



CITY OF MELBOURNE BOWLS CLUB INC. NEWSLETTER

August 2015



Chair's Message

As we live through one of Melbourne's coldest winters in years it is great to see there are still committed bowlers out there on the greens honing their skills for the season. Although I am told that often at this time of year the toss is not to decide who bowls first, but whether to bowl or head back to the bar.

The next couple of months will see the return of many bowlers as their preparation for the season commences. We are also hoping to see new bowlers join us for a friendly roll and to join the ranks of the pennant teams. This will be a good opportunity for the more experienced bowlers to pass on some of their skills and encouragement to the newer bowlers at the club.

The last few months have been a trying time for the club as a new board and new manager settle into their positions on the back of a year where the club made a loss. Things are improving thanks to the commitment of all concerned and the changes that are being implemented. Whilst the new bar prices have improved the club's gross trading income, the Board is actively reviewing the pricing on a number of drinks lines, including a survey of prices nearby and at other clubs. The Board has been careful to preserve club events that are part of the club's culture, such as the trivia night, birthday party, Melbourne Cup function etc.

It is timely to publically acknowledge the very large amount of work that Laurie Garmston has done, not only in the Secretary's role over many months but also as head of the Tools Engineering group and backup to allowing visitors and contractors access to the club when required. Unfortunately it has often been a role that is far from glamorous, such as unblocking toilets or coming back at night to lock a forgotten gate. Laurie has shown an outstanding commitment to getting things done around the club.

The commitment from members volunteering around the club and working on committees and the board has been fantastic. We owe you all a great debt of gratitude, and I encourage members to express their thanks directly by a quiet word to those involved during the coming months – having received a few kind words after the information night I can say it often means more than anything.

Grant Reithmuller chair@citybowls.net

Congratulations to the CoMBC team which won the 2015 Premiership Division 2, Inner City Winter Pennant



Standing: Gary Dowling, Paul Nelson, Rob Stoney, James Larmour-Reid, David Kelly, Dan Lynch and Roger Scott. Seated: Kaz Rothwell with John Adams

Flagstaff Gardens, Dudley Street, West Melbourne, 3003
T: 0408 108 420 | E: info@citybowls.net | www.citybowls.com

Editorial summary of the Information Night held on July 9th, 2015

To keep members fully informed of the CoMBC Board activities and initiatives an Information Night was held at the club. This was an excellent initiative and over 45 members availed themselves of the opportunity to listen to the presentation, provide feedback and ask questions. Grant Reithmuller (the newly elected 2015 Chair), welcomed all and gave a power point presentation and verbal overview of the state of the club from the Board's perspective.

5 General Goals

Grant identified what he thought were 5 general goals for CoMBC

- provide great facilities for people to play bowls
- provide a welcoming and encouraging environment for those who want to bowl
- provide a social network for bowlers and social members that is friendly and supportive
- engage with the local community
- provide opportunities for people to volunteer and engage in a community organisation in their local community

Financial Goal

On the financial front the suggested financial goals for CoMBC were effectively to operate at a surplus, and thereafter invest back into the club.

Financial Review

A comprehensive overview of the operating expenses for 2014/2015 was presented. Much to the relief of members, Grant signalled that any significant increase in fees is highly unlikely because it would not significantly increase revenue and could be a disincentive to membership. As membership fees represent only 2.5% of operating expenses they are not a significant factor in the club's bottom line.

Unfortunately the bar, functions and green hire ran at an overall loss last year due to some special causes including :

- backdated superannuation payments had to be paid due to errors in previous years
- increased salaries
- loss of barefoot bowling revenue due to one green being out of action
- a pricing review of drinks was overdue
- processes for stock control needed updating

As a consequence the manager has been asked to look at a restructuring of bar staff, utilising volunteers to staff the bar during quiet periods, and the need for more staff hours for bookkeeping. Clear processes have now been set up for payments and records. A sinking fund for green replacement and equipment depreciation has been established, and fortunately the club's reserves appear to be sufficient to cover depreciation to date.

The good news is that membership is increasing, which it is hoped will improve the profitability of the bar. The refurbished board room is now available for hire, we now have 2 operating greens and there will be improved BBQ facilities. If all the plans come off we should be in surplus by the end of the year.

The year ahead

Board operations for 2015 will deal with a very large agenda and portfolios have been allocated to Board members.

