

## Keryn Herbert retains Southern Shears Open wool title - February 23, 2015

Te Awamutu woolhandler Keryn Herbert retained her Southern Shears Open title as the first-day of the shear's 50th anniversary championships ended in Gore on Friday (February 20).

A current New Zealand Trans-tasman series representative and back in front of the Shearing Sports New Zealand open-class rankings, Herbert won the final from Milton woolhandler Monica Potae, with Larnie Morrell, of Masterton, third.

The three faced a tough fullwool contest working for two shearers each simultaneously. A Master Woolhandler, it was only Herbert's fourth win in 14 finals this season, having often had to toil in the shadow of two-times Golden Shears winner and 2012 World Champion Joel Henare, who on Saturday in Balclutha scored his seventh win of the season.

Henare, in a field of 22 who started in the heats, was eliminated in the semi-finals, on a day Herbert rated quite unlike any other she had ever seen in woolhandling competition.

She said the abilities of younger competitors in the lower grades and the crowd response was "awesome," and the fleece-throwing of a high quality all-round.

Her next competition will be at the Tamarunui Jamboree Shears on February 27, one of three events leading into the Golden Shears a week later, when she hopes to win a Golden Shears title for the first time.



Keryn Herbert



Woolhandling junior - 4 Shani Newton, 3 Peketai Puna, 2 Chiquita Tamepo, 1 Nove Kumeroa-Elers

Milton woolhandler Cherie Peterson won the senior final, by just 0.352pts from Otago Shears senior winner Steve Mason-Smallman, of Taihape. It was one of the smallest winning margins ever in a woolhandling competition.

The experience of growing up in the woolsheds of Southland paid-off for Matura teenager Nova Kumeroa-Elers who after a handful of competitions had his first victory in the Junior final.

The 19-year-old turned the tables on Junior rankings leader Chiquita Tamepo, by whom he was beaten by just one-and-a-half points in his best previous result at the national Crossbred Lambs shearing and woolhandling championships at Winton five weeks ago.



Woolhandling senior - Gina Malcolm (Primary ITO), 4 Krystal Schimanski, 3 Stevie Mason-Smallman, 2 Ebony Turipa, 1 Cherie Peterson

### Fagan: The winning way continues - February 23, 2015

Aspiring shearing competition retiree David Fagan celebrated the end of another of his career's amazing weekends by winning the Counties Shear's Open final on Sunday (February 22).

The win at the Franklin A and P Show at Pukekohe came just 20 hours after the 53-year-old's stunning four victories and a record-breaking day of competition shearing 1500km away in Gore.

The efforts at the Southern Shears including being first to finish the Elders Primary Wool Series test against Wales, the South Island Shearer of the Year final, and the Southern Shears Open Final - the last at the end of what was almost a 12hr day in which he shored 91 sheep in about 87 minutes, possibly the most he had ever shorn in one day of competition.



Managers Bill Jones (Wales) and Paul Grainger (NZ) toss for the teams' stands in the Elders Primary Wool Test, watched by Southern Shears secretary Lani Arnott.

He was also in the three-man North Island team which beat the South Island in an inter-island shearing test.

The weekend's three open final wins took him to a career total of 637 open final wins in 33 seasons of Open-class shearing. Among them now are 9 wins for the season, 5 of which have come during seven trips to the South Island, which also included winning the inaugural New Zealand Rural Games Speedshear.

He has now won 12 Southern Shears open finals, 7 South Island Shearer of the Year titles, and just three 3 Counties open finals, but none of which he had otherwise won since 2001.

In the Southern Shears final, Fagan polished his 20 second-shear sheep in 17min 2.55sec, beating next-man-off and eventual runner-up and two-times winner Dion King, of Hastings, by 20, 22sec, in the SISOFY final of 20 mixed-wools sheep were dispatched in 17min 49.72sec, Southland hope Darin Forde being next home 35.48 seconds later, and in the 10-sheep test Fagan's 9min 29.42sec was 29.74sec quicker than teammate Tony Coster, of Rakaia, and almost a minute quicker than the best of the Welshmen, Gwion Evans, who beat teammate Rhys Jones by 15secs.

His teammates in the inter-island match were King and Pongaroa shearer David Buick, following after him in the Open final's eventual result were King, Forde, Angus Moore, of Kaitangata, Feildings Aaron Haynes, who had clearly the best pen points, and Nathan Stratford, of Invercargill.



David Fagan (left) wait for the others to finish the Elders Primary Wool test match between New Zealand and Wales.



Southern Shears junior winner Hemi Lambert, aged 15.

Third to Fagan and Forde in the SISOU final was Coster, followed by Stratford, Haynes and Moore, while after the flight north the next day, Fagan won a final in which Feiulding's Murray Henders was runner-up, followed by Mark Grainger, of Te Kuiti, Adam Brausch, of Porangahau, and Haynes.

It was near Gore, at Riversdale, that Fagan won his his first final as a teenaged intermediate grade lambshearer in 1979, and at Gore in 1983 that he scored only his second Open final triumph.

The double was a big a huge success just two weeks out from his bid to win a 17th and final Golden Shears open title in Masterton on March 7, and seven weeks from his expected last competition at the New Zealand Shearing Championships in Te Kuiti on April 11.

