



the 2 METER MARK

Bowls USA

SUMMER 2021

We're Back!! (mostly)

Checking around, it seems most of our clubs are up and running at some level again. Outside the Arizona clubs where summer is the "off season" because of the heat, most clubs have seen bowlers return to the greens.

In the Central Division which has seen the 2020 and 2021 National Championship cancelled due to Covid-19, they hosted the **2021 CENTRAL DIVISION OPEN July 15 to 18**. With entries from 6 of the 7 Divisions going to Milwaukie to bowl with a group that's been ready to host a big-time event for nearly two years, the event was a terrific get-back-together for bowlers. Click [HERE](#) for the results.

SouthCentral Division while in their quiet period, has bowlers on the greens, albeit early in the mornings. With over 40 new members in the past year (well done!), Johnson Lawn Bowling Club in Sun City West has a daily draw during the week starting at 7:00 AM. Visitors are welcome but need to schedule through a member of the club in order to meet requirements from the rec center that manages the facilities. Most of the clubs in the Division are open with early draw times. The Division has posted a preliminary **Tournament Schedule for the 2021 – 2022 season**. Click [HERE](#) for a look at the tentative schedule.

Southwest Division has most all the clubs open that were restricted by closure of municipal facilities as Covid-19 precautions. Check out the **Tentative Tournament Schedule** – and their nifty new web design by clicking [HERE](#). The Division is also working toward the 2022 US Open with Committee formation, plans and work under way. The Division will be hosting the 50th US Open in fall 2022.

Southeast Division is also in their off season but have published their 2021-2022 tournament calendar including info for the 2022 SED Open. Click [HERE](#) for the latest. They also managed to get in one spring tournament at the Pinehurst club – nice write up [HERE](#)



We're Back *cont.*

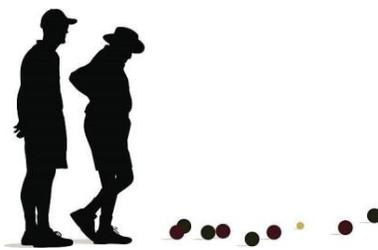
Northeast Division is having a full season and even managed some early spring tournaments. The latest **Tournament Schedule** is [HERE](#). Bowlers are looking forward to rolling on the new green at the Essex County facility which had a ribbon cutting ceremony about a year ago.

On the other side of the country, the Northwest Division is off the greens right at this minute – hotter there than in SouthCentral. When the weather breaks, back to the greens. An event to get to if you possibly can - **Tacoma Triples Invitational August 7, 2021**. The Tacoma club has a tree in the green - it's magnificent and covered in the conditions of play.



In the Bay Area (and yes, Fresno counts according to a Fresno State Bulldog alum), Bowlers are BOWLING; Oakland's pairs league is up and running, Berkeley just finished their pairs tournament – results [HERE](#), Palo Alto opened for social bowling on June 19th, Rossmoor has a full tournament schedule [HERE](#) (men's and women's singles coming up in July), San Francisco is back in the park, San Jose's Summer Sizzling Mixed Triples has 14 teams (and nice prize money) and kicks off July 24th, Sunnyvale is open and sending out a group for the John Brown Friendships games.

For now, we're back. Get out and roll a few, catch up with friends, meet new bowlers (many clubs added members – people wanted to be outside), volunteer, introduce the game to some people you know, enter some tournaments, and remember why you love our sport.





National Divisional Challenge

As many of you may be aware, Bowls USA has created a new mixed national team tournament that is being played for the first time this year! Sun City Center LBC (web page [HERE](#)) in Florida will host the event between Thursday, September 16th and Tuesday, September 21st. SCC has an extensive background in hosting major tournaments and their experienced volunteers have generously offered to collaborate on this inaugural event.



The tournament will see teams of 6 players, 3 men and 3 women, representing the divisions. They will play a double round robin with a redraw at the start of the second-round robin. Five players participate each round while pairs and triples, or singles and fours, play simultaneously. Strategic team management will be key since each event, other than singles, requires a mixed team and no player may sit out 2 games in a row.

