

Champions of World Shearing

New Zealand Prime Minister Rt Hon Bill English was thrilled to support the World Shearing Championships held in his home province of Southland last month.

The former farmer from Dipton was invited to pit his skills in a two man, one-sheep-each shearing challenge against the legendary Sir David Fagan and went on to earn one of his first major victories in the election year. The PM displayed undeniable proficiency and finished with one of the fastest long blows to secure a win.

While Sir David insisted the match was won fair and square, Mr English demurred saying Sir David may not have unleashed his full skill set - the one that had secured 642 shearing titles worldwide (including five individual World championships) ahead of his retirement from professional shearing in 2015.

Either way, it made great entertainment for the crowds who'd gathered in huge numbers to support the four-day 40th anniversary World Shearing and Woolhandling Championships at the ILT Stadium in Invercargill.

During the finals, the true champion emerged in the form of Hawke's Bay shearer John Kirkpatrick who won the 20-sheep individual event in front of more than 4,000 spectators and was crowned *World Champion*.

Mr English was on hand to present the championship ribbon to a very proud John Kirkpatrick who said he'd chased this title all over the world for the past 20 years. Kirkpatrick was clearly honoured and delighted to have finally secured this long held dream of a World title and relished



John Kirkpatrick being presented the World Championship ribbon by Mr English.



New Zealand Prime Minister Bill English faces off against veteran shearer Sir David Fagan at the Shearing World Championships in Invercargill in early February 2017.

having won it right here in New Zealand in front of a home crowd.

All the hard work had finally paid off. The 46-year-old said it had been a long season as training started in September, followed by selection in November and then the shows started in January culminating in the World finals.

He is the third Hawke's Bay shearer to win the World individual title across the last four championships, following Cam Ferguson's victory in Wales in 2010 and Rowland Smith's win in Ireland three years ago.

Teamed up with Invercargill gun shearer Nathan Stratford, Kirkpatrick also claimed a third World teams title at this year's event.

Kirkpatrick's daughter Angela Stevens won the supporting All Nations Senior woolhandling title, and Waipawa's Aaron Bell won the All Nations Senior shearing final. On his last night as 2014 World champion, Rowland Smith won the All Nations Open shearing final, in which Kirkpatrick was runner up.

Gisborne's Joel Henare took first place in the individual woolhandling final and the Kiwi/Aussie combo team of Sophie Huf and Mel Morris won the teams championships.

During his address, Bill English expressed his admiration for the hard work and expertise of professional shearers and woolhandlers, acknowledging their importance in relation to New Zealand's wider sheep and export industries. He also described the stadium in Invercargill as brilliant for this type of event, noting that the public had got in behind it.

Indeed, the ILT stadium is one of the biggest venues ever used for the competition. It enabled all the action including the wool industry expo and food court to be accommodated under one roof. From fleece to garment, spectators could view the production process in its entirety. The competition attracted more than 300 shearers from over 30 countries and required 4,000 sheep to be shipped in for the event.

The next World Championships is set to be held in France in 2019.

DOMOTEX 2017

On January 17, Domotex closed on a high note after four action packed days which drew record breaking audiences and more high calibre decision makers than ever before.

Worldwide, Domotex Hannover is recognised as the pinnacle of trade show events for the most influential professionals and decision makers in the floor covering industry. PGW Wool's Palle Petersen, GM of their export arm Bloch & Behrens, flew to Germany to take part in this event together with their European-based representative Hans Bering.

This year, Domotex broke all previous records, attracting 1,409 exhibitors from 61 countries, utilising more show space than ever before and drawing in a higher percentage of exhibitors and visitors from abroad.

The Carpet Design Awards (photographed above) is one of the highlights



of the annual Domotex show and entices numerous guests from the international carpet industry. The award is highly regarded around the world, not least because its entries are a rich source of inspiration for carpet dealers, interior designers and owners of carpet and rug galleries.

Following Domotex, Palle and Hans went on to visit key clients based in Europe

and the UK.

Several new supply contracts have been negotiated with a large variety of customers from several continents, and as a result we have Fixed Price Forward Contracts available to growers. If you have wool to fill these orders, please contact your local PGW wool representative for more information about our ongoing export requirements.

World Record Broken

Invercargill again found itself in the shearing spotlight on 20 February 2017 when local man, 33-year-old Leon Samuels, broke a world record by shearing 605 ewes in eight hours at Argyle Station, near Waikaia, north of Gore.

The previous record holder, Stacey Te Huia of Te Kuiti, had held the solo record for 603 strongwool sheep since December 2010 and was among the hundreds who turned out to watch Samuels take a crack at the title.

