

Torquay Bowls Club feedback regarding GBR Review of Pennant Competition

Background:

All TBC affiliated members were emailed notification of the GBR Review via Mailchimp in addition to notices being placed on noticeboards around the club. (Affiliated members include many non-pennant playing members). Forums were held on Tuesday 13th November 2018 at TBC Clubroom. Two sessions were held and were attended by around 50 members. This number represents 54% of the club's current pennant playing group. A PowerPoint presentation was shown based on the information provided by the GBR. A facilitator from Division One conducted each session. Comments by attendees were noted and documented on sheets attached to whiteboard.

Summary:

Our club's members broadly supported Saturday and Midweek Pennant remaining the same with an 18 week season and that the newly formed Premier Division should be 10 sides to facilitate this.

Premier:

- If GBR wish Premier to be an "elite" competition, other options need to be looked at in order to achieve this, such as introducing another group (metro?) or different play format (?).
- To assist in achieving a higher standard in the new 10 club Premier Division, suggest have 3 teams of 4 players per side.
- It was felt that Premier Division coming back into our domestic Pennant structure, will be just another Division (above Div 1) and could fit into the existing 10 per division format ie. 6 Premier sides + 4 Div 1 sides.
- Premier coming back to domestic competition does not warrant disruption to our entire existing Pennant divisions in both Saturday and Midweek Pennant competition. Change to 8 sides per Division, will push back sides unevenly and some new divisions will comprise half one existing division and half another.

Saturday Pennant:

- Our Pennant players prefer 18 weeks participation. They enjoy the graded competition Pennant provides and wish to play as much of it as possible.
- To have 10 sides with 2 up promotion and 2 down relegation with potential for a club to have more than 1 side in a Division, is deemed preferable to 8 sides 1up/1down and 1 club per Division.

Midweek Pennant:

- Our Pennant players like 18 weeks, they enjoy the graded competition Pennant provides and wish to play as much of it as possible.
- There was **strong objection** to the disruption to Midweek Pennant competition simply to align with Saturday Pennant competition.

Christmas/New Year break:

- Our club does not experience greater unavailability of players over Christmas/New Year and considers the usual 3 week break is sufficient.
- GBR's suggestion of a longer break at Christmas to allow players to get away on holiday is contrary to the suggestion of holding club and GBR events during this period.

Other issues:

- Belief that change from 18 weeks to 14 weeks will not encourage greater participation with regard to players not wishing to commit to a season.
- 4 weeks over Xmas is a long break from playing. Would clubs expect players to practise before resuming; thus reducing the effective break anyway (?).