

## ZONE 1

### **BowlsNSW priority topics:**

**Coaching:** After much delay and uncertainty the Zone is having its first two-day Zone-wide coaching course this month run by Mike Hall. We are promoting it to all clubs and are holding it centrally in the Zone at Ballina, which should attract a good level of interest.

**Marketing:** Our lady publicity officer continues to demonstrate that it is not good enough to just send media releases to newspapers (photos are essential) and she is building good relations with our various local newspapers. Coverage is improving throughout the Zone.

### **Governance**

Three key separate, but related, issues arose since the last State Council:

- One district voted “that Zone One investigate abolition of districts”
- Another district's (Clarence River) whole executive resigned due to a disagreement with a State Match Committee decision on structure of local pennants championship (special meeting due soon to appoint new executive)
- Zone 1's sub-committee set up to review Zone management with the broad brief to recommend how the Zone can stimulate clubs, competition, membership and operations presented a preliminary report with the overall finding that Zone needs to take serious action to brief our clubs on future administrative and operational options and give them an opportunity to express their views both in writing and verbally.

The current plan is to invite administrators from nearby zones to tell us how they went about the zone-alone project, how existing districts were absorbed into the zone-alone administration and competition, the impact upon and reaction of clubs and bowlers, how the zone administration was set up and operates, etc. This might be through meetings in each of our three districts to which club officials (of both licensed clubs and bowling clubs) are invited, together with active bowlers and district administrators. It might also be appropriate to invite BowlsNSW representatives and perhaps some board members to participate. BowlsAustralia (probably Craig Donaldson our Region Bowls Manager) could also be involved. There are numerous other issues to be considered but we feel we now need to be making positive steps towards zone-alone and bringing the clubs, administrators and players along with us.

### **State Council priority topics:**

**Communication** – after many technical blockages, Zone one has at last found a way forward and we have commissioned a local technology company to customise the BowlsAustralia format and work is underway to update and transfer material from our existing website; a new facebook page will also be added.

**Survival of small clubs** – two of our smallest clubs have returned to the fold although not completely – one, Urbenville wishes to reaffiliate with its district (and has paid a fee) and possibly with the Zone but does not want to be part of BowlsNSW; South Grafton has resurrected and we await determination of its affiliation fee. We are in discussions with the former club. Two other small clubs have been lost – Woodburn and Broadwater largely because of nearby construction work on the Pacific Highway which impacted their facilities. One good story is Bangalow which has an increase of 71% and is now able to field two pennant teams for the first time in ten years.

**Membership and recruitment** – Registrations continue to drop although at a slower rate than in the past. Since July 2018 we have a net loss of 82 bowlers or just over 3% of our playing strength, all three districts experiencing losses. We now have 2,490 registered bowlers. There is some local dispute about BowlsNSW registered bowlers figures with worries over duplications and timeliness.

**Junior bowls** – we will shortly be calling expressions of interest in junior championships, for which we have 11 possible entrants.

**Tony Hart**

## **ZONE 2**

### **Communication**

Zone 2 held a seminar for Side Managers and Selectors on February 7; 63 people representing 27 clubs. The seminar covered changes to the Conditions of Play for 2019 and the role of team managers and their responsibilities, regrading, forwarding of pennant results and scoresheets.

The Umpires Committee also held a seminar on February 14 where 34 umpires were in attendance to discuss changes to the Law Book and COP and also discussion on the heat policies and heat measuring devices.

### **Membership and Recruitment**

92 new members were registered throughout Zone 2 in the period 18/1/19 to 27/2/19.

### **Junior Bowls**

Junior Championships have been running during February with the Singles attracting 20 entries, Fours 5 sides and Pairs 10 sides.

### **Survival of Small Clubs / Support Services**

Zones 2, 6 and 15 have formed a working party to look at this topic and there is an agenda item for more discussion on this topic.

### **General**

Pennant nominations - 170 sides for Saturday and 86 sides for mid-week.

Denis Broad retired as Secretary after 37 years and was given a send-off at the Zone 2 Presentation Night where retired media personality John Gilmour talked us through Denis's career in both bowls and cricket administration.

A Veteran's and Super Veteran's Day was held at Lambton BC on March 7 with 38 participants taking to the green.

A senior rep game was contested between Zones 2, 6 and 15 at Charlestown on March 5 which was used as a selection trial for the Senior Inter-Zone at Kahibah and Charlestown in May.

Executives attended 23 club presentations since November.

The NDBA regained the Les Parrott Memorial Shield from the RNSWBA with a very convincing victory at Dora Creek Workers BC in November.

