

Shearing

Promoting our industry, sport and people

Number 112: (Vol 39, No 2) August 2023
ISSN 1179-9455 (online)



The Red Dragon rules the world! Welshman Gwion Lloyd Evans wins the world machine shearing championship at the Royal Highland Show on 25 June 2023 with his team mate and 2019 champion Richard Jones in second place, in a final containing no southern hemisphere shearers for the first time since 1977.

What makes a Gun?
The Big Alpaca Record
Shearing's Hall of Fame
World Championships 2023
New Zealand Woolclassers Ass'n
Swapping high heels for handpiece
Shear History Trust National Museum



Last Side Publishing
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phil Oldfield's Ireland
Kerry Johnstone tributes
Tony Mathews short stories
Hi from the Canadian Prairies
Shearing at Feilding High School
Shearing Sports NZ National Rankings
Lucie Grancher's world champs journey

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UNDER COVER STORY

Greetings readers and Facebook followers – of which we now have in excess of 4,600. (Which doesn't include those following our publication via other pages – Shearingworldwide, Lister, Heiniger, Top Gun Shearing Supplies, New Zealand and Australian Shearing Contractors Associations, et cetera.

It's probably no surprise that we have given great attention to the recent world championships in Scotland – maybe a dozen pages of photos, four pages of results and associated 'side-bar' stories.

The Cook Islands team provides a report on their activities; French team member Lucie Grancher provides an entertaining 'read' on her journey from novice woolhandler in New Zealand to world championships finalist. And French blade shearer Reinhard Poppe expresses disappointment that the sheep he and other competitors shorn with blades were almost immediately shorn again with machines. A lack of diplomacy somewhere, we suggest.

It is our sad duty to record the passing of several well-known industry people, including Master Shearer Kerry Johnstone, widely known throughout New Zealand, Australia, the USA and other parts of the world. Kerry had been battling ill-health for some time.

You may have noticed we have been putting together a shearing industry "Hall of Fame" in recent months and we extend our deliberations substantially in this edition. Read our explanation on page 45 and the list of hallowed names on page 46. We make the distinction between candidates for a Hall of Fame and candidates for what might be termed a Hall of Legends. Shearing Sports New Zealand's "Master Shearers" do not necessarily belong in a 'Fame' category and nor do many of our "Legends". Give us your comments and 'feedback', please.

Apart from the items mentioned, we have a range of stories and hope there is something of interest to you. Meantime, keep well and we will do it all again in November. Better still, send us something (story, photo) for November!

*Ka kite ano
Nga mihi, Des Williams*

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Keeping Crossbred Wool Quality Standards High Pays Off

By Marg Forde (reprinted with permission of NZ Wool Classers Association)

“A lot of people are putting it all together; they mightn’t care but we do” – Fiona Ramsden

Recent double NZWCA Classer Merit Award winner Fiona Ramsden has a farm office which looks a little different to most wool growers. Alongside all the expected communication equipment, administrative tools and paperwork like farm accounts and shearing tally books sit Fiona’s sewing machine, overlocker, an array of wool textiles, wool bale stencils and raw wool, the latter five items associated with her make-to-order business “Coast Road Interiors”.

Fiona, who lives on one of her family properties “Ware Ware” near the Tararua District’s eastern North Island coastline, has a passion for wool and a deep understanding of it’s value and uses. She has a Diploma in Fashion Design and Technology, a Diploma in Wool Technology and in addition to farming she has extensive experience in fashion and interior design.

“I’ve always been a textile person,” says Fiona, “and I have come to know you can’t get anything better than wool to make clothing, soft furnishings, carpet and so much more.”

She says she was “overwhelmed and thankful” to receive NZWCA Classer Merit Awards in the WoolWorks Crossbred Classer or Grader category and the BJ Mahony Shearing North Island category. “It makes all the hours of preparation on the farm, attention to detail and quality and hard work with the wool during shearing worth it,” says Fiona.

She travelled to Christchurch with her partner Matt to attend the NZWCA Industry Day/AGM on May 9 where the annual awards, for the 2022/23 season, were announced and presented.

“My father Dan has always been very passionate with wool and passed down his knowledge to me over the years. Wool is such an amazing fibre that I love working with at all stages. I just wish it was more valuable to farmers.”

Fiona came home from travelling and working in 2012. Her parents, Dan and Barbara took on Ware Ware (1215ha effective) in 1971 and bought Barbara’s family out of Moanaroa (1450ha effective) in 1999. The senior Ramsdens retired last year leaving Fiona on Ware Ware and son Hugh and his wife Kate on Moanaroa. The two steep contoured Northern Wairarapa properties, which are 15 minutes apart, and a 400 ha finishing property near Pongaroa, are run as one entity, carrying 23,000 stock units with a 60/40 sheep to beef ratio. The sheep are proudly Romney however terminal sire rams are used over the older ewes.



Above: Fiona Ramsden at the NZWCA Classer Awards with Mitchell Young of WoolWorks (Sponsor).

The Ramsdens are regulars in the auction room when their wool is sold, always enjoying how the quality of their wool and it’s preparation makes it stand out in the sale boxes. “Even though the price is so low, we wouldn’t skimp on the preparation and the buyers seem to know that, you can see them sit up when our lots come up,” says Fiona, whose stencil FX2153 goes on every bale.

Last year they topped the sale with a 17 bale line of hogget wool: Colour 0.9; vm 0.1; yield 80.7; micron 34.4, which sold for \$3.23 clean. A 15 bale line of hogget wool, 36.3 micron made \$3.19 clean.

Moanaroa stretches 11 km along the coastline while Ware Ware is 15 km inland, but Fiona says the difference in the wool between the properties is noticeable with “Moanaroa wool a lot brighter and cleaner”.

Fiona proudly admits to being “very hands on” at shearing time. Prior, she washes the floors in both wool sheds and makes sure there is no wool lying around. “So when the shearing gang walks in, the standard is set, they will go the extra mile because we do.”

The gang, from Tararua Shearing, come knowing this explains Fiona. “They’ve got used to me,” she laughs, “it’s a busy time but I really enjoy it. I like that I have a great relationship with the gang, we are all chasing the same result.” She is aware that, in the face of extremely low Crossbred wool prices, the quality of preparation she is seeking is higher than many other places.

Key, she has found, is being in the shed, working alongside the wool handlers, and being clear, “this is what I want”. Afterwards, Fiona makes a point of letting the wool handlers know how the wool has sold, giving credit where it’s due.

“We really appreciate a quality job done.”

FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

CONNECT

TALK & LISTEN,
BE THERE,
FEEL CONNECTED

Give

Your time,
your words,
your presence

TAKE NOTICE

REMEMBER THE SIMPLE THINGS THAT GIVE YOU JOY

KEEP LEARNING

EMBRACE NEW EXPERIENCES,
SEE OPPORTUNITIES,
SURPRISE YOURSELF

BE ACTIVE

DO WHAT YOU CAN,
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,
MOVE YOUR HOOD

INTRODUCE THESE SIMPLE STRATEGIES INTO YOUR LIFE AND YOU WILL FEEL THE BENEFITS.

FARM STRONG
Live Well Farm Well

The Ramsden's two coastal properties sadly suffered extensive damage in Cyclone Gabrielle. The Owhango River runs through their land, out to sea at Akitio Beach. "We are trying to carry on as much as we can," says Fiona, "we had a bad drought in 2020 and now all the cyclone flooding in which we lost a lot of fences, land and access." What used to be a 20 minute drive to Pongaroa is currently taking an hour and getting to Dannevirke 1.5 hours instead of one hour.

For now, Fiona has closed the accommodation "Coast Road Backpackers" which she created on Ware Ware from the shearing quarters and a workers cottage. The scenery on the Ramsden properties is not the same as it looks featured in the Big Save Furniture wool advertisements, made when the Ramsdens sold directly to the furniture company. "Going to the beach is not that attractive at the moment," says Fiona. "There's logs and slash and debris everywhere. Since the floods I've been picking up a lot of polystyrene, it is such a polluter. Wouldn't it be great if wool could be used for packaging instead."

Check out the farm accommodation on Ware Ware here: <http://www.coastroadbackpackers.co.nz/>

Wool promotional video filmed on Moanaroa for Big Save Furniture <https://youtu.be/XICltmi00fA>

Next NZWCA North Island Industry day set for October in Whanganui

Planning is underway for a NZ Wool Classers Association North Island day of upskilling and connecting for anyone with an interest in wool. The date is still to be confirmed but it will be in October, in Whanganui.

NZ Wool Classers Association Registrar Marg Forde explains: "We run our Industry Days primarily for professional development for our NZWCA classers, graders and members, but the content of the days are planned to be accessible to anyone who works with or has a passion for wool. Our members attend free and there will be a small charge for non-members."

As with the North Island Industry Day in Napier in October last year, the day is being jointly organised by NZWCA North Island Board member Sonya Johansen, and Marg Forde. The day's programme will include hands-on wool exercises, speakers, a visit to the Elco wool store and a tour of the Bremworth Carpet's yarn spinning plant at Castlecliff, Whanganui.

Marg Forde says: "Once the date is set we will be getting the word out via our website www.woolclassers.org.nz Facebook and email. It's been quite a while since a NZWCA day has been held in this part of the country so we are looking forward to welcoming all the keen central North Island woollies."

For more information contact Marg Forde reg@woolclassers.org.nz



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NZWCA Classer Awards announced and presented

The NZ Wool Classers Association Classer Awards for the 2022/23 season were announced and presented at the association's AGM in Christchurch in May. Some changes to judging criteria were also announced including the inclusion of consideration of a nominated classer/graders commitment to being informed and engaged, professional development, and contribution to the industry. Congratulations to the following whose excellence in classing was recognised by the annual awards, which are made possible by collaboration with wool brokers PGG Wrightson, NZ Merino Company, Wools of NZ and the sponsors named below:

NZ Merino Company MERINO MERIT AWARD

A514 Ian Shaw for Nine Mile and Bendigo

Merino commendations

- A644 Jackie Donald for Grantleigh and (hoggets) Simons Hill
 - M2140 Cedric Aramoana for Mt Florence
 - M1465 Anne-Marie Parcell for Mt St Bathans and Riverrun
 - A2129 Tina Elers for Ardgour
 - A1678 Guy Palmer for Haldon
 - A984 Kevin Waldron for The Bend
 - M1675 Wendy Parsons for Longslip
 - M1563 Sharon Lawton for Ben Omar and Westedge
 - A1565 Rose Barnett for Moutere and Buscot
 - A1677 Murray McLachlan for Walter Peak and (ewes) Mt Nicholas
 - D1445 Richard Moriarty for Barcaldine
- (To page 6)



*Top: Ian Shaw with Blair Davies of NZ Merino Company.
Above: Richard Moriarty with Roger Fuller, Wools of NZ.*

BJ Mahony Shearing NORTH ISLAND MERIT AWARD

FX2153 Fiona Ramsden for Ware Ware

WoolWorks CROSSBRED CLASSER OR GRADER MERIT AWARD

FX2153 Fiona Ramsden for Ware Ware

Peter Lyon Shearing NZ PROVISIONAL CLASSER OR GRADER ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD

P2214 Samantha Harmer for Castle Ridge

Provisional Classer or Grader Encouragement commendations

P2222 Charlotte Stuart for Craiglynn

P2226 Jeanine O'Neill for Long Gully

Wools of NZ MID MICRON MERIT AWARD

D1445 Richard Moriarty for Marble Point (also nominated for merino clip Barcaldine)

Mid Micron commendations

D2105 Kelly Paku-Taylor for The Archeron and Mt White

H2182 Cassie Johnson for Tokastone

A2181 Julia Waldron for Glenshee

A1796 Donna Gaskell for Seven Hills

A2086 Ian Kofoed for Ida Valley

A825 Janet Hackshaw for Emerald Hills

A1451 Bruce Abbott for Horseshoe

PGG Wrightson OWNER CLASSER AWARD

FM2030 Maria Bamford for Hurunui Hills

Owner Classer commendations

FM1187 Bill Stevenson for Upcot

FD Allan Paterson for Armidale

FA Juliet Jones for Matarae



Above: Maria Bamford with Kevin Waldron of PGG Wrightson

AND DID YOU KNOW ... you don't have to be a wool classer or grader to be a member of the NZ Wool Classers Association? NZWCA has an Associate membership category for any individual or organisation that supports the work of NZWCA and that recognises the value of the maintenance of a New Zealand classer/grader registration system. Existing Associate members include wool growers, shearing contractors, those who work in the wider wool industry and businesses which rely on a supply of quality wool.

Classers are encouraged to speak to their clients about NZWCA Associate membership. Anyone wanting further information can find it here (scroll down to the Association membership section): <https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/membership-information/>

Changes in NZ Wool Classers Assn Board members

There are some fresh faces on the NZ Wool Classers Association Board following the association's AGM in Christchurch in May. At the same time some long-standing and hard working Board members have retired, with the thanks of NZWCA.

The NZWCA Board is comprised of a mix of wool classers and industry body representatives. In addition there is one Independent director, Allan Frazer, who has been on the Board since the association was formed. Allan has been Patron since 2021.

Sonya Johansen A1099 remains on the Board but stepped down as vice-chair and Tracy Paterson M2133 (Matakanui Station) took on the vice-chair role.

New Board members in 2023 are Kevin Waldron D984 of PGGW (brokers rep), Mitchell Young of WoolWorks (wool processing industry rep), Ratapu Moore D2188 and shearing contractor (NZ Shearing Contractors Assn rep) and Kristal White A2142 (wool classer rep).

Retiring Board members are Roger Fuller of Wools of NZ, Tony Cunningham of WoolWorks, Grant Moore of NZSCA and John Sanders of Matangi Station.

For more information about the all the NZWCA staff, Board members and structure go to: <https://woolclassers.org.nz/board-members/>

* * * * *

Recipients of 2023 Wool Research Organisation of NZ (WRONZ) Scholarships for Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing students were announced and awarded at the NZ Wool Classers Assn Industry Professional Development Day Christchurch in May.

Congratulations to these students who will each receive \$1000 (in \$250 payments as each portion of their Cert Wool Tech is passed): Kate Stewart, Thomas Dravitzki and Richanna Clarke.

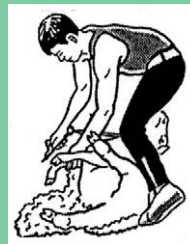
A further two scholarships are available this year for students who began their studies in July. Applications close on August 10 2023. All information can be found here: <https://woolclassers.org.nz/education/scholarships/>

* * * * *

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Sunday shearing not a regular thing Too exhausting: Danger of Bidibidi

“No one wants to shear on a Sunday if it can be avoided,” said the secretary of the New Zealand Farmers Union, Mr. AP O’Shea, when referring, in an interview in Wellington, to recent criticism of Sunday shearing.

Mr. O’Shea, who himself spent nine years on a sheep station, recalled that Sunday work had only been done twice on the station during that period. Even then it had been at the request of the shearers themselves, in order that they might finish shearing the last remaining sheep in the flock and proceed the same day to another station so as to be ready to commence work first thing on the Monday morning. On each of the two occasions, the owner of the station had only permitted Sunday shearing on condition that the shepherds were agreeable.

Mr. O’Shea said that anyone with sheep station experience would realise that regular Sunday work was impracticable. In the first place, the sheep dogs were not able to stand up to the continuous work without a break that would be involved in Sunday shearing. Even six days work a week was a big strain on the dogs, and without a spell they would become exhausted. Lame dogs could wreck a shearing.

Seasons programme

Shearers usually had a season’s programme of work. They had a number of stations marked down on which they did shearing, and if they could not finish their work through wet weather, men who had been shearing in dry districts came in and obtained work at the expense of those who had been delayed.

“You will never find shearing done on a Sunday at the request of the station owners,” said Mr. O’Shea, “because they usually have enough trouble on a place of any size to keep the sheep up to a fast gang of shearers. Nowadays a shearer thinks nothing of doing 200 sheep a day. In the past, Sunday shearing has been winked at by the authorities because the men themselves desired it. One cannot run a farm like a factory and work to schedule hours and schedule days and from the point of view of national prosperity it is not advisable to do so.”

Mr. O’Shea said that the weather and the bidibidi had an important influence on shearing, from the point of view both of the shearer and the station owner.

If the bidibidi were allowed to mature and get into the wool it depreciated the value of the staple, and that reacted directly on the shearers pay, which was on a sliding scale based on the previous year’s wool values.

The higher the price for wool the better rate of pay for shearing. In many cases shearing was done by contract and the men were anxious to get through their work as quickly as possible. Shearing work was really piece-work and the men themselves realised that the more they did the more they earned. (*Poverty Bay Herald*, 18 December 1936)

* * * * *

Can you help this knitting group?

Lovie Muir from Whangamata is trying to find a fadge or two of raw wool that her friends in a Whangamata ‘knitting group’ can spin and turn into knitted garments. They are doing it for people on the East Coast who have lost clothing and other basic necessities through the ravages of Cyclone Gabrielle. If you think you can help in any way contact Lovie on 021 297 0293 or email: info@whangamatapartyhire.co.nz



Above: Bidibidi in the wool and exhausted dogs – likely consequences of shearing sheep on Sundays. (Internet images.)



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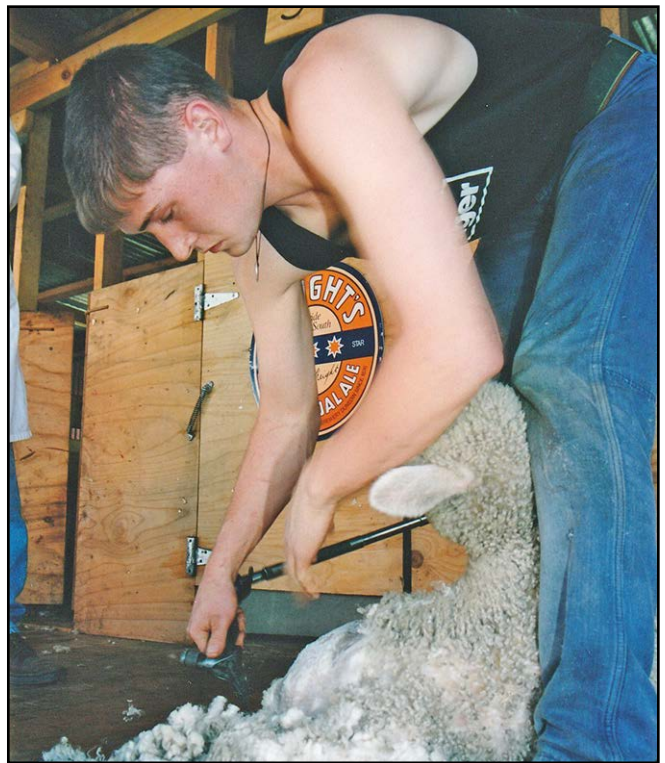
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Above: Gavin Mutch, that Scottish New Zealander from Scotland (2015 New Zealand Golden Shears Open Champion) has been recognised as a Master Shearer by the British Isles Shearing Competitions Association (BISCA). And hey, we can remember back to the year 2000 when he was Shearing Sports New Zealand's top ranked Junior Shearer! Congratulations on a 23-year journey of achievement, on both sides of the world.

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Above: On the other side of this magnificent gigantic rock in the middle of Australia, known as Uluru (formerly Ayer's Rock) is a huge flock of freshly shorn merino wethers – wrinkly, feisty wethers. (Well there must be – we can't think of any other reason why Steph Brooker-Jones would have sent the photo to Shearing magazine!)

FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

- CONNECT**
TALK & LISTEN, BE THERE, FEEL CONNECTED
- Give**
Your time, your words, your presence
- TAKE NOTICE**
REMEMBER THE SIMPLE THINGS THAT GIVE YOU JOY
- KEEP LEARNING**
EMBRACE NEW EXPERIENCES, SEE OPPORTUNITIES, SURPRISE YOURSELF
- BE ACTIVE**
DO WHAT YOU CAN, ENJOY WHAT YOU DO, MOVE YOUR HOOD

INTRODUCE THESE SIMPLE STRATEGIES INTO YOUR LIFE AND YOU WILL FEEL THE BENEFITS.

FARM STRONG
Live Well Farm Well

Bluey Brink

There once was a shearer, by name Bluey Brink,
A terror for work and a devil for drink:
He could shear his hundred each day without fear,
And drink without winking four gallons of beer.

Now Jimmy the barman who served out the drink,
He hated the sight of this here Bluey Brink;
He stayed much too late and he come much too soon,
At morning, at evening, at night and at noon.

One morning as Jimmy was cleaning the bar,
With sulphuric acid he kept in a jar,
Bluey came yelling and howling with thirst;
Whatever you've got, Jim, just give me the first.

This ain't down in history, it ain't down in print,
That shearer drunk acid with never a wink,
Saying that's the stuff, Jimmy, why strike me stone dead,
This will make me the ringer of Stevenson's shed.

All through the long day, as he served out the beer,
Poor Jimmy was sick with his trouble and fear,
Too anxious to argue, too worried to bite,
Seeing the shearer a corpse in his fright.

The next morning as Jimmy was opening the door,
Along came the shearer, asking for more,
With his eyebrows all singed and his whiskers deranged,
Holes in his hide like a dog with the mange.

Says Jimmy, And how did you like the new stuff?
Says Bluey, It's fine but I ain't had enough;
It gives me great courage to shear and to fight,
But why does that stuff set my whiskers alight?

I thought I knew drink, but I must have been wrong,
That stuff that you gave me was proper and strong;
It set me to coughing and you know I'm no liar,
And every cough set my whiskers on fire.

(From A Web of Song, Wendy Butler Collection)



The party was great

If a cartoonist was drawing this, you would see South Canterbury shearer Darryl Keenan (above left) with a bright light bulb over his head. An idea!

Darryl was in a Tokyo hotel reading an English-language newspaper, and there was a story about a co-operative sheep farm. Sheep need shearing, and Darryl thought he saw an interesting job. Down he went to the lobby to speak to the receptionist. She sent off a fax but the reply was negative. "We are too small," they said. "Only 100 sheep and we already have a shearer."

Darryl had a job waiting in Europe but he did not give up. Back home in Geraldine, he talked to Juliet Adams who taught Japanese at the local college. He would do the job for nothing, he said. Juliet made contact with the farm again and in time Darryl got the reply he wanted.

Flying back to Italy last year, he stopped off again in Tokyo. This time there was an interpreter waiting for him, and he was whisked four hours travel north to Yamagata.

