

# Tournament Review Submissions

## **Submission from Nairn MacGibbon:**

### **Interclub**

I would prefer to see interclub run as single-headers (i.e. one game on a Saturday morning) rather than double-headers. The main reason for this is that it would enable clubs to schedule club championships for Saturday afternoons, meaning that teams that had an away game in the morning would then return to their clubs for lunch before playing their afternoon club champs. This will benefit club patronage and morale (as well as potentially bar turnover). Where interclub is run as a double-header, if a team/side is playing away in the afternoon, the players will in many cases go straight home rather than returning to the club. In addition, double-headers mean that the interclub season is very short. Interclub is the competition that most club members participate in, and for the interclub season to be over so soon denies them that chance to participate.

I would also prefer to see the interclub competition run over a longer period of time (perhaps a league/round prior to Xmas and one run after Xmas. A common argument I have heard against running interclub after Xmas is that the programme is full because there are rep fixtures scheduled after Xmas. I would prefer to see some of the rep fixtures pulled to the start of the season... At present the "average" bowler is playing most of their interclub at the very start of the bowls season when the greens are not at their best and the weather is variable. It feels like priority is being given to the top 2%-3% of bowlers (the rep players) at the expense of the playing experience of the vast majority (who pay the lions share of the subscription revenue to the Centre), which doesn't seem right.

I would also bring the format of the 7-side games into line with what is going to be played at the national interclub playoffs:

- i. Singles: 21 Shots up or Time Limit 2¾ Hours – whichever comes first
- ii. Pairs: 18 Ends or Time Limit of 2 ¾ Hours – whichever comes first
- iii. Fours: 15 Ends or Time Limit of 2 ¾ Hours – whichever comes first

### **Centre Events**

I would like to see Wellington Centre Events restricted to participants who are fully paid-up members of a club within the Wellington region. Similar to the way in which the Taranaki Centre have a two separate men's 4's tournaments: the Taranaki Open Men's 4's (which teams from other centres can enter) and the Taranaki Centre 4's (which only Taranaki teams can enter). My suggestion for events that would be open to teams from other centres would be the Mixed Pairs and the Easter 2-4-2 pairs since these do not go to national titles.

## **Champion of Champions to Pathways**

I would like to see the progression to national club finals be by way of Open Centre events rather than through Champ of Champs. Having the progression through club championships lessens the incentives for top bowlers in each club to take on newer players within their club teams (since there is potentially a national title on the line). It is through club championship play that newer bowlers are introduced to competitive competition, and the current structure doesn't provide much incentive for the top bowlers to take on the newer ones.

## **Pennants (Wed afternoon for men)**

Keep entirely as is... love the format

Submission from Brady Amer:

## **Bowlers Rangatahi:**

Previously in Bowls here in Wellington we had Jacgals. This was for players 18 and under who played for an affiliated club in Wellington. This allowed players who played at different clubs to enter Bowls Wellington Open Events together under the club name "Jacgals". Unfortunately, this was voted out last season by club delegates. The main reason being there was a perception there was not many young players around so why keep it. Currently we have 14 under 18 bowlers across Wellington and 140 players playing our weekly college competition. This number is only going to increase as in the first quarter of this year so far, we have engaged with 489 under bowlers in various ways e.g. college bowls, school sessions and our Rangatahi Rookies. Youth bowls is only going to grow here in Wellington. What I am proposing is to bring back Jacgals but change the name to "Rangatahi Bowlers." I am also proposing that the criteria age to change from 18 to 21.

Reasons are as followed:

- Our Rangatahi Rookies squad is 21 and under
- Young people with intellectual disabilities can attend school until the age of 21
- This also allows players who leave college who are still new to the sport, support to still play with their friends from other clubs
- Young people tend to want to play with people their age
- Some clubs have sometimes struggles filling up their centre teams and young people can miss out. This stops this.

This was a great initiative when it was part of sport here in Wellington. The only negative of this was that players who won open events could not play in the pathways as the Jacgals club was not an affiliated club. This occurred in 2013 with Seamus Curtain and Lachlan Gordon who won the Mens Open Pairs. In conclusion we are promoting our sport as an inclusive sport that is for all people. Bringing this back will allow young people to enter our open events together. It is hard being a young person in bowls. Sometimes it can be hard getting into teams. This stops this and we get to see young bowlers playing together and thriving.

