

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Thursday, January 23, 2025

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Thirteen qualifiers so far another 30-odd expected

There are 13 teams that have so far ensured their places in Friday's post section rounds of the 120th Midlands Funds Management Taranaki men's Open fours.

Those teams, inevitably representing some of the more favoured lineups, chalked up wins five and six on day three yesterday. Some of those sides upped the ante to suit the growing temperature that did cause some cracks in some greens, and some sweating, with the old saying ringing true again — if you're sweating, then so is the green.

In addition, there are 18 sides sitting on five wins and 36 still alive with four victories to date. The general rule of thumb is that 25% of teams will qualify from a six-from-eight format. That would result in 45 waiting with anticipation for the draw this evening, but inevitably there will be a few more or less either side of the number.

Of the 13 teams so far through, only two of them are skipped by past winners. They are also the only Taranaki sides to so far make it through — defending titleholder Darren Goodin (Paritutu) and Scott Roberts (Tower). Goodin posted two solid wins — 28-6 over Taranaki Umpires Association President, David Brunton (Fitzroy) and 33-18 over Piripi Huwyler's Para NZ team. It was Huwyler's third loss, dashing his side's hopes of qualifying.

Roberts, who will keep getting better as the week progresses, had plenty to spare in both his wins — 26-17 and 35-11 over Colin Gardiner (Waitarere Beach) and Dennis Holdt (Paritutu) respectively.

The other 11 skips to so far qualify are Logan Amer (Johnsonville), Neville Hill (Onehunga & Districts), Billy Fulton (Henderson), Dave Walker (Tahunanui), Grant Wakefield (Johnsonville), Glen Riche (Blockhouse Bay), Joe Hunn (Kia Toa), Gavin

Hamlyn (Martinborough), Paul Eaton (Mt Maunganui), John Petelo (Pt Chevalier) and Peter Belliss (Aramoho).

Amer, a past Wellington open singles and pairs winner, is a mature player, despite his still relative youth. His side includes his brother Brady, and the father and son duo of Simon and Marshall Kenny. Amer didn't have things all his own way against Colin Williams (Riverhead) in round six but found a way to prevail 28-26 to join Roberts as the two qualifiers so far in section two.

The survivors of the day in the group were undoubtedly Ian Hosken's Clayton four. Having dropped both games on Tuesday, the Australians rebounded by inflicting the first defeat on Mark Mathews (Tui Park) 22-20 in the morning and then took down Phil Todd (Johnsonville) 25-9. Mathews, on five wins, faces two four winners today — Williams and Todd — at Leperton.

* The finals of the tournament will again be held at Paritutu this year. Keith Sampson of the tournament committee said that the greens advisory panel had reached the unanimous decision that Paritutu provided the best two-green club option for the finals.

It is scheduled at this stage that two greens will be used at both Paritutu and West End on Friday for post section of the fours, but this will ultimately depend upon the number of qualifiers.

* For those wishing to purchase the Taranaki Open fours shirts, these can only be obtained by ordering online at:

<https://www.gamechanger.org.nz/bowlstaranakiopenfours>



Two losses on Monday doesn't mean curtains

Tuesday's newsletter highlighted that in the past teams have dropped their opening two games and still found a way to qualify, and even win the Open.

And three such teams in this year's edition have won four in a row after two losses on Monday. They are the sides skipped by Dennis Turner (Lepperton), the 2000 Dominion pairs winner Chris Waterson (St Johns) and Brendon Walton (Auckland).

Turner has a hard row today against five-winner Wayne Te Huki (Okaihau) and six-winner Dave Walker (Tahunanui).

Watson meets Cam Johnstone (Otaki) and

Glen Riche (Blockhouse Bay), who has already made it through.

Walton posted a big 23-1 win over Peter Dorreen (Far North RSA) in round six and meets two three winners today — Erik Chilton (Kia Toa) and Steve Goater (Wanganui).

Meanwhile, of the teams that opened with a loss in round one, Allan Sandercock (Sunshine Coast) is one of three to string five wins together in succession. The other two sides are Trevor Johns (Paritutu) and Paddy Deegan (Opunake). Sandercock, after losing on the last bowl in round one, made it five when he pipped five-winner Peter Small (Hutt) 23-22.

