

GENERAL (DELEGATES) MEETING – 18 Dec 24

PENNANT REPORT

Clubs are to be commended for the way that they have managed their Sides within BowlsLink this season. Other than the two trials, use of Shuffle and the Live Scoring App there has been less support required from the Region's Pennant Coordinator. However, the perennial issue is still there – club managers forgetting to align the teams.

New Clubs. It is great to see both Commercial Club and North Albury join us and enhance our Pennant competition. Both clubs are doing extremely well with Commercial Club on top of the Weekend Division A2, A5 and Midweek B3 and North Albury on top of Weekend Division B3.

Live or Digital Scoring was introduced to Division A1 Sides this season. Unfortunately, initially the experience in the use of the Live Scoring App was less than satisfactory. However, with a number of upgrades the App is now more stable and users are having less issues. Like most experiences, if a new innovation does not work well when you are first exposed to it people are more reluctant to use it. Some issues identified when using the App were:

- Phone black spots at some venues,
- Older generation phones not coping or unsuitable,
- Phones switching to lock mode too soon,
- Age demographics will be an issue as we roll the use of the Live Scoring App out to the lower Divisions.

Shuffle Button. As you are all aware the Shuffle Button is now available to complete your Draws. This is a great innovation but its operation is restricted due to once the 'shuffle' occurs Side Managers cannot make late changes to their teams, a regular occurrence in our region. An additional flaw is that the Away Side is not able to see if the "Shuffle" has occurred. For these reasons ***the 'Shuffle' should only be used once you reach the venue.***

A proposal put to Bowls Vic to modify the App to enable Away Sides to see whether the 'Shuffle' has occurred and enable Side Managers to make team changes after the Shuffle has come up blank. Bowls Australia are not receptive to changing the management of the Shuffle as they are afraid that people will be able to manipulate the Draw. Regardless of the restriction, it is recommended that the shuffle be used to avoid the need to manually align teams.

Washouts. Unfortunately, recently we have experienced a couple of region wide washouts. As washouts were not an issue over the past couple of years, the first washout did cause a number of administrative problems due to club Pennant Administrators and Side Captains being uncertain of the wet weather procedures. This

was quickly resolved and the second washout was not such a hassle administratively. Hopefully, we are over washouts but it appears that we may experience some extreme heat days after Christmas.

Pre-Game Pennant Practice. There have been a number of instances where players have turned up at the Pennant venue prior to the days play and just walked on to the Green for a roll up. Please ensure that your players are aware that at no time is a visiting bowler is to enter a club's Greens without first seeking approval. If nothing else it is common courtesy. Additionally, whilst clause 21 of the CoP does allow for pr-game Pennant practice clause 21.1 does include a provision stating that pre-game Pennant practice is ***“subject to the Greenkeeper/Greens Director of the home club declaring the greens available for practice”***.

Unfortunately, the clause in the CoP relating to pre-game practice is included in Section 1 of the Bowls Vic Conditions of Play which Regions cannot alter.

Clubs are advised to contact the host venue to ensure that the Greens will be available for pre-game practice and advise their players accordingly.

Finally, ***the Pennant Committee would like to take the opportunity to wish all bowlers and their families a Merry Christmas and safe traveling over the festive season.***

See you all back on the Greens in the New Year.

Bryan Smith
Chairman Pennant Committee
Ovens and Murray Bowls Region Inc

Dec 24