There, says Darryl, he was taken to a fine hotel, given breakfast and then driven to the "farm". It turned out to be mainly rice paddies, with sheep and cattle kept in plastic greenhouses. The main purpose of his visit, it seemed, was to shear for the TV cameras, earning publicity for the co-operative.

He had brought a 10-volt dagging plant, and sheared in all about 20 sheep - the rams. The local shearer also performed for the TV camera. He used horse clippers and was amazed at Darryl's technique.

The sheep were Suffolks, worth about \$2000 each in Japan, but in poor condition. Darryl's advice to the owners; dipping and drenching, open air and something better than poor quality hay imported from the US!

The visit ended, as always in Japan, with a party. "It started rather formal but turned out to be a really good night," says Darryl. "We drank a lot of sake. Then we started arm wrestling. I beat them at that too!

There are some sheep in Japan, he says, but they are small flocks that the owners can shear at their own pace. He visited a farmhouse where a woman was spinning and knitting raw wool into jerseys. "The family were just as interested in me as I was in them."

Darryl is 29, has been shearing 10 years and competes as a senior. He currently works for Adrian Cox. He has shorn in Australia, Britain, Europe - and Japan.

"It was amazing. They treated me like a Lord, and the cheque worked out at \$20 a sheep!

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**FORDE WINDERS
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SOUTHLAND • NEW ZEALAND

Shearing silverware stays in Wales

By Doug Laing (Shearing Sports New Zealand)

History was made at the Golden Shears world shearing and woolhandling championships in Scotland in June with the world trophies being shared among Wales, Scotland and South Africa. For the first time since world championships were introduced in 1977, New Zealand failed to win a single title.

In a weekend of stunning reversals, New Zealand, winner of four times as many titles as any other nation across the six titles of individual and teams titles in machine shearing, blade shearing and woolhandling, achieved just one top-three placing.

The closest the Wools of New Zealand Shearing Sports New Zealand team came to a title was the blades-final second placing to defending champions and South Canterbury shearers Allan Oldfield and Tony Dobbs, beaten only by rookie-international South Africa pair Bonile Rabela and Zwelamakhosi Mbuweni in a relay decided on quality points after the Kiwis won the race by two seconds with each side averaging about 2min 20sec a sheep through the 10 in each pen.

Dobbs, the winner of more than 100 finals in a 40-year career, including victory in an all-New Zealand field at the 1988 championships in Masterton, was fourth in today's Individual final which was won by Rabela, with defending champion Oldfield having been a shock elimination in the semi-finals.



Above: Rosie Keenan – not so much a winner being a grinner as a champion smiling with delight. **Below:** Much more circumspect – Bonile Rabela, yet to believe his good fortune.



In what became a benefit for Wales, which claimed three of the titles, Kiwi woolhandling pair Candy Hiri, of Gore, and Ngaio Hanson, of Eketahuna, was fourth in the woolhandling teams event won by Welsh pair Ffion Jones and Sarah-Jane Rees, and shearers Rowland Smith, of Maraekakaho, and Southland gun Leon Samuels, were sixth in the machines teams event won by Welsh pair Gwion Evans and Richard Jones.

The biggest surprise in possibly the history of the championships was that for the first time New Zealand was not represented in either the machine shearing or woolhandling individual finals.

In the six-man machines shearing final, which New Zealand had won 12 of the previous 18 times, it was a Wales one-two, with Evans edging out defending champion Jones, while in the woolhandling Scotland team members Rosie Keenan and Audrey Aiken were first and second respectively.



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Above: A red-letter day for Wales – or a red-letter weekend, more likely: Sarah Rees and Ffion Jones (world teams woolhandling champions); Richard Jones (Royal Highland winner and world runner-up); Alwyn Manzini (team manager); Gwion Lloyd Evans (world champion); Elfed Jackson (world individual) and Gareth Owen (world blades teams finalists.)

Smith and Samuels were eliminated from the machine shearing in the semi-finals, but they were in good company, with the elimination also of Smith's brother and England representative, Matthew Smith, and three-times former finalist Hamish Mitchell, of Scotland.

Former New Zealand representative Keryn Herbert, of Te Kuiti, was sixth in the woolhandling individual event, representing Cook Islands.

Results from the 2023 Golden Shears World Shearing and Woolhandling Championships at the Royal Highland Show, Ingliston, Edinburgh on June 22-25, 2023:

Machine shearing Individual (20 sheep): Gwion Evans (Wales) 14min 56sec, 53.85pts, 1; Richard Jones (Wales) 16min 5sec, 57/45pts, 2; Calum Shaw (Scotland) 15min 50sec, 59.05pts, 3; Denis O'Sullivan (Ireland) 16min 56sec, 60.5pts, 4; Ivan Scott (Ireland) 16min 12sec, 61.5pts, 5; Adam Berry (England) 16min 8sec, 61.55pts, 6.

Machine shearing teams (20 sheep): Wales (Gwion Evans, Richard Jones) 16min 12sec, 59.45pts, 1; England (Adam Berry, Matthew Smith) 15min 49sec, 60.35pts, 2; Scotland (Hamish Mitchell, Calum Shaw) 15min 49sec, 62pts, 3; Ireland (Denis O'Sullivan, Ivan Scott) 17min 55sec, 64.75pts,

4; Northern Ireland (Graeme Davidson, Jack Robinson) 16min 50sec, 67.2pts, 5; New Zealand (Leon Samuels, Rowland Smith) 16min 56sec, 68.7pts, 6.

Woolhandling Individual: Rosie Keenan (Scotland) 110.2pts, 1; Audrey Aiken (Scotland) 158.2pts, 2; Lucie Grancher (France) 205pts, 3; Hilary Bond-Harding (England) 4; Adele Lemercier (France) 5; Keryn Herbert (Cook Islands) 6.

Woolhandling Teams: Wales (Fion Jones, Sarah Rees) 217.7pts, 1; France (Lucie Grancher, Adele Lemercier) 233pts, 2; Scotland (Audrey Aiken) 253.1pts, 3; New Zealand (Ngaio Hanson, Candy Hiri) 4; England (Hilary Bond-Harding, Alice Derryman) 5; Australia (Mark Purcell, Racheal Hutchinson) 6.

Blade shearing Individual (6 sheep): Bonile Rabela (South Africa) 13min 14sec, 65.034prs, 1; Zwelamakhosi Mbuweni (South Africa) 13min 57sec, 67.35pts, 2; Andrew Mudge (England) 14min 16sec, 68.467pts, 3; Tony Dobbs (New Zealand) 13min 37sec, 70.85pts, 4; Johnathon Dalla (Australia) 16min 6sec, 76.133pts, 5; Elfed Jackson (Wales) 14min 52sec, 79.1pts, 6.

Blade shearing teams (10 sheep): South Africa (Bonile Rabela, Zwelamakhosi Mbuweni) 23min 12sec, 101.8pts, 1; New Zealand (Tony Dobbs, Allan Oldfield) 23min 5sec, 103.55pts, 2; Wales (Elfed Jackson, Gareth Owen) 26min 30sec, 115.7pts, 3; Australia (Johnathon Dalla, Andrew Murray) 25min 52sec, 115.9pts, 4; England (Andrew Mudge, George Mudge) 29min 6sec, 119.5pts, 5; Ireland (Peter Heraty, James Hopkins) 32min 45sec, 123.35pts, 6.

Royal Highland Show All-Nations Championships: Machine shearing final (20 sheep): Richard Jones (Wales) 14min 34sec, 50.45pts, 1; Gwion Evans (Wales) 14min 13sec, 52.3prs, 2; Jack Robinson (Northern Ireland) 15min 25sec, 54pts, 3; Gavin Mutch (Scotland) 14min 29sec, 54.25pts, 4; Gareth Daniel (Wales) 14min 33sec, 56.05pts, 5; Leon Samuels (New Zealand) 15min 21sec, 56.55pts, 6.

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Royal Highland Woolhandling:

Open final: Hilary Bond-Harding (England) 36.6pts, 1; Rosie Keenan (Scotland) 43pts, 2; Audrey Aiken (Scotland) 48.2pts, 3; Ffion Jones (Wales) 59.6pts, 4; Tina Elers (Cook Islands) 60.1pts, 5; Ngaio Hanson (New Zealand) 65.8pts, 6.

Blade shearing final final (5 sheep): James Hopkins (Ireland) 16min 58sec, 73.1pts, 1; Andrew Mudge (England) 13min 11sec, 75.95pts, 2; Johnathon Dalla (Australia) 12min 9sec, 76.85pts, 3; Peter Heraty (Ireland) 14min 39sec, 77.15pts, 4; Gareth Owen (Wales) 15min 42sec, 80.1pts, 5; Mark Armstrong (Scotland) 17min 25sec, 83.65pts, 6.



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New Zealanders in action: Top left: Leon Samuels and judge Julie Resneau (France). Above left: Rowland Smith and judge Christo Geldenhuis. Top right: Tony Dobbs. Middle: Candy Hiri. Above: New Zealand blades team, Dobbs shearing, Oldfields Phil (mentor) and Allan (team member) – second in the world blades teams final, and judge Julie Resneau.



Machine Shearing teams, from left: Sponsor, Richard Jones, Alwyn Manzini, Gwion Lloyd Evans, Peter Webber, Adam Berry, Matt Smith, Calum Shaw, David Stewart, Hamish Mitchell, Denis O'Sullivan, Ivan Scott, Andrew Corrigan, Graeme Davidson, John Murphy, Jack Robinson, Ronny King, Rowland Smith, Leon Samuels.



Blade Shearing teams, Back left: Bonile Rabela, Allan Oldfield, Gareth Owen, Andrew Murray, George Mudge, James Hopkins. Front: Sponsor, Zwela. Mbuweni, Tony Dobbs, Elfed Jackson, John Dalla, Andrew Mudge, Peter Heraty.



Woolhandling teams, Back left: Alwyn Manzini, Ffion Jones, Thimoleon Resneau, David Stewart, Ronny King, Candy Hiri, Peter Webber, Hilary Bond-Harding, Mark Purcell. Front left: Billy Kyle (sponsor), Sarah Rees, Adele Lemerrier, Lucie Grancher, Rosie Keenan, Audrey Aiken, Ngaio Hanson, Racheal Hutchinson, Tom Kelly.



“All the world’s stage / And all the men and women merely players / They have their exits and their entrances ...” Well, that’s according to Shakespeare, but there was also room for the audience in Edinburgh’s McRobert Theatre, venue for the world shearing and woolhandling championships, where there was indeed many players making their exits and entrances: **Top descending:** McRobert Theatre; World machine finalists: David John (Lister), Gwion Lloyd Evans and Richard Jones (Wales), Calum Shaw (Scotland), Denis O’Sullivan and Ivan Scott (Ireland, Andrew Berry (England). World blades finalists: Boniile Rabela, and Zwela Mbuweni (South Africa), Andrew Mudge (England), Tony Dobbs (New Zealand), Jonathan Dalla (Australia), Elfed Jackson (Wales). World woolhandling finalists: Rosie Keenan and Audrey Aiken (Scotland), Lucie Grancher (France), Hilary Bond-Harding (England), Adele Lemerrier (France), Keryn Herbert (Cook Islands).



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Above and Below: Australian woolhandler Mark Purcell ordering his fleece to land perfectly. Not too shabby!



Above: Norwegian judge Sven Reiersen giving another blade shearer close scrutiny.

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Above: The Swiss contingent, from left: Roddney Joppich (manager), Johan Ulrich Gradel and Alexander Gradel (woolhandlers), Andre Meister and Simon Zaugg (machines)



Above: Team USA: Nolan Abel and Alex Moser (machines); Katherine Moser (manager); Kevin Ford and John O'Connell (blades); Leann Brimmer (woolhandler). Absent: Coleen McTaggart (woolhandler).



Above: The Netherlands sent a full team to the world championships at Edinburgh for the first time. From left: Machine shearers Gerrit Crum and Johannes Kloosterman; woolhandler Marieke Janssen, blade shearer Arjan Kaashoek (at back), Emma Janssen, (woolhandler), Jan van den Hardenburg (blade shearer), with manager Erik Bijlsma in front. The team was previously represented at Le Dorat in 2019 (five members) and Invercargill (2017) with one machine shearer.



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World Machine Shearing Championship 2023 Order of Qualifying (Two Rounds)

1	Richard Jones	Wales	41.150
2	Ivan Scott	Ireland	43.900
3	Matthew Smith	England	44.000
4	Calum Shaw	Scotland	44.350
5	Jack Robinson	Northern Ireland	45.800
6	Adam Berry	England	48.350
7	Leon Samuels	New Zealand	48.400
8	Gwion Lloyd Evans	Wales	50.450
9	Rowland Smith	New Zealand	50.700
10	Hamish Mitchell	Scotland	51.250
11	Denis O'Sullivan	Ireland	51.350
12	Loic Leygonie	France	52.300
13	Graeme Davidson	Northern Ireland	52.600
14	Pierre Grancher	France	54.050
15	Nathan Meaney	Australia	57.550
16	Lars Sonstevoldhaugen	Norway	57.00
17	Daniel McIntyre	Australia	59.750
18	Baldassari Alvez	Uruguay	61.150
19	Jovan Taiki	Cook Islands	63.350
20	Alex Moser	USA	63.650
21	Daniel Creer	Isle of Man	63.850
22	Stefan Turner	Falklands	66.900
23	Viktor Larsson	Sweden	68.350
24	Felix Reidel	Germany	68.650
25	Emanuel Gulde	Germany	68.750
26	Asmund Kringeland	Norway	69.050
27	Ekkehard Reinprecht	Austria	69.900
28	Krystian Jarosz	Poland	70.450

29	Nolan Abel	USA	71.300
30	Jaime Colera Cassoran	Spain	71.700
31	Marcin Zgodzinski	Poland	71.700
32	Jan Clarke	Falklands	71.800
33	Luis Pincol	Chile	72.900
34	Alex Smith	Cook Islands	72.900
35	Domenico Scoccoza	Italy	73.600
36	Dumisani Xhasa	South Africa	73.800
37	Donald Metheral	Canada	74.500
38	Magnus Vuolo	Sweden	75.850
39	Simon Zaugg	Switzerland	76.500
40	Kenneth MacLeod	Chile	81.850
41	Nestor Rivas	Brazil	81.950
42	Caisarra Jimenez	Spain	83.150
43	Johannes V Schalkwyk	South Africa	85.000
44	Phillip Christian	Isle of Man	85.050
45	Helder Edgardo C-B	Uruguay	91.700
46	Johannes Kloosterman	Netherlands	99.450
47	Andre Meister	Switzerland	101.300
48	Wolfgang Riess	Austria	102.500
49	David Zdrha	Czech Republic	103.050
50	Ando Fiks	Estonia	103.300
51	Ion Bulz	Brazil	103.950
52	Mehis Tamsalu	Estonia	104.250
53	Gerrit Crum	Netherlands	111.600
54	Marek Langer	Czech Republic	116.750
55	Lauri Tolonen	Finland	121.300
56	Marko Kansala	Finland	143.350

World Blade Shearing Championship 2023 Order of Qualifying (Two Rounds)

1	Tony Dobbs	New Zealand	98.583
2	Andrew Mudge	England	102.816
3	Zwela. Mbuweni	South Africa	103.850
4	Allan Oldfield	New Zealand	104.567
5	Bonile Rabela	South Africa	104.616
6	George Mudge	England	104.700
7	James Hopkins	Ireland	108.233
8	John Dalla	Australia	110.384
9	Karolin Bunting	Germany	112.483
10	Elfed Jackson	Wales	112.917
11	Peter Heraty	Ireland	120.200
12	Mark Armstrong	Scotland	121.433
13	Gareth Owen	Wales	121,534
14	Karel Svarc	Czech Republic	129.883
15	Andrew Murray	Australia	130.034

16	Sam McConnell	Northern Ireland	131.450
17	William Craig	Scotland	134.383
18	Ardigal Massoubre	France	139.117
19	Jan V-D Hardenberg	Netherlands	139.634
20	Reinhard Poppe	France	143,217
21	Kevin Ford	USA	167.650
22	Arjan Kaashoek	Netherlands	167.967
23	Sebastian Engel	Germany	168.667
24	Seamus Kelly	Northern Ireland	168.800
25	Pedro Vera	Spain	169.066
26	Aadam Kaivo	Estonia	181.250
27	Arsenio Saihuque	Argentina	182.533
28	Jana Sinova	Czech Republic	194.633
29	John O'Connell	USA	198.134

World Machine Shearing Semi-finals

1	Denis O'Sullivan	Ireland	36.400
2	Gwion Lloyd Evans	Wales	36.450
3	Adam Berry	England	36.600
4	Ivan Scott	Ireland	37.050
5	Calum Shaw	Scotland	37.300
6	Richard Jones	Wales	38.500
7	Jack Robinson	Northern Ireland	38.850
8	Rowland Smith	New Zealand	39.000
9	Matthew Smith	England	40.450
10	Hamish Mitchell	Scotland	41.400
11	Leon Samuels	New Zealand	43.900
12	Loic Leygonie	France	46.200

World Blade Shearing Semi-finals

1	Bonile Rabela	South Africa	52.550
2	Tony Dobbs	New Zealand	54.900
3	Andrew Mudge	England	62.150
4	Zwela. Mbuweni	South Africa	63.150
5	Elfed Jackson	Wales	64.050
6	John Dalla	Australia	64.800
7	James Hopkins	Ireland	65.200
8	Peter Heraty	Ireland	65.900
9	Allan Oldfield	New Zealand	70.400
10	George Mudge	England	71.450
11	Karolin Bunting	Germany	74.250
12	Mark Armstrong	Scotland	75.600

World Machine Shearing Final

1	Gwion Lloyd Evans	Wales	53.850
2	Richard Jones	Wales	57.450
3	Calum Shaw	Scotland	59.050
4	Dennis O'Sullivan	Ireland	60.500
5	Ivan Scott	Ireland	61.500
6	Adam Berry	England	61.550

World Blade Shearing Final

1	Bonile Rabela	South Africa	65.034
2	Zwela. Mbuweni	South Africa	67.350
3	Andrew Mudge	England	68.467
4	Tony Dobbs	New Zealand	70.850
5	John Dalla	Australia	76.133
6	Elfed Jackson	Wales	79.100

World Teams Machine Shearing Final

1	Gwion Lloyd Evans and Richard Jones	Wales	59.450
2	Adam Berry and Matthew Smith	England	60.350
3	Hamish Mitchell and Calum Shaw	Scotland	62.000
4	Ivan Scott and Denis O'Sullivan	Ireland	64.750
5	Jack Robinson and Graeme Davidson	Northern Ireland	67.200
6	Rowland Smith and Leon Samuels	New Zealand	68.700

World Teams Blade Shearing Final

1	Bonile Rabela and Zwela. Mbuweni	South Africa	101.800
2	Tony Dobbs and Allan Oldfield	New Zealand	103.550
3	Elfed Jackson and Gareth Owen	Wales	115.700
4	John Dalla and Andrew Murray	Australia	115.900
5	George Mudge and Andrew Mudge	England	119.500
6	Peter Heraty and James Hopkins	Ireland	123.350



Denis O'Sullivan, Andrew Corrigan and Ivan Scott (Ireland)



Bonile Rabela and Zwela. Mbuweni (South Africa)

World Woolhandling Championship 2023 Order of Qualifying (Two Rounds)

1	Rosie Keenan	Scotland	139.400
2	Ngaio Hanson	New Zealand	142.000
3	Hilary Bond-Harding	England	148.600
4	Adele Lemercier	France	149.000
5	Ffion Jones	Wales	150.600
6	Rachael Hutchinson	Australia	151.600
7	Keryn Herbert	Cook Islands	151.800
8	Audrey Aiken	Scotland	157.000
9	Lucie Grancher	France	161.00
10	Sarah Rees	Wales	161.400
11	Jonathan Haakull	Norway	165.600
12	Tara Wilson	Falklands	187.200
13	Rachel Murphy	Northern Ireland	196.600
14	Jayne Harkness-Bones	Northern Ireland	197.800
15	Alice Derryman	England	200.800
16	Mark Purcell	Australia	204.800
17	Candy Hiri	New Zealand	205.200
18	Tina Elers	Cook Islands	209.400
19	Hazel Crowe	Ireland	220.800
20	Pilar Castro	Falklands	229.800

21	Maria Jacoba Muller	South Africa	233.800
22	Camila Quinteros	Chile	2356.200
23	Stefanie Kauschus	Germany	262.300
24	Amber Paterson	Canada	269.000
25	Archie Sepulveda	Chile	269.400
26	Wolfgang Riess	Austria	279.400
27	Leann Brimmer	USA	295.200
28	Alexander Gradel	Switzerland	301.800
29	Colleen McTaggart	USA	307.400
30	Ila Matheson	Canada	327.400
31	Ruth Jane Rossevatn	Norway	328.200
32	Piotr Zarnecki	Poland	332.600
33	Almarie Muller	South Africa	333.400
34	Katrin Tahepold	Estonia	334.200
35	Simon Mogg	Germany	349.000
36	Joanne Devaney	Ireland	351.200
37	Marieke Janssen	Netherlands	372.400
38	Johann Ulrich Gradel	Switzerland	376.200
39	Linnea Eklund	Sweden	383.800
40	Emma Janssen	Netherlands	389.800

World Woolhandling Semi-finals

1	Rosie Keenan	Scotland	76.000
2	Audrey Aiken	Scotland	79.200
3	Lucie Grancher	France	83.800
4	Hilary Bond-Harding	England	87.800
5	Adele Lemercier	France	94.600
6	Keryn Herbert	Cook Islands	97.200
7	Ffion Jones	Wales	107.600
8	Racheal Hutchinson	Australia	113.600
9	Ngaio Hanson	New Zealand	125.400

World Woolhandling Final

1	Rosie Keenan	Scotland	110.200
2	Audrey Aiken	Scotland	158.200
3	Lucie Grancher	France	205.000

World Teams Woolhandling Final

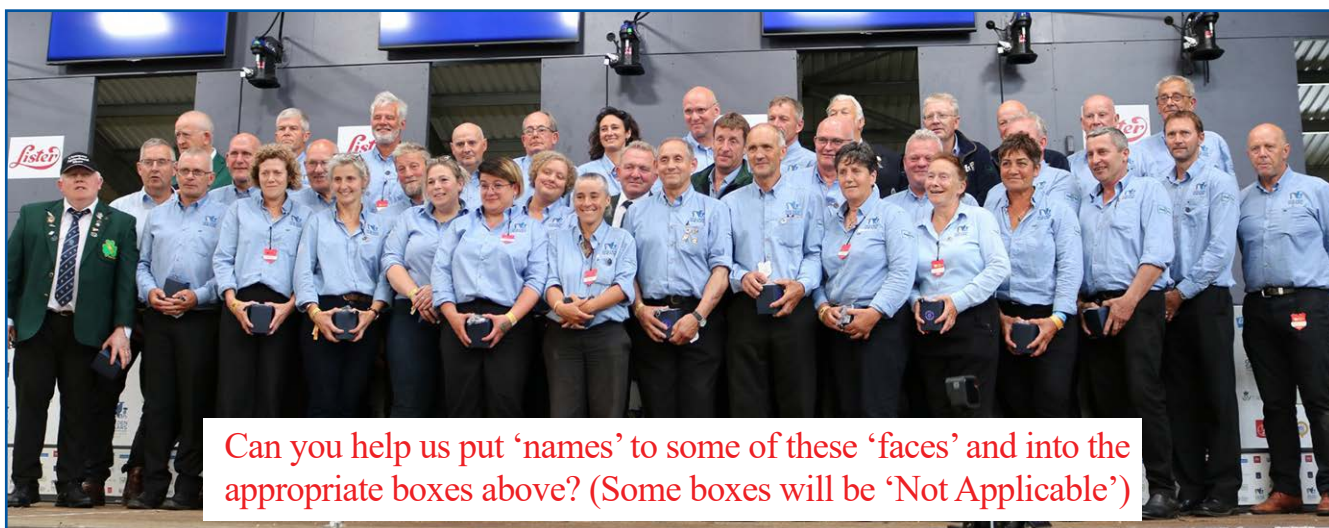
1	Ffion Jones and Sarah Rees	Wales	217.700
2	Lucie Grancher and Adele Lemercier	France	233.000
3	Rosie Keenan and Audrey Aiken	Scotland	253.100



Above: Happy manager, happy team. Alwyn Manzini with Sarah Rees and Ffion Jones, the new world champion team.

