

Shearing

Promoting our industry, sport and people

Number 119: (Vol 41, No 3) November 2025
ISSN 1179-9455 (online)



Kromey Elers wrestles with the magic merino carpet, NZ Merino Shears, Alexandra. (Barbara Newton Photo.)

@Barbara Newton 2025

Safety in the sheds
Tribute: Brian Waterson
Taihape Shears work in progress
Yvonne Abraham reflects on 50 years
Great Raihania Shears brand new board
Golden Shears World Championships 2026



Last Side Publishing
Hamilton, New Zealand

Tribute: Ken Pike
Laura adds to history
New Strong wool Alliance
Shearer training where it began
New Zealand Merino Shears Review
Jock Martin's Clutha District Mayoral journey

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UNDER COVER STORY

Greetings readers and Facebook followers and welcome to this 119th edition of *Shearing* magazine, No 3 of Vol. 41.

People who know me even moderately well are aware of my fondness for 'quotes' – those clever little collections of words that stop you in your tracks and make you think. I posted a typical item in the August mag – '*Time passes. It doesn't ask if you are ready.*' It jumped out at me from a short fictional piece that I was reading, the more strange because I hardly ever read fiction, apart from the daily paper.

The great Kristofferson sang a line, 'All I'm taking is your time.' John Rowles, too – 'If I only had time ...'. And Cher, of course – 'If I could turn back time.' Wouldn't that be nice.

So, back to the quote ... Time doesn't ask if you are ready. Though on a very personal level, I recall a counter-argument from my 90-year-old father, the night before he died, saying (letting 'Time' know) he was 'ready to go'.

So where am I going with this? I guess I'm saluting the two legends we pay tribute to in this issue – Ken Pike and Brian Waterson, who amassed 181 years of time on Earth between them. Notices of their passing posted on Facebook drew many hundreds of 'sad likes' and comments – testaments from the people they met, worked with, influenced and were admired by in the course of their well and long-lived lives.

As always, we hope there is something for everyone in these pages. We might be a bit 'stats heavy' with our various Shearing Sports results etc., but they deserve to be recorded.

So here's to a great summer with just enough rain to keep the droughts away and cricket outfields green. And some Peace on Earth inspired by the festive season would be good for a change.

We'll do it all again in April 2026. Keep well meantime.

*Ka kite ano
Nga mihi, Des Williams*



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Shed safety shouldn't happen by ACCIDENT.



CALLING ALL SHEARING CONTRACTORS!

Shed safety isn't optional
– it's essential.

Talk to your farmers. Shed safety is everyone's responsibility — **act NOW before it's too late.** Protect your crew, reduce downtime, and keep everyone safe with the right equipment.



Shed safety starts here.

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heiniger

When results matter

Shed safety starts with the right gear

From Heiniger

For anyone working in the wool industry, shed safety isn't just a talking point – it's a daily reality. From shearers and wool handlers to pressers and contractors, every person who steps into a shearing shed deserves to work in an environment that's safe, efficient, and built for performance.

As the new season ramps up and shearing shows, world records, and major competitions return to the calendar, the focus on shed safety has never been more important. The shearing industry continues to push new boundaries - in speed, precision, and endurance – and that makes reliable, high-performance equipment more critical than ever.

"Safety and performance go hand in hand," says Dale Harris, Joint CEO of Heiniger Australia & New Zealand. "A well-set-up shed isn't just safer for the team – it's more productive, more professional, and it sets the tone for every run. The right equipment allows shearers and wool handlers to do their best work while reducing fatigue and preventing injury."

Shed safety starts long before the first blow. It begins with the right layout, the right preparation, and the right tools. Reliable, easy-to-maintain equipment helps ensure everything in the shed works together – from handpieces and shearing plants to woolpresses and grinders – creating a smoother workflow and a safer, more consistent environment for everyone involved.

"Contractors have a key role to play here," Harris adds. "They're the ones leading teams from shed to shed, and they know what a safe setup looks like. Speaking up and encouraging shed owners to invest in safer gear and better setups isn't just the right thing to do – it's essential for the long-term health of the industry."

That message is echoed across both Australia and New Zealand, where shearing contractors are increasingly taking the lead on safety conversations. From new-generation shearing plants to advanced woolpresses, innovation continues to drive efficiency and wellbeing in sheds big and small.

EVO Shearing Plant - The Pinnacle of Safe Shearing

The two-time WorkSafe Award-winning Heiniger EVO Shearing Plant is the world's number one selling and most trusted shearing plant – demanded by shearers, contractors, and farmers alike. Recognised as a milestone in shearing technology, the EVO is built around one core principle: safety without compromise.

Released in the early 2000s, the EVO was the first professional shearing system in the world to be manufactured with an electronic safety switch – at the time, a groundbreaking feature that instantly stops the machine in the event of a dangerous handpiece lock-up. Before this innovation, a locked handpiece could spin at over 3,000rpm, becoming a potentially life-threatening hazard. The EVO changed that forever, setting a new global benchmark for in-shed safety.

Additional safety features include a soft-start function that reduces wear and increases the lifespan of the handpiece, a durable, reinforced housing for added stability, and low noise emissions that help reduce fatigue during long runs. At only 7.8kg, the EVO is lightweight and easy to transport, while the downtube is completely isolated from electrified components, reducing the risk of electric shock.

"Safety isn't just a design consideration – it's the foundation

of the EVO," Harris says. "It's a plant that protects shearers in the moments that matter most. Every feature, from the electronic cut-out to the soft start, keeps the team safe while maintaining the high-performance professionals demand."

TPW Xpress Woolpress — Trusted Performance in Sheds

Across New Zealand and Australia, the TPW Xpress Woolpress has long been a cornerstone of shed safety and reliability. Built to handle the demanding conditions of shearing sheds, the Xpress combines strength, precision, and operator protection in one proven design. The Xpress features a two-stage hydraulic system that delivers fast cycle times and consistent pressing pressure – ensuring every bale is packed tight and to spec, with minimal effort from the operator. Its robust frame construction, easy-access controls, and comprehensive safety guards make it ideal for busy, high-output operations where efficiency and safety must go hand in hand.

"The TPW Xpress has earned its place in sheds right across New Zealand and Australia," says Harris. "It's a name contractors and wool handlers trust - because it delivers, season after season. It's reliable, efficient, and built for performance. That consistency helps keep teams moving and sheds running smoothly, even at the height of the season."

From its origins in Western Australia in the 1970s to its introduction into the New Zealand market in the 1990s, TPW has become synonymous with quality and innovation. Today, under Heiniger's stewardship, TPW continues to set the benchmark for safe and efficient wool handling – supported by ongoing improvements and a commitment to the evolving needs of modern sheds.

Innovation Built on Real-World Experience

Both the EVO Shearing Plant and the TPW Xpress Woolpress reflect Heiniger's deep connection to the shearing industry. Every improvement, every safety feature, and every performance upgrade comes from real-world feedback - from the contractors, shearers, and farmers who rely on Heiniger gear every day. By working side by side with professionals in the field, Heiniger's Research & Design and Technical teams continue to pioneer practical innovations that make the job safer and easier. Whether it's refining ergonomics, improving maintenance access, or developing smarter control systems, Heiniger's goal remains the same: to deliver power, performance, precision, quality – and safety in every product.

A Shared Responsibility

Shed safety doesn't happen by accident – and it isn't the responsibility of one person alone. It's a shared commitment between contractors, shed owners, and everyone on the board.

Talk to your farmers. Encourage them to invest in the right gear and the right setup – before it's too late. The right equipment doesn't just protect your team; it keeps your operation running smoothly, reduces downtime, and helps ensure every run is completed safely and efficiently.

Because in the shearing industry, safety and performance go hand in hand – and both start with the right equipment.

For more information on Heiniger's full range of shearing and wool-handling equipment, visit www.heiniger.co.nz or **contact your local Heiniger representative.**

Safety in the shearing shed – a chequered history

Bad News from the Past

For as long as there have been woolsheds there have been accidents, serious and not so serious, within their walls and pens and timbers. A cursory glance through 'Papers Past' in search of Woolshed Accidents throws up the following (we've kept the 'victims' anonymous):

New Zealand Herald 6 June 1913:

Explosion in Woolshed – Advices to hand from Kumaroa, in the Woodville District, show that three men (named) had a very narrow escape. The kerosene oil engine that drives the sheep shearing machinery would not go so they sent for an 'expert' who filled the engine with oil from a newly-opened tin, and when a match was applied there was a terrific explosion, the three men being badly burned ...

The least-injured man had the presence of mind to smother the flames, otherwise the woolshed would have caught fire, and the 400 sheep in the shed would have been roasted alive. An examination after the accident disclosed that the new tin did not contain pure kerosene, but a mixture of benzine and some other oil.

Mataura Ensign, 11 January 1917:

Accident in Woolshed: A well-known resident of the Mandeville and Riversdale Districts, named *****, was engaged yesterday in Mr F Robertson's woolshed, Wendon, when he met with an accident. **** was completing the filling of a bale of wool when he set his foot on a plank which was resting on the woolpress. The plank gave way and **** fell to the floor, striking his head against the bottom of the press. He was motored to the Gore Hospital last night, where he was attended to. Fortunately his injuries, although painful, are not considered serious.

Manawatu Herald 6 December 1934:

Accident in Woolshed – **** of Whittaker Street, the well-known footballer, is at present an inmate of the Palmerston North Hospital to which institution he was admitted yesterday suffering injuries to his leg.

**** was engaged in woolpressing on the Barber Estate at Rangiotu last Friday when the press handle flew back and struck him a severe blow below the knee. **** continued working after receiving treatment but later it was found that his injuries were more serious than at first thought and he was removed to hospital by ambulance yesterday.

Wairarapa Times-Age 13 December 1941:

Kopuaranga Accident in Woolshed – An accident occurred yesterday afternoon in Mr **** woolshed at Kopuaranga. By some mischance a grinding disc became detached from its machine and was hurled through the shed, striking one of Mr **** feet and inflicting a severe wound. Miss ****, who was in the shed at the time, rendered first aid and Mr **** was later conveyed to Masterton, where the wound was stitched.

Hauraki Plains Gazette, 18 November 1942:

Fingers Crushed: Mr **** of Coromandel met with a painful accident recently on the first day of shearing operations. While working at the wool baling machine he badly crushed his finger. He received attention at the Coromandel Hospital.

More Recently

Shearing magazine's March 1993 edition informed people of the industry in New Zealand that new legislation coming into effect on 1 April that year would bring tougher rules regarding safety in the workplace. Until then, the shearing industry had been governed (if you like) by the *Shearers Act 1962*, the main provisions of which covered accommodation and amenities, and employer responsibilities, supported by 'Award' regulations. But left many questions unanswered.

In replacing the *Shearers Act* (and other pieces of legislation), the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992* "brings in tougher and clearer rules, more powers for inspectors and stiffer penalties.

"In the shearing world, it would work like this: John Jones the farmer is responsible for providing a safe woolshed with safe machinery and safe quarters. But he is also responsible for seeing that Bill Smith, the contractor, has a properly prepared plan for the health and safety of the workers on the job.

"Bill Smith has to identify the hazards and provide the plan for dealing with them. That may mean fire drill in the quarters, putting a qualified person in charge of a first aid kit or teaching the presser the hazards of his job.

"Bill Smith's responsibilities go further than this. He must see all staff know how to do their jobs safely – for themselves



**We have vacancies available for
clean and experienced shearers,
pressers and woolhandlers during
our busy Main Shear season from
November to March**

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Central North Island

Proudly providing services to the wider Rangitikei region
Member of NZ Shearing Contractors Association

and others. He must see other people (like visitors to the shed) are not endangered. He is expected to keep a register of accidents – not only when someone is hurt, but when they might have been! And when someone is seriously hurt, he has to provide a written report to the Labour Department within a week. He is also expected to watch the health of his employees.

“Charlie Brown, the open shed shearer, has to ensure that his ‘action or inaction, while at work does not harm anyone, including himself.’

‘With 30,000 woolsheds in the country [1993 figures!], the policing of all this is likely to be sketchy. But the axe could fall when there is an accident. The new Act gives inspectors powers to enter premises, order improvements, close down machinery and take workers off the job if their health has been affected.

“Fines for failing to comply with the act through fault or neglect can reach \$25,000 (double that if someone comes to harm). And if John Jones the farmer, or Bill Smith the contractor takes an action (or does nothing) knowing it is reasonably likely to lead to death or serious harm, he can cop \$100,000, a year in the slammer or both.”

Safety in Woolsheds

Eighteen months later, with the industry having had time to get to grips with the new legislation (if not actually having done so), a follow-up story in the November 1994 edition of *Shearing* magazine identified a number of “**Accidents waiting to happen**” in a woolshed. The woolshed was ‘a typical shed’ rather than one specific and the story listed things to be wary of. “The Occupational Safety and Health Act” (Did

we mean the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992*?) “lays it on the farmer to provide a safe work place”. This would be aided by a simple checklist for a typical woolshed:

- Steps into the shed – are they safe, wet or dry. Do they have or need a guardrail?
- Floor and gratings – are there sprung boards or holes that would catch a fast-moving presser?
- Counterweights – are they placed so no one collects one on the head, or hand?
- Nails in the wall – would these catch a face or presser leaping down from the top box?
- Electrics – when did an electrician last check them? Is there good lighting in the shed?
- The press – is it well clear of the rafters?
- The grinder – is it guarded and in a well-lit place?
- First Aid Kit – is there one?
- Things lying about – chemicals or other hazardous goods?

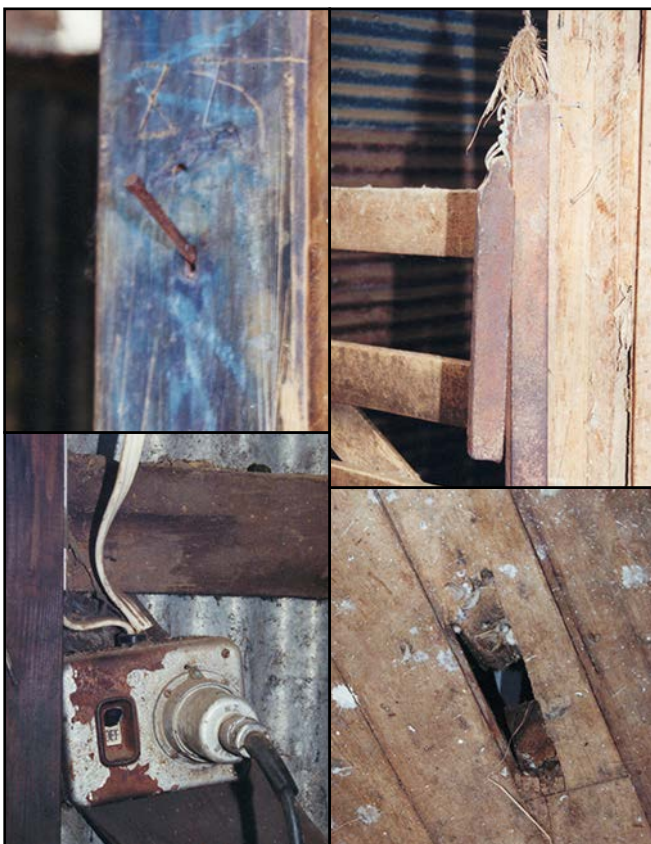
An accompanying story explored the question of where responsibilities lay between the farmer and a shearing contractor. *“John Boddy, spokesman for Federated Farmers, says the Feds have no problem with the idea that the farmer is responsible for providing a safe workplace, but it is the contractor’s responsibility to have safe equipment and to train and supervise the workers. It is also accepted that when a farmer hires labour directly, he/she takes on those responsibilities – e.g., training a new-chum presser when shearing open shed.”*

Four years drift by ...it’s now March 1998 and *Shearing* magazine tells us Wools of New Zealand (WoNZ), the Shearing Contractors Association, Federated Farmers of New Zealand and the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) are working together to improve the injury and health record in the industry.

ACC points out that premiums have risen alarmingly over recent years as a result of the high numbers of shearing industry claims. *“The cost has become an unacceptable burden on an already stressed compensation industry. The stakeholders are determined to reduce the problem and we believe this can be achieved by the whole industry pulling together and focusing on straight-forward, common sense solutions.*

“First and foremost, we need to stop the injuries and illnesses (including dehydration) associated with shearing from happening in the first place, through simple good practice, good equipment and good health in the woolshed. A safe, healthy shed is good business – for everyone.”

And as a warning to those ‘injured’ workers ‘milking the system, ACC pointed out fraud is a totally unacceptable cost on the industry. “Shearing should only be responsible for genuine claims and fraudsters should be exposed. The industry can’t afford them.”



Above: Accidents waiting to happen – nails in walls, gate counter-weights, electrical fittings, holes in floors. (Shearing Magazine archive images.)



The joint WoNZ, Shearing Contractors Association, Federated Farmers, ACC initiative resulted in a “*Shearhealth Pack*” (a series of posters, see below and next page) being developed and sent out to woolgrowers and more than 500 organisers, contractors and gangers in December 1997.

The *Shearhealth Pack* was met with 'mixed reaction' from contractors, the magazine reported. Many agreed it was a good idea, they couldn't fault the initiative, but it didn't introduce anything people didn't already know. Others said their injuries tended to be cuts, which only kept them off the job for a day or two and certainly didn't contribute to higher insurance premiums.

But, “if every wool grower helps by putting up the posters and promoting the ideas in them, and if everyone working in the shed pays attention to the ideas, then the present problem is likely to diminish. [The old story about leading a horse to water ...]

BACKCARE
Injury Prevention
A JOINT PROJECT BY WOOLS OF N.Z.,
ACC & THE N.Z. SHEARING CONTRACTORS ORGANISATION

REF Page 63864 S H/B

WOOLPRO
CREATING VALUE

As recommended by Wools of New Zealand Production Technology.

BEFORE WORK

- Always warm up.
- Keep fit & flexible.
- Have a regular exercise routine.

DURING WORK

- A good shearing style avoids excess strain.
- Keep back straight while catching sheep.
- KEEP WARM
Use a back warmer, wear woollen singlets.
- Wear comfortable clothing.

AFTER WORK

- Use the Back Extension - extend & count to 10.
- Change into warm dry clothes.
- KEEP MOVING
Don't sit around seizing up.
- Use a lumbar support

BACK SUPPORT CAN HELP

- Part-time Shearers/Farmers.

MOST IMPORTANT BACK-CARE EXERCISES:

USE THE WORKING EXTENSION...

Before the Workplace Legislation

Former New Zealand Wool Board Field Superintendent Robin Kidd recalls the shearing industry was taking positive steps to improve safety in and around shearing sheds long before the Government started legislating for it.

In consultation with world-renown Waikanae physiotherapist Robin McKenzie (1931-2013), founder of the McKenzie Institute International and specialist in spinal and back disorders, and with encouragement from ACC, Kidd developed a set of fitness exercises especially for shearers.

“Robin McKenzie had written two books in the 1980s about “*How to treat your back*” and “*How to treat your neck*” so his work was very much of assistance to the problems that shearers encountered. “We came up with 14 separate exercises, with the two most important ones focusing on hamstrings and wrists. If the shearers’ hamstrings are too short or too tight they won’t be able to keep their legs straight while shearing the last side and that is when the sheep is most likely to get away.”

[Robin’s test – “The hamstring exercise, practiced regularly for two or three weeks should lengthen the muscles at the back of the thighs sufficiently to enable you to place the palms of your hands on the floor while keeping your legs and knees straight. The ability to do this will greatly reduce the stress and pain for learners. For the competent shearers, it will give better control of the sheep on the last side.”]

“We also developed an exercise to strengthen wrists to help prevent ‘blown wrists’, which was another common shearing injury. The rest of the exercises were mainly “body building” in nature to strengthen chest and arms, shoulders, legs, diaphragm and stomach, etc. The New Zealand Wool Board as it was then produced a little A5 pamphlet describing the various exercises with words and diagrams and these were widely circulated to shearers.”

The exercise set was then incorporated as a “*Health and Fitness*” segment in the *Shearers Handbook*, published by the Shearing Service of the New Zealand Wool Board in 1993. (And later, in a 1998 reprint by WoolPro.)

14. Hamstrings (*Essential maintenance)

Lying on back, raise the right knee. Pull the knee back onto the chest with one hand, then relax slightly. Hold your toes with the other hand and straighten the leg pulling the toe down. Hold for at least 10 secs, rest and repeat three times with alternate legs.

7. Wrists

Clasp thumbs firmly with fingers and roll wrists downwards towards the floor.

8. Wrists

Kneeling on left knee, place the right forearm on the right thigh with the wrist hanging over the knee. Place the left palm over the knuckles of the right hand, then straighten the right wrist against the pressure of the other hand. Hold, then lower while still under pressure. Rest and repeat 10 times with alternate wrists.

Above: No prizes for recognising the Wool Board 'model' – Alan 'Mickey' MacDonald, world champion 1994.

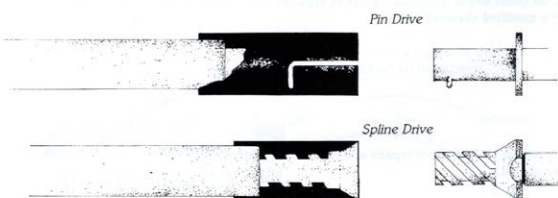
The Spline Drive/Pin Option

In New Zealand the traditional connection of the handpiece onto the downtube has been a pin drive. Another option which is becoming popular with some shearers is a spline drive.

This has an important safety benefit if the shearer hits an eartag, piece of wire or the handpiece locks up for some other reason.

When operating with a spline drive, the handpiece usually unlocks from the gut before any serious damage occurs. With a pin drive, a lock-up will normally result in expensive breakages and possible loss of work through injury.

Many machines are not fitted with spline drives. Safety conscious shearers can overcome this by carrying their own appropriate short gut and fitting it into the machine before they start. Don't forget to retrieve it at the end of the job though!



Robin Kidd identifies the change from pin drives to spline drives (aka worm drives) as one of the major safety improvements in machinery and equipment during his time in the industry.

"By the early to mid-1990s the old pin drive system in Sunbeam gear was being replaced by spline drives to help reduce the risk of serious injury from a lock up. If the handpiece with pin drive hit an ear tag or something solid the handpiece was impossible to hold and could do great damage. With a spline drive the handpiece disengaged itself, allowing the shearer to hold onto it without it causing any damage.

"The problem eventually took care of itself with gear manufacturers discarding the old system. But lockups caused many serious injuries prior to then."

* * * * *

Robin Kidd retired from the wool industry in 1999, by which time the New Zealand Wool Board had 'morphed' into 'WoolPro', for whom he was head of shearer training. He was made a life member of Shearing Sports New Zealand in 2000. He and his wife Ellie 'semi-retired' to the Hawkes Bay some years ago where Robin keeps himself busy in a 'small jobs' property maintenance business – gardens, lawns, fencing repairs, paving and the like.



Robin Kidd's successor at WoolPro (and later with Tectra) Gavin Rowland is these days a principal at the Elite Wool Industry Training (EWIT) company.

Without quoting any figures from any non-existent study, Gavin's instinct tells him injuries in the shed are still reasonably common, though mainly of a 'soft tissue' nature – bruises, muscle injuries and the odd cut with a handpiece.

"The sustained emphasis on shed and industry safety over the past 30 years and more has resulted in heightened awareness of best practice and injury prevention.

"It's much more common now to see shearers doing warm up exercises at the start of a day or run than it used to be. I think some of the old timers were probably too self conscious to be seen doing press-ups on the board in front of the other shearers."

* * * * *

INJURY MANAGEMENT

GET INVOLVED... ...SAVE MONEY

**The work injury claims your staff make...
impact on your premium.**

BEFORE THE INJURY

WHEN INJURED

DOCTOR

GETTING BACK

BACK AT WORK

ACC FRAUD HELPLINE

0800.372.830

Support injured people back to work.

The longer someone is off work - the less likely they are to return.

The sooner your workers can safely return to work... the better it is for everyone

Support employees to rebuild fitness levels.

WOOLPRO
CREATING VALUE

SHED SAFETY

Injury Prevention

Safe sheds are good sheds.

Shearing Sheds are a place of work... not a place for children.

WORK AREAS

- Put pads on catching-pen doors.
- Keep shed steps, landings & floors well maintained.
- Maintain gates & gate weights.
- Maintain pulleys & belts.
- Remove protruding nails & sharp objects.

FIRST-AID & PHONE

- Have a first-aid kit available.
- Ensure contents are maintained (include rubber gloves).
- Make sure you know where the nearest phone is situated.

NOISE CONTROL

- Keep noise to a reasonable level.
- Recommend ear plugs if necessary.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- Fix cracked plugs & switches.
- Use cutout switches in the wet or outside.
- Position woolpress to avoid damage or injury.
- The cable to the woolpress must be placed to avoid damage.

The sound of *oi oi oi* in Alexandra

By Doug Laing (Shearing Sports New Zealand)

New South Wales farmer-shearer Jamie Boothman can add another tag to the akoubra after restoring ocker domination of the New Zealand Merino Shears open shearing title with a win in last month's final at Alexandra, Central Otago.

Boothman, 31, from Crookwell, in the Southern Tablelands and about 240km southwest of Sydney, arrived from Australia on the day and was in charge almost all of the way, as top qualifier for the quarterfinals and then the semifinals, and fourth going into the six-man final.

The title's Australian dominance had been highlighted by West Australian Damien Boyle's eight wins between 2010 and 2019 and New South Wales shearer Daniel's McIntyre's win in 2022.

Boothman claimed the title by more than three points from runner-up Brett Roberts of Matura who, as the first NewZealander secured a place in a New Zealand team for the first time, while defending champion Chris Vickers, of Palmerston, North Otago was third.

Boothman sheared for Australia for the first time in a three-a-side trans-Tasman win at the Golden Shears in Masterton in March, and will face Roberts in the return match during the Australian National shearing and woolhandling championships in Jamestown, South Australia on October 24-26.

A surprise elimination in the Open shearing semi-finals was Invercargill shearer Nathan Stratford, five times the winner but in 2025 placed 7th and missing a place in the six-man final for only the 3rd time since his first in 2002.

Two-times world woolhandling champion Joel Henare, from Gisborne but based in Motueka, started his 20th season in the Open woolhandling class by winning the New Zealand Merino open woolhandling title for a fifth time, with defending champion Pagan Rimene, of Alexandra, the runner-up.

It was Henare's 144th open win, and lined him up for a 15th trans-Tasman test in three weeks' time.

Vickers and Te Kuiti shearer James Fagan were the only survivors from last year's final among the six in Saturday's final, but of the four in the woolhandling final, Henare, Rimene and Waihape had all reached the 2024 showdown.

The Senior shearing final, over four sheep each, was won by 26-year-old Western Australia-based Tawhaarangi Taylor, from Ohakune, who plans to next weekend defend the national winter comb senior title at Waimate. Dre Roberts, brother of Brett Roberts, was second, beaten by about 5-and-a-half points.

The first winner of the new season was 19-year-old Zoe Meikle, of Oamaru, claiming the Novice woolhandling title on Friday. Later she made up a family team with father Justin Meikle (open shearing), brother Tye (senior shearing), and mum Renee (open woolhandling) competing for McSkimming Shearing in finishing ninth of 18 in the shearing and woolhandling teams event.

On Saturday the Junior woolhandling final provided a first win for 23-year-old Mady Little, from Balclutha but now living in Alexandra, and the senior final was won by 24-year-old Tia Manson, of Piopio, who had scraped into the final as the fourth qualifier.

The Merino championships, which attracted 139 competitors, including a small number from Australia, Wales, and South Africa and comprising 70 shearers (open 47, senior 23) and



Above: New South Wales shearer and farmer Jamie Boothman, winner of the New Zealand Merino Shears Open shearing championship. **Below:** Defending champion Chris Vickers, a valiant third placing (Barbara Newton images.)



69 woolhandlers (open 30, senior 11, junior 12, novice 16), was the first of 57 shows on the Shearing Sports New Zealand calendar for the 2025-2026 season.

They include the 20th Golden Shears World shearing and woolhandling championships in Masterton on 4-7 March 2026, and end with the New Zealand Shears in Te Kuiti on 9-11 April 2026.