"Southland has been good to me," he told the crowd on a night which turned into a testimonial for a man the shearing and farming World regards as New Zealand's most prolific and enduring winner in sport.

"But I won't be back," he said, reaffirming his retirement plans.

Welsh team manager Bill Jones hoped Fagan will make himself available for one final test series in the UK this year, saying: "In Wales, David Fagan is like God."

Dion King said: "I told him, before the final, I didn't mind coming second to him."

The Fagan triumphs overshadowed the other



Southern Shears Open final quinella - Dion King (2nd) and winner David Fagan.



Senior winner Ethan Pankhurst makes it 9 wins for the season.

success of the final day at Gore, which were headed by 23-year-old Masterton shearer Ethan Pankurst's ninth senior win of the season.

The Intermediate and Junior finals were won respectively by Marley Waihape, 18, of Matura, and 15-year-old Hemi Lambert, of Raupunga, both having also won at the prestigious Otago Shears near Balclutha last week.

Finishing third in the Junior final was Emily Te Kapa, only the second time she's been beaten in nine finals this summer. The 20-year-old Scottish shearer is the youngest daughter of late great New Zealand Open-class shearer Joe Te Kapa.

Sarah Higgins, of Havelock in Marlborough and better known as a woolhandler, won the Novice event.

Southern Shears organisers were rapt with the success of the jubilee weekend, in which there were 110 entries across the five shearing grades, and 62 in the three woolhandling grades the previous day.



The Intermediate final line-up, sponsor Darin Forde far right, next to winner Marley Waihape, of Matura.

## World shearing records near Dubbo on tomorrow and Saturday - February 19, 2015

Two Kiwi brothers are travelling across Australia to help two Australians break the World shearing records they set 12 years ago.

From Cambridge but now long-based in West Australia, Kattaning shearing contractor Michael-James Terry, 45, and 41-year-old brother Cartwright Terry, who lives in Baldivis, near Perth, hold the two-stand eight-hour fine-wooled merino record of 924, shorn at Westerdale, West Australia, on February 22, 2003.

During the day, Cartwright Terry, known as "Carty", set a solo record of 466, while "M.J." shore 458.

The record are being tackled on Saturday at Parkdale Stud, 36km northwest of Dubbo, NSW, by Australian shearers Beau Guelfi and Bob White, culminating what promises to be two of the greatest days in the history of Australian woolshed shearing.

In the same shed tomorrow(Friday), Bathurst-based New Zealand shearer Stacey Te Huia will attempt the nine-hour record of 513 which was set near Kojonup, West Australia, on April 6, 2005, by Dwayne Back, another New Zealand-born shearer based in West Australia.

He has told Parkdale farmer Don Mudford he has his eyes on 600, but will need a to be on the pace right from the 5am start to forget his failed attempt on the strongwool record of 721 in New Zealand.

About to start work in a woolshed out of Katanning earlier this week, Carty Terry said the soft rolling skinned Poll merinos at Parkdale are "made" for tally-shearing, and he expects all three records to fall.

"They are good shearing for any record," he said. "You couldn't ask for any better."

He says Te Huia is "more than capable" of breaking the nine-hour record, and Guelfi and White will break the two-stand record.

Guelfi, based for part of the year in Gisborne, New Zealand, and originally from Kukerin, WA, shore 461 as he, White and contractor Steve Mudford set a three-stand record of 1289 at Parkdale in April last year.

Terry, who was to have been part of that trio but withdrew to help others get their names into the books of the World Sheep Shearing Records Society, says both Guelfi and Tangie-based White, who is from Conargo, NSW, are capable of breaking his solo record.

The son of a former Waikato shearing contractor and having grown-up with shearing, he prepared for almost a year for his big day in 2003, but still almost had to pull-out during the last of the four two-hour runs.

He started the day with 114 from the 7.30am get-go to morning smoko, and followed with runs of 119, 118 and 115. Brother M.J. shore runs of 112, 116, 115 and 115.

In the nine-hour record being tackled by Te Huia starting at 5am on Friday, Black shore 112 in his first run of two hours to the one-hour breakfast break, followed by successive 1hr 45min runs of 103, 98, 99, and 101.

The records are being run by Shearing Industry Promotions and the referees appointed by the World Sheep Shearing Records Society for Friday are convenor Paul Harris, from New Zealand, and Australian officials Ralph Blue, Bernie Walker and Grant Borchardt, while Harris, Blue and Borchardt will be joined by Australia-based New Zealander Peter Black for Saturday's two-stand record. Trainees and observers will be John Fraser, from New Zealand, and Arwyn Jones, from Wales.

## Big battle looms in PGG Wrightson National Circuit - February 16, 2015

Te Kuiti shearing legend David Fagan remains on course for a 10th win in the McSkimming Memorial Triple Crown as New Zealand's top all-wools shearer.

Fagan, 53, heads the points after four of the five qualifying rounds of the PGG Wrightson National Circuit, which incorporates the trophy first presented in 1973. The series opened with the finewool leg at the New Zealand Merino Championships in Alexandra on October 3-4, which were followed by the crossbred fullwool round in Waimate a week later, the Canterbury Show's New Zealand Corriedale Championships in November, and the lambshearing leg in Marton on February 7..

The final qualifying round will be the second-shear sheep at the Pahiatua Shears on March 1, after which the top 12 will be named for the finals on the last day of the Golden Shears in Masterton on March 5-7.

