

World champs hopeful returns to winning form - March 28, 2010

Napier shearer John Kirkpatrick has ended a luckless run of 11 competitions without victory by winning the Open final at the Taranaki Shears in Stratford.

The 39-year-old's win today (Sunday) came a day after being beaten by 35-year-old fellow Hawke's Bay shearer Dion King in another final at the Waitomo Caves Shears, Kirkpatrick's seventh second-placing since his last win in Dannevirke on February 5.

The opening-price favourite for the Golden Shears when he was also second earlier this month, and defending a Taranaki title he won last year, Kirkpatrick was bouncing-back from one of his worst results of the season just over a week ago when he failed to make the final of the Waimarino Shears at Raetihi, which was also won by King.

The latest winning form has strengthened the likelihood of an all-Hawke's Bay combination defending New Zealand's World machine shearing titles at the 14th World Championships in Wales in July.

The first of two positions was claimed by Waipawa shearer Cam Ferguson when he won the Golden Shears final on March 6, and the second is on the line at the New Zealand Championships in Te Kuiti on April 10.

The 26-year-old Ferguson's post Golden Shears blues continued when he missed out on both weekend finals, after failing similarly in two other events since his most famous triumph.

The reigning World champion, Paul Avery, showed he is still in contention for a swansong in Wales by being runner-up today, winning the race over 20 sheep but bowing to Kirkpatrick's superior quality on the day. James Fagan, of Te Kuiti, was third. King was fourth, followed by Hawke's Bay-based Far North shearer Rowland Smith and Te Kuiti icon David Fagan, the TAB favourite to win in Te Kuiti and who was third on Saturday at Waitomo.

All the top shearers are expected to compete at the Northern Shears during the Royal Easter Show in Auckland next weekend, the last competition before the Te Kuiti showdown.

The season's last competition in the South Island will be next weekend at Oxford, where blade shearers will be competing for their two places at the World championships. Heading the race are Christchurch shearer Brian Thompson, Geraldine's Phil Oldfield, and 2008 representative Billy Michelle, of Timaru.

The two woolhandlers in the team, after a trial series final at the Golden Shears, are Te Kuiti mum Keryn Herbert and Taihape

schoolteacher and reigning World champion Sheree Alabaster.

NEW ZEALAND CHAMPS - TAB ODDS - March 24, 2010

Opening-price odds on the New Zealand Open Shearing championships to be shorn at Te Kuiti on April 10:

Winner:

\$2.5

0 David Fagan

\$3.5

0 Cam Ferguson

\$5.0

0 John Kirkpatrick

\$7.0

0 Dion King

\$9.0

0 Paul Avery

\$20 Dean Ball, Nathan Stratford.

\$30 James Fagan, Jerome McCrea, Gavin Mutch

\$40 Darin Forde, Rowland Smith

\$80 David Buick, Mark Grainger, Digger Balme, Sean Edmond

\$100 Jordon Smeaton, Gareth Daniel, Kelvin Walker, Lawrence

\$150 Alan Bramley, Murray Henderson, Ryan Miller

Delwyn Jones and Shane Rawlinson are additions at \$50, and prices on other competitors are available on request at the TAB.

Head-to-Head

David Fagan \$1.60 v Cam Ferguson \$2.25

John Kirkpatrick \$1.60 v Dion King \$2.25

Paul Avery \$1.35 v Dean Ball \$3

Nathan Stratford \$1.57 v James Fagan \$2.30

Jerome McCrea \$1.87 v Gavin Mutch \$1.87

The TAB also offers options on shearers to finish in the top three, and on who will join Cam Ferguson in the New Zealand team at the World Championships.

A bet for the shear fun of it - March 23, 2010

The TAB has opened up multi-bet options on shearing for the first time with a series of head-to-head match-ups for the New Zealand open title which will be decided in Te Kuiti on April 10. Shearing bookmaker Kieran McAnulty said head-to-head betting had been particularly popular during the 50th Golden Shears in Masterton earlier this month, including the biggest single bet made in TAB shearing options history.

As a result it was decided to link five head-to-head options to give fans a multi-bet chance for the championships, which decide the last place in the New Zealand team for the 14th

Golden Shears World Championships in Wales three months later.

Two particularly keen match-ups see veteran and Te Kuiti hero David Fagan favoured to beat new Golden Shears champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, while two shearers vying to make it an all-Hawke's Bay attack on the World title will be in pitched battle not only on the board but also the ticket, with reigning New Zealand champion John Kirkpatrick the early favourite to beat longtime fellow-Napier rival Dion King.

The bets apply to the finishing placings of the shearers in each option, regardless of whether they reach the six-man final.

Before the head-to-head book was opened, Kirkpatrick, a World teams champion in 2008, predicted either he or King would be joining Ferguson on the trip to Wales.

The winner of six titles throughout the country from October to January, Kirkpatrick was the more-favoured despite 10 consecutive shows without victory since last winning at Dannevirke on February 5, including six second placings. In the same time, King has scored three of his four wins this season. Meanwhile, the TAB has Fagan as more than a sentimental favourite in its win-pool on the New Zealand open, which if he wins will offer the 48-year-old a chance to redeem himself on his favourite Welsh stage, where he was beaten by King Country shearing mate and former schoolmate Alan McDonald in 1994. Fagan opened at \$2.50, Ferguson at \$3.50 and Kirkpatrick, the opening-price favourite for the Golden Shears, has been let-out to \$5. King and reigning World champion and Taranaki farmer Paul Avery were the only others paying under \$10.

The TAB is operating two other options on the New Zealand Open, a top-three finish choice and an option on who will join Ferguson in the New Zealand team, effectively being the top placed open final placegetter apart from Ferguson.

This weekend, most of the top contenders continue the road to Te Kuiti with the Waitomo Caves Shears in the King Country, and the Taranaki Shears in Stratford.

A Win win for Jase the Ace - March 21, 2010

West Coast shearer Jason Win has returned to winning form back on his favourite stamping-grounds of Marlborough and Nelson a fortnight after again just missing the dream of a place in the Golden Shears open final in Masterton.

Win, from Ikamatua, scored a crushing victory in the Saturday's 16-sheep open final at the Flaxbourne A and Show at Ward. He was first finished, taking 13 minutes and beating home-show hope Angus Moore by 20 seconds. But Win also cleaned-up

with easily the best quality as Moore disappeared from contention at the behest of the judges in the pens outside.