Results from the New Zealand Merino Shearing and Woolhandling championships, 3-4 October 2025:

Shearing

Open final (12 sheep): Jamie Boothman (Crookwell, NSW) 21m 6.36s, 82.735pts, 1; Brett Roberts (Mataura) 22m 21.52s, 85.743pts, 2; Chris Vickers (Palmerston) 21m 2.08s, 87.604pts, 3; James Fagan (Te Kuiti) 20m 41.16s, 91.058pts, 4; Paerata Abraham (Masterton) 20m 28.13s, 92.074pts, 5; Erick Klabe (Guyra, NSW) 23m 34.73s, 93.82pts, 6.

Senior final (4 sheep): Tawhaarangi Taylor (Ohakune) 13m 26.58s, 61.579pts, 1; Dre Roberts (Mataura) 11m 37.09s, 67.105pts, 2; Taelor Tarrant (Taumarunui) 10m 29.19s, 68.96pts, 3; Jadas Guelfi (Gisborne) 10m 17.03s, 72.352pts, 4; Emma Martin (Gore) 14m 53.73s, 72.437pts, 5; Michael Garniss (Australia) 12m 30.34s, 74.767pts, 6.

Woolhandling

Open final (5 fleeces): Joel Henare (Gisborne/Motueka) 191.612pts, 1; Pagan Rimene (Alexandra) 247.2pts, 2; Foonie Waihape (Alexandra) 263.762pts, 3; Jasmin Tipoki (Napier) 292.664pts, 4.

Senior final (3 fleeces): Tia Manson (Piopio) 192.732pts, 1; Chiquita Tamepo (Hastings) 209.94pts, 2; Ashley Clarke (Gore) 254.1pts, 3; Misty-Rose Kokiri Elers (Mataura) 273.862pts, 4.

Junior final (3 fleeces): Mady Little (Balclutha) 182.874pts, 1; Jayda Millanta (Tauranga) 188.442pts, 2; Maia Rauhina (Whanganui) 189.062pts, 3; Grace Croasdale (Masterton) 216.706pts, 4.

Novice: Zoe Meikle (Oamaru) 88.056pts, 1; Priah Ratana Sciascia (Feilding) 97.07pts, 2; Angel Spooner (Ashburton) 103.6pts, 3; Jayda White (-) 133.5pts, 4.

Shearing and Woolhandling teams (5 fleeces): Korua Ma (Ringakaha Paewai, Troy Christy, Pagan Timene, Foonie Waihape) 3333.929pts, 1; You're Kidding (Paraki Puna, Tawhaarangi Taylor, Maia Rauhina, Jasmine Tipoki) 342.51pts, 2; Shedtalk (Paerata Abraham, David Gordon, Cushla Abraham, Amy Ferguson) 366.825pts, 3.



Top: Joel Henare, New Zealand Merino Shears open woolhandling champion for the fifth time. **Above:** Tia Manson, senior woolhandling champion.



Above: Mady Little from Balclutha, junior woolhandling champion in a close-fought contest with Jayda Millanta (Tauranga) and Maia Rauhina from Whanganui. (Barbara Newton image.)

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New Zealand Merino Shears action. Top: Ashley Clarke. Above: Chiquita Tamepo. Top right: Darrell Harrison. Middle: James Fagan. Bottom: Patrick Duncan. (Barbara Newton images.)



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Taihape Shears always a work in progress

By Des Williams

A historic review of Taihape's shearing competition was featured in the *Central District Times* (CDT) on Tuesday 8 February 2000 – 25 years ago! "From small beginnings in the early 1960s, the Taihape Shearing Sports has grown into an event that not only attracts shearers, shed hands and spectators from all around New Zealand, but also from around the world."

And no surprise that, among the names of the initial committee were two Taihape icons, Jack Harrison (noted shearing contractor) and Mick Doole, legendary judge involved in many world record attempts long before the advent of a world records society. Les Thurston and Jack Gilbert were also on the first committee. They were joined a year later by David Bell, Keith Williamson, Roy [Ron?] Horton Bert Collerton and Ray Cooksley. Doole and Gilbert became regular judges at Golden Shears through the 1960s and into the '70s.

According to the *CDT*, Taihape's first year of competition was "in dispute" but with Golden Shears starting in 1961, Taihape began either the year before or the year after" and was won by Bing Macdonald from Wally Welch, Joe Ferguson and Ian Selby. [Our guess is the year after! Ed.] Bing won the second year as well, from Joe Ferguson and Colin Boshier.

The comprehensive story by *CDT* was occasioned by the completion of extensions to the shearing pavilion at Taihape. "This impressive \$20,000 extension was made possible through the generosity of sponsors and the gifting of surplus funds from the 1997 world three-stand lamb shearing record event at Kowhainui Station. Steve Stoney, Bart Hadfield and Rodney



Top: Taihape Shears board on 44-gallon drums for the first year; **Above:** The Caltex stand, looking a bit more permanent for the second year. Bing Macdonald won on both occasions. (Photos and *CDT* clipping supplied by Charlie Illston.)

Sutton were heavily sponsored by the Gretna Hotel – Pub Charity and Ancare for their record attempt.

"Now independent from, but working alongside the A&P Association, the Shearing Sports Committee was formed in October 1999. Discussions surrounding the much-needed upgrade of the shearing facilities had been taking place since 1983 when it became apparent that a fifth stand in the pavilion and enlargement of the wool room would be beneficial to all concerned."

Completion of the new facility in time for the 2000 competition was the result of work from many factions of the local committee, the *Central District Times* reported. Shearers, woolhandlers, contractors, farmers and many other willing participants had spent many a weekend involved in working bees to complete the project. The committee received handsome reward for their efforts, with 96 shearers and 46 woolhandlers turning up on the day. A young fellow from Hawkes Bay named John Kirkpatrick added his name to the trophy won all those years earlier by the legendary Bing Macdonald.

The shearing board for the first Taihape Show was set up on 44-gallon drums and shelter for the shearers was provided by a canvas cover strung up over the stage. "Shearing plant was initially supplied by Wright Stephenson's and Farmers. Mick Doole supplied the equipment for several years after that until a deal was struck with Feilding, Marton, Apiti and Taihape Shearing Committees some 20 years ago.



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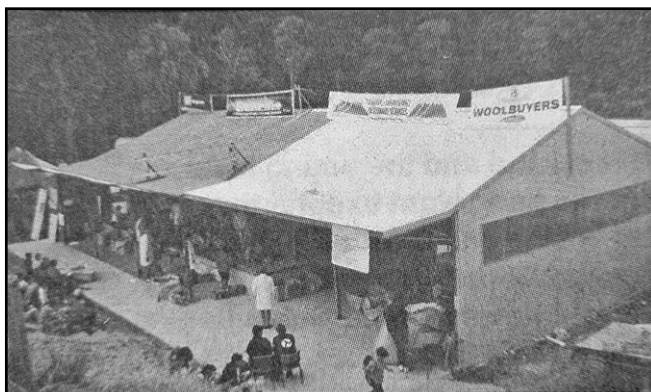
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Above: Taihape's newly renovated shearing pavilion for the year 2000. Extensions on the right fairly obvious, even in black and white. (From *Shearing magazine* August 2000.)

Now the committees own one plant each, with the four plants travelling to the annual shows at each area."

With no seating on the spectator bank that first year, stories of spectators sliding down the bank were many, and suggestions were made that consumption of ale during the afternoon may have added to the lack of traction on some footwear. Seating cut into the steepish bank resolved the problem in future years.

"International competitors relish the opportunity to pit their skills against the best shearers in the world, right here in Taihape," the CDT commented. "The reputation of our local competitors coupled with the newly renovated 'top class' pavilion at the showgrounds, makes the Taihape event one of the most popular shearing competitions in the country."

And not much has changed in the 25 years since that CDT story was written, except the "shed" has undergone even more improvements in recent years, and the competitors still flock to the Taihape Shears in almost unmanageable numbers.

Note: The next Taihape Shears will be held on 24 January 2026. Entries must be lodged on-line – No entries will be accepted on the day. (From the 2026 Taihape Shears Committee)

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Top: Marg Martyn and Robin Middleton adding up the computer points at Taihape Shears, 2005. **Above:** Champion woolhandlers at Taihape, 2005, from left: Tom Fleming (open), Penny Kerekere (senior), Amy Karaka (senior runner-up) and Te Atakura Karaka, (junior). (LSP Photos.)



Above: Surplus funds raised by the world three-stand record at Kowhainui Station near Taihape in 1997 helped finance extensions to the Taihape Shearing pavilion in 1999-2000. Here, Rod Sutton drinks the drink of the thirsty during his long day with Bart Hadfield and Steven Stoney, while organiser Bruce Rogers remains pensive about the eventual outcome.



Above: Re story opposite – can you imagine this immaculately-dressed shearer using offensive or threatening language that would offend a woman customs officer back in 1983? Not likely from this 2004 Royal Welsh centennial open shearing champion (aka the baby-faced assassin). (LSP Photo)

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Bad Mouth Tag Irks Sensitive Shearers

(From Papers Past New Zealand)

Shearers trying hard to put a little polish on their rough-and-ready image are more than a little piqued by a judge's reference to what he considered acceptable language in the shearing sheds of Wairarapa.

The air does not crackle with choice expletives these days, according to several angry contractors. Obscene language belonged to the "bad old days".

Their annoyance is directed at Chief Judge Sullivan of the District Court in Auckland who said in court last week that certain words that might be acceptable in a Wairarapa shearing shed were definitely obscene when used in front of a woman customs officer. (The judge made the comment to the actor, Terence Cooper, who had been found guilty on two charges of using obscene language and threatening language to customs officers at Auckland Airport on April 16 [1983].

"It has been a long, hard road to lift the image," said Mr Bill Morrison, an Eketahuna shearing contractor.

"Can we improve the industry if he says that?" said a Featherston contractor, Mr John Hodder.

Mr Keith Sandbrook said the industry had been changed since the emergence of Godfrey Bowen, the champion shearer, in 1951.

The contractors said that today's shearers were well-trained people who played an important part in New Zealand's third largest export-earning industry.

"They [Aucklanders] think we are all country bumpkins but we have more manners," one Masterton man said.

The secretary of the Golden Shears Society, Mr Colin Gilmour-Wilson, was concerned by the judge's comment. He said obscene language and rough gear were banned at Golden Shears events. He doubted that either would be tolerated in Wairarapa woolsheds nowadays.

Standards have improved, with bad language and rough gear gone for some years, the contractors say. But they admit that when a sheep kicks, a shearer might swear "under his breath."

"It's like a tradesman hitting his thumb with a hammer ... you hear worse at the pub," one said.

It had been a battle to get rid of the old image. One contractor recalled an Australian newspaper report about a bus accident in which "32 people and two shearers were unhurt."

Others recalled advertisements for potatoes which said, "suitable for pigs and shearers."

(The Press, Christchurch, 21 November 1983. © Stuff Ltd)

*And who was the potty-mouthed actor, Terence Cooper (1933-1997) charged with using language that might turn a shearer's ears blue? We believe it would be the Northern Irishman who moved to New Zealand in 1976, having previously played a role in the 1967 James Bond film, Casino Royale "back home". His biggest role in New Zealand was that of Detective-Sergeant Doug Mortimer in **Mortimer's Patch**, a rural police drama that screened for three seasons in the early 1980s. And Wikipedia tells us Cooper established a successful restaurant, Trouper Cooper's Curry House, in Auckland. He later moved to Queensland, where he died in 1997.*



Above: Two well deserved BISCA Contribution to Shearing awards were presented at the Royal Ulster Agricultural show in Northern Ireland recently. Recipients were Damian Nelson and George Graham, pictured above.



Above: Stuart Connor was presented with his British Master Shearer Certificate earlier this year by Alan Derryman.

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Above: The Irish Sheep Shearers Association congratulates Tom Dunne, current Chairperson of the ISSA, on his election as Chairperson of the British Isles Shearing Competitions Association (BISCAs) which was established in 2000, replacing the National Shearing Competitions Committee. "This is a fantastic appointment and a testament to Tom's commitment to our industry. Tom has served on the BISCA committee since 2012. We wish him every success as he takes on this new role," the ISSA reported. Tom replaces outgoing chairperson, Andy Barratt from England.

Bradley's historic moment

Southern Hawke's Bay mum Laura Bradley created shearing history when she reached the open shearing final at the Wairarapa Spring Shears. In only her second competition in the top grade, she is thought to have become the first woman to reach an open shearing final in the North Island, and one of maybe a dozen worldwide.

She finished fourth in her first 15-sheep final, and also won her first senior woolhandling title, at her first attempt in the that grade. The only other female to reach an open shearing final in New Zealand in the past 15 years was Sarah Hewson, of Havelock, when fourth at the Nelson A&P Show in 2022.

Bradley last season won 12 senior finals, becoming the first woman to claim the New Zealand Shears senior title in Te Kuiti and the first woman to become the No 1-ranked senior in New Zealand in any season. Bradley's fourth placing on Sunday, in a season where her main goal was to become only the second woman to reach the Golden Shears Open Top 30 quarterfinals in March, came against three of the best, each of whom had won the Wairarapa final at least once.

The winner, for a fourth time was the 2024 New Zealand Shears open champion David Buick, and No 1-ranked open shearers nationwide last season, who eight days earlier was in Australia shearing his 21st test match for New Zealand.

The runner-up was 2017 world champion and four-times Golden Shears Open champion John Kirkpatrick, who last year won the Wairarapa title for a 10th time, and third was Eketahuna shearers Hemi Braddick, who won the title in 2023.

Among those who did not make the final was 2012 world champion Gavin Mutch, who in 2015 became the only shearers from overseas to win the Golden Shears Open title, and who will be representing Scotland against the 2026 World championships in Masterton.

While Buick appeared to dominate on the board, the only shearers to cut-out an average of less than a minute a sheep and finishing in 14min 53.22s, just 0.527pts separated the first three in the final count. Bradley sheared the 15 in 17min 21.07sec.

The Senior shearing final was won by Kaivah Cooper, of Napier, the Intermediate by Buick's son, Michael, the Junior final by Waiari Puna, of Napier, and the Novice by Charlie Kjestrup, of Akitio.

The Open woolhandling final was a triumph for Marton's Logan Kamura, who was runner-up last April in the New Zealand Shears open final at Te Kuiti, his only final last season, and who, competing only occasionally, last won at the Manawaru show in 2019. The Junior woolhandling final was won by Dannevirke High School head girl Caitlin Murphy, and the Novice by Kobie Foster, the pair helping make it a big day for remote Pongaroa, which claimed four of the nine titles.

The Wairarapa Shears had 94 entries, with 50 shearers (Open 13, Senior 6, Intermediate 5, Junior 16, Novice 10) and 44 woolhandlers (Open 17, Senior 5, Junior 13, Novice 9) (Doug Laing SSNZ).



Top: Judge Sam Saunders watching Laura Bradley make shearing history in the open final at Carterton earlier this month. **Below:** Laura with the trappings of success, senior woolhandling champion (red) and open shearing finalist (green). (Shearing Sports NZ photos.) (See next page.)



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Laura adds to history

An historic achievement by Woodville Flyer, Laura Bradley was believed to be the first woman shearer to reach a North Island Open class final at the Wairarapa A&P Show, Clareville, Carterton. To reach the final, Bradley outshore 2012 world champion, in-form perennial finalist and Scottish representative for the 2026 world championships, Gavin Mutch in the heats. Bradley paced John Kirkpatrick through the early pen in their 15 sheep final, before losing pace to the experience on the final stage.

In only her second Open shear, having qualified out of the heats at the Great Reihana Shears in Hastings a week earlier, the tall farmer shearer and mother of a toddler, was praised by winner David Buick with a 'welcome to the Open', and his encouragement for her 'to make many more'.

It was an East Coast treble, with Kirkpatrick finishing a second behind Buick, who shored his 15 hoggets in just under 15 minutes, followed by Eketahuna gun, Hemi Braddick and Bradley in 17 minutes.

An anecdotal record suggests that twelve women from six countries globally have made Open class sharing finals in over 43 years since the first female finalist to do so. It was another farmer shearer, Margaret McAuley of Otautau who was the first woman shearer to make an Open final, at the Invercargill A&P Show in 1982. This was in the same year that McAuley shored her record of 400 on ewes, where a tally in the day over 330 in nine hours automatically put her in the open class.

The eleven shearers who are known to have thus far followed McAuley are: Jillian Burney (1988, Lysfasi Wales); Michelle Harrex (1992-1996, Alexandra); Emily Welch (2011, Waikaretu); Sarah Hewson (2022, Blenheim); Una Cameron (2010-present, Scotland); Anne-Lise Haugdahl Humstad (2018-2022, Norway); Eleonore Resneau (2018-present, France); Pauline Bolay (2018-present, Canada); and Australians, Cathy Wendleborn (1988-89, South Australia); Shelley King (2024-present, Victoria); Nicki Guttler (2024-present, New South Wales).

(Jills Angus Burney)



Above: Thirty years of Australian open woolhandling champions, from left: Racheal Hutchison, Marion Kelly, Alex Schoff, Mark Purcell, Eileen Evans and Sian Bacon.



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Southland double at Spring Shears

By Doug Laing (Shearing Sports New Zealand)

Southland shearer Casey Bailey scored one of the biggest of his handful of open-class wins earlier this month in a come-from-behind effort at Waimate that surprised even himself. The 34-year-old Bailey, from Riverton in western Southland, finished more than a minute behind Kaiwaka shearer and event favourite Toa Henderson, who finished the six-man New Zealand Spring Shears final of 18 sheep each in 17m 7s, but was able to claw back the three-points-plus time deficit with the best quality points.

He beat Henderson by 1.204pts, while third was veteran Hawke's Bay shearer, 2020 Waimate winner and 2017 world champion John Kirkpatrick, completing a South Island double at the two-day championships, with Invercargill's Nathan Stratford having won the national winter comb title the previous day.

Fifth to finish, in 18m 16s, and asked how he felt at the time, Bailey said: "Not that confident really. Three points is a lot to try to bring back." But it was enough, for his first win since the South Island Shearer of the Year final in Gore in February 2023. It gave him maximum points in the fourth round of the Shearing Sports New Zealand 2026 world championships team selection series.

Henderson, having won all three previous rounds, including the Golden Shears and New Zealand Shears Open titles last season is set to miss the next round in Hastings on 24 October 24 while with the New Zealand team for a test match in South Australia.



Above: Casey Bailey, New Zealand Spring Shears open champion.

Bailey, a prolific winner in the senior class including the New Zealand Shears senior final at Te Kuiti in 2014, has limited his competition in the open class, citing distance, trying not to take too many days off work, and targeting A-grade shows because of the higher level of competition.

He's been in the last two Golden Shears open finals, runner-up to Leon Samuels in a Southland one-two in 2024 and third to Henderson in 2025.

The stakes are higher this season with the goal to make the New Zealand team for the "Worlds" at the Golden Shears on 4-7 March, and he says: "It's more of a dream to win the Worlds or the Goldies."

South Canterbury shearer Allan Oldfield took his biggest step towards regaining the World blade shearing title he won in France in 2019 when he won the Waimate open blades final, the fifth round of an eight-round selection series that ends in Christchurch on 14-15 November.

The current New Zealand pair of Scott McKay, of Clarence, and Tony Dobbs, of Fairlie, were second and third respectively, and they also beat Australian blade shearers Johnathon Dalla and Andrew Murray in the first trans-Tasman test of the season.

French shearer Simon Rouanet won New Zealand's only Intermediate blade shearing title.

Stratford's win was his third in four years in the Winter Comb championship. According to Shearing Sports New Zealand records he's had 105 individual wins dating back to his first, in the Junior final at Waimate, in 1991. Friday's was his 89th in the Open class.

In all Stratford has 17 individual wins at Waimate, with the Junior win, the Senior title in 1996, 12 Waimate Spring Shears Open titles from 2001 to 2023 (including five consecutively in 2005-2009), and the Winter Comb titles in 2022, 2023 and now 2025.

Having missed a place in the New Zealand Merino Shears final seven days earlier, on Friday he won the winter comb title by just 0.23 points from runner-up Brett Roberts, of Maitua, who was backing up from a Merino Shears

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second-placing that gained him a place in the trans-Tasman series team for tests at Jamestown, South Australia, at (NZ) Labour Weekend and at the 60th Southern Shears in Gore in February. Dre Roberts, of Maitaia, won the Spring Shears senior final, while King Country shearer Taelor Tarrant won the senior Winter Comb final, in his fifth final in six on finewool in the past three seasons.

In the other Spring Shears finals, the first lower grade finals of the new season, Oamaru teenager and No. 1 ranked 2024-2025 Junior shearer Tye Meikle, of Oamaru, won the Intermediate title, Galaxie Waihape, of Maitaia, the Junior event, and Caden Hofman, of Kurow, the Novice title.

Pagan Rimene, of Alexandra, had the first win in her 20th season of Open-class woolhandling by claiming the Spring Shears Open title for the second time, the 35th win of her Open-class career. It was a first Open final for third placegetter Nya Kerekere, while Joel Henare moved ever closer to a career total of 150 wins when he won the South Island Woolhandling Circuit final.

North Island visitors won the lower grade woolhandling titles, with Tre Ratana the Senior champion and Jorjah Mason, of Masterton, having a first Junior win. There were 166 entries across the classes on Saturday, comprising 43 Open shearers, 18 seniors, 15 in the Intermediate grade, 11 Juniors, seven Novice competitors, and nine each of two classes of blades shearing, and in the woolhandling there were 21 in the Open, 14 seniors, and 19 juniors.

Results New Zealand Spring Shears, Waimate 10-11 October 2025

International:

Trans-Tasman Bladeshearing Test (5 sheep): New Zealand (Tony Dobbs 15m 52.59s, 56.23pts; Scott McKay 15m 34.63s, 56.73pts) 112.692pts, beat Australia (Johnathon Dalla 15m 39.02s, 58.351pts; Andrew Murray 16m 38.84s, 75.29pts) 133.64pts.

Shearing:

Open final (18 sheep): Casey Bailey (Riverton) 18m 16.41s, 59.71pts, 1; Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka) 17m 7.17s, 60.91pts, 2; John Kirkpatrick (Napier) 17m 54.5s, 61.00pts, 3; David Buick (Pongaroa) 17m 44.23s, 63.15pts, 4; Brett Roberts (Maitaia) 18m 0.06s, 63.22pts, 5; Brook Hamerton (Hastings) 19m 10.48s, 64.46pts, 6.

Open Novice (10 sheep): Joseph Gordon (Masterton) 10m 48.03s, 40.20pts, 1; Taare Edwards (Rakaia) 11m 56.66s, 42.13pts, 2; Blake Crooks (Rangiora) 11m 11.94s, 43.49pts, 3; Aiden Tarrant (Mapiu) 11m 49.98s, 46.19pts, 4; Nathan Bee (Wyndham) 11m 54.33s, 47.71pts, 5; Mohi Gray (Waipukurau) 11m 51.56s, 52.57pts, 6.

Senior final (8 sheep): Dre Roberts (Maitaia) 10m 4.39s, 38.34pts, 1; Emma Martin (Gore) 10m 39.73s, 39.11pts, 2; Taelor Tarrant (Taumarunui) 9m 35.91s, 39.67pts, 3; James Wilson (Winton) 10m 44.78s, 41.36pts, 4; Sarn McCone (Temuka) 11m 5.03s, 42.37pts, 5; Timo Hicks (Tapawera) 10m 42.2s, 42.61pts, 6.

Intermediate final (5 sheep): Tye Meikle (Oamaru) 7m 27.33s, 26.56pts, 1; Jodiesha Kirkpatrick (Gisborne) 7m 47.31s, 28.56pts, 2; Michael Buick (Pongaroa) 7m 52.33s, 40.41pts, 3; Missy Te Whata (Mossburn) 8m 24.36s, 31.81pts, 4; Isaak Cleland (Oamaru) 7m 10.77s, 33.53pts, 5; Harlem Haare (Gore) 8m 20.05s, 36.40pts, 6.

Junior final (3 sheep): Galaxie Waihape (Maitaia) 6m 29.94s, 27.16pts, 1; Reuben Wilkinson (Wyndham) 6m 50.42s, 30.18pts, 2; Ben Rowson-Jones (Derbyshire, England) 6m 33.16s, 31.65pts, 3; Tatyana Collier (Gisborne) 6m 36.84s, 35.50pts, 4; Joel McComb (Kurow) 8m 19.05s, 35.95pts, 5; Tracey Paton (Otaio) 7m 52.73s, 40.97pts, 6.

Novice final (1 sheep): Caden Hofman (Kurow) 3m 14.95s, 23.74pts, 1; Shyla Gordon (Masterton) 4m 45.23s, 30.26pts, 2; Khorteaz Tua (Waipukurau) 6m 39.58s, 42.97pts, 3; Bridee

Wilkinson (Wyndham) 4m 39.11s, 49.95pts, 4; Wilfred Morgan (Oamaru) 3m 18.94s, 55.94pts, 5; Ashley Clarke (Roxburgh) 4m 29.84s, 58.49pts, 6.

Open Blades final (5 sheep): Allan Oldfield (Geraldine) 13m 32.2s, 50.61pts, 1; Scott McKay (Clarence) 14m 13.22s, 52.86pts, 2; Tony Dobbs (Fairlie) 15m 3.22s, 52.96pts, 3; Mike McConnell (Christchurch) 14m 52.34s, 53.01pts, 4; Johnathon Dalla (South Australia) 16m 32.47s, 59.82pts, 5; Phil Oldfield (Geraldine) 16m 39.5s, 59.97pts, 6.

Intermediate Blades final (2 sheep): Simon Rouanet (Albine, France) 13m 55.22s, 53.26pts, 1; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 13m 66.97s, 53.34pts, 2; Shun Oishi (Japan) 13m 14.88s, 58.74pts, 3; Gonzalo Olivares (Santiago, Chile) 13m 2.86s, 63.64pts, 4; John O'Connell (Ireland) 12m 57.39s, 65.87pts, 5; Shaun Burgess (Rakaia) 11m 42.31s, 69.61pts, 6.

New Zealand Winter Comb Championships:

Open final (10 sheep): Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 21m 10.72s, 83.03pts, 1; Brett Roberts (Maitaia) 20m 15.31s, 83.26pts, 2; Colin O'Neil (Alexandra) 21m 28.16s, 84.90pts, 3; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 20m 28.45s, 88.02pts, 4; Justin Meikle (Oamaru) 18m 47.03s, 88.55pts, 5; Duncan Leslie (Alexandra) 22m 17.97s, 89.49pts, 6.

Senior final (5 sheep): Taelor Tarrant (Taumarunui) 13m 30.72s, 69.53pts, 1; Stacey Whitu (Roxburgh) 14m 36.03s, 73.20pts, 2; Dre Roberts (Maitaia) 15m 51.14s, 76.35pts, 3; Cody Waihape (Gore) 15m 31.86s, 78.59pts, 4; Levi Uluakiahoia 16m 42.41s, 80.72pts, 5; Emma Martin (Gore) 20m 13.81s, 87.29pts, 6.

Woolhandling:

Open final (3 fleeces): Pagan Rimene (Alexandra) 93.15pts, 1; Joel Henare (Motueka) 119.86pts, 2; Nya Kerekere (Gisborne) 180.53pts, 3; Kelly McDonald (Waimate) 209.26pts, 4.

Senior final (2 fleeces): Tre Ratana Sciascia (Taihape) 101.08pts, 1; Lucy Elers (Maitaia) 144.48pts, 2; Ashley Clarke (Gore) 158.41pts, 3; Kimberly Ward (Australia) 188.93pts, 4.

Junior final (2 fleeces): Jorjah Mason (Masterton) 140pts, 1; Tahli Nelson (Alexandra) 161.56pts, 2; Chevy Menzies (Cromwell) 197.78pts, 3; Legacy Hiroti (Raetihi) 421.69pts, 4.

Veterans: Vanessa Dennison (Kurow) 73.844pts, 1; Rhonda Wakefield (Rakaia) 81.63pts, 2; Dayna Te Aho (Milton) 100.13pts, 3; Keith Adams (Waimate) 103.75pts, 4.

South Island Woolhandling Circuit:

Open final (4 fleeces): Joel Henare (Motueka) 70.74pts, 1; Taiwha Nelson (Alexandra) 87.51pts, 2; Amy Ferguson (Alexandra) 98.00pts, 3; Foonie Waihape (Alexandra) 109.87pts, 4.

