



**Bowls Victoria Board Representatives Meeting with the
Gippsland and Strzelecki Regions.
Monday 16 December, 2013
Traralgon Bowling Club**

Attendees:

Bowls Victoria

Board Directors: Murray Rowe & Helene Stenning
Chief Executive: Graeme Bridge
Community Development Officer: Barrie Lester

Gippsland Bowls Region

President: Jeff Amos *
Secretary: John Lewis
BVRR: Don Carmichael (North Gippsland BD)
BVRR: Fay Lewis *

East Gippsland Bowls Division

President: Terry White
Secretary: Fay Lewis *

North Gippsland Bowls Division

Dep. President: John McBay
Secretary: Jeff Amos

Strzelecki Bowls Region

Pres. & BVRR: Joy Hargreaves (Apology)
Dep. President: Peter Henwood *
Secretary: Tony Colwell *
BVRR: Tony Colwell *

South Gippsland Bowls Division

Dep. President: Ann Green
Secretary: Peter Henwood *

West Gippsland Bowls Division

President: Mal Grant
Secretary: Gerald Winter

1. Welcome

Chief Executive Graeme Bridge welcomed all in attendance and introduced Bowls Victoria Board members to the Division and Region Representatives who in turn outlined their positions on the respective Division/Region Boards. GB then asked Murray Rowe to chair the meeting.

2. **Update from Bowls Victoria**

Chief Executive addressed the meeting.

Strategic Plan

The Plan has been launched and it outlines Bowls Victoria's vision and mission from 2013 through to 2017 for Bowls In Victoria. The Plan has been developed following consultation with Victorian and Nationals Bowls organisation staff and stakeholders and together with our strategic partners and supporters. It also provides strategic alignments with key Bowls Australia, Victorian Government and VicHealth programs and initiatives. The process has taken over 20 months. Without such a plan little if any funding would be provided from through the Government Department of Sport & Recreation or from funding partner VicHealth. Divisions and Regions make up a large part of this process and there are 5 key priority areas:-

- Participation
- Communications
- Club Support
- Leadership and Governance
- Commercial Development

With our 5 key values being:-

- Leadership
- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Professionalism
-

As an organisation we will direct our energies towards honouring everything we say that we are going to do.

Participation is to be a key focus for all clubs as we need to grow not decline. We need to actively encourage and support all those who step onto your green. But the biggest challenge facing all clubs is leadership and governance. We need to keep accurate records, if records are not accurate it effects the funding we receive. More members equals more funding. Also members need to know what their roles and responsibilities are when they join a club and should be encouraged to take on roles on club boards and committees.

Communication

Bowls Victoria has done its best to evolve from hard copies of everything discussed and progressed to email and in the future people must realise that as a sport we will only benefit from the use of the technology that BV provides. BV needs to deliver a clear and consistent messaging, increase direct communication with individuals and stakeholders, strengthen the use of the IT system and social media and also must increase visibility of BV personnel to clubs, members and regions.

Club Support

To ensure that all clubs are supported by the sport and our partners to reach their desired level of success and operational stability, BV must provide a targeted response to meet specific club needs, integrate CDO roles to meet with BV's strategic directions, connect partners to support club development initiatives, positively promote club initiatives and most importantly train and educate club office bearers and volunteers.

BV wants to listen to what people and clubs have to say, but they must go through their Divisions and Regions to make them also aware of what they want to try and achieve. If clubs are doing something good, we need to know about it. It is not just a case of we do not listen, but there are 523 clubs all with different ideas, at BV we do not have all the answers, but we do need to change how we all operate and the CDO's are there to assist you. It is about developing relationships with councils, shires as they are integral links to pursue funding opportunities that exist through government and what they provide is vital to our clubs.

Leadership & Governance

Stressed the importance of making sure that constitutions and rules are adhered to when implementing decisions and that support of the Executives of the Division and Region Boards who are administering the sport in their respective areas is critical.

Whole of Sport IT

Since the WOS IT System became active in July there has been a steady stream of activity regarding Club/Division & Region take-up of websites and access to the system. 220 Club/Division/Region websites have been activated at no charge to any of those 220 identities.