Ultimately, Renwick shearer Chris Jones was runner-up, albeit more than 12 points behind the globe-trotting Win who has won events as far afield as Norway, but who on March 6 completed the possibly unprecedented sequence of four successive Golden Shears open semi-finals without qualifying for the final. Win has had three wins this year at Duvauchelle, Tapawera and Reefton, but had earlier reached finals in company with veteran North Island stars David Fagan and John Kirkpatrick at the New Zealand Spring Shears in Waimate and the national crossbred longwool championships in Lumsden.

Napier gun's king-hit as shears showdown looms - March 21, 2010

The cautionary New Zealand Shearing Championships odds on Napier shearer Dion King looked well-founded when he won the the latest lead-up event in Raetihi on Saturday.

The 35-year-old, who was a \$7 fourth-favourite last week when the TAB opened betting on the April 10 championships showdown in Te Kuiti, was winning for the fourth time in 10 finals he's contested since returning from Australia mid-season with the goal of a place in the two-man machine-shearing sector of Shearing Sports New Zealand's team for the 14th World Championships in Wales on July 19-22.

Central Hawke's Bay gun Cam Ferguson claimed the first spot when he won the Golden Shears open final a fortnight ago, pitching King into a sudden-death battle in Te Kuiti with the likes of five-times World champion and King Country hero David Fagan, and 2008 World champions Paul Avery, of Stratford, and John Kirkpatrick, of Napier.

At the Waimarino Shears on Saturday, the 48-year-old Fagan, the TAB's \$2.50 favourite for the Te Kuiti final, had to settle for second, nephew James Fagan nipped-in for third, and Avery tailed the four-man field in the final pover 20 sheep each.

King, who won the Agrodome Shears in Rotorua, the Southern Shears in Gore and the Apiti Sports open final a week before the Golden Shears where he was fifth after being top qualifier for the final, finished in 17min 42sec on Saturday, beating David Fagan by 11 seconds and also recording the best quality points to take victory by 1.3pts.

Kirkpatrick fauled to reach the final for the first time in 17 contests this year, while Ferguson had his second miss in two outings since winning the Golden Shears.

Avery, who had bounced back from missing a place in the Golden Shears by beating Fagan, Kirkpatrick, King, Ferguson

and company at Kumeu last week, was still able to celebrate on Saturday, after son David scored his first win, in the Waimarino Novice final. Fagan's son, Jack, was second in the Junior final.

There was an upset in the intermediate final when Golden Shears winner Wi Poutu Ngarangione, of Gisborne, was beaten for only the second time in 15 finals this season, victory going to finals rookie Nukutai Tuhura, of Ruatoria.

The 19-year-old Ngarangione was still able to put another nick in the belt, by winning the intermediate final of a new Central North Island circuit, the senior final of which was won by fellow Gisborne shearer Tama Niania, who also won the Waimarino senior final.

The road to Te Kuiti continues with a double-header next weekend at the Waitomo Caves Shears and the Taranaki Shears, and the Royal Easter Show in Auckland a week later.

Black singlets on a roll in shearing test against Wales - March 21, 2010

New Zealand is headed for a second consecutive whitewash in home shearing series' against Wales after a convincing win as test-match shearing came to to tiny Raetihi in the Central North Island on Saturday.

Kiwi shearers John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, and James Fagan, of Te Kuiti, had earlier beaten Welshmen Gareth Daniel and Gareth Evans by almost 10 points in the first test in Gore and almost 13 in the second test at the 50th Golden Shears in Masterton.

While the gap closed to less than five-and-a-half points in the weekend's match at the Waimarino Shears, New Zealand is strongly favoured to make it 4-0 when the series end at the New Zealand Championships in Te Kuiti on April 8-10.

Last year, Kirkpatrick and black-singlets teammate and World champion Paul Avery also won 4-0 against a Welsh team of Daniel and veteran Nicky Beynon, having won an away series in Wales a few months earlier. But it was a different story in Wales last July when a four-test series was squared 2-all.

The Welsh improvement on Saturday was marked by Daniel's pursuit of Kirkpatrick in the 12-sheep event, in which the New Zealander was first finished in 11min 25sec. Just two seconds behind, and using the New Zealand season to prepare for his bid on the World championships at the Royal Welsh Show in July, Daniel carded the best board job, with just 15 penalties to the 20 ticked-up by Kirkpatrick. But the Kiwi helped cement the outcome with demonstrably the better result in the pen's outside.

International Shearing Test (12 sheep): New Zealand 78.708pts (John Kirkpatrick 11min 25sec, 42.332pts; James Fagan 11min 55sec, 45.083pts) beat Wales 84.196pts (Gareth Daniel 11min 27sec, 45.85pts; Gareth Evans 12min 33sec, 51.983pts). New Zealand lead 3-0. The 4th and final test is at the New Zealand championships in Te Kuiti on April 8-10.

Old champ for New - March 14, 2010

It was a case of old champ for new as World champion shearer Paul Avery turned the tables on new shearing golden boy Cam Ferguson in the first competition after Ferguson's triumph at the 50th Golden Shears.

A shock semi-final elimination at the Shears in Masterton on March 6, Taranaki-farmer and shearing veteran Avery bounced back quickly to win the Open final at the Kumeu Summer Shears near Auckland on Saturday.

But while most of the top guns were on board in the six-man final, including King Country icon David Fagan and three other Golden Shears finalists, new Golden Shears champion Ferguson was not. He had to watch from among the crowd after himself missing the cut, albeit by just a hundredth of a point.

Fagan was second and fellow Te Kuiti veteran Dean Ball third. Hawke's Bay shearers John Kirkpatrick and Dion King were fourth and fifth, and sixth was Far North youngster Rowland Smith, who the previous weekend had bounced back from injury to beat Avery in a Golden Shears invitation event for the best of those who had missed-out on a place in Masterton's big final.

In the South Island on Saturday, there was also a reversal in fortunes for another Golden Shears victor as New Zealand representative Tony Coster had to settle for second to fellow Rakaia shearer Grant Smith in the Mayfield A and P Show Open final. A week earlier Coster won New Zealand's premier mixed-wools title, the PGG Wrightson National, for a second year in a row.