Chair – Grant Reithmuller

Vice Chair – Kaz Rothwell (marketing, training for bookkeeper, membership)

Secretary – Laurie Garmston (day to day issues and operations, main liaison with the manager for daily matters, coordinator for Tool Engineers)

Treasurer – Renee Simpson (usual role)

General Members:

Gary Dowling (liaison with the Bowls Committee, developing terms of reference for committees including the Newsletter Team, assisting the Secretary)

Maddy Scully (developing the 5 year plan, 150th birthday celebrations)

Jack Ainsaar (selectors, bowls competitions)

Jim Pallister (surveying members)

The kitchen

The problems associated with the use of the kitchen have been actively pursued by the Board. It transpires that due to Health and Safety regulations use of the kitchen facilities must now be compliant with the relevant regulations. This requires inspection and registration. Lisa Lamour-Reid (who has considerable expertise in this area) has arranged the inspections and is developing guidelines that will hopefully allow generous member use without breaching the regulations.

Bowling

On the bowling front Grant was very excited to announce that the club has 4 teams entered for the coming season, divisions 4, 6, 7 and 8. The decision was made that it is better to have enough teams for everyone to get a game each week, even if we pay a small forfeit fine some weeks if numbers are low. However, members are asked to encourage friends or acquaintances to join as we could really do with another half dozen bowlers for the season.

Acknowledging contributions

Acknowledgement was made to the significant contributions of volunteers to the club. Simon Inglis and Simon Whatmore were thanked for their very successful negotiations with Melbourne City Council to fund the improvement of the green soils, and repair the barisol. Acknowledgement was made to the outstanding contributions made by the many other volunteers who take on so many roles at the club, and the importance that member expectations respect the volunteer nature of the roles and the time these roles take.

Questions and comments

Questions and comments were taken from the floor which the Board noted and will attempt to follow up appropriately.

- Interim food regulations are not friendly to bowlers wanting a hot drink or to refrigerate their food.
- A concern if we will have a cultural problem if we become too corporate or regulated.
- Request to investigate hall hire costs compared to other equivalent venues.
- A suggestion to increase manager's time to relieve the volunteer secretary's role which has a significant workload.
- There was a consensus by all present about the unsatisfactory efficiency (not the honesty) of the current auditor, and agreement that the Board is right to be seeking quotes for auditing services.
- A suggestion was made to introduce additional categories of membership – junior members and employees being members. Grant was open to the idea, and suggested that it start with a proposal to the Board, which could be disseminated via the newsletter to allow member feedback to inform the Board. Grant also pointed out that with junior members careful planning may be necessary to ensure that relevant 'working with children' regulations, guidelines and best practices were established.
- A member asked whether bowling members pay the \$45 component of their fees to Bowls Victoria when many do not play pennant. This will be investigated by the Secretary.

Further information nights are intended with one in about 6 months. It is also hoped to have a Bowls Committee and Selectors information night before the season starts given that the bowls pennant issues are central to club.

The very informative meeting concluded at 8.15pm when attendees adjourned for refreshments. The Board is to be congratulated on this excellent initiative which enhances the transparency of club operations to all who are interested.

Lynne Macdonald (editor) newsletter@citybowls.net

Bowls Committee

John McLaren – Chair

Colin Ham – Secretary

Steve Phillips – Equipment officer and catering equipment@citybowls.net

Deb Dowling – Uniforms uniforms@citybowls.net

Rob Oke – New members welcome

Henry Silis

Dan, Dave and Deb - Tournament Sub-Committee

bowlscommittee@citybowls.net



Stop Press

Club members are advised that the Board is planning a Members Feedback Survey to gather information on ways to improve the club.

Jim Pallister board@citybowls.net



Board Minutes

A full copy of the Board minutes will be emailed to all members and displayed on the notice board in the clubrooms. What follows is a summary of the key issues. Members are encouraged to provide feedback on any aspects of the clubs operations to Board Members.