**Warren Shipley (Sec)**

## **ZONE 3**

The Zone AGM was held on 15 December 2018 at Narrabri BC and at this meeting the motion was passed that Zone 3 adopt the new constitution, that the Zone becomes a Zone-alone and the 5 districts be dissolved. 15 clubs were represented. The next meeting for the Zone was held on 9 February 2019 at Barraba and 19 clubs were represented. This meeting was more informative as we had the Match Committee give a full run-down on the Pennants and State Championship events and the Selection Committee was able to outline the selection policy for the year and all who attended showed that the change to move to Zone-alone was going to be for the better. The next Zone meeting will be held at Bingara BC on 20 July and the AGM is set down for 16 November 2019 with the venue tba. Four districts - New England, North West, Barwon, Gwydir have dissolved and Central North are still in talks with the Department of Fair Trading to finalise their dissolution. The Zone executive have held 2 meetings and meet again on 11 March.

Zone conducted a junior singles carnival 2-3 February and had 40 nominations. This was played in four divisions: under 11/13/15/18. Play was at West Tamworth BC and Tamworth City BC. Zone junior singles championships were played at Manilla BC 2-3 March, and the pairs and fours will be played 26-28 April again at Manilla. The 2019 pennant season started 9-10 March with 49 teams participating in grades 2-7.

Tamworth City BC are celebrating their 100 years' centenary this year. I attended the unveiling of their 100 years plaque on 1 February 2019. The plaque was unveiled by Neville McDonald who has been a member since the 1950s. Neville is 102 years of age. The short ceremony was followed by light luncheon. A centenary celebration dinner will be held 20 April at the Tamworth City BC.

**Greg Wilkins**

## ZONE 4

The inaugural Pennants Forum held at Yeoval 15 December 2018 was a great success. Agenda items were discussed at length, with many clubs providing input. The main topic of contention was excessive travel and a resolution endorsed by the quorum was for the Match Committee 'where possible, to limit maximum travel for a club to two hours'.

Zone 4 half-year meeting held at Wellington 12 January 2019 was well attended. After the preliminary agenda items had been resolved there was a discussion on the recently published Conditions of Play and the 2019 pennant draw was tabled and accepted.

It was reported at this meeting that Blayney BC was in danger of closing. Two weeks later they did cease operations. Additionally, Dubbo Railway BC has also closed. While both clubs continue to have strong bowling contingent, Blayney has opted to pull out of 2019 Pennants and Dubbo Railway will play their games at Dubbo Macquarie BC. Along with the withdrawal of Blayney's Grade 5 and 7 teams, Lithgow City Grade 6 and Grade 7 teams from Rylstone, Gulgong and Molong have also withdrawn – thus requiring extensive amendments to the draw. All is now set to start pennant sectional play, the first weekend in March.

The closure of Blayney BC and Dubbo Railway BC highlights the precarious position of many of the smaller clubs, not only in Zone 4, but State-wide. Lawn bowls is linked directly to the licensed clubs and if these clubs are not operated and managed with an effective business plan to enhance lawn bowls - lawn bowls will suffer. The following link is an article published in the Sydney Morning Herald relating to bowling club closures and amalgamations. It was sent as a circular by Clubs NSW to Member Clubs: <https://www.smh.com.au › National › NSW › Local council>.

Like some of the State Councillors present, I am a board member of a licensed club and aware of the costs associated with the management of bowls. I think it is fair to say that these costs are generated by bowling members in very few clubs. The shortfall in revenue is made up from patronage by non-bowling members. Recruitment strategies must adapt to this issue or more clubs are going to close.

On a happier note, Lithgow City will be celebrating their centenary in March. This is a tremendous achievement for any club to reach the 100-year milestone. They are a club with a proud tradition and have an impressive record, which includes State Pennant flags, State Champions, numerous Zone and District Pennant winners and champions. They are well managed, which shows by their longevity, have a modern clubhouse with three grass greens and a good bowling membership – both men and women.

The Zone Singles and Pairs Championships in all three formats have been completed during February. The sectional knock-out rounds were played at various venues and the Match Committee must be complimented on their venue selections. All section winners played off at Orange (Pairs) and Narromine (Singles). There was a total of 600 entrants for both championships.

The 'Junior Questionnaire' presented by Anthony Cottee at the last meeting was posted to all clubs via the Zone Secretary's email network - with very little response. Glenn Morrison from West Dubbo has presented an excellent reply to the questionnaire with regard junior bowls within Zone 4.

Questionnaire:

1. *Does your Zone have a Junior Committee? Is that committee focused on junior recruitment or junior selection?*

Yes, both. We try to get clubs to get juniors and do selection trials for Zone events.

2. *What competitions does the Zone conduct for juniors only?*

State Championships at Zone level, round robin, West Dubbo and Gulgong Clubs conduct two-day tournaments for juniors. West Dubbo send a squad of juniors to the Drake's Pride Tournament held at Windang BC.

