

2013 OPEN MEN'S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP
MAINLAND FOUNDATION BALLPARK, CHRISTCHURCH

Strike Zone

Day Five – Sunday, February 24

Longest last day

Waitakere's Shannon twins are steeped in softball folklore – like catcher Patrick has a habit of hitting home runs on Sundays and brother Heinie pitches best when he's on death's door.

Both theories will be tested to the utmost, as their Bears attempt to add the only title that has eluded Patrick to his CV on the last day of his softball-playing career.

The West Aucklanders fell short in their first attempt to make today's final at the Open Men's Club Championship in Christchurch, beaten 7-1 by defending champions Auckland United.

But with another life up their sleeves, they now face Hutt Valley Dodgers for the right to take on United in the title game.



Bears catcher Patrick Shannon heads into retirement

"If everything goes our way, we think we've got a big chance," says Patrick Shannon, who will hang up his mitt after today.

"A lot of stuff has gone our way. Realistically, coming into the tournament, top eight was our goal and then top four, so we're probably right where we should be at the moment.

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“Heinie’s pitching on empty and it would have been nice to give him one less game, but he’s a warrior – he always wants the ball and he’ll be up for it.”

Heinie Shannon has been carrying a calf niggle since the Black Sox win over Japan at the world championships two weeks ago, but the only respite he's had this week has been the few innings Patrick has pitched in relief of his bro.

He was probably feeling the effects of that workload against United, who jumped out to an immediate lead and never relinquished control.

Now, Bears take on a Dodgers outfit boasting inspirational Black Sox skipper Rhys Casley, infielder Tyson Byrne and pitcher Nik Hayes.

They have the psychological advantage of having already beaten them at this tournament, but that means nothing at the business end of the event – which is where the Shannons’ big-game reputations kick in.

Patrick hit a homer for the Black Sox in their world championship win over Venezuela two Sundays ago, as he did when New Zealand previously won the title in 2004. Heinie had returned two nights after injuring his calf to grind out a one-legged win over Argentina and keep the Black Sox championship hopes alive.

Of course, they also have the pressure of matching the performance of their women’s team, who captured their first national club title last week.

United of Cantrbury last achieved the men’s/women’s club double in 2001.

Statistically speaking

Batting Average

Tyron Bartorillo (Papanui)	0.778
Rhys Casley (Dodgers)	0.667
Kallan Compain (United)	0.565
Gareth Cook (PCU)	0.565
Wayne Laulu (Miramar)	0.500

Runs Batted In

Dave Bishop (Porirua)	11
Three players	10

Home Runs

Gareth Cook (PCU)	6
Three players	4

Earned Run Average

Nik Hayes (Dodgers)	1.04
Regan Manley (PCU)	1.46
Penese Iosefo (Albion)	1.59

Meet the Black Sox World Champions today!

Don’t forget, our world champion Black Sox will be guests of honour at the Mainland Foundation Ballpark at 1pm today.



Yesterday ...

Saturday, March 23

Group A	P	W	L	For	Against
(7) Waitakere Bears (Auckland)	3	3	0	14	8
(4) Hutt Valley Dodgers	3	2	1	18	7
(8) Albion (Canterbury)	3	1	2	9	9
(6) Mt Albert Ramblers (Auckland)	3	0	3	6	23

Group B	P	W	L	For	Against
(1) Auckland United	3	2	1	10	7
(2) PCU Devils (Canterbury)	3	2	1	15	8
(3) Poneke Kilbirnie (Wellington)	3	2	1	17	6
(5) Northcote (North Harbour)	3	0	3	3	24

Bears 5 Dodgers 4, Albion 8 Ramblers 1, Poneke Kilbirnie 4 United 3, PCU 10 Northcote 2
Semifinals – United 7 Bears 1, Dodgers 6 PCU 0

Group E	P	W	L	For	Against
(10) Roosters (North Harbour)	3	2	1	15	11
(9) Poirura City United (Wellington)	3	2	1	15	12
(11) Miramar (Wellington)	3	2	1	11	9
(13) Fastpitch (Hawke's Bay)	3	0	3	4	15

Group H	P	W	L	For	Against
(19) Eden Roskill (Auckland)	3	2	1	14	6
(12) Papanui Tigers (Canterbury)	3	2	1	13	6
(17) Demons (Southland)	3	2	1	10	15
(15) Johnsonville (Wellington)	3	0	3	10	20

Roosters 3 Fastpitch 1, Miramar 3 Porirua City 1, Papanui 8 Johnsonville 1, Eden Roskill 7 Demons 0
Semifinals – Papanui 3 Roosters 2, Eden Roskill 8 Porirua City 2, Johnsonville 7 Miramar 0, Fastpitch 3 Demons 2

Group X	P	W	L	For	Against
(16) Auckland Marist	3	2	1	22	17
(20) Howick (Auckland)	3	2	1	9	10
(18) Stoke Eagles (Nelson)	3	1	2	18	28
(14) Halswell Hornets (Canterbury)	3	1	2	20	6

Howick 4 Halswell 2, Marist 16 Stoke 6
Semifinals – Halswell 12 Marist 2, Howick 4 Stoke 0



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Today ...

Sunday, March 24

10am

Waitakere Bears v Hutt Valley Dodgers

Albion v Poneke Kilbirnie

Mt Albert Ramblers v Northcote

Auckland Marist v Stoke Eagles

Miramar v Demons

Noon

Papanui v Eden Roskill

Howick v Halswell

Johnsonville v Fastpitch

Roosters v Porirua City United

2pm

Final - Auckland United v Bears/Dodgers