World Championships Team Managers and Judging Officials 2023

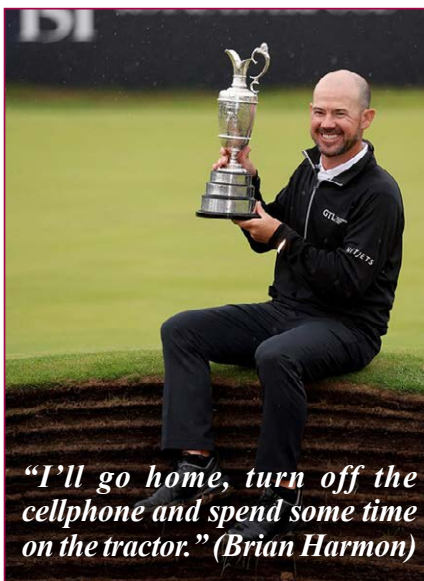
Country	Team Manager	Shearing Judge/s	Woolhandling Judge/s
Argentina	N/A	N/A	N/A
Australia	Tom Kelly	Daryl Wallace	Matt Stasinowsky
Austria			
Brazil			
Canada			
Chile			
Cook Islands	Sharon Hillis		
Czech Republic			
England	Peter Webber	Johnny Fraser	
Estonia			
Falkland Islands	Jack Wilson		
Finland			
France	Thimolean Resneau	Julie Resneau	Christelle Jeannet
Germany			
Ireland	Andrew Corrigan	Tom Dunne	Colin Crowe
Isle of Man			
Italy			
Netherlands	Erik Bijlsma		
New Zealand	Ronny King	Donald Johnston	Janet Smith
Northern Ireland	John Murphy	David O'Neill, John Murphy	Wallace Boyd
Norway		Sven Reierson	
Poland			
Scotland	David Stewart	Colin MacGregor (Chief Referee)	Kirsty Donald
South Africa	Izak Klopper	Christo Geldenhuis	Karin Lee
Spain			
Sweden			
Switzerland	Roddney Joppich		
United States	Katherine Moser		
Uruguay			
Wales	Alwyn Manzini	Nicky Beynon, Clive Hamon	Gwenan Paewai (w/h ref), Meinir Evans



Can you help us put 'names' to some of these 'faces' and into the appropriate boxes above? (Some boxes will be 'Not Applicable')



Above: The New Zealand team ready and waiting for the action to start. Team manager Ronny King, woolhandler Candy Hiri and and flag-bearer Allan Oldfield in centre of picture.



"I'll go home, turn off the cellphone and spend some time on the tractor." (Brian Harmon)

Above: He's never shorn a sheep but we reckon this American is a decent sort of bloke. Aged 36, a professional golfer since 2012, played 340 tournaments and won two of them. Won a few million dollars in his time but hardly a superstar in the Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Rory McIlroy category. Owns a small farm in Georgia, USA. Came to England to play in "The Open" and won by six strokes. Daylight second, as they say – daylight made considerably murkier by the rain that fell most of the fourth day.

He's Brian Harmon, and for four days he just kept hitting the ball down the middle of the fairway, and kept rolling in the putts better than 120 other starters in the field. But what really endeared him to this writer, when asked what he does next: "I'm going to go home, turn off the cellphone and spend some time on the tractor!" (Yeah, Rowland Smith?)



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Above: The team from South Africa, back row: Christo Geldenhuis (shearing judge) and Karen Lee (woolhandling judge). Middle left: Almarie Van Schalkwyk (woolhandler), Izak Klopper (team manager) and Maria Muller (woolhandler). Front: Johannes Van Schalkwyk (machine shearer), Bonile Rabela (blade shearer), Zwelamakhosi Mbuweni (blade shearer) and Dumasani Xhosa (machine shearer).



Above: The team from Northern Ireland, from left: Seamus Kelly (blade shearer), Graeme Davidson (machine shearer), Rachel Murphy (woolhandler), Sam McConnell (blade shearer), John Martin (RUAS), Jack Robinson (machine shearer), Wallace Boyd (woolhandling judge), David O'Neill (Machine shearing judge), Jayne Harkness-Bones (woolhandler) and John Murphy (blade shearing judge and team manager).



Above: The Australian contingent. Back left: Jonathan Dalla (blade shearer), Daryl Wallace (shearing judge), Tom Kelly (team manager) and Matt Stasinowsky (woolhandling judge). Middle: Mark Purcell (woolhandler), David Lawrence, Racheal Hutchinson (woolhandler). Front left: Nathan Meaney (machine shearer), Andy Murray (blade shearer) and Daniel McIntyre (machine shearer).

Defy me, would you?

By Tony Mathews

I have little tolerance for practical jokes as they can be down-right dangerous and life in the sheds is hard enough without some clown adding to it. Having said that, I have to admit the mental picture of this one has caused a chuckle or two over the years.

Eighty-plus years ago there was in the Roxburgh region a shearer renowned for his strength and stamina. It was said he got his tally by bullocking them out. One day the Sheepo tied a big half-bred wether down to the grating with a length of seaming twine. In came the mighty one and grabbed the wether to walk it out, but no, it refused to rise.

"Defy me would ya," roared the strongman shearer, whereupon he gave an almighty jerk upwards breaking the seaming twine - the resulting momentum sending both shearer and sheep crashing out through the catching pen door where shearer, wether on top of him, landed flat on his back.

Moral of the story, keep your friends close and your sheep closer, for likely what saved him from injury was he did land like a wrestler, on the flat of his back.

Today, practical jokes are seen as bullying, though good-natured ribbing, or what Godfrey Bowen called 'shiak' can help to lighten the load on a hard day.

You don't hear the word 'shiak' anymore and I cannot find it in any dictionary, although Godfrey assured his readers from the boss down they'd better get used to it if intending to enter or work in the sheds.

Footnote: 'Shiak', 'shiating' (also chyack or shyack; shyacking): Australian, verb meaning to taunt or tease or jest. Now uncommon usage. But these Australian people in photo opposite will know all about it! (Ed.)

* * * * *

Woolly Words:

'Mutton dressed as lamb': Someone dressed in a manner more suited to someone much younger. Mutton was obviously less tasty than the meat of a younger lamb. Perhaps a reference to a butcher's tempting shop-window display. The term 'lamb-fashion' was also used in the nineteenth century.

(From A Short History of Sheep in New Zealand by Richard Wolfe (Random House, 2006.)



World Premiere – One Act Play: Above: “WOW!”, 56 second cuts with one stroke. Wait ‘til I tell the Chief Referee!



Above: “Well we saw it too but we are bound not to tell.” Rightly so, Mavis Mullins, Huw Condron and three unidentified fact-checkers, whose lips are about to be sealed.



Above: “Well it wasn’t any of us, Peter Webber, Adam Berry and Matt Smith from England all agree.



Above: “Need we say, it wasn’t anybody out here!” Curtain falls to much applause ...

Above: The Norwegian team at the world championships, from left: Jonathan Haakull (woolhandler), Ana Leira (woolhandling judge), Ruth Rossevatn (woolhandler), Lars Sonstevoldhaugen (machine shearer), Asmund Kringeland (machine shearer) and Sven Reiersen (shearing judge). Sven says Lars had a good experience at his first start in the world championships, finishing 16th overall in the qualifying heats and 14th (between Hamish Mitchell and Rowland Smith) on the cheviots (Round 2). Asmund had previously competed at Le Dorat (2019) and Invercargill (2017). Woolhandler Jonathan Haakull was the ‘veteran’ of the team, attending championships number five since attending Builth Wells in 2010. He finished in eleventh place at Edinburgh.

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Cook Islands at the Worlds

From Sharon Hillis (team manager)

Our team headed over to Edinburgh Scotland to start the competition on 22 June 2023. The team consisted of shearers Jovan Taiki, Alex Smith and woolhandlers Tina Elers and Keryn Herbert. Travelling with us also were five other family supporters.

Prior to the world show the team competed at a small show at Malvern. This was a good chance to look at the Scottish sheep and fleeces as they are different to here in New Zealand.

Following after the show it was up to Edinburgh to get ready for the world competition. There was a training day for competitors to have another chance to shear and work with the fleeces and ask any questions.

Keryn Herbert was nominated for the woolhandler rep for the southern hemisphere. She attended the World Council meeting representing not only the Cook Islands, but the southern hemisphere countries too. This was a proud moment for us as a team. She represented our hemisphere with passion and pride.

Competition started on Thursday. It was a great few days. Here are the results for the Cook Islands: Tina Elers 5th All Nations open event; Keryn Herbert, sixth Worlds event; Woolhanding team seventh in world championships; Tina Elers, 18th in world event; Jovan Taiki 19th in world individual machine shearing; Alex Smith, 34th in world machine shearing.

Our team was passionate and proud of representing the Cook Islands. We flew the flag with pride for the four days. For the opening ceremony parade of countries, as manager I nominated **Tina Elers (below)** to carry the flag for the parade.



Above: Keryn Herbert, sixth best woolhandler in the world competition, representing the Cook Islands. She was world teams champion (with Sheree Alabaster) representing New Zealand in 2010 at Bult Wells, Wales.



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Above, below and opposite: Cook Islands team members Jovan Taiki, Tina Elers, Sharon Hillis, Keryn Herbert and Alex Smith in various poses during their Scotland excursion.





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Reinhard calls out thoughtless action

By Des Williams

French blade shearing representative at the recent world championships, Reinhard Poppe, has called out shearing's World Council over its thoughtlessness in machine shearing sheep after being shorn with blades. He posted his thoughts on Facebook after returning home to France, which we reproduce here with Reinhard's permission, and with very minor editing:

Golden Shears, game over ...Back home now, to the usual routine, running around after unshorn sheep all over the place, catching up with family and friends ...Pressure's off, but still ... a little bitterness remains.

I think that most will understand what I say, and hope they will make something of it. This message is to the shepherding people amongst my Facebook contacts. Just still very sad of the scene of our blade shorn sheep being reshorn by handpiece on official training days and after shows. This is telling us: your work is worthless.

Although it leaves the sheep with more protection against any weather; increases the value and the amount of the clip with a higher regrowth rate and a cleaner cut than the comb and cutter, not burning the tip of the fiber and increasing the softness of it ...

Yes, I know it's way slower, but in a world where everything goes too fast, it is a matter of welfare both for human and animal to take that time to raise quality up again. Quality of the clip, and quality of life, by eliminating noise, vibration, heat, and being able to work off grid.

Yes, I know it might not be as impressive as a handpiece, and we don't make or sell as much gear, so commercially not that interesting...

Still, all the people that came blade shearing to the Royal Highland Show at the legendary "Golden Shears" had been working hard, as hard as anyone to be able to produce a decent



Above: French blade shearer Reinhard Poppe in action at the Golden Shears world championships in June.

result on the Scottish sheep, for the Scottish shepherds, for the world to enjoy what they see: a silent dance between human and animal, in a careful move not to hurt one another and not destroying the wool, that is the outcome of this dance.

That's why I shall not compete again, until somebody from the World Council decides that we too deserve respect for the job we deliver; the pain and resilience and the hours of study it takes to achieve, and apologies for destroying the result of the long months or years of work it took us to get there.

We are artists and athletes. Just like the wool handlers and the handpiece racers, we deserve the same respect for our work. We are not leftovers from the past. We are the keepers of ancient knowledge. We are not slow, we are at the right pace of the heartbeat of the animals we shear. I ask every shearer or wool producer feeling this to copy this and send one copy to the World Council, and one to his National Shearing Association. There is no need for humiliations like that. Those who were there will know what I talk about. (Reinhard Poppe)

Reinhard's post was quick to draw a variety of responses from 69 people in all (as at 28 July), many who supported his view and others who suggested he might be a little over-sensitive. World championships chief referee, Colin MacGregor from Scotland, explained that the farmers who supplied the sheep wanted them all 'looking the same' (my words) for sale, eight weeks after the championships. "If they were keeping them all for their own use [they] would be happy to leave them as you have shorn them."

Reinhard considered all opinions and stuck to his guns: "They can do as they please with their sheep, just don't re-shear them in front of everyone's face just after you finish. It's like saying your work is shit."

Perhaps all that was needed was for Show administrators to have explained in advance what was happening, and why.

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Above: From Shearing magazine March 1996, an Atkinson gang from Gisborne “doing the honours” at the new woolshed on Mangaheia Station, Tolago Bay. Shearers from left: Jason Robertson, Dominic Briody, Derek Flanigan, Dave Ngarangione and Sonny Waitere. Still going strong chaps?



Above: Three new Master Woolhandlers from Wales. Meinir Evans, Angharad Jones and Gwenan Paewai. Meinir was a woolhandling judge in 2023; won the world teams event in 2014 (with Aled Jones) and was second in 2010 (with Bron Tango). Angharad won the world individual title in 1998 and represented Wales at Bloemfontein in 2000. Gwenan was woolhandling referee in 2023 and represented Wales at the 2008, 2012 and 2019 world championships. Masters indeed!



Above: We photographed these young men at Golden Shears in 2009. That’s 14 years ago. Did they go away and become famous? Have they shorn many thousands of sheep? Did they set records? Win big competitions? Well, they must be in their mid-twenties by now, at least ...



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The Big Push to an Alpaca Record

(2022) Mike: *'Game on Bro, how ya feeling Iain? Ya awfully quiet Bro...'*

Iain (Canadian Headman for Alpaca Shearing): *Ha ha ha yeah just gathering my thoughts Bro ... Its a mental game and I'm breaking all the rules in my head to push through ... its the biggest day I've had in my life ...'*

We had the pin pulled about 2:30 after shearing 130+ alpacas, not enough staff to keep the machine running. We are only two weeks into our season ...

"We will get it next year, you in Bro?"

Iain: *"Hell yeah, I'm in!"*

That was 2022 and we knew it could be done – we just had to wait another year.... 2023

(2023) Two and a half weeks into the season, working on a farm in Northland, shearing 20 alpacas: Deon and Daniel were helping out so I just happened to say, "Hey guys, you keen to help out another day on Gibbs Farm?"

After another phone call and convincing them to get a day off work we had our team organised, a few days out from shearing. *"Phew that was close!"*

"Hey Dan I think we can pull this off ..."

Dan: *"Pull what off?"*

"Ya up for a world record bro ...?"

Dan: *"You supplying the beers?"*

Walking into the shed at Gibbs farm with an idea of breaking the world record was exhilarating to say the least. This all depends on the team on the day ... Not realising that not everyone knew what we were up to was a surprise ...

Once we got into the first run we knew we had the team we needed ...

"Hey guys we can do this ..."

"Do what?" someone asked.

"Shear a world record.... Its a big push as I know you guys



"Hi, my name is Al Paca. What's yours?"

have the mental strength to push through the pain physically and mentally. We can go cry in the corner later ..."

Bang ... we are off and blazing away... Lunch came and went... Riddles and Yaahos from the boys keep the team blazing through ...

Dan (or Danimal, as he's known) had the team running like a well-oiled Swiss watch ... keeping all of them motivated and running ... blocking out the pain and we kept blazing away through the day ...

170 alpacas ... Dan asked.. *"Whats wrong Bro, what the hell ya doing ... change that cutter and get on with it, I'm thirsty..."*

Mike: *"I can't, my hand's cramped up like a leppa and I can't get the handpiece outta my hand ... ohhhh bugger, now the other ones all cramped up and twisted."*

Bugger it, just keep going ... so we did. We all hit the wall about three times, pushed the pain barrier to the wall ...

Mark Loffhagen held the world record for many many years today we have smashed it to pieces ... by 20+ alpacas!

The first beers didn't even touch the sides, the buzz of that shearing shed can't be explained. It's a team of guys and girls that was buzzing in a way that couldn't be created like that ever again. The team was perfect ...the motley crew pick up off the side of the road was legendary.

Just on nine hours shearing plus standard breaks till the last run and we just blazed through the break with whoooraaaa ... we were rocking!

Thanks to

- Dan (main man called a Headman... Danimal the Legend)
- Paul (Gibbs farm manager X King sheep shearing)
- Deon (Legend rugby player)
- Jona (Legend rugby player)
- Daniel (Daniel Jordan Mau'u) (Legend rugby player)
- Renee (Legend OZZY Police woman tough as nails)
- Dane (Tougher than Nails)
- Scott (Just a Legend)
- BIG thanks to Paul (Gibbs Farm manager) who organised the shearing day for us. Tough bugger who kept the alpacas up to the shed and organised the extra helpers
- Big shout out to Kim (The office Girl) Who jumped in feet first and ran like a machine all day to keep up with this the motley crew

Individual stories:

Deon: "It was a tough day at the Alpaca shearing office that's

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for sure! However, it was made easier by Mike and Dan through their awesome organisation of the days events. We had regular breaks with good food provided, and when it was getting a bit dull, Mike would pull through with a brain teaser to help keep us going! If I'm honest though, the challenge was definitely more mental than physical, and the only way we were able to persevere was due to the amazing group of people who all helped to contribute in their own way.

"It was a real team effort and the positivity of the group really helped to get us to the finish line! Speaking of finishing, once we had finally ushered the last Alpaca out, spirits were high but I was completely knackered. It took me until the next day to realize just how cool of an accomplishment it was and I'm just very privileged that me and my brothers could be involved in such a momentous occasion!

"Now, as for how me and my brothers got involved is a story in itself, but I'll try to keep it short. Through a connection from a friend at the Waipu Rugby Club, me and my brother Daniel got asked to help a lovely lady by the name of Cushla. My understanding was that we were going to be moving some heavy farm equipment. However, only a few days out from the day, the word 'Alpaca' started to be thrown around, and before we knew it we were rangling alpacas for Mike and Dan. What I thought was going to be just a good yarn and a one off, turned into Mike reaching out and asking me and Daniel to come help break a world record. So naturally I roped in my other brother Jonah and the rest is now one for the history books and definitely a heck of a good yarn."

Daniel Jordan Mau'u: "It began on the 15th of October as my brother Deon and myself were asked by a member of the local rugby club if we could lend a hand to help on a farm. "When we got there, thinking we were there to do some heavy lifting of farming equipment, we were informed by the owner that we will be helping shear her alpacas with dudes named Mike and Dan. We looked at each and said. 'Okay then.' Mike gave a rundown of how we would be helping and after we completed that job he offered after chance to assist him with more alpacas at the famous Gibbs farm, we gave him our contact details,

"A week later, on the 18th of October, we met Mike at Gibbs farm with younger brother Jonah to assist him in shearing



Above: Back left: 'Danimal', Paul Robinson, Jonah Mau'u, Steve (The machine). Bottom left: Renee McCarthy, Daniel Mau'u, Kate (Legend), Mike (Pacman), Banks (the shearer), Dane (Jiu Jitsu master), Deon Mau'u.

a record of 200 alpacas. After a quick team meeting to discuss our jobs for the day we started around 7:30 in the morning. Starting off strong, we got through the first 25 within the first hour and a half. Mike started to give us a few head-scratching riddles to keep us entertained and take our mind off some of the physical fatigue, while the alpacas gave us some entertainment as well by jumping over the fences that divided them while Mike was busy shearing,

"It was a massive effort for the whole day from everyone with lots of laughs and alpacas trying to escape getting sheared by jumping the fences or trying to walk out the lunch room door while Jonah wasn't paying attention (lol). I believe after this experience I will not be counting sheep to fall asleep but

alpacas. I would like to thank Mike for the opportunity to assist in this record-breaking effort and Gibbs farm for allowing us to work in their facilities."

Jonah: After playing a season of NPC I never thought I would be finding myself in a farm wrestling an alpaca, let alone his 199 other mates who were well in need of a trim. My brothers Daniel and Deon were telling me a great yarn about an eventful week they had shearing alpacas with the iconic duo "Shearpac Mike and Dan".

"From what was a great story at first now transitioned into an opportunity of a lifetime! Leaving Orewa in the early hours of the morning to arrive at the Gibbs Farm, I was quite nervous because I've never even seen an alpaca

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Above: Ready for action.



Above: The finished product.

or worked with animals in any kind of setting. However, the instructions from Mike and Dan was very informative, their detail to the craft and how we work with flow made things look like clockwork.

“My role in this was to lasso the hooves of the alpacas and then run a pulley system really tight to stretch the alpacas out so they’re easier to shear and keep them safe from moving around and hurting anyone or themselves. This humane way kept them in a great position for Mike and Dan to do their thing and once they’re done our team would come in and replace the freshly trimmed alpacas with one of his furry buddies.

