

The Falcon: June 2020

Introduction

Most of us are missing our bowls, some more than others. But it was brought home to a few of us earlier this week, what else we may be missing. A small group of members had gathered at the Club for a variety of reasons –to check on the roof, to paint the entrance walls, to do a bar stocktake, to monitor electrical usage and so on. In fact, any semi-legitimate reason to get out of the house!

It was another spectacular day – and we have been having our fair share of them recently. It was windless, not a cloud in the sky, and the gorges and ravines on the mountain were clearly defined. And not having to concentrate on the head, watch your opponents bowl, or listen to your Skip's instructions, one was able to sit on a bench (two metres apart, of course) and take in that magnificent view. I'm sure many of you are missing that view.

I would like to think that the founders of this Club of ours had this view in mind when they chose how to position the greens.

Level 3; are we getting any closer?

If I understand Minister Mtethwa's presentation on Saturday morning – and I'm not sure that I do – then BSA is required to submit to the Sports Ministry a proposal of how Bowls can be re-introduced while adhering to all the prescribed health protocols.

This needs to happen within 14 days of the Ministry gazetting its conditions. The Ministry will then adjudicate on whether the provisions are acceptable or not.

Bearing in mind the number of sporting codes whose proposals will have to be processed thereafter, it is unlikely that we can expect to get back on the greens before July at the earliest.

The status of Bowls?

Here is an extract from a News 24 report.
"All sports codes offer work opportunities at all levels. Gymnastics provides full or part-time employment to approximately 3 500 people countrywide, with golf providing approximately 40 000 jobs at facilities alone, and swimming an

estimated 22 000 jobs. Close to 6 500 people are employed directly and indirectly in tennis.

Various sports federations recently came together to discuss the future and phased return to sport. These sports federations have put strong risk- mitigation strategies and policies in place based upon international best practice and in line with government regulations. These non-contact sports codes include gymnastics, swimming, golf, rowing, surfing, canoeing, cycling, cricket and tennis".

No reference to Bowls?

From David Hall

John Dews sent a few of us a letter from David Hall announcing the conditions under which his English Bowling Club would be permitted to return to bowls. As it is a fairly long document, I have edited it significantly.

General Advice

Please do not come to the Bowls Club if you are within the 7 or 14 day period of self-isolation. Please stay at home even if you only have minor symptoms such as cough, headache or mild fever. Access to changing rooms will be allowed once to collect personal possessions from lockers. Social distancing must be observed and it is recommended that gloves are worn when collecting equipment.

Social distancing of 2.0 m must be observed at all times (unless with members of your own household)

Wash your hands thoroughly before you leave home

Please bring alcohol based hand sanitizing material with you if possible

Booking to play

Do not come to the green unless you have booked a slot.

Booking slots will initially be for 2 hours, with a maximum playing time of 1.5 hours. This will allow time for one group to leave before the next arrives.

Arrival

Please do not arrive more than 15 minutes before your playing slot.

The club house will remain closed except for emergency use of telephone and first aid equipment.

Changing facilities will not be available but toilets will be available. Please avoid using toilets if possible and clean anything you have touched after use.

Playing

To ensure social distancing only rinks 1, 3, 5 and 7 will be available

Only two bowlers will be allowed on a rink initially.

To minimise the risk of infection, only essential items should be utilised during any session: • **Mat** • **Bowls** • **Jack** • **Rink markers** • **Gloves** • **Bowling arm/lifter** (for use by one person only if required)

Also to minimise the risk of infection non-essential equipment should not be used this includes: • **Scoreboards** • **Bowls pushers** • **Ditch markers** • **2m distance sticks** • **Chalk**

Sanitise your hands and any equipment (including bowls, jacks and mats) you use before and after you play – do not assume that the person before you has sanitised the equipment thoroughly.

One player should be nominated on each rink to place/move both the mat and jack throughout the period.

Bowls should be moved by the feet after each end and positioned a safe distance each side of the mat

Social distancing of 2.0m to be maintained at all times throughout the game (unless playing with members of the same household)

Departure

When you finish playing, change your shoes and leave the club within 15 minutes – ensuring that you have sanitised all equipment used.

