 1986 and 2009, Alexandra shearer Brian 'Snow' Quinn won six times from 1965 to 1972, Kirkpatrick in 2002 was the first man to beat Fagan in the final for 13 years and won for a fourth time last year, and the event was won three times each by Taranaki shearer Roger Cox and National MP Colin King.

There are some notable absentees this year, in 2005 and 2007 winner, 2008 World champion and Taranaki shearer Paul Avery, and King Country shearer Dean Ball, whose 13 finals from 1998 to 2011 is the most for any shearer who hasn't won the title.

World champions chase first Golden Shears woolhandling titles - February 26 2013

Three World champions will be out to win their first Golden Shears Open woolhandling titles against record-holding six-times winner and defending champion Joanne Kumeroa in Masterton this week.

The three are headed by Gisborne's Joel Henare who despite being now just 21 years old, has been in five consecutive Golden Shears Open finals, the runner-up the last four times, and who beat Australia-based Whanganui woolhandler and shearer Kumeroa in last year's World Championships final, also at the Golden Shears.

He's been in top form this season, reaching nine finals and winning five, but Te Awamutu and Te Kuiti woolhandler Keryn Herbert has gone one better, winning six of the 13 finals she's contested out of a possible 18, while 2008 World champion Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, with whom Herbert won a World teams title in 2010, has won two of the eight finals she's contested this season, all in the North Island.

Herbert has reached the Golden Shears final three times, with third placings in 2010 and last year, while Alabaster has made-it just twice, runner-up to the since-deceased Gina Nathan in 2005 and third in 2009.

Other top contenders include 2008 Golden Shears champion Ronnie Goss, who beat Herbert and Alabaster in the Apiti Sports final on Saturday.

The best performed of the southern hopes is Taiwha Nelson, of Alexandra, who won the New Zealand Corriedale Championships title in Christchurch in November and who was a finalist in both the Otago Championships in Balclutha and Southern Shears in Gore earlier this month.

Kumeroa has been in 13 Golden Shears Open finals dating back to her first in 1990 and will find this the toughest as she resumes continues battle against the top woolhandlers in New Zealand but also continues a fight against cancer.

At the Golden Shears she will also be shearing in a women's invitation event.

The field is made interesting by the inclusion of several well-performed Senior competitors in the Open-class for the first time this season.

All of the top hopes will be at the Pre-Shears woolhandling competitions which will be held tomorrow at Massey University's Riverside Farm, near Masterton.

Four Golden Shears woolhandling titles will be decided during the three-day 53rd championships, highlighted by the Open heats on Friday and the final for the top four on Saturday night.

A woolhandling competition was held at the first Golden Shears in 1961, but it did not become a regular feature at the World's major shearing festival until 1985.

No share for Welsh as Kiwis complete shears tests whitewash - February 26 2013

Wales has been left still to claim a shearing test win over New Zealand in New Zealand after losing the final test of the teams' Elders Primary Shearing Series at the weekend.

Kiwi shearers John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, and Nathan Stratford, of Invercargill, beat Welsh shearers Richard Jones, of Corwen, and Gareth Lloyd Evans, of Bylchau, in the test at the Pahitua Shears on Sunday by almost 18pts.

The commanding victory gave New Zealand a 3-0 series win, to go with the earlier wins at the Rotorua A and P Show last month and the Otago Championships a fortnight ago.

Kirkpatrick and Stratford had drawn a test series against Wales in Wales during a UK tour last July and August. A New Zealand team is expected to tour the UK again this year.

First to finish Sunday's test, shearing 10 sheep in 9min 45.61sec, more than 20 seconds before Evans, the second to finish, Kirkpatrick now heads to Masterton to defend his Golden Shears Open title, recognised by shearers as the biggest goal in World shearing, possibly bigger than the World Championship.

Result:

Elders Primary Wool Shearing Series, Third Test (10 sheep): New Zealand 79.166pts (John Kirkpatrick 9min 45.61sec, 39.481pts; Nathan Stratford 10min 7.69sec, 39.685pts) Wales 97.161pts (Richard Jones 10min 33.12sec, 44.556pts; Gareth Lloyd Evans 10min 6.1sec, 52.605pts). New Zealand wins series 3-0.

Great Scot shears into NZ national circuit showdown - February 26 2013

World champion Taranaki-based Scottish shearer Gavin Mutch has leapt into PGG Wrightson National Circuit contention with an 11th hour qualifying performance at the weekend.

Mutch scored the maximum possible 12 points in the final qualifying round at Pahiatua on Sunday, leaping from a lowly 22nd place to 11th on the list of 12 qualifiers and joining a fellow Scottish World champion in South Island-based Tom Wilson in pursuit of New Zealand's second-most important title at the Golden Shears starting in Masterton on Thursday and ending with the big finals on Saturday night.

They will shear a semi-final on Saturday morning, seeking a place in the evening's six-man final over 15 sheep, with three fine-wooled merinos, three strong-wooled full fleece, three coarse-wooled corriedales, three lambs and three second-shear ewes.

Mutch, who won his World title during last year's Golden Shears, is also a strong contender for the Golden Shears Open, the heats for which will be held on Friday, with about 60 shearers looking for places in the six-man Golden Shears Open final, regarded as the Wimbledon of Shearing, over 20 second-shear sheep, also on Saturday night.

A win by Mutch in either might pose a dilemma for officials, with the winners of each of the two big events claiming places in the New Zealand team for two tests against Australia next summer.

The TAB is, however, keeping the affable Scotsman at arm's length, preferring other options for the 40th anniversary PGG Wrightson National, having Mutch on the 6th line at \$15 to win. The favourite is three-times National Circuit winner Tony Coster, of Rakaia, paying \$2.75, followed next by Invercargill shearer Nathan Stratford.

More experienced with the merino and corriedales, seven other South Island shearers have made the cut, including second Southland shearer Darin Forde, who won in 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2004, and defending champion Angus Moore, from Marlborough but now based in South Otago.

Golden Shears Open champion John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, is the most-favoured of three other North Island shearers in the Top 12, the others being Axle Reid, of Taihape, and Dannevirke shearer Paerata Abraham, who also qualified only at the last chance.

Incorporating the McSkimming Memorial Triple Crown, first presented in 1973, the series started at the New Zealand Merino championships in Alexandra and the long strongwool sheep of the Spring Shears in Waimate in October. Then followed the national corriedale championships at the Canterbury Show in November, the national lambshearing championships in Raglan last month, and Sunday's event in Northern Wairarapa.

Qualifying points were based on placings in the heats of each event, but points in the final stages will be based on the shearing and quality points system common to shearing competitions throughout the country.

