Shearing

Promoting our industry, sport and people

Number 111: (Vol 39, No 1) April 2023
ISSN 1179-9455 (online)



Ullapool, 45km north-west of Inverness – one of the enchanting places you might visit if you are going to Scotland for the world shearing and woolhandling championships in June 2023. It's on the 'round trip' from Edinburgh, John O'Groats, Skye, Glencoe. (But go to the shearing and woolhandling first!)

New world records
Revisiting Scotland 2003
Meet the real Jimmy Power
New Zealand Championships



Last Side Publishing
Hamilton, New Zealand

Balclutha and Gore
Golden Shears report
Godfrey Potterton returns
Gavin Rowland this is your life

Shearing

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UNDER COVER STORY

Greetings readers and Facebook followers – welcome to *Shearing* magazine No 111 (digital number ten). It seems appropriate to extend an official 'welcome back' to Golden Shears after two years lost to Covid, and to New Zealand Championships at Te Kuiti after missing 2020 and 2022.

A previous editor of this magazine, David Grace (RIP) in 1995 published a story about an East Coast Contractor named Stan Pardoe (Rongowhakaata Iwi). Because Stan was leaving the shearing industry to take up a role in iwi management, David saw fit to publish that story in both English and Maori, or Te Reo as we now know it.

One may only guess at David's motive in doing so but it's agreed he was acutely aware of the 'bicultural balance' in our industry and of the way Maori and Pakeha have worked as one in the sheds of the nation for 150 years. But since that edition, probably no more than a handful of 'korero kupu' (Maori words) have found their way onto the pages of this magazine.

We see it as a milestone moment therefore that the Waimarino Shears Committee at Raetihi saw fit, two years ago, to introduce a strategy aimed at incorporating Te Reo Maori into its competition. First by introducing individual words into the day's activities, and second by incorporating phrases, sentences and narrative descriptions in te reo.

And now (see page 64) the New Zealand Championships committee at Te Kuiti has adopted the same policy and started implementing it at this year's event. With some notable success, one might say. One might hope that other competitions around the country will want to follow suit and the Waimarino Committee (Komiti) indicates its availability to offer guidance in that direction.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to give any other space in this edition to the havoc that Cyclone Gabrielle wreaked on our countryside and inhabitants as it swept across the North Island – particularly Northland, the East Coast (Tairawhiti) and Hawkes Bay. But we are aware of several people directly involved in our industry who suffered great property damage and loss. While we can do little more than express arohanui and best wishes, we know the characteristic 'industry resilience' will be there aplenty as they go about rebuilding their lives and assets.

Finally, if you are heading for Scotland and the world shearing and woolhandling championhips in June – travel safe and trouble-free. See you all in August.

Nga mihi, Des Williams

Publisher: Last Side Publishing Ltd, Box 102, Hamilton 3240, New Zealand. Tel 0274 833 465.
Email: **shearingmag@xtra.co.nz**

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CONTENTS

3 Heiniger advertisement
4 NZ Wool Classers Association
6 Swampy – this is your life
10 Action from Balclutha and Gore
15 Bereavements
17 Trevor Bacon back on the boards
18 Snow Quinn opened the door
19 Lister advertisement
20 Cry (German) wolf
24 Godfrey Potterton returns
29 Meet the real Jimmy Power
33 Revisiting Scotland 2003
43 Golden Shears report
46 Golden Shears volunteers
47 Historic Flaxbourne
48 Photo essay Scott Welsh gang
50 Big Gumboot Day at Taihape
52 Reuben Alabaster's record
53 Jack Fagan – the power of pain
55 Sacha Bond and Amy Silcock
57 Heinger advertisement
58 Arthur Sykes went to war
60 Poem – Anzac Day
61 NZ Championships report
64 NZ Champs adopts Waimarino strategy
65 Mongolians visit
66 Lister advertisement

Shearing magazine Facebook Profile for November 2022 and (August 2022)
Post impressions 35788 (16790)
Post reaches 19830 (12438)
Post engagements 2663 (1264)

Photo Credits:
Barbara Newton 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; Charly Harvey 21; Doug Laing 44, 51; Golden Shears 46; Internet 32, 55, 56; Jack Fagan 53, 54; Jills Angus Burney 22; Marg Forde 4, 5; Philip Oldfield 25 (Reefton), 26 (Ireland); Ratapu Moore 47; Roger Leslie 20; Ron Palenski 30. All others *Shearing* magazine/ Last Side Publishing Ltd.

Next edition due 7 August 2023.
Deadline for all material two weeks prior.


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NZ WOOL CLASSERS ASSOCIATION



Upskilling and connecting day for all with a passion for wool

Registrations close on 2 May for the next NZ Wool Classers Association Industry Day, which will be held in Christchurch on 9 May 2023.

Classers and Graders are encouraged to attend as part of their professional development commitment, but you don't have to be a NZWCA member to do so.

The programme for the day is designed to be of interest and benefit to anyone involved in wool and the wool harvesting industry. For example, Southern Institute of Technology South Island Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing students will be there, with tutors Laurie Boniface and Richard Gavigan, as part of their block course that week.

It will begin with practical wool exercises and end with a factory tour to Untouched World. In between there will be a range of speakers – including Lucas Smith, the entrepreneur behind WoolAid, the world's first merino wool adhesive bandage – and the NZWCA AGM which will incorporate the annual Classer Awards announcement and presentation.



Above: *'Hands down the best water bottle ever' – that's what Sarah Lewis (M2176) reckons about the engraved bottle she received for her commendation in the NZWCA Classer Awards for 2021 season, presented at the NZWCA AGM last year. Sarah, who holds New Zealand and Australia wool classer registration and works in both countries each year, says she's a 'water bottle expert' and values her bottle both for its function and the accolade it represents. These special bottles will again be presented to Classer Award commendation winners at the NZWCA AGM/Industry Professional Development Day in Christchurch on 9 May 2023.*

All are welcome; attendance is free for NZWCA members (including associate members) and $25 for non-members, with smoko and lunch included. Venue is Christchurch Park, 250 Westminster St, Mairehau.

Follow this link for full details and online registration: https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/news/agm-industry-professional-day-2023/

Here is the full timetable:

- 8am to 8.25am – Registration
- 8.25am to 8.30am – Welcome. Health and Safety for the day briefing
- 8.30am to 9.45am – Wool exercises
- 9.45am to 10.15am – Tom Hooper CEO of Wool Source Ltd, the Wool Research Organisation of NZ's initiative to commercialise and launch innovative new uses for NZ wool. Tom will also announce the next recipients of the WRONZ/NZWCA Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing student scholarships.
- 10.15am to 10.30am – Morning smoko
- 10.30am -10.45am – Untouched World (today's factory visit venue) general manager Kim Holden
- 10.45am to 11.15am – Lucas Smith NZ founder of WoolAid, the world's first merino wool adhesive bandage. "WoolAid heals you without hurting the world" www.woolaid.com
- 11.15am – 11.30am – Update from Wool Impact a collaboration between the government and sheep sector partners under the Sustainable Food & Fibre Futures fund to grow revenues for wool
- 11.30am – 11.45am – Megan Mounsey-Smith of NZFAI progress on the inclusion of wool in the NZ Farm Assurance (NZFAP) quality assurance programme and development of online bale specifications
- 11.45am to 12.45pm – Lunch provided (wool exercise entry papers to be handed in by the beginning of lunch)
- 12.45pm to 1.30pm – AGM, Wool Classer 2022 Season Awards
- 1.30pm to 2pm - Brokers key messages for 2023 season wool prep and classing, and chance for discussion and questions with wool reps from NZ Merino Co, PGGW and Wools of NZ
- 2pm to 2.40pm – Wool Exercise and samples discussion, questions + exercise top scorers announced
- 2.40pm to 2.55pm – Acknowledgements, questions, suggestions, time to fill out feedback forms on the day
- 2.55pm – depart venue for Untouched World factory tour
- 3.30pm SHARP. Be at factory 155 Roydvale Ave, Burnside
- 4.30pm approximately – End (at conclusion of factory tour).

NZ Wool Classers Assn first appearance at Wanaka Show

The NZ Wool Classers Association were grateful to be invited to set up a stand in the Wanaka Show wool tent, next to the building which was full of impressive show fleeces. The show this year was held on 10-11 March 2023.

NZWCA Board member Terence Mulcahy (D1473) and Registrar Marg Forde (A1260) enjoyed the two days of the show talking to a wide range of people about the association's role upholding the integrity of NZ's register of classers and graders, and purpose and place as an independent, industry-good organisation advocating for quality and wool education.

Wool growers were informed how they could gain their owner classer registration and how they could use the association's website to search the validity of a classer's registration. They were also invited to consider supporting NZWCA with associate membership.



Above: *'A place where wool freaks drool!' – That's how NZWCA Registrar Marg Forde described the interior of the Wanaka Show fleece competition building. Packed three high with stunning show fleeces, the building and competition was the result of time and commitment from passionate wool men and women such as wool steward and NZWCA member, Martin Paterson (FD1772), pictured.*

Terence and Marg had merino fleece samples on hand, courtesy of Carrick Station, chosen to demonstrate the basics of wool classing for those with limited or no wool knowledge who stopped by for a chat. The samples clearly demonstrated the difference between fine, medium and strong merino wool and there were also samples from the same clip of the faults tender and unscourable yellow.

In the Wanaka Show fleece competition, the Grand Champion fleece was an 18.3 micron, 5.5kg merino ewe fleece from Armidale Merino Stud, owned by the Paterson family. It was selected for the show by NZWCA owner classer Alan Paterson (FD713) and scored an impressive 99/100.

The prize for the NZWCA registered wool classer who selected the top scoring flock fleece at the show went to Pru Heaney (A2158) for a merino ewe fleece from Cluden Station which scored 97.5 and weighed 3.4kgs.



Above: *NZWCA Board member Terence Mulcahy and Registrar Marg Forde fronting it for the NZWCA at the Wanaka Show in March.*

Things looking a bit Grey? Where to get help

Mental Health line 1737 (open 24/7)

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Depression Helpline (open 24/7) – 0800 111 757

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.

Kidsline (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 Kidsline 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).

Swampy – this is your life (membership)

By Des Williams

Known to all and sundry in the shearing world as 'Swampy', Gavin Rowland describes the 'Life Membership' awarded him by Shearing Sports New Zealand (SSNZ) as a most humbling experience. And he takes special pleasure for what, to most, will be an obscure reason.

"It's quite something for me to have my name alongside that of Robin Kidd as a life member of Shearing Sports NZ. We both hail from the small Canterbury village of Albury, in the MacKenzie country, and Robin was something of a mentor to me through my early days in shearing and SSNZ."

Some quick homework on Albury via Google reveals its population has never exceeded more than 200 people at any one time, and presently has about a third of that number. "When I lived there we had a garage, a store, a pub and a primary school. Now I think even the pub has closed so just the school is still in business!" And Gavin was the fourth person to become a life member of SSNZ after Robin, Hugh McCarroll and John Fagan. So, two of the four from Albury – that's a piece of pub quiz trivia for certain!

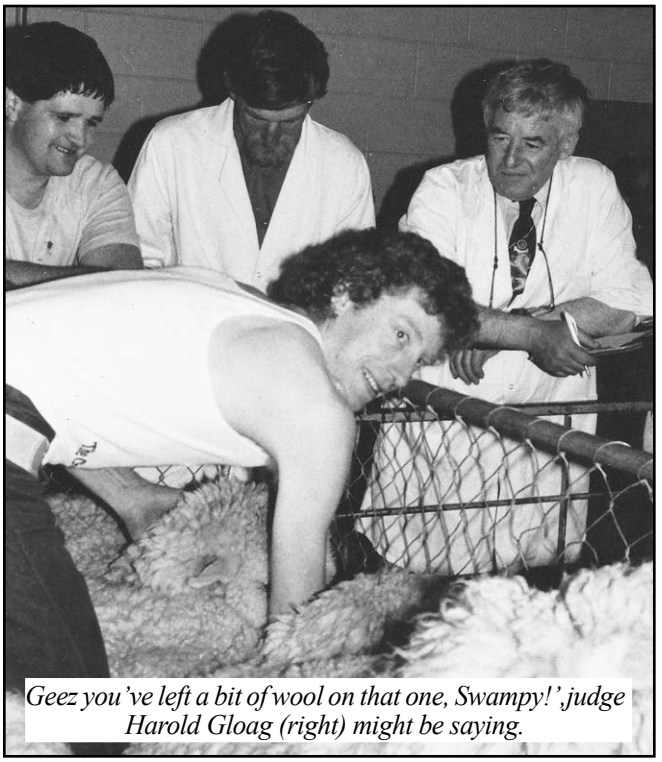
Gavin's contribution to the administration of our sport started in the 1991/92 season when it was still known as the National Shearing and Woolhandling Committee. He was elected South Island Shearers' rep that season, taking over the role from John Hough. An historic year, you might say, coinciding with the National Committee adopting the more 'fit for purpose' name of Shearing Sports NZ.

"I continued in that role at national level for the next two or three seasons and then in 1995/96 (by which time the Wool Board had changed its name to *Wools of New Zealand*) I became the 'WONZ' delegate, continuing through to 2011/12. We underwent a few more name changes during that time, of course. WONZ became '*WoolPro'* in 1998, became *Meat & Wool Innovation* in 2002, from which came Tectra, a private company in 2003.



Gavin Rowland – Shearing Sports NZ's fourth life member.

"At that stage Tectra had both South and North Island delegates on the SSNZ executive, and I then became the company's sole representative through until the start of the 2012/13 season. But through all those changes to company structures and names, the role remained pretty much the same – attending the national meeting and being the point of contact for South Island issues and business."



Geez you've left a bit of wool on that one, Swampy!', judge Harold Gloag (right) might be saying.

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Shearing Sports NZ annual general meeting 1993. Back left: John Fagan, Robin Kidd, Bill Lee (NZ Wool Board, chairman), John Lawton, Graeme Hutchby, Philip Morrison, Ian Buchanan, Nicky Gibson, Murray Christie, Graham Twose and Phil O'Shaughnessy. Sitting: Raewyn Perry (secretary), Alastair McIntyre, Colin Gibbs, Hugh McCarroll and Gavin Rowland.

Meanwhile, as well as being national delegate, Gavin was also serving on the South Island Committee. He became SSNZ South Island chairman in 2006/07 and secretary of the South Island Electronic Scoring Committee – roles he continued for a decade.

"In 2012/13 John Fagan decided to stand down as SSNZ chairman and I was elected to take his place. John had served in the role for about ten years and prior to that our national meetings had always been chaired by a representative of the NZ Wool Board or [later] Wools of New Zealand. Tony Brennan had been chairman prior to John and he did an excellent job, but it was probably just a natural transition for SSNZ to eventually elect its own chairman."

Gavin nominates 'single judging' as probably the biggest issue that came before the committees, North, South and national, during those years. "The South Island introduced single judging before the North. Prior to that we had three people judging each sheep out the back and their assessments were averaged in order to give a 'job' score for each sheep.

"The late Paul Rose had got me into judging, probably around 1995 when the Wool Board was running judging days, and I remember it being quite difficult to 'keep up' at first. The head judge in the group of three would be telling the sheep holder – 'Round, round, up' and you didn't always feel like you had enough time. But with single judging you could work at your own pace and then move on to the next sheep.

"Some people were concerned about the fairness of the single judge system and thought we needed a judge for each stand out the back. There were some frank discussions around that Board table in Palmerston North, but we knew from the South Island experience was all about getting the rotation right and the fears and misgivings eventually disappeared."

Gavin says it's disappointing how the electronic scoring system (ESS) has fallen by the way in recent years. He was secretary of the South Island ESS for a number of years and was 'putting them up and taking them down' for a couple of years when John Lawton was not available. "It was state of the art technology for quite a while but then the computer programme got out-dated and we don't have the system any more."

After nearly twenty years of continuous involvement one way or the other with Shearing Sports, Gavin then took a break for a year or two, but was back on board by 2015 as a member of the New Zealand Shearing Foundation Inc., an organisation especially set up to manage the 2017 world shearing championships at Invercargill.

Gavin had previously managed the New Zealand team to the 2008 world championships at Bjerkreim in Norway, so he had a pretty good idea of the work that lay ahead. That team had won the world machine shearing title (Paul Avery) and the teams title (Avery and John Kirkpatrick), as well as



the individual woolhandling (Sheree Alabaster) and teams woolhandling (Alabaster and Joanne Kumeroa) so similar success at a home venue would not come easy.

"New Zealand had previously hosted the world championships four times, always run in association with Golden Shears at Masterton. The Shearing World Council (at Gorey, 2014) had then awarded the 2017 championships to Christchurch, which meant a new organisation was needed, and the Foundation was established under the chairmanship of Tom Wilson, by then based at Balclutha.

"Other Foundation members were Sir David Fagan (Te Kuiti), John Fagan (Waihi Beach), Warren Parker (Raglan), Michael Hogan (Invercargill) and Jude McNab (Balclutha), with Andrew Lambie from Christchurch as Treasurer.

"But when we began our planning and preparations it soon became obvious Christchurch City would not have new infrastructure in place in time for such an event, following the major earthquakes of 2010 and 2011. The decision was made in November 2015 to switch to Invercargill and despite having just 15 months to get it all together, Invercargill did a marvellous job hosting the championships at the ILT stadium, with more than 30 countries attending and a crowd of more than 4000 filling the stadium on finals night.

"The organisational success of those championships and the community involvement generated by the Southland people in particular made for a most memorable occasion for all who came as competitors and supporters and it was an honour to have played a part in it."

* * * * *

Born in 1957 and raised on the family sheep and beef farm at Albury, Gavin followed his older brother Bill into the shearing sheds – by the age of 17 he had set his own sights on someday owning a farm. "Bill was about five years older than me – he was also known as 'Swampy' and for quite a while I became 'Young Swampy'. As I got older the 'Young' bit just got dropped off!

"About that time the Rural Bank had a scheme going where shearers and truckdrivers and similar occupations could borrow up to 80% finance for a block of land, so I went off to a two-week shearing school with those ambitions in the back of my mind. But as time went by, that dream of farm ownership fell by the wayside.



Above: *Former New Zealand Wool Board instructors at Golden Shears, mid-1990s, from left: Murray Christie, Fergus (Gus) Dermody and Gavin Rowland (right), with (then) Southland contractor John Lawton (middle) sharing their company.*

"The shearing school was held at Rangitata Island and was run by Ray Dunick who was a Wool Board instructor at that time, and who later became a Lister sales rep. I can still remember the course like it was yesterday

"My parents weren't all that keen on my being a full-time shearer at that stage because I was still a bit on the small side as a growing teenager. But Bill had been shearing for several years by then and he helped convince them it was a good idea. He was working for a local contractor, Johnny McCabe and proved to be a big influence on me for his work ethic and demonstrating all it takes to be a good shearer. I got a start there with Johnny McCabe too, usually sharing a stand with one or two other beginners to start with.

"I shore locally at first before trying other parts of the South Island, and up north with Tony O'Reilly around the Manawatu area. Australia too became part of the annual routine for several years so it became South, North, Aussie and back again.' I was also set to do a season in the United Kingdom, but that didn't eventuate."

While working for Dave Jackson at Mossburn, Gavin teamed up with Neil St George and John Hough on 31 January 1989, for a three-stand, nine-hour ewe shearing world record at Mavora Station.

"Neil led the way with 573, 'Houghie' did 518 and I shore 502 for a combined tally of 1593. That mark stood for almost exactly four years until Rick Pivac, Dion Morrell and Chris Brooker together did 1857 at Clutha Downs, near Lawrence, and that record still stands, 30 years later."

Gavin then spent five years as a shearing contractor at Fairlie (about ten minutes north of Albury!) and it was during that time he became a provincial shearing instructor for the Wool Board. Part of his training for that role involved attending training courses at Lincoln, with the Wool Board's permanent staff.

"I really enjoyed getting into that side of the industry but still it came as a major surprise one day when Robin Kidd rang me 'out of the blue' and asked if I was interested in becoming a full-time trainer for the Wool Board. 'And while you're at it, think about who you would like working with you, because you'll be running the South Island team,' he said!

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"Robin explained that long-time employees Murray Christie and Gus Dermody had both decided to retire about the same time, but as it turned out, Murray then agreed to stay on for a year while I learned the ropes, so to speak. We worked with Federated Farmers to organise and run learner shearer courses. It also involved quite a lot of shearing ourselves because the instructors would invariably have to shear the farmer's sheep that were left over from the courses.

"When Murray eventually retired I became South Island coordinator and Colin King came in as a senior instructor. It's fair to say he learned a lot from us and we also learned a lot from him over the next four years or so with his wide range of experience in the rural industry. He was later elected onto the Meat Board and of course then became the member of Parliament for Kaikoura."

Meantime, those structural changes kept coming. Meat and Wool Innovation became the latest iteration of the Government's 'State-owned Enterprise' shearer training agency and Gavin found himself appointed to a manager's role that he hadn't even applied for!

"I wasn't sure that I really wanted to take over such a new role but anyway, I found myself being interviewed for the job by Lance Wiggins. It was the first job interview of that sort I'd had in my life so I went there pretty relaxed with no real expectation of being appointed.

"But then, when I did get the job I suddenly felt the weight of responsibility, following in the footsteps of Godfrey Bowen and Robin Kidd and being aware of all that they had achieved. Training was still pretty big back then and I could imagine Godfrey looking down upon me with a discerning eye!"

Then, more change. Meat and Wool Innovation decided to 'sell off' or privatise the business of shearer training. Together with two business partners, Beau Gardner and Phil McLeish, Gavin headed up the private company known as Tectra ('technology transfer') and together they committed themselves to carrying on shearer training as much as possible in the old Wool Board tradition.

For ten years Tectra carried on those traditions, working closely with Agriculture ITO in formulating and delivering training courses for beginners through to several levels for more experience shearers. And then, in December 2014 the business came to the end of its natural life, Tectra shut its doors (well, that's the short explanation) and Gavin found himself with some extra time on his hands.

