

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Sunday, January 26, 2025

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Cool Walker takes last semifinals berth

In a tense finish, Tahunanui (Nelson) skip Dave Walker ensured his team's place in the semifinals of the Midlands Funds Management Taranaki men's Open fours at Paritutu today.

Walker's side made it through after a high-quality 25-21 quarterfinal victory over Neville Hill (Onehunga & Districts) last evening.

And even though the Nelson side were never headed after levelling on end 10, there was still plenty of anxious moments for Walker and his men Chris Alldred, Mike Dickie and Graham Growcott.

Playing the last end, the Nelsonians, endeavouring to become the first side from their region to win the Open since "Jock" Grieve (Motueka) claimed it in 1958, led by three points. They were one down but had three bowls handily around the head.

Then Hill's No 3, Mike Bradshaw, drove, removing all of the closest Nelson bowls, and leaving his side holding three shots.

Effectively, that meant the game was tied at the skip change-over. Cooly, Walker drew a toucher, a brilliant shot under the circumstances, and Hill, playing with weight on the forehand was wide and then narrow.

It was a frustrating end for his side, which contained Steve Bicknell and John Carruthers up front.

They had led 10-3 after nine heads, before Walker took a seven. Four down, Hill drove, removing his closest to be six negative. Walker then added the bonus to take seven.

The sides were again level after 18 ends, before the Walker's side moved ahead. They have proved their worth this week and also have good credentials.

Walker has four titles in Nelson, having previously won six in Kapiti. He is a member of Richmond. Growcott, who plays for Stoke, has four Nelson titles also, and previously won seven in Auckland plus the now defunct Auckland-run NZ open singles.

Dickie and Alldred both play for Tahunanui. Dickie is the least known, but contributed to the side's success, while Alldred holds a gold star in Nelson.

Walker's semifinal final opponents this morning are the Johnsonville side of Simon Kenny and Marshall Kenny — both third year players — and brothers Brady and Logan Amer.

A six on the fifth end set up Amer's side in its 29-12 triumph over Mike Cavanagh, Mike Wass, Shaun Pennell and skip Frankie Lim (Pukekohe). Lim brought the score back to 14-7 in arrears, before Amer through two scoring bursts comfortably took the match.

The second semifinal is between Terry Leadbetter, Dave Jones, Alvin Gardiner and skip Dan Dickison (Tauranga) against the last local hope, Mark Kuklinski, Kelly Hill, John Roberts and Scott Roberts (Tower).

Dickison beat Dave Weir, Daryl Mackie, Gavin Brown and Steve Fisher (Royal Oak) 24-16, with the last end not played, in his only match of the day.

Dickison has the most decorated side of the semifinalists. They generally looked the better side, leading early, although a four to Fisher on the 10 had his side in front 10-9.

But then Dickison dominated, moving to 22-11 ahead. Fisher brought that back to 22-16 before a two on end 24 concluded the match.

Roberts had a classic quarterfinal against the Carlton Cornwall side of Mark Posa, Zoran Bartulovich, Petar Sain and Rob Ashton. Despite trailing for the majority of the match, Roberts won 22-19 to make the semis for a second-straight year.



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The Tower side ultimately finished the better, with lead Kuklinski in great touch.

The match also had some frustration for Scott Roberts. Behind 19-16 with three to play, but holding a hatful, Roberts trailed the jack for one.

Most sides would spit the dummy, but his teammates dug deep and drew four beauties on the next. Ashton was only able to remove one on the drive, the three shots giving Roberts an advantage of one playing the last end, which his side drew better to.

In the round three games played in the morning, Ashton defeated Craig De Faria (West End) 28-15. The damage was done in the middle stages, when Ashton came from 7-6 behind to 20-9 in front after 20 ends, with Bartulovich especially impressive in the game.

Roberts accounted for Peter Belliss (Aramoho) 26-21. Belliss led 12-4 after 10 ends and it could have been even greater. Roberts drew fourth shot on the eighth when seven down.

