

Bowls ACT

2020 Annual Report



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Firstly, I wanted to thank you, our member club's committees, members and all administrators, players and volunteers for your contributions and commitment for continuing to support Bowls ACT over the past year, through the bushfire emergency, and the COVID – 19 Pandemic impact which has affected bowls locally and nationally.

Whilst BACT staff hours were reduced, support to Clubs remained generally unaffected, including the provision of assistance around COVID-related information. With this in mind, I ask clubs and their members be cognisant that we are all volunteers (BACT and Club Committee's) and endeavor to provide a service to the best of their abilities and available time.

We were fortunate that there has been minimal disruption since the resumption of bowls and we were able to commence playing again far sooner than originally thought. It is interesting to note that we have in fact seen an increase to participation in ACT championships since resumption which has been excellent.

Clubs will take time to recover from the financial impact of the pandemic, and BACT Board agreed to reduce the financial burden imposed upon Clubs by reducing affiliation fees, and that placing priorities on the health and wellbeing of bowls members outweighed the financial considerations.

Strategic Highlights

As you would be aware, high on my priority list was to have an independent audit conducted of Bowls ACT financial status. This was conducted by Mr Ray Watt in conjunction with our Executive Officer, Mr Ciaran O'Rourke. Inconsistencies identified were around stock levels, stock that was not accounted for, stock that was previously written off but still held. These have been now addressed and Bowls ACT will no longer be stocking clothing, equipment or bowls related stock that is not related to representative teams.

We as a Board have worked diligently toward revising existing policies, developing new policies and removing unnecessary financial constraints on member (eg: removal of Transfer fees), and this has been communicated to Clubs via email and circulars.

It is important I acknowledge the time and commitment of the Board who have focused on a range of portfolio issues with the intent to increase our general management and invigorate the sport in the ACT region.



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Operating Highlights

The Board has also been focusing on being inclusive with clubs and to ensure they are well informed in relation to the decisions being made on their behalf by Bowls ACT, and all efforts have been made to provide summaries of BACT board meetings to clubs for distribution to their memberships.

Portfolios for Directors were primary in achieving this and have focussed on Audits (financial and physical stocks), Integrity, Coaching, Officiating, Governance, Board nominations and Events such as the upcoming ACT Invitational Singles Championship.

I am pleased we have made significant progress across many areas, including the following:

- Enhancements to BowlsLink (BA) with a major improvements made to the functionality.
- Increased visibility across social media platforms has been successful and been applauded by clubs for the content.
- Exploring sponsorship opportunities with an aim to obtaining and maintaining their support through 2021 and onward.

It has been fantastic to see clubs reviving in-house championships as well as tournaments once the restrictions on COVID were eased. Importantly, these successes have been achieved at clubs via the implementation of COVID plans, and members dedicated to monitoring and enforcing the conditions as directed by their respective Local Government requirements.

Pennant competition for season 2021 commenced the first round on Sunday 31 Jan 21 and it was pleasing to see a positive commitment by clubs and testament to the support members give to their clubs.

I'm conscious of naming individuals but I must say, a big part of why events run by Bowls ACT are successful, and this is due to the efforts of our Executive Officer – Ciaran O'Rourke, Match committee (Barry Freebody, Charles Smith and Board Member Matthew Styles), and to Bill Rush and his umpiring team for their efforts in all-weather conditions that enables our championships to be successfully conducted.

Looking Ahead

There has over the years been mixed results for both the Open and Seniors Sides, and our representative teams are yet to be formed for the 2021 season.

As such BACT have reviewed the player agreement which will place higher accountabilities on players from the date they are included for selection through to post representative duties. Higher standards of player accountability, professionalism, and team support are focal areas of the Board and Representative Managers and selectors.

Nominations for Coaches and Selectors have been requested, and it is imperative these members should be respected on their merit as players, their understanding of the game, application of the games Laws, upholding the etiquette of the game, and be role models of the sport.

Bowls ACT is intent on professionalising the attitude and way sides represent the Territory.

President Bowls ACT

David Pruss



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EXECUTIVE REPORT

2020 represented a unique year in many respects both on and off the greens. We faced numerous impediments to Bowls throughout the year, but still managed to save a somewhat positive result for 2020.

Bushfires started off the disruptions to the year creating difficulties with the beginning to the championships, especially the Triples, before Canberra was hit with a hailstorm causing extensive damage across the region. These two events served to be just the beginning as in March COVID-19 made its presence known to us. Facing uncertainty moving forward the Pennant season was initially postponed with the hope of continuing later in the year, though ultimately it was never able to do so.

