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Subject : 2007 Walter DeVeer Restricted Challenge Petition

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please accept this email as a formal petition for the re-introduction of the Walter De Veer Restricted Challenge, in its 2006 rule format, into the schedule for the 2007 Australian National Championship at Altona.

On Saturday the 6th January 2007 a group of concerned bowlers and administrators met in Melbourne to formulate a plan to petition the TBA Board and State Managers to consider the re-introduction of the very popular Walter De Veer Restricted Challenge, in its 2006 rule format, back into the 2007 Australian National Championship.

G. Wilson (NT), S. Hendricksen (WA), J. Kent (Vic), G. Russell (Vic), D. Simpson (Qld and TBAQ), P. Turner (SA), D. Nichols (SA), L. Hickey (ACT), C. Dennis (ACT), C. Sculthorpe (Tas), K. Huxley (Tas), D. Archer (NSW and NSW TBA Adult State Tournament Committee), M. Wentworth-Perry (NSW) travelled at their own expense to this meeting and represented the voice of eleven years of Walter De Veer Restricted Challenge history.

P. Coburn (Vic), J. Dobson (Tas) & R. Hatchard (SA) also attended as special invited guests and were asked to contribute.

We would like to highlight text included in both the TBA Vision and Mission statements as displayed prominently on the TBA website.

Vision : Tenpin Bowling To Be The Pre-Eminent Lifetime Participative And Competitive Sport In Australia.

Mission Statement : To Provide Governance, Education And Opportunities For Participation And Achievement Within The Sport In Partnership With The Industry And Its Stakeholders.

This group feels that TBA are ignoring their own Mission State and in particular the statement "Opportunities For Participation And Achievement Within The Sport In Partnership With The Industry And Its Stakeholders" with the 2007 Walter De Veer National Restricted Challenge rules as recently released on the following basis:

1. The Walter De Veer Restricted Challenge was an event created by Daryl Holt and presented by Warren Stewart to the ATBC AGM in 1995. Voting delegates at this event agreed unanimously to introduce this event the following year. The first event was conducted as part of the Adult National Championship at Canberra in 1996. Since this first event 539 men and 533 women have represented their respective zones in its eleven year history. With the marked change in the proposed 2007 Walter De Veer National Restricted Challenge rules we note that that this was not introduced "In Partnership With The Industry And Its Stakeholders" in that absolutely none of the zone Adult State Team or De Veer Committees were even asked or consulted on any proposed changes let alone any of the existing DeVeer bowlers themselves. There was ample opportunity to consult with representatives from these committees, and bowlers, as they were all in Hobart at the same time as the State Managers meeting.

2. In 2006 the event known as the Intercentre Challenge formed part of the Australian Adult National Championship. This event was introduced in 2003, as a Trios format, and similar in format to the proposed new 2007 Walter De Veer National Restricted Challenge. The entry fee for this event has been capped at \$150.00 through this time.

3. In 2003 (Townsville) 9 teams competed, 7 teams in 2004 (Melbourne), 15 teams in 2005 (Illawarra) and in 2006 (Hobart). This event has been grown slightly from its first event however significant is that the lowest number was when the Nationals were last conducted in Melbourne when Victorian centres boycotted this event. This was after significant promotion of this event through Victorian centres.

4. The success, both financially and participation wise, is dependent upon the local bowler participation and as history has it with the lack of support by local centres this group feels that the new 2007 Walter De Veer National Restricted Challenge will not be attractive for twenty 5-person teams.

5. The entry fee for the proposed 2007 Walter De Veer National Restricted Challenge is \$710.00 for each 5-person team making the final. With only the winners of this proposed event getting their money back (subject to 10 teams entering) we feel that this event is less attractive than the current Intercentre Challenge.

6. The 2007 Walter De Veer National Restricted Challenge is not Restricted as there is not an average cut off to make it a restricted event.

7. We feel that this new format will adversely effect the participation at the 2007 Adult Nationals. During the course of the 2006 Australian National Championship in Hobart a total of 12385 games were bowled compared with 12674 in 2005.

- 997 were bowled by Seniors (ATBSO members) who stayed on and bowled an All Event and the TBA Seniors Cup.
- 6280 games were bowled during the DeVeer week through All Events, Intercentre Cup (438), the 3 days of DeVeer and then Restricted Cup. Immediately after the final of Restricted Cup, at the conclusion of DeVeer week, the game count was 618 ahead of the 2005 tally.
- 5108 games were bowled during the week of Rachuig including All Events, 3 days of Rachuig, Classic and Masters.

The game tally during the 2006 Rachuig week was 907 games less than in 2005.

Fact : The DeVeer groups bowl the lion's share of the games at the Adult National Championships.

A significant number of the 2006 DeVeer bowlers, and their supporters, will not come to the 2007 National Championship. This will lead to a major downturn in the lineage returned to the host centre. This downturn may result in this event running at a significant financial loss.

8. In previous years most zones insist that their state teams must bowl their home zone state championship. With the abolition of the Walter De Veer Restricted Challenge as a state representative group we feel that state championships around the country will also be down on entries.

9. It has been stated that DeVeer was introduced as a pathway to Rachuig. We do not believe this statement as being correct since the 2006 Walter De Veer Restricted Challenge rules state the following purpose for this event:

(a) The purpose of the Walter de Veer Restricted Challenge is to determine annually the best Zone representative team of bowlers with averages not exceeding 184 in the Men's Division and 174 in the Women's Division in a handicapped competition.

(b) To foster, develop and advance a spirit of good sportsmanship and fellowship, to promote and maintain a good relationship amongst the representative teams and to provide an opportunity for a combination of graded and handicapped competition of all ages and abilities.

We can find no reference in these rules to this event being a pathway.

10. We do acknowledge that a significant number of bowlers first state team experience was in a DeVeer team. While our investigations, through the TBA website, reveal that twenty (20) of these bowlers went on to compete in the scratch Walter Rachuig Trophy, four (4) of these bowlers went on to represent their country at the highest scratch level, three (3) went on to win a scratch nationally ranked event and one (1) went on to win two scratch national ranking systems. Without this event, we have no doubts that these bowlers would not have moved forward with their bowling if not for their first state team experience with the Walter de Veer Restricted Challenge.

This petition is on behalf of all male bowlers with a 184 or lower average and all female bowlers with a 174 or lower average, coaches, managers and supporters from around Australia – potentially 80% of TBA's 2007 Membership.

We note that some zones have continued to include a DeVeer roll off date within the state tournament calendars and as the re-introduction of these will require the organisation of these roll offs we request a formal decision or response to this petition no later than the 22nd January 2007.