

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

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Green issues early warning on opening day

While it is still early days, Ngongotaha's Wendy Green sounded a loud warning on the first day's play in the 68th Taranaki women's Open fours yesterday.

Green and her powerful side posted two big wins to be half way to qualifying. They are joined by 13 other unbeaten teams. But on a joint appraisal of results and her team on paper, Green has emerged as a leading contender for the title.

Playing in **section C** at Vogeltown yesterday, Green (nee Clarke), who grew up in Stratford and is a much-decorated player now, received a stern examination in the first half of her opening match against Taranaki rep, Susan Cottam (West End).

After 13 of the 25 ends, the scores were locked at 10-all. But as the drizzle — which of course was all-but non-existent last week for the men's Open — started to subside, Green took control, and aided by a seven, whistled home 30-12.

In the afternoon, Green was too strong for Chris Commane (Opunake), winning 29-8.

Green has an especially strong team this week. In addition to regular team mate, Lynette McIntosh at No 3, Green has former double Wellington titleholder Huia Ratana leading and Mina Paul at second.

Paul is the most successful women's bowler in the history of Bay of Plenty. She has four bars to her gold star, won the Dominion fours twice with the Khan family, and has secured other New Zealand honours in the intercentre (twice) and national club triples.

Val McEldowney (New Plymouth) also collected a seven in the morning as her side posted a 31-15 win over Martie Sissons (Ohope). However, McEldowney was nosed out 27-23 by Cottam in the afternoon.

Karen Forrest (Manurewa) was a comfortable 25-16 victor over Anne Loveridge (Wanganui East), and then even more con-

vincing in the afternoon, with a 39-7 effort over first-round winner Gay Baxter (Bulls).

Ellie Goble (Lepperton) prevailed 29-15 over Gloria Shaw (Paritutu), having led 21-4, and then made it two for the day by ousting Loveridge 26-21.

Joan Richards (Fitzroy) also had two wins. Richards upstaged Marilyn Constantine (Tauranga) 23-14 in the first round. An even opening saw Constantine lead 8-7 after 11 ends. However, Richards won the next five ends to open up an eight-shot advantage. Richards then beat Faye Hopkins (Tower) 27-13.

The section moves to Paritutu today and then finishes at West End.

Leading the way in **section B**, which played at Paritutu, are Teo Thoresen (Levin), Margaret McCallum (Inglewood) and Pauline Pirere (Laird Park).

Pirere was untroubled in the first round, winning 32-15 over Pam Mulford (Plimmerton) and then defeated Cathy Andrews (Paritutu) 26-16, having raced to a 21-8 lead. Andrews had survived a tough assignment against Ngaire Cowen (Palmerston North) in the morning, winning 24-19.

Cowen recovered to beat Liz Johnstone (Waitara) 24-15 in the afternoon.

Thoresen scored the biggest win of the day, running away 44-6 over Rae Curtis (Manaia), and then beat Jean Sheary (Matua) 25-15.

But Curtis staged a remarkable turn around, beating Prue Wright (Paritutu) 31-13 after lunch.

McCallum's victories included an afternoon 28-21 triumph over June Smith (Tauranga), who had also won in the morning, having earlier beaten Wright 38-15.

Today the section plays at West End, before heading to Fitzroy on Thursday.

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Fitzroy's Maree Gadsby secured the comeback of the opening round. Her side came from 21-8 behind after 16 ends to pip Paritutu's Barbara Harvey 23-22 in **section A** at West End. Gadsby's comeback was bolstered by two fours. Gadsby completed a successful day with a 29-17 win over Wendy Moratti (Lepperton).

In the same section, former Dominion fours winner, Pam Burgess (Wanganui) was a convincing 39-10 victor over Margie Davis (Paritutu), but came unstuck in the afternoon, losing 19-18 to the unbeaten West End team skipped by Janice Ropitini.

Ropitini led 17-12 after 19 ends and held on after leading by two shots playing the 25th head.

Two other Taranaki sides also won both games in the group. Joy Collins got the second one over Anne Duggan (New Plymouth) 27-23, while a useful Tower side skipped by Jane Augustine also won twice. In the morning, Augustine trailed Te Awamutu's Judy Cato (nee Broomfield), who grew up in the city, 9-0. But the tide turned and Augustine triumphed 30-18.

Dawn Clark (Tauranga South) needed an extra end to deny Ronnie Crone (Otaki) 19-18. Clark led 15-11 after 17 ends, before Crone won the next five ends to lead 18-15 with three ends to go. However, Clark took a sin-

gle on each of the remaining heads, including the extra end. Both teams lost in the afternoon. Section A plays at Fitzroy today, before moving to Vogelstown tomorrow.

In **section D** at Fitzroy, Lee McDonald (Mercury Bay), whose side includes New Plymouth's Lyn Weir and Una Maha, won both games. They opened with a close 23-19 victory over last season's runner-up Kristin Stampa (Hawera Park). And then they beat Gale Fache (Vogelstown) 22-16.

Ohope's Mary Bettelheim held off Parkakariki's Sue Murray 25-22, having led by four shots playing the last end in the morning. Murray is in fact playing No 3 in the side, with Auckland's Denise Samuel skipping.

And Samuel's experience came to the fore in the afternoon when the side overturned a 11-2 deficit to beat Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood) 31-21.

In one of the feature games of the afternoon, between morning winners, Carol Pearce (Lepperton) upstaged her former clubmate, Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy) 28-24. The match was even until Pearce pulled a seven. However, Adams, after three successive threes, took the lead by one shot after 22 ends. But Pearce finished the better to win.

Marg Davies (Papakura) also won twice.

Section D plays at Vogelstown today and Paritutu tomorrow.

Who won how many on day one?

Standings after the first day's play in the 2020 Taranaki women's Open fours:

Section A: two wins, Maree Gadsby (Fitzroy), Jane Augustine (Tower), Janice Ropitini (West End), Joy Collins (Opunake); **one win**, Pam Burgess (Wanganui), Margie Davis (Paritutu), Ann Loomb (Mt Maunganui), Judy Cato (Te Awamutu), Denise Clark (Tauranga South), Barbara Harvey (Paritutu).

Section B: two wins, Teo Thoresen (Levin), Margaret McCallum (Inglewood), Pauline Pirere (Laird Park); **one win**, Cathy Andrews (Paritutu), Alison Winter (Central Cambridge), June Smith (Tauranga), Pam Mulford (Plimmerton), Heather Thomas (New Plymouth), Rae Curtis (Manaia), Denise Cottam

(West End), Ngaire Cowen (Palmerston North).

Section C: two wins, Ellie Goble (Lepperton), Karen Forrest (Manurewa), Wendy Green (Ngongotaha), Joan Richards (Fitzroy); **one win**, Marilyn Constantine (Tauranga), Martie Sisson (Ohope), Susan Cottam (West End), Gay Baxter (Bulls), Val McEldowney (New Plymouth), Faye Hopkins (Tower).

Section D: two wins, Carol Pearce (Lepperton), Marg Davies (Papakura), Lee McDonald (Mercury Bay); **one win**, Kristin Stampa (Hawera Park), Margaret Farmer (Paritutu), Denise Samuel (Paekakariki), Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood), Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy), Mary Solomon (Tauranga), Mary Bettelheim (Ohope), Gale Fache (Vogelstown).