

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Monday, January 15, 2018

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113th Open promises much, says Bennett

The 113th Taranaki men's open fours, which commences in New Plymouth and surrounding areas this morning, has all the makings of a top tournament, says Bowls Taranaki chairman, Brien Bennett QSM.

Everything is in order for a brilliant week of bowls, Bennett said. "While the weather forecast at this stage may show some rain on Wednesday, locals will confirm that the forecasters have predicting rain in these parts for three months — but we are in an official drought!"

The greens advisory panel are comfortable with all of the chosen venues, with inspections haven't taken place 10 days ago.

Inglewood will not be used this year, as its only natural surface was re-sown during the winter, but all of the other greens should be familiar with regular competitors.

Neither will the Stratford-Avon greens be used, despite them being as good as any in the province. The Taranaki centre has a long-standing rule that it will play on the best greens available — but within the divisions where the event has been allocated to.

Same format as last time - and some

Today's Taranaki Open repeats the same format that has basically remained unchanged for over 70 years.

All 156 teams will play two games of 25

ends today, tomorrow, Wednesday and Thursday, with those sides winning six or more games advancing to Friday's post section rounds.

Friday also sees the

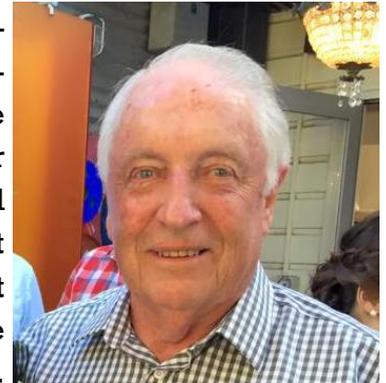
"We would be delighted to use Stratford-Avon, given the high-quality of their greens, but we need to also recognise that it is in a different weather zone to the other clubs selected.

And, unlike last season, when we believed that we didn't have sufficient greens of quality in the north, this year we do."

Bennett said, overall, the Board of Bowls Taranaki are happy with the entry of 156 teams. "Of course, we always want more. But considering that we have had five withdrawals since entries closed, it is satisfactory — and two up on last year.

The only changes to the published programme are Sonny Hokai's Far North side being replaced in section two by a composite team headed by Inglewood's Don Gyde; and the use of the New Plymouth No 1 green as opposed to New Plymouth No 2.

"All is set for a great week."



commencement of the pairs event for non-qualifiers and non-participants of the fours.

Both the pairs and fours finals will be held on Sunday.

WEATHER FORECAST

Tuesday



Wednesday



Thursday



Plenty of action-packed sections

The field of 156 teams have been divided into 12 sections, some of which promise some real action during the first four days of qualifying.

Section one includes past Bowls NZ chairman John Carter (Hutt), David Hood (Kerikeri), who has been a consistent performer at the NZ Open and has won a bucket-load of titles in the Far North, Tony Holdsworth (Mt Albert), the 1994 Dominion singles runner-up, and Graham Fulford (playing under the Australian banner this week), who was part of John Granger's 2002 winning Open team.

Youthful Adam Wishnoski (New Lynn) leads **section two**, which includes two useful West End sides, Neil Candy and John Sexton, Graham Baxter (Hawera Park) and Ian Lowry (Rahotu), while Cliff Mitchell-Burnard (Te Kuiti) returns.

Brian Little (Palmerston North), the 2016 champion, returns to the skipping role this year and his side appears the most likely in **section three**. The group includes another past winner, Darren Goodin (Paritutu), Wellington gold star holder Brent Stubbins (Johnsonville) and Terry Osment (Te Awamutu).

The O'Sullivan family team from Inglewood are reunited in 2018, with Gerry again taking the skip berth. They feature in **section four**, alongside Ray Hudson (Central Levin), Les Dempster-Rivett (Frankton Junction) and Kevin Coombe (Aramoho).

Barry Wynks (Takaro), a member of the NZ Para team for this year's Commonwealth Games, skips a new-look team in **section five**, where the favoured teams include dual winner Mark Anderson (Alton), Peter Dorreen (Far North RSA) and Ian Coombe (Mairangi Bay).

Craig Johns (West End), the supervisor of **section six**, presents a strong side, but he won't have it all his own way against Paul Bartosh (Morrinsville RSA), 2006 Dominion fours winner

Ross Thorn (Naenae) and Manawatu rep Scotty McGavin (Bulls).

After a long absence, Howard Ivory (Wilton) returns with the 1989 champion John Earles at No 3. They are in **section seven** along with Gerard Slattery (Hinuera) and Mike Cavanagh (Pukekohe). Stu Settle (Hinuera), the 2014 winner, remains an excellent supporter of the Open. His side will tangle in **section eight** with the likes of Terry Cullen (Helensville), Roger Neilson (Wanganui East), Noel Probyn (Fitzroy) and Garry Murfitt (West End).

Cary Pinker's Wanganui East side were semifinalists in 2016, but they face a tough qualifying draw in **section nine**. They play prominent Hawke's Bay bowler Ian Mason (Havelock North) this afternoon, Dave Selby (Hillcrest) on Tuesday, and then on Wednesday, meet two of the most consistent skips in the Open of this generation, Rex Holmes (Paraparaumu Beach) and Gary Lilley (West End).

Section 10 comprises a number of very solid units, including Bernie Martelletti (Te Puke), Ray Park (Wanganui), Ian Andrews (Paritutu) and Anton Ferrari (Wilton).