Samuels has a strong family background in shearing and trained for about three years before attempting the record. Even so, he struggled on the day in the heat and had to contend with particularly restless sheep. The aim was to shear one sheep every 45 seconds and each sheep is required to average over 3kg of wool. The Southland shearer expressed his gratitude to his wife and family who supported him on this journey to the top.



Invercargill shearer Leon Samuels breaking the world shearing record.

Wool Market Comment

A difficult crossbred wool market prevails. Fine wool prices have surged to the highest levels we've seen in recent years but demand for stronger types is very selective.

Lambswool 30 microns and stronger is proving difficult to sell as most exporters are holding stocks from last year. The strong indicator has come back from 446 greasy this time last year to the current indicator of 234 which is up 4 in the last two weeks. Amid global uncertainty, buying out of China has dropped from 53% last year to just 31%. This has left exporters scrambling to secure orders from more established markets elsewhere.

Recently, those of the PGW wool team involved in export and business development have travelled abroad to gauge current customer needs in Europe, the UK and the USA. Wool quality is uppermost in the minds of customers.

Buyers become more selective in a difficult market and preparation standards ahead of sale must be maintained to attract price premiums. Be vigilant in removing vegetable matter. Any lines of wool with a VM of 0.3 or greater will be discounted or problematic if not impossible to sell.

PGW wool contracts remain a good option for wool growers wishing to avoid the risk of price movement. Strong wool growers with contracts already in place from last year are presently achieving price premiums of over 200+ cents. Better still, some of these contracts extend out for the next two years.

Even fine wool growers currently enjoying good prices should pause to reflect on the somewhat average prices of previous years. It may be worth locking in a percentage of your wool clip to counter future market volatility.

Looking ahead, indications are that it may take some time to clear the back log of unsold wool which is still building in the strong wool sector. Fine and mid micron types are selling well, but it is hard to visualise prices going much higher.

We urge you to talk to our experienced PGW wool team for advice about wool clip preparation, your options to contract all or part of your wool clip, and how to sell to best advantage in the current market.

Cedric Bayly, General Manager - Wool

Crossbred Wool for Japanese Futons

Nagao Shoji K.K. is a successful trading company located in Nagoya, Japan with over 60 years' experience in the wool business and textile manufacturing. More recently, the company has turned its hand to developing wool fillings for futons (and other bedding products) and heat insulating materials. Nagao Shoji is aware of the health benefits of wool for people and the environment generally.

PGW's business development manager, Craig Smith, has fostered a relationship with founding principals of Nagao Shoji (Nagao Kazuharu and his son Nagao Kazuhiko) to help link them directly into New Zealand's wool pipeline.

In Japan, futons are not used on frames, but are placed directly on the floor and slept on, then folded and stored away in a closet during the day to create space.

Cleanliness is a critical part of futon maintenance. They are aired in sunlight or beaten regularly to keep them hygienic and fresh smelling. Shoes are left at the door of Japanese homes to keep their tatami mat flooring or carpets as clean as possible – especially in areas used for sleeping.

So, wool in futons comes into its own. It is naturally fire-retardant, mould and mildew resistant, hydrophilic and non-allergenic. Wool is also a natural insulator which helps to keep you warm in winter yet, conversely, its breathability keeps you cooler in the summer. Wool fibre helps your body maintain optimal temperatures for maximum comfort and rest. It's coil-like structure pulls excess heat and moisture from your skin while you sleep. It can absorb up to 30% of its own weight in moisture without feeling heavy or damp. Wool 'breathes' by wicking moisture away from the body and releasing it into the air which is very welcome in humid conditions.

Nagao Shoji K.K. understands the importance of using genuine, natural fibres to maximise health benefits for their end users and to underpin wider concerns for the global environment. PGW Wool is there to support them every step of the way.



Merino goes Global global merino

Living up to its name, USA-based textile manufacturer Global Merino Inc has operational links in California, Bangkok, Spain, and Melbourne, and sources the bulk of its wool from New Zealand.

Global Merino's founder and CEO, Jose Fernandez, was born and educated in upstate New York. He and his family now reside in Spain with a view to expanding the business across Europe to twice its current size over the next five years. Global Merino sources the finest of merino wools and uses contract spinners and weavers to make designed woollen fabrics for outdoor companies like Patagonia.

Recognised by ISPO Textrends as the winner in the base layer category and in the top 10 for second layer, Global Merino focuses on a solutions oriented approach to fabric development to deliver against the performance requirements for their customers. Their high-tech sports and outdoor fabrics target different and specific needs across cycling, skiing, hiking and running sports disciplines.

The key ingredient is wool, but a triple plaited construction using a combination of merino wool, polyester and *creora eco-soft* gives consumers the best of warmth, comfort, fit, and movement – delivering good stretch and recovery to their fabrics.

