

NOTES ON THE DISTRICT PROGRAM 2022 onwards

During the lockdown, the newly-unified State Association was very busy reviewing the direction in which they want to take the sport. As a result, they have conducted the promised “competition review” much sooner than anticipated, meaning there will be quite a lot of change for us to adapt to next year. Representatives of Districts and Zones were invited to participate in Zoom presentations and discussions with Bowls NSW. Clubs have since received the State program and the Conditions of Play documents. Here is an overview:

- The only events before July next year will be “catch up” 2021 State Finals, Champion of Club Champions, State Carnival (a new men’s carnival as well as women’s) and the Australian Open.
- The Bowls NSW bowling year will in future be 1 July – 30 June (not calendar year)
- Our program for 2022-23 onwards is guided by “entry closing dates” set by Bowls NSW.
- Sydney metropolitan Zones and Districts were invited to adopt a “common” calendar, with some scope to adapt it to our needs; our District program had to be approved by Bowls NSW.
- Women’s & Men’s Pennant, plus Pairs & Triples championships, will be held August – December.
- Fours & Singles, plus the Open Gender Pennants on Saturdays, will run February – May 2023.
- State Champion of Champions, Pennant Finals and State Championships will be June – July 2023.
- Women’s Weekend Pennants and Summer League have been dropped from the program.

PENNANTS

- There will be a new “Single Gender Pennants” for men, as well as the usual Women’s Pennant.
- Single Gender Pennants will start in August (after the Commonwealth Games, so clubs can still select their “elite players” for Pennants), with our four “Grades” renamed as “Divisions”.
- No more “importing” of elite players for Single Gender Pennants – club members only.
- Any two clubs in the District can combine players to form a side in any “Division”, even if they are entering their own club sides in other divisions as well (if Bowls NSW gives approval).
- Elevation to the next-highest grade will apply if the side wins at the Regional play-off.
- The side finishing last in a District division will be relegated to the next-lowest grade for the following season.
- More information about gradings will come from Bowls NSW in coming weeks/months.
- Other elevations/regressions may be applied by Bowls NSW depending on the number of entries for each Division. For example, if 5 sides entered one division and 3 (or 7) entered the division above or below, they would most likely “even out” the numbers.
- Our District Women’s Pennant will run “mid-week” as in the past, with clubs able to request an evening or weekend time-slot for their “home games”.
- Open Gender Pennants (Saturdays, Sundays, or Friday nights) will start on 25 Feb 2023.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

- Bowls NSW will hold five categories of each championship discipline:
 - Open Women’s
 - Senior Women’s
 - Open Men’s
 - Senior Men’s
 - Reserves
- “Reserves” is the only “open gender” category and is limited to bowlers whose “open gender Pennant grading” (OGP) is 5 or lower. Any woman who doesn’t have an OGP grading can enter, providing she hasn’t played 50% or more matches in Divisions 1 or 1 of Single Gender Pennants in the current or previous season.
- There will be a “seniors” category in Women’s Singles and Triples, as well as Pairs and Fours.

- The formats for “seniors” are now identical to the “Open”. (Response to the Bowls NSW survey mid-year was overwhelmingly in favour of this.)
- The number of ends has been standardised so men and women play the same:
 - Pairs -- 2x2x2x2, **21 ends**
 - Triples -- 2-bowl, **25 ends**
 - Fours -- **21 ends**
 - Singles – 25-up (no change for women!)
- Depending on entries, sectional play may be run and, if 3 sectional rounds were played in the day, the number of ends in each team game would be reduced. (Singles would remain 25-up).
- Players can play in only one category in the same discipline (i.e., make a choice between playing in the “Open”, “Senior” or “Reserves” Pairs if eligible for all, and may then make a different choice for the Triples, Fours and Singles, if eligible for more than one category).
- **North Shore District will run the “Open” category of each championship at the weekend (in conjunction with the Men’s championships), with “Seniors” being played through the week.**
- All Regional Play-Offs incl. Pennant will be held at the weekend (in conjunction with Men’s Finals).

OTHER ALTERATIONS TO CONDITIONS OF PLAY

- There are changes to “Restricting the movement of players” during a match.
- Movement restrictions now apply in all events.
- Practice is now permitted before all matches (if permitted by greenkeeper and Controlling Body).

The points listed here are intended as a guide only; we encourage everyone to read the individual “Conditions of Play” documents, which are available on the Bowls NSW website.