At the beginning of the year the Administrative Officer, Jenny Clout, announced that she was to step down from the role with this announcement followed by the decision of Executive Officer, Kate Lyttle, to also step down from her role. Both staff members had served Bowls ACT for some time, Kate Lyttle notching up 9 years with the organisation in the Executive role, and would be sorely missed by the community as they called time on their positions. At the beginning of the COVID-19 break Kate made the decision to stay with Bowls ACT until there was an opportunity to properly change over the position and bring in a new Executive Officer. Bowls ACT would like to take another chance to thank both Kate and Jenny for their service to the sport in the region.

Thankfully, Bowls ACT was able to organise championships under COVID restrictions with the Singles, Pairs, Fours, CoCC Singles, and Over 60 Pairs all going ahead in the back half of the year in successful matchplay. Bowls ACT congratulates all competitors for their efforts throughout the 2020 championships and would like to thank them for the conduct and commitment during a frustrating year.

In late August Bowls ACT finalised their recruitment process for the Executive Officer bringing in Ciaran O'Rourke to take on the role following the departure of Kate Lyttle. Ciaran began the role in late August and with the AGM being held in September after initially being delayed due to COVID, was joined by a new President and Board. The AGM in September 2020 saw the retirement of Wally Kuhn as President with Matthew Styles replacing his position on the Board as a newly elected Director. Gillian Harris-Mayes and Di Marquet were re-elected to their positions on the Board and David Pruss was elected as President of the Board, beginning his role on September 28th immediately following the AGM.

In the back-end of 2020 Bowls ACT focused on ensuring the completion of Championship events as well as moving to creating a new brand under the guidance of a new President, Board and Executive Officer. The first point of call was for Bowls ACT to address the financial position of the organisation in order to ensure the fiscal viability of the organisation moving forward. Bowls ACT began a Financial Review under the guidance of Ray Watt in October 2020 with results to be provided to the Board in early 2021.



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All in all, 2020 started as a difficult year but served to become an opportunity for Bowls ACT to reinvigorate itself before moving into the future. Bowls ACT has begun a process of re-branding itself to become a more inclusive community which is self-sustaining and viable for years to come. Clubs are embracing the changing attitude towards the sport across Australia and looking for new avenues to increase their revenue and footprint in the local community to allow themselves to prosper into the future.

The work is still in its early stages, but Bowls ACT hopes with the continued efforts of the Board, led by David Pruss, Clubs, and Members that Bowls can become a major player in the sporting landscape of Canberra. Bowls ACT will continue to work on their Business and Strategic Plans moving into 2021 and beyond to develop the sport whilst including Clubs and members in the process of reinvigorating the sport.

Bowls ACT would like to thank the ACT Government for their continued support, in particular through their commitment to provide a Facilities Audit as conducted by RSM Consultancy. Bowls ACT could not achieve the level of success that we do without their continued support and we look forward to the public release of the RSM Report to enable clubs to enact recommendations and begin a process of growth. Bowls ACT looks forward to the continued support of the ACT Government in the future in what is sure to be a great partnership for both moving forward.

Pennants

The Pennant season for 2020 began with some fantastic Bowls before being interrupted by COVID-19. The season was halted after Round 6 due to the closure of Clubs and the Lockdown enacted within Canberra.

With the intention of re-starting the season later in the year every effort was made to attempt to get the season underway, however in the end we were unable to reinstate the 2020 Pennant Season. The season was called off after 6 rounds and no Champions were crowned for the 2020 year. While this was a disappointing result Bowls ACT would like to thank clubs for their communication and efforts to get the season running again.



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Championships

2020 Championship Results

Men's	Winner	R/Up
ACT Singles	Ian Whybrow	Alex Tonkin
ACT Pairs	McLean, M / Johnson, D	Tonkin, R / McInnes, P
ACT Triples	Johnston, B / Savino, N / Kelly, R	Walsh, L / Grebert, C / O'Keefe, J
ACT Fours	Johnson, J / Rowe, P / Brownlie, W / Kelly, G	Craven, R / Turner, W / Palmer, H / O'Keefe, J
CoC Singles	James Reynolds	Jeff Bradley
CoC Pairs	N/A	
CoC Triples	N/A	
CoC Fours	N/A	
Over 60s Pairs	Peric, I / Ashlin, A	Brookman, M / Smith, T
Over 60s Fours	N/A	
Women's		
ACT Singles	Chloe Morrision	Sharon Harmer
ACT Pairs	Moore, R / James, K	Hunt, M / Hancock, J
ACT Triples	Kavas, M / Hancock, J / Hunt, C	Trounce, J / Mengel, N / Megee, H
ACT Fours	Blunden, N / McCaskill, K / Mitchell, A / Dalton, V	Bannerman, M / Waters, L / Young, G / Maroney, M
CoC Singles	Chloe Morrision	Lorraine Donney
CoC Pairs	N/A	
CoC Triples	N/A	
CoC Fours	N/A	
Over 60s Pairs	Gillespie, L / Clarke, J	Blunden, N / Dalton, V
Over 60s Fours	N/A	
Mixed Pairs	Steele, S / Bourne, B	Ebsworth, M / Birch, L