It was at Mayfield last year that Ferguson won only his second open title.

The weekend's competitions were far from the end of the season for the country's top shearers, who next week head for the Waimarino Shears at Raetihi or the Methven Lamb Shears, part of a series of weekly contests heading towards a showdown at the New Zealand championships at Te Kuiti where they will battle for then single black-singlet sport beside Ferguson in the glamour machine-shearing events at the 14th World championships in Wales in July.

Golden Shears: Tragedy and odds - March 08, 2010

A mistaken report that teenager Joel Henare had beaten World champion Joanne Kumeroa in the Golden Shears Open woolhandling final on Saturday didn't worry the veteran who overcame tragedy and other odds to claim the title for a record fourth time.

Kumeroa, almost 40, revealed last night she almost scratched from the 50th Golden Shears after learning of a teenaged niece's death in Australia last Tuesday.

She also had to contend with a hip injury suffered in training the next day, and the disappointment earlier on Saturday of losing her World Championships team place. Ultimately she also had the premature disappointment of thinking she had been beaten, as Henare, on stage in front of a capacity 1800-strong audience, apparently

hearing nothing more than the sound "Jo, Jo," common to both their names, started his own celebration, thinking he had beaten one of his idols and mentors in the big one.

"I thought Joel had won it, too," she said. But then fellow finalist and hometown hope George Hawkins looked at her and said: "You're right. You've got it."

Presented with a \$1200 winning and a Royal Agricultural Society gold medal, Kumeroa then had to skip her own celebrations, bolting immediately afterwards for Wellington and an early-morning flight to Sydney to join bereaved whanau for her niece's tangi.

Kumeroa had won the title previously in 1994, 2001 and 2004. She had also won the World title in Edinburgh in 2003 and Toowoomba two years ago, and 18 months ago in Norway was runner-up to Kiwi teammate and Taihape school teacher Sheree Alabaster.

In Saturday's triumph she was a comfortable 20 points clear of Henare, in his fourth Golden Shears Open final in four years in the grade, but still without victory after being runner-up now two years in a row.

But earlier on Saturday it was Kumeroa who had to settle for the smaller pickings, filling third in a World Championships trial to find the two representatives for this year's event in Wales in July. It was won by Henare's New Zealand transtasman test



Bowing out, Joanne Kumeroa, Zealand team World Championships in Wales, third placing ended her reign as Shears Open title.

team partner, Te Kuiti-based Te Awamutu mum Keryn Herbert, and Alabaster was second, guaranteeing a defence of the crown.

Kumeroa, who plans to return for the New Zealand championships in Te Kuiti after Easter and settle back in Whanganui to work as a shearer, said from Sydney she had had little woolhandling practice in recent times, and grasped the opportunity when she went with some Tectra instructors to a woolshed near Masterton last week.

But it was there she "bumped something" and copped the hip injury, which left her hobbling for the rest of the week, despite the psychological help of a massage from woolhandling judge and qualified South Island therapist Barbara Newton.

"I was blown away to be hobbling around like that, and I was carrying alot when I went up there," she said. "But I had to do it for my niece."

Having shorn at Golden Shears in the past - notably in 2004 and 2005 when she also won the women's woolpressing title and the AgricultureITO Triathlon, based on points across all three disciplines of the sport - she is unsure about what her future holds.

She wants to work for loyal past bosses such as Phil Hourigan and Ewen Mackintosh, and with shearing mentor Noel Gardiner, and says she has "thought about" attempting a shearing record. She's managed up to 400 merino lambs in a day in Australia, and says she's "ready to go back home and try some crossbreds," with a previous best New Zealand lambs tally of 375 in eight hours.

"I don't know if I'm mentally strong enough for a record," she said.. "But, maybe if I'm around the right people."

She will however still chase the woolhandling titles, saying: "Getting knocked out of the team for the Worlds will make me more determined. A true champion always comes back, they say."

She said there were numerous young competitors stepping-up, notably Henare, and Larnie Morrell who won the senior title, despite still recovering from serious hip injures in a vital shearing gang van crash in Otago in September 2008. Morrell had previously won the Golden Shears junior title.

"But," Kumeroa said, "I've got to keep them honest."

Golden Shears on Sky TV - March 08, 2010

The Sky Tv coverage of the 50th Golden Shears is expected to start on March 17, featuring four shows at various times over the following four weeks on Sky 1 and Sky 2.

Russell Baxter, of production company Positive Pictures, says

the PGG Wrightson is scheduled to show three times in the week starting March 17, the Golden Shears Blades Championship three times in the week starting March 23, the Transtasman shearing twice in the week starting March 30, and the Golden Shears Open three times in the week starting April 7, straddling the New Zealand Championships being held in Te Kuiti about the same time.

He advised checking guides, especially if presetting PVRs and VCRs but the current schedule is:

PGG Wrightson:

March 17, Sky1, 3pm;
March 19, Sky2, 7am;
March 23, Sky 1, 12.30am.

Golden Shears Blades

March 23, Sky1, 6.30pm
March 26, Sky2, 11.30am
March 30, Sky 2, 10.55pm.

Transtasman Shearing:

March 30, Sky 1, 6.30pm;
April 2, Sky2, 8am.

Golden Shears Open:

April 7, Sky1, 6.30pm;
April 9, Sky2, 8am;
April 11, Sky2, 10pm.

**Young guns take the spoils as vets look-on -
March 07, 2010**

Nostalgia meant nothing to a new wave of youngsters who scooped most of the major spoils watched by a host of former champions as the 50th Golden Shears ended in Masterton on Saturday.

The glamour open shearing title was won by first-time finalist and Waipawa speedster Cam Ferguson, who having recently turned 26 was just over half the age of 48-year-old veteran Te Kuiti icon David Fagan, in the final for a 24th time and making an unsuccessful bid for title No 17.

Ferguson became the youngest to win the title since Fagan first won in 1986, and the first first-time finalist to win since 1989, and claimed the first of two machine-shearing places in the New Zealand team for this year's World Championships in Wales.

It was Hawke's Bay quinella, with early favourite and 2002 and 2008 winner John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, runner-up for a sixth



time, while Fagan was third.

