

2027 Conditions of Play (CoP) Changes Summary

1.	CoP Section: 1.3.15, 1.7, 2.2.4, 3.2.3, 6.2.1, 7.2.1, 8.1.1, 15.2.1, 15.2.3 & 16.1.2	Change: Calendars and Schedules
Rationale: • Date references have been amended in line with the movement to 1 January season start date. • Region programs are to be submitted to Bowls NSW no later than 1 October 2026, as well as upon any made changes, to ensure the current document can be referenced by Bowls NSW staff and the State Match Committee. • All season-specific dates throughout the document (entry closing dates, age cut-off dates, State Finals dates, submission deadlines, etc have been rolled forward from 2025/26 to 2027 equivalents.		
2.	CoP Section: 1.3.42, 1.5, 1.12.5, 1.28, 1.29 & 1.34	Change: Policies
Rationale: • Additional inclusion of Bowls Australia policies to align with national standards. • Specific references listed on the National Integrity Framework, National Merchandise Program and Bowls Australia Artificial Devices Policy. • All instantaneous penalties imposed by officials must be reported to Bowls NSW, as well as the direct Controlling Body.		
3.	CoP Section: 1.3.39, 1.3.43 & 3.2.3	Change: Individual grading definitions
Rationale: • Inclusion of the phrasing “as currently recorded on Bowlslink” removes ambiguity on event eligibility where an individual Pennant grading may change during the season.		

4.	CoP Section: 1.33.2	Change: Requirement for an originally nominated team member to be retained in each team.
Rationale: When a side withdraws from a competition, this place can be filled by a team on a Wait List (in order of entry) rather than by the order of preference of any individual(s).		
5.	CoP Section: 3.4, 3.5, 4.2.1, 4.5, 4.6, 5.5.2, 6.2.2, 7.2.1	Change: Change to player (as well as substitute and replacement player) eligibility
Rationale: - Clearer notation was required to reinforce the requirement in Section 1.12.1, whereby a player shall be a Declared (Primary) member of that Club at the time of entry to the competition, not just at the time of play. - Clarity added to Region based qualifying events (Over 40s Pairs, State Rookies, State Mixed Pairs), where following entry a player changes their Declared (Primary) Club outside of the Region they cannot continue in that competition. - Removes the inconsistent, event-by-event eligibility wording that existed in the 2025-26 document and gives clubs, umpires, Bowls NSW staff and the State Match Committee one clear, uniform eligibility test to apply and administer via Bowlslink.		
6.	CoP Section: 1.30, 8.7, 12.9.2, 13.9.2, 14.9.2 & 16.6	Change: Coaching accreditation
Rationale: Any individual nominated as the coach of a player, team or side shall hold a current Bowls Australia coaching accreditation, to be recorded on Bowlslink. This ensures only accredited coaches (verifiable via Bowlslink) can coach during play, rather than any nominated person.		
7.	CoP Section: Multiple areas	Change: Additions of “Notes” and “Examples”
Rationale: - Included in a new format for visual prominence in the document. - Working grading examples give Clubs and officials a shared reference point if/when scenarios arise, lowering the chance of inconsistent interpretation.		

