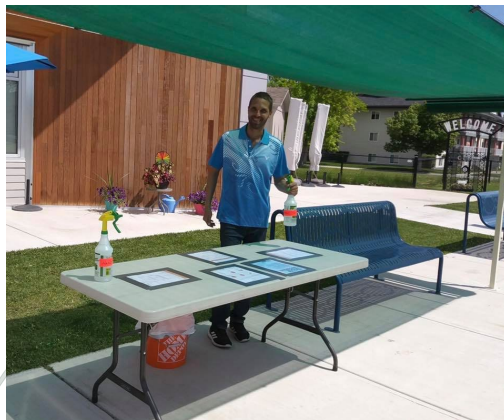




Bowls Alberta

2020 Annual Report





Bowls Alberta



2020 Annual Report Overview

Vision Statement: to advance the sport of Bowls in Alberta

Mission: to promote participation and excellence in the sport of lawn bowls for all ages and abilities

Overview

2020 began with so many plans and hopes for the growth of programs and special celebrations of our sport! We looked forward to excellent achievements on the greens by AB athletes, for the opportunity to showcase our sport by hosting the Canadian Championships in Edmonton, to work with Bowls Canada Boulingrin (BCB) in the “Just Roll with It” project and so many other scheduled events. But early in the year, as a global pandemic was declared, our plans for the year were put on hold and we waited month by month wading through updates and restrictions and cancellations to finally some gradual return to play at our member clubs.



The Global Pandemic, which impacted all aspects of life, had huge negative effects on the season of play but also some positive effects both at the club and provincial level. As BCB cancelled all their Championships we soon realized we needed to cancel all our provincial events as well. But we were pleased that in June, with the help from BCB, we did provide the clubs with waiver forms, acknowledgement of risks forms, and the protocols they needed to safely ‘return to play’. Clubs opened in gradual stages but only for their members, once the provincial and municipal restrictions were loosened.

This was to be the second year into the four-year Strategic Plans which were prepared by the board during the winter of 2017-18. Work on the goals for a *Sustainable Future for Bowls* was stalled along with all our programs. We did still offer support to the group of individuals working to resurrect the lawn bowling club in Red Deer. But with all the restrictions early in the year, they lost heart and gave up on the project. We will attempt to encourage them or work with our contact from the recreation department of the City of Red Deer in 2021-2022. We also had a scheduled visit to the AGM of the Grande Prairie Lawn Bowling Club and this also had to be put on hold. Under the second goal of a *Strong and Unified Alberta Bowls Community* we were led down a new path in setting up the Presidents’ Meetings which led to increased collaboration and support among the clubs. The direct support that Bowls Alberta and the clubs received from BCB also increased the club’s respect and appreciation for the national governing body. Under the third goal of *Quality Sport Development and Achievement* we recognize that all our scheduled provincial events had to be cancelled but efforts were steered in different directions with the completion of work we hadn’t had the time to focus on for years.

We were fortunate to have Anna Mees, the Executive Director of BCB come and lead workshops for our board and for our clubs late in 2019. Anna’s leadership and input set the tone for a respectful and collaborative working board with a clear understanding of their roles. The Board of Directors met 10 times throughout 2020, meeting mostly through telephone conference calls and then switching to Zoom calls. Some business of the association was dealt with through email correspondence between meetings. The board had a very productive year albeit way different than anticipated.

Thankfully the Covid-19 case numbers eased up in the spring and restrictions were likewise eased. Towards the end of June our clubs slowly began to open with Safety Officers in place, with restrictions on the use of their club houses, with pre-play online registrations and with the requirement of social distancing on the greens. From the clubs' point of view, the season wasn't all lost!



'Social Distanced' Canada Day Bowls Tournament at Calgary Lawn.

By the middle of July almost all our clubs were open to some degree and by August a few of them began to offer tournaments, albeit with continued restrictions. The season was salvaged at around 40% of the usual participant numbers, and a few clubs even reported increased participation by their members. A few of our clubs, particularly those with more vulnerable members, had very little participation. But once the season ended in early September, we were thankful that we had not received one report of covid-19 being spread at any of our clubs. This was a real testament to the excellent efforts of the club executives and volunteers that made keeping their members safe a top priority.

