

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Friday, January 22, 2021

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Miracle bowl keeps the O'Sullivan's alive

Inglewood's Gerry O'Sullivan has never been a man to be taken lightly on the bowling green. A previous winner of both the Taranaki open and champion-of-champions singles, the regular Taranaki rep has also featured in the Dominion as a runner-up in the fours (2017) and third-equal in the pairs (2019).

But it's doubtful that he has ever played a shot as thrilling as the one yesterday.

Needing to win both games on day four to qualify, O'Sullivan, skipping brothers Bernard and Danny, plus Steve Sabine, trailed Oakura's Peter Radich 23-22 on the 25th head in the morning match.

Radich's side put the jack into the ditch and sat within a few centimetres. O'Sullivan then skilfully hit into the ditch — on the right angle — one of his own team's touchers. It gained the point and forced the extra end.

The O'Sullivan's took that to win 24-23 and then they booked their place in post section by beating Terry Osment (Johnsonville) 30-23.

The reward for the Inglewood side is a place amongst 38 other qualifiers. But the celebrations will be put on hold when the first bowls roll down this morning — for O'Sullivan meets one of the favoured teams in the opening post section game, Dan Dickison (Tauranga).

The biggest casualty on day four was West End's Craig De Faria. De Faria, hunting for a third successive finals appearance, kept his hopes alive with a win in the morning.

His West End side led for most of their afternoon game against Cary Pinker (Wanganui East). But the game was forced into overtime and on a dramatic end, with the jack in the ditch, Pinker pushed the counting West End bowl into the ditch to deny De Faria.

Graham Crawford (Paritutu) was another unlucky side. Needing to win the last game



to qualify, Crawford's side was nosed out 23-22 by Tony Stoker (Naenae), who also missed qualification by just one game.

There were other joys of pleasure, though.

Mike Bradshaw, skipping Neville Hill's Royal Oak team produced a brilliant delivery on the last end to enable his team to beat Garry Murfitt (West End) 25-24 and qualify.

Aiden Takarua (Pt Chevalier) was the only side to play all eight games and win the lot. Takarua also achieved the same feat last year before exiting in round one of post section. This year he has received a bye into the second round and will play Mark Anderson (Tower) at 9am this morning.

Anderson went through after beating Stoker 30-24 and the already-qualified Marty Doak (Far North RSA) 24-13 on the fourth day.

Dan Delany (Royal Oak) suffered a second loss in the morning, this time 26-21 to Raymond Martin (Victoria). But the side rebounded after lunch to beat John Gray (Fitzroy) 25-13 and advance.

And there was great reward for the perseverance of two Open stalwarts Jim Priest (Oakura) and Nelson West (Inglewood). After a long absence, both return to post section play this year after qualifying yesterday.

Fourteen to remain at end of Friday

The draw for post section in the fours might seem a little confusing for some. However, organisers have assured everyone that all is in order.

The 39 qualifiers have been drawn into two sections, one of 19 (section one) and one of 20 (section two).

As has been a Taranaki tradition for a number of years, some round two matches will be played at 9am today. "It's termed player-friendly," Grant Hassall said.

But a slight change this year will see the top half of section one play round three matches this afternoon. That will mean that six teams will survive the day in section one.

While some round two matches in section two are being played this morning, no round three matches will be played today. That will mean that eight teams will survive the day in section two.

In total that equates to 14 sides that will remain for tomorrow. "This allows all of Saturday's play to occur on just one green."

Those surviving teams at the top of section one will play their round four match (quarterfinal) on Saturday morning. The victor will then have Saturday afternoon off ahead of Sunday morning's semifinals.

"It might come across as a little confusing, but it's as plain as a pikestaff on the master chart."

Fours post section and pairs section play for Friday

Post section draw for the 116th Taranaki men's Open fours on January 22:

Section 1, at Paritutu A:

Round 1 (9am start — 2 rounds): G Murfitt (West End) v M Doak (Far North RSA), G O'Sullivan (Inglewood) v D Dickison (Tauranga), S Brien (Stokes Valley) v D Elgar (West End).

Round 2 (report 1.15pm — 1 round): Brien/Elgar winner v B Harris (Johnston Park), P Matheson (Halswell) v D Nightingale (Glendowie), K Coombe (Aramoho) v B Phillips (Tower).

Round 2 (9am start — 2 rounds): K Hill (New Plymouth) v N West (Inglewood), T Horn (Mangere) v A Ferrari (Naenae), M Anderson (Tower) v A Takarua (Pt Chevalier), A Bowden (Parklands) v I Mahoney (Central Levin).

Section 2, at Paritutu B:

Round 1 (9am start — 2 rounds): R Park (Wanganui) v D Hood (Whangarei), N Hill (Royal Oak) v D Goodin (Paritutu), K Ansell (New Lynn) v M Jones (Hillcrest), S McCartney (Paritutu) v J Brosnan (Glen Eden).

Round 2 (report 1.15pm — 1 round): J Cornish (Omarunui) v W Fredrickson (Blockhouse Bay), K Smith (Hinuera) v T Turua (Royal Oak), J Gray (Fitzroy) v R Martin (Victoria).

Round 2 (9am start — 1 round only): J Priest (Oakura) v P Belliss (Aramoho), M Cavanagh (Pukekohe) v D Scott (West End), B Foley (New Plymouth) v B Little (Palmerston North).

Section play draw for the Open fours-pairs on January 22 (all starting at 8.45am):

Section 1, at West End 1: N Atkinson (Methven), B Robertson (Hikurangi), M Hori (Methven), N Bovey (Central Levin), P Digby (Stratford-Avon), T Kortergas (Central Levin), M Dew (New Plymouth), R Davidson (Far North RSA), P Deegan (Opunake), P Huxtable (Far North RSA), W Smith (Papamoa), M Dudley (Hawera Park), G Tahan (Seatoun), G Crawford (Paritutu).

Section 2, at West End 2: D Hopkins (Kia Toa), D George (Ponsonby), E Chilton (Kia Toa), M Griffin (Levin), D West (Fitzroy), J Read (Reefton), L Dobson (Hawera Park), T Heimuli (Papatoetoe), P Shea (Omarunui), K Fe'ao (Papatoetoe), G McLeod (Tawa), J Rona (West Coast), P Hassall (Tawa), J Forde (Seatoun).

Section 3, at Vogeltown A: B Lilley (West End), P Clegg (Hawera Park), M Cameron (Ponsonby), I Franklin (Johnsonville), R Gadsby (Fitzroy), N Nehemia (Johnsonville), D Stachurski (Inglewood), K Bishop (Motueka), M Hartland (Pukekohe), R Inglis (Motueka), T Fabling (Hillcrest), M Watson (New Plymouth), S Robinson (Omarunui), T Johns (Paritutu).

Section 4, at Vogeltown B: L Bourne (Wanganui East), G Rankin (New Plymouth), C Pinker (Wanganui East), M Bridgland (Naenae), P Fergusson (Tui Park), T Stoker (Naenae), G Crow (Paritutu), T Campbell (Far North RSA), M Kelly (Fitzroy), D Amosa (Far North RSA), N Payne (Vogeltown), M Wesley (New Plymouth), B Fouhy (Omarunui), M Whittle (Fitzroy).

Section 5, at Oakura: T Pattison (Naenae), B Mummery (Paritutu), D Davis (Kaikohe), J Ross (Epsom), I Morris (West End), G Kingi (Epsom), B Read (Paritutu), G Evans (Johnsonville), J Quay (Okato), K Alexander (Johnsonville), T Simonson (West End), C Horo (Rahotu).