Shearing and woolhandling teams event: Kurow 83 Justin Meikle/Tye Meikle, Vanessa McAllister/Zoe Meikle, 78.12pts, 1; PLS All Day (David Gordon/Cody Waihape, Amy Ferguson/Kimberly Ward) 93.39pts, 2; Pro Shear (Taare Edwards/Caleb Brooking, Jess Toa/Tessa Kirby) 121.447pts, 3.



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Tribute: Ken Pike

By Des Williams

It's 25 years ago now – time sure does fly – when Ken Pike, at the end of a two-hour interview, told this writer, "You now know more about me than I know about myself."

Surely ranking high among New Zealand's all-time great shearers, Ken Pike died at his Whangamata home on 18 October 2025, aged 87. A brief post announcing Ken's death on *Shearing's* Facebook page drew 165,000 'views', 728 'Likes' and 107 comments – clear indication surely that thousands of people around the shearing globe also knew Ken Pike at least reasonably well. Knew him with deep admiration and respect.

Ken grew up on the family-owned dairy farm at Hoe-O-Tainui, in the heart of the Waikato, and after attending high school at nearby Morrinsville, he spent a couple of years in the district doing casual farm work. Whether it was shepherding, fencing or haymaking on neighbouring farms – whatever happened to need doing, Ken was prepared to do it.

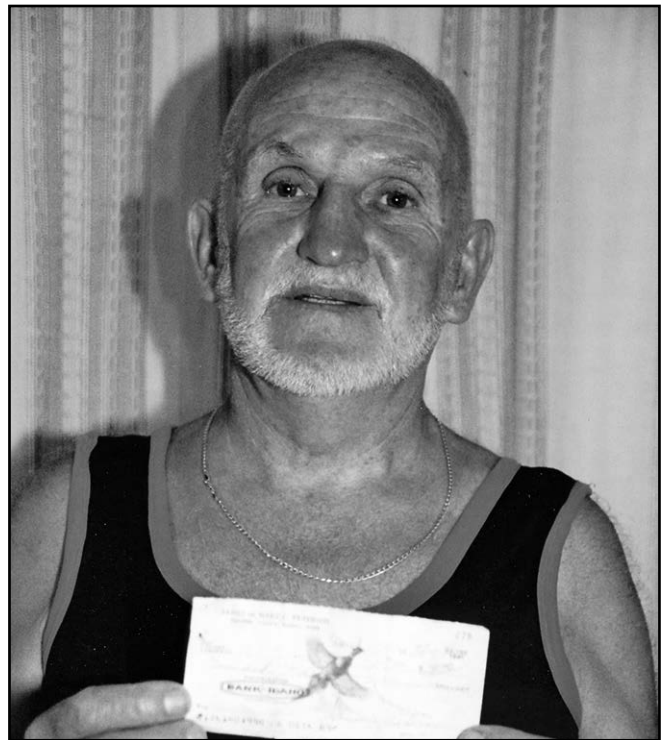
He started shearing in 1956, when he and older brother Noel joined the team run by local contractor Ian Hutchings. And before long, younger brother Terry would become the third shearer in the Pike family.

Ken's first note-worthy day in the sheds came in 1962 when, as his local newspaper recorded: 'Twenty-four-year-old Ken Pike scored a notable triumph on Thursday when he shored 488 Romney lambs in a nine-hour shearing day. The sheep were shorn on a property controlled by the Maori Affairs Department and managed by Mr GJ Leith, at Tauhei.'

'This is the largest genuine one-day tally shorn in the district by a long way,' Mr Leith said yesterday. The lambs were in natural condition, only the daggy types having been crutched. Mr Pike caught his own lambs.'

Three years later, in November 1965 and at the same property (Hangawera Station), Ken extended his 'personal best' out to 621. Shearing with Brian Thomas (551) and Terry Pike (456), the trio accounted for 1628 well-woolled Romney lambs in the day. A witness at the shed, veteran stock buyer CW Craig, said he had 'seen a few million sheep shorn, but none more cleanly nor quickly.'

Ken undersood his tally was just the second in excess of 600, with his 621 beating the then recognised world record



Above: Ken Pike with the cheque that was never cashed.

of 602 set by Colin Boshier a couple of years earlier. It was the first of many similarly huge tallies this legend of the handpiece would post in the next 45 years of his career.

'That was regarded as an unofficial world record and I remember Colin ringing me up to offer his congratulations. I shored straight Romneys that day – Mangawera Station backed onto the property that my parents owned and I understand it is now being turned into a landfill site or rubbish dump.'

And while Ken spent those summer months in the heat of the North Island (having taken over Ian Hutchings run several years earlier), he also got into the routine of heading south to Central Otago for the pre-lamb season, working for Alexandra contractor, Murray McSkimming.

'Ken came down through most of the 1960s and 1970s,' Murray McSkimming recalled. 'He was one of the great all-round shearers of his era – right up there with Snow Quinn and Ian Rutherford, in my book.'

Murray said he himself still held the shed record for ewes at Earnsclough, with a tally of 284. 'Snow Quinn got to 283 and Ken Pike was next with 280. Cartwright Terry has since done a 300 in the shed using a cover comb and leaving the socks on, but in the days when we took all the wool off, Ken was quite simply one of the very best.'

'I also remember him doing 350 merino hoggets one day and that was a fantastic tally. They were pretty wrinkly but Ken just kept riding over the top. As far as I know Ken's wether tally at Earnsclough, 247 back in 1973, was never beaten under those similar conditions, while Quinn and I did 220-odd on the same sheep. In all those years he worked for me I regarded him as a real bloody gentleman. He also had a marvellous disposition with the cockies and I've never heard a bad word said against him.'

And while working in the South, Ken twice won the New Zealand merino championships in Alexandra – 1971 and 1974 – and gained fourth placing in 1975. He was also

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a regular competitor in the Caltex [now PGG Wrightson] National championship and three times a finalist.

Murray McSkimming reckoned Ken might have done even better at the shows, but he tended to get a little bit nervous. 'As soon as Ken got the entry form, about three weeks before a show, he'd start to shake!'

In 1971, Ken started what became almost annual trips to the United States to shear sheep. 'Back then I was working an open run around Morrinsville with Brian Thomas. We had a guy named Chris Trow working in the gang and Chris used to go over to the States as a ski instructor. I went over for the first time and found work with Vern Fairchild at a place called Buhl, in Idaho.

'Apart from a year or two in Wyoming and four seasons around Montrose in Colorado, I've worked most of the time for Fairchild. Since 1991 I've only missed one season in the States – that was 1994 when I had my knee operated on. Fairchild operates three gangs, with each gang working on an eight-stand trailer. We would probably average about 1400 sheep per day between us, working four two-hour runs. The average mob in the States is probably around 2000 to 3000 sheep, but some may be up to say 14,000. We live on the job in campers or caravans, cook our own meals and feed ourselves, though we're never really that isolated – there's usually a town within two or three hours drive.'

He's even shorn sheep for the Mafia – though he didn't get to meet any of the 'members' in person. 'We shore at a place called The Islands, near Stockton, which is at the head of San Francisco harbour. We gained access to the property by keying in a code to open the gate – and the code was changed to something different just about every time you went through.'



Above: The Grandfathers at Hautu Prison Farm December 1991. Back left, Bronco Carson, Ken Pike, Jack Dowd. Front, Jeff Dorset, Hinga Tahana, Keith Wilson, Aussie Carrington. (LSP Archives photo.)

The rates of pay in the States made the trip worthwhile, Ken said, and Fairchild even paid his airfare over, which added to the profitability. But there was one payday during his early years in the USA when Ken preferred to keep the cheque, rather than spend it.

'We were shearing at a big shed one time when I asked the boss's son if his father had plenty of money because I was prepared to shear a sheep while blindfolded for \$20.00. The bet was arranged okay but on the condition that I'd only get paid if the sheep was not cut or scratched, which was fair enough. Unfortunately, I took out a bit of a bootlace while coming down the last side, but the owner was impressed enough to pay me half rate – \$10.00. I've still got the cheque – I never did get around to cashing it in!'

Ken reckoned he averaged 10,000 sheep in the American season that stretched from early March to the end of May. His travel routine then generally took him back to Britain for May - June - July, and then to Australia, for a stint in the Riverina District.

'This is actually the first year in about 15 that I haven't shorn in Australia. I always enjoyed working on a station known as 'Kooba' – it was a 12-stand shed with about 30,000 crossbred sheep where you'd average up to 280 on ewes and 300 plus on lambs. It was what you might call a good money shed, but the property is now almost entirely in maize that they sell directly to Kellogs.'

Ken and his wife Pauline were based at Golden Springs, near Reporoa for more than 20 years, where they operated a deer farm that they called 'Costalota'. A former champion woolhandler herself, Pauline (open title winner at Alexandra in 1977, 1978 and runner-up 1979) accompanied Ken to the United States on a number of occasions, but generally she 'stayed put' on the farm. 'Someone had to stay home and do the work,' she noted. The farm originally carried about 450 hinds but they gradually reduced down to about 120.

And it was a wayward deer that caused Ken's knee injury back in 1991, causing him a fair amount of aggro until he had a knee replacement operation in 1994. 'The ACC were trying to get me to give up shearing and go gardening,' Ken said. 'But shearing is all I've ever done and I wasn't going to give up that easily.' Besides, he reckoned he'd already spent three months of his life doing the easiest job in the world: 'During National Service days in the Army I was a gunner in the tanks division. All I had to do was pull the trigger!'



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Above: Farewelling Ken Pike Esq., from left: Riki the shearer, Merle Brabant, Alan Brabant, Eric Lloyd, Jeff Dorset, Pauline Pike, Aussie Carrington, Shane Harvey.

And as Rotorua contractor Jeff Dorset (for whom he worked while in New Zealand) noted, 'Ken is probably the only person in the world with a plastic knee to shear more than 500 sheep in a day!'

Ken Pike may well have shorn more sheep than just about anyone else on the planet – an estimated two million as at the mid-late 1990s. He averaged more than 35,000 per season since 1956, with one year seeing 67,000 through the porthole and at least another 10 years when tallies exceeded the 50,000 mark. [Since this story was written Darin Forde may have surpassed Ken's career total.]

He was one of the 10 men who lined up at Poronui Station on 8 January 1979 to have a crack at a world record tally. The Eddie Reidy-assembled gang shored 5,557 lambs between them in nine hours. Ken recalls there were

some wether lambs mixed in with the ewes that day and shearers had the option of shearing the wethers or letting them go. He couldn't see the sense of letting them go, having gone to the trouble of dragging them out, so wethers and ewes were shorn alike in the Pike tally of 606, on a day when John Fagan also exceeded 600.

The other eight shearers on that heroic and historic day were Dick Hettig (584); Hamahona (Sam) Te Whata (563); Jeff Rountree and Ivan Rosandich (555 each); Jack Dowd (552); Mark Boot (546); Brian McDonnell (502) and Barry Johnston (492).

Ken Pike's other venture into world record territory came in December 1991 when Jeff Dorset's six-stand team, 'the Grandfathers' shored 3291 wether lambs at Hautu Prison Farm near Turangi. This team, average age 41, comprised Keith Wilson, who rang

the board with 630; Aussie Carrington (604); Ken Pike (531); Bronco Carson (512); Hinga Tahana (510) and Jack Dowd (504). And as the oldest of that group, Ken may lay claim to being the oldest shearer (at 53 years and six months) to be a world record-holder.)

Ken Pike was recognised as a Master Shearer by the National Shearing Committee in 1979. Since then he has added more than 20 years of distinguished service to the shearing industry. At the time of interview, Ken said he sometimes wondered why he was still shearing after 45 years in the business. 'And then I realise how much fun I've had over the years and I think, why should I stop doing something that I enjoy so much?'

It's at this stage of our conversation that Ken Pike suggests 'You now know more about me than I know about myself' – but there's time for one more story from that vast experience of his years shearing in the States. There was this time when, because of an administrative mix up, Ken found himself without the proper work permits and he and several others were rounded up and placed in the cells...

'There were 24 of us in there, including six shearers and an American Indian guy they called 'Hiawatha'. One young guy in the cell started moaning and complaining and saying his Dad was a lawyer and was going to do all sorts of things once he found out about the plight his boy was in. Finally, Hiawatha decided he'd had enough of the ranting and raving. He looked the boy in the eye and said 'Sonny, I've just done 20 years for killing a man. I don't mind doing another 20 years...!'

Ken did eventually hang up the handpiece, he and Pauline moved to Whangamata in 'retirement' and Ken set up business as a lawnmowing contractor. But it's as a shearer that the legend of Ken Pike will endure. A last word from Murray McSkimming, who employed, worked with or observed all the great shearers of the past fifty years in action: 'Before Alan Donaldson, Colin King and David Fagan, you had Quinn, Rutherford and Ken Pike. Ken could shear anything you put in front of him, and they don't come any better than that.'

(Adapted from *Don't Forget the Sweat Towel*, Last Side Publishing Ltd 2020.)

* * * * *

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Souvenir Programme

KING COUNTRY SHEARS—1985 RESULTS									
OPEN MACHINE SHEARING			FINALS			20 SECS/FAULT			20 SHEEP
NAME	TIME	TOTAL BOARD STROKES	TOTAL PEN STROKES	TIME FAULTS	BOARD FAULTS	PEN FAULTS	TOTAL FAULTS		
J. FAGAN	16m 13.7s	25	160.00	48.065	1,250	8,000	57,935		
C. KING	16m 27.0s	30	163.33	49.350	1,500	8,167	59,017		
D. FAGAN	16m 55.1s	34	185.33	50.755	1,700	7,817	60,272		
R. COX	16m 2.2s	33	127.00	54.110	1,650	8,350	62,110		
J. RUKI	17m 17.3s	38	167.33	51.865	1,900	8,367	62,132		
I. ROSANDICH	19m 16.5s	27	147.33	57.825	1,350	7,367	66,542		
SENIOR MACHINE SHEARING			FINALS			20 SECS/FAULT			10 SHEEP
NAME	TIME	TOTAL BOARD STROKES	TOTAL PEN STROKES	TIME FAULTS	BOARD FAULTS	PEN FAULTS	TOTAL FAULTS		
C. BELLAMY	11m 2.7s	29	87.33	33.135	2,900	8,733	44,768		
S. DREEN	11m 20.5s	22	90.67	34.025	2,200	9,067	45,292		
M. HEGGLIN	11m 41.1s	31	74.33	35.056	3,100	7,433	45,588		
D. BALME	11m 4.9s	37	87.33	33.245	3,700	8,733	45,678		
W. WIRIHANA	12m 40.7s	28	95.33	38.035	2,800	9,533	50,368		
S. MUIR	14m 9.5s	27	71.67	42.475	2,700	7,167	52,342		

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T. MCC

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A. DON

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74

807

793

84

79

OPEN

NAME

C. KING

J. FAGAN

P. GRAI

R. PIVA

D. FAGAN

A. DON

AL

LTS

717

96

34

84

96

26

OPEN MACHINE SHEARING

FINALS

20 SECS/FAULT

25 SHEEP

NAME	TIME	TOTAL BOARD STROKES	TOTAL PEN STROKES	TIME FAULTS	BOARD FAULTS	PEN FAULTS	TOTAL FAULTS
D. FAGAN	20m 39.8s	50	229.67	61.990	2,000	9,187	73,177
A. DONALDSON	19m 59.1s	77	272.67	59.955	3,080	10,907	73,942
J. FAGAN	21m 10.7s	87	238.00	63.535	2,280	9,520	75,335
J. RUKI	21m 44.5s	75	255.00	65.225	3,000	10,240	78,465
P. GRAINGER	22m 12.8s	51	251.67	66.640	2,040	10,067	78,747
R. PIVAC	22m 13.5s	70	254.33	66.675	2,800	10,173	79,648



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Pub Quiz: Twenty Questions

- 1: Who is the Registrar for the NZ Woolclassers Association?
- 2: What year did Warren White establish Waimate Shearing?
- 3: Name the senior shearer who won Golden Shears and New Zealand championship titles in 2024.
- 4: What weight was the bale pressed by Cushla Abraham to win the Golden Shears women's title in 2024?
- 5: Which UK shearing identity is allowed to take her sheep across London Bridge?
- 6: Who was named Young New Zealand Rural Sportsman of the Year in 2024?
- 7: What is the name of the trophy contested by NZ-Australia trans-Tasman shearing teams?
- 8: Who is the New Zealander inducted into the Australian Shearers Hall of Fame in 2024?
- 9: Who kept Her Majesty waiting in 1963?
- 10: Who, in the last year or two published a book about cooking for shearing gangs?
- 11: Give two reasons why the name Jimmy Power should be remembered forever.
- 12: Who became known as the Minister of Woolpressing?
- 13: What do All Blacks Stu Wilson (RIP) and Piri Weepu have in common, in relation to shearing?
- 14: Who rode his Harley Davidson to the Western Shears Raglan in 2006?
- 15: Why (according to Rodney Macdonald) did they invent Japanese motorbikes?
- 16: What was the one title NOT won by a woman at Ohura A&P Shears in 2025?
- 17: Who was named British Shearing Personality of the Year in 2022?
- 18: Which former King Country shearing contractor held a reunion of employees in November 2022?
- 19: Name three of the five locations that have held the world shearing championships at least twice.
- 20: Why was Welshman Gwion Lloyd Evans on the cover of August 2023 *Shearing* magazine?

(All questions apart from Q 15 derived from recent *Shearing* magazines. Answers on page 69.)

The First Hawera [Egmont] A&P Show

It is a long way to hark back to the first A and P Show held in Hawera. This was held in a paddock opposite where now is the beautiful King Edward Park gardens, and no doubt created a very live interest. It is noteworthy now, looking back over the mist of years, because it was the first of a line of successful meetings held annually to the present day, when a show is held of such a standard as could not have entered into the minds of the spectators of and their competitors in a show of 41 years ago.

Yet in its way, and in its day, the first was probably just as important, and just as much an epoch - perhaps even more so - in the life of the community as will be the big display of tomorrow, with its wide field of competitors, its well bred cattle, sheep, pigs and horses, and its horse leaping contests. However, it is pretty certain that the riders of the early days yield nothing to those of today.

In those days sheep took a greater part in the life of farming on the fertile lands of the district than is the case now - dairying had not assumed the premier position it has since achieved - **and it is not to be wondered at that a sheep shearing competition figured on the list of events contested on that rough paddock at the western end of the little township.** No doubt the whole town and district was agog with excitement, and one can readily picture the keen interest taken and the enthusiasm created by the first event of the kind held in Hawera.

Of those who took part in the Show there are not very many left, and as the years pass the list gets less and less as each show comes round. **One of those who was there and took part in a sheep shearing competition was Mr. John Cleaver, of Te Roti. He drew from his memory some recollections of the event. The conditions were: Shear three sheep within 15 minutes, and the first prize went to the man who did his sheep best within the time limit.**

It is of interest to record that the late Messrs Caverhill and J Mason were the timekeepers, Messrs J Livingston and Buchanan judges, and the late Mr. GV Bate secretary.

There were 12 competitors, and Mr. Cleaver said he felt sure, from his long experience with the shears, that he could give most of them a good run and that he could easily finish within the time. He drew two good and one bad sheep, but he made pretty good time and finished well before the limit, and he was one of the few who did so.

Three others who entered were Albert, a Maori, the late Mr S Gadsby, afterwards of Kakarama and Te Kuiti, and a man named O'Dell, maintenance man at Waihi Blockhouse.

All were amazed to hear that the award was given to Mr. Gadsby, who took a full half hour to finish. But a sequel to it is that Mr Cleaver, after interviewing the secretary, was given the prize, in that he had shorn the sheep within the time allowed and therefore was justly entitled thereto.

(*Papers Past, Hawera Star, Volume XLV, 17 November 1925*)

* * * * *

The first Egmont A&P Show at Hawera was held on 4 November 1884 and was described as being "conspicuously successful, with an attendance of 1500. The Association had been formed nine months before, and the support of many leading and progressive farmers has been extended to it throughout the long period of its establishment." (*Papers Past, Hawera Star, 10 April 1930.*)

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By Richard Dawkins, Federated Farmers national meat & wool chair

Federated Farmers' call to arms on New Zealand's growing feral animal and weed problems is gaining traction. Our push for a national pest strategy is being heard by government and across the primary sector.

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We're working closely with the Department of Conservation, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Forest Owners Association to develop new ways to address the pressure from wild animals and pest plants.

The problem is real and, like any weed or pest issue, it will only worsen if left unaddressed. Nature will not wait for bureaucracy.

Farmers are reporting feral animals invading productive land more often. Ungulates, particularly deer, are the primary concern, with mobs moving across fences and into paddocks.

Wild pigs are causing real losses too, including many horrific cases of young lambs being eaten.

These pressures are directly affecting farm productivity and the national flock – and that means shearers' livelihoods are at stake as well. If the sheep don't survive, neither does the shearing season.

Too often, landowners fail to meet their social and legal responsibilities. That has to change. At the same time, a few bad actors shouldn't overshadow the many neighbours who are doing the right thing.

The next step is to set clear expectations – socially and legally – and to support those already taking action. In short: the era of leaving pests for someone else to deal with must end.

Hunting competitions and coordination services, such as those run by the NZ Deerstalkers Association, are valuable tools and should be supported. But recreational hunting alone cannot solve the problem.

Everyone with land has a responsibility to manage pests, and 'good neighbour' rules under regional pest management plans exist for a reason.

In plain language, landowners must take reasonable steps to prevent pests on their property from spreading to neighbours.

Too often, this simply isn't happening, and councils have limited ability to enforce it.

Priorities differ across landowners. Farmers want wild animal numbers kept very low to protect pastures, fences and livestock. Forestry often invests in control only during establishment. DOC focuses on biodiversity, which doesn't always align with protecting farmland. Hunting blocks have yet another set of objectives.

The result is high costs for farmers. There's the damage to pasture, fences and stock, but the time and ammunition spent controlling pests really adds up too. On top of that, farmers pay more than \$35 million a year in biosecurity levies through OSPRI. This fragmented approach is holding back progress, but our concerns are being heard.

Federated Farmers is in active discussions with industry, ministers and officials. Our goal is a comprehensive, durable strategy for managing pests that protects productive land, biodiversity and community resilience.



Above: Richard Dawkins, Federated Farmers National Meat and Wool chair.

Work is underway on a national feral deer management programme. This includes building reliable data on deer numbers, reducing bureaucratic hurdles for Wild Animal Recovery Operations, and piloting pest management through regionally led catchment groups.

Practical ideas are being tested, such as technology trials, reviews of control tools, and the 'Value for Venison' programme to ensure recovered animals feed New Zealanders in need.

Alongside this, we're working with the Forest Owners Association on 'Good Neighbour' guidelines and a memorandum of understanding outlining best practices for landowners. Those won't solve every dispute, but they're a constructive step forward.

The challenge is urgent, and it's not just wild animals – weeds are surging too. Wilding pines are spreading quickly across the high country, where low-input grazing and farmer management once held them in check.

Federated Farmers is calling for the national investment in wilding pine control to increase from a baseline \$10 million a year to \$50 million a year. Unless that happens, we're going to see huge amounts of high-country farmland swallowed up by this invasive weed.

Farmers need to work with neighbours and local stakeholders to stay ahead. Historically, it's been farmers who roll up their sleeves and deliver results on the ground, but that effort can only go so far.

Federated Farmers will continue to advocate for coordinated national action to protect the land, the flock, and the livelihoods of all those who depend on them – shearers included.

Unless we act decisively, the sheep – and the jobs that depend on them – will pay the price.

* * * * *

New alliance to strengthen strong wool future

(Story supplied)

A new cross-sector body aims to deliver better long-term outcomes for the New Zealand strong wool industry, generating greater demand, lifting value and avoiding costly duplication. The Wool Alliance, a formal agreement between Campaign for Wool NZ, Wool Impact, the Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) and Beef and Lamb NZ, is a first-of-its-kind industry model to enable wool's economic stability and growth, and safeguard lasting capability for the sector.

Former Fonterra chair, John Monaghan, has been appointed as the independent chair of the Wool Alliance, charged with leading the Wool Alliance roll-out. With a proven track record in facilitating sector transformation, John's tenure began in July, following an externally-led search and selection process.

John says he's realistic about what is required to lead the wool sector at such a critical time. "I see real opportunity for strong wool to lift its value and visibility globally. But it's not a straightforward pathway," he says. "Currently, we have a number of individual bodies competing for funding. Consolidation is the obvious solution, and it's what growers want. The Wool Alliance needs to show up differently, cooperate and collaborate to create a lean and sustainable structure."

The four organisations who sit under the Wool Alliance umbrella have formalised their commitment to working together by signing an agreement. Now, says John, the Wool Alliance enters an establishment phase, focusing on market enablement, pre-competitive support, and delivering a strong, united voice for New Zealand wool. "Wool is a cornerstone of our New Zealand identity, and it's important it remains so."

Members of Parliament including Ministers Nicola Willis, Todd McClay and Mark Patterson, along with representatives from the Ministry for Primary Industries, Federated Farmers and New Zealand Farm Assurance Incorporated (NZFAI), have already had a chance to meet with the Wool Alliance team. Now the focus turns to further sector and public engagement, with the establishment of a Wool Alliance website, and grower meetings scheduled to take place both online, and throughout the country, from early November.

"We are now in a position to share more information about how members of the Wool Alliance plan to work together, championing wool-based products and applications and supporting innovation, education and research, while reducing duplication. Our Steering Group comprises stakeholders from each Alliance member, and we'll be firmly focused on collaboration and transparency, working together towards outcomes that benefit the entire value chain."

Implementation of an enduring model for New Zealand strong wool is expected in 2026, following extensive consultation with industry partners, testing and refinement. The Wool Alliance says beneficiaries of this work will be broader than wool growers, with advantages felt far beyond the farm gate. Early-stage funding will come from existing resources, although other funding sources will need to be considered as the model evolves.

"There's a big job ahead of us to build the industry up again and establish an enduring model for wool that really works. It's a great challenge and one I'm pleased to bring my experience and enthusiasm to," John says.



Above: From left, Ross McIsaac (Sector Manager, Wool Impact), John Monaghan (Chair, Wool Alliance), Andrew Morrison (Chair, WRONZ), Kara Biggs (General Manager, Campaign for Wool NZ). (Photo Supplied.)

About the Wool Alliance

- The Wool Alliance is a formal agreement between Campaign for Wool NZ (CFWNZ), Wool Impact, Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) and Beef and Lamb NZ (BLNZ).
- Members of the Wool Alliance are focused on the collective work required to develop and deliver an enduring model for strong wool - work that has been underway since early 2024.
- The Wool Alliance agreement was signed by all four parties in September 2025. The alliance Steering Group comprises nine members: the chair and one executive from each organisation, alongside the newly appointed independent chair.
- Campaign for Wool NZ (CFWNZ) is a charitable trust advancing education, promotion and advocacy of New Zealand strong wool.
- Wool Impact Ltd is working to increase demand and value for strong wool through a market-led approach.
- Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) is an incorporated society supporting post-harvest wool research and development in New Zealand.
- Beef and Lamb NZ (BLNZ) is the farmer-owned, industry organisation representing New Zealand's sheep and beef farmers.

Further information about the alliance, the model, and upcoming grower meetings can be found at www.woolalliance.co.nz



Chilean needle grass – a real pest!

(From *Environment Canterbury*)

Chilean needle grass (CNG) is an invasive pest that can grow up to a metre tall. It has bright green leaves and produces long, needle-like seeds with a sharp point and tail. During its flowering season, from late October to March, you'll notice drooping seed heads with a red-purple tinge, making this the best time to identify it.

CNG spreads easily on clothing, vehicles, machinery, feed, and livestock, and once it takes hold, it's extremely hard and costly to control.

Its sharp seeds can injure animals by piercing their skin and eyes, and they contaminate meat and wool products, reducing quality and value. Left unchecked, this grass can take over pastures and harm our environment and economy.

Think you've seen Chilean needle grass? Report it! Early action is the best way to protect our region. Call 0800 324 636 or visit reportpests.nz for more information and identification tips. You can also learn more at ecan.govt.nz/chilean-needle-grass.



Help us find the needle in a haystack

Chilean needle grass (CNG) is an invasive grass that can grow up to one metre tall. It has bright green leaves and distinctive long-tailed seeds with a pointed base (6-7cm long). CNG is easiest to identify from late October until March during flowering and seeding when its drooping panicles have a red-purple tinge.