Qualifiers in order are: Tony Coster (Rakaia) 37pts, 1; John Kirkpatrick (Napier) 35pts, 2; Grant Smith (Rakaia) 26pts, 3; Axle Reid (Taihape) 26pts, 4; Gavin Rowland (Dunsandel) 25pts, 5; Angus Moore (Ward/Kaitangata) 24pts, 6; Tom Wilson (Darfield/Scotland) 22pts, 7; Tony Nott (Blenheim) 21pts, 8; Darin Forde (Lornville, Invercargill) and Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 20pts, 9eq; Gavin Mutch (Whangamomona/Scotland) 16pts, 11, Paerata Abraham (Dannevirke) 15pts, 12.

TAB odds to win: \$2.75 Tony Coster; \$4 Nathan Stratford; \$6 Darin Forde, Angus Moore; \$8 John Kirkpatrick; \$15 Gavin Mutch; \$20 Grant Smith; \$30 Gavin Rowland, Paerata Abraham; Tony Nott, Tom Wilson, Axle Reid.

Smith the TAB favourite to win first Golden Shears Open - February 21 2013

Hastings shearer Rowland Smith is the bookmakers favourite to win his first Golden Shears open title in Masterton next week, despite the presence of four others who between them have won 21 of the finals of the World's greatest shearing event in the last 23 years.

When begtting opened today, the 26-year-old Smith was paying \$2.50, with defending champion and four-times winner John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, second-favourite at \$3, and Te Kuiti legend David Fagan next at \$5 to win his 17th title, at the age of 51, and 29 years after he debuted in the final as runner-up to brother John in 1984.

Originally from Northland, from where he won the Golden Shears Junior title in 2004 and Senior title in 2006, Smith's favouritism is based on near all-conquering form since mid-January when he returned to competition after honeymooning in Hawaii with new wife and fellow shearing record-breaker Ingrid Baynes.

The 2011 New Zealand Open winner, he's won seven finals in four weeks, including a remarkable double last weekend, in Gore on Saturday and Pukekohe on Sunday.

Kirkpatrick has been in 12 finals during the summer but won just three - one in Australia, two in the South Island, and none in the North Island, while Fagan, who last won the Golden Shears Open in 2009, has won four finals.

About 60 shearers have so far entered the Open, which starts with heats next Friday (Mar 1), the second of three days of the 53rd Golden Shears. The goal is a place in the six-man "Wimbledon" of shearing, the Open final of 20 second-shear sheep each, the fastest likely to finish in about 16 minutes.

The opening of betting today follows yesterday's opening of a book on the PGG Wrightson National, the final of which will also be held on the last night of the Golden Shears, over 15 sheep of mixed breeds and wool, culminating a competition which had five qualifying rounds throughout the country. The favourite for that event is Rakaia shearer Tony Coster.

Odds to win the 53rd Golden Shears Open are: \$2.50 Rowland Smith; \$3 John Kirkpatrick; \$5 David Fagan; \$7 Cam Ferguson; \$9 Dion King, \$15 Nathan Stratford; \$17 Gavin Mutch; \$25 James Fagan, Darin Forde, Murray Henderson; \$30 Digger Balme, Adam Brausch; \$40 Doug Smith, Mark Grainger, Paerata Abraham, Tony Coster, Axle Reid; \$60 Andy Mainland, Tama Niania, Bevan Guy, Ian Kirkpatrick, Aaron Haynes; \$80 Tom Wilson, Grant Smith, Jimmy Samuels, Bart Hadfield; \$100 Shane Rawlinson, Noel Gardiner, Chris Vickers, Wi Poutu Ngarangione, Peter Clendon, Adam Berry, Shannon Warnest, Matene Mason.

TAB spokesman Kieran McAnulty says other shearers will be quoted on inquiry.

Coster low-priced favourite ironman shearing event - February 20 2013

Three-times PGG Wrightson National shearing champion Tony Coster, of Rakaia, has been installed a warm favourite to regain the title at the 53rd Golden Shears in Masterton next week.

Winner of the event and consequently recognised as the country's top all-breeds shearer from 2009-2011, and leading the points going into the final qualifying round at Pahiatua on Sunday, Coster was a \$2.75 favourite when odds were released by the TAB this week.

The TAB is also today expected to release odds for the premier Golden Shears Open shearing and woolhandling championships.

Coster is guaranteed a place in the top 12 qualifiers for the National showdown without having to shear at Pahiatua.

But the situation's a little precarious for Southland gun Nathan Stratford who is a \$4 second favourite, despite currently teetering in 12th place and needing points to secure his position. Fellow Southlander Darin Forde, a four-times winner who was runner-up last year, is third-favourite, despite also needing points to secure his place, and heads 2012 winner and currently third-placed Angus Moore, from Ward in Marlborough but now living at Kaitangata, South Otago.

Golden Shears champion John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, is next despite having not previously reached the final of the event, and the TAB is being cautious with World champion Gavin Mutch, a Scottish farmer living at Whangamomona in Taranaki and who is at \$15 while still needing a substantial placing in the Pahiatua show's heats to reach the top 12.

The points are based on placings on the compulsory opening round at the more specialist fineweol merino championships in Alexandra in October, the fullwool of Waimate's Spring Shears, the coarse-

wooled corriedales of the Canterbury Show, the national lambshearing champion at Raglan and this week's second-shear competition at Pahiatua.

Points are scrapped after the qualifying stages, and semi-finals and a final will be shorn in Masterton on all five of the wool types, the winner decided on time and shearing points.

It's the 40th anniversary of the National, incorporating the McSkimming Memorial Triple Crown, first won by Waikato shearer Joe Ferguson in 1973.

Points and placings after four of the five-qualifying rounds this year were:

Top 12: Tony Coster (Rakaia) 27pts, 1; Grant Smith (Rakaia) 26pts, 2; Angus Moore (Kaitangata) and John Kirkpatrick (Napier) 24pts, 3eq; Gavin Rowland (Dunsandel) 23pts, 5; Tony Nott (Blenheim) 18pts, 6; Tom Wilson (Darfield) and Axle Reid (Taihape) 17pts, 7eq; Darin Forde (Winton) 14pts, 9; Chris Vickers (Palmerston) and Doug Smith (Ruawai) 13pts, 10eq; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill), 12pts, 12.

Others vying for places in the semi-finals are: Shaun Mathieson (Riverton), Jason Win (Reefton, now Coleraine, Vic), Chris Jones (Renwick) and Paerata Abraham (Masterton) 11pts, 13eq; Josh Hull (Australia) 10pts, 17; Colin O'Neill (Alexandra), James Fagan (Te Kuiti) and Tipene Te Whata (Tautoro) 7pts, 18eq; Andy Mainland (Invercargill) 6pts, 21; Gavin Mutch (Whangamomona) 4pts, 22. TAB Odds: \$2.75 Tony Coster; \$4 Nathan Stratford; \$5 Darin Forde; \$6 Angus Moore; \$10 John Kirkpatrick; \$15 James Fagan, Gavin Mutch; \$30 Paerata Abraham, Shaun Mathieson; \$40 Grant Smith, Gavin Rowland; \$50 Tony Nott, Tom Wilson, Axle Reid, Chris Vickers, Doug Smith, Chris Jones.

