

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NSW BOWLING GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



# THE BOWLING GREENKEEPER

DECEMBER 2018

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## **Ben Morthorpe named Living Turf Greenkeeper of the Year 2018**



Cabramatta Bowling Club's winning greenkeeper Ben Morthorpe with Living Turf's Mike Darlington and Cabramatta's Chief Executive Officer Jay Porter

## **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE**

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News from the ACT, Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers

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Rep's Report & More

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## The Bowling Greenkeeper

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## President's Report with Mick Woods



Well it's that time of the year again. Summer is upon us and Christmas is fast approaching. I am sure we all have our festive season holidays booked (insert laughter here). The greater likelihood is that most Bowling Greenkeepers will be hard at work throughout this period renovating

greens, managing staff and public holidays, along with keeping their bowling members satisfied during this frenzied time of activity. Good luck to all.

I hope this summer brings the heat and much needed rainfall that is required to bring greens back into play in ideal condition.

### Association News

Duncan and his team are getting ready to host next year's State Championships once again at Ballina from May 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> 2019.

If you think your club may be suitable and interested in sponsoring and hosting this event for 2020-22,

now is a great time to start conversations with the appropriate people at your club and any of the Association Executive.

Recently members from the Executive including myself flew to Melbourne to meet with the AGCSA to discuss the possibility of the NSWBGA and other state associations combining to form a peak National Body. While many topics and points were discussed no binding decision could be made. This topic and matters will continue to be discussed at an executive level with members opinions sought at our next AGM.

The 2019 conference will again be held at Bankstown Sports on 17-18 June 2019 with this venue proving to meet needs for this event. Be sure to make regular visits to our website [nswbga.com.au](http://nswbga.com.au) for updates and registration.

I would like to wish Wayne Vardy a full and speedy recovery. For those not informed Vard's was hospitalised after being involved in a traffic accident as a pedestrian. All the best champ. Finally, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous New Year.

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# Bowls Report with Brent Norman



Firstly I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year to all our members and their families. For us this time of year means many hours walking behind our mowers trying to produce that perfect surface - sounds like fun. The good news is only five months until our next Championship Week which will be held at Ballina RSL again with our host Duncan Elphick already putting in the ground work to be the best yet.

As for rolling some bowls on the greens, I was amazed to see how many greenkeepers were listed in teams at the Pennants finals across all the grades. It would be good to have all these guys involved with our Association, so spread the word as members and let's try to get as many as possible to our State Championships and join our Association.

A couple of great results out of these Pennant finals were:

Ben Morthorpe was part of Cabramatta winning Grade 1

Sean Belotti was part of the Engadine team winning Grade 3

Personally I represented Cabra Vale and although we came up just short in the final at Ocean Shores, I have to say it was a pleasure playing on Paul Earl's greens during the event at Pottsville.

It was fantastic to see a number of our members do well in district, zone and state championships. A special mention again must go to Ben Morthorpe winning the State Champion of Champion Pairs with Australian player Aaron Wilson (pictured). Paul Earl also made the state finals in this event which was a great effort.



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Benny wasn't finished there for the year, being included in the state squad now and pushing hard to get the honour of playing for NSW. I'm sure he will be hard to keep out and he would be looking forward to especially take on Peter Watts and Wade Turner when they come across ACT.

Other guys I must mention for making rep teams also include:

- Shannon White Zone 10 and city team
- Brent Norman State over 40s
- Barry Wilkinson Zone 4 over 60s
- Clayton Rogers Zone 3 team
- Damien Miller Zone 8 team
- Jase Aurisch Zone 11 team

Sorry if I've missed anyone - but keep sending through any results - don't be bashful we all like to hear success amongst our fellow Greenies.

We mustn't forget this year's Legends vs Greenkeepers match at Engadine Bowling Club. The 2018 sides and the final scores are featured on page 11.

