



## MELTON & DISTRICT INDOOR BOWLS CLUB LTD

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



### Newsletter – April 2021

#### Getting closer – we are planning for re-opening on 17 May.

We hear that some of you have found the recent Newsletters a touch negative – we are sorry if you gained that impression. We all want to get back to the Club as soon as possible. We have tried not to raise false hopes here, or move quicker to opening than the rules set by the Government Roadmap - and that Roadmap is still full of uncertainty even now. Particularly since our Continental friends are enjoying a third wave. All we can say at the moment is that the earliest we will be allowed to open is w/s 17 May, and we have started the required preparations. Watch these Newsletters.

Whilst we are primarily a Members-only, Indoor Bowls Club, our facilities service two businesses – the Club (with two income streams of the playing hall and the bar) and a separately owned restaurant. Whilst Mehdi is hoping to be able to serve food to tables just outside the building entrance from 12 April, we will still not be in a position to open the bar, and so his customers may have to bring their own drinks.

The bar income is important to the survival of the Club. Opening either of the businesses indoors will require the support of staff paid solely by the Club. In truth, we have to recognise that neither business can be financially viable, without significant numbers (higher than those last autumn) coming through the door. The Board of Directors were pleased to hear that furlough funding had been extended, as to have had furlough funds removed before the Club was able to open fully would have meant being back into significant, monthly, operating losses.

We are hearing that many of our Members are, as usual, going to play outdoors for the Summer. Only planning to return to the indoor rinks in September. As is usual, we must expect bowling numbers indoors will be down until September. Expected but disappointing, as this year we have not had chance to build our cash reserves in the Winter. We can only reduce our costs by reducing the opening hours that our staff are needed in support.

It has been decided that we will operate with reduced hours for the Summer, and a re-opening regime of distancing guidelines similar to those of last September. However, we are much better prepared and experienced. As long as no additional distancing or household mixing restrictions are re-imposed, we will be able to be open for 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 end of the year.

We will be open seven days a week as follows;

- Mondays for just one session at 10.00.
- Tuesdays to Saturdays we will have three sessions; 10.00, 12.30 and 18.30.
- Sundays just two sessions at 10.00 and 12.30.
- All sessions will have to be pre-booked.

As indicated last month, we will try to do a quick survey to gauge the number of Members wanting to return immediately, and those interested in playing Summer leagues or competitions. The Board of Directors will limit opening hours (either by day, or sessions per day) in the first months to ensure we open only when there is a demand, but will add extra rinks and sessions as demand grows.

Whilst social roll-ups will be the pattern of the first month, and we all may need to get our bodies back into the swing. (Many of us have expressed doubts whether we could reach a long jack, let alone hold shot, at the moment.) It will be the re-introduction of a cut-down league programme and a few 'fun' competitions that will lift the income from rinks fees to the levels required to avoid further losses. It is hoped to get these events organised by the end of June to run in a short programme through to September.

Limited mixing of households on the rinks will be a key restriction to be watched (here the early advice from the EIBA seemed at odds with the Government Roadmap). Even then, **our own personal compliance** with the mixing and distancing rules will be essential to avoid lockdowns and any permissions to stay open.

The Board of Directors will continue to review the advice from the Government and the EIBA, and will 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 even a May opening cannot yet be guaranteed.

## Volunteers required



The Club depends on volunteers to fill many of the management positions required to run a successful sports club.

As mentioned last month, 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). The right person may also be able to maintain our website and drive forward the improvements planned.

The Bowls Management Executive Committee has two posts which have been unfilled for nearly a year now. The first is a critical position for the Club which has been well served in the past years by Jenny McConnell – we need a new **Club Fixtures Secretary**. Other pressures on her time have forced Jenny to step down, although she has to be thanked for providing a watchkeeper role in the last year.

The second post on the BMEC is the **Captains Representative**. This post both coordinates the activities of, and then represents, both Men's and Ladies Captains and Selectors on the BMEC. (This includes all of the various Club and weekly Team Captains and Team Selectors.) Any Captain or Selector may apply for the role, and in the event that we get more than one volunteer the Captains and Selectors will be asked to select their candidate by vote. It is most essential that these senior playing roles are represented on the BMEC.

