

Chilean shearer makes history at Nelson Show - November 30, 2014

A Chilean shearer showed a determination even the most passionate of New Zealand shearing devotees would find hard to match when he won the Intermediate final at the Nelson A and P Show last week (November 22).

Luis Pincol, a 28-year-old from the southernmost Chile town of Porvenir, got up at 2am to drive more than 500km for the event, in which he became possibly the first from his home country to win a shearing contest.

There are no competitions in Chile, he confirmed from the South Canterbury town of Geraldine, where he has been working for local shearing contractor Bruce Rogers for the last two years.

Speaking on Friday (November 28), a few hours after wife Susana produced their second child, he said he was motivated to come to New Zealand after watching videos of the Golden Shears in Masterton, and wanting to be there.

"The first time was money," he said in a facebook interview when asked how a carpenter's son from a near-antarctic fishing township had taken-up shearing. "But over time it was more a sport for me. That's why it was always my dream to be here and participate in competitions."

His first competition was in March 2013 at Mayfield, about 35km north of Geraldine, where he was the distant-second sole Intermediate opponent for Masterton shearer Ethan Pankhurst, who has since become one of the country's top Senior shearers.



LUIS PINCOL, the Geraldine-based shearer who scored possibly Chile's first-ever shearing competition win at Nelson on November 22. He was pictured shearing earlier in the season.

With third placings at the tiny Mayfield and Oxford shows at the end of last season, he stepped-up dramatically this season to be runner-up four times in five Intermediate finals before he made the breakthrough.

Among them was a first-up second at the New Zealand Spring Shears in Waimate last month, and second on November 14 at the Canterbury Show's NZ Corriedale Championships to up-and-coming Intermediate hope Hugh De Lacy.

Shearing his 4 sheep last Saturday in 7min 27.15sec and recording the best quality points in a four-man final, he beat De Lacy by 1.72pts, with third place going to Golden Bay-based Mongolian shearer Enkhnasan Chuluunbaatar.

Mentored by Timaru shearing stalwart Lawrence Tyree and with best woolshed tallies of about 320 ewes in a day and 365 on lambs, he said: "I was very tired from the long trip, but what kept me awake was the desire to participate, just give my best as I could."

"My dream is to go to Golden Shears, and represent my country at the World Championships," he said. "It is very difficult to participate in competitions because trips are very long and costly."

The Nelson win had a prize of less than \$200.

With the next World Championships scheduled for Christchurch in 2017, he has a good chance of forming a Chilean team with Oamaru-based Jose Catalan, who helped him come to New Zealand.

The Shearing Sports New Zealand season of 16 shows to date has already produced winners from at least five different countries, including Open-class victors Damien Boyle, an Australian who won the

national Merino Championships final last month for a fifth time, and Ivan Scott, who returned to New Zealand from Ireland just in time to spring a major surprise at the Corriedale Championships in Christchurch.

In other events at Nelson, Tony Nott, from Blenheim, and Jotham Rentoul, of Tapawera retained the Open and Senior titles they won last year, after also winning at the opening Top of the South Show of the season at Blenheim earlier in the month.

The 53-year-old Nott shored his 15 sheep in 17min 57.85sec, beating runner-up Rangiora-based Mark Herlihy by almost 26 seconds, and ultimately by almost six points.

Rentoul also won a cleanshear, in which Herlihy was again runner-up.

The Junior final was won by Rob Hervey, of Murchison, while the continuing revival of woolhandling competition in the area saw Kodi Hawkins, of Martinborough, winning the senior title, and Moana Rawhiti, of Blenheim, the Novice.

Kiwis win Tri-Nations and two tests in NSW heat - November 24, 2014

The Shearing Sports New Zealand shearing and woolhandling team completed a successful four days in Australia with wins in two of three Trans Tasman tests on Sunday (Nov 23) in Central New South Wales.

Tony Dobbs, of Fairlie, and Brian Thomson, of Christchurch, had a comfortable win over Australians John Dalla and Ken French in the blade shearing test, while Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, and Ronnie Goss, of Mangamahu Valley and formerly of Kimbolton, scraped home by two points over opponents Mel Morris and Sara Moran in the woolhandling test.