A third Hawke's Bay shearer, 2006 winner Dion King, was fifth. But the trend towards new faces was otherwise evident across the shearing competitions. Earlier in the day, the three lower grade shearing titles were also won by teenagers, 19-year-old Gisborne shearers Tama Niania and Wi Poutu Ngarangione claiming the Senior and Intermediate titles respectively, and Southland schoolboy Brett Roberts winning the junior title just a few days before his 16th birthday.



New Open Champion Cam Fer

Their wins followed the opening-day success of Masterton schoolboy David Gordon, who at the age of 13 won the novice title and became the youngest winner in the history of the championships.

The other major open shearing event, the PGG Wrightson National Series final, shorn over 15-sheep of five different wool types, was a triumph for Rakaia shearer Tony Coster. He won free use of a Hyundai Santa Fe, adorned with his own image as a result of his win in the event last year.



Te Awamutu woolhandler Keryn Herbert won the World Championships woolhandling selection trial, with reigning World champion Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, second. They will take part in the championships in July, at the expense of former champion and Australia-based Whanganui woolhandler Joanne Kumeroa was third and failed to qualify.

Photos: Golden Shears
golddenshears@pete.co.nz

Kumeroa had some solace in winning the Golden Shears open woolhandling title for a record fourth time, with national rankings leader and 18-year-old Joel Henare, of Gisborne, finishing second.

The senior woolhandling title was a special success for Masterton's Larnie Morell, who was suffered serious hip injuries in a fatal shearing gang van crash in Otago 18 months ago and has not yet returned to fulltime work. The junior woolhandling title was won by Sharni Graham, of Masterton.

The blade shearing event run as a special feature of the celebrations was won by Phil Oldfield, of Geraldine, and then woolpressing events were a hometown cleansweep, with Jeremy Goodger winning the men's singles, Fiona Christensen the women's, and Carl Cocks and former New Zealand Kiwis rugby league representative David Ewe the pairs.

The shears major non-championships honour was a success for the Agriculture ITO Tectra-run shearing training in New Zealand with modern apprentice trainee and intermediate runner-up Tysson Hema, of Waipukurau, winning the coveted R.E.O'Hara Memorial for best quality points in any of the five shearing-grade finals.

Ferguson, who won the Golden Shears senior title in 2004, had

won six open titles during the season, including the New Zealand Spring Shears full-wool title in Waimate, the Otago Championships in Balclutha, and the South Island Shearer of the Year final in Gore, to be rated a real chance in Masterton despite having never been in the big final before. He also ceded at least 10 years to all of the other finalists except Invercargill shearer Nathan Stratford.

The major surprise earlier in the day was the semi-finals elimination of World Champion and Taranaki farmer Paul Avery, and the final was to be among the more dramatic.

A father-of-three who gave up an ambition to play in the Te Aute College first fifteen to go to work as a teenaged parent, Ferguson won the race on Saturday night, finishing his 20 sheep in 16min 36.353sec, the sixth-fastest winning time.

With just six seconds covering the next four, luckless Te Kuiti shearer Dean Ball, in his 12th final without ever winning the title was next off in 16min 45.666sec, and last off was the only South Islander, Invercargill's Nathan Stratford, taking 17min 20.286sec. But it was an all-round success for Ferguson who also posted the best quality points, both on the board and in the pens outside.

It was a remarkable effort for Ferguson who a short time earlier was third in the PGG Wrightson National, after finishing first in a near-record time.

In a personal moment some hours afterwards, former shearing great Roger Cox told Ferguson how "impressed" he was, and the star-struck new champion inquired:

"Y'reckon?"

The New Zealand shearing team of Dean Ball, Tony Coster and Nathan Stratford beat Australians Shannon Warnest, Jason Wingfield and Bill Hutchinson team to avenge a loss in last November's trans-tasman test in Warialda, NSW. New Zealand teams had earlier in the championships won a woolhandling test against Australia, and another shearing test against Wales.

Youngest Golden Shears champ - March 06, 2010

The first champion at the 50th anniversary Golden Shears in Masterton tonight was quick to thank not only his shearing-mad father but also his mother - for doing his washing.

The thanks came from 13-year-old David Gordon, a youthful hometown hero who became the youngest champion in Golden Shears history when he won the novice final over two sheep.

But it hadn't been an easy day for the youngster who almost disappeared under the weight of favouritism after winning four other novice competitions during the season. With a cut sheep in



the heats he thought he was out of the contest, but scraped into the semi-finals where he took control, heading the top six for the final with a four-point advantage and scoring one of Golden Shears biggest-ever shearing winning margins of more than 10 points in the final.



His father, open-class shearer and shearing contest commentator Nuki Gordon conceded his son had been under pressure, but he'd told if he was going to reach the top he'd have to learn how to handle it. The same had faced sister Cushla who won the same title two years ago at the age of 18.

Photos: Golden Shears
golddenshears@pete.co.nz

While having competed last year at the age of 12, and having first shorn a sheep at the age of seven, he has still managed only the occasional half-hour's shearing in the woolshed. His father says if pressed he could do 80 in a day, but he hasn't yet done a tally. Among those eliminated in the semi-finals was 15-year-old David Avery, son of World champion Paul Avery, while another to make it through the early stages was 18-year-old Jack Fagan, who qualified for the junior semi-finals to start a Golden Shears career in the footsteps of famous father David Fagan, who on Friday starts a bid for a 17th Golden shears open title.

World Champ Eliminated - March 06, 2010

An audible sigh of relief rang across Masterton's War memorial Stadium this afternoon as shearing icon and reigning Golden Shears champion David Fagan scraped into tonight's 50th anniversary final.

The 48-year-old Fagan made it in as sixth of six finalists announced after this afternoon's semi-finals. It's his 24th Golden shears open final since his first in 1984, and he's chasing the title for a 16th time.

The big surprise was the elimination of World Champion and Taranaki farmer Paul Avery, only who had reached the final 16 times in the previous 20 yearsd and won the Golden Shears final in 2005 and 2007.

The qualifiers were headed by 2006 champion Dion King, of Napier, who will have two other Hawke's Bay challengers in the big event, in 2002 and 2008 winner John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, and the only first-time finalist, Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa.

Te Kuiti veteran Dean Ball, the second-to-top qualifier, has made it into his 12th Golden shears open final in 13 years, desperate to win the event for the first time, and the only South Island finalist is Nathan Stratford, of Invercargill.

