



## Bowls Canada Boulingrin: “Just Roll With It Program “ Facility Adaptations & Assistive Equipment Recommendations

June 7, 2021

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### Adaptations for Wheelchair Use on the Green:

The following recommendations outline ways to protect greens when introducing wheelchair bowlers to **new participants** accessing wheelchairs. The first two recommendations are intended to be temporary and initial steps that can be taken when introducing the sport to new bowlers.

#### On Outdoor Greens

- For **new participants** accessing wheelchairs, greenskeepers may be concerned about damage to the greens. One option to reduce the impact a regular wheelchair has on a turf-surface is to distribute the weight across a greater area. There are numerous commercial solutions to this (Google “Turf Protection Mats” to find options), however simple [plywood boards](#) (1/2” x 4’ x 8’) should suffice in most instances. Placing plywood boards (or other commercial mats) on the green and having the wheelchair user roll their wheelchair on top of the plywood will reduce the impact and potential damage to your green by reducing the PSI load of the touch points. It should be noted though, that plywood should not be left on the green too long or it may cause issues from reduced sun exposure. <sup>1</sup> *Note: on a plywood board, the mat should be placed in the top corner (which corner will depend on the handedness of the bowler).*
- On outdoor greens, wheelchair bowlers should play from one end while the marker provides information to them about the other end. This would limit the wheelchair bowler from visiting the head. The wheelchair bowlers would therefore play in one direction only and would not change directions at the completion of an end. Once an end is completed, the marker would bring the bowls back to the starting position for the wheelchair bowlers.<sup>2</sup>
- General etiquette should be encouraged on outdoor greens in order to protect the greens. More specifically, wheelchair users should be encouraged and reminded to engage in wide turns on the green and to avoid spinning in one spot. <sup>3</sup>
- Indoor or synthetic greens can be used by wheelchair bowlers with little to no restrictions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: University of Guelph Turf Institute (2020)

<sup>2</sup> Source: Paul Brown, Acting President, International Bowls for the Disabled (2020)

<sup>3</sup> Source: Paul Brown, Acting President, International Bowls for the Disabled (2019)

<sup>4</sup> Source: Jan Palazzi, Vice-President, International Bowls for the Disabled (2020)



## Wheelchair Modifications

- For participants accessing wheelchairs who are interested in becoming more involved in the sport, wheel and castor replacement is an option. Wide wheels are recommended in order to minimize damage to the greens. Specifically, pneumatic or soft rubber rear tires with a **minimum width** of 45mm, and small, front tires measuring a **minimum width** of 200mm x 50mm are most recommended. [Castors](#) are to have a minimum width of 75mm in order to minimize damage to greens.<sup>5</sup> For very soft greens, even wider tires are recommended. *Note: Bowls Canada is currently reviewing a Wheelchair Policy that will be implemented at a late date. More details will be shared once this is approved.*
- As a temporary or precautionary measure where there are concerns about the tread on tires, they should either be deflated a little to spread weight or should have duct tape placed over them to provide a smoother surface.<sup>6</sup> [Tire covers](#) may be considered as an option as well.
- It should be understood that there may not be an enormous need for bowls specific or custom wheelchairs or for adaptations to greens for regular wheelchair use. Some players currently accessing wheelchairs can and want to play from a standing position.<sup>7</sup>

## Accessing the Greens

- A **ramp** should be provided for accessing the greens. If one is available, the ramp used by the mower to access the green for maintenance can also be used as wheelchair access to the green. A second **ramp** at the other end of the green can also be used (and then the two rinks closest to the ramps are best suited for use by wheelchair bowlers due to proximity to these ramps).
- All spaces around the greens should be flat and barrier-free.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: [International Bowls for the Disabled](#) (2018)

<sup>6</sup> Source: [International Bowls for the Disabled](#) (2018)

<sup>7</sup> Source: Gary Fraser, Performance Manager, Scottish Disability Sport (2019)



## Para Bowls Equipment Recommendations:

The following recommendations include possible assistive equipment that can be used by bowlers with a disability. Links are provided to show examples of where some of these pieces of assistive equipment can be purchased.

### Visually Impaired Bowlers

- White, breakable centre strings (approx. 1/8" thickness) with pegs to hold them down in or near the ditch
- Telescopes and monoculars
- Waterproof distance marker signs at 21m (hog line), 23m, 25m, 27m, 29m, 31m, 33m, 35m (approx. 5" x 7")
- Steps over the ditch

### Physically Impaired Bowlers

- Bowling arms ([Canadian distributor option](#), [Australia distributor option](#))
- [Ubi-launchers](#)
- [Telescopic bowls and jack lifter](#)
- [Canes/walking sticks with bowl lifters](#)
- [Canes/walking sticks with green protectors](#)
- [Cane/walking stick green protectors](#) (sold separately)
- Specialized bowls wheelchairs ([Para Handy](#), [Bowls Royce Wheelchair](#))
- Custom designed wheelchair
- [Bowls Buddy walking frame](#)
- Walkers meeting the following regulations:<sup>8</sup>
  - All wheels must be minimum diameter of 200mm
  - If the tire is pneumatic or soft rubber, the minimum width of the tire must be 50mm
  - If the wheel is a nylon or polyurethane castor, the minimum width of the total running surface must be 75 mm, with no sharp edges;
  - It is recognised that these castors can come as a single wheel or pairs of wheels and can be slightly convex to help maneuvering on an outdoor surface;
  - Any grooves or treads must be shallow – if there are any concerns, duct tape should be used to provide a smoother surface.
  - Players are requested not to sit on their walkers while on the green unless approved by the groundskeeper.

*Note: Bowls Canada has a [Domestic Regulation](#) on the use of bowling delivery aids for Canadian Championships where prior approval is required for their use. In the context of local club bowling activities where a new bowler with a disability may be participating, the bowler is free to use a bowling delivery aid for the delivery of the jack and bowl.*

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<sup>8</sup> Source: Bowls Canada, *Policy Regarding the Use of Walkers* (2018)



## **General Facility Adaptations:**

*The following recommendations are general adaptations that can be made to the overall facility to better accommodate bowlers with a disability. Note: Every jurisdiction will have their own accessibility requirements - please consult with your local municipality to ensure you are meeting the minimum requirements as they pertain to facility accessibility.*

### **Facility Accessibility**

- Ensure your facility is equipped with ramps for more accessible entrances. Ramps slopes should be as shallow as possible and at least 90cm wide. As the ability to handle the steepness of a ramp is very person specific, it is recommended to include signage by the ramp indicating how those who have difficulty with it can access assistance.
- Provide at least one door that is accessible and install signage directing visitors from non-accessible doors to the accessible entrance.
- Entrances and doorways throughout the facility should be wide to allow for wheelchair access.

### **Accessible Facility Amenities**

- Provide washrooms, locker rooms/change rooms that include accessible features such as additional space to maneuver around locker rows, benches and in and out of showers.
- Accessible washrooms should have grab bars and raised toilets. Accessible stall doors should always open outwards. Rental of portable accessible toilets should be considered if accessible washrooms are not available on the premises.

### **Accessible Parking**

- Ensure accessible parking be made available closest to the accessible entrance. The general rule is 1 accessible spot per 25 total spaces.
- Provide clear signage of these designated spots and provide extra space on both sides, ensuring the route to the facility from them is flat and stable.