

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Saturday, January 20, 2024

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Big guns beaten as field opens up

It would have taken a brave person before the start of play to suggest that by day's end that the three skips who have previously won world titles would all be eliminated in the 119th Midlands Funds Management Taranaki men's Open fours yesterday.

But the three of them, Gary Lawson, Peter Belliss and Blake Signal, all went west.

Lawson's side was well out-pointed by Caleb Hope (Stokes Valley) 28-12. Hope's front three of John Brien, Corey Brookes and Robbie Bird laid the foundation.

Hope was able to extend that pressure into points. Lawson remained in touch mid-game, at only four points adrift. But bowls on the head are crucial to winning a fours game, especially one of 25 ends.

Hope's side didn't let their form slip after lunch, either. They powered away from Tauranga South's Mike Oldfield 30-7.

Belliss' loss was 25-24 to Steve Ramsay (Mt Albert). The match had a number of tight heads, with the standard of play high.

However, Belliss will have a degree of disappointment that his side let slip an early 13-2 lead. Once the Mt Albert side got back into the contest, and indeed hit the front for a first time on end 17, it was always going to go down to the wire. Ramsay took a two on the last end to win by one and will play Colin Boyle (Carlton Cornwall) today.

Signal's side opened with a 28-12 win over Wayne Harris (Orewa). But then they struck Nigel Drew (Birkenhead), unbeaten during this campaign. Drew took the initiative from the outset, leading 16-6 and prevailing 21-16. Drew now plays Scotty McGavin (Bulls).

Hope's opponent this morning is Mark Anderson (Tower). Anderson scored a comparatively easy 24-6 win over Brendon Gibson (Johnsonville), a margin that surprised many as the capital crew had progressed trouble-free up until that point.

Anderson's front two, brother Brendan and Kevin Hills, began to find their groove in that game.

Earlier in the day there had been an interesting, and peculiar, conclusion to Anderson's 21-20 win over Mike Reddy (Kaitaia).

The two teams went into the last end even. They couldn't decide who had shot, so the umpire was called. Again, the bowls could not be separated, the end being declared a tie.

That forced an extra end, where Grant Anderson, No 3 in the Tower team and a man for the big occasions, drew the shot.

Aidan Zittersteijn (Paritutu), a member of last year's winning side, was undone by Scott Roberts (Tower) 25-16 in the afternoon. Roberts was back to form similar to that which he exhibited when in skip the pair during Taranaki's 2015 NZ intercentre victory. Roberts posted a low scoring 16-15 morning win.

Phil Morgan (Te Puke) sneaked past John Garrud (West End) 21-20 after leading by two playing the last end. Morgan meets Neville Hill (Onehunga & Districts) this morning, after Hill ousted two fellow Auckland teams.

Peter Nixon's Sunshine Coast side was untroubled in both games. Nixon, with a rich history in bowls coaching and co-ordinating, has emerged as the surprise package of the Open so far. He meets Darren Goodin (Paritutu).

One interesting match this morning will be between Darren Scott (West End) and the Birkenhead side of Evan Thomas which is being skipped by Chad Nathan. They met in the seventh round, with Birkenhead taking the victory there to qualify 31-24. Will it be a repeat or revenge?



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Familiar faces into Saturday's rounds again

Any close observers of the Taranaki Open will note that the same names often reappear in the later stages of the competition. Pre the second war, the likes of Father Mason, Roy Boulton and Jimmy Lobb — who appeared in a remarkable 17 finals — were the dominant performers.

In the decades since, further big names kept reappearing — Pete Skoglund, Robbie Robson, John Lambert and among the more recent names from the last 25 years, Dan Delany, Craig De Faria and the Andersons have all had their “turns”, and the trio remain firm chances again in 2024.

Delany, with four titles, continues to exhibit that ability to win games others don't. Following his close escape on Thursday, he was again in trouble, trailing Frankie Lim

(Pukekohe) 24-18 with just seven ends remaining at Inglewood yesterday afternoon. But he dominated proceedings after that to end the title hopes of Lim's side 30-26.

De Faria, a three-time Open winner, had almost secured his place after 10 ends in his only outing of the day. His side led Garry Banks (Takapuna) 18-1 at that junction, eventually winning 27-14.

