



## MELTON & DISTRICT INDOOR BOWLS CLUB LTD

Bowling Green, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, LE13 0LR



### Newsletter – March 2021

**Sorry – We are set to remain closed until further notice.**

The issue of the Covid Restrictions Roadmap on 22 February has not changed the restrictions placed on Clubs like ourselves, and the Government will be extending the closures of indoor hospitality and leisure beyond April and into late May **at the earliest**. This would then give the vaccination programme a chance to cover the key workers and get most of the over-50's population.

The Board of Directors are pleased to hear that furlough funding is likely to be extended, as to have furlough funds removed before the Club is able to open, and footfall back to at least August 2020 attendance figures, would mean monthly operating losses of well over £9,000 per month. It appears that we are to have a phased lifting of restrictions and a re-opening regime similar to that of last July, but we are much better prepared and experienced. As long as no additional distancing or household mixing restrictions are re-imposed, we might even be able to be open in the Summer with a six-rink, 3 session per day format as we operated last Autumn. Distancing, mat cleaning and two jacks are likely to be with us until the winter.

Mixing of households on the rinks will be a key restriction to be watched. Even then, **our own personal compliance** with the mixing and distancing rules will be essential to any permissions to stay open. It is obvious that in the future even small outbreaks are going to attract the attention of the NHS testers and the imposition of local lockdowns. They are determined to reduce the chances of increased transmissions leading to the creation or spreading of future variants of the virus.

The Board of Directors will continue to review the advice from the Government and the EIBA, and we will strive to ensure the Club will open as soon as it is safe and financially viable to do so. We have to remember that all dates proposed for the lifting of restrictions are at this time to be considered as 'conditional' and a May opening cannot yet be guaranteed.

Nearer the time that we are told we can open, we will need you to tell us how quickly you are likely to return to the Club. If we have sufficient interest, then we will be able to open the Club with some confidence that we will not incur significant losses. Should responses be disappointing, then opening might have to be limited (either by day, or sessions per day). We will be contacting you for your opinions.

It has been reported that although many of our local outdoor Clubs may be allowed by the Roadmap to open their greens in April, some of their green keepers are not sure that the greens themselves will be ready for play until late May. As ever, weather dependent too.

## Keeping in Contact – Volunteer required



During the lockdown the Club will try to keep you informed of any news or changes to the forecast for re-opening through these monthly newsletters, notices on the website and posts on social media.

The Club is searching for somebody who might be willing to take on the role of Publicity Officer for the Club. The post involves not only the regular communications with Members, but also the flow of news to the local community through social media and the local press (paper, radio and TV). Once we have a major sponsorship deal, then the role will be closely linked to ensuring that our sponsors are properly represented both at events and in any articles about the Club. Pat Wright will be able to supply a job description to any interested members.

## National Competitions 21/22

The EIBA have published the following statement;

### **2019-2020 National Finals**

With Indoor Bowls not being able to fully return to normal until at least 21st June 2021 the outstanding National Finals for 2019-2020 will be deferred once more until 25th September to 14th October 2021. The schedule of finals and location will be confirmed in the coming weeks.

### **2020 Summer National Competitions**

It is with regret because of the time frame of when Indoor Bowls can return the EIBA will not be running its Summer National Competitions programme and will now refund all remaining entries.

We thank those players who were happy to carry over their 2020 entry in the expectation that the Competitions would take place and we'll be in contact to finalise matters.

It is our intention to stage Summer National Competitions in 2022 and will release full details towards the end of this year.

### **2021-2022 Winter National Competitions**

With the positive news that we have a pathway to a return to normality the EIBA are planning that a full programme of competitions can take place next season.

As such, full details and entry forms will be published and sent out on Wednesday 3rd March 2021. We will automatically carry forward entries from the 2020-2021 season which had not been withdrawn.

The EIBA have also published the proposed dates for the rounds of the various National Championships and Team Competitions for 2021/22 season.

The rounds of the Singles, Pairs, Triples and Fours are planned to run from 17 October 2021 with Finals on 6 March 2022. The other competitions, including those for the Under-18's and Under-25's, will run in a similar timescale although their Finals may be earlier.

The Team Competitions, i.e. Denny, Yetton, Mason, Vivienne etc., are planned to run from 9 October 2021 to 9 April 2022.

Entry forms are due to arrive at the Club by 3 March. The covering letter that will be issued with the entry forms will provide more details regarding deferred entries from 2020/21 season. Entries can be made directly to the EIBA or through the Club.