CNG spreads easily on clothing, machinery, vehicles, feed and livestock and is very difficult and costly to control once established.

Its sharp, needle-like seeds can also penetrate the flesh and eyes of livestock, causing serious injury and degrading meat and wool products.

CNG can be tricky to identify but our team is here to help.

 **Environment
Canterbury**
Regional Council
Kaumihara Taiao ki Waitaha

Travelling Stock – 1969

Southward the road trains thunder,
On through the hours of light,
Never a halt this morning,
Never a rest tonight.
Hollow, and gaunt and hopeless,
Dusty, and dim of eye,
By night and day on their weary way,
The travelling stock go by.

On through the noonday silence,
On through the dust dry air,
Away with the drought-time harvest,
The loadings of dumb despair.
Weary, and weak, and wasted,
Famished and sinking fast,
Two tiers high 'neath a brassy sky
The travelling stock go past.

© Bruce Simpson (1923-2019)

From *A Thousand Campfires – Australian Bush Verse*. Edited by the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria. Pan MacMillan Australia 2000



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Not too old or too grey – Jock elected Mayor



Above: Jason 'Jock' Martin in two of his more recognisable roles during his 60-year journey through life.

We think it might have been former Balclutha shearing contractor Ron Davis who suggested some years ago that anyone who has run a successful shearing business is thus qualified to run any other sort of business, large or small. And Jason 'Jock' Martin is probably now well on the way to giving truth to Ron's theory.

Recently elected mayor of Clutha District Council, Jock sees the role as an opportunity to give back to a community that has treated him so well over many years.

Having previously served as a District councillor (as did Ron Davis),



Above: Jock Martin's young constituents honoured him with a haka and waiata at his Mayoral swearing in ceremony last month. (Brendon Potae photo.)

Jock won the recent mayoral election from another shearing identity, Ken Payne, who had served as deputy mayor on the previous council.

Having been involved in local body politics for almost 25 years, Jock entered 'the arena' in 2001 as a member of the Tuapeka-Lawrence Community Board at the age of 36. In one of those quirky coincidences that happen from time to time, Jock's son Ben (35) was this year elected to the same Board. (But too soon to talk of a future Martin mayoral dynasty, they both agree!)

Jock says his parents settled in the Waitahuna district in the 1950s [mother was Te Arawa Iwi from Rotorua] and began farming there and he told the *Otago Daily Times* he was looking forward to serving the district that had "been kind to [him]".

"I've really enjoyed the campaign, and getting to meet so many beautiful people throughout the district. Talking to residents has kept me grounded, as you need to stop and do the listening, and understand what people want. This district has been kind to me down the years, giving me a lot with my family, work and grandchildren and I've got plenty of gas left in the tank to give a little back. We're just everyday, down to earth people," he said.

Jock told *Shearing* he would maintain his busy involvement with the industry and through his company, Jock Martin Management Ltd.

"It's the shearing world that keeps me grounded and that got me to where I am now. Being able to work with the people ("he tangata") is what it's all about.

And there's nothing quite like

getting thrown in at the deep end, Jock agreed. His first week in the new role coincided with the severe rain and wind storms that battered the lower South Island – blew half of Southland away and resulted in, among other things, postponement of the six-day Tour of Southland cycle race (in which this writer has an acute interest!)

"Our damage was mainly from the wind, with trees downed and power outages for up to eleven days without cell phone coverage and waste water disposal facilities," Jock said. "But our communities have risen to the challenge and things are slowly getting back to something like normal."

All part of life's journey, Jock reckons. A journey that has seen him progress from farmer's son to shearer, shearing contractor, joint organiser of shearing world records (major involvement with the Morrell-Pivac-Brooker three-stand ewe record in 1993), company rep for Heiniger, local body politician and now Mayor of the Clutha District Council, based in Balclutha.

And while it's the shearing industry that has kept him grounded this far, it's his wife Marie and family that provide the "rock foundations".

Go well, Mayor Jock Martin! (Keep a dog whistle handy, just in case!)

"You really need to look at your tallies from the perspective of what they look like outside. Rough sheep generally means poor technique." (Snow Quinn's advice to a young Ron Davis.)

Shearing Sports New Zealand Calendar 2025-2026

The following are dates for shearing and woolhandling shows in New Zealand for the remainder of the 2025-26 season. The Rangitikei Shearing Sports, including world championships machine shearing and woolhandling selection finals, will be on 7 February; the Otago Shears will be a two-day Friday/Saturday event; the Wairarapa Woolhandling is on the Sunday before the world championships.

6 December (Saturday): Whangarei A&P Show (shearing only), at Whangarei ; Geyserland Agrodome Shears (shearing/woolhandling), Rotorua A&P Show, at Ngongotaha.

10 January (Saturday): (Peninsula Duvauchelle Shears (shearing only), at Duvauchelle.

16 January (Friday): Northern Southland Community Shears (New Zealand Full wool shearing/woolhandling championships), at Lumsden.

17 January (Saturday): Kaikohe A,P&H Show (shearing only), at Kaikohe; Wairoa A&P Show (shearing only), at Wairoa; Golden Bay A&P Show (shearing only), at Takaka; Southland Shears (New Zealand crossbred lamb shearing/woolhandling championships), at Winton A&P Show.

18 January (Sunday): Horowhenua A,P & I Show (Royal New Zealand Show), at Levin.

24 January (Saturday): Taihape A&P Show (shearing/woolhandling), Taihape; Tapawera Shears (shearing only), Tapawera.

30 January (Friday): Dannevirke A&P Show, at Dannevirke.

6 February (Friday): Aria Waitangi Day Sports (shearing/woolhandling), at Aria.

7 February (Saturday): North Kaipara A&P Show (shearing only), at Paparoa; Rangitikei Shearing Sports (shearing/woolhandling), at Marton; Reefton Shears, Inangahua A&P Show (shearing/blade shearing), at Reefton.

13-14 February (Fri-Sat): Otago Shears, at Carterhope Estate, Te Houka (Balclutha).



14 February (Saturday): Northern Wairoa A&P Show Shearing only), at Arapohue (Dargaville); Te Puke A&P Show (shearing only), at Te Puke.

20-21 February (Fri-Sat): Southern Shears (shearing/woolhandling, at Gore.

21 February (Saturday): North Hokianga A&P Show (shearing only), at Broadwood; Ohura A&P Show, at Ohura; Murchison A&P Show (shearing only, at Murchison.)

22 February (Sunday): Counties Shears (shearing only), at Pukekohe.

27 February (Friday): Taumarunui Shears (shearing/woolhandling), at Hikurangi Station, Taumarunui.

28 February (Saturday): Apiti Sports (shearing/woolhandling), at Apiti; Kaikoura A&P Show (shearing only), at Kaikoura.

1 March (Sunday): Pahiatua Shears (shearing only), at Mangaone Valley, Pahiatua; Wairarapa Pre-Shears Woolhandling, at Mikimiki (Masterton).

4-7 March (Wed-Sat): 2026 world championships and Golden Shears International Championships (shearing/woolhandling/ blade shearing/ wool pressing), at Masterton.

7 March (Saturday): Amuri A&P Show (shearing only), at Rotherham.

14 March (Saturday): Kumeu A&H Show (shearing only), at Kumeu; Cheviot A&P Show, at Cheviot; Mayfield A&P Show (shearing only), at Mayfield.

21 March (Saturday): Warkworth A&P Show (shearing only), at Warkworth; Waimarino Shears (shearing only), at Raetihi; Methven Lamb Shears (shearing only), at Methven A&P Show.

22 March (Sunday): Flaxbourne A&P Show (shearing only), at Ward.

28 March (Saturday): Waitomo Caves Sports (shearing only), at Waitomo.

4 April (Easter Saturday): Oxford A&P Show (shearing/blade shearing, at Oxford.

6 April (Easter Monday): Mackenzie A&P Show (shearing/blade shearing), at Fairlie.

9-11 April (Thurs-Sat): New Zealand Shears (shearing/woolhandling), at Te Kuiti.

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Above: This man can probably produce Mac Potae's equivalent of 'five sheep and the catch' in the space of five minutes on the rugby field. Who is he, in a Shearing mag-sponsored club jersey? (Clue, several years ago.)



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Tight As

To reach 'Long Drop Station' you have to negotiate three hundred metres of one-way track blasted across a sheer rock face reminiscent of the Skippers Canyon. Ever since the road was put in, the council staff have maintained a sign with an arrow pointing over the edge saying, 'The Fortnight Drop'. My guess, old Dale McDonald, the first settler found 'The Fortnight Drop' a bit long for a stencil.

She was a hard place, 'Long Drop', pioneered by an even harder man. They reckon old Dale sacrificed a lot of stock breaking the place in via the 'Hoof-n-tooth' method.

It's probably in pines now, but sixty years ago 'Long Drop' was a self-sufficient, well-run property complete with a huge workshop employing an A-Grade mechanic able to issue COFs and WOFs. They also had lots of sheep which a contractor was engaged to shear, but to save a few bob by cutting out the middle man, all crutching was done on an open shed basis.

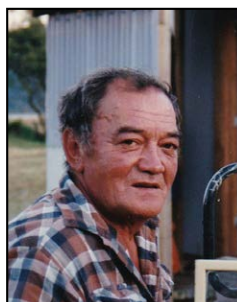
Since crutching is not a particularly skilled job unless you are a gun, almost anyone could turn up and get a job in the six-stand shed if he had a day or two to spare. I'd been there for two days when 'Toby', who incidentally was the fastest fan crutcher I ever came across, said to me, "You know these guys pay five bob a hundred less than the local going rate?"

'No', I answered, 'why is that?' "Cos", continued Toby, "they have too many to pay for so they can't afford to pay as much!"

Thinking Toby was joking, I laughed, but laughed no longer when I got my cheque. (Tony Mathews)

Short Change

Tony Mathews remembers: "Bill Meech's gangs used to allow three minutes for a change over of wool when switching from ewes to lambs or vis-à-vis. At a shed one day we started into a mob of lambs five minutes before knock off time.



Mac Potae: "With the catch, I'll do six ..."

"When someone asked if it was worth starting on the lambs so close to five o'clock, ganger Mac Potae said, 'With the catch I'll do six, Neville and Ernie will do five apiece and you three will definitely do three each. That's 25 we won't have to do tomorrow.'

"And as Godfrey Bowen used to say, 'Your pay stops when your handpiece stops and no one does a tally by looking out the windows.'"

Tony Mathews said he couldn't believe it later on in his career when he encountered gangs working eight hour days, stopping on the hour for a smoke or breather. "Inevitably the breaks would lengthen and shed hands came to expect them."



EWIT Course, King Country



***Above:** Participants in an Elite Wool Industry Training (EWIT) course at Neil Fagan's property, Kopaki, on 10-11 November 2025. From left: Baaska (Shear Mongolia), Neil Waihape (EWIT Instructor), Jana Sinova (Czechoslovakia), Budee (Shear Mongolia), Sarah Bryant (Te Kuiti), Joe McCauley (Tauranga), Duncan Adam (Scotland), Tess Fagan (Te Kuiti). In front: Tia Ngarimu (Ruatoria). **Below:** Budee (Share Mongolia)*

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EWIT course participants: **Above:** Tia Ngarimu. **Middle:** Joe McCauley. **Bottom:** Tess Fagan (was helping on the press for the day. Her real job is a nurse trainee. **Above right:** Duncan Adam. **Middle right:** Neil Waihapa explaining the intricacies of comb grinding to Jana Sinova, in New Zealand to represent Czechoslovakia as a blade shearer at the world championships in March 2026. (*Shearingmagazine photos.*)



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Smart Training

The Big Return on Smart Training: Why Investing in Skill will reshape Shearing's Future (By Tom Wilson)

In today's evolving wool industry, every dollar counts and every sheep matters. With fewer sheep in the country, heavier frames, stronger temperaments, and increasing pressure on quality across the entire supply chain, the demands on shearers, woolhandlers and contractors have never been greater. Yet the solution is remarkably simple—and surprisingly affordable: structured, high-quality training.

An updated economic analysis of New Zealand shearing and wool-handling training shows that a relatively small investment leads to major gains in productivity, profitability, and quality. For shearers, woolhandlers, contractors, farmers, and the wool industry as a whole, the message is clear: training pays, and it pays fast.

Small Investment, Massive Returns

One of the most compelling findings is just how quickly training pays for itself. At the moment a full (unfunded) Elite Wool Industry Training course costs \$925 per shearer. Based on the measured improvements in daily output, the cost is recovered in just a few days. After that, every extra sheep shorn, every hour saved, and every contract retained is pure return on investment.

Elite-trained shearers are consistently reporting gains of:

- +53 sheep/day for Learners
- +67 sheep/day for Juniors
- +40 sheep/day for Intermediates
- +50 sheep/day for Seniors

That means a shearer could earn over \$130 extra per day on average, simply by applying the improved skills they learned on course. For contractors, those gains translate to around \$200 extra per day in gross margin—more if contractors' expectations around performance are fully realised. In an industry built on tight margins, that's a game changer.

Stronger, Heavier Sheep Demand Better Technique

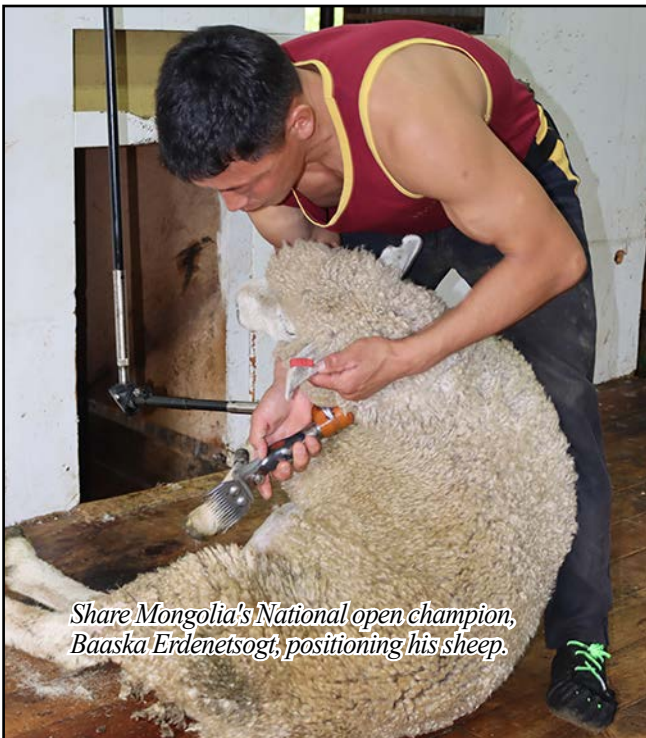
Modern genetics and market trends have delivered sheep with heavier bodies, stronger frames, and bolder temperaments. These animals are valuable—but without the right shearing techniques, they are also harder to handle. This is where Elite's approach matters most. Training isn't just about speed. It's about:

- Higher animal welfare standards
- Safer, balanced shearing patterns
- Improved sheep control
- Reduced strain and fatigue
- Techniques that match today's sheep—not the sheep of 20 years ago.

The result? A safer workplace, fewer injuries, calmer sheep, and shearers who can work longer and more comfortably. This alone increases retention in a physically demanding trade.

In a Smaller National Flock, Skill Is a Competitive Edge

With fewer sheep nationally, competition for work has increased—not just among contractors, but among shearers, woolhandlers and pressers themselves.



Share Mongolia's National open champion, Baaska Erdenetsogt, positioning his sheep.



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Farmers and contractors alike look closely at reliability, speed, and quality when selecting who gets the call for the next job.

Completing structured training signals that a shearer or woolhandler is committed to their craft. It shows professionalism, a willingness to learn, and a desire to deliver high-quality work. For young or emerging shearers, woolhandlers and pressers this can be the difference between remaining in seasonal work or becoming a sought-after, year-round operator.

In a tightening labour market, demonstrated skill and reliability is job security.

Better Staff = Better Business

For shearing contractors, trained staff make every part of the business run more smoothly and more profitably. When teams efficiently shear more sheep with high-quality results and wool is professionally prepared, the contractor benefits in several ways:

- Higher daily output = higher revenue
- Cleaner, more consistent quality = happier clients
- Lower injury rates = fewer disruptions and downtime
- Better teamwork and reliability = stronger crew culture
- Contract retention = long-term stability

Many farmers make hiring decisions based almost entirely on quality. Poor-quality shearing or wool preparation is one of the fastest ways to lose a client, and one of the hardest business hits to recover from. Training directly protects against this by lifting the skill and consistency of every shearer and woolhandler in the shed.

The Ripple Effect: Quality Drives Confidence Across the Wool Chain

Quality presentation of the raw product doesn't begin at the retail outlet, the marketing company or the processors. It begins in the woolshed—with the shearer's first to last blows, and the talents of well-trained woolhandlers.

The benefits of high-quality shearing and wool handling accumulate as wool moves through the chain:

- Fewer second cuts mean cleaner lines of wool
- Wool that is handled by highly trained people and processed to bespoke specification
- Better animal welfare means better industry and global brand relationships
- Well trained motivated work teams mean more reliable clip presentation
- Contractors known for quality, keep contracts and build reputation
- Buyers and processors and end users gain confidence in NZ wool's consistency

Before the industry can tackle challenges in processing, marketing, or global competition, it must first secure quality at source: the hands of the people who remove and process the fleece.

Elite's training is designed around this principle—lifting skill at the very start of the wool journey so everything downstream gains value. To flourish and succeed, all of this requires sustainable funding to achieve the desired Return on Investment (for all involved) from a truly magnificent product. For information and details of courses Check out

www.elitewoolindustrytraining.com

www.facebook.com/ewitnz



Above: Congratulations to SWTI and AWI trainers Tom and Marion Kelly on receiving the coveted Jim Robinson trophy for their contribution to Sports Shear Australia. Tom and Marion have worked tirelessly for many years from being competitors as Australian team members, through to holding positions both on the national and Victorian committee, and judging all over Australia and internationally. It would be hard to find two people more passionate about the industry and giving young shearers and woolies the best chance of success. (Facebook post July 2025)



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Shearer Training – where it all began

From Sheep-O! by AR Mills, AH & AW Reed, Wellington, 1960.

For various reasons the standard of shearing in New Zealand had deteriorated over the years. The quality of work was low, and few learners were being attracted to the trade. This was a serious problem for all connected with the industry.

The advent of Godfrey Bowen as a world record holder seemed to offer a golden opportunity for something to be done about it, and I often remarked to Godfrey that we ought to arouse the interest of the New Zealand Wool Board in some form of training scheme. This, I felt, could be just about the finest thing that had ever been brought to the wool grower's back door – or front door, for that matter. At this point my brother, Norman, who had travelled down to see the record attempt [at Opiki on 6 January 1953], brought a request from Mr Roy Bousfield, President of the Waipukurau Agricultural and Pastoral Association, for Godfrey to shear at the association's annual show.

"What's in it for me?" Godfrey asked. "I can't go around the country at my own expense giving exhibitions."

"You've got to go, Godfrey," I said. "It may be a penalty of fame, but you'll see, something will come of it."

So go we did, and thus was launched our first exhibition before the public.

And what a day! The crowd packed around that shearing stand proved beyond doubt the popularity of shearing as a public attraction. The activities of



*Above: AR 'Bob' Mills, Shannon farmer and author of **Sheep-O!** and the brains behind the advent of formal shearer training in New Zealand 70 years ago.*

the show were virtually brought to a standstill. Sheep and cattle stewards complained at being deprived of an opportunity to see the event. Sideshow proprietors protested volubly at the effect on their businesses. Godfrey's performance was an unqualified success, and proved to be the forerunner of dozens of similar exhibitions throughout the county. The interest displayed was not confined to country people, but extended to town and city dwellers as well.

Even the waitresses in hotels talked of it. Diners at their tables spoke knowingly and unknowingly of the art of shearing, and it was amusing to sit

quietly by, unidentified, absorbing the opinions expressed by all and sundry, people whose knowledge of sheep had sometimes not progressed past the choice mutton chops lying on their plates.

My next development was a request from Mr "Horrie" Mungavin, himself no mean performer with the handpiece, to demonstrate at the Levin Show. Godfrey rather reluctantly complied. The exhibition aroused quite as much interest as the one at Waipukurau but there the matter seemed to end, especially as Godfrey felt that the 'presentation' to compensate for his time and expenses was not over-generous. There was satisfaction in the work but no future; our little campaign was over.

But Mr Walter Horrobin, of Waikanae, deputy chairman of the Wool Board, had seen Godfrey in action and, to his lasting credit, had immediately realised the potential value of this outstanding shearer to the wool industry. Eventually Godfrey was invited to meet the Wool Board at Wellington. I accompanied him but waited at the Midland Hotel while he interviewed the Board. When he came back, he reported that he could make no headway with the members. "Hopeless," he said, and asked me if I would talk to them. I had expected there would be opposition, and that proved to be the case.

Board members were sharply divided on the wisdom of training men to shear. It had been tried before and not been a conspicuous success. I was aware of this and knew the reason why. How could it have been a success when there had been no outstanding shearer and proven champion to do the instructing – an expert all budding shearers could look up to, one whose guidance and technique would be accepted without question?

I had given much thought to the launching of a training scheme, and was convinced that, if it were to succeed, the farmers throughout the country would need to be one hundred percent behind it. It would be necessary to tour both islands, demonstrating shearing technique and the care and maintenance of machinery and gear, not only to shearers but, more important, to farmers as well. If the farmers accepted the scheme, success was assured; if not, it was doomed.

So, I went before the Wool Board to

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Above: The original team of NZ Wool Board instructors at Lincoln College Woolshed, 1955. **Back left:** Jim Barclay (Southland), Wi Edwards (Wairoa), Ron Gardner (South Otago). **Third row:** Maurie Eaton (Marlborough), Victor Greene (Mid-Canterbury), George Randell (Hawkes Bay), D Stevens (South Taranaki), R Midgley (Napier), Red Fleming (Gisborne), George Tocker (King Country), Rex Tayler (Temuka), John White (Southern Hawkes Bay), Roy Jones (North Taranaki). **Second row:** Lyall Caldwell (North Otago), Bob Win (Nelson), Reg Morgan (Northland), Ross Campbell (West Coast), M Davis (Whanganui), David Frew (Central Otago), Kenneth Hutt (South Canterbury), Lyndsay Butcher (Southland), Jim Tawhai (Gisborne), Walter Welch (Taihape), C Millar (Wairarapa). **Front row:** Bill Englebretsen (Flock House), Snow Pratt (Auckland), Claude Waite (Waikato), Vincent Nesdale (Manawatu, NZ Assistant instructor), Godfrey Bowen (NZ Senior instructor), Kevin Nesdale (Manawatu), Keith Sandbrook (Hawkes Bay), Ted Johnson (North Canterbury), Bob Reed (Wairarapa). (LSP Photo archives.)

expound my theory and answer questions. When asked where I came in on the proposal, I replied that I would undertake to organise the whole scheme.

Listening carefully, I judged that the majority of the Board members were in favour of the proposal. What they did not know, and what even Godfrey himself did not know, was that while waiting at the Midland I had, by telephone, made tentative arrangements with a farmer in the nearby Pauatahanui Valley to stage a demonstration there. In the event of an adverse decision by the Board, I intended inviting its members to attend. As things turned out, this was not necessary. A favourable decision was reached, and the New Zealand Wool Board Shearing Service was on its way.

Later, after witnessing demonstrations, those members of the Board who had not favoured the scheme unreservedly withdrew their opposition; and eventually the project, bristling though it was with all manner of unforeseen difficulties, could not have had stronger support and understanding from its sponsors. That fact is worth recording.

* * * * *

An itinerary which provided for alternate months to be spent in each Island was drawn up and the first official two-day demonstration took place at Massey College, Palmerston North, in August 1953. The rest, as they say – well, you know what they say ... By 1955 Godfrey had assembled a team of 32 gun shearers from around the country and trained them into his own likeness and they dispersed back to the provinces and ran training courses for local shearers. The Wool Board morphed through several iterations over the next 50 years, retaining the same training system. The Elite Wool Industry Training (EWIT) group's modus operandi today perhaps best mirrors the system as it used to be.



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Great Raihania's brand new board

By Doug Laing (Shearing Sports NZ)

The Great Raihania Shears' new Colin Watson-Paul Stand at the Hawke's Bay A&P Show in Hastings was launched in world-class fashion, with New Zealand champion Toa Henderson's winning, when just reaching the final was a special challenge all of its own. And the final was a classic 20-sheep contest, a fitting and crowning glory for the new shearing stand at Hawke's Bay Show. The first nine in the race to make the top six for the final, doubling as the fifth leg of the Shearing Sports New Zealand 2026 world championships machine shearing selection series, were separated by just 0.55 points.

Northland shearer Henderson, now the winner of four of the legs and a warm favourite to be in the team for the world championships in Masterton on March 4-7, flew from Auckland for the day, and, from a field of 28, was the only finalist who has not been a world record holder.

It guaranteed a quick pace, with Henderson the only shearer to go under 16 minutes for the 20 woolly hoggets, his 15m 57s beating next-man-off and Hawke's Bay-based Scotland international and former world champion Gavin Mutch by almost half-a-minute, with another 15 seconds back to world nine-hours lamb shearing record holder Stu Connor, an English shearer also based in Hawke's Bay. Connor ultimately had enough quality to claim second place overall, but Henderson had done enough to win, albeit by just 0.4pts.

Mutch was third, Southland legend Nathan Stratford was fourth, Hawke's Bay shearer and 2014 world champion Rowland Smith was fifth, and sixth was Te Kuiti shearer Jack Fagan, who had won an open final a week earlier in Gisborne.



Above: The new, transportable six-stand board used for the first time at Great Raihania Shears, Hastings.

The open woolhandling final provided a 59th career open win for reigning New Zealand Shears and North Island Circuit champion Keryn Herbert, of Te Kuiti. Her second open win, in 2005, was at Hastings, and she had last won the Hawke's Bay title in 2011.

The winner of a world teams title for New Zealand in Wales in 2010, she's expected to compete for Cook Islands at the world Championships, having previously done so in Scotland two years ago.

Former New Zealand representatives Cushla Abraham, of Masterton, and Tia Potae, of Milton, were second and third, and Logan Kamura, of Marton, was fourth. Abraham was also the runner-up last year.

Napier shearer Kaivah Cooper had his first senior shearing win, after 13 as a Junior in 2023-2024 and five Intermediate wins last season. Michael Buick, of Pongaroa, won the Intermediate final, Ashlin Swann, of Wairoa, won the Junior final, and Charlie Kjestrup, from Southern Hawke's Bay, won the Novice event. Maiden Elers, from Mataura, won the senior woolhandling final, and Laura Bradley, from Papatawa, between Dannevirke and Woodville claimed the junior win that will take her into senior grade next season, and then also sheared her way into the Open shearing quarterfinal on her debut in the top grade with the handpiece.

Despite the absence of some competitors whose travel plans were disrupted by the windy weather, and with the Shearing Sports New Zealand team in Australia for Saturday's trans-Tasman tests, there were 132 entries across the five grades of shearing and four of woolhandling.

There were 88 shearers (Open 28, Senior 9, Intermediate 13, Junior 20, Novice 18) and 44 woolhandlers (Open 17, Senior 10, Junior 17). There were also 26 in Thursday's Secondary Schools' Shearing Challenge, in which all six finalists were shearers with experience in novice or junior finals last summer, including winner Alex Wrenn, of Feilding Agricultural High School.

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Above: Great Raihania Shears Open finalists, from left: Na Rongowhakaata Raihania (Kaumatua), Toa Henderson, Stu Connor, Gavin Mutch, Nathan Stratford, the laughing Rowland Smith, Jack Fagan, Sponsor.

RESULTS Great Raihania Shears, 24 October 2025:

Shearing: Open final (20 sheep): Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka) 15m 57s, 57.8pts, 1; Stu Connor (England) 16m 39s, 58.1pts, 2; Gavin Mutch (Scotland/Dannevirke) 16m 25s, 58.4pts, 3; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 18m, 59.05pts, 4; Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 18m 23s, 61.85pts, 5; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 17m 59s, 63.4pts, 6.

