

Kiwi guns head home tails-up after shears win - July 27, 2011

The New Zealand shearing team of Dion King and Rowland Smith has ended its UK tour with a series-winning victory over Wales.

The triumph came at the Corwen Shears in North Wales at the weekend, giving the pair a 3-1 series win, and an overall tour result of five wins and four defeats, after a 2-1 series win over England and single-test losses to the UK and to Scotland.

While Welshman Gareth Daniel was first to finish the 20 sheep in his bid to claim a tied series, taking 12min 9sec and heading Smith by 15 seconds, it was Smith who claimed overall individual honours on points, as New Zealand won by 2.5pts.

It was a big day for New Zealand which also claimed the first three places in the Corwen Shears Open final in front of a crowd team manager Bruce Walker estimated to number up to 2500, about the same as the population of the host town in Derbighshire, North Wales.

Smith's brother, former World eight-hour ewe-shearing record holder Matthew, claimed possibly the biggest competition victory of his career by winning the contest, one of the closest in UK competition history.

He beat defending champion and Te Kuiti veteran David Fagan and Napier gun King by just five hundredths of a point, Fagan claiming second place with superior quality marks.

Rowland Smith also qualified, but tailed the six-man final after copping a maximum 5pt penalty on one sheep.

Young Irish shearer Jack Robinson, who works with the Smiths in Hawke's Bay, continued a series of triumphs by winning the Corwen senior final, for which teenaged veteran's son Jack Fagan failed to qualify by a single place.

Brendan Graham, a young Irishman who has had two seasons in the South Island, won the intermediate final in which young Southland shearer Linton Palmer was fourth. All were honoured in an atmosphere supercharged with a haka led by Dannevirke shearer Paerata Abraham, who is heading to a new base in Australia.

But it's not expected to keep him from a New Zealand summer joining the Smiths, David Fagan and King who return to New Zealand to prepare for an eight-round series in which about 20 others are expected to be after New Zealand's two machine shearing places at the 15th World Championships at the Golden Shears in Masterton in March.

The qualifying series starts at the Canterbury Show in November and ends at the Southern Shears in Gore a fortnight before the World event.

Major results from the Corwen Shears were:

International (20 sheep): New Zealand 91.85pts (Rowland Smith 12min 24sec, 44.8pts; Dion King 12min 43sec, 47.05pts) beat Wales 93.9pts (Gareth Daniel 12min 9sec, 45.85pts; Richard Jones 13min 3sec, 48.05pts). New Zealand wins series 3-1.

Corwen Shears Open final (20 sheep): Matthew Smith (New Zealand) 11min 36sec, 43.15pts, 1; David Fagan (New Zealand) 12min 1sec, 43.2pts, 2; Dion King (New Zealand) 11min 24sec, 43.2pts, 3; Gareth Daniel (Wales) 12min 14sec, 43.7pts, 4; Gareth Evans (Wales) 11min 51sec, 44pts, 5; Rowland Smith (New Zealand) 11min 40sec, 48.85pts, 6.

Kiwis last chance to claim Welsh shearing series - July 22, 2011

New Zealand shearers Rowland Smith and Dion King have been beaten in the penultimate test of a UK tour, leaving one last chance to claim a series victory over Wales this weekend.

The defeat came at the Royal Welsh Show where Welsh shearers Gareth Daniel and Richard Jones won by 1.5pts, bouncing back from the heavy defeats Daniel and previous teammate Wyn Jones had in the opening two tests of the four-test series.

At Corwen this weekend, Hawke's Bay-based Smith and King will be out to claim a 3-1 series win over Wales, to go with an earlier 2-1 win over England. In the two other tests on tour, they were beaten by the UK and by Scotland.

The Kiwis defeat at the Royal Welsh Show, which attracted more than 200,000 people over four days, was in contrast to the successes of 12 months ago when in addition to Kiwi shearers Cam Ferguson and David Fagan's domination of the World Championships, New Zealand had beaten Wales

in a test and veteran team member Fagan won the Royal Welsh All-Nations Championship. This week, Daniel satisfied the Welsh lust for revenge also with victory in the championship, beating runner-up Fagan by seven-tenths of a point, with King third.

Daniel was first finished in both of the 20-sheep events, clocking 12min 51sec in the test to beat King by 25 seconds, and 11min 42sec in the championship final to beat Fagan by 22 seconds. Rowland Smith was a surprise elimination in the heats which involved 41 shearers, but brother Matthew and fellow New Zealander Paerata Abraham survived and just missed qualifying for the final.