Fagan first won the title in 1986, on the same night as the first of his 16 Golden Shears Open Championship wins.

Three-times winner National winner Tony Coster, of Rakaia, 2010 Golden Shears and World champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, and defending series champion Nathan Stratford, of Invercargill, loom as the strongest challengers. The 2011 winner, Angus Moore, of Kaitangata, is also well placed to qualify.

PGG Wrightson National Circuit 2014-2015 placings and points after four of five qualifying rounds:

- 1 - David Fagan(Te Kuiti), 33pts
- 2 - Tony Coster(Rakaia), 32pts
- 3 - Cam Ferguson(Waipawa), 25pts
- 4 - Aaron Haynes(Feilding), 23pts
- 5 - Chas Tohiariki(Gore), 22pts
- 6 equal - Grant Smith(Rakaia), Nathan Stratford(Invercargill), 21pts
- 8 - Angus Moore (Kaitangata) 18pts
- 9 equal - Joe Tumohe(Balclutha), Eru Weeds (Ohai), 15pts
- 11 equal - David Buick(Pongaroa), Gavin Mutch (Whangamomona), 14pts
- 13 - Leon Samuels (Invercargill), 12pts
- 14 equal - Jack Fagan(Te Kuiti), Troy Pyper(Invercargill), 11pts
- 16 - Charlie O'Neill (Alexandra), 9pts
- 17 equal - Jockey O'Neil (Alexandra), Chris Vickers (Palmerston), 8pts
- 19 - Matt Tumohe (Balclutha), 6pts
- 20 - Axle Reid (Taihape), 5pts
- 21 - Tipene Te Whata (Tautoro)

## Amazing Fagan claims his own cup, and Otago win No 18 - February 15, 2015

Shearing great David Fagan performed another of his never ceasing to amaze triumphs today when he won one of the country's premier titles for the 18th time - at least a decade after he donated it's winner's cup because he didn't think he'd be around the event much longer.

But the 53-year-old told the crowd that watched the Otago Championships final in a woolshed near Balclutha this wone definitely would be his last.

It gave him a career tally of 633 open final wins - the first having been the Otago title in 1983. But it had been 11 years since he last won the title in Balclutha.

"You always remember those first wins," said Fagan, "It really put the fire in my belly for the future, and here we are."

Having announced recently he will retire from competition shearing after the New Zealand Championships in home-town Te Kuiti on April 7-9, the five-times World individual champion made his intention clear today on the opening sheep of the five-man final of 20 sheep each.

He was first into the catching pen for No 2, and staged a keen race with 2012 World champion, and Whangamomona-based Scotsman Gavin Mutch, who ultimately finished first in 18min 9.37sec.

Mutch beat Fagan by just nine seconds, but the the superior quality of Invercargill shearer Nathan Stratford, who finished in 18min 36.15sec, gave him the second-place ribbon, Fagan winning by just 0.29pts.



David Fagan - My trophy



David Fagan, nearing the end of the open final he won by 0.29pts.

It reinforced Fagan's TAB favouritism to win a 17th Golden Shears open in Masterton next month, although he has not won the coveted title since 2009.

Last year's winner and runner-up, Hawke's Bay shearers and 2014 World Championships representatives Rowland Smith and John Kirkpatrick, did not compete.

There was another sign of a changing guard in the shearing sports when 2012 World Woolhandling champion Joel Henare, of Gisborne won the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year final for a sixth time.

It's the richest woolhandling prize in the country, the winner claiming \$2000 plus selection in the New Zealand team for tests against Australia next summer in Forbes, NSW, and in Masterton at the 2016 Golden Shears.

In 2012, at the age of 20, Henare completed a string of five-consecutive wins in the event, he was runner-up in 2013 and last year, and today he announced it could, too, be his last, with he had fiancé Erica Reti, of Dunedin, having decided to move to Australia at the end of the season.

The surprise top qualifier for the final, Kodi Hawkins, of Martinborough, was runner-up. In the senior shearing final, the shearing sports' most prolific winner this season, eight-show winner Ethan Pankhurst, had to concede defeat for the second time in a month to first-year senior and fellow Masterton shearer Dylan McGruddy, while the intermediate and junior finals on Friday went respectively to Marley Waihape, of Mataura, and 15-year-old Hemi Lambert, of Raupunga.



Monica Potae(second from right) anxiously awaits the call from judge Alistair Eckhoff in the woolpressing. Teammate Joel Henare, right, was much more relaxed



Stevie Mason-Smallman on her way to winning the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year senior final.

The New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year senior final was won by Stevie Mason-Smallman, of Taihape, and the junior final by Jaya-Deva Henry, of Milton.

Pagan Rimene, of Masterton but based in the South Island, won the South Island Circuit open woolhandling final. The senior circuit final was won by Sarah Higgins, of Havelock, and the junior by Winton-based Chiquita Tamepo, of Gisborne.

About 130 shearers and woolhandlers competed in the two-day Otago Shears, for many the start of a Golden Shears countdown taking in the Southern Shears next weekend in Gore and three North Island competitions in the week before the Golden Shears in Masterton on March 5-7.

## A bit of a boost at Arapohue - February 15, 2015

Organisers of the Arapohue Show's shearing championships on Saturday (February 14) are hoping some renewed interest from south of Auckland is a sign of good things to come in boosting entries in competitions in Northland.

