

2024 National Championship Model FAQ

Q: Why did BCB change the national championships?

A: The formats used between 2013 and 2023 were not meeting the goals of a Championship event. With rapidly increasing costs and decreasing funding, there was financial pressures at all levels. Over the last five years, there have been fewer and fewer facilities willing to host a national event. With already limited resources being stretched across seven national events, it was increasingly difficult for BCB to support each event to a required standard. Finally, participation data over the last five national championships has shown a significant decline. Identifying a format to help smaller provinces reinvigorate their competitive programming was essential.

Q: What are the goals of a national championship program?

A: The goals of a national championship program include providing meaningful competition experience, generating revenue (or at least breaking even), and showcasing the sport to existing and potential participants. A longer-term goal is to also create connection and excitement amongst recreational lawn bowlers for the national championships similar to how recreational participants in other sports are eager to attend and support the national championships each year.

Q: Why were the Senior Triples eliminated?

A: The average age of all participants at all championships in 2022 (including Youth) was 61. This means seniors are already competing in non-age specific events. When looking at the declining participation of National Senior Triples participants across the country (as evidenced by the increasing number of B-teams over the last few years and a 2022 event that had to run with vacancies in the draw), this discipline is not currently sustainable at a national level. Knowing how much this age group still loves to compete locally, it is hoped that by removing this as a national playdown in provincial calendars, there will be more space for competitions targeted to local and regional Senior competitors.

Q: Why were the Mixed Pairs eliminated?

A: With no international Mixed Pairs event and declining participation over the last years, this discipline is difficult to justify retaining. Removing this event frees up the provincial calendar for clubs and PSOs to hold their own regional events if they wish.

Q: Why were the Indoor Singles Championships eliminated?

A: The Indoor for many years has become mostly a Western-specific event as eastern provinces do not attend. In place of a Canadian Indoor Championship, Bowls Canada will run a World Indoor Qualification competition to qualify Canada's entrants to the World Indoor Championships. Moving to a Qualification format instead of a "Championship" removes this concern. While representation from across the country is always desirable for a nationally sanctioned event, there is less focus on this as a requirement for an event that is an international qualification event rather than a national championship.

Q: Why did the Youth event change?

A: When looking at a Youth Championships, it is important to provide a meaningful competition experience for the participants. Approximately 60% of the games for both boys and girls in the Under 18 category from 2015-2022 resulted in extremely lop-sided scores ('blowouts'), which is not a very meaningful competition experience for either participant. Part of the lopsided scores can be explained by the fact that many participants who are 12 years old or younger have not yet started puberty, putting them at an extreme disadvantage against those who have. Physical attributes (strength, stamina, etc.) as well as mental attributes (brain capacity for long-term planning, strategy & tactics, etc.) are not fully developed in adolescents who have not yet hit puberty. This means that putting a 12-year-old against an 18-year-old is not likely to result in a meaningful competition experience.

[Sport for Life's LTAD 2.1 document](#) discusses puberty, and peak height velocity, suggesting that the majority of both boys and girls will have reached puberty by the age of 14:

Our last competition review (2017) resulted in the minimum age requirement of 12, as prior to that there was no minimum age criteria. We committed to a 3-year pilot (2018, 2019, 2022) which is why the minimum age of 12 was kept for those years; now that our pilot phase has ended, we are looking to make the event more meaningful going forward, which is why the age range will be 14-21. This new age range will ensure that the majority of all participants will have reached puberty, and have the physical and mental capacity to compete against their peers.

In an ideal world, there would be multiple competition opportunities at the local and regional level to support athlete development before an individual competes nationally. Developing youth-specific competitions within a club or province is an excellent starting point to building a more meaningful development pathway for youth.

Based on the participant data, the majority of U25 participants of the last few years are already playing in other playdowns. By limiting the age to 21 for the youth championships, it provides more opportunity for young players to compete. Selecting the World Youth Championship representative means that more youth will be in the pool for consideration. The new Bowls Canada strategic plan has identified a plan to create regional competitions that would provide

more opportunity for youth and other aspiring players to compete and be seen by national selectors.

Q: Why did the format get changed so drastically?

A: The world has changed where games in all sports are being modified to become shorter, faster, and more appealing to spectators. In order to still allow for a full round robin, games were made shorter to accommodate a 7-game round robin in fewer days, and sets play to ensure meaningful competition with fewer blow-outs. Bowls Canada is also following the World Bowls trend of moving international play to five-ends sets play with shorter time limits.

Q: Why did everything get moved to one location?

A: The previous model of events being spread across the country was fractured, resulting in fewer resources for host clubs from all sources. By bringing everything together, it will result in greater resources and investment for the host – this will result in a greatly improved venue, experience, and all-around result for championships.

Q: When will the 2024 Championships take place?

A: Mid-to-late August

Q: How do we bid on hosting?

A: Bidding details will be posted on the Bowls Canada website. Contact Bowls Canada at office@bowlscanada.com for more details.

Q: Who can bid on hosting?

A: Cities, clubs, and Provincial Associations are all eligible to submit a bid, however all three will need to work in collaboration for a successful bid.

Q: Why were triples brought back?

A: To ensure an affordable, meaningful experience for participants, two disciplines per person were recommended. The five-aside format made the choice to offer singles/fours and pairs/triples a feasible option. Feedback from bowlers and provincial associations also indicated that triples was a popular and desirable event.

For more information, please contact Jake Schuknecht at jschuknecht@bowlscanada.com.

About Bowls Canada Boulingrin

Bowls Canada Boulingrin (BCB) is the governing body responsible for lawn bowls in Canada. The BCB mission is to advance the sport of bowls in Canada. For more details on Bowls Canada Boulingrin and the sport of lawn bowls, visit www.bowlscanada.com.