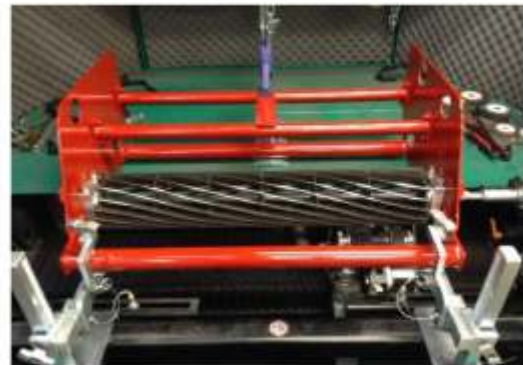
Best wishes

Brent Norman  
Bowls Secretary



*Pictured: Mick Woods (Greenkeepers) and Sam Clough (Legends)*

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# Rep's Report

MIKE DARLINGTON, LIVING TURF

TEL: 0407 100 606 [mdarlington@livingturf.com](mailto:mdarlington@livingturf.com)



I would like to start this report by thanking greenkeepers and people in our industry, including reps from other companies, in the well wishes of support for our family, when my dear wife Julie, (Mum and Nanny) had a malignant brain tumour removed mid-August. As

you can imagine it rocked us all completely but with a successful operation and follow up chemotherapy and radiation that has just finished Friday the 26th October after 6 weeks, we are confident of a complete recovery. A further six months of stronger chemo tablets will start in a month's time. The phone calls, messages and visits have been an immense source of inspiration to us all. On behalf of all our family, thank you for your thoughts and wishes.

Unfortunately in the same vein, long time greenkeeper, Wayne Vardy from Woonona Bowling Club was hit by a car early October. Wayne was put into an induced coma and air lifted to St George Hospital with multiple fractures and head injuries.

On last report Wayne was making a steady recovery. We all hope that he makes a full recovery and wish Wayne's family all the best in this difficult time.

As far as greenkeeping matters are concerned, what a start to the renovation season. After such a long dry spell the rains came and didn't go away for two weeks. With no sunshine, the renovated greens were struggling, especially the tiffys. There was no growth, areas were opening up and some greens weren't being cut for two to three weeks.

We all hope that the weather improves and further renovation conditions are what the greenkeepers are looking for.

Unfortunately Dapto Huntley Bowling Club closed its doors a couple of months ago. Amalgamation was initiated but couldn't save this once successful bowling club.

As the last report for the year, the Living Turf Team would like to wish greenkeepers and their families all the best for Christmas and the New Year. Once again, thank you.

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# Ben Morthorpe named Living Turf Greenkeeper of the Year

The 2018 Living Turf Greenkeeper of the Year award was presented at the annual Peter Mobbs Shield day at Engadine Bowling Club on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July.

Ben Morthorpe, the Head Greenkeeper at Cabramatta Bowling Club, received this great award.

A special mention must also be made to all of this year's nominations, Brent McCristal in particular being nominated for the fourth consecutive year! It is great to see so many turf managers around NSW producing such great surfaces and doing our industry proud.

As well as taking out the 2018 Living Turf Greenkeeper of the year award Ben has managed a clean sweep at the 2018 State Championship week winning both the singles and the pairs titles, Ben has also been selected in the NSW side this year and also won the NSW state fours and winning the No 1 Pennant flag with Cabramatta.

After taking up bowls whilst at school in 2003 he was always around the greens, Ben took the opportunity in 2005 to have a week's work experience at Cabra Vale Diggers under Brent Norman and really enjoyed it. The following year he received a call from Brent telling him there was an apprenticeship available. Ben took that opportunity and started his Greenkeeping career as an apprentice at Cabra Vale Diggers under Brent Norman and Jim Tracey in 2006.

After completing his apprenticeship and an extra year he left for few months to pursue other interests before applying for the Assistants job back at Cabravale which he held for 4.5 years. In 2016 he successfully applied for the Head Greenkeeper's job at Cabramatta Bowling Club.



Even with Cabramatta losing a green to synthetic, Ben has continued to keep Cabramatta Bowling Club's reputation as having some of the fastest and best surfaces in Sydney.