“The repetition of this made the team at times feel the burn in the muscles and sweat profusely. Bodies were in the trenches when we hit the 150 mark. If it weren’t for Mike’s riddles, myself and Dan’s shouts of glory and perseverance, we wouldn’t be standing before you today as Guinness world record breakers.

“Shearing that last alpaca I played music to seal our impeccable triumph of 200 alpacas! Words can not describe how thrilled and grateful I am to be a part of this experience. Many thank-yous to Pac-Man Mike and Dan The Man for having me and my brothers on their outstanding team. To Paul and Kim from Gibbs farm for hosting us and making sure we were well fed and hydrated.

“Lastly all credit to the alpacas for putting in a good performance, they kicked and screamed and peed all over me but we capitalised on their errors. All the best to them and see them next season.”

Dane: “We turned up thinking we’d give my step dad Paul (the farm manager) a hand with the alpaca shearing. We thought, “Oh nice early start, we should be home by 2pm and still be sweet to get to the gym ...”. That’s not what ended up happening! The whole day felt like a 12-round boxing match. The first few rounds were fairly easy but a bit inefficient because we were all learning the system. Around 12 o’clock I started to feel my knees get achy but the real work started at about 2pm (I think) when I was told that we were only half way through the mob. Mike kept throwing riddles at us which I think may have been a tactic to keep our brains firing while we were taking on the repetitive task of alpaca shearing.

“I’d look over at the pen and it felt like the number just wasn’t going down! But everyone in the shed were such weapons, no complaining, no quitting, everyone just dug in and let out the occasionally “woooooo!”

“The sun went down and the pen looked almost as full as it did at the start of the day. My knees were hurting pretty bad now but we kept going, everyone throwing out encouragement and wrong answers to riddles as we went. We probably had about 40 to go and we were all cooked now, even Mike had now got a bit of colour in his cheeks.

“We collectively decided to skip on any breaks and just do



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one giant run. It was shit. But when that last alpaca walked off and the sound of the shears finally stopped it was an awesome feeling. Alpaca shearing. It's not normally a part of my life but man, being a part of such a colossal effort and having a team like that is something I won't forget!

"The weekend after shearing Dane entered a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu competition. what a tough bugger ...

"I bloody did it Bro, I got double gold and a bronze in the weight division above me. They were all tough dudes as well but all the hard work paid off and I came home with the wins."

"Hey thanks a lot man, it was an awesome experience eh. I just really enjoyed the challenge of it and the positivity and energy you and Dan maintained throughout the day made it fun."

Renee: "My partner Dane and I have been living in Whangaparaoa since August, spending time with his family after the Covid lockdowns stopped us from visiting from Australia for quite some time. We both wanted to earn some extra cash during our time here and Dane's step-dad offered us two day's work on a farm assisting with alpaca shearing.

"I was warned that the alpacas were very noisy and that I should wear earplugs. I thought it sounded like a fun experience and surely I wouldn't actually need earplugs? We arrived at the farm at 6.30am and I had in mind that we'd be finished around 3 or 4pm. I was very wrong.

"I met the crew and started hearing whispers about a world record being broken. I thought to myself, 'surely that's not us?' When the whispers became a serious conversation, I soon realised this wasn't going to be a two-day job. It was going to be one long painful day of mental resilience to get 200 alpacas sheared in one day. I had to mentally prepare my mind to stay positive and my body to keep up the pace until it was done.



Above: The Hydration Manager.

I had never worked on a farm before, so it was my chance to prove to myself that I could do it till the end.

"Mike the Shearer delegated everyone a role and without a minute wasted, we got to work and were racing against the clock. It didn't take long to find my groove, assisting Mike with taking the fleece and manoeuvring the alpaca for ease of shearing. In amongst that, I was constantly sweeping and sorting the fibres into bags with a constant eye on Mike. I made sure when he was shearing the front right side of the alpaca, it was my queue to jump over and hold the animal for him. I never missed my queue.

"It was a mental struggle to ignore the pens full of alpacas that still needed to be sheared, and working out that it was already afternoon and not even being half way done was disheartening but that feeling had to be ignored. I had to stay positive and look forward to little wins like eating dinner, having a warm shower and laying my head down on my pillow after this day was over. Just keep going, just keep going I said to myself.

"We wouldn't have been able to do it without the camaraderie and encouragement from the crew that we had. Everyone would let out a cheer now and then and celebrate the small wins when we'd reach a new milestone. We had a portable speaker set up blasting old school bangers, and the boys were keeping us entertained by dishing out endless riddles as a distraction.

"The fridge was stacked up with food (and beer) which was amazing, but I'm counting my calories so I was feeling quite delirious towards end of the day! Just keep going, just keep going.

"Before I knew it, the sun was fading and the lights in the barn felt so bright and harsh. My feet were sore and my elbows were starting to ache from hours of sweeping. I was covered in alpaca hair and dirt and my ears were wringing from the constant squealing of the alpacas. 'Just one more hour,' I heard. Even that was discouraging because I wanted to stop hours ago! So one more hour!? Could I do it? Of course I could. There was no way I was stopping before anyone else.

"Finally, I looked over to the pens and could count on two hands the remaining alpacas. Just focus, get it done, you're almost there.

"28,000 steps later I put that broom down! What just happened!? I can't feel my back, I can barely bend over. I was so relieved and filled with joy and accomplishment. Thank goodness that was over and thank goodness I stuck it out and got it done. Going through struggle to reach a goal is worth every minute. Now get me home, I'm going to bed!"

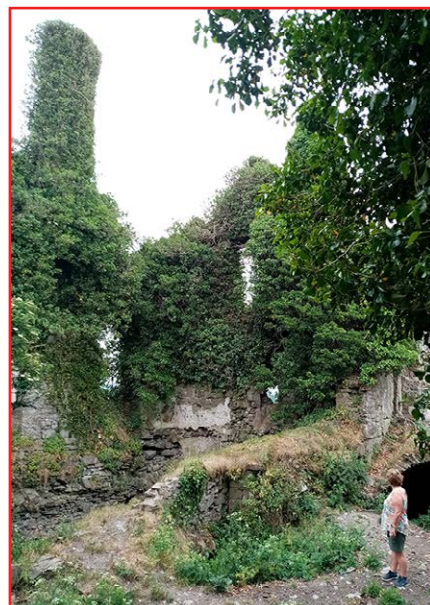
Scott: "The guy in the back ground that keeps the machine running. A typical farmer, keeps out if the lime light. Top bloke."



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Shearing magazine loves it when Phil Oldfield from ShearSharpNZ goes overseas – especially to Ireland. He always takes a camera, puts it to good use and comes back with photos and stories. (*That's by way of a hint, hint, hint to all other shearing whanau who travel beyond the shores of Aotearoa!*) **Top photos:** “Two hours off the plane and I was shearing on the hottest day of the summer – 25 degrees – at Liz and Godfrey Potterton’s farm in County Kildare.” [See our story about Godfrey in April 2023 *Shearing* magazine.]

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Top left: Liz, Godfrey and Graham Potterton, with Rodney Bryan.

Top right: “Possibly the oldest shearing ‘shed’ in County Kildare – Carbury Castle, visible from Potterton’s kitchen window.” **Above and opposite:** Action from the traditional blade shearing competition at Cneifio Gelert Shears on Gareth Owen’s farm in North Wales.

On the floor: Michael Churchhouse, Judge Gwynro Evans, Gareth Owen, Elgin Jones and Richard Till. **On the board:** Rheinallt Hughes, Angela Pearson, John Till, Elfed Jackson, Rhydian Evans and Trefoar Jones. **Above right:** Mari Williams and Angela Pearson competing in the intermediate blades competition, which Angela won.



Above: Another Phil Oldfield view of what could possibly be the oldest shearing shed in County Kildare. Clearly it was a blades-only shed, evidenced by the lack of electricity and power points for plugging in machinery. Above right: James Hopkins and Peter Heraty are well-used to shearing without power in their part of the world. All you need is some reasonable daylight ...

Things looking a bit Grey? Where to get help

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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).

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Women's National title on the way

By Jills Angus Burney

A New Zealand National Women's Championship title is one step closer with the National Committee voting this month on a remit forwarded from the North Island annual general meeting in May 2023 to establish this new event.

Delegates from the New Zealand Shearing Championships proposed the remit on the back of three years of holding their Open women's event. The New Zealand Shears Women's Championship is proving to be increasingly popular with the likes of top junior shearers like Emma Martin of Gore holding their own in the six-sheep final Women's Final against the likes of the new world eight-hour lamb record holder and open shearer Sacha Bond, and the eventual winner, Laura Bradley of Dannevirke.

There's a question often asked by male competitors as to where should the sport draw the line? Which is another way of saying that the sport has always been presented as gender neutral, and assumes that it should always stay in that pretence.

So, while it's true that in shearing women can already enter and compete across the four shearing grades from Junior to Open, the question of providing women wider opportunities is at the heart of creating the New Zealand Women's National Championship title.

Women competitors have spoken up over the past four years to denounce the symbolic 'invitation only' style event, felt as a token event where host administrators pick the six shearers for a final, rather than competitors attaining a final shear on their points through merit. Women shearers have moved beyond being patronised, and genuinely want women's events to lead to meaningful experiences.

A national title was first mooted several years ago when, after a South Island show held a handicap event, pitting junior women against an open woman competitor, which then Open competitor, Sarah Hewson (nee Higgins) of Marlborough said was frustrating, motivating a structural change to these events.

Ultimately, as Shearing Sports New Zealand Media Liaison, Doug Laing noted in his report to the North Island meeting, more women are competing in shearing than ever before. For Shearing



Above: Barbara Marsh (1943-2014) was the second woman to compete at Golden Shears (1964) and was an intermediate finalist in 1978. She won the 'Women's Championship' at Masterton in 1980 and set world records during her 30-year career.

Sports NZ administrators, the effect of more women shearers is encouraging to boost entry numbers in each of the grades and particularly noticed by fifty percent of the audience, the female spectators.

While the competitors may think that shearing is only about them, hosts of shearing events have to become inventive, not only for encouraging competitors of all elk, but to offer an entertainment product that encourages sponsors from a broader business pool, and beyond the



Above: Emma Martin, New Zealand junior champion 2023 and third place-getter in the NZ Women's championship.

traditional reliance on agribusiness, but where integrity and diversity are corporate bottom-line values.

As a heritage sport, the facts speak loudly on all things not being equal for women competitors when you look back over the past sixty years. Few women shearers have ever been included in the emerging champion events or in grade circuits, with only Emily Welsh and Sarah Hewson believed to be the only woman shearers in the sixty years of Young Farmers teams. Less than a handful of New Zealand women have ever made an Open Final, from Margaret McCauley being the first to do so in Invercargill in 1983. Scotland's Una Cameron is the only woman to attain a Top 30 place at the New Zealand Golden Shears, in 2011. This proposal fills a gap in talent production.

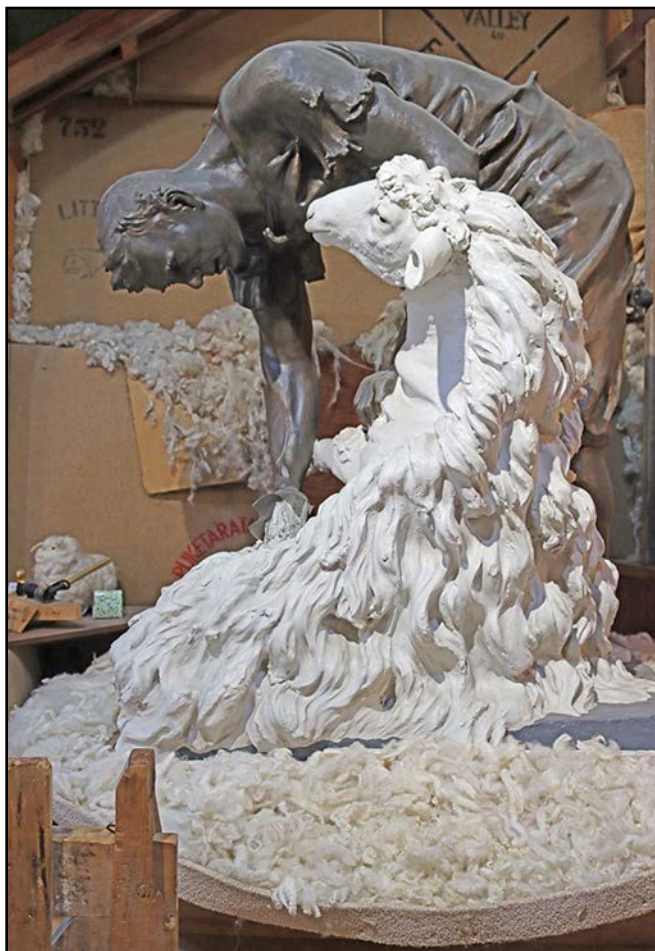
The opportunities for women to gain confidence in circuit and wider invitation events has been sparse. The intention is now to create a platform for women to build experience from, much like France did when they hosted the All-Nations Women's Champion at Le Dorat in 2019. More than forty women shearers competed, with the six-stand ten sheep final won by the indomitable open shearer, Elenore Resneau. Remarkably, since her outstanding win in Le Dorat, Resneau has gone on to qualify into a French open final, shear 350 ewes with her brother, Thimo for a two-stand French merino record and press her place in history.

After forty years of invitation-only women's events, one couldn't argue SSNZ would be moving 'too quickly' to create a women's championship platform. It is true that doing so now may expose where we are at – that much like women's football (soccer, rugby and league) – we are still developing.

Ultimately and strategically, if we genuinely want to invest in the future of competitions and encourage the retention of all competitors on a year on year basis, and consciously be eligible for provincial recognition, or dare I dream Sport NZ funding, we have to be like FIFA and the New Zealand Rugby Union, and be inclusive of opportunities for female athletes. And if not successful, or woman shearers themselves don't back the opportunity, the title can always be revoked.



Above: Man wearing the Shearing magazine-sponsored jersey for the University of Waikato Rugby Club, turn around and reveal yourself! *Below:* A ha, 'tis the hardy front row prop from Bay of Plenty via Taranaki, Joel Wisnewski, no less. In his fifth season with the club, Joel brought up his 50th appearance back in April. We don't think he's ever shorn a sheep (may have milked a cow), but he's tough enough to be a shearer!



Above: This sculpted masterpiece – (in the Shear History Trust Museum, Masterton) was originally created by William Thomas Tretthewey (1892-1956) for New Zealand's stand at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, in 1924-25. William's parents came to New Zealand from Cornwall and he originally trained as a wood carver at the Canterbury College School of Art. He progressed to sculpting when he moved to Wellington after his marriage c1914. Upon being brought home again the piece spent many years in the foyer of the Dominion Farmers Institute Building in Featherston Street, Wellington, occupied by a number of farming organisations including the Wool Publicity Committee and the Department of Agriculture. The statue was presented to the Shear History Trust by the Waitangi Tribunal, the last owner of the building. Chances are it has found its permanent home!





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From the Canadian Prairies

Shearing magazine is pleased to welcome Double E Shearing to our world-wide contacts. Russell Eddy and Chloe Bermejo are based at a small town named Plumas, central Manitoba, Canada. “We shear throughout the Canadian prairies, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, [travelling] over 2000km,” Russell explains.

“Sheep numbers are small here so we have to line up lots of stops and make everything fairly quick to set up and portable. We do about 15,000 a year here in Canada and this year we are heading to Australia for the Fall, and the United States for early winter.

“Weather is one of our biggest challenges, and awkward set-ups in multi-purpose ‘processing barns’. Our season is year-round as we do mostly pre-lamb shearing and a lot of farms are accelerated lambing, so most fleeces are eight-months, with

heavy dirt from feed-lotting. There’s a massive shortage of shearers here which also helps keep our season full,” Russell says. “Wool is worthless here, average shearing is \$5-\$5.50, wool is worth about ten cents a pound, with average ewes clipping five pounds, so a fleece is 50 cents. Most people compost or burn it.”

Photos: top left: Chloe Bermejo, 30 June 2023 at the Eastern Canadian Sheep Shearing Competition, held at the Holstein Agro Expo and Rodeo, Holstein Ontario. She won first place in the novice event

Top right: Russell Eddy, 14 March 2023, Graham Rannie property at Binscarth, Manitoba. (Kamil Mirga photo.)

Bottom left: Chloe Bermejo, 18 March 2023 at Montgomerys, Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. (Kamil Mirga photo.)

Bottom right: Russell Eddy, 18 March 2023 at Montgomerys, Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. (Kamil Mirga photo.)

I think we may have published this before, and it is clearly of Australian origin (attributed to an Australian SAS soldier). But I fear I am not alone in thinking its messages resonate very loud and clear in present-day New Zealand. (Ed.)

WAKE UP TIME

When the shearing sheds are silent and the stock camps fallen quiet
When the gidgee coals no longer glow across the outback night
And the bush is forced to hang a sign, 'Gone broke and won't be back'
And spirits fear to find a way beyond the beaten track

When harvesters stand derelict upon the wind-swept plains
And brave hearts pin their hopes no more on chance of loving rains
When a hundred outback settlements are ghost towns overnight
When we've lost the drive and heart we had to once more see us right

When 'Pioneer' means a stereo and 'Digger' some backhoe
And the 'Outback' is behind the house, there's nowhere else to go
And 'Anzac' is a biscuit brand and probably foreign owned
And education really means brainwashed and neatly cloned

When you have to bake a loaf of bread to make a decent crust
And our heritage once enshrined in gold is crumbling to dust
And old folk pay their camping fees on land for which they fought
And fishing is a great escape; this is until you're caught

When you see our kids with Yankee caps and resentment in their eyes
And the soaring crime and hopeless hearts is no longer a surprise
When the name of RM Williams is a yuppie clothing brand
Not a product of our heritage that grew off the land

When offering a hand makes people think you'll amputate
And two dogs meeting in the street is what you call a 'Mate'
When 'Political Correctness' has replaced all common sense
When you're forced to see it their way, there's no sitting on the fence

Yes one day you might find yourself an outcast in this land
Perhaps your heart will tell you then, 'I should have made a stand'
Just go and ask the farmers, that should remove all doubt
Then join the swelling ranks who say, 'Don't sell Australia out'.

Courtesy of Craig Leggett (Ex SAS & 1 RAR)

So what can you do? If you think something is bullshit, say so, out loud!

Banks of Marble

I've traveled 'round this country,
From shore to shining shore;
It really made me wonder,
The things I heard and saw.

I saw the weary farmer,
Plowing sod and loam,
And I heard the auction hammer,
A'knocking down his home.

But the banks are made of marble,
With a guard at every door,
And the vaults are stuffed with silver,
That the farmer sweated for.

I saw the seaman standing,
Idly by the shore,
And I heard their bosses saying,
'Got no work for you no more.'

But the banks are made of marble,
With a guard at every door,
And the vaults are stuffed with silver,
That the seaman sweated for.

I saw the weary miner,
Scrubbing coal dust from his back,
And I heard his children crying,
'Got no coal to heat the shack.'

But the banks are made of marble,
With a guard at every door,
And the vaults are stuffed with silver,
That the miner sweated for.

I've seen my brothers working,
Throughout this mighty land,
I prayed we'd get together,
And together make a stand.

Then we'd own those banks of marble,
With a guard at every door,
And we'd share those vaults of silver,
That we have sweated for!

(Ted Rice lyrics, Pete Seeger singer.)



Stuff Headlines 6 July 2023

“Eight hundred country schools to get American-made synthetic carpet”

“Meets recycling and carbon footprint goals.”

(Ministry of Education Head of Property, Sam Fowler)

What do we think?

Bullshit, Government decision-makers. Just another example of New Zealand's future being sold down the Globalist drain.

Nylon, fossil fuels, carbon footprints ... yeah.

Gone but not forgotten

By Tony Mathews

The first sheep I got a cheque for shearing I shore with Keith Evans. Keith worked around Mangaweka, fencing and shearing in the 1950s. A perfectionist by nature, Keith was an especially talented shearer with the same slow hand, full comb, relaxed style we later saw in Brian Quinn, both men taking full advantage of their reach to make it look easy.

Slow hands were less the norm back then as the convex comb commonly in use seemed narrower, and entered the wool more readily, due to the short even lead across their width.

I've often wondered where Keith could have gone with his shearing once comb manufacturers started listening to shearers and making the sort of concave comb they were asking for.

Keith was the only shearer I ever crossed paths with to come to grips with that 'Edsel' of combs, the Stewart Master. It was a sort of hybrid, a straight convex comb with a very long tooth either side. This comb never took off but Keith had its measure.

Equally, he had the measure of the first concave comb available that I knew about, the Burgon. In fact he gave me a couple but they were only any good in fat, open woolled sheep or good store lambs.

Above all, Keith was a family man at a time when the average father wouldn't be seen pushing a toddler about town in a stroller, let alone carrying his young daughter on his shoulders among Taihape's Friday night crowd of shoppers. Keith did just that, they really stood out. I'll wager his little girl didn't grow up with a fear of heights.

Being so family orientated, and with shearing so seasonal, I guess Keith was looking for a steadier source of income as in 1959 he purchased a truck, along with a licence to cart general goods and stock.

It was February 1960 when the news of Keith's tragic end reached me on a West Otago farm. "You know a Keith Evans when you were up Mangaweka?", the boss inquired after hearing the one o'clock news one day. When I replied in the affirmative he told me what he'd heard on the radio.

At nineteen I'd seen my share of death but admit I had to bite back the tears, thinking of Keith's last minute of life fair cut me up, and still does.

The rumour mill went into top gear

and no doubt a coronial inquiry was held where, in true Kiwi fashion, everyone ducks for cover and tries to blame the victim. Likely it's all there to look up but I don't have the skills or machinery.

Seems another trucking firm hired Keith with his truck to help transport sheep from across the Rangitikei Canyon to the Taihape ewe fair. Two trucks had been and gone with their loads before Keith arrived to get his. It's said Keith expressed serious misgivings about the state of the suspension bridge and didn't want to load all the remaining sheep, but being new in business and anxious to please, he was prevailed upon to do so.

LORRY DRIVER KILLED Bridge Decking Collapses

(New Zealand Press Association)

TAIHAPE, February 17

A cartage contractor was killed instantly when the laden sheep truck he was driving crashed through the decking of the Taoroa suspension bridge over the Rangitikei river, near Taihape, at 7.20 a.m. today, and fell 275 feet to the river bed. He was:

Keith Robert Evans, aged 27, of Mangaweka. He was married, with two children.