Their continued form marks them among those to watch in New Zealand's World Championships qualifying series which starts in Christchurch in November, leading to the selection of two machine shearers for the next World shearing and woolhandling championships at the Golden Shears in Masterton in March.

There remained a place for the Fagan name on the Royal Welsh honours board however, with its senior title going to Fagan's 19-year-old son, Jack, who beat runner-up and former Hastings-based English shearer Steve Rowberry by a comfortable 34 seconds over 12 sheep, and 3.784pts on the final scoresheet.

Results of major events involving New Zealand shearers at the Royal Welsh Show which ended early today (NZT):

International 20 sheep: Wales 103.8pts (Gareth Daniel 12min 51sec, 49.9pts; Richard Jones 14min 27sec, 53.9pts) beat New Zealand 105.3pts (Dion King 13min 14sec, 51.75pts; Rowland Smith 13min 51sec, 53.55pts).. New Zealand leads 2-1 with one test to go this weekend.

Royal Welsh All Nations Open Championships (20 aheep): Gareth Daniel (Wales) 11min 42sec, 44.75pts, 1; David Fagan (New Zealand) 12min 4sec, 46.45pts, 2; Dion King (New Zealand) 12min 18sec, 48.15pts, 3; Ian Jones (Wales) 12min 26sec, 48.7pts, 4; Andrew Morris (Wales) 11min 51sec, 48.9pts, 5; Nicky Beynon (Wales) 12min 46sec, 49.95pts, 6.

Royal Welsh Senior final (12 sheep): Jack Fagan (New Zealand) 9min 33sec, 39.733pts, 1; Steve Rowberry (England) 10min 7sec, 43.517pts, 2; Mark Evans (Wales) 10min 53sec, 44.983pts, 3; Jack Robinson (Northern Ireland) 10min 22sec, 45.433pts, 4; Matthew Rees (Wales) 10min 43sec, 48.067pts, 5.

Kiwi shearers set to end UK tour on top in Wales - July 18, 2011

New Zealand shearers Rowland Smith and Dion King are set to end their first UK tour on top in Wales this week after bouncing back to winning form with four test-match wins in eight days.

Having been beaten by England, the UK and Scotland in the first three tests of the tour before claiming their first victory, the pair won an England series deciding test at the Great Yorkshire Show on Thursday, watched by worldwide Campaign for Wool patron Prince Charles.

They then opened a four-test series against Welsh shearers Gareth Daniel and Wyn Jones with victories at the Cothi Shears on Friday and the following day at the Lampeter Shears.

The third test against Wales is at the three-day Royal Welsh Show which starts today (July 18 UK time) while the tour ends at the Corwen Shears in North East Wales on Saturday.

New Zealand Open champion Smith, 24, of Ruawai, in Northland, also claimed his fourth Open title on tour with victory in the Great Yorkshire Open, which had been won in 2009 and 2010 by New Zealand veteran David Fagan, of Te Kuiti.

King, 36, claimed his first Open win of the tour and his first since April by winning the Lampeter title, which was won last year by fellow Hawke's Bay shearer John Kirkpatrick.

Meanwhile Fagan and 19-year-old son Jack went within a few blows of scoring two family doubles in their latest outings.

Jack Fagan won the Cothi senior final with his illustrious dad having to settle for second in defence of the Open title he won last year, and then father and son skipped the Lampeter Shears to contest the Rickamore Shears in Northern Ireland, where David Fagan won the Open final and Jack was runner-up in the senior final.

They also won an international challenge, against Irish shearers Ian Montgomery and Jack Robinson, while Jack Fagan surprised by posting fastest time in a charity Open speedshear, although its final was won by Rowland Smith's brother, Matthew.

Dannevirke shearer Paerata Abraham continued his good form since arriving from his new base in Australia by reaching the Cothi and Lampeter shears' finals.

Results from latest competitions on the Shearing Sports New Zealand shearing team's tour of the UK:

Great Yorkshire Show on Thursday (July 14):

International, Third Test v England (20 sheep): New Zealand 101.75pts (Rowland Smith 13min 44sec, 49.85pts; Dion King 14min 12sec, 51.9pts) beat England 108.35pts (Antony Rooke 14min 15sec, 54.1pts; Adam Berry 14min 40sec, 54.25pts). New Zealand beat England 2-1 in the series.