Even the scoring for this tournament is taking a new approach. There is a maximum of 4 possible game points for a win but if a team loses by 5 points or less, the losing team takes one of the game points for a 3/1 split.

This tournament is focusing on team strategy and bowling, while keeping ceremony to a minimum. Watch for new team configurations, new scoring outcomes, and likely, new team attires.

Interested players should contact their Division Presidents.





On the Mat



With Melanie Vizenor, Bowls USA, National Umpire-in-Chief

Quick Questions

When did you start?

My first lesson was with Hank Luba at the Frick Park LBC in May 2004. The greens are only open Memorial Day through Labor Day, and my first lesson was as soon as they opened for the year. When I first started bowling, I entered every tournament they offered and practiced daily. And in October 2004, I bowled in the US Open at Johnson LBC in Sun City West in all three events. I am forever grateful to Eileen Luba and Lois Saladin for inviting me to join their team in my first year of bowling. A real honor for a novice. My pairs partner that year was Jackie Tucker.

Home Club?

Coronado (2020 and currently)

San Diego (2006 - 2020)

Frick Park (Pittsburgh, PA, 2004 - 2006)

How often do you get to bowl?

Here in the Southwest Division (during a normal year), just about every weekend in tournament play and then I try to get out a few times during the week

3 things that an umpire must have?

First, an inquisitive mind

Second, a little sense of humor

Third, patience

What are 4 things you'd like bowlers to stop doing?

1. Stop -- stepping on the mat before their opponent's delivered bowl has come to rest
2. Stop -- following their delivered bowl down the rink of play by moving sideways and forward, thereby distracting the bowlers on a neighboring rink of play
3. Stop -- filling out scorecards incorrectly -- yes, the laws of the sport specify how to fill out a scorecard
4. Stop -- refusing to move back to allow the opposing team access to the head when possession of the rink of play changes

What is the funniest thing you've ever seen as an umpire? I have never seen anything funny as an umpire.

Other: Like many bowlers I know, we wish that we had started bowling much earlier in life. My mother started bowling at Rossmoor (Northern California) in 1986. I never bowled with her or watched her bowl, a fact that saddens me to this day. When I started bowling, she gave me the following advice: become an umpire and never complain about the greens. Words of wisdom for all of us.



Memorial Fund



The **USLBA Memorial Fund, Inc.**, is a tax exempt (501-C3) organization. This means your contributions/donations are **tax deductible contributions**. Your support allows the USLBA Memorial to assist with the promotion and growth of our sport.

To contribute, please click on this link: [Contribute to the USLBA Memorial Fund.](#)



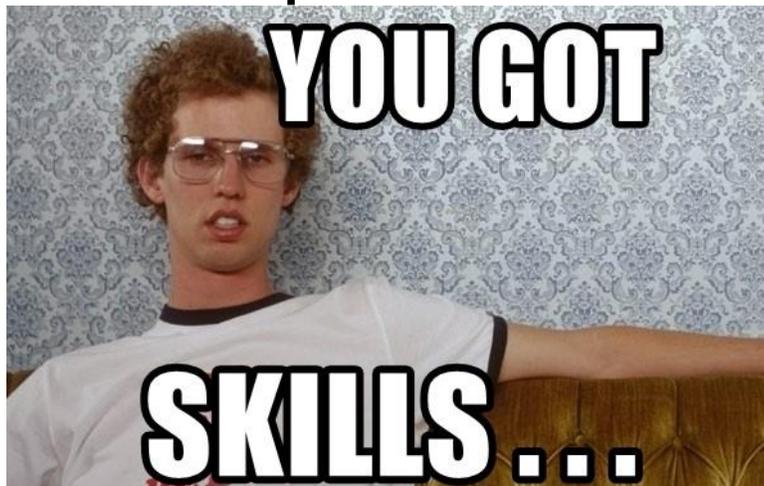
Reach out to these Members of the Board to learn more about the good works of the USLBA Memorial Fund and how you can show support.

