

Thursday 4 March, 2010

## **A Name to Watch**

HE ONLY shored his first sheep a couple of years ago but it looks like Gisborne teenager Wi Poutu Ngarangione is well on his way to breathing down the necks of shearing's greats.

With a focus rarely seen in someone of his age, Wi entered his first competition last year and has since dominated the intermediate division in this season's national shearing circuit.

Wi has won twelve of the thirteen shearing competitions he's entered since October last year. The exception was a competition in Raglan where he was narrowly beaten by a shearer nearly three times his age.

Wi was top qualifier in the intermediate shearing heats this morning and will move on to the semi-finals this afternoon. If he continues as he started today, he'll be well on his way to Saturday's final.

And he doesn't want to stop there. His vision is to one day be open shearing champion.

Commentator at this year's Golden Shears, Koru Mullins, said he would like nothing better than to sit here in five years time and see Wi in the open final. He said at this stage Wi has got plenty of skill and shows a natural ability for the sport.

"He's certainly dominated his class this season. He's got natural talent and he's good with sheep."

Unlike most other sports, shearing relies not only on handpiece technique but also animal handling skills. According to Koru, Wi's got the touch with sheep, a calming effect that makes them that much easier to shear.

"He's also quite mature. He speaks well, he always thanks organisers and sponsors, he's good at the right things."

Koru said it's still a big step up into the open class for any shearer, a step that is more challenging in terms of responsibility and physical demands. But Wi is certainly making big steps in the right direction.

For more information and free higher resolution images contact the Golden Shears media group at [goldenshears@pete.co.nz](mailto:goldenshears@pete.co.nz) or phone 021 488 137. International callers phone 0064 21 488 137.

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