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Southland shearer Darin Forde, winner of Saturday's Pleasant Point Open shearing final, pictured in Hawke's Bay the day before his next most recent win just over two years ago. PHOTO/SSNZ.

Southern man Forde has his day – again

Former national champion Darin Forde showed he's still more than capable of keeping the opposition honest when he won the Pleasant Point Gymkhana Shears Open shearing title on Saturday.

The 53-year-old from Lorneville in Southland hadn't won for over two years, and he shored in only two finals last summer.

But the lack of racing form counted for little in a four-man final in which one of the vanquished was fellow Southland shearer Nathan Stratford, who had gone four finals in a row unbeaten in New Zealand since his return from the CP Wool Shearing Sports New Zealand UK tour in July. As it happened, Stratford had to settle for third, the traditional quality not good enough on the day to peg-back either Forde or first-man-off Ant Frew, of Pleasant Point, the only two to go under 20 minutes for the 20 sheep.

Forde, a shearer for 35 of his 53 years, has had a thing for Pleasant Point, where he was runner-up to Stratford last year, and third the previous year, and where Saturday's triumph was his fifth on the shearing stand set-up in the main street, having previously won the Pleasant Point title also in 1997, 1999, 2010, and 2013.

Chilean shearer Luis Pincol is expected to become his country's first Open-class shearer after winning the Senior title on Saturday.

Based in the South Island, he is in his fifth season in the Senior class and on Saturday scored his 14th win in the grade, points for which took to him the threshold for which he will be upgraded from the start of next season.

He finished more than a sheep of the other three finalists and had an eventual winning margin of almost five points over runner-up Jade Maguire Ratima, of Winton.

World championships bladeshearing hopeful Allan Oldfield, of Geraldine, swapped clippers for hot steel to win the Intermediate final, by two-and-a-half points from runner-up Eve Peddie, of Alexandra, and Henry Mayo, from England, continued his domination of Junior events in the South Island, beating runner-up Adele Lemercier, from France, by just under four-and-a-half points.

RESULTS from the Pleasant Point Gymkhana Shears on Saturday, November 3, 2018:

Open final (20 sheep): Darin Forde (Lorneville) 19min 26.97sec, 65.45pts, 1; Ant Frew (Pleasant Point) 19min 24.09sec, 66.2pts, 2; Nathan Stratford (Invercargill) 20min 44.5sec, 66.63pts, 3; Eli Cummings (Pleasant Point) 20min 49.72sec, 70.09pts, 4.

Open Plate (10 sheep): Ringakaha Paewai (Gore) 11min 10.51sec, 37.53pts, 1; Kevin Hessel (Fairlie) 11min 5.88sec, 42.59pts, 2; Grant Smith (Rakaia) 11min 12.53sec, 45.03pts, 3; Aku Waihape (Ashburton) 11min 47.97sec, 47.1pts, 4.

Senior final (10 sheep): Luis Pincol (Chile) 12min 11.15sec, 42.86pts, 1; Jade Maguire Ratima (Winton) 14min 4.34sec, 47.72pts, 2; Alex Smith (Rakaia) 14min 1.09sec, 48.15pts, 3; Linton Palmer (Dipton) 14min 58.36sec, 51.12pts, 4.

Intermediate final (5 sheep): Allan Oldfield (Geraldine) 9min 16.84sec, 35.04pts, 1; Eve Peddie (Oxford) 9min 35.47sec, 37.57pts, 2; Mitchell Menzies (Ranfurly) 8min 50.53sec, 39.93pts, 3; Cody Davidson 8min 29.94sec, 51.7pts, 4.

Junior final (4 sheep): Henry Mayo (England) 9min 19.15sec, 33.71pts, 1; Adele Lemercier (France) 10min 33.15sec, 38.16pts, 2; Levi Neil (-) 8min 52.37sec, 46.37pts, 3; Kelly Poehls (Makara) 13min 27.97sec, 46.4pts, 4.