President/Treasurer	Ron Rollick
Vice President	TBD
Secretary	Norma Goodhart
Central	Mark Mathwig
Northeast Division	Doreen Alexander
Northwest Division	Debbie Tupper
Pacific Intermountain Division	Ginger Harris
South Central Division	Jean English
Southeast Division	Rick Fitzgerald
Southwest Division	Ed Quo

Reach out to Ron by clicking [HERE](#)



Hey.....A Little Help Over Here



We could REALLY use them

This Newsletter needs an Editor. It's a fun, glamorous job which leads to riches and fame (at least that's what I was told). Seriously, now that most clubs are up and running again, it's time to get the Newsletter up and running again. If you're interested, please reach out to busanewsletter@gmail.com



CONTEST TO NAME THE NEWSLETTER – Submit your suggestion [HERE](#),

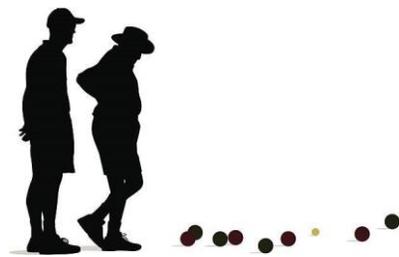
the Newsletter needs a name (hopefully something better than “the 2-meter mark”)

1st Prize:

- Your name published in the Newsletter (if you'd like)
- People will say nice things about you in public places
- Being able to say “I thought of that” to your friends every time the Newsletter comes out

Judges' decision will be more or less final. Judges are Bowls USA President, Current Editor of the Newsletter and either the new Editor or BUSA 1st Vice President

Just so you know – Bowly McBowface isn't going to be a winner.



Tacoma Lawn Bowling Club

Curiosity, an Octopus, a Tree, and a Pair of Lions

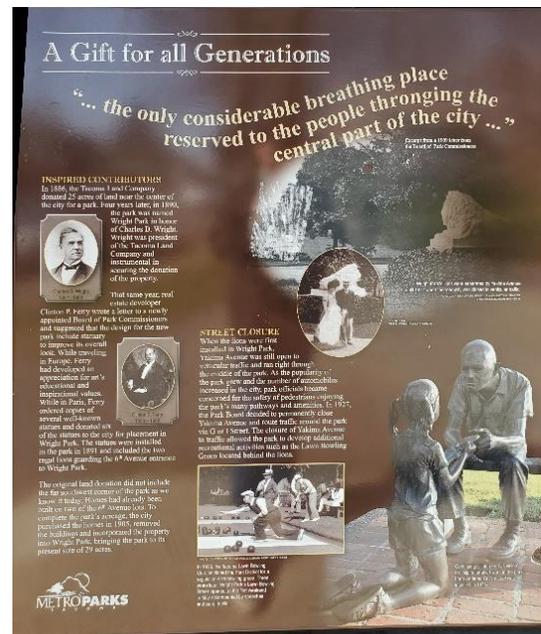


How many of us have walked through a city park and noticed a garden, sign, or statue, but have not been curious enough to learn more? A guy in Tacoma, Washington walked through the city's Wright Park and noticed a large, flat lawn surrounded by gutters, went closer and found a plaque identifying the lawn as a bowling green.

Further curious, he went to the city's website and found that he could rent the lawn (you still can [check out the rink boundaries](#)) and access to the shed next to it for the weekend. Checking online to learn about lawn bowling, he rented the lawn – now realizing it was called a green – opened the shed to find 70- to 80-year-old bowls (described later as have a time zone bias) – and set about lawn bowling – by himself. One curious guy - Kane Tobin.