The six for the final starting just before 9.15pm are in order of qualifying Dion King, Dean ball, John Kirkpatrick, Nathan Stratford, Cam Ferghuson and David Fagan.

Fagan goes for the double - March 06, 2010

Shearing icon David Fagan has cleared the first hurdle in lining-up another double in the two major events at the 50th Golden Shears in Masterton by heading the qualifiers for the final of the country's premier all-wools event, PGG Wrightson National.

To clear the second hurdle, Fagan, 48, will have to make it through this afternoon's semi-finals of the Golden shears open. Both finals will be shorn tonight - firstly the 15 sheep of five different wool types in the national, which he will be trying to win for a 10th time, and then the 20 crossbred second-shear sheep of the Open which, as reigning champion, he will be trying to win for a 17th time.

He has completed the double of winning both titles in the same year five times, in 1986, 1992, 1995, 2000, and 2003.

The qualifiers for the Wrightson National, in order after this morning's semi-finals, are: David Fagan (Te Kuiti), his nephew James Fagan (Te Kuiti), Jerome McCrea (Whanganui), Cam Ferguson (Waipawa), reigning Wrightson National champion Tony Coster (Rakaia), and Nathan Stratford (Invercargill).

Kiwis handle Ockers again in wool test - March 05, 2010

The New Zealand woolhandling kept up a proud record in tests against Australia with a crushing victory at the 50th Golden Shears in Masterton tonight.

It was New Zealand's ninth win in a row in transtasman woolhandling tests, since the last defeat in Millicent, South Australia, in October 2005.

The new Zealand team of Joel Henare, of Gisborne, and Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, beat the Australian team of Racheal Hutchison, of Gilgandra (NSW) and Wayne Laird, from the Central Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, by over 100 points.

Shearers John Kirkpatrick, of Napier, and James Fagan, of Te Kuiti, made it a double for the night for New Zealand by winning a shearing test against the Welsh team of Gareth Daniels and Gareth Evans, by a comfortable margin of over 12 points.

The shearing team will try to make it a cleansweep of tests at the Golden Shears in a match against Australia tomorrow night (saturday).

Golden Shears - Qualifiers - March 05, 2010

Central Hawke's Bay shearer Cam Ferguson came back from near disaster to not only salvage his Golden Shears hopes but also head the semi-finals qualifiers after the quarterfinals of the

50th open championship in Masterton tonight.

The 25-year-old Ferguson, yet to reach a Golden Shears open final, was forced into a significant struggle to regain control of one of his eight sheep in the Top 30 Shootout, and it told in the eventual result in which he was the second-to-slowest of the 12 to reach the semi-final, almost 46 seconds slower than fastest qualifier Jason Win, of Ikamatua, on the West Coast.

But his quality, both on the board and in the pens afterward, gave him the edge, and in a surprise result he headed fellow Hawke's Bay shearer Dion King by less than half a point, with reigning champion David Fagan third to qualify. Win qualified in seventh place, while TAB favourite and two-times winner John Kirkpatrick, also of Hawke's Bay, qualified in 10th place.

The semi-finals will be shorn tomorrow afternoon (Saturday) with the six best heading to shearing's most famous moment in Masterton's War Memorial Stadium tomorrow night. The points start from scratch at each stage.

The 12 qualifiers in qualifying order are: Cam Ferguson (Waipawa) 1, Dion King (Napier) 2, David Fagan (Te Kuiti) 3, Dean Ball (Te Kuiti) 4, Paul Avery (Toko, Stratford) 5, Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 6, Jason Win (Ikamatua) 7, Gavin Mutch (Scotland and Whangamomona) 8, Adam Brausch (Dannevirke) 9, John Kirkpatrick (Napier) 10, Jerome McCrea (Whanganui) 11, James Fagan (Te Kuiti) 12.

Golden Shears - Senior - March 05, 2010

Australian crossbred senior shearing champion Matene Mason is on course to complete a transtasman double after qualifying in top place for tomorrow Golden Shears senior championship in home-town Masterton.

Mason, 18, who won his Australian title in Warrnambool last October, six months after winning the new Zealand Championships intermediate title in Te Kuiti, hit the pace in the semi-finals in Masterton today, the third day of the 50th anniversary Golden Shears.

But he won't have it easy in the 12-sheep final, with constant rival Tipene Te Whata, of Tautoro in the Far North, among the six finalists, along with consistent Manawatu shearer Aaron Haynes, and surprise 2009 Golden Shears intermediate champion Bevan Guy, of Kaeo.

Result:

Senior semi-finals (8 sheep, top 6 shearers qualify for final on Saturday): Matene Mason (Masterton) 10min 45.348sec, 39.892pts, 1; Aaron Haynes (Feilding) 10min 32.042pts, 31.246pts; 2; Bevan Guy (Kaeo) 10min 53.062sec, 41.306pts, 3; Tama Niania (Gisborne) 11min 24.07sec, 42.61pts, 4;

Tipene Te Whata (Tautoro, Far North) 11min 49.066sec, 43.108pts, 5; Rocky Wegner (Western Australia) 10min 59.188sec, 43.584pts, 6; David Hape (Dannevirke) 11min 25.025sec, 44.001pts, 7; Mark Buick (Masterton) 11min 43.056sec, 44.428pts, 8; Phillip Rangiwai (Mataura) 11min 21.259sec, 44.938pts, 9; Mohi Gray (Waipukurau) 11min 36.932sec, 45.472pts, 10; Ant frew (Kaeo) 11min 24.613sec, 46.016pts, 11; Daniel Hodgson (Taumarunui) 10min 22.845sec, 46.142pts, 12; Krishane Edmonds (Raetihi) 11min 30.036sec, 46.268pts, 13; Joseph Maher (Taihape) 11min 21.475sec, 46.268pts, 14; Davy Garland (Feilding) 11min 23.927sec, 49.321pts, 15; Clayton Braddick (Eketahuna) 12min 36.024sec, 50.062pts, 16; Koha Kokiri (Porirua) 12min 3.019sec, 52.276pts, 17; Sam Garrett (Tuatapere) 12min 59.995sec, 57.625pts, 18.

Money on King for Golden Shears - March 05, 2010

The TAB has been forced to slash the odds on Napier shearer Dion King to win his second Golden Shears open title after a surge in betting support since the weekend.