Who has won how many after day three

Standings after the day three in the 120th Midlands Funds Management Taranaki men's Open fours yesterday:

Section 1: six wins, Darren Goodin (Paritutu); **five wins**, Peter Small (Hutt), Allan Sandercock (Sunshine Coast); **four wins**, Murray Dickson (Pakuranga), Tupu Campbell (Opononi).

Section two: six wins, Logan Amer (Johnsonville), Scott Roberts (Tower); **five wins**, Mark Mathews (Tui Park); **four wins**, Ian Hosken (Clayton), Phil Todd (Johnsonville), Colin Williams (Riverhead).

Section 3: six wins, Neville Hill (Onehunga & Districts), **five wins**, John Gray (Fitzroy); **four wins**, Jim Cornish (Omarunui), Neil Clarke (Frankton Junction), Phil Morgan (Te Puke).

Section 4: six wins, Billy Fulton (Henderson); **five wins**, nil; **four wins**, John Garrud (West End), Allan Peers (Thames), Malcolm Moore (Frankton Junction), Grant Anderson (Tower).

Section 5, six wins, nil; **five wins**, Andy Ellis (Pringle Park), Paddy Deegan (Opunake); **four wins**, Ian Coombe (Mairangi Bay), Gerrard Slattery (Hinuera), Andre Rautenbach (Pukekohe).

Section 6: six wins, Dave Walker (Tahunanui); **five wins**, Wayne Te Huki (Okaihau), Gareth Evans (Johnsonville); **four wins**, Dennis Turner (Lepperton), Ray Scott (Kia Toa), Garry Petersen (Wanganui East).

Section 7: six wins, nil; **five wins**, Dan Dickison (Tauranga), Trevor Johns (Paritutu); **four wins**, Pat Walklin (Oakura), Daniel Geaney (Blockhouse Bay), Michael Feek (Mt Albert).

Section 8: six wins, Grant Wakefield (Johnsonville), Glen Riche (Blockhouse Bay); **five wins**, Graeme Crawford (Pohara); **four wins**, Grant Pease (Fitzroy), Chris Waterson (St Johns).

Section 9: six wins, nil; **five wins**, Ross Thorn (Naenae), Frankie Lim (Pukekohe); **four wins**, Evan Jones (Fitzroy), Peter Dorreen (Far North RSA), Brendon Walton (Auckland).

Section 10: six wins, Joe Hunn (Kia Toa) Gavin Hamlyn (Martinborough); **five wins**, nil; **four wins**, David Campbell (Rewa), Steve Critchlow (Naenae), Scott Johnson (Tawa).

Section 11: six wins, Paul Eaton (Mt Manganui), John Petelo (Pt Chevalier); **five wins**, Petar Sain (Carlton Cornwall), Mark Dudley (Hawera Park); **four wins**, Andrew Bowden (Parklands).

Section 12: six wins, nil; **five wins**, Craig De Faria (West End), Naki Nehemia (Johnsonville); **four wins**, Nigel Berry (Hawera Park), David Ball (Carlton Cornwall), Mike Ansell (Bulls), Ashley Paul (Darfield).

Section 13: six wins, Peter Belliss (Aramoho); **five wins**, Paul Digby (Stratford Avon); **four wins**, Gavin Brown (Royal Oak), Mark Pene (Whangamata).

Joy for qualifiers but pressure remains for many others

After losing both games on Thursday last year to miss qualifying by one match, Mt Maunganui's Paul Eaton must have had some second thoughts yesterday.

Sitting on four wins, Eaton had two close games. His side beat Alex Riddock (Paritutu) 26-22, after leading by two shots playing the last end, in the morning round.

In the afternoon, there was even more tension as Eaton's side clashed with fellow five winner, Rob Ashton (Carlton Cornwall).

Eaton held a one-shot lead going into the final head. But Ashton's side held five shots before John Simons drew the ace. Ashton narrowly missed with two drives and so ensured the qualification of the Mt Maunganui team.

In the same section, John Petelo's side has largely flown below the radar this week, but their victories have generally been comfortable, including 23-18 over noted horse racing writer Tim Ryan (Raglan) and 24-17 against Les Smith (Wanganui East).

Four of the sections so far have no qualifiers.

In section 12, Craig De Faria (West End) and Naki Nehemia (Johnsonville) both have five wins. De Faria has the easier route today but his side received plenty of cheek yesterday morning from a Bay of Plenty side skipped by Bill Morrison.