Smith wins big double - February 18 2013

Rowland Smith cemented TAB favouritism to win his first Golden Shears Open title when he won a remarkable double in Gore and Pukekohe at the weekend.

The 26-year-old Hastings-based shearer won the Southern Shears Open final on Saturday and flew the next morning to win the Counties Open final.

It took him to seven wins in the four weeks since he resumed show shearing at the Wairoa A and P Show, where he was unlucky to miss-out on a place in the final.

In both finals at the weekend, the runner-up was reigning Golden Shears Open champion John Kirkpatrick, who won another South Island Shearer of the Year, just his second win in a range of Open finals in New Zealand this summer.

Kirkpatrick is the only shearer to have won titles in three Golden Shears grades, a feat Smith will be trying to emulate in Masterton at the end of next week.

Smith won the Golden Shears Junior title in 2004 and, having finished fourth in the 2005 Intermediate final, won the Senior final in 2006.

His biggest win since was the 2011 New Zealand Open final, followed by Saturday's victory in Gore, and last year's win in the Otago Championships.

Father and son David and Jack Fagan were others to make the big trip from South to North at the weekend, David finish fifth at Gore and third at Pukekohe, while Jack had to settle for second to Bryce Guy in Pukekohe's Senior final after beating local favourite Brett Roberts to win in Gore.

Digger Balme showed he's still a top contender for the Golden Shears, winning at Ohura on Saturday and fifth at Pukekohe.

World champion Joel Henare returned to winning form in the Southern Shears woolhandling final, in which Keryn Herbert was runner-up and Taiwha Nelson third.

Shearing record bid disappointment - February 13, 2013

Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia overcame the disappointment of failing in a World record bid yes by shearing the last hour and threequarters for his supporters and a new personal best of 703 ewes in nine hours.

The record bid officially ended in a packed and hot Te Hape woolshed just east of Benneydale, when judges convenor Eddie Archer, of South Africa, called time just after 2.45pm, after the end of the fourth run, with a tally of 566 ewes shorn and an unlikely 156 needed in the last hour and threequarters to break the record of 721 set by Southern Hawke's Bay shearer Rodney Sutton six years ago.

The record for a 1hr 45min run is the 143 Southlander Darin Forde shore immediately after lunch in his 1997 record tally of 720.

For the third time in three record bids this season, the World Shearing Records Society judges had their own challenge before the event could go ahead.

Two day-before shears of 10-sheep each failed to get the minimum average wool weight of 3kg, finally achieved at a third attempt, after about 80 were removed from the flock, leaving just 750 for the big day.

A fortnight earlier, judges called-off a three-stand lambshearing record in Southern Hawke's Bay because the flock did not meet head-wool requirements, and a wool-weigh at a four-stand bid a few days later was delayed because of wet sheep.

At Te Hape it was always going to be a tough day after the first run in which 33-year-old Australia-based Te Huia struggled with cold sheep and machinery that locked several times as he tried to force the pace in the difficult conditions.

With one sheep rejected in the 5am to breakfast run he had 149 on the board, which compared with Sutton's opener of 158 and Forde's 161 and left him requiring an average of just over 143 for each of the remaining runs of 1hr 45min each.

As the sheep and the shed warmed in the heat of the day, he got more onto the mark but with his one and only other rejection had 141 and 140 in the two further runs to lunch, having gone through the halfway mark at 11am on 349.

Needing an unprecedented 292 in the afternoon, Te Huia dropped further off the pace, with just 136 more shorn before the announcement was made.

The tallies compared with Sutton's tallies of 158, 140, 142, 140, and a final run of 141 when he set the record at Mangapehi, also in the King Country, on January 31, 2007. On that day, Sutton shore 727, had six rejected by the judges, and made his last record-breaking catch just four seconds before the 5pm deadline.

After Mr Archer congratulated the team for the "well-run" day, Te Huia, who had a previous best of 674 in a two-stand record a year ago, spoke briefly and emotionally to thank the judges, a team of more than 30 helpers, and the sponsors and the crowd.

With no serious previous challenges to the Sutton record, everyone in the packed shed could understand the disappointment after eight months' training, and all agreed with Te Huia who said it takes a "tonne of guts," commented "that's the way it is," mopped his brow, took a short break and resumed at 3.15pm, to shear through unjudged to the end at 5pm and complete the remaining goal.

Only four others have shorn more than 700 ewes in nine-hour record attempts, the first in 1994 being also 703, by King Country legend David Fagan, who was among those guiding Te Huia's bid. Te Huia later reflected on a few "feisty" sheep, and he said: "It shows why it's the hardest record to break."

Among those who wasn't giving up was four-year-old daughter Kalani, who had come from Masterton, shouting "Come on Dadda" above the music and the crowd which continued to pack the woolshed despite the inevitable outcome.

Te Huia has three successful record bids behind him, including the current eight-hour record of 603 and the two-stand record of 1341 set a year ago with Waikaretu shearer Sam Welch, who with veteran shearing record attendant Digger Balme was in Te Huia's corner for the day keeping him up-to-date with progress against the clock.

Heading back to Bathurst in NSW within a few days, Te Huia was vowing a break from shearing, but father Dean wasn't prepared to call an end to record bids within the family, including women's 8hr solo lambs record-holder Kerri-Jo, who was among the army of helpers at Te Hape this week. "Watch this space," he said.

Shearing record bid disappointment - February 12, 6pm

Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia overcame the disappointment of failing in a World record bid today by shearing the last hour and threequarters for his supporters and a new personal best of 703 ewes in nine hours.

The record bid officially ended in a packed and hot Te Hape woolshed just east of Benneydale, when judges convenor Eddie Archer, of South Africa, called time just after 2.45pm, at the end of the fourth run, with a tally of 566 ewes shorn but an unlikely 156 still needed in the last hour and threequarters to break the record of 721 set by Southern Hawke's Bay shearer Rodney Sutton six years ago.

Needing an average of an unprecedented 146 in each of the two afternoon runs, Te Huia dropped further off the pace, and by afternoon smoko when the judges retired he'd run-tallies of 149 for the first run of two hours, and 141, 140 and 136 for the next three of one hour 45 minutes each.

It compared with Sutton's tallies of 158, 140, 142 and 140, before shearing a final run of 141 when he set the record at Mangapehi, also in the King Country, on January 31, 2007.

With a previous best nine-hour tally of 674 in a two-stand record a year ago, Te Huia spoke briefly and emotionally to thank the judges, a team of more than 30 helpers, and the sponsors and the crowd, and after a short break resumed at 3.13pm, sheared through unjudged to the end at 5pm and finish with 703 for the day.