Board

The Bowls ACT Board underwent significant change in 2020 with the aim of achieving a Gender balance, as outlined as a requirement for incorporated associations in the ACT. At the AGM in September President Wally Kuhn announced his retirement from the position of President as well as his position as a Director for Bowls ACT. We thank Wally for his service and his guidance through his time on the Board and as a President.

Following the AGM there were two more resignations from the Board in Jeff Bradley and Marg Bachetto. Both Jeff and Marg had served as diligent Directors of Bowls ACT in their time, however, were unable to continue their commitment to organisation and felt it best to step aside. We would like to thank both Jeff and Marg for their service to Bowls ACT during their time as Directors and wish them all the best moving forward, hoping to see them continue to apply their skills on the greens.

In October Roger Grylls resigned from his long-standing position as Finance Director, with the position now left vacant. Roger had been a long-serving member of the Board in the position of Finance Director and I would like to take the chance to thank Roger for his years of service to Bowls in the region.

Wally Kuhn's position was replaced by Matthew Styles, elected unopposed at the 2020 AGM, who has since brought a lot of effort and energy to the Board. Chloe Morrison was appointed to the position vacated by Marg Bachetto, while Mark Jennings retired from his appointed position in order to fill the position vacated by Jeff Bradley.

At the end of 2020 the Bowls ACT Board consisted of 6 voting Members who have been designated portfolios based on their suitability to the role and previous experience;

David Pruss – President

Gillian Harris-Mayes – Vice President: Human Resources

Mark Jennings: Governance and Legal

Di Marquet: Marketing and Sponsorship

Matthew Styles: Events and Matches

Chloe Morrison: Representative Teams

The current Board has worked diligently to reinvigorate Bowls ACT in line with their Strategic Plan, and to build a new Business Plan for the organisation moving forward. Through several Board meetings the Directors have discussed plenty of matters concerning the Sport of Bowls and begun a journey towards the future of the sport in the region.

Many thanks must be given to the Board, both new and former, for their commitment to the sport and their passion to see the game thrive in the region. No doubt the Board will continue to work towards building the sport in the region and creating an environment where Bowls is a sport enjoyed by all.



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Committees

The Bowls ACT Board is supported by several Committees with members appointed to the positions in order to assist with the running of the sport.

Match Committee

The Match Committee was comprised of three members; Charles Smith, Barry Freebody, and Matthew Styles for the duration of 2020 and into 2021. The Match Committee presided over matters concerning the running of events and championships for the 2020 year including ACT Championships and Pennants. The Match Committee served a valuable role in the decision making processes surrounding COVID-19 restrictions and the return to play for the year.

I'd like to take the chance to thank the Match Committee for all of their work during 2020. They served the community well giving guidance during difficult times. We will have a new committee following the 2021 AGM and wish these committee members the best should they not be continuing in the role.

Umpires Committee

The Umpires Committee has been made up of several members who have served to guide the organisation on issues concerning the Laws of the Sport of Bowls. Committee Members are; Bill Rush (Chair), Russ Sheely, Jenny Van Vucht, Garry Goodman and Gillian Harris-Mayes. The Umpires committee has also worked with Bowls Australia during this difficult time on the accreditation and re-accreditation of officials and we are thankful for their ongoing support.

Coaches Committees

There have been two Coaches Committees for Bowls ACT, the Coaching Committee and the Junior Coaching Committee. Bowls ACT would like to thank the members of these committees as we look to revamp the Coaches Committees into a new Representative Committee in 2021. Committee Members include Garry Goodman, Jack Kearslake, Patrick Robertson and Denise Rutherford. Thank you for your service and we hope that you will continue to remain involved with Bowls ACT as we move forward.

Financial Review

In October of 2020, following the 2020 AGM, Bowls ACT undertook a Financial Review to gain a thorough understanding of the current fiscal standing of the organisation and create a pathway moving forward.