Former international Dan Delany (Royal Oak), a four-time winner and the 2017 runner-up, again poses a big threat from **section 11**. He will tangle with Wellington CEO Dave Hewitt (Silverstream), Warren Bellringer (New Plymouth) and the 1987 Dominion pairs champion Peter Clark (Tauranga South).

Kiwi great Peter Belliss (Aramoho) heads **section 12**, alongside Steve Hoeft (Pt Chevalier), Peter Thompson (Paekakariki) and 2003 winner Russell Hardy (Tower).



2017 was Ces Bell's year; but Hawke's Bay team has not returned

Taradale's Ces Bell won his second Taranaki Open fours 12 months ago when he skipped his side of Frank Grantham, Ken Smith and Fred Ellison to the title.

In the final, the Hawke's Bay side defeated Dan Delany and his Auckland team of Mike Nasey, Norman Scott-Morrison and Joe White-law 27-15 at the West End greens.

Unfortunately, Smith died during the winter. The loss of his close bowling mate had a significant impact on Bell, who skipped an Aramoho side to win the title in 1992. He has

in fact not played at all this season. "I would love to come back and attempt to defend the title," Bell said. "But my heart is just not in bowls at the moment."

In last year's semifinals, Bell came from behind to beat Wanganui East's Carey Pinker, while Delany withheld — just — a storming fight-back from Aramoho's Peter Belliss, winning by one shot.



Selby takes the honours in Waimea's pre-Open tournament

Former Hawke's Bay and Wanganui rugby rep Dave Selby and his Hillcrest side of Murray Young, Trevor Harris and Steve Lidington warmed up for this week's Open by winning the pre-Open tournament at Waimea yesterday.

Last season Selby skipped

the winning side in the Mata-mata Open fours.

Second place went to a Waimea team entered under the name of Benny Hill, who impressed in qualifying in last season's Dominion sinlges, whilst a member of Rakaia. Hill's team comprised his son, Mike Hori, Robert

Wolfe and Levi Wilson.

Popular Canterbury visitor Bob Harris and his team of Alan Dannefaerd, Martin Hammond and Murray Foskett were third.

Eight teams took part in the Sporty's-sponsored tournament.

- Barry Stevenson

Open News - your way to stay in touch

Bowls Taranaki Executive Officer, Neville Elliott, said this first edition of Open News is designed to inform players and spectators in a similar way to the brilliant coverage the tournament has previously received from the Taranaki Daily News.

"Fairfax made the decision in December to move away from covering regional sport.

Like all sports codes, we were disappointed with the decision, but we can not sit on our hands," Elliott said.

Bowls needed as much profile and coverage as it could possibly get.

"Our website will be fully updated with results after each round, and progress scores during post section."

Elliott also said that Face-

book will be used more than ever before and that there were prospects of some live streaming — although "we don't really have the technology available to us that was so well used at the Nationals."

Newstalk ZB, on 1053 am, will provide coverage after 2pm and 7pm each day, in association with Hassall Homes.



Johns, Brien and Dorreen victors in West End dress-rehearsal

West End's Craig Johns, Stokes Valley's Steve Brien and Far North RSA's Peter Dorreen were the respective green winners from a pre-Open tournament that was held at West End used.

All three greens were used to accommodate the 36 entries.

On green one, **Johns'** quartet of Jordan Linn, Dave Wilson and Steve Walker took out the top prize, in verifying their side as one of the favourites for the Open.

Second place went to the Sunshine Coast (Australian) side of Noel Allison, Heinz Quatember, Alan Young and skip Dennis Layden.

Third place went to a Tawa team skipped by well-known indoor bowls identity, and a past president of the national federation, Trevor Rayner. Rayner's team was Graham Williams, Paul Hassall and Gavin McLeod.

Brien skipped a family team to win the honours on green two. His team included his brother John, his cousin Glen Brookes, and Brookes' father Noel.



Glen Brookes son, Corey, will play during the tournament week, with Noel Brookes continuing to fulfil a Public Relations role with Bowls Taranaki.

In second place was Noel Probyn's Fitzroy side of Tony Walsh, Nigel Newton and Ian Mahoney.

Third position went to the strong Kerikeri team of Trevor Smith, Kevin Briscoe, Barry Allison and former Taranaki junior rep David Hood (skip).

Dorreen's side that were victorious on green three comprised John Filmer, Robbie Davidson and Paul Huxtable.



Naenae president Ross Thorn, who made the quarterfinals last season, and his team of Robbie Yemm, Mark Clements and Lou Newman took second place

The Vogeltown side of Laurence Hori, Conrad Jagusch, Wayne Te Huki and Kevan Sellers (Vogeltown) rounded out the place-getters by taking third.

Like Waimea, the tournament was also sponsored by Sporty's Café and Bar in Fitzroy.

- **Graeme McDowell**

Match of the morning — Settle v Probyn

One of the most intriguing matches this morning will take place at Fitzroy No 1, where Noel Probyn, a three-time winner of the Open, will meet the 2014 champion **Stu Settle** (Hinuera).



Probyn's side of 1962 Empire Games cycling silver medalist Tony Walsh, Nigel Newton and Ian Mahoney missed out on qualifying last year after making the last 16 the year before.

Settle's side has been a consistent performer for many years, and following their break-through victory were third-equal in 2015. The team again includes Kevin Smith and Bruce Milne, with Stu's brother, John, returning after missing last season.

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