Two more had been rejected by the judges on a quality basis earlier in the day.

Only four others have shorn more than 700 ewes in nine-hour record attempts, the first in 1994 being also 703, by King Country legend David Fagan, who was among those guiding today's record attempt.

Te Huia, 33, had a difficult opening run, with cold sheep, locking gear, and later "feisty" sheep, and he said: "It shows why it's the hardest record to break."

By lunch he was 10 behind the target and requiring at least three sheep more per run than had ever been shorn before he knew there was little hope.

Among those who wasn't giving up was four-year-old daughter Kalani, shouting "Come on Dada" above the music and the crowd which continued to pack the woolshed despite the inevitable outcome.

Shearing record update

Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia has gone to lunch in his World record bid 10 sheep down on the required pace and is unlikely to seriously challenge the mark of 721 ewes in nine hours shorn by Southern Hawke's Bay shearer Rodney Sutton six years ago.

With five and a half hours gone in the Te Hape woolshed, off State Highway 30 east of Benneydale, 33-year-old Te Huia had shorn 430, 10 less than Sutton had at the same stage of his big day on which he beat the previous record by just one, with four seconds to spare.

Te Huia wasn't throwing in the towel however, and according to father Dean is determined to beat a personal best of 674 shorn in a two-stand record last year, and to also become only the fifth shearer to beat 700 in an official nine-hour record bid.

With two sheep rejected by the judges during the morning on the basis of quality, Te Huia has today recorded run-tallies of 149 for the first run of two hours, and 141 and 140 for the next two of one hour 45 minutes each, which compares with Sutton's morning tallies of 158, 140, and 142.

The record for a 1hr 45min run is 143 shorn by Southlander Darin Forde in his record 720 in 1997, but to beat the record, Te Huia would need an average 146 for each of the afternoon runs..

Shear Record Half Way - February 12 2013 - 11.15am

The seesawing fortunes of Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia are making it now unlikely it will be his day as he strives to break the World record for the most ewes in nine hours.

Shearing at Te Hape, east of Benneydale in the King Country, Te Huia reached the halfway stage, at 11am and an hour before lunch, with a tally of 349, chasing Southern Hawke's Bay shearer Rodney Sutton's record of 721.

Starting at 5am, Tw Huia shore 149 in the two hours to breakfast, and 141in the next hour and threequarters to morning smoko.

Needing more than 20 every 15 minutes for the rest of the day, he hit the mark in the 45 minutes after smoko but lost one of the 60 to the marking pens of the judges.

Tough road gets a bit easier in shear record bid - February 12 2013

Drama is starting to unfold in a King Country woolshed where Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia is out to break the World record of 721 ewes in nine hours.

Starting at 5am and ending the first two-hour run with 149, about 11 off the required pace of just over 80 an hour, he needed an average of just over 143 for each of the four remaining runs of an hour and threequarters each. He fell just short at 141 going to the morning smoko break at 9.45, for a total of 290 after three hours and 45 minutes, but supporters were confident of further improvement during the day.

The record bid is taking place at Te Hape, on State Highway 30 east of Benneydale, where Te Huia struggled with cold sheep and some gear issues in the first run, but he's taken to thinner combs and with temperatures rising in the shed looked much more comfortable in his work after breakfast.

The second run staved off a possible decision to call the bid off early, and Te Huia will be targeting 144 in the third run from 10.15 to noon.

The current solo record of 721 was set by Southern Hawke's Bay shearer Rodney Sutton six years ago, and Te Huia's best previous best is 674 in a two-stand record a year ago.

Tough road ahead for record bid shearer - February 12 2013 - 7.30am

Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia has a tough day ahead if he is to break a World ewe shearing record after falling more than 10 off the pace in the opening two-hour run at Te Hape, east of Benneydale.

Starting at 5am and needing about 160 ewes to keep on the pace, Te Huia had one sheep rejected and was credited with 149 going into the hour-long breakfast break at 7 o'clock.

Trying to force the pace, he had some difficulty with the machinery locking-up as he chases the solo record of 721 for nine hours set by Southern Hawke's Bay shearer Rodney Sutton six years ago. Te Huia's best previous tally for nine hours is 674 in a two-stand record a year ago.

Resuming at 8am he now needs an average close to 82 an hour to break the record. If the pace is not improved significantly consideration could be given to ending the bid early

Failure a huge spur as record-breaking shearer faces biggest challenge - February 11, 2013

Tackling the biggest job of your life might not be the best time to talk about failures. But that's not the way for Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia who tomorrow (Tuesday, February 12) tackles possibly the greatest shearing record of them all, hoping to shear more than 721 ewes in nine hours in a remote a King Country woolshed.

The record has not been tried by any other shearer in the six years since it was set by Southern Hawke's Bay shearing ironman Rodney Sutton.

Te Huia, 33, has figured in three successful record bids over the last 14 years, but says it is the one failure, an attempt on the solo record for eight hours in 2010, that stands him in greatest stead for the goal of which he's been dreaming almost as long as he's been in the woolsheds.

"It was a huge learning curve," Te Huia said during one break from a rigorous schedule which in addition to daily shearing on both sides of the Tasman has included hundreds of kilometres of running and swimming, other body work, and strict dieting.

Simply, it's not a place where he wants to go again.



Te Kuiti shearer Stacey Te Huia

As he continued work at the weekend, father and shearing instructor Dean Te Huia said that when he and the family started looking at the facts and figures about records shearing 16 years ago "we were quite happy doing 250 to 300 a day."

It was in 1999 that the family name first appeared in the books of the World Sheep Shearing Records society, where a 20-year-old Stacey and older brother Hayden set a two-stand eight-hour record of 986.

In January 2010, Stacey fell just short of Hawke's Bay shearer Matthew Smith's new solo eight-hour record of 578, but nailed it with a new mark of 603 the following December, and in January last year

Stacey and long-time shearing mate Sam Welch, of Waikaretu, set a two-stand nine-hour record of 1341, of which Te Huia shored 674.

His best nine-hour tally to date, it was done at about 18.75 sheep a quarter-hour, but to claim the solo record on Tuesday he'll have to lift that to over 20 a quarter-hour, or as his father puts it, at least one every 42.8 seconds.

Welch will be "on his door" on Tuesday with a strict pacemaking schedule throughout the day, and Te Huia will be looking at starting close to the record opening two-hour run tally in such a record attempt, 1997 record-breaker Darin Forde's pre-breakfast 161 in Southland.

With one-hour breaks for breakfast and lunch, and half an hour each for morning and afternoon smoko, the remainder of the day is shorn in four runs of 1hr 45min each.

The enormity of the task is highlighted by the detail of Sutton's record, in which he shored 727 sheep, but had six rejected by judges appointed to ensure the quality of the shearing is maintained, along with the integrity of the records structure.