Key points from the July 13th Board Meeting

- The Board is currently reviewing the clubs drink prices and it is anticipated that the results of this review will be completed by Aug 1st - more information to follow.
- The Board is conscious of the need for the Mansbridge synthetic green to be fit for purpose prior to pennant season commencing. The Chair and Greens Director have held a number of meetings with subject matter turf experts. As a result of these discussions the Board has agreed to obtain three quotes to have a geo tech contractor bore holes to a level of 5 metres below the green surface in order to determine the reasons for the green subsiding ie. contaminated soil, drainage or tree roots from Dudley Street. When the quotes are received and a preferred contractor has been engaged the Board intend to schedule a members' working bee to roll half the green surface to allow contractor access - more information to follow. • The Secretary provided the meeting with an update on progress on the refurbishment works to the Board Room and office areas and provision of perspex to sheds 1, 2 and 3 roofs to allow sunlight to the new green. The Secretary confirmed that the club was continuing to negotiate with the City of Melbourne Council on a range of proposed improvements. The Board acknowledged the work done by Laurie and his volunteer team headed up by Jeffrey Moore, Robert Stoney, Rob Oke, Dick Dowling and Henry Sillis in transforming the Board Room and office areas.
- The Board approved five new members. The Board welcomes Cath Taylor, Malcolm Gray, John McGuire, Lee Lie and Tim Hanson and trust that they enjoy their time at the club.
- The Board was appreciative of club members (with special mention to Mick Durham) with RSA certificates who have volunteered to be rostered on to run the bar on certain days / events.
- Gay Edgcombe has been appointed Chair of the Social Committee. The Board is delighted that Gay has taken on this role and also welcomes the appointment of Lisa Larmour-Reid to the Social Committee.
- The Board has recommended that the Selectors and Bowls Committee schedule a Members Information Night prior to bowls season commencing.
- The Board voted to discontinue catering for Board meetings.
- The Board has agreed to provide use of the clubs facilities to Mates 4 Mates and the XLI Club. Mates 4 Mates is an organization that provides rehabilitation programs for current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members who are wounded, injured or ill. The XLI Club membership is made up of a cross section of individuals from Government, Victorian Police, Legal, Public Service, Medical and the Corporate fraternity. The XLI Club support a number of philanthropy activities and the clubs current focus is to raise funds for a new food van for Vinnies to feed the homeless. The XLI Club will be holding a Trivia Night at the CoMBC to raise funds for the food van at CoMBC on Sunday 27th September. Gary Dowling is the Board point of contact should you require any further information about these activities.

Gary Dowling board@citybowls.net

Selectors' Report

There is not much to report on being the middle of winter. This year we have entered 1 team for midweek pennant and 4 teams for Saturday pennant: (divisions 4/6/7/8 -the later being 2 rinks of 3 players each.)

We now wait on BowlsVic to produce the 2015/16 draws.

Three of the four practice games have been confirmed, those being: Alphington- played at City; Toorak- played at Toorak and Invermay- played at Invermay. Only Flemington/Kensington is yet to confirm.

Details will be provided early August so keep an eye on the notice board, app and emails. Good bowling!

The selectors selectors@citybowls.net



Secretary's Update

- Board room and office cabinetry installation has been completed.
- Bruce Taylor will install a TV on the north wall of the Board Room, photos will be hung and the room will be available for hire.
- Council did not agree to a lot of my "wish list" however I will keep trying.
- We have permission to install a roof over the rubbish bin storeroom which will allow the club to use this area for the storage of tables and chairs. I will compile specifications for the materials to be used and obtain a council permit to enable works to be completed.
- Council has approved the installation of a wall mounted shelf next to the bar to accommodate the guest register/forms etc thus doing away with the unsightly table currently in use.
- Permission also from council to create a wall recess to mirror the one on the right side of the bar to enable Bruce to install another TV which will be used for club advertising.
- Quotes have been received for a geometric hanging system which will enable club photos to be hung in the Board Room and down the corridor outside the office. Name tags will be attached to all photos to identify who is who at 'the Zoo'. Thanks to Madeleine Scully and Kevin Mansbridge for identifying the people in the photos.
- The Honour Boards are being updated.
- Works in sheds 5 and 6 still to be done.
- Rob Oke and I had a successful work day on Monday and have painted the west wall of the function room, the entrance walls in both the female and male locker rooms and touched up the painting of the walls in the Board Room and the office. We cleaned the walls and ceiling in the corridor and laid the carpet tiles (donated by a friend) with double sided-tape allowing them to be taken up if necessary, in the Board Room.

I welcome Gary Dowling who will be assisting me with the secretarial duties.

Laurie Garmston secretary@citybowls.net

Greens Director's Report

Mansbridge Carpet Green

In concert with the board an action plan has been put in place to deal with the continued problems of depressions in the north-west corner of the green and runs in the northern half of the green. This concerns extensive geotechnical investigation of the northern half of the green. This involves, boring, sampling, moisture content assessment, plastic limit samples, reports and recommendations.