Slowly the Tower team found their feet. A second four on the 16th levelled the scores and then a three on the next gave them a lead. Roberts led by three with two to play and drew a top shot on the 24th to control the

game, even though he thought himself that the bowl was going to pull up short.

Hill controlled most of his match against John Garrud (West End), prevailing 28-14. The closest Garrud got was 11-10 behind, after it was earlier 11-3. Three fours after that blew the score out.

Walker had a close shave in beating Daniel Geaney (Blockhouse Bay) 21-20. The lead changed constantly throughout the match, but a five to Geaney on the 23rd had his side in front. Walker levelled on the next with a brace. And took the point on the last after Alldred, and then Growcott, drew well.

* There will be a 65-year age gap between two leads that face off in one-semifinal of The Devon Hotel Open fours-pairs event this morning. Dave McMurchy, aged 83 and leading for George Lyddiard (Kensington), plays Luca Dobson (Tower), aged 18 and leading for Camron Horo (Rahotu). McMurchy is best remembered for making the Dominion fours semifinals in 1985, while Lyddiard has twice been runner-up in the Open fours.

The other semifinal is between Allan McQuoid and Wayne Harris (Orewa) against Peter Ritchie (USA) and Kevin Hills (Tower).

Today's action will be livestreamed:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/W9n9LK9acpE?si=5eHg7UIM>

Fours and pairs results

Results of post section play in the Midlands Funds Management Taranaki Open fours at Paritutu yesterday:

Round 3: Dave Walker (Tahunanui) 21 Daniel Geaney (Blockhouse Bay) 20, Neville Hill (Onehunga & Districts) 28 John Garrud (West End) 14, Rob Ashton (Carlton Cornwall) 28 Craig De Faria (West End) 15, Scott Roberts (Tower) 26 Peter Belliss (Aramoho) 21.

Round 4: Logan Amer (Johnsonville) 29 Frankie Lim (Pukekohe) 12, Walker 25 Hill 21, Dan Dickison (Tauranga) 24 Steve Fisher (Royal Oak) 16, Roberts 22 Ashton 19.

Results of post section play in The Devon Hotel -sponsored Taranaki Open fours-pairs event at Paritutu and West End yesterday:

Section 1, round 1: Bruce Lilley (West End) 25 Russell Duggan (Central Levin) 10, Wayne Place (Reporoa) 25 Darren Scott (West End) 12, Wayne Harris (Orewa) 20 Erik Chilton (Kia Toa) 16, Kevin Hills (Oaks North) 24 Paul Howell (Inglewood) 12,

Gavin Bannatyne (Upper Hutt) 30 Kevan Sellers (Vogelstown) 17, Keith Alexander (Johnsonville) 21 Nathan Goodin (Rahotu) 20, Hugh Andrews (Bannockburn) 23 Ian Hosken (Clayton) 15.

Round 2: Lilley 23 Gavin McLeod (Tawa) 15, Harris 21 Place 18, Hills 20 Bannatyne 6, Andrews 23 Alexander 9. **Round 3:** Harris 22 Lilley 16, Hills 26 Andrews 16.

Section 2, round 1: Camron Horo (Rahotu) 24 Damian Peters (West End) 12, Mitch Taylor (Clayton) 24 Dean File (Fitzroy) 11, Gareth Evans (Johnsonville) 21 Warwick Pinker (Wanganui East) 17, Chris Carter (Parklands) 23 Kevin Mahon (Katikati) 20, Dave McMurchy (Kensington) 18 Blair Clarke (Tawa) 12, Andy Campbell (Mt Maunganui) 27 Piripi Huwyler (Para Bowls) 11, Mike Paton (Orewa) 18 Nathan Eriwata (Lepperton) 11.

Round 2: Horo 18 Reece Aitken (Fairfield) 17, Taylor 19 Evans 12, McMurchy 19 Carter 8, Paton 28 Campbell 10. **Round 3:** Horo 17 Taylor 16, McMurchy 17 Paton 15.