

WINTER 2021– AROUND THE COURTS



From the Chair

2021 continues to be a challenging year, with boccia being played at home, in clubs and limited competitions with all sorts of variations throughout the year! While some clubs have had to make changes by returning to mask wearing and social distancing or cancelling competitions, it's good to see our athletes continue to play and enjoy boccia.

And, of course, the Paralympics in Tokyo in August – September and the Nationals in Hobart in November – a great way to celebrate 2021! We are immensely proud of our Paralympians and wish them good luck in all they do!

COVID has affected competitions in Australia and overseas and there have been several changes being made by BISFed which will affect some of our athletes.

Ken Halliday and I attended, via Zoom, the BISFed regional meeting, with representatives from across Asia Oceania. Among the many topics discussed were competitions based on gender and ball licensing. It was a valuable opportunity to have our voice heard and BA's position is outlined later in this newsletter.

See you on a court somewhere –

Richard



Save the date!

Queensland State Titles:
The Boccia Battle
September

More information:
brunaa@sportingwheelies.org.au

Toyoko 2020 Paralympics
24th August – 5th September
2021

2021 BA National Titles
15th – 18th November

HOBART

More information:
northwest@paraquadtas.org.au

Boccia in Brisbane is back!

The 2021 Queensland Boccia Tri Series is underway, with two of the three individual one day competitions played.

We kicked off at the Tri Series at Redland Club in June where Tania Stewart and her club members welcomed rival teams from Harvey Bay, Brisbane City and Moreton Bay Boccia clubs to their courts. As the first competition since the Covid shutdowns, many were rusty (referees included) but once we were in the swing of things and balls being thrown and rolled players were on top of the world.

The winners there were: BC3 1st Samuel Thorne and 2nd Nathan Langdown. BC1/2 1st Lachlan Kavanagh and 2nd Daniel Swartz. BC 4/5/Emu, our biggest pool, 1st Ryan Finn and 2nd Bruce Walker.

For round 2 of the Tri Series 2021 we headed over to Brisbane City Boccia run by the unstoppable force that is Bruna Accurso on the 18th of July.

The final round will be in the brand-new venue for Moreton Bay Boccia Club run by Emily Finn on the 15th of August.

We know we are very lucky to be back playing competitions it's been just the best to catch up with our Boccia Family competition aside - *Emily*

BISFed Rule changes

BISFed has recently introduced 2 major changes which affect our High-Performance athletes. These changes will not be introduced into Australian competitions for many years.

1. BA will not require the use of licensed balls at domestic competitions. This means that while athletes may choose to purchase licensed balls, they are not required for athletes to compete at domestic competitions All balls remain subject to the ball check protocols and rules.



BISFed Rule changes

2. BA will continue to hold mixed gender competitions. BISFed International Competitions will hold separate male and female games, however this will not happen in Australia for many years. While we are working to encourage more women and girls into boccia, it is not practical to hold separate games, particularly while everyone is enjoying the current mixed competitions.





Hunter Cup

2021 saw the return of the Hunter Cup for its 8th year. It was a great success, with a large number of players from Sydney, Canberra, Penrith, Armidale, and the Newcastle/Lake Macquarie area taking part. It was wonderful to see old and new friends enjoying each other's company off the court, and fierce competition on the court.

The standard of play was high possibly reflecting an increase in the number of coaches in our sport, and the skills they've gained through the BA Coaching Course.



BC1: Gold: Chris Allerdice, Silver: Dylan Schwartz, Bronze: Zac Ahoy
 BC2 - Gold: Scott Ellsworth, Silver: Aaryan Shah, Bronze Corena Harrison.
 BC3 - Gold: Angel McReynolds, Silver: Tony McInnes, Bronze Tom Ferguson
 BC5: Gold: Phil Bates, Silver: Connor Hamlin, Bronze Matt Van Hoek
 EMU. Gold: Fiona Porch, Silver: Paul Hazel
 Mixed Team. Gold: Hunter Merlot, Silver: Penrith, Bronze Sydney Stars.
 Winner Rammers Cup: Ange McReynolds
 Winner Throwers Cup: Phil Bates
 Encouragement Award: Justy Lai
 Well done everyone!

Redland Boccia Club

Redland is a small but active club, of about 6-7 players, on south-eastern seaboard of Brisbane, playing on Sunday mornings. It's one of the oldest boccia clubs in Queensland, starting over 15 years ago. They have a mix of seasoned and new players, most playing socially, and have lots of fun together enjoying our sport.

Redlands mainly plays team games at boccia, but mixes it up with some single games. At the end of each session, they play Robots (knocking down strategically placed toy robots) or any of the various forms of 'killer' they can come up with, all in, including support people.

Although they are a tight knit group, they always welcome newcomers with open arms and introduce them to boccia! If you want to know more about Redlands follow them on Facebook or contact their program manager Tania through Sporting Wheelies



Nationals Update!



ParaQuad Tasmania are excited to be hosting the 2021 Boccia Australia National Titles in Hobart, Tasmania between 15-18 November 2021, rescheduled from 2020.

The event will be held at the Hobart Netball and Sports Centre, corner Creek and Main Road, Newtown. Registrations of State Teams will open on 2 August. Individuals are welcome to register, however space will be allocated first to the State Teams. Registration closes on 20 September.

Information regarding the event will continue to be found on the [ParaQuad Tasmania National Events webpage](#). Here you'll find initial information regarding some accommodation and travelling into Tasmania in relation to COVID19 stipulations.

