

Saturday 6 March, 2010

The Shears' International Appeal

WHEREVER you find sheep you'll find shearers and so it's no surprise that each year the Golden Shears has its fair share of international competitors.

In total there were ten countries represented at the Shears this week. Scottish and Japanese shearers, Norwegian woolhandlers, Irish woolpressers - the past four days have certainly not lacked in international flavour.

For the first time in Golden Shears history, a Polish competitor was also up on the boards this week doing his best at chasing glory in the junior shearing contest.

Jake HICKI is a 35 year old shearer hailing from Poznan in southwest Poland. His background in shearing began after meeting a fellow Polishman in France, a man who also happened to be a shearer.

Initially working as his driver, Jake later decided to take up a handpiece himself. Nine years down the track and after shearing sheep in Spain, France and Scotland, Jake eventually made his way to the Mecca of the sheep shearing world, the Golden Shears in Masterton.

"I think the first time I heard about the Golden Shears was in France. I was working with a French guy and a Polish guy and that was the first time I heard about this event, the first time I heard the name David Fagan, the first time I heard about all those top shearers," he said.

Jake is now in New Zealand for the second time, working for Moriarty Shearing in Waiau. He said just making it to the Golden Shears was realising a personal dream but competing in the junior shearing heats next to Jack Fagan, the son of 16-time Golden Shears open shearing champion David Fagan, took his experience that one step further.

"Before I would never have imagined I would come to New Zealand and compete against David Fagan's son," he said with a broad smile.

"Those seven to eight minutes, it was one of the best adventures of my life."

For detailed results to date visit

<http://www.goldenshears.co.nz/results10/index.htm>

For free higher resolution images go to <http://pete.co.nz/press/> at <http://pete.co.nz/> For more information and specific higher resolution images contact the Golden Shears media group at goldenshears@pete.co.nz or phone 021 488 137. International callers phone 0064 21 488 137.

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