



## DELEGATES INFORMATION SESSION NOTES

The Gippsland Region Board held an information session for club delegates and observers at Bairnsdale Bowls Club on Monday 16 October 2023.

President Jan Morton opened the meeting at 10.05am.

### Present

#### *Board members*

Jan Morton (President), Nigel Plunkett (Vice President), Bronwyn Thwaites (Secretary), Colin Smith (Treasurer), Graeme Hemming and Dave Butterworth (directors)

#### *Delegates and observers*

Don Cameron (Bruthen); Chris Kyle (Howitt Park); Jeff Amos (Yarram); Leigh Bryant (Sale); Maureen Kelly and Chris Sherrin (Heyfield); Nannette Hamilton and Graham Bromwich (Bairnsdale); Kerry Binotto and Shane Higgins (West Sale); Gordon Keddie (Stratford); Helen Everett (Bairnsdale Golf); Chris Wain (Metung); Alan McDonald (Loch Sport); Karen Cheney (Orbost); Raymond Barry (Lindenow); John Budge (Paynesville).

### Apologies

Alison Harrower (Bruthen), John Crawford (Bairnsdale Golf), June Richardson (Stratford), Marg Brandhoj (Lakes Entrance)

### Report from the President

#### *Pennant*

Jan Morton (JM) briefed delegates on how the divisional structures were set up following the receipt of each club's **preferences** for the coming season, noting:

- the Competitions Committee reviewed the preferences against the number of sides required for a viable competition in each division
- promotion/relegation was a consideration in some cases
- where adjustments had to be made, affected clubs were consulted.

In other pennant-related matters, JM reminded delegates that:

- players must wear appropriate uniform. While club presidents carry the responsibility for ensuring appropriate attire is worn, they can delegate this to the side managers. See clause 18 in the [Bowls Victoria Region Conditions of Play](#). JM will seek a ruling from Bowls Victoria (BV) about hats and footwear.
- smoking or vaping is permitted only in clubs' designated smoking areas
- drinking on the green is prohibited.

### *State events*

Online entries for State events are going well, with venues for most events decided and available on the GBR website.

### *Region Sides*

Expressions of interest are coming in for the 2023/24 Region Sides Championships being held in Ballarat on 14 and 15 January. BV has approved the GBR selection criteria that potential players need to be aware of when putting their names forward. All selected players will have to sign a Code of Conduct. Nominations close on 30 November.

### *Regulations review*

Bronwyn Thwaites (BT) provided an update on the GBR Regulations review (see full details in the attachment).

## **Finance**

Colin Smith circulated a finance summary for the period from 1 May to 16 October 2023, highlighting expenditure:

- net accommodation and meals costs for the 2022/23 Region Sides, \$1.9k
- net apparel costs, \$1.03k
- three sets of junior bowls for the Geckos for \$1.5k, offset by a \$1k donation from Bairnsdale Bowls Club
- trophies, pennant flags and medallions, \$2k.

To date, a total of \$11k in affiliation fees has been received, with payments from Yarram, Loch Sport, Howitt Park and Tambo Valley outstanding.

The closing balance on 16 October is \$17.5k.

## **Junior development**

Nigel Plunkett (NP) reported that the junior development program continues to go well, with the squad training on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday every month at Bairnsdale BC. He again stressed the importance of getting more clubs on board, asking that each club nominate a junior representative. Paynesville BC has nominated Ivan Thompson.

NP handed over to Gordon Keddie (Stratford), who spoke about the club's junior program under way with the local state and Catholic primary schools. Starting two weeks ago, the program runs all day on Friday with three groups coming in at different times - a total of 66 children over the day. The club is considering running a weekend junior competition in response to a request from some of the participants.

Chris Wain (Metung) said 34 children regularly attended on Friday nights, however the club has only two sets of junior bowls for them to use. Dave Butterworth offered sets from Lakes Entrance to assist.

JM strongly recommended that clubs look for grants under the Victorian sporting clubs grants program to assist with the purchase of equipment for juniors. See [link](#).

## **Coaching**

NP reported that BV had stopped coaching courses for the time being. He asked clubs to advise the GBR Secretary:

- how many members for whom have they paid for a course which has not yet been run
- how many members want to do a course.

Once he has the information, NP will go back to BV on behalf of clubs and ask that a course be organised.

## Umpiring

Umpiring Coordinator Chris Sherrin updated delegates on the umpiring situation, highlighting:

- she and Pam Carter (Sale) will be undertaking the presenter-assessor course
- the Region has 32 current umpires and 16 whose accreditation has expired (she distributed a list)
- some clubs have no umpires, a concern.