But as many others have found 'in retirement', Gavin discovered it's possible to get to the stage of needing more than mowing lawns and playing golf to keep usefully occupied. Good mate Tony Coster came to the rescue: 'Why don't you come out with me and do the odd day's shearing?'

"The 'odd days' became more and more regular, the aches and pains soon disappeared and I was really enjoying being on the end of a handpiece again. That trip to the UK for shearing that I had planned all those years ago suddenly came to fruition as I went over to 'do a season' in Wales for my cousin, Grant Rowland. The one season turned into four seasons and then … along came Covid."



Above: *Gavin Rowland shearing under the critical eye of John Hough. Two-thirds of the three-man team who (with Neil St George) set a nine-hour record in January 1989.*

Back in New Zealand, meantime, shearer training had been languishing for a couple of years. Tom Wilson was setting up a business [August 2016] called Elite Wool Industry Training (EWIT) with Dion Morrell, along the lines of the Wool Board and Tectra traditions. Tom asked Gavin if he would be available 'for a year' to help out while they got themselves up and running.

"Now here we are, six years later and EWIT is going from strength to strength. We are working closely with Australian Wool Innovation and the British Wool Marketing Board to develop training exchange systems just like days of old and the future for industry training is looking brighter now than it has been for many years."

* * * * * *

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Action from Balclutha and Gore

(Barbara Newton)

The last two of the main events on the Shearing Sports calendar for the South Island were held recently at Balclutha, 'NZ Woolhandling and Otago Shearing Championships'; and Gore's 'Southern Shears'. It was pleasing to see good entries all round, with both competitions held in warm conditions and stock in good condition despite the drought conditions experienced in the southern regions.

Shearing: Cyclone Toa

Cyclone Toa came down from Northland and 'reigned' on the drought-stricken south! Fresh from a win at Aria the previous weekend, Toa Henderson shore amongst some esteemed company, leaving four previous winners in his wake to take out the Otago open shearing title.

No one has been around the show circuit longer than Nathan Stratford, aka 'Stratty' and with fellow New Zealand rep Rowland Smith, he, Leon Samuels and Brett Roberts have been battling it out all year. The other finalist was David Gordon from Masterton, who also competed in the senior woolhandling. David has been quietly working away in the background, making more shearing finals than not of late, and could be a bit of a dark horse as the season draws to a close.

Brett Roberts made a strong showing coming back from a nasty cut suffered during the final at Winton a few weeks previously.

But Henderson (***pictured below***) led the charge from start to finish, with the field pretty much together for the first 10 sheep. The speedster Leon Samuels made his characteristic slow start, before a late flurry. But it was a clear win for the man from Northland, with Samuels, Stratford and Smith separated by the smallest of margins.



All except Smith, who obviously had more important things to deal with in the aftermath of the cyclone which affected his home region, contested the final at Gore won by Leon Samuels, runner-up Nathan Stratford, Henderson, Gordon and Roberts. The sixth finalist was Casey Bailey who had earlier taken out the South Island Shearer of the Year title.

King Country's rising star Clay Harris scored a notable double, winning the senior shearing at both Balclutha and Gore. Alex Clapham (3rd and 2nd) and Josef Winders (two 4ths) also made both finals.

In the Intermediate shearing final at Balclutha three visiting Aussies featured: winner Doltan Austin, third Lochie Reichet and Ged Leerson gaining a sixth placing at both shows. They were taking part in a reciprocal shearer and woolhandling training exchange programme between Elite Wool Industry Training and AWI and SWTI S Australia.

Jack Pringle (Balclutha) was intermediate runner up on both days, while Jordan White, also from Balclutha, managed fifth and third placings .

In both of the Junior shearing events the first three placings went to Cody Waihape, Lydia Thomson and Emma Martin.

As well as its traditional programme of events, the Southern Shears also hosted a competition for novice woolhandling, novice shearing, and a women's shearing event.

To page 11

Grant Moore
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Woolhandling

A masterful display by Joel Henare to take out what is the most challenging and entertaining event on the woolhandling calendar, the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year. Finalists have to process full wool, 2nd shear and lambs wool and this is undeniably the most lucrative show on the SSNZ circuit with the open winner receiving $2000, making it possibly the only show where the woolhandlers receive a bigger prize purse than the shearers.

Joel, known for his fast clean up, was held to account by Heaven Little, competing in her first-ever open final when they finished just seconds apart. But it was the experience and calm demeanour displayed by Henare with win number 13 from 16 finals at Balclutha, the first of which he contested at the age of just 15 and where he finished fourth.



Above: *Krome Elers in the senior woolhandling at Gore.*



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The experienced hands of Candy Hiri, who finished runner up, Little and Cheri Peterson (4th) were no match for Henare's comfortable result. Henare made it a double when he repeated his win the following week at the Southern Shears in Gore where he was again untroubled with a win from Nova Kumeroa and Foonie Waihape.

In the senior woolhandling division Charis Morrell took out the title in Balclutha, while fellow finalist Autumn Waihape claimed the title at Gore.

In the junior section we had two new winners: Chloe Henderson at Balclutha and Madie Little at Gore. Naki Maraki made both finals, with a second and third, respectively.







Top: *Open shearers at Balclutha, from left: Tom Wilson (sponsor), Toa Henderson, Leon Samuels, Nathan Stratford, Rowland Smith, Brett Roberts and David Gordon.* ***Middle:*** *Open woolhandlers at Gore: Monica Potae, Cody Waihape, Joel Henare, Nova Kumeroa and Foonie Waihape.* ***Above:*** *Judges relaxing, Liv Gardener, Kelly Frisbee, Mereana (Bo) Paku-Clark and Lani Arnott.*









Action from the Otago championships at Balclutha. ***Top left:*** *Lydia Thomson, runner-up in the junior shearing at Balclutha.* ***Above left:*** *Autumn Waihape, placed third in the senior woolhandling.* ***Top right:*** *woolhandling judges Dayna Te Aho, Kellie Frisbee and Amber Casserly.* ***Above right:*** *Cheri Peterson, placed fourth in the open woolhandling.*



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Otago Championships, Carterhope Estate Balclutha, 11 February 2023:
Shearing:
Open final (20 sheep): Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka) 56.7185 1; Leon Samuels (Invercargill) 58.4185 2; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 58.806 3; Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 58.8735 4; Brett Roberts (Mataura) 60.294 5; David Gordon (Masterton) 63.781 6.
Senior final (12 sheep): Clay Harris (Piopio) 44.4485 1; Adam Gordon (Masterton) 48.8783 2; Alex Clapham (Manchester, England) 50.0217 2; Josef Winders (Invercargill) 50.7288 4; Gabriel Winders (Invercargill) 56.2435 5; James Wilson (Ryall Bush) 60.2723 6.
Intermediate final (5 sheep): Doltan Austin (Edenhope, Vic) 29.3325 1; Jack Pringle (Balclutha) 30.2175 2; Lachlan Reichelt (Adelaide, S.A.) 30 .8635 3; Destiny Paikea (Heriot) 31.558 4; Jordan White (Balclutha) 32.525 5; Ged Leerson (Colac, Vic) 35.778 6.
Junior final (4 sheep): Cody Waihape (Mataura) 32.206 1; Lydia Thomson (Rangiora) 32.3455 2; Emma Martin (Gore) 33.670 3; James Hogan (Invercargill) 38.5735 4; Gethin Williams (Henllan, Wales) 39.664 5; Connor Wilkinson (Wyndham) 40.3825 6.
Woolhandling
New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year: Joel Henare (Gisborne/Motueka): 102.224 1; Candy Hiri (Mataura) 126.694 2; Heaven Little (Balclutha) 163.462 3; Cheri Peterson (Milton) 186.35 4.
Senior final: Charis Morrell (Alexandra) 127.63 1; Krome Elers (Mataura) 145.06 2; Autumn Waihape (Mataura) 156.912 3; Stoneigh Waihape (Mataura) 183.404 4.
Junior final: Chloe Henderson (Feilding) 168.061; Alisha Casserley (-) 183.914 2; Whakapunake Maraki (Flaxmere/Feilding) 194.132 3.

Southern Shears, Gore, 17-18 February 2023:
Shearing:
Southern Shears Open: Leon Samuels (Invercargill) 52.99 1; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 54.24 2; Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka) 54.50 3; David Gordon (Masterton) 55.79 4; Casey Bailey (Riverton) 55.97 5; Brett Roberts (Mataura) 56.35 6.
South Island Shearer of the Year: Casey Bailey 60.75 1; Leon Samuels 61.02 2; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 61.96 3; Nathan Stratford 63.05 4; Angus Moore (Ward) 65.03 5; Brett Roberts 66.21 6.
Senior: Clay Harris (Piopio) 44.79 1; Alex Clapham (England) 47.37 2; Daniel Biggs (Mangamahu) 48.32 3; Josef Winders (Invercargill) 48.33 4; Christopher Malcolm (Winton) 49.47 5; Nathan Bee (Wyndham) 50.26 6.
Intermediate: Dre Roberts (Mataura) 31.628 1; Jack Pringle (Balclutha) 31.629 2; Jordan White (Balclutha) 32.30 3; Will Sinclair (Balclutha) 33.98 4; Jalen Ballard (Australia) 34.26 5; Ged Leersen (Australia) 34.76 6.
Junior: Cody Waihape (Gore) 28.36 1; Lydia Thomson (Rangiora) 30.14 2; Emma Martin (Gore) 30.42 3; Joseph Jacka (Australia) 32.33 5; Connor Wilkinson (Wyndham) 33.24 6.
Novice: Dallas Mihaere (Alexandra) 3.00 1; Francis Layton (England) 6.00 2; Jaelem Kingi (King Country) 7.00 3; Maxi Amtead (Australia) 14.00 4; Taurus Horden (Gore) 16.00 5; Ngawaka Karaitiana (Piopio) 16.00 6.
Women: Hannah Rose (Taumarunui) 24.37 1; Lydia Thomson (Rangiora) 24.39 2; Ariana Te Whata (Mossburn) 27.43 3; Emma Martin (Gore) 27.44 4; Cushla Abraham (Masterton) 30.00 5; Alice McKay (Australia) 36.43 6.

Woolhandling:
Open: Joel Henare (Gisborne) 82.71 1; Nova Kumeroa (Mataura) 121.99 2; Foonie Waihape (Alexandra) 158.56 3.
Senior: Autumn Waihape (Mataura) 103.82 1; Saskia Tuhakaraina (Gore) 136.08 2; Whati Turipa (Dannevirke) 137.66 3; Krystal Gulliver (Gore) 179.47 4.
Junior: Madi Little (Balclutha) 116.37 1; Whakapunake Maraki (Flaxmere) 120.60 2; Lucy Elers (Mataura) 133.24 3; Charlize Ratima (Lawrence) 219.44.







Top: *Alisha Casserly, junior woolhandler.* ***Middle:*** *Candy Hiri.* ***Above:*** *Chloe Henderson, Charis Morrell and Joel Henare.*

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Left descending: *Jack Pringle, intermediate runner-up at Balclutha and Gore; Destiny Paikea, intermediate finalist at Balclutha.* ***Above:*** *Nova Kumeroa with the no-hands landing.*



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Above: *The Cook Islands shearing whanau based in Southland came up with a brilliant idea ahead of the world championships in Scotland, in June. Some none-too-difficult negotiations with the Southern Shears committee at Gore in February resulted in Cook Islands representatives holding cultural demonstrations and selection competitions to determine team membership. Having previously been represented at Masterton 2012, Invercargill 2017 and Le Dorat, France in 2019, the Cook Islands will now send woolhandlers Keryn Herbert and Tina Elers, and shearers Marley Waihape and Jovan Taiki to Scotland for the championships that take place 22-25 June at the Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh.*

Bereavements

Doug Sinclair

Former Southland shearer Doug Sinclair died recently after a period of illness. It is believed Doug was in his late 70s.

Doug was three years a finalist at Golden Shears. He finished runner-up to Bill Newland in the 1969 intermediate final, then runner-up to Barry Broome in the senior final a year later before claiming the senior title in 1971.

That win earned him a trip of several weeks to the United Kingdom with the Golden Shears open champion, Brian Quinn. The pair gave shearing demonstrations in England, Wales and Ireland and Doug also appeared at the Bath & West and Southern Counties Shows while Quinn was demonstrating on the Isle of Man. Their itinerary later took them both to Scotland.

Former Southland shearing judge Stewart Weir recalls Doug Sinclair also did a period of competition judging while he was a sheep farmer, before later "jumping the fence" to take up dairying.

"I remember Doug and I judged a final together one time at the Woodlands Show. After the event we compared our cards and we had exactly the same scores for every sheep. It's the only time in my judging career I could remember that happening." [A clear case of great minds thinking alike, Mr Weir! Ed.]

Margaret De Koning

Margaret De Koning, wife and business partner of the late Elbert, former Southland shearing contractor and founding member of the New Zealand Shearing Contractors' Association, died at Lakes District Hospital (Queenstown) on 21 February 2023, aged 85. Noted in the *Southland Times* as "Dearly loved wife of the late Elbert, loved mother and mother-in-law of Diana, Karl and Keli, and the late Susan. Loved Nana to five grandchildren."



This story about Margaret from the April 2018 edition of *Shearing*:

Margaret De Koning's Good Idea

Glenda Betts vividly remembers an occasion when, some years after her three-stand effort she, together with Margaret McAuley and Sharon Crowley were working for Ohai contractors, Elbert and Margaret De Koning: "This particular day – it was a Monday, and Margaret De Koning had done the shed/shearer allocation on the Sunday night.

She decided to send her three women shearers off together to shear 1150 lambs at a four-stand shed. It was an open shed with the farmer supplying the tucker and shed hands.

'I picked up Margaret [McAuley] and we arrived at the shed in my VW Beetle. Sharon arrived in Margaret De Koning's orange Morris Minor two or three minutes later. We started to set up for our start at 7.30am. The farmer meantime scuttled off to ring Elbert and complain that he wanted the 1150 or so lambs finished that same day.

'Margaret and Sharon both cranked up at over 100 a run with Margaret leading the charge. We had the shed cut out by afternoon smoko and we had one happy cocky who soon had a story to tell – and the story very soon made it to the local pub.

Margaret de Koning told me not long afterwards she'd just thought it was a good idea!'

RIP Margaret De Koning; RIP Doug Sinclair.

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Trevor Bacon back on the boards

By Des Williams

At the (somewhat surprising) age of 58, Australia's former world shearing record holder, Trevor Bacon has been a familiar name and face on the shearing scene for nearly 30 years.

He first appeared in New Zealand in the mid-1990s, competing at the New Zealand Merino Shears in 1996 with Shannon Warnest. And when you ask him for a 'two-minute rundown' on what he's been up to since that time, he takes you literally:

'I started shearing really young and progressed steadily, came to New Zealand a few times, then got away from full time shearing and did some farming, bought some trucks (transport company?), then went underground mining at Roxby Downs (BHP, 500km north of Adelaide) for a couple of years I was working there first as a machine operator and then as a trainer.

'Then I was back into shearing as a full-time trainer for TAFE South Australia. That folded after two-and-a-half years so I went back shearing on my own for a couple of years. Now, my wife Sian and I have some training contracts with Australian Wool Innovation, working in sheds and also at shearing schools with novices and learners.'

Well – thanks for the two minutes! We caught up with Trevor at Golden Shears, where he and several other AWI trainers were finishing a one-month stint in New Zealand, working with Tom Wilson and Elite Wool Industry Training (EWIT) in the South Island.

'We've been working really closely with Elite over that time to reach a good understanding on the way they train and they will soon come to Australia and familiarise themselves with our way of operating.

'When New Zealand workers come to us in Australia we will have a good understanding of where they have been work-wise, and what they have done in the way of training with Elite and we will be able to build on that experience with our Australian systems and methods. And vice-versa when Australian staff come to New Zealand.'

EWIT's Tom Wilson described the Memorandum of Understanding reached with AWI as a most exciting development in trans-Tasman industry training. 'It's clear the young people here on this trip have already gained much from the experience, with several doing well at Golden Shears.'

Trevor's present annual training routine involves two months in Queensland and the rest of the year doing schools and in-shed work in Victoria and South Australia.

And just to refresh our memories on Trevor's world record – he shore 471 merino-cross lambs at Wallabrook, near Naracoorte SA on 7 October 2002, extending by 44 the previous mark of Brett Cavanough shorn on 20 September 1997. Since then, Dwayne Black (519 in 2005), Aidan Copp (524 in 2019) and Floyde Neil (527 at Kojonup, WA) on 13 November 2022 have raised the bar even higher.





Top: *Trevor Bacon shearing and Shannon Warnest watching during a 'warm-up' at Taratahi prior to the Golden Shears in 1996.* ***Above:*** *Trevor (second left) at Golden Shears with some of the Australian Wool Innovation trainers who (along with a number of young shearing ambassadors) ended a month-long stay in New Zealand, working with Tom Wilson and Elite Wool Industry Training in the South Island. Pictured from left are Josh Sneath, Trevor Bacon, Paul Oster, Craig French, Glen Haynes and Tom Wilson (EWIT)*

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Snow Quinn opened the door

By Gabriela Schmidt-Morrell

A legend of a shearer in his time: six times Golden Shears open champion between 1965 and 1972, and get this: Retired for a few years from competition shearing, then made a comeback especially for the second world championship, held at Masterton in 1980. [The first was held in England, in 1977.] Just for that occasion, he stepped up within the year and won the title on the back of a zero lead up.

But that is not what I want to talk about, nor his clever hunting methods and dog handling skills, or his community work: For example, reading books to kindergarten kids after he slowed down to part-time work.

What I want to acknowledge in this article is the role he played in my professional life as a shearing contractor.

I was relatively new to New Zealand, and Dion introduced me to Snow Quinn one time in the very early 2000s. He lived on a little lifestyle block near Alexandra in Central Otago and was – amongst other things – a shearing contractor.

He owned a little open run, with work for one or two crews a few months of the year, servicing sheds around Central Otago, many of them fine wool.

At the time, Dion was still shearing, but his back was starting to give in a bit. He was off work regularly, trying to patch himself together again. Generally, after shearing rams. That would do it. Most shearers in their 40s would know what I am talking about.

After a few years of on and off suffering, we decided shearing full-time was no longer sustainable and we started looking for other career options.

Snow and Dion had a few discussions around the run, and Snow decided, or agreed, he would sell his run to us once he reached retirement age, as long as Dion shore on the run for a season.

It sounded great, and that is indeed what happened. In 2006, when Snow turned 65, he, a man of his word, sold us his run for the price of the old van he was using at the time. We were excited.

That was the beginning of Dion Morrell Shearing. I don't think we realised in that moment what a gift it was. His gesture allowed Dion and I a clean start into contracting, easing us into the job on the back of a solid little run. We learned the ropes and grew from there.





Top and above: *Brian 'Snow' Quinn the shearing judge and Dion Morrell the fine wool shearer-turned contractor. New Zealand Merino Shears, Alexandra, 1996. It was Morrell's first time in the final, which he won. He repeated that success in 1997 and 2002 and made the final on eight other occasions.*

What Snow Quinn is for me is nothing to do with being a shearer legend. He is the man that gave us an opportunity, provided a steppingstone into owning a business. He opened a door. Maybe he didn't realise just what he did for us, and maybe he did. Either way we owe him a lot and I feel grateful every time I see him.

Snow Quinn is, by the way, still on his lifestyle block, still shearing his own sheep, still helping people around him, fit as a fiddle. He could even be hunting the hills at the back of Earnscleugh as I am writing this. We wish him many more happy years in Central.

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Cry (German) wolf!

By Roger Leslie

The first time I heard the word 'wolf' in Germany, it made me happy. My grasp of German was limited and any word I recognised, without reference to the dictionary, I latched onto like a drowning man to a flotation device. It seemed the word was the same in both languages and only pronouncing the w as a v was different.

On that occasion the shepherd was screaming at his dog, which appropriately was called Wolf. I say appropriately because it was much more interested in carnage and disorder than in shepherding. Its favourite pastime was singling out unsuspecting lambs and dragging them into roadside ditches for a bit of quiet mauling. This was tolerated to a certain extent until some unseen boundary was crossed and he would be called to heel, where he would be patted fondly on the head while blood dripped from his ugly maw.

When I heard other mutts in the travelling menagerie also called 'Wolf' I naively enquired and was answered with a careless wave of the arm. "They are all called Wolf." These hounds were the product of years on the road with the sheep, and a lot of careful inbreeding.

I never thought much about wolves because they were a thing of the past in populous Western Europe. I once visited the Transylvanian region of Romania and was introduced to a shepherd there who lived with his tiny flock of sheep in the hills. Amongst his sheep were half a dozen Wolfhounds keeping a weather eye on things, including me, the foreigner.



In the translated discussion I told him I had sheep back home in NZ and that my father was looking after them while I was away. He was politely disbelieving of this, and the obvious hole in my story was the wolves. "How did I keep my father safe from the wolves?" When I told him there were no wolves in New Zealand, he took on an ethereal stance and said "Yes, yes, no wolves, yes, yes!" I can still see the look on his face as he stared into the world of impossible dreams.

Now western Europe has reintroduced the wolf and the terror of wolf attacks on sheep is a daily experience for shepherds. It is much easier for the wolf to 'kill and destroy' in a paddock of penned sheep than chase a fleet-footed deer in the forest. The wolf of the past had to watch out for humans who were his natural enemy, but today most of the humans have a romantic notion that the wolves are cute and have every right to be there.

This view is easy to have if you live in the city and have never seen a wolf close up, or seen what they can do to a flock of sheep. Yesterday a friend sent me a picture of half a dozen slaughtered sheep which were attacked while in the supposed protection of a shed. Last year I saw a documentary on German TV about a friend who lost 40 of his 160 stud sheep, most of which he knew by name. He said he had taken the advice of the 'Wolf expert' and surrounded his sheep with a special wolf proof electric fence.