Sutton made his crucial record-breaking catch just seconds from the 5pm bell, and during the day had pulled about 36 tonnes of live mutton onto the board, and, with a requirement of an average of at least 3kg of wool per sheep, filled more than 14 bales of wool.

Up to date details of the attempt on the day will be available on the [Breaking News Page](#).

World Sheep Shearing Record Attempt FACTSHEET

The Record

Stacey Te Huia, 33, of Te Kuti, will attempt to break the World solo 9-hours strongwool ewe-shearing record on Tuesday, February 12, 2013, at Te Hape, east of Benneydale, on SH30. The current record is 721, shorn by Rodney Sutton, of Porangahau, at Mocketenui, Mangapehi, west of Benneydale, on January 31, 2007. Details of all attempts at the record exceeding 700 ewes are at the foot of this background information.

World Shearing Records

Records for solo and multi-stand shearing tally records are administered by the World Shearing Records Society, for the standard 8hr or 9hr working day common to the industry in the woolshed. The 9hr day comprises five "runs" spread over is generally spread over a 12hr period. The first run of two hours is followed by four of 1hr 45min each, with two one-hour breaks, for breakfast and lunch, and two half-hour bresaks, for morning and afternoon "smoko."

Rules and conditions

For solo records, a fee of \$US1800 is payable to the Society, which provides three judges to oversee the quality of the shearing and protect the integrity of the records system. Solo record attempts in New Zealand are generally overseen by one Judge from the North Island, one from the South Island and one from overseas. They may eject sheep or stop the attempt if quality is unacceptable. Helpers are allowed including those who pen the sheep (the sheepo), woolhandlers (rouseabouts, or "rousies"), and wool pressers, who bail the wool, but the shearer is not allowed help in catching the sheep from the pen, shearing or sheep-handling on the board, and despatching the sheep. The convenor of the panel for Stacey's record attempt is Eddie Archer, of South Africa.

The Sheep

Ewes must be no younger than 18 months old, and carry an average of at least 3kg of wool per sheep. A trial shear of 10 sheep will take place before the judges on the day before the record attempt, to ensure the standard and other conditions relating to the crutching of the sheep and other aspects are met.

Previous Record attempts by Stacey Te Huia

December 11, 1999: Stacey Te Huia (491) and brother Hayden (495) set eight-hours two-stand ewe shearing record of 986, at Marton. Hayden broke the solo record of 452, set by Steven Dodds in Southland in 1983.

January 19, 2010: Stacey Te Huia shears 573 ewes to fall five short of the eight-hours solo ewe shearing record of 578 set by Matthew Smith at Waitara Station, north of Te Pohue, Hawke's Bay, on January 15.

December 22, 2010: Stacey Te Huia shears new eight-hours solo ewe shearing record of 603, beating previous record of 578 set by Matthew Smith, at Waitara Station, north of Te Pohue, Hawke's Bay, on January 15, 2010.

January 18, 2012: Stacey Te Huia (674) and Sam Welch (667) set new nine-hours two-stand ewe shearing record of 1341 at Te Hape, breaking the previous record of 1335 set by Darin Forde and Wayne Ingram at Wairaki Station, Blackmount, Southland, on February 1, 1996.

The Current Record

There have been no attempts on the record in the six years since since Rodney Sutton set the mark of 721 in January 2007. Sutton actually shored 727 (an average of 44.57sec per sheep) but six were rejected by the judges. He hauled about 36 tonnes of sheep out of the pens and the wool filled 14 bales.

He beat by one the previous record set by Darin Forde, of Winton, at Blackmount, Southland, on January 29, 1997. The first record over 700 was 703 by David Fagan, of Te Kuiti, at Blackmount, Southland, on February 23, 1994.

Full details of the four records exceeding 700 ewes in nine hours appear below:

NINE HOURS EWES (strongwool)

	5am 7am	8am 9.45	10.15 Noon	1pm 2.45	3.15 5pm	TOTAL
Rodney Sutton January 31, 2007, Mangapehi, King Country	158	140	142	140	141	721
Darin Forde January 28, 1997, Tuatapere, Southland	161	138	137	143	141	720
Dion Morrell February 1, 1995, Wairaki, Southland	159	141	142	138	136	716
David Fagan February 23, 1994, Brunel Peaks, Southland	157	139	135	136	135	702

Stratford and Rimene star in Otago Shears - February 10, 2013

Two big but popular upsets have dominated the Otago shearing and woolhandling championships in Balclutha with its major shearing title won by a South Islander for only the third time in 31 years and a cleansweep of its two Open woolhandling titles by a competitor who overcame tragedy to score her first victories in over six years.

The triumphant shearer at what is one of New Zealand's major annual shearing sports events, was Invercargill gun and New Zealand representative Nathan Stratford, who became only the second South Island shearer to win the Open final in Balclutha in the era of Te Kuiti shearing legend David Fagan, who first won the event in his first season of Open-class shearing in 1983.

Edsel Forde, now long-retired from competition shearing, won the event in 1989 and 1994, but multiple-winner Fagan kicks on, qualifying for the five-man, 20-sheep final again on Saturday and finishing fourth in quest of a 618th Open competition victory.

The lady of the moment in the woolhandling was Pagan Rimene, from Alexandra and Masterton, and who won both the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year and South Island Open Circuit finals, her first wins since her first Open final in November 2006, when she beat mother and former World Teams and Golden Shears champion Tina Rimene at the New Zealand Corriedale Championships in Christchurch.

Stratford's win also ended a succession of wins in the Open final by Hawke's Bay shearers since Fagan last won in 2004, while Rimene's Woolhandler of the Year triumph brought to an end the winning sequence of Gisborne's Joel Henare who last year, at the age of 20, won for the fifth time in a row, three weeks before winning the World Championship in Masterton.

With best Otago placings of third in 2004 and 2007 but missing from the final in 2011 and 2012, it was a determined Stratford who tried to make the pace through the early stages.

But it was Waipawa shearer Cam Ferguson, whose 2010 win was followed by his Golden Shears and World Championship triumphs later that year, who took charge, his 17min 16.06sec for 20 sheep leaving him watching the rest for 31 seconds before Stratford was next to hit the button, four seconds ahead of multiple winner John Kirkpatrick, of Napier.

It was quality-over-speed which decided the issue as Stratford claimed the win by more than two points from Ferguson who held on by less than four-hundredths of a point to take second place ahead of Kirkpatrick. With Fagan next, Southland shearer



Pagan Rimene on her way to winning the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year and South Island Circuit Open finals double at Balclutha



Nathan Stratford, the first South Islander to win the Otago Open Shearing Championship since 1994.

Darin Forde, who's had to live in the shadow of the first four, who have now each won the event at least once, had to settle for fifth, in his first time in the final since 2008.

