



Shepparton Park Bowls Club Inc

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March Newsletter 25/3/2011

Proud host of the Australian Open in 2009 and 2010

MARCH

- 28 VIBBA Section Annual Meeting

APRIL

- 4-8 Ladies Victorian Country Carnival
9 Mixed Canadian Pairs 2x4x2 - Team Event
11 VLBA Section Annual Meeting
13 Ladies State Fours Titles
14 RVBA Section Annual Meeting
14 Ladies State Fours Titles
17 Mixed Fours Tournament - GV Tournament
20 Ladies Championship Pairs - 3rd Round
21 Men's 2 x 2 Jackpot Pairs
23 "Plasta Masta" Mixed Triples Tournament - Team Event
28 Men's 2 x 2 Jackpot Pairs
30 Mixed Social Bowls and Presentation Night Dinner

MAY

- 5 Men's 2 x 2 Jackpot Pairs
12 Men's 2 x 2 Jackpot Pairs
18 Club Annual Meeting

Annual General Meetings

Over the next six weeks each Section and the Club will hold their Annual General Meeting. This provides an ideal opportunity for members to review their personal involvement in the organisation and running of the Club. We need many people to put their hand up to offer in some capacity. Please think about how you can help out during the next season - many hands might light work! If you are not sure what is required, please talk to those

members who are currently undertaking the roles and they will let you know what is involved.

Nomination forms for positions in the Section management are available in the clubhouse.

Nomination forms for Club and Board positions will be called during April.

Help Wanted

Throughout the season, the club hosts visits from many different corporate groups. We need to build a list of members who are willing to give up a couple of hours every now and then. All that is required is to be on hand to provide very basic and quick instruction in how to deliver a bowl and some rudimentary elements of a game. There is a sheet in the clubhouse to add your name, or contact John Wallace or John Davy if you can help.

Presentation Night

Keep an eye on the notice board for a sheet to add your name for attendance at the Club Presentation Night. It will be held on April 30, and be our monthly chicken and salad night.

Charges for use of Rose Green

There have been a lot of rumours and mis-information circulating regarding the cost for non-members to use the Rose Green. **The Board has determined that there is no charge for members and non-members who wish to have a roll up** (subject of course to the green

not being used for tournaments, etc).

If any other club wishes to use the green for their tournaments, trade nights, etc, there will be a very reasonable hire fee. If you know of any individuals or clubs wanting to use the green, please pass this information on to them.

Full details of these charges can be obtained from our booking officer on 0421 597 175, or from the sheet displayed in the Tournament Office or Bar.

From the March Board Meeting

Bar (Glenn Edwards)

Ten people attended the Responsible Serving of Alcohol course which will increase our pool of available bar staff.

Catering (Marg Davy)

- Last Friday, 11th March, the annual Riverside Gardens Ladies Invitation Tournament was held here at Shepparton Park. A total of 40 teams enjoyed the extremely well presented day of bowling. Catering for the 120 participants was made easier by the physical help provided by members of our catering committee plus a number of volunteers. My thanks go to all who assisted, and in particular to those ladies who provided salads, sweets, sponges and scones. The venue was most colourful with floral table gifts and prizes displayed thanks to

Bob and Moira and Riverside Gardens.

- Coming events to be catered for are Charity Day on Friday 18th March followed by Mawson Family Day on Sunday 27th March.
- But our catering certainly doesn't end there! On Monday 4th April the Victorian Ladies Country Carnival commences at various venues throughout the Goulburn Valley.
- At Shepparton Park we have 96 players on the Monday, 48 on Tuesday, 48 on Wednesday, and 32 on Thursday. This entails providing Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea each day. On the Friday Shepparton Park caters for a special luncheon for approximately 50 to be hosted by the GV President. Ladies I hope we can count on you for help in the supply of slices, sponges etc. and help in the preparation of the meals.

Greens (Ray Phillips)

- The greens are running well and we will be hosting Divisions 1 and 5 men's pennant grand finals.
- Tiger Turf have come and fixed the bumps on the west side of the Rose Green (one was a stone and the other a piece of underfelt which they removed), and fixed the stitching.
- If any members find any loose stitching, **PLEASE** don't pull it, but report it to me or the Greens Committee for repair.
- The next fertilising will be the last for the season, as we go into the slower growing period.
- During the first week of April we will be one of the clubs hosting the women's carnival. We will need volunteers to help on the greens as well as other areas around the club, so please offer to help.

House (Bob Smith)

- Thanks you very much to the members who have helped during the past three weeks to get quite a few of the jobs on my list completed. With the season coming to an end and the list getting longer, I certainly appreciated your assistance.
- We are looking for an old Commander Phone to install in the new bar, so that it will be compatible with our existing system.

Social (Ken Allen)

- The March Chicken and Salad night was well attended and included a trivia night provided by Margaret and John Davy. This was enjoyed by all and is something we can hold again.
- Sunday March 20th is our Jazz Night and to date 60 names are on the sheet. I expect more to be added by Sunday.

- There will be no chicken night in March.
- Our next chicken night in April will be held on Saturday 30th in conjunction with Presentation Night.