But the expert hadn't told the wolves and they had jumped over the fence and killed eighteen sheep, disembowelled two more (that were still alive) and drowned a further twenty in the creek. When the expert came to sign off the much lauded compensation package, he refused the twenty drowned sheep because there was no evidence the wolf had done it. He also disputed the two injured sheep that had to be put down because it was the shepherd that actually killed them.

I asked how long it would be before a child or some other vulnerable person was killed by wolves, and he said he believed this had already happened but that it had been covered up by

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Increasingly I am finding sheep with horrific scars on their throats left by a wolf. Such a sheep is not easy to shear because this kind of trauma leaves a mark on their mental stability, and sadly, also on that of the shepherd.

Ten years ago, the chief reason shepherds gave for 'getting out of sheep' was bureaucracy. Now the bureaucrat has a much mightier weapon than the pen. The wolf. We may think the sheep industry in NZ is going through hard times, but we should be counting our blessings.

* * * * * *

I am often asked what I will do when I'm too old to shear – I have given a variety of answers to this, because I guess it's weighing on my mind as well. Last year I started telling the German shepherds I know well, that I would become a wolf hunter. This raised a few wry smiles, but some gave it serious thought beyond the intended levity.

One lady shepherd, who I suspect has long been a kindly soul, but has been traumatized by the wolf attacks, looked me in the eye and said, 'But that's illegal.' I replied, 'Yes.' She then suggested that if I did take up that vocation, that I put the evidence on the railway track and then no-one would know what had killed it.

I said, 'You've given this some thought.' She just looked at me, but there was the fires of passion burning in her eyes.









Above: *Stuart Goat and Jahdei Rakete from Forde Winders Shearing, preparing for another day in the shed.*



‘Shearing’ the message of good behaviour

By Dannii Sargent, WFVN Coordinator

A weekend of watching some of the world’s top shearers and woolhandlers was an exciting prospect for the Wairarapa Family Violence Network (WFVN) – but most exciting was the conversations created.

The network coordinates campaigns around the region, working alongside services, schools and the community to reduce incidences of violence and provide violence-free education. When former women’s world shearing record holder, Jills Angus Burney, a local barrister approached the network in 2022 she sought for Golden Shears to partner up with our public education programme because “it was an opportunity for both parties not to be missed.”

Following the serious assault of volunteers at the Waimate Shears in 2021, the Golden Shears has taken a proactive stance and sent a strong message to the industry to recognise and encourage good behaviour.

Partnering with Farmstrong, the Wairarapa Rural Support Trust and the Salvation Army, the network went to work at the event: having conversations with competitors, shearers and woolhandlers, whanau, visitors and overseas visitors about the ways violence shows up in poor and often impulsive behaviour across all our communities.

Wairarapa Family Violence Network aligned with the White Ribbon funding and campaign of ‘Boys will be Boys’ and worked with local iwi to have both English and Te Reo printed t-shirts printed to be given to officials, door staff and top shearers.

Farmstrong backed the campaign and handed out bags with their Wellbeing book and other promotions to many competitors on day two of the event, the Friday, until stock was exhausted.

“The Golden Shears Executive has been forward-thinking and courageous in supporting our presence at the 61st Golden Shears,” network coordinator Dannii Sargent said.

“It was great to see the message supported by Jills and her Golden Shears Committee colleagues – but also by prominent shearers. With over 100 tee-shirts worn, the event was a success. We hope to be back next year.”



Above: *Masterton’s Police District Family Violence Team, on the doors at the 2023 Golden Shears.*



Above: *Shane Ratima, that good bugger from Ratima Shearing, Hunterville, competing in the open heats at New Zealand championships. Unfortunately, Judge Eugene King must have found a few flaws to prevent Shane from qualifying!*

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He may pass this way again ...

By Des Williams

If you ever go across the sea to Ireland and find yourself leaving Dublin via the road to Galway, you will very soon reach County Kildare, where Godfrey Potterton's family farm is situated. Godfrey lives close to the township of Kildare, population about 9000. He grew up on the farm with two brothers – one older and one younger - and says he inherited his interest in sheep and wool from his father.

"Dad would always wash the sheep before shearing if he was doing it, but later he brought in the shearing contractors and I was quite surprised that they used to wear hobnail boots! There was always a period of excitement while get things sorted out before the shearers arrived.

"I suppose I started shearing sheep myself in the early 1970s – I was born in 1956, so I would have been in my teens. I did quite a bit of shearing back then but I was never very good at it. I didn't do huge numbers but I always enjoyed going to all the different farms and listening to the different stories people had to tell."

Godfrey says shearing conditions on some Irish farms leave a great deal to be desired compared to here in New Zealand. Their flocks are small and there are basically two breeds – mountain sheep and lowland sheep.

"Years ago, the proceeds from wool was generally the first money to come onto the farm for the year, in May or June. I have heard stories from years ago that the money from the wool of 70 or 80 Cheviot sheep would be sufficient to buy a good Rayburn cooker and hot water system for the house. Others were able to sell two years' worth of wool at the same time and buy a new car. Now, you'd need wool from tens of thousands of sheep to buy a new car.

"As a child I had the job of plucking the wool from any sheep that died and that was worth quite a lot of money back then, which I was allowed to keep. My father farmed in a smallish way, raising pedigree stock – what you would call stud stock here in New Zealand. He ran Hereford cattle and Oxford down sheep. We used to exhibit sheep at the agricultural shows – we would take them all over the place and I was always proud to lead them around the show ring.



Above: *Godfrey Potterton and Mongolian shearer Nasan Chuluunbaatar at the world championships, Invercargill in 2017.*

"We went to places like the Royal Dublin Show, but also to England and the Royal Welsh Show. My father also used to judge at a lot of the shows we went to. And I suppose I have carried on that tradition – I've been going to the Royal Welsh Show for years and years and years."

Godfrey describes himself as 'a born-farmer from a young age', growing up with a profound love of dogs, goats, chickens, hens and animals of all kinds. "I just loved all of that and consider myself very lucky to have been born on a farm.

"And then I went off to Agricultural College to further my education and when that was done I did some travelling around Europe, by inter-rail (cheap tickets!) or hitch-hiking. I was always looking over the hedges and fences to see what kind of cows and other animals were being kept there."

During those travels Godfrey met a young lady from the west of Ireland by the name of Elizabeth Bourke, who was also from a farming background. They were married in 1979 and have two grown children, Graham and Hazel, who is presently resident in New Zealand. They now reside on what was part of the original family farm.

"But I've always had a love of the wool and you might

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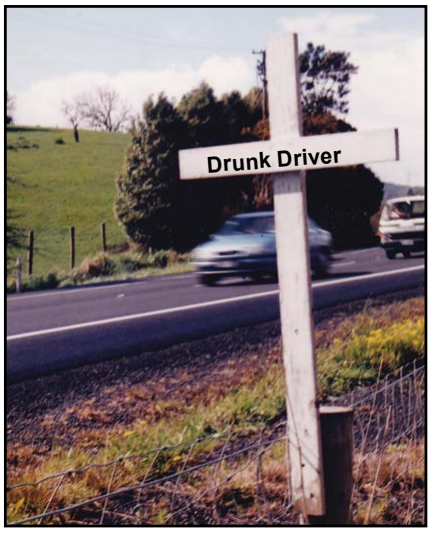

Don't let this be you!





Top: *Godfrey Potterton shearing at Reefton Show, 2015.* ***Above:*** *Godfrey judging Welshman Gwion Evans at Invercargill, 2017.*

say that can be traced back several generations. Some of my ancestors were wool merchants and they had a good business selling wool to the French military when France was invading countries around the world they needed wool for uniforms. They couldn't buy wool from Great Britain because they weren't particularly friendly at the time. So, they came in through the back door and bought wool from Ireland and some of my family did very well out of it, selling wool to the French. I really believe my own interest in, and love of wool comes from that far back.

"About 20 years ago I joined up with the Ireland Sheep Shearing Association and got to know lots of like-minded people. I got on the committee and progressed with the help of a lot of people to train as a shearing judge. Arwyn Jones of Wales would be foremost among those people who have helped me along that path that has led to my judging at two world championships – Gorey Ireland in 2014 and at Invercargill in 2017. Through this involvement I have developed friendships with many people of similar interests - people with a similar love of sheep and wool and shearing."

Godfrey recently spent nine weeks in New Zealand, on what was his fifth or sixth (?) visit and spent his 66th birthday on Stewart Island/Rakiura searching (unsuccessfully) for kiwi. He had the bonus experience of a very rough crossing of Foveaux Strait, but the trip was well worth it, despite that.

His first visit to New Zealand about 20 years ago was the result of a chance meeting with a Kiwi from Oamaru, who was working at a wool store in Ireland.

"I really got my eyes opened when he took me around to New Zealand shearing sheds and wool stores – I really loved every minute of it. I got taken to Milford Sound and other special places and I think I got infected with a New Zealand bug! From that initial visit I've developed a great interest in and love for New Zealand.

"Then I came back a few years later and got myself a little van to travel about in. Whenever I came to a shearing shed with sheep in the yards or being shorn I would stop and quietly go in and make myself known. You break the ice with a compliment about the good sheep or nice dogs and next thing you are on the way to making another good friend."

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It was chance, too, that led me to meeting and becoming great friends with a farming couple from Hunterville. These 'chance' friendships have resulted in visits to sheep sales at Temuka and cattle sales at Te Kuiti – and another special occasion - a 'chance' meeting with Sir David Fagan at Te Kuiti. "We enjoyed tea and scones and just hanging about for the afternoon. I had met David before of course, at the world championships in Invercargill when he shore a sheep with Prime Minister Bill English.

"New Zealand and Ireland have a lot in common but we have a lot of differences, too. The scale of farming here is big – huge, whereas it is smaller and part time at home. That has allowed me to come to New Zealand for nine weeks while my wife and son Graham look after the farm at home."

As we sat chatting in the afternoon sunshine at National Park, Godfrey had just returned from a two-night stay at Blue Duck Station on the Whanganui River, owned by Dan Steele, who he describes as 'quite a character'.

"That's an amazing place Dan has developed. Seven thousand hectares, half in bush and half in farmland. He's into beef cattle, sheep and honey production in a big way. He has been carrying out sustained pest control in the bush areas for many years now, employs a lot of people on that work and the birdlife is simply amazing. Everybody should go there to see what can be achieved.

"We got on the tail end of a group that was being shown around by a bloke who was explaining all about the Station and what was going on there. There was also shearing going on while we were there and he spoke about the wool and the limited value it had. I don't know who the gang was [King Brown Shearing from Taumarunui] but they seemed to be doing a very good job. Two shearers had each done over a hundred for the first run.

"I have always had an interest in nature, going back to my



Above: *Judges for the world championships at Invercargill in 2017, attending a training day at Alan Lindsay's Myross Bush farm. Godfrey Potterton (second left), Gerard Kelly (Northen Ireland) and Tom Dunne (Ireland) with front row seats in the stand.* ***Opposite:*** *A Phil Oldfield blade shearing course in County Mayo, prior to the 2014 world championships in Ireland. From left: Seamus Joyce (RIP), Joe Scargill (the farmer, on machine), Anita Kerrigan and Peter Heraty.*



Above: *Godfrey Potterton points to the location of Blue Duck Station: "An amazing place that everyone should visit."*

boyhood on the farm at Kildare with its wetland birds and the like and I used to like doing some shooting in what we regarded as 'wild' areas. We did a lot of drainage work and reclamations and fencing and building. But through that development we lost a lot of species from the farm.

"Then as you get older you start to look at things differently. Looking back now, there were a lot of bird species we made homeless and it was happening the same in many other places. We were promoted to do it of course and paid subsidies in order to increase farm production. But I have always had that love for the little things we don't understand – 'God's little creatures', for want of a better term.

"Back in the 1970s and '80s we didn't have a good understanding of the bigger picture. We do now and farming is a part of it, of course, and there are a helluva a lot of people who need to be fed, but maybe we need to roll back a bit, make some space and regain some balance.

"On our own farm we have joined local environmental initiatives, fenced off our drains, let some wetland areas revert, reduced our use of fertilizer and got the right breed of sheep to farm. I started breeding New Zealand romneys about five years ago, using Wairere stock and getting the best genetics. So that's my main thing now, breeding New Zealand romneys and they are well suited to Ireland. They are bred here to get up and go and look after themselves and those characteristics are welcome in Ireland!"

Godfrey looks forward to the next world championships at Edinburgh in June. He won't be there as a judge, but considers himself most fortunate to have represented Ireland at Gorey 2014 and Invercargill in 2017.



"Invercargill was just a fantastic experience, meeting judges from all over and shearers of many nationalities from countries you would not normally associate with shearing, using all kinds of equipment. And capacity crowds sitting in comfort at a great venue. I remember we got some good briefings ahead of the big evening sessions: 'When you are up on that stage the crowd will get louder as the evening goes on – your job is to not hear it!' And, 'Don't go waving to your aunty down in the back row!'

"Tom Dunne was the instigator for getting me to Invercargill. I had judged at the Royal Ulster and in Scotland and several other shows. Then Tom told me I was off to Invercargill in the South Island of New Zealand – I was absolutely delighted. It was spectacular, and such a privilege to be there.

"Prior to my judging at Gorey 2014 I had only been judging for two or three years but I was getting encouragement from a lot of people so I was both lucky and fortunate to get those appointments. Arwyn Jones was particularly helpful. He ran the first judging course I attended. I didn't know much about it but some things just stick in your mind. Arwyn said, 'Judge what you see, and only what you see. You might think you know what's going to happen in the next blow or half blow, but until it does happen you don't judge it!'

"So, I've always regarded that as my number one piece of advice. And it was nice to have someone from outside the local fold explaining these things. I think he was an independent trainer at that stage. He came to Ireland and did quite a few judging courses that I remember."

In what might be described as true Irish fashion, Godfrey has developed many friends during his 20 years of close association with New Zealand, and special among them is Geraldine blade shearer, Phil Oldfield, with whom he spent a week. "Phil has done so much for blade shearing in Ireland, he's been over four times in the past ten years, doing training courses for our promising young shearers.



Godfrey's trip this time was the result that 'New Zealand bug' – "You know, when you get an itch you have to do something about it." So, I am here while my wife Elizabeth, son Graham and his fiancé Jayne are looking after the farm at home, and it's because of that willing support I have been able to come back, and I am grateful for it.

'Well, that's my story. Everyone has a story!"

"I expect to pass this way but once," (allowing for some translation) said French missionary Stephen Grellet, back in the 1800s. But without putting too much money on the table, it might be a safe bet that Godfrey Potterton will surely pass this way again ...

* * * * * *



Above: *Perhaps the next generation of globe-trotting Irish machine-shearing champions in the making – Patrick Corrigan (left) and Paddy Dunne – both descendants of All-Ireland champions. The pair spent some time working in New Zealand (with Kirkpatrick Shearing in Hawkes Bay) before heading home to Ireland after Golden Shears, where they had competed in the junior division. They have some good precedent footsteps to follow – Michael Stephens, Seamus Braddick, George Graham, Joe Healy, Ivan Scott, Stanley Allingham ...*

Below: *And speaking of globe-trotters – Ivan Rosandich (left) and Ian 'Scottie' Stewart have clocked up a few miles in pursuit of sheep to shear. Ivan was New Zealand Golden Shears champion in 1981 and Scottie won the inaugural British Golden Shears open at Bath & West in 1964.*



From History's Page

Shearing Contests Young Farmers' Competitions Show Fixture Attracts Wide Interest

(Extract from Manawatu Times, 7 November 1938.)
Staged for the first time, shearing contests for members of Young Farmers Clubs attracted great interest at the Manawatu Show on Saturday. Over 1000 spectators were present when the events started in the morning, and at stages throughout the day there were over 2000 onlookers.

There were 94 competitors and they were divided into three sections, depending on the shearing ability of the entrant. The first contest was for those who could not shear more than 99 sheep in a 9 hour day, the second for those whose ability lay between 99 and 149, and the third was an open class, carrying with it the New Zealand Young Farmers championship. The competitors in all classes had to be bona fide members of Young Farmers Clubs.

The contests were staged in one of the main halls. Stadium seating had been erected on one side, and along the opposite side were the pens and shearing machines, ten in number. Three heats were necessary in each section, the outstanding competitors qualifying for the finals.

In the judging a maximum of 40 points was allowed for speed, 20 for neatness and 40 for style. Under the latter heading many considerations were taken into account. Each competitor was allowed a practice sheep and was then required to do two under competition conditions, entrants starting on these simultaneously at the word 'go'.

There were many close finishes, and the crowd was not slow in showing appreciation. Several humorous interludes occurred when sheep broke free and tried to find quieter surroundings.

The organisation and control of the contest worked very smoothly. Mr EW Barnett (Tokorangi) was the supervisor, and associated with him as stewards were members of the Young Farmers' organisation. The judges were Messrs. P De Malmanche (Opunake), AW Hudson (Massey College) and K Duncan (Hunterville), while Messrs R Linklater (Colyton), B Chrystall (Kairanga), D Scott (Aokautere), HM Linklater (Pohangina) and A Guy (Kairanga) acted as junior judges.

It is intended to make the contests an annual fixture, the venue probably alternating between the North and South Islands.

Nearly 400 sheep were sheared during the day. These were four-tooth wethers and were supplied by the Palmerston North City Council, being the sheep that it has grazing on the aerodrome. As each sheep was shorn its wool was gathered up and removed to a grading table and then pressed and bailed.

Of outstanding interest was an exhibition provided during the afternoon by one of the judges (Mr de Malmanche) and Messrs LB Green (Raumai), J Pirie (Dannevirke) and W Hoppi (sic) (Dannevirke). Mr de Malmanche in 1934 established a world's record of 409 sheep in a nine hour day while both Messrs Pirie and Hoppi have individual tallies exceeding 300. Each of these three put through six sheep in time averaging under two minutes for each animal, and the speed and sureness with which they worked was an eye-opener to the 3000 spectators.

It was left to Mr. Green, however, to provide the most educative portion of the demonstration. A veteran of 35 years shearing experience and an expert with both the old-time hand-operated blades and the modern electrical machine which has displaced them, he demonstrated both methods, doing two sheep by hand and then three with the machine.

With blades he has done 183 sheep in a day and with the machine 338, and had the demonstration of the former method been in less expert hands, the comparison between the two methods might have appeared incongruous.

Commenting on the young farmers' shearing, Mr de Malmanche expressed keen satisfaction with the work of all the competitors and congratulated them on the way they had handled the sheep and on their style and neat work. He praised the organisation of the contests and pointed out that there was need for encouragement of shearing, as the number of shearers was getting less each year and there was a definite shortage at present.

Addressing the spectators, Mr Barnett thanked them for their enthusiasm and said the Young Farmers Clubs felt fully rewarded for the work they had that had been put in, in organising the contest.

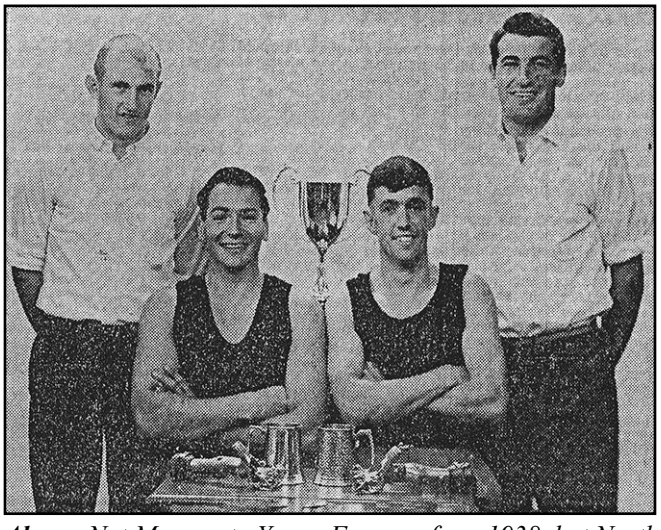
Results were as follows:

Junior class for shearers who could not shear more than 99 sheep in a nine-hour day: J Meads (Hunterville) 1. Others who qualified for the final were EJ Osborne (Apiti), PG Thevenard (Kimbolton-Kiwitea), GT Third (Shannon), WJ Cooper (Masterton), D Simmonds (Dannevirke), HH Cooper (Masterton), S Hay (Tinui), A Stewart (Bunnythorpe).

Intermediate class, up to 149 sheep in a nine-hour day: D Carman (Tinui) 96 points, 1; GW Blixt (Pohangina) 91, 2; RL Meads (Waituna West) 90, 3. Others who qualified for the final were GA Mitchell (Kairanga), TM Henson (Feilding), A Lupton (Waverley), N Checkley (Mangatainoka), AF Blatchford (Woodville), L McNeil (Taihape).

New Zealand Young Farmers championship: R Hutt (Onga Onga), 89 points, 1; I Bowen (Te Puke), 87, 2; W Thompson (Rangiwahia), 85, 3; S Steedman (Taihape) 84, 4.

Others who qualified for the final were: W Brown (Kimbolton-Kiwitea), GR Ritchie (Kimbolton-Kiwitea), MA Brightwell (Marton), ERJ Stewart (Darfield), F McKinstry (Masterton). Fastest time for any one sheep, 2min 2sec, was returned by Hutt.



Above: *Not Manawatu Young Farmers from 1938, but North Canterbury Young Farmers from 1965, winners of a ten-day, New Zealand Wool Board-sponsored trip to Australia after the big regional finals at Golden Shears. From left: Warren Breitmeyer (Little River), Trevor Taege (Annat), Robin Manson (Motukarara) and Malcolm Calder, (West Melton).*

Meet the real Jimmy Power

By Des Williams

Until now, the story of James Charles 'Jimmy' Power, the New Zealand shearer who became known as the first to introduce the 'long blow' to the shearing pattern, might best be described as a jigsaw puzzle with many missing parts. Now with this, the fourth effort in which *Shearing* magazine attempts to draw together a credible and accurate story, we introduce plentiful new information, thanks to 'Ancestry' websites and other on-line sources.

