

2010 NATIONAL BOWLS AWARDS

ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR



MICHAEL STEWART

How does a small country bowls club like Wakefield, near Nelson, double its membership in just two years? The answer lies with Michael Stewart, president of the Wakefield Bowling Club, this year's Administrator of the Year, and recipient of the Don Manson Memorial Award.

Stewart works with Bowls Nelson producing a yearly programme, negotiates for club-sponsored tournaments, and is a driving force in the recruitment of new members for his club. Through letter drops, SPARC 'Way2Go' sports days, and a 'Wake up to Wakefield Day', membership has almost doubled. This has allowed the creation of new roles within the club, and the leadership skills of the president to shine through.

Named "the best little bowling club in NZ" by CDO Vince Roper, the club's "growth and achievement under Mike's leadership over the last 2-3 years are unparalleled. I have frequently used Wakefield as a role model club for others to learn from."

The club was awarded with the Bowls NZ ClubCheck Essentials Award, and is the first of its kind to be awarded to a rural club.

"It was not until he became president that the club had clear goals set that were achievable," says Vice President Gordon Hope, "the results speak for themselves. If it was not for him, the club would still be a small, struggling country club."

GREEN KEEPER OF THE YEAR



GERARD SLATTERY

A good green keeper needs to understand fertilisers, sprays, grass types and growing conditions. But a great green keeper understands the most important aspect: bowlers need to have good bowling greens on which to ply their skills. And this year Gerard Slattery, green keeper and president of the Waitoa Bowling Club, Thames Valley, has been named the best green keeper in New Zealand.

It is an honour that the Waitoa resident has worked hard for: he spends many hours maintaining the Waitoa green, and many more talking to and helping others with their greens. In fact, in addition to being the president and green keeper of the Waitoa Bowling Club, Slattery is also president of the Thames Valley Green Keepers Association. After re-establishing this organisation in the area, the exceptionally keen green keeper and bowler has reinvigorated the local green keepers and poured time and effort into training and assisting new green keepers.

Having worked with Slattery over the past six years, Waikato Sports Turf Agronomist David Ormsby has been privy to the local bowler's great work. "Gerard has done a great job as a green keeper (sic)... such that it [Waitoa Bowling Club] is now a highly regarded playing surface within the Thames-Coromandel Region.

"[He] has done a great job in making meetings informative...whilst raising the profile of the region's green keepers. Gerard has been an enthusiastic green keeper who is continuously trying to learn and improve his green keeping skills." This is true to such a degree that club members believe "it can be said that Gerard shows more than a commitment to his role, it is an obsession and a very important part of his commitment to bowls."

Glowing endorsements like these have been following Slattery for years, and it is testament to his hard work and enthusiasm for the art and science of green keeping that he has been named the 2010 Green Keeper of the Year.