Senior final (10 sheep): Kaivah Cooper (Napier) 11m 49s, 47.85pts, 1; Dre Roberts (Mataura) 12m 18s, 48.9pts, 2; Dylan Young (Gisborne) 12m 43s, 50.25pts, 3; Mark Ferguson (Elsthorpe) 12m 41s, 50.75pts, 4; Dalton Tangiwai (Pahiatua) 14m 49s, 53.95pts, 5; Atawhai Hadfield (Wairoa) 14m 33s, 56.75pts, 6.

Intermediate final (6 sheep): Michael Buick (Pongaroa) 9m 31s, 36.717pts, 1; Jodiesha Kirkpatrick (Gisborne) 9m 44s, 37.7pts, 2; Lydia Thomson (Oxford/Hastings) 10m 31s, 41.217pts, 3; Sam Parker (Raglan) 8m 57s, 42.183pts, 4; Riley Norman (Eketahuna) 11m 20s, 44.833pts, 5; Mitch Nation (Waipukurau) 8m 54s, 53.367pts, 6.

Junior final (3 sheep): Ashlin Swann (Wairoa) 7m 27s, 32.35pts, 1; Alex Nicholson (Dannevirke) 7m 44s, 34.867pts, 2; Shawna Swann (Wairoa) 9m 15s, 35.417pts, 3; Cam Bolton-Smith (Pahiatua) 7m 25s, 36.25pts, 4; Tawharangi Aranui (Martinborough) 6m 47s, 36.683pts, 5; Bruce Anderson (-) 9m 30s, 36.833pts, 6.

Novice (1 sheep): Charlie Kjestrup (Pongaroa) 4m 50s, 22.5pts, 1; Waimarama Armstrong (Taharoa) 4m 58s, 25.9pts, 2; Tahu Hauiti (Dannevirke) 3m 44s, 26.2pts, 3; Hinepurotu Hauiti (Dannevirke) 4m 27s, 27.35pts, 4; T Brickell (-) 4m 47s, 27.35pts, 5; Campbell Ellingham (Hastings) 4m 17s, 27.85pts, 6.

Secondary Schools Challenge: Alex Wrenn (Feilding AHS) 26.23pts, 1; Waiari Puna (Napier BHS) 28.73pts, 2; Mac Foreman (Feilding AHS) 29.5pts, 3; Ashlin Swann (Wairoa College) 34.21pts, 4; Deacan Mullins-Henry (Napier BHS) 34.81pts, 5; Hunter Wigglesworth (Feilding AHS) 35.61pts, 6.

Woolhandling: Open final: Keryn Herbert (Te Kuiti) 91.162pts, 1; Cushla Abraham (Masterton) 102.458pts, 2; Tia Potae (Milton) 117.836pts, 3; Logan Kamura (Marton) 120.712pts, 4.

Senior final: Maiden Elers (Mataura) 88.276pts, 1; Jodiesha Kirkpatrick (Gisborne) 91.988pts, 2; Tre Ratana Scia Scia (Feilding) 111.1pts, 3; Ashleigh Ostler (Kimbolton) (-) 156.95pts, 4.

Junior final: Laura Bradley (Woodville) 90.15pts, 1; Leah Tamainu (Nuhaka) 93.39pts, 2; Jade Hikiwai (Dannevirke) 99.96pts, 3; Caitlyn Murphy (-) 127pts, 4.



Above: Great Raihania Shears senior finalists, from left: Kaivah Cooper, Dre Roberts, Dylan Young, Mark Ferguson, Dalton Tangiwai, Atawhai Hadfield.



Above: Great Raihania Shears Intermediate finalists, from left: Michael Buick, Jodiesha Kirkpatrick, Lydia Thomson, Sam Parker, Riley Norman, Mitch Nation.

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Above: Great Raihania Shears Junior finalists, from right: Ashlin Swann, Alex Nicholson, Shawna Swann, Cam Bolton-Smith, Tawharangi Aranui, Bruce Anderson.



Above: Look, they spelled my name right last time! Keryn Herbert and Na Rongowhakaata Raihania share a joke.



Above: Great Raihania Shears Novice finalists, from right: Charlie Kjestrup, Waimarama Armstrong, Tahu Hauiti, Hinepurotu Hauiti, T Brickell, Campbell Ellingham.

The Musterers

We've ridden where the gullies dip
We've walked the rocky ridges.
We've crawled where hobnails wouldn't grip –
Swam mobs in lieu of bridges.
We've mustered land that had no end
And blocks that had no fences
And found through long hard days my friend
When real mateship commences.

We've sheltered from the blizzard blast,
Until the storm cloud lifted.
Across the hill we scrawled our past
As years and seasons shifted.
And though we never lit a spark
That kindled into glory,
I like to think we left some mark
In the high country story.

When wool is booming at the sales,
The grower gets the credit.
The mob of beef on country rails –
Who mustered, drove and fed it?
Who finished with a weather squint
From suns and winds and ices?
Who never found his name in print
Beside the record prices?

But we remember – let us drink –
And make the glasses brimming.
And may our image never shrink,
Although our eyes are dimming.
And if I go before you mate,
And if you come behind me,
When you get to St Peter's gate
A 'Way-le-go' will find me.

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Open Class Shearers. Points awarded 12-1 (first to 12th) in A-grade show, 8-1 in B-grade show, 6-1 in C-grade show.

Paerata Abraham (Masterton): 2 Waimate Winter Comb (11), 4 Poverty Bay (9), 3 Taihape (10), 1 Aria (8), 2 Taumarunui (11), 1 National Shearing Circuit (12), 8 Golden Shears (5), 5 North Island SOTY (8), 8 finals, 1 win, 74pts.

Reuben Alabaster (Taihape): 2 Dannevirke (7), 12 Golden Shears (1); 1 final, 0 wins, 8pts.

Travers Baigent (Wakefield): 2 Nelson (7), 2 Golden Bay (6), 1 Murchison (6), 1 Kaikoura (6), 4 finals, 2 wins, 25pts.

Casey Bailey (Riverton): 4 Waimate (9), 6 NZ Crossbred Lambs (Winton) 7, 3 South Island SOTY (10), 2 Southern Shears (11), 5 Pahiatua (8), 6 National Shearing Circuit (7), 3 Golden Shears (10), 4 NZ Shears Circuit Te Kuiti (9), 8 finals, 0 wins, 71pts.

Digger Balme (Rotorua): 1 Rotorua (8), 4 Wairoa (5), 5 Rangitikei (8), 2 Te Puke (7), 2 Ohura (7), 5 Counties (4), 5 Kumeu (8), 4 Waitomo Caves (3), 8 finals, 1 win, 50pts.

Baden Barker (Tapawera): 4 Murchison (3), 1 final, 0 wins, 3pts.

Hemi Braddick (Eketahuna): 3 Poverty Bay (10), 4 Wairarapa (5), 3 Central Hawke's Bay (6), 3 Wairoa (6), 3 Apiti (6), 3 Pahiatua (10), 1 Waimarino (12), 7 finals, 1 win, 55pts.

Alan Bramley (Kaeo): 2 Northern Wairoa (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Chris Brears (Matiere): 4 Ohura (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Dave Brooker (Cust): 5 Canterbury Circuit (8), 5 Reefton (4), 3 Kaikoura (4), 3 finals, 0 wins, 16pts.

David Buick (Pongaroa): 2 Waimate (11), 2 Poverty Bay (11), 2 Wairarapa (7), 2 Central Hawke's Bay (7), 1 NZ Fullwood Lumsden (12), 1 NZ Corriedale Lambs Winton (12), 1 Horowhenua (8), 2 Taihape (11), 1 Rangitikei (12), 6 South Island SOTY (7), 3 Southern Shears (10), 1 Taumarunui (12), 2 Pahiatua (11), 2 HB Autumn Waipukurau (11), 2 Golden Shears (11), 2 Waitomo Caves (5), 2 North Island SOTY (11), 17 finals, 5 wins, 169pts.

Shaun Burgess (Ashburton): 3 Canterbury Circuit (10), 2 Cheviot (7), 2 finals, 0 wins, 17pts.

Brayden Clifford (Waikaka): 4 West Otago (3), 1 final, 0 wins, 3pts.

Blake Crooks (Rangiora): 4 Peninsula Duvauchelle (3), 3 Cheviot (6), 2 finals, 0 wins, 9pts.

Eli Cummings (Pleasant Point): 3 Pleasant Point (6) 1 final, 0 wins, 6pts.

Hugh De Lacy (Rangiora): 3 Ellesmere (4), 5 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (8), 1 Canterbury Circuit (12), 1 Cheviot (8), 1 Methven (8), 3 Oxford (7) 6 finals, 3 wins, 47pts.

Andrew Deverall (Tauranga): 4 Te Puke (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Chris Dickson (Raetihi/Masterton): 6 Dannevirke 7, 3 Aria (6), 2 finals, 0 wins, 13pts.

Taare Edwards (Ashburton): 5 Ashburton (4) 1 final, 0 wins, 4pts.

Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti): 1 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (12), 1 Whangarei (8), 2 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (11), 2 South Island SOTY (11), 4 Counties (5), 2 Kumeu (11), 3 Waitomo Caves (4), 1 North Island SOTY (12), 3 NZ Shears Te Kuiti (10), 10 finals, 3 wins, 84pts.

James Fagan (Te Kuiti): 2 NZ Merino Alexandra (11), 1 final, 0 wins, 11pts.

Ant Frew (Pleasant Point): 2 Ellesmere (5), 2 Ashburton (7), 2 Pleasant Point (7), 2 Peninsula Duvauchelle (5), 4 Mayfield (5), 2 Methven (7), 1 Oxford (8), 7 finals, 1 win, 54pts.

David Gordon (Masterton): 2 Horowhenua (7), 3 Rangitikei (10), 5 Taumarunui (8), 3 finals, 0 wins, 25pts.

Simon Goss (Whanganui): 3 Kumeu (10), 1 final, 0 wins, 3pts.

Mark Grainger (Te Kuiti): 4 Taihape (9), 4 Aria (5), 1 Te Puke (8), 2 Counties (7), 3 Taumarunui (10), 10 Golden Shears 3, 4 Kumeu

(9), 2 Waimarino (11), 2 NZ Shears Circuit Te Kuiti (11), 4 NZ Shears Open 9, 10 finals, 1 win, 82pts.

Floyd Haare (Ohai/Bainham): 1 Golden Bay (6), 2 Tapawera (7), 3 Reefton (6), 3 finals, 1 win, 19pts.

Brook Hamerton (Ruawai/Hastings): 3 Hawke's Bay (10), 4 Central Hawke's Bay (5), 4 Apiti (5), 4 Waimarino (9), 4 finals, 0 wins, 29pts.

Clay Harris (Piopio): 3 Horowhenua (6), 4 Dannevirke (5), 2 finals, 0 wins, 10pts.

Aaron Haynes (Feilding): 5 Dannevirke 4, 1 final, 0 wins, 4pts.

Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka): 1 Taranaki (8), 2 Whangarei (7), 1 Kaikohe (6), 6 Taihape (7), 2 Rangitikei (11), 1 Otago (12), 1 Southern Shears (12), 1 Counties (8), 1 Apiti (8), 1 Golden Shears (12), 1 Kumeu (12), 1 Warkworth (6), 1 Waitomo Caves (6), 1 NZ Shears Open (12), 14 finals, 11 wins, 127pts.

Robert Herbert (Kaikoura): 4 Tapawera (5) 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Duncan Higgins (Havelock/Blenheim): 4 Nelson (5), 3 Tapawera (6), 4 Reefton (5), 3 finals, 0 wins, 16pts.

Paul Hodges (Geraldine): 1 Reefton (8), 1 final, 1 win, 8pts.

Barry Jones (Pukekohe): 4 North Kaipara (3), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Chris Jones (Blenheim): 4 Marlborough (5), 3 Golden Bay (4), 3 Murchison (4), 3 finals, 0 wins, 13pts.

John Kirkpatrick (Napier/Pakipaki): 5 Waimate (8), 1 Poverty Bay (12), 2 Hawke's Bay (11), 1 Wairarapa (8), 1 Central Hawke's Bay (8), 4 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (9), 5 Southern Shears (8), 3 Counties (6), 4 Pahiatua (9), 5 HB Autumn Waipukurau (8), 4 North Island SOTY (9), 11 finals, 3 wins, 96pts.

Thomas Lambert (Christchurch): 4 Canterbury Circuit (9), 1 final, 0 wins, 9pts.

Gethin Lewis (Wales): 4 Horowhenua (5) 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.



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Sam Mackrill (Australia): 5 NZ Merino Alexandra (8) 1 final, 0 wins, 8pts.

Willie McSkimming (Oamaru): 4 Ellesmere (3), 2 Canterbury Circuit (11), 2 finals, 0 wins, 14pts.

Andy Mainland (Invercargill): 2 West Otago (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Matene Mason (Masterton): 3 Taranaki 6, 1 final, 0 wins, 6pts.

Justin Meikle (Oamaru): 1 Ellesmere (6), 2 Ashburton (7), 1 Marlborough (8), 1 Peninsula Duvauchelle (6), 5 NZ Fullwool Lumsden (8), 1 Tapawera (8), 2 Reefton (7), 4 Otago (9), 5 South Island SOTY (8), 4 National Shearing Circuit (9), 3 Mayfield (6), 5 NZ Shears Circuit (8), 12 finals, 4 wins, 90pts.

Angus Moore (Ward/Seddon): 2 Marlborough (7), 6 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (7), 1 Nelson (8), 6 Otago (7), 4 South Island SOTY (9), 6 Taumarunui (7), 6 Pahiatua (7), 3 HB Autumn Waipukurau (10), 2 National Shearing Circuit (11), 4 Golden Shears (9), 1 Flaxbourne (8), 3 NZ Shears Open (10), 12 finals, 2 wins, 98pts.

Dion Morrell (Alexandra): 3 NZ Merino Alexandra (10) 1 final, 0 wins, 10pts.

Gavin Mutch (Scotland): 3 Waimate (10), 1 Hawkes Bay (12), 2 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (11), 2 Taranaki (7), 2 Wairoa 7, 3 Dannevirke (6), 5 Apiti (4), 3 National Shearing Circuit (10), 9 Golden Shears 4, 3 Waimarino (10), 3 North Island SOTY (10), 1 NZ Shears Circuit Te Kuiti (12), 2 NZ Shears Open (11), 13 finals, 2 wins, 114pts.

Nick Nalder (Takaka): 3 Nelson (6), 6 Reefton 3, 2 Murchison (5), 3 finals, 0 wins, 14pts.

Tama Niania (Gisborne): 5 Poverty Bay (8), 6 Apiti (3), 2 finals, 0 wins, 9pts.

Neville Osborne (Dargaville): 3 Kaikohe (4), 2 North Kaipara (5), 1 Northern Wairoa (6), 1 North Hokianga (6), 2 Warkworth (5), 5 finals, 2 wins, 26pts.

Earl Paewai (Seddon): 4 Flaxbourne 5, 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Corey Palmer (Dipton): 3 West Otago (4), 4 NZ Fullwool Lumsden (9), 5 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (8), 3 Otago (10), 1 South Island SOTY (12), 6 Southern Shears (7), 11 Golden

Shears 2, 7 finals, 1 win, 52pts.

Tui Pene (Waipawa/Rotorua): 3 Rotorua (6) 1 final, 0 wins, 6pts.

Dane Phillips (Kaiwaka): 2 Kaikohe (5), 1 North Kaipara (6), 6 Kumeu (7), 3 finals, 1 win, 18pts.

Phil Price (Old Radnor, Powys, Wales): 3 Te Puke (6), 1 final, 0 wins, 6pts.

Paraki Puna (Napier): 5 Waimate Winter Comb (8), 3 Wairarapa (6) 2 finals, 0 wins, 14pts.

Shane Ratima (Hunterville): 1 Ohura (8), 1 final, 1 win, 8pts.

Axle Reid (Taihape/Waipawa): 5 Taihape (8), 6 Rangitikei (7), 2 Kaikoura (5), 4 HB Autumn Waipukurau (9), 5 National Shearing Circuit (8), 1 Mayfield (8), 3 Flaxbourne (6), 2 Oxford (7), 8 finals, 1 win, 58pts.

Brett Roberts (Mataura): 6 Waimate Winter Comb (7), 1 Ashburton (8), 2 NZ Fullwool Lumsden (11), 6 Golden Shears (7), 2 Mayfield (7), 6 NZ Shears Circuit (7), 6 finals, 1 win, 47pts.

James Ruki (Te Kuiti): 2 Rotorua (7), 1 final, 0 wins, 7pts.

Leon Samuels (Invercargill/Roxburgh): 1 Waimate (12), 1 Waimate Winter Comb (12), 3 NZ Fullwool Lumsden (10), 3 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (10), 2 Otago (11), 2 Apiti (7), 1 Pahiatua (12), 5 NZ Shears Open (8), 8 finals, 3 finals, 82pts.

Alex Smith (Rakaia): 6 Canterbury Circuit (7), 3 Peninsula Duvauchelle (4), 3 Methven (6), 2 Flaxbourne (7), 4 finals, 0 wins, 24pts.

Corey Smith (Rakaia): 4 Pleasant Point (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Grant Smith (Rakaia): 6 NZ Merino Alexandra (7) 1 final, 0 wins, 7pts.

Ralph Smith (Dargaville): 3 Northern Wairoa (4), 3 North Hokianga (4), 2 finals, 0 wins, 8pts.

Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho): 1 Wairoa (8), 1 Taihape (12), 2 Aria (7), 4 Southern Shears (9), 1 HB Autumn Waipukurau (12), 7 Golden Shears 6, 6 finals, 3 wins, 54pts.

Nathan Stratford (Invercargill): 4 NZ Merino Alexandra (9), 6 Waimate (7), 3 Waimate Winter Comb (10), 1 Pleasant Point (8), 3 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (10), 1 West Otago (6), 1 Dannevirke (8), 4 Rangitikei (9), 5 Otago (8), 5 Golden Shears (8), 6 North Island SOTY (7), 6 NZ Shears Open (7), 12 finals, 3 wins, 97pts.

Paul Swann (Waitoa): 5 Te Puke (4), 1 final, 0 wins, 4pts.

Lionel Taumata (Taumarunui/Gore): 4 Hawke's Bay (9), 4 Ashburton (5), 4 Rotorua (5), 3 finals, 0 wins, 19pts.

Stacey Te Huia (Marton/Te Kuiti, Dubbo, Mossburn): 4 Waimate Winter Comb (9), 1 final, 0 wins, pts.

Conan Te Kene (Taumarunui): 3 Ohura (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts.

Chris Vickers (Palmerston/Shag Point): 1 NZ Merino Alexandra (12), 1 final, 0 wins, 12pts.

Phil Wedd (Napier/Silverdale): 3 Whangarei (6), 4 Kaikohe (3), 3 North Kaipara 4, 2 North Hokianga 5, 3 Warkworth (4), 5 finals, 0 wins, 22pts.

Josef Winders (Invercargill): 5 Rotorua (4), 6 Te Puke (3), 2 finals, 0 wins, 7pts.

Lyall Windleburn (Rangiora): 3 Marlborough (6), 4 Oxford (5), 2 finals, 0 wins, 11pts.

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Open Class Woolhandlers. Points awarded 12-1 (first to 12th) in A-grade show, 8-1 in B-grade show, 6-1 in C-grade show.

Cushla Abraham (Masterton): 7 NZ Merino Alexandra (6), 18 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 1 South Island Circuit Waimate (12), 2 Hawke's Bay (11), 4 Wairarapa (5), 2 Central Hawke's Bay (7), 3 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (10), 19 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 17 NZ Cross bred Lambs, 7 Taihape (6), 8 Dannevirke (1), 18 Rangitikei, 3 NZWHY Otago (10), 6 Southern Shears Gore (7), 9 Taumarunui (4), 12 Apiti, 5 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (8) 8 finals, 1 win, 87pts

Sheree Alabaster (Taihape): 13 Rangitikei.

Teresa Aporo (Martinborough): 8 Rotorua (1) 0 finals, 0 wins, 1pt

Cedric Aramoana (Kurow): 31 NZ Merino Alexandra, 25 NZ Long Wool Waimate,

Ana Braddick (Eketahuna): 4 Dannevirke (5), 10 Rangitikei (3), 4 Taumarunui (9), 13 Apiti, 2 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (11) 3 final, 0 wins, 28pts

Marika Braddick (Eketahuna): 4 Poverty Bay (9), 4 Hawke's Bay (9), 6 Wairarapa (3), 3 Central Hawke's Bay (6), 3 Dannevirke (7), 11 Taumarunui (2), 9 Apiti, 3 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (10), 3 North Island Circuit (10), 6 Golden Shears (7), 5 NZ Shears (8) 7 finals, 0 wins, 71pts

Chelsea Collier (Hamilton): 13 Taihape, 2 Dannevirke (7), 3 Rangitikei (10), 18 NZWHY Otago, 27 Southern Shears, 5 Taumarunui (8), 10 Apiti, 9 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (4), 5 Golden Shears (8), 3 finals, 0 wins, 37pts

Natalie Collier (Gore): 13 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 19 NZ Crossbred Lambs, 17 NZWHY Otago, 21 Southern Shears Gore, Tiffany Collins (Australia): 8 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (5) 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts

Sarah Davis (Rerewhakaaitu): 24 NZ Merino Alexandra 0, 20 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 8 Hawke's Bay (5), 10 Wairarapa, 10 Central Hawke's Bay.

Krome Elers (Mataura): 9 Wairarapa, 9 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (4), 14 NZWHY Otago, 3 Southern Shears Gore (10) 1 final, 0 wins, 3pts

Nova Kumeroa Elers (Mataura): 23 NZ Merino Alexandra, 10 NZ Long Wool Waimate (3), 2 South Island Circuit Waimate (11), 16 Hawke's Bay, 6 Central Hawke's Bay (3), 2 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (11), 18 NZ Crossbred Lambs, 7 NZWHY Otago (6), 8 Southern Shears Gore (5), 5 HB Autumn Waipukurau (8) 2 finals, 0 wins, 47pts

Tina Elers (Mataura): 4 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (9), 11 South Island Circuit (2), 4 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (9), 15 NZWHY Otago, 25 Southern Shears Gore 2 finals, 0 wins, 20pts

Heaven Elers-Reedy (Balclutha): 26 Southern Shears Gore,

Emaraina Eruera (Eketahuna): 8 Wairarapa (1), 7 Central Hawke's Bay (2), 8 Apiti (1), 0 finals, 0 wins, 4pts

Amy Ferguson (Invercargill/Alexandra): 14 NZ Merino Alexandra, 3 NZ Long Wool Waimate (10), 3 South Island Circuit Waimate (10), 1 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (12), 11 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (2), 5 NZ Crossbred Lambs (8), 13 NZWHY Otago, 4 Southern Shears Gore (9) 4 finals, 1 win, 51pts

Ripeka Ferris (Cheviot): 22 NZ Merino Alexandra, 9 Hawke's Bay (4), 0 finals, 0 wins, 4pts

Megan Fleming Gisborne: 36 NZ Merino Alexandra,

Maave Foster (-): 34 NZ Merino Alexandra,

Lucky Garrett (Pahiatua): 14 Dannevirke, 15 Rangitikei, 4 Apiti (5), 1 final, 0 wins 5pts

Samantha Gordon (Masterton): 16 NZ Merino Alexandra, 19 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 12 Hawke's Bay (1), 3 Wairarapa (6), 5 Central Hawke's Bay (4), 15 Taihape, 15 Dannevirke, 9 Rangitikei (4), 9 HB Autumn (4), 4 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (9), 10 Golden Shears (3) 3 finals, 0 wins, 31pts

Ngapere Hakaraia (-): 15 NZ Merino Alexandra,

Philisea Halliday (Gore): 33 Southern Shears Gore,

Ngaio Hanson (Eketahuna): 25 NZ Merino Alexandra, 21 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 2 Wairarapa (7), 12 Central Hawke's Bay, 6 Rotorua (3), 2 Taihape (11), 1 Dannevirke (8), 11 Rangitikei (2), 18 Southern Shears Gore, 2 Taumarunui (11), 11 Apiti, 8 HB Autumn (5), 2 North Island Circuit (11), 5 finals, 1 win, 58pts

Darryl Harrison (Dannevirke): 28 NZ Merino Alexandra, 13 Hawke's Bay.

Bianca Hawea (Masterton): 11 Wairarapa,

Joel Henare (Gisborne/Motueka): 4 NZ Merino Alexandra (9), 5 NZ Long Wool Waimate (8), 1 Poverty Bay (12), 2 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (11), 1 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (12), 3 NZ Crossbred Lambs (10), 2 NZWHY Otago (11), 2 Southern Shears Gore (11), 1 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (12), 1 Golden Shears (12), 1 Cheviot (6), 4 NZ Shears (9) 10 finals, 5 wins, 123pts

Keri Henare (Alexandra): 18 NZ Merino Alexandra.

Keryn Herbert (Te Kuiti): 9 NZ Merino Alexandra (4), 8 NZ Long Wool Waimate (5), 4 South Island Circuit Waimate (9), 3 Poverty Bay (10), 6 Hawke's Bay (7), 7 Wairarapa (2), 1 Central Hawke's Bay (8), 1 Rotorua (8), 4 Taihape (9), 5 Dannevirke (4), 8 Rangitikei (5), 16 Southern Shears Gore, 2 Aria (7), 1 Ohura (6), 10 Taumarunui (3), 6 Apiti (3), 1 HB Autumn Waipukurau (12), 11 Wairarapa Pre-Shears 2, 1 North Island Circuit (12), 1 NZ Shears (12), 10 finals, 6 wins, 128pts

Candy Hiri (Gore): 30 NZ Merino Alexandra, 16 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 5 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (8), NZ Crossbred Lambs (4), 6 South Island Circuit Waimate (7), 6 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (7), 16 NZWHY Otago, 5 Southern Shears Gore (8), 12 HB Autumn (1), 1 final, 0 wins, 35pts

Renee Hooper (Oamaru): 33 NZ Merino Alexandra, 15 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 15 NZ Crossbred Lambs, 22 NZWHY Otago, 23 Southern Shears Gore.

Logan Kamura (Marton): 2 NZ Shears (11) 1 final, 0 wins, 11pts

Nya-Binghi Kere Kere (Rakaia): 38 NZ Merino Alexandra, 22 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 12 Dannevirke, 7 Rangitikei (6) 0 finals, 0 wins, 7pts.

Rahera Kerr (Piopio): 4 Rotorua (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts

Winny Lingard (-): 29 NZ Merino Alexandra,

Heaven Little (Balclutha): 11 NZ Merino Alexandra (2), 3 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (10), 13 NZ Crossbred Lambs, 10 NZWHY Otago (3) 1 final, 0 wins, 15pts

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Vanessa McAlister (-): 6 NZ Merino Alexandra (7), 9 NZ Long Wool Waimate (4) 0 finals, 0 wins, 4pts

Kelly McDonald (Domett): 2 NZ Long Wool Waimate (11) 1 final, 0 wins, 11pts

Lashara Maguire Ratima (Winton): 14 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 10 NZ Crossbred Lambs (3), 0 finals, 0 wins, 3pts

Tamara Marshall (Taumarunui): 37 NZ Merino Alexandra, 12 South Island Circuit Waimate 1, 0 finals, 0 wins, 1pt

Bodeisha Mason (-): 18 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 11 NZ Crossbred Lambs (2), 12 NZWHY Otago 1, 17 Southern Shears Gore, 0 finals, 0 wins, 1pt.

Dallas Mihaere (Dannevirke): 8 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (5), 20 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 12 NZ Crossbred Lambs (1), 19 NZWHY Otago, 32 Southern Shears Gore, 0 finals, 0 wins, 6pts

Kane Miles (Christchurch): 27 NZ Merino Alexandra, 24 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 12 NZ Corriedales (1), 0 finals, 0 wins, 1pt

Trish Moke (Waipawa): 15 Hawke's Bay, 11 Central Hawke's Bay.

Ratapu Moore (Ward): 5 NZ Merino Alexandra (8), 15 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 8 South Island Circuit Waimate (5), 11 Golden Shears (2), 0 finals, 0 wins, 15pts

Charis Morrell (Alexandra): 13 NZ Merino Alexandra, 4 NZ Long Wool Waimate (9), 10 South Island Circuit Waimate (3), 4 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (9), 11 Taihape (2), 10 Dannevirke, 12 Rangitikei (1), 6 NZWHY Otago (7), 19 Southern Shears Gore, 2 finals, 0 wins, 31pts

Larnie Morrell (Alexandra): 26 NZ Merino Alexandra, 8 NZWHY Otago (5), 11 Southern Shears Gore (2), 9 Golden Shears (4), 0 finals, 0 wins, 11pts

Kay Murphy (Oamaru): 35 NZ Merino Alexandra, 13 NZ Long Wool Waimate.

