

MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand
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Photo

Champion woolhandler-turned-school teacher Hanatia Tipene shows eight-year-old pupils Quinn Snowden (centre) and Nathan Perana the wool at the New Zealand Shearing and Woolhandling Championships in Te Kuiti today. PHOTO/DOUG LAING SSNZ

Woolhandler in a class of her own

Former New Zealand Open woolhandling champion Hanatia Tipene barely missed a beat after being eliminated in this year's heats in Te Kuiti today.

Soon after just missing out, being 16th in a field of 24 and just one place from making it to the quarterfinals, she was looking after a group of children in the crowd – her own class from Te Kuiti Primary School.

“I’ve been training for five years,” said Tipene, originally from Porangahau in Southern Hawke’s Bay but now well-settled with Welsh partner and shearer Delwyn Jones in Te Kuiti, where they were already well settled when she won her big title in 2013.

This is her first year teaching, and she was quick to show her excited new flock the qualities of wool as the event from which she had been eliminated progressed through its semi-finals late on the first day of the three-day New Zealand Shearing and Woolhandling Championships in Te Kuiti’s Waitomo Cultural and Arts Centre.

They saw top quality with five of the top performers during the season making Saturday night’s final, including \$1.30 TAB favourite, World champion and defending titleholder Joel Henare, from Gisborne but now based in Motueka and, like Tipene, now working mainly outside the wool industry.

Henare hadn’t had it all his own way. He was second to host area hope Keryn Herbert, who was top qualifier, and in the quarterfinals where the top qualifier was top South Island hope Pagan Karauria, from Alexandra

and who beat Henare in the first Royal Easter Show Open woolhandling final on Sunday.

He also battled in the semi-finals, qualifying for Saturday night's final in fourth place, behind top qualifier Logan Kamura, of Marton, Herbert, and Karauria, and ahead of seven-times winner and 2008 World champion Sheree Alabaster, also now a school teacher.