They are looking forward to welcoming athletes from Australia and New Zealand to Tasmania, and to an eagerly anticipated National Titles.

For more information contact admin@boccia.com.au or northwest@paraquadtas.org.au

Sasha Ulasowski

Welcome to our new Pathways Manager.



Sasha comes to Boccia with 15 years' experience in sport administration having worked for both a State Sporting Organisation as a Sport Development Officer and at a National Sporting Organisation as the General Manager of Sport Operations. Over those years she has worked in areas such as Coach and Officials pathways, High Performance, Medication Control, Sport Development Funding Programs, Para-Equestrian, Club Development and Junior Pathways.

Sasha is passionate about sport, in particular the development of pathways within sport. Sasha's role of Pathways General Manager with BA is focused on the identification, development, and implementation of national pathways for both athletes and coaches.

She is looking forward to continuing the work that has been developed by coaching coordinator, Glen Lebeau on the current coaching accreditation courses and working with the BA Board to ensure all pathways align with its Strategic Plan. Since starting work with BA Sasha has been in contact with many of the coaches, athletes, and their supporters to understand how best to develop our clubs and their athletes.



Contact Sasha at pathways@boccia.com.au



Road to Tokyo

From Dan Michel



As the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics Games draw near, and preparations are getting into their final stages, it's a nice time to reflect on the journey that has taken me to this point. Five years ago I became the first Australian in 16 years to qualify for a Paralympic Games, which was such a proud moment for me.

Since then, I have worked hard to become the best athlete I can be and have managed to qualify for my second Paralympic Games, this time with my fantastic teammates Spencer Cotie and Jamieson Leeson. I can't wait to don the green and gold once again and compete with them on the biggest stage in our sport.

Preparations for Tokyo have been difficult. The world has faced a once in a century challenge with the COVID pandemic and the boccia world wasn't immune. Ordinarily I would be competing on the international circuit up to 4 times a year, playing against some of the best players in the world. Due to COVID, I haven't had the chance to compete since December 2019, more than 18 months ago.

The experience of regular competitions is invaluable as it allows you to test new strategies and measure yourself against the world's best on a consistent basis. You know where you sit in the pecking order, and what adjustments you need to make to take the next step. Without that experience, you need to really lean on your knowledge of the game and trust that you are doing all the right things in daily training to work to achieve your goal.



I feel lucky that, in Australia, we have done a great job in mitigating the effects of Covid relative to other countries. Our consistently low case numbers gave me the confidence that I could continue training safely and our suppression strategies allowed that to happen. There were a couple of months early in the pandemic where I wasn't able to train, but since mid-2020 I have had an almost uninterrupted training schedule.

Critically, I have been able to maintain the same drive and motivation to improve even without any chances to compete. I put that down to having such quality teammates to play against every day in training.

As a team we have really been able to push each other and ensure that we are getting the best out of each other. I'm really proud of the way we have handled a tricky situation and am confident that we have emerged as significantly better boccia players, ready to take on whatever Tokyo throws at us.



It will be quite a unique situation when we take to the courts in Tokyo. No one will have seen anybody else play for nearly 2 years, and nobody will really know what to expect. It will be a challenge to play our best in such an unknown environment, but I'm confident in our preparation and I expect us to be able to compete with the best.

I look forward to that challenge and will do everything I can to bring home a medal for Australia.

I would like to thank everybody for the support and appreciate your continued support in Tokyo! *Dan*

BOCCIA AUSTRALIA UPDATE.



The BA Board continues to have regular virtual meetings working on both the governance and development of boccia in Australia. Our longest standing Board member Chris Nunn has left after providing invaluable service to boccia, overseeing the development of coaching and growth of the High-Performance team. His wisdom and enthusiasm will be greatly missed.

Chris is replaced by Kathryn Periac formally of Australian Institute of Sport and Triathlon Australia, now working in the National Redress Scheme for people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse. Kathryn has wide experience working with disabled athletes, particularly the development of para-triathlon athletes in Australia. She will be working on the implementation of the BA Strategic Plan and Classification.

Good luck to our Tokyo Team!

Good luck and best wishes to all our team heading to Toyoko, our terrific BC3 team Dan, Spencer and Jamieson, their RAs Ash, Zoe and Amanda as well as, Coach Ken and Manager Caroline. And not forgetting Lisa our Australian Head Referee who will also be there. We are proud of you all and know you will do your best for yourselves and Australia

Stay Safe, Have Fun and May Your Balls Run True!



Useful documents

- Boccia & your NDIS Plan
 - <https://cdn.revolutionise.com.au/.../fil.../zcsicfni2g8kmowt.pdf>
- BA Member Protection Policy
 - <https://cdn.revolutionise.com.au/site/yasooii8uylewca5.pdf>
- Framework and Guidelines for Return to Boccia
 - <https://cdn.revolutionise.com.au/news/vfyaypzlul9jb8sx.pdf>
- Australian National Anti-Doping Policy
 - <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/what-we-do/anti-doping/world-anti-doping-code/australian-national-anti-doping-policy>



Thank you to everyone who submitted items for this Newsletter from BA. We will keep any unused stories and photos for our next Newsletter. Please feel free to submit more – we want our members to know what happening in boccia across Australia. Photos are particularly welcome!

Send your stories and photos to admin@boccia.com.au