Great Yorkshire Open final (20 sheep): Rowland Smith (New Zealand) 14min 5sec, 51.9pts, 1; Gareth Daniel (Wales) 14min 11sec, 52.25pts, 2; David Fagan (New Zealand) 14min 40sec, 53.4pts, 3; Lee Molkenbuhr (Falkland Islands) 15min 12sec, 55.5pts, 4; Antony Rooke (England) 14min 47sec, 55.95pts; John Lamb (Scotland) 15min 10sec, 57.85pts, 6.

Cothi Shears on Friday (July 15):

International First Test v Wales (20 sheep): New Zealand 95.15pts (Rowland Smith 13min 1 sec, 47.1pts; Dion King 12min 53sec, 48.05pts) beat Wales 107.05pts (Gareth Daniel 13min 8sec, 48.1pts; Wyn Jones 13min 36sec, 58.95pts).

Cothi Open final (20 sheep): Gareth Daniel (Wales) 12min 31sec, 46.15pts, 1; David Fagan (New Zealand) 12min 28sec, 46.55pts, 2; Ian Jones (Wales) 14min 4sec, 51.2pts, 3; Nick Beynon (Wales) 13min 53sec, 51.3pts, 4; Andrew Morris (Wales) 13min 42sec, 57.05pts, 5; Paerata Abraham (New Zealand) 12min 38sec, 58.05pts, 6.

Cothi Senior final (12 sheep): Jack Fagan (New Zealand) 10min 42sec, 41.017pts, 1; Lion Hughes (Wales) 11min 51sec, 45.633pts, 2; Clwyd Jones (Wales) 11min 48sec, 46.567pts, 3. Lampeter Shears on Saturday (July 16):

International, Second Test v Wales (20 sheep): New Zealand 91.55pts (Rowland Smith 12min 5sec, 45.7pts; Dion King 11min 30sec, 45.85pts) beat Wales 100.05pts (Gareth Daniel 11min 26sec, 43.7pts; yn Jones 13min 15sec, 56.35pts). New Zealand lead 2-0 with two tests remaining.

Lampeter Shears Open final (20 sheep): Dion King (New Zealand) 12min 19sec, 48.8pts, 1; Gareth Evans (Wales) 12min 34sec, 50.2pts, 2; Gareth Daniel (Wales) 13min, 50.6pts, 3; Richard Jones (Wales) 13min 33sec, 50.6pts, 4; Ian Jones (Wales) 14min, 52.55pts, 5; Paerata Abraham (New Zealand) 12min 31sec, 55.25pts, 6.

Smith in charge as Kiwis win England series 2-1 - July 18, 2011

New Zealand shearing champion Rowland Smith was the man of the moment as he and Shearing Sport NZ teammate Dion King beat England in a deciding third test at the Great Yorkshire Show on Thursday (July 13).

The 24-year-old Northlander was first to finish, claimed the best quality points, and scored a major individual honour by also winning the Great Yorkshire Open final.

In the 20-sheep test he and King were one-and-two off the board, albeit with a 28 second gulf as Smith powered through the pen in 134min 44sec.

It was the big factor in the black-singleted pair's triumph over the England duo of Adam Berry and Antony Rooke, by a comfortable 6.6pts, and also claimed a 2-1 series win over England.

They beat Berry and Mark Fox in the opening test at the Three Counties in Malvern Worcestershire on June 18, and Berry and Rooke comfortably at the Lakeland Shears in Cumbria last week.

Among the beaten in Smith's Great Yorkshire Open win was fellow-Kiwi David Fagan who last year made the show board the scene of his 600th open-class victory.

Smith dominated with his speed, shearing the 20sheep in the final in 14min 5sec, six seconds ahead of Welsh shearer Gareth Daniel. Fagan was next in 14min 40sec, and produced marginally the best quality points.

Fagan did however claim winning success, stepping-in as manager of the New Zealand team for the day, with the audience including the Patron of the world wide Campaign for Wool, Prince Charles.

Results:

International (20 sheep): New Zealand 101.75pts (Rowland Smith 13min 44sec, 49.85pts; Dion King 14min 12sec, 51.9pts) beat England 108.35pts (Antony Rooke 14min 15sec, 54.1pts; Adam Berry 14min 40sec, 54.25pts).

