

# Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Tuesday, January 29, 2019

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## New winner to be found in 2019 Open

There will be a new winner of this year's Taranaki women's Open fours tournament, which starts in New Plymouth this morning.

Last year's champion side of Karen Clarke, Robyn Davis, Marilyn McLeod and skip Margaret Reed (Tauranga South) are not among the 48 entries that have been divided into four sections for the first three days of the event.

The clubs being used are Paritutu, which acts as headquarters, West End, Vogeltown and New Plymouth.

The six section play games, up to and including Thursday afternoon, require teams to win four of those matches in order to qualify for Friday's post section rounds.

Numbers are down six teams on last year, but all is not lost, said Bowls Taranaki president, Brien Bennett QSM, pictured right.

"We would be kidding ourselves if we said that we were happy with the decline. We are not," Bennett said.

However, one of the factors in the reduction, it is believed, is the Aotearoa Maori national tournament, Bennett said. That competition, being held in Hastings, occurs on Saturday and Sunday this week, clashing with the closing stages of the Open. "We have lost some entries because of the clash."

It is the first time that the two events have conflicted. The Aotearoa Maori event is held on the weekend closest to Waitangi Day. Previously, when that day fell on a Wednes-

day, the Aotearoa Maori event would be held on the weekend after. Instead this time it is being held on the weekend before. "The draft dates for 2020 indicate that there should not be a repeat of the clash."

**Section 1:** Three visitors to keep an eye on are Marilyn Constantine, formerly of Wanganui and now of Tauranga, Sharon Siegruhn, who's side contains two members of the 2017 winning team, and Robyn Wallace (Omarunui). Constantine, who has played for Bay of Plenty since moving north, opens with a tough match against Lepperton's Ellie Goble.

Goble is a three-time winner of the event and has been in good recent form, winning the Tauranga women's open fours earlier in the month. The other members of that side are also competing in the Open this week. No 3 Pauline Davy, who now plays for Opunake, will skip the only side from Coastal Taranaki in the competition, after the originally entered skip Bev Robinson withdrew. Davy is also in section one. Goble's two front players in Tauranga, Heather Hughes and Jean Haggerty, are playing in section four with Carol Pearce.

Two other prominent skips in section one are the 2013 Dominion singles winner Val McEl-downey (New Plymouth) and the 2013 Dominion fours winning skip Heather Johns (Paritutu).



**Tauranga champs: Heather Hughes, Jean Haggerty, Pauline Davy and Ellie Goble.**

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**Section 2:** Shapes as a group that will be tough to qualify from. Denise Samuel, a semi-finalist last year, is back in the mix, while Pam Burgess (Wanganui) skips an imposing-looking side.

Ngairie Cowen (Palmerston North) remains a useful competitor, while the Central Cambridge side this year will be skipped by Waikato gold star holder, Alison Senior.



**Ngairie Cowan**

Of the Taranaki teams, Gloria Shaw (Paritutu), Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy) and last season's runner-up, Patty Symes (Tower), should all be competitive.

**Section 3:** The nature of the draw for a section of 12 is that the teams numbered one to six in the group will play the bottom six. There is a risk that one side of the section could dominate the other, and this group has a look like this about it.

Karen de Jongh, formerly from Auckland and now of Hillcrest in Hamilton, will take the early favouritism tag for the week. Daughter

## Changes to programme

There have been a number of changes to the originally published programme.

The most significant of these is that the Vogeltown B green has taken the place of Fitzroy 2.

This change affects sections two (Tuesday), three (Wednesday) and four (Thursday).

Further, after the withdrawal of Kerin Roberts (Browns Bay) from section four, the group has been redrawn into a 10-team section.

Two-time winner Shona Chambers (Browns Bay) has also withdrawn. Her place in section one has been taken by Liz Johnstone (Waitara), who will skip a composite side.

of the famed Jos, de Jongh has had a decorated career in the Queen city, including a couple of titles at the now-defunct Auckland Bowls run New Zealand Open.

Her side this week includes Carol Cox and Sue Broadbent, plus Debbie White. White came from 20-11 down to win the Dominion singles three weeks ago today.

The top half of the draw also includes Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood), who was the women's player of the year in Taranaki last season, former Black Jack Cathy Andrews (Paritutu) and Gayle Melrose (Papakura), the 2012 Dominion fours winner. Melrose also has a member of the 2017 winning side, Cheryl Hunia.

**Section 4:** The group has a very even look to it. Kristin Stampa (Hawera Park) continues to chase titles with enthusiasm. She is a past winner, as is Valda Rowan (Paritutu).

Mary Bettelheim (Ohope) and Karen Forrest (Papakura) both qualified last season and would be expected to do the same this time. Solid local sides headed by Janice Ropitini (West End), Berys Norgate (Paritutu) and Carol Pearce (Lepperton) all have enough talent within their teams to qualify.

But inevitably, across all four sections, many of the aforementioned will not secure the necessary four wins. So competitive is the event.

## Match of the morning — Burgess v Adams

The feature match of the opening morning is at Vogeltown between Pam Burgess (Wanganui) and Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy).

Both present very useful sides.

Burgess has Debbie Wildermoth, Dot Belliss and former cycling champion, Denise Taylor, in her side. Both Burgess and Belliss were members of Cynthia Adams' victorious Dominion fours team in 2015.

Adams, who won the Taranaki open singles last October, is a gold star holder in the province, as is her No 3, Vickie Kelly. Lesley Te Awa and Faye Hill are the front end.