Can we also remind our lady Members that we are still looking for a lady to take on the role of **Junior Vice President** (this post is rotated male/female each



election) from the next AGM onwards. This post normally leads to the position of Club President after two years.

Pat Wright will be able to supply job descriptions for all four roles to any interested members.

## National Competitions 21/22

The EIBA have had to publish an amended list of the dates for the various rounds of the Team competitions. These are now available on the EIBA website. If you had been copied the dates from any of the Club's BMEC members in February please check (with the EIBA website or Mick Rawle) for the amended dates.

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 have been asked in the last month. Any answer given now may need to be reviewed by the Board and BMC Executive closer to re-opening.

**Will we need to show proof of vaccination?** At the moment there are no plans, or firm Government requirements, for the Club to ask for proof of vaccination on entry – but pressure is growing in the National Press. All we ask is that you are sure that you are not showing symptoms, or should not be self-isolating, **before travelling to the Club** and then follow the distancing and sanitising rules once in the Club.

**Will the social sessions (N&I, Come One Come All, Galas etc) restart in the Summer?** It is hoped to restart the social sessions soon after the Club re-opens. It may be that there will be fewer sessions each week (and perhaps at different times) if rink session times are limited, and you will have to pre-book a place by ringing the Club. Please watch the website for details.

**Will there be any leagues or competitions in the Summer?** It is hoped that we will be able to run a cut-down League programme, and Mick Rawle is looking at the possibility of running a limited selection of the more popular competitions. Both will require our Members to indicate interest asap. Again, watch the website.

**The Government says “open a window” for fresh air. How can the Club offer more fresh air in an air-conditioned building?** The system over our rinks brings in fresh air, and then heats or cools it as required before delivering it to the rinks. If required for better aerosol dispersal, we can increase the flow of fresh air delivered by increasing the fan speeds. If you think the air has become ‘stuffy’, please inform the Office staff.

**I have tokens bought at £2.50 each. Will I have to pay the additional 50p to meet the new £3 rink fee?** No. The Club will honour any tokens bought in 2020 as being equivalent to the raised rink fee of £3. New tokens, of a different design, will be sold at the new price of £3 each. We continue to ask you to pay rinks fees by token or card rather than by cash.

**Should I have paid my membership fees at 1 April 2021?** No. Your 2020 Membership payment expires on 31 August 2021. You will be sent a renewal reminder by e-mail in August. If the Club does not have your up-to-date e-mail address, or you do not have the

internet, your envelopes should be at the Reception desk for collection from mid-August. The Board has agreed that they will make a consideration of the rather strange year just suffered by fully paid-up Members in the charge to be made for 2021/22 – watch next month's Newsletter for more details.

**When will the AGM be held this year?** The Board has decided to hold the two AGMs – Company and Club – in September. The Auditors will complete the annual financial audit in the next few weeks as usual.

### Keeping fit – body and brain

Well, did you try to do some of the exercises? Or was the idea too much fuss and bother? For those of you who at least did give it try – well done, and here's hoping that you have kept the exercises going throughout March. If you want to take things further, and with a more professional teacher, why not search the internet and watch the excellent video, **'Bowls England Workout Level 1'**. You'll recognise many of the movements we have covered here in the Newsletter, but used in different combinations to give you a more thorough exercise.



Finally, fitness doesn't just involve the body – it involves the brain too. Many of us are finding the lack of social interaction stressful, or are having trouble at the moment with waking up in the night. The latter perhaps because the brain is not working hard in the day, but sometimes also because it is too stimulated by all of our modern electronic toys. It is understood that the evening drop-off of **natural** blue light is a signal to the brain to prepare for sleep. The **artificial** blue light emitted by all of the various screens that have become part of our modern lives is delaying the 'close down' signal, and perhaps increasing the evening total for the brain's workload. In effect, both increasing tiredness whilst extending the higher brain activity levels later into the night. Try to avoid watching TV or playing interactive games until the moments before trying to sleep. Don't keep that mobile phone switched on and next to the bed. And you might like this – find your desert island!