Great Yorkshire Open final (20 sheep): Rowland Smith (New Zealand) 14min 5sec, 51.9pts, 1; Gareth Daniel (Wales) 14min 11sec, 52.25pts, 2; David Fagan (New Zealand) 14min 40sec, 53.4pts, 3; Lee Molkenbuhr (Falkland Islands) 15min 12sec, 55.5pts, 4; Antony Rooke (England) 14min 47sec, 55.95pts; John Lamb (Scotland) 15min 10sec, 57.85pts, 6.



Rowland Smith at the Great Yorkshire Show where he won the Open final and with Dion King won a deciding test to give New Zealand a 2-1 win over England.

PICTURE / DONNA MCKENZIE

Kiwi shearers bounce back in UK - July 10, 2011

New Zealand shearers have had major success in Britain overnight with a win over England in a test match and yet another victory for veteran David Fagan.

The triumphs came during the Lakeland Shears at Cockermouth, Cumbria, where the New Zealand team of Hawke's Bay-based shearers Dion King and Rowland Smith bounced-back from defeats in the first three tests of a UK tour to beat the English team of Adam Berry and first-time international Chris Hird by a comfortable margin of eight-and-a-half points.

The Kiwis quickly mastered the herdwick breed of the 20-sheep contest, Smith beating King to the finish by just the pull of the cord, with a fastest time of 14min 9sec, nine seconds ahead of Berry, with Hird more than a sheep behind.

While Berry and Hird had the better of the judging on the shearing board, the Kiwis' quality in the pens was "outstanding," said team manager and South Otago farmer Bruce Walker. King and

Smith incurred 8.05 penalty points in the pen judging, while the English blew-out to 15pts.

Fagan's triumph in the Lakelands Open final, just three months short of his 50th birthday, was also a display of mastery, to the delight of another of the British audiences which have watched in awe of his achievements since he first plundered the UK competition scene 28 years ago, with four wins in 1983.

Most astoundingly he finished the 20-sheep final in 13min 37sec, more than 20 seconds ahead of the 24-year-old Smith, whom he ultimately beat by just 0.2pts when all points were counted.

Welsh shearer Gareth Daniel was third, King was fourth and Berry fifth.

Fagan, from Te Kuiti and in the UK independently, had been the top qualifier from the 15 in the semi-finals, which also included Ian Kirkpatrick, of Gisborne, and Paerata Abraham, a Dannevirke shearer who recently moved with the family of girlfriend and fellow shearer Cushla Gordon from Masterton to Australia.

The victory showed Fagan to be in imposing form ahead of this week's defence of the Open title at the Great Yorkshire Show, where he claimed his 600th open-final win 12 months ago.

Other displays of Kiwi might at Cockermouth came in an international relay, in which Kirkpatrick and Abraham finished second to Welshmen Rhys Jones and Matthew Evans, while Fagan's son, Jack, was second in the senior final, a seven-sheep won by Jack Robinson, the young Irishman who shears in New Zealand with Smith for Hastings contractors WoolQual.

King and Smith, beaten in the previous tour tests by England, the UK and Scotland, face an England series decider at the Great Yorkshire Show, and then a series of four tests against Wales at Cothi on Friday, Lampter next Saturday, the Royal Welsh Show on July 21 and the tour-ender two days later at the Corwen Shears.

Results from major events involving New Zealanders at the Lakeland Shears in Cockermouth, Cumbria, on Saturday (UK time):

Test match (20 sheep): New Zealand 96pts (Dion King 14min 9sec, 48pts; Rowland Smith 14min 8sec, 48pts) beat England 104.5pts (Chris Hird 15min 9sec, 53.3pts; Adam Berry 14min 18sec, 51.2pts). The New Zealand-England test series is tied 1-1 with the decider at the Great Yorkshire Show on Wednesday.

Lakelands Shears Open final (20 sheep): David Fagan (Te Kuiti, NZ) 13min 37sec, 48.55pts, 1; Rowland Smith (Ruawai, NZ) 13min 59sec, 48.75pts, 2; Gareth Daniel (Wales) 13min 53sec, 49.35pts, 3; Dion King (Napier, NZ) 14min 2sec, 50.55pts, 4; Adam Berry (England) 14min 17sec, 52.2pts, 5.

Lakelands Shears Senior final (7 sheep): Jack Robinson (Ireland) 6min 47sec, 27.92pts, 1; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti, NZ) 6min 33sec, 28.65pts, 2; Ross Crang (England) 7min 23sec, 28.72pts, 3; Michael Salton (England) 7min 52sec, 32.74pts, 4; Ed Goodfellow (England) 7min 10sec, 35.79pts, 5.