Ben has been on the NSWBGA committee for the past two years and is always keen to assist in any way possible.

The NSWBGA and Living Turf would like to congratulate you once again Ben on a great achievement in winning the 2018 Living Turf Greenkeeper of the Year.

*Pictured clockwise: Topping off a great year; Ben Morthorpe with Brent Norman; receiving the Award on Legends Day; and with Barry Wilkinson at State Championship Week in Ballina in May.*



## Legends take the Peter Mobbs Shield for 2018



*Pictured: The NSWBGA Greenkeepers ready for play at Engadine Bowling Club in July.*

The rain held out this year for the annual Legends vs Greenkeepers match for the Peter Mobbs Shield at Engadine Bowling Club on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July. This year the Bowls NSW Legends won the match, with a final score of Legends 137 def Greenkeepers 126. Thanks to all participants and our host greenkeeper Matt Keough.

### 2018 Legends vs Greenkeepers Results

Rink Scores (Legends listed first)

Rink 1 – McCulla, Reynolds, Clough, Lambourne 30 def Hartfield, Woods, Willmer, Troth 16

Rink 2 – Jamieson, Barrett, Ferguson, Morton 17 lost to Bateman, Dagwell, Turner, Watts 25

Rink 3 – Forbes, M Duprez, S Green, B Duprez 20 lost to Hancott, Wilkinson, Moffitt, Norman 31

Rink 4 – Fitzgerald, McGillvray, C Green, Such 22 def Flaherty, Ryan, Miller, Morthorpe 16

Rink 5 – Turpin, Clarke, Jacques, Corey 20 def Hvass, Bellotti, Keough, Greenhalgh 19

Rink 6 – Ronald, Kralj, Hughes, Holt 28 def Rodger, Stewart, Crean, Aurisch 19

Final Score: Legends 137 def Greenkeepers 126



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## Around the Associations

### Mid North Coast with Danny Knight

Hello all. Spring has certainly reached the Mid North Coast and most guys by now are well into their renovation programs. After what was a dry winter the rain arrived in September and has been quite reliable since. We would love to be able to send some to our brothers out west.

There have been a few reports of Spring Dead Patch and ERI following on from our prolonged hot conditions running into autumn. The pearl are still around but are from most reports having less of an impact due to improved practices in treatment and turf nutrition and general awareness.

I was in the fortunate position this year to be able to remove the surface from my old top green and replant. No one knows when it was done last, if ever, so it was well overdue.

Plugs taken prior showed around 40mm of thatch material which had built up noticeably after the three years the green couldn't be renovated following the flood in 2009.

I decided to take 50mm off which saw the turf cutter at full depth. It was a cleansing feeling knowing that day I was saying goodbye to many of my problems.

We removed the surface with a small posi track as access was limited and the machine loaded into small tippers which dumped the old turf as fill locally. This job took all day but the operator did a really great job of sticking to the cut line and not digging into the surface.

I had two weeks before I could get the grass to replant but I couldn't stand looking at the old surface anymore and needed it gone!

There were a few things I wanted to do while the top was off such as applying lime and gypsum, Merit and Meridian and some fungicide.

Mick Woods brought his Procore down from Tamworth and he went over the green with 19mm hollow tynes. I scarified the green after to fluff up the soil prior to laser levelling.

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Alastair McArthur lasered the green on the Saturday prior to planting and corrected some areas we knew were out. We were very happy to get that job done as around 300mm had fallen in our area in the week leading up.

The final lead up job was to find a trailer to tow to South West Rocks to pick up the material to plant. I finally found an enclosed trailer from Kennards Hire similar to a horse float with a drop down ramp which worked really well.

I went down on the Monday morning to see Mark operating his Winston Suttle shaver he had rebuilt over the winter. He was more than impressed at the shute Phil Hartfield had custom designed which didn't clog like the factory model.

I helped Nathan push and barrow the shavings into the trailer and unloaded back at Urunga for planting the next morning.

