

# Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Wednesday, January 17, 2024

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## Temperatures rise as action heats up in Open

While there was uniform delight at the clear skies the appeared so impressively on the second's play in the 119th Midlands Funds Management Taranaki men's Open fours yesterday, by early afternoon there were many wishing the overcast conditions from Monday would return.

The heat certainly took its toll and those not keeping up with the liquid intake found concentration much more difficult.

As expected, there was a wide cross section of results, with many guns surging ahead and others faltering.

Overnight the analysis is that of the 166 teams taking part, 29 have won the lot so far, 52 sides sit on two wins and 58 quartets have had just one victory.

That means that 27 teams are dreaming about the pairs or next season.

Two of the more prominent skips in the latter category are Peter Dorreen (Far North RSA) and Garry Petersen (Wanganui East). Both are successful gold star recipients in their home centres and have featured in past Opens. But such is the nature of the game and the event.

Among the visitors to enjoy the heat and the well-running Paritutu front green yesterday afternoon was Mt Albert's Steve Ramsay (pictured right).

Ramsay's team, after a win on Monday, was not in the hunt in the morning's round, being thumped 30-8 by Birkenhead's Nigel Drew. The Aucklanders were therefore looking down the barrel in the afternoon with a clash against Stokes Valley's Caleb Hope.

But Ramsay and co righted the ship to score an impressive and important 22-16 victory.

Drew, following Monday's narrower victory over Hawera Park's Mark Dudley, made it two impressive wins for the day by later beating two-winner Robin Pierce (Katikati) 29-10.

Drew presents a well-balanced side with specialist front men Mark Rumble and Brian Wil-



son joined by rising prospect Daymon Pierson.

Hope's side includes Robbie Bird, who in his relatively short time in the game has already tasted success in the 2021 NZ champion-of-champions singles and twice in the NZ inter-centre. They finished the day on two wins.

After a near perfect performance on Monday, win No 2 came 25-22 over Dudley in the morning, after the boys from the capital had led by one shot at the commencement of the 25th end.



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## Club administrator excels on day two

One of the most popular and prominent club administrators in Taranaki bowls is Waitara's Cliff Rona.

Rona, who was named as Bowls Taranaki's Administrator of the Year last season, has excelled at the head of the Waitara club over the past six seasons.

Its facilities continue to improve, its tournaments always attract a full house and its membership has experienced a large increase as well.

Rona has been crucial to all of that.

Waitara's artificial green, one of only three in

the province — Inglewood and Paritutu's indoor complex are the others — is scheduled to be replaced this year, too.

With all of that work going on, it's a wonder Rona can fully focus on competition bowls.

But he has proven that he can with his side unbeaten in the first three rounds.

His side includes John Ape-esera, Jeff Jane and former Olympic rower Grant McAuley. They scored to good wins yesterday over two likely qualifiers — 20-15 against Ross Thorn (Naenae) and 24-13 over Darren Scott (West End).

### Summary of wins after day two:

**Section 1:** three wins, Cliff Rona (Waitara); two wins, Tupu Campbell (Opononi), Darren Scott (West End), Ross Thorn (Naenae), Bob Sanders (Wakari), Mark Nicholl (Putaruru), Mark Payne (Sunshine Coast).

**Section 2:** three wins, Nigel Drew (Birkenhead), Wayne Parker (Bay Veiw); two wins, Mark Pene (Whangamata), Gordon Oliver (Lepperton), Robin Pierce (Katikati), Nigel Musgrave (Naenae), Steve Ramsay (Mt Albert), Caleb Hope (Stokes Valley).

**Section 3:** three wins, Mike Reddy (Kaitaia Church Road), Anton Ferrari (Naenae); two wins, Graeme Crawford (Pohara), Nigel Berry (Hāwera Park), David Ball (Carlton Cornwall), Bob Shorter (Darfield), Steve Cottam (Paritutu).

**Section 4:** three wins, Jim Priest (Oakura), Brendon Gibson (Johnsonville), Peter Belliss (Aramoho); two wins, Kevin Deegan (South Johnstone), Neville Clark (Carlton Cornwall), Shae Fleming (Rahotu), Ray Scott (Omarunui).