3. *What junior recruitment strategies have worked in your Zone?*

West Dubbo, Gulgong, Bathurst City and Trangie BCs have successful junior squads. Main recruitment has been via schools and family members. Cowra BC is trying to start up juniors. Bourke BC is hoping to get juniors to play twilight bowls commencing in February on Friday nights – they purchased 12 set of junior ACE bowls (which highlights their commitment). Nyngan BC is looking at a program in the new year as well as clubs in the eastern section of the Zone around Lithgow.

4. *What elements can be put in place in terms of Zone structures to assist in junior recruitment?*

Zone 4 has a Junior Committee, but members come from only two clubs.

5. *What development days or events are targeted at junior recruitment?*

Similar response as Question 3.

6. *Is it only a club responsibility to recruit juniors? What elements need to be put in place at Zone level to support or assist growing the number of juniors?*

Clubs make up Districts and Zones, so it should be the individual club's responsibility to provide greens, bowls and coaching with help from the Zone, Bowls NSW and Bowls Australia with promotional material. Bowls NSW should also try to get private and Catholic schools involved in bowls competitions like the CHS Lawn Bowls and target primary schools. In the Dubbo region, there is a Central Schools Competition.

7. *Would a junior hub, ie. central location(s) within each Zone assist in conducting events for juniors to attend?*

Dubbo is the hub of junior bowls in Zone 4. Each Zone should have a hub with Junior Committee Members and Coaching Committee involved. With the vastness of Zone 4 having a hub in each of the geographical regions would help considerably.

In regional centres it is becoming difficult to attract juniors to participate in any of the sporting codes. Many clubs have twilight or barefoot bowls that have juniors playing. The transition from this form of bowls to the main stream is proving difficult. Time availability appears to be the main problem, with juniors on weekends having commitments to other codes and during the week school work or part-time jobs.

**Ray Warren**

## **ZONE 7**

On October 6<sup>th</sup> 2018 Club Sapphire Merimbula introduced its new Junior Academy. The registrations from that weekend have increased to 25 with more interest shown every week. Ages of the boys and girls range from 5 years to 15 years and come from various clubs in the district: Merimbula, Candelo, Tathra, Bega and Cooma and three juniors who have relocated back to Merimbula from Canberra. The academy provides a shirt and cap to all members paid for by a generous fund created by Club Sapphire Merimbula. Regular clinics are conducted on Sunday mornings which include invited guests like Kelsey Cottrell. The academy will be seeking to play matches against other clubs, District and Zones.

Zone 7 played the Patrons Shield tournament on weekend of 16-17 February at Merimbula BC.

The Zone 7 AGM appointed Joe Franklin as Zone 7 Umpire Coordinator to help with the accreditation and reaccreditation of the current umpires.

The merger between South Coast and Central South Coast Districts has been finalised and the first delegates' meeting was held at Milton-Ulladulla BC on 14 January.

I represented Zone 7 at the Bowls NSW Players Award night at Club Kirribilli on 20 February and once again it was an outstanding success.

A proposed coaching course set down for St George's Basin BC had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers.

**Joe Franklin**

## **ZONE 8**

2019 season is now well underway with four districts having commenced pennants, the remaining two to commence shortly. District events are also well under way.

In January, I had the pleasure to travel to Tumbarumba in the Southern Highlands District for their official opening day; all clubs were represented. I also attended their January quarterly meeting with Zone 8 Match Chairman Ron Cameron and Zone 8 secretary John Swaffield.

In December last year Zone 8 held a forum on the viability of continuing with districts or going to a straight Zone. The forum was attended by Bowls NSW CEO Greg Helm, GM Anthony Cottee and State President Vince Beard. Members from all six districts and clubs were represented. Major points discussed were administration of Zone 8 - dissolution of districts. Greg Helm addressed the meeting outlining the reasons for Zone-only administration.

Other topics discussed were the viability of small clubs and the assistance available to them; communication i.e. website and social media; member recruitment, both senior and junior; flat fee explanation and how it works; amalgamation between both men's and ladies playing pennants to help small clubs. During the forum there was good feedback and questions re all topics. Zone 8 has requested all districts and clubs go back to their respective bodies and discuss the issues raised and report back to the Zone with any more questions they require answers to. Once this information has been received and evaluated another forum can be scheduled to progress further.

At our January quarterly meeting more discussion was held on the forum held in December. Some very interesting comments and feedback have been received.

On behalf of Zone 8, I would like to wish Anthony Cottee every success in the future. You will be a big loss to Bowls NSW.

**Gary Brookes**

## **ZONE 9**

Match Committee. Like all Zones, this committee has done an outstanding job to arrange our current pennant season and normal zone events.

