



MESSAGE FROM THE WORLD BOWLS PRESIDENT

I am writing to you as your newly re-elected President – an honour I am delighted to accept, and I sincerely thank World Bowls’ global membership for your continued support. This is however no time to dwell on the nicety of office.

I am fully aware that our great sport, and indeed our way of life, is under threat as never experienced before by our generation. It is truly a time to show our unity as a sport more than ever before. Bowls programmes and events have either been postponed or cancelled. Clubs have closed. The number one priority is of course for everyone to stay safe and well. In this respect Governments and MNAs are issuing the relevant guidelines and advice necessary for this to be achieved, along with details of financial packages available to reduce the negative economic impact of the virus. It is also very pleasing to see several MNAs going the extra mile to maintain regular communication and contact with their membership. We urge everyone to follow that lead, every little piece of positivity helps as we seek to alleviate the effect of coronavirus quarantines and lockdowns. Look at other MNA websites and other Social Media where you may find helpful information and advice you can usefully share with your own membership.

At World Bowls, as the sport’s global governing body, we clearly recognise the distressing situation and I assure you that the board and staff will leave no stone unturned to assist the bowls fraternity where possible to restart the sport when this scourge has passed.

In these dark moments however it is indeed essential that we look forward positively to a return to normality when we can once again freely access our clubs and greens. No one can predict when this will be, but we desperately hope that it will be sometime in 2020, if not the first part of 2021.

With this hope in mind I again wish to reassure MNAs that we at World Bowls are determined to play our part, where practically possible, in the revival and resurgence of our sport when this occurs. We are currently working on measures which will hopefully make a positive difference. These include –

- **Reducing the amount of World Bowls affiliations fees paid by our MNAs for 2021 when they become due for payment in late 2020.**
- **Ensuring our well supported World Bowls programme of events is protected. Amidst the gloom and doom we were thrilled last week to announce that World Bowls in conjunction with Host National Authority Bowls Australia has rescheduled the World Championships from next month to May/June 2021. Well done to everyone concerned.**
- **Review of our World Bowls Development Strategy to enhance the benefits available to our developing nations through our Development Assistance scheme.**
- **Earmarking funding to implement exciting proposals worked up through a partnership of Bowls Australia and World Bowls where creative concepts to market our sport in a coordinated manner across the globe have been drawn up and ready to be refined and rolled out for use by all MNAs who wish to participate.**
- **Freezing the level of annual licence fees payable by Bowls Manufacturers and Testers in 2021.**
- **Finalisation and promotion of our World Bowls Coaching Syllabus which is geared to benefitting our smaller, less established and developing Member Nations.**

In conclusion I would urge all our member nations to be strong and resolute and remember you are not alone. As a sport we need to show unity as never before. Please accept this message as a pledge of your governing body's support and commitment to care. Let's dedicate ourselves to putting this dreadful virus blight behind us and planning for a return to playing and enjoying the greatest sport of them all.

Yours sincerely,

John Bell

President

World Bowls

4 April 2020