International Relay (14 sheep): Wales (Rhys Jones, Mathew Evans) 10min 38sec, 37.76pts, 1; New Zealand (Ian Kirkpatrick, Paerata Abraham) 10min 53sec, 40.36pts, 2; Falkland Islands (Lee Molkenbuhr, Stefan Clark) 12min 29sec, 44.16pts, 3; Scotland (Una Cameron, Callum Shaw) 12min 49sec, 44.45pts, 4; England (Ashley Story, Andrew Percy) 12min 36sec, 44.66pts, 5.

Shearing Test - July 04, 2011

Kiwis shearers Rowland Smith and Dion King are struggling to post their first victory together in the New Zealand singlet after being beaten by Scottish pair Hamish Mitchell and Gavin Mutch on Sunday, July 3.

Norway-based Mitchell dominated the test match back in his home territory at the Lochearnhead Shears, 77km north of Glasgow, finishing first through the race over 15 of the horned Scottish blackface sheep. Or "blackie hogs" as they are known in the area. He also carded the best combined board and pen quality points.

Finishing in 9min 57sec, he was six seconds ahead of Mutch, with half-a-minute to King, and Smith a further five seconds later, the New Zealanders' time points deficit accounting for 3.55 of the total margin of 4.41pts.

Smith, who produced marginally the best quality points in the test, was third in the Lochearnhead Open final, also dominated by Mitchell who cleared his 20-sheep pen in 12min 23sec, 39 seconds and ultimately 2.2pts clear of runner-up Mutch, back home in the UK from the farm he runs in Taranaki.

New Zealanders were also in good form in the Lochearnhead Senior final, won comfortably by Irish shearer Jack Robinson. Dominating the class in the UK this season and showing the benefits of two seasons working with Hastings contractors WoolQual in New Zealand, he finished almost four points clear of runner-up and surprise finalist Reece Munro, from Taranaki, with Te Kuiti's Jack Fagan third.

Shearing Sports New Zealand team manager Bruce Walker, of Owaka, South Otago, described Lochearnhead as "a great show" and said the sheep were as good as had been seen at the Shears - "nice and round, and great combing."

The defeat of Smith and King was the third in three tests for the new Kiwi combination, up against a string of Home Nation sides hitting their peak qualifying for their teams for the next World Championships in Masterton in March, where Mitchell and Mutch will be aiming to make the teams final for a fourth time together.

It is expected to be Mitchell's sixth World Championships.



Dion King has a firm hand on one of his blackie hogs in the third test of the UK tour, against Scotland at Lochearnhead. PHOTO / DONNA MCKENZIE



As ever, the New Zealand supporters haka was as popular at Lochearnhead as the team itself.

In the first test of their tour, Smith and King were beaten by England shearers Mark Fox and Adam Berry, and in the second by Mutch and Welsh shearer Gareth Daniel, shearing as a United Kingdom team.

This weekend the Kiwis face England again during the Lakeland Shears at Cockermouth, Cumbria. A third test against England is expected next week at the Great Yorkshire Show, preceding a four-test series against Wales, at Cothi, Lampeter, the Royal Welsh Show and Corwen. Results of key shearing events featuring New Zealanders at the Lochearnhead Shears which finished on Sunday:

International (15 sheep): Scotland 77.87pts (Hamish Mitchell 9min 57sec, 38.72pts; Gavin Mutch 10min 3sec, 39.15pts) beat New Zealand 82.28pts (Rowland Smith 10min 38sec, 40.7pts; Dion King 10min 33sec, 41.58pts).

Lochearnhead Shears Open final (20 sheep): Hamish Mitchell (Scotland) 12min 23sec, 46.55pts, 1; Gavin Mutch (Scotland) 13min 2sec, 48.65pts, 2; Rowland Smith (New Zealand) 13min 30sec, 49.7pts, 3; Simon Bedwell (Scotland) 13min 2sec, 50.2pts, 4.

Lochearnhead Shears Senior final (10 sheep): Jack Robinson (Ireland) 8min 54sec, 34.75pts, 1; Reece Munroe (New Zealand) 8min 54sec, 38.65pts, 2; Jack Fagan (New Zealand) 9min 20sec, 39.6pts, 3; Robert Davidson (Ireland) 8min 38sec, 40.4pts, 4.

Second defeat for NZ shearers in UK - June 28, 2011

The New Zealand shearing team has had its second defeat in two shearing tests on a tour of Britain, being beaten by a United Kingdom during the weekend.