RVBA Section (Laurie Fagan)

- Men's Pennant has come to a conclusion for 5 of our 6 teams. Five divisions made the finals with only Division 3 still in contention in the Grand Final on Saturday next. We all hope that they are successful and make it back-to-back flags.
- Division One bowlers are going to host a BBQ for Division Three after the Grand Final on Saturday at our clubrooms. This is an excellent example of the camaraderie and support that has developed within the club over the season, and follows on from the much appreciated BBQ put on by our Ladies Section for the Men at the end of the home and away season.
- I believe that even without a succession of premierships we have had a very good pennant season. Our teams have been more settled and for this credit must go to our hard working selection committee under the chairmanship of Wes Gibbs. To put 92 players on the rinks each Saturday has been a mammoth task.
- Given that members of the media wrote Shepparton Park off at the beginning of the Pennant season, because of a perceived "turbulent" end of 2009/2010 season, I believe that the Club has been a happier Club this season with most players playing at their correct level and in the true spirit of the game.
- A very well attended Men's night with Guest Speaker, Mark Jacobsen, was held on February 24th. Mark is an Australian representative and is one of 3 coaches at the very successful Metropolitan Premier Division club Moonee Ponds. Mark was easy to listen to and passed on some basic but important tips to the 70 people in attendance. The comments following this have been very good, suggesting to me that a possible scenario to the "Coaching Question" may be to invite this type of high profile and successful coach to the Club once per month, during the Pennant season, for a full day, to give both individual and theme coaching to larger groups. This could be supplemented by having a local coach doing individual coaching when required.
- Congratulations to Rodger Bone, Glenn Edwards, Bill Raglus and Ray Phillips for winning the GVBA division 2 and 3 championship fours.
- Thursday Jackpot Pairs continues to be strongly supported with a large number of bowlers from other clubs regularly participating.

- Congratulations also to our Ladies Section for their continued high level of results, with a most impressive victory in the Division one Grand Final being a highlight.
- The Men's Section Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 14th at 7.30pm.

VIBBA Section (Fred Murley)

- The AGM of the indoor carpet bowls will be held on Monday 28th March at 7pm. All interested persons are invited to attend.
- We are hoping to enter Division 1 and 2 teams again this year, and as pennant will start on Monday 2nd May we will be putting some mats down for practise mid-April.
- All members who would like to try are most welcome to come along.

VLBA Section (Pam McGurgan)

- Our pennant season is over and congratulations to our Division 1 side for winning the Grand Final. Division 3 did us proud by playing in their Grand Final.
- What a great night we had at the Vic Hotel with 56 members attending.
- Congratulations to Di Hands in winning the 100Up in a very close game against Bev Cahill.
- The Invitation Triples was a great success, it is always a great day and everybody enjoys it. Thanks to Riverside Gardens for your continued support.
- Shepparton Park donated \$100 to Bridgewater Bowls Club who lost everything in the recent floods. Another \$100 was also donated from other clubs playing on the day.
- The Victorian Carnival is on between April 4th and 8th, so it will be a very busy week followed by the Sate 4's on April 13th.
- The AGM will be held on April 11th.

Following much comment in the daily press and around the club, here is a letter received from Bowls Victoria CEO Peter Hanlon

Mixed Pennant, Bowls Victoria and the Equal Opportunity Act

It is with considerable frustration that many of us in bowls read the commentary by some bowlers on "Bowls Victoria's" direction on pennant, the allegations of a "hidden agenda of the Bowls Victoria executive" and lack of action by Bowls Victoria in responding to the dissatisfaction of many bowlers in not having single gender pennant competitions.

This public debate and commentary is, although passionate and heart-felt in many cases, too often inaccurate and injurious to our sport.

It is not true that Bowls Victoria is unaware of the issues, failing to take action or working under some hidden agenda. Bowls Victoria Directors, represented in particular by Rosemary Varty, Betty Collins and Graeme Hosken, and I have a very keen sense of the expressions of dissatisfaction of many bowlers. We have travelled to meet with and discuss their concerns with some of those who are most vocal. We are also aware of the counter arguments put by many other bowlers. Some of these arguments have appeared in daily papers in recent days, but I also have numerous letters, emails and faxes to add to that list (arguing from both sides of the fence).

The basis of much of the criticism of Bowls Victoria is that it should simply allow the conduct of a ladies' pennant competition mid-week, along with a mixed pennant competition mid-week. The assumption seems to be that Bowls Victoria simply has to change its policy in relation to pennant; or, if there is a hurdle, take a survey and tell the powers that be that we want a change and that because we want it we should have it.