Pillar 1: Sustainable Future for Bowls

1. Increased sources of revenue

Sponsors and Supporters

In 2020 we received the following grants from Alberta Sport Connection:

Association Development Program Grant
Covid-19 Emergency Support Fund



We are grateful for the continued support through the annual grant. The Covid-19 Support Funds allowed us to support our clubs and not charge registration fees for 2020 as well as significantly reduce the fees for 2021. The clubs were very much appreciative of this support as they all felt a significant loss of revenue by not being able to host schools, corporate groups, and fundraising endeavors on their greens.

Our annual sponsorship of two events from [Dignity Memorial](#) and from [Northgate GM](#) were not realized as we did not hold provincial events this past year. Also, we did not receive any funding from the usual hotel sponsors in Medicine Hat and in Edmonton. Hopefully we can resume the funding from these sponsors in 2021 as they assist us in keeping the costs of our provincial events affordable for all players across Alberta.



We received Athlete Travel Assistance funds from the city of Edmonton for sending Edmonton players to compete in the Canadian Senior Triples Championship in Montreal and Edmonton players to compete in the Canadian Indoor Singles Championship in BC late in 2019. This funding allows us to give support to all AB players attending national events.

We are thankful for the continued support of the Alberta Gaming, Liquor & Cannabis thru our volunteer work at a casino every two years. We were fortunate to have a casino scheduled for the end of 2019 and so we received funding from AGLC early in 2020.



Last of all we applied and were successful in receiving the Jump Start Sport Relief Grant. Because of the Covid-19 situation this funding was held over to be used for Youth Programming in 2021.

2. Effective Leadership

A new board of directors was put in place the end of 2019 and we had high hopes that many new skills were going to be brought to the table and assist us in moving ahead in our strategic plans. But with the pandemic still lingering the Board was forced to put a lot of effort reviewing Covid-19 Protocols for clubs, sorting through the ever changing provincial and municipal restrictions, and then meeting with representatives from clubs to assist and encourage them in safely opening for play when they were ready.

With no season planning and less work for the office and board members, there was time to work on some governance issues. First, we struck up a committee to do another thorough review of our Bylaws as we had begun to recognize that they contained too much detail regarding committees and their composition and duties. The revised Bylaws were then approved by our membership at the AGM held in October successfully over the Zoom platform.

Then we began the work of reviewing our policies, particularly the ones required for our Safe Sport Framework. Work began on a policy manual and templates for all our clubs but was halted when late in the year BCB announced that they were again required to review and update their policies and would soon after be aiding the provinces and the clubs with their Safe Sport Policies. We look forward to adopting the BCB policies for our association in 2021 and then working with clubs to encourage them to implement the policies as well.



We did continue the *Safe Sport* steps, this year. The board took the *Responsible Coaching Pledge* in the spring. All board directors obtained *Respect in Sport* Certification. The board also passed the motion that all AB coaches and umpires are also required to take either the *Respect in Sport* training or the *NCCP Safe Sport Course*.

Last of all we ensured that Terms of References were put into place for all operating committees. The work on these continued early into 2021 when we had Sport Law and Strategy review them and make further recommendations before they were approved by the Board of Directors.

3. Supporting Thriving Clubs

In April of 2020, the Board President began to host BA Presidents' Meetings on a regular basis to facilitate open communication between the board and the member clubs' executive members. There were nine

meetings from April through to the end of August with the clubs' Presidents and Vice-Presidents through Zoom meetings, and this paved the way for a better understanding of the decisions made to cancel events, created opportunities for clubs to collaborate in adhering to the BCB's Return to Play Protocols, and created opportunities to discuss the municipal, provincial and federal health regulations and requirements in response to the pandemic. Clubs were very thankful for the meetings and most appreciative of the documents provided to assist them in safely returning to play during the pandemic.

A major project for the spring and into the summer was getting our website moved to a new host and securing the services of a new webmaster. As a part of this move, we set up pages specifically dedicated to the board and to the clubs. The Board page can be accessed with a password by all board members and has all the essential governance documents as well as records of minutes and other board meeting material. The Club Member page was set up on our website for the purpose of clubs sharing resources. Minutes of the Presidents' Meetings along with folders containing club development and governance documents are found on this page and accessible to all clubs.