Rowland Smith, from Ruawai in Northland, and Dion King, of Napier, were competing at the Royal Highland Show at Ingliston, Edinburgh, when they were beaten by Welsh champion Gareth Daniel and Scottish shearer Gavin Mutch.

Mutch and Smith shore blow-for-blow on the last sheep to each clock 12min 11sec, with Daniel next in 13min 1sec. beating King by 16 seconds. Daniel produced the best quality and when all points were counted the UK had won by a comfortable 6.13pts.

Smith finished a creditable fifth in the Royal Scotland Open final, won by Scotsman Hamish Mitchell, with New Zealand-based Mutch finishing in second place..

Brook Todd, of Dipton, in the South Island, was fifth in the senior final, in which the runner-up was Londonderry shearer Jack Robinson, who shears with Smith for Hawke's Bay shearing contractors WoolQual, while Linton Palmer, also of Dipt, was runner-up in the Intermediate final.

The New Zealand team, beaten by England in the first international of its tour 10 days ago, faces its next test against Scotland at the Lochearnhead Shears next weekend.

Royal Highland Show, June 26.

United Kingdom 93.4 penalty points (Gavin Mutch 12min 11sec, 47.08pts; Gareth Daniel 13min 1sec, 46.32pts) beat New Zealand 99.53pts (Rowland Smith 12min 11sec, 48.95pts; Dion King 13min 17sec, 50.58pts).

Royal Highland Open final (20 sheep): Hamish Mitchell (Scotland) 14min 49sec, 54.95pts, 1; Gavin Mutch (Scotland) 14min 55sec, 55pts, 2; Kieran McCullough (Northern Ireland) 16min 42sec, 58.3pts, 3; John Lamb (Scotland) 16min 59sec, 59.6pts, 4; Rowland Smith (New Zealand) 16min 25sec, 61.75pts, 5; Mark Fox (England) 16min 55sec, 62.05pts, 6.

Kiwi shearers beaten in first test - June 19, 2011

New Zealand shearers Rowland Smith and Dion King have suffered a narrow loss to England in the opening international of a test series in the UK.

The English team of Adam Berry and Mark Fox, recently selected to represent their country at the 15th World Shearing and Woolhandling Championships in Masterton in March, won the match by just 0.97pts at the Three Counties Show in Malvern, Worcestershire, today (NZT).

With three Open-class wins behind him since arriving in the UK early last month, 24-year-old New Zealand Open champion Smith, from Ruawai in Northland but based mainly in Hawke's Bay, marked his test-match debut with a keen race for time honours with Fox, the new English national champion.

Fox won by five seconds, finishing 17 sheep in 12min 4secs, while Berry and King fought the remaining battle about half-a-minute behind, Berry being third-man-off in 12m 33s, but scoring the best quality points.

Napier shearer King, 36, overcoming a recent bout of pneumonia and flying into Manchester just 24 hours before the test, tailed by another five seconds but despite having not shorn in Britain for more than three years, was able to keep his quality in check, while Smith was penalised uncharacteristically, both on the board and in the pens.

Both also reached the final of the Three Counties Open, in which Smith and brother Matthew were second and third to Welsh champion Gareth Daniels. King was fifth.

Mathew Smith dominated the pace, shearing the 20 sheep in 14mins 42secs, almost half-a-minute ahead of his brother and Daniels, both timed at 15mins 10secs.

Rowland Smith and King face up to nine tests over five weeks, against England, Scotland and Wales, the last at Corwen in Wales on July 23, after which both are expected to return to New Zealand to start preparing for a tough eight-round series to select New Zealand's machine shearing representatives for the World Championships.

Result:

International (17 sheep): England 95.91 penalty points (Adam Berry 12m 33s, 46.59pts; Mark Fox 12m 4s, 49.32pts) beat New Zealand 96.88pts (Dion King 12m 38s, 48.19pts; Rowland Smith 12m 9s, 48.69pts).

Three Counties Open Final (20 sheep): Gareth Daniels (Wales) 15m 10s, 55.95pts, 1; Rowland Smith (New Zealand) 15m 10s, 57.2pts, 2; Matt Smith (New Zealand) 14m 42s, 58.15pts, 3; Richard Jones (Wales) 16m 44s, 60.95pts, 4; Dion King (New Zealand) 16m 31s, 62.2pts, 5; Antony Rooke (England) 17m 8s, 64.1pts, 6.