



DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES PAYING DIVIDENDS FOR NEW NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

By Crispin Anderlini

It's not always the most experienced bowlers that get the glory, it's also the best prepared and trained; a fact that has been proven recently on the national stage at the Hyundai New Zealand National Open Championships in Dunedin.

Benefiting from the High Performance and Talent Development Programmes and setting a new standard for bowling champions, 19-year-old Mandy Boyd became the youngest woman to win a national title after her composite Fours team won out over veteran bowler Bev Morel's team 16-10 in the final on Taieri greens. Bev Morel skipped the winning Fours in 2007, and was looking to do it all again this year but unfortunately for her highly experienced team, they weren't able to contend with the skill SLAM (the acronym used by the winning Fours team) displayed.

Boyd's 24-year-old sister Angela, also a member of the high performance and development programmes, joined Mandy, Leanne Curry and skip Sue Burnand to form the team SLAM. Angela Boyd will add this title to the Singles title she won in the NZ National Secondary School Championships (2001), while Mandy will add it to the growing treasure chest of tournament gold she has won, including two National Secondary School Singles titles and a Kittyhawks Under-20 trophy.

Amy Brenton (19) took the tournament by surprise, with some superior play that landed her in the finals against the highly competitive world Singles number one, Jo Edwards. Despite being schooled by the top international player 21-3, Brenton defeated top bowlers like Wynette McLachlan and Clare McCaul in her rise to the top of the competition and Jo Edwards believes that the experience will just make the talented Amy Brenton a stronger bowler in years to come.

25-year-old Chris Le Lievre and skip Ryan Bester outclassed all challengers in their bid for the Pairs trophy beating legends like Phillip Skoglund 19-3 to fight their way into the finals match against Ali Forsyth and Matt Gallop (23). Le Lievre was in fine form throughout, and didn't miss a beat in his

drawing game in the final at Taieri. Forsyth and Gallop took an early lead in the final (3-0 on the first end), but were put down from then on by Le Lievre and Bester, with the final score 20-9.

Ali Forsyth stepped up in this tournament as a skip and showed his undeniable skills as a bowler after skipping his team to the final of the men's pairs, and victory in the fours (for his third National Title). The victorious fours team was made up of Ali Forsyth, Matt Gallop, Gallop's father Lloyd (1998 Fours winner) and Graham Hood. The composite team took on the Scott family combination from Dunedin's North East Valley club – brothers Terry (skip) and Jim, cousin Shaun, and Jim and Terry's brother in law Stephen O'Driscoll – and came out ahead with an 18-9 victory that crowned an outstanding run.

The dream team of Jo Edwards (world number 1) and Val Smith (world number 3) beat Wynette McLachlan and Marilyn Paterson 17-11 to win the Women's Pairs trophy, and gave Edwards her double victory. Throughout the tournament the pair scythed through their opposition, exceeding the high expectations placed on them. One opponent called them 'the smiling assassins', one moment laughing, joking, and smiling with you, and the next crushing the life out of the game with extraordinary skill.

Adding more weight to the local Scott family bowling legacy, Shaun Scott joined his illustrious cousins Terry and Jim Scott with a Singles victory over multiple national title-holder Petar Sain, 21-13. The defeat thwarted Sain's dreams of a gold star for what would have been his fifth national title, but insured that the Scott family bowling pedigree continued on through another generation. Shaun's handle bar moustache, and character on and off the green, has left an indelible mark on those who witnessed the transformation of his game from a man with potential, to a bowler of renown. Hailing from the Talent Development Programme and the Academy of Sport in Dunedin, Shaun Scott has credited much of his success to the skills learned during the past two years in the programme.

Pictured below, from left: Pairs Winners: Jo Edwards, Val Smith, Chris Le Lievre and Ryan Bester; Jo Edwards celebrates her win in the Singles; Men's Singles winner, Shaun Scott; and the winning Fours teams.

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