

# Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

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## Morning “sprinkles” fails to dampen enthusiasm

Two rain “sprinkles” at 7am and at the conclusion of the first round failed to dampen the enthusiasm of competitors as the 114th Taranaki men’s open fours got underway in New Plymouth and surrounding area yesterday.

Blustery winds, especially in the afternoon round, coupled with the showers, meant the temperature was much more kinder to bowlers. But those same conditions also caused some problems for some of the favoured sides who dropped matches during the day.

The most prominent team to slip-up was Brody Dix’s New Lynn side. Dix and his side of Adam Wishnoski, Keith Ansell and Gary Dougherty, the 2018 champions, had to work overtime to dispel the challenge of Motueka’s Kerry Bishop 28-26 first up.

But there was no escape in the afternoon, when Dix’s side was defeated 36-24 by Geoff Cagney (Sunshine Coast). It means the New Lynn side can only afford one more loss in section play. Although, given that they lost two of their opening three games last season, and still marched majestically to

the title, there is no need for any panic in their camp yet.

Another surprise was the opening loss incurred by West End’s Craig De Faria, pictured right. De Faria, formerly Johns, has been in excellent touch this season, having already claimed the Taranaki open singles and centre fours titles, the latter with the same team he has for this week.



But De Faria came unstuck against Tauranga South’s Mike Oldfield 27-24. After taking an hour to get on the board, De Faria turned the game around to lead 19-9. However, Oldfield replied in kind taking a lead of two shots into the final end. There De Faria held two before, with his last delivery, Oldfield landed on the shot bowl to secure the victory. De Faria returned an emphatic 29-8 win over the 1995 winner, Kevin Hills (Tower), in the afternoon, but Oldfield fell 22-17 to two-winner Gerard Slattery (Tui Park).

## Councillor Brown officially opens the Open

In keeping with the best traditions of the Taranaki Open, New Plymouth District Councillor Gordon Brown officially opened the event at Paritutu yesterday.

Brown, who represented the NPDC in the absence of

Mayor Neil Holdom, highlighted the significant contribution the Open continues to make to the district. After the official ceremony was complete, Brown hit the greens, too. Playing for Bill Foley (New Plymouth), he enjoyed

a loss and a win during the day.



## Full section wraps

A number of leading lights went through the first day without too many problems. Here is the full day's review, section-by-section.

**Section 1:** Paritutu's Darren Goodin was one of three teams to emerge with the perfect record, joining Dennis Ryan (Paraparaumu Beach) and Garry Murfitt (West End). Playing on his home green, Goodin won both games comfortably. The 2005 winner, Ray Park (Wanganui), found the going tougher, sneaking through in the first match by one-shot after his side had held a three-shot lead on the last end. But Park lost in the afternoon. The only morning game not to be completed, between Naenae's Steve Critchlow and Fitzroy's Maurice Kelly, was concluded after the second round and went the way of Critchlow when he drew a toucher on the extra end.

**Section 2:** West End's Dean Elgar, Hutt's John Carter, Paritutu's Mike Walsh and Bay View's Joe Johansen were the sides to come through unscathed. Elgar won both matches with something to spare, while Walsh, who was in the winning team in 1990 and 1993, skipped his side to two comfortable wins. The second victory was against Wilton's Howard Ivory, which was the second loss of the day for the team for the Capital. However, Carter's long-standing side managed to survive the day, although it needed a four on the last end, which included a measure, to pip Sunshine Coast's Allan Sandercock 22-21.

**Section 3:** There are five teams who slept well in the group after two wins — Garry Banks (Beach Haven), Peter Belliss (Aramoho), Ray Glogoski (Kerikeri), Mark Anderson (Tower) and the 2014 winner, Kevin Smith (Hinuera). Belliss had a few anxious moments in the morning, before breaking free 24-16 from one-winner Colin Boyle (Epsom), while Banks only had three points to spare when he edged

one-winner Brian Cooper (Levin) in the later round.

**Section 4:** Birkenhead's Nigel Drew won yesterday's match of the morning. Drew's side beat the Central Levin side entered under the name of Ian Mahoney but skipped by Dereck Taylor 34-17. Mahoney, still recovering from a hip replacement seven weeks ago, slotted into the side at No 3. However, things didn't get any better in the afternoon, with the Central Levin side losing 23-16 to Don Ramsey (Pukekohe). Joining Ramsey and Drew as unbeaten teams were Ian Porteous (Aramoho) and Ian Lowry (Rahotu).

**Section 5:** Rex Holmes' favoured Paraparaumu Beach side had to work extra hard for both of its wins — 23-18 over Russell Haddock (Wanganui) and 22-17 over Kevin Briscoe (Far North RSA).

Other two-winners were Ross McGrail (Putaruru), John Sexton (West End), Richard Meacle (Sunshine Coast) and the under-rated Fitzroy skip, Colin Christie.

**Section 6:** Frankton Railway's Steve Liddington, a former team mate of the great Robbie Robson, showed that old-fashion drawing bowls still have a place in the game. Playing with Henselite supergrips, Liddington's side posted two wins. Havelock North's Bruce Stewart, after a three year absence from the Open, also notched up two wins. In the morning round, his side overcame a tea-time deficit against West End's Ross Henderson, a semifinalist in 2018, winning 29-22, and then made it a profitable day beating Hawera Park's Graham Baxter 22-16.



