

Open News - Taranaki Open Fours

Saturday, January 30, 2021

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Fryer impresses to advance to quarterfinals

Manawatu's Mere Fryer had a day to remember on the greens of Paritutu yesterday.

Playing in the opening two rounds of post section in the 69th Taranaki women's Open fours event, Fryer skipped her team into today's quarterfinals.

Fryer is no stranger to the big time in bowls. She has amassed 22 Manawatu titles and previously also won a national club (pathways) pairs.

Her side beat Mina Paul (Ngongotaha) 18-13 and Colleen Clark (Ohope) 31-7 to advance.

Fryer's side includes Emily Gray, who last season won two Manawatu titles; Vivienne Jones, who came in late to the side and plays out of the Fitzroy club in New Plymouth, won the 2018 Taranaki champion-of-champions fours; and No 3 Leoni Renata, a highly talented player with experience in Hawke's Bay, Gisborne and the Bay of Plenty.

Fryer, the skip, has harnessed that collective skill and energy into a team that is a genuine title contender. The side led from the opening end in both games during the day.

But there still were some pressure moments, especially against Paul. Fryer led 12-3 after 11 ends, but by the completion of the 19th, it had become 14-11. Three successive singles provided more comfort, with Fryer able to secure the success after holding a four-shot lead playing the last end.

The Clark match became somewhat an anticlimax, after the Ohope side had caused the biggest upset of Open in the morning game, beating the defending champion Marg Davies (Papakura) 25-7.

Interestingly, both of Clark's matches went only 20 ends.

Against Davies, Clark controlled proceedings, leading 14-2 after 10 ends. Four ends later it was 16-6, but with the next five heads all going Clark's way, the white flag was waved early.

It was the opposite for Clark after lunch against Fryer.

After leading 12-1 after seven ends, Fryer put the match beyond doubt with counts of five on both the 13th and 15th ends.

Three other teams also won twice on the day – Trish Howard (West End), who meets Fryer this morning, Wendy Green (Ngongotaha) and Paula Meredith (Johnsonville).

Green and Meredith square off this morning in what has all the makings of a classic clash.

Green beat Elaine McClintock (Orewa) 26-23 and Fay Bird (Central Cambridge) 23-10.

Green's match against McClintock was earmarked for a titanic struggle, and it was. It was decided in the middle stanza, where Green went from 8-all after nine ends to 25-17 in front after 19. Three fours and a three proved decisive, as the old adage of avoiding numbers was illustrated.

McClintock battled to the end, winning five of the remaining six ends, but the wily Green was able to keep the counts to four singles and one two.

Green didn't get things all her own way in the second round against Bird, leading just 8-6 after 11.

But a four and a five immediately after that saw the match conceded after just 18 ends.

Bird's team had done well in the morning, winning the last five ends of its game against Mary Solomon (Tauranga) to triumph 25-18. That match didn't finish until 1.50pm and that told a story, too.

Meredith received tough assignments from two experienced Taranaki skips but prevailed – 26-24 over Gale Fache (Vogeltown) and 23-19 against Pauline Davy (Opunake).

Fache was left to rue dropping four fours during the opening eight ends, as Meredith raced out to 16-6 in front. The margin was increased even further.

After 17 ends, it was 25-11. The Vogelstown quartet came home with a decidedly wet sail, but could only manage two on the last end when four was required to tie the game.

Meredith's afternoon encounter with Davy kept the crowd entertained. While Meredith did lead 11-5 after nine, Davy, a Taranaki gold star holder, squared it up at 14-all after 17. A two to Davy on the 22nd end put the Opunake team in front 18-16. But disaster struck on the next, with Meredith claiming a five. A further brace to Meredith on the penultimate head curtailed the Opunake optimism.

Howard has been introduced into the Taranaki representative side this season and teaming with Debra Kalin, Lorraine Heal and Laureen Bright, they delighted themselves by advancing to the quarterfinals. It meant Howard needed to contact her boss, Maxine Pryor of the Nag 'N' Noggin, to get off work today.

They upset Gloria Shaw (Paritutu) 28-22 in the morning, although there were some nervous moments with Shaw having closed the deficit to just three shots playing the last. Howard was thankful for a 13-2 lead after eight ends.

Howard then ended a highly successful tournament for Coral Lukies (Kia Toa) 24-17. It was the start that made the difference, Howard racing to 9-1 in front.

Open fours post section results

Results of post section play in the Taranaki women's Open fours at Paritutu yesterday:

Round 1: T Howard (West End) 28 G Shaw (Paritutu) 22, M Fryer (Palmerston North) 18 M Paul (Ngongotaha) 13, C Clark (Ohope) 25 M Davies (Papakura) 7, W Green (Ngongotaha) 26 E McClintock (Orewa) 23, F Bird (Central Cambridge) 25 M Solomon (Tauranga) 18, P Davy (Opunake) 24 F Vessey (Paraparaumu Beach) 22, P Meredith (Johnsonville) 26 G Fache (Vogelstown) 24.

Round 2: J Raymond (Wanganui East) 30 A Duggan (New Plymouth) 18, L Witton (Taupo) 20 E Hodge (New Plymouth) 19, C Nicoll (Inglewood) 27 C Pearce (Lepperton) 16, A Rennie (Carlton Cornwall) 24 H Johns (Paritutu) 15, Howard 24 C Lukies (Kia Toa) 17, Fryer 31 Clark 7, Green 23 Bird 10, Meredith 23 Davy 19.

Lukies closed in twice on Howard, but each time the West End side scored again to preserve the lead.

The four teams to advance to the quarterfinals by playing only one game were Joan Raymond (Wanganui East), Liz Witton (Taupo), Cindy Nicoll (Inglewood) and Alison Rennie (Carlton Cornwall).

Raymond's side were in all sorts of bother against Anne Duggan (New Plymouth). They trailed 15-4 after nine ends, although a resurgence gave them a sniff at 17-11 after 15. The team from the river city then completely took over, winning all bar one of the remaining ends to triumph 30-18.

Witton held on, just, to beat New Plymouth's Elaine Hodge 20-19. Witton had looked comfortable at 18-8 in front after 15 ends, but seven straight heads to the New Plymouth side saw the game tied up after both 22 and 24 ends.

Nicoll took 17 shots on the last six ends — two were left un-played — in her 27-16 win over Carol Pearce (Lepperton). Pearce had led 16-10 until Nicoll's run commenced.

After trailing Paritutu's Heather Johns 7-2, Rennie got in front 11-7 and then took the game 24-15.

Quarterfinal draw — eight still have a chance

Quarterfinals draw for Saturday, January 30 at Paritutu:

Joan Raymond, Debbie Wildermoth, Loralie Hawkes, Adrienne Richdale (Wanganui East) v Liz Witton, Pam Mulford, Annie Judge, Val Hadfield (Taupo), Cindy Nicoll, Loris Ropitini, Margaret McCallum, Lorraine Crowskey (Inglewood) v Alison Rennie, Jill Fraser, Louise Fitness, Lillian Tukiri Carlton Cornwall), Trish Howard, Laureen Bright, Lorraine Heal, Debra Kalin (West End) v Mere Fryer, Leoni Renata, Vivienne Jones, Emily Gray (Palmerston North), Wendy Green, Lynette McIntosh, Huia Ratana, Doreen Ryan (Ngongotaha) v Paula Meredith, Kay Martin, Lil George, Merani Davis (Johnsonville).