A small number of competitors made the journey of over three hours each way to the Northern Wairoa A and P Society's show near Dargaville, enough to enable the show to run a novice event and a junior event, neither of which was able to take place at the North Kaipara A and P Show 50km away at Paparoa seven days earlier.

The major money, however, still stayed with the northlanders, with home-show shearers Neville Osborne, Jared Rountree, Michael Boyd and Ralph Smith repeating their previous week's Paparoa wins in the Open, Senior, Intermediate and Veterans events respectively - Osborne's fifth win at Arapohue in the last seven years, and Boyd completing a succession of wins at the show from novice to intermediate.

The junior event was won by Te Kuiti visitor Mitchell Hoare who had won the previous week at the Te Puke Show.

Hazel Wood, of Ruawai, won the novice event, returning from a successful southern venture in which she won novice events at the Dannevirke A and P Show and the North Island Championships at Marton, also the previous weekend.

The next competition in Northland is next Saturday at the North Hokianga show at Broadwood, the northernmost of the 60 shearing competitions on the Shearing Sports New Zealand calendar.

### Down in the valleys shearing at Apiti for Welsh test - February 13, 2015

The remote northern Manawatu farming locality of Apiti has been named as one of two venues for the upcoming Elders Primary Wool Shearing Series test matches between New Zealand and Wales.

The match on February 28 will be the last New Zealand representative appearances for Te Kuiti shearer David Fagan, who first shored for New Zealand 30 years ago. He will retire from competition shearing at the New Zealand championships in Te Kuiti in April.

While the Gore test will be indoors, the Apiti test will be on an open-front stand at the Apiti Domain, at a sports day which dates back to an athletics and horse sports event first held in 1895.

The Domain is on Oroua Valley Rd, just south of Apiti and about 40km north of Feilding. Shearing Sports New Zealand chairman Gavin Rowland confirmed the venues this week, and that the second test would be held at Apiti, not at Pahiatua where it was initially scheduled to take place the following day.

Mr Rowland said the shearing industry and sport is based around small-town New Zealand, and added: "It's a great occasion for these areas to see international sport in their own back-yard. I'm sure Apiti and the people of Manawatu and surrounding areas will welcome this chance to see an Elders Primary Wool Series test, and, of course, the last test match in the career of David Fagan."

He and Rakaia shearer Tony Coster, who replaces injured Napier gun John Kirkpatrick, will shear against Welsh shearer-farmers Gwion Evans and Rhys Jones, who last weekend beat a Top of the South team in Reefton, their first win in three provincial matches on tour.

Results of the three matches on the Wales Shearing Team tour of New Zealand to date:

**January 17, Tauranga, 10 sheep:** Tauranga Shears Selection 94.84pts (Paerata Abraham 11min 5.2sec, 47.26sec; Mark Grainger 10min 21.6sec, 47.58pts) beat Wales 101.78pts (Gwion Evans 10min 43.4sec, 48.17pts; Rhys Jones 11min 6.1sec, 53.605pts).

**January 25, Rotorua, 12 sheep:** Geyserland Shears Invitation 95.4pts (Murray Henderson 11min 48sec, 45.483pts; Jack Fagan 12min 50sec, 49.917pts) beat Wales 105.62pts (Gwion Evans 12min 19sec, 51.95pts; Rhys Jones 12min 45sec, 53.667pts).

**February 7, at Reefton, 15 sheep:** Wales 114.455pts (Gwion Evans 14min 44.75sec, 55.971pts; Rhys Jones 15min 9.69sec, 58.485pts) beat Top of the South 132.463pts (Chris Jones 15min 36.9sec, 62.578pts; Richard Sampey 15min 51.03sec, 69.885pts).

Remaining matches are: February 21, v New Zealand (first test), at Gore; February 27, v Taumarunui Jamboree Shears Team, at Taumarunui; February 28, v New Zealand (second test), at Apiti.

## **New venues for Otago and Pahiatua shears' - February 10, 2015**

Two of the major lead-up events before the Golden Shears are shifting out of town centre venues and returning to woolsheds for their competitions over the next three weeks.

They are the Otago Shears, which will be held next Friday and Saturday (February 13-14) at the Telford Farm, 498 The Owaka Highway, and the Pahiatua Shears, which will be held on March 1 at a Fouhy family property at 2021 Mangaone Valley Rd, southeast of Pahiatua.

First-day events at the Otago Shears start at 8am on Friday and include the woolhandling events, including the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year, and junior and intermediate shearing heats.

Saturday's events, starting at 7.30am with senior shearing heats, include the Open shearing championship, the first leg of an unofficial four-event shearing Grand Slam over four successive weekends, also including the Southern Shears in Gore, the Pahiatua Shears and the Golden Shears in Masterton on March 5-7.

Only multiple Golden Shears champions Roger Cox, David Fagan and John Kirkpatrick are thought to have won all four finals in the Grand Slam in a single season.

The Otago Shears had been held in the Balclutha Town Hall each year for more than half-a-century, while the Pahiatua Shears, first held on a trailer in the early 1970s, became particularly popular during the later 1970s and the 1980s in a woolshed at Balfour Stud, beside State Highway 2 just south of Pahiatua, and had been held at the town's sports stadium for about the last 10 years.