Nearly all of us have at one time or another on the green, have had someone ask us "What's that called?" or, perhaps more commonly "Is that bocce?". Kane, bowling on the green he'd rented, had the same experience one Saturday when someone asked him what he was doing. He replied, "lawn bowling" and in turn asked our sport's classic question; "Would you like to give it a try?". With that exchange, the rebirth of the Tacoma Lawn Bowling Club was underway.

Established in 1929 the club had functionally closed in 2014. The club treasury was transferred to the Northwest Division. The City of Tacoma maintained the green as part of the park, but no one bowled, and the green became more of a Frisbee picnic area than anything else.



Hank the Octopus





Through word of mouth, mostly friend to friend, more people began showing up to bowl and a group of regulars formed. With assistance from the Jefferson Park Club in Seattle (always a nice bunch) and the NW Division (which transferred back the treasury funds – well done!) regulars moved ahead to form an “official” lawn bowling club.

Check out the website [Tacoma Lawn Bowls](#) (drone shot on the home page is AWESOME!).

A core of social media savvy bowlers headed by Kane and newcomer and bowling keener, Nate Van Ness, brought the club’s presence online and the membership grew quickly. Members recognized the value of the club as a “networking resource” with both social and business value.



TLBC members at a Tacoma Rainiers Baseball Game

With the club located on the main business route through downtown Tacoma, members meet friends at the green using the opportunity not to just roll a few, but to also get connected to new communities, like-minded groups, potential employers/employees, other businesses, and organizations. A natural progression was to begin hosting events at the club for community stakeholders. The club has hosted events for groups varying from The Heart Association to a local professional association for realtors. Awareness of the club as a community asset grew via these events. An especially effective strategy to increase the club’s profile was promoting events through a hosted group’s media footprint. For instance, for the realtors and the Heart Association, the event was heavily promoted through the groups’ monthly newsletters and online presences.

While a portion of the club memberships and league fees go back to the City of Tacoma, the club members still perform some of the bowling specific maintenance on the green. The City’s rec department lists the Club’s Tuesday League in its summer rec activities with the club providing instruction and equipment to new bowlers.



Evening Grooming



The green is unique in that it plays 8 rinks one direction, but only 6 when shifted 90 degrees, this is because one of the rinks is home to a magnificent tree. As far as the club knows, this is a one of a kind in Conditions of Play in the US.



The southern end of the green is guarded by a pair of lions. Beauties. They came to the park in 1892 from Europe where they were acquired by a Tacoma local. While originally bracketing the entrance to the park, they now are just outside the fence from the green.



The Ferry Lions



The head in rink 4 is fully occupied

Like many clubs, TLBC curtailed activity during the 2020 season, but have fully reopened starting in Spring, 2021. The city parks department has included Lawn Bowling as one of its Summer League sports which has brought bowlers back to the green on Wednesday evenings.

Kane and Nate continue as pillars in the club as President and Vice President and have also stepped into roles in Bowls USA's Northwest Division as Councilor and President. TLBC extends an invitation to drop in to any bowlers in the area and those interested in picking up a new sport as well as joining an active group connected to the community and one another.





Ditch Weight

By Mark A. Toucher

In this column, you'll read about the mostly very minor adventures, observations, occasional shout outs and rants of an avid and quite average club bowler.

I'm outside again – excited, bowling, and have 14+ months of energy to burn off. True at this stage in life my burning energy is more light than heat, but I'm back on the green. The mostly 14 months off (I did get out twice by myself when the green was accessible – it was weird that there was NO ONE around) did very little to improve my game. My attitude is definitely better, but my game, not so much. Lots of garden hose heads. Which got me thinking of a couple of things.....

In the past when my game has taken on a truly epic level of catastrophe, after I've tried sacrificing a chicken and hired a shaman, I've gone to Jackie Tucker and asked her to "just fix it". I suspect her good humor and analytic coaching technique masks what has to be quiet horror at the unconscious collections of bad habits I've accumulated since our last session. Watching the video with her is always an "what....why...am I doing that?" experience.