The tests were contested on the final day of the two-day inaugural Old Errowanbang Woolshed Championships, incorporating the Australian National Championships..

It was however a different story for machine shearers Nathan Stratford, of Invercargill, Colin O'Neill, of Alexandra, and David Buick, of Pongaroa, who were well beaten by Australians Shannon Warnest, Jason Wingfield, and Daniel McIntyre in the machine shearing test, which marked the 40th anniversary since the first Trans Tasman home-and-away test was held in 1974..

On Saturday, New Zealand won a combined machine shearing, blade shearing and woolhandling Tri-Nations match against Australia and South Africa, the first event of its type and one which Sports Shear Australia hopes to turn into a regular event.

With just two from each craft, Stratford and O'Neill were chosen as New Zealand's Tri-Nations machine shearers, based on their placings earlier in the day in the Old Errowanbang Woolshed Open championship heats.



The Shearing Sports New Zealand team in Australia for the Trans Tasman tests. From left Nathan Stratford, Colin O'Neill, Brian Thomson, Keryn Herbert, Tony Dobbs, Ronnie Goss, David Buick, Vanessa Te Whata (woolhandling judge), Peter Vujcich (shearing judge), Doug Laing (media officer), Ken Payne (manager).



The heritage-protected Old Errowanbang Woolshed, about 70km south of Bathurst, Central NSW. The woolshed was built in the 1800s and was used for the heats of the Old Errowanbang blades championship. Other events were shorn in a marquee nearby.

The big individual New Zealand success was that of Dobbs, who has for more than 20 years dreamt of winning a final against the crack African bladesmen.

He finally did so when he beat World champions Mayenzeke Shweni and Zweliwile Hans, of South Africa, in the Old Errowanbang Woolshed Bladeshearing Championships, the heats of which were shorn in the huge, heritage-rated 119th century woolshed.

Finals and other events took place in a large marquee, as temperatures in the area, south of Bathurst, Central NSW, soared close to 40degC.

"I've been thinking of this for 20 years," said 52-year-old Dobbs after his win. A 1988 World champion who came out of a retirement from competition last year to mount a challenge at this year's World championships, held in Ireland in May, he said: "I thought I peaked in Ireland. But they peaked better. I never, ever thought I would beat them. It was just a privilege to be here."

Dobbs is unbeaten this season, winning three finals in New Zealand before the trip to Australia.

Adding to the Kiwi collection was Stratford's effort in finishing second in the Old Errowanbang open machine shearing final, won by Warnest. Stratford was top qualifier for the final by a wide margin of more than 6 points.

Herbert and Goss did not qualify for the Old Errowanbang woolhandling final, which was won by Kayla Garner, NSW, in a reversed decision after the prize had initially been presented to Morris.

New Zealand is yet to be beaten by Australia in a Transtasman blade shearing test, Thomson having shorn in all six wins, while New Zealand has now won 24 of the 32 woolhandling tests since woolhandling was added to the Transtasman programme in 1998.

Australia has now won three machine tests in a row, and seven of the last eight, drawing level with New Zealand on 28 wins each since the first test 40 years ago. The series was suspended from 1985 to 1997.

It was Warnest's 22nd consecutive transtasman test, but he was unable to add to his record of 13 times being the top individual, an honour that this year went to McIntyre, as it had when the



Tony Dobbs shears in the Old Errowanbang Woolshed bladeshearing heats, in the historic woolshed, which in the late 1800s would have over 100 workers at the peak of the season, including 40 bladeshearers.



The New Zealand woolhandling team of Ronnie Goss (left) and Keryn Herbert (right) with New Zealand judge Vanessa Te Whata, in a woolshed session the day before the championships.

Australians beat Kiwis John Kirkpatrick, Rowland Smith and Dion Morrell in Masterton in March.

The Australians started with 40 transtasman test appearances between them, while the New Zealand trio had just seven, and were beaten before the halfway stage, which comprised eight merinos each.