The Otago Shears, which expect to be back in the Town Hall next year, will be signposted "Otago Shears" from Balclutha's Z Energy service station, while similar signposting from Pahiatua's BP station will direct competitors and spectators to the one-day, shearing-only Pahiatua Shears about 10km away.

## **Great north shows need the shearers - February 10, 2015**

Organisers of one of the country's oldest shearing competitions are hoping a window in the shearing calendar may open onto a whole new field of competitors in Northland on Saturday.

The competition at the Northern Wairoa A and P Association's 118th Arapohue Show, near Dargaville, will be the only shearing competition in the North Island this weekend, and the only other competition in the country will be almost 1700km away in Balclutha.

Competition is scheduled for the Open, Senior, Intermediate and Junior classes, as well as Novice and Veterans events, starting at 10am.

There's a truckload of sheep waiting - about 180, says farmer and organiser Kevin Boyd, who first shored at the show in the 1970s and still occasionally competes to help make up the numbers because of the event's popularity with showgoers.

He isn't expecting any great surge in the number of entries, but he'd certainly welcome them.

"We always get a reasonably good crowd all day sitting out in front, so it still does represent an important part of the show," he said.

As with all the show shearing events in Northland, competitor numbers have dwindled comparative with the dwindling sheep population in the region, once close to 2 million and now estimated to be well under 500,000.

Young shearers, thus, head south for the work, or, as in the case of youngest son and promising shearer Michael Boyd to a tertiary agricultural education at Lincoln in Canterbury... but he will shear the show first.

The problem was classically highlighted at Saturday's North Kaipara A and P Show at Paparoa, where there were no Junior or Novice entries, while of the six Intermediate entries winner Rex Finlayson is 56, third-placed Mike Bristow is 74, and shows stalwart Rex Salisbury is 79.

The biggest entry was the 10 in the Veterans class, including 81-year-old Ted Trembath. The North Kaipara Open was won by Neville Osborne, who had last won the event in 2012, the Senior was won by Jared Rountree, Finlayson repeated the Intermediate win he had last year, and Ralph Smith won the Veterans final, and, aged 66, also shored in the Open.

In the heyday, the area north of Auckland fronted with some of the country's top shearers, including Golden Shears champions Brian Waterson, Norm Blackwell and Ivan Rosandich, whose presence also attracted other top names to the shows.

Among them was Cambridge gun Jack Dowd, who also "left behind" the Jack Dowd Cup for the Open final at Arapohue.

Sadly, Mr Boyd says, someone left with the trophy one year, and "forgot" to bring it back, opening big gaps in the shearing's history, because at times the only record of the winners was in the engraving on the silverware.

But while some of that history may have vanished, the competition isn't disappearing, and with hopes for the future it's shed was rebuilt in time for last year's show.

Mr Boyd says it's time for show associations and shearing competitions to "think outside the square" to accommodate modern-day issues, attract competitors and make sure the events survive.

## The old home town suits Brausch just fine - February 09, 2015

Porangahau shearing contractor Adam Brausch had a long-awaited return to winning form back in his old home town with victory in the Dannevirke A and Show's Open shearing final today.

Brausch, who won the New Zealand Championships junior, intermediate and senior finals in 2001, 2002, and 2004 respectively, and the Golden Shears intermediate title in 2002, had to wait six years before he broke through in top company and won the Wairarapa and Dannevirke shows' finals in the 2010-2011 season, when he also reached the Golden Shears Open final.

But he had to wait another four years for his next win today, beating 2010 Golden Shears and World champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, by 1.21pts in a four-man, 15-sheep final. Brausch had to rely on quality points to claim the title.

Tailing the field in the early stages, he hit the lead after five with the quickest of the second-shear sheep in the contest, but Ferguson was able to hit the front again and finished in 13min 38sec, beating Pongaroa farmer David Buick by 12 seconds and Brausch by 21 before the judging panalties were taken into account to decide the final result.

Taihape schoolteacher and 2008 World woolhandling champion Sheree Alabaster also ended a break from the winning circle by taking today's open woolhandling final, her first victory since the New Zealand championships in Te Kuiti last March.

Her 2010 World teams champions partner, Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, was second, and Ngaio Hanson (nee Braddick), of Eketahuna, was third.

In other shearing events, Masterton shearer Ethan Pankhurst continued as the most successful competitor across all grades with his eighth Senior win, following three in the grade last year, Woodville's Tegwyn Bradley finally grabbed his first Intermediate win after five seconds and thirds earlier in the season, and Napier-based Ricci Stevens scored his



Adam Brausch winning his first Open title for four years



Tegwyn Bradley, pictured at Marton the day after his first Intermediate win, at Dannevirke.

first Junior win, after top-three placings at Wairoa, Taihape and Rotorua.

Hastings-based Erana Smith, from Ruatoria, won her fourth Senior woolhandling title of the season, and Hannah Spiers, who works for Braddick Shearing, had her first Junior woolhandling win.

Shearing convenor Jane Leogreen, who in 1995 became only the second woman to win a Golden Shears title (the Junior final), was pleased with the big entry of over 150 competitors, comprising 106 in the five shearing classes, including 34 juniors and 22 in the novice and intermediate grades, and 49 in the four woolhandling classes.



Sheree Alabaster signals the finish of the Open woolhandling final, her first win since last year's New Zealand championships.