One of the few things we did know for certain is how the story ends. Sergeant James Charles Power was killed in the Boer War, at the Battle of Onverwacht on 4 January 1902. He had signed on as No. 79 with the 4th Queensland Imperial Bushman (QIB) and left Australia for South Africa aboard SS Manchester Port on 18 May 1900.

The eager 'bushmen' had a little skirmish with officialdom long before reaching South Africa! The Press (Christchurch) published a story on 31 May 1900, based on a letter from one of the 'bushmen' (presumably posted somewhere en route): 'All members of the QIB were put on Imperial rations as soon as the transport ship got to sea. Namely: bread and tea at all three meals. All the Contingents howled together like jackals, 'til the officers provided cheese and biscuits.'

When the 4th QIB tour of duty was completed towards the end of 1901, Jimmy opted to transfer to the 5th QIB (No. 525) rather than return home immediately. By that time, after more than a year of active service, he had been promoted to the rank of sergeant, having earlier been noted for 'Gallantry and good conduct in action.'

The battle at Onverwacht involved about 50 Queenslanders who were vastly outnumbered. Figures reported at the time indicated thirteen were killed, including Power, and another 17 were wounded. (The Australians at the Boer War: RL Wallace, The Australian War Memorial and Australian Government Publishing Service, 1976).

A fair portion of the earlier known information about Jimmy Power's shearing exploits came from a long letter written to The Press (Christchurch) by George Gardner, published on 13 June 1953. Therein Mr Gardner described how Jimmy discovered the 'long blow' by accident while shearing at Dunlop Station in 1891.

Mr Gardner wrote: 'I always maintain that Jimmy Power, a New Zealander from Oamaru, was the champion of champions at machine shearing.' Thus, a second definitive piece in the jigsaw was sorted - Power's association with Oamaru was confirmed by virtue of the fact his name is recorded on that South Island town's South African War Memorial.

George Gardner explained how he had been prompted to write his letter after watching a shearing demonstration at Addington by Godfrey Bowen: 'Godfrey Bowen's style, except in one small particular, is no different from that originated by James Power, just on 62 years ago [1891], at Dunlop Station, on the River Darling, New South Wales.

'Taken all round, Jimmy was the most scientific and fastest machine shearer the world has yet seen. Of that, I am positive. And also, the first anywhere to accommodate himself to the different technique, as between blade and machine shearing. He discovered the 'long blow'. I know this only too well, for I was his pen mate at Dunlop when it happened.



Above: *Champion shearer and South African Boer War casualty, Sergeant Jimmy Power. (Photoshop colourised.)*

'We were shearing very big merino rams, with outsized spiral horns. Finishing off the first shoulder, Jimmy's sheep got out of control, banged its head down, and the horn smashed a hole in the floor. I up and took notice, for more reasons than one. But Jimmy's brain acted as it always did, very quickly.

'In a peculiar manner, he just pinned the ram on its back, with his right knee on the crutch, and shore away from aft to fore in great style, despite the violent exertions of the animal's hind leg in the air – which didn't incommode Jimmy in the slightest. By the time the back ridge was reached, the ram decided to call it a day, and so, a revolutionary technique was evolved, and I was the first to follow suit.

'Among other things first put into practice by Jimmy was his method of shaping the points of the teeth of his combs in that peculiar manner which enables them to enter the fleece easily, and at the same time to ride the skin safely. An elementary, but indispensable artifice to have at one's command. Next, was the particular attention he always paid to the 'throw' of the cutter on the comb, so as to prevent and obviate 'pulling' and 'chewing' – in other words, to ensure a complete cut.

'Also, he was the first machine shearer in Australia, in 1891, to discard the old-time hand shearer's style of opening



Above: *Sergeant JC Power (name underlined) on the Oamaru Boer War Memorial. (Ron Palenski photo.)*

up the neck, viz, by starting away back on the last shoulder, and emerging by the off ear. He simply shore straight up over the wind pipe, which kept the fleece balance undamaged, and saved it from being broken down the back.

'Jimmy was always very proud of how compact his fleece finished on the floor. These various traits may seem trite and common-place now, even to those who really do know good shearing, but all the same they were found out and practised before Godfrey Bowen was born. No detraction of any sort is meant to the latter; rather, he deserves the utmost credit for his spirited action in putting his special knowledge and ability at the disposal of others, even in this year 1953.

'In conclusion, I really must mention, that Jimmy Power was sadly deficient in one thing – showmanship – when the unprecedented number of sheep he shore each season, is taken into consideration. Regarding a day's tally, I quote from 'This Century of Ours' in which it is stated, 'It is generally accepted that the best day's work on merino sheep during the 'Roaring Ninetys' (sic) was Jimmy Power's 315 in 7 hours 20 minutes at Barenya, Queensland, in 1895, and if more sheep had been available, it was generally understood he would have put up a world's record.

'Be it understood this would have been done on merinos, not lambs, and not Cheviots. Under artificial circumstances, goodness only knows, but he might have walloped out a thousand a day, and got a gold medal, and had a singlet named after him.'

Before we get to Jimmy Power shearing at Barenya in 1895, there is information available from The Press (6 October 1893), contained in a letter from 'N.P.', sent from Northampton Downs Station, via Blackall, Central Queensland and dated 27 August 1893:

'Sir: It may be interesting to many of your readers to hear some of the tallies cut by New Zealand shearers in central Queensland. The shearing started this year later than usual owing to the drought, and only 43 men are on the board instead of 62 as in other years. The stamp of men employed may well be gauged by the fact that in the four weeks up to last Saturday only one man had lost one full day, one half a day and one an hour and a half. A record probably for such a number of men.

'The forty-three shearers shore 116, 821 in the four weeks. During the week (July 24th to 31st) 29,006 sheep were shorn, of which James Power was credited with 1022, G Gardiner 959, and L Pulley 927.

'From July 31st to August 5th, the record was 31, 916: J Power 1098, G Gardiner 1012, Pulley 1005. During that week J Power's tallies were 172, 183, 182, 202, 224, and 135 on Saturday. The sheep shorn were 4-tooth wethers.

'For the week August 7th to 12th, 35,180 sheep were shorn, Power 1290, Gardiner 1138, Pulley 1023, McPhee 1113, and Creed 1054. The principal tallies that week were: Power 222, 210, 229, 237, 247, and 145 Saturday; Gardiner 200, 182, 209, 206, 216, and 125. In connection with these tallies I should mention that shearing terminates at 1:00pm on Saturday, the hours worked per day being eight hours.

'James Power is the son of Mr J Power, of Oamaru. G Gardiner comes from the Cust, where his people are well known farmers, and L Pulley is from Loburn, North Canterbury. A lot more well-known New Zealand shearers are here and are very highly spoken of through Queensland by the squatters. Another New Zealand shearer, Dennis Noonan, has lately cut some big tallies up at Marathon Station and claimed to be the champion machine shearer. He was challenged by Mr M S Tolano, of Blackall, to shear against James Power for from £50 to £1000 but so far no notice has been taken by Noonan of the challenge.

'PS: The week August 14th to 19th, Power shore 203, 216, 218, 222, 209, 142. He averaged over 200 per day for three weeks up to date.'

And so to Barenya on 20 September 1895. The Oamaru Mail (16 November 1895) reported how 29 men had shorn nearly 90,000 sheep in three weeks and five days, or 172½ hours. The best days included Sept 19th – eight men averaged 236 sheep; Sept 20th – 11 men averaged 236 sheep. 'The highest individual tally was made by J Power on the 20th September, when he shore 315 sheep (mixed), working less than eight hours. The sheep were shorn better this year than ever before on Barenya Station.'

A correspondent to the Hughenden newspaper declared, 'J Power's tally is the highest ever done in one day in Australia, I believe in the world. I saw some time back, a record of the highest machine performances in the States of America, and to the best of my recollection it was 340 for ten hours. Power's 315 were shorn in seven hours 45 minutes. He is a phenomenal shearer – one man in a million – and he shears so clean there is no chance for the boss of the board to 'wire' him.'

Information provided by Hamilton-based Boer War historian Richard Stowers (since RIP), together with additional detail from Australian researchers Bernie Walker, Dave Parker and Des De Belle for our story in the November 2013 edition of Shearing magazine, indicated that Jimmy Power had given his address on enlistment in Australia as C/- Jeremiah Power, 'Pomakaho, Auckland'.

Because of George Gardner's assertion that Jimmy had come from Oamaru, this reference caused some major confusion in trying to complete Jimmy's jigsaw; No such place name existed then, or now, but was recently verified as 'Paemako', south of Te Kuiti, where Jeremiah and his eldest son William took up a block (or blocks?) in 1896. Not very close to Auckland, but more on that later.

In the meantime - George Graham and Ivan Scott – perhaps you should sit up and take notice, for although most mentions of Jimmy Power in print have him noted as a New Zealander, he actually came into the world at Ballygrennan, County Limerick, Ireland, the seventh of ten children born to Jeremiah and Honora Power (nee Byrnes) from Knockfierna.

Jeremiah (a farmer) and Honora were married at Ballingarry Catholic Church, County Limerick, on 8 March 1859. They brought their large family to New Zealand when the youngest, Annie was four-years-old, arriving at Port Chalmers via the SS Invercargill on 2 October 1878, having sailed from Glasgow on 12 July. Born on 26 April 1869, Jimmy was therefore not yet nine years of age when he came to New Zealand. His siblings in order of arrival were:

William Power (1860-1924) (farm labourer); Mary (Mariam?) Power (1861-1897) (domestic servant); Margaret Power (1862-1879); John Henry Power (1864-1929); Patrick John Power (1866-1936) (farm labourer); Johanna Power (1867-1931); James Charles Power (1869-1902); Michael Joseph Power (1871-1897); Jeremiah Joseph Power (1872-1899) and Annie Power (1874-1902).

Note: Margaret and John Henry had sailed to New Zealand on separate ships from the rest of the family. Jeremiah and Honora and the other eight children sailed as a 'Colonial Nominated Family'. New Zealand's Immigration and Public Works Act 1870 had envisaged two kinds of immigrants; those recruited by the New Zealand Agent-General and those nominated by people already living in New Zealand. The Power family arrived in that latter category. 'Ancestry' information records that Honora's parents John Byrnes and Margaret (nee Scanlan), also from Knockfierna, had come to New Zealand some time prior and settled at Oamaru, which no doubt also determined the Power family's choice of locality.

At Oamaru, Jeremiah found work as a labourer and by about the mid-1880s Jimmy had also entered the workforce. Whether it was initially as a shearer, or later when he picked up the handpiece is not known but it is likely he would have completed a few seasons around Otago and maybe Canterbury before heading across to Australia. As noted above, he was shearing with George Gardner (from Cust, in Canterbury) at Dunlop Station in 1891 when that stroppy ram with the spiral horns lay down long enough for Jimmy to 'invent' the long blow.

It is likely that Jimmy would have alternated between New Zealand and central-western Queensland for his first few seasons of shearing at least, before becoming a more permanent resident in Queensland. His younger brother Michael Joseph was already living at Longreach in 1891, having married Frances Hall there that year. Jimmy was known to be working around the Barcaldine area, and was the owner of a house at Ibis Street, Longreach for some time before signing on with the 4th QIB.

Jeremiah and Honora Power stayed at Oamaru until about April 1896, by which time eldest son William had married Margaret Brosnahan from Wellington and they, with Jeremiah, moved to Paemako in the King Country, to 'take advantage of the new opportunities' in an area that had just been opened up for farming. This was a new settlement where some 1400 acres had been subdivided into a dozen farms, with most settlers having to find work on local road construction works to supplement their farming income.

While Jeremiah was with William and Margaret at Paemako, Honora, Jeremiah Joseph and Annie went to join Jimmy and Michael at Longreach. John Henry Power and Patrick John Power were also in Queensland as shearers, perhaps even before Jimmy.

And while all soldiers must march off to war with at least some realisation that they may not return alive, several of Jimmy Power's brothers and sisters were also destined for early deaths. Sister Margaret, a dressmaker, had died from a 'brain fever' on 22 March 1879, just a few months after arrival in New Zealand. She was 16-years-of-age.

Michael Joseph and Jeremiah Joseph both succumbed to tuberculosis ('consumption') at Longreach, just two years apart; Michael on 14 December 1897, aged 26 and Jeremiah Joseph on 5 November 1899, aged 27. Both are buried at Longreach Town Cemetery. Michael had been a compositor or typesetter for the Oamaru Mail and he found similar work with the Longreach Standard, and then with the Government Printing Office in Brisbane. The Brisbane climate did not suit him, however, and he returned to Longreach and worked in the shearing sheds. Jeremiah Joseph was employed as a tailor.

Then, just a day after James' death in South Africa, Annie, having returned to New Zealand, died at Paemako aged 28, also from tuberculosis (5 January 1902).

Jeremiah Power later returned home to Oamaru from Paemako and he died there on 31 July 1908, aged 74. Honora Power also returned to Oamaru, probably after settling Jimmy's estate business at Longreach. She died at Oamaru on 9 October 1912. Both are buried at Oamaru's 'Old Cemetery'. Only William, John Henry, Patrick John and Johanna of the ten children who travelled from Ireland to New Zealand in 1878 managed to out-live their parents.

William died on 15 October 1924 (aged 64) and is buried at Karori Cemetery. Patrick John (married Alice Ethel Tate) died of a cerebral haemorrhage in 1936 and is buried at Charters Towers Monumental and Lawn Cemetery. Johanna (married James McMahon) died at Oamaru on 10 July 1931 and is buried at Oamaru Old Cemetery. John Henry married Mary Ellen Seaby from Barcaldine in 1911 and they produced three sons and two daughters. John died in 1929 and is buried at Longreach.

It may be fair to say Jimmy Power's military service is

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much better preserved (in bronze and stone!) than his shearing exploits. As Bernie Walker points out, his name appears on South African War Memorials at Oamaru, Brisbane and the Australian War Memorial at Canberra, and also at Onverwacht. There is also a comprehensive memorial plaque for Jimmy at the Longreach Town Cemetery, recording his death and burial at Ermelo, South Africa (210 km east of Johannesburg).

And while this story is about Jimmy Power the shearer more than about Sergeant James Charles Power the soldier, an 'Anzac Biography' compiled by the Maryborough Military & Colonial Museum (Queensland) contains much factual information about Jimmy's service in South Africa, and the circumstances of his death. His medals and ribbons include clasps recording service in Cape Colony, Orange Free State and Transvaal.

Jimmy had described some of his experiences in a letter from Pretoria, sent home to his brother 'Jack' (John Henry), with the date 29 August 1901:

'… Soldiering is a very rough game. We have never seen a bit of soap since we came here; in fact, I don't think we're ever supposed to wash. Biscuits and tinned beef is what we are mostly living on; we get fresh meat when the cattle are handy to kill. There are actually no sheep in the Transvaal except a few that are kept for mutton and they are more like a goat than a sheep. I saw a few flocks of merino sheep in the Free State. I have been told that a man who owns 10 or 12,000 sheep in Cape Colony is looked upon as a big squatter.

'Shearing all over South Africa is done by Kaffirs for something like five or six bob a hundred. I have not been in Johannesburg as yet. I would like to see it. When on our last march we crossed the Witwatersrand main reef near Krugersdorp. We had several small fights with the Boers, and some good artillery duels. We had a six hours' artillery fight near Bronkhorst Spruit, when we were up there. We had 22 guns in action, and they must have made things very sultry for the Boers, who had to retreat.

'We arrived back here yesterday, and we expect to go up



Leydenburg way with [General] Hamilton tomorrow. We expect that there will be hard fighting up that way. By what I have seen of the Boers I do not think them very courageous or plucky. They will only fight where they have a very strong position and a good getaway, and then they do not make much of a stand. They fight well, I believe, if things are greatly in their favour. …'

Jimmy also mentioned to Jack there had been talk of 'giving us a trip to England after the war, but I don't think I will go even if I get the chance.' Several of his fellow troopers had been invalided home already and there were quite a few in hospital.

Four months after writing that letter, Jimmy Power was dead. Another member of the 5th QIB recorded how he had found Power's body on the battlefield: 'His mates felt the loss. He died with a smile on his face. He was always popular in the corps, knew his business, interfered with no one, was quiet to a degree, and always had an eye on the lookout for Boers on the skyline. Right in front of Power lay a killed and a wounded Boer – since dead.'

So, it was two against one at the end, eh Jimmy? That sort of challenge he would have accepted any day of the week as fair play on the shearing board. But there ain't no fair play on the battlefield.

* * * *

Only one question remains – does a man who spent the first eight years of his life in Ireland, then 12-15 years in New Zealand and maybe eight years in Australia, and whose major shearing exploits seem to have taken place in Australia, qualify for a place in the New Zealand Shearing Hall of Fame? We say, absolutely! (That's a yes!)

Two or three days previous to shearing the shed should be cleaned out thoroughly; a mere sweeping of the floor is not sufficient, but the walls should be cleaned down, birds' nests removed, gratings cleaned, and the floor given a good wash. The damage done to the manufactured material by pieces of string, straw chaff, and so forth is so serious that one cannot emphasise too strongly the necessity for a thorough cleaning of the wool shed. All the accessories of shearing, such as bales, seaming twine, needles, stencils, ink, branding fluid, wool bins, etc., should be attended to.

(King Country Chronicle, 8 October 1931.)

Shearing magazine's
New Zealand Shearing Industry Hall of Fame

James Apes (1855-1938)
Alex Hutchinson (1865-1943)
Raihania Rimitiriu (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)
Ivan Bowen (1915-2007)
Godfrey Bowen (1922-1994)

Revisiting Scotland's world championships 2003







The MacRobert Theatre: *Described as "the most modern shearing competition facility in Europe, if not indeed world-wide", the theatre was designed and purpose-built specifically to host Golden Shears world championships 2003, with the finance in large part being donated by the MacRobert Trust. The Trust was established by Lady MacRobert of Douneside, Aberdeenshire, in memory of her three sons who were all tragically killed as aviators, the youngest two as officer pilots in the Royal Air Force in 1941.*

The shearing theatre was designed by members of the Royal Highland Agricultural Society, built by Algo (Blairgowrie) Limited, one of the main sponsors of Golden Shears. It was opened in 2002 and used for the first time for the shearing competitions at the Royal Highland Show that year.

The building was built so it can be adapted as a theatre stage for plays, music events, pop concerts and so on, like all other buildings within the Royal Highland Centre.

Shearing and Woolhandling World Championships Golden Shears 2023

Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh 22-25 June 2023

royalhighlandshow.org.uk

Best wishes to our Wools of NZ-sponsored New Zealand team. Bring those titles home!

Rowland Smith & Leon Samuels (machines)
Allan Oldfield & Tony Dobbs (blades) *
Candy Hiri & Ngaio Hansen (woolhandlers)
Ronald King (team manager)
Donald Johnston (shearing judge)
Janet Smith (woolhandling judge)

* subject to confirmation at MacKenzie Show Easter Monday









Top descending: *Events prior to the 2003 world championships included a highly-memorable field trip to the Cameron property at Killen, in the Central Highlands. Wikipedia says Killen has a "sub-polar oceanic climate, colder compared to most of the United Kingdom." (They got that right!)* ***Above****: a Frenchman (on the way to Killen), out standing in his field.*







Top descending: *Holding pens and catching pens, inside the operational area of the MacRobert Theatre.*

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Top: *Africans at Scotland's world championships 2003. From left: Charles August (Lesotho), Daniel Mone Nteko (South Africa), Zweliwile Elias Hans (South Africa), Siongozi Nkomoyi (South Africa) and Elliot Ntsombo (Lesotho).* ***Above:*** *Australia's contingent, from left: Ian Rennie (judge); Aroha Garvin and Dave Summers (woolhandlers); Beau Guelfi and Hilton Barrett (machine shearers) and Mike Henderson (team manager).*





Top: *Ottmar Just (Germany) with judge Anne Lambie.* ***Above:*** *Tina Rimene (New Zealand).* ***Below:*** *One for the Easter holiday travellers!*

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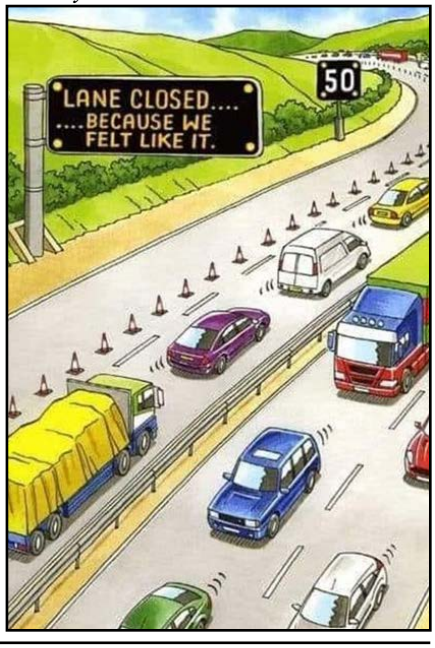









Top left descending: *England's team – Andrew Percy, Steven Lloyd, Andrew Wear, Kelly Vicary, George Mudge and Hilary Bond; What you got there, Richard Sampey? Dave Turner may be asking ...; The commentators – Colin MacGregor (Scotland), George Graham (Ireland) and Phil O'Shaughnessy (New Zealand); Who's that big bloke with Ron Davis and John Fagan? Why, Todd Blackadder, former All Black captain (then coaching in Scotland).* ***Above descending:*** *Kiwis among the pipes and kilts: Dean and Gillian Ball, and the blade boys, Bill Michelle and Peter Race.*





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SHEEP AND THE SCOTTISH ECONOMY

In the late 18th and early 19th Centuries sheep were put on the hills and glens of Scotland for the profits that could be made from wool. Sheep replaced the crofters who had farmed these areas for generations but who now had to be suppressed following the Jacobite uprising. Many of these people were "exported" to the New World and became pioneers in those lands.