Not knowing how many helpers I had turning up I decided I would barrow the material on and spread it by shovel as in a top dress (thank you Simon Cooper for that advice). We raked the green first with some customised pool fencing and then started spreading. I ended up putting on 5 bays at 5 barrows a bay and it went on really evenly. We rolled it in and put the mats down and were done by 9am and watering.

The strike one week on is great and I've started giving it light feeds and I'm looking forward to getting a mower on there.

Mark was delighted with the job his shaver did on his middle green. He followed that up with the scarifier, then the fat boy and then a cut and was confident he had removed most of the thatch. Nathan was pleased that Mark was pleased as he'd seen enough of the wheel barrow!



*Pictured: Mark Wilcher of South West Rocks, and renovations at Urunga and South West Rocks*



Craig Hayfield at Kempsey RSL has also been busy. Mark was being over-protective of his revamped shaver so Craig got the scarifier out instead. He then drilled using the clubs old machine. Craig has offered to any club interested in an old drilling machine- they can pick it up at their leisure from the bottom of the Macleay River. We warned him that if either Dave Croad or Dave Waters get their illegal trawler nets snagged on the drilling machine they would be furious!

Phil Davis has retired after many years of service at Red Rock Bowling Club. Both Phil and his wife Helen have clocked up endless hours keeping the club afloat over some very tough times. Taking the reigns will be one of Brett Long's old apprentices Jarrod Holdsworth. We wish all three well in their next chapters. Apparently the Jewfish in Red Rock are nervous hearing of Jarrod's arrival.

Next magazine I have arranged a history in the industry from a well-known and well-travelled figure that many of you would have met or dealt with.

Good luck through your renovations and let's hope the weather is on our side.



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## ACT with Peter Watts



R.I.P Danny Boy. After being diagnosed with an aggressive brain cancer only four months ago, Daniel James Wilson passed away and has hopefully gone to greener pastures (13<sup>th</sup> September 1975 – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018). He will be missed.



Once again Canberra promised an early spring with a couple of weeks of beautiful weather in early September and just as we get ready to hook into some work we get belted with more severe frosts and stupid cold weather. Now in late October we are getting some warmer weather which is promoting growth in the greens and allowing us to get renovations under way.

### **Around the grounds**

Western Creek with Mark Bateman: the club has just completed a \$90 000 toilet block and servery outside the greens. This will be a great asset to the club and I'm sure will be used regularly by all. Unfortunately, Mark has lost his apprentice Hugh who has moved into a different line of work. Mark is currently looking for an apprentice and until then will have to battle on by himself.

Tuggies and QBN with Mark Dagwell: Tuggies will have a stock standard year with normal renos and ongoing maintenance while at Queanbeyan the boys will be busy bringing back a green that has been out for years and converting it from a Greenlees park to a Tiffy. QBN has just held a successful greenkeepers day and it was enjoyed by everyone who attended, playing a different format of 3 bowl pairs.

QBNRSL with Wade Turner: Wade will also be converting his number 1 green from Greenlees park to a Tiffy and this work is due to commence on the 5th of November, Both Wade and Mark will be getting their grass from Grandview's Bowling Club off Phil Harfield so I'm sure it will be a great strain and looking forward to playing on a couple of new surfaces. Wade will be hosting the next greenkeepers day on the 14th December and is proudly sponsored by MC Daisley Services - this will be a great day so come one come all.

Norths with Terry Doyle is hoping to redo his number 1 green which has broken out with different strains of grass through it and is looking for a good Greenlees park to put back in it. Terry was unfortunate to have a little fall and got a small cut on his elbow, this was nothing and then continued to work on the green renos, we all know how dirty taking greens out can be and then putting out all your ferts can be a dusty job. Anyway, after doing all this his elbow got infected and Terry was rushed into surgery. The doctor told him if he left it for another day or two he could have lost his arm. Let this be a warning to the rest of us.

Belco with me and raising plinths suck. It doesn't rain in Canberra so please send some our way. Normal