Shortly before the start of the 2015/16 pennant season the green will be rolled back and this investigation undertaken. Once the soil test and geotechnical work is completed the northern half of the green will be repaired and laser levelled and the carpet restored for the pennant season.

During the course of the season the full report and recommendations of the consultants will be considered by the Board, the greenkeeper, green director and any other consultants considered necessary to form a future plan of remedial work for the green.

Mills Grass Green

Greenkeeper Darren Walls has just returned from three weeks annual leave, coinciding with the height of the green's winter dormancy period. The odd weed moss that has appeared since his absence has been sprayed and eradicated. We are pleased with the progress of the green. It will again be solid tyned in August and again treated with gypsum and other chemicals to assist with its drainage and aeration. Members are gradually adjusting to the fact that we have a grass green that will improve by increased usage by them. It is slow but will speed up with the Spring regrowth. We need to become familiar with this new green by practicing on it as much as possible and using this knowledge as an advantage to us. Once the practice matches and season get underway we will work in close concert with the selectors to ensure the greens are used to the best advantage of the club

Dick Dowling

Social Committee Update

Hi everybody, the remaining events for 2015 are well advanced in our planning process. Last year and this year we were short of food for some events as many came on the day without letting us know. We do like a strong attendance but we want to look after you properly. From now on we don't want to run short of food on the day. We are thinking of providing a folder for you to RSVP for the remaining events for this year with a pencil and eraser attached. Easy to change later if you can't come. This will enable your family and friends to come as they can be pencilled in as well. We will still use the app and emails for RSVPs. Please add any dietary needs with your RSVPs as we continue to get these requests on the night making it difficult for some guests.

We are planning to follow Russell and Dick's great work with the cleaning up after Thursday night meals by getting some volunteers to help with cleaning up after events so the Social Committee can have some fun away from the kitchen.

The remaining events for 2015 are:

1. COMBC 149th Birthday Party: Tuesday 18th August at 7 pm
2. Melbourne Cup: exciting meal being planned and we will let you know what it is when approved by the Board. This event will be on Tuesday 3rd November from 11 am
3. Christmas Party: Sunday 13th December at 1 pm
4. New Year's Eve Fireworks Party Thursday December 31st at 8 pm

If anybody has ideas for new events please let me know so we can consider them.

Gay Edgcombe (chair), Nan Nankervis, Barb Elderfield, Lisa Larmour-Reid, Deb Dowling & Dick Dowling
socialmembers@citybowls.net

Member Space

“One summer’s day I wandered into a strange grass area where humans were bending over and discharging strange round coloured balls so I investigated this behaviour to the cries of delight from several humans. I was hungry so I decided to stay around this area eating what I could catch. A few days later, a female human (Gay) sat near me so I climbed into her lap. A man (Rocket) came along, put me into a dark box and they took me to a torture room where another human prodded me and stuck sharp things into me. The male took me to a place high up off the ground to live with him and another female (Maddy), where they fed me up so I could go back to the torture room to have an unspeakable thing done to me. I forgive them because they did love me and spoilt me as is my due.

I was allowed to visit the lap lady in another high up place where I helped her with her exercises. I also visited another high up place where there were two humans (Peter and Lynne) and a cat. We had a lot of fun playing chase kitty and jump on kitty and other secret feline games.



The humans got together and decided that I didn’t like high up places where I couldn’t feel the grass between my paws or sniff the breeze or hunt. So I was off in the box again to a low place where I now live with two other humans (Dick and Debbie) who let me go outside and still provide me with a warm safe place to stay.

I reward my new slaves by singing them the song of my people and jumping on their heads from a great height when they are sleeping. I have taken the female’s favourite cushion as she is only good for serving me breakfast and so does not rate a good sleeping spot.

Thank you all who helped make me healthy again and looked after me so well. I am flourishing and have almost beaten my slaves into submission.

Love from Lucky

Club member Gary Dowling and his Seymour mates are enjoying terrific success with their pacer Messini. Messini won the \$110,000 Group 1 Vicbred final for 4YO entires and geldings at Melton on Saturday July 4th 2015. The horse’s win was well received (and celebrated) by patrons at club member Mark Minehan’s Royal Standard Hotel.



From The Newsletter



The next newsletter will be published at the start of October when the editor returns from overseas. We encourage members to submit articles of interest to readers for the next newsletter. Due date **Sunday September 27th**

Lynne, Steve & Madge newsletter@citybowls.net