This morning, De Faria meets Martinborough's Garry Muriwai, who also got a flyer in his match, against Tupu Campbell (Opononi), leading 15-3 and triumphing 26-15.

Of the other skips still in contention, Mark Anderson has previously won the Open twice in sides skipped by brother Grant, Scott Roberts succeeded in 2020 in the No 3 role, while Darren Goodin skipped the winning side in 2015.

Fours post section results and pairs post section draw

Results of post section in the fours from yesterday:

Section 1, Paritutu A, round 1: Wayne Parker (Bay View) 28 Kevin Deegan (South Johnstone) 12, Darren Scott (West End) 30 Cliff Rona (Waitara) 7, Maurice Symes (Fitzroy) 31 Neville Clark (Carlton Cornwall) 21, Evan Thomas (Birkenhead) 22 Gary Johnstone (Arrowtown) 20. **Round 2:** Colin Boyle (Carlton Cornwall) 27 Nigel Musgrave (Naenae) 12, Steve Ramsay (Mt Albert) 25 Peter Belliss (Aramoho) 24, Scott 25 Parker 20, Thomas 25 Symes 12.

Section 2, Paritutu B, round 1: Mark Anderson (Tower) 21 Mike Reddy (Kaitaia Church Road) 20, Brendon Gibson (Johnsonville) 26 Bill Foley (New Plymouth) 8, Caleb Hope (Stokes Valley) 28 Gary Lawson (Elmwood) 12, Mike Oldfield (Tauranga South) 25 Gerry O'Sullivan (Inglewood) 13. **Round 2:** Garry Muriwai (Martinborough) 26 Tupu Campbell (Opononi) 15, Craig De Faria (West End) 27 Garry Banks (Takapuna) 14, Anderson 24 Gibson 6, Hope 30 Oldfield 7.

Section 3, Oakura, round 1: Peter Nixon (Sunshine Coast) 26 Ross Clark (Manaia) 12, Anton Ferrari (Naenae) 24 Stephen Liddington (Hillcrest) 18, Scotty McGavin (Bulls) 23 Bruce Phillips (Tumut) 20, Steve Muller (Oakura) 26 Trevor Harris (Hillcrest) 18, Nigel Drew (Birkenhead) 28 Ray Park (Wanganui) 16, Blake Signal (Stokes Valley) 28 Wayne Harris (Orewa) 12. **Round 2:** Darren

Goodin (Paritutu) 24 Owen Sutton (Putaruru) 9, Nixon 26 Ferrari 5, McGavin 28 Muller 21, Drew 21 Signal 16.

Section 4, Inglewood, round 1: Andy Ellis (Pringle Park) 27 Murray Dickson (Pakuranga) 18, Mike Bradshaw (Onehunga & Districts) 31 Daniel Geaney (Blockhouse Bay) 24, Frankie Lim (Pukekohe) 25 Grant Pease (Fitzroy) 15, Danny Delany (Royal Oak) 25 Neil Bovey (Paekakariki) 8, Scott Roberts (Tower) 16 Laurie Guy (Victoria) 15, Aidan Zittersteijn (Paritutu) 29 Ross Thorn (Naenae) 14. **Round 2:** Phil Morgan (Te Puke) 21 John Garrud (West End) 20, Bradshaw 32 Ellis 22, Delany 30 Lim 26, Roberts 25 Zittersteijn 16.

Draw for post section play in the New Plymouth Club-sponsored Taranaki men's Open fours-pairs event at Vogeltown today:

Round 1 (8.45am start): Gary Watson (Titahi Bay) v Ken Thomas (Kaikohe), Barrie Johnstone (Kaitiaki) v John Zittersteijn (Paritutu).

Round 2 (8.45am start): Ted Walker (Carlton-Cornwall) v Hugh Andrews (Bannockburn), Bill Read (Paritutu) v Peter Vink (Fitzroy), Bruce Milne (Hinuera) v Cliff Webber (Omokoroa), Ash Paul (Darfield) v Nairn McGibbon (Johnsonville), Willy Parker (Darfield) v Craig Metcalfe (Vogeltown), Peter Lange (Te Kuiti) v Adam Blucher (Te Atatu Peninsula).

Round 2 (report 10.30am): Martin Hitchings (Orewa) v Cary Pinker (Wanganui East).