



## DELEGATES INFORMATION SESSION NOTES

The Gippsland Region Board held an information session for club delegates and observers at Paynesville Bowls Club on Monday 21 February 2022.

President Jan Morton opened the meeting at 10am.

### **Present**

#### *Board members*

Jan Morton (President), Nigel Plunkett (Vice President), Bronwyn Thwaites (Secretary), Colin Smith (Treasurer), Peter Beesley, Keren Blake and Marg Brandhoj (directors)

#### *Delegates and observers*

Alison Harrower (Bruthen); Chris Kyle (Howitt Park); Karen Chenney and Sue Robinson (Orbost); Jeff Amos (Yarram); Nev Irish (Rosedale); Bruce Melrose and Keith Pritchard (Sale); Graeme Hemming (Maffra); Chris Wain (Metung); Judy Beesley and Sue Jenkins (Paynesville); Bert Middelhuis (Heyfield); Neil Hutchison (Bairnsdale); Kerry Binotto and Shane Higgins (West Sale)

### **Apologies**

John and Merrilynne Hayes (Golden Paradise Beach), Peter Howie (Lakes Entrance), Simon Alleaume (Lindenow), Nola Wheeler (Stratford)

### **State and Region events**

Jan Morton (JM) provided an update as follows:

- State Triples to be completed on Sunday 27 February
- A change of date to the Champ of Champs singles at Bairnsdale, now on 27 March and 2 April (clubs notified)
- Region representatives in the State Over 60s Singles and Pairs played well despite losing in the first round, either to the eventual semi-finalists or runners up.
- The Region Challenge will be held at Paynesville on Sunday 6 March, with east and north squads already announced. The format will be three games of 12 ends. The side to represent the Region at Moama will be announced after the challenge.

In response to a question from Karen Chenney, JM advised it was decided to move from sectional format to knock out in the Triples because of the poor number of entries and the amount of time sectional play took. This decision boosted the number of entries to eight women's teams and 14 men's.

## **Pennant**

JM advised the greens for the finals had been allocated, with back up plans in case of rain.

Neil Hutchison queried why neutral grounds were not considered for finals. In response, JM said the Competitions Committee removed neutral grounds from the Conditions of Play because it believed finals should be played on the best greens available.

## **End of season survey**

Bronwyn Thwaites reported on plans to conduct a comprehensive post season survey, advising that Gippsport Community Solutions would be engaged to assist with the survey design and set up, the analysis of results and the final report. The survey will be available online and in hard copy and results will be reviewed when developing the 2022/23 program.

JM advised there would be no change to Open Midweek Pennant, which was a State competition where gender cannot be considered. This would not preclude clubs offering women only competitions if they had the numbers.

## **Alcohol policy**

JM reminded delegates that clubs needed to take responsibility for their players during finals, specifically ensuring they did not drink alcohol on the green and behaved in an appropriate manner. She said Bowls Victoria would implement a policy for players and officials of no drinking from the start of play to the end of play at the Region Sides event. Penalties would be imposed for non-compliance.

## **Junior development**

Nigel Plunkett (NP) reported that the junior development program had been a slow and difficult process, emphasising again the importance of clubs getting on board to make it happen. A key aim is to establish a junior squad that can compete against other Victorian regional squads.

Nigel handed out a Gippsland Geckos information brochure and car sticker, copies of which would be distributed to all clubs. He will promote the program at a primary schools championship bowls event at Bairnsdale Bowls Club on 11 March, at which he will announce a Come and Try Day to be held most likely on a Sunday after the State games have concluded.

Bruce Melrose spoke about the successful program being run by Alby Hallas at Sale Grammar which could be expanded to other schools.

## **Finance**

Colin Smith circulated the finance report from 1 May 2021 to 21 February 2022, highlighting:

- income of \$19.2k including \$8.2k in grants (Covid, junior development), capitation fees from the dissolution of the former divisions, State entry fees and hoodie payments
- expenses of \$20.7k including branding (flags, banners and trophies), prize payments, Region uniforms, insurance, and accommodation for Region Sides
- bank balance \$22.5k.

## **Coaching**

NP reported he has contacted Bowls Victoria about dates for a coaching course. He asked delegates to remind their members that applications go through Bowls Victoria and must be completed online. The Region will cover the costs this season.

## **Umpiring**

Margaret Brandhoj and Keith Pritchard provided an update on the umpiring course. Keith said he was still waiting to get material from Bowls Victoria and as a result, had been unable to set a course date. Most East umpires have been reaccredited.

## **Greens inspection**

JM advised a greens inspection course would be held at Paynesville Bowling Club in October to coincide with a Bowls Victoria inspection. She reminded delegates that any club which has done a major greens renovation needs a level 2 inspection

## **Questions**

### *Finals*

Bruce Melrose queried what should happen in a situation where teams 6 and 7 (same Division) are in the finals and Covid strikes team 7 (the lowest ranked team), specifically can team 7 be filled from 'above'.

In response, JM said issues such as this would be reviewed initially by the Competitions Committee on a case-by-case basis. She congratulated the clubs affected by Covid during the season for their outstanding handling of the situation, with only one Covid-related forfeit.

### *Communications*

In response to a question from Neil Hutchison about how clubs can communicate with the Board, JM said all matters should be directed to the Region Secretary in the first instance who will then refer them to the Board or most appropriate committee for consideration/action.

Chris Wain queried the relevance of the delegates, who he said were not being consulted or involved in any decision making. He also pointed out that the last information session was in October 2021.

In response, JM said the way the Region is governed has changed, as requested by Bowls Victoria, including the delegates' role. All clubs had the opportunity to review the draft Constitution and Regulations which were voted on and supported by the delegates at a special general meeting. The Conditions of Play were widely distributed, and amendments made following feedback from clubs.

Bronwyn Thwaites reminded delegates that under the Constitution, clubs had the opportunity to request a special general meeting on specific issues and were able put forward Notices of Motion for discussion at the annual general meeting. The information sessions are conducted by the Board to keep clubs, through the delegates, up to date with what is happening across the Region and to seek their input on issues of concern.

## **Close of meeting**

JM closed the meeting at 11.30am, thanking Paynesville for hosting and for the club's hospitality.

## **Next meeting**

To be advised.