**Section 5:** three wins, Aidan Zittersteijn (Paritutu), Danny Delany (Royal Oak), Peter Nixon (Sunshine Coast); two wins, Bart Robertson (New Plymouth), Steven Goater (Wanganui), Gerard Slattery (Tui Park), Neil Bovey (Paekakariki).

**Section 6:** three wins, Noel Probyn (New Plymouth), Gary Lawson (Elmwood), Andy Ellis (Pringle Park), Grant Pease (Fitzroy); two wins, Garry Banks (Takapuna).

**Section 7:** three wins, John Petelo (Pt Chevalier), Murray Dickson (Pakuranga); two wins, Ray Park (Wanganui), Stephen Liddington (Hillcrest), Phil Morgan (Te Puke), Jim Cornish (Omarunui), Terry Osment (Johnsonville), Gavin Bannatyne (Upper Hutt).

**Section 8:** three wins, Ross Clark (Manaia), Daniel Geaney (Blockhouse Bay); two wins, Mario Marinovich (New Plymouth), Keith Sargent (Fitzroy), John Niwa (Waitara).

**Section 9:** three wins, Garry Muriwai (Martinborough), Wayne Harris (Orewa); two wins, Rob Clark (Manaia), Dan Dickison (Tauranga), Gerry O'Sullivan (Inglewood), Colin Boyle (Carlton Cornwall), Richard Meacle (Sunshine Coast), Trevor Harris (Hillcrest).

**Section 10:** three wins, Mark Anderson (Tower), Bruce Phillips (Tumut), Mike Bradshaw (Onehunga & Districts); two wins, Mort Jones (Hillcrest), Darren Goodin (Paritutu), Ross McLean (Otaki).

**Section 11:** three wins, Blake Signal (Victoria), Dave McNeal (Rewa); two wins, Ian Busby (Tower), Frankie Lim (Pukekohe), Ian Coombe (Mairangi Bay), Cliff Webber (Omokoroa).

**Section 12:** three wins, Owen Sutton (Putaruru), Laurie Guy (Victoria), Craig De Faria (West End); two wins, Scott Roberts (Tower), Paul Eaton (Mount Maunganui), Tony McAleve (Oakura), Warwick Frederikson (Blockhouse Bay).

## Belliss retains perfect record

Aramoho's Peter Belliss is among the more favoured sides to be ideally placed to qualify with his Whanganui team holding three wins.

Belliss won the feature game of the morning 21-18 over Paul Darbyshire (West End). But it was a close-run affair for the strong side from the river city.

Darbyshire, who played exceedingly well, led 7-1 after five ends, 12-9 through 13 heads and 17-14 after 21 ends.

But Belliss took a two, a two and a three to lead by four shots playing the last. Darbyshire could only manage a single.

In the afternoon Belliss beat that gritty Pukekohe player Don Ramsey 29-14.

Ramsey, in his morning loss to Mike Harvey (Raumati) had the unique experience of two tied ends during the game.

Craig De Faria (West End) got the nod in the clash of two of the big local teams on the well-prepared Vogelstown green, beating Scott Roberts (Tower) 27-25, in another intriguing morning match.

De Faria took the impetus from the outset, leading 12-0 after seven ends. But a five on the 15th end to Roberts brought his team to within one point.

However, the momentum swung back to De Faria with seven shots over the next three ends. A three on the 23rd head gave the West Enders a five-shot buffer with two ends to play. Safe play saw them home.

On an adjacent rink, Laurie Guy (Victoria) also had a titanic struggle, beating Bruce Currie (Mt Maunganui) 23-22.

An early break to Currie saw the BOP side up 9-1, but after 13 ends, it was 13-all. Currie led by one shot playing the last end. Guy drew a second counter with his bowl to sneak the victory.

Guy's side continued their unbeaten start to the week with a win over two-winner Tony McAleve (Oakura).