Great difficulty was experienced in recovering the body, as there is a sheer drop from the bridge, and the river bed can be reached only by wading and swimming from a point upstream.

More than 100 sheep on the

In a precedent to the much publicised Berryman case years later, where a beekeeper met his maker when a suspension bridge gave way beneath his vehicle, Keith, truck and sheep plunged several hundred feet to their deaths in the riverbed below. It took a long time to access the wreck.

In my mind I can still see Keith carrying his little girl on his shoulders about the streets of Taihape, or sitting across from me at the lunch table, towel draped "Billy T style" around his neck and advising me to be careful when dealing with that bloke, saying "He's so greasy when the sun shines on him your eyes slip off. (Now that's greasy!)"

The tears I felt I had to fight back all those years ago still water my eyes whenever I think of what his wife, children and the rural world lost the day Keith Evans departed us.

I don't shut gates

By Tony Mathews

By and large, shearers and sheep owners get along pretty well by respecting each others' difficulties. To ensure a win-win outcome, many's the time I've seen shearers go out and help draft another mob to get them undercover in the face of an approaching shower.

Some other times I've seen a shearer help out by killing a mutton but sadly, there are a few shearers who believe the sole purpose of the farmer is to provide sheep on which a good tally can be put up.

These arrogant types seem to get away with it all too often, simply because once you have got the sheep in the holding paddock you want them shorn and back on the hill.

The worst example of this came from a shearer who drove off after work and blatantly left the holding paddock gate open, whereupon a thousand plus sheep poured down the driveway and out onto the road. I was still grinding up and watched as the farmer had God's own job getting through the stampeding mob on his farm bike to head them as they simply ran over the top of his faithful heading dog, Lass.

After much punching he got them back in the holding paddock, allowing me to leave for home.

Next morning as the shearer was setting up the farmer came over and said, rather than enquired, "You leave the gate open when you went out last night?"

"I don't shut gates," the shearer replied matter-of-factly.

The farmer said nothing and just walked away in disgust. This guy was a good shearer and the shearer on the board is a lot better than an advert for one in the paper.



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DON'T BLOW YOUR WRIST

Don't Blow Your Wrist

With main shear looming, now's the time to prepare the body for those big tallies. Blown wrists are really common among shearers who hit the board hard after a bit of a break. Just like the All Blacks wouldn't play a test without a pre-season or any warm-up, you need to make sure you're in good nick before you pick up the handpiece. You can learn simple warm-up routines that help prevent blown wrists at www.tahingatahi.co.nz.



MY FATHER SAID:

There are two types of people in this world, the Givers and the Takers. The Takers may eat better, but the Givers always sleep better.



The pursuit of happiness

By Gabriela Schmidt-Morrell

We just want to feel good ... As often and for as long as possible... But what is it that makes us feel happy and joyful? The answer can be found in a chemical called dopamine, produced by our brain as a response to an external stimulus.

Be it sugar, social media, alcohol, drugs, sex or exercise: The response in our brain is the same: It produces the 'feel-good' neuro-chemical called dopamine, which brings on feelings of pleasure and motivation.

A dopamine hit brings about pleasure, and then is quickly followed by pain, or a come down, in order to keep us motivated. This balancing see-saw of pleasure and pain made sense in the time of early humans, when we had to constantly search for our basic needs – food, water, shelter. Dopamine hits don't last very long and are followed by pain so that immediately we're searching again...

We now live in a world of abundance rather than scarcity, and dopamine hits are everywhere. We have become dependent on it. This is a problem especially if our choice of the dopamine creator is harmful to ourselves and others.

When we're repeatedly exposed to our pleasure-producing stimuli, our brains adjust and, eventually, we need more and more just to feel "normal," or not in pain. We are in a dopamine deficit.

Our ability to experience joy in moderate rewards is now reduced. Over time, our stimuli of choice don't even get us high. And when we're not using, we're experiencing the universal symptoms of withdrawal from any addictive substance, which are anxiety, irritability, insomnia, dysphoria and craving. The pursuit of happiness seems like mission impossible that way.

Here is one expert idea on how to break the cycle and restore balance:

Start with a dopamine fast. Take a 30-day break from whatever it is that you rely on for pleasure: social media, sugar, video games, sex, pot, booze – anything, really. This doesn't mean going cold turkey forever, but this first month is key to getting your pleasure-pain balance back in check. It's a lot easier to cut out an addictive behavior entirely at first, and then re-introduce it in moderation.

You'll probably feel a lot worse before you start feeling better. Stick with it – after about two weeks, the pleasure-pain see-saw in your brain will start to restore to its natural balance and you'll be able to enjoy more modest rewards.

However, this is not the approach one should take for highly addictive substances like drugs and alcohol. Going cold turkey can actually cause life-threatening withdrawal and should be done under the care of a professional.

Question is: How else can we get our dopamine hits if not from harmful substances and behaviour?

Thankfully there are multiple other options:

- Physical activities. Any sport or exercise that gets your heart rate going.
- You are probably familiar with a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction after a day's shearing.
- Having a fun time with your friends and family, talking, laughing, sharing stories, eating together, experiencing a feeling of belonging.
- Helping others: Teach someone something, be there if someone needs you.
- A healthy diet high in protein creates more dopamine than a diet high in saturated fats. (Clean meats, eggs, nuts, fruit and veges etc. vs fatty take aways)
- More sleep: Make your 8 hours as non-negotiable as possible.
- Listening to music. Everything just seems a little easier and lighter with the right beats.
- Sunlight. You ever experience stepping into the sunlight and your face automatically starting to smile?

In the pursuit of happiness, we also realise of course, that feeling low is part of life, and that times of happiness and joy get us through the tough times.

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Above: Elfed Jackson (Wales) and Andy Wear (England), who set a British nine-hour, two-stand strong wool ewes blade shearing record at Fernhill Farm, near Bristol, on 17 September 2022. Elfed shored 170 and Andy 160 for a total of 330. The record was set under rules set by the British Isles Shearing Competitions Association (BISCA). The pair were presented with their Record Certificates at the Royal Welsh Show last month.



Above: When your mother travels all the way from New Zealand to Scotland with high hopes seeing you (as defending world champion) shear in the world blades final, but you fail to make the cut, there is bound to be a price to pay. Here we see Allan Oldfield paying the price for 'failing to make the cut'. (Or perhaps it's because he did make the cut that he failed to make the cut, but let's not go there ...)



Above: The Irish blade shearing team of Martin and James Hopkins (with team manager Tom Dunne) won the Six-Nations Championship at the Royal Welsh Show, Builth Wells, last month (July 2023). (Irish Sheep Shearers Association photo.)

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‘Leave a bit on, Frog!’

By Wayne Perkins

Back in the day, Frog Potae and Dad were probably about as different as you could get. Dad was a non-drinking conservative Christian farmer with a strong faith (that he wasn't afraid to tell people about) and Frog was a bit of a hard-case shearer who didn't mind a rum and thought religion could go hang for all he cared, but they had a high degree of mutual respect for each other.

It just goes to show that maybe our differences are much less than we realise and our sameness (our common humanity) much greater than we often care to admit and a little bit of mutual respect can go a long way to unifying us all. Worth thinking about aye?

Anyway, Frog used to shear at our farm, back when I was just a glint in the old man's eye, so I'm unsure if I ever saw him in our shearing shed but I got to shear alongside Frog much later in life, when I was doing my first stint in Aussie.

He was great fun to work with and I felt lucky to know him. He didn't teach me much about shearing but he taught me a lot about drinking rum!

One lunchtime we were all sitting on the shearing board with our mugs of tea when Frog told a story from back in the day, about shearing at our old farm and it went like this.

Frog was a young up and coming shearer working for George Potae. He was a good shearer by this stage but



Above: Colin 'Frog' Potae, didn't need to be told twice to leave some wool on!

still quite a way from being the legend he would become at his peak.

He was shearing alongside Spike James, who was an exceptional shearer and Spike was ringing the board.

Dad had a bit of a soft spot for Frog and he also enjoyed a joke so he came along at morning smoko and said quietly, "Frog, just leave a few crutches in if you need to and put a bit of pressure on Spike"

Well of course as any shearer knows, if the farmer tells you to leave a bit

more wool on you don't have to be told twice so Frog started leaving the crutch in every now and then so he could keep up with Spike.

Now this put a hell of a lot of pressure on Spike but Frog still couldn't get a sheep around him. Dad counted out the sheep at lunchtime and saw that Frog and Spike were neck and neck so he wandered on down to Frog and said, "Start leaving a few bellies on and I'll take them off later when everyone has gone home." By the end of the day, Frog had shorn more sheep than Spike and neither he nor my father ever let on what had happened.

Frog said that to this day Spike had never been able to work out how this young whipper-snapper managed to beat him.

Now that's a fantastic story to be told about your Dad from someone who you consider one of the coolest shearers to ever pull on a pair of shearing strides.

I have often thought what an extraordinary thing it was for my father to suggest and actively encourage. I mean, they were his sheep and he just made a lot of extra work for himself but I think it was because he had been a shearer himself.

Dad sold the family farm in 1983 and my last memory of our farming life was when we all went down on the very last night and baled up the dags.

Dad always said, "Well, we finished on a high note boys!"



Above left and right: Amber Casserly (blue shirt) and son Kaden, side by side on the board at Clover Downs, working for Hill Shearing Services, Balclutha



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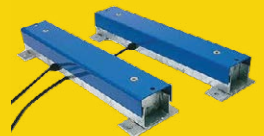
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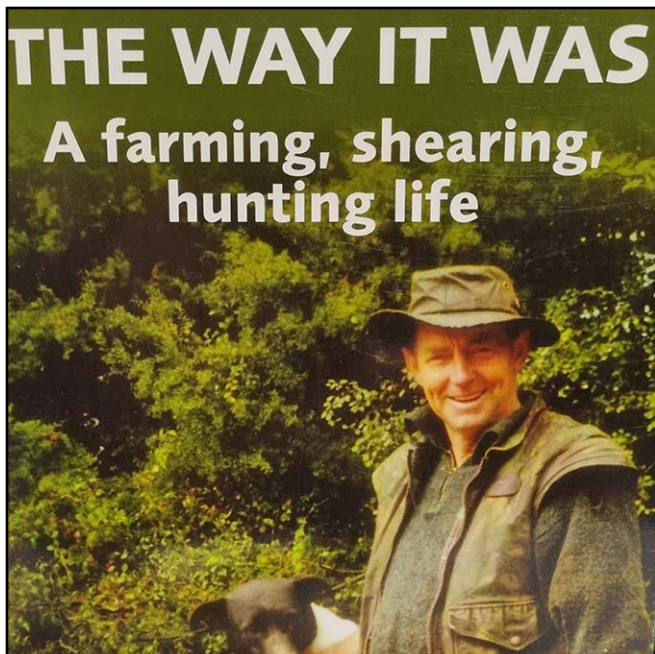
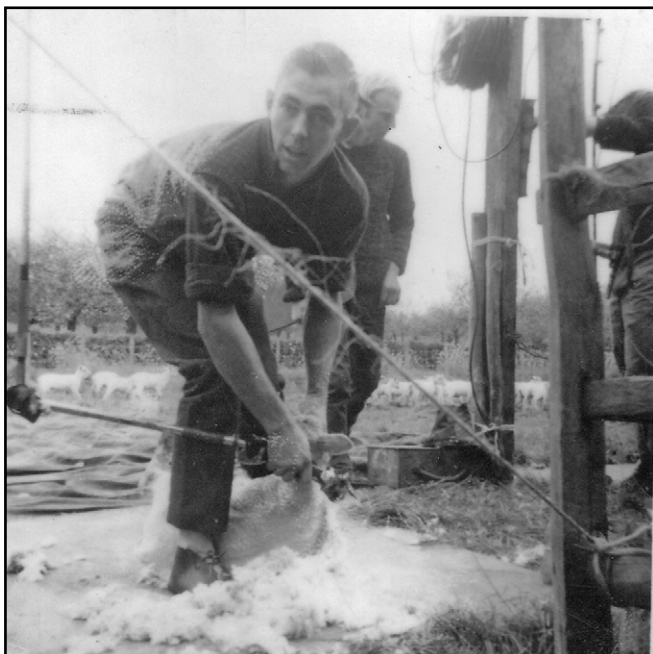
Operation height: 2740mm
Transport height: 2140mm
Box height (filling): 1185mm
Width: 1390mm

Depth: 970mm
Weight: 530kg
Generator size minimum: 8KVA
Pressure relief: 2600-2700psi

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Pump: Variable displacement piston
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THE WAY IT WAS

A farming, shearing, hunting life

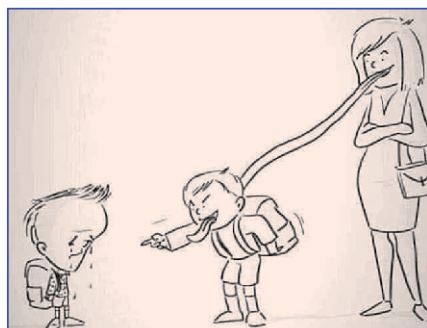


Top left: From history's pages and the photo archives of Murray Kidd, in the *Far North: A photo of Tom Brough, taken somewhere in England during his 'Golden Shears tour' in 1968.*

And if you are looking for a copy of the late Mr Brough's best-selling book, 'The Way it Was' – it is now available for purchase on Fishpond. Just type in the title, the author and category 'Books' and there you will have it. You'll be able to read a lot more about Tom's visit to the UK in 1968, from which the above photo was taken.

The photo opposite – Murray Kidd says the photo of four shearers dates back to 1963 or 1964, working for Murray McSkimming, shearing rams. "In the photo are Joe Ferguson, Morrie Lawton and Allan Williamson. I'm not sure about the fourth guy."

Murray reports he gave up serious use of the handpiece some years ago, but managed to shear a few a couple of months ago. "That's between fishing and shooting and living the good life in Ahipara!"



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Preserving our Heritage

Readers may have noticed in the past couple of editions we've published a *Shearing Magazine* "Industry Hall of Fame". Hopes were high "at this end" that it might draw some comment or criticism, or even suggestions for additional names to be added.

Nope, not a word from anywhere. Does that mean readers are not interested in the deeds of our industry heroes from long ago? Even looking back ten years to when Sir David Fagan was still a force to reckon with can seem like last century.

It's a curious thing for people such as I who are old enough to have sporting heroes from the 1960s and 1970s. To have seen Colin Meads play rugby, Peter Snell run mile races, Denny Hulme drive his Formula One racing car, and remember Baghdad Note winning the Melbourne Cup in 1970 with Midge Didham 'up'. Curious, because it's a popular pastime on Facebook for 'Celebs' to name their "All-time greatest team" (be it rugby, cricket, netball, league, whatever) and invariably pick no one from more than 30 years ago. Were players from further back not good enough? Or is the 'selector' merely displaying a lack of historical knowledge?

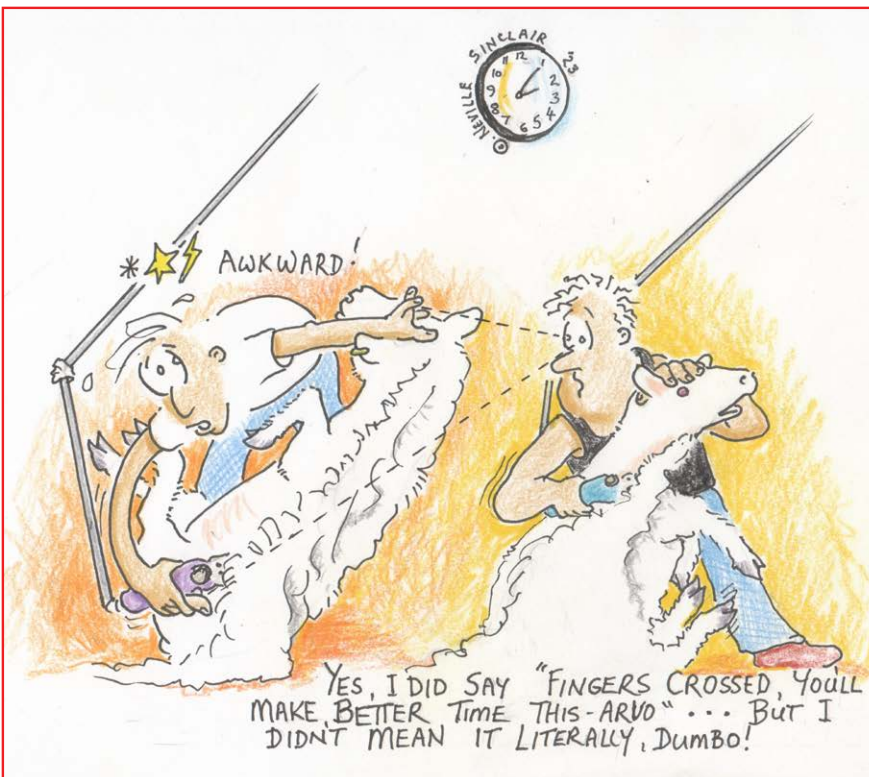
Undoubtedly, many people have never heard of Bill Higgins (first man to shear 400 sheep in nine hours) and do not really care if his place in history is preserved. But we care because the exploits of Higgins, Raihania Rimitiri, Johnny Hape, Bill Richards and others are the very fabric upon which our heritage is based. If some researcher twenty years from now wants to find information about our industry 'heroes' they will at least have a starting point.

For this edition we have extended the 'Hall' further: a 'room' for those whose exploits can only be judged subjectively, or by intuition, because most have passed on. (But some are very much alive!)

We have also 'built a room' for those whose more recent exploits can be measured against specific criteria. Our requirements are for the inductee to have won a world championship and at least three other major New Zealand titles. We have ten people in that category.

So check out our Hall of Fame at page 46 and let us know what you think, and if we have missed anyone out at this stage. Undoubtedly, there is scope for additional members in both categories.

And note, the Hall of Fame should not be mistaken for a 'Hall of Legends'. (Des Williams)



Above: Dion Morrell Shearing gang at Chittock's Farm, Kelso, July 2023, from left: Leon Samuels, Danielle Mahia, Kortez Mahia (in pen), Stacey Young, Thomas Winiata, Dylan Miller, Matthew Watt and Tim Wilson. (Claire Toia-Bailey image.)

European heatwave kills over 700 people

Wow! A headline from this week's paper? No, 27 July 1987, actually. (What comes around has already been around, you might say, with confidence.)

Shearing magazine's New Zealand Shearing Industry Hall of Fame

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

- 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)
- Bill Meech (1914-1985)
- Ivan Bowen (1915-2007)
- Les Richards (1917-2000)
- Godfrey Bowen (1922-1994)
- Bing Macdonald (1928-2004)
- Makaore Potae (1934-2001)
- Ken Pike (1938-****)
- Barbara Marsh (1943-2014)
- Mavis Mullins (1956-****)
- Keith Wilson (1957-****)
- Darin Forde (1965-****)

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

- Roger Cox 1977; Golden Shears 1977-78, 1980)
- Brian Quinn 1980; Golden Shears 1965, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1972; NZ Merino Shears 1968, 1970, 1978-79.
- Peter Casserly 1980; NZ Golden Blades 1975, 1976; Omarama Shears 1995.
- Colin King 1984; Golden Shears 1982, 1987-88; National circuit 6 times.
- David Fagan 1988, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2003; Golden Shears 16 times; NZ Open 16 times.
- Tony Dobbs 1988; Golden Blades 18 times.
- Joanne Kumeroa (1969-2015) 2003, 2005; Golden Shears 1995, 2001, 2004, 2010-12; NZ Open 1992, 1995-96, 2001-02, 2007.
- Paul Avery 2008; Golden Shears 2005, 2007; NZ Open 1995, 2000, 2007.
- Rowland Smith 2014; Golden Shears 8 times; NZ Open 8 times.
- John Kirkpatrick 2017; Golden Shears 2002, 2008, 2011, 2012; NZ Open 2008, 2009, 2012.

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Kerry Johnstone tributes

New Zealand Master Shearer Kerry Johnstone died at Shepparton, Victoria, Australia on 21 June 2023, aged 82 years. The following story (by way of tribute) is reprinted from Top Class Wool Cutters, published in 1996.

Kerry Johnstone – Master Shearer

Born South of Auckland in March 1941, Kerry Johnstone was one of three brothers to learn the rudiments of shearing on a small dairy and sheep unit farmed at far north Mangonui by parents Ted and Jean.

After the mandatory years at Kaitia College, 18 year old Kerry and brothers Graham and Colin were all convinced they wanted to be shearers, and set off for Taihape. Like many youngsters before and after, they were seeking jobs with Jack Harrison, shearing contractor.

“It’s amazing how many shearers passed through Jack’s hands over the years,” Kerry says. “He was very prominent in the industry, well known for training shearers and providing excellent conditions of employment.

“Jack was a most interesting character with the gift of the gab. He’d had open heart surgery in the days when it was still very much pioneering surgery. He was one of the early success stories when a lot of the others didn’t make it.”

The shearing season for Kerry in those early days was October to December main shear, followed by a short second shear run in March and April. Then it was back to other rural skills learned on the family farm - scrub cutting, fencing and tobacco picking.

The mid-1960s saw Kerry based in Feilding, and while there he started dabbling in shearing competitions. His first trip to

the Golden Shears was in 1969 but he had a problem deciding which grade he should enter.

“It was quite funny because I’d never really done the tallies to consider myself an open shearer, so I didn’t have a clue what to do. Then I thought, ‘What the hell, I’m only here for some fun I might as well have a go in the open.’ I went on from there and surprised everyone, not least myself by getting second to George Potae in the final.

Kerry had worked on those big sheep around the Manawatu, and not until some time later did he actually achieve the open class tally. “Here I was shearing against all those guys I considered to be guns, never thinking for a moment that I could possibly be as good as them. Then, ‘Hello’ - I didn’t know if they’d all had a bad day or just what had happened.”

Kerry remembers having doubts about tactics for the Golden Shears final. He knew he had to shear 20 sheep with two handpieces. “Can you shear 20 sheep without a cutter change ... Perhaps you can’t - what the hell am I going to do?”

He decided to play safe, gave a spare cutter to his pen assistant and said, “Can you give this to me in a hurry if I scream out for it during the final?” “Sure, sure” the boy said, dropping its teeth upwards into the breast pocket of his shirt. Comes the moment the edge starts to go and Kerry screams out for the spare cutter. He’s already got the old one off as the boy jams the tops of his fingers into the pocket, with predictable result.