McIntyre ended Warnest's long reign at the top of Australian open shearing by winning the Australian National Championship final. First and second in the 16-sheep final, they will be joined in the next test at the Golden Shears in Masterton in March by third placegetter and West Australian merino specialist Damien Boyle, who has won the last five New Zealand Merino Championship finals in Alexandra.

The Australian woolhandling team will comprise national final winner Moran, from Victoria, and young newcomer and runner-up Tara Smith, of South Australia, while Dalla, from South Australia, and French, from Victoria, expectedly retained their places in the national team by finishing first and second in their final.



Checking the sheep before the All-Nations, which New Zealand won. Machine shearers Nathan Stratford (left) and Colin 'Mouse' O'Neill (right), and woolhandler Ronnie Goss (centre).



A racy crew - The Shearing Sports New Zealand Transtasman team, judges and supporters on the start line at Mt Panorama, Bathurst, during a must-do stop on the way home from the weekend tests.

Samuels claims first Open show win - November 24, 2014

Southland shearer Leon Samuels scored his first Open-class shearing win by claiming the West Otago A and P title in Tapanui on Saturday.

Samuels, whose biggest moment in shearing was a tally of 648 lambs as a team of four set a World eight-hour record in February 2013, based Saturday's win on the fastest time and best board judging points.

On Saturday, he shored his 12 sheep in 12min 5sec, with Willie Hewitson, of Winton, next to finish 13 seconds later in a four-man final. It was a good time for the damp conditions on a day which had over 20mm of rain outside, shutting-down many other activities at the annual show.

Currently based in Tuatapere, Samuels was penalised significantly in pen judging, but was still able to win by almost three points from eventual runner-up Andy Mainland, of Invercargill.

While the Open grade attracted just nine entries, the show was especially pleasing for organiser Kevin Baxter, who said the 20 intermediate grade entries is a record for the show.

The intermediate final was won by up-and-coming North Island shearer Carlton Aranui, of Raupunga, while the Senior final was won by Dane Phillips.

Ferguson bounces back for fourth home show win - November 16, 2014

Waipawa shearer Cam Ferguson bounced back from the disappointment of having to withdraw from the New Zealand Transtasman shearing team by winning his home Central Hawke's Bay A and P Show title for a fourth time on Saturday (November 14).

Ferguson had to withdraw from the team on Friday and was replaced by Pongaroa farmer David Buick, who was to prove his toughest competition in the four-man final in wind-struck Waipukurau.

Buick made the pace and was first to finish the 20 longwool sheep in 18min 26sec, beating Ferguson by 16 seconds. But Ferguson took the nod by 1.22pts, with Buick having to settle for third, his hopes dashed by the scoring sheet impacts of a particular cut early in the race and difficulty getting the right comb working in the difficult conditions.

"A bit a learning curve," he said, ahead of this week's trip to Australia, where the test will be shorn at the Old Errowanbang Woolshed, Central NSW, part of a busy schedule in which he, and fellow finalist David Fagan both flew back after competing in the national Corriedale championships in Christchurch on Friday.

King Country icon Fagan, who won a Speedshear in Waipukurau on Friday night, just hours after shearing the Christchurch final, shore Saturday's final with an elbow bandaged after his handpiece ripped into his left arm in the early-afternoon heats, and finished in 18min 56sec.

While almost a further sheep in arrears, remaining finalist Peter Chilcott, of Whananaki, scored easily the best quality points, and ultimately claimed second place.



The Junior shearing finalists at Waipukurau



The Junior woolhandling finalists at Waipukurau

Ferguson first won the CHB title in 2009, setting out on the path which led to both the Golden Shears Open and World titles within the next eight months.

Saturday's victory was his third in a row in the event, which was at risk of being cancelled when the Fire Service ordered the pavilion and other facilities evacuated as the show was thrashed by late-morning winds estimated at about 140kmh.

Organisers already had some sheep heading back to the farm when the winds eased enough to allow competition to resume.

It made it worth the trip for the crews of Gisborne contractor Deano Smith, with son Ramone having his fourth Intermediate shearing win in a row, and Monique Mackey winning the Junior woolhandling final.



