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15 July 2020

**To All Provincial Presidents**  
**To All District Presidents**  
**To All Membership**

Dear Fellow Bowlers

During the last few days, we as the Executive have been made aware of numerous accusations levelled against us due to the fact that other sports have been allowed to return to participation whilst ours is still in limbo. These accusations include 'Bowls SA has been abysmal in the management of this process', 'our half-baked administrators are being left in the dust' and 'it's time for a change... our administrators just don't have the clout', 'Bowls SA skitter in afwesigheid' and 'they should be replaced with a new executive'

There's a quote that goes like this 'Never judge someone without knowing the whole story.' In line with this principle let me put forth the facts around where we stand with regard to getting back on the green and what Bowls South Africa (BSA) has done in this process:

- 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020 – State President declares a National State of Disaster
- 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 – State President announces that a national lockdown will be implemented effective
- 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 – SASCOC establishes a 'War Room' with the purpose of co-ordinating efforts on behalf on their membership.
- 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020 - lockdown period was extended to the end of April 2020.
- During this period to the end of April 2020 BSA issued seven various communiqués on different matters.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 – State President advises that the country would be moving to alert level 4 with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020. Alert level 4 contains no provisions for sports clubs to be opened.
- 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – BSA directs a letter to the Minister of Sport seeking relief under the restrictions placed by alert level 4.
- 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – Department of Sport replies that we must put this request through SASCOC.
- 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – SASCOC's War Room requests information for a survey the results of which are to be presented to the Minister of Sport so that an understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on the sport sector can be determined. Survey duly completed and submitted to SASCOC.
- 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – Request made to districts and clubs to provide financial and staff information to provide BSA with more substantive data that we can use in representations to the authorities. Just over 25% of affiliated clubs provided complete data whilst eight districts did not even respond.
- 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – SASCOC provide report back on survey stating that only 34 federations submitted data.
- 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – BSA submits proposal to SASCOC re allowing bowls to return to play under alert level 4 restrictions.
- 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – BSA provides the members with an update on the above matters.
- 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – SASCOC responds on its meeting with the Minister of Sport. Stating the following: 'The Department raised concerns that National Federations are continually requesting for meetings with the Minister and it is not possible for the Minister to meet each National Federation. SASCOC was asked to assist and coordinate these requests ..... through the War Room.'
- 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – SASCOC replies to our submission saying our documents have been shared with the War Room.
- 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020 – BSA communicates with districts / provinces on finances.
- 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – State President advises that the country would be moving to alert level 3 with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.
- 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – BSA provides members with update with regard to level 3 regulations.
- 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – Minister of Sport addresses the public with regard to level 3 regulations.
- 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 – Apart from the above-mentioned communiqués BSA also provides information to districts on UIF and the criteria to make a Lotto submission.

**Executive Committee:**

President: Robert Forbes, Vice President: Heather Boucher  
Members: Andrew Strong, Jenny Sinclair, Johan Barkhuizen.  
David Hamer



**sport & recreation**

Department:  
Sport and Recreation South Africa  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



- 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 – Minister of Sport issues a media statement stating amongst other things with reference to his public address ‘The Department and Ministry of Sport, Arts and Culture take this opportunity to request continued patience and tolerance as the directions are still to be published in the Government Gazette.’
- 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 – BSA issues a communiqué on address made by the Minister of Sport.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 – Letter from SASCOC on the Ministers public address and stating ‘The Department has indicated that the directions announced by the Minister considered some of the proposals submitted by the WAR ROOM and the respective National Federations. However, there are many unclear items and in this regard a letter has been submitted to the Director General seeking clarity on the unclear items in the announcement.’ and ‘the organisation at the current moment is unable to provide further guidance to the membership on the next step, therefore a meeting has been requested with the Director General to engage and have a clear way forward regarding the directions.’
- 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – SASCOC confirms that our sport is regarded as an amateur and non-contact sport.’ Our other issue with regard to high performance athletes could not be answered until they have a meeting with the Department of Sport.
- 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – BSA issues a communiqué together with a document setting out potential health and safety protocols that it was envisaged would be needed for a club to be able to have players return to play.
- 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Minister of Sport issues a government gazette detailing information as alluded to in his media statement on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.
- 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – BSA writes an email to SASCOC seeking clarity on the issues raised in the government gazette. BSA also queries under what conditions golf was allowed to return to play. This email plus subsequent telephone calls have gone unanswered.
- 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – The Department of Sport issues a media release stating:  
Sport bodies are required to comply with the directions and submit their plans as outlined this to be done within 14 days from the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The media statement goes on to reference all data that needs to be submitted. It must be clearly understood at this point that no reference was made to dealing with the aged and thus BSA did not consider making reference to this in our submissions. BSA carefully interrogated the contents of the government gazette to ensure that all areas required as set out therein were properly covered in our plans. Whilst some of these might be considered onerous or over the top it was our belief that in the pursuit of speedily facilitating the return to play BSA would rather provide for the excess than potentially having our plan rejected because of the omission of such information.
- 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – BSA submits return to play plans electronically. A printed copy is also physically handed in to the Department of Sport.
- 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – BSA is advised that the submission must be made through their on-line portal. This is duly done but not all our documents could be uploaded. Department confirms that they will use those as submitted electronically.
- 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – The Department of Sport issues another media statement reemphasising the need for sport bodies to submit their plans. Furthermore stating:  
Upon receipt of the plans as required by the Directions, the Minister must apply his mind as to whether the sports bodies have complied with all requirements as proclaimed in the Directions. **‘During the period of processing the plan, no sports body is allowed to resume training or playing.’**  
Furthermore, in processing the plans, the Minister may consult with the Department of Health, relative to compliance with health protocol including, amongst others, pronouncement of the hotspot area as to whether it is feasible to resume matches or training in such area, and the levels of risk thereto.  
The Minister shall approve the application based on the recommendation of the appointed team and **relevant sports body will be informed of the decision of the Minister in writing.**

