

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Friday, January 31, 2020

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22 teams make it through in 68th Open

When post section play gets underway this morning in the Taranaki women's open fours bowls event there will be 22 sides that will be harbouring hopes that 2020 is their year.

The field has been reduced to that number after three days of qualifying play and there were plenty of excellent performances during those early rounds.

There were two teams that won all six games – Pauline Pirere (Laird Park) and Karen Forrest (Manurewa). Both were impressive, as were Ellie Goble (Lepperton) and Wendy Green (Ngongotaha), although the latter two had the luxury of not having to play the last round. Goble and Green won five straight.

Section A: Barbara Harvey (Paritutu) qualified in the last round after beating former Dominion fours winner Pam Burgess (Wanganui) 26-15. Burgess had already qualified. It was a much-needed victory for Harvey after her side had been beaten in the morning 25-23 by Kera Parata (Kaikohe), after going into the last end even.

Two sudden death games occurred in the section that played at Vogeltown. Joy Collins (Opunake) beat Judy Cato (Te Awamutu) 28-16 while a West End side entered under the name of Janice Ropitini prevailed 21-19 over Maree Gadsby (Fitzroy).

Ropitini, with a sore leg, was substituted by Trish Howard for the majority of the game, with Jackie Moeahu taking over the skipping duties.

Collins had lost 27-18 in the morning to Ann Loomb (Mt Maunganui), a result that ensured qualification for the Bay of Plenty team.

Gadsby had a frustrating day missing out. Prior to the two-point defeat in round six, the Fitzroy four had lost 27-22 to Jane Augustine (Tower), after the scores had been even with two ends to play. That was enough for Augustine to qualify.

Section B: Cathy Andrews (Paritutu) went

through 29-10 over Pam Mulford (Plimmerton) in an afternoon game that both teams needed to win to qualify. Andrews had earlier been denied her fourth win on an extra end when losing 22-21 to June Smith (Tauranga). Smith won her last game, too, to advance.

Jean Sheary's Matua team provided a story of survival. After two losses on Tuesday, Sheary needed the rest to get through and her side responded with four wins on the trot. Sheary beat Denise Cottam (West End) 21-18 in the morning and then Liz Johnstone (Waitara) 22-8 after lunch.

Two visiting sides, Alison Winter (Central Cambridge) and Teo Thoresen (Levin), battled it out in the final round to secure win No 4. Honours went to the Waikato quartet 22-17, which was a disappointing conclusion for Thoresen's team. It had started the week with three successive wins.

In the morning, Thoresen went down 22-12 to Ngaire Cowen (Palmerston North). However, Cowen's lifeline didn't last, losing to Heather Thomas (New Plymouth) 26-17 in the last game. Both sides missed qualifying by one match.

Inglewood's Margaret McCallum exited after a 28-14 loss to Pirere in the afternoon. It left the Inglewood side ruing two narrow losses on Wednesday.

Section C: Two local sides, Faye Hopkins (Tower) and Joan Richards (Fitzroy), both entered the last day needing one win to qualify. But both went down twice to bow out.

Hopkins went down in the morning 22-21 to Gay Baxter (Bulls), having trailed by three shots after 24 ends, and then was beaten 32-22 by Anne Loveridge (Wanganui East). Loveridge finished on three wins.

Richards had a tough draw throughout section play. Her side was denied 23-14 by Goble and 28-19 by Forrest.

However, the 2013 Dominion singles winner, Val McEldowney (New Plymouth), won both games yesterday to be among the qualifiers. Marilyn Constantine (Tauranga) made it four games without a blip when her side edged Susan Cottam (West End) 19-15 in round five.

Section D: After winning three straight, Lepperton's Carol Pearce, with young Briar Atkinson in the side, lost narrowly twice during section play. The loss yesterday was 24-21 to Kristin Stampa (Hawera Park), which enabled last year's runner-up to qualify. But Pearce eased home 29-8 in the final round. That was against Raewyn Falconer (Frankton Junction), who was left stranded on three wins.

Atkinson, pictured, is a pupil at Sacred Heart Girls' College in New Plymouth. She has been playing bowls for only 12 months. Bowls Taranaki President, Ian Andrews, was not 100% sure that she was the youngest ever qualifier in the Open — "but we are pretty sure that she is."

On an adjacent rink at Paritutu, Lee McDonald (Mercury Bay) – with New Plymouth's Lyn Weir and Una Maha in her side – also qualified in the last round 30-22 over Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood), who had exited on Wednesday.



McDonald started the game with a roar, leading 15-0 after just seven ends. Few could deny McDonald was a deserving qualifier. After the disruption to her side prior to the event commencing, the two losses the side incurred were both by the narrowest of margins. The second of those yesterday morning was an extra end job, 26-24, to fellow qualifier Marg Davies (Papakura).

All play today, tomorrow and Sunday is at Paritutu.

Open fours post section draw

Draw for post section play in the 68th Taranaki women's Open fours at Paritutu on Friday, January 31 (NB: all qualifiers must report for a 9am start):

Round 1 (9am start – two rounds for the day): J Ropitini (West End) v M Constantine (Tauranga), A Winter (Central Cambridge) v P Burgess (Wanganui), J Smith (Tauranga) v B Harvey (Paritutu), J Augustine (Tower) v J Collins (Opunake), W Green (Ngongotaha) v K Forrest (Manurewa), C Andrews (Paritutu) v M Bettelheim (Ohope).

Round 2 (9am start – one round for the day): J Sheary (Matua) v L McDonald (Mercury Bay), V McEldowney (New Plymouth) v A Loomb (Mt Maunganui), C Pearce (Lepperton) v P Pirere (Laird Park), K Stampa (Hawera Park) v M Davies (Papakura), R Adams (Fitzroy) v E Goble (Lepperton).

Match of the morning — Green v Forrest

The feature match of the opening round of post section this morning will be between Wendy Green (Ngongotaha) and Karen Forrest (Manurewa). Both sides completed section play in Section C and were largely untroubled throughout.

Green's team comprises Huia Ratana, Mina Paul and Lynette McIntosh, while playing with Forrest are Miriam Pedley, Nancy Wilson and Jan Jones.

It will be a frustrating end to the Open for the loser of the game — the same scenario occurred in the men's Open last week, when two eight-winners clashed in the first post section round.

The winner of the clash will meet the victor of the Cathy Andrews (Paritutu) v Mary Bettelheim (Ohope) match in the afternoon round for a place in Saturday's quarterfinals.