Ray Watt came onboard to advise and work began on the review in October of 2020 continuing through to early 2021. In conducting the review Bowls ACT has established several internal frameworks for the financial procedures of the organisation and reviewed the current financial standing of the sport in the region.

Key findings of the review;

- Inadequate working papers and documentation of financial procedure
- Mistakes in recordkeeping of financial procedure
- Variable invoicing dates/procedures
- Lack of Board oversight on Bowls ACT Financials



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Direct outcomes of the review;

- Change in accounting software, from MYOB to Xero
- Updated invoicing procedures
- New Chart of Accounts
- Write off of limited Debtors
- Write off of limited Stock

While the review continues to be an ongoing procedure to ensure the financial stability of the organisation into the future the ground work that has been undertaken has ensured that Bowls ACT remains financially sound in the immediate future. The Financial Review has allowed Bowls ACT to continue to build on its business plan and to project financial obligations further into the future.

It should be noted that Bowls ACT would not be in this position were it not for the work of Ray Watt and for this we are extremely grateful.

Looking Ahead

With Bowls ACT having conducted a financial review, instated Board Portfolios, established a new Board, established a new EO, and COVID somewhat heading towards the rear-view mirror the path ahead for Bowls in the region looks ready to be established.

Bowls ACT has seen a reduction in members over the previous decade, however, the organisation is poised to start reversing the trend and to begin establishing Bowls as a favoured pastime in the ACT Region.

Bowls ACT is eagerly awaiting the public release of the RSM Report into Bowls clubs and Facilities commissioned by the ACT Government and is looking forward to implementing the recommendations of the report with the support of the clubs.

The future of Bowls in the region rests in the hands of its members as we embark on a period of building the sport. The Bowls ACT Board is looking to reinvigorate the sport to create an environment that is welcoming to new members and to create an opportunity for more and more people to join our community. Bowls ACT is looking to establish itself within the ACT and surrounding regions and to create a pathway for Bowlers to become the best in Australia.

This reinvigoration includes a revamp of the Representative Pathway including the introduction of a new Representative Policy to outline the standards to be upheld for representative players in the region. It is the goal of Bowls ACT to be, pound for pound, one of the best bowling states in Australia in the coming years and it all starts with creating an environment where we are attracting more and more people to the game. We hope that you'll join us on this journey and I can say that I for one am extremely excited about what the road ahead holds for Bowls ACT, the Clubs, the Members, and the community.

Ciaran O'Rourke

Executive Officer



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DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Human Resources

Gillian Harris-Mayes

Strategic Highlights

Raising the Bowls ACT Profile and sponsorship/marketing opportunities moving forward through the next two to three years. These issues are only beginning to be addressed and need considerable additional work to bring them to fruition particularly the sponsorship/marketing.

Operating Highlights

Building a solid portfolio of policies and procedures which are being seen as top quality examples of such a portfolio within the ACT sporting environment and beyond. The legal expertise which has been given to these give them rigour and strong credibility.

Building of a solid financials platform to overcome issues of previous years highlighted at the last AGM gives a solid budgeting/planning base for the future.

Ensuring Bowls ACT survived during the Covid 19 period. This work reflects for more than the current period but will be ongoing moving forward as the situation develops.

Developing the BACT website to include regular updates on pennants and other ACT events and building an approach of positivity has resulted strong feedback and appreciation from local and interstate bowlers and is testament to its success. The website allied to greater interactions with the local clubs by the Board particularly ensuring representation of Board members at local events has greatly helped with visibility of the Board.

Looking Ahead

We need to:

- Develop short term and longer term (1 year and 5 year) business and strategic plans
- Develop our funding and sponsorship opportunities
- Attract more people to the sport
- Build our representative, coaching and umpiring capabilities
 - Become a Centre of excellence of coaching and umpiring
- Become more attractive to outside events
- Further Build our relationship with ACT Government
- Further develop our platform with BA



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Personal Achievements:

- Working extensively with Legal Director on policy design and implementation
- Developing professional HR practices and procedures
 - Recruitment of new staff and volunteers for specific roles
- Ensuring I represent BACT at all time, attending ACT events as a player, umpire or Board member at a variety of venues

Gillian Harris-Mayes

Vice President – Human Resources



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Governance and Legal

Mark Jennings

My work on legal and governance issues is linked to the Board's commitment to ensuring a safe, respectful and enjoyable environment for all who are involved in the sport of bowls in the ACT and surrounding region. I have prepared key documents such as the Member Protection Policy, Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy which demonstrate the Board's commitment.