120 Clubs have full access to the system and can view their member's data and generate activity through the competition portal.

It is planned for Regions and Divisions to have access in Early January.

Clubs that want Priority Access should email Paul Winslow for assistance. Paul's email address is paulw@bowlsvic.org.au

Club Education & Training

Bowls Victoria is considering what options are available in facilitating assistance to clubs in the areas of Governance, Membership & Participation and forming links with their Regional Sports Assemblies (RSA's) who are there to assist at the local and Regional level.

Many clubs and for that matter quite possibly Divisions and Regions are experiencing difficulties in administering their affairs and the business of running their clubs.

Bowls Victoria wants to assist everyone where necessary to provide the levels of service to the members that they seek in maintaining viable clubs that will be around for the long term.

The CDO's can be of enormous assistance to Clubs, Divisions and Regions and we actively encourage all parties to form relationships with their respective CDO who can provide links through local councils and assist with applications for funding and grants.

If stakeholders are experiencing any difficulties with contacting or receiving assistance from the CDO's please let the Chief Executive know and action can be escalated to obtain service.

Connecting Clubs & Schools

There has been a massive amount of work undertaken in the area of establishing links with clubs and schools. This has been as a direct result of forming relationships with School Sport Victoria and the Active After School Communities program established through the Australian Sports Commission. These two identifiable resources have been receiving a lot of support from the BA/BV Community Development Officers and internal support from the Special Projects Coordinator at Bowls Victoria.

It is vital that clubs in your Divisions and Regions understand that these resources are available to them and that support is there to provide guidance in establishing the connection between schools and clubs.

With the assistance provided from AASC through their Region Coordinators there is plenty of opportunity to get clubs involved with this introductory programme.

Active After School Communities

Refer to above.

Coaching & Umpires

At this stage you should have all read of the changes being introduced in the fields of Umpiring and Coaching accreditation and re-accreditation.

The entire accreditation and re-accreditation system has undergone an overhaul and is now focused on a competency based assessment program rather than the previous system that was overly strict in its administering of re-accreditation in particular for Coaching and Umpiring.

There is a current amnesty on Coaching Re-accreditation as mentioned at the October BVRR meeting and this has been introduced in an attempt to keep as many of the people who had previously accredited involved with Coaching as the previous re-accrediting process had been seen to turn people away from continuing in their role as a Club or Introductory Coach.

Information on the amnesty was widely promoted in the November issue of The Shot magazine and we encourage all coaches considering continuing with their coaching activities checking out what their options are in seeking re-accreditation.

BVRR's and their role

Constitution Updates

Have all the Regions and Divisions commenced or completed updates to their Constitutions?

A number of these have been reviewed by Bowls Victoria and advised changes have been recommended back to the Divisions and Regions prior to these being submitted to Consumer Affairs Victoria. If some of these have been approved by CAV, Bowls Victoria would appreciate a copy of the approved version for our records so we can refer to it if there is a need to do so for whatever reason that may arise.

Affiliations

The affiliation issue is one that continually arises when people are questioning why should they pay an affiliation fee to play bowls and what do we get for our money?

Bowls Victoria is committed to upholding the Bowls Australia Affiliation and Eligibility Policy.

4 AFFILIATIONS – PLAYERS

4.1 All players within Australia must be affiliated with at least one (1) STA as a result of their being a full, financial member of an affiliated Club with STA and BA membership.

4.2 Whilst it is recognised that it is essential that new players are encouraged to participate in the sport of bowls, beginners and introductory players should be limited to a maximum of six (6) introductory sessions at any Club before being required to become an affiliated player.

4.3 No beginner, social or recreational player shall be permitted to play in any competition or social games until they become financial, affiliated members of a Club with membership of an STA and BA.

The answer is quite simple, affiliate or don't play in organised bowls. Clubs who only affiliate their Pennant & Championship bowlers are in breach of the Bowls Australia policy. How is the affiliation fee used by BV?

