

# Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

*Thursday, January 25, 2024*

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## Easy going day ahead for skillful eleven

Today should be an easier day, at least in terms of self-pressure, for the 11 teams that have already qualified in the 72nd Devon Hotel Taranaki women's Open fours.

Those sides, while still required to play, can afford to drop both matches today and still be involved in Friday's post section rounds, which will be held on the slick Paritutu greens.

There are a further 20 sides sitting on three wins, one shy of qualification, and another 26 quartets that have so far won two matches. The remaining 31 teams are out.

It is expected that the total number of qualifiers, following the completion of the last two games today, will be in the mid-30s.

Remarkably, five sides have already gone through in from section one: Elaine Hodge (New Plymouth), Kerin Roberts (Mairangi Bay), Sue Hodges (Omokoroa), Janet Barnard (Rotorua) and Taranaki double gold star holder Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy).

Hodge received a close examination in the last round yesterday, pipping Paekakariki's Teo Thorensen 22-19.

Barnard, whose team includes the decorated Mere Eden, twice won with some comfort. But their fellow Bay of Plenty side, skipped by Hodges, had a narrow squeak in the morning. They beat Cheryl Sharrock (Paritutu) 25-18. The scores had been locked at 16-all after 21 ends.

Adams won both games with some to spare, while Roberts, who holds 10 North Harbour titles, had to wait until after the fourth game to notch up a win in round three. Her side achieved the feat, 22-21 against Carol Cox (Tokoroa). The match was one of four games that had not finished by the 1.30pm time limit.

In the same section, Leeane Poulson's side, still being skipped by Trish Cullinane, won well twice, and seem certain to be among the qualifiers.

Diane Strawbridge (Kensington) and Meredith Pottage (Mt Maunganui) both advanced from section two. Pottage, a past BOP champion-of-champions triples winner, had a close morning game with Barbara Harvey (Paritutu). Harvey led 18-15 after 20 ends, but Pottage won the next four heads to take a three-shot lead into the last, holding on to win 21-19. At the same time, Strawbridge got off to a flyer, leading Adrienne Tilyard (Buckland) 13-0 after eight ends and winning 26-16.

Rima Strickland (Royal Oak) is also through, but it was a close-run affair against the gritty Hetty Bolscher (Pukekohe) after lunch in section five. Strickland got through 19-16. In the same group, Marlene Malcolm (Waitara) upset Val Symes (Fitzroy) 21-19 in round four to leave both teams on three wins. Marilyn Constantine also suffered a second defeat.

Senara Watt (Papakura) is the only qualifier so far from section six. Both wins yesterday were by comfortable margins — 24-12 over Wendy Moratti (Lepperton) and 29-12 against Diane Dickinson (Henderson).

Section seven has two qualifiers to date — Hastings' Chris Telford, a dominant force in Bay bowls, and Pirongia's Denise Te Momo. Again, both teams were relatively comfortable throughout the day.

Te Momo, the defending titleholder, did send a shot across the bows in beating Anne Lomas (Hunua) 28-15. Lomas' side sits on three wins.

Neither section three or four have any qualifiers to date.



Briar Atkinson (Paritutu) recovered to win in the afternoon after getting into bother early in her morning loss to Martie Sisson (Ohope), trailing 13-2, and then, after 15 ends, 21-6. Her Paritutu side narrowed the scores, closing to 22-18 behind with five to play. Sisson, though, took a two and three consecutive singles to win 27-18.

Gayle Melrose (Papakura), Ruth Spittle (Taradale) and Dot Collis (Waitarere Beach) all consolidated their positions after an opening day loss to finish on three wins.

However, the news was not as good for Leeane Stewart (Hikurangi). Her side dropped both games. The first defeat was to Melrose 20-16.

Melrose led 12-4 after 11 ends. Stewart brought it back to 16-all with three ends to go.

But Melrose claimed the rest of the heads.

Stewart was then nosed out by Spittle 28-26.

There was a similar story in section four, where Pania Roberts (Opononi), promoted in

here yesterday, also dropped both matches on day two.

Eileen Stephens (Raglan) took Roberts down first 29-22 and then Robyn Wallace (Omarunui) squeaked past Roberts 26-25. That left Wallace as one of five teams on three wins overnight.

Lesley McLinden (Bridge Park) is among those sides. Her loss was also to Wallace 26-24 in the morning. Wallace rushed ahead 10-0, but a six and a four on ends 10 and 11 created a tight clash.

Indeed, heading into the 25th end, the scores were tied, before Wallace got the nod.

Play yesterday became more tricky in the breezy conditions, although those playing on the back green at Fitzroy were reasonably well protected.

Bowls and breeze go hand in glove in Taranaki. However, in last week's men's Open there was virtually no breeze, let alone wind, on any day. Sorry, ladies!

## Win summary after the second day's play

### Standings after day two in The Devon Hotel Taranaki women's Open fours:

**Section 1:** four wins, Elaine Hodge (New Plymouth), Kerin Roberts (Mairangi Bay), Sue Hodges (Omokoroa), Janet Barnard (Rotorua), Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy); three wins, Leeane Poulson (Papakura); two wins, Frances Parkes (Tower), Carol Cox (Tokoroa).

**Section 2:** four wins, Diane Strawbridge (Kensington), Meredith Pottage (Mount Maunganui); three wins, Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood), Andrea Grant (Browns Bay), Lynda Francis (Havelock North); two wins, Judy Cato (Te Awamutu), Adrienne Tilyard (Buckland), Janet Olliver (Waitarere Beach), June Smith (Katikati).

**Section 3:** four wins, nil; three wins, Briar Atkinson (Paritutu), Dot Collis (Waitarere Beach), Ruth Spittle (Taradale), Gayle Melrose (Papakura); two wins, Viv Hall (West End), Sue Kingi (Raglan), Leanne Stewart (Hikurangi), Martie Sisson (Ohope), Jenny Sargison (Omarunui).

**Section 4:** four wins, nil; three wins, Frances

Busby (Tower), Margaret O'Regan (Ohope), Lesley McLinden (Bridge Park), Robyn Wallace (Omarunui), Hazel Littlejohn (Darfield); two wins, Jilly Kimber (Waitara), Pania Roberts (Opononi).

**Section 5:** four wins, Rima Strickland (Royal Oak); three wins, Val Symes (Fitzroy), Marlene Malcolm (Waitara); two wins, Anne Woods (Okato), Cheryl Le Claire (Taradale), Mary King (Thames Coast), Marilyn Constantine (Tauranga), Fay Bird (Central Cambridge), Hetty Bolscher (Pukekohe).

**Section 6:** four wins, Senara Watt (Papakura); three wins, Kristin Stampa (Hāwera Park), Heather Gilbert (Tauranga South), Kaye Bunn (Thames Coast); two wins, Judi Bishop (Frankton Junction), Diane Dickinson (Henderson), Wendy Morrati (Lepperton), Cathy Andrews (Paritutu).

**Section 7:** four wins, Chris Telford (Hastings), Denise Te Momo (Pirongia); three wins, Anne Lomas (Hunua), Marlene Foster (Wanganui East); two wins, Diane Smith (Te Puke), Lee McDonald (Mercury Bay), Gale Fache (Pari).