When the book was opened last week, the 35-year-old 2006 champion, who has been based in Australia for most of the last year, was quoted at \$15 to win the title, with fellow Napier shearer and two-times winner John Kirkpatrick the favourite at \$2.50.

King's odds were first cut on Monday, after he won at tiny Apiti in Manawatu on Saturday, won of three weekend contests involving most of the major hopes. The first at Taumarunui on Friday was won by Te Kuiti icon, reigning Golden Shears champion and 16-times victor David Fagan, resulting in his odds being cut from \$6 to \$4, and the third at Pahiatua on Sunday was won by Dean Ball, also from Te Kuiti.

The odds on King, who had also won two other titles since returning to New Zealand in January, were cut to \$9 on Monday, but TAB bookmaker Kieran McAnulty said today the further support for King had given the TAB "no option" but to tighten his odds further, to \$6.

Meanwhile, Kirkpatrick has eased to \$3 but remains the favourite to regain a title he won in 2002 and 2008.

The heats start at 12.30pm today, the third day of the 50th Golden Shears, with the goal of aslmost 100 entrants being firstly to qualify for tonight's quarterfinals Top 30 Shootout. The final, featuring the best six shearers in the World, will be on tomorrow night (Saturday).

The TAB is also running head-to-head and first-three finish

pools, and is also operating a pool on the PGG Wrightson National Roundup, in which 12 semi-finals qualifiers will line-up tomorrow shearing five different wool types trying to qualify for the final of that event, also tomorrow night.

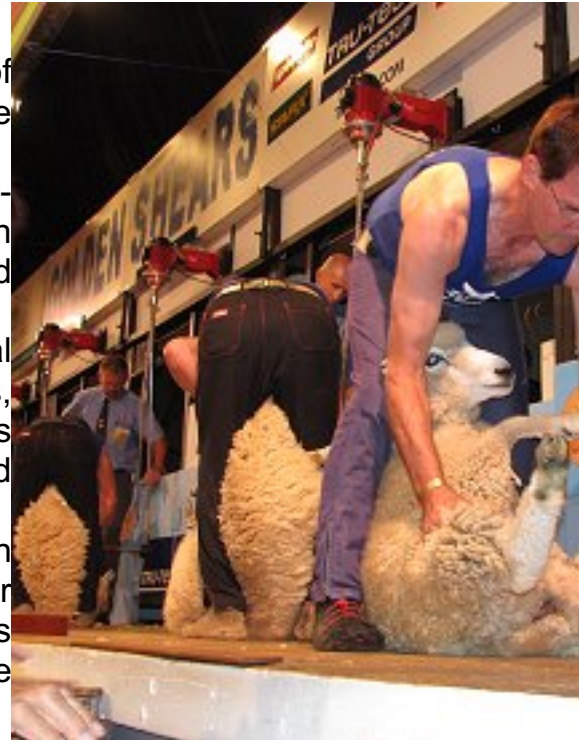
MP shears back the years in vets triumph - March 04, 2010

Kaikoura MP Colin King has returned to the scene of his greatest triumphs to claim a Veterans title at the 50th Golden shears in Masterton.

A left-hander, he shone on the same especially-adapted Stand No 6 on which he won the Golden Shears open title in 1982, 1987 and 1986, and yesterday .

The 59-year-old King won the Veterans Grade 1 final yesterday (March 4) for shearers aged 55-64years, and at a jubilee dinner the National Party MP was presented with prizes including the non-party red ribbon.

Golden Shears 1967 intermediate champion Hugh McCarroll, of Tauranga, won the Grade 2 final for shearers aged 65 or over, and the veterans woolhandling event was won by the only female competitor, Tina Duncan, of Wairoa.



Left-handed C
of the veteran
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Golden Shears Day 2

Prolific young Gisborne shearer Wi Poutu Ngarangione stayed in the hunt to win his most important title at the Golden shears when he made his way through the intermediate semi-finals at the 50th anniversary championships in Masterton today.

While being the top ranked junior in New Zealand last year, he had to settle for the minor money at Golden Shears and at the New Zealand championships in Te Kuiti, but has responded with vengeance in the current season, being beaten just once in 13 competitions.

He qualified at the top of the record Golden Shears entry of 71 shearers in the heats, and second from the semi-finals, but will still be hotly-favoured to win the title, par of a dream to, somehow, one day emulated the feat of shearing icon David Fagan.

It is, first, he said. a dream just to shear against Fagan in a competition, and hopes to achieve that goal before Fagan retires. Fagan, aged 48, is seeking a 17th Golden Shears open title and will start his bid tomorrow in his heats.

Both finals are on the last day of the championships on Saturday.

In the other championship shearing event, in a day dominated by the appearance of about 60 competitors in veterans events, Dannevirke shearer David Hape headed the qualifiers for the senior semi-finals to be shorn tomorrow (Friday).

Results from the second day of the 50th Golden Shears in Masterton:

Shearing:

Senior heats (4 sheep, 18 qualifiers for semi-finals on Friday):

David Hape (Dannevirke) 5min 42.497sec, 23.375pts, 1; Tama Niania (Gisborne) 5min 53.077sec, 23.654pts, 2; Tipene Te Whata (Tautoro) 6min 36.22sec, 24.311pts, 3; Joseph Maher (Taihape) 6min 34.016sec, 24.951pts, 4; Matene Mason (Masterton) 6min 51.741sec, 25.087pts, 5; Davy Garland (Feilding) 5min 58.214sec, 25.161pts, 6; Aaron Haynes (Apiti) 5min 45.232sec, 25.512pts, 7; Sam Garrett (Tuatapere) 6min 19.515sec, 26.226pts, 8; Mark Buick (Masterton) 6min 11.494sec, 26.575pts, 9; Clayton Braddick (Eketahuna) 6min 48.988pts, 10; Mohi Gray (Waipukurau) 6min 37.952sec, 27.148pts, 11; Ant Frew (Kaeo) 6min 48.418sec, 27.171pts, 12; Daniel Hodgson (Taumarunui) 6min 41.372sec, 28.087pts, 13; Rocky Wegner (Australia) 6min 13.607sec, 28.18pts, 14; Bevan Guy (Kaeo) 7min 0.996sec, 28.55pts, 15; Krishane Edmonds (Raetihi) 6min 21.552sec, 28.578pts, 16; Koha Kokiri (Porirua) 6min 14.037sec, 28.702pts, 17; Phil Rangiwai (Mataura) 7min 19.351sec, 29.468pts, 18.