Jose Fernandez recently visited New Zealand to meet with Kiwi wool growers. The PGW wool team arranged a gathering in the Mackenzie Country at Glenbrook Station where Jose, himself a keen skier and cyclist, outlined to growers precisely how merino wool serves to meet the technical needs of his unique sportswear constructions.

PGW Wool business development manager, Craig Smith, described the meeting as an opportunity for merino growers to interact with an end user of their wool – but more than that – for growers to meet someone who is passionate about wool and really appreciates the value of the product being grown.

Jose talked about the general trend towards natural fibre. He believes



Jose Fernandez displays a range of 'Global Merino' sportswear during his recent visit to New Zealand to meet PGW woolgrowers.

consumers, particularly young people, are looking for innovative products that perform well technically, but impact on the environment less. Therefore, Global Merino is taking a more considered approach to their product evaluation from the farm gate onwards. They employ athletes with an affinity for achieving the best technical performance from the natural attributes of pure New Zealand merino wool.

Established in 2007, Global Merino is growing rapidly. Three years ago, it sourced 20 tonnes of wool top from New Zealand. This year, Global Merino contracted 210 tonnes of wool top from New Zealand, 50 tonnes from Australia through contracts and another 100 to 120 tonnes were bought at auction. Also this year, the company has pledged to move away from commodity wool, instead committing 100% to direct-sourced wool out of New Zealand. PGW Wool is delighted to help this company with its global expansion of top performing wool products!



The iconic capital of fashion, Paris, hosted the International Woolmark Prize finale on 23 January 2017. More than 75 designers from over 60 countries were nominated for this year's award, with finalists representing six different regions around the world.

New York-based designer, Gabriela Hearst, was announced winner of womenswear for her sensitive understanding of wool. Her award-winning collection ranged from gossamer fine evening gowns made from ultrafine 14.5 micron wool through to hard working trench coats utilising 21.5 micron wool in a new wool-velvet fabrication designed to stand the test of time. Having been raised on a sheep farm in Uruguay, Hearst understands the natural nuances of wool; she is technically competent and a passionate spokesperson for the product.

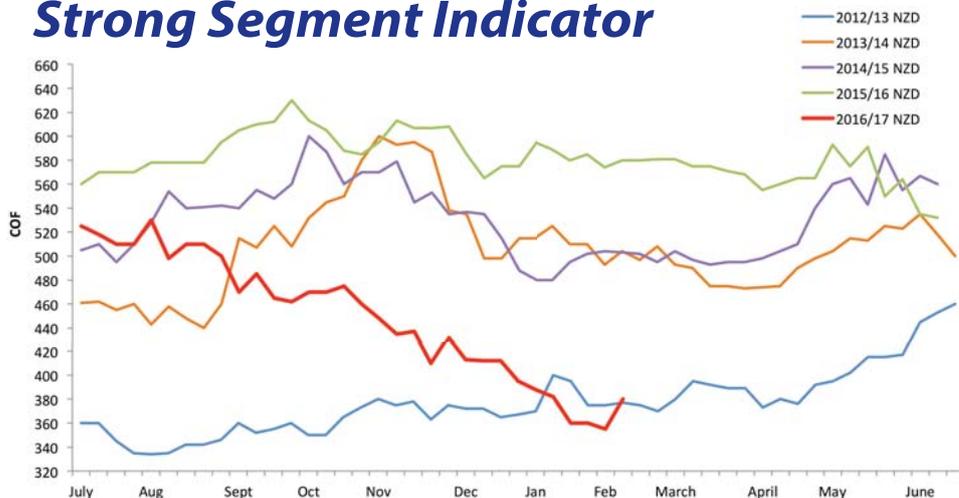
Other womenswear finalists were TOLON (Asia), macgraw (Australia & New Zealand), Faustine Steinmetz (British Isles), Tim Labenda (Europe) and Nachiket Barve (India, Pakistan & the Middle East) – all of whom displayed quality craftsmanship across their collections of wool garments.

Nachiket Barve views wool as relatively untapped in India where, historically, wool does not resonate with luxury (think the humble wool khadi worn by Gandhi). However, having worked with wool for the past three seasons, Barve has come to admire the way it drapes, tailors and carries colour so beautifully. It is also lightweight, wrinkle-free and has a nice sheen. But most importantly, it is completely natural. He and other fashion designers in India see a great future evolving for wool where the label *Made in India* may be replaced by *Designed in India* and worn with pride.

In a career defining moment for the British menswear design duo Ben Cottrell and Matthew Dainty, COTTWEILER was announced the menswear winner. Bonding merino wool to their technical sportswear fabrics is core to the Cottweiler cult and anti-brand brand! An edgy, dark and cover-all style of fashion for men, utilising wool to make the clothing 'real' and wearable on the streets of London.

It is heartening to see the wider world waking up to the wonders of wool.

Strong Segment Indicator



PGG Wrightson Wool

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