

# Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Thursday, January 18, 2024

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## Nine visitors and four locals already through

Nine visiting teams and four from within the home province have already guaranteed their places in Friday's post section rounds in the 119th Midlands Funds Management Taranaki men's Open fours tournament.

That followed the completion of two further rounds yesterday, where the lucky 13 added two more wins to the three they had all respectively secured from the opening two days play.

There are 29 sides sitting on four wins and 37 on three wins. The best estimate would have the likely number of qualifiers in the mid-to-late 50s range.

Manaia President Ross Clark ensured his club, in its 125th jubilee year, had plenty to celebrate when his side headed the list of those to win five.

In the morning round, Clark's side of Trevor Taunt, Jason Peters and Phil Kuklinski thumped Waitara's John Niwa 36-5. Mario Marinovich (New Plymouth) pushed Clark harder in the afternoon, but Manaia still got the victory, 22-15.

The other three Taranaki sides through are skipped by Noel Probyn (New Plymouth), Mark Anderson (Tower) and Aidan Zittersteijn (Paritutu). All three know what it feels like to win the Open.

Probyn, belying his 80 years, is a three-time past winner. His side accounted for Bob Edwards (Massey Avenue) 28-9. But Brian Eccleshall (Hawera Park) created some headaches after lunch before Probyn's side of Michael Matthews, Wade Donovan and Bill Foley ensured qualification with a 27-23 win.

There was anticipation at Waitara in Anderson's morning battle against another great south Taranaki bowling family, the Hawkens. It was the Andersons that won 26-16.

Mark skips the team that contains his brothers Brendan and Grant, plus Kevin Hills.

Despite dropping a five early, the Andersons crept in front mid-game and then led 20-11 after 18 ends.

But the Hawkens, being skipped by Bruce Phillips, claimed five singles in a row, narrowing the deficit to just four points. A single to Anderson on the penultimate gave enough breathing space on the last end, a five-bag haul inflating the final score.

Phillips' side responded in the afternoon, eliminating Mort Jones (Hillcrest) 25-11 to sit comfortably on four wins over night.

Zittersteijn's wins came 21-9 over Dan Delany (Royal Oak) and 27-3 against George Markie (Vogeltown).

The morning win against Delany was a particularly impressive personal performance from the 2018 Commonwealth Games bronze medalist.

A four on the second end to Zittersteijn set the tone of the match. After nine ends, Zittersteijn and his side of Daryl Read, Kurt Smith and Adam Collins had opened up an 11-4 lead. Three ends later that had become 15-5.

A single and a two on the next ends meant the Aucklanders still had a chance. However, the next three heads went the way of the Paritutu quartet, with the white flag coming out soon after.

\* Paritutu will host this year's finals, it was announced yesterday. It is anticipated that four greens will be required for Friday's post section rounds in the fours. In addition to the two at Paritutu, the Oakura and Inglewood greens will also be used.



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# Sportsmanship great to see—in many ways

There can be no denying the pleasure that can be extracted from true sportsmanship. But in the heat of battle it sometimes can be lost.

However, during the 2024 Open so far there have been plenty of illustrations of the good.

The picking up of an opposition bowl, the provision of a refreshment — even water in this heat is gratefully accepted — the applauding of a good bowl.

It has been good to see.

In addition, following some confusion from a drive during a match, Darfield visiting skip,

Bob Shorter, suggested the “putting back of the bowls to their original position” as opposed to declaring an end dead, even if the outcome wasn’t to his advantage.

Yesterday, Pakuranga’s Murray Dickson, an Auckland gold star holder, agreed to delay the start of his fifth round match so that his opposition, skipped by Richard Helms (New Plymouth), could attend the funeral of Ray Chard. Chard was originally entered into the event. Dickson took the game 23-11 to sit on four wins. The spirit of sportsmanship is alive.

## Summary of wins after day three:

**Section 1:** five wins, nil; four wins, Darren Scott (West End), Ross Thorn (Naenae); three wins, Tupu Campbell (Opononi), Evan Thomas (Birkenhead), Steve Berezowski (Gisborne), Cliff Rona (Waitara), Bob Sanders (Wakari).

