

# Conditions of Play (CoP) Changes Summary

1.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.3	<b>Change:</b> Remove the Single Gender grading requirement from Open Reserve Bowler
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The State calendar has Pennant played in the second half of the season, meaning that the current season grading for Single Gender Pennant is no longer valid due to the Region Championships often being played earlier in the season.</li> <li>Men's Pennant grades are not recorded, and it was creating a tiresome search process for our Region administrators for these events – almost 5,000 entrants in the 2024/25 season.</li> </ul>		
2.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.12	<b>Change:</b> Change to entries wait list
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarification of the previous clause, and now acknowledging that bye positions can be filled until the publication of the draw, withdrawal positions can be filled up to 24 hours prior to Round 1, and removal of the replacement of forfeits in the draw (these are considered to be in the 24 hours prior to event and are not to be replaced in the draw from a wait list – refer Section 1.14).</li> </ul>		
3.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.13.3	<b>Change:</b> Change to Pennant players being able to continue in the event with their former Club
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This rule has been changed to provide consistency throughout Bowls NSW events, previously Club and Region winners could continue to State finals events, but this was not permissible in Pennant competitions.</li> <li>Furthermore, with the changes to the season calendar for 2025/26 it allows players who have transferred to another Bowls NSW club for the 2026/27 season to continue to participate for their former club at Region or State Pennant finals.</li> </ul>		

4.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.17	<b>Change:</b> Change the wording regarding meal breaks
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are Bowls NSW events that are coordinated in short formats with up to 5 or 6 games scheduled in a day and allowing a minimum of 30 minutes between every match for a meal break is not feasible with scheduling.</li> </ul>		
5.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.18	<b>Change:</b> Permitting a substitute to be used for late arrivals
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This change has been made to bring the Conditions of Play in line with the laws of the sport.</li> </ul>		
6.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.30	<b>Change:</b> Non-requirement for a player/team/side to have an accredited coach
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This change has been made to bring the Conditions of Play in line with the laws of the sport.</li> </ul>		
7.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.32	<b>Change:</b> Change to the restriction of movement of players
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The State Match Committee recognised that changes were required to this section of the CoP to assist officials who found it difficult to enforce the current rules if there were multiple rinks/greens under their control. It was determined that it would be easier for officials to monitor any delaying of play (by scoreboard end checks), rather than trying to watch every bowler on every rink for their compliance.</li> <li>The changes also allow a skip to call their third in fours, or second in triples, to the head end of the green to discuss shot selection, and also those players would be able to remain at the head end until it is their turn to bowl.</li> </ul>		
8.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.35	<b>Change:</b> Inclusion of NSW or Australian events only
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This clause is intended for NSW or Australian selection and the new wording reflects that. In addition, clause 1.35.2 has been modified to only apply to officials of a Region or State Junior side, and not to any other Region or State officials.</li> </ul>		

9.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 1.36.1	<b>Change:</b> Inclusion provision for sectional draws in Rounds 2 & 3 of three player/team/side sections
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where a Round 1 match is a draw, Bowlslink is unable to allocate a player/team/side into Rounds 2 &amp; 3 of the competition. Bowls NSW will provide further guidance to those Clubs and Regions using Bowlslink for these events.</li> </ul>		
10.	<b>CoP Section:</b> Sections 2.1.2, 3.3.3 & 5.2.2	<b>Change:</b> Pairs Championship matches reduced to 18 ends
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At Region &amp; State Championship level the Pairs competition has continually proven to be the longest format of the game. The current rule of 21 end matches means that there are continual issues faced when two rounds of competitions are scheduled to be completed in the same day (ie, some Clubs, Region, State Championships, State Champion of Champions). There have been numerous instances where Regions have been unable to complete two matches in one day and teams have been required to return the next day to complete a small number of ends, which has in turn further delayed the next day(s) scheduled rounds of play.</li> <li>This change will provide more flexibility to when Pairs events can be scheduled. With the 21 end format, Clubs, Regions, and Bowls NSW are limited to try and schedule Pairs matches during daylight saving months. This is not possible at Bowls NSW events where the Champion of Champions and State Championships are not always held during these months.</li> <li>Section 3.3.3 reflects the change to 12 ends (formally 14) of sectional play where there are three scheduled matches in a single day.</li> <li>Note that there has been no adjustment to Senior Women's Pairs, which remains as 21 ends of 3 bowl pairs.</li> <li>In addition, further clarification has been added to Section 2.2.3 regarding the requirement for Clubs to follow the prescribed format and dates of play for Club Singles &amp; Pairs so that their winners are eligible to compete in Bowls NSW Champion of Champions events.</li> </ul>		

