

Johannesburg – More than 200 of South Africa's leading young lawn bowlers compete in Bloemfontein from April 7-10 for coveted trophies in the Warwick Wealth/Bowls South Africa Under-25 Interdistricts Championships (20 sides of four) and the Bowls SA U-19 development Tournament (32 sides).

No fewer than 17 young men and women in the U-25 event have already represented their provinces at the national Masters Championships, several winning medals – Boland's Anneke Snyman, player of the event last year at Margate, went on to win a magnificent bronze medal in the Open Women's Masters in Johannesburg - in both Open and Junior categories; several also play inter-provincial bowls for senior sides.

Boland are the U25 champions; Natal Inland the U-19 holders.

Hosted by Southern Free State, with its roots dating to 1926, the U-25 championship is vital nursery to the immediate quest for Protea talent, evidenced by a Junior SA side's exciting debut in a quadrangular event in December last year in Windhoek; exceeding all expectations against senior opposition from Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Several aspiring African and players of colour are key prospects for international junior events of the near future.

Says Bowls SA president, Allan Freeman: "Youth is the key to the future of all sporting codes. For bowls, hitherto tagged as a sport for the aged, an injection of brilliantly talented youngsters puts South Africa on the front foot in its search for continued dominance of world bowls events."

The U-19 Development Tournament is packed with players from formerly disadvantaged communities who prove an inspiration to learners in both urban and rural areas. Many have eagerly taken to a sport which is producing amazing results at Open international level.

HQ is Orangia Bowling Club; spectators welcome from 8.30am daily.

**Districts represented are: U-25: Boland, Eden Bowls, EP, KZN, Gauteng North, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg BA, Mpumalanga, NW, NFS, Port natal, Sables, SFS, WP (several have two teams); U-19: Boland, Border, Gauteng N, Eden, Ekurhuleni, JBA, KZN, Limpopo, Natal Inland, NW, N Cape, NFS, Sables, WP (several have two, even three sides).**

*Written by AP Simmonds, Media Officer, Bowls South Africa ([www.bowlssa.co.za](http://www.bowlssa.co.za))*