## All hands on deck to save Te Puke Shears - February 09, 2015

The young bucks stood-up big-time as the Te Puke A and P Show's Open shearing competition was threatened with being scrapped from the programme because of a lack of entries on Saturday.

Cancelled last year because of heavy rain, the Open was won by 24-year-old Pio Pio shearer Sam Brooks, who, like the others from the lower grades, answered the call to make sure there was still a spectacle for the showgoers making a bee-line for the shearing, unaware of how hard the event had been hit by clashes with other events through the vagaries of the calendar and programming of A and P shows throughout the country.

The Te Puke show clashed directly with the North Island Shearing and Woolhandling Championships at Marton and two other competitions throughout the country, and came the day after the historic Aria Sports and the Dannevirke A and P Show on Waitangi Day.

Brooks hadn't shorn many competitions since a string of good performances in the intermediate grade in 2012-2013.

They included two wins, and a third at Te Puke, where the Open final later that February afternoon was won by Hastings shearer Rowland Smith, now the No 1 shearer in the World.

Earlier yesterday afternoon, Brooks mucked-up his chances of reaching a Senior final for the first time, being one of three who missed qualifying for the four-man final in that grade.

"I thought I would give the Open a go as I will have to move up to the Open next year," he said, having this season passed a gradings threshold by shearing his first ewes tally of over 400 in a day.

"Te Puke is where I'm originally from and my parents live over there," he said. "So I like to support the show and was happy to make sure there was an open event running."

Only two Open-class shearers were at the show, Rowland Smith's father and regular Te Puke event commentator Alan Smith, from Ruawai, and Scott Gerke, of Papamoa.

They were joined in the Open field by Brooks, four intermediate shearers, and event organiser and competitions judge David Hodge, who made the most of the day by finishing as runner-up, after earlier

winning the Senior event, along with dressing-up as "Davina Ross" to complete a full field of four for a new "Ladies" event.

His wife, Carol, also shored in the intermediate heats, as well as judging during the afternoon, in which she said the shearing took place in "beautiful" fine weather, starkly contrasting with the catastrophic deluge of 12 months earlier.

She said that while the event struggled for competitor numbers, there's no shortage of support from the area, highlighted by an 11th hour decision to run the women's event and arrange a sponsor for the prizes.

"And the spectators absolutely love it," she said.

The Intermediate final was won by Kaleb Foote, the Junior final by newcomer Michael Hoare, and the veterans by Peter McCabe.

### Half-a-second mate - Welshman pipped by Kiwi Master - February 09, 2015

The Wales shearing team went within half-a-second of completing another western rout for their country when members Gwion Evans was beaten by just 0.018pts in the Reefton Shears Open final on Saturday.

Evans and teammate Rhys Jones had already beaten a Top of the South team in the third match of their New Zealand Tour, and a win for Evans in the final event would have sealed a unique treble of doubles at the Inangahua A and P Show at Reefton Racecourse.

While it was the first win for the Welsh on the current tour, after two matches in the North Island, Wales had beaten the Top of the South at Reefton in both 2013 and 2014, when team member Richard Jones won the Open finals back-to-back, the only Open-class wins by any Welsh shearer in New Zealand.

Evans dominated the test against Top of the South shearers Chris Jones and Richard Sampey, both from Marlborough, as Wales won comfortably by more than 18pts, a morale-boosting victory ahead of the mountainous goal of beating New Zealand for the first time in New Zealand in an Elders Primary Wool Series test at Gore on February 21.

Evans also dominated the pace in the ultimately demonstrably closer Reefton Open final, shearing the 15 lambs in 14min 27sec, the only finalist to shear under a minute a sheep.

But it was the quality of Master Shearer, former New Zealand representative and Rakaia contractor Grant Smith that carried the day, after he was only third to finish and took 15min 10.63sec.

Half-a-second quicker by Evans, or half-a-second slower by Smith would have been enough to reverse the result, a big moment for Smith, who had had to endure 20 finals of minor-money-only since his most-recent previous win at Oxford almost two years ago.

Japanese shearer Shun Oishi won his second Intermediate title at Top of the South circuit shows, the senior title was won by Andrew Ferguson, of Takaka, Eve Peddie, of Oxford, broke-through to win a Junior title, and Phil Oldfield, from Geraldine, won the first blades final of the new year.

The next show in the West Coast-Tasman region is at Murchison on February 21.

## Young English shearer surprises at Marton - February 09, 2015

English farmers' son Ross Thomson was better cut-out than most teenagers for the role of victory speech maker after the first win of his fledgling shearing career in Marton today.

But the 19-year-old from a small sheep and chicken farm near Dawlish, who was in a Devon team which was runner-up in the national YFC debating competition last year, wasn't quite prepared for what happened.

"I was more than surprised," said Thomson, who only just qualified for the final of the North Island Junior Championship, in last place in a field of 12 for a final shorn in two legs of six shearers each.

But from then he was in total charge. Shearing in the second leg he finished his three sheep in 6min 51.06sec, 11 seconds quicker than the next fastest in either of the two legs, and also scored comfortably the best quality points to win by more than four points from runner-up, former Golden Shears novice winner and near-local Connor Puha, from Kimbolton.

In his first full season of shearing and planning to shear full-time for at least the next five or six years, Thomson had shorn in "a couple" of small competitions in England before coming to New Zealand in November. He has been shearing in the central North Island for Rewa Shearing.