8.	CoP Section: 2	Change: Renamed from "Club Championships" to "Club Major Championships".
Rationale: Distinguishes them from other club-level competitions that do not fall within the Bowls NSW Conditions of Play.		
9.	CoP Section: 2.2.5	Change: Club Major Singles & Pairs to be administered in Bowlslink
Rationale: - Provides a verifiable record for confirming Club's declared champion that is progressing to the Champion of Champions event, rather than relying on club-held paperwork or verbal confirmation when Bowls NSW and/or the State Match Committee are verifying entries for the State finals. - If a Club's Major Singles or Pairs championship is not properly recorded, disputes about who is entitled to contest Champion of Club Champions become harder to resolve.		
10.	CoP Section: 3.3.2	Change: State Women's Championships at Region level to be played on weekends.
Rationale: - Weekday match scheduling likely excludes players (or potential players/members) who work standard weekday hours. - Without a mandate, different Regions could schedule State Championship qualifying on different days (some weekday, some weekend), creating inconsistent access to the event depending on where a player is based. - The State Match Committee notes the significance of this change and has not introduced this same mandate for Senior Women's Championships at Region level for the 2027 season.		
11.	CoP Section: Previously Section 11 of 2025-26 document	Change: Removal of the General Pennant Conditions of Play
Rationale: - Relevant information to each competition has been consolidated into the specific Pennant competition. This lessens the requirement for cross-referencing between sections and pages. - Specific penalties have been noted in each Pennant section rather than noting "maximum points deduction" and "five shots per rink used". - Additionally, penalties relating to Side forfeits and withdrawals have been listed in each separate competition.		

12.	CoP Section: 11.7, 12.12, 13.19 & 14.12	Change: No-notification forfeit penalty escalated for Pennant competitions
Rationale: - Previously a single financial penalty applied; the new wording introduces a two-tier structure — a \$400 fine if the forfeiting Club notifies the Region Association, opposition Club and host venue at least 24 hours beforehand, rising to a \$1,000 fine if proper notification is not given. Specific penalties have been noted in each Pennant section rather than noting “maximum points deduction” and “five shots per rink used”. - Materially increases the financial deterrent for forfeiting without adequate notice, which causes the greatest disruption to opponents, host venues and competition administrators, while keeping a lower penalty for forfeits that are properly notified.		
13.	CoP Section: 12.19, 13.13 & 14.19	Change: Monetary penalty for Pennant side withdrawals after Pennant Grades/Divisions are allocated
Rationale: - Side withdrawal fine fixed at \$400 (Open/Women's/Men's Pennant), replacing the previous "up to \$400" discretionary wording. - Removes ambiguity by fixing the amount rather than leaving it to discretion within an "up to" range.		
14.	CoP Section: 12.8.1, 13.8.1 & 14.8.1	Change: Amendment to Bowlslink side submission requirements
Rationale: - Bowlslink side-submission deadline changes from a fixed "8:00pm the day prior" to "the nominated day/time as notified by the Region Association". Removes ambiguity by fixing the amount rather than leaving it to discretion within an "up to" range. - A new clause requires side line-ups in Bowlslink to be correct before each match (i.e., all players listed in Bowlslink to match those competing), with penalties listed for non-compliance.		
15.	CoP Section: 12.22.3, 12.23, 12.23.1, 13.16, 13.17.3, 14.22.3 & 14.23	Change: New thresholds and requirements for Pennant post-sectional eligibility, and grading at the conclusion of sectional play, added
Rationale: Open Pennant post-sectional eligibility grading test changed from “previous season grading” to “current Open Pennant grading”, which better reflects a player’s actual form during the season in progress.		

- Opposing clubs who have fielded the same core roster all season have a reasonable expectation that their opponents' rosters reflect a similarly genuine season-long effort.
- 50% of matches threshold included to provide consistency across all competitions, and as greater opportunity for individual qualification (especially in those Region with limited match seasons).
- Ensures a player has to demonstrate a genuine season-long connection to the club, not just a late administrative transfer.
- Avoids penalising a player who joined a Club mid-season for legitimate reasons (e.g., relocation) but still played matches for that club before the post-sectional finals.

16.

CoP Section: 12.14, 13.21, 14.14

Change: Change to the process for any unplayed Pennant match

Rationale:

- All match results may have an impact on final ladder positions (not solely first and last placing), which can guide future decision-making regarding elevation and regression of sides into the next season.
- Ensures the impact of not playing a match is deliberately assessed against ladder integrity.
- Match participation directly affects individual player grading as well as potential post-sectional play eligibility qualification.

17.