De Faria raced ahead 8-0 early, but after 10 ends it was squared at 10-all. The two teams went point-for-point, with Morrison's side leading 18-17 with two ends remaining. But a four and a two sealed the result for De Faria.

Nehemia's side, which Nairn MacGibbon is skipping, never got going in the morning against a determined David Ball (Carlton Cornwall). Ball led 22-4 and cruised home 27-17. Ball won again after lunch and meets fellow four-winner Nigel Berry (Hawera Park) this morning.

Berry's side is one of a handful of local teams that are giving as good as they are getting. Two other such Taranaki sides had a ding-donger yesterday morning at Paritutu.

Trevor Johns (Paritutu), the former Taranaki winger who was runner-up in the Open two



years ago, and Oakura's Pat Walklin, pictured above, could not be separated through 23 ends. Johns got the nod ultimately, 24-18, and sits on five wins. But Walklin, who shows typical guts and humour from his native West Coast, remained in contention with an afternoon victory leaving his side on four wins.

In the same section, Dan Dickison (Tauranga) wasn't feeling too good about things after 15 ends in the morning round. His side trailed Steve Cottam (Paritutu) 18-11. But three fours and a five after that saw Dickison win 32-22. Dickison won 25-8 in the afternoon.

It is hard to not use medical analogies in reviewing the day three efforts of Gerard Slattery's Hinuera side, which this year doesn't include a member of the famed Settle family nor Kevin Smith.

The morning match had to be halted as Slattery, who is well decorated in both Waikato and Thames Valley, had stitches removed by a district nurse. It didn't affect Slattery's performance, his side gaining their fourth win 30-8 against Terry Mullin (Pihama).

But in the afternoon, it wasn't so flash, as the opposition had a doctor of the draw — Bart Roberson, who put on a clinic to deny Hinuera 22-11. Sadly for Robertson, though, like his last outing in 2023, he will not be involved in post section.

25 years ago: Six down was no problem for Stewart

Scotsman Mal Stewart, who had represented PNG at the 1988 World Championships, called on his experience and skill to produce the biggest shot when it mattered most in the 2000 Open final at Paritutu.

Stewart and his West End side of Noel Probyn (sadly, a late withdrawal from the 2025 event), Keith Sampson (part of the organising committee this year) and Gary Lilley (who retired as West End greenkeeper last June) claimed the 95th Open beating Philip Skoglund's Northern four 26-17 in the final, which was the first to be played on a Sunday afternoon.

It was Stewart's exploits on the 23rd end of the final which proved to be the most memorable moment.

At that junction, Stewart led by eight shots, before a piece of magic from Skoglund, who 12 months earlier had won the Dominion pairs, resulted in the Manawatu men holding five, possibly six, shots.

But Stewart, after visiting to the head, marched back to the mat, and drew the shot dead. It was a cruel end for Skoglund and his side of Andy Campbell (the only finalist competing this year), brother Raymond Skoglund (who shared in the prior pairs triumph with

brother Philip) and Craig Gush (who still plays occasionally at what is now known as North End). They trailed throughout the final, including 17-9 earlier, but hung in the contest looking for a break. They had it until Stewart denied them.

John Earles (Wilton) and Fred Ellison (Taradale) skipped the third-equal sides. Fifty-seven of the 266 teams (made up of 166 locals and 100 visitors) qualified for post section.

The pairs went to Paritutu's Terry Muir and Vic Robson who edged out Trevor Owen and Mike Curd (Vogelton) in the final.



Pictured left to right: Probyn, Sampson, Lilley and Stewart.

Match of the morning — Ashton v Dudley

Of the 18 teams sitting on five wins, only two of them are due to meet this morning. That game is at Paritutu between Rob Ashton (Carlton Cornwall) and Mark Dudley (Hawera Park).

Ashton's side of recent Auckland pairs winner Mark Posa (a title won with Nick Thompson, who incidentally features here in Billy Fulton's team), Zoran Bartulovich and Petar Sain, had travelled well through the recent rounds until they fell last evening to Paul Eaton.

Dudley's only loss so far has been to qualifier John Petelo (Pt Chevalier). Sport is all about momentum. Dudley had a one-point win on Monday morning and from that win, the confidence levels of Dudley and his team of Ross Johnson, George Standard and Chris Hall have continued to increase.



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