<b>11.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 3.2.2	<b>Change:</b> Amendment to age eligibility restrictions for State Senior Championships
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players must now be 60 years or over at the commencement of the season (July 1).</li> <li>• Removes the opportunity for 58 or 59 year old players from competing in Senior Championships.</li> <li>• Each Region conducts its Championships at different times to suit its own conditions and calendar, therefore a set age eligibility date of 1 July has been set. The State Match Committee recognises that there will be 60 year old players each season that are unable to compete in State Senior Championships, however this decision was reached following thorough consultation and strong member feedback.</li> <li>• Age limits of an individual's eligibility to be selected in a Bowls NSW Senior side is unchanged, this date will remain dependant on the dates of the Australian Senior Sides Championships as set by Bowls Australia each year.</li> </ul>		
<b>12.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 3.3.3	<b>Change:</b> Amendment to number of ends for Open Reserve Championships
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Reserve Championships will play the same length of matches as the State Men's Championships, State Women's Championships and Senior Men's Championships.</li> <li>• There have been no alterations to the number of ends, or formats for Senior Women's Championships.</li> </ul>		
<b>13.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 6.2.1	<b>Change:</b> Amendment to age eligibility restrictions for Over 40's Pairs
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players must now be 40 years or over at the commencement of the season (July 1), and also 59 years or under at the scheduled completion of the event (December 7).</li> </ul>		

<b>14.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 7.1.2	<b>Change:</b> Change of Number of ends played for Mixed Pairs (Section 4.1), Over 40s Pairs (Section 6.1), Rookies Pairs (Section 7.1.2)
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixed Pairs &amp; Over 40s Pairs have been reduced from 18 to 17 ends, and Rookies Pairs from 12 to 11 ends.</li> <li>These matches are permitted one roll up and this change will mean players finish at the end they started the match (no dead ends permitted).</li> <li>These formats have multiple matches held each day in qualifying and this small reduction will help scheduling times, especially at State Rookies finals where six matches are scheduled to be completed in a day.</li> </ul>		
<b>15.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 8.5	<b>Change:</b> Addition of a 12 years and under Singles event at the State Junior Championships
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides younger children with a valuable early entry point into the sport, fostering their interest and developing their skills at a crucial age in their athlete growth.</li> <li>Aiming to strengthen the future of bowls by establishing a more substantial junior base and increasing long-term player retention.</li> <li>This will be a singles competition, open to both boys and girls.</li> </ul>		
<b>16.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 11.13	<b>Change:</b> All matches in Pennant competition must be played
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The State Match Committee uses section finishing positions to help determine which Club(s) are elevated, regressed or maintained in grade in the following season.</li> <li>Clubs should get the opportunity to host all of their home games.</li> <li>Each match played may be crucial in determining the grading of a player within a season for post-sectional rounds.</li> <li>It is understood that in all circumstances the above may not be possible due to a large number of washed-out matches. In this case, Regions must seek approval from the State Match Committee for any match to remain unplayed.</li> </ul>		

