

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Friday, January 29, 2021

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The joys of qualifying still remain

The joy of qualifying in the Taranaki women's Open fours tournament remains a high achievement in bowls — just ask those 92 players, split across 23 teams, that.

You could also ask players in the 33 sides that missed the cut and it's likely they will concur, too. Even though the qualification rounds were reduced from eight to six last century, there still is a buzz that comes with qualifying. All the action from now on takes place at Paritutu, and one such team that will certainly still have smiles on their faces this morning will be Anne Duggan's New Plymouth team.

After two losses on the opening day, Duggan's team won the rest of their games to qualify in **section A**. It was a feat mirrored by Carol Pearce and Mina Paul.

Aided by counts of six on both the 15th and 17th ends, Duggan coasted home 32-14 over Patricia McGrail in the morning game. That left Duggan's team of Heather Earl, Lois Sole and Val Fleming in a winner-take-all sixth round with Kristin Stampa (Hawera Park).

Stampa had taken over the skipping of her team and also needed the game to qualify. Duggan called the tune up to the 14th end, leading 14-6.

But five ends later, it was 14-all. Duggan, though, took the initiative back, edging to 20-14 in front with two ends remaining. Stampa could only manage a two and a single on the final two ends, leaving Duggan the match 20-17.

With Fay Bird qualifying in the last round after McGrail had defaulted, it left only one other match on the New Plymouth green. Coral Lukies (Kia Toa) was chasing her fourth win against Liz Johnstone. In the morning, Lukies had eliminated Joan Richards (Fitzroy) 28-20, to give her team a chance. It was an opportunity that they, eventually, did take — but only just.

After tailing Johnstone 13-8, Lukies made it in

front 17-13. Three ends later it was 17-all and, indeed starting the last end, it was 19-all. But there was the spoken joy — and relief — for Lukies' team when they took the point to win 20-19.

There had been similar scenes in the morning when Joan Raymond's Wanganui East side notched up win No 4, grabbing a two on the last end to break a 19-all deadlock with the already-qualified Mary Solomon (Tauranga).

Three big names qualified in the morning round in **section D** — Paula Meredith (Johnsonville), Heather Johns (Paritutu) and Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood).

Meredith's team won convincingly 32-12 over Colleen Day (New Plymouth). Day, searching for her first win of the week, kept in touch early on. Meredith led just 10-9 after 10, but soon after collected a four and a five on consecutive heads. A further four on the 17th put the game beyond doubt.

Johns had plenty of anxious moments before her side prevailed 26-20 over Anne Loveridge (Wanganui East). Loveridge's side was left to rue two narrow losses on Monday. They still had their chances against Johns.

Loveridge led 14-13 after 16 ends. However, 10 shots over the following four ends put Johns in charge. Loveridge responded with a five to keep the interest high, but Johns cribbed home.

Nicoll defeated Frances Parkes (Hawera Park) 28-15. Nicoll was in complete control leading 21-3 after 13 ends. While Parkes added some respectability, Nicoll got through comfortably.

In the clash of the two unbeaten teams Marg Davies (Papakura) and Gloria Shaw (Paritutu), it ended officially in a draw.

There was disappointment for Dawn Clark (Tauranga) and Gaye Holub (Waitara), after they both lost in the last round to miss out.

There were three teams that qualified with victories in the last round in **section C**, which finished with seven making the grade in total — an extraordinary high number.

Mina Paul (Ngongotaha) was one such side, which was a noteworthy effort from the BoP team. They had won a tough morning match against Chris Telford (Napier) 26-21 and then broke free in the second half of the afternoon round to beat Trish Howard (West End) 26-9.

Howard had already qualified in the morning, 25-12 over Margaret Farmer (Paritutu).

There were two games in the last round that saw two three winners facing off.

From 8-7 in front after 11 ends, Gale Fache's Vogeltown quartet moved to 19-8 in front of Patty Symes (Tower). Fache took the game 24-16. In the morning, Fache was a 21-8 victor over Pauline Davy (Opunake).

The other encounter was between Telford and Colleen Clark (Ohope). Clark had kept her hopes alive with a 26-13 morning victory over Rae Curtis (Manaia). The teams could not be separated on four occasions during the game. Telford held the upper hand leading 22-18 after 21 ends, but then luck deserted her side, with Clark winning the last four ends to take the honours 27-23.

The other qualifier from the morning round was Liz Witton (Taupo). Witton beat Anne Connelly (Bulls) 25-15, having led 20-9 after 17 ends. A four to Witton on the 24th end sealed the result, with the last head not played.

Open fours post section draw

Draw for post section play in the 69th Taranaki women's Open fours at Paritutu on Friday, January 29 (NB: all qualifiers must report for a 9am start, except Coral Lukies):

Round 1 (9am start – two rounds for the day): Gloria Shaw (Paritutu) v Trish Howard (West End), Mina Paul (Ngongotaha) v Mere Fryer (Palmerston North), Colleen Clark (Ohope) v Marg Davies (Papakura), Elaine McClintock (Orewa) v Wendy Green (Ngongotaha), Mary Solomon (Tauranga) v Fay Bird (Central Cambridge), Pauline Davy

One of the most keenly contested games this morning will be between the unbeaten Elaine McClintock (Orewa) and Wendy Green (Ngongotaha). Green's side has been especially decisive over the past two days in **section B**.

They beat Paritutu's Cathy Andrews 32-8 yesterday morning to qualify and then put the kybosh on Margie Davis' hopes 35-13. Davis had experienced the agony of dropping 11 shots on the last three ends in the morning match to lose 25-24 to Rhonda Adams (Fitzroy).

Andrews missed the cut this year when her side lost in the afternoon 28-10 to Martie Sisson (Ohope).

Fane Vessey's Paraparaumu Beach team sneaked through its morning match to qualify, beating Alison Rennie 25-24 on an extra end. Vessey was in trouble, trailing 22-15 after 21 ends, but a four and a two on the last two ends tied up the match.

Palmerston North's Mere Fryer claimed win number four in the morning as well, 27-17 over Sisson.

Lepperton's Carol Pearce was the last qualifier from the section when her side beat Rennie 26-19. Pearce dominated proceedings post end 15, when the scores had been level at 14-all.

* By the end of play today, eight teams will remain in the Open. Those teams playing round two matches in advance at 9am today will play just one game, with the winners observing their bye this afternoon.

(Opunake) v Fane Vessey (Paraparaumu Beach), Paula Meredith (Johnsonville) v Gale Fache (Vogeltown).

Round 2 (9am start – one round for the day): Joan Raymond (Wanganui East) v Anne Duggan (New Plymouth), Elaine Hodge (New Plymouth) v Pam Mulford (Plimmerton), Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood) v Carol Pearce (Lepperton), Heather Johns (Paritutu) v Alison Rennie (Carlton Cornwall).

Round 2 (report at 12.30pm – one round for the day): Coral Lukies (Kia Toa) who will play the winner of Shaw/Howard.