Masterton woolhandler Jessie Dean overcame eight years of shyness to win the Junior woolhandling championship final.



Ross Thomson



Woolhandling Junior - Jessie Dean

The 25-year-old, who works for Braddick Shearing, of Eketahuna, hadn't competed since her only previous competition, the Pre-Shears Championship near Masterton, when she was 17.

Back in familiar territory, just 15kms from where she went to school at Turakina Maori Girls College, she explained her absence from any more competitions simply. "Too shy," she said.

She just scraped into the six-person final of an event which had 10 entries.

## Ferguson wins as shearing mates tipped-up - February 09, 2015

Former World and Golden Shears shearing champion Cam Ferguson has won his first North Island Championships open final at the expense of a close mate in Marton.

The Waipawa gun failed to qualify for the top-six showdown on Saturday, but was promoted after Porangahau contractor Adam Brausch, who had been top qualifier, was tipped-up for not tipping-up, and was penalised five points.

It was a massive hit for Brausch, dropping him from top of the list to seventh, a day after the former Golden Shears and New Zealand Championships lower grades winner had beaten Ferguson the previous day in the open final at the Dannevirke A and P Show to claim his first win in four years.

Brausch was, however, not the only shearer to offend the judges in a rare clampdown on a requirement that all competitors must tip-up sheep in the next event to assist the judges inspecting the shorn sheep. It is requirement put in place to ensure busy competition programmes run to time.

Of the 12 semi-finalists, there were three that failed, with James Ruki, of Te Kuiti, also losing a place in the final, while Southland visitor Eru Weeds was also penalised, although he had already been eliminated.

It wasn't just the open-class shearers who suffered, judges confirming two senior shearers also had their hopes dashed when penalised for failing to tip-up for the next event after their semi-final.

Ferguson seized the moment, shearing the 20-sheep open final in 16min 58.37sec - 14



Shearing Open semi- David Fagan



Woolhandling Open - 1 Cushla Abraham 2 Aria Mullins 3 Keryn Herbert 4 Sheree Alabaster 5 Pania Piwari 6 Ngaio Hanson In front Taylor Rae Ala

seconds ahead of next-man-off Gavin Mutch - and carding the second-best shearing board judging points.

It gave him victory by 1.286 points over Te Kuiti legend David Fagan who, at 53 and having last week announced he will end a 37-year competition career at the end of this season, was the only other finalist after Ferguson and Mutch to cut-out in under 18 minutes, shearing his 20 in 17min 27.09sec.

Mutch, who had also been promoted into the final field after originally failing to qualify, was placed third when all time and quality points were counted.

The win was Ferguson's 6th of 2014-2015, putting him one win ahead of Fagan in a season which has been missing new World champion Rowland Smith(on family time-out) and World Championships teammate John Kirkpatrick(injured).



Shearing Open - 1 Cam Ferguson 2 David Fagan 3 Gavin Mutch 4 Murray Henderson 5 Troy Pyper 6 Aaron Haynes

There was a major surprise in the Open woolhandling final where Cushla Abraham(nee Gordon), of Masterton, had her first victory since winning four senior finals in early 2012.

"This really is a surprise," she said emphatically.

The runner-up was first-time open finalist Aria Mullins, of Dannevirke, while third and fourth were internationals Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, and Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape.

The senior shearing final was won by Robert Mudgway, of Taihape, the intermediate final by Ramone Smith, of Gisborne, and the junior final provided a maiden win for English teenager Ross Thomson, from Dawlish, Devon.

Junior shearing final runner-up Connor Puha, of Kimbolton, went one better later in the day to win the senior woolhandling final, while Jessie Dean, from Masterton - "too shy" to compete for the eight years since her only previous competition - won the junior woolhandling final.

## **New venues for Otago and Pahiatua shears' - February 09, 2015**

Two of the major lead-up events before the Golden Shears are shifting out of town centre venues and returning to woolsheds for their competitions over the next three weeks.

They are the Otago Shears, which will be held next Friday and Saturday (February 13-14) at the Telford Farm, 498 The Owaka Highway, and the Pahiatua Shears, which will be held on March 1 at a Fouhy family property at 2021 Mangaone Valley Rd, southeast of Pahiatua.

First-day events at the Otago Shears start at 8am on Friday and include the woolhandling events, including the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year, and junior and intermediate shearing heats.

Saturday's events, starting at 7.30am with senior shearing heats, include the Open shearing championship, the first leg of an unofficial four-event shearing Grand Slam up to and including the Pahiatua Shears and ending with the Golden Shears which will be held in Masterton on March 5-7.

Only World champions and multiple Golden Shears champions Roger Cox and David Fagan are thought to have won all four finals in the Grand Slam in a single season.

The Otago Shears had been held in the Balclutha Town Hall each year for more than half-a-century, while the Pahiatua Shears, first held on a trailer in the early 1970s, became particularly popular during the later 1970s and the 1980s in a woolshed at Balfour Stud, beside State Highway 2 just south of Pahiatua, and had been held at the town's sports stadium for about the last 10 years.

The Otago Shears, which expect to be back in the Town Hall next year, will be signposted "Otago Shears" from Balclutha's Z Energy service station, while similar signposting from Pahiatua's BP station will direct competitors and spectators to the one-day, shearing-only Pahiatua Shears about 10km away.