A Club Board Governance Manual was prepared and distributed to all BA Board Members and to all the clubs. Since boards of our association and of the clubs are all run by volunteers with lots of turn over from year to year, board members weren't always fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. The manual is based on the Sport for Life online [*Effective Board Governance*](#) course and was meant to meet the needs of the board members not interested in taking courses. But the hope is that the manual will tweak the interest of at least most executive board members, and they will be encouraged to take the full NCCP course for themselves.

4. Increasing Albertans Awareness of our Sport Needs to be More Intentional

This goal was put aside as Covid-19 Protocols clearly stated that clubs should not have visitors at their clubs. Members only were welcome to participate under some very strict guidelines.

2020 was a year of learning for everyone!

Clubs learned the importance of yearly Waiver and Acknowledgement of Risks forms.

They put in place health and safety protocols which they will continue to use.

We all learned that our sport is a safe one to play even in a pandemic.

*And we learned the importance of making clubs 'Safe and Welcoming' environments
and the policies and procedures to ensure that happens!*



Pillar 2: Strong & Unified Bowls AB Community

1. Encouraging our Clubs to meet Excellence Standards

Our clubs went over and above many of the requirements to open safely through the pandemic. They appreciated the leadership from Bowls Alberta and except for two clubs that went off a bit on their own and didn't adhere to all the recommended protocols, but thankfully all members were kept safe at their respective clubs. They adhered to the restriction of all players participating only at one club with members only rolling bowls at their primary clubs. Of note was the exceptional volunteers that stepped up at all the clubs and put in extra hours posting information, keeping records, and continually monitoring situations.



Always keeping that 2 m distance.

We took advantage of the slower season and clubs were provided with the opportunity to review their insurance policies and work through the details of what really was the best coverage for their board members and for their club. We worked closely with our own provider who then reviewed all clubs' policies and then made recommendations to them. For the most part clubs acted upon the advice received and not only improved the coverage for their club and their directors but gained a better understanding of how sport insurance coverage was changing and what was best for their own club.



Two of our clubs took advantage of the slower season and did some renovations. One club did extensive work on their club house as well as replacing a full green. Another redid all the boards surrounding their greens and then reseeded their green. Grants received from the city of Edmonton helped these clubs meet some essential needs of the clubs as both Edmonton clubs did the upgrades in anticipation of hosting Canadian Championships in 2021 and 2023.

2. Membership and Participation Overview

With opening so late in the 2020 season, many clubs struggled with what to charge their members. Bowls Canada waved all membership fees and subsequently Bowls Alberta did as well, but we still required all clubs to complete registration forms and submit their membership lists into the BA Member database. A few clubs did charge a reduced fee for the season while other clubs waved fees and carried over memberships from 2019.

Overall membership numbers went from 845 in 2019 down to 713 in 2020. Three clubs had a significant drop in numbers and several clubs just rolled over their members from the previous year. Only 40% of registered club members participated in 2020 and only at their club events.

3. Player Development through Interclub and Tournaments

All Bowls Alberta sport programming was cancelled for the 2020 season. Several clubs were able to hold their own club tournaments, and a few did offer some player coaching sessions. But player development was not intentional and on hold for the entire year.

Pillar 3: Quality Sport Development and Achievements

1. Provincial events

The Bowling Program Committee prepared the 'Conditions of Play' and the 'Calendar of Events' for 2020 and once again the clubs were supportive in their willingness to host events. But by late March, as BCB canceled their programs, we followed suit and cancelled our provincial championships and all other tournaments.

2020 Provincial Tournaments



2. An Active Youth Development Committee

A Youth Development Committee did continue work throughout the year even though they did not host any events. With the successful application late in the year for the Jump Start Covid Relief funding the committee began some plans for renewing the youth program opportunities in 2021.

The Head Coach and the Youth Team Manager did an online Zoom meeting in August to connect with the youth that attended the Canadian Championships in 2019. This connection with the youth was well received and was meant to encourage the youth to get back out on the greens in 2021.

3. Athlete Development work

Early in the year our Alberta Head Coach, Derek Dillon was appointed again as our Head Coach for another two years. BA and its members are very fortunate to have a Coach that is so dedicated to professionalism, to advancing our sport, and to ensuring Alberta players are some of the best in Canada.