Today sheep are still the major farming enterprise on the hills and remote areas of Scotland with nearly 10 million sheep on about 16,500 holdings. Much of the land that sheep occupy is of very marginal, poor quality which could not support any other type of farming. Clearly without sheep on these areas there would be no farmers and local communities would wither and die.

Sheep production in Scotland is through a stratified system. This involves hill flocks of hardy hill breeds i.e. Blackface and Cheviot where ewe lambs are retained as stock replacements for older ewes which are then sold on to farmers on slightly lower ground after four lamb crops.

Upland flocks of these draft ewes off the hill breeds are mated with rams of more prolific breeds to provide cross bred lambs. These ewe lambs, because of their fertility, milkiness and hybrid vigour, are sought after by lowland breeders to cross with meat breed terminal sires.

Lowland flocks comprising cross ewes produce high quality prime lamb from the better climate, soil type and grazings of lowland arable farms.

Another important aspect of Scottish sheep production is the sale of "store" lambs. Due to insufficient feed to finish the lambs on the hills and uplands, they are sold in the autumn as "stores" to lowland farmers for fattening. This provides an important supplementary activity for these lowground farms.

The by product of sheep in Scotland, namely wool, has also had a major impact on the Scottish economy. The woollen industry in the borders developed from 1730 centred round Hawick, Galashiels, Selkirk and Peebles, whilst the Harris Tweed industry in the Outer Hebrides evolved from 1846. The names of Pringle, Lyle & Scott and Ballantyne and the knitting style of Aran and Shetland to name but a few are known the world over.

Sheep are a vital component of the Scottish agricultural industry and the Scottish economy as a whole.

Some twenty breeds of sheep are shown in the competitive classes at The Royal Highland Show, representing the very best of pedigree flocks and reinforcing the reputation of Scots stockmen as being amongst the best in the world.

(Pages 37-39: extracts from 2003 World championships souvenir programe.)

SCOTTISH BLACKFACE SHEEP



Blackface Sheep

THE BREED DOMINATING THE SCOTTISH SHEEP INDUSTRY

The Blackface Breed is the most numerous breed in Britain accounting for over three million ewes, representing 16% of the British Purebred Ewe Flock. The vast majority is found in Scotland. The outstanding qualities of the breed are Survivability, Adaptability and Versatility, with the ability to fit into any farming situation. They are one of the hardiest sheep breeds in the country and are the backbone of the Scottish sheep industry.

DESCRIPTION

All Blackfaces are horned, with black or black and white face and legs. The fleece should be free of black fibre and can vary from short, fine wool used for carpets and tweeds to strong coarse wool, which is mainly sold for the Italian mattress trade.

There are several distinct types within the breed, which have evolved over the years influenced by climate, environment and grazing quality. This gives the breed the advantage of being able to produce sheep to suit every climatic condition.

HISTORY

The Breed's origin is lost in the midst of time, but undoubtedly emerged from the genetic umbrella of "horned" sheep from which also sprung the Swaledale, Rough Fell and other localised types such as the Lewis and Mayo Blackface.

In the early 19th Century the breed was taken from Dumfriesshire and Lanarkshire and introduced into the North of Scotland, but due to the high price of Cheviot wool the Blackfaces were cleared off the hills in favour of the Cheviot. This continued until 1860 when the wool prices reached the same level and the farmers realised that the Blackface with its ability to survive and reproduce in adverse weather conditions was the best-suited breed to utilise the hill and mountain grazing to their best advantage.

In the late 19th Century there was an upsurge in interest of Breed Improvement. Many of the farms that sold high priced tups and enthusiastically promoted the breed at that time are names still well known today.

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE BREED

1. The principal function of the breed is to utilise to the best advantage the hill and mountain grazing of the British Isles, producing store lambs which are suitable for short or long keep, finishing off grass, rape, turnips or in-shed

2. Off better hill grazing, many lambs are sold prime direct off their mothers, at carcase weights of 15 -19kgs. The smaller hill lamb is ideal for the markets in Italy and Spain, which require carcase weights of 8-12kgs. Blackface Lamb is naturally reared, symbolising the purity and goodness of the land and has a reputation for its unrivalled sweet flavour and tenderness.

3. Of equal importance, the Blackface is at the summit of the pyramid of stratification of the British Sheep Industry. The hills produce a reservoir of females which are drafted to marginal or upland farms either as ewe lambs or five or six year old ewes, where they are crossed with a Bluefaced Leicester to produce the ever popular Scotch Mule Ewe, or a Border Leicester to produce the Greyface Ewe.

4. Crossed with a terminal sire the Blackface ewe produces a quality prime lamb, or a store lamb for finishing.

For further information contact- Blackface Sheep Breeders Association. Tel 01764 683746 Aileen McFadzean, Breed Promotion Manager www.scottish-blackface.co.uk

THE SCOTCH MULE



The Scotch Mule is the progeny of a Blackfaced Ewe and a Bluefaced Leicester ram. This medium sized, polled cross-bred has a mottled brown face while the fine white wool should have a curled appearance, this being passed down from the sire's side.

Whilst the Scotch Mule has been bred in large numbers for many years, possibly as early as 1920, only recently has this unique cross been identified as such. Originally all Leicester crosses out of a Blackface were termed Greyfaces but the recent success of mules has prompted breeders to identify this specific cross as being a Scotch Mule. Being the progeny of the hardy, adaptable Blackface and the super-prolific milky Bluefaced Leicester, this hybrid combination produces a crossbred ewe ideal for today's sheep industry. The Scotch Mule can therefore be used as a breeding ewe in a variety of circumstances ranging from hard upland condidtions to tightly stocked lowland farms, adapting readily to any situation. Most importantly when crossed with a modern lean terminal sire they produce ideal prime lambs for today's market.

Due to her outstanding inheritance the Scotch Mule possesses many outstanding qualities including:

Prolificacy – inherited from both sire and dam Hardiness – an undisputed attribute of the Blackface

Milkiness – another characteristic inherited from both sire and dam

While breeding has concentrated mainly on length, conformation and milking qualities, the Scotch Mule enjoys a reputation of being a very easily managed ewe. Scotch Mules are available at most of the main Auction Marts in Scotland, although more so in the south, with quality breeding stock available from mid August onwards





Above: *There's that freshly relieved man again (front right), with some French compatriots, enjoying Mr Cameron's hospitality at Killen, as are the other visitors, pictured right.*

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The supreme blade shearers at Scotland's world championships in 2003, from left: Elliot Ntsombo, Elias Hans, Samuel Nkomoyi, Peter Race, Bill Michelle and Tom McKellar.



The supreme machine shearers at Scotland's world championships in 2003, from left: David Fagan, Tom Wilson, Dean Ball, Nicky Beynon, Steven Lloyd and Keiran McCullough.











Top left: *A man who (allegedly) may have a lot to answer for.* ***Middle:*** *Waina, Kirstie and Mavis, misbehaving (allegedly).* ***Above:*** *The moment when you realise (much later) the 'auto-focus' button had been dislodged onto 'manual' – David Fagan and Elliot Ntsombo in blurry image exchanging singlets (New Zealand/Lesotho) after winning their respective world championships.* ***Top right:*** *The New Zealand team – Dean Ball, David Fagan, Bill Michelle and Peter Race, with Tina Rimene and Joanne Kumeroa in front.* ***Above right:*** *woolhandlers supreme: Joanne Kumeroa (New Zealand), Bronwyn Tango (Wales) and Alison McNeil (Scotland).*

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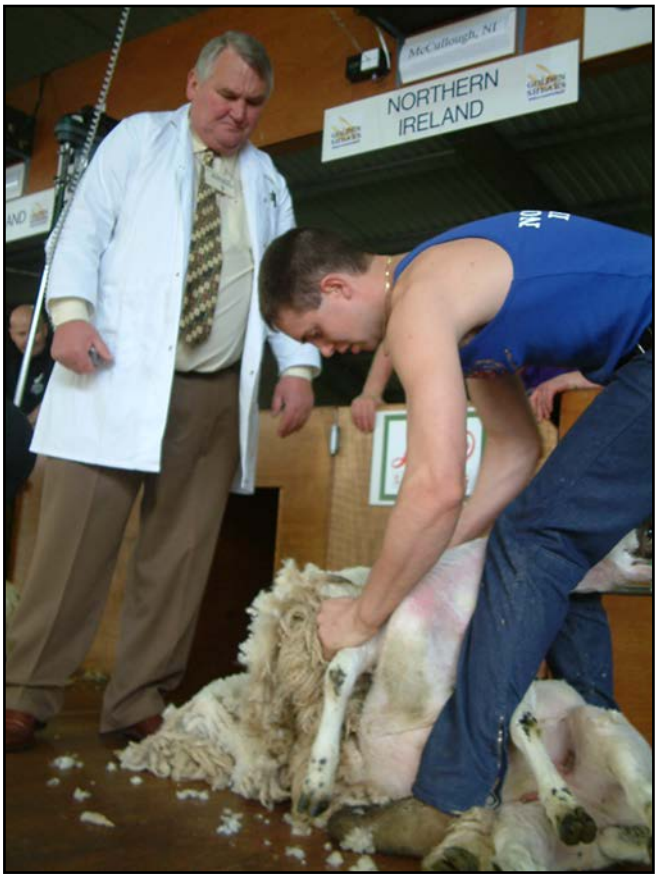

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Top left: *Bill Michelle watches New Zealand team mate Peter Race remove the fleece from the woolly beast – perhaps the same one that Nancy Rovde (resident woolhandler, above left) is carrying away for baling.* ***Top right:*** *Ireland's Ger Heraty plying his own trade in the world blade shearing heats.* ***Above right:*** *Keiran McCullough (Northern Ireland) keeping the job right for his countryman judge, Maurice Megahey.*

Goldies back in business

By Doug Laing (SSNZ)

Champion shearer Rowland Smith achieved the goal he'd set all season when he won an eighth Golden Shears Open shearing title in Masterton tonight.

Capping three days of a fever-pitched return of Golden Shears after two years of pandemic cancellations, and taking a break from driving his tractor in the Hawke's Bay cyclone recovery, Smith won the right to represent New Zealand at the 2023 Golden Shears World Shearing and Woolhandling Championships in Scotland on June 22-25, where among the toughest opposition will be brother expatriate kiwi Matt Smith, representing England.

Rowland Smith, who won the World title in 2014 in Ireland and was runner-up in France in 2019, claimed tonight's victory by more than three points from runner-up and Marlborough shearer Angus Moore, despite being only third off the board after a classic race for time honours on stand 1, 2, and 3.

A time points deficit of over one point was nothing against the trademark quality of the two-metres giant, who seemed always in control despite being third to finish.

Moore, in the Open final for the first time, but having earlier in the night won the multi-breed PGG Wrightson Vetmed National Shearing Circuit final for a third time, bolted into the lead on the second sheep, and remained in front until the eighth when Masterton shearer Paerata Abraham hit the front and, shearing at a consistent pace of a little over 40 seconds a sheep, stayed there till the end, finishing in 15min 43.88sec.

It revived memories of Abraham's only previous Golden Shears Open final, when he cleared the 20 sheep in 15min 50.234sec in 2016. The fastest time final of all was when David Fagan shore 15min 27.4sec in 2003 with John Kirkpatrick second off the board in 15min 43.8sec, when they were ultimately winner and runner-up respectively.

Third place went to near-perennial beaten finalist and Invercargill shearer Nathan Stratford, despite being last to finish, in 16min 57.959sec. Fourth was first-time finalist Hemi Braddick, of Eketahuna, Abraham was fifth and four-times winner Kirkpatrick was sixth.

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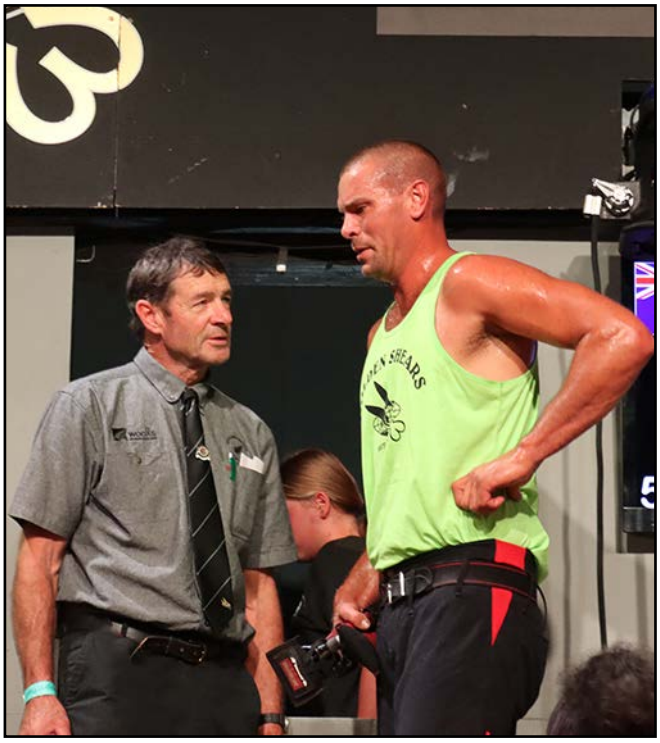

Above: *Judge Ken McPherson and shearer Rowland Smith having a chat about second cuts (what else would it be?) after the champion-to-be had finished his shear in the heats.*

Joel Henare, from Gisborne but living with his three children in Motueka, justified hot TAB favouritism to win a ninth-consecutive Golden Shears Open woolhandling title a wide margin from runner-up Keryn Herbert, of Te Kuiti.

Henare was unavailable for World championships selection, leaving what became one of the closest finals ever in a woolhandling final as four others fought out a team selection final.

The two positions were claimed by Candi Hiri of Gore and Ngaio Hanson of Eketahuna, with less than a point covering the first three places, just-cutting Foonie Waihape, of Alexandra, out of the trip to Edinburgh.

Hanson's performance was one of three putting both Eketahuna and her family on the map. She's the sister of Open shearing finalist Hemi Braddick and Open woolhandling third-placegetter Ana Braddick.

Meanwhile, the New Zealand shearing team of southern trio Stratford, Stacey Te Huia and Leon Samuels staged an amazing comeback to win a transtasman shearing test against Australian visitors Daniel McIntyre, Nathan Meaney and Sam Mackrill.

The black singlets had been given a sound beating in the season's first test in Bendigo, Vic, in November, but sprung the surprises by being in charge over the six merinos each that comprised the first half of the contest, followed by the New Zealand breed fullwools and second-shears.

The TAB had favoured the Australians, but it became payback also for the previous night's surprise win over New Zealand in a woolhandling test.

Among lower grade triumphs, 21-year-old Abby Curnow, of Bendigo, Vic, is the new Junior woohandling champion,

becoming the first Australian to win a Golden Shears woolhandling title in the 38-years since woolhandling was added to the Shears' ribbon parade in 1985.

It also made it a double of the Junior titles for Australia, after 18-year-old Tyran Cochrane, of Goodooga, NSW, won the Junior shearing title on Friday, the first Australian to win a New Zealand Golden Shears title since John Allan's Intermediate victory at the Golden Shears' inception in 1961.

The Senior woolhandling title on Saturday was won by Rahera Kerr, of Hauturu, the Senior shearing final was won by Clay Harris, of Piopio, and the Intermediate shearing final was won by Will Sinclair, of Balclutha, both backed by recent winning form.

In the woolpressing, Masterton's Goodger brothers again battled for men's singles title, with Jeremy scoring a 14th win, claiming the title back from brother Vinnie, winner four time in a row from 2017 to 2020.

The women's title was won for the first time by Savannah King, of Eketahuna, beating eight-times winner Fiona Healy in the final.

RESULTS: 61st Golden Shears International Shearing Championships at the War Memorial Stadium, Masterton on Thursday-Saturday March 2-4, 2023:

Trans-Tasman Contests

Shearing test (12 sheep: 6 merinos, 3 long wool, 3 second-shear): New Zealand 203.61 pts (Leon Samuels 65.957; Nathan Stratford 68.003; Stacey Te Huia 69.65) beat Australia 210.751 pts) (Sam Mackrill 69.992; Nathan Meaney 70.31; Daniel McIntyre 70.449). Woolhandling test (8 fleeces): Australia (Racheal Hutchison, Mark Purcell) 282.3pts, 1; New Zealand (Cushla Abraham, Angela Stevens) 309.7pts, 2.

Wools of New Zealand / SSNZ world championships woolhandling selection final: Candi Hiri (Gore) 111.92 1; Ngaio Hanson (Eketahuna) 112.46 2; Foonie Waihape (Alexandra) 112.48 3; Jasmin Tipoki (Martinborough/Napier) 165.28, 4.



Above: *Tyron Cochrane of Australia winning the junior championship at Golden Shears in the distant footsteps of John Allan, intermediate champion in 1962.*

Shearing:

Golden Shears open final (20 sheep): Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 52.64 1; Angus Moore (Ward) 55.609 2; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 55.698 3; Hemi Braddick (Eketahuna) 56.357 4; Paerata Abraham (Masterton) 56.592 5; John Kirkpatrick (Hastings) 58.629 6.

Senior final (12 sheep): Clay Harris (Piopio) 44.645 1; Adam Gordon (Masterton) 44.649 2; Cory Tiwai Barrowcliffe (Piopio) 44.982 3; Te Ua Wilcox (Gisborne) 45.779 4; Joseph Gordon (Masterton) 45.916 5; Paul Swann (Wairoa) 48.134 6.

Intermediate final (8 sheep): Will Sinclair (Balclutha) 36.705 1; Dalton Tangiwai (Pahiatua) 39.175 2; Sam Green (England) 39.254 3; Jack Pringle (Balclutha) 40.971 4; Tini Papanui (Feilding) 41.465 5; Jacob Taylor (Dannevirke) 43.626 6.

Junior final (5 sheep): Tyran Cochrane (Goodooga, NSW) 27.044 1; Jake Goldsbury (Waitotara) 29.746 2; Cody Waihape (Gore) 31.543 3; Emma Martin (Gore) 32.749 4; Dan Rogers (Raetihi) 32.756 5; Ryka Swann (Wairoa) 33.586 6.

Novice final (2 sheep): Maaka Nikora (Taumarunui) 20.304 1; William Clarkson (Martinborough) 21.667 2; Flyn Innes (Martinborough) 22.745 3; Stirling McKelvie (Tikokino) 3.397 4; Tom Clarkson (Martinborough) 23.781 5; Ged Biling (Masterton) 29.664 6.

PGG Wrightson Vetmed National shearing Circuit final (15 sheep – 3 merino wethers, 3 fullwool, 3 corriedale, 3 lambs, 3 second-shear): Angus Moore (Seddon) 65.416 1; Leon Samuels (Invercargill 66.535 2; Brett Roberts (Mataura) 67.624 3; Stacey Te Huia (Alexandra) 69.804 4; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 69.917 5; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 74.082 6.

Maori-Pakeha Teams (8 sheep): David Gordon (Masterton) and Jacob Moore (Marton) 62.270 1; Whakapunake (Naki) Maraki (Flaxmere/Feilding) and Paul Hodges (Geraldine) 68.326 2; Reuben Alabaster (Taihape) and Matthew Hunt (Waikaka) 69.58 3.

Women's Invitation (6 sheep): Pauline Bolay (Canada) 28.71 1; Laura Bradley (Papatawa) 29.054 2; Emily Te Kapa (Scotland) 32.25 3; EmmaMartin (Gore) 38.982 4; Lydia Thomson (Rangiora) 40.706 5; Amy Silcock (Tiraumea) 43.658 6.

Student Shearing Challenge (2 sheep): Smedley (Scott O'Connor/Benazzi Ward) 1; Pukemiro (Zach Hall/Renee Garrett) 30.831 2; Feilding High School (Camden Bolton-Smith/George Peacock) 32.955 3; Napier BHS (James Robinson/Max Free) 33.367 4; Palmerston North Boys High School) 35.561 5; Growing Future Farmers (George Parke/Ella McMillan) 6.

Speedshear:

Open: Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 18.49sec, 1; Jimmy Samuels (Marton) 19.11sec, 2; Hugh De Lacy (Rangiora) 19.218sec, 3; Stu Connor (England) 20.192 4.

Senior: Clay Harris (Piopio) 22.15sec, 1; Allan Oldfield (Geraldine/Hutt Valley) 22.41sec, 2; Jeff Winders (Invercargill) 24.694sec, 3; Jayden Mainland (Wellsford) 4.

Woolhandling:

Open final: Joel Henare (Gisborne/Motueka) 149.76 1; Keryn Herbert (Te Kuiti) 207.6 2; Ana Braddick (Eketahuna) 248.8 3; Jasmin Tipoki (Martinborough/Napier) 260.82 4.

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Senior final: Rahera Kerr (Hauturu) 154.5 1; Emma Martin (Gore) 174.24 2; Vinniye Phillips (Taumarunui) 187.987 3; Amy Bell (Weber) 203.8 4.
Junior final: Abby Curnow (Bendigo, Vic) 84.74 1; Tatijana Keefe (Raupinga) 132.46 2; Jolie Orcher (Goodooga, NSW) 150.7 3; Lucy Elers (Mataura) 152.88 4.
Novice final: Eleri Bradley (Woodville) 63 1; Crystal Newton (Piopio) 72 2; Bryndyll Pinkham (Taumarunui) 76.6 3; Ana Mason (Masterton) 115.4 4.
North Island Circuit Open final: Cushla Abraham (Masterton) 103.5 1; Keryn Herbert (Te Kuiti) 115.86 2; Ngaio Hanson (Eketahuna) 158.4 3; Jasmin Tipoki (Martinborough/Napier) 195.86 4.
Woolpressing:
Men (weight target 170kg): Jeremy Goodger (Masterton) 165.5kg, 46.45 1; Vinnie Goodger (Masterton) 164kg, 53.1 2.
Women (target weight 150kg): Savannah King (Eketahuna) 147.5kg, 63.35 1; Fiona Healy (Masterton) 146.5kg, 65.9 2.
Novice (target weight 170kg): Daniel Lewis (Masterton) 157.5kg, 66.95 1; Hoanni Wipaki (Milton) 149kg, 79.7 2.
Pairs (target weight 170kg): Vinnie and Jeremy Goodger (Masterton) 174kg, 25.3 1; Cona Harmon and James Goodger (Masterton) 174.5kg, 32 2.
Triathlon Teams
YFC Shearing and Woolhandling (3 sheep): East Coast 1 (shearers Hemi Bradick, Ruka Braddick; woolhandlers Marika Braddick, Ana Braddick) 7min 11sec, 141.5 1; Taranaki/Manawatu (shearers Joseph Gordon, David Gordon; woolhandlers Shya Gordon, Samantha Gordon) 7min 2sec, 152.6 2; East Coast 2 (shearers Lionel Taumata, Whakapunaki Maraki; woolhandlers Tatijana Keefe, Ngaira Puha) 7min 16sec, 209.4 3.