The Intermediate shearing finalists at Waipukurau

Mackey's victory was part of an East Coast clean-up of the three woolhandling titles, headed by that of Joel Henare, also of Gisborne and currently working for Flaxmere contractor Colin Watson Paul.

Henare retained the CHB Open woolhandling title by a narrow margin from Te Kuiti-based Keryn Herbert, from Te Awamutu. Two days earlier they were second and third respectively in Christchurch, where Henare had his first defeat in a final since last March.

Erana Smith, from Ruatoria but also currently based in Flaxmere, had her third senior win, keeping at the top of the grade's national rankings for the season.

Masterton shearer Ethan Pankhurst claimed the senior shearing title, marking himself as the most prolific shearing winner of the season to date. It was his second win since returning from the South Island, where he had three wins last month.

Khochyce Forward, of Te Awanga, won the junior shearing final, his second win in a week.

Pagan's big day in Christchurch - November 15, 2014

Persistence and determination paid-off for woolhandler Pagan Rimene when she won her second New Zealand Corriedale Championships open title at the Canterbury Show in Christchurch on Thursday(November 13).

But it was only one step on the bucket-list for the well-pedigreed competitor who, along with family and friends, once wondered if she would ever compete again, after seriously injuring her back in a shearing-van crash which killed two workmates in 2008.

Having gone some way to emulating the feats of mother and champion woolhandler Tina Rimene, she's now taking-after father Dion Morrell and wants to become an Open-class shearer.

She gave the first big hints in 2006 when she won the Golden Shears Senior woolhandling title, and the first of her Corriedale titles in her first final in the Open class.

Battling back after the crash, she had to endure the embarrassment, anger even, of claiming the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year title in Balclutha in February 2013, only to learn after a week on a remote stay-out there had been a mistake in the points, and she hadn't won at all.

Putting that also behind her, she scored a rare double by winning in both crafts at the Cheviot A and P Show in March 2013, and followed three intermediate shearing finals results last season with fifth in the intermediate showdown the day after her big woolhandling triumph.

Competing in the shadow of such competitors as prolific-winning 2012 World champion and reigning two-times Golden Shears Open champion Joel Henare, who one woolhandler referred to as the "Black Caviar" of woolhandling. Rimene's only win last season was in the national crossbred lambs championship final at Winton in January this year.

Both then and at Christchurch, the first three placings were the same, with Henare, from Gisborne, having to settle for second place, after 10-consecutive wins in finals since last March. Third was Te Awamutu's Keryn Herbert, who this week represents New Zealand in a transtasman test in the Old Errowanbang Woolshed in Central NSW.

It was an extension of the rivalry that's been around for about 10 years, since Tina Rimene took Pagan and Henare and about four others under her wing in what was effectively their own training school. They competition-trained as young teenagers in the woolsheds, and started competing about the same time.

Rimene still has regular sessions with the chiropractor, but has convinced the medical professionals that not only is a life in the woolshed not doing any harm in her recovery, shearing sheep may even do it some good.

The senior and junior finals yesterday produced two first-time winners. The senior title went to Chatham islander Kahlo Tuuta, who won by a narrow margin of just over three points from runner-up Rakaia-based Tanesha Tiepa, from Palmerston North. The junior final was won by Stephanie Smith, of Rakaia.

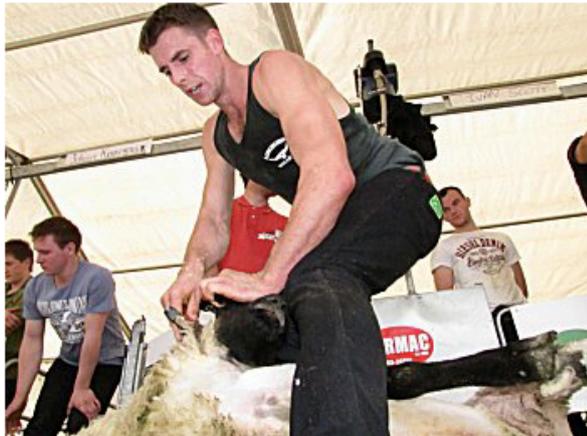
Great Scott! Irish star grabs Kiwi shears title. - November 15, 2014

World record lambshearer Ivan Scott scored his biggest competition win outside the UK and home-country Ireland in what was otherwise little more than a stopover at the Canterbury Show's New Zealand Corriedale Championships in Christchurch.