Guy's side includes former Wellington Easter pairs winner Barry O'Brien, the 2011 winner

Gary Ruane and Mark Burgess. Burgess is the son of Max, who was part of John Lambert's 1981 Open winning team.

Blake Signal (Stokes Valley) also suffered a scare in the morning, but prevailed 22-21 over Maurice Symes (Fitzroy).

Symes led the contest 18-15 after 20 ends, before Signal, with two singles and a big five, got in front.

Symes clawed back a single and a brace to fall one point short of an extra end.

Signal's winning ways continued after lunch, 26-10 over Trevor Belk (Bulls), while Symes also tasted victory.

Gary Lawson (Elmwood Park), following his 16th Dominion title in the pairs last week, notched two further wins.

He was comfortable but pushed along by Paul Digby (Stratford-Avon), winning 25-18, and then accounted for Keith Hastings (Miramar) 39-12.

Currently Peter Nixon is performing the best of the six Sunshine Coast sides. Nixon's team has three wins, following victories yesterday over Perry Byres (Titahi Bay) 26-17 and George Markie (Vogelstown) 26-14.

Two past winners to suffer a loss on day two were Dan Dickison (Tauranga) and Ray Park (Wanganui).

Dickison's defeat was 24-23 to Trevor Harris (Hillcrest). The Waikato side provided the turn-around from the first day.

On Monday they were thumped 30-2 by Wayne Harris (Orewa), but then followed up the Dickison win by edging Rob Clark (Manaia) 23-21.

Park was defeated 28-14 by Stephen Liddington (Hillcrest) in the seventh section which is currently being dominated by two unbeaten Auckland teams — JohnPetelo (Pt Chevalier) and Murray Dickson (Pakuranga).

In further sad news, Park's lead from his 2005 triumph, Barry Gush (Palmerston North), passed away just prior to the commencement of the tournament.

## 50 years ago: Victory to Rewa's Doug Johnston

Doug Johnston's Rewa team of Neville Bishop, Spurdle was also runner-up in the 1979 Do-Merv Lansdown and Tom Lynch were comfortable victors in the 1974 final.

They defeated Paritutu's Shady Lane, Laurie Koorey, Arthur Barry and skip Barney Spurdle 25-20 in the final, played on the Monday morning on the Paritutu front green.

Johnston, who had beaten Ken Murtagh in the semifinals, raced away to a 16-0 lead after nine ends.

Spurdle clawed back into the contest, closing to 19-

15 in arrears after 18 ends. But then the Rewa team pulled away again to secure victory.

The triumph for Johnston in particular was pleasing. It was just his third Taranaki Open, having previously been runner-up in 1970. But for Spurdle second was his lot.

He also lost the 1964 final skipping.



The pairs was won by Te Atatu's Brian Elsmore and Bill Bennett, who beat Paritutu's Percy Adlam and Alex Hare 29-19 in the final.

The 1970s were truly halcyon days for the Open. It was during this decade that entry numbers soared.

As an illustration, the 1974 event attracted 462 teams, a record at the time, which exceeded the previous best by 32 sides.

One green was used at both Avon and Stratford, while play went as far west as Okato. A feature during these days, and into the 1980s, was the use of women's clubs. The ladies entered into the spirit of the competition by arranging temporary bar facilities at their "dry" clubs.

### Match of the morning

Of the 29 teams unbeaten, two will square off in the feature game of the morning today on Paritutu's front green.

Aidan Zittersteijn (Paritutu), the defending titleholder, will meet Dan Delany (Royal Oak), a four-time winner.

Delany has been comprehensive in all of his three wins to date.

He teams with Vili Fifita, Matt Carroll and Teo Turua.

Zittersteijn has former North Island rep Daryl Read, Kurt Smith and Adam Collins in his side.

Zittersteijn has been challenged in all three games to date but has found his way to the winner's circle each time. Yesterday morning he beat Neil Bovey (Paekakariki) 28-21, but only after the scores had been level with two ends to play. It was similar in the afternoon, as the Paritutu side only pulled away on the final ends to deny Gerard Slattery (Tui Park) 29-21, a margin that flattered the victors.