Communication

In stark contrast to the excellent communication which prevails at CBC, with Maureen McLeod at the centre, communication in other parts of the world, and also emanating from a range of sources in South Africa, mostly governmental, leaves a lot to be desired.

Thank heavens we don't have to make sense of statements like " This is a problem, quite a problem, a bigly problem, well not so big, actually fairly small, fairly small, but still a big problem!"

We can leave that to our friends across the Atlantic.

But in the last few weeks we have listened with initial interest, followed by frustration, to a range of pronouncements regarding the national lockdown that have been almost impossible to decipher.

And this inevitably leads to misinterpretations, confusion, irritation and possibly non-compliance.

This is non-communication at its best!

As my favourite columnist, Ndumiso Ngcobo wrote in the Sunday Times yesterday; "Never mind going back to church, we're speaking in tongues all the time!"

Greens

Most of you will have received via Maureen's email the news concerning our greens. An application of an over-strength herbicide six weeks ago has burnt them quite badly. The herbicide attacks only the surface grass, so fortunately the damage is not permanent. We have completed the repair treatment but will have to wait to see how long the greens take to recover.

As mentioned in the email, C Green has not been affected much and is ready for play. A Green needs another few weeks but B Green has some bad patches.

As Peter Brown commented on the Friday Happy Hour app, "everything is fixable", but it is nevertheless discouraging after all the effort that was put in to get the greens up to scratch.

1994 Commonwealth Games

In response to a request from us, Alan provided the following account.

"26 years have passed since I was selected to represent my country at the games. The team was made up as follows: Fours; Neil Burkett (Skip), Robbie Rayfield (3rd), myself (2nd) and Donny Piketh (lead). Pairs: Ashley van Winkel and Theuns Fraser, and Kevin Campbell played singles.

With question marks around South Africa's political future at that stage, our participation was a last-minute decision. We spent a few days in Johannesburg being kitted out and were surprised to be given burgundy tracksuits with flashes of green and gold.

We needed three flights, via Heathrow and Calgary to get to Victoria, the capital of Vancouver Island and venue for the Games. Vancouver Island

is stunningly beautiful, unbelievably clean and the accommodation at the Athletes Village, brand new. We asked for nothing and were treated like royalty.

The Opening Ceremony is engraved in my memory for ever. The entry to the stadium is done in alphabetical order. The excitement grew as the announcer approached the S's. Then we heard "Returning after 26 years, Afrique du Sud/South Africa" and the stadium erupted. It was very emotional and I'm not ashamed to say there were tears in my eyes. Queen Elizabeth officially opened the Games and even visited the Bowls Complex to watch, sitting quite close to our rink. In our section of ten countries, we won eight games, losing only to the Irish along the way. Their approach to the game was eye-opening, shouting, urging each other on and generally having fun, in contrast to our quiet and reserved approach. At a guess I would say their team were all in their twenties.

The final against Australia, was played on the bumpiest (they were all fairly bumpy) green, chosen because of being closest to the cameras. Neil had predicted that we would win a medal but had not indicated which colour! His experience of the PE greens set him up for a good performance and he was simply outstanding. We were in control for most of the game but they came back at us toward the end of the game. My main contribution was to sink the jack on the 15th/16th end.

We went in to the last end three up. With Neil's first wood he had a run at the jack and missed. I recall him saying "this is the worst drive I've had all year." At that moment I thought "but you've got another wood, Neil". With his final wood he hit the target and we got the shot. When the Aussie Skip missed with his last shot, we leapt in the air. There is a picture of Donny and me airborne which captured this moment.

Then it was to the podium with the Gold Medals around our necks, a bouquet of flowers in our hands and the new national Anthem ringing in our ears. What a moment, being part of a team to achieve the ultimate prize in Bowls.

On arrival at Cape Town airport we were met by a huge banner-waving crowd, most from Constantia Bowling Club, the best Club in the whole world. Those were the days and I will always be thankful to the people who got me there, too many to mention but they know who they are.

Alan reflects on the fact that its been a long time since Western Province has been represented by four players (Neil, Kevin, Ashley and himself) in the Springbok team. The selection was also a feather in the cap for Constantia Bowling Club with both Ashley and himself being members and Kevin joining shortly afterwards.

Down memory lane

We have previously urged newer members to seriously consider participating in the All Cape event. Apart from providing a reasonably high standard of bowls over four or five days, it also allows one to make good friends, in more ways than one, with so many of the players in one's section.