The 33-year-old from Kilmacrennan, Co Donegal, hadn't won a competition in New Zealand since the 2008 Northern A and P Show in Rangiora, and scored this Friday afternoon success less than two days after arriving from the UK.

And there was no resting-up, for it was up early the next morning for the four-hour drive from Christchurch to Picton catch a 10.45am inter-island ferry, destination the woolsheds of contractor Jeff Dorset around Rotorua.

His win yesterday was based on the quality of his 10 sheep in the pen judging, where he was more than 4pts better than anyone else in the six-man final.



Ivan Scott, pictured at Ballinrobe near home in Ireland winning the Connaght title in May, one of his last victories before winning the New Zealand Corriedale Championship in Christchurch on November 14.

His ultimate winning margin of 1.299pts was all that stood between 47-year-old defending champion Rakaia shearer Tony Coster and a unique treble on a day when Coster was presented with a small trophy marking his acclaim as a Master Shearer.

Coster had retained the Canterbury Circuit title on Thursday and on Thursday led Canterbury to victory over Queensland in the Lister Challenge, completing a 2-0 sweep after a victory at the Diamond Shears in Longreach, Qld, in July.

Coster was first to finish in 12min 24.98sec. Te Kuiti veteran David Fagan was next off in just under 13 minutes, while Scott was more than 44 seconds further afield. Fagan did enough to claim third place overall.

The second shearer from overseas to win the Corriedale title in the last four years, Scott had been a favourite for the World Championships in Ireland in May, after winning three finals in the build-up.

Having been second-to-top qualifier from the heats in Gorey, Co Wexford, he missed out on qualifying for the final, by just one place.

Scott, planning to head home for Christmas, has shorn in New Zealand every summer since he was 19, and has twice broken the World eight-hour strongwool lambshearing record. He is the current holder with 744, shorn when he claimed the record back from Hawke's Bay shearer and former World and Golden Shears champion Cam Ferguson in January 2012 at Opepe Station, just east of Taupo.

Meanwhile, Fairlie farmer Tony Dobbs retained the blade shearing title he won last year after retiring following his last previous win in the event 18 years earlier.

But it was a big day for runner-up and World Championships New Zealand teammate Brian Thomson, of West Melton. He was later also presented with his Master Blade Shearer award, and selected to join Dobbs in the New Zealand team for next weekend's transtasman test in Australia.

Former World Championships New Zealand representative Billy Michelle, of Timaru, was third in a final which was also unique for the appearance of New Zealand-based Japanese shearer Shun Oishi.

He has competed in all-four shearing sports crafts, as a machine shearer, a woolhandler, a presser, and with the blades.

The senior shearing final was won by Rangiora-based Lyall Windleburn, with a huge winning margin of almost 12pts over runner-up Vanni Springer, of Ranfurly.

The intermediate final was won by Hugh De Lacy, of Fernside. Pagan Rimene, who on Thursday won the Open woolhandling final, also displayed her versatility by finishing fifth. Emily Te Kapa beat regular rival Kelly MacDonald in the Junior final.

Buick and Thomson added to NZ shearing and woolhandling team - November 14, 2014

Wairarapa shearer David Buick and Christchurch blade shearer Brian Thomson have been added to the New Zealand shearing and woolhandling team to compete in a transtasman test in Australia next weekend.

Buick, a Pongaroa farmer and shearing contractor who last month won the Australian Romney Shears crossbred title in Warrnambool, Vic., replaces Waipawa shearer Cam Ferguson who became unavailable for the trip to Central NSW.