CoP Section: 12.15, 13.22 & 14.15

Change: Change to process for declaring a non-completed Pennant match

Rationale:

- Gives both competing Clubs a say in whether an interrupted match is finalised at the threshold or resumed later, rather than an automatic administrative cut-off determined previously often solely by the home side.
- Allows the continuation of a match (often close) to its full duration on a later date if scheduling permits.

18.

CoP Section: 1.33.6

Change: Substitute and Replacement Pennant player eligibility for post-sectional matches

Rationale:

- As these individuals are competing in the match, their inclusion as a match counted for post-sectional play can be considered, upon application to the State Match Committee.

19.	CoP Section: 1.12.4	Change: Pennant player eligibility after transferring Clubs
Rationale: - The winner of a Pennant competition is the Club rather than any individual member, therefore all players attending State Pennant Finals (Platinum, Men's, Women's or Open), and all Region post-sectional matches, must retain their Declared (Primary) club as the club with which they are representing. - The State Match Committee acknowledges that this rule was waived during the 2025-26 season due to the extension of events into a different bowling season.		
20.	CoP Section: 13.25.2 & 14.24.2	Change: Ensuring 16 sides at Men's & Women's State Finals
Rationale: To match current Conditions of Play for Open Pennant.		
21.	CoP Section: 14.17.1 & 14.22.1	Change: Men's Pennant eligibility
Rationale: - Ensures every player in a match is there because their actual grading places them there, keeping the competition genuinely reflective of the grading system rather than something clubs could partially bypass. - Aimed to encourage those Clubs with higher graded players to participate in the higher Division competition to allow their entire membership to compete. - Simplifies compliance for post-sectional eligibility.		
22.	CoP Section: 13.17	Change: Players changing declared Club after Women's Pennant grading allocation
Rationale: - Increased from a straightforward "one division below previous grading" restriction to a more detailed two-part rule. - Refines the anti-stacking rule to handle the specific case where a transferring player's new club does not field a side at the immediately lower division, while keeping an overall two-player cap.		
23.	CoP Section: 11.15.1	Change: Adding further eligibility criteria to 'local' Platinum Pennant players
Rationale: The amendment from "any Bowls NSW Championship event" to "Club Major Championship or Region Championship" as a qualifying mechanism for non-marquee Platinum Pennant players removes non-Club based events such as Australian Indoor Singles qualifying and Women's State Carnival.		

24.	CoP Section: 11.15.1	Change: Greater flexibility provided for positional changes
Rationale: The ability to move any positions once within the rink was based on participant feedback from Platinum Pennant Season III, and consultation with Bowls NSW staff and the State Match Committee.		
25.	CoP Section: 15.2.1, 15.2.2, 15.2.3 & 16.1.3	Change: Region representative eligibility
Rationale: - Clarification that an individual must be a Declared (Primary) member of a Club within the Region at the time of each match. - Allows newly transferred players the opportunity to compete for their Region (if selected), even if they have joined after the squad submission deadline so as to not block potential State Selection pathways, whilst also ensuring any individual selected at the squad submission deadline that later transfer their Declared (Primary) club to a club outside that Region is ineligible to compete for their former Region side as they are no longer a member of a Club within that Region.		
26.	CoP Section: 16.2.1	Change: Squad flexibility at Junior Inter-Region Sides Championship
Rationale: Allows Regions to select players in different positions and disciplines throughout the competition, whilst maintaining the requirement to nominate selected players/teams for all medal play-offs.		
27.	CoP Section: 6.2.2	Change: Over 40s Pairs eligibility
Rationale: The previous requirement for both members of a pair to represent the same Club has been broadened for 2027 to allow eligible players from different Clubs within the same Region to form a team, providing consistency with other Region-based qualifying events (Rookies & Mixed Pairs).		
28.	CoP Section: 10.5	Change: Women's Carnival – uniform requirement
Rationale: Updates the attire rule to reference the current Bowls Australia merchandise compliance regime rather than a simple logo requirement.		