Top left: *Bryan Drysdale, one of the vital people behind the scenes, keeping the sheep up to the shearers on stage. He's been doing it for 20 years!* ***Above:*** *Not so far behind the scenes, but also VIPeeps in keeping the show on the road – commentators Rowena Duncum (from The Country radio programme) and Tuma Mullins, he of the effortless word-flow.* ***Top right:*** *Maria Warrington, assist. call steward.* ***Above right:*** *Whakapunake Maraki beneath the steely glare from Mr McLaren.*

50 years of Golden Shears volunteering

(Adapted from Golden Shears official programme 2023 with permission from the Golden Shears Society.)

Bruce Caseley and Bill Hutchings began volunteering at Golden Shears as keen members of a local Young Farmers Club. The year was 1971. They've hardly missed a year since. Golden Shears honoured these stalwarts in a ceremony on the Saturday night (2023), awarding them badges for 50 years of Golden Shears volunteering.

"A lot of our volunteers have come from the Young Farmers Club," Bill says. The age of retirement from the club is 30, but Bruce and Bill did not let that get in the way of their volunteering at Golden Shears. They carried on.

"There's nothing like the Golden Shears," says Bruce, who was brought up on a farm, has worked in farming since the early 1990s, and tutored for eight years at Taratahi. He's also sold and managed life insurance, worked for the Wairarapa Times-Age selling rural advertising, and spent half of every year for about a decade driving trucks in Texas for silage harvest. "I'm retired now," he says.

"We started out at Golden Shears tipping sheep," Bruce says. "'Tipping' involves turning the sheep once they're shorn so the judge can assess the quality of the shearing."

Bill grew up on a dairy farm, spent seven years milking cows, before going on to work for an impressive 44 years for the government, testing Wairarapa's cattle for nasties like TB and brucellosis.

As well as tipping sheep for Golden Shears, Bruce and Bill



Above: *Bruce Caseley (left) and Bill Hutchings, familiar and helpful faces at Masterton's Golden Shears for fifty years.*

have registered entrants, calculated shearing points (with a team of six) before points for the shearing were computerised, calculated points for wool pressing and wool handling events, been committee members, been treasurer, run the yards, edited the programme, worked the bar, and helped to crutch the sheep before they go to the Golden Shears to be shorn. Whew!

"Presenting the sheep in good shape gives the competitors a good chance to perform well," Bruce says.

Bill and Bruce both stay for the entire Golden Shears from start to finish. "It gets into your blood. You've got to stay to watch the open final."

They get involved for the pleasure, the people, and the buzz. They have some good stories, too. Bruce and Bill can remember years when foreign exchange students came together at Golden Shears to shear in the novice heats and to have a jolly good time. "They'd never come across anything like it."

Bruce recalls being out the back in the sheep pens in the early days. "We didn't have the steel shed up then, so we erected a marquee over the sheep. A big wind came up and lifted the whole damn thing off its middle pole. As the pole fell, its spike tore the canvas. One of the chaps ran around to Wrightson's Grain Store, as it was known then, and fetched a bag-sewer. Two of us held up a long ladder and up he went to sew up the rip in the tent." Bruce chuckles at the memory. "That was a true Heath Robinson moment."

The Golden Shears is made possible by the volunteers, many of whom, including Bill and Bruce in previous years, take annual leave from work so they can help.

* * * * * *

Perhaps it goes without saying (but we will say it anyway!) that Bruce Caseley and Bill Hutchings have previously had their contributions recognised through awarding of Life Membership of the Goldern Shears Society. Other life members are Kevin Aplin, Bruce Christensen, Greg Herrrick, Laurie Keats, Philip Morrison, Edwin O'Hara, Ian Stewart, Gavin Tankersly and Murray Tomlin.

And we know there are many other volunteers out there who have devoted their lives to our sport. Let's have their names and we can give them some time in the spotlight!

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Flaxbourne A&P Show Shears at Ward
Sunday 26 March 2023

Open final (10 sheep): Angus Moore (Ward) 51.83, 1; Lyall Windleburn (Rangiora) 60.09 2; Willy McSkimming (Oamaru) 64.04 3; Richard Sampey (Blenheim) 67.91 4.

Senior final (6 sheep): Scott McKay (Clarence) 48.73 1; Timo Hicks (Tapawera) 50.47 2; Seymour Lambert (Ward) 51.17 3; Alice Watson (Seddon) 53.51 4.

Intermediate final (4 sheep): Alex Kiriakos (Todmorden, England) 46.451; Beau Cameron (Blenheim) 47.55 2; Radar Thompson (Ward) 49.09 3; Marcus Taylor (Inland Road) 59.68 4.

Junior final (2 sheep): Sam Murray (Ward) 25.54 1; Lydia Thomson (Rangiora) 32.51 2; Jack Murray (Ward) 44.55 3; Jimmy Peter (Ward) 68.72 4.



Above: *Flaxbourne open finalists, from left: Richard Sampey, Willy McSkimming, Lyall Windleborn and Angus Moore.*



Above: *Flaxbourne senior finalists, from left: Alice Watson, Seymour Lambert, Timo Hicks and Scott McKay.*



Above: *Flaxbourne intermediate finalists, from left: Marcus Taylor, Radar Thompson, Beau Cameron and Alex Kiriakos.*



Above: *Flaxbourne Junior finalists, from left: Jimmy Peter, Jack Murray and Sam Murray. Absent: Lydia Thompson.*

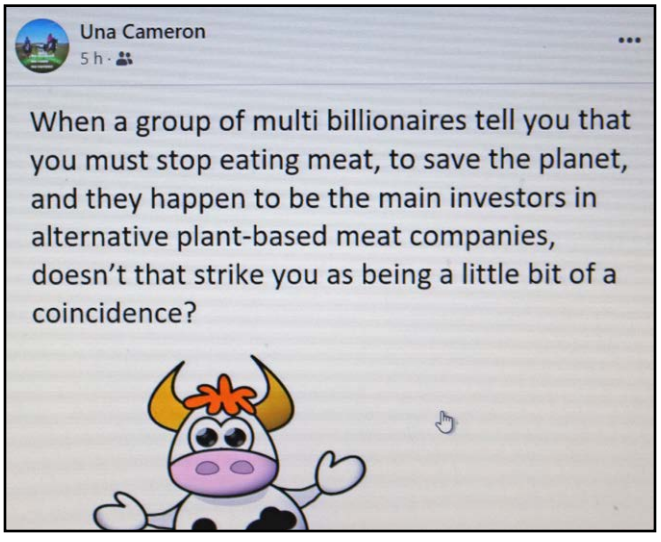
Flaxbourne, Marlborough (Some history)

Frederick Weld and Charles Clifford played dominant roles in bringing large numbers of sheep to the South Island, founding Flaxbourne Station in 1847. AL Kennington wrote of this venture in *The Awatere – A District and its People: "The founding of Flaxbourne was a milestone in the history of the pastoral industry in New Zealand. Here on a lonely coast, after much careful planning, was estsablished a sheep station on a scale not before attempted in New Zealand.*

"It was a highly successful operation, involving, besides the hundred and one details of a venture like this, the bringing of three shiploads of sheep from Australia, the taking of pre-fabricated houses across Cook Strait, and the building of a small vessell to maintain communications.

"In fact, for the next 58 years, the very name Flaxbourne spelt progress and reflected the vision of its founders. It is the only sheep station in the South Island to be marked with an Historic Places Trust notice board."

The Notice Board explains that Weld and Clifford leased the land from Ngati Toa chief, Te Puaha. By 1879 the run consisted of 72,000 acres, carrying 60,000 sheep. In 1905 the Government purchased 45,000 acres for subdivision into 80 farms. The remaining land was cut up in 1913. The original station is now known as The Homestead. The Flaxbourne name was later given to a smaller property near Lake Grasmere. (From *Top Class Wool Cutters*, Des Williams 1996.)



HELL YES! We just hope there's enough carbon dioxide available to grow all the extra plants required.







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Permanent positions for quality shearers and shedhands

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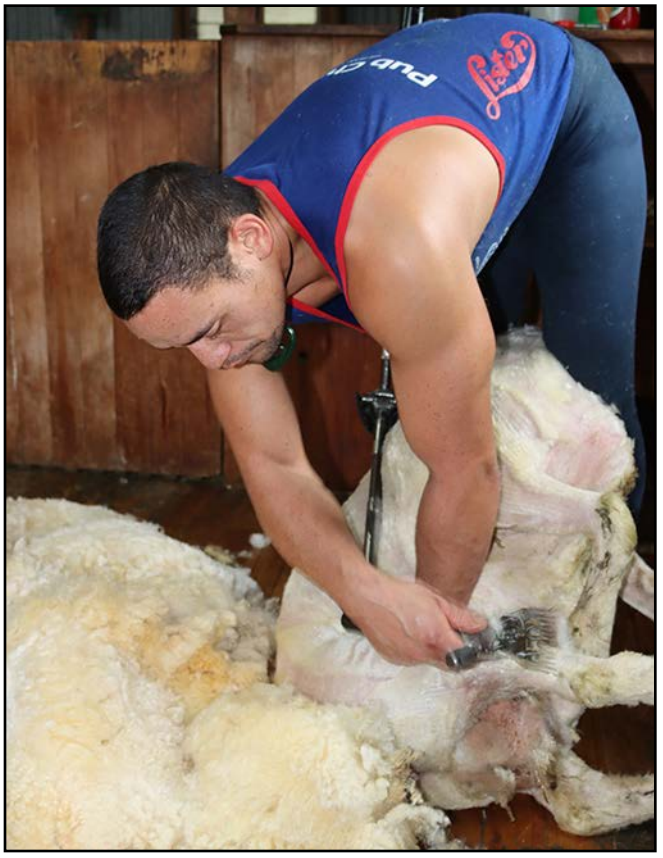
Shearing magazine caught up with the Scott Welsh gang shearing at Alan Bonnie's farm, near Wallacetown, Southland, just after Christmas: ***Top****: From left, Scott Welsh, Jahna Te Kani, Casey Bailey, Mark Hammond (presser), Carmen Fluerty and Jaxin Rose (learner shearer).* ***Above:*** *Casey Bailey on the last side.* ***Opposite:*** *Carmen Fluerty drops a fleece into the press.*













More action from Alan Bonnie's Wallacetown shed: ***Top left descending:*** *Casey Bailey and Chad Bailey; Chad Bailey, Scott Welsh (the boss).* ***Top right descending:*** *Chad the versatile man; Jahna Te Kani and Mark Hammond.*

Big gumboot day at Taihape

By Doug Laing

Taihape's famed gumboot throwing competition was cancelled but the shearing still went ahead in a classic day of making-it-happen amid torrential rain on Saturday 28 January 2023.

But the Taihape A and P Show's 60th shearing and woolhandling championships – an anniversary delayed a year by Covid 19 restrictions and ultimately the only event not cancelled at the show – would not have happened, had it not been for three tractors to make sure the near-record entry of 159 shearers and woolhandlers had sheep to shear.

Local shearing contractor Stu Munro, convenor of the committee of three that puts the competition together, was determined the Shears would go ahead, despite the possibilities that faced him when he got up before four in the morning and headed down to the six-stand open-sided shearing pavilion, in its picturesque natural amphitheatre setting.

The problem was that with many of the competitors already in the area or on their way, from as far as Northland and Hawke's Bay, he couldn't see how the sheep trucks would get in and out of the venue – until he rang agricultural contractors Joe and Tash Coogan. 'It was 4.30am when I rang Joe,' Munro said. 'He said: "I've been expecting a call from you."

The company soon had three tractors to haul the sheep trucks in and out of the venue, and Munro said: 'We wouldn't have had any way of getting the stock in and out. It wouldn't have happened without the tractors.'

The competitions went ahead, with 108 shearers across the five shearing grades from novice to open, and 51 entries across the four woolhandling grades, which also needed some innovation to ensure they went ahead with minimal wetting of the wool. The organisers, including world champion woolhandler and Taihape schoolteacher Sheree Alabaster, decided to do away with the blending component of second-shear competition, meaning that without any blending penalty points, multiple world champion Joel Henare's 128th open final came with possibly the lowest score ever in an open woolhandling final in New Zealand.

Fellow former world champion Rowland Smith was pushed to the limit by Wairarapa shearer Hemi Braddick in the open shearing final before claiming a win by just 0.05pts, just a week after figuring in a tied-result with Scottish shearer Gavin Mutch at Wairoa, broken only by Mutch's superior quality points on the day.

Braddick led the race almost throughout Saturday's final, as the rain increased, driving ever-closer to the shearing board, and shore the 20 sheep in 16min 58sec, beating Smith off the board by just six seconds. Smith's better quality in judging in the pen was just enough to erase Braddick's advantage on time and board judging points to claim the win in the overall count.

One of the shears of the day came from 2017 world champion John Kirkpatrick, in his 28th season of open-class shearing and last to finish (17min 58sec) but claiming third place with the best pen-judging points from any of the finals.

Joseph Gordon, of Masterton, won the senior shearing final by 2.7pts from Piopio shearer Clay Harris, who'd gone under a minute a sheep in shearing the pen of 10 in in 9min 39.2 sec, while shearers from the UK claimed two titles, with Sam Green, from England, winning the intermediate final, and Elis Jones the junior final. Novice honours went to new competitor Ngawaka Karaitiana, part of a significant team of competitors from Piopio. Ashleigh Ostler, of Marton, made a successful return to competition after about 18 years away to win the senior woolhandling title, and Piopio claimed the two other titles, with Mykayla Barrowcliffe winning the senior final and Crystal Newton the novice honours.

Results Taihape Shears, 28 January 2023:

Shearing:

Open final (20 sheep): Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 17min 4sec, 59.15pts, 1; Hemi Braddick (Eketahuna) 16min 58sec, 59.2pts, 2; John Kirkpatrick (Pakipaki) 17min 58sec, 60pts, 3; Aaron Haynes (Feilding) 17min 44sec, 61pts, 4; Tama Niania (Gisborne) 17min 35sec, 61.25pts, 5; David Gordon (Masterton) 17min 54sec, 61.8pts, 6.

Senior final (10 sheep): Joseph Gordon (Masterton) 10min 8sec, 36.5pts, 1; Clay Harris (Piopio) 9min 52sec, 39.2pts, 2; Tama Nahona (Whanganui/Kaiwaka) 10min 10sec, 41pts, 3; Daniel Biggs (Mangamahu) 10min 49sec, 41.15pts, 4; Cory Barrowcliffe (Piopio) 11min 21sec, 43.65pts, 5; Keiran Devane (Taihape) 13min 38sec, 50.8pts, 6.

Intermediate final (8 sheep): Sam Green (England) 10min 27sec, 39.725pts, 1; Josh Devane (Taihape) 10min 49sec, 40.075pts, 2; Steven Anderson (Scotland) 10min 37sec, 41.725pts, 3; Bruce Grace (Wairoa) 10min 26sec, 42.925pts, 4; Hamuera Henderson (Kaiwaka) 13min 21sec, 47.05pts, 5; Luke Parkhouse (Devon, England) 12min 1sec, 47.3pts, 6.

Junior final (4 sheep): Elis Jones (Wales) 7min 51sec, 31.05pts, 1; Ryka Swann (Wairoa) 7min 17sec, 33.35pts, 2; Coby Lambert (Raupunga) 7min 49sec, 33.45pts, 3; Pat Corrigan (Ireland) 8min 42sec, 35.35pts, 4; Teifion Morgan (Wales) 8min 32sec, 35.35pts, 5; Daniel Kerr (Scotland) 7min 15sec, 35.75pts, 6.

Novice (1 sheep): Ngawaka Karaitiana (Piopio) 4min 9sec, 27.45pts, 1; Trent Alabaster (Taihape) 4min 32sec, 27.6pts, 2; Sam Fletcher (Hawke's Bay) 4min 15sec, 27.75pts, 3; Josh Haywood (Taihape) 4min 38sec, 30.9pts, 4; Ashlin Swann (Wairoa) 7min 20sec, 31pts, 5; Camden Bolton (Feilding) 4min 54sec, 41.7pts, 6.

Woolhandling:

Open final: Joel Henare (Gisborne/Motueka) 15.25pts, 1; Ngaio Hanson (Eketahuna) 24.916pts, 2; Kryn Herbert (Te Kuiti) 27.074pts, 3; Angela Stevens (Napier) 27.874pts, 4; Stevie Mason-Smallman (Taihape) 36.862pts, 5.

Senior final: Ashleigh Ostler (Marton) 30.538pts, 1; Tina Ngarangione (Gisborne) 30.93pts, 2; Te Ana Phillips (Taumarunui) 32.612pts, 3; Rahera Kerr (Te Kuiti) 39.4pts, 4; Vinniye Phillips (Taumarunui) 48.05pts, 5.

Junior final: Makayla Barrowcliffe (Piopio) 35.46pts, 1; Tia Manson (Piopio) 37.962pts, 2; Atina Barrowcliffe (Piopio) 50.47pts, 3; Jerana Manson (Piopio) 51.13pts, 4; Lekisha Rubi George (-) 60.838pts, 5.

Novice: Crystal Newton (Piopio)) 22.188pts, 1; Kristen Muller (Otorohanga) 23.188pts, 2; Keisha Reiri (Piopio) 23.04pts, 3; Capree Wallace (Taihape)) 26.64pts, 4; Natalia Renata (Hastings) 33.674pts, 5; Tess Fagan (Te Kuiti) 47.064pts, 6.















Above: *Trent Alabaster after winning the New Zealand Novice title at Te Kuiti earlier this month and thus becoming the latest champion to emerge from Taihape's long-running Alabaster Dynasty. Other photos on this page relate to Taihape's Big Gumboot Day – see story and results previous page.*

Reuben the youthful record-setter

By Jills Angus Burney

Exciting times lie ahead with the depth of talented young New Zealand aspirants setting a series of world records early in the summer. Two records, just two days apart, set the tone on the week before Christmas for the men's solo eight-hour lamb record.

First up was 19-year-old Reuben Alabaster from Taihape breaking by just two sheep the standing ten-year old solo eight-hour record of 744 set by Irishman, Ivan Scott at Opepe Station in January 2012.

At 19 years of age, Alabaster is the youngest to set a solo record, and a year ago, at the age of 18 and in the same woolshed, became the youngest to hold a shearing record, as part of a five-stand team triumph.

As an 18-year-old, Reuben Alabaster surpassed as the youngest ever shearing world record holder, the unsuccessful solo effort in February 2020 by the then twenty-year-old West Australian, Ethan Harder who sought the world merino ewe record. While Harder fell short in his attempt, Alabaster was followed all day to his triumph with live broadcasts by Radio New Zealand. Many city folk followed the impressive coverage on both main news television news channels presenting Alabaster as a national young sports hero.

Alabaster's achievement as a teenager is remarkable. With the Fagan Shearing crew of Welshmen, Delwyn Jones and Llion Jones, Jack Fagan, Reuben Alabaster and Kelly Brill at the Atihau-Whanganui Incorporation's Te Pa Station just a year earlier, he helped set a nine-hour, five-stand strong wool lamb record. Second best to the final tally by Jack Fagan of 811, then 18-year-old Reuben Alabaster's 774. He out-shore at almost twice his age, 35-year-old Delwyn Jones dispatching 729, with Llion Jones 725, and Kelly Brill 701, each hammering their previous best.

To overcome Scott's 8-hour lamb record, Alabaster needed an average of over 93 lambs an hour, or quicker than 38.7 seconds a lamb caught, shorn and dispatched. Alabaster got off to a good start, with 187 in the opening run.

Having one rejected mid-morning by the World Sheep Shearing Records judging panel he dropped to 183 in the two hours before lunch, guaranteeing a tough afternoon. Alabaster recovered after lunch with 187 in the next two hours to go to afternoon tea needing the same pace of 187 to just break the record at the end of the last run.





Reuben Alabaster has carried his successful foray into world record tally shearing across to the competition boards. ***Top****: seen shearing here with father Ricky Alabaster in the New Zealand open heats, while* ***(Above)*** *he won the Open challenger final at Te Kuiti, an event for shearers who have not previously won an open final. Pictured with (from left) Russell Knight (Acto-Agriculture, sponsor); Chris Dickson, Lionel Taumata, Paora Moananui, Paraki Puna and Llion Jones.*

All credit to the young gun, who broke the record in the last minute and plucked an extra on the count of time to finish with 188. Later he said he actually thought the last one was for one-up at 745, but when he stopped it was a safer 746!

It was no surprise in March 2023 that Alabaster was nominated for the Rural Games NZ Young Sportsman of the Year. Alabaster has since late January taken time off from shearing to farm near Taihape with his parents, attended the Rural Games Sports Awards in Palmerston North. A Top-30 quarter-finalist at the 2023 Golden Shears but who missed out on the top 12, was the popular winner of the Rural Games NZ Young Sportsman of the Year.