This is a real exercise on a training course designed to reduce stress amongst top company executives. In these strange times it is easy for small issues to become the focus for anxieties simply because there nothing else going on. Divert the brain's activities from the issues and the 'stress' (I hate the current over-use of the word) goes away. It is all about getting the brain activity to refocus, slow down, reset and rebalance.

First lie on the floor. (Yes, the bed will do if you must – but no pillows!) Close your eyes, arms resting relaxed down the side of your body, and concentrate on nothing but taking slow breaths - in then out, nice and slow (use a slow count of three on each). Try to recall an image of somewhere that you have visited that was liked for being very restful and uncrowded – a sunny beach, a lake, a mountain top, a forest glade – you get the idea. Try (still with your eyes closed) to see further into the distance in the image that you have created. Imagine the noise of the water, or the wind in the trees. Just think of the location and enjoy the feeling of calm it gave you. Stay there for at least 10 minutes, watching the scene, breathing nice and slow. Now, that's not what I call hard work. Take your time getting back up of the floor (or the bed!) - there's no rush! Do a couple of gentle stretches. Feel better? Refreshed? Or did you fall asleep?

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

Many of us at the Club are now closer to getting the second jab, and there are a decreasing number of ‘youngsters’ waiting for their first. We are still on a course that will mean that 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 risk of catching Covid hasn’t gone away!**

It has to be remembered that vaccination does not mean that you cannot catch the virus. It just means that you will not be as ill. You may show no symptoms, and still be able to pass it on to another Club Member.



We will ask you 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. The new variants now threaten an Autumn round of boosters for us all, and so the need to take precautions and restrictions are likely to be with us for the rest of the year. In truth it is likely that the Covid jab will join the Flu jab as an annual event.

The Club will require all of us to follow the Government's guidelines when planning to visit the Club. When entering the Club's premises you will be required to abide by the Club's policies and procedures in place at the time of each visit - until such restrictions are no longer in place. Once we are open, and travel restrictions have been relaxed;

### Do not travel to or enter the Club if -

- You or any member of your household have had any COVID-19 symptoms in the last 24 hours (with or without positive test).
- You have been abroad to a “quarantine required” country within previous 14 days
- You have visited a UK area in “Local Lockdown” within the previous 14 days
- You are a known contact of a person who has activated “Test, Track & Trace”

## Colin Wagstaff appears in Bowls International

**BOWLS INTERNATIONAL**  
**CONTENTS**  
THE GAME'S MOST RESPECTED NAME **MARCH 2021**

**SPECIAL FEATURES**

**28-29 HOW BOWLS BOOSTS CONFIDENCE**  
Chat with DBE player Colin Wagstaff

**32-33 THREE GENERATIONS**  
Bowmen have bowls in their blood

**34-36 INTERVIEW: STEVE GLASSON**  
Glas calls time on coaching role

**P.28**

Colin Wagstaff has appeared in a two-page spread in Bowls International. Colin gave them an interview about his late arrival to the sport, the benefit and enjoyment that it has introduced to his life and his hopes his involvement for the coming years within the bowling community – particularly within Disability Bowls England. Colin is now one of their Regional Ambassadors.

Colin must count as one of the Club's most inspirational members, having overcome more physical and mental problems since childhood than many of us would be able to bear. Whilst Colin, and his use of crutches and wheelchair on the rinks, has been just one of our very visible reminders that our sport is not just for the more "able-bodied" player, we must remember that not all disabilities are immediately visible to the eye. We do have several members with significant sight impediments, and others with movement restrictions that they have learnt to cope with, and even disguise. The Club has been willing to help them overcome their restrictions and provide aids to extend their playing careers. The Club has also made a great effort to make rinks available to encourage new players with learning difficulties and other non-physical disabilities to come and enjoy the game. With Colin's greater involvement at Club Committee level and personal experiences we hope to do even better in the future.

### The Better News

Since the last Newsletter, we have not been informed of any further deaths amongst our members either past or present. Really good news.

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

**Please follow the guidance, 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.**



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

**Hopefully soon the Newsletter will be able to return to concentrate on bowls news items.**