

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

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Semi thriller sees an all-Bay of Plenty final

In a dramatic and nerve-tinging finish, Marilyn Constantine's Tauranga side ensured an all-Bay of Plenty final in the 73rd Devon Hotel Taranaki women's Open fours at Paritutu yesterday.

Constantine's side edged out Adele French (Thames Coast) 23-22 in a semifinal match that had almost everything, and this morning meets Sue Hodges (Omokoroa) in the final.

Hodges' side includes Karen Pickering, Rachelle Morrison and Char Beckett. It prevailed 34-11 over Lynn Clifford's Mercury Bay lineup of Judy Campbell, Larisa King and Sue Rossiter in its semifinal.

The semifinal victory by Constantine, who is skipping Mary Campbell, Carolyn Tasker and Mina Paul, was a conclusion that was as good as it gets in bowls.

After trailing 22-16 after 23 ends, Constantine made French's side of Bev Rogers, Val Mathews and Kathryn McGaughey pay when she pushed off Rogers' shot and then drew the bonus for a haul of six on the 24th.

That made it all-square playing the last end, and that's when the quality of play broke most bowls ceilings.

Campbell held a good shot first. Mathews drew the jack to hold shot. Paul in turn trailed the jack to take the shot back. McGaughey turned Mathews' bowl in to hold the advantage. Paul, after changing to the backhand, ran off the shot bowl to lie two.

Constantine made it three. French, running, connected with the head but was still one down. Constantine covered. And French was wide with her last.

Given the importance of the match, the deepness of the game in such a tournament, and the closeness of the scores, the play was top-shelf stuff.

Constantine's side had luck on its side in the opening part of the game as it took an 11-5 lead after nine ends. Twice French held fives.

Once French moved the jack to go one down. Another time Constantine, attacking, wicked in to take the shot.

French's side brought the score back to 13-11 after 15 ends, before French, crucially when two down, drew the shot with her last bowl.

The momentum moved with Thames Coast. They took a four on 18th and a three on the 23rd gave them what should have been a match-winning six-shot buffer.

But then the drama started.

Against Clifford, Hodges, after dropping a single on the first, replied with a five on the second. Soon it became 15-1 after six ends. By the afternoon tea break that had become 21-3 after 10 ends.

The pavlova helped Clifford's side to an extent. A five on the 15th made it 24-11. But that was as good as it got for them with Hodges winning the remaining heads.

It was a quiet end to what had been an excellent week for Clifford, who won three Wellington titles before moving north, and her side. They arrived in New Plymouth last Sunday, watched the men's final, acclimatised and then delivered the goods.

The fours final, like the pairs, starts at 9am this morning at Paritutu.

* Unfortunately, with the Bowls New Zealand live-streaming team engaged in the trans-Tasman in Wellington and an alternative supplier being unavailable, there will be no live coverage of this morning's final.

End-by-end updates will be published, however, on the Bowls Taranaki website results page.



French was involved in the closest of the four quarterfinals in the morning, her side pipping Pat Dixon (Naenae) 21-20.

Dixon, playing with Kathy Cross, Anne Robinson and Leonie Gough, led 8-2 after seven ends. French then dominated the middle stages, taking the advantage 17-10 after 18 ends.

But Dixon levelled the ledger four ends later, and with a three on the penultimate head, took a two-shot lead into the last.

Cross was handy on the last end, but Rogers, trailed the jack for two. McGaughey added another, and neither Gough, nor Dixon, with two pushes, could alter the head.

Clifford also made her move in the middle stages of her game against the Wanganui East quarter of Adrienne Richdale, Thelma Ward, Joan Raymond and skip Debbie Wildermoth. Clifford took the contest 29-18. That was after Wildermoth had led 7-2. Clifford turned it around to a 21-12 lead.

Constantine's side was too steady for the Mercury Bay lineup of Colleen Sexton, Irene Gross, Nirie Reddy and Lee McDonald, winning 24-13. Leading 15-7 after 15 ends, Constantine claimed a four on the next end. A three on the 19th sealed the contest.

Hodges beat Janet Olliver (Waitarere Beach) 26-16. Olliver led 10-6 after nine ends. But a five on the 11th gave Hodges the lead. Olliver's side of Michelle Macdonald, Mary Van der Velden and Gloria Michael were still in touch, 15-13 down after 15 ends, before Hodges won the next six ends to take a match-winning break.

* The opposing skips in the final of the Midlands Funds Management fours-pairs event this morning are two of the most successful women players produced in Taranaki, Cathy Andrews (Paritutu) and Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy).

That is appropriate given the pairs winners will become the second recipients of the Margaret Cole Trophy.

Andrews has accumulated 15 Taranaki titles and Adams 13. Kileigh Barber, leading for Andrews has four Taranaki titles, while Adams' lead, Judy Crawford, is a member of the senior Taranaki representative squad this season. In yesterday's semifinals, Andrews and Barber beat sisters Lyn Bowcock (Taradale) and Bev Bromfield (West End) 25-12, while Adams and Crawford defeated Susan Cottam and Noeline Goldsworthy (West End) 21-7.

Fours and pairs results

Results of post section play in The Devon Hotel Taranaki women's Open fours:

Quarterfinals: Karen Pickering, Rachelle Morrison, Char Beckett, Sue Hodges (Omokoroa) 26 Michelle Macdonald, Mary Van der Velden, Gloria Michael, Janet Olliver (Waitarere Beach) 16; Judy Campbell, Larisa King, Sue Rossiter, Lynn Clifford (Mercury Bay) 27 Adrienne Richdale, Thelma Ward, Joan Raymond, Debbie Wildermoth (Wanganui East) 18; Mary Campbell, Carolyn Tasker, Mina Paul, Marilyn Constantine (Tauranga) 24 Colleen Sexton, Irene Gross, Nirie Reddy, Lee McDonald (Mercury Bay) 13; Bev Rogers, Val Mathews, Kathryn McGaughey, Adele French (Thames Coast) 21 Kathy Cross, Anne Robinson, Leonie Gough, Pat Dixon (Naenae) 20. **Semifinals:** Hodges 34 Clifford 11; Constantine 23 French 22.

Results of post section play in the Midlands Funds Management Taranaki women's Open fours-pairs:

Round 1: Viv Borrie, Yvonne Gibb (Miramar) 24 Di Howard, Di Smith (Havelock North) 12; Aroha Crichton, Mary Carpenter (Whakatane) 20 Ann Looney, Martie Sisson (Whakatane) 14; Judy Crawford, Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy) 22 Maureen Drury, Allison Williamson (Taradale) 14; Noeline Goldsworthy, Susan Cottam (West End) 18 Lyn Hunn, Louise Fitness (Havelock North) 13; Jen Brown, Fay Jones (North End) 23 Chris Commane, Rita Davey (Opunake) 17. **Round 2:** Kileigh Barber, Cathy Andrews (Paritutu) 23 Geneva Barnard, Jane Henderson (Opunake) 16; Bev Bromfield, Lyn Bowcock (Composite) 18 Gibb 17; Adams 26 Carpenter 6; Cottam 23 Jones 12. **Round 3:** Andrews 25 Bowcock 12; Adams 21 Cottam 7.