When asked what next, Alabaster says he is off travelling. Given Covid restrictions, Alabaster has achieved all that he has with only one shearing season overseas, as a 16-year-old to a winter season in Australia. However this June he is off to the United Kingdom to shear and take part in the World Championships All-Nations event in Scotland. His future in shearing is, without doubt, one to watch. As they say in Facebook parlance, to 'follow' with interest.

The power of pain

By Jack Fagan

After several sleepless nights in January 2022 I couldn't shake the urge of wanting to attempt another world record. The time had come again to find some super fast sheep and book in another date. With one goal in mind, to hold an individual world record.

With massive goals comes greater risk.

To find a team with an indestructible attitude and positive mindset you need look no further than Mark Barrowcliffe and Puketiti Station. After a couple of meetings we had our plan and they gave us the green light for a start.

I started training on the 12th March, building towards the 22nd December 2022.

The Covid lockdowns had killed the competitions for the remainder of the season so I took it out in the gym, prepping for the European season.

After flying to the United Kingdom in May I had a thorough meeting with personal trainer, Matt Luxton. We had our training schedule set for the next seven months with one task I asked of him – make me a freak!

Matt's knowledge and enthusiasm for fitness is second to none. His programme was not easy. But as they say, "do the mahi, get the treats."

Dedication would not be a problem, when you want something bad enough nothing will stand in your way.

Fast forward to the spring, things were not looking good for anyone attempting a record as we were having the wettest season of all time.

A small window of hot weather on the 21st December gave us enough time to prepare the sheep for the next day.

The night before the big day I woke to a raging thunderstorm. Drifting back to sleep I kept telling myself, "It's ok, you only have to shear a few lambs tomorrow."

Jumping out of bed at 4.45am I struggled to eat breakfast. The pressure had arrived and all I felt was a nauseous knot in my throat.

Dad, Dion King and I hit the road playing the whole *Back in Black* album while talking about the game plan.

We opened the shed door and got blasted by a heat wave as if the sun was rising in the catching pens. The lambs were sweated up and ready to peel.

7am, it's go time! Settling in fast the first run flew by with 191 down the chute.

Second run we hit a speed bump and little did I know this would become the defining moment of the day.

Under the pump on the hour I was starting to overheat. The air was thick and with every breath it felt like hot knives were piercing my lungs.

The thought of failure was sticking out like dogs balls. "Suck it up, keep pushing!" the team shouted.

I launched into the pen, only to run square into the end of the door. Flailing in to grab a lamb, I made a noise that would only resemble a dying whale. The door struck me right on the old fella and up through the hip.The next half a dozen sheep were excruciating. Things weren't going to plan.

The next thing I heard was "comb change after this sheep"!

With fresh steal on I now had the opportunity to reset and get back on the horse.

Mentally I was hurting. All I could hear was the bullshit the haters and pessimists have thrown at me over the years.





Standing left: *Todd Oliver, Dean Redman, Jimmy Haupokia, Kelly-Ann Perawiti, Jeremy Leygonie, Jye Bates, Turi Edmonds, Calum Bosley, Kelly Brill, Coel L'Huillier, Sam Brooks, Digger Balme, Floyde Neil, Thimoleon Resneau, Michael Hegglin, Rusty Morgan, Sir David Fagan.* ***Front left****: Llion Jones, Sean Fagan, Tom Reed, Jack Fagan and Parker Haverland (his nephew), Kyle Balme, TJ Balme, Dion King.*

Rather than let it get me down, I gave them a front row seat! Welcome to the freak show! Standing up for another drink, I flipped that negativity into energy and dived into the pen thinking, "let's go you bastards!"

Having plugged the hole, we finished on 183 for the second run.

Relaxing at lunch the team were quite worried about how the afternoon would play out. After a tune up from Dig I said "Dig, don't worry, it's all good, I'm going to do 190 the next run."

Calmer than a monk on morphine waiting for the countdown I knew we had been through the worst.

The wall had been smashed and the pain barrier was at a new level. It was now time to be the entertainer. Confidence filled the shed, 190 went down the chute for the third run.

4.30pm soon came along, spewing up gulps of liquid became the norm but that didn't matter as the thunderous thump of AC/DC filled the shed making everyone feel like they were at a rock concert.

Hunting down the catch with a few seconds to spare before 5pm the shed erupted like a frenzy in the colosseum.

With a beer in one hand, hugs and handshakes with the other we could now relax and enjoy the moment.

Over 1000 hours went into organising this day. The coming together of friends from France, Australia, Wales and the South Island created an outstanding bond between the team. 754 shorn for the day, mission accomplished.

They say you have to have a screw loose to attempt a day like this. I'm pretty sure a couple of my screws rattled out and fell down the porthole that day!

So you want to sign up for some voluntary torture? Decide what you want. Grab it by the horns and get stuck in. Days like this will become one of the most satisfying things you can do!



Top: *Jack Fagan with Kelly-Ann Perawiti (his woolhandler for both records) and Te Kuiti shearer, Jimmy Haupokia.*

But records don't come easy ...

By Jills Angus Burney

It was a frank admission by Jack Fagan at his World Solo 8-hour Lamb Record presentation this month, that it took more than 1000 hours among his volunteers to prepare his record. This insight into the mechanics of a shearing record is as telling as it is remarkable, given the number of records attempts these past twelve months.

The notion of a perfect record must surely be when all the stars align, as they did for King Country-based shearer, Sacha Bond in a hot Northern Southland woolshed late January. Within her reach was the 8-hour world womens' lamb record of 510 set in December 2019 by Canadian Pauline Bolay. Bond needed an average of under 56.47 seconds per lamb caught, shorn and dispatched, or over 15.9 lambs a quarter-hour or 63.75 per hour.

Looking in from the outside, no assumption could be made that Bond would smash the record. In fact, when Woodville-born Bond first stepped back to her homeland from across the Tasman in late 2019 after being raised in Australia and having learnt to shear there too, she bought some experience from the Australian outback with her, a fast hand and a quiet determination to attempt a solo record.

At the time we all could have assumed it was to be an Australian attempt but fate took her to Puketiti Station a few weeks later where, on 23 December 2019, she watched the Barrowcliffe team establish their new world men's three-stand lamb record. To her providence, Bond stayed around Piopio and partnered up soon after with Coel L'Huillier, one of the three-stand record holders. With her pen mate Natalya Rangiawha who had shorn 507 lambs in the January 2020 women's four-stand lamb record injured, their intent to attempt the existing women's two-stand 8-hour record of 903 set by Ingrid Smith (nee Baynes), 470 and her mother Marg Baynes, 433 in January 2009, was abandoned in late 2020.

From showing a fast hand promise, Bond set out to piece together the other critical factors that Fagan alluded to in his recent speech. After missing out on the Te Pa Station sheep to young Reuben Alabaster whose two-day old record he broke, Fagan also went to Puketiti Station. Both acquired an even line of sheep supply of a suitable disposition for a record attempt that was critical to their success too.

It was after a pre-lamb winter shearing stint in Southland that Fairlight Station, south of Lake Wakatipu, in Northern Southland provided their lambs to Bond. There were many



Above: *Sacha Bond acknowledging all her supporters after setting a new eight-hour lamb shearing world record.*

learnings there for everyone, Bond said recently, as some 700 lambs of the potential flock were over-crutched shortly before the record, not meeting the minimal preparation standard for the record. This had a significant effect, she said, on the lambs in the final pick drafted out for her record.

From where she started in December 2019, Bond has obviously spent the past three years patiently building her experience. She'd shorn 500 once before the record, imagining then only to achieve just 511 to crack Bolay's record. Bond used her delays during Covid and the birth of her son with L'Huillier to not only cultivate support but to draw on the wealth of experience from her Piopio base and from across the Tasman with former Australian record holder and shearing record doyen, Dwayne Black.

It could not have gone better for Bond, who set out to target 127.5 per run, and consistently delivered 150 per two-hour run. Her supreme fitness was evident. She spoke of her gruelling training leading up to the record, and the learning about mind control and mental toughness, and training her mind in an ordinary day's work setting to not be distracted and retain full focus for every lamb she shore. It paid off.

The 29-year-old mother of a pre-schooler, Bond smashed Bolay's record by 91, with remarkably even two-hour runs of 150 for the first three work periods, and 151 at the end of the day for a final day's tally of 601 lambs. While she lost six lambs to the judges in the process for untidiness, that fast hand was averaging 48 seconds a lamb or 18.75 per quarter hour, and 75 per hour.

To put this achievement in perspective, this makes her only the fourth woman in thirty-two years to shear over 600 in a day, and a more exciting a prospect, another hour at this pace could have seen her eclipse by a possible fifteen the current nine-hour solo effort of 661 lambs by Megan Whitehead in January 2021. It also put her within 34 lambs of Daniel Langlands in the current men's world three-stand world lamb record from Puketiti that she'd studied just three years earlier.

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Amy Silcock attempt

Also, within reach this summer of the Tararua shearer, Amy Silcock was the World Women's 8-hour Ewe record of 371 set by Marie Ussher Smith in Cornwall, England in 2021. Silcock needed an average of under I minute, 29 seconds per ewe caught, shorn and dispatched, or over 11.6 ewes a quarter-hour or 46.5 per hour.

Silcock had access to a strong line of ewes that she'd shorn the season before at Ross Na Clonagh farm on the Balance Road, Pahiatua, in the Tararua District, but the excellent growing season put 10kgs on the ewes, lifting the challenge considerably. A failure to belly crutch the ewes three months out before the record significantly hindered her attempt. It's no exaggeration to say that Silcock's sheep were substantially heavier and woollier (by almost a kilo) than they needed to be. Like Kerry-Jo Te Huia in 2016, establishing her 9-hour ewe record of 452, Silcock was using the comb sideways at times to bash her way up the neck on successive cotty ewes.

In contrast to Bond's experienced preparation, Silcock readily admits she'd not shorn over 350 on ewes before her record attempt. Her crew were relatively inexperienced until open shearers, Jimmy Samuels and Alex Smith stepped up at the last minute to help, while Lister's Russell Knight assisted with gear and her machine all day.

To her credit, Silcock finished the day with 348 to a shed full of admiration, and a chief judge, Ralph Blue from Dubbo Australia, who praised her tenacity to carry on to the full day as each run produced a loss to achieving the target Ussher Smith had set.

As Piopio Shearing contractor and record aficionado having managed multiple shearing records, Mark Barrowcliffe noted after the eight-hour five-stand record men's record at Puketiti Station in 2018, 'It's a lot of work setting up and cleaning up. It's a great team-building exercise and you've got your top guys pushing the boundaries.'

He might have said this to Bond, with the stars aligned from the outset, it was excellence looking good.

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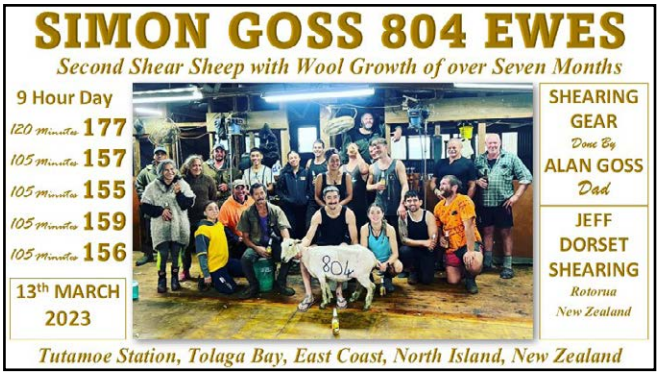
Above: *Simon Goss and Jamie Skiffington established a new eight-hour, two-stand lamb shearing record at The Shades, Whanganui, on 4 January 2023. Simon's tally was 715 and Jamie did 695 in combined runs of 348, 354, 356 and 352, exceeding by four lambs the tally (1406) set by Justin Bell and Sean Edmonds at Opepe Station, near Taupo, on 16 December 2002. The event was also a fund-raiser for the New Zealand Heart Foundation.* ***Below:*** *Simon Goss being urged on by sister Sarah Hirini (nee Goss).*





(From Shearingworldwide Facebook)

Massive Congratulations Simon Goss for shearing what is believed to be the first tally over 800 on adult sheep (ewes) with wool growth of over 7 months shorn in a nine-hour day on 13 March 2023. The tally was shorn at Tutamoe Station, Tolaga Bay, East Coast, North Island, New Zealand.

Respective run tallies: First 120 Minutes 177; second 105 Minutes 157; third 105 Minutes 155; fourth 105 Minutes 159; fifth 105 Minutes 156 (804). Simon's shearing gear was done by Alan Goss (Dad) and the shed contractor was Jeff Dorset Shearing, Rotorua, New Zealand.

Simon's effort raises the question – has there been a comparable tally shorn anywhere in New Zealand before?

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77.5	Regular	92.5	Regular
80	Regular	92.5	Long
82.5	Short	95	Regular
82.5	Regular	95	Long
82.5	Long	97.5	Regular
85	Regular	97.5	Long
85	Long	102.5	Regular
87.5	Regular	107.5	Short
87.5	Long		
90	Regular		
90	Long		

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Another shearer who went to war

From *Shearing at Lake Sumner*, by *Lester Masters*

In 1925 I rode with a shearing gang up the Hurunui River in North Canterbury, along the 28-mile bridle track to the Lakes Station. On our first sighting, the station buildings by the shores of the lake at the foot of the Brothers Range, the woolclasser had turned to me and said with a grin that seemed to be a permanent feature of his face: 'Race you to the gate.'

Being a blade shearer, and therefore a representative of a pastoral craft that dates back to pre-biblical times, even though, as it turned out later, I was only the drummer (slowest shearer) of that particular gang, it would never have done for me to ignore such a challenge.

I gathered up the reins, gave my horse a touch in the flank, and away we went, neck and neck. As we rounded a bend a washout appeared in the track right in front of us. The classer had the inside running, and there was just sufficient of the track left for him to get around in good order.

I was not so lucky, however, my mount pulled up with a sudden jerk, the ground gave way and his front feet went over the two feet drop. I did a sort of flying trapeze act but, being somewhat out of practice at that kind of thing, didn't make a very happy landing. Being just an average human, directly I realised that my only hurts were a few bruises, I scrambled back onto the track to make sure that the undignified manner in which I had dismounted had not been observed by the remainder of the gang.

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I led my horse over to where the woolclasser was waiting, mounted, and the two of us rode forward again in a more sedate manner. 'Pity your judgment was so faulty, you might have had a sporting chance otherwise,' the classer remarked in a condescending way. I looked at him, then turned in the saddle and stared back as though deeply absorbed in something that was happening behind us. The classer fell for the trick and also turned. Directly he did so I dug my heels into the horse's flanks, shot away again and the race was mine. Of course, as I later remarked to the classer, had his judgment not been so faulty, he might have had a sporting chance!

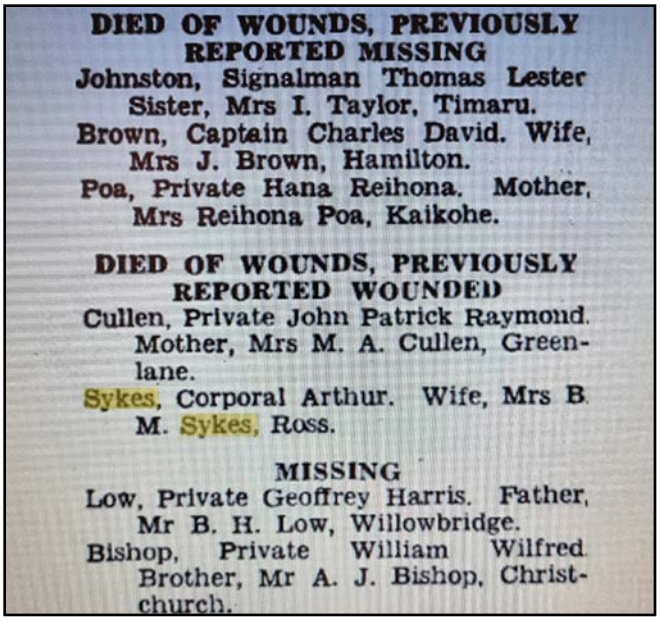
Frank Nurse and the musterers, with the usual astuteness of their kind, kept the tough old sandy-backed wethers well out of sight and gave the five of us, who comprised the actual shearing gang, some nice little hoggets to start on. As I was much the smallest man in the gang, height five feet, weight just on seven stone, I was immediately loaded with the name of Lofty, and given the pen at the far end of the board. The man next to me, an Irishman who soon became known as Jim the mag. artist. Jim was a great yarn spinner. It was one of his habits, if a sheep was giving trouble to keep muttering until he had it out the porthole such things as 'Bad cess to you. May a curse be on you. May 'ould Scratch himself take you.'

If interrupted accidentally while spinning a yarn, or as he often was purposely by one of the others, he would exclaim, 'Where am I now, where was I last, I'll go and find out.' After which he would either continue his yarn or, more than likely, start an entirely new one.

Arthur Sykes, who was also one of the gang, was known of course as the Big Gun (very fast shearer) and given the pen next to the wool table. I had heard many tales of Sykes's ability with the blades and had thought some of them exaggerated until I saw him in action that year at The Lakes. He was a nuggety-built man about five feet seven inches in height, with big and powerful arms and hands. I don't think I ever saw another shearer work with his shears pulled back as far as Sykes had his, and I'm quite sure I never saw another who kept his shears so constantly filled to the hilt, or was able to cut off such wads of wool when in action.



Arthur Sykes (sitting second left) at Esk Head, 1930s.



DIED OF WOUNDS, PREVIOUSLY REPORTED MISSING

Johnston, Signalman Thomas Lester Sister, Mrs I. Taylor, Timaru.
Brown, Captain Charles David. Wife, Mrs J. Brown, Hamilton.
Poa, Private Hana Reihona. Mother, Mrs Reihona Poa, Kaikohe.

DIED OF WOUNDS, PREVIOUSLY REPORTED WOUNDED

Cullen, Private John Patrick Raymond. Mother, Mrs M. A. Cullen, Greenlane.
Sykes, Corporal Arthur. Wife, Mrs B. M. Sykes, Ross.

MISSING

Low, Private Geoffrey Harris. Father, Mr B. H. Low, Willowbridge.
Bishop, Private William Wilfred. Brother, Mr A. J. Bishop, Christchurch.



Above: *Screenshot from Timaru Herald, 12 December 1941.*
Opposite: *Arthur Sykes' gravestone at Tobruk War Cemetery.*

To see the wool billowing onto the board about Sykes' moccasined feet when he went properly into action undressing a merino wether seemed to me to be a sight that would have merited the time of one of the world's great artists in attempting to transfer to canvas. Though not quite certain on the point, I think I would be right in saying that, when in his prime, as he was when I met him, Sykes was never beaten in any shed in a full day's shearing contest.

Certainly, I myself, the drummer of the gang, headed him off for a few sheep one day, but that was done by strategy, not by ability. My catching pen happened to be filled just on 'smoko' time. In it I noticed right near the front one rosella (sheep bare wool except for a few tufts around the neck) and several others that appeared to be bare bellies. On strolling along and glancing casually into Sykes's catching pen I noticed that he had eight tough looking old sandy backs in it.

Almost before the starting bell had finished ringing after smoko, I had a bare belly on the board, slewed around so that the bare patch couldn't be noticed, and had started operations. I soon had the body wool off the sheep, skipped a few trimmings and dumped it out the porthole. When I looked along Sykes was just turning to come down the last side of his sheep. I grabbed another bare belly out of the catching pin and tore in at getting its wool off. By this time the rest of the gang realised what was going on and started barracking for the 'little big gun'.

Sykes started to roll the wool off in earnest, drew level and pushed his second sheep out of the porthole just as I did mine. I let him get his third sheep on the board, then grabbed the rosella, hacked the few tufts of wool off and dumped her out the porthole. The gang gave a yell for the little fellow. I rushed in and grabbed what appeared to be a good shearing sheep, but it turned out to be a sticky old jinny that would have made excellent bait for shark fishing. I was just going up the neck of her as Sykes pulled his fourth onto the board. He soon started to overhaul me. The gang yelled at me to stick to it. I plugged away, got the body wool off, skipped the trimmings, pushed her out of the porthole and had just managed to straighten up as Sykes poked his one out.

Sykes was a great sport and I felt sure that he hung back just to let me get that fourth sheep out ahead of him. He looked along at me, made out he was gathering up his gear and said with a grin, 'Seeing there is a new ringer (fastest shearer) at The Lakes, you and I had better change stands.'

'Well, I don't know,' I replied, grinning back at him. 'Perhaps we had better wait until the end of the run and see how things are going then.'

Of course, when that time came his tally was, as usual, nearly double mine. Sykes went to Hitler's war to help quell Rommel's men, and now sleeps somewhere in Egypt's sands. It is often said that old soldiers and old shearers never die. If that be so, as well it might, the spirit of Arthur Sykes will still be roaming the shearing sheds and homestead paddocks of the high-country stations of the South.

Extract from *Back Country Tales* by Lester Masters. Reprinted from *'Alone in a Mountain World'* by David McLeod (AH & AW Reed, 1972.)

* * * * *

Arthur Sykes was born about 1901, the son of David and Elizabeth Sykes of Christchurch. He appears to have spent some of his adult years living at Ross and maybe other locations on the West Coast. At the time of his shearing at The Lakes (as related in Lester Masters' story above), he would have been about 24 or 25 years of age.

Arthur was 39 years of age when he enlisted (at Greymouth) for military service in April 1940, and started his initial training at Burnham Camp, near Christchurch, the following



month. As S\N 12683 Private Sykes he was assigned to the 26th Battalion, 2nd NZEF and departed for overseas later that year. He took part in the North African (desert) campaign and was wounded (probably) during the battle of Sidi Rezegh on 23 November 1941. He died of wounds on 4 December 1941. By the time of his death, Arthur Sykes had been promoted to the rank of corporal.

According to an 'In Memoriam' notice published in The Press on 4 December 1942, Arthur was the husband of Marcella, from Palmerston North, and father to Russell and Mary. He is buried at the Tobruk War Cemetery in Libya.

