

## MEDIA RELEASE

From Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand  
March 28, 2018

Caption: Shearer John Kirkpatrick with the Hyundai Santa Fe which he will have for the next 12 months as winner of the PGG Wrightson Wool National Shearing Circuit. PHOTO/SUPPLIED

### World champions head for Royal Easter Show

Two current World champions have confirmed they will be competing in the shearing sports at the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary Royal Easter Show in Auckland this weekend.

The two are Napier shearer John Kirkpatrick and South Island-based Gisborne woolhandler Joel Henare, who won their respective World individual titles at the 40th anniversary World shearing and woolhandling championships in Invercargill in February last year.

Kirkpatrick confirmed his plans when he received the Hyundai Santa Fe DM 2.2D Elite he will be able to drive to events around the country over the next year as a result of winning the PGG Wrightson Wool National Circuit final on March 3.

Having fronted at more than 20 competitions this season, in the 1657kms from Winton in the south to Kumeu in the north, and West to Bendigo in Australia, Kirkpatrick confirmed he'd be driving the new wheels on the weekend trip to Auckland and back.

It's the second time he's won the prize, the first having been in 2013.

It includes \$1800 in cash and vouchers from PGG Wrightson Wool, selection in the 2018-2019 New Zealand trans-tasman series team, and the McSkimming Memorial Triple Crown, first presented in 1973 to kick-start a circuit aimed at finding New Zealand's top all-round shearer, now on five different wool types.

It's the 16<sup>th</sup> year PGG Wrightson has been the naming sponsor, only the third in the history of the event, and Hyundai has been involved for nine years, since a year's use of an Hyundai Santa Fe was first included in the package in 2010.

PGG Wrightson general manager wool Grant Edwards, of Christchurch, was at the hand-over, along with North Island manager Allan Jones, of Hastings, East Coast retail manager Shane Cohen, of Masterton, Hyundai representative Nick Churton, of Bayswater Hyundai, Hastings, and Golden Shears president Phillip Morrison.

Mr Edwards said it was great for PGG Wrightson Wool supporting the shearing and woolhandling competitions “because without them we wouldn’t have an industry.”

“We hugely respect the amount of work that goes into it,” he said. “This is about excellence, and we want to reward excellence.”

“It is pretty cool for Johnny to win it for a second time, and for us to present it to a shearer who is a World Champion as well.”

The winner of more than 150 Open finals, including in 2002 ending shearing legend David Fagan’s run of 12 consecutive Golden Shears Open titles in Masterton, Kirkpatrick has driven well over 100,000km to and from events in the North Island in his 23 seasons at the top level.

It includes about 16,000kms backwards and forwards to the Auckland show, where he has reached the final 18 times, and won in 2004, 2008, 2010 and 2016.

Meanwhile, Henare, who has also been supported by PGG Wrightson Wool, scored his 100<sup>th</sup> Open class woolhandling win when he claimed the Golden Shears Open woolhandling title in Masterton for a record sixth consecutive time, has confirmed he will also be in Auckland for the historic Royal Easter Show Open woolhandling competition on Sunday, the last of three days of shearing sports competition at the show.

Co-organiser Phil O’Shaughnessy said it’s thought to be the first time competition woolhandling will have been held at the show, and being a full-wool competition, including the spectacular fleece throws over the wool table, it’s expected to be a popular event with the public.

He said there had been some challenges, but a flock of more-than-suitable full-wooled sheep had been sourced from Mahurangi Peninsula.

“There, of course, aren’t a lot of sheep around Auckland, nor a lot of wool tables,” he said.

Shearing competition at the show starts at 10.30am on Friday and Saturday and the woolhandling competition on Sunday starts at 11am.

ENDS

For further information, Doug Laing, media officer, Shearing Sports New Zealand, ph 0274-690644.