There will be transtasman tests in machine shearing, bladeshearing and woolhandling tests, and a Tri-Nations match against Australia and South Africa, during the three-day Australian National Championships in the 140-year-old Errowanbang woolshed, about 70km south of Bathurst.

Buick joins Nathan Stratford, of Invercargill, and Colin "Mouse" O'Neill, of Alexandra, in the machine shearing team in what will be a particularly tough but important trip. Australia has won six of the last seven transtasman machine-shearing tests, with Shannon Warnest the top individual in five of them.

Thomson was selected after finishing second in the New Zealand Corriedale Championships blade shearing final in Christchurch and joins event winner and 2014 World Championships teammate Tony Dobbs, of Fairlie, to make-up a two-man blade shearing team.

The woolhandling team comprises Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, and Veronica "Ronnie" Goss, formerly of Kimbolton and now farming in the Mangamahu Valley, near Whanganui.

The teams, managed by Ken Payne, of Balclutha, fly to Australia on Thursday, and the tests will be held during the three-day Australian National Championships.

The shearing test will mark the 40th anniversary of the first of the annual home-and-away transtasman tests, held in Euroa, Vic. The home machine shearing and woolhandling tests will be held at the Golden Shears in Masterton in March.

Travelling with the team will be shearing judge Peter Vujcich, of Napier, and woolhandling judge Vanessa Te Whata, of Mossburn.



Machine shearers
David Buick



Machine shearers
Nathan Stratford



Machine shearers
Colin O'Neill



Blade shearers
Tony Dobbs



Blade shearers
Brian Thomson



Woolhandlers
Ronnie Goss



Woolhandlers
Keryn Herbert



Manager
Ken Payne



Shearing Judge
Peter Vujcich



Woolhandling Judge
Vanessa Te Whata

Veteran Fagan makes a point at Pleasant Point - November 09, 2014

Shearing icon David Fagan again proved the other side of 50 is no bar to still knocking off the odd victory every now and then by winning his 629th open title, at the Pleasant Point Gymkhana(November 8).

Aged 53 and in his 33rd season of Open-class shearing, Fagan travelled south from his King Country home to blow the best of the south away in the final by shearing his 15 sheep in just 13min 52.81sec and also scoring the best quality points in pen judging.

On a shearing stand erected in the South Canterbury town's main street, which was closed to traffic for the day, the multiple World, Golden Shears, New Zealand and British champion beat runner-up and newly-acclaimed Master Shearer and Canterbury hope Tony Coster by 1.19pts.

Fagan also won a Saturday night fundraising Speedshear at Legends Cafe in Pleasant Point. Leon Samuels, of Invercargill, was runner-up, and local legend Kevin Walsh third.

Runner-up to 2010 World champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa,at the New Zealand Spring Shears in Waimate and the Hawke's Bay Show's Great Raihania Shears last month, Fagan's last win in a show competition before Saturday was his 14th Royal Welsh Open title during the Elders Primary Wool New Zealand team UK tour in July.

Fagan's first Open win was in 1983, and by the end of that year he had won more than 10 times, including his first Golden Shears title win (an invitation Lambshear) and victory in the British Open final.

Paul Hodges, of Geraldine, scored his first win of the senior season, beating runner-up Corey Smith, of Rakaia, by almost four points. The intermediate final was won by Corey White, of Waimate, and Scottish-Kiwi lassie Emily Te Kapa , had another success in her battle for South Island junior supremacy with Kelly MacDonald, from Lake Hawea.

Three in a row for Buick ahead of Canterbury Show - November 09, 2014

Pongaroa farmer David Buick won his third open shearing final in a fortnight with victory in the Manawatu Show Shears on Saturday (November 8) at Manfeild, Feilding.

In a three-man final, he beat runner-up, home-town shearer, contractor and veteran loyal show competitor Murray Henderson, by just under two points. Third was young Waipukurau shearer Tysson Hema.

Henderson, who won a New Zealand Championships senior final in Te Kuiti in 1996, has shorn in more than 30 open finals, but won just one, at Rangiwahia in 2000. Hema is yet to win a final since graduating to the top class after winning the 2012 Golden Shears and New Zealand championships senior titles.

