



Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

### **Auckland Bowls attracts World Class Bowlers for 2020 Women's Premier Singles Event**

Auckland Bowls General Manager Steven Yates is delighted to announce the securing of several World Class Bowlers for its Premier Ladies Open, to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Headlining the participants is current World and NZ Singles Champion **Jo Edwards**. Jo is one of New Zealand's greatest ever bowlers. In two decades, she's amassed two World Bowls titles, three Commonwealth Games gold medals, a record-equalling six World Cup singles crowns and countless other international honours. The Nelsonian is also the country's most capped player, having become the first New Zealander to reach 600 caps in 2019.

Joining Jo Edwards in the WPOS is **Val Smith** who has also won multiple National Titles and represented New Zealand at The Commonwealth Games, World Championships and Asia Pacific Championships, picking up several medals. Val is recognised as one of the most feared singles players in the country.

**Selina Smith** will return in 2020 to defend her title where she overcame fellow Blackjack teammate **Deb White** in last year's final. Selina had an outstanding season last year representing her country at the Trans-Tasman challenge in the Gold Coast in February 2020. Selina has also previously represented Auckland Bowls at Representative Level. Unfortunately, due to other commitments, Deb White is unable to return this year.

Fellow Blackjack **Wendy Jensen** has also accepted an invitation to have a crack at this prestigious title and again had a very successful 2019/2020 season. Wendy capped a fine 2018/2019 season by being recalled to the national set-up for last year's Asia Pacific Championships after last representing NZ in the early 2000's. Like Selina, Wendy has also previously represented Auckland.

World Under-25 Singles Champion **Paris Baker** will also line up in this year's event. After reaching the Semi-Finals last season in a very tense battle, she was just pipped at the post. Auckland Bowls had the privilege of welcoming Siosifa Takitua Taumoepeau, Tonga's Head of Sport and Recreation, to last year's event. After stepping off the plane and jumping into a cab, he arrived just in time to cheer on Paris. Paris is a current member of the Auckland Bowls Open Women's Representative Team.

Yates believes this is the strongest line-up ever assembled for this event and it is designed to encourage our local Female Bowling Community to enter, whilst also providing the opportunity of playing against some of the best Bowlers in NZ and the World.

The event will also be Livestreamed on our Auckland Bowls Facebook and Website so if you can't make it to one of our venues over the weekend, you will still have the opportunity to watch some outstanding Bowls.

The Headquarters and playing venues are yet to be determined and will be announced in the very near future. Entries will open on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020, so mark these dates on your calendar and make sure you get your entry in as soon as possible (to avoid disappointment) and have a crack at the best.