Taiwha Nelson (Alexandra): 10 NZ Merino Alexandra (3), 1 NZ Long Wool Waimate (12), 9 South Island Circuit Waimate (4), 9 NZ Corriedales Christchurch, (4), 2 Rotorua (7), 5 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (8), 4 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (9), 8 Taihape (5), 16 Dannevirke, 19 Rangitikei, 9 NZWHY Otago (4), 7 Southern Shears Gore (6), 12 Taumarunui (1), 14 Apiti, 10 HB Autumn (3), 10 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (3), 4 finals, 1 win, 69pts

Kataraina Ngahooro (Taumarunui/Rakaia): 32 NZ Merino Alexandra, 23 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 12 Wairarapa, 14 Central Hawke's Bay, 7 Rotorua (2), 14 Taihape, 11 Dannevirke, 16 Rangitikei, 34 Southern Shears Gore, 17 HB Autumn 0 finals, 0 wins, 2pts

Katie O'Sullivan (Scotland): 20 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton, 24 NZWHY Otago,

Destiny Paikea (Heriot): 17 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 7 NZ Crossbred Lambs 6, 0 finals, 0 wins, 6pts

Azuredee Paku (Masterton): 28 Southern Shears Gore, 13 HB Autumn, 12 Wairarapa Pre-Shears 1, 2 Cheviot (5), 1 final, 0 wins, 5pts

Waimiere Penaha (Masterton): 15 HB Autumn.

Cherri Peterson (Milton): 21 NZ Merino Alexandra, 14 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 20 NZWHY Otago, 20 Southern Shears Gore,

Te Anna Phillips (Taumarunui): 11 Hawke's Bay (2), 5 Taihape (4), 13 Dannevirke, 13 Rangitikei, 30 Southern Shears Gore, 2 Ohura (7), 1 Taumarunui (12), 5 Apiti (4), 2 HB Autumn Waipukurau (11), 5 finals, 1 win, 40pts.

Vinniye Phillips (Taumarunui): 7 Hawke's Bay (6), 1 Taihape (12), 6 Dannevirke (3), 1 Rangitikei (12), 1 Aria (8), 35 Southern Shears Gore, 7 Taumarunui (6), 2 Apiti (7), 4 HB Autumn Waipukurau (9), 7 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (6), 4 Golden Shears (9), 5 finals, 3 wins, 78pts

Pania Piwari (Omaha): 39 NZ Merino Alexandra, 14 HB Autumn.

Monica Potae (Kennedy Bay/Milton): 3 NZ Merino Alexandra (10), 12 NZ Long Wool Waimate (1), 2 Poverty Bay (11), 5 Rotorua (4), 21 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 6 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (7), 6 Taihape (7), 29 Southern Shears Gore, 7 Golden Shears (6), 5 finals, 0 wins, 46pts

Tia Potae (Harataunga/Kennedy Bay/Milton): 8 Alexandra (5), 7 South Island Circuit (6), 14 Southern Shears Gore, 11 HB Autumn (2), 2 Golden Shears (11), 1 final, 0 wins, 24pts

Summer Pritchard (Pongaroa): 3 Apiti (6), 1 final, 0 wins, 6pts

Ngaira Puha (Kimbolton): 3 Hawke's Bay (10), 1 Wairarapa (8), 13 Central Hawke's Bay, 10 Taihape (3), 9 Dannevirke, 17 Rangitikei, 9 Southern Shears (4), 1 Apiti (8), 3 finals, 2 wins, 33pts

Atareta Puna (Napier): 10 Hawke's Bay (3). 0 finals, 0 wins, 3pts

Daine Rehe (Te Teko/Masterton): 17 NZ Merino Alexandra, 11 NZ Corridales Christchurch (2), 0 finals, 0 wins, 2pts

Pagan Rimene (Alexandra): 1 NZ Merino Alexandra (12), 17 NZ Long Wool Waimate, 5 South Island Circuit Waimate (8), 12 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (1), 2 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (11), 1 NZWHY Otago (12), 15 Southern Shears Gore, 6 Wairarapa Pre-Shears (7), 3 Golden Shears (10), 3 NZ Shears (10), 5 finals, 2 wins, 71pts

Duckie Ropiha (Waipukurau): 15 Central Hawke's Bay.

Nicole Sciascia (Porangahau): 16 HB Autumn.

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Angela Stevens (Napier): 5 Hawke's Bay (8), 4 Central Hawke's Bay (5), 12 Taihape (1), 2 Rangitikei (11), 31 Southern Shears Gore, 7 HB Autumn (6), 8 Golden Shears (5). 2 finals, 0 wins, 36pts

Ricci Stevens (Napier): 14 Hawke's Bay, 8 Central Hawke's Bay (1), 3 Taihape (10), 4 Rangitikei (9), 21 Southern Shears Gore, 3 HB Autumn Waipukurau (10), 3 finals, 0 wins, 30pts

Charlotte Stuart (Balclutha): 6 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (7), 8 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (5), 14 NZ Crossbred Lambs, 21 NZWHY Otago, 13 Southern Shears Gore, 0 finals, 0 wins, 12pts.

Brittany Tibble (Gisborne): 19 NZ Merino Alexandra.

Jasmin Tipoki (Martinborough/Napier): 40 NZ Merino Alexandra, 6 NZ Long Wool Waimate (7), 1 Hawke's Bay (12), 5 Wairarapa (4), 9 Central Hawke's Bay, 9 Taihape (4), 7 Dannevirke (2), 5 Rangitikei (8), 4 NZWHY Otago (9), 10 Southern Shears Gore (3), 8 Taumarunui (7), 7 Apiti (2), 6 HB Autumn (7), 4 North Island Circuit (9), 12 Golden Shears (1) 4 finals, 1 win, 75pts

Jess Toa (Ashburton): 20 NZ Merino Alexandra, 11 NZ Long Wool Waimate (2), 10 NZ Corriedales Christchurch (3) 0 finals, 0 wins, 5pts

Peggy Sue Tohengarua (Aria): 3 Taumarunui (6), 1 final, 0 wins, 6pts

Saskia Tuhakaraina (Gore): 10 NZ Long Wool Lumsden (3), 16 NZ Crossbred Lambs, 23 NZWHY Otago, 22 Southern Shears Gore, 0 finals, 0 wins, 3pts

Ebony Turipa (-): 16 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 8 NZ Crossbred Lambs (5) 0 finals, 0 wins, 5pts

Sue Turner (Aria): 3 Aria (6), 9 Rotorua, 6 Taumarunui 7, 2 finals, 0 wins, 19pts

Autumn Waihape/Hiri (Gore): 22 NZ Full Wool Lumsden, 11 NZWHY Otago (2), 12 Southern Shears Gore (1), 0 finals, 0 wins, 3pts

Foonie Waihape (Gisborne/Alexandra): 2 NZ Merino Alexandra (11), 7 NZ Long Wool Waimate (6), 7 NZ Corriedales (6), 7 NZ Full Wool Lumsden (6), 1 NZ Crossbred Lambs Winton (12), 5 NZWHY Otago (8), 1 Southern Shears Gore (12), 4 finals, 2 wins, 61pts

Krystal Wilson (-): 12 Alexandra (1), 0 finals, 0 wins, 1pt.

Hineta Wirangi (-): 31 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra.



Top: Blade shearing legend Ronny Hill offering sound advice to Simon Bouanet of France, at Waimate Shears. **Above:** 'What's this?' I hear you say. Not a sheep to be seen on all that green grass. The Facebook photo caption read: "Big shout out to society member Peter Nikolaison who, after a lot of study and a winter spent attending Steam School at the Steam Traction Society in Feilding, has become a qualified steam driver."

"Thanks also to Selwyn Roberts who prepared the railway locomotive assignments Peter completed. Pete is shown receiving his certificate from Steam Driven Vehicles Unit Standards assessor, Alec Birch."

Still none the wiser? Pete's the man who's been taking all those marvellous photos at Golden Shears each year, for as far back as you and I can remember. And his father did it for years before him.



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Shearing magazine's New Zealand Shearing & Wool Industry Hall of Fame

Subjective category: By reputation and deeds, their names endure through New Zealand's shearing industry history and folklore:

- James Apes (1855-1938)
- Alex Hutchinson (1865-1943)
- Rimitiriu Raihania (1868-1934)
- Jimmy Power (1869-1902)
- Ihakara 'Ike' Robin (1886-1968)
- Bill Vella (1886-1971)
- George Stuart (1890-1953)
- Bill Higgins (1894-1939)
- Johnny Hape (1900-1969)
- Percy de Malmanche (1902-1968)
- Bill Richards (1907-1995)
- Claude Waite (1911-2000)
- Bill Meech (1914-1985)
- Ivan Bowen (1915-2007)
- Les Richards (1917-2000)
- Godfrey Bowen (1922-1994)
- Bing Macdonald (1928-2004)
- Makaore Potae (1934-2001)
- Ken Pike (1938-2025)
- Barbara Marsh (1943-2014)
- Mavis Mullins (1956-****)
- Keith Wilson (1957-****)
- Michelle Anderson/Harrex (1963-****)
- Darin Forde (1965-****)
- Joanne Kumeroa (1969-2015)

Objective category: World individual or teams shearing championship winner supported by at least three major New Zealand titles:

- Roger Cox 1977; Golden Shears 1977-78, 1980; Southern Shears 1974-79 incl.
- Brian Quinn 1980; Golden Shears 1965, 1967-68, 1970, 1971, 1972; NZ Merino Shears 1968, 1970, 1978-79.
- Martin Ngataki 1980; Golden Shears 1979; National Lamb Shear (Raglan) 1977, 1978, 1979.
- Peter Casserly 1980; NZ Golden Blades 1975-76; Omarama Merino Shears 1995.
- Colin King 1984; Golden Shears 1982, 1987-88; National circuit six times.
- John Fagan 1984; Golden Shears 1984, National Lamb Shear (Raglan) 1981, 1984, 1985.
- David Fagan 1988, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2003; Golden Shears 16 times; NZ Open 16 times.
- Tony Dobbs 1988; Golden Blades 20 times.
- Paul Avery 2008; Golden Shears 2005, 2007; NZ Open 1995, 2000, 2007.
- Rowland Smith 2014; Golden Shears eight times; NZ Open eight times.
- John Kirkpatrick 2017; Golden Shears 2002, 2008, 2011-12; NZ Open 2008-09, 2012.
- Nathan Stratford 2017; New Zealand Merino Shears 2006, 2009, 2016, 2018, 2021.



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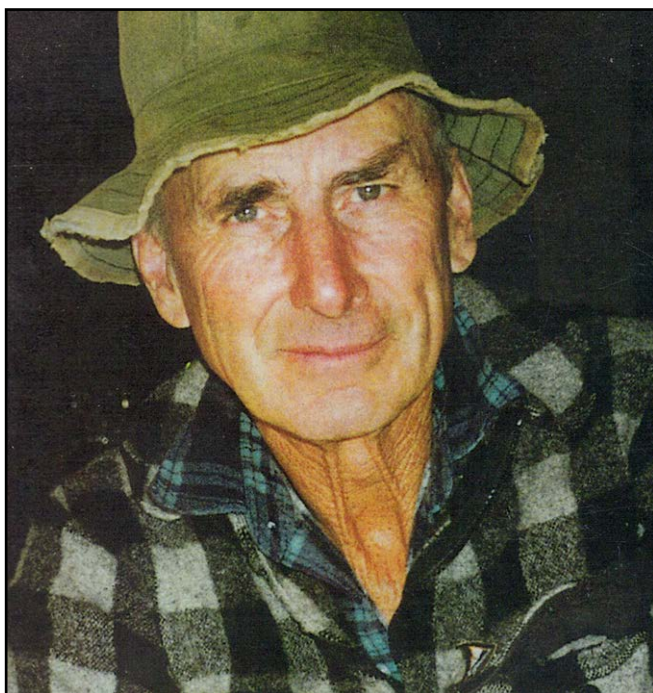
Tribute: Brian Waterson (1931-2025)

By Des Williams

The man affectionately known to the shearing industry as 'Wart' – 1963 Golden Shears Open Champion Brian Waterson, died at Browns Bay on 8 November, aged 94. As well as becoming third name on the Golden Shears Honours Board after Ivan Bowen (1961) and Bing Macdonald (1962), Waterson was twice runner-up, to Stewart Symon in 1962 and Brian Quinn in 1970. He was also a finalist in 1968 (4th) and 1969 (6th).

Brian spent his early days growing up on a farm in the Mohakatino Valley in North Taranaki. After returning to 'civilisation' from serving overseas in The Great War (including Gallipoli), Brian's father, grandfather and two brothers had taken his family to live three miles up the Mohakatino Valley - accessed by rafting up the river. The Waterson men together helped break in 1100 acres of bush country. They milled the timber off the land before subdividing it into three farms.

Life was tough in the Mohakatino, Brian recalled in Last Side to Glory – The Golden Shears Open Championship 1961-1990 (Des Williams and Margaret Way, Hazard Press, 1991): He remembered, after massive rainfalls in 1937, watching whole hillsides in that moving papa rock country, just slip away before his eyes. The roar like thunder as the country moved, and the giant rata trees crashing and tumbling like match sticks left vivid impressions in his memory.



Above: Brian Waterson; he mainly answered to 'Wart'.

When the road into the valley was formed, it was cut along blue papa cliffs with the river down below. During winter storms in 1937 the land started slipping into the river and blocking the road. "One such slip, three miles long, left the family blocked in for a whole winter.

The same thing occurred the following winter. Brian recalled him and his father standing by the cowshed and his father pointing to a steep hillside of cut-over bush. "Watch that hillside, son!"

"All of a sudden there was a roar like thunder and huge standing rata trees started moving down the hillside, still standing vertically. Then with a thundering crash they turned end over end down the valley with thousands of tons of earth. I could feel my knees knocking. It was awesome. The Mohakatino thundered all night. Next morning gullies had become flats, flats were log-strewn mud pools. The small stream, where my mother did the weekly washing with a scrubbing board and copper, had disappeared.

Those bleak conditions finally drove one of the other families out. They walked off with just a bundle of clothes under their arms, Brian recalled. 'What a bloody hell hole it was - I went back years later to have another look at it.'

And though Brian's father had seen more than enough action during 1914-18, the Waterson family life was again interrupted by a World War. This time, his father sold the Mohakatino property and enlisted for service at home.

Five years later, it was time for another farming venture, now at Mount Misery, near, Tauranga. Conditions were rough there too, in bush-sick country. Brian recalled that the previous owners had used the floorboards from one of the spare bedrooms in the farm house to build a pig sty on the property.

Brian completed his secondary schooling at Tauranga and at the age of seventeen he headed to Port Waikato and



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Moe mai ra e hoa, just a short poroporoaki. Way back in the day you shored with Joe Ferguson and Peter Baldwin in Hawkes Bay with Tutu Waretini. Bill Meech, Bill Jones all gone now. Old shearers never die they just simply fade away, hei re ra. (Owen Jerry Hapuku)



Above: Brian Waterson with the trappings of success at the 1964 'Silver Fleece' competition held at Hamilton.

Above: Brian Waterson demonstrating the art of shearing at the Royal Ulster Show, Belfast, in 1970.

began life as a shearer. From Last Side to Glory again: "After twelve months of shearing, Brian was managing tallies around the 150 mark and he decided then that it was time to have a go at this show shearing business. Packing his kit, he headed for the Waikato Showgrounds, arriving too late [for the lower grade event]. However, he would not be denied a shear. 'Cheeky as hell' he lined up beside the Open guns like Ivan Bowen and Claude Waite.

"In an effort to match these guns Brian exhibited a flurry of blows and second cuts to be laughed off the board. Enjoying a few drinks afterwards, he was then removed from the pub - twice - by the same policeman. For many a young show shearer this could well have been the beginning and the end in one day, but Brian, it merely made him more determined. His summary of the whole episode, 'The only thing going for me was no one knew me.' A small matter he rectified in later years."

It was all part of the learning process for Brian, there were no mod cons such as Wool Board shearing courses in those days. It was a simple matter of guts and determination - real character-building stuff - as he shored his sheep, watching other shearers at every opportunity. Like many another young shearer of the time, the Wolseley handpiece soaking in the bucket of cold water at smoko time and lunch breaks was a familiar sight. Contrast that with the necessity for Brian to soak his hand in hot water each morning to ease away the pain of the previous day's efforts.

There was another occasion when it became "a simple matter of guts and determination." The then eighteen-year-old was strolling in the vicinity of Hamilton Lake during a rare visit to the bright lights, when he heard cries of help

coming from the water. Two young girls had fallen off the jetty and were in some difficulty by the time Brian, himself suffering from the 'flu, had run a couple of hundred yards before diving in, fully clothed, to come to the rescue. His endeavours were eventually assisted by others in the vicinity, and the incident had a happy ending.

Brian's next significant career move was to Taihape in 1960, and a job with noted contractor Jack Harrison. While the life of a learner shearer left much to be desired in the way of work and living conditions and numbers and quality of sheep to be shorn, the situation improved dramatically when Brian moved from Port Waikato to Taihape, around 1960, to a job with the noted contractor, Jack Harrison.

The food and conditions certainly improved, as did the quality of the advice he was to receive on the finer points

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Above: Golden Shears open finalists 1968. Not Brian Waterson's best year, but he was in some good company! From left: Brian Quinn, Tom Brough, Joe Ferguson, Waterson, Allan Williamson and Ron Stuart. (LSP photo collection.)

of shearing. Brian singled out Walter Smith as having had a particular influence on his shearing at that time. Then he was on the move northwards again, this time to Kaukapakapa, where he took up a farm and a contract shearing run. He continued to develop his interest in shearing at shows around the area, attending competitions at the Auckland A & P, Franklin, Wellsford, Warkworth, Kumeu. Further south, Aria and Te Kuiti were also on the competition trail.

Brian made his first appearance at Masterton's Golden Shears in 1962, but it was the following year, 1963, that he and Kaukapakapa would hit the headlines. As he was preparing for the open final, Brian realised that he might be a little bit short of gear to cover all the contingencies which could arise during a pen of 20 sheep and a quest for the title of Open champion. A shearing mate from Warkworth, Edgar Smith, came to the rescue.

"I just said to him, 'have you got a comb I could borrow?' He handed me a comb and I shored my trial sheep with it - it was a beautiful comb and I knew right then I'd do well. My original idea was to use Edgar's first and then change to my own favourite comb to finish off with. But that borrowed comb gave me a lot of confidence, it just wiped the wool off.

"I had a real neck and neck battle with Bing Macdonald through most of that final. Then he stopped to change a cutter, and later, he changed back to his original handpiece. I shored right through without a change because I didn't want to break my rhythm. The gear was gnawing the wool off a bit over the last three sheep but I just screwed the tension down and kept going. So, I had my own favourite comb all worked up and, in the end, I didn't even use it."

And though he was surrounded by many all time legends of New Zealand shearing whenever he fronted up to a shearing competition, Brian Waterson admitted that he defeated himself far more often than the other competitors ever did. He would get himself psyched up and nervous the night before a big event such as the Golden Shears and wouldn't be able to sleep. He recalled having to go to the Masterton Hospital once, about 2.00am in the morning, to get some knockout drops. "They worked all right, but not until about nine o'clock the next morning. They had to kick me out of bed and outside as well. I was still half asleep up on the stand!"

"But Golden Shears competitions have given me something to take my mind off the drudgery of the shearing season, something to look forward to, and build up for. Above everything else I classed them as a challenge to my shearing ability, apart from being a sporting event where



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I'd meet many old friends. Their main value lies in the fact that the younger shearers have a goal to achieve in trying to improve their standards. This is a very valuable contribution to the economy of New Zealand as it helps reduce the incidence of skin cuts and second cutting, thus increasing our overseas funds. I feel that if ever the Golden Shears were terminated, a great number of skilled men would leave the industry. When work is turned into a sport, I think it is the ultimate.

Apart from Golden Shears 1963, Brian's other notable competition success came at the one-off 'Silver Fleece' Rothmans New Zealand open championship held at Hamilton in 1964. The event was held over two days, with points aggregated from two 20-sheep finals. He also replaced Brian Quinn for the 'Golden Shears prize' of a trip to the United Kingdom in 1970, involving several months of shearing demonstrations. He then teamed up with Quinn at the World Expo in Osaka, Japan, on his way home from the UK, for further shearing demonstrations and wool promotional work.

Brian loved his sport, played Golden Oldies rugby and was a fair hand at tennis. He was also known far and wide for his sense of humour, much of which shines through in his book, 'Some Buggers I've Seen', published in 1999. (One feels it might have been called 'Some Bastards I've Met' had

Barry Crump not beaten him to the title in 1971.) The book (a collection of short stories) came with the explanation that any resemblance between characters in this book and real persons, buggers or not, is purely coincidental. Some names and places also underwent slight changes just to keep people guessing. For example, Jack Harrison Taihape contractor becomes 'Harrigan' in the book. Norm Blackwell becomes Storm Maxwell.

Brian's years during and after shearing and shearer contracting were combined with farming near Wellsford, where he owned drystock and dairy properties. He died at The Sands Care Centre and Village, Browns Bay, on 8 November 2025. He is survived by his wife Claire and grown 'children', Graeme, Joanne, Lynne and Brett. He was 'Poppa Wart' to 14 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

References:

Last Side to Glory – The Golden Shears Open Championship 1961-1990. Des Williams and Margaret Way, Hazard Press, 1991

Some Buggers I've Seen, Brian Waterson, BMW Publications 1999 (source of Belfast and cover photos.)

Inaugural Northern Shears Programme, Warkworth Town Hall, 1988. (Lynne Rosandich story 'Looking North'.

* * * * *

1963 was Brian Waterson's year. His major battles were always against himself, being plagued with nerves for days prior to competitions. Many sleepless nights would leave him tired and worn, as if the quality of the opposition itself was not enough to worry about. But he won his championship the first time he got to the final, and that has subsequently proved to be no easy feat

"I used to see Brian doing chin ups and push ups and that sort of thing before competitions. I used to think he was just showing off but I found out later it was all because of his nerves. He said if he'd just stood there waiting for the word to start, he would have shaken himself to pieces." (Norm Blackwell, Golden Shears open champion 1974-1975.)



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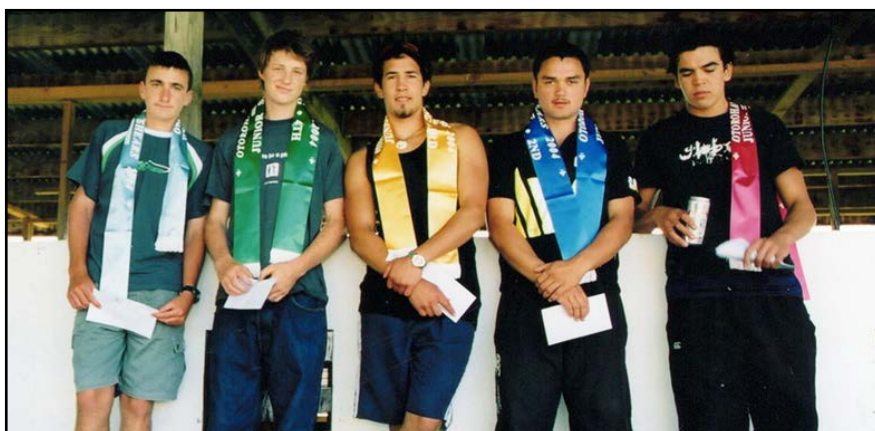
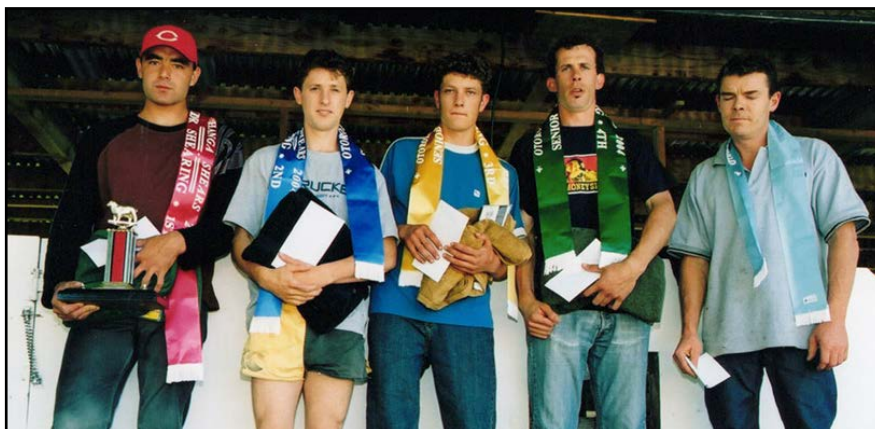
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Above: "Once Upon a Time ..." Not just turning back the clock, but turning back the years and some are no longer with us. Those that are have celebrated another 21 birthdays since this photo was taken at Golden Shears 2004. We won't name you all just yet – "you know who you are!" (LSP Archive photos.)



*Finalists from Otorohanga Shears 2004: **Top:** Seniors Cam Ferguson, Shane Rawlinson, Willy McSkimming, Simon Hales and Darren Hamilton. **Above:** Juniors: Mark Grainger (5th), Josh MacDonald (4th), Gareth Macrae (3rd), Jordan Marshall (2nd) and Te Rangi Marshall (1st).*



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NATIONAL RANKINGS 2024-2025

TOP 12 OPEN SHEARERS

Rank	Name	Final	Win	Pts
1	David Buick	17	5	169
2	Toa Henderson	14	11	127
3	Gavin Mutch	13	2	114
4	Angus Moore	12	2	98
5	Nathan Stratford	12	3	97
6	John Kirkpatrick	11	3	96
7	Justin Meikle	12	4	90
8	Jack Fagan	10	3	84
9	Leon Samuels	8	3	82
10	Mark Grainger	10	1	82
11	Paerata Abraham	8	1	74
12	Casey Bailey	8	0	71

TOP 12 SENIOR SHEARERS

Rank	Name	Finals	Wins	Pts
1	Laura Bradley	22	12	201
2	John Cherrington	20	8	179
3	Bruce Grace	17	6	163
4	Taelor Tarrant	13	5	115
5	Tommy Stevenson	11	3	92
6	Dre Roberts	10	3	77
7	Aiden Tarrant	9	1	75
8	Callum Bosley	12	0	73
9	Daniel Seed	7	2	50
10	Liam Norrie	8	3	47
11	Jack Hutchinson	7	0	45
12	Richard Lancaster	6	1	42

TOP 12 INTERMEDIATE SHEARERS

Rank	Name	Finals	Wins	Pts
1	Ryka Swann	15	5	141
2	Kaivah Cooper	11	5	115
3	Paddy Dunne	9	1	68
4	Caleb Brooking	7	2	50
5	Sarah Bryant	6	2	50
6	Evan Rowbotham	4	1	44
7	Kim. Whalon	6	4	42
8	Jet Schimanski	4	1	40
9	Keahrey Manson	4	3	38
10	Ella Caves	6	2	38
11	Lachie Cameron	6	0	36
12	Ham. Henderson	4	2	35

TOP 12 JUNIOR SHEARERS

Rank	Name	Finals	Wins	Pts
1	Tye Meikle	21	12	197
2	Jodie. Kirkpatrick	20	11	184
3	Paddy Hudson	6	4	65
4	Holly Crombie	9	3	62

5	Sonya Fagan	7	1	55
6	Sean Dunne	7	0	55
7	Tom Clarkson	6	0	51
8	Ashlin Swann	6	0	41
9	Tess Berger	6	3	40
10	Joseph Scahill	4	0	34
11	George Peacock	3	2	31
12	Tamati Dennison	4	0	31

TOP 12 OPEN WOOLHANDLERS

Rank	Name	Finals	Wins	Pts
1	Keryn Herbert	10	6	128
2	Joel Henare	10	5	123
3	Cushla Abraham	8	1	87
4	Vinniye Phillips	5	3	78
5	Jasmin Tipoki	4	1	75
6	Pagan Rimene	5	2	71
7	Marika Braddick	7	0	71
8	Taiwha Nelson	4	1	69
9	Foonie Waihape	4	2	61
10	Ngaio Hanson	5	1	58
11	Amy Ferguson	4	1	51
12	Nova Kum. Elers	2	0	47

TOP 12 SENIOR WOOLHANDLERS

Rank	Name	Finals	Wins	Pts
1	Tatijana Keefe	11	3	120
2	Amy Bell	10	2	102
3	Chloe Henderson	9	2	88
4	Tre Ra. Sciascia	6	2	84
5	Lucy Elers	6	2	66
6	Kelly Barrett	6	1	65
7	Emma Martin	5	2	51
8	Noko. Maraki	2	2	46
9	Alice Otimi	5	3	44
10=	Te Whetu Brown	4	1	40
10=	Ashleigh Ostler	4	1	40
12	Ashley Clarke	3	0	36

TOP 12 JUNIOR WOOLHANDLERS

Rank	Name	Finals	Wins	Pts
1	Capree Wallace	10	1	100
2	Laura Bradley	9	4	85
3	Jodie. Kirkpatrick	9	4	76
4	Paige Marshall	9	1	74
5	Jayda Millanta	5	1	67
6	Grace Croasdale	5	0	60
7	Waiari Puna	4	1	59
8	Marilyn Harrison	5	3	57
9	Miri. Thompson	5	1	57
10	Eleri Bradley	2	2	48
11	Mere Maraki	6	1	46
12	Kalyah Ferguson	5	..1	41



Shearing Sports NZ top rankers: Sir David Fagan (chairman), Capree Wallace, Tye Meikle, Ryka Swann, Laura Bradley and David Buick. Absent: Keryn Herbert, Tatijana Keefe.

