



Update and information from the Bowls England International Performance Management Team.

To: players, clubs, county team managers, coaches & administrators.

You may be aware that we have been undertaking a comprehensive "Performance Strategy Review", which will be considered by the Bowls England Board this month. Once approved, we will be exploring how this is implemented and be reaching out to Sport England to ask for their financial support. We will share this with you all in due course and be arranging sessions to discuss how, together, we can take the recommendations forwards.

Until any new processes and procedures are agreed and put in place, the Performance Management Team will continue to prepare and select teams to compete in the 2024 International programme of events.

The 2024 Performance Management Team:

Performance Director	Mo Monkton
Women's International Team Manager	Sandy Hazell
Men's International Team Manager	Kirk Smith
Women's U25 International Team Manager	Nicola Bowe
Men's U25 International Team Manager	Stuart Thomas
U18 International Team Manager	Nicola Bowe
Performance Coach	Mal Evans
Selector	Di Wilson-Rogers
Selector	John Ottaway
Selector	Kevin Phillips
Selector	Jason Parkinson

Additional support personnel will be invited to assist as and when required.

2024 International Events:

Bowls' Big Weekend	Fri 24 th -Mon 27 th May	Various
British Isles International Series	Fri 28 th -Sun 30 th June	RLS
International Test Match v Ireland	Sat 13 th /Sun 14 th July	RLS
U18 International Series	Sun 21 st /Mon 22 nd July	Ireland
European Championships	3 rd -8 th September	Scotland
U25 International Series	Sat 14 th /15 th Sept	Ireland

(RLS = Royal Leamington Spa)

Junior development and trials at Victoria Park, Royal Leamington Spa:

Sat 18 th May 2024	U25 + Full International Trials
Sun 19 th May 2024	Junior Development + U18 International Trial

Players can self-nominate for a place in one or more group.
(see "Development/Trial Day Information" & "Nomination Form" for further details)
Team Managers and Selectors will consider all nominations and invite a certain number of players in each group to attend.



The Development Session & Trials will be an opportunity for selectors to observe current & emerging players who may be considered to represent England in the 2024 International Events.

Please note that not all players from the 2023 full international squad will be required to attend the trial but will be considered when teams are selected, provided the online availability form was completed.

In addition to the opportunity for emerging players to attend the development and trial days, selectors will observe players at the Amy Rose Bowl/White Rose/Balcomb/Walker Cup Regional Finals along with the finals of the "Blue Riband - Singles/Pairs/Triples/Fours competitions".

Team Managers will also take the opportunity to speak with County Team Managers to help identify potential international players for the 2025 season & beyond.

Special thanks go to Jon Cockcroft & Alistair Hollis who attended many meetings over the winter with the other Home Nations to agree a way forward for the Senior International Series. All 5 nations (England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland & Jersey) will enter a team comprising 15 women & 15 men playing a variety of disciplines to compliment world events, but in a format that will retain the atmosphere and rivalry of seeing country -v- country battle it out for top spot.

The series to be held at Victoria Park, Royal Leamington Spa on Friday 28th/29th/30th June is sure to be an exciting and high calibre event and I hope many bowls fans will go along and support our team.

The Commonwealth Games Federation is working hard to secure a host city for 2026 and although this is proving difficult, we hope they will make a breakthrough to secure the future of the games. We will understand more in the Spring but, whether it happens or not, there is a collective feeling that the Commonwealth Games has to reinvigorate itself in order to be relevant in the busy global sports calendar. There is huge appetite to do this, and it is critical that led by World Bowls we all work to ensure bowls is relevant. In the meantime, we are discussing with Commonwealth Games England how sports can work together to keep the Commonwealth narrative going and Jon Cockcroft is part of a cross sport group to shape that. We could, for instance, see our new-look British Isles event form part of a Commonwealth-style series.

Whilst waiting for the outcome of the Commonwealth Games discussions, World Bowls has been in communication with all Member Nations to discuss a number of new and innovative events to compliment the 4 yearly World Bowls Championships. These include a new World Cup event for the top 12 nations in the World and an annual singles competition. These new events will not only produce exciting, fresh formats but also provide essential opportunities for qualification and ranking points which will be required for future World Bowls and CWG entry.

With events being added to the international calendar each year there will be more opportunities to play at the very highest level and we feel confident that the Strategy Review will help us plan, prepare and continue to produce teams able to compete and succeed on the World Stage.



Part of the Performance Strategy review talks about the playing experience of our top bowlers. It covers how we create an environment where the best bowlers in our country are playing the appropriate calibre of competitions, spending a higher percentage of their time in purposeful practice, and playing formats that best prepare players for world level events. This has shaped some of our thinking in the National Competitions propositions that will be discussed at the forthcoming AGM. Of course we await the vote, but we are very excited about the potential for enhancing the Balcomb, Walker, White Rose and Amy Rose, and the changes that will better connect domestic competition with international bowls. We very much hope this will lead to more of a collegiate approach between international and County management, and provide more clarity for players.

To finish, we hope that all current and past international players will support Bowls' Big Weekend by attending at least one club in their area. If we are to continue to invest in international bowls from our affiliation fees, it is critical that everyday club bowlers feel connected to England players. Furthermore, this is an important event for Aviva and they value seeing the England players out and about at participating clubs. A list will be drawn up showing when and where our internationals will be which will help clubs promote their event.

We hope you found the update informative but if you have any questions, please make contact with myself or any of the Team Managers who will be happy to help you. We will arrange a Zoom call in a couple of months when we have more clarity on a number of the areas above.

I wish you all a happy and successful season and I look forward to seeing many of you throughout the summer.

With kind regards, *M. Monkton* · on behalf of the International Performance Team