Shortly before Saturday's final, Stratford and Kirkpatrick took a 2-0 lead in the three-test Elders Primary Wool Shearing Series by beating Welshmen Richard Jones and Gareth Lloyd Evans by almost 16pts. The contest was shorn over three second-shear and three full-wool sheep each, with Kirkpatrick first off the board in 6min 55.41sec.

With just one other finals placing behind her this season, Rimene's NZWHY win came after three consecutive finals placings in the event and emulated her mother's victory in 2004, and followed her win in the Senior final at Balclutha in 2006, when she also won the Golden Shears Senior final. She had, however, reached just one other final this season.



A memorable double for Anne-Maree Kahukura, winner of the two Senior woolhandling titles at Balclutha.

PHOTOS/BARBARA NEWTON

The new champion also finished third in the weekend's Junior shearing final, won by Kahn Culshaw, of Ashburton, and was in an all-star Team Morrell combo which won the teams event. The others in the team were senior woolhandling double winner Anne-Maree Kahukura, of Omakau, and shearers Kirkpatrick, from Napier, and Matura's Brett Roberts, who won the Senior final for a second time.

In her ninth season of competition woolhandling, Rimene's genes have always had her destined for the top, now being realised despite a road tragedy in 2008, in which two passengers in the work van she was driving were killed, and in which she and sister and fellow successful woolhandler Larnie Morrell were seriously injured.

Her mother has been competing in Open competition more than 20 years, winning two World teams titles and three Golden Shears Open finals, father Dion Morrell is a contractor and former World record breaking shearer who won New Zealand's major all-wools title, the McSkimming Memorial Triple Crown (now the PGG Wrightson National), in 1997, and her sister won the Golden Shears Junior and Senior woolhandling titles.

Masterton teenager David Gordon scored his 11th win in his last 12 finals by claiming the other shearing title, a win by more than six-and-a-half points over runner-up and 2012 Golden Shears Junior champion Andrew Leith, of Dipton, while the two Juniornwoolhandling titles were shared, with Emma Kate Rabbidge, of Wyndham, winning the NZWHY final and Daine Rehe, of Te Teko, the South Island Circuit final.

Shearers break 2500 tally in southern chill - February 06, 2013

Four shearers posted a new lambshearing record with more than 2500 lambs in eight hours in the midst of a southern chill today.

The official tally of 2556 was shorn by Hawke's Bay shearers John Kirkpatrick and James Mack and Southlanders Leon Samuels and Eru Weeds in the Heiniger Four-stand Eight-hour Lambshearing World Record Challenge at Centre Hill, northwest of Mossburn.

Starting at 7am on a part-damp flock and with snow on nearby Mt Hamilton, they shored four two-hour runs and finished at 5pm, before a packed and cheering crowd and a haka to herald their place in the register of the World Sheep Shearing Records Society.

While the conditions had meant personal targets of around 700 and an overall tally over 2700 were never likely, it was a personal triumph for Kirkpatrick, who topped the count with 650.

Eight-hour tallies of 700 or more have been achieved in official record attempts just four times, from Justin Bell's record-breaking 731 in a two-stand record in 2002 to Ivan Scott's current solo record of 742, shorn in January last year.

This week, rain with the lambs outside the the previous day put the record bid under some threat, delaying a wool-weigh in which the average was a substantial 1.5kg per lamb, but it was always going to be a record, being the first attempt in the four-stand, eight-hour category.



Woolshed mates for more than 20 years, John Kirkpatrick at work in the four-stand record.
PHOTO/BARBARA NEWTON



Contractor and regular employer Brendon Mahony said in Napier he believed Napier-based Kirkpatrick had never before shorn more than 600 in an eight-hour day.

Samuels, from Invercargill, overcoming the agony of a hip ricked early in the day, finished with 648, Mack, from Weber in Southern Hawke's Bay and overcoming a finger injury in the middle of the day, posted 643 and Weeds, from Ohai, in Southland, ended with 615.

Judges rejected seven lambs, Samuels being docked four throughout the day but coming home with the biggest run of the day, no more rejects and arun tally of 167.

Better known as a competition shearer, with more than 200 wins including four Golden Shears Open wins in almost 20 years of top-class competition, Kirkpatrick hadn't been expected to top the tallies, but after tallies of 120 in each of the first two runs upped his pace in the afternoon with 164 after lunch, and 166 through to the crescendo at the end.

Mack made the morning pace with runs of 163 and 162, slipped back to 156 in the two hours after lunch with 156, before also powering-home ton knock-off with another 163, while Weeds had runs of 157, 153, 152, and 153. The combined run tallies were 638, 635, 634 and 649.

The quartet had a talented team of woolhandlers with Bernadette Forde for Samuels, Diane Weeds catering to son Eru, Tia Potae for Mack and former Golden Shears woolhandling champion Ronnie Goss on the stand with Kirkpatrick.

Records society chairman Mark Baldwin, from Australia convened the six-man judging panel, of which the others were John Fagan and Ian Buchanan from the North Island, and South Island officials John Hough, Paul Harris and Colin Gibson.

It was the second of three records scheduled for the season, with all eyes now turning to Te Hape in King Country, where Stacey Te Huia, of Te Kuiti, on February 12 will attempt to break Porangahau shearer Rodney Sutton's solo nine-hour ewes record of 721, set in 2007.



The triumphant team, from left James Mack, Leon Samuels, John Kirkpatrick and Eru Weeds.
PHOTO/BARBARA NEWTON

Welsh scoop pool at Reefton shears - February 03, 2013

Welsh shearers Richard Jones and Gareth Lloyd Evans scored a major breakthrough for their country with a teams win and a quinella in the Open final at the Reefton A and P Show yesterday.

The victory by the two Denbighshire shearers over the Top of the South combination of Blenheim shearer Tony Nott and Nicvk Nalder, of Aaron Creek, Upper Takaka, was the first for the Welsh in three matches on their six-stop Elders Primary Wool Shearing Series tour.

Jones' win in the 20-lamb open final was possibly the first by a Welsh shearer in Open-class competition in New Zealand..

It was also the second year in a row in which the first two placings had gone to shearers from overseas, Scottish World Championships team member Hamish Mitchell having won last year, in a victory over Darfield-based fellow Scotsman and former World champion Tom Wilson.



Welsh shearer Richard Jones, who won the Reefton A and P Show Open final in New Zealand on Saturday, and also sheared with teammate Gareth Lloyd Evans in the first win of their Elders Primary Wool Shearing Series tour. Jones was pictured in an earlier match in Tauranga. PHOTO/DOUG LAING, Shearing Sports New Zealand

The international match was effectively a shear of two halves, with Evans and Nalder in a race to be first off the board, which Evans won by 2.5 seconds in finishing in 15min 32.87sec, and Jones and Nott each more than 15 seconds behind.

It was the latter pair vying for the best quality, with Nott, now a part-time shearer who otherwise runs a concrete-pumping business in Marlborough, claiming the best total, but it wasn't quite enough when all points were added, and Wales won by 2.016pts.