Shearing Sport New Zealand Rankings — Winners 1993-2025

Shearing Year

2024-2025
2023-2024
2022-2023
2021-2022
2020-2021
2019-2020
2018-2019
2017-2018
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1992-1993

Open

David Buick
Toa Henderson
Nathan Stratford
Nathan Stratford
David Buick
Troy Pyper
Rowland Smith
Rowland Smith
Rowland Smith
John Kirkpatrick
David Fagan
John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick
John Kirkpatrick
Paul Avery
David Fagan
David Fagan
David Fagan
John Kirkpatrick
David Fagan
Paul Avery
David Fagan
David Fagan
David Fagan
David Fagan
David Fagan
David Fagan
David Fagan

Senior

Laura Bradley
Blake Crooks
Adam Gordon
Taare Edwards
Brayden Clifford
Simon Goss
Lionel Taumata
Tegwyn Bradley
Paraki Puna
Kaleb Foote
Ethan Pankhurst
Casey Bailey
Jack Fagan
Tysson Hema
Matene Mason
Aaron Haynes
Ian Kirkpatrick jnr
Tane Henderson
Angus Moore
Ringakaha Paewai
Andy Mainland
Adam Brausch
Richard Timu
Gavin Mutch
Dean Cox
Blair McCarroll
Ian Kirkpatrick
James Mack
James Fagan
Dean Boros
Justin Meikle
John Kirkpatrick
Colin Thirkell

Intermediate

Ryka Swann
Emma Martin
Bruce Grace
Blake Crooks
Adam Gordon
Daniel Biggs
Tyson Crown
Daniel Seed
Laura Bradley
Ricci Stevens
Kaleb Foote
Catherine Mullooly
David Gordon
Bryce Guy
Jack Fagan
Wi Poutu Ngarangione
Tipene Te Whata
Ian Kirkpatrick jnr
Toa Henderson
Bevan Holm
Hemi Keelan
Cody Waihape
Andy Mainland
Matthew Timu
Glen Moir
Mark Brabant
Roger Pearse
Dean Cox
Justin Ward
Stacey Te Huia
James Fagan
Rangi Nikora
Antony Bryant

Junior

Tye Meikle
Kaivah Cooper
Lydia Thomson
Josh Devane
Reuben King
Adam Gordon
Atawhai Hadfield
Jonathan Paynter
Liam Norrie
Connor Puha
Laura Bradley
Josh Balme
Marshall Guy
Charlie Guy
Bryce Guy
Jack Fagan
Wi Poutu Ngarangione
Tipene Te Whata
Tuara Hemara
Peter Redhead
Dion Reedy
Rowland Smith
Harold Peri
Simon Hales
James Smail
Gavin Mutch
Scott Bailey
Brendan Wadsworth
Neil Fagan
Anthony Peeti
Stacey Te Huia
Jason Win
Todd Percival

Woolhandling

Year

2024-2025
2023-2024
2022-2023
2021-2022
2020-2021
2019-2020
2018-2019
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2016-2017
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1992-1993

Open

Keryn Herbert
Keryn Herbert
Joel Henare
Keryn Herbert
Pagan Karauria(Rimene)
Keryn Herbert
Joel Henare
Joel Henare
Joel Henare
Joel Henare
Keryn Herbert
Joel Henare
Keryn Herbert
Keryn Herbert
Keryn Herbert
Joel Henare
Joel Henare
Joel Henare
Joanne Kumeroa
Angelique Gage
Lisa Fagan
Angelique Gage
Joanne Kumeroa
Roni Goss
Joanne Kumeroa
Joanne Kumeroa
Joanne Kumeroa
Joanne Kumeroa
Joanne Kumeroa
Joanne Kumeroa
Raelene Howes
Aroha Garvin

Senior

Tatijana Keefe
Vinniye Phillips
Vinniye Phillips
Heaven Little
Azureddee Paku
Jasmine Tipoki
Ngaira Puha
Ricci Stevens
Jamie McLean
Erica Henare(nee Reti)
Ana Braddick
Juliette Lyon
Samantha Gordon
Cushla Abraham
Sharni Graham
Amy-Lee Ruki
Kiri Gerretzen
Aria Mullins
Talia Holm
Hanatia Tipene
Hayley Holm
Waimiere Hakaraia
Keryn Herbert
Sheree Alabaster
Thomas Fleming
Rose Puha
Gaby Farentino
Christine Lawton
Natalie Te Huia
Vanessa McAllister
Leanne Peeti
No Grade
No Grade

Junior

Capree Wallace
Makayla Neil
Tre Ratana Sciascia
Emma Martin
Rahera Kerr
Te Anna Phillips
Lucas Broughton
Tyler Hira
Ricci Stevens
Angela Kirkpatrick
Chiquita Tamepo
Erica Reti
David Gordon
Anne-Maree Kahukura
Tumanako Waikari
Juliette Lyon
Amy-Lee Ruki
Molly Kidd
Aria Mullins
Talia Holm
Aroha Ryan
Hayley Holm
Emma Bolton
Angie Stoney
Sheree Stevens
Kristie Matson
Rebecca Eames
Rose Puha
Hine Biddle
Raha Tuhakaraina
Heidi Blake
Fiona Barakat
Craig Rawiri

National Rankings

Shearing Sports New Zealand introduced National Rankings in 1992 as a means of identifying the status of shearers and woolhandler for media report purposes. Before that, competitors were loosely described – 'top-ranked shearer Colin King won ...', etc. But was he top, or second, or third? There was no way of being categorical about where any shearer was placed – even David Fagan in his prime (before 1992) couldn't prove that he was number one. The rankings are based on points accumulated from competition finals contested during the season. The system is not perfect, but if you don't make finals against the best in your grade, you can't achieve a national ranking. (Ed.)

Valley of the Ahuriri

By Jills Angus Burney

As you travel from Omarama on State Highway 8, on the left about 20km towards the Lindis Pass and Cromwell, you will first pass Dunstan Downs Station. Just beyond, before the red roof past the next left-hand corner of the Longslip Station woolshed, there's a turnoff to the right for Birchwood Road. For the past thirteen years, I have longed to go up Birchwood Road since discovering my high-country Williamson family connection to that valley.

Having travelled that highway for two decades en route to Alexandra in the first week of October, I had first travelled past the Birchwood Road turnoff as a high school student returning to the Manawātū from West Otago nearly fifty years ago. But until the week between this year's New Zealand Merino Shearing Championships and Waimate Spring Shears, when the Longslip blade shearers invited me to Ben Avon woolshed, I had never before been off SH8 up Birchwood Road.

Longslip Station and the Patterson family first came to my attention in June 2010 at the Shearing Sports Australia fundraiser at the historic Tuppal 72-stand woolshed re-enactment near Tocumwal in New South Wales. Omarama farmers, Wendy Patterson and her husband were among the many blade shearers at one end of the Tuppal board.

At the time I didn't quite believe her when Wendy said they had about 30,000 merinos across several landholdings at the time. I was even more incredulous that they mainly still had blade shearers in for their pre-lamb shearing. Ever since then, on a Monday after that first weekend in October, I can surely count on catching a yarn with a gang of blade shearers at the Longslip woolshed.

This part of the border of Central Otago and Canterbury took on even more significance thirteen years ago when I discovered that my maternal birth family, the Williamson's, came from near St Bathans. The North Islander that I am was even more surprised that my grandmother, Dorothy Wilson (nee Williamson) had attended classes at the Blackstone Hills primary school with the legendary shearer contractor, Murray McSkimming. Our great-grandfather, Ted Williamson had farmed at Grandvue, beside Williamson's Creek under the Blackstone Hills, now part of a Department of Conservation (DOC) estate near Otarehua. At 45 Sunderland Street, Clyde is the stone cottage built by my great-great grandfather, Arthur Brough, the first lawyer in Clyde during the goldrush.

By the time that Grandvue was sold in 1942 to St Bathans Station, my grandmother's brother, another Ted Williamson was farming Birchwood Station. He brought the Station, which is 32 km from Omarama, into what is admired today for its history as a Hereford cattle and merino stud.

The Station is featured in Philip Holdens book '*Station Country III: The Last Muster*' as a grazing area of 12,500 acres of the 24,000-acre station, for 8000 sheep and 450 cattle. The station extended another 30 kilometres up the Dingle Burn, which drains into Lake Hawea. When Holden visited Birchwood thirty years ago the broad river flats on the banks of the Ahuriri River lay beneath the rearing mass of the 2000m Barrier Range – thar and chamois country.

Which brings me back to the now annual visits to Twizel where my mother's cousin, retired farmers, Ron and Jennifer Williamson have resided since Birchwood Station was sold back to DOC in 2007 during the 100-year tenure review.



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Allan Oldfield at Ben Avon Station



An impromptu invitation from the blade shearers saw me drive up Birchwood Road the next morning and visit the Longslip shearing crew at Ben Avon Station (that like Birchwood Station, was once part of the Longslip holdings). It was grand high country to view with my own eyes the vista of a spectacular photograph by a Masterton photographer friend that graces a wall at home. This panorama is from a point just north of where the Te Araroa National walking trail crosses through Longslip and Ben Avon Stations, jumps Birchwood Road on the trail from Lake Ohau to the north, towards the Dingle Burn and further southwards.

According to Holden, Ben Avon is located midway up the Ahuriri valley. Taken up in 1858, Longslip had once been 40,000 acres and extended over the Mount Prospect and Maungatika Ranges to Lake Hawea. Both Ben Avon and Birchwood were once out-stations for the mighty Longslip

estate, but had been their own titles since 1905.

The Ben Avon woolshed (**above**) sits beneath the mighty peak of Puke Makariri (1850m), is dated from the 1880s where it had been built as a 24-stand shed. The blade crew led by New Zealand team member, Scotty McKay (**pictured left**) and former 2019 world champion, Allan Oldfield looked very much at home there. It was grand to catch up with a few familiar and much older faces, Allan Gemmell and Peter Race, the latter coaching the exciting new young French blade shearer, Simon Rouanet.

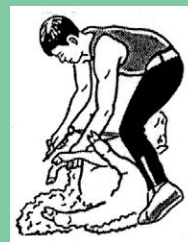
There was a real determination to use this mob of Longslip whethers as good practice for the following weekend's Waimate Spring Shears.

There's no such thing as a private conversation in a blade gang, as the near silence of the blades is interrupted by healthy banter and teasing of the young trainees, until someone turns the juke box on. Here, though, there's no need to drown out noisy machines, so the conversation carries on after lunch until the early cut-out midway through the third run.

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The blade shearers were ably supported at Ben Avon by classer, Wendy Patterson, her brother, Brian (owner of Longslip Station), manager, Tony and their woolshed staff, including Senior Woolhandling Judge, Dawn Ratana.

Beyond Ben Avon the stunning landscape tells the story of the high-country transition from the working farm that was Birchwood Station to the regenerating Ahuriri Conservation Park. As the dust settles behind the Longslip shearing gang heading back to SH8, and a final run back at the main woolshed, I wandered further up Birchwood Road to see the Birchwood homestead, and walk the poorly maintained 4-Wheel Drive track.

Who knew there was a spade-line that divided the Otago runholders from their Canterbury neighbours. Or that there was an impressive glacier at the top of the valley, the Shamrock Hut, and a valuable wet-land off the banks of the Ahuriri? At Waimate Shears the newly returned Omarama resident, Peter Casserly, a former champion blade shearer (also of the shearing Shrek on a glacier fame), was quick to tell me he'd worked, fished and hunted the Ahuriri valley for much of his adult life. He wouldn't change a thing about the valley that was once his working office but is now his recreation.

As shearing people, we have an immense privilege to mahi in such stunning scenery and to have opportunities to explore far up these valleys off the beaten track. I made a casual mention of Birchwood from Christchurch to Gore on this, my twentieth pre-lamb trip, and many could tell me of their days in woolsheds up the Ahuriri.

* * * * *



Top: Allan Gemmell on the board (and the ball) at Ben Avon Station. Middle: Wool classer Ida Ratima doing her best to avoid the camera! Above: Longslip Station's manager drenching the newly-blade-shorn wethers. (Jills Angus Burney photos.)



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Yvonne Abraham reflects on 50 years

By Yvonne Abraham

Kia ora koutou Katoa. I've been invited by Jojo Crawford to share the story of my life as an open woolhandling competitor, New Zealand woolhandling representative, fine wool classer and New Zealand Shearing Sports woolhandling judge and I'm honoured to do so.

Over the past 50 years, I've worked in the Shearing and Wool Handling Industry, a world I hold close to my heart. It was more than just a job – it is a passion, a way of life, and a legacy I'm still proud to be part of.

I'm blessed with four Tamariki: Leah, Rangi, Maranga, and Paerata. My daughter Leah runs a small business and contributes to our local iwi through the school lunch programme – nourishing our next generation in more ways than one. All three of my sons have spent time in the shearing sheds, each starting from scratch as a Sheepo, Presser, Crutcher and eventually becoming well-skilled Shearers.

Rangi and Maranga made the decision to take their skills across the Tasman to Perth, Western Australia, where they began their journey in the shearing industry before transitioning into mining. Rangi now owns a small business there, while Maranga continues to work in the mines.

Paerata remained dedicated to the shearing path, honing his Merino skills under the expert guidance of Master-Shearer Peter Lyon and Terry 'Stager' O'Neill. Today, he and his wife Cushla



Above: Yvonne Abraham reflects on 50 years in the industry. (Photo supplied.)

continue to thrive – both within the wool industry and on the competitive shearing circuit – carrying forward a legacy of excellence.

With much delight, the legacy continues as my eldest granddaughter Ariana, just 12, has already stepped into woolhandling competition with confidence. That spark is unmistakable – she's definitely on her way!

I'm incredibly proud of my children. They're entrepreneurial, hardworking, and grounded in whānau values. I also have nine beautiful mokopuna, ranging in age from 27 to 4 – and yes, I'm still waiting patiently for my first great-moko!

1960s-70s

I first began working in the sheds during school holidays and the occasional weekend. When I left school at 16, I

had the good fortune of stepping into full-time work with my Uncle Punga Paewai, who had taken over the reins from my Koro Lui Paewai – my Grandfather. Back then, the sheds were tough and quite intimidating, really. I still remember the first time I threw a fleece on the table – clear as day. Auntie Bongo, who had a reputation for being scary, went off at me! I said, "But you told me to throw it on the table," and she snapped back, "Yeah, down the length of the table – not across it, you F.W!" I honestly thought I was about to get a slap across the ears.

Thankfully, Auntie Rona and her husband Uncle Fuzz took me under their wing during those early, uncertain days. It was Auntie Rona who patiently taught me the fundamentals of wool handling – step by step, with care and encouragement. Without their generosity and steady guidance, I'm not sure I would've found my footing in the sheds.

Learning to woolhandle was tough in the beginning – I was terrified of everyone. The shearers, and especially the older woolhandlers... I didn't know the timing, and they'd be yelling at me. I just tried to avoid getting a twack on the head. I'd go home crying to Mum, saying, "I don't want to go back out to the shed!"

By my second season, things started to improve. I felt more confident and began to find my rhythm. By the third season, I was really in the swing of it and genuinely enjoying the mahi.

Back then, we still used straw brooms to sweep the board. I remember stepping in to sweep a crutch at the wrong moment – bad timing – and the shearer accidentally chopped most of the straw clean off! The broom came out a lot shorter than it went in. That day, I learned a big lesson: it's no fun trying to work without a proper broom, especially when the straw's gone!

I was slow picking up fleeces at first – crouching and setting up the fleece – I was so slow that a shearer once had to leap over the top of me to reach the pen door. Left to learn the hard way, I quickly found out that timing and awareness was everything in the shed.

At 18, I joined a stayout – one of those campouts with the shearing gang. Come nightfall, the crew would head

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off to the local pub, laughter echoing and stories flying. I tried to tag along, but the cook caught me by the scruff of the neck and steered me straight back into the kitchen where my Auntie and Uncle were waiting, arms crossed. Auntie said in a low tone, “Where do you think you’re going?”

“I’m going to the pub,” I replied, bold as anything.

“No, you’re not,” they said. “You’re staying here with us!”

At the time, I couldn’t understand why I wasn’t allowed to go. It felt very unfair missing out on all the action. But looking back now, I see it clearly – they were watching over me and keeping me safe in their own quiet way. I am forever grateful to them for all the love and care they showed me.

Those moments shaped more than just my skills – they shaped my outlook. I learned that in life, just like in the sheds, you either sink or swim. And I chose to swim. To persevere. To keep going, even when things felt overwhelming. That lesson has stayed with me ever since; woven into everything I do.

I did learn to shear, but back in the early 1970s, there weren’t many women on the stands, so I wasn’t always taken seriously. Being petite, some may have assumed I couldn’t handle the sheep – but surprisingly I proved otherwise. As I gained experience, I shored plenty of last sides, then started shearing the entire lamb or ewe, and even Merino. I especially loved jumping on the stand at the end of a run to shear the final sheep – it was always a buzz.

The advantage of learning to shear gave me a deeper understanding of



Above: Champions of the industry at Alexandra, 1996, from left: Huia Whyte-Puna, Yvonne Abraham, Murray Christie, Kevin Walsh and Hugh Chittock. (LSP archives.)

woolhandling. It taught me to spot second cuts and read how the fleece falls as it’s shorn – crucial knowledge for setting up a fleece and ensuring it lands flat on the table, ready for a superb throw. Having this knowledge was a big help with timing – staying in sync with the shearers and keeping pace with the fleeces coming off.

My advice to learner woolhandlers: have a go at shearing. It’s a great way to understand the timing and rhythm of a busy shearing shed.

I continued to grow through the shearing sheds and eventually found myself drawn into the world of woolhandling competitions – thanks to the encouragement of my cousins, Mavis Mullins and Oti Mason. Back then, Oti was the Joel Henare of his time, and that’s where my show

journey truly began. I started entering competitions, gradually earning placings and wins, and building confidence with each event.

Over the years, I had the privilege of working alongside and competing against some of the greats: Oti Mason, Mavis Mullins, Gina Nathan, Elsie Lyon, Raelene McConachie, Patrick Shelford, Gloria Shelford, Tina Rimene, Joanne Kumeroa, Dayna Te Aho, Waina Penaha, Bernadette Forde, and of course, our very own Joel Henare, who was just a young whippersnapper beginning his incredible journey.

My Merino woolhandling skills were shaped by the guidance of the renowned champions Elsie Lyon, Raelene McConachie, and Gina Nathan, while my crossbred handling was honed under the watchful eyes of Auntie Rona, and both my amazing champion cousins Mavis Mullins and Oti Mason. Each of them played a huge part in my development, and I carry their lessons with deep gratitude.

One of the proudest and most electrifying moments of my woolhandling career was being part of Darin Forde’s six-stand ewe shearing world record in Tuatapere, 2005. I had the honour of woolhandling for Paul Rutherford on that unforgettable day. The energy in the shed was electric – precision, pace, and pure determination. To contribute to such a high-calibre event and witness world-class shearing in action remains an unforgettable experience. I was also honoured to support and woolhandle for Jimmy Clarke and Craig Anderson

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in their two-stand lamb shearing record attempt, again in the Tuatapere region. Both experiences demanded seamless teamwork under pressure and I enjoyed every second of it!

I wish the very best for all future shearing world record attempters, and their woolhandling teams...

Woolhandling for Shearing World Records.

Rule 10 www.shearingrecords.com

Only one board woolhandler may attend a shearer at any given time, and they must not assist the shearer. The woolhandler's role is to support, not distract. At past records, some woolhandlers have unintentionally disrupted the flow, becoming obstacles rather than assets.

It is vital to remember, the shearer is the one being judged. Judges must have a clear view of every action, and unnecessary movement places added stress on them throughout the day. Supporters and audiences often travel long distances to witness the shearer's performance – their focus should remain on the stand, not on distractions around it.

The woolhandler's responsibility is simple yet critical: clear the wool swiftly, efficiently, and with minimal presence. Strive to be invisible. Every second counts, and the outcome of the record depends on precision, discipline, and seamless teamwork.

Diploma in Wool Technology

During the mid-90s as a student at Lincoln University, I graduated with a Diploma in Wool Technology / Wool Classing. I found the course fascinating, especially the scientific side of wool



Above: A South Island team, many years ago. From left: Edsel Forde, Aroha Garvin, Gerald Hoera, Yvonne Abraham, Joe Clarke and Gina Nathan. (LSP Photo archives.)

and how much there is to learn beneath the surface. After graduating, I spent a short period working alongside several wool buyers, gaining insight into the commercial side of the industry.

Soon after, an exciting opportunity came up to run my own classing contract in Tarras, Central Otago. I worked primarily with Adrian Cox's shearing crew and also had the privilege of doing sheds for Peter Lyon and Daryl Ainsley. It was a formative chapter, hands-on, fast-paced, and deeply rewarding.

I had the privilege of serving as a Woolhandling Trainer and tutor for TECTRA in the South Island – now known as Elite Wool Industry Training (EWIT), and for 'Wool Training Systems' in the North Island. Both roles were incredibly rewarding, offering the chance to pass on knowledge, support emerging talent, and contribute to the future of the wool industry.

Working Overseas

Over the years, I've worked across Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Isle of Man, Western Australia, New South Wales Australia, and even had the opportunity to travel to Sardinia, and Casper in Wyoming, USA. But after all that, homesickness crept in – and I found myself heading back to good old Aotearoa, where I felt my heart truly belonged.

Some of the highlights of my competition career include:

- The absolute highlight of my competition journey was being selected for the New Zealand Team to South Africa. We gave

it everything, battled hard and came home with the win. It was unforgettable, and a moment of immense pride. South Africa is a land of striking contrasts: breathtaking landscapes, incredible wildlife, and deep divides between poverty and wealth. We even travelled into Lesotho, a small country where safety was a real concern, to pick up African shearers who had walked 30km just to meet us.

- Reaching the Golden Shears Final was a proud milestone – while I didn't quite clinch the top spot, I walked away with a well-earned second place. I competed there for over two decades, from the late '80s right through to the 2009/10 season.
- It was an exciting ride representing the South Island Team alongside Aroha Garvin, Raelene McConnachie, Gina Nathan, Patrick Shelford, Bernadette Forde, and Tina Rimene. We won three times at Gore and twice at Te Kuiti – memories I'll always treasure.
- I enjoyed competing in pressing events, including one with Sheryl Lee Cribb at Te Kuiti. We performed really well and likely would've taken the win, but we were just underweight – my fault, I was the one doing the tramping!
- I much admired one particular woolhandling competitor – the incomparable Tina Rimene! Her woolhandling style was truly unique as she worked from one

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side of the table only, with a method that was precise, systematic, and incredibly thorough. That same sharp technique lives on in her daughter Pagan, who mirrors Tina's approach beautifully.

Beyond her skill, Tina brought an infectious energy to the competition scene – fun, vibrant, and full of life. She made the sheds buzz with good vibes and lifted everyone around her.

Pre-lamb Season 2025

I was deeply honoured to be invited as a woolhandling judge at the prestigious New Zealand Fine Wool Merino Shears, held 3–4 October 2025 in Alexandra, South Island. From there, I headed straight to the New Zealand Waimate Spring Shears on 10–11 October, where Full Wool Romney Hoggets' took center stage. These events are more than competitions – they're celebrations of excellence, camaraderie, and the enduring spirit of our industry. It's a privilege (and a whole lot of fun!) to support them and witness the incredible talent on display

Amazing Support

Even though I do my best to stay fit, each year brings its own challenges. This season, I've been truly uplifted by the support around me. My heartfelt thanks go to Peter and Elsie Lyons – such a caring couple to work for, and I am deeply grateful for the trust they place in me.

The shearers showed great courtesy and respect, which made life in the shed so much easier and more enjoyable. A big mihi to the Karamaena Whānau, who feel like whānau to us in every way. Winnie, your patience and encouragement mean the world, and the same goes for Dayna Te Aho and her daughters – thank you for standing by me with such kindness. I feel blessed to have had a wonderful pre-lamb season, surrounded by people who bring strength, care, and aroha. Ngā mihi nui – thank you all.

World Championships 2026

And yes of course! The countdown is on for the Golden Shears World Championships, lighting up Masterton of New Zealand from 4–7 March 2026. Hosting this iconic event on home soil is a dream come true. The buzz is real, and I can't wait to meet the international teams, see fresh talent take the board, and feel the pride ripple through the crowd. It's going to be unforgettable!

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A Life Woven in Wool

The shearing and wool industry has been more than a career – it's been the fabric of my life. From the board to the judging table, it's shaped my values, my rhythm, and my sense of purpose. Now, as a New Zealand Shearing Sports Woolhandling Judge and former competitor, I bring decades of hands-on experience to the role – especially in the Open Class, where instinct, precision, and timing are everything. I know the pulse of competition, the pressure of performance, and the quiet mastery that only comes from time spent in the thick of it. Judging isn't just a role – it's a way to give back to an industry that's taught me, supported me, and continues to inspire me. It's an honour to uphold the standards of the craft and celebrate the people who keep it alive.

Looking Ahead

As technology continues to evolve, I believe judging will eventually become more automated and data-driven. That's the direction the world is heading – and there's value in precision and consistency. But no algorithm can replicate the instinct, the feel, the lived experience that seasoned judges bring to the board.

So, to the next generation of judges – especially those of you who've spent years in the shed and competed in the Open Class, I salute you. You carry the heart of the craft and I wish you all the best! *Ngā Mihi Koutou Katoa.*

Whakapapa –Genealogy

Yvonne Faith Maire Abraham nee Jones

Born and bred: Dannevirke, North Island, New Zealand

IWI: Rangitāne o Tamaki Nui A Rua - Ngāti Maniapoto.

Father: Wilkie Te Hurinui Jones

28th Māori Battalion WW2

Carpenter

IWI: Ngāti Maniapoto.

Mother: Margaret Pahemata Jones nee McDonald-Paewai

Toll Operator/Hostel Manager

IWI: Rangitāne o Tamaki Nui A Rua.

Maternal Grandmother: Maka Lucy Paewai nee Naera

Woolhandler-Cook

IWI: Ngāti Pikiao-Ngāti Ngāti Whakaue.

Maternal Grandfather: Lui Paewai

1924 "Invincibles" All Blacks

Shearer and Shearing Contractor

IWI: Rangitāne o Tamaki Nui-ā-Rua.

Paternal Grandmother: Kahuwaero Matengaro Jones nee Hetet.

Member of Inaugural Māori Women's Welfare League.

IWI: Ngāti Maniapoto.