Like all such planned dates, we have to hope that things will have returned to near-normal (whatever that is) in time for the proposed start dates.



The following questions are amongst several that have been asked of BMC Members about playing once we re-open. Any answer given now will need to be reviewed by the BMC Executive closer to re-opening.

**Stick Chalk. Will the Club be banning the use of stick chalk?** There has been no guidance from the EIBA on this as yet, but the Club will be asked to consider a ban of stick chalk on our rinks. It is obvious that the practice of licking the chalk and marking someone's bowl is not something we should allow.

**Two-bowl Pairs. This format was used in the World Championships, and looks 'interesting'. Will it be introduced into our Competitions programme?** The Competitions Secretary has previously said that he is willing to consider any format that might be popular. Let Mick Rawle know if you wish to register such an interest.

**Fours. Will we ever be able to play Rinks (Fours) games again?** The easy answer is 'yes'. The difficult answer is as to when. Even with **1 metre + distancing** restrictions in place, we should be able to re-introduce Rinks games by the next Winter season – as long as players are willing to show compliance with '3's-up', and with Leads standing on the bankside at the Head end whilst 3's and Skips are bowling. The retention of a **2 metre distancing** would make things much more difficult to maintain safe play – but not impossible.

## Keeping fit

We have been hearing that many of you are suffering aches and pains that you didn't have before the lockdown. All the joints have joined in; knees, hips, shoulders and necks. A sure sign that you are probably not doing enough exercise. If there is one lesson that we can take from Sir Tom and all those people that have battled to recover from major injuries, you have the choice; do nothing and you will slowly lose the will and ability to move, or start doing some exercises to build back strength and mobility – starting with gentle movements. **As long as your doctor has not told you that you need to be careful**, exercise at first for just a few minutes each morning, afternoon and evening, building slowly to a proper set of exercises that you do for 15-20 minutes just twice a day. **And don't forget a regular 15 minute walk in the fresh air.** Now that doesn't sound too difficult surely?



Any initial movements should be very simple, e.g. arms hanging at your side, starting with **slow** arm swings back and forth (shoulder height to the front and at least waist height behind), then side-to-side across the body and finally a set lifting your arms up and down with hands reaching for the ceiling.

Then try lifting your knees as if a toy soldier marching on the spot or climbing the stairs (hold onto a chair back if you feel that you might lose your balance). Next stand with your feet slightly apart and arms at shoulder height, swing your hips round slowly from side to side, so that you get to look over the shoulder by adding a slow movement of the neck.

Build up the number of swings or lifts in each exercise from a starting point of say 15-20 of each – you then decide when and if to increase the numbers depending on how comfortable you feel. You can even do some of these exercises sitting down on a dining chair. You can make the arm exercises more difficult by holding something like a can of beans in your hand as an extra weight – make sure that it is something you can grip securely!

Bending to touch the toes is something for the expert, and can make you dizzy if you do too much. Perhaps add these only once the other exercises feel easier. Don't worry if the toes seem too far away, start by touching your shins!

Try it. **But start with slow, smooth movements.** Jerky movements will cause more harm than good, and fast movements don't really improve the benefit gained. Think of all those pictures of the Chinese doing Tai Chi – nice smooth, slow movements! **Stop if it hurts, or if you start to feel dizzy.** The latter might be a sign of blood pressure problems, and you should always take the advice of your doctor if you are under medication about the safe level of exercise that you can undertake.

I can hear you saying, "I don't think I need to exercise". I can assure you that when you start playing again there will be a muscle somewhere that tells you that you should have. Add some of the stretching described above together to create a complex movement. A step forward with your leading foot, a bend at the waist and a swing of the arm – sound and feel familiar? Swap foot and arm and repeat. You never know, eventually you might find that you can then also bowl well with the other hand, ..... or be just as bad!

### Get your vaccines – our route to safe opening.

**There has to be some good news about the demographic of the Club membership – it now means that quite a few of us have had the first jab! By the end of May our percentage of immunised members will have reached a medically significant level in terms of the potential for transmission at the Club. If you are offered the vaccine, please seriously consider taking up the chance to reduce the future risks to yourself and your contacts at the Club.**

The Government has made it clear that the vaccine does not mean that we can relax the routines that we have been practicing to reduce the chance of infecting others, because we may still be carriers, even if not infected ourselves.