Buick, having won the Australian Romney Shears crossbreds title in Warrnambool and then the Wairarapa Spring Shears final in the previous two weeks, was first to finish on Saturday, taking 10min 28sec for his 11 sheep and beating next-man-off Hema by 22sec.

Henderson had the best board judging points and the second-best in the pens, to get closest to Buick who plans to shear next on Friday in the New Zealand Corriedale Championships at the Canterbury Show in Christchurch, where he was fifth last year.

Joel Henare, from Gisborne, returned to winning form to beat fellow former World champions Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, and Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, by a wide margin in the open woolhandling final.

Beaten for the first time when eliminated in the semi-finals of Herbert's Wairarapa show triumph last week, Henare was today the quickest to the finish and scored the best points in all three aspects of wool handling.

South Island-based Masterton shearer Ethan Pankhurst won the Senior shearing final, taking a step closer to now almost inevitable open classification next season. He had won three in the South Island this season before defeat last week at the Wairarapa show, and today won by almost three points from runner-up and Levin shearer Michael Rolston, who continues to show the form promised when he won the Golden Shears junior title in 2011.

Gisborne shearer Ramone Smith also completed a Warrnambool-Wairarapa-Manawatu treble by winning the intermediate final, by just 0.4pts from Tegwyn Bradley, of Woodville, while the junior final was won by Khochyce Forward, of Hastings.

Erana Smith, from Ruatoria but living in Flaxmere, won the Senior woolhandling final, her second win of the season, while Sarah Sears, of Taihape, marked her second final with her first win by taking the junior woolhandling title.

The next North Island competition is at the Central Hawke's Bay Show next Saturday.

Nott cements Top of the South treble at Marlborough show - November 08, 2014

Marlborough concrete contractor and now part-time shearer Tony Nott cemented a Top of the South Treble with a win in the annual circuit's final in in Blenheim on Saturday (November 8), despite having done almost no shearing this season and fronting-up so unprepared he almost decided against starting.

But it was the 53-year-old's home-town event, at the Marlborough A and P Show, and he knew it was struggling for numbers, despite staging the Top of the South final for the first time in several years.

Having won back in 1989 and at one stage enduring a 14-year gap without making the final, he won the title in Nelson in 2012 and again last year, and said after the latest win: "It's good to see it back on this side of the hill."

Organisers are planning to alternate the final among contributing show venues to help foster greater numbers on the circuit of seven shows in the Nelson-Marlborough-West Coast region.

The final, comprising four of the circuit's long-time supporters was over 15 sheep each, including corriedale hoggets and lambs, was "first-up" on Saturday.

"I hadn't done any shearing for a while," Nott said. "And there was not a lot of gear in the kit. But no one knew a lot about what was going on, and there was no pace on."

His time of 21min 30.72sec was more than half-a-minute quicker than runner-up and fellow Marlborough veteran Chris Jones, and Nott also had a board-job advantage of over 3pts.

Both had to concede defeat in the Marlborough open final at the finishing-end of the programme. It was won by Rangiora-based shearing instructor Mark Herlihy, who had his first two Open wins last year.

The Marlborough senior final was won by Jotham Rentoul, of Tapawera, and the junior final by Duncan Higgins, of Havelock North. There was no intermediate class because of a lack of entries.

The next shearing competition in the region is at the Nelson A and P Show on November 22.

Dobbs clear-cut winner in blades shears - November 03, 2014

Fairlie farmer Tony Dobbs' commitment to the ancient craft he says he would hate to see lost has been rewarded again with a win in the blade shearing event at the Ashburton A and P Show.

Having come out of retirement last season after a competition break of more than 20 years, it was Dobbs fifth New Zealand win in a row, and he cruised home by 11 points from 2014 World Championships teammate Brian Thomson, of West Melton.

He started the sequence with a treble at the end of last summer, winning at Sefton, Oxford and his home Mackenzie A and P Highland at Easter, and started the new campaign with victory in the New Zealand Spring Shears at Waimate last month.