The Athlete Development Committee had begun the application process for identifying the 2020 Athlete Development Squad but that too had to be put on hold. The nine scheduled Player Development Camps were all put on hold and eventually cancelled. And finally, the annual Alberta vs British Columbia Development Match also was cancelled.

But the year was not a total right off as there was now time to concentrate on developing Alberta LTAD material. We have a LTAD manual from BCB, but it is very outdated. So, we reviewed and eventually prepared our own updated **Long Term Athlete Development Manual**. We are thankful to BC's Lawn Bowling Association and to our Head Umpire for their input into a manual and a developed Athlete Matrix which reflects strategies and goals our coaches can now implement in their work with bowlers in various stages of their development.

4. Coaching Development

Two Club Coach courses were scheduled for in the spring and a Competitive Coach Course for the fall but with all programs cancelled by BCB we also had to cancel these.

Late in the year BA's Head Coach, Derek Dillon, and Learning Facilitator, Pat Vos, did assist BCB in a thorough review and rewrite of the Club Coach Course material and then a subsequent online piloting of the course.

5. Officials Development

The Head Umpire prepared two videos related to officiating and training which then were shared with the membership through the website and through Facebook. The first gives instruction on Measuring Green Speed and the second was on Measuring Shot Bowl before calling an umpire. These videos were well received not only by our own Alberta members but around the globe.

6. Marketing

Our young at heart Head Umpire, Dwyane Hauck, with the help of his son, also developed a page on Facebook for our members to enjoy, called Lego Lawn Bowling League. Since we were unable to go out to the greens early in the season, he entertained members with the witty and fun adventures of the Lego players. The site became most popular and was featured in a Sport Calgary Newsletter.



All other marketing plans for the year were put on hold.

7. Awards Committee

Despite the lack of provincially run events this year the annual awards were still given. The Volunteer of the Year award went to Dwayne Hauck for his online contributions to our community through the officiating you-tube videos he prepared as well as for the Facebook Lego Lawn Bowling League he created and that entertained a large portion of our membership. Our Long-Term Service Award was presented to Rosina Toal for her more than 30 years of contributing to our association as an athlete, board member and committee member.

This year we inducted Margaret Fettes to our online Wall of Fame. Margaret was active for many years as a player at the local, national, and international level, she served as a Coach and as an Umpire, was active on the Bowls Alberta Board, the BCB Board and served as a Director for World Bowls. The highlight of her career was representing Canada as a competitor at the 1994 Commonwealth Games and then returning as a Team Manager to the 2002 Commonwealth Games. Margaret was an outstanding leader in our sport.

8. Welcoming Para Athletes on to the Greens

The BCB pilot project, *Just Roll With It*, was to run at the Commonwealth Lawn Bowling Club this year. But it was postponed due to the pandemic until 2021. This BCB project was being run at an Ontario club and at our Edmonton Club and was set to develop and pilot coaching material, courses, assistive devices and classification categories along with welcoming athletes with various disabilities onto the greens. From these projects BCB was to develop material to assist all clubs across Canada in the steps and best practices to become more inclusive.

In September the Alberta Government offered a Sport Participation Support Program Grant. We developed a program entitled *Becoming Para Ready: Welcoming Para Albertans onto the Lawn Bowling Greens* and applied for the grant. We were successful in receiving the funds to carry out this program in conjunction with the BCB pilot project, in 2021 and then continuing the work into the first half of 2022.

At the end of the 2020 season, Bowls AB completed 15 of their 45 key actions items identified in the annual plans with an additional 9 items still in progress. Many of the action plans were postponed to 2021.

Covid-19 impacted our year significantly, but the Board of Directors bounced well with the situation and adjusted to extra meetings particularly with the clubs' Presidents. They spent a lot of time discussing Return-to-Play protocols and ensuring that what we received from Bowls Canada Boulingrin was updated to reflect the requirements and restrictions within the province and in the municipalities. Many positives did come out of the situation as the administrative work had to be adjusted as well. As many people were *covid-weary* we limped into 2021 with a hope that we could all adjust to a new normal.

34% of the action ideas in the 2020 Plans
were completed while the rest were all delayed
due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Social distancing 'O Canada' at the Stanley Park Lawn Bowling Club in Calgary