Chris suggested that anyone interested in becoming an umpire do the online self-paced course on [BowlsLearn](#). Once accredited, she and Pam Carter will do the on-green assessment for course participants. She also offered to help clubs who wanted to run an 'unofficial' markers and measurers course in the meantime.

## Other business

There was no other business.

## Matters raised from the floor

- *Seniors championship*: On behalf of the clubs, Maureen Kelly (Heyfield) congratulated Jan Morton for winning a gold medal as a member of the winning Victorian women's senior side in the Australian championships.
- *Voting*: In response to a question from Chris Wain (Metung) on voting rights, BT advised that while BV had recommended that members under the age of 18 be not permitted to vote in club elections, it was not compulsory for clubs to change their Constitutions if there were other alternatives to address the matter.
- *Break*: Chris Kyle (Howitt Park) expressed the club's concern at the 'demise' of the break in Weekend Pennant, saying it would have an impact in terms of player availability and fundraising. Chris Wain said he found the decision confusing given that delegates had voted to retain the break at the 2022 AGM. In response, JM said the removal of the break was a majority decision by the Competitions Committee following representation by several clubs. She also pointed out that after the 2022 AGM, it had become clear that some delegates had voted **against** their club's wishes to remove the break, a point backed up by Nannette Hamilton (Bairnsdale).
- *The role of clubs*: Karen Chenney (Orbost) asked how clubs could get their point across, given the changing role of delegates. JM stressed the best way was to contact the Region direct with queries or matters of concern, and each would be dealt with appropriately. She again asked clubs not to circulate information, sometimes misinformation, among themselves. BT said the information sessions were a forum where not only the Board had an opportunity to speak to delegates on a range of topics, but also delegates could bring forward issues on behalf of their clubs. Delegates could also ask for specific topics to be included on the agenda for general discussion.
- *Conditions of Play*: In response to a question from Chris Wain about the Conditions of Play (CoP) distribution, JM said the timing was dependent on the receipt of BV Region CoP.

## Close of meeting

JM closed the meeting at 11.45am. Next meeting 19 February 2024 at Maffra Bowls Club.

## Attachment

### REGULATIONS REVIEW BRIEFING: DELEGATES INFORMATION SESSION

- At its meeting on 17 July, the Board agreed to review the GBR Regulations, our operating framework, to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- On behalf of the Board, I am undertaking the review with assistance from former Governance Steering Committee member, Chris Sherrin (Heyfield).
- The Regulations cover:
  - the Region structure
  - governance, including Board election process
  - the number of committees - their responsibilities, and the nomination/selection process
  - delegated officer/coordinator positions
  - program of events – pennant, State and Region events
  - finances and assets
  - disciplinary processes, region standards and policies.
- The review has focused primarily on governance and the committees – the number, their composition and terms of reference.
- It has considered issues that have emerged since the GBR began operations in July 2021.
- These include:
  - the difficulty in filling any one of the Competitions, Junior Development and Representatives Sides Committees with the number of members stipulated in the Regulations
  - given the Board's regional rather than playing area focus, whether committees require equal representation from east and north as currently in the Regulations
  - the on the ground practicalities of running the Region's pennant and State events program.
- Regarding committees, for example, the Junior Development Committee has not attracted any nominations from members for the past two years, with no sign that this will change.
- The GBR has also learned a lot during the past two years about the most effective way of working with host clubs when running State events and pennant finals.

- In the light of these considerations, several changes to the existing Regulations are proposed, including:
  - reducing the number of committees from four to three – Competitions, Representatives Sides (men and women), and Disciplinary – by dropping Junior Development
  - establishing a new Junior Development Coordinator position, incorporating the former Committee’s roles and responsibilities
  - removing the reference to playing areas in the composition of the committees
  - including junior events in the Competitions Committee’s responsibilities as part of the Region’s junior development push
  - stipulating the process for hosting a State event in the Regulations overview document, including the GBR/host club’s specific responsibilities
  - including the detailed selection criteria for the Representative Sides in the committee’s terms of reference.

### **Next steps**

- The Board will discuss the draft amendments at our meeting following this information session.
- The final draft will be submitted to the Board for consideration/approval on 15 January 2024.
- The amended Regulations will be presented to the delegates at the 19 February 2024 information session.
- The new Regulations will be implemented well ahead of the 2024 election timetable.