1. \$10.13 Affiliation fee paid to BA (70cents payable to World Bowls) This will be increasing in 2014/2015. (The Bowls Australia Affiliation Fee is paid on every bowler, Senior and Junior) Bowls Australia have automatic indexing of CPI and other such increases factored in to their fee structure and these rise annually. Bowls Victoria cannot

		afford to absorb these increases and therefore these are passed on to the members.
2.	\$11.50	BV Staff Salaries, including Payroll Tax and Work cover
3.	\$ 5.25	Cost of Magazine
4.	\$ 3.00	Building expenses including insurance and depreciation
5.	\$ 3.25	BV State side expenses
6.	\$ 2.00	BV State pennant and competitions
7.	\$ 2.90	BV Board and BV committee expenses
8.	\$ 0.80	Postage, telephone, audit and legal expenses
9.	\$ 3.17	Printing, stationary and sundry expenses

Addressing Issues

Clubs should be the first party to deal with individual member issues.

If there is an issue that requires Divisions and Regions to be involved, then members and/or clubs should be seeking that assistance at the local level before coming to Bowls Victoria.

Bowls Victoria is the last port of call for people who may wish to consider escalating issues against Clubs, Divisions or Regions.

In most instances where club members come straight to Bowls Victoria without consulting with the other parties the affected person(s) are trying to gather information to mount a case against their respective Club/Division/Region and this does not lead to positive outcomes for anyone. Most of the time people are doing this to shop around for the advice they want to hear rather than what is the most applicable considering the circumstances. This message has to be reinforced back to clubs via their delegates to the Divisions and Regions.

Fines for Non-Appearance

Currently under the constitutional processes followed by Division and Region boards there is no power to suspend, expel or fine members.

Legal opinion is being sought on this issue and we are currently awaiting feedback from Lander & Rogers as to the prospects of developing a policy that would enable Divisions and Regions to apply limited opportunities to administer fines for breaches of local rules or conditions of play that apply to their local pennant competitions.

In order to enforce a structure of administering fines there have to be clear Conditions of Play and Entry obligations outlined at time of entering events.

3. Structure

- 3.1 Crisis in Strzelecki BR (Strzelecki BR)
Can't get enough people on committees, etc.
Suggested to make available position descriptions for all roles and conduct sharper meetings held with purpose and to not run them too long. Keep the committee members involved with worthwhile roles. Recognition of the volunteers input.
- 3.2 Running of Strzelecki BR – lack of personnel (WGBD)
Refer to above.
- 3.3 Constitution Changes (NGBD)
Maintain a sheet that lists all relevant changes for consideration by members at General Meeting seeking approval of the changes.

4. Game Format Structure

- 4.1 Single Gender – re South Australia and Equal Opportunity Commission (WGBD)
This does not apply in Victoria. Different laws and legislation apply to each state.

- 4.2 Open Gender Pennant – decline in numbers (NGBD)
What is BV doing to promote Men’s competitions as against Women Only? BV is doing what it can in reference to the Equal Opportunity legislation to conduct its competitions for all members. The current exceptions in force allow us to promote women’s competitions more readily and open competitions without discriminating against anyone.
Ann Green of South Gippsland Bowls Division raised some concerns regarding giving woman a fairer go in some clubs in her Division where she believed there was blatant discrimination against women who were not being picked at the level of representation in pennant sides where they believed they should be. CE advised that all clubs and selection committees had a responsibility to ensure that they selected sides based on ability and that gender should not come into the equation. Any instances of what appears to be disregard for the Equal Opportunity legislation should be reported and discouraged by the local administrators in the first instance and then referred to Bowls Victoria if there is insufficient action on the matter.
- 4.3 State Events – low number of entries (WGBD & Lakes Entrance BC)
It was noted that the entries for state events have decreased by 15 for the women and 10 for the men. Entries lower in the Under 25’s and Novice Singles due to no prize money being made available by BV for these events.
- 4.4 State Events – Knockout v Sectional (WGBD)
It is up to the Division/Region to decide whether the events are KO or sectional.
- 4.5 Abolition of Novice events (WGBD)
These events are in place to encourage new members to become actively involved in the playing of state events.
- 4.6 Standardized rules for Metropolitan and Country pennant (Orbost & Lindenow BC)
There has always been opportunities provided for Country Divisions and Regions to adopt their own criteria for forming their respective competitions. There are no plans to remove these options.
- 4.7 State Events - prize money to Regions & Divisions – as per BVRR Minutes of 30/10/2013 (WGBD)
This was incorrectly advised and we apologise for that error.
- 4.8 State Titles - travel and expenses. Who decides who will be paid and how do you qualify for reimbursement (Orbost BC)
That is what the region prize money is paid for. To offset the costs associated with travel, etc. to State Finals.
- 4.9 Ban on pennant matches during Victorian Open (EGBD)
CE advised the meeting that if Divisions or Regions wanted to play pennant throughout the Vic Open they must present a case to BV.