And of course the time together can lead to some interesting stories!

Lucky Eddie reminded me of some of these a day or two ago. He, Paul Eglin (now sadly suffering from Alzheimers), Gary Nash and myself were regular All Cape devotees. On one occasion in PE, we arrived at our final venue of the week with nothing to gain but have a bit of fun. We had won half our games and were up against a team lower than us on the log. We had decided previously to introduce ourselves to our opponents as Darrol, Daryl, and my other brother Darryl, with Eddie retaining his name. Our opponents, from Victoria Park, dressed in brown shoes, with a combined age of 329, all seemed to be suffering from some form of physical disability.

Our humorous introduction of names before the game went down like a lead balloon. No reaction! The trial ends, on a track which I would be nervous to cycle over, revealed an opposing Skip whose high altitude delivery far exceeded that of President John Stamper. The bowl had a fascinatingly wide range of options on meeting the surface of the green. Kick violently left, or right, or bounce and then kick, or just die like a dropped meat pie.

Naturally we smiled. Naturally we saw ourselves calling the game off when too far ahead and retiring to an early bitterly cold beer.

Well guess what. We got chalked! Our opposing skip's remote- controlled lobs variously took out the shot wood, chipped the jack into the ditch, attacked the head from directions we had never ever experienced before.

It took us at least to Mossel Bay on the way back before we lightened up a bit and were able to laugh at ourselves.

Lockdown trivia

The level 4 restriction that prevented your running more than 5 km from your house still allowed you to run a marathon!

If you add the circumference of a 5 km circle (approximately 34 km) to the 10 km out and back from your home, you exceed the 42 marathon distance.

Part of an investigation regarding the control of alcohol sales, actually considered the reduction in the size of the packaging. This was apparently based on a belief that those who drink quarts, or doubles, or use large capacity wine glasses, are more prone to develop alcoholic tendencies. Should we be concerned about some of our members?

A number of you have referred to scraping the barrel as your liquor stocks run out (drops of forgotten sherry etc).

Which reminds me of a story that the late Dick Charsley told me. Dick, a fanatical Blue Bulls supporter, and his wife Val, ex-Club President and member of the WPBA Executive, were entertaining Clive Sinclair and his wife.

Dick was a teetotaler. They had provided wine for the evening but Clive asked whether Dick had any gin. Dick thought that he had seen an old bottle of Gilbeys when they last moved house. He found it in the pantry but there was very little left in the bottle. It also had a tattered price tag on it marked 7 shillings! He reckoned it had been given at least 30 years to build up steam.

Within 20 minutes of receiving his generous tot (the remnants of the bottle), Clive was apparently speaking in Northern Pakistani!

Sick Bay

John Smuts has continued to make great progress and is exercising regularly.

Ron Joubert, with whom I keep in daily contact, is as well as can be expected. He thanks all of you who have taken the trouble to phone him.

By the time that you receive this issue, Finn will have received his new pacemaker and will also have received his first visit from a delighted Inga.

Vince, as most of you know, has really been in the wars recently. Joh Stamper chatted to him yesterday and tells me that the infection in his knee has cleared up and he sounds positive. Petal, after a nasty fall which resulted in a chipped tooth, will be having her smile restored this Monday.

Alan appears to be having second thoughts about an operation to his knee.

Age matters!

Among all the real and fake news items circulating, I was interested to come across a statement that "the age group most susceptible to the Covid 19 virus were in the 60 to 79 range". Good news for us octogenarians!

Birthdays

June 2:	Peter Gilchrist
June 4:	Paddy Goncalves
June 4:	Liz Hudson
June 4:	John Stamper
June 9:	Bill Kilbride
June 12:	Jet Clark
June 13:	Judith Ellman
June 13:	Bev Fargher
June 16:	Anna Mercer
June 22:	Craig Mozley
June 23:	Dawn Bastick
June 28:	Eddie Curtis

And finally

Bill McCarthy, Greenkeeper at Meadowridge Bowling Club, sent me some interesting quotations last week. Particularly appropriate at this bewildering time of our lives is the following :

"What this country needs are more unemployed politicians"

And as a basic introduction to Economics, the following:

"The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else".