Some tales of Arthur's prowess survive to this day. Peter Casserly relates how Arthur and Stan Hart were shearing at Mount White in 1938 and fought each other all day long. Arthur finished with 203 and Stan with 201, the first double hundreds achieved in the shed. Peter thinks Arthur's tally stood until 1967, when George Karaitiana upped it by one.

"I was shearing at the shed with Alan Norman and Donny Hammond in 1970. But Alan happened to be absent one day and Donny had a go at the record. He upped it to 206 and I did 203, being just 21-years-of -age. Well, Donny was walking around with his chest puffed out a bit when Alan got back to learn he'd missed the new shed record. But Alan didn't say too much.

"Next morning Alan hooked into it and did 56 in the first run and ended the day on 209. As far as I'm aware that's still the record at Mount White. And Donny reckoned Alan must have been in town the previous day 'drinking thick shakes' to prepare for his big tally.

"There were seven of us at Mount White that year – Alan Norman, Donny Hammond, Alex Madonald, Graeme Macdonald, Bill Walker, Johnny Moses and myself and so we became known as 'The Magnificent Seven', named after the western movie that had come out a few years beforehand. A bloke named Norman Goodyer had been in the gang prior to that but I'd taken his place for Mount White.

"I recall another little story about Arthur Sykes – there was a shearer back in the 1930s who went into town for a haircut. He was only in the chair for about a minute and the barber had the job done. The shearer asked, 'You're not related to Arthur Sykes by any chance, are you?'

"Arthur who?"

"Arthur Sykes, the famous blade shearer!"

On the strength of that question, we would think not!

* * * * * *



Shearing at Mount White c1953, probably 25 years after Arthur Sykes did the shed's first '200'.

ANZAC DAY

I saw a kid marchin' with medals on his chest.
He marched alongside Diggers, marchin' six abreast;
He knew it was ANZAC day, he walked along with pride,
He did his best to keep in step with the Diggers by his side.

And when the march was over the kid was rather tired.
A Digger said, 'Whose medals son?' to which the kid replied:
'They belong to my daddy but he did not come back
He died up in New Guinea on a lonely jungle track.'

The kid looked rather sad then a tear came to his eye.
The Digger said 'Don't cry my son and I will tell you why,
Your daddy marched with us today – all the bloomin' way
We Diggers know that he was there – it's like that on Anzac Day.'

The kid looked rather puzzled and didn't understand,
But the Digger went on talking and started to wave his hand
'For this great land we live in, there's a price we have to pay
And for this thing called freedom, the Diggers had to pay.

'For we all love fun and merriment in this country where we live,
The price was that some soldier, his precious life must give.
For you to go to school, my lad, and worship God at will,
Someone had to pay the price so the Diggers paid the bill.

'Your daddy died for us my son – for all things good and true,
I wonder if you understand the things I've said to you?'
The kid looked up at the Digger, just for a little while
And with a changed expression, said, with a lovely smile:

'I know my daddy marched here today, this, our Anzac Day,
I know he did, I know he did – all the blooming way!

Anon. (From The Happy Warrior, An Anthology of Australian and New Zealand Military Poetry. Sid Harta Publishers, 2001.)

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Echoes from the past at Te Kuiti

By Des Williams

The voice and words of commentator Godfrey Bowen from a Golden Shears open final fifty years ago came echoing down the corridors of time at Te Kuiti last Saturday evening. In a piece of famous radio commentary back in 1972, Godfrey had said, "Look at little Eddie Reidy on stand five – he's the smallest man on the board and he's showing all the others how to shear sheep."

In the New Zealand open championship final last week it was Leon Samuels on stand five, the smallest man on the board by some margin, and he too was showing all the others how to shear sheep.

But it's not that he didn't have some fierce competition to contend with. Gavin Mutch (as in days gone by) set the early pace in the 20-sheep final before Toa Henderson started to mount the serious bid that everyone in the packed Les Munro Centre knew was coming.

Defending champion Rowland Smith also gave glimpses of past deeds in this race that would reward the winner with a trip to the world championships in Scotland, in June, but in the end, it was a battle against the clock which Samuels (15min 06s) won by six seconds from Henderson, with Smith more than half a sheep back in 15min 31sec.

Leon also had the advantage over Henderson on the board and in the pen judging to win by an overall margin of 1.274 – more than enough to claim without argument that second berth in the New Zealand team to Scotland alongside Smith, who'd already won his ticket at Golden Shears.

And while half a century has passed since Godfrey's commentary 'çame through the wireless', it's a mere 30 years since the New Zealand open was last won by a South Island shearer– Edsel Forde in 1993.

[Though of Ngati Rangi/Ngati Pikiao central North Island descent, 38-year-old Leon has long been domiciled in Invercargill and more recently, Roxburgh. He first learned to shear at the age of 16 in the South Otago region and "we claim him as one of our own," said one deep South shearing authority. 'Nuff said!']

Smith had won the North Island Shearer of the Year final on the Friday night from Henderson and Samuels, while the third



Above: *The ever-popular and hotly-contested local contractors relay was won by the Mark Barrowcliffe team, from left: Clay Harris, Corey Barrowcliffe and Craig Fagan.*



Above: *"Well, that's Wales accounted for Leon. How about we now go to Scotland and take on the rest of the world?" 'Good idea, Rowland. I just need to win the open first.'*

'biggie'on the programme, the multi-breeds circuit final went to Paerata Abraham, 0.119 of a point clear of Hemi Braddick and another fraction ahead of Nathan Stratford, who has won the event three times in the past decade. This event, Leon Samuels had won in 2021.

Piopio senior Clay Harris completed a remarkable quartet of major victories in the senior final – having also won Golden Shears, Southern Shears and the Otago championship in the previous three weeks. Adam Gordon had finished second in three of those finals, just missing the connection at Gore.

Meanwhile, there was no trip to Scotland hanging on the outcome of the open woolhandling final but major interest, never-the-less. Could Monica Potae finally win a big one? Well, she wasn't quite good enough to match Angela Stevens on the night, though there was just a couple of points in it – very close for a woolhandling result.

The only previous champion in the final, Hanatia Tipene (winner in 2013) finished fifth, behind Chelsea Collier and local 'veteran', Sue Turner.

New Zealand shearing and woolhandling championships Te Kuiti, 30-31 March -1 April 2023:

Wools of New Zealand Series (20 sheep): New Zealand (Rowland Smith, 57.171; Leon Samuels 57.239) 114.41 beat Wales Development (Gethin Lewis 61.283; Dylan Jones 67.474) 128.757. New Zealand won the series 3-0.

New Zealand Shears Circuit final (5 merinos, 5 second-shear, 5 lambs): Paerata Abraham (Masterton) 61.469 1; Hemi Braddick (Eketahuna) 61.588 2; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 61.709 3; Leon Samuels (Invercargill), 62.009 4; Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 63.193 5; Digger Balme (Otorohanga) 66.591 6.

North Island Shearer of the Year final (20 sheep – 10 ewes, 10 lambs): Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 52.934 1; Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka) 53.733 2; Leon Samuels (Invercargill) 54.813 3; John Kirkpatrick (Napier) 55.864 4; Gavin Mutch (Dannevirke), 56.082 5; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 57.66 6.

New Zealand Shears Open final (20 sheep): Leon Samuels (Invercargill) 52.153 1; Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka) 53.427 2; Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho) 53.977 3; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 55.969 4; Gavin Mutch (Dannevirke) 57.168 5; David Gordon (Masterton) 57.889 6.

New Zealand Shears Open Plate (10 sheep): John Kirkpatrick (Napier) 33.419 1; Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti) 34.717 2; Dean Ball (Te Kuiti) 34.842 3; Mark Grainger (Te Kuiti) 36.572 4; Casey Bailey (Riverton) 38.141 5; Digger Balme (Otorohanga) 40.875 6.

Open challenger (10 sheep): Reuben Alabaster (Taihape) 36.065 1; Chris Dickson (Masterton) 39.211 2; Lionel Taumata (Gore), 39.372 3; Paora Moananui (Eketahuna) 39.381 4; Paraki Puna (Napier) 40.57 5; Llion Jones (Wales), 40.693 6.

New Zealand Shears Senior final (12 sheep): Clay Harris (Piopio) 43.928 1; Adam Gordon (Masterton) 45.402 2; Tama Nahona (Kaiwaka) 45.997 3; Cory Barrowcliffe (Piopio) 46.797 4; Te Ua Wilcox (Gisborne) 47.741 5; Jayden Mainland (Wellsford) 48.509 6.

New Zealand Shears Intermediate final (8 sheep): Bruce Grace (Wairoa) 39.151 1; Sean Fagan (Te Kuiti) 39.91 2; Charlie Summers (Naracoorte, South Australia) 42.11 3; Hamuera Henderson (Kaiwaka) 43.483 4; Sam Green (England), 45.204 5; Matthew Smith (Otorohanga) 47.014 6.

New Zealand Shears Junior final (5 sheep): Emma Martin (Gore) 30.37 1; Coby Lambert (Raupunga), 33.289 2; Cody Waihape (Gore) 35.023 3; Daniel Rogers (Raetihi) 35.311 4; Ryka Swann (Wairoa) 37.016 5; Sam Parker (Raglan) 37.126 6.

New Zealand Shears Novice final (2 sheep): Trent Alabaster (Taihape) 28.86 1; Sam Fletcher (Mt Maunganui) 29.37 2; Kaivah Cooper (Napier), 30.54 3; Malcolm Nahona (Kaiwaka) 34.71 4; George Peacock (Dannevirke) 37.20 5; Rebecca Dickson (Feilding) 41.84 6.

New Zealand Shears Women's final (6 sheep): Laura Bradley (Papatawa) 32.993 1; Sarah Hewson (Blenheim) 33.098 2; Emma Marton (Gore) 38.703 3; Lydia Thomson (Rangiora) 44.226 4; Cushla Abraham (Masterton) 44.549 5; Peggysue Tohengaroa (Aria) 46.389 6.

Whanau Teams Relay (5 sheep): Sir David and Jack Fagan, 23.528sec, 1; Nuki and Joseph Gordon (Masterton) 26.389 2; Mark and Cory Barrowcliffe, 27.712 3; Digger and Josh Balme 28.112 4; David and Michael Buick, 28.941 5; Neil and Sean Fagan 31.545 6.

Development Teams Challenge (2 sheep): Canterbury Marlborough Development (Emma Martin 12.552; Lydia Thomson 18.771; Robin Krause 21.742) 53.03 beat New Zealand Shears King Country (Coby Lambert 23.434; Cody Lambert 23.578; Devon Ball 26.607) 73.619.

Woolhandling:

New Zealand Shears Open: Angela Stevens (Napier) 96.31 1; Monica Potae (Milton) 98.69 2; Chelsea Collier (Hamilton) 111.37 3; Sue Turner (Aria) 115.31 4; Hanatia Tipene (Te Kuiti) 123.12 5.







Top: *New Zealand Shears junior finalists, from left: Sir David Fagan (for sponsor); Emma Martin, Coby Lambert, Cody Waihape, Daniel Rogers, Ryka Swann, Sam Parker.* ***Middle:*** *New Zealand Shears Womens finalists: Sir David Fagan (for sponsor); Laura Bradley, Sarah Hewson, Emma Martin, Lydia Thomson, Cushla Abraham, Peggy-Sue Tohengaroa.* ***Above:*** *New Zealand Shears intermediate finalists, from left: Sponsor (TK Natural), Bruce Grace, Sean Fagan, Charlie Summers, Hamuera Henderson, Sam Green, Matthew Smith.*

New Zealand Shears Senior: Cat Christey (King Country) 78.12 1; Rahera Kerr (Hauturu) 80.37 2; Vinniye Phillips (Taumarunui) 95.994 3; Summer Pritchard (Pongaroa) 96.87 4; Tira Ngarangione (Gisborne) 103.22 5.

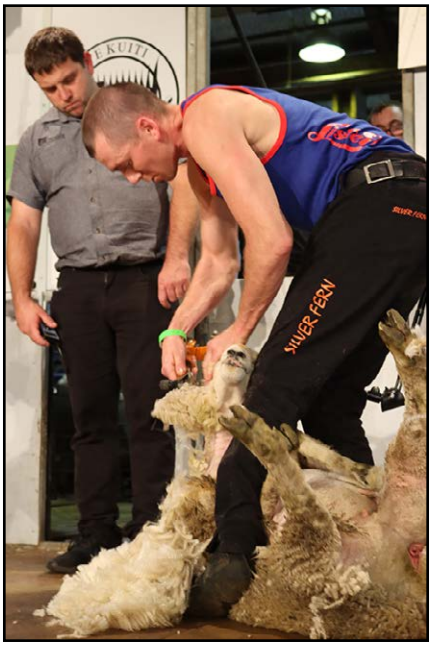
New Zealand Shears Junior: Tre Ratana Sciascia (Taihape) 73.744 1; Te Whetu Brown (Wairoa) 81.38 2; Makayla Neil (Taumarunui) 90.144 3; Chloe Henderson (Feilding) 112.5 4; Kelly Barrett-Thom (Kawhia) 118.25 5.

Shearing and woolhandling:

Inter-Island shearing and woolhandling (six second-shear sheep): North Island (shearers Rowland Smith, Toa Henderson, Gavin Mutch; woolhandlers Sue Turner, Hanatia Tipene, Angela Stevens) 308.299 beat South Island (shearers Leon Samuels, Nathan Stratford, Casey Bailey; woolhandlers Tamara Marshall, Chelsea Collier, Monica Potae) 333.429.

* * * * * *

















Scenes from New Zealand championships. ***Across top:*** *Daniel Rogers of Raetihi preparing his gear for the Junior final, then shearing in the final in which he finished fourth; Ant Frew from Pleasant Point in the open heats.* ***Middle row:*** *Intermediate entrant, Will Sinclair from Oamaru: Jacob Moore from Marton setting up, then shearing in open heats.* ***Bottom left:*** *Doug Laing receives the Lance Waddell Trophy for service to shearing sports:* ***Bottom right:*** *A nod from the photographer and this young spectator's wink in response – agreement that Leon Samuels would win the big prize!*

NZ Championships adopts Waimarino's Te Reo Strategy

By Des Williams

There's the old adage that you learn something new everyday and for most people at the New Zealand championships earlier this month, chances are it was plenty to do with Te Reo, the Maori language. Following a strategy introduced by the Waimarino Shears Committee at Raetihi two years ago, the Les Munro Centre at Te Kuiti became witness to what Sir David Fagan described as 'a matter of doing what was right.'

Stressing that the strategy had been adopted by the whole committee rather than any one individual, Sir David said 'no one was being thrown in the deep end' and implementation would be a gradual process over the next few years. He likened it to how the Welsh community incorporates both English and Welsh into commentaries, prize-givings and with bilingual signs at their competition venues.

Waimarino Shears spokesperson Brendon Morgan said his committee had introduced the strategy at their own competition two years ago, to bring an awareness of te reo Maori to the shearing sector and were assisting the New Zealand Shears at their request. The strategy was in two phases – the first based on vocabulary and the second on incorporating Maori words (kupu) into everyday narrative.

Brendon said Waimarino had implemented phase two at its own competition on Saturday 18 March 2023 and he hoped the move to phase one by the New Zealand Championships would result in other competitions doing the same.

People present at the championships over the three days, and those tuned into the live-streaming witnessed first hand what this writer would describe as an outstandingly success implementation of the strategy. Woolhandling commentators Tia and Monica Potae and shearing commentators (Tuma Mullins, Jack Fagan and Jimmy Samuels in particular) embraced the opportunity with total enthusiasm and professionalism. 'Competitors, Get set, Go!' became *'Kaiwhakataetae, Kia rite, Tukua!'* and not one '*kaiwhakataetae*' was left standing at the *taiwhanga* (catching pen) door. Those *takapu* (bellies) went flying as usual and the board *kaiwhakawa* (judges) deducted penalties one, two or three (*tahi, rua, toru*) at a time!





Top: *Brendon Morgan from the Waimarino Shears Komiti, assisting the New Zealand Championships to adopt the Waimarino Te Reo Maori strategy.* ***Above:*** *Commentators Tia Potae and Tuma Mullins, putting the strategy into practice.*

Taikutihipi Shearing industry

Kupu Pakeha	Kupu Māori
Sheep	Hipi
Wool	Wūru
Shearing	Kuti
Shorn	Kutia / Morea
Shearing plant	Wāhi Kutikuti
Handpiece	Mau Kutikuti
Cutters	Kukuti
Moccasins	Hiripa
Grinder	Pehu
Pendulum	Taima Tārere
Sandpaper	Pepa Whakamaene
Glue	Kāpea
Fadge	Pēke wūru
Broom	Puruma / Tahitahi
Catching pen	Taiwhanga
Woolpress	Perēhi wūru
Sheep truck	Taraka Hipi

Whakataetae Kutihipi Shearing Show

Kupu Pakeha	Kupu Māori
Judges	Kaiwhakawā
Competitors	Kaiwhakataetae
Get set	Kia rite
Go	Tukua
Commentator	Kaipāoho
Timekeeper	Kaitatau-wā
Woolhandler	Pirihō / Kaiwūru
Sheep'o	Hīpō
Presser	Kaiperehi
Grandstand	Taunga Mātaki
Belly	Takapū
Long blow	Kuti roa
Crutch	Waru
Smoko	Paramanawa
Sponsors	Kaitautoko
Spectator	Hunga Mātakitaki
Entertainment	Whakangahau

"The strategy started with all of these simple phrases we use every day – we simply translated them and used them at our competition.

"And it attracted so much attention, not just from people in the industry, but those who were quite keen just to learn the language.

"We are more than happy to support others who might want to jump on board our waka and implement certain parts of our strategy into their own shows."

(Elijah Pue, Language ambassador).

Share Mongolia – a sustainability project

By Jills Angus Burney

If there's one thing to know about one of the Golden Shears greatest shearers, the late Tom Brough and his wife, Larraine (a former travel agent), it was their love for travel. So, it's no surprise that when their Rabobank finance manager son, Paul Brough was trekking through Mongolia in 2019 and came across a group of farmers who had built pens out of branches, that he took interest in their cutting wool from a herd of 900 with scissors at a rate of 30 sheep a day.

"It would take them a month. I came home and thought, 'this is ridiculous, we could have a crack at running some courses,'" he said to the *New Zealand Herald* when they first arrived.

Brough said he discovered there had been attempts to provide modern shearing gear to Mongolia before, but with no instructions on how to use it properly or maintain it, those efforts were doomed to fail. That chance meeting with Brough on holiday in Mongolia had led to the quartet travelling to New Zealand on a shearing sojourn, arriving here early in the summer, staying in the King Country and the Hawkes Bay.

Share Mongolia was established as a sustainability project introducing modern farming to the Mongolian herders. The project set out to use the expertise of New Zealand farmers and shearers to promote sustainable, efficient and economic farming practices in Mongolia. An initial idea was hatched to run some courses in an exchange with visiting New Zealand shearers, and from there it made sense to see if the farmers themselves would benefit from travelling and learning in New Zealand through the establishment of Share Mongolia - Farmers Helping Farmers.

This is no typical Kiwi farmer exchange, because it has the potential to radically change their lives, funded by the World Bank, the Rabobank Community Fund, the Australian Embassy of Mongolia, the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

Share Mongolia received initial funding for shearing instructors and equipment for the first Mongolian-based training of 68 herders, leaving them with machinery and teaching them how to use and maintain the gear properly. More than US$50,000 has been raised since for shearing equipment and two German-built shearing trailers have been exported to Mongolia.



Above: *Mark Barrowcliffe (left) with Ama, Ahanda, Baasca and Budee.*

Other developments include the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) assisting a virtual training programme on pasture management, wool preparation and sheep husbandry to address the need for more sustainable farming practices and avoid the annual loss of some 3600ha of land to the Gobi Desert from overgrazing.

Budee, Baasca, Ama and Ahanda are from a long line of nomadic farmers that tend to their flock in one of the coldest regions on earth in winter – as they had done for thousands of years – shearing their sheep with scissors. Rabobank flew them from Mongolia, organised their work, lodgings, gear and tuition using shearing gear and handpieces commonly used in New Zealand and other parts of the world.

Budee, Baasca, Ama and Ahanda were staying with King Country contractor Mark Barrowcliffe while in New Zealand. He said they were quick learners and practical thinkers. It was fascinating to see them navigate the differences in day-to-day living between here and their life at home.

"You only need to show them once. It's amazing how they work things out," he said. "Everything is new to them".

While shearers typically sweat it out at the best of times during the course of their work under shed roofs in the height of summer, back home for these boys on the Mongolian plains, temperatures during winter can plummet to minus 60 degrees in some places. It is a place where dried cow and horse faeces are burnt for warmth. Sheep are bred with black heads so they are easier to find in the snow.

At the end of the exchange the farmers will return to Mongolia, having worked and earned money that they would be able to invest in their families and farms. One farmer said he was already saving for his five-and-a-half months old daughter's high school education.

It took Ama three days to travel to the nearest airport, and they then spent 20 hours on a plane flying to New Zealand, navigating three international airports along the way. "I was relieved when they arrived," Brough said.

Meanwhile, Budee, Baasca, Ama and Ahanda were in action at a number of AP&I Shows over the summer, joining gangs of shearers competing for time-honoured prizes in a variety of sections, and taking in some of the show's attractions too.

A measure of their progress was the thirteenth place by Serjbude (Budee) lkhagasuren in the New Zealand Shearing championships Junior grade, a far cry from their first event at Horowhenua in Levin in mid-January, when none of four of them knew the value of a second cut in the wool, and their final job was more than a bit rougher.

Brough says that by the time they go home this month, instead of getting through 30 sheep a day they've all attained about 250 sheep per day. With lack of time and funding to prepare of the World Championships in Scotland this June, Brough says there is hope that one day these young men will turn up at some future event as the Share Mongolian Worlds team.

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