Paternal Grandfather: Michael Rotohiko Jones

4th New Zealand Pioneer Māori Battalion WW1

Medal for Bravery

Secretary to Native Affairs Minister 1947-1949

Advisor to the first Māori Queen Te Atairangikaahu

IWI: Ngāti Maniapoto.

Yvonne Abraham Qualifications

Lincoln University – Diploma in Wool Technology.

Classing Stencil A1346.

Wool Handling Qualifications Level 1,2,3.

Merino Shearing Qualification – Level 1.

Tectra Training Ltd – Tutor and Trainer.

Wool Systems Training Ltd – Tutor and Trainer.

Woolhandling Judge – Badged.

Get to know your sheep: The Corriedale

The Corriedale is a very popular breed, and now has the second highest numbers in the world sheep population, being exceeded only by the merino. The Corriedale was evolved in New Zealand by crossing the merino with the Lincoln, and breeding up the resultant progeny, until after many generations of inter-breeding, the results of the Merino-Lincoln cross, a definite type was established, and the breed became famous as the Corriedale.

Like the Merino, the Corriedale does not favour wet climatic conditions, but thrives best on dry hill country. It also does well on flat country providing the rainfall is not too great.

The Corriedale has a fine wool, which inherits much of the Merino quality, but which has the distinctive heavy staple of the Lincoln. The Corriedale is a very popular dual-producing breed, with a good heavy fleece of quality wool and an excellent carcass, which makes the Corriedale ewe ideal for producing fat lambs.

The breed is widely used in Canterbury, Otago, Marlborough, and to a large extent in the back country, but it is better suited by medium hill country. The wool count of the Corriedale generally averages 56's, with a range of 50's to 60's on heavier country, and 56's to 60's on high country.

Shearing qualities

The average Corriedale is quite fair shearing, and while it is not a high-tally sheep, it is easier to shear than a merino, being plain-bodied apart from an odd neck wrinkle or dewlap, and lacking the horns of the Merino.

The Corriedale is well covered with wool, and unlike heavy breeds grows more wool than hair on the hocks, thereby making it imperative that they be shorn trimmed



to the feet. These points or socks do not have a tendency to lift or rise off the skin as they do on some breeds, but comb off quite well.

With a reasonably long, heavy staple, the Corriedale produces a big weight of wool, and yet has the tender, loose skin of the Merino. This results in the wool often pulling the skin out, which makes it sometimes difficult to 'drive' with a full comb without marking the sheep.

Corriedales are docile and lie well on the board. I am of the opinion that they shear out of season – that is, in winter and early spring – better than cross-breeds or long-wool breeds, many of which are extremely difficult to shear in these months. For this reason, Corriedales suit pre-lamb shearing.

Shearing rates are quite high for Corriedales in New Zealand, and taking this into account, the breed, being fair average shearing, is quite an attractive proposition for the shearer.

(From *Wool Away* by Godfrey Bowen, Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd, 1955. Illustration from *What Sheep is That* by Mike Warman, GP Publications Ltd, 1991.

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Healthline (open 24/7) – 0800 611 116

Samaritans (open 24/7) – 0800 726 666

Suicide Crisis Helpline (open 24/7) – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO). This is a service for people who may be thinking about suicide, or those who are concerned about family or friends.

Youthline (open 24/7) – 0800 376 633. You can also text 234 for free between 8am and midnight, or email talk@youthline.co.nz

0800 WHATSUP children's helpline – phone 0800 9428 787 between 1pm and 10pm on weekdays and from 3pm to 10pm on weekends. Online chat is available from 7pm to 10pm every day at www.whatsup.co.nz.

Kidline (open 24/7) – 0800 543 754. This service is for children aged 5 to 18. Those who ring between 4pm and 9pm on weekdays will speak to a Kidline buddy. These are specially trained teenage telephone counsellors.

Your local Rural Support Trust – 0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP)

Alcohol Drug Helpline (open 24/7) – 0800 787 797. You can also text 8691 for free.

For further information, contact the Mental Health Foundation's free Resource and Information Service (09 623 4812).

RESULTS: New Zealand Corriedale Shearing and Woolhandling Championships, Royal New Zealand A&P Show, Christchurch, 14-15 November 2025:

Shearing:

Open final (10 sheep): Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 11m 41.93s, 43.2pts, 1; Gavin Mutch (Scotland/Dannevirke) 10m 44.71s, 43.44pts, 2; Justin Meikle (Oamaru) 12m 2.97s, 46.15pts, 3; Hugh de Lacy (Rangiora) 12m 36.5s, 47.13pts, 4; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 13m 35.9s, 47.6pts, 5; Corey Palmer (Dipton) 13m 25.16s, 53.66pts, 6.

Senior final (7 sheep): Dre Roberts (Mataura) 11m 55.2s, 45.33pts, 1; Zion Smith (Christchurch) 13m 9.31s, 46.32pts, 2; Nick Owen (Dannevirke/Christchurch) 11m 26.9s, 47.2pts, 3; Reuben King (Kaiapoi) 14m 9.03s, 51.59pts, 4; James Wilson (Winton) 14m 44.69s, 53.95pts, 5; J P Bouyer (Hastings) 14m 52.62s, 54.2pts, 6.

Intermediate final (4 sheep): Tamati Dennison (Kurow) 8m 27.38s, 36.87pts, 1; Ariana Te Whata (Mossburn) 9m 15.34s, 39.02pts, 2; Kye Waihape (Temuka) 8m 51s, 39.05pts, 3; Tye Meikle (Oamaru) 8m 54.79s, 39.74pts, 4; Izaak Cleland (Oamaru) 8m 8.16s, 42.42pts, 5; Caleb Makuch (Temuka) 8m 49.66s, 42.48pts, 6.

Junior final (3 sheep): Ben Rowson-Jones (North Derbyshire, England) 8m 37.5s, 42.21pts, 1; Joel McCone (Temuka) 8m 46.59s, 43.66pts, 2; Jamys Christian (Isle of Man) 10m 4.5s, 44.23pts, 3; Logan McCartney (Ashburton) 9m 41.85s, 47.76pts, 4; Tracey Paton (Otaio) 9m 58.96s, 48.61pts, 5; Cam Henson (Woodville) 9m 47.78s, 50.72pts, 6.

Donaghys Canterbury Circuit (10 sheep): Justin Meikle (Oamaru) 11m 43.06s, 45.45pts, 1; Hugh de Lacy (Rangiora) 12m 22.28s, 47.31pts, 2; Blake Crooks (Rangiora) 12m 23.72s, 47.89pts, 3; Lyall Windleburn (Rangiora) 11m 44.44s, 49.52pts, 4; Shaun Burgess (Rakaia) 13m 38.41s, 52.92pts, 5; Murray Johnstone (Cust) 13m 32s, 53.79pts, 6.

Crusaders Region Open (7 sheep): Murray Johnstone (Cust) 10m 20.97s, 39.62pts, 1; Taare Edwards (Ashburton) 11m 38.37s, 44.35pts, 2; Liam Norrie (Cheviot) 11m 31.62s, 45.15pts, 3; Lyall Windleburn (Rangiora) 10m 25.44s, 45.41pts, 4; Blake Crooks (Rangiora) 11m 26.25s, 47.88pts, 5; Thomas Lambert (Christchurch) 12m 46.78s, 53.48pts, 6.

Blades shearing:

Golden Blades Open final (5 sheep): Alan Oldfield (Geraldine/Lower Hutt) 15m 29.47s, 53.87pts, 1; Scott McKay (Clarence) 15m 18.53s, 54.13pts, 2; Tim Hogg (Rolleston) 17m 24.69s, 60.23pts, 3; Mike McConnell (Timaru) 17m 57.37s, 60.47pts, 4; Tony Dobbs (Fairlie) 17m 38.43s, 61.72pts, 5; Peter Race (Rakaia) 17m 48.37s, 63.82pts, 6.

Intermediate (2 sheep): Evalyn McGregor (Otautau) 15m 21.16s, 57.56pts, 1; Simon Rouaret (Albine, France) 15m 58.41s, 59.42pts, 2; Gonzalo Olivares (Santiago, Chile) 16m 43.65s, 66.68pts, 3.

Woolhandling

Open final (5 fleeces): Joel Henare (Motueka) 107.45pts, 1; Logan Kamura (Bulls) 154.176pts, 2; Taiwha Nelson (Alexandra) 154.35pts, 3; Amy Ferguson (Alexandra) 4.

Senior final (2 fleeces): Tia Manson (Piopio) 67.988pts, 1; Emma Martin (Gore) 9.15pts, 2; Ashley Clarke (Gore) 98.5pts, 3; Renee Bonney (Waimate) 4.

Junior final: Zoe Meikle (Oamaru) 66.96pts, 1; Tahlia Nelson (Alexandra) 79.34pts, 2; Gabriela Schmidt (Alexandra) 144.06pts, 3; Jade Stark (Waipara) 4.



Top: Intermediate blade shearing finalists, Canterbury A&P Shears: Phil Oldfield (Sponsor), Evalyn McGregor, Simon Rouanet, Gonzalo Olivares. **Above:** New Zealand blade shearing team for the 2026 world championships – Tony Dobbs and Allan Oldfield with Shearing Sports South Island chairman, Paul Harris. (Thomas Lambert photos.)

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Above: New Zealand Corriedale shearing open championship finalists, from left: (Sponsor), Jack Fagan, Gavin Mutch, Justin Meikle, Hugh de Lacy, Nathan Stratford, Corey Palmer. Opposite: Canterbury All-Breeds Circuit open finalists, from left: (Sponsor), Justin Meikle, Hugh de Lacy, Blake Crooks, Lyall Windleburn, Shaun Burgess, Murray Johnstone. Bottom: Canterbury Shears junior finalists, from left: Ben Rowson-Jones, Joel McCone, Jamys Christian, Logan McCartney, Tracey Paton, Cam Henson. (Thomas Lambert photos)



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There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still. (Franklin D Roosevelt)



Woolhandling finalists, Canterbury A&P Shears. Top: Sponsor, Joel Henare, Logan Kamura, Taiwha Nelson, Amy Ferguson. **Middle:** Sponsor, Tia Manson, Emma Martin, Ashley Clark, Renee Bonney. **Above:** Sponsor, Tahlia Nelson, Zoe Meikle, Gabriela Schmidt-Morrell, Jade Stark. (Thomas Lambert photos.)

To an Old Mate

Old Mate! In the gusty old weather,
When our hopes and our troubles were new,
In the years spent wearing out leather,
I found you unselfish and true –
I have gathered these verses together
For the sake of our friendship and you.

You may think for a while, and with reason,
Though still with a kindly regret,
That I've left it full late in the season
To prove I remember you yet;
But you'll never judge me by their treason
Who profit by friends – and forget.

I remember, Old Man, I remember –
The tracks that we followed are clear –
The jovial last nights of December,
The solemn first days of the year,
Long tramps through the clearings and timber,
Short partings on platform and pier.

I can still feel the spirit that bore us,
And often the old stars will shine –
I remember the last spree in chorus
For the sake of that other Lang Syne
When the tracks lay divided before us,
Your path through the future, and mine.

Through the frost-wind that cut like whip-lashes,
Through the ever-blind haze of the drought –
And in fancy at times by the flashes
Of light in the darkness of doubt –
I have followed the tent-poles and ashes
Of camps that we moved farther out.

You will find in these pages a trace of
That side of our past which was bright,
And recognise sometimes the face of
A friend who has dropped out of sight –
I send them along in the place of
The letters I promised to write.

© Henry Lawson (1867-1922) (From the Poetical Works of Henry Lawson, Angus & Robertson Ltd, Sydney, 1968.)

Vacancies available for clean reliable shearers and shedhands from January through to end of March. We have a great working environment with meals, accommodation and transport provided.

SHEAR TECH

For all your shearing and crutching requirements

Phone Ray or Matt ☎ 027 948 4512

Servicing Southland and Otago





Top: New Zealand Corriedale championships, senior finalists: (Sponsors; Dre Roberts, Zion Smith, Nick Owen, Reuben King, James Wilson, JP Bouyer. **Above:** NZ Golden Blades finalists: Sponsors; Allan Oldfield, Scott McKay, Tim Hogg, Mike McConnell, Tony Dobbs, Peter Race. (Thomas Lambert photos.)

Where in the World 2029?

We've heard it on the grapevine that Australia has lodged a bid to hold the world shearing and woolhandling championships in 2029. And as usual, the grapevine proves to be astonishingly accurate, for the organising committee chairman Gary Leersen confirms the bid has been made on behalf of the competition held at Geelong, about an hour south-west of Melbourne Airport.

Gary says his team is looking to hold the event just prior to the 2029 Melbourne Cup, which will be held as usual on the first Tuesday (6 November).

"We have a lot happening in the area at that time. Our normal Geelong Show and the Geelong Races featuring the Geelong Cup are held around 20-21 October. Then we have the Warrnambool Shears and Euroa Shears after that, leading into our proposed dates for the world championships, say 1-4 November.

"We have a great venue with seating for about 3000 and would be looking to hold a wide range of other wool-related activities in conjunction with the championships."

Gary Leersen said the application has been lodged with shearing's World Council and the keenly-awaited decision will be made at Golden Shears, Masterton, in March 2026.

Tararua Shearing Ltd

Shearers and shedhands wanted.

**Must have good work ethics
and be reliable.**

**Accommodation, meals and
transport provided.**

**Work from mid-November to
end of March.**

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Cell 027 386 8789**

tararuashearing@xtra.co.nz

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**GET THE EDGE
MAKE THE CUT!**

A message from Bryce McKenzie of Groundswell NZ:

I'm inviting you to our events with world-renowned Princeton physicist Dr Will Happer, where he will discuss the warming impact of greenhouse gasses, the problems with many approaches to methane policy, and what this means for the future of farming in New Zealand.

Together with the Methane Science Accord, Groundswell NZ is pleased to host Dr Happer and provide an opportunity for the New Zealand public to hear from a respected and independent expert they're otherwise unlikely to see covered in our media. As always, we want you to be able to make up your own mind. So whatever your thoughts on climate change, agricultural emissions, or the Paris Agreement, come along with your questions for a good faith discussion.

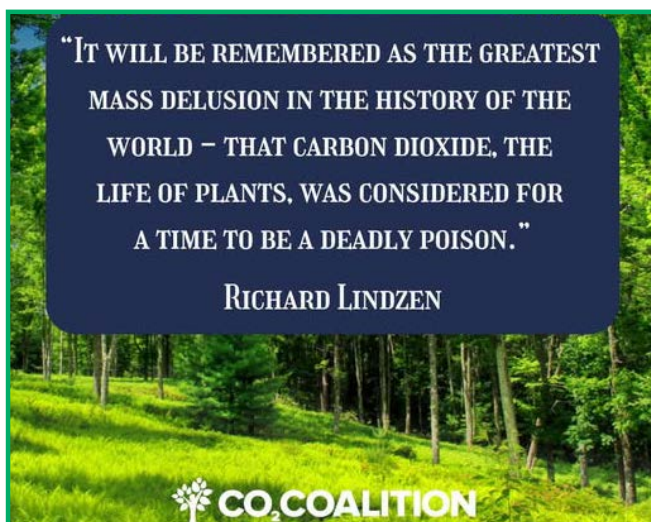
Don't miss out! This tour is almost certain to cause some controversy, and you have the opportunity to see it yourself instead of just watching the media coverage.

Find your nearest event below. You can check our website for any changes at <https://www.groundswellnz.co.nz/news/dr-will-happer-nz-tour-event-details>.

If you know someone who might like to attend, please bring them along or forward them the above website link.

Event details (all dates in December 2025)

- Friday 5th – Waikato, Hamilton Jetpark Conference Centre, Airport, 7:00pm.
- Saturday 6th – Taupo, Taupo Cosmopolitan Club, 5 Taniwha Street, 3:30pm.
- Sunday 7th – Hawke's Bay, Havelock North, St Georges Restaurant, 12:00pm.
- Monday 8th – Masterton, Keinzley Agvets, 131 Te Ore Ore Road, 12:00pm.
- Wednesday 10th – Christchurch, Sudima Hotel, 550 Memorial Ave, 1:30pm.
- Wednesday 10th – Timaru, Pharlap Raceway, Greyway Lounge, 7.30pm.
- Friday 12th – Balclutha Town & Country Club, Yarmouth Street, 1:30pm
- Friday 12th – Gore, Gore, RSA, Bowler Avenue, 7.30pm.
- Saturday 13th – Wanaka Community Hub, 34 McDougall Street, 1:00pm.



About Dr Will Happer

Dr Happer is a physicist whose research spans atomic physics, spectroscopy, optics, and atmospheric radiative transfer.



1. Emeritus Professor at Princeton University and former Chair of the Department of Physics.

2. Former Director of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science (1991–1993).

3. Long-time member of JASON, the elite advisory group that counsels the U.S. government on national science and technology issues.

4. Developed the sodium laser guide star to correct for atmospheric distortion affecting astronomical telescopes.

5. Together with William van Wijngaarden, conducted detailed analyses on the radiative effects of greenhouse gases, using the HITRAN satellite database to quantify absorption and emission characteristics.

Dr Happer is widely recognised for his stance on climate science. Including that the warming effect of carbon dioxide is modest (not catastrophic) and that increased carbon emissions can benefit plant growth. His conclusions, published through the CO₂ Coalition, have stimulated vigorous international debate on climate sensitivity and energy policy.

PS. Groundswell is a grassroots movement representing farmers, growers, and rural communities without the resources of the political parties or levy bodies. If you can, chip in to our campaign fund and join the fight to free New Zealand from the Paris Agreement.

Te Anau Shearing Ltd

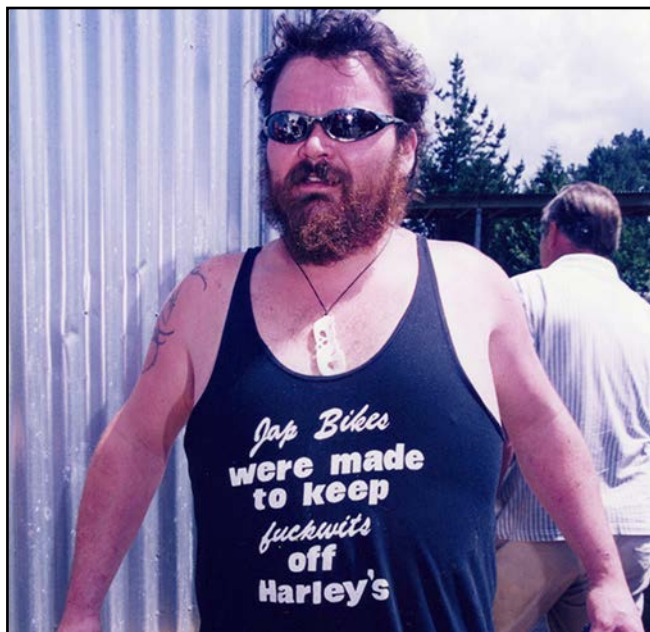
We have jobs available June - August and Dec - April for people who are reliable, have good work ethics and positive attitudes.

Meals, accommodation and travel provided

**Phone Andrew on
027 434 8108 or 03 249 7035
ajclegg@xtra.co.nz**

Pub Quiz: Twenty Answers

- 1: Marg Forde
- 2: 2011
- 3: Forde Alexander (Taumarunui)
- 4: 150.00 kg (The precise weight required.)
- 5: Jayne Harkness Bones (Northern Ireland)
- 6: Clay Harris (Piopio)
- 7: The Walker-Keats Cup (see below)
- 8: Peter Black
- 9: Allan Williamson
- 10: Michelle Forde
- 11: (a) He invented the shearing long blow and (b) was the first shearer to lose his life in battle (The Boer War 1902).
- 12: John Hodder
- 13: They have both been guest speakers at NZ Shearing Contractors conferences.
- 14: Cartwright Terry
- 15: To keep F-wits off Harley Davidsons (opposite).
- 16: The open shearing title.
- 17: Willie Horner
- 18: Jeff Rountree
- 19: Masterton, Royal Bath & West, Royal Highland (Edinburgh), Gorey, Builth Wells (Wales)
- 20: He'd recently won the world shearing championship at Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh.



Above: The politically correct Rodney Macdonald explains the simple mechanical truth. (LSP Archive photos.)



Above: Careful where you go with this beauty – eight teeth, 10cm wide, three comb screws to stop it from warping. A 1970s American item from the Bill Goldsworthy collection.



Above: Keats (Laurie) and Walker (Bernie) with the Walker-Keats Cup, symbol of supremacy in trans-Tasman shearing.



Pleasant Point, South Canterbury
Quality Shearers, Woolhandlers & pressers wanted
between the months of January - March & June - October.

Competitive wage rates
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**AJ & GR Smith Shearing
Kimbolton 1983-1987**

Time for a catch up!

**Reunion: 24 January 2026
Venue Oroua Clubrooms,
Kimbolton**

**For more information
email al.gilly@xtra.co.nz
Phone 027 689 7819**

Falklands Tri-Nations



The Tri-Nations teams, from left: Chile, Falkland Islands and Wales.

In partnership with the Falkland Islands Development Corporation (FIDC), Falkland Shears Committee successfully hosted the first ever Tri-Nations International Shearing and Woolhandling Test competition in Stanley on Friday, 14 November 2025, which saw the national teams from the Falkland Islands, Wales, and Chile compete in “round robin” style match-ups between each nation.

Wales took the top prize in both the Tri-Nations test shearing and woolhandling events, with the Falkland Islands in second, and Chile in third. Falkland Islands representatives were Evan Jones and Adam Dickson as their shearers, with Pilar Castro and Holly Turner as the wool handlers.

Representing Wales as shearers were the 2023 Golden Shears machine shearing world champion Gwion Evans, and national champion Llyr Jones. Alongside were woolhandlers Sarah Rees and Jessica Morgan, the former a 2023 Golden Shears woolhandling team champion.

Representing Chile were shearers Kenneth MacLeod and Jorge Caracamo, alongside wool handlers Camila Quinteros Peñafiel and Archie Sepulveda.

Winners of the test match received a total prize of £8,000, which was sponsored by Consolidated Fisheries Limited (CFL), with £4,000 awarded to both winning shearers and woolhandlers separately. Second place winners received a total of £4,000, which was sponsored by Falkland Islands Company (FIC). Third place winners received a total of £1,000, which was sponsored by Falkland Shears.



Camila Quinteros and Archie Sepulveda (Chile), Jessica Morgan and Sarah Rees (Wales), Holly Turner and Pilar Castro (Falkland Islands)



Llyr Jones (Wales), Evan Jones (Falkland Islands), Adam Dickson (Falkland Islands), Gwion Evans (Wales). The Open finalists.

Open Shearing Event

The Open Shearing saw Gwion Evans (Wales) come 1st, scoring 64.923 points, and Adam Dickson (Falkland Islands) placing 2nd scoring 71.25. Evan Jones (Falkland Islands) was not far behind, coming 3rd with a score of 71.83 points, only separating him by 0.58 points from Llyr Jones (Wales), who placed 4th with 72.35 points.

Open Wool Handling Event

The Open Wool Handling saw Kayleigh Anderson (Falkland Islands) take 1st place, with an incredible performance, scoring 97.30 points, followed by Bekka Phillips (Falkland Islands) in 2nd, scoring 108.40 points. Fayan Alazia (Falkland Islands) was not far off, scoring 110.40 points, and placing 3rd. Kursha Lloyd (Falkland Islands) placed 4th, scoring 190.20 points.

HELP US ALL RAISE OUR GAME IN THE WOOLSHED

Tahi Ngātahi is an online platform that uses video clips to pass on skills and safety tips to farmers, shearing contractors and shearers.

Our aim is to:

- reduce common injuries by 30% and prolong careers
- build a stronger, more skilled workforce

- make shearing more attractive to new entrants.

Tahi Ngātahi's part of wider efforts to revitalise the wool industry and will be integrated into the government's new \$1.86m on-job training initiative Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ.

Visit www.tahingatahi.co.nz and sign up to show your support for this great industry.

For business support to make the best use of the programme, please contact Bronwyn Campbell at support@tahingatahi.co.nz or 0272436979



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NEW ZEALAND



DON'T DO YOUR BACK IN

Learn Your Warm-Ups

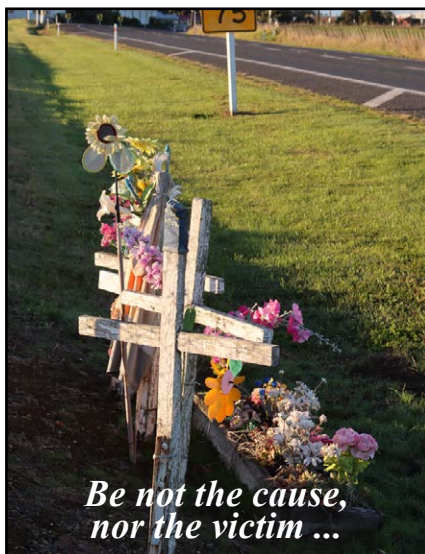
Every year over 9,000 days are lost to injury in the wool sector. That's a lot of pain for no gain. Tahi Ngātahi's videos are designed to help everyone raise their game in the shed. You can learn short warm-up routines that help prevent back strains at www.tahingatahi.co.nz. A few extra minutes of simple stretches a day could save your back and boost your wallet.



DON'T BLOW YOUR WRIST

Don't Blow Your Wrist

With main shear looming, now's the time to prepare the body for those big tallies. Blown wrists are really common among shearers who hit the board hard after a bit of a break. Just like the All Blacks wouldn't play a test without a pre-season or any warm-up, you need to make sure you're in good nick before you pick up the handpiece. You can learn simple warm-up routines that help prevent blown wrists at www.tahingatahi.co.nz.





**Golden Shears New Zealand and
World Championships
Wednesday 4 March – Saturday
7 March 2026.**

Stadium

**Wednesday Morning 4 March 2026 (Stadium)
Shearing**

Novice heats
Junior heats
Novice semifinals
Junior semifinals
Student Challenge final

Marquee

Woolhandling novice heats
Junior heats
Novice semifinals

**Wednesday Afternoon 4 March 2026 (Stadium)
Shearing**

Intermediate heats
Senior heats
Intermediate semifinals

Marquee

Woolhandling senior heats
Junior semifinals
Senior semifinals

Wednesday Evening 4 March 2026 (Stadium)

Woolhandling Novice final
Shearing Novice final
Shearing Junior final
Woolhandling Junior final
Woolhandling Senior final
Shearing Intermediate final

Thursday Morning 5 March 2026 (Stadium)

Woolhandling Golden Shears open heats
World blades shearing Round 1
Marquee
Shearing Golden Shears open blades heats

Thursday Afternoon 5 March 2026 (Stadium)

World woolhandling Round 1
World machine shearing Round 1
Marquee
Golden Shears open blades semifinals

Thursday Evening 5 March 2026 (Marquee)

Teddy Bear Shear
Senior speedshear
Open Speedshear

Friday Morning 6 March 2026 (Stadium)

World woolhandling Round 2
Golden Shears open shearing heats

Friday Afternoon 6 March 2026 (Stadium)

World machine shearing Round 2
World blades shearing Round 2
Golden Shears Open Top 30

Friday Evening 6 March 2026 (Stadium)

World woolhandling teams 'B'
World machine shearing teams 'B'
World teams blades shearing
World woolhandling teams 'A'
World machine shearing teams 'A'

Saturday Morning 7 March 2026 (Stadium)

Woolhandling Golden Shears open Top 20
Golden Shears senior shearing semifinals
Woolhandling NIWC woolhandling final
Womens' shearing invitation
Golden Shears open blades final
PGG Wrightson/Vetmed National Circuit semifinal
Golden Shears senior shearing final
Golden Shears open woolhandling semifinals

Saturday Afternoon 7 March 2026 (Stadium)

PGG Wrightson/Vetmed National Circuit shearing final
World blades shearing semifinal
World shearing semifinal
World woolhandling semifinal
Maori-Pakeha teams shearing final
Golden Shears open shearing semifinals

Saturday Evening 7 March 2026 (Stadium)

World woolhandling final
World shearing final
World blade shearing final
Golden Shears open woolhandling final
Golden Shears open shearing final

Live streaming Friday / Saturday (Community activation)
Programme subject to change between now and event.
Check Golden Shears website.

STAFF WANTED NOW

- Riverton-based accommodation available
- Paid rest breaks for wool-handlers and pressers
- Positive hard working team
- References required



To apply, please email

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