**2025 February Library Newsletter**

2025 is a year to be remembered in human history. Great changes affecting the whole world and every aspect of our life come at a speed beyond our imagination. For me, to live both physically and mentally well is a blessing. I hope you enjoy reading my newsletter.

( 1 )  The yearly biggest indoor bowling event - the World Indoor Bowls Championships at Potters resort in England -  concluded a few weeks ago. There were lots of talking points this year. The Scottish software engineer Jason Banks, aged just 28, became the first player ever to win the hat-trick of Open Singles, Open Pairs and Mixed Pairs after having claimed first prize at the Scottish International Open a couple of months ago.

There were also some surprising results where some renowned seeded bowlers lost their games to overseas qualifiers. lt also aroused my interest to watch some familiar top bowlers from different parts of the world make their debut performance, such as Sam Tolchard from England, Colleen Piketh from South Africa, young Aiden Takarua from New Zealand, veteran bowler Anne Nunes from USA, young reigning IIBC world indoor singles champion Nor Abdullah from Malaysia etc. And another young bowler from Scotland, Beth Riva, niece of Alex Marshall, became an overnight star as she helped Banks win the Mixed Pairs and then narrowly lost in the final of the women's Singles to Julie Forrest. You can watch all these videos including the final games easily on You tube.

How good is Jason Banks to achieve such success at this event ? Here is my observation.

You all know how difficult it is to beat all those experienced ranking players at Potters who are experts in inch-perfect drawing bowls and accurate conversion shots. It is often said that getting the first two bowls consistently on the jack are essential to win a singles game. Jason Banks is not limited to the first two bowls. He can deliver any bowl, whether the third or fourth bowl to win. The commentators said that he practised hard, especially the drive shots, every day. He has the skills, as well as the determination to win. He is quick with good judgement and has full confidence in what he can do.  Take the Open Singles Final match for example. In the very first end, his opponent Paxton played good drawing bowls. To everyone's surprise, Jason, without any hesitation, delivered a perfect drive shot to win. This would more or less intimidate the opponent mentally. Maybe this is the reason why Paxton was completely outplayed in the first set.

Talking about bowling game strategy, I recommend you to watch the match between Jason Banks and Mark Dawes.   In this game, both delivered brilliant shots. It is usually the rule that to win a bowls match you have to draw close to the jack. But for competitive bowling, another rule is that any bowl near the jack would be a bigger target for drive shots. What is the strategy? When you have your first bowl right on the jack, should you draw more close bowls in a better position, or put back bowls near the ditch or near the spot? Another choice is to put blockers, which is a less usual option for most players in this event. It is interesting to see how Mark Dawes in this match put blockers to protect the head from Banks' accurate drive shots and he also made some good drive shots as well, which unfortunately were not in his favour.

This is a good and close game: [youtube.com/watch?v=WlQEif85bLw](http://youtube.com/watch?v=WlQEif85bLw) Please enjoy.

( 2 )  We are thrilled to see our Canadian bowler Kelly McKerhen enjoy a successful 2024 year winning the New Zealand National Championships women's pairs followed by the Australian Open Fours title and mostly recently the Hong Kong International Bowls Classic women's pairs which sees her climb to the top of 2024 season as the World Bowls Series woman Number One ranked player.

Other than those, she also won the 2024 State Championships women's singles and 2024 Victorian Indoor Championships women's singles. We all know that she is a good skip player. Do you want to see her performance in the Singles game? She dominated these two Singles final matches. I recommend you to watch the quarter-final match of the 2024 Victorian Indoor Championships when she played against a strong opponent Olivia Cartwright. Both had good drawing and also conversion shots.

[youtube.com/watch?v=tdFD0IPozqQ](http://youtube.com/watch?v=tdFD0IPozqQ)

( 3 )  For a change, let's watch the more traditional format of lawn bowling.  The format of four bowls pairs - 15 ends of 2x2x2x2 with burnt-end replayed - is popular in Australia. Be patient when watching such games, as usually it is quite a long game. With

World champion Corey Wedlock had a successful year by winning the Summerland Pairs, pairing Michael Anderson, and doubled up by claiming the prestigious Summerland Singles in the same tournament, happily pocketing $4000 prize money each.

Both the Pairs and Singles final games were close and exciting. Somehow, so many driving and burnt-ends prolonged the games. And yet, there was a Pairs game in the knock-out round which attracted my attention. I highly recommend it to you.

The weather was bad, windy and likely to rain. Yet these four players delivered brilliant shots which kept you wanting to continue watching and exclaiming - how unbelievable.

The game lasted from day time to dusk for 2:50 hours. Watch and enjoy.

[youtube.com/watch?v=tB-0DT62ngk](http://youtube.com/watch?v=tB-0DT62ngk)

On-Kow Au,

(email: [onkow.a@gmail.com](mailto:onkow.a@gmail.com) )

The librarian,

PIBC and Richmond LBC library