**2024 December Library Newsletter**

(1)  More than 50 champion bowlers from 30 nations competed in the 22nd World Champion of Champions. The play-offs were a battle with the weather, with light and persistent rain throughout the day. Anne Nunes, USA defending champion, lost to Tongo's Milika Nathan who was stronger in the wet. Australia's veteran bowler Lee Schraner defeated the young New Zealand star Aiden Takarue in straight sets, 6-4, 4-4, to claim the title for a second time. Our Canadian representative Pat Bird lost to Takaure in the semi-final and gained a bronze medal.

The play-offs were streamed live on Youtube. As we saw, the green was practically full of water. It must be quite an experience for those players struggling under such wet conditions. But it was said that both Schraner and Takarue produced bowls of stunning standard with Schraner drawing to perfection and Takarue powerful with his driving skills. What a pity that the filming crew stopped shooting this game, probably due to the rain.

Instead, let's watch the match between these two first class players in the section game and enjoy their good performance. It is always interesting to watch how top bowlers play their games with different tactics. Take this match for example, coming to the last end of the first set when Takarue was down two points. Schraner did not draw his first bowl close to the jack. Instead, his first bowl was somewhere behind in case the jack might be moved to the back. Then Takarue also put his bowls in the back. In their minds, position bowls are more important than close jack bowls. Later on, Schraner was holding one shot and Takarue had the second and third bowl, Schraner cleverly drew a second bowl to play safe to prevent Takaure having the chance of taking out his only bowl to win 2 points or more. Yes, lawn bowling is like playing chess on the green.

[youtube.com/watch](http://youtube.com/watch)?v=WczvSWOLb4I

(2)  Australia's recent dominance of international events continued in Hong Kong with the nation claiming two gold medals, Men's Singles and Mixed Pairs, at the 2024 World Bowls Junior Indoor Championships.

***Mixed Pairs Final*** (Part 1 of the video )

Australian Kane Nelson and his teammate Kira Bourke took the title after a sublime performance against Aaron Johnson and Ruby Hill of England.

***Women's Singles Final*** (Part 2 of the video )

Australia resident and Malta representative Rebecca Rixon won the title against the Philippines' Angeleca Abatayo.

***Men's Singles Final*** (Part 3 of the video)

Kane Nelson became the country's second consecutive men's singles gold medalist following Nathan Black's 2023 heroics after an enthralling contest against Scotland's Paul Innes. I highly recommend this match to you. Both young players displayed not only a high quality of skill but also a good personality of cool and calmness. Paul is such a good draw bowler and Kane Nelson is so accurate with his driving shots. When they played the third end of the tie-breaker, I favoured Paul who should easily have made the drawing shot which he surprisingly failed to achieve. What do we call this? Lawn bowling is a mental game.

[youtube.com/watch?v=bndUO2rNMd4](http://youtube.com/watch?v=bndUO2rNMd4)

(3)  Let's watch the Indoor Bowls Open Singles Circuits Grand Final which is a good and close game played by Sam Tolchard and Finley Williamson.

Sam Tolchard is such an all-round player. Basically, he is undoubtedly a good draw bowler which is essential to be a winner in singles games. In this match, I gave thumbs up to three of his good shots other than drawing shots. Just for fun, can you trace them when you watch this video?

-  In one end, he played a runner to take out his opponent's only bowl in the head to score for more.

-  On another end, he played a perfect block bowl right in the centre line when he was holding the shot with the jack. If you have been bowling long enough, you will understand that a good blocker is not easy to play. Usually, it is a wasted bowl. Very often, instead of being a nuisance, it actually becomes helpful to your opponent. Also, you need to know what shot your opponent is going to play, whether a draw shot, a runner or a drive.

-  With his last bowl, he played a drive shot, taking the jack to the ditch.

[youtube.com/watch?v=gEKTb8\_UH0I](http://youtube.com/watch?v=gEKTb8_UH0I)

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