

Thursday February 28 2008

WELSHMAN Joe “Rubber” Hughes bounces his handiwork away at New Zealand’s world-famous Golden Shears sheep shearing competition today.

Hughes said he was from a farming background in Mid-Wales and had been in New Zealand since last November for the Kiwi shearing season.

“I was shearing back home but I’ve learnt a lot since I’ve been here.”

Hughes made a good show in his heat of the Junior Shearing Event and will compete in the semi-finals this evening.

As a left-handed shearer Hughes has his work cut out for him in most sheds, which don’t supply special left hand shearing rigs.

He said the Golden Shears left-handed set up helped him to shave a good few seconds off his usual performance time. He finished shearing three sheep today in 4 minutes and 29 seconds.

“It definitely made it faster, easy 30 seconds faster over all. Usually with the right-handed way I have to pull the sheep out and spin around and usually land the wrong way.”

Hughes said he had enjoyed his time in New Zealand and looked forward to returning for the next New Zealand shearing show season.

He leaves for Wales next week and said the Golden Shears was going to be a good farewell session.

The Golden Shears runs from Thursday February 28 to Saturday March 1 and sees competitors from New Zealand, Norway, Australia, the UK, Ireland, Canada, and South Africa battle for the top titles.

It is a favourite fixture of the New Zealand rural calendar in a country whose national identity is strongly linked to its rural industries, especially wool growing.

For a full programme and live video action see [www.goldenshears.co.nz](http://www.goldenshears.co.nz).

For free images or further information contact the Golden Shears Media Group at [goldenshears@pete.co.nz](mailto:goldenshears@pete.co.nz) or phone 0064 21 488 137 or 0064 27 5788 137.