**Section 7:** Inglewood's Gerry O'Sullivan, a semifinalist in the recent Dominion pairs in Auckland, emerged from the day with two wins. But it was a close-run thing in both matches. In the morning, his side needed an extra end to edge Waikanae Beach's Rhys Hakkens 29-28 and then posted a nail-biting 26-25 victory over Stratford-Avon's Morrie Stieller in the afternoon. Stieller, who had been a handsome opening winner over Peter Dorreen, led by six with two ends to play. But the O'Sullivan side, edged on by father Jack who is managing and not playing this year, grabbed a six and then took the necessary single on the last end. Palmerston North's Brian Little also won twice, the second by a surprisingly comfortable margin 24-11 over Naenae's Ross Thorn. The Chris Alldred (Sunshine Coast) side, which is in fact being skipped by Neil Fisher, won twice, as did Te Kuiti's Colin Young. Hakkens, Dorreen and Thorn all finished with one win.

**Section 8:** In hitting 30 twice, Wanganui East's Cary Pinker issued a warning that his side means business in this tournament. They were joined on two wins by Anton Ferrari (Naenae) and Kelvin Bishop (West End). Ferrari's second win was 26-20 over Ian Coombe (Mairangi Bay), who at least kept in touch by securing a win in the first game.

**Section 9:** Orewa's Mike Paton had an excellent opening day with two resounding wins, the first 30-10 over Hamish Kape (Okato). Despite the original skip, Allan Stewart, being a late withdrawal, the Mangere side now being skipped by Glen Newton, managed to win twice. There was merit in both victories, with the second one being 28-26 over Pukekohe's Mike Cavanagh, who has been a regular qualifier. Paritutu's Steve Cottam also notched two wins, the second being a remarkable 29-25 one over Dion Davis (Kaikohe). Davis, the president of the Far North is on debut in the Open and looked on track for his second win

of the day when leading 17-4, before Cottam's crew turned the tide. And Bill Johnston, playing on his home Fitzroy green where he won that club's senior singles on Sunday, also started with two wins.

**Section 10:** Keinsington's Dean McMurchy, Royal Oak's Dan Delany, Tui Park's Gerard Slattery and Parklands' Chris Carter all posted two wins from the tough section. Delany didn't find it easy, though, beating John Tobin (Riverhead) 26-24 and only broke after the afternoon tea break to beat Steve Brien (Stokes Valley) 28-19. And in the Archer family game, which drew a big crowd, the brother-in-laws (Allan Batley) beat the brothers (David Archer) 31-12. Late father, Bob, would have been proud.



**Section 11:** The group produced the most lop-sided results of the day, with six teams unbeaten and six without a win from the 14. Those unbeaten were Gary Lilley (West End), Jim Priest (Oakura), Bruce Phillips (Tower), David Hood (Kerikeri), John Claydon (Masterton) and Merv Whitten (Palmerston North), who's team includes Denis Duffy, a two-time Rothmans intercentre winner. Hood got the nod 27-26 in the last game over Terry Osment (Johnsonville), who had opened with a comfortable win.

**Section 12:** Hillcrest's Dave Selby was the only side to come through with the perfect record. The Waikato side beat Aramoho's Kevin Coombe 24-16 and New Plymouth's Roger Gregory 25-18. Coombe got back on course in the afternoon, beating Ian Andrews (Paritutu) 25-20. Andrews had won comfortably in the morning. After a morning loss, Brent Stubbins (Miramar) beat Noel Probyn (Fitzroy), another one-winner, 23-21.

## Taranaki Open a vital part of the calendar

The Taranaki Open fours is a vital part of the calendar in the sport in this country, so says Bowls New Zealand CEO, Mark Cameron.

Cameron is currently in the province watching the Open, as he also did last season, and continues to be impressed with the competition and comradeship he sees around the greens.

For the current season, Bowls NZ introduced a “Summer of Bowls” calendar, which saw the sport’s parent body in this country endorse a number of tournaments. “The Taranaki Open fours was the first on that calendar. That’s how important we view the event.”

Cameron is now into his second year in the job. He identified early the need for changes in the sport and believed the televised Bowls3five event had been a great success. It showed that the game could be played in a shorter time slot and could be appealing to bowlers and non-bowlers.

“However, there is still very much a need for tournaments like the Taranaki Open. You can not deny the success that the event continues to experience.”

“I thoroughly enjoyed my time here last year and am delighted to be back, meeting a number of old faces, along with new ones. I’m tempted to come back as a competitor — one day.”

“This year I have detected more interest and enthusiasm about new and junior players. The corporate and casual markets are showing

some most encouraging growth, too. These are ideal ways to introduce new members to our game.”

Cameron said he is thoroughly enjoying his time at Bowls NZ. He has previously been employed in cricket, netball and basketball and rated his current job as the most pleasurable he had had in any codes.



## Match of the morning — Lilley v Hood

Two of the unbeaten teams that will square off this morning will be West End’s Gary Lilley and Kerikeri’s David Hood.

Lilley is a three-time winner of the Open. On the first day he beat James Carter (Paritutu) 43-11 and Kearin Pollard (Hawera Park) 27-19.

Hood, who commenced his bowls in Kaponga before moving to the Far North and establishing an excellent record in that centre, beat Ross Henderson (Reporoa) 29-15 and Terry Osment (Johnsonville) 27-26

The Lilley-Hood clash will take place at Paritutu A.

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