We should strive to stick to these three simple routines – **and** It should be remembered that significant immunity is not gained until some three weeks after the first of the two jabs. Despite the massive success to vaccinate all of the over-70's by the middle of February, it will still mean that restrictions of some sort are to be with us well into the Summer months before most adults have been given good immunity levels.

## Second-Hand Sales

There have been some enquiries to the Club about help in selling unwanted bowls. As you may know, the Office has always offered you the chance to put card adverts on the noticeboard just inside the Main Entrance. The Mission 650 Team have also been thinking about the possibility of creating a Sales rack in the Coaching Store to sell off some recently donated bowls.

In truth, most of the bowls that have been donated to the Club in the last five years have not been suitable for indoor use, and only a few are suitable for sale as a cheap, short-term starter bowl for somebody new to the game. Most of the bowls in the coaching lockers are similarly 'on the limit' for use on our rinks. Please do not donate bowls to the Club just to get rid of them from your cupboards – recently we were left some very old, Size 6 Crown Green bowls not used since Nelson stopped loading cannons with them. We just have to put them in a skip.

If you want to get rid of unwanted sets of bowls, or any of the associated bags, carriers etc., first decide whether you want to sell them or whether you would be prepared to donate them to the Club. If you donate them, then the coaching team will first assess the type and condition of the bowls, and then decide whether they should be offered for sale (to new starters or even the wider membership) or would be better than any of the locker bowls for use in coaching our new starters. All monies raised are used to buy new equipment for the Club.

If you want to sell your bowls through the Club, please be realistic. Most bowls shops have reduced the opportunities for trading-in bowls, and will refuse bowls with 'out of date' stamps. You will be lucky to get more than £50 trade-in value for anything over five years old. A set of four modern, indoor-bias bowls which are about 5-10 years old might attract buyers at the £100 level if in good condition. If you want to leave them with us, it would be better if they were supplied in a carrier, or box, as this makes it easier for us to attach a label and identify the seller once sold.

Some Members do like to change their bowls regularly and do sell top quality bowls at attractive prices. At the moment this is done by word-of-mouth on the pals networks. The Club is considering whether to offer a better way to advertise these sales to the wider membership – perhaps even in these Newsletters.

## The Sad News

Since the last Newsletter, we have been informed of two deaths; one a real stalwart of the Club in recent years, and belated news of one of our former Members and distant friend.

It is with great sadness that we must report the death of **Mal Williams**, aged just 72. He died of a heart attack on 7 February. Our sincere sympathies go out to his wife, Joan, and their whole family. Our heartfelt thanks go to Joan for asking that any memorial donations should be given to the Club – a generous act by the family in such sad times – Jennifer at Mousley Family Funerals confirms that they are opening an account in respect of Mal, which will be open for one month. Any donated cash from Mal's funeral will be converted into a cheque and sent to the Club, along with any cheques received by Mousley's (made payable to M&DIBC).

His bowls prowess, smile and laughter will be sorely missed at the Club, and particularly by our great friend Walt Reid who writes;

*"I would just like to preface my tribute to Mal with the facts that my proposed migration south is off, permanently as far as I know. But I did want old friends to know how I felt about a member who had such a kind disposition and welcomed me into what I found to be a great Club and where I spent the next seven years thoroughly enjoying all that it offered. My short poem relates now to the golfing scene rather than bowls, but there is such a social similarity and I think Dave Armstrong will provide a great balance."*

Mal, A Dear Friend and Mentor  
Then,....we happily walked down the fairway,  
On the tree-lined swards of Sysonby,  
And once again you trounced us,  
Mick and Gerry, Dave and me.

It wasn't just the game we played,  
Or the competing for fickle victory,  
Even when errant ball found leafy glade,  
There was always the delight of your company.

I loved the banter, the striving, the humour,  
Now,....may fairways lead you to serene pavilions.  
While the trees you loved to me will murmur,  
'You were the finest of friends Mal Williams'.  
Such a great guy,  
Walt Reid

We have also heard that **Margaret King** passed away on 24th October last year. Both her and husband Richard were members from the opening in 1987 until they moved to the Skegness area some years ago.

Please keep the Office informed if you hear of Members no longer with us.

**Please stay at home, and keep safe.**

**When it is time to get ready to play again –  
remember to use the new deal on Club  
discounts at your local bowls shop.**

**Next month's Newsletter – Colin Wagstaff  
appears in Bowls International**



**If you know of a Club Member who  
does not have access to the  
internet, please tell them about the items in this Newsletter.**



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