## **Submission from Plimmerton Bowling Club:**

### **Restrict or severely limit the use of Double Headers for Interclub games**

This 2022-23 season the number of double headers for interclub on Saturdays has had a detrimental effect on our club. Because Plimmerton only has one green whenever it is used for interclub for the whole of Saturday, it severely impacts our club programme. When postponements due to weather are also considered this has a cumulative and devastating effect.

We have a healthy club membership, the majority of whom enjoy playing during Club Days on Saturday afternoons. The numbers who play on Club Days far outnumber the number of players who play interclub. When the double headers were played this meant none of our non-interclub playing members could access the green.

Another impact was on our older players who still enjoy playing interclub. They found the double headers tiring and coupled with the travelling between venues - for example travelling from Plimmerton to play at Karori or Miramar in the morning followed by travelling to Wainuiomata for a game in the afternoon - made for an unpleasant experience. One of our teams playing in the Quads section had only 2 home games, the rest of the time was spent travelling.

The effect on our club championships was also quite marked. As we frequently play our club championship games on Sundays, we noticed a big drop off in entries from both working age and older members. This was put down mainly to the double headers of the previous day. If Bowls Wellington is wanting to encourage healthy participation for all ages, then we submit that double headers discriminate against older players who still want to compete in interclub and play an active life in events at their own club. This also affects some younger players with families who cannot commit to playing bowls all weekend.

### **Conclusion:**

We know that National/International events at Naenae will necessitate some interruptions to the interclub programme but for all the above reasons we would like to see a return to morning only interclub as much as possible. We understand that the season was compressed last year to allow those clubs with grass greens to have more time to prepare their greens for interclub. We also understand that some of those clubs had events playing on their greens in the week or two before interclub started. We suggest that the interclub season be extended to start **either earlier** before Christmas **and/or finish later** after Christmas. This will help ensure full participation for all ages and a happy bowling community.

## **Submission from Simon Chrisp Karori:**

### **Feedback is**

- The lads really enjoyed interclub and is a good pathway to introduce people into bowls. It is the next step from our Weds club for our members and playing with other club members makes the transition to competitive bowls easier
- Really didn't enjoy the number of double headers and it's also hard to ask people to commit when it's irregular weekends and both mornings and afternoons
- Was surprised and disappointed that it was over so quickly (5 or 6 weeks)
- Only having one promotion and relegation is a barrier to enabling teams to move through the grades and would recommend a change to want to see more movements of teams up and down the competition.
- Movement between grades is good to ensure that competitions are even and that they do not become stagnant with playing the same teams each year.

### **Club preference would be:**

- 8 teams per grade
- Played pre and post Xmas
- Top 2 teams are promoted, and bottom 2 teams are relegated (may want relegation and play-off for premier if 2 relegated teams are too much)
- One match scheduled per weekend (Sat AM) and that allows for catch ups in afternoon if there are cancellations etc. Makes it easier to be clear what the ask is when they sign up to play too
- Make other competitions work around the interclub e.g. Afternoon starts, Sundays.

### **Other feedback**

There are a lot of competitions out there. Sometimes less is better.

## **Submission from Wilton Bowling Club Comments on Scheduling of Events:**

It would appear that the Centre has failed to take changes in weather patterns over many seasons, and are continuing to run events at the same time each year. We would recommend that the scheduling of events needs to be revised to allow for events to be held when the weather is at its best, not when it is inclement.

### **Interclub**

Concerns have been expressed over the number of double headers which prevents clubs from running their own events in the afternoon. As a result, there is a reluctance of members willing to take part. This can be seen as being both age related and having to travel long distances between matches. There are several members who do not want to play 2 games a day including travel. We recommend that the Centre in completing the draw for these events ensure that long journeys between morning and afternoon matches are avoided eg Upper Hutt to Island Bay (Miramar or Lyall Bay), or Porirua based clubs to Wainuiomata.

