

COMMONWEALTH LAWN BOWLING CLUB  
Annual General Meeting  
2 October, 2005

President's Report

I regret that I am unable to attend and deliver this report in person. It will contain three main areas.

A general report upon the main activities of the club and the executive.  
Comment upon matters of concern, particularly financial, both current and future  
The current status of the Canadian Lawn Bowling Centre of Excellence project

The new executive committee first met on October 4, 2004 and has held regular monthly meetings throughout the year plus one or two short interim meetings to discuss matters of immediate significance. One of the most discussed and time consuming matters was that of finance. Wrestling with any budget where the anticipated expenditures exceed the anticipated revenues is challenging. Prior to the Spring General Meeting, the Executive sent detail of the 2005 budgeted operating costs for the year, compared with those of ten years ago in 1995. This was to enable all club members to be fully conversant with the financial position prior to discussion at the meeting of the proposed new membership fees and the increase in other fees already determined by your executive.

At the meeting club members endorsed the new fees by an overwhelming majority (4 votes opposed).

Although an endeavor was made to mitigate the increases by for example, removing charges for use of club bowls, shoes and lockers, some lockers remained unused.

Corporate Challenge was a success both in operation and accruing financial benefits. We owe a debt to those members who devoted so much of their time to the event. Hosting the World Masters Games was both great fun for those who attended and financially rewarding. Much of the success was due to volunteers both from the WMG pool and from within our membership. Special mention has to be made of the excellent program and management of it by Margaret Fettes, assisted by Bill. The format of having to complete games within two hours and skips not being able to visit the head ( for the benefit of seafarers, that is the head on the green), proved successful. LBAA sponsored the event.

Although it was explained fully at both the AGM and Spring meetings that without a food services director, there would not be kitchen services, members continued to complain about lack of social event meal services. There is a difference between volunteering and accepting responsibility for supervising that volunteering, ensuring that all kitchen supplies are available and that the standards demanded by food service regulations are met! Of course we can all use a BBQ. But who is responsible for ensuring it is cleaned?

In addition to the financial benefits from Corporate Challenge and the World Masters Games, there were those from the Schools program operated by Margaret Bruce. We owe a debt to her and her helpers.

There have been two main areas of complaint during the 2005 season. Those are the condition of the greens and the bowling program. The arrival of spring

showed that the greens had suffered innumerable patches of winter kill. A visit to the Royal, demonstrated even worse conditions. Despite budgetary restraints, eventually a consultant was brought in and he was duly followed by his staff with equipment again re-seeding some of the greens. By the time of the World Masters Games, conditions had substantially improved and by the end of the season conditions were perhaps better overall than during the last few years. All this demonstrates the need for a long term program for restitution of the greens, something which perhaps should have been addressed quite a few years ago.

The bowling program was subjected to a lot of criticism, mainly perhaps because it sought to introduce change from established formats. These were done I understand for two reasons. The first was in response to the long term cries that "They don't bowl with us ." and the second in trying to address having jitneys in the evenings when people who work would be able to participate. I can assure members that popular or not, it was an endeavor by the author of the program to be constructive.

One member made a justified criticism about lack of communication. If there is a member willing to produce a regular club news sheet, they will receive help from the executive. In addition, the executive minutes are now posted on the notice board and LBAA has a resolution before it seeking circulation of it's executive minutes to all member clubs.

Mention of LBAA brings me full circle back to club fees. Your elected executive established new fees, including those for rental of greens. On March 3, 2005 the LBAA was notified that green rental charges had been increased to \$125 per day. The calculation was simple. Operating costs of the club are \$500+ per day. There are four greens = \$125 per green per day. The club makes payment to the LBAA for each member as a membership charge. It is not for members of this club to additionally subsidize the operations of LBAA who had prior knowledge of the change in charges before they allocated any events to the club.

As President, I wish to congratulate those who were successful in the Provincial Playdowns, who represented Alberta in the Canadian National Championships or in other national events. Also those who participated in the World Masters Games. What a pleasure to see a silver medal hanging around the neck of an 83 year old lady member and which she had won in the 35-59 year old age group. Competitive lawn bowling at all levels should still retain an element of fun. On the other hand, it is my personal view that Alberta should send it's most competitive bowlers to national events and strive to win.

Now to matters of concern. These relate to finance. During 2005 we had some exceptional revenues; \$5400 from WMG, almost \$4,000 brought forward from last year from the National Seniors Triples. These will not be available in the 2006 season. Although we budgeted very carefully, our revenues barely achieved budget and our expenditures well exceeded budget particularly upon the greens. This club unlike others, requires ALL its casino revenues to survive. Membership charges for a couple now total \$350. Although we are not drowning, the water level is fairly high!

Your new executive will have to address some hard facts, in particular when addressing the costs associated with the greens. As we demand more services, the cost of labour rises and it has been well controlled this year. Your directors have largely exceeded the call of duty, although no longer prepared to sit in the clubhouse on Sunday afternoons in case the odd member turns up.

Before turning to the Canadian Lawn Bowling Centre of Excellence, I wish to

give some big thank you's. Firstly to all the members of the executive, not only for their dedication to the club and it's members, but also for their toleration of my chairmanship. I wish to particularly thank those who having given such sterling service to the club are now retiring from the executive -I hope you fully enjoy being able to bowl as and when you like, without being constrained by your club responsibilities. Enjoy it!

Next I wish to thank all those who have so willingly volunteered in so many capacities. They are typified by the two ladies whom your executive nominated jointly as Volunteer of the Year to the LBAA: Jean DeBolt and Mabel McQuitty. We could not separate them, and I dare you to try! Our other nomination was that of Jim Crawford for the Long Term Service Award. Since he joined the club as a new bowler in it's formative year, Jimmy has served the club and the sport. I for one take daily pleasure in the wonderful display of flowers. I admire his endeavors, whether it is rolling the greens in the morning dew prior to events, or painting the exterior of the clubhouse.

I wish also to encourage those of you who have constructive comment to send it in writing please to the executive. Don't mumble, get it out there -who knows, you may be right!

Finally to the Centre of Excellence project. Following your vote of approval for up to \$10,000 to enable application for the CIP grant, the application was sent the next day. We have now been awarded some \$9,350. The Steering committee has met with the architect and representatives of PCL. The Randall Conrad report was completed following our open meeting here. When the architect has drawn the initial blueprints and PCL have completed their estimates, we shall have the necessary plans and documentation to start pursuit of the Federal Government for financial support for this national facility.

I thank you for your patience in bearing with the length of this report, but it has in part been a response to the request for better communication!

Neil S.C. Reid  
President.