“There I was, in the middle of a Golden Shears open final, without a cutter on my hand piece, feeling like and probably looking like a complete idiot! I learned to look after myself from then on but that first final on 20 sheep was a real ordeal. The pain comes on after about 15 and somehow, you’ve got to get through the rest of them. Hard going!”

Despite those dramatics, the rookie came second. The forerunner of things to come, Kerry would go on to qualify 10 years in a row at Masterton, making the finals again in 1970 (sixth), 1976 (fourth) and 1977 (third).

If Jack Harrison nurtured young shearers from the north by the hundreds, then so did Murray McSkimming at Alexandra, and Kerry Johnstone knew the right moves to make, having chosen the career of shearing. He spent several seasons on the South Island pre-lamb run around Central Otago, and got to be a useful fine wool shearer.

“I wasn’t very good on merinos when I first went south. I won the cross-bred title at the Alexandra Shears one year, and then I made the fine wool final. I wasn’t very good but some of those other guys couldn’t have been much better.

“New Zealand shearers didn’t travel to Australia much in those days of course, so they didn’t have the experience. Snow Quinn, Ian Rutherford and a few others around Central Otago could shear merinos, but they were a struggle for most of us other blokes.”

In 1975 Kerry gained second place in the Caltex National championship behind Roger Cox, thus earning selection (with Roger and Norm Blackwell) in the New Zealand team which travelled to Euroa (Victoria) in October for a test against Australia.

Australia had won the first Test at home in 1975 by 25 points, but New Zealand squared the ledger at Masterton in March 1975. Against even their own best expectations, the Kiwis then stunned the partisan Euroa audience by snatching

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an historic victory – with a whole 0.854 of a point to spare!

Two years later Kerry again made the team, this time as captain. Accompanied by Kevin Walsh, Ivan Rosandich and Colin Gibson, and even though Australia had the great John Hutchinson in its lineup, Kerry and the boys did it again, by 17.56 points this time and no arguments.

“After that first trip with the New Zealand team I just kept going back to Australia and ended up living there permanently. At that time I was shearing here [NZ], Australia, England, America - so no place was home and I had to stop still to work out which country I was in at any given time. I carried that on for five or six years, just living out of a suitcase.”

Kerry lived in the Euroa area for more than a decade, working mainly for John Harris in Victoria, southern NSW, with ventures into South Australia and Queensland as well.

He became involved in the research and development of shearing gear with an Australian company, an association which had a less than happy ending. “I was acting as a consultant, testing combs, cutters and handpieces, but I got fired following a company reorganisation and change of location and I still haven’t been paid for some of the work I did.”

Despite that experience Kerry maintains a keen interest in that side of the industry, noting huge advantages in all aspects of shearing gear.

“I visited the sunbeam factory while over there with the New Zealand team in 1975 and there were rows of guys sitting at benches, grinding each comb individually. Now they are hardly touched by human hands, the process



Above: Kerry Johnstone (right), captain of the 1977-78 New Zealand team against Australia, with team mates Ivan Rosandich, Colin Gibson and Kevin Walsh. (Don Vickers photo/Bernie Walker Collection.)

is computer controlled using machines worth half a million dollars each, but all companies have them. Combs can now be used virtually straight out of the packet.”

Looking back over his career in shearing, Kerry retains a special place in his memory for the late Danny Holland.

“I’ll always remember one of my first competitions at Feilding. It was Danny’s first show and I’d never seen him before. I looked at the others in my heat, didn’t really recognise anybody and thought to myself, ‘Well, shouldn’t have too much trouble here.’”

I was halfway through my first sheep when I heard a rattle beside me and there was Danny, diving in for his

second! He sure could fire them out. He didn’t qualify on that occasion, but he soon became a real crowd-pleaser on the circuit.

“I suppose my favourite memory has to be with the New Zealand team at Euroa – beating them on their home patch twice, and using narrow gear at that. It’s always nice to win against the odds, especially when the odds are Aussies! I was also leading individual in the test so that added quite a bit to the satisfaction.”

(Abridged extract from *Top Class Wool Cutters* by Des Williams. (Shearing Heritage Publications, 1996.)

(See next page for more recent tribute.)

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From Sports Shear Australia Association:

Sad news from Shepparton, with the death of Kerry Johnstone. Kerry (KBJ) was a good mate who we caught up with most years over the past 45. He has contributed to the shearing industry across the world and introduced me to the larger network of our wonderful shearing and wool industries.

Thanks to Kerry’s introduction to New Zealand, USA and the UK we have all benefitted from great experiences and more importantly long on-going friendships from around the world.

Kerry had a weird sense of humour which we all got used to, and yes, he could be funny. He might have appeared aloof to some but if you took the time to get to know him he was a bloody good bloke.

We all know he was a shearing legend, one of the best merino shearers with a great work ethic. He judged at our Sport Shear South Australia and some Victorian competitions; thought speed shears a complete waste of time, discrediting the “real” shearers and he let us all know.

Kerry was one of a kind, one of the best and one of the long-lasting Master Shearers across the world. RIP Kerry Johnstone. (Steph Brooker-Jones)

Kerry Johnstone – Obituary

When the trans-Tasman competition celebrates its 50th anniversary next March, much of that longevity can be tributed to the late Kerry Johnstone, who passed away in Shepparton, Victoria on 21 June 2023 after a long battle with bowel cancer.

At almost 80-years-old, Johnstone was renowned in the USA and Australia as recent as two years before he died, still shearing with his colostomy bag fixed safely in tow.

According to the late Jim Robinson of the Warnambool Shears, after the collapse of the Euroa Golden shears in 1985 over the disruptive wide-gear industrial dispute, it was Kerry Johnstone, by then resident in Victoria, who rescued the trans-Tasman test match series.

Originally based with his first family in Feilding, from the late 1970s Johnstone was one of the first full-time shearers who moved annually seasonally between Australasia and the USA. Johnstone had first worked in Australian sheds when a member of the second New Zealand team to tour Australia in 1975. From 1979 Johnstone and his second wife, Glenys were based in Victoria and working inter-state to the outback New South Wales, and several seasons to Britain and Wyoming.

For many years Johnstone worked for his contemporary, Australian shearing legend and shearing contractor, John Harris of Euroa, until he moved to Tintinara in South Australia to work with Mick Lawless. For some time, his second daughter, Karen accompanied Johnstone in the woolsheds of Victoria and South Australia, to the mid-west of Wyoming and on one occasion to the United Kingdom.

At the time of planning for the 1988 first Warrnambool event Johnstone was a Heinger rep, servicing and marketing the new European shearing tools. Because of the hostile relationship between competitors in the mid-1980s either using wide or narrow gear mandated by the competitions, a delicate balance was walked by the two big market players, then UK manufacturer Lister and Sydney based Sunbeam Corporation. All the wide gear manufactured in Sydney was by their wool industry regulations for export only and so all the wide fork hand pieces, combs and cutters was sent off-shore. Ironically, even Western Australian agricultural companies that were shearing gear suppliers imported their gear from New Zealand via an intermediary agricultural company, Wrightson NMA.

As a new player in the lucrative gear market, Robinson told *Shearing* in 2012, Heinger was keen to come on board as a major sponsor at Warrnambool as the then union-sanctioned Shearing Competition Federation of Australia (SCFA) competitions were only able to use approved narrow gear as supplied by either Lister or Sunbeam. They backed off from a confrontation over adopting the world competition rules, allowing room for the Switzerland-based Heinger team who made it known emphatically they were not in the narrow gear business and stood for international rules. And so emerged the groundswell from Warrnambool that eventually became Shearing Sports Australia.

When living with his late wife, Rhonda in Casper, Wyoming Johnstone brought his unique international perspective to the fore in the USA. His was invaluable knowledge, as a former team member and captain of the New Zealand international test shearing team, as a Masterton Golden Shears finalist to support and instruct the USA team. Johnstone was the USA team manager to the world championships in Scotland in 2003 and then a judge for USA shearing team to the world championships in Toowoomba, 2005.

Australian shearing Hall of Famer, John Conlan's tribute

from Kyneton, Victoria was high praise indeed, that Johnstone "would have to be one of the best merino shearers to come out of New Zealand."

One of the first shearers to be formally recognised as a Master shearer, when the honours were created in the 1970s with retrospective recognition for such greats as Godfrey Bowen and Colin Boshier, Kerry died at his home in Shepparton, Victoria, about 48km north of Euroa on 21st June 2023, aged 82 years.

Johnstone is survived by his first wife Elaine, and his children Sam (Cynthia), Karen, Maxine, and Peter; his second wife, Glenys Fraser and other family in the Wairarapa, Northland and Australia.

Note – with Kerry Johnstone being the first shearer I ever met, and babysitting his kids next door (except one) all those years ago in Feilding when he was away shearing or competing, it is fitting in my view that the tribute from his family reads, "A man truly dedicated to his craft... the final blow is done."

His were extraordinary accomplishments to the shearing industry over six decades. RIP, Kerry Johnstone, Master Shearer.

(Jills Angus Burney, with Karen Johnstone, and Doug Laing.)

* * * * *

Recent Bereavements

John Ingram (c1947-2023)

Noted Southland shearer John Ingram died at Riverton on 10 May 2023, aged 76. John was known for many years as one of Southland's leading shearers, both in the sheds and at competitions. He twice made the final of the McSkimming Memorial final at Golden Shears, third to Joe Ferguson and Don Morrison in 1973, and third to Eddie Reidy and Morrison in 1974.

In accordance with John Ingram's wishes, a private family service was held following his death.

John's son, Wayne Ingram set a world two-stand record with Darin Forde in February 1996 when the pair shored 1335 sheep at Wairaki Station. The mark stood until 2012 when bettered by Sam Welch and Stacey Te Huia.

* * * * *

Robert Warnock (d 9 April 2023)

Allan Warnock of Whyalla-Stuart, South Australia, has notified *Shearing* magazine of the death from cancer of his son, Robert, on 9 April 2023.

"Robert started in the sheds at 15 years and was soon shearing. He shored for 38 years – 28 of them at Hay, in the New South Wales Riverina District. He had a great work ethic and was very reliable. He was known as Robbie, or the 'Riverina Rocket'."

Allan says Robbie planned his own funeral, held on Saturday 15 April. "It was a Saturday so people didn't have an excuse not to work, and 11.00am so that punters could get to the hotel next door and buy their Saturday raffle tickets and have a punt on the races.

"The wake was held in the hotel and I was overwhelmed by the number of people who came up to me with stories of how Robbie had helped them, and how he was always available to help someone else. About 200 people attended the funeral. He was my best mate and I will miss him."

RIP Robbie 'Riverina Rocket' Warnock.

* * * * *

Recent Bereavements

Charles Edward Julian Stone, formerly of Cambridge, died at Christchurch Hospital on 18 May 2023, aged 68. A familiar character around the shearing sheds of Cambridge and the wider Waikato region through the 1970s-1990s, Julian first started out working for Jack Dowd, while still maintaining a presence on the family farm at Fencourt, on the outskirts of Cambridge.

After selling the farm some 10-12 years ago Julian moved to the South Island, first around Nelson and then further south to Amberley, where he was involved in establishing a farming-related museum.

Julian loved taking part in shearing competitions, never with much thought of winning but always with the ambition



of having the best quality, especially 'board points'. In lighter moments Julian would proudly state the highlight of his career was winning the senior title at Raglan's Western Shears in 1980.

And why that particular event? "Well, David Fagan was second and Noel Passau was third!" (That same year Bob Michie won the National Lamb Shear and Martin Ngataki the Western Shears Open.)

Julian had a strong interest in agri-cultural history, the National Fieldays and "old" machinery. He was also among the first enthusiasts to set up his video camera at shearing competitions and film the action for posterity.

And from this writer's perspective, Julian was most helpful (c1989-90) in introducing contacts in the shearing world and being his 'escort' to Golden Shears for the first time in 1990. And knowledgeable company on subsequent Masterton 'holidays'. RIP Julian Stone. *(Des Williams)*

Tom Rarere, Blade Shearer (1957-2023)

Former Timaru blade shearing contractor Tom Rarere died at his home in Timaru on 12 June 2023, aged 65. Tom and his wife Karen took over Donny Hammond's run in 2003 when that little champion retired and together they ran the business as MacKenzie Shearing Partnership for the next 10 years. Regulars in the gangs during that time included Bill Michelle (RIP), Mike McConnell, Tim Hogg, Craig Clarke, the Montgomery boys, Brett Inglis, Daniel Rarere and many more.

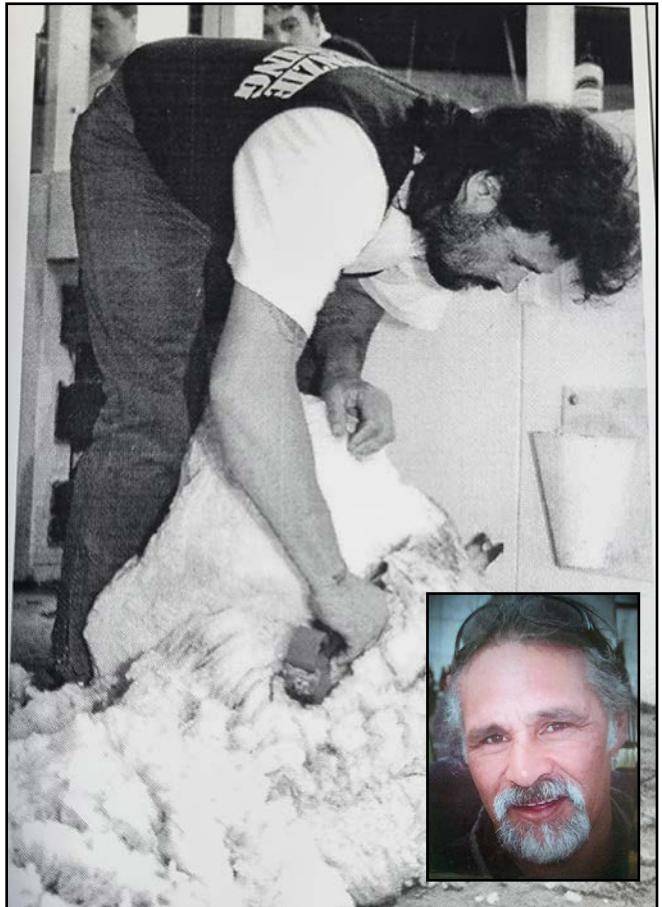
Karen Rarere says Tom was a "Dam baby" – his father worked on the various power dams being constructed on the Waitaki River in the 1960s and the family moved from Roxburgh, to Otematata and then on to Twizel as Tom was growing up. On leaving school, Tom spent most of his working life at Timaru. He worked at the Pareora Freezing Works during the season from the mid-1970s and went blade shearing during the works 'off-season'. He started blade shearing with Donny Hammond and learned the craft from him.

Tom eventually became interested in shearing competitions – he and the late Willy Montgomery received plenty of encouragement from Bill Michelle when Bill returned home from several years living in Australia. Perhaps his most notable success came at Omarama in 1995 when he won the intermediate blades title. He made the open final at Northern Shears (Rangiora) the following year and Karen mentions several other ribbons "in a box" that Tom won over the years: third at Waimate 1996; another Waimate final in 1998 and 2002; a third at Ashburton in 2003 and the most recent, Waimate in 2012.

Tom's other major sporting interest was darts – New Zealand Darts Association inter-hotel competitions and for the Central Regions Darts Association events.

Tom retired from the Works in July last year and had no inkling of ill health until he had a scan for a rotor-cuff injury. A shadow on his lung showed up on the very edge of the scan and further investigation revealed tumours on the brain, which proved to be the cause of death.

Karen Rarere described her husband as a well-liked and popular man, with more than 400 people attending his funeral service. He is survived by three children, Justin, Melissa and Daniel and five grandsons.



Above: Tom Rarere shearing at the Canterbury Show in 1996. Inset: A few grey hairs later!

From everywhere to there

(A letter from Lucie Grancher)

When I was a little child, we didn't have a TV and we were making our own super heroes. There was Jean-Pierre, the old guy who looks like a sheep and goes around farms helping on shearing days and whatever else. There was Henri the old shepherd because his last name was Coton, and the cops, of course.

And then there was David Fagan. Our father use to go shearing in New Zealand every year for a few months between something like 1994 and 1998, I'm not sure. But you'll all relate.

After growing up in that merino farm, where we had to fight to get value for our wool, I first started rousing in 2014 in Middlemarch, New Zealand, for Peter Lyon. There I was a chicken and Rose McGee gave me the basics. Until 2019 I did at least one season per year (except 2017), mostly in New Zealand where Roxanne Roxburgh, Pagan Rimene and many others along the way have built my experience.

Four seasons in Norway where Ana Leira was my head (for three) and gave for my legs, optimising the timing was the game. One odd in Wales where piss was the head and the lead, I was 23. To all the rousies, shearers, classers and whoever else I worked with, and the farmers I worked for, thank you for the sharing, the fun and the experiences. Those years are priceless to me.

Coming back to France, at a time when many farmers were getting interested in their wool again after a good 70 years of disregarding it, there appeared to be a lot I could give back to them. It starts with simple things: how to set up a shearing worksite in respect of the wool; how to throw a fleece and work around a table; how to keep tidy...

So, since 2014 I have been giving woolhandling courses to many different types of people, and I must say that teaching is the best teacher. In 2016 we started organising woolhandling competitions in France. With my team mate Adèle Lemerrier, we went to many six-nations events through the United Kingdom together and gained show experience.

And then in 2018 I started shearing and it was game over for the woolhandling seasons. No more time or reasons to run around the world kicking wool, Quentin and I have our run, a wee farm, and now also a wee man.

I was six months pregnant when I won the Merino show we have in March last year, and gained a place in the French team for the world championships.. I wasn't keen to go, but my brother Pierre made the team as well so I decided to stay and give it one last go ...

And what a go! I was not trained; actually, my brothers shored seven sheep for me at the start of June and forced me to throw them – the fleeces of course – on the garden table. My last season was in 2019. I had zero expectation of myself, apart from having a great time and a few beers. Well, it turned out that there was no time for the beers!

When you enter a show, most times it's because you know the job you are going to be judged on. Then you want to do the best you can, and that's when pressure and stress appear together, holding hands. But the best you can do is the best you are: not the best you stress!

I'm not revealing any secrets but I felt it in my body and brain at the world champs. Zero expectation but enjoy: top qualified



Above and Below: Lucie Grancher and Adele Lemerrier competing in the world teams event, and with ribbons for second.



the first round! That was just mad! So pressure came back, and I threw my first fleece the wrong way up on the second round (on blackies they are upside down). Freaked out for a second or two, then pulled myself together to end up 20th. With a lot of luck I managed to squeeze into the semi finals, and after that every step was a bonus, 100% fun and pleasure. I never had so much fun competing, pushing my physical limits and keeping the brain bright.

The highlight for me was being in the teams final. With Adèle we worked together so well as a team, the rhythm took us through the fourteen fleeces just like a ballet! When we walked off, I just wanted to go woolhandling again. Woolhandling competitions are so much more fun than shearing ones to me. Just watch Emily Te Kapa doing it and you'll know what I mean!

In the end, it came clear to me that being a good competitor is as much having the abilities and technics as being able to perform them. And that takes probably as much work and experience as gaining the technics. I would love to know what was David Fagan's mind like before he shored in all the Golden Shears finals he won between 1990 and 2004 (apart from 2002, when John Kirkpatrick won), but I'm confident that he wasn't one of the ones queueing at the toilets!

If you love what you do then give it a go, life is very short but moments like this make it last longer. And forever for those who's names are on the board!

Whether I'm in the team or not, I will see you in Masterton, Aotearoa in 2026. Until then take care, we all love you and your people, your woollies and your whenua.

Feilding HS Initiative for female shearers

By Emma Kendrick

In 1919, 20 acres of farmland was purchased on North Street of Feilding. From then, Feilding Agricultural High School expanded in this area. In 1961 the first shearing competition was held, with the last event in 1991. Using his passion for students and farming, agricultural science teacher Kain Nixon revamped this competition in 2020.

Woolhandling was added to this competition, with heats being held in the school's woolshed on Manawanui farm, and finals in the school hall using a two-stand stage kindly sponsored by alumni Aaron Haynes. (Haynes also donated the new trophies for this event). This event will generally fill up the school hall (400+ students) and is judged by official shearing sports judges. Two out of the three shearing events have been won by female shearers, since 2020.

In 2022, a proposal was brought to the agricultural school, where a suggested 'girls shearing course' would take place. The number of girls compared to boys on the regular shearing courses at FAHS was very low (1-2 per course), and this would be a new way to promote shearing to the female agriculture students.

Rose Puha and alumni Jills Angus-Burney were accompanied by Ian Hopkirk in the first girls course which ran in May 2022 at Manawanui. The course turned out to be a great success, with 13 girls attending, a record number for a school course. Jills, being an ex-record holder and one of a kind in her time, was a great role model for all students on this course. Both the school woolhandling and shearing were won by girls that year.

In March of 2023, I attended the course again, this time as a 'helping hand'. The number of smiles, improvement, and quality shorn sheep was remarkable; something I had never seen in a course at school before. Girls have a special ability to take note of detail, and won't get ahead of themselves until they get the basics right first.

The biggest difference I had noticed between the girls and boys, was that the girls are much more encouraging of each other (high-fives, compliments, etc). Male students were supportive, also, but the girls had an effect on their peers that inspired them to move forward with each other and not against, something the boys couldn't quite grasp.

In 2023 we had a record number of female students competing in the school shearing competition, and the highest number of girls competing in the local shearing shows this season, including Rebecca Dickson who made the New Zealand Shearing Championships novice final.

This course is not to take away from the boys. It is not to undermine them, or prove that we are 'better'. It is to create a new space for young girls to feel comfortable with their peers and instructors, to show that they are believed in and to leave the past well behind us.

This course had the results we hoped for last year, and we are continuing to hope that the number of girls shearing at Feilding High School remains high.



Above: A FHS student with her second shorn sheep. **Below:** Jills Angus Burney explains the secrets of a good long blow. "From the breezer to the sneezer," Godfrey Bowen used to say.



I call myself a genuine thrill-seeker. The joy to be had when finding a typing error on a restaurant menu is overwhelming. (Him Again.)