Intermediate semi-finals (5 sheep, first six shearers qualify for final on Saturday): Sharnie Rimene (Masterton) 8min 18.026sec, 32.301pts, 1; Wi Ngarangione (Gisborne) 8min 26.789sec, 33.339pts, 2; Dylan Fowler (Temuka) 8min 19.018sec, 33.991pts, 3; George Hawkins (Masterton) 8min 16.504pts, 34.225pts, 4; Tysson Hema (Waipukurau) 8min 31.616sec, 34.581pts, 5; Brook Todd (Dipton) 7min 24.806sec, 34.84pts, 6; Jack Robison (Northern Ireland) 8min 39.297sec, 34.965pts, 7; Phil Kerley (Gisborne) 9min 0.317sec, 35.016pts, 8; Corey Palmer (Dipton) 8min 51.895sec, 35.995pts, 9; Scott Nichol (Milton) 8min 32.246sec, 36.212pts, 10; Paki Waerea (Hastings) 8min 27.414sec, 36.171pts, 11; Linton Palmer (Dipton) 9min 18.943sec, 38.147pts, 12; Stewart Kennedy (Scotland) 8min 51.815sec, 38.191pts, 13; Rob Mudgway (Taihape) 9min 41.156sec, 38.258pts, 14; Steven Playle

(Wairoa) 8min 36.072sec, 39.804pts, 15; Mike Anderson (Masterton) 8min 49.206sec, 39.86pts, 16; Nathan Gleeson (Stratford) 10min 59.618sec, 40.581pts, 17; Robert Davidson (Northern Ireland) 9min 7.958sec, 42.398pts, 18.
MORE LATER...

Golden Shears - Veteran - March 04, 2010

The sole surviving shearer from the first Golden Shear open final in 1961 was back on the board in Masterton today almost as happy to finish as he was to start on his big night 50 years ago. Southlander Ian Harrison, 76, shored in the last heat of the 50th anniversary veterans event, holding a candle for the mainland as six-times winner Snow Quinn, from Alexandra, decided against competing, although happy to watch from the stadium floor. Among those competing in the event limited to those over 50 years, was three-times winner and National MP Colin King, and 1984 champion and Shearing Sports New Zealand chairman John Fagan.

Harrison, who had outlived original champion Ivan Bowen and other shearing legends Godfrey Bowen, Bing Macdonald, Ma Potae and Australia Kevin Sarre, still shears occasionally, making an annual pilgrimage to Stewart Island. Aged 76 he came to Masterton without having shorn a sheep since the Edendale Crank-up in January, and shored a few in a shed near Masterton this morning to ensure he was on song.

Having not shorn in competition since his last appearance at the Golden Shears in 1965, he looked surprisingly fresh after shearing two sheep in 4min 10.711sec, and just as surprisingly not remarkably slower than his 1961 final, in which shored 20 sheep in 32min 19.2sec, one of the slowest times in the history of the open final, for which icon David Fagan holds the record at 15min 27.4sec, shored at the age of 41 in 2004.

"There were a few rough ones," Harrison said as he stepped from the stand

Golden Shears - Woolhandling - March 03, 2010

A young Gore hopeful will face three North Island opponents in the final of the Golden Shears junior woolhandling championship on Saturday.

Competing in the semi-finals near the end of the first day of the 50th anniversary championships today, Melanie Hillis qualified in third place. Hometown entrant Sharni Graham headed the four qualifiers.

RESULTS Woolhandling:



Golden Shears Junior championship semifinals (top for qualify for final on Saturday): Shani Graham (Masterton) 110.532pts, 1; Stevie Mason (Taihape) 120.754pts, 2; Melanie Hillis (Gore) 120.8pts, 3; Kim Sowry (Pahiatua) 159.27pts, 4; Juliette Lyon (Alexandra) 160.52pts, 5; Cushla Gordon (Masterton) 170pts, 6; Ngahuia Thwaites (Dannevirke) 170.48pts, 7; Nicole Higgs (Gisborne) 172.22pts, 8; Te Aomihi Tangawai (Eketahuna) 174.568pts, 9; Lauren Sargent (Masterton) 180.56pts, 10; Ash Boyce (Dannevirke) 188.198pts, 11; Samantha Gordon (Masterton) 214.48pts, 12.

Golden Shears - Junior - March 03, 2010

The Southland town of Matura is on target to claim its fourth Golden Shears junior title in five years with teenaged hope Brett Roberts tonight heading the six qualifiers for the event's final on the last day of the 50th championships on Saturday.

Roberts went into the event as favourite having already won six titles in the 2009-2010 season, at the New Zealand Spring Shears at Waimate, the Pleasant Point show, Northern Southland Community Shears at Lumsden, the New Zealand Crossbred Lambs Championships at Winton, the Otago Championships at Balclutha, and the Southern Shears in Gore, before heading to prepare for his Golden Shears bid with finals placings in Taumarunui, Apiti and Pahiatua last weekend.

The form has put him in line to repeat the victories of Matura's Rangiwai brothers, Maaka, Phillip and Jake, who won the title in 2006, 2007 and 2009 respectively.

More than 100 of the country's youngest shearing hopes competed on the opening day, with Roberts first heading the 62 entrants in the junior heats to be one of 18 in the semi-finals.

Among those eliminated in the semi-finalists was 18-year-old Jack Fagan, son of Te Kuiti icon David Fagan, who on Friday starts his bid for a 17th Golden shears open title.

The winner of the first Junior title, South Wairarapa farmer Melville McConachy, is shearing in the championships 50th year veterans event tomorrow (Thursday).

RESULTS:

Junior semi-finals (4 sheep, top six shearers qualify for final on Saturday): Brett Roberts (Matura) 7min 59.549sec, 34.227pts, 1; Sarah Goss (Kimbolton) 9min 27.656sec, 34.383pts, 2; Jacob Moore (Marton) 7min 55.383sec, 37.769pts, 3; Cameron Hicks (Marton) 8min 33.494sec, 40.175pts, 4; Hemi Braddick (Eketahuna) 9min 23.52sec, 40.425pts, 5; Henare Niania (Gisborne) 8min 48.169sec, 40.908pts, 6; Michael Rolston (Levin) 9min 39.473sec, 40.974pts, 7; Cushla Gordon (Masterton) 10min 33.671sec.