That thought got me to thinking, maybe more purposeful practice (at this point any practice) might help, which led to wondering what the Coaching Committee (Jackie, Kottia and Heather) had been up to during the pandemic. There are some new drills posted [HERE](#).

In my adult life, I've taken up downhill skiing, tennis, and golf. All with varying levels of success.



I've spent a lot of money for equipment and coaching to get barely better in those sports. From day one of taking these sports up to reaching a point of competence was months. If you've seen my golf game, perhaps years and still waiting.

A round of golf can cost more than my first car. Equipment is expensive and quickly becomes obsolescent. The head on the driver in my bag is larger than my first tennis racket.

Bowls is a completely different experience for a newbie. In all the clubs I've belonged to, instruction/coaching has been free to new bowlers, likewise the equipment.



Most new bowlers reach a level of competence (comfortable in the morning draw) in weeks, not months or years. The barrier to entry and getting “good enough” to enjoy what you’re doing are unique to bowls. In clubs that sponsor corporate events, it’s common to have people who have never even heard of bowls having a blast rolling a few into the head 30 minutes after they arrive.

The “time to the fun part” is a great strength of our sport, and perhaps under appreciated. As a reminder, when you’re bowling with a neophyte, take it easy on the instruction and over rotate on the fun part. The “fun” approach creates new members.

In an objective view of my current game, I wondered if I’d ever be able to get back to tournament bowling (counting on you Jackie!) which sent me off on another thread.

As a pretty medium level bowler, I’ve been in the rink with Dee, Charlie, Ann, and other elite bowlers when someone was keeping score. Didn’t say I’d won often (or honestly – ever), but still, think about it. In what other sport is some dog face like me going to get a chance to “compete” against a multi-time US Champion?

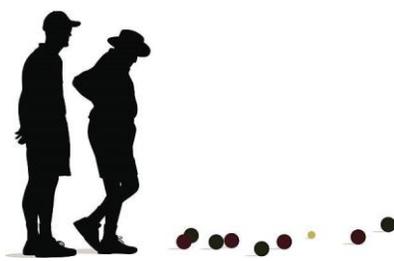
The closest non-bowls experience for me was back when I won a sales contest for the company and got to play in a charity event with pro golfers. That was so long ago the golf balls were stuffed with feathers and it still cost 10 grand. No one was “really” keeping score and I never for one moment considered it competition.

The “time to fun part” is unique to bowls in my experience, so is the “time to compete”. Whether competition is the club’s novice championship or in the US Open, bowlers in the US can pretty quickly find a level of competition they are comfortable in joining.

Prior to the pandemic, a fairly recent trend for me was men and women that were athletes in their younger days drawn to bowls for the competition. Typically in their early to mid-fifties, they are no longer the full-time support system for their kid’s extracurricular activities, and they just want to return to sport.

Maintaining a level of competitiveness in their previous sport during their family years wasn’t possible for most. Getting back to that level after decades away is unlikely, so they seek new sports. With application of their previous athletic experience to bowls including best practices (yep – that’s a pun) they quickly move to a satisfying level of completion in bowls.

I think Pickleball (for the record tried – didn’t like it – felt like a gazelle wearing one snowshoe) benefits from this trend. It’s the fastest growing sport in the US – quick time to fun level and access to all levels of competition – sounds familiar. Some other day, maybe a few thoughts on why Pickleball is growing like crazy, and bowls hasn’t – got a thought on this? Send me a note – contact info at the end of the column.



It's great to be back on the green. I hope you're back too. If you are, welcome the newbies whether they joined for the potluck or to go for the gold. Our sport covers the spectrum – it's up to us to help make sure they have the best experience possible.



Lastly and with sadness – Our sport has lots of great people and we recently lost one.

Jim Semanek



Good bowler, tireless volunteer, great guy.

[Bowls USA Note](#)

Get in touch - BUSANEWSLETTER@gmail.com - comments/thoughts/grammar corrections/recipes that don't require an oven - all are most welcome. Stay Safe! See You on the greens.