5. Affiliation

- 5.1 Breakdown of \$42 affiliation fee (Lindenow BC)
This was provided by CE as per previous breakdown advised by BV.
- 5.2 What do social bowlers receive for affiliation? (Orbost BC)
The same as affiliated bowlers. This was explained in detail by CE with specific reference made to the BA Affiliation Policy.

5.3 What do country bowlers receive as opposed to metropolitan bowlers? (Orbost BC)
Both receive the same, but mostly of the queries received at BV come from country clubs and players.

5.4 Country Club Union (Lakes Entrance BC)
Not advised as this could be seen as a destructive mechanism.

6. Under 18 Development Squads (WGBD)

Lorraine Steel is the Under 18 Development Officer and Geoff Taylor has provided wonderful assistance.

The meeting was advised that the squad would be named by those who were chosen to participate in it.

GB advised that BV assists with the cost of uniforms via a subsidy for the Under 18 squads.

7. Possible new club – Churchill BC – further information requested (WGBD)

Chief Executive reported that the Latrobe City Council has no time line on the proposed the Churchill BC. GB further advised that Councils are no longer developing single sport venues, they are all moving towards multi sport complexes.

8. Greens

8.1 New or replacement greens notification to Region or Division (WGBD)
CE advised that Andy Smith – Chairman of the BV Greens Committee was trying to get people to notify the Division/Region Secretaries together with the Greens Committee when a new green is ready for play.

9. Umpiring

9.1 Level required – BA to make exam simpler for re-accreditations (WGBD)
Covered in BV Update

10. Laws

10.1 BA List of Laws for review? (WGBD)
A 15 page document was forwarded to BA in relation to the review. The priority was for the scorecard to be kept by the 2nd in a Fours game.

10.2 BV Rules for Competition – Rule 1C(i) (NGBD)
GB advised that any of the issues relating to this are to be passed on to the BV Disciplinary Committee.

11. Whole of Sport IT Update (BV)

11.1 When will full console be available? (WGBD)
Full console will be available on request.

11.2 New BV website difficult to navigate to find results – is more education required? (Lakes Entrance BC)
There will be a 5 page article on the new website, in the next issue of “The Shot”

12. Media

12.1 Coverage of bowls – results of petition having any effect (WGBD)

This has not been relevant since the decision to cease production of the ABC program some three years ago.

Funding was withdrawn for the purposes of securing free to air television coverage of bowls.

The ongoing issue of coverage in the mainstream daily print media is one that still remains unresolved as the provision of results, etc. is a free service that cannot be always guaranteed.

13. Complaint regarding lack of forewarning from BV of Region meeting to allow clubs to present issues of concern. (Lakes Entrance BC)

GB reported that 2 to 3 weeks notice should be plenty of time in the email age. Next time we will give four weeks notice for the collation of issues of concern.

14. General Business

No items of General Business other than what was briefly discussed in a reference made to earlier questions and responses given were submitted.

BV Board Director Murray Rowe closed the meeting at 3:05pm and thanked all those present for their attendance and participation in the discussions.

Graeme Bridge
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
BOWLS VICTORIA