**Section 2:** five wins, Nigel Drew (Birkenhead); four wins, Nigel Musgrave (Naenae), Caleb Hope (Stokes Valley); three wins, Colin Christie (Fitzroy), Wayne Parker (Bay Veiw), Mark Pene (Whangamata), Robin Pierce (Katikati), Steve Ramsay (Mt Albert).

**Section 3:** five wins, nil; four wins, Mike Reddy (Kaitaia Church Road), Anton Ferrari (Naenae); three wins, Graeme Crawford (Pohara), Eric Foreman (Fitzroy), David Ball (Carlton Cornwall), Bob Shorter (Darfield), Steve Cottam (Paritutu).

**Section 4:** five wins, Brendon Gibson (Johnsonville), Peter Belliss (Aramoho); four wins, Jim Priest (Oakura), Kevin Deegan (South Johnstone), Neville Clark (Carlton Cornwall); three wins, nil.

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

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

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

**Section 8:** five wins, Ross Clark (Manaia), Daniel Geaney (Blockhouse Bay); four wins, nil; three wins, Mike Oldfield (Tauranga South), John Garrud (West End).

**Section 9:** five wins, nil; four wins, Garry Muriwai (Martinborough), Dan Dickson (Tauranga), Gerry O’Sullivan (Inglewood), Wayne Harris (Orewa), Trevor Harris (Hillcrest); three wins, Colin Boyle (Carlton Cornwall).

**Section 10:** five wins, Mark Anderson (Tower), Mike Bradshaw (Onehunga & Districts); four wins, Bruce Phillips (Tumut), Darren Goodin (Paritutu); three wins, Mike Mail (Omokoroa), Ross McLean (Otaki).

**Section 11:** five wins, Blake Signal (Victoria); four wins, Frankie Lim (Pukekohe), Dave McNeal (Rewa); three wins, Ian Busby (Tower), Bryan Boulton (West End), Paul Howell (Paritutu), Scotty McGavin (Bulls), Maurice Symes (Fitzroy).

**Section 12:** five wins, nil; four wins, Scott Roberts (Tower), Paul Eaton (Mt Maunganui), Tony McAlevey (Oakura), Laurie Guy (Victoria), Craig De Faria (West End); three wins, Gary Johnstone (Arrowtown), Owen Sutton (Putaruru).

## Birthday boy has double celebration

Bowls Wellington General Manager Blake Signal had a double celebration yesterday.

While celebrating his birthday he also successfully skipped his side into post section play.

Signal skips one of the favoured teams in this week's Open, with experienced Grant Wakefield leading — best remembered for his 2002 Dominion pairs win with Brendon Gibson, who also has skipped his own side to five-straight wins — Rod Leitch, a Wellington gold star holder, and recent Black Jack Raymond Martin. They beat Cliff Webber (Omokoroa) 23-13 and Barrie Johnstone (Katikati) 33-13.

Peter Nixon (Sunshine Coast) confirmed that the Australian contingent will have representation in post section play after two further wins yesterday.

While three Auckland sides also have taken the direct route — Andy Ellis (Pringle Park), Daniel Geaney (Blockhouse Bay) and Mike Bradshaw (Onehunga & Districts). Joining them are Nigel Drew (Birkenhead), Peter Belliss (Aramoho) and Gary Lawson (Elmwood).

Lawson only just escaped the morning round against the 2014 winner Kevin Smith (Hinuera), 20-19 after securing the deciding point on the 25th end.

Smith's side was predicted to qualify on Monday morning, but two defeats on Tuesday put them into the mire.

With their backs against the wall, the Hinuera side battled bravely, even after Lawson had skipped away to a 13-5 lead after 11 ends.

They closed to 15-11 down, after 17 ends, and then, on the run scored a three and consecutive twos. After 20 ends Smith was in front. Lawson tied the game up two ends later, before the sides traded singles ahead of the winner-take all last end. After lunch, Lawson beat Bernie Martelletti (Te Puke) 19-10.

