

MERRILEES REGAINS YEAR END NUMBER ONE

Southland's Craig Merrilees is guaranteed to regain the New Zealand Professional Bowls Association year end number one trophy which he was last awarded in 2018. In the latest provisional standings Merrilees has a lead of over 100 points from fellow Southlander Craig Tinker.

Merrilees, Tinker and the 2022 year end number one Sheldon Bagrie-Howley have all booked their places in next year's New Zealand PBA team for the annual challenge against the Australian PBA. The best performed kiwi in this year's event to be held in Dunedin on September 18 and 19, plus the next four best ranked players will make next year's team.

This year's event will see Merrilees, Tinker, Ray Martin, Ross Ellery and Oliver Mason battling the Australians on home soil for only the second time in the event's history. For next year's event Clare Hendra, Gavin Hamlyn and Aidan Zittersteijn are battling for either one or two positions depending on who the best performed kiwi at this year's event is.

Hendra from Wellington has secured the best woman trophy for the fourth year in a row though a nomination to the World Bowls Tour Ladies Invitation Singles is not yet guaranteed in case Kerry Heffer wins the NZ berth in the World Indoor Singles in which case she would grab the nomination.

Former Cook Islands Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Zittersteijn from Taranaki will again be nominated for the World Indoor Under 25 Singles to be considered for the one overseas spot. And Southlander Jason Wheal has won the Best Rookie trophy.

The NZ PBA season wraps up next weekend with finals in all events in Invercargill followed by the 2023 NZ v Australia PBA Challenge in Dunedin on the following two days.

Information including an application form, entry forms, dates and venues for the NZ PBA can be found on the worldbowlstour.org site under PBA – New Zealand.

Results:

Hopes Bowls Stadium, Dunedin

2nd Aero Ranking Singles

Final: Oliver Mason (Southland) bt Russell Dawe (Dunedin) 6-6, 11-5.

1st Aero Ranking Singles

Final: Brent McEwan (Dunedin) bt Russell Dawe (Dunedin) 11-3, 8-4.

Provisional NZ PBA Pre-Finals Weekend Rankings

(2022 rank) 2023 provisional rank

	Name	(Centre)	Points
(5)	1	Craig Merrilees	(Southland) 474
(3=)	2	Craig Tinker	(Southland) 366
(1)	3	Sheldon Bagrie-Howley	(Southland) 359
(12)	4	Clare Hendra	(Wellington) 342
(38=)	5	Gavin Hamlyn	(Wairarapa) 340
(33)	6	Natarsha Grimshaw	(Hawkes Bay) 328
(13)	7	Aidan Zittersteijn	(Taranaki) 323
(7)	8	Murray Wilson	(Dunedin) 310
(15)	9=	Thomas Cockerill	(Southland) 309
(6)	9=	Oliver Mason	(Southland) 309
(17)	11=	Bevan Clark	(Southland) 296
(59=)	11=	Russell Dawe	(Dunedin) 296
(61=)	11=	Murray Glassey	(Hawkes Bay) 296
(35=)	14	Brent McEwan	(Dunedin) 277
(3=)	15	Ross Ellery	(Manawatu) 271
(8)	16	Richie Muir	(Central Otago) 265
(9)	17	Colin Rogan	(North Harbour) 260
(21=)	18	Garry Cotter	(Waikato) 253
(19)	19	Dave Bean	(Southland) 248
(118=)	20=	Ethan Flynn	(Central Otago) 246
(29)	20=	Kaylin Huwlyer	(Whanganui) 246

Others:

New	39	Jason Wheal	(Southland) 190
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