Strategic Highlights

In 2019 and 2020, the Board gave priority to revising and updating the Constitution, which is the foundation for the governance of Bowls ACT. I was closely involved in this process. Having completed work on the Constitution, the Board is now giving priority to revising and updating Bowls ACT policies, which elaborate on the Constitution and meet legislative and other requirements. In 2021, the Board has adopted key documents such as the Member Protection Policy, Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.

Operating Highlights

The successful adoption of key policies.

Looking Ahead

The Board will continue its work to ensure that all Bowls ACT policies are fit for purpose.

Mark Jennings

Director – Governance and Legal



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Marketing and Sponsorship

Di Marquet

Bowls ACT have had quite a few challenges over the past 12 months with COVID that has greatly impacted our sport.

Changes have had to be made to try and accommodate everyone within the bowls community and which includes the operation of Bowls ACT.

Strategic Highlights

Appointment of our Executive Officer to tackle a demanding role.

Ability of BOWLS ACT to complete 99% of its events.

Operating Highlights

We have had a few challenges, of which have now been sorted and we look forward to a positive result.

Looking Ahead

Sponsorship has been hard to get due to COVID and with companies having less money to spend.

Sponsorship proposals have since gone out to quite a few major companies.

And as with big companies, unfortunately comes a long lead time, but continued follow up is happening.

Di Marquet

Director – Sponsorship and Marketing



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Events and Matches

Matthew Styles

Strategic Highlights

- Introduced change to COP now allows players to play Bowls ACT Events with any registered Bowls ACT players removing the restriction of having to be from the same club.
- Creation of the Bowls ACT Invitational Open Singles Event which will see the best 8 Women and 8 Men vi for the best player in Canberra title.
- Running a Conference Style Division 1 Men's Competition which allowed maximum bowls to be played and avoided a bye heavy event.

Operating Highlights

- Further Introduction and commitment to online entries and payments via Bowlslink for tournaments.
- Results being updated on Bowlslink daily to allow easy to follow tournament outcomes.
- Regular Social Media reports and highlights of ACT Championships, which have received tremendous feedback and support.

“The new CoP, enforceable from February 1, 2021 will allow composite teams to enter ACT Championship Events. Composite teams mean that participants will not be required to be members of the same club”.

Looking Ahead

- Look to Stream ACT Events more frequently.
- Discuss and collaborate on a transition to open gender pennants. Given one of the strengths of bowls is the fact no matter what gender or age you are, you can always competitively play against anyone else it makes sense to consider an open pennant competition.
- Look to increase representative opportunities, which is currently very limited, look at arranging tournaments and matches against local zone rep teams from NSW to increase exposure to the best players. Possible interstate Premier league style competition

Matthew Styles

Director – Events and Matches



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Representative Teams

Chloe Morrison

I was appointed to the Board in 2020 to help with the development of the current State Squads; Juniors, Open, and Over 60's, by assisting in the expression of interest and selections of coaches and managers. I personally would encourage members to feel they can ask and approach me with any issues or any queries they may have and to let them have a voice in future meetings. Being an active playing member for years and knowing what drives people is what motivates me to encourage the direction of the Board. My main focus is to implement changes that will assist future decisions and policies. I personally believe the game in ACT will improve for years to come.

Strategic Highlights

In 2020 there have been some warmly recognised changes in the approaches and structure of the Board. Due to the recommendations from the newly appointed Board we have agreed to the following changes:

- Amending several policies for more individual player protection i.e. social media and awareness of people's personal beliefs and cultures
- Ethical and responsible decision making
- Updating the Conditions of Play for Championships
- Changes to the Disciplinary Policy
- New Codes of Conduct and Representative Policy
- Removal of Transfer Fee

Operating Highlights

- Easier financial system on how we track income and expenditure
- Improved interactions with social media i.e. Facebook, Instagram and BACT Website
- No longer supplying and selling bulk bowls items to public
- Only supplying appropriate representative uniforms
- Positive feedback from members
- Working together as a team and communicating as a team
- Increase in Government Grants
- Member relationship and reporting improvements

Looking Ahead

In 2020 the election of new Board Members has seen some positive changes for the future of Bowls ACT. Potential sponsorship deals and tournament ideas have created some welcoming discussion points and lots of interest. The Board Members share a similar vision towards the direction of Bowls in the ACT region and will continue to work together with clubs to ensure a bright and fair future for the game to ensure its longevity.

Chloe Morrison

Director – Representative Teams



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