1. It is not Bowls Victoria that requires the conduct of mixed pennant. Under the current circumstances as determined by VCAT in 2001, the only single gender events allowed to be conducted in Victoria under the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 and subsequent VCAT decisions, (except for a couple of club-based competition exemptions) are those for which the RVBA/VLBA/Bowls Victoria have gained exemptions on application to VCAT every three years, as required. It is through the actions of the RVBA/VLBA and Bowls Victoria that we are able to conduct any single gender events at all. To conduct a competition in breach of the Equal Opportunity Act is something no Board Director can do without exposing the Association to potentially significant legal ramifications.
2. These single gender event "exemptions" relate to State Championships and were gained because of the argument that they form part of an elite player pathway where Victorian men and women champions need to be identified to then compete against the champions from other states/territories. There is no change to these exemptions for next year. But, pennant does not form part of such a pathway, and the same arguments cannot be taken to VCAT.
3. As stated in previous Bulletins, Bowls Victoria has been working closely with Lander & Rogers (our legal firm), the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEO&HRC), while also consulting with club personnel, to find what avenues under the legislation and VCAT rulings might be available to Bowls Victoria.

4. Yesterday, as part of my commitment as Chief Executive to assisting the Board with this matter, I attended a 3-hour induction course at the VEO&HRC on the new Victorian Equal Opportunity Act which will come into effect on 1 August 2011. I have been invited to follow up today with them to learn more about some of the possible opportunities under the new Act. If the new Act provides possibilities to Bowls Victoria previously not available, we will explore them thoroughly.

During the day, I was able to inform those at the Equal Opportunity Commission of the new governance structure under Bowls Victoria: an elected Board of 4 men and 4 women; Regions and Divisions with male and female Chairman (or President) and Deputy Chairman (or Deputy President); gender representation (where possible) on all committees. From the VEO&HRC perspective, we will be one of the best structured State Sporting Organisations (SSO) in relation to our governance structures. Many SSOs are unable to get any female representation on their Boards.

Our newly unified body, Bowls Victoria, has been praised by State Government, VicHealth, beyondblue, Bowls Australia and the other State Bowls Associations, for the strides being taken in establishing bowls as a major State Sporting Association with a model governance structure soon to be fully in place, and for our ability to engage with a broad demographic of participants, including people with disabilities. Our integration of men and women across the levels of governance wins high praise.

And then, because of comments made in the major daily media this week (and in country papers over recent months), "Bowls Victoria" and its "Executive" are presented as being the cause of the problem, of doing nothing to address it, or in fact having a hidden agenda via which to work against the wishes of "bowlers". Other letters have presented the views of smaller clubs and their reliance upon mixed gender, or of clubs very happy with mixed pennant as a competition structure.

We are about to submit a proposal for the next three years of significant funding from our major funding partner, VicHealth, based upon increasing the number of girls and women in our sport as players, coaches, umpires, administrators, etc. We need to maintain our current membership while welcoming new girls and women to our sport. Will pennant be the major attraction for these new recruits?

A significant incidence of decline in membership has been of females in the past 20 years, and yet some of our highest profile achievements have been by Victoria's women (Sam Shannahan, Lisa Phillips, Joyce Lindores, Joan Tennent, Dawn Staggard, etc.).

Female membership (VLBA) declined by **45%** in **1990-2010**, the largest decline being in **1990-2000 (28%)** and a further **24%** between **2000-2010**.

Male membership (RVBA) declined by **31.5%** between **1990-2010**, being a decline in **1990-2000** of **20%** and of **5%** between **2000-2010**. (NB: between 2001-2010, men and women could affiliate with RVBA and VLBA).

The RVBA and VLBA each lost in excess of **10,000 bowlers** between **1990 and 2000** – prior to the Equal Opportunity decision.

The reasons for such a decline will be many and varied, including the increasing number of women over 45 years of age who now work full-time, making any mid-week pennant competition inaccessible. The absence of single gender pennant mid-week will be minimally reflected in these statistics, because the number of men registering with VLBA in previous years has been marginal.

That is not to say that figures this year may well reflect a further decline due to those ladies who say they have left the sport because of men playing in mid-week pennant. This is being taken very seriously by Bowls Victoria in assessing the pennant situation. The trend of declining female membership, however, has been significant for more than 20 years and needs to address numerous factors (including pennant) in seeking to attract more girls and women to our sport.

Increasing the number of girls/women in our sport is part of Bowls Victoria's greatest challenge: to assist Clubs to increase membership and participation. This is the primary goal as we establish our new committees, partner with Regional Sports Assemblies, form alliances with Local Government and seek to source further support funding (grants, sponsorships).

Bowls Victoria cannot simply wave a magic wand and cause the requirements of Victorian legislation to change or go away. If there is a means via which Bowls Victoria can gain greater control of how it conducts pennant, we will find it by working with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission and those who have excellent legal experience in these areas. That is what we are doing.

To those whom I regard as simply taking cheap shots at Bowls Victoria, please be aware that we are the only sport in Australia that is subject to an Equal Opportunity ruling that requires under Victorian legislation that our sport is not to be conducted on a gender basis unless granted exemptions to do so. As such, there needs to be a very clear and thorough understanding of the legal means by which Bowls Victoria might gain greater control over the conduct of pennant competitions. We are looking closely, along with legal advisors, at the new Equal Opportunity Act to see what might be available to us. This is a slow and detailed process and is not assisted in anyway by allegations of doing nothing.

To those who have publicly accused Bowls Victoria of ineptitude, inaction and even malicious intent in the matter of mixed gender, please be aware of the facts rather than damage the image and integrity of our organization.