

The History of the New Zealand National Championships

The first National Championships were held in Wellington in June 1950. Entries were open to any affiliated player and there were 120 in the singles, 75 teams in the pairs and 45 in the fours events.

The organisers in 1950 could not have dreamt of the size these championships would reach. At their peak in 1977 at Tauranga there were 3,050 in the singles, 1,700 pairs and 835 fours.

Triples were introduced in 1993 and today's nationals take eight days of intensive play to complete.

Over the years the Federation Executive has developed an organisation and methods to cope with this programme with the result that hitches of any type are so rare as to be almost unknown. A notable success in 1984 was the first use of a computer to carry out the National Championship draw. The smooth introduction to this operation was largely due to the efforts of Kevin Eddy, who not only briefed the programmers but also carefully watched over the whole proceedings.

Winning a National Championship title is the dream of every aspiring indoor bowler. Only three players have won a National Championship gold star for five titles. The first was the late Sen Smith from Auckland in 1989, the second was Grant l'Ami from Otago in 2002 and the third was Paul Psaila, Auckland in 2006.