

MEDIA RELEASE

Bowls Queensland Evolves Player Pathway with Refreshed State Selection Format

Bowls Queensland (BQ) has announced changes to its competition calendar, with the North vs South Challenge to be retired and replaced by a new selection model designed to give more players across the state a genuine shot at representative honours.

The decision follows a thorough review by the BQ Board, which identified a number of challenges with the current format, including the cost of travel and accommodation, limited player visibility for selectors, and scheduling pressures that affected player availability.

BQ Chairperson Brian Marshall said the change reflects the organisation's commitment to investing in better outcomes for players.

"The North vs South Challenge has been a part of our calendar for some time, and we appreciate the role it has played. However, the Board felt we could do more for our players by moving to a format that opens the door for a wider group to be seen by our selectors," Marshall said.

"The logistical challenges of running an event in the north, combined with the cost of flights and accommodation, meant the return on investment for both BQ and the players simply wasn't where it needed to be."

In place of the scheduled event later this year, BQ have introduced a structured two-day state high performance camp, expanding squad numbers and allowing selectors to assess a significantly larger pool of players competing directly against one another in real time.

The initial squads have been selected based on incumbent players and expressions of interest submitted by players, incorporating results from the past three years. The selection committee retains the ability to add players to the squads at any time, with selectors actively reviewing individual performances across the District Sides and State Championships events throughout the season.

BQ Director of Finance Graham Lewis echoed that sentiment, pointing to the broader value the new format will deliver.

"The North vs South event had a limited pool of players for our selectors to work with, and the dollar value it returned for BQ and our players didn't stack up," Lewis said. "Last year's flight cancellations saw players unable to make it to Cairns at all, and with the cost of air travel continuing to rise, the financial and logistical burden on players and BQ alike had become increasingly difficult to justify."

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By investing in a properly structured camp with increased squad numbers, we get greater visibility of players competing for state positions in real time. That's a better outcome for everyone."

BQ is also exploring a Country vs Metro style event, currently researching suitable locations, logistics and desired outcomes as the organisation looks to create more pathways for players to be seen by state selectors.

Beyond the senior pathway, BQ is expanding its junior development programs, with increased junior squad numbers to be rolled out in 2026, reflecting the organisation's focus on the long-term health of the game.

"We are not stepping back, we are stepping forward," Marshall said. "These changes mean more players across Queensland will have the opportunity to represent their state, and we believe that is the right direction for our sport."

Further details on the new trial camp format and upcoming events will be communicated to clubs and districts in the coming weeks.

End of Media Release

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