Red ribbon time in Wales

By Doug Laing (Shearing Sports NZ)

Three New Zealanders have grabbed-back some Kiwi pride with wins at Corwen Shears, the glamour Welsh lamb-shearing and woolhandling competition.

The wins went on Saturday to Jack Fagan, 31, of Te Kuiti, in the Open shearing final; Blake Mitchell, 20, of Patea, in the junior shearing final, and on Friday, to Sonya Fagan (Jack Fagan's second cousin), aged 19 and also from Te Kuiti, in the intermediate woolhandling final.

On the flip-side, the Wools of New Zealand Shearing Sports New Zealand team of Masterton brothers-in-law Paerata Abraham and David Gordon ended its 2023 United Kingdom tour without a win in a three-test series against Wales, bowing by 13 points to 2019 world champion Richard Jones and new Champion Shearer of Wales, Gethin Lewis.

But they're looking forward to resuming the battle early in the new year in New Zealand, where Wales is yet to beat New Zealand, with Gordon, in particular, having prospered on his first tour.

Selected as sixth placegetter in the New Zealand Shears Open final, after the unavailability of others, including world championships representatives Leon Samuels and Rowland Smith, he had good personal results in the tests and was fifth to Fagan in the Corwen Open final. He had just scraped through the heats of 54 shearers to be last man into the semi-finals at No 18, and then being top qualifier for the six-man final.

While Jack Fagan has had several wins in a decade in the Open class, including the Royal Welsh Open in 2015, the New Zealand Corriedale championship at Christchurch and the New Zealand Crossbred Lamb shearing title in Southland (2022-2023 season), his cousin Sonya Fagan had just one previous win, in a novice woolhandling final at the Devon County Show in England in May. Blake Mitchell's win was his first.

The Fagan victories continued a family link to the Corwen lamb-shearing championships, with brothers John and David Fagan – Jack Fagan's uncle and father respectively – closely involved in the event when it was established in 1989, as the first show in the United Kingdom with a 20-sheep final.

They presented the Fagan Brothers Trophy, the silverware that was claimed by Jack Fagan today. The now-Sir David Fagan won the first final and went on to win 13 times, and John Fagan also won, as did his son, James Fagan.

It was the culmination of a big year for Jack Fagan, who last December set a world eight-hour strongwool lamb-shearing record of 754, an average of 38.2 seconds a lamb.

Today he was first-off, at the same rate of 38.2 seconds a lamb, caught, shorn and despatched, shearing the 20 in 12min 44sec, and beat next-man-off Evans by 23 seconds, while also scoring the best quality points on the shearing board. Evans' better points from judging in the pens enabled him to close the gap to just 0.7pts.

In the test match, Gethin Lewis, who will return to New Zealand later this year for a seventh season with Napier shearing contractor Brendan Mahony, made the pace, shearing the 20 lambs in 13min 7sec. But Richard Jones, who with Evans won the world teams championship a month ago in Scotland, was again the top individual on points, despite being last to finish, had also been the case in the second test at the Royal Welsh show on Wednesday.



Above: Jack Fagan, Corwen Shears open champion.

Drama for Junior final winner

There was an element of drama for competitions rookie Blake Mitchell, initially announced as third placegetter in the Junior final and winner of the award for the cleanest shearer.

But, knowing he had also had the fastest time, the result was challenged and an error found, leading to a second prizegiving and his elevation to first place.

Off a dairy farm, an old-boy of Francis Douglas Memorial College in New Plymouth, and taught to shear over the last two years by uncle and Whanganui shearing contractor Matt Thompson, it was only his third competition, having shorn only in the heats at his first in Marton last February, and being eliminated in the semi-finals at the Cothi Shears in Wales earlier in the month.



Above: Blake Mitchell, Corwen Shears junior champion.

Mitchell was the sixth qualifier for the six-man final, where he shored the five lambs in 6min 33sec, first off the board by 43 seconds, and winning by 0.7pts from Welsh shearer Luke Price.

He reckoned if it wasn't for the shearing he'd be still working on the dairy farm, but after a short time remaining in the UK and then a month or two shearing in Australia he'll return to New Zealand to set some new goals.

'I've got the bug for winning now so I'll be getting some practice in for the circuit in New Zealand this summer to get some more red ribbons, he said.

Another Fagan wins in Wales

Sonya Fagan is now one of five King Country Fagans on the Corwen Shears Honours Board after capping a promising season in the United Kingdom with her first win.

A daughter of Craig and Sarah Fagan, she arrived in the Northern Hemisphere to work in Norway in February and it became her dream to be at the Royal Highland Show and 2023 Golden Shears world shearing and woolhandling championships, which were held in Scotland on June 22-25, with competitors from more than 30 countries.

Fagan started in the novice grade, with no winning history in a small number of competitions over the years in New Zealand. At Edinburgh five weeks ago in a field of 24, she was top qualifier for the Royal Highland novice woolhandling final, in which she was beaten only by Scottish woolhandler, Sarah Bateman.

The form continued with third place on another big stage in the Royal Welsh Show intermediate final, and in an otherwise all-Wales field at Corwen qualified for the final in which she beat the first two qualifiers.



Above: Corwen Shears intermediate woolhandling finalists, from left: Ffion Haf Jones (3rd), Awel Jones (2nd), Sonya Fagan (1st).

Fagan expects it to have been her last competition in the UK before heading home to New Zealand in November and re-launching her New Zealand show career in January, probably at the Taihape A and P Show.

'I've been in the shearing shed since I was, like, born really,' she said. 'I did my first main shear rousing when I was 11, and have done about 10 main shears in New Zealand.'

'Last year was my first year going outside of New Zealand to rouse and I fell in love with the travel and started competing this year competitively,' she said. 'I've done a few shows over the years in New Zealand but never really took it seriously until I came here.'

She has also competed as a shearer and armed with the skills for a travelling lifestyle, and a short interrupted stint at university, said: 'I want to travel and see the world, but when I've found a place to settle down I want to go back to do agricultural business. I love farming I want to learn the business side of it.'

Results of finals with New Zealand competitors at the Corwen Shears in North Wales 28-29 July 2023:

Shearing International (20 sheep): Wales 98.45pts (Richard Jones 13min 37sec, 47.05pts; Gethin Lewis 13min 7sec, 51.4pts) beat New Zealand 111.85pts (Paerata Abraham 13min 15sec, 54.1pts; David Gordon 13min 35sec, 57.75pts). Wales won the series 3-0.

Corwen Shears Open final (20 lambs): Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti, NZ) 12min 44sec, 48.7pts, 1; Gwion Evans (Wales) 13min 7sec, 49.45pts, 2; Alun Rhydonnen (Wales) 13min 15sec, 49.75pts, 3; Ian Jones (Wales) 14min 17sec, 52.75pts, 4; David Gordon (Masterton, NZ) 13min 22sec, 54.5pts, 5; Dean Nelmes (England) 23min 32sec, 64.85pts, 6.

Corwen Shears Junior final (5 lambs): Blake Mitchell (Patea, NZ) 6min 33sec, 31.45pts, 1; Luke Price (Wales) 8min 15sec, 32.15pts, 2; Barney Richardson (England) 7min 16sec, 32.4pts, 3; Ioan Williams (Wales) 7min 50sec, 33.3pts, 4; Elis Jones (Wales) 7min 47sec, 33.35pts, 5; Harvey Samuel (Wales) 7min 41sec, 36.85pts, 6.

Corwen Shears Intermediate woolhandling final: Sonya Fagan (Te Kuiti, New Zealand) 1; Awel Jones (Wales) 2; Ffion Haf Jones (Wales) 3.



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What makes a gun?

By Tony Mathews

What makes a gun? If it were work ethic every shearer would be a gun. No one goes near a woolshed without a good work ethic. Is it stature? Guns come in all shapes sizes and sizes so it is not stature.

Still wondering, I asked Mac Potae. If anyone would know, he should. Without hesitation, Mac formed a vee between the middle and index fingers of his left hand then slapped it across the wrist of his right hand saying, 'This thing mate, this thing – the ball-bearing wrist. That's what makes the difference!'

Glumly, I flexed my wrist back and forth then tried to rotate it, finding very little movement.

'Hmmm,' said Mac, 'doesn't look like you've got a ball-bearing wrist, does it. 'Never mind,' he continued, 'with luck you might be able to do enough to pay for your tucker. Then again, maybe not, going by the amount you eat.'

I returned to my stand way down the other end of the board, unsure as to whether I'd been 'shiacked', bull-shitted or told the truth. By day's end the answer was obviously the truth.

Many will say, 'That shearer has a good hand,' but I prefer the more colourful ball-bearing wrist, just as I do the Native American term 'iron horse' for locomotive and 'white man's talking wires' for Telegraph.

The *Reader's Digest* used to run a page titled 'Towards more picturesque speech'. Doesn't get more picturesque than 'ball-bearing wrist'.



Above: If Tony Mathews wasn't shiacked or bull-shitted by 'What makes a gun' Mac Potae all those years ago, we are now looking at a genuine ball-bearing wrist.



Top: Test teams at Scotland's Lochearnhead Shears on 1 July 2023; Hamish Mitchell and Calum Shaw vs Paerata Abraham and David Gordon, flanked by Emily Te Kapa and Ronny King. **Above:** Adam Gordon winning the senior competition at Lochearnhead, thereby following brother David's footsteps, who won that title in 2019. That's Paerata Abraham in the pen.

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18 years of Woolshed History

By Gavin Tankersley

In 2005 a group of Golden Shears committee members and farmers got together to establish The Wool Shed, National Museum of Sheep & Shearing. Eighteen years later, the Museum is still going strong with 100 – 200 visitors each week.

Over the past 18 years the governing body, The Shear History Trust, has continued to move forward from the original two wool sheds – Glendonald & Roselea.

It was the intention to bring the shearing history into a prominent place in Masterton, the home of the Golden Shears, to recognise the importance of sheep & shearing to New Zealand. In this, the Trust has succeeded and after the problems of covid the museum is now moving forward again.

In 2018 we opened the Stewart/Weston Gallery to house and display more items that had been given and acquired over the years. The Trust has also established an educational children's display on the mezzanine floor of this new building.

Also on display in the new wing is Masterton's steam roller. This is a working example of traction engines that worked on farms from the 1870s through to the 1930s in New Zealand.

For those that have not visited The Wool Shed Museum we would point out that as you come in the foyer of the museum you pass through the shop which features New Zealand made woollen garments, slippers, socks & accessories etc as well as souvenirs/ tourist items.

The Glendonald Woolshed houses the life-size display of the original shearing board and the history of shearer training



Above: The Woolshed, National Museum of Sheep & Shearing, Masterton.

in New Zealand and the New Zealand Wool Board.

Following through to the Roselea Woolshed you find one of the last surviving examples of a building built entirely from split totara and erected by the farmer himself in 1890. It was still used up until 2001 and we now use it for live shearing displays for bus tour group and other group bookings.

The new wing, built in 2018, was named the Stewart/Weston Gallery because of all the work these two gentlemen had done towards the building of the Museum. Many shearers will know Ian (Scotty) Stewart because of the prominent role he has played in the shearing competitions over the years. He won the first British Golden Shears Open Championship in 1964 and has since been one of the most prominent Golden Shears Committee members. Darragh Weston has been a local shearing contractor and then farmer. His knowledge of farming in the

Wairarapa is second to none and with his natural building ability has proved invaluable to our Trust Board.

The Shear History Trust Board remains passionate about the importance of wool as a premium sustainable fibre for clothing, carpets and fabrics. In this world where sustainability is paramount it is a fibre that is in a class of its own and we continue to promote its use to all who visit the Museum. It is a fibre for the future as well as the past. Today it seems impossible but it must be remembered that in the 1800s, 90% of New Zealand's income came from wool.

We invite people to check out our website www.thewoolshednz.com for more information.

(And see next page.)



Above: Scotty Stewart, one half of the 'Stewart/Weston Gallery'. (Mr Weston had his back turned!) Opposite: Bullock team.

The National Museum of Sheep & Shearing



Above: Opening Day at The Woolshed, National Museum of Sheep and Shearing at Masterton. New Zealand representative Shane Casserly shears the ceremonial fleece.



Above: Lydia Thomson of Rangiora was the top-ranked Junior Shearer in Shearing Sports New Zealand (SSNZ) competitions for the 2022-23 season. She made 19 finals during the season, won nine of them and accumulated 157 ranking points, 21 more than second-placed Emma Martin, of Gore.

SSNZ media manager Doug Laing says rankings for 2022-2023 were well spread around the country, with Nathan Stratford, from Invercargill, the champion Open shearer for the season, and Joel Henare, from Gisborne, again the top woolhandler.

“Other top-ranked shearers were Adam Gordon, of Masterton (Senior); Bruce Grace, from Wairoa (Intermediate); Lydia Thomson, of Rangiora (Junior), and Allan Oldfield (Blades), while the other top-ranked woolhandlers were Vinniye Phillips, of Taumarunui (Senior), and Tre Ratana Sciascia, of Taihape (Junior).

“Events were held at 53 shows, all but one including machine shearing, eight including blades shearing, seven including a women’s shearing event, and 20 including woolhandling, while just the Golden Shears included wool pressing.

“Shearing Sports New Zealand rankings were established in 1992-1993 and are based on points awarded for placings in Open, Senior, Intermediate, Junior and Blades finals, descending from 12 for a win in an A-grade show, 8 for winning at a B-grade show and 6 for a C-grade show win. Where there are ties, ranking is determined on superior number of wins or highest placing.”

Full ranking lists for all shearing and woolhandling grades are published in the following pages of this edition.



Above: The old Roselea Shearing Shed, now an integral part of the National Museum of Sheep and Shearing. Below: The former Glendonald Shed, houses the life-size display of the original shearing board and the history of shearer training in New Zealand.



SSNZ National Rankings 2022-2023

Open Shearing

1. Nathan Stratford (Invercargill): 21 finals, 4 wins, 181pts
2. Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka): 16 finals, 11 wins, 150pts
3. Rowland Smith (Maraekakaho): 15 finals, 8 wins, 143pts
4. Leon Samuels (Invercargill): 14 finals, 3 wins, 138pts
5. Gavin Mutch (Dannevirke): 15 finals, 4 wins, 124pts
6. Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti): 12 finals, 2 wins, 105pts
7. Angus Moore (Ward/Seddon): 10 finals, 3 wins, 87pts
8. David Gordon (Masterton): 12 finals, 0 wins, 87pts
9. Hemi Braddick (Eketahuna): 10 finals, 2 wins, 86pts
10. Hugh De Lacy (Rangiora): 9 finals, 3 wins, 65pts
11. Brett Roberts (Mataura): 7 finals, 1 win, 58pts
12. John Kirkpatrick (Hastings): 6 finals, 0 wins, 51pts
13. Ant Frew (Pleasant Point): 6 finals, 2 wins, 42pts
14. Aaron Haynes (Feilding): 5 finals, 0 wins, 40pts
15. Willie McSkimming (Oamaru): 7 finals, 1 win, 39pts
16. Lyall Windleburn (Rangiora): 7 finals, 1 win, 38pts
17. Digger Balme (Otorohanga): 5 finals, 1 win, 36pts
18. Stacey Te Huia (Mossburn): 4 finals, 0 wins, 36pts
19. Paerata Abraham (Masterton): 4 finals, 1 win, 34pts
20. Travers Baigent (Wakefield): 5 finals, 3 wins, 32pts

Senior Shearing

1. Adam Gordon (Masterton): 19 finals, 4 wins, 169pts
2. Clay Harris (Piopio): 13 finals, 10 wins, 131pts
3. Alex Clapham England): 10 finals, 3 wins, 98pts
4. Daniel Biggs (Mangamahu): 12 finals, 2 wins, 97pts
5. Cory Barrowcliffe (Piopio): 11 finals, 3 wins, 91pts
6. Blake Crooks (Timaru): 10 finals, 3 wins, 80pts
7. Joseph Gordon (Masterton): 10 finals, 2 wins, 80pts
8. Paul Swann (Wairoa): 9 finals, 1 win, 62pts

9. Jayden Mainland (Wellsford): 7 finals, 3 wins, 55pts
10. Josef Winders (Invercargill): 6 finals, 2 wins, 58pts
11. James Wilson (Ryal Bush): 8 finals, 2 wins, 51pts
12. Mitchell Menzies (Ranfurly): 6 finals, 1 win, 50pts
13. Timo Hicks (Tapawera): 7 finals, 5 wins, 45pts
14. Tama Nahona (Whanganui/Kaiwaka): 5 finals, 2 wins, 43pts
15. Te Ua Wilcox (Gisborne): 5 finals, 1 win, 38pts
16. Liam Norrie (Cheviot): 5 finals, 1 win, 37pts
17. Reuben King (Onga Onga/Kaiapoi): 5 finals, 1 win, 35pts
18. Scott Cameron (Alexandra): 4 finals, 1 win, 34pts
19. Alan Boler Wellsford): 6 finals, 1 win, 32pts
20. Chris Malcolm (Winton): 3 finals, 0 wins, 25pts

Intermediate Shearing

1. Bruce Grace (Wairoa): 16 finals, 9 wins, 133pts
2. Will Sinclair (Balclutha): 12 finals, 4 wins, 115pts
3. Dre Roberts (Mataura): 9 finals, 2 wins, 82pts
4. Jack Pringle (Balclutha): 7 finals, 2 wins, 74pts
5. Matthew Smith (Otorohanga): 11 finals, 0 wins, 74pts
6. Dylan Young (Gisborne): 8 finals, 2 wins, 65pts
7. Callum Bosley (Cornwall, England): 7 finals, 3 wins, 59pts
8. Josh Devane (Taihape): 6 finals, 1 win, 52pts
9. Sean Fagan (Te Kuiti): 6 finals, 1 win, 51pts
10. Jordan White (Balclutha): 5 finals, 0 wins, 44pts
11. Hamuera Henderson (Kaiwaka): 5 finals, 1 win, 39pts
12. Dalton Tangiwai (Pahiatua): 4 finals, 0 wins, 38pts
13. Sam Green (England): 4 finals, 1 win, 37pts
14. Jesse Sullivan (Harihari): 5 finals, 0 wins, 36pts
15. Alex Kiriakos (England): 5 finals, 2 wins, 31pts
16. Kimberley Maclean (Motueka): 5 finals, 1 win, 28pts
17. Danielle Boyd (Dargaville): 4 finals, 1 win, 24pts
18. Jacob Taylor (Dannevirke): 3 finals, 1 win, 24pts
19. Dylan Hamlin (Bainham): 3 finals, 3 wins, 22pts
20. Richmond Ngarangione (Gisborne): 3 finals, 2 wins, 22pts

Junior Shearing

1. Lydia Thomson (Rangiora): 19 finals, 9 wins, 157pts
2. Emma Martin (Gore): 14 finals, 6 wins, 136pts
3. Cody Waihape (Maraura): 12 finals, 3 wins, 112pts
4. Jake Goldsbury (Waitotara): 11 finals, 4 wins, 95pts
5. Ryka Swann (Wairoa): 9 finals, 2 wins, 71pts
6. Daniel Rogers (Raetihi/Eketahuna): 7 finals, 2 wins, 61pts
7. Caleb Brooking (Mataura): 7 finals, 2 wins, 54pts
8. Tyron Cochrane (Goodooga, NSW): 6 finals, 1 win, 53pts
9. Robyn Krause (Germany): 7 finals, 0 wins, 52pts
10. Pat Corrigan (Curragh, Ireland): 7 finals, 0 wins, 49pts
11. Coby Lambert (Raupunga): 6 finals, 0 wins, 49pts
12. Cheyden Winiana (Nuhaka): 5 finals, 3 wins, 37pts
13. Sam Parker (Raglan): 4 finals, 2 wins, 34pts
14. Connor Wilkinson (Wyndham): 4 finals, 1 win, 30pts
15. Gus Berger (Ahuroa): 4 finals, 3 wins, 29pts
16. Paul Finlayson (Kai Iwi Lakes): 4 finals, 1 win, 25pts
17. Amy McNeil (Inverness, Scotland): 4 finals, 1 win, 22pts
18. Emma Kendrick (Feilding): 3 finals, 0 wins, 19pts
19. James Hogan (Woodlands): 2 finals, 0 wins, 17pts
20. Angus Crombie (Blenheim): 3 finals, 1 win, 15pts

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Blade shearing

1. Allan Oldfield (Lower Hutt): 8 finals, 4 wins, 68pts
2. Tony Dobbs (Fairlie): 8 finals, 3 wins, 67pts
3. Phil Oldfield (Geraldine): 6 finals, 0 wins, 37pts
4. Mike McConnell (Albury): 4 finals, 1 win, 33pts
5. Tim Hogg (Rolleston): 4 finals, 0 wins, 29pts
6. Allen Gemmell (Loburn): 3 finals, 0 wins, 23pts
7. Scott McKay (Clarence): 2 finals, 0 wins, 20pts

Open Woolhandling

1. Joel Henare (Gisborne/Motueka): 14 finals, 10 wins, 154pts
2. Keryn Herbert (Te Kuiti): 7 finals, 0 wins, 73pts
3. Ngaio Hanson (Eketahuna): 7 finals, 0 wins, 65pts
4. Chelsea Collier (Gore/Hamilton): 7 finals, 1 win, 62pts
5. Cushla Abraham (Masterton): 5 finals, 3 wins, 53pts
6. Candy Hiri (Gore): 4 finals, 1 win, 43pts
7. Monica Potae (Kennedy Bay): 4 finals, 1 win, 37pts
8. Jasmin Tipoki (Martinborough): 4 finals, 0 wins, 33pts
9. Foonie Waihape (Alexandra): 3 finals, 1 win, 32pts
10. Amy Ferguson (Invercargill): 3 finals, 1 win, 22pts
12. Angela Stevens (Napier): 2 finals, 1 win, 21pts
13. Hanatia Tipene (Te Kuiti): 2 finals, 0 wins, 20pts
14. Ana Braddick (Eketahuna): 2 finals, 0 wins, 20pts
15. Kelly Macdonald (Domett): 2 finals, 0 wins, 19pts
16. Sue Turner (Aria): 2 finals, 1 win, 17pts
17. Samantha Gordon (Masterton): 2 finals, 1 win, 16pts
18. Marika Braddick (Eketahuna): 2 finals, 0 wins, 15pts