Evans, 31, and three times winner of the Champion Shearer of Wales title at the Royal Welsh Show, finished first in the Open final, taking 19min 25.31sec, almost 28 seconds clear of the second man off, Shearing Sports New Zealand chairman Gavin Rowland, of Dunsandel, finishing just ahead of 24-year-old Welsh Circuit champion Jones, from Corwen, and Renwick shearer Chris Jones.

But Richard Jones recorded easily the best quality points, and ultimately claimed the win, cutting-out his teammate by just under a point.

Having missed qualifying for the Open final, Nott won the Open Plate, in which Nalder was fourth. Nelson area shearers won two titles, Jotham Rentoul, of Wakefield, in the Senior event, and Neil Macdonald, of Tapawera, the Intermediate champion, and the Junior title was won by well-performing Rakaia shearer Corey Smith.

RESULTS of the Reefton A and P Show Shears on Saturday, February 2, 2013:

International (15 sheep): Wales 136.553pts (Richard Jones 15min 58.19sec, 62.176pts; Gareth Lloyd Evans 15min 32.87sec, 74.377pts) beat Top of the South 138.569pts (Tony Nott 15min 49.38sec, 61.936pts; Nick Nalder 15min 35.34sec, 76.634pts).

Open final (20 sheep): Richard Jones (Wales) 19min 56.57sec, 72.944pts, 1; Gareth Lloyd Evans (Wales) 19min 25.31sec, 73.816pts, 2; Chris Jones (Renwick) 19min 58.38sec, 79.969pts, 3; Gavin Rowland (Dunsandel) 19min 53.2sec, 82.01pts, 4.

Open plate (10 sheep): Tony Nott (Blenheim) 10min 10.94sec, 45.747pts, 1; Shaun Burgess (Rakaia) 9min 7.94sec, 51.597pts, 2; Tom Wilson (Darfield and Scotland) 9min 57.81sec, 53.691pts, 3; Nick Nalder (Aaron Creek) 9min 19.94sec, 55.097pts, 4.

Senior final (8 sheep): Jotham R entoul (Wakefield) 12min 7.75sec, 43.513pts, 1; Travers Baigent (Golden Downs) 10min 11.91sec, 46.221pts, 2; Rowan Nesbit (Rangiora) 11min 59.89sec, 47.866pts, 3; Brett Williams (Tapawera) 11mkin 1.78sec, 49.589pts, 4.

Intermediate final (6 sheep): Neil Macdonald (Tapawera) 12min 11.93sec, 45.797pts, 1; Cory Green (Rakaia) 10min 28.94sec, 48.114pts, 2; Stewart Howatson (-) 13min 21.93sec, 60.597pts, 3; Aaron Win (Reefton) 13min 2..19sec, 60.776pts, 4.

Junior final (4 sheep): Corey Smith (Rakaia) 7min 57.66sec, 39.633pts, 1; Alan Oldfield (Geraldine) 9mnin 19.5sec, 60.475pts, 2; Tom Iamónico (-) 11min 20.72sec, 67.036pts, 3; Joel Richard (-) 14min 55.47sec, 70.524pts, 4.

Proud sporting mum wins woolhandling title - February 04, 2013

Proud Manawatu sporting mum Ronnie Goss could have been forgiven for having her mind elsewhere as she competed in the North Island shearing and woolhandling championships in Marton on Saturday, while daughter Sarah represented New Zealand in the IRB Women's Sevens in the US at the weekend. But the Kimbolton farmer was able to focus for a few important moments on her own endeavours as she won the Open woolhandling, a "shock" she reckoned after beating former World teams champions Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, and Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, in a six-person showdown during the 50th anniversary Rangitikei Shearing Sports.

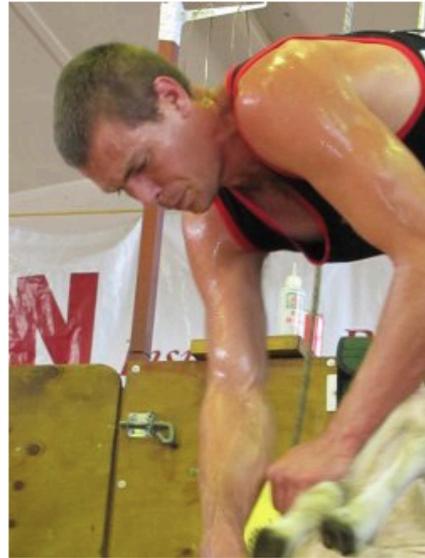
It shouldn't have been too much of a surprise, for the now 44-year-old Goss had won two titles last summer, she's been a regular top performer at Marton and former North Island championships venue Feilding, and also won the Golden Shears Open woolhandling title in 2008.

The Gosses are a shearing family, with son Simon finishing second in Saturday's Intermediate shearing final to prolific winning Masterton teenager David Gordon, who having beaten at Dannevirke the previous day was posting his 10th win in his last 11 finals.

Rugby-playing daughter Sarah, who was quickly into action with tries against Trinidad and Tobago and the Netherlands in her team's opening two matches of the weekend tournament in Houston, Texas, has had to put her promising shearing career on the back-pedal to concentrate on a flourishing Sevens career and university studies.

But, she will take-up the handpiece again for a Women's invitation event during the Golden Shears in Masterton on February 28-March 2.

Meanwhile, two-metres tall 2011 New Zealand Open champion Rowland Smith made another giant leap into contention for his first Golden Shears Open title by successfully defending the North Island title in an exciting 20-sheep Open final at Marton.



It was the 26-year-old Hastings-based Northland shearer's fourth win in six events in a fortnight since returning to the competition scene after honeymooning with wife and record-holding woman shearer Ingrid Baynes.

Having won at Horowhenua a fortnight ago and then a weekend double at Taihape and Rotorua last week, Smith had to rely on pen-quality points after a frantic race with Te Kuiti veterans Digger Balme and David Fagan, and Dannevirke shearer Adam Brausch.

Balme, 48, dominated at the end, finishing the 20-sheep final first in 16min 19.81sec, 14 seconds ahead of Fagan, who just pipped Smith, with Brausch just another 3-4 blows away, bouncing back strongly after the disappointment of an aborted World record attempt last week.

Ultimately Smith won by less than a point from the 51-year-old Fagan, who on Friday nudged posted Open-class win No 617 with a victory at the Dannevirke A and P Show, his third of the season.

Hemi Braddick, of Eketahuna, kept-up his consistent form in winning the Senior title, cutting out the 10-sheep pen in 10min 50.75sec, 25 seconds clear of next-man-off Bryce Guy, of Kaeo, and ultimately two points clear of third-man-off Lachie Baynes, of Wairoa, who snuck enough quality points to ultimately finish runner-up. With Jack Fagan, of Te Kuiti, and Michael Rolston, of Levin, it was a top-quality field of well-performed young shearers.

