

## THE GREENLEES PARK AUSTRALIAN FOUR'S



In 1998 the team of John Fitzgerald, Phil McAulay, Alan Burton and Phil Pratt won fourteen games straight to win the Australian Champion of Champions Fours. Firstly, they had to win the Western Suburbs District Championship, then play the winner of the Eastern Suburbs District to win the Zone 11 Championship and qualify for the NSW State Fours Championships. Zone 11 comprises all the bowling clubs in the Eastern and Western Suburbs.

The State Championships were played at St Johns Park Bowling Club from the 2 October to the 4 October 1998. There are sixteen zones in the State. In the first game they played a team from Woolgoolga winning 28 - 19, next Wollongong 19 - 15, then the semi final against Grandviews, winning 32 - 14, and the final against Merrylands, winning 28 - 15 in a match they were never headed. The winning team received \$8,000 and Runner - up \$4,000.

The winners of each State played in the Australian Champion of Champions at Dudley Park Bowling Club at Mandurah, W.A. from the 16 to the 17 November 1998. The first game they beat ACT 19 - 18, the second was against Victoria winning 32 - 13, the third they beat Queensland 27 - 14. In the final they beat Western Australia 25 - 14. The team was well supported by members who flew over to watch the games.

At a function on the 25 November 1998, the Royal NSW Bowling Association declared Phil Pratt Bowler of the Year.

### **A Poem written in their honour:**

*The 1998 pennant season started off down Mona Vale way,  
From there we went to Earlwood and Mt Lewis, for more practice, before the start of play.  
The team performed indifferently, we had our ups and downs,  
But at the end of the Zone play, Greenlees Park wore the crown.*

*The State Championships started slowly for Fitzy, Macka, Burto and Pratty,  
But after some torrid battles, we emerged from the pack, very happy.  
Our next foray was at St Johns Park and we were feeling mean,  
Our supporters turned up once again, to cheer and clap and scream.  
The competitors fought bravely as they drew and drove and frowned,  
But we were more than equal to the task and once more we were crowned.*

*We were told we had not finished, further games we had to play,  
So we boarded an Ansett aeroplane, bound for Mandurah, W.A.  
From all the States and Territories, the other champions came,  
But after more torrid battles, we were victorious once again.  
And to those who travelled with us, or took the time to call,  
And to all the Greenlees Park members, we thank you one and all.*

*Fitzy, Macka, Burto and Pratty (1998)*