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Category	Clubs
Topic	Dalkeith Bowling Club Perth
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Headline

The 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games revisited

Caption #2

Dalkeith-Nedlands still retains 4 greens from the Commonwealth Games days

Body Copy

For a couple of weeks in November 1962, the Dalkeith Bowling Club in Perth, Australia was the centre of the lawn bowling universe - it was here that the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games had its bowling headquarters.

Perth, Australia won the right to host the 'British Empire and Commonwealth Games' in 1962 ... the last time the quadrennial festival would be so-named. From 1966 in Kingston, Jamaica, the name morphed to the 'British Commonwealth Games' and the current name – the 'Commonwealth Games' – didn't start being used until 1978 in Edmonton.

Lawn bowls had been a 'core sport' since the 'British Empire Games' were inaugurated in Hamilton, Canada in 1930 – and although there were no lawn bowls at the Kingston games because of the lack of bowling greens in Jamaica – they continue to be a core sport today. Unfortunately, women didn't start competing until 1986 in Edinburgh.

In 1962, Dalkeith was regarded as 'the' club in Perth. Located on Perth's 'Paratai Drive' - Jutland Parade on the northern reaches of the Swan Estuary - the club boasted 5 greens, as well as a further two greens at the neighbouring women's club. It was the ideal facility to promote the game of lawn bowls to the world.

At that time, like many bowling clubs in New Zealand, Dalkeith had a membership waiting list. "There were well over 400 members," says current Club President, Chris Richardson, "and that's not counting what was then the women's club across the carpark."

Today the venue for the 1962 Perth games is known at the Dalkeith-Nedlands Bowling Club, The club has a more modest 230 members, and no waiting list. Most Kiwi bowling clubs would be rapt with that number, but Chris would like to do better. "The problem we have here is that the catchment area isn't growing," he observes. "We're on a bit of a promontory here, and any growth is only going to come from existing residents, not new housing."

The women's club has now integrated with the men, but the women's clubhouse and the remnants of the two greens are still recognisable from their hey-day in 1962. These days the men are only using 4 greens, and the fifth green as fallen into disuse – being occasionally mown by the local council who own the land. An artificial surface has been laid on one of the greens.

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Jutland Parade still remains a highly desirable part of Perth. Gina Reinhardt lives down the road. The difference is that after the mining boom of the 80s and 90s, Perth now has numerous 'Jutland Parades'. Far more than Auckland, which is relatively un-mansioned for a similar-sized city

Like most bowling clubs in Australia, Dalkeith-Nedlands stays open all year round. The weather is kinder to lawn bowlers in Australia – it's warmer, drier and sunnier. "Even in winter, we have three roll-ups a week," says Chris, "It's just we don't have the tournament activity there is in summer." And like all bowling clubs in Australia, they welcome vacationing Kiwis to join their roll-ups.

In fact a visit to the Dalkeith-Nedlands Bowling Club may be something you just need to add to your Perth bucket list. After all, it's the scene of lawn bowls history – where the great David Bryant won the first of his four successive Commonwealth Games gold medals in the singles. 1962 was also the Comm Games where two great Kiwi lawn bowlers – Hugh Robson and Bob McDonald – took away gold in the Men's Pairs.

"I don't know about Hugh and Bob," says Chris, "but I'm told that David came back here for a game or two in the early 90s when he was holidaying in Perth. It was great to have him back."

Next time you're in Perth, you might want to do the same.

1962 British Empire & Commonwealth Games

Gold

Men's Singles	England	David Bryant
Men's Pairs	New Zealand	Hugh Robson, Bob McDonald
Men's Fours	England	David Bryant, Les Watson, Sidney Drysdale, Tom Fleming

New Zealand results

Men's Singles	6 th	Jeff Barron
Men's Pairs	1 st	Hugh Robson, Bob McDonald
Men's Fours	6 th	John Rabone, Malcolm Boon, Richard Pilkington, Bill O'Neill