



Santa Cruz Lawn Bowling Club
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Dec. 2, 2010
PIMD Board of Directors
c/o John Ogden, Secretary

Membership continues to be an issue at all levels of lawn bowls. It would seem that the sport has attained a “new normal” of falling retention rates, decrease in competitive participants and declining membership. To address this issue, the USLBA has budgeted \$50,000 over the past two years to hire a marketing firm and clubs throughout PIMD have held open houses and other recruitment events. In the Santa Cruz Lawn Bowls Club, members have participated on the USLBA marketing committee, drafted the USLBA member retention guide, worked on the PIMD new member guide and collaborated with other Bay area clubs in addressing membership issues. Membership is a primary concern for us.

PIMD has been very successful in developing, promoting and hosting tournaments for competitive players within our division. None the less, there has been a decline in the number of competitive players, particularly women competitors. Tournament players are nurtured from the club level and it is at the club level where recruitment of future competitive bowlers must occur. As clubs face decreasing membership, finances for funding recruitment become increasingly limited and a cycle of decline is set in motion. Member investment (dues) should reap greater productivity. Our money should be put to work rather than held in reserve. A review of the PIMD financial report through June 4, 2010, shows reserve funds that could be used to assist division member clubs in financing recruitment programs.

Santa Cruz Lawn Bowls Club has developed a two-year intensive growth program, “Rolling Forward: Promoting New Directions in the Sport of Lawn Bowls”, with a goal of adding a minimum of 25 new members per year. We request PIMD assist in funding this program with a grant of \$500. All methods and materials, as well as advice and assistance, will be made available to other PIMD clubs upon request.

Thank you,

Christine Palochak, President Elect

Rolling Forward:

Promoting New Directions in the
Sport of Lawn Bowls

Submitted to: Pacific InterMountain Division

Date: December 4, 2010

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Rolling Forward: Promoting New Directions in the Sport of Lawn Bowls

Project Abstract

In light of the continuing decline in membership in the sport of lawn bowls, Santa Cruz Lawn Bowls Club has developed an intensive 2 year recruitment plan. Viewing our members as consumers who must elect us from a myriad of other sports and recreational opportunities, we have developed long term goals to guide our decision making. We have created “Rolling Forward: Promoting New Directions in the Sport of Lawn Bowls”, to change the perception of lawn bowls from a game for senior citizens to a mentally challenging sport for all ages. We are requesting \$500 from PIMD to help us achieve our goal of 25 new members per year.

Statement of Need

While recently reviewing club files we came across the following minutes from PIMD:

“ K.L. and others renewed appeals for more new members. Suggestions were made to concentrate more efforts on retirement groups such as SIRS, to send out information on lawn bowling to business retirees and possibly to try out evening bowling for employed people. K. further noted that the only way to get people, especially younger people, into lawn bowling was to get them to try it out.”

This could have been minutes from the meeting held this week. For 21 years, PIMD and local clubs have faced a continuing problem with membership. Minutes, memoranda and agenda in the file from 1989-1995 continually reiterate the same lack of growth and inability to recruit members, especially younger members.

Besides the membership dilemma, what has changed over the past 20 years in the sport of bowls? Perhaps a few USLBA and PIMD rules, some interclub reorganization, facilities renovations, addition or subtraction of a tournaments and modified draw times? If we look at the rest of our lives, the changes have been immense: rapid information exchange, vastly increased time and opportunity for entertainment options, changes in dress, life style, finances, and even in family structure. If our sport faced recruitment problems in 1989 and has failed to keep pace with our changing culture and society, it is no wonder we are facing even more serious recruitment issues today.

Program Description

“Rolling Forward: Promoting New Directions in the Sport of Lawn Bowls” focuses on updating the image of lawn bowls. It is not a game but a sport. It is not a slow paced social activity but a mental and physical challenge for all ages. We have created 10 year, 5 year and one year plans covering membership, facilities, and finances which will be posted on the web site as concrete objectives. The plans will provide direction and serve as our guide in decision making. What do we want our club to look like in 10 years? We have to know where we are going in order to get there.

Advertising materials addressing our changing image will be distributed throughout the community. Since our experience shows that personal contact is the most successful means of recruitment, every member at every meeting, will be given specific recruitment tasks with member incentives. Monthly open competitions will be developed in which any community member may participate and has a chance at winning. In order to increase club exposure, gift memberships will be provided to service clubs and charity auctions, and gift certificates available for members to purchase. In addition, a highly visible club presence will be at each community event held in San Lorenzo Park. A club member will be assigned as liaison with UCSC Student Life Advisor at the University Inn to develop and coordinate programs involving students’ leagues on the green.

Goals and Objectives

The main objectives of our program include:

1. Recruiting 25 new members in 2011 and in 2012
2. Adopting club colors of varsity red and black to be worn at all tournaments, competitions and events
3. Creating an updated logo
4. Producing 250 postcards contrasting “then and now” of lawn bowls with personal invitations to try the sport to be mailed to community members
4. Distributing 50 flyers portraying the new look of the sport of bowls to community centers, mobile home parks, health clubs throughout the community
5. Create and distribute 10 gift memberships for charity auctions and service clubs
6. Scheduling and advertising “Pay to Play Fridays” community days on the first Friday of every month.
7. Providing member incentive for new member recruitment. Each new member recruited in 2011, who signs up in 2012, entitles signing member to a 25% dues reduction in 2012

8. Appoint a club member as UCSC liaison

9. Acquire a Portable photo collage/advertising kiosk for use at community events.

Timeline Activities

Submit Grant Proposal December 2010

Expected Grant notification January 2011

Obtain required supplies February 2011
and materials

Budget

Cost of preparing new logo for embroidery, at Catto's, Inc.	\$60
Printing 250 single sided, color postcards	\$70
Mailing expenses	\$110
Printing 50 color flyers	\$50
Printing costs gift memberships	\$15
Portable photo backdrop	\$45
Additional signage	\$150