In the same section, Garry Banks (Takapuna) sits comfortably on four wins. His afternoon triumph was over Smith.

Banks is clearly due some luck.

In the early hours of the Monday morning of the 2023 Open, Banks suffered a heart attack and withdrew from the event. On Saturday, enroute to New Plymouth, his car died north of Otorohanga, but he found a way to make it.

His loyalty and love to the Open has seen his side now give themselves every chance of qualifying this time.

Taranaki selector John Garrud (West End), himself a two-time champion, kept his hopes alive – but only just.

Garrud eliminated Naki Nehemia (Johnsonville) 34-17 in the morning. That gave his side its second win, the same number as his afternoon opponent, Brian Osmond (Frankton Junction).

Osmond held the upper hand for most of the match.

The Waikato side was in front 10-1 after four ends and 20-13 after 16 heads. Even after 22 ends, Osmond was the warm favourite, leading 25-18. But Garrud with a three, a single and a four snatched victory 26-25.

One Wednesday morning one game was not completed by 1.30pm expiry time, that being the clash between Craig De Faria (West End) and Tony McAleve (Oakura). De Faria went into the game with three wins, McAleve with two wins.

At the morning tea adjournment, De Faria called the tune, leading 13-0. But playing the last end, De Faria led only 20-19. His side still looked odds-on for victory, holding two shots. But McAleve drew the shot with his last bowl to force an extra end.

After De Faria's No 2, Dave Wilson, had drawn a toucher, McAleve's No 2, Bob Anderson, moved the jack slightly to give Oakura the shot.

There it remained until De Faria, with his last bowl, killed the end.

On the replay, after the fifth round had been completed, Anderson drew the shot to enable an Oakura victory. Both sides have four wins.

## 25 years ago: Delany dominant in debut final

Rawhiti's Dan Delany, pictured right during yesterday's play, became the dominant force of the 1999 event, when he claimed the first of his four Taranaki Open fours crowns.

But that result looked anything but after the first day's play, conducted in strong winds and featuring 286 teams.

Even though Delany had been a trifle unlucky to lose out in the semifinals the previous year, he was not expected to feature in 1999 after his side of Steve Bicknell, Joe Whitelaw and Mike Nasey came away from their first day in Clifton Park.

They dropped both games — firstly to Leperton's Tom Harold and then in the afternoon to West End's George Nicholas.

But the Delany side won their next six section play games and then six post section games to secure the title.

In the final, Delany, who many pundits believe has played his best bowls in Taranaki, was in sublime touch.

His side beat the Wilton quartet of Lou Cancian, John Gray, Howard Ivory and skip John Earles 27-16.

Delany led 12-6 at afternoon tea time.

But three ends later the ledger had been squared.

Delany edged ahead, leading 20-16 after 21 ends, before sealing the result with counts of 2-3-2.

Delany, still a young man in those days, said soon after the final; "We will definitely be back." And he still is, having missed only three Opens

in the years since. "It's totally different down here from Auckland, they're too snobbish up there," he concluded in 1999.

The pairs was won by Neil Walsh (NPRSA), who led for Australian Peter Backhouse. They beat West End brothers Lindsay and Garry Murfitt 17-13 in the final.



## Match of the morning

Two four winners will meet this morning on the Vogeltown A green — Mike Reddy (Kaitaia Church Road) and Anton Ferrari (Naenae).

They are the two leading teams in a competitive third section which currently has no five winners.

Both teams opened with three-straight wins. However both fell yesterday morning — Ferrari lost 33-24 to Eric Foreman (Fitzroy), while Reddy was beaten 22-16 by Gavin McLeod (Tawa).

In the afternoon, Ferrari beat Craig Murray (Oakura) 28-21 while Reddy was a 26-14 victor over John Michael (Waitarere Beach).

Reddy's side includes the Allison's, father Barry and son Sam, plus Trevor Smith.

Ferrari's team comprises Chris Hemingway, Peter Small and Bruce Miller.

