

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand
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Really flying: Transtasman kiwi scores big in Waimate

Record breaking Australia-based New Zealand shearer Stacey Te Huia quickly recovered the cost of his latest transtasman mission as he won a rare elite-level speedshear in Wamate last night(Friday).

Based in Dubbo, NSW, and the holder of records set on both sides of the Tasman, Te Huia landed in Queenstown about 1.30pm, before setting out on a 284km, three-and-a-half hour drive to South Canterbury for the 10-man event at the 50th anniversary Waimate Shears and New Zealand Spring Shearing and Woolhandling Championships.

It would be a rewarding exercise, Te Huia pocketing \$2500 for shearing four lambs in 1min 38.76sec as he breezed through the heats semi-final and final of a four-man shearing superstars showdown.

It included the 44.86sec he took for the final's two lambs, beating World Championships All Nation speedshear winner Jack Fagan, of Te Kuiti, by 1.26sec.

But it wasn't for the money for Te Huia, who was making his second trip home to New Zealand in a week, to keep the numbers up in the separate PGG Wrightson Wool National Shearing Circuit, the first prize for which includes a place in the New Zealand team for the 2018-2019 transtasman series.

Te Huia said he'd needed extra points after a disappointing showing in the circuit's compulsory finewool first round at the New Zealand Merino Championships in Alexandra last week, and needed to get back to New Zealand to enhance his position in the second round, being shorn in Waimate today(Saturday).

His \$25-a-second effort last night was a bonus.

The Open speedshear, shorn on full-wooled ewes and missing the elite shearers, was won by West Coast-based Geraldine shearer Paul Hodges, with a final time of 29.8sec, a Senior speedshear was won by Gore-based Lionel Taumata, from Taumarunui, with a final time of 32.53sec for a single ewe, Darcy Tong, of Timaru, won Junior and Intermediate grades Cleanshear, and World Champion woolhandler Joel Henare, from Gisborne, won \$1000 for some perfection in woolhandlers' Fleece Throw.

The North Island competition season opened yesterday with two Speedshear events in Gisborne, with globetrotting local Tad MacNeilage winning an Open event at the Poverty Bay A and P Show during the afternoon, and 2010 Golden Shears and World champion Cam Ferguson, of Waipawa, claiming a winner-cheque in another contest at the Roseland Hotel, Makaraka.

Results:

Waimate

Elite Speedshear final (two lambs): Stacey Te Huia (Dubbo/Te Kuiti) 44.86sec, 1; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 46.12sec, 2.

Open Speedshear final (one ewe): Paul Hodges (Geraldine) 29.8sec, 1; Ethan Pankhurst (Masterton) 31.12sec, 2.

Senior Speedshear final (one ewe): Lionel Taumata (Gore/Taumarunui) 32.53sec, 1; Joel Malcolm (Invercargill) 33.14sec, 2.

Junior/Intermediate Cleanshear: Darcy Tong (Timaru) 1; Duncan Higgins (Havelock) 2.

Woolhandling Fleece Throw: Joel Henare (Gisborne/Dunedin) 1; Nov Kumeroa Elers (Mataura) 2.

Gisborne:

Poverty Bay A and P Show:

Open Speedshear: Tad MacNeilage (Gisborne) 1; Bart Hadfield (Wairoa) 2; Ian Kirkpatrick jnr (Gisborne) 3.

Senior Speedshear: Shane Smiler (Gisborne) 1, David Kirkpatrick (Gisborne) 2, Johnny Crawford (Gisborne) 3.

Intermediate Cleanshear: Jayden Mainland (Wellsford) 1, Koi Ngarangione (Gisborne) 2, Carmen Smith (Pongaroa) 3.

Roseland Tavern Makaraka Speedshear:

Open Speedshear final: Cam Ferguson (Waipawa) 1; Ian Kirkpatrick jnr (Gisborne) 2; Tad MacNeilage (Gisborne) 3, Deano Smith (Gisborne) 4.

Senior Speedshear: Rozzi Philips (Gisborne) 1; John Crawford (Gisborne) 2, Shane Smiler (Gisborne) 3, Matt Ruru (Gisborne) 4.

Veterans Speedshear: Robert Matenga 1, Peter Gordon 2; Errol Tuhi 3; Mike Kerekere 4.

ENDS