

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

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Dickison takes second title in five years

The JJ Goodwin Memorial Cup is on its way back to Tauranga after Dan Dickison's side won the 120th Midlands Funds Management Taranaki men's Open fours title yesterday.

Dickison and his side of Terry Leadbetter, Dave Jones and Alvin Gardiner ran out comfortable 34-22 victors in the final over Dave Walker's Tahunanui (Nelson) team in the final. Walker was skipping Chris Alldred, Mike Dickie and Graham Growcott.

It was a genuine team effort from the Tauranga side and also Dickison's second victory in the Open having also skipped the winning team in 2021.

All four members of the Tauranga side contributed to the victory, with inevitably one of the team producing the goods each end.

They led 15-0 after six heads. But Walker's side responded with two twos and then a five — one of the few ends that the Tauranga side did fail on. That made it 15-9.

Walker held shot on the next but Dickison pushed the shot bowl off the jack to take a three and head to the tea break ahead 18-9 after 10 ends.

It was a momentum mover and Dickison, aided by a five on the 12th and a four on the 16th, went out to 31-11.

Walker's side hadn't made it all the way through to the final, winning 13 games in succession, for nothing. They were skilled and also fighters.

This was illustrated again over the coming ends when they closed to 32-22 behind.

With four ends still remaining, they had a chance, especially on the 22nd when they held two shots. But Dickison pushed through the counters, moving the jack back for two.

A further two on the next end concluded the final.

Dickison's side was earmarked as one of the favoured teams at the start of the week and overcame a set back on Monday afternoon.



Champions left to right: Terry Leadbetter, Dave Jones, Dan Dickison and Alvin Gardiner.

Dickison started his bowls in the late 1980s at St Clair in Dunedin where his father, Phil, was a member. His first centre title came in Wellington, before he claimed a gold star in the Far North. He has 20 Bay of Plenty titles.

Gardiner started bowls 51 years ago at the Invercargill club. He won five Southland titles, seven in Canterbury, three NZ Intercentres and best of all two Dominions — the fours in 2010 and the pairs in 2012.

Jones, a player of 47 years experience, commenced his bowls at Paekakariki, before moving to Taihape for 25 years and winning two Wanganui titles. He has won eight Bay of Plenty crowns and is the greenkeeper at Taupo.

Leadbetter is the least experienced of the four, having played for just eight years. He started with Burnside, before joining Papamoa and is now a member of Tauranga South. He has two Bay of Plenty pairs titles.



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Rain overnight and during the morning forced organisers to move play into the Paritutu indoor complex. The players completed their trial ends outside and play commenced, but then the rain became heavier, with the green showing surface water.

Organisers waited for 25 minutes to see if the weather was going to improve. It didn't and so play was moved inside.

It was in the morning semifinals that Dickison ended the hopes of a Taranaki victory when his team defeated Scott Roberts (Tower) 28-19.

Roberts was skipping Mark Kuklinski, Kelly Hill and John Roberts. They at least had the satisfaction of being the best performed Taranaki side.

Dickison shot out to an 8-0 lead and in the final analysis, that was the difference. That became 21-11, and while Roberts brought that back to 21-17, Dickison moved away again.

Walker's team beat the Johnsonville side of father-and-son Simon and Marshall Kenny and brothers Brady and Logan Amer 30-21.



Runners-up, left to right: Mike Dickie, Chris Alldred, Dave Walker and Graham Growcott.

After 20 ends the scores were 21-all, after Amer had got back into the game with a seven on the 16th.

Marshall Kenny, aged 17 years, became the latest player to compete in an Open semifinal.

RITCHIE AND HILLS WIN PAIRS: Peter Ritchie (Oaks North, California), left, and Kevin Hills (Tower) won The Devon Hotel pairs event. They beat Luca Dobson (Tower) and Camron Horo (Rahotu) 22-16 in the final.

Hills and Ritchie shot out to a 9-0 lead in the final. Dobson and Horo closed to 12-9 behind but then promptly dropped a five.

The contest was wide open still with four ends remaining and the difference just two shots.

But four singles on the remaining ends sealed the victory for Hills and Ritchie.

Ritchie attended school in New Plymouth and played football for NP Old Boys. He has played bowls for 15 years in the USA, where there is about 3,400 bowlers.

Hills also won the pairs in 1998 with the late Dennis Hohaia.

In the semifinals, Dobson and Horo beat Dave McMurchy and George Lyddiard (Kensington) 19-14, while Ritchie and Hills defeated Allan McQuoid and Wayne Harris (Orewa) 21-11.