Our Zone Triples and Zone Fours have been completed. Senior Inter-Zone in-house trials are scheduled.

A new initiative for the Zone was our New Bowlers event held on 27 February where 72 of our newer bowlers, playing either lead, second or third, teamed up with 24 top grade skips supplied to each team. It was a free day with lunch provided and a brief talk by our Umpire and Coaching Committees included. Overall, an outstanding success. Other new initiatives are being researched and various club members have been recruited to investigate "Zone newsletter", "Bring a buddy day", "Community Radio", "Volunteer Day", "Club presentations to Zone" and "Handouts". We are appreciative that Kevin Dring President Zone 15 is assisting us with background details.

Extra Zone awards for Senior Bowler and Reserve Bowler of the Year are being researched.

Our Vets and Super Vets Day is planned for 8 April.

We provided BNSW with a report on the state of junior development in Zone 9. On 17 March an under-11 singles & pairs event will be held at Belrose BC followed by the open junior singles & pairs on 28 April and 5 May.

Forestville RSL BC held a Presentation Night on Saturday 23 February. Merit and tie bars along with various runner up and winners club trophies were presented. Belrose BC held a Charity Day to raise \$6,500 for their Grade 1 player Rex Cochrane who was recently badly injured in a quad bike accident. Our Zone was represented at the recent BNSW Players Awards Night.

We have recommended to Greg Helm that BNSW/Bowls Australia consider advertising in the Probus and Seniors Magazine following a suggestion from Phil Lewis of Lindfield BC. He was receptive to the suggestion and has referred it to his new Marketing Manager.

Our Zone regrets that Anthony Cottee has resigned from his position as BNSW General Manager.

**Andy Little**

## **ZONE 14**

### **1/ Zone Website**

The Zone is going through a process of web development creating a new website including webpage layout, content production and graphic design to modernise the look and feel of the site. Our objective is to create a site that communicates and engages with our partners, stakeholders, members, and those wanting to seek information about our game or Zone. The development of our website will now provide the Zone with a social media interface with the added capability to live stream. Our aim is to create a high quality, high performing digital experience with the capacity to effectively communicate, inform and market our Zone and our game.

### **2/ New Committees**

Mechanical Bowling Arm: the Zone has committed resources to assist the existing MBA participants, creating a positive awareness that this is a viable alternative for existing players carrying injuries that may take them out of the game.

Our committee is looking to work with neighbouring Zones 1, 11 and 3 to identify potential opportunities. The Zone is already working with clubs towards a formal 7-a-side inter-club competition.

Junior Development: responsible for the planning and implementation of our schools program and junior development.

Coaching Network: responsible for capacity building, up skilling our club coaches beyond their existing knowledge base. We need to further develop elite coaches to provide support to schools programs, junior development, emerging talent, elite players within the Zone.

IT Working Group: responsible for all the technical, graphics and content for the new website.

### **3/ Commercial Audit Sponsorship**

The Executive is working to develop a value driven sponsorship strategy. We are currently working with our stakeholders, partners and members to identify potential sponsorship assets that are owned by the Zone such as, events, website, rep team apparel, other. The Zone is looking to develop new programs and offerings to grow our saleability and marketability.

**Paul Sullivan**

## **ZONE 16**

### **South Pacific Carnival**

Towradgi Park BC put on an excellent carnival as more than 800 bowlers from across NSW and interstate played 10 days of singles, pairs, fours and a new event, combination pairs. The carnival's evolution with the introduction of women bowlers in the Combination Pairs proved a huge success with husband and wife teams, family pairings and friends making up 48 teams. After a few years of sliding entry numbers, the Combination Pairs reinvigorated the carnival and the timing of the new event over the last three days was welcomed by everyone.

### **Junior South Pacific Carnival**

Leif Selby's departure has meant that new members were needed for this committee. Emails were sent to our 22 clubs asking for an expression of interest. Warilla Bowling & Recreation Club will continue with academy coaching, under the guidance of Irish International Jeremy Henry, Australian Jackaroos Corey Wedlock and Jesse Noronha, and ex-Irish national champion Shane Leonard. Shane Leonard will join our Zone 16 Junior committee as chairperson. Again, an outstanding event. The Junior South Pacific has a long history as being a springboard for some of Australia's greatest bowls talent.

Derham "Curly" Griffiths has resigned from Collegians Orb BC after some 50 plus years as Secretary/Treasurer due to ill health. He is a life member and patron of our Zone and has experienced ill health for some considerable time. We all wish Curly a speedy recovery.

Allan Byrnes OAM was elected President of the Orb in 1997 and worked hand in hand with Curly. Some 95 years has been "clocked up" by the dynamic due — surely a record?

**Harry Herring (Sec)**