Gordon finished the six-sheep Intermediate final a minute clear of Stratford shearer Darren Alexander, who was second to finish, and also claimed the pbest board and pen points, to win by more than six points from eventual runner-up Goss, while Kaeo teenager Marshall Guy spread-eagled the Junior field by shearing three sheep in 4min 56.15sec, a minute-and-a-half quicker than first-time finalist Jayden Hiroti, of Raetihi, and Digger's protege, Josh Balme. Guy posted second-best quality and won by almost six points from eventual runner-up Balme.

The Gordons were among the money in the woolhandling, with Samantha winning the Senior final, and David second in the Junior final which was won by Jimmy Samuels, who as a shearer reached the Golden Shears Open Top 30 Shootout last year in his first show out of Senior class.

Shearers take break for big Southland record challenge - February 03, 2013

Four shearers are sitting it out in Southland in the countdown to a World Record shearing challenge in they could shear as many as 3100 lambs between them on Tuesday (February 5).

Event organiser Brendon Potae says he's given the quartet the weekend off after three hard weeks preparing for the Heiniger Four-stand Crossbred Lambs Eight-Hour World Record, to be shorn at Centre Hill Station, near Mossburn..

"I've told them to go fishing, sightseeing," he said today as he and others from a support crew expected to swell to almost 70 people put finishing touches to the shed where about 250 people are expected to watch the event inside, with others watching on CCTV in marquees nearby.

The focus will be Invercargill shearer Leon Samuels, Eru Weeds, from Ohai, James Mack, originally from Thames, and Golden Shears and New Zealand Open champion John Kirkpatrick, Napier, from left to right on alternate stands across the eight-stand board.

Mr Potae said 3100 lambs have been mustered for the event aimed at posting a four-stand World Record for lambs in eight hours, the first attempt at the category on a register managed by the World Shearing Records Society.

"If they do the 3100 they can knock-off early and go home," he said. "It wouldn't be a bad day's shearing for eight hours."

The four have all chosen their own woolhandlers for the day, with top South Island competitor Bernadatte Forde, of Tuatapere, looking after Samuels, Weeds having mother Diane Weeds cleaning-up after him, Tia Potae woolhandling for Mack, and former Golden Shears Open woolhandling champion Ronnie Goss, of Kimbolton, siding with Kirkpatrick, fresh from her North Island Open championship win in Marton on Saturday.

Almost \$5000 in fees had to be paid to the society, which is providing six judges, convened by Australian Mark Baldwin, and including two from the North Island. South African judge Eddie Archer will also be on hand, being in New Zealand as convener of a nine-hour ewe shearing record attempt by King Country shearer Stacey Te Huia seven days later.

Among those at work today, were those gathering a mountain of food for the shearers and their helpers during the day and its aftermath.

"Crayfish, paua patties, kina, venison... It's tough down here," said Mr Potae. Shearing will start at 7am on Tuesday, with four two-hour runs, separated by half-hour breaks for morning and afternoon smoko and anhour for lunch.

Updates will be available on the Breaking News page of this website throughout the day.

No record, but it was a good day - February 1, 2013

Cam Ferguson, Adam Brausch and Ringa Paewai were understandably gutted when told just hours before their record bid on Thursday that it was off because there was just not enough top-knot. But the trio weren't about to let anyone down, and responded the only way they knew how, by shearing the lambs anyway and making sure the sponsors, helpers and supporters had a good day out regardless.

Despite the overnight judges' decision, about 9.30pm and after about six hours of consideration, the men were still on the board at Moa Stone Farm near Ormondville, Southern Hawke's Bay, and ready to go at 7am.

With them were an array of about 40 helpers inside and outside, the sponsors stayed on-board, and during the day more than 200 people filed in and out of the woolshed, in a remote Southern Hawke's Bay wilderness where temperatures soared well over 30degC.

They had personal goals, Brausch and Paewai after personal-best eight-hour talleys near 700, and Ferguson wanting to make sure they got there, having previously shorn a solo record 742 two years earlier (a record now held by Ivan Scott, 744).

Dannevirke contractor Darrin Paewai, for whom the three were working, said just to get the motivation running after hearing the record bid was off was "huge," but a lot of "mana and pride."

"They were very disappointed, but they've dug very deep," he said as the shearers ripped into their task mid-afternoon, after hitting the lunch break with four hours and 1035 lambs behind them, indicating that had the World Shearing



Ringa Paewai, of Dannevirke, with an audience, despite it no longer being an official record attempt.



Waipawa shearer Peter Barakat, one of the horde of helpers who turned up to help their shearing mates.

Record Society judges given the green light the night before eclipsing the record of 1784 shorn by Digger Balme, Roger Neil and Dean Ball in an eight-hour day in 1999.

"The people have still come out to see them, they've been coming out all day," he said. The pre-record drama started when the judges, including Peter Artridge, from Australia, arrived mid-afternoon the day before for the traditional wool-weigh, when a minimum average of 0.9kg of wool per sheep was required in a sample shear of 20 lambs.

Records society secretary Hugh McCarroll, of Tauranga, as they drove past the paddocks, judges remarked on the numbers which appeared to have little or no top-knot, and the concerns were raised immediately.

Ultimately, the wool-weigh never happened, and offending lambs were removed from the flock of about 2500 waiting in readiness for the big shear, ultimately with not enough left for the big shear, ultimately with not enough left for the bid to go ahead.

"It was very disappointing," he said. "They hadn't done enough homework. It'll be a bit of a wake-up call for everybody."

Event manager Bill Hale argued the point, but the next day, having got over the emotion and being buoyed by the support which remained, said he appreciated the rules and judging had to protect the integrity of the records system and the interests of those who had set or attempted records in the past, including the King Country trio coveting the record which was to have been under attack.



OUT: A lamb missing the crucial top-knot.



IN: This lamb had enough on top.

One shearer estimated that if all the shearers were shorn without a need to remove the top-knot and whisk around the ears of each animal, it could have been a saving of a second-and-a-half per lamb, or add as many as 25 lambs to each man's tally during the day.

The shearers had been preparing for at least six months, and fees totaling almost \$4000 had been paid to the society as part of the costs of the event.

For the record, albeit unjudged and unofficial, the trio shored 2061 for the day, with Ferguson 696, Brausch 691 and Paewai 674.

Principal sponsors Cavalier Woolscourers presented the shearers with products among a range of appreciation of the efforts of all who took part.

Two further record attempts are going ahead, with John Kirkoatrick, Eru Weeds, James Mack and Leon Samuels doing a four-stand lambs tally at Centre Hill, near Mossburn in Southland, next Tuesday (February 5) and Stacey Te Huia tackling Rodney Sutton's nine-hour ewes record of 721 at Te Hape, King Country, a week later (February 12).