Between times he was third in the World Championships in Ireland in May, stopped only by two South Africans from reclaiming a title he won in Masterton in 1988.

In Waimate he and Thomson also beat Australians John Dalla and Ken French in a transtasman test, and Dobbs and one other shearer to be chosen in Christchurch next week will represent New Zealand in another test during the Australian national shearing and woollhandling championships in the remote 140-year-old Errowanbang woolshed in Central NSW on November 21-23.

Former New Zealand machine-shearing representatives Tony Coster and Grant Smith, both of Rakaia, were first and second in the open machines shearing final on Saturday, with third place going to Southland shearer Leon Samuels who led a keen race for time honours by shearing 15 sheep in 14min 41.48sec, regarded as a quick time on the sheep used for the contest.

Taranaki shearer and agricultural student and 2014 New Zealand intermediate champion Darren Alexander won his first senior final by beating local area hope Corey Smith, of Rakaia.

The intermediate event saw a return to winning form by Corey White, who had won three shows earlier in his hometown of Waimate, while Emily Te Kapa, who lives in Scotland, won her second junior title,

with a margin of more than five points from now regular rival Kelly Macdonald, of Lake Hawea. It was the third time this season they've formed an all-female quinella.

Buick retains Wairarapa Spring Shears title - November 02, 2014

Pongaroa farmer David Buick returned from his Australian crossbred shearing title victory to retain the Wairarapa Spring Shears open title on Saturday.

As he did last year, the 36-year-old beat former World and Golden Shears champion Cam Ferguson, stamping himself as a real contender for the Golden Shears and New Zealand Championships titles later in the season.

With a small field of just eight entering the open event, the two were hot favourites to quinella the event.

In a 15-sheep final they beat fellow contenders Noel Gardiner, of Wanganui, and Peter Clendon, of Masterton, by more than a sheep.

Ferguson took time honours, finishing in 15min 3sec, which surprised locals who reckoned it would take at least a minute longer for the quickest shearer to clear his pen of the tough and feisty Wairarapa perendales.

Finishing 10 seconds later, Buick more than made up the time-points deficit with the quality the experts reckoned would carry the day.

He said afterwards the sheep were tougher than his Australian experience of just seven days earlier when he won the Romney Shears final at Warrnambool, Vic.

A Golden Shears open finalist in Masterton for the first time last year, 14 years after winning the intermediate title at the World's premier annual shearing event, he plans to give 2014-2015 his best shot by competing in as many shows as possible, including the Canterbury Show in Christchurch on November 14.



Keryn Herbert, winner open woolhandling



David Buick winner open shearing

Running a small shearing operation and also having recently leased more land around Pongaroa, a big goal would be to become the first home-region shearer to win the Golden Shears Open.

The Senior final on Saturday was a big moment for Northern Hawke's Bay shearer Willie Lambert, whose sole previous win was at the Wairoa show last January.

He had tough opposition in South Island-based Masterton shearer Ethan Pankhurst, but won the race by 55 seconds and kept a sufficient hold on quality to claim victory by more than three points.

It emulated the feat of 15-year-old brother Hemi Lambert, who won the Junior final, following victory eight days earlier in the Hawke's Bay Show's Great Raihania Shears, where their sister, Teresa, won her first woolhandling title.

The intermediate shearing final on Saturday was won by Gisborne shearer Ramone Smith, who had also won at Warrnambool.

But South Island-based Gisborne woolhandler Joel Henare was not so fortunate, failing to qualify for Saturday's Open woolhandling final, ending a run of five wins in a row which started with the Ireland All Nations title in May.

The honours went with New Zealand 2010 World Champion team members Keryn Herbert, of Te Awamutu, and Sheree Alabaster, of Taihape, winner and runner-up respectively. Logan Kamura, of Marton, was third, in what was his fourth finals appearance in his last five shows, dating back to his maiden Open win in the Taranaki Shears last March.

Rahna Williams, of Hastings won the senior woolhandling final and Danielle Fox, of Gisborne, scored a maiden win in the Junior final.

The next North Island show on the Shearing Sports New Zealand calendar is at Feilding next Saturday.