

Scottish ace crowned women's champion

The 'Flower of Scotland' bloomed in the Garden City yesterday when the great Lorna Smith won her first world singles title in Christchurch.

It's a long way from Linlithgow in the Scottish Lothians to Fendalton on New Zealand's South Island, but Lorna would agree that every moment aloft was worth the pain after she defeated Dutch star Saskia Schaft in a closely-fought World Singles Champion of Champions gold medal play-off.

This was a final of moments. When Lorna held four close counters on the first end of the second set and Saskia drew the absolute shot; and again three ends later, although this time the Dutch diva hit the head at speed and collected two.

But after the two protagonist found themselves tied at a set apiece, it was Lorna's four shot collect on the first tiebreak end, despite Saskia's best attempts at a another heroic save, that was the moment of them all.

One of the most decorated bowlers of all time, Lorna's medal tally at international level is of legendary standing, however, this is her first major singles crown. And she did it the hard way – coming through the elimination finals, where she defeated local star Helen King in a tiebreaker, then another sudden-death three-ender against Malaysia's Noor Zafirah Noor in the semi finals, before she encountered Saskia, who had been the standout competitor all week in the main event.

Earlier in the day Fiji's Litia Tikoisuva gained promotion to the semi finals when she outgunned Tai Jim from the Cook Islands in an elimination final, however, the popular Suva champion was unable to reproduce the same form in her semi final clash with Schaft, and will share the bronze tier of the medal presentations podium today with Noor.

The men's elimination finals yesterday morning were both entertaining affairs in which the scores were not an accurate reflection of the quality of play. Young Malaysian star Fairus Jabal defeated Kenny Chan from Hong Kong and will take on unbeaten local Blackjack Ali Forsyth in the 10am semi final while the only other undefeated player at Fendalton, David Holt from Australia, will face Scotland's Iain McLean in the 12.30 decider as a result of McLean's emphatic victory over England's Andy Walters yesterday morning. What a scenario! Forsyth, a former winner of this event; Jabal, the recent world junior mixed pairs winner; Holt, a former Commonwealth Games gold medallist; and McLean, the reigning world indoor mixed pairs champion. It's gold class all the way. Enjoy!

Yesterday's results:

Women: Elimination finals: L Tikoisuva (Fij) d T Jim (CKI) 9-4 10-9, L Smith (Sco) d H King (NZL) 6-9 6-8 4-3.

Semi finals: S Schaft (Ned) d L Tikoisuva (Fij) 10-4 8-4, L Smith (Sco) d N Noor (Mas) 14-0 6-9 4-3.

Final: Lorna Smith (Scotland) defeated Saskia Schaft (Netherlands) 8-5 4-6 6-0.

Men: Elimination finals: F Jabal (Mas) d K Chan (HKC) 7-5 10-4, I McLean (Sco) d A Walters (Eng) 9-2 10-4.

Today's matches:

10am: 1st semi final: Ali Forsyth (NZL) v Fairus Jabal (Malaysia); 12.30pm: 2nd semi final: David Holt (Australia) v Iain McLean (Scotland); 2.30pm: Men's final.



Scotland's Iain McLean



World champion Lorna Smith



Fairus Jabal from Malaysia

Men's Final

AUSTRALIA Win v bye 1-0 1-0 4			5th = Hong Kong China
	Australia vs Scotland 9		5th = England
SCOTLAND Win v England 9-2 10-4 3			5th = bye
			5th = bye
MALAYSIA Win v Hong Kong China 7-5 10-4 5			
	Malaysia vs New Zealand 9		
NEW ZEALAND Win v bye 1-0 1-0 2			

Women's Final

NETHERLANDS Win v bye 1-0 1-0 4			1st Scotland
	NETHERLANDS Win v Fiji 10-4 8-4 9		2nd Netherlands
FIJI Win v Cook Islands 9-4 10-9 4			3rd = Malaysia
		SCOTLAND Win v Netherlands 8-5 4-6 6-0 9	3rd = Fiji
SCOTLAND Win v New Zealand 6-9 8-6 4-3 6			5th = Cook Islands
	SCOTLAND Win v Malaysia 14-0 4-7 4-2 9		5th = New Zealand
MALAYSIA Win v bye 1-0 1-0 2			5th = bye



Saskia Schaft (Nederlands) Sue Wood Lorna Smith (Scotland)