Has any thought been given to Sunday play instead of having double headers, eg Round X played on Saturday morning (as already happens) with Round Y being played on Sunday morning?

We recommend that the Centre reduces the number of double headers and extends the Interclub season into January/February, avoiding Nationals & other major tournaments to meet set deadlines.

### **Champion of Champions**

With the Champion of Champions being run in March, and the inclement weather in November pressure has been put on our club to complete our Championships over a 2-month period (January/February)

Do they need to be run during the season (March)?

With an indoor venue (Naenae) can they be run in May/June at that club or use other clubs with a turf or carpet green?

National Champion of Champions are run in July

### **Pennants – a personal observation**

Why are there 2 separate competitions (Men's & Women's) with different playing conditions and structure for Pennants? Interclub has 2 competitions (M&W) but 1 set of playing conditions.

## **Submission from Steve Leitch:**

### **Interclub**

Firstly, let me say I think our interclub programme has been great and always a great way to start the weekend off on a Saturday morning. But Clubs are becoming more and more frustrated with the number of Saturdays and Sundays which are required for the Centre events and the push forward of Champ of Champs, so we find we have a very congested programme. A way out of this may be to review the interclub competition.

There may not be an easy answer to this but I have one I think you should consider.

- Drop the sections back to 8 teams per grade.
- Team draw would look something like this.
- Teams A,B,C,D travel to one green and play 2 games there. (as do E,F,G,H)
- This could be a neutral game or best home green on merit.
- Next Week A,B,E,F travel as a group and play 2 more games. (as do C,D,G,H)
- Third Week A,B,G,H travel as a group and play 2 or 3 games in a day
- Change the conditions of play if needed. Shorten games and/or time limit.
- This gets the Interclub round robin over in 3 – 4 Days. Plus, playoffs.

Then determine the overall winner by a semi and final playoff (along with relegation playoffs) Keep four teams in for overall winner and the other 4 for relegation.

It's not the answer for next year, as you would need to get clubs on board with 8 teams in each.

But it helps when travelling to interclub that all four teams will stay at the one green.

And when it comes to inter-centre you need to be able to play 3 games a day.

As said, we don't have to change Interclub, but we need to change the congestion of an overfull schedule. The average Club bowlers get all the club champ bowls played by the end of February at the moment.

### **Midweek Pennants**

Last season the Pennants Tournament started in middle of October and ended beginning of February.

I would see this event being better if played at least a month later. So, start in the middle of November and end in the middle of March.

Better weather and better greens are usually available in this time.

If you wanted to extend play even more, have a one of final in each grade, where the top two teams play off rather than just a round robin winner.

But really my thoughts are that there is no need to start and finish a tournament so early in the season when it is not pushed for time.

## **Submission from Island Bay:**

### **Schedule Bowls Wellington Interclub series to have one game only per weekend**

The Bowls Wellington Interclub series is unique and unlike any other interclub series in New Zealand it is run over 9 rounds. The 2022-2023 season saw 8 rounds played as double headers (2 rounds played in one day). The reasoning for the need to hold double headers was to accommodate Bowls New Zealand events in Wellington while still maintaining the full complement of Centre events as they are currently structured. This is not a new situation and has been raised since at least 2015.

The message this sends to clubs is that Centre and Bowls NZ events have priority over club programmes. Many clubs are finding new ways to get their community and members involved in the game of lawn bowls. In order to be successful clubs are having to change how they provide a programme that meets the needs of the members and enables the club to grow.

New members are indicating that while they enjoy the sport and want to be involved in serious competition, they also do not wish their full weekend taken up with bowls. Talking to clubs in other parts of NZ this is not an unusual situation.

Bowls Wellington, like clubs, needs to be flexible with their programme. For the Centre to accommodate Bowls NZ events, selected local Centre events could be withheld for the season. An example is the October 2-4-2 event could be withheld and only the Easter 2-4-2 event held.

Therefore, this submission is requesting that the Bowls Wellington Interclub series be played as one round per Saturday morning, with no double headers. This allows clubs to schedule play on Saturday afternoon, to have flexibility for the club programme, to provide choice to members and grow the sport within the community.