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bowls victoria
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

Talkin' 'bout my generation

Issue 24 November 2014

GOOD AS GOLD

Under-18s campaign bears fruit

SECOND COMING

APL 2 is upon us – we
preview the tournament
and talk to one of its stars



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COACHING IN FOCUS... OVER-60S... ARMED NATIONALS...

Gold rush

Victoria came away with gold in three of eight Under-18 disciplines but fell agonisingly short of overall glory

Victoria's talented Under-18 team showed their undoubted class bringing home a total of four golds from the Australian Under-18 Championship at Nightcliff in the Northern Territory.

The boys team led the way with gold in the Fours and Singles on their way to taking the overall boys title. The girls matched them in the Fours discipline, retaining the crown they took out in Sorrento, WA, last year. Three quarters of that team were retained, with Tayla Morison, Elisa Rigoni and Cody Sylvester going back-to-back as Tiffany Brodie joined in the fun to grab her first title.

The awesome foursome was untroubled throughout the tournament, winning four games on the bounce. They first dismissed the home side NT with a 16-8 win before victory in what always looked like the winner-takes-all game in their group against NSW, this time with a 21-17 scoreline. Now fully in the groove they went on to confirm their place in the final with a dominant 21-6 win over Western Queensland and they

Australia. That led to a final against the Vics were not to be denied as led from start to finish to come away with a 19-9 victory and another golden moment.

The boys Fours were similarly dominant in their group games but

did things considerably harder when it came to the final. Jayden Christie, Curtis Hanley, Ben Cotter and Joshua Corless eased into the tournament with an 18-14 win over the hosts before coming out on top against NSW with a 16-11 scoreline. Now in pole position, they nailed their final spot with a 19-5 win over WA and unsurprisingly found themselves facing up to the same opponents as their female counterparts in the final.

Christie and Corless had been here before, losing out to NSW in the final in 2013, and it looked for a long time as though they would have to settle for silver again as at the halfway mark they were facing a metaphorical mountain with the score at 5-14. But these young bowlers are made of stern stuff and remarkably posted scores on the next six ends without reply, sneaking into the lead at 15-14 and extending it to 16-14 with one end remaining. Queensland finally got back onto the scoreboard but with just a single shot it was not enough to overhaul the Big V who confirmed a remarkable victory.

The other member of the Victorian boys team, Jay-Bye Norris, was not to be denied glory as he too grabbed a gold medal, this time in the Singles. He stamped his authority on the tournament in round one with a huge 21-2 win over the local hope, before matching up to 13-year-old NSW superstar Jono Davies who made such an impact at the Australian Open earlier this year. But Bye-Norris took little note of that with another hugely impressive 21-10 win. Already virtually guaranteed a place in the final, he cemented it with a final round 21-15 win.

Again it was the might of Queensland who stood between Victoria and glory and what transpired was another epic final. Bye-Norris had the better of the early exchanges to lead 7-3 and what followed was a ding-dong battle that saw the young Victorian on

the edge of glory when leading 20-17 and needing just one shot to claim the title. But the Queenslander wasn't done just yet and pulled back a single before more drama on the next saw a measure that eventuated in him pulling level at 20-20. With nerves jangling the two jousters went down to the wire on a final end and it was Bye-Norris who showed his mettle to take a 21-20 win.

There was more medal action for the boys in the Triples where another gold looked on the cards for a while as Curtis Hanley, Ben Cotter and Jay Bye-Norris had much the better of the early exchanges, leading 8-5 after nine ends of the final. But the South Australian opposition fought back in grand style and dominated from thereon in, taking ten shots to one to pull out a 15-9 lead after 16. A mini-comeback from the Big V ensued but it was too little too late as they went down 16-13. Meanwhile, Jayden Christie and Josh Corless, gold medallists in 2013, couldn't quite match their Pairs performance of the previous year but still came away with bronze and that was enough for the boys to claim the overall medal with a brilliant two golds, one silver and one bronze from four disciplines.

The girls team also had a say in more medals with Tayla Morison and Tiffany Brodie coming through a tense bronze medal match to win 14-13 for the duo's second medal of the campaign. New South Wales took the overall honours in the girls tournament with one gold, one silver and one bronze.

It only remained to total up the overall winner, with Victoria's great campaign seeing them go devilishly close to taking overall honours for the first time since 1997. But despite winning the most gold medals and despite Victoria and NSW claiming wins in boys and girls respectively, it was Queensland whose overall consistency took the title. While their performance in six finals was not what they hoped for, with only one victory, their group stage successes were enough to claim glory.

The future of bowls in Victoria is bright with some excellent bowlers racking up oodles of experience in top-class competition that can only bode well for the future.

In the aftermath of the Under-18 Championship Bowls Australia announced its Under-18 squad for the forthcoming season and Victoria's success was recognised with three of the ten-strong squad hailing from the state. Josh Corless and Tayla Morison retained places attained last year and were joined by Jayden Christie.

2014-15 Australian Under-18 squad

- Elizabeth Allen (WA)
- Dawn Hayman (NSW)
- Tayla Morison (VIC)
- Ellen Ryan (NSW)
- Connie-Leigh Rixon (QLD)
- Jayden Christie (VIC)
- Joshua Corless (VIC)
- Jono Davis (NSW)
- Nic Gosley (QLD)
- Dylan Skinner (NSW)



Tayla made: Double medallist
Tayla Morison in action



Jay Bye-Norris with his Singles gold (above). Awesome foursomes, Joshua Corless, Ben Cotter, Curtis Hanley and Jayden Christie (above right) and Tayla Morison, Elisa Rigoni, Cody Sylvester and Tiffany Brodie (below right)