**If the sports body resumes training or matches either contact or non-contact without the**

**approval of the Minister, it is tantamount to a violation of the Direction and Regulations. Any necessary or punitive measure will be taken against such sports body in terms of the Regulations.**

**The Department shall deploy officials to monitor compliance with the Directions and such officials shall be given special identity document.**

- 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 – BSA issues communiqué on the above matters.
- 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – BSA places before its members a document detailing frequently asked questions to serve as a reference point to matters related to COVID-19 and the proposed return to play.
- 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Minister of Sport announces authority for return to play for seven sports. He further states ‘We wish to humbly appeal to the rest of the sport sector to exercise patience and tolerance as we continue the task of processing their plans’
- 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 – The Department of Sport provides us feedback on our application including some issues to be addressed amongst which is reference to our aged membership.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 – BSA responds to Department of Sport addressing their concerns and puts forward a suggested policy with regard to over sixty persons. Essentially this policy is a mandate for over sixties to acknowledge the inherent dangers of COVID-19. This policy was not shared with members as it was merely a suggested policy which could be changed and therefore not necessarily be the final document.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 – BSA issues a communiqué to members updating them on the progress of our application.
- 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – The Minister of Sport issues amended regulations with regard to return to play. In the amended gazette the Minister instructed ‘all sport bodies’ to apply within 14 days for permission to return to activities through the compilation of a detailed operational plan. The Minister also undertook, through this document, to within seven working days after receiving the application which complies consider the application and approve this in writing.
- 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – BSA prepares to resubmit all plans and checks with the Department of Sport as to the necessity or otherwise of this. BSA is advised that it is not necessary to resubmit plans.
- 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – The Minister of Sport states ‘if you have previously applied and awaiting further feedback there is no need to re-apply, feedback will be provided.

Now apart from the detailed interventions as outlined above BSA has dealt with such matters as has come across its desk and where appropriate communicated as necessary with all the role players. In order to share this with the broad spectrum of our membership communiqués appropriate to information necessary to keep people updated was posted on our social medium platform.

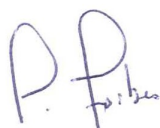
Bowls South Africa is, through its constitution, bound to the laws of this country and, apart from us as individuals exercising our rights at voting time, we do not make the laws of this country. Furthermore, by virtue of the National Sport and Recreation Act of 1998 the Minister of Sport, Art and Culture is empowered to make regulations with regard to the control of sport. These regulations have been set out above together with the explicit statement that the Minister will be the sole adjudicator in determining which and when any sport is granted permission to return to play.

If as alluded to by some people we must take a stance against the government which is confrontational Bowls South Africa stands the risk of fracturing a sound relationship with the government that has been built over many years and which could also place funding that we receive from them at jeopardy. Bowls South Africa is not privy to any discussions that other sports federations have had with the Government and why they have started back earlier than us. It could very well be related to the economic impact those sports have on the economy of our country.

Any person who is of the opinion, as alluded to in social media postings, that the Executive of Bowls South Africa is incapable of running Bowls South Africa is free, through the mechanisms available to them, to propose a motion of no-confidence in the Executive and place this before the national council. Furthermore, any person who feels that they are better equipped to run the affairs of Bowls South Africa is free to put their name forward for election through the channels available to them.

I trust that the above information gives some clarity to the work that has been going on at Bowls South Africa since that day in March when the dynamics of our country were suddenly changed. This is a very difficult time in our lives and all of us are equally frustrated and concerned but if the only outlet to this frustration is for people to vent their anger in a manner that suggests we at Bowls South Africa are party to, or complicit in, such actions which undermine our sports return to play or to throw stones at those who are trying their level best to act on behalf of all its constituents in the most appropriate and legally allowed manner then I believe communications directed at us which sows dissension amongst our members is unfair, unjust and without foundation.

I will leave you with the following quote which, I believe, it will do all of us well to heed 'Don't mix bad words with your bad mood. You'll have many opportunities to change a mood, but you'll never get the opportunity to replace the words you speak'.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the letters 'P.P.' followed by a flourish that appears to be 'P.P.' again, all written in a cursive style.

**President  
Bowls South Africa**