## Mike Barnett - Referee/Umpire of the Year, in Waikato - February 03, 2015

Shearing judge Mike Barnett had much more on his mind than personal success when he was named Referee/Umpire at the Waikato Sports Awards last week.

It was a big step in helping keep shearing on the map in the big smoke - in this case Hamilton, home of Super 15 rugby franchise The Chiefs, in a region which has also been home to several of the World's top rowers and a range of other sports stars..

Mr Barnett also comes somewhere more than a mile or two from the big smoke, as in Aria, the nearest place he can call a home town, even if it doesn't make the 520-plus New Zealand listings on Wikipedia.

But at 53, he's been recognised by metropolitan peers, for his achievement as a chief steward at last year's Golden Shears World Shearing and Woolhandling Championships in Ireland.



Mike Barnett, being interviewed as chief referee at the New Zealand Shearing Championships in Te Kuiti last year. Less than two months later he was in charge at the World Championships in Ireland, leading to him last week being named Referee/Umpire of the Year at the Waikato Sports Awards.

He said it was "a shock" to hear himself being named in such exalted company at one of New Zealand's premier regional sports awards.

"I'm rapt," he said later. "But I'm more pleased for the sake of shearing."

"It's nice to see shearing being recognised," he said, having told the audience in Hamilton's Claudelands Events Centre he wished it was recognised much more - like at the Commonwealth Games, or, even, the Olympics.

As a sheep and cattle farmer it was not the sort of gong or opportunity he ever expected when he started judging shearing competitions 12-13 years ago, nor when he was asked by World Championships organiser George Graham if he was interested in the high-ranking role in Gorey.

"Even getting the invitation to be referee at the World Championships was a surprise," he said.

Teaming with Welsh judge Arwyn Jones to oversee the shearing competition, Mr Barnett was one of a large number of New Zealanders who took-on roles at the championships, including wife Jo, who had otherwise been along mainly for the shopping, the touring and catching up with family and friends in the UK.

Back in New Zealand, Mr Barnett was nominated by the New Zealand Shearing Championships Committee first for the Waitomo District Referee/Umpire of the Year Award.

He won that award in November - on a big night for shearing sports on which woolhandler Keryn Herbert was named district Sportsperson of the Year and New Zealand Shears committee members Paul Grainger and Les Te Kanawa were among eight people recognised for service to sport, including former All Blacks Sir Colin Meads and brother Stand Meads.

The success that night forwarded Mike Barnett to the provincial awards as a representative of one of the eight districts in the Waikato region.

It was forward-thinking stuff for the Waikato awards, which in 1994 included shearers David Fagan and Alan MacDonald, also from the Waitomo district, as Team of the Year.

In 2009, woolhandler Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, was named Wanganui Sportsperson of the Year, recognising her win in the World Championships in Norway the previous year, and at the 2011 Hawke's Bay Sports Awards there was a double triumph, with Cam Ferguson named Sportsperson of the Year for his World Championships and Golden Shears win the previous year in Wales, and brothers Rowland and Doug Smith were named Team of the Year for their World ewe-shearing record.

Another shearing personality to have featured in regional sports awards was Willie Buick, of Masterton, who was joint Administrator/Official of the Year and joint Supreme winner at the 2013 Wairarapa Sports Awards.

Mr Barnett urged shearing show committees to make sure they are aware of what awards are available in their regions and ensure top competitors and officials are nominated.

"It all helps keep shearing and woolhandling up there," he said.

### **Top 10 guns set for Rural Games Speedshear on Sunday - February 03, 2015**

New World champion shearer Rowland Smith will have one of his few competition outings of the 2014-2015 season in an invitation Speedshear at the first Hilux New Zealand Rural Games in Queenstown this weekend.

Smith, who won the World Championships final in Ireland last May, and who became a dad for the first time soon afterwards, is taking a break from competing on the Shearing Sports New Zealand Circuit.

But, in honour of mentor Paul Kelly, who died last year, he is among 10 of the country's top shearers invited to contest the Speedshear between 1pm and 3pm on Sunday (February 8). They are headed by Smith and Te Kuiti veteran and multiple World champion David Fagan, Hastings shearer Dion King, who holds the World lambshearing record of 866 in nine hours, and 2010 World champion and Waipawa shearer Cam Ferguson, who once shore an eight-hour record of 742 lambs.

The others are former nine-hour ewe-shearing record holder Darin Forde, of Tuatapere, Invercargil shearer Leon Samuels, who shares a four-stand lambshearing record, regular speedshear top-liners Deano Smith, of Gisborne, Porangahau contractor Adam Brausch, and Joe Tumohe, of Balclutha, and Fagan's son and recent first time Open speedshear winner Jack Fagan.

On what is already a busy weekend for the shearers, some of them will be continuing a weekend of thousands of kilometres chasing the shearing prizes, after competing at the Rangitikei Sports Shears in Marton on Saturday, after also competing at either the remote Aria Sports or the Dannevirke A and P Show on Friday. Others may have shorn in the Reefton Shears, also on Friday.

On Sunday, shearers will shear two sheep in each round, the slowest two after each round being eliminated until two are left to shear two lambs each in the final side-by-side.

David Fagan said the event provides good exposure for competition shearing, and hopes it becomes an annual event.