42.194pts, 8; Brendan Graham (Gorey, Ireland) 12min 2.328sec, 44.116pts, 9; Simon Goss (Kimbolton) 12min 14.657sec, 44.983pts, 10; Cody Beck (Taumarunui) 10min 5.937sec, 46.047pts, 11; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 11min 45.495pts, 12; Jotham Rentoul (Tapawera) 12min 40.133sec, 47.507pts, 13; Calvin Maihi (Te Akau) 11min 42.42sec, 50.621pts, 14; Dougan Butler (Inglewood) 8min 42.769sec, 48.138pts, 15; Daniel Dysart (Dannevirke) 8min 33.258sec, 49.163pts, 16; Aaron Bell (Masterton) 10min 15.014sec, 49.751pts, 17; Bryce Guy (Kaeo) 9min 56.888sec, 54.094pts, 18.

Golden Shears - March 03, 2010

The first champion at the 50th anniversary Golden Shears in Masterton tonight was quick to thank not only his shearing-ma father but also his mother - for doing his washing.

The thanks came from 13-year-old David Gordon, a youthful hometown hero who became the youngest champion in Golden Shears history when he won the novice final over two sheep.

But it hadn't been an easy day for the youngster who almost disappeared under the weight of favouritism after winning four other novice competitions during the season. With a cut sheep in the heats he thought he was out of the contest, but scraped into the semi-finals where he took control, heading the top six for the final with a four-point advantage and scoring one of Golden Shears biggest-ever shearing winning margins of more than 10 points in the final.

His father, open-class shearer and shearing contest commentator Nuki Gordon conceded his son had been under pressure, but he'd told if he was going to reach the top he'd have to learn how to handle it. The same had faced sister Cushla who won the same title two years ago at the age of 18.

While having competed last year at the age of 12, and having first shorn a sheep at the age of seven, he has still managed only the occasional half-hour's shearing in the woolshed. His father says if pressed he could do 80 in a day, but he hasn't yet done a tally. Among those eliminated in the semi-finals was 15-year-old David Avery, son of World champion Paul Avery, while another to make it through the early stages was 18-year-old Jack Fagan, who qualified for the junior semi-finals to start a Golden Shears career in the footsteps of famous father David Fagan, who on Friday starts a bid for a 17th Golden shears open title.

RESULTS from the opening day of the 50th Golden Shears in Masterton today (Wednesday): Shearing:

Golden Shears Novice:

Semi-finals (2 sheep): David Gordon (Masterton) 3min



8.651sec, 20.433pts, 1; Monique Taylor (feilding) 3min 48.449sec, 24.422pts, 2; Cody Harrison (Dannevirke) 4min 11.963sec, 25.871pts, 3; Heidi Kerley (Gisborne) 4min 11.963sec, 26.598pts, 4; Manahi Fox (Masterton) 4min 46.082sec, 28.304pts, 5; Ethan Pankhurst (Masterton) 3min 30.903sec, 29.545pts, 6; Ash Boyce (Dannevirke) 3min 19.577sec, 29.979pts, 7; Jan Hartmann (Germany) 4min 54.193sec, 35.71pts, 8; David Avery (Stratford) 3min 22.481sec, 36.124pts, 9; Dan Rush (Kimbolton) 6m 4.919sec, 37.246pts, 10; Quintin Sanson (Feilding) 4min 25.782sec, 49.289pts, 11; Rei Marumaru (Bulls) 2min 49.213sec, 52.461pts, 12.

Final (3 sheep): David Gordon (Masterton) 7min 2.825sec, 29.141pts, 1; Cody Harrison (Dannevirke) 7min 14.644sec, 39.232pts, 2; Manahi Fox (Masterton) 6min 51.461sec, 45.073pts, 3; Heidi Kerley (Gisborne) 10min 54.29sec, 45.715pts, 4; Monique Taylor (feilding) 9min 24.922sec, 46.246pts, 5; Ethan Pankhurst (Masterton) 7min 9.948sec, 47.997pts, 6.

Young gun targets hometown gold to start golden Golden Shears - March 02, 2010

A 13-year-old schoolboy could become the Golden Shears youngest ever winner and provide a home-town triumph when the 50th anniversary of the World's most famous shearing and woolhandling championships start in Masterton on Wednesday. David Gordon, 13, will be lining-up in the Novice event, with four wins in novice events in the lower North Island behind him, along with several placings up-a-class in junior events, and a unique double on Saturday in which he won both the shearing and woolhandling events in the novice grade at Apati.

At Masterton he has big mocassins to fill, following in the footsteps of sister Cushla who won the novice final two years ago. Last year, David Gordon was one of three 12-year-olds who shored in the event, thought to be the youngest to compete at the Golden Shears since late East Coast shearer Nuku Smiler first competed in 1970, at the age of 11.

The novice event will be the only title decided on the opening day of the championships which have been extended from three to four days to cater for veterans events, mainly on Thursday.

Altogether, 26 events will be held, including the Junior Intermediate and Open shearing competitions which were the basis of the original programme in 1961 as the Golden Shears became an instant hit after several years in the thinking, and just a few months in the planning.

The two veterans shearing grades will include the very first



Golden Shears champion, original junior final winner Melville McConnachy, of South Wairarapa, and the only-surviving first-year Open finalist, Southlander Ian Harrison. But surviving first-year woolhandling champion Wairukuruku Maere, of Hastings, isn't contesting the veterans woolhandling event. She's now 92. The championships also include a blade-shearing event, commemorating a blade shearing competition at the first Golden Shears. But, with the craft now confined to a short season in the South Island, it will be the first blade-shearing event in Masterton since the 1996 World Championships. New Zealand will also compete in shearing tests against Australia and Wales, while there will also be a transtasman woolhandling test.

A World Woolhandling Championships selection trial is expected to overshadow the Golden Shears' own woolhandling championship, but the major interest will centre on the Golden Shears open shearing final on Saturday night.

Almost 100 shearers will start in the opens heats on Friday afternoon, aiming first for places in the Top 30 shootout a few hours later, then the 12 for Saturday afternoon's semi-finals, and ultimately the six-man final in which King Country icon David Fagan is expected to be trying to win the title for a 17th time - the 30th and 40th anniversary titles included.