Senior Woolhandling

1. Vinniye Phillips (Taumarunui): 10 finals, 2 wins, 93pts,
2. Te Anna Phillips (Taumarunui): 8 finals, 4 wins, 83pts

3. Tira Ngarangione (Gisborne): 8 finals, 1 win, 67pts
4. Rahera Kerr (Hauturu): 5 finals, 1 win, 50pts
5. Krome Elers (Mataura): 3 finals, 2 wins, 33pts
6. Saskia Tuhakaraina (Gore): 3 finals, 1 win, 33pts
7. Samantha Allen (Balclutha): 3 finals, 1 win, 32pts
8. Summer Pritchard (Pongaroa): 3 finals, 0 wins, 25pts
9. Amy Bell (Weber): 3 finals, 1 win, 24pts
- 10eq. Autumn Hiri (Gore): 2 finals, 1 win, 22pts
- Tamara Marshall (Waikaretu): 2 finals, 1 win, 22pts
12. Ashleigh Ostler (Marton): 2 finals, 1 win, 20pts
- 12eq Emma Martin (Gore): 2 finals, 0 wins, 20pts
- Charlotte Stuart (Omarama): 2 finals, 0 wins, 20pts
- Jess Toa (Ashburton): 2 finals, 0 wins, 20pts
15. Sarah Davis (Rerewhakaaitu): 2 finals, 0 wins, 16pts

Junior Woolhandling

1. Tre Ratana Sciascia (Taihape): 7 finals, 2 wins, 68pts
2. Whakapunake (Naki) Maraki (Flaxmere/Feilding): 6 finals, 1 win, 60pts
3. Tatijana Keefe (Raupunga): 6 finals, 4 wins, 57pts
4. Te Whetu Brown (Wairoa/Napier): 5 finals, 2 wins, 45pts
5. Waiari Puna (Napier): 5 finals, 1 win, 43pts
6. Makayla Neil (Taumarunui): 4 finals, 0 wins, 37pts
7. Tia Manson (Piopio): 3 finals, 1 win, 32pts
8. Mikayla Reihana (Dannevirke): 3 finals, 1 win, 27pts
9. Ngahua Salmond (Te Kuiti): 3 finals, 0 wins, 27pts
10. Chloe Henderson (Feilding): 2 finals, 1 win, 21pts
11. Lucy Elers (Mataura): 2 finals, 0 wins, 19pts
12. Lekisha Ruki George (Piopio): 2 finals, 1 win, 16pts
13. Atria Barrowcliffe (Piopio): 2 finals, 0 wins, 16pts
14. Jevana Manson (Piopio): 2 finals, 0 wins, 16pt

Shearing Sport New Zealand Rankings — Winners 1992-1993 –2022-2023

Shearing Year

Shearing Year	Open	Senior	Intermediate	Junior
2022-2023	Nathan Stratford	Adam Gordon	Bruce Grace	Lydia Thomson
2021-2022	Nathan Stratford	Taare Edwards	Blake Crooks	Josh Devane
2020-2021	David Buick	Brayden Clifford	Adam Gordon	Reuben King
2019-2020	Troy Pyper	Simon Goss	Daniel Biggs	Adam Gordon
2018-2019	Rowland Smith	Lionel Taumata	Tyson Crown	Atawhai Hadfield
2017-2018	Rowland Smith	Tegwyn Bradley	Daniel Seed	Jonathan Paynter
2016-2017	Rowland Smith	Paraki Puna	Laura Bradley	Liam Norrie
2015-2016	John Kirkpatrick	Kaleb Foote	Ricci Stevens	Connor Puha
2014-2015	David Fagan	Ethan Pankhurst	Kaleb Foote	Laura Bradley
2013-2014	John Kirkpatrick	Casey Bailey	Catherine Mullooly	Josh Balme
2012-2013	John Kirkpatrick	Jack Fagan	David Gordon	Marshall Guy
2011-2012	John Kirkpatrick	Tyson Hema	Bryce Guy	Charlie Guy
2010-2011	John Kirkpatrick	Matene Mason	Jack Fagan	Bryce Guy
2009-2010	John Kirkpatrick	Aaron Haynes	Wi Poutu Ngarangione	Jack Fagan
2008-2009	John Kirkpatrick	Ian Kirkpatrick jnr	Tipene Te Whata	Wi Poutu Ngarangione
2007-2008	John Kirkpatrick	Tane Henderson	Ian Kirkpatrick jnr	Tipene Te Whata
2006-2007	John Kirkpatrick	Angus Moore	Toa Henderson	Tuara Hemara
2005-2006	Paul Avery	Ringakaha Paewai	Bevan Holm	Peter Redhead
2004-2005	David Fagan	Andy Mainland	Hemi Keelan	Dion Reedy
2003-2004	David Fagan	Adam Brausch	Cody Waihape	Rowland Smith
2002-2003	David Fagan	Richard Timu	Andy Mainland	Harold Peri
2001-2002	John Kirkpatrick	Gavin Mutch	Matthew Timu	Simon Hales
2000-2001	David Fagan	Dean Cox	Glen Moir	James Smail
1999-2000	Paul Avery	Blair McCarrroll	Mark Brabant	Gavin Mutch
1998-1999	David Fagan	Ian Kirkpatrick	Roger Pearse	Scott Bailey
1997-1998	David Fagan	James Mack	Dean Cox	Brendan Wadsworth
1996-1997	David Fagan	James Fagan	Justin Ward	Neil Fagan

1995-1996	David Fagan	Dean Boros	Stacey Te Huia	Anthony Peeti
1994-1995	David Fagan	Justin Meikle	James Fagan	Stacey Te Huia
1993-1994	David Fagan	John Kirkpatrick	Rangi Nikora	Jason Win
1992-1993	David Fagan	Colin Thirkell	Antony Bryant	Todd Percival

Woolhandling

Year	Open	Senior	Junior
2022-2023	Joel Henare	Vinniye Phillips	Tre Ratana Sciascia
2021-2022	Keryn Herbert	Heaven Little	Emma Martin
2020-2021	Pagan Karauria(Rimene)	Azuredee Paku	Rahera Kerr
2019-2020	Keryn Herbert	Jasmine Tipoki	Te Anna Phillips
2018-2019	Joel Henare	Ngaira Puha	Lucas Broughton
2017-2018	Joel Henare	Ricci Stevens	Tyler Hira
2016-2017	Joel Henare	Jamie McLean	Ricci Stevens
2015-2016	Joel Henare	Erica Henare(nee Reti)	Angela Kirkpatrick
2014-2015	Keryn Herbert	Ana Braddick	Chiquita Tamepo
2013-2014	Joel Henare	Juliette Lyon	Erica Reti
2012-2013	Keryn Herbert	Samantha Gordon	David Gordon
2011-2012	Keryn Herbert	Cushla Abraham	Anne-Maree Kahukura
2010-2011	Keryn Herbert	Sharni Graham	Tumanako Waikari
2009-2010	Joel Henare	Amy-Lee Ruki	Juliette Lyon
2008-2009	Joel Henare	Kiri Gerretzen	Amy-Lee Ruki
2007-2008	Joel Henare	Aria Mullins	Molly Kidd
2006-2007	Joanne Kumeroa	Talia Holm	Aria Mullins
2005-2006	Angelique Gage	Hanatia Tipene	Talia Holm
2004-2005	Lisa Fagan	Hayley Holm	Aroha Ryan
2003-2004	Angelique Gage	Waimiere Hakaraia	Hayley Holm
2002-2003	Joanne Kumeroa	Keryn Herbert	Emma Bolton
2001-2002	Roni Goss	Sheree Alabaster	Angie Stoney
2000-2001	Joanne Kumeroa	Thomas Fleming	Sheree Stevens
1999-2000	Joanne Kumeroa	Rose Puha	Kristie Matson
1998-1999	Joanne Kumeroa	Gaby Farentino	Rebecca Eames
1997-1998	Joanne Kumeroa	Christine Lawton	Rose Puha
1996-1997	Joanne Kumeroa	Natalie Te Huia	Hine Biddle
1995-1996	Joanne Kumeroa	Vanessa McAllister	Raha Tuhakaraina
1994-1995	Joanne Kumeroa	Leanne Peeti	Heidi Blake
1993-1994	Raelene Howes	N/A	Fiona Barakat
1992-1993	Aroha Garvin	N/A	Craig Rawiri

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Above: Leanne Peeti was top-ranked senior woolhandler when the new grade was introduced by SSNZ in 1994-95. She won the New Zealand senior championship in 1995 and represented New Zealand at the world championships in South Africa 2000, winning the world teams title with Tina Rimene.

Shearing Sports New Zealand - Calendar 2023-2024

September 29-30 (Fri-Sat)	New Zealand Merino Championships	Alexandra
October 6-7 (Fri-Sat)	New Zealand Spring Shears	Waimate
October 14 (Sat)	Poverty Bay A and P Show	Gisborne
	Ellesmere A and P Show	Leeston
October 20 (Fri)	Great Raihania Shears (Hawke's Bay)	Hastings
October 20-22 (Fri-Sun)	Trans-Tasman Tests and Australian Championships	Jamestown, S.A.
October 21 (Sat)	Northern A and P Show	Rangiora
October 28 (Sat)	Wairarapa A and P Show	Carterton
	Ashburton A and P Show	Ashburton
November 4 (Sat)	Manawatu A and P Show	Feilding
	Marlborough A and P Show	Blenheim
	Get to the Point Gymkhana Shears	Pleasant Point
November 11 (Sat)	Central Hawke's Bay A and P Show	Waipukurau
November 16-17 (Thu-Fri)	New Zealand Corriedale Championships	Christchurch
November 18 (Sat)	West Otago A and P Show	Tapanui
November 25 (Sat)	Taranaki Shears	Stratford
	Nelson A and P Show	Richmond
December 2 (Sat)	Whangarei A and P Show	Whangarei
	Geyslerland Agrodome Shears, Rotorua A and P Show	Ngongotaha
January 13 (Sat)	Peninsula Duvauchelle Shears	Duvauchelle
January 19 (Fri)	Northern Southland Community Shears	Lumsden
January 20 (Sat)	Kaikohe A, P and H Show	Kaikohe
	Wairoa A and P Show	Wairoa
	Golden Bay A and P Show	Takaka
	Southland Shears, Winton A and P Show	Winton
January 21 (Sun)	Horowhenua A, P and I Show	Levin
January 27 (Sat)	Taihape A and P Show	Taihape
	Tapawera Shears	Tapawera
February 2 (Fri)	Dannevirke A and P Show	Dannevirke
February 3 (Sat)	North Kaipara A and P Show	Paparoa
	Rangitikei Shearing Sports	Marton
	Reefton Shears, Inangahua A and P Show	Reefton
February 6 (Tues)	Aria Waitangi Day Sports	Aria
February 10 (Sat)	Northern Wairoa A and P Show	Arapohue (Dargaville)
	Te Puke A and P Show	Te Puke
	Otago Shears	Balclutha
February 16 (Fri)	Southern Field Days Speed Shears	Waimumu
February 16-17 (Fri-Sat)	Southern Shears	Gore
February 17 (Sat)	North Hokianga A and P Show	Broadwood
	Ohura A and P Show	Ohura
	Murchison A and P Show	Murchison
February 18 (Sun)	Counties Shears	Pukekohe
February 23 (Fri)	Taumarunui Shears	Taumarunui
February 24 (Sat)	Apiti Sports	Apiti
	Kaikoura A and P Show	Kaikoura
February 25 (Sun)	Pahiatua Shears	Pahiatua
February 28 (Wed)	Wairarapa Pre-Shears Woolhandling	Mikimiki
February 29-March 2 (Thu-Sat)	Golden Shears International Championships	Masterton
March 2 (Sat)	Amuri A and P Show	Rotherham
March 9 (Sat)	Kumeu A and H Show	Kumeu
	Cheviot A and P Show	Cheviot
	Mayfield A and P Show	Mayfield
March 16 (Sat)	Warkworth A and P Show	Warkworth
	Waimarino Shears	Raetihi
	Methven Lamb Shears, Methven A and P Show	Methven
March 23 (Sat)	Waitomo Caves Sports	Waitomo
March 24 (Sun)	Flaxbourne A and P Show	Ward
March 30/1 (Sat)	Oxford A and P Show	Oxford
April 1 (Mon)	MacKenzie A and P Show	Fairlie
April 3 (Wed)	Autumn Shears	Hawke's Bay
April 4-6 (Thurs-Sat)	New Zealand Shears	Te Kuiti

From high heels to handpiece

By Kayleigh Graham

I wasn't supposed to be a shearer, but it looks like I may be becoming one now. I wasn't raised on a farm. I had never worked with livestock before or been close to any sheep. I was a city girl, and I arrived on the farm as a tourist.

After years of living in tiny apartments and working as a teacher at the local college, I suddenly felt the urge to escape to a more natural environment, even for a day. I visited a sheep farm as part of a tourism program that allowed me to name a newborn lamb. I named her Nellie. By the end of my first day on the farm, I suspected that I couldn't happily return to city life. Outside in the country, surrounded by sheep, with mud caked on my high heels and grass stains on my denim dress, a fundamental part of my personality changed forever.

A short time later, I moved into a cabin near the farm and went to visit my pet sheep Nellie every day. Then the shepherd said I was welcome to help in the barn, where it appeared I wasn't half bad at working with the flock. Soon after, I was working on the farm and learning a new way of life in the country. I switched out my high heels for a pair of steel toe boots and my denim dress for a set of coveralls. In the fall and winter, I mainly helped with chores and flock health evaluations. In the springtime, we prepared the flock for the arrival of the shearers.

Watching the shearers captivated me. I felt awe at the way they flipped the ewes swiftly, gently, and with control. They made strenuous work seem effortless. My childhood training as a ballerina taught me to memorize choreography, and I



Top and Above: Kayleigh Graham, shearing with her weapon of choice.

quickly recognized a choreographed series of movements in the method the shearers used to remove the fleece. Brisket, belly wool and crutching first, then the left hip and tail; roll the sheep this way then step between to follow strokes along the neck and jaw and left foreleg, then spin them until they're in a sort of lateral recumbency for the long strokes along the back; bend their neck so they fold just right and finish off on the right hip. It was rhythmical, precise, and efficient, and I admired the process.

A friend interrupted my spectating trance to ask who would shear my pet, Nellie. I had never thought about shearing her before that moment. I wanted to provide my little sheep with all the care she needed to thrive, so I answered that I would shear her myself. The friend laughed, knowing that I had never shorn a sheep but that I was now determined to learn.

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One of the professional shearers agreed to teach me and spent a long time going through the choreography, guiding my hands in the right pattern, and warning me of habits to avoid forming. It took me a long time, but I sheared Nellie that day. Shearing my first sheep gave me such a profound sense of accomplishment.

For several years the shearers who came to shear the flock, would give me a tutorial, some more pointers, and advice. I practiced on sheep throughout the summer months and by the third season they noticed a striking improvement. One of them asked me to go catch, flip, and shear an enormous ram, perhaps as some sort of initiation ritual. I did, and they were pleased with the result. They gave me a pair of shearing shoes, soft moccasins, and it felt like I had earned acceptance into a world of shearers. I switched out my steel toed boots for moccasins and my coveralls for a singlet and trousers.

Thinking of all the people with pet sheep like Nellie, I realized the area might need a small flock shearer. Not everyone who can shear wants to travel to shear three or four ewes. But as a novice shearer, I was happy to start small. Within a month of shearing that ram, I had travelled to twenty different small flocks to provide shearing services, and the clients and their animals were full of appreciation and respect. I felt like I had found my calling.

It turns out there is a tremendous need for shearers in my community, so I will do what I can to fulfill it. I've just opened an independent business, 'Hoof Tracks Livestock Services', to help provide small flocks the care they deserve. I'm taking on new clients and word is travelling quickly, which is wonderful. I'm even booking shearing for next season, to reserve time for clients who already rely on my services.

I just sheared Nellie for the fifth time. Even though she grows sturdier each year, shearing her is becoming quicker and easier as I learn and improve. I wasn't supposed to be a shearer; but it looks like I may be one now.

Kayleigh Graham works on Topsy Farm, Amherst Island (pop.450), which is in Lake Ontario, Canada. She does most of her shearing in Ontario State but hopes to travel further afield. Soon!



Above: Kayleigh Graham and Nellie. Teaching each other!

Where are they now?



From the "Where are they now?" files: The group of open class shearers above (all class, some would say) appeared in the August 1992 *Shearing* magazine – 31 years ago.

The guy in front – Johnny Fraser has spent the last few years in England and was officiating at the world championships in Scotland. Glenn Forde (back right) farms at Te Akau on the Waikato coast; Jeremy Fuller is gathering wisdom in Tasmania; Eryl Williams (Welshman) spends most of his time in Norway and is still shearing slowly; Clint Bellamy is farming sheep and beef at Stratford and Craig Alexander (left of picture) has farming and other business interests at Matamata and elsewhere. We spotted Craig last week on the sidelines at a rugby tournament in Hamilton, prompting us to 'pull out the photo' again.

And the history behind the top photo? The 1992 photo caption explained: *Born out of frustration and a few beers, the country's newest and perhaps most unusual shearing contest had its highly entertaining conclusion on-stage at the New Zealand Championships in April.*

Amidst all the deadly serious competition, the six participants in the inaugural Horseshoe Ultimate Challenge attracted more rowdy audience participation than most other events. The winner, Oamaru's Johnny Fraser (aka Bean) was deadly serious though as he explained to the crowd he would ensure the \$600 stake would "go to a good cause".

The group of six created their ultimate challenge in Masterton's Horseshoe Tavern within hours of finding they hadn't qualified in the Golden Shears open heats. Each put up \$100, decreeing the winner would be the one with the best combined heat points from the Taranaki, Northern and NZ Shears. The winner could spend the prize as he chose, as long as it was assisting all six to have a good time.

Afterwards – some time afterwards – the boys declared their contest simply the best. Hordes are said to be clamouring for entry next year.

And Craig still knows his way around a sheep with a handpiece. He admitted to having shorn a few of his own sheep that morning. A family property owned at Dannevirke has supplied the sheep for the Dannevirke Show in recent years, and is managed by new British Master shearer, Gavin Mutch.



Straggle Muster

By Roger Leslie

I grew up on a mixed sheep and beef farm, and my earliest memories of mustering were being sent into the 'hard to reach' gullies and blind woodlots to flush out the vagrant sheep that were often found in such places.

My father loved to ride a horse but seemed to think it was better for his boys to do the hard, and sometimes dangerous, legwork, while he rode the nice ridges on his horse, with his team of dogs swarming about its feet. Our farm was rough, semi-broken land that seemed to abound in hiding places for the sheep which had no desire to come in with the others. Dad had the eyes of an eagle and could spot a straggler two miles away (he never developed a liking for, or use of, kilometres). Consequently, I was often sent back to do a straggle muster, with comments like, "this time do it with your eyes open."

Seeing I didn't like doing the legwork twice, I learned to flush out the gullies properly the first time. Trouble was, I had quite an affinity with those stragglers. It seemed that I too, always wanted to go a different way to everyone else. I long suspected that dad had been the same as a boy, and his siblings confirmed this. He though, never admitted it and would just smile his little smile and insist on behavioural conformity from both sheep and boys.

Over the years I've shorn many stragglers, from ones and twos to over a thousand in a single mob on an Australian outback station. The owner confided in me that he thought these vagrant sheep were the pick of his flock and always seemed to have best lambs. "They have initiative," he said, "even though they make me bloody angry."

My father then purchased an even rougher hill block next to ours and with it came a small flock of 'wild' sheep that no one could muster. He tried and failed many times to get them in and finally offered 'the mongrels' to me. If I could muster them, I could have them. Ha, I've always loved a challenge. They turned out to be a cunning old Perendale ewe with a triple fleece of wool like Shreck, and six offspring in tow from the three years. I never let her near the rough blocks again and we settled on a truce regarding her coming in once a year. I loved her spirit and kept her well beyond optimal years until she died of natural causes.



Above: Just one more straggler.

Now that I mainly shear hobby sheep in makeshift yards and see few good sheep dogs, the incidences of escapes and not getting the whole mob in are much more prevalent. I seem to spend a lot of time dashing about trying to apprehend 'that other one'. Of course like people, the main mob might not be doing something sensible, and the loners are the survivors. I thought there was a strange similarity between a mob of woolly sheep smothering itself in a gully, and the covid madness with its mandates.

Sometimes there are good reasons why sheep 'aren't with the others'. In May I shored eight massive sheep for Karen, an extremely organised lady in Wuppertal. She once told me she had so many irons in the fire, she needed a bigger fire. We were sitting, post shearing at her well-laden breakfast table, and she wanted to pay me for doing her nine sheep. I said there were only eight. "No, there are definitely nine, I'll show you after breakfast". Then as we were happily eating, one of the farm hands stuck his head round the door and with a 'sheepish' grin, said "I'm sorry but I've found one more, could you do that one too?" Karen was a bit embarrassed and asked how he could miss one sheep in a small field with only nine animals in it? He said she was standing on her own in the corner, all sad. She was more than sad, she had a serious case of flystrike, and wouldn't have lasted another day.

As I cleaned her up, I thought that those who handle sheep must discern between animals with a streak of individuality and those that are sick. I guess it's the same with humans. We have to make allowances for those that don't want to be with the others, but we need to look out for those that are sick and need help. Let's look out for each other.



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“A chance encounter between a Kiwi couple and an Irish girl in a rain storm on Stewart Island’s Rakuirā track leads to a Kiwi-Irish shearing team in rural Ireland. After seven years of travelling New Zealand, Hazel Potterton of Ireland is saved from the rain by George Blyth and Teagan Graham of North Canterbury. Keen to return the favour, Hazel tells them of her family farm in Carbury, Ireland, where her parents Liz and Godfrey, brother Graham and his fiancé Jane farm sheep and cattle. Hazel tells them that they love hosting New Zealanders. Three years later, the Kiwis found themselves at the Potterton family farm at the end of the shearing season and great fun was had.” (George Blyth.) Above: A big day for the Kiwi-Irish shearing team, shearing Graham Potterton’s ewes. From left: Nicky Kennedy (Marlborough, NZ); Rodney Bryan (Kildare, Ireland); Teagan Graham, George Blyth, Mick Falkiner (Meath, Ireland); Graham Potterton (Kildare, Ireland).



Above and Below: Another use for the handpiece, shearing alpacas.



Middle: Shearing off a portable trailer on local farms – George Blyth and Graham Potterton. Above: “No fancy TPW woolpress here, more traditional methods are used.”

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