

## MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing,  
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### Wales beat New Zealand at Royal Welsh Show

The New Zealand shearing team has one last chance to claim an international victory on their CP Wool UK Tour after suffering a third consecutive loss to Wales on Wednesday (July 25) at the Royal Welsh Show.

Nathan Stratford, of Invercargill, and David Buick, of Pongaroa, had been beaten in the first two tests by Mathew Evans, of Swansea, and Alun Lloyd Jones, of Llangollen, last Friday and Saturday at Cothi and Lampeter.

At Builth Wells they narrowed the gap a little against the new Welsh pairing of Jones and Corwen shearer Richard Jones, who had earlier been confirmed as the Wales machine shearing team for the 2019 World Championships in Le Dorat, France.

But Stratford and Buick still had to concede defeat by 3.55pts, and now go to the tour finale on Sunday at the Corwen Shears, where Stratford won an Open title on his first team trip to the UK eight years ago.

The pair will be determined to stop a second consecutive Wales cleansweep in the annual series in Wales.

Buick went within a blow or two of winning the race, won by Alun Lloyd Jones with a time of 12min 43sec for the 20 Welsh mountain sheep, while Stratford, a minute-and-a-half on time points, had the best quality points.

Stratford also had the best quality points in the Royal Welsh All-Nations Open championship final, but, again with a significant time-points, had to settle for second place behind New Zealand-based Scotland international and former World and Golden Shears champion and much quicker Gavin Mutch.

Claiming a fourth win in four different countries in less than a month, Mutch put in one of his best performances to be first to finish the 20 lambs - 12min 9sec, and 20 seconds clear of Wales international and next-to-finish Matthew Evans.

Stratford was last to finish the six-man final, in 14min 5sec, and pulled-back a couple of the time points deficit with comfortably the best points in pen judging, but Mutch still claimed the win by a comfortable 4.2pts.

Buick and fellow New Zealanders and Te Kuiti shearers Jack Fagan and James Ruki were all eliminated in the semifinals which comprised 18 of the original field of 46.

Richard Jones completed a double of the Welsh World Championships team selection events by claiming the Champion Shearer of Wales title, Alun Lloyd Jones claiming his place having finished runner-up to Richard Jones in the Welsh circuit.

#### Results:

CP Wool New Zealand UK Tour: Wales 106.15pts (Alun Lloyd Jones 12min 43sec, 52.3pts; Richard Jones 13min 44sec, 53.85pts) beat New Zealand 109.7pts (David Buick 12min 44sec, 54.6pts; Nathan Stratford 14min 16sec, 55.1pts) by 3.55pts. Wales leads the series 3-0. The fourth test is at Corwen on Saturday (July 28).

Royal Welsh All Nations Open Championship final (20 sheep): Gavin Mutch (Scotland) 12min 9sec, 53.25sec, 1; Nathan Stratford (New Zealand) 14min 5sec, 57.45pts, 2; Lloyd Rees (Wales) 13min 29sec, 58.2pts, 3; Gareth Lloyd Evans (Wales) 13min 35sec, 59.75pts, 4; Richard Jones (Wales) 13min 30sec, 61.1pts, 5; Matthew Evans (Wales) 12min 29sec, 62.55pts, 6.

Champion Shearer of Wales final (20 sheep): Richard Jones 13min 55sec, 50.25pts, 1; Matthew Evans 13min 1sec, 51.6pts, 2; Gareth Lloyd Evans 13min 11sec, 52.5pts, 3; Lloyd Rees 14min 5sec, 53.55pts, 4; Kevin Williams 14min 24sec, 54.8pts, 5; Elwyn Jones 14min 4sec, 56.05pts, 6.

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