<b>17.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 12.3.1	<b>Change:</b> Adding further eligibility criteria to 'local' Platinum Pennant players
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This clause prevents the current transferring of players after their Region championship season for a non-Platinum club and becoming 'local' players in Platinum Pennant.</li> <li>• Local players will be required to be eligible to play in Bowls NSW State Championship events and have played their most recent Region Championship or Bowls NSW State event with that Club.</li> </ul>		
<b>18.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Sections 13.2.3 & 14.2.3	<b>Change:</b> Change to the process of nominations for Pennant competitions
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs will now indicate how many sides they would like to enter in each Pennant competition based on the players that they have available for the season, along with player losses or gains from the previous season.</li> <li>• The State Match Committee will utilise previous season results, a review of the player losses and gains supplied by the Club, and consultation with Region Match Committees to assist in determining its grading allocation.</li> <li>• This change allows Clubs to advise of any players who are members of their Club who are unable, or not wanting to participate in Pennants and therefore should be allocated a different Grade/Division. The State Match Committee will place restrictions on players who Club's advise will not be participating in the competition, and therefore why a grading regression has been allowed (refer section 13.2.6 and 14.2.6).</li> </ul>		

<b>19.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 13.5	<b>Change:</b> Change to player eligibility for Open Pennant
<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The only players that would have grading restrictions are players with 'N' gradings (previous season Region or State winners). This allows restrictions to players that were part of a Club's winning side from the previous season, as well as players who change Clubs in the following season to when they were a Region or State winner (refer section 13.5.2).</li> <li>• Easing of restrictions will be welcomed by Club administrators and selectors who are always under pressure about selections and concerned about losing points for any of their sides.</li> <li>• It allows greater flexibility for selections with Clubs who have multiple grades who have players they want to elevate to a higher grade or are required to be dropped to a lower grade due to performance.</li> <li>• Currently our 16 Region Match Committees are required to check the eligibility of every player from every Club in every grade in every round of the competition, including any finals matches (approximately 15,000 players each round). This task is a massive burden on volunteer administrators, with the potential for the integrity of the competition to be tarnished by incorrect points scores being resulted. Furthermore, this task at Region level is even more cumbersome when there is a requirement for two matches to be played on one day, or when multiple matches are scheduled on the same weekend.</li> <li>• This proposal was trialled in Women's Pennant competition during the 2024/25 season and worked as an effective way to mitigate the challenges.</li> <li>• Restrictions have been placed on players for post-sectional eligibility so that Clubs cannot drop players back in grade for finals play (refer section 13.5.3 and 14.5.3).</li> </ul>		
<b>20.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 14.3.2	<b>Change:</b> Region to set dates of play and all matches scheduled for midweek times in Women's Pennant
<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows the Regions to schedule all matches by setting the default day and time of for this competition. Clubs previously held this responsibility, meaning that all seven days of the week could be allocated for play in the same section of Pennant depending on the location of the Home side.</li> <li>• Matches to be set as midweek dates and times to free up calendar space. The two opposing Clubs still have the ability to negotiate a different day of play or starting time and submit application to the Region for approval.</li> </ul>		

<b>21.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 15.3.2	<b>Change:</b> Region to set dates of play and all matches scheduled for midweek times in Men's Pennant
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matches to be set as midweek dates and times to free up calendar space on weekends for Regions and Clubs to conduct their other events. The two opposing Clubs still have the ability to negotiate a different day of play or starting time and submit application to the Region for approval.</li> <li>In the 2024/25 season nearly 50% of the Regions played this competition fully midweek, with Clubs in the other Region often moving matches to weekday evenings to suit their playing rosters.</li> </ul>		
<b>22.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Sections 16.2.1 & 12.9	<b>Change:</b> Women's Inter-Region and Platinum Pennant
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These two events, as recent additions to the Bowls NSW schedule, will be reviewed by the State Match Committee at the conclusion of the 2024/25 season. Following the review there may be amendments made to these sections.</li> </ul>		
<b>23.</b>	<b>CoP Section:</b> Section 18	<b>Change:</b> Addition of section for All Abilities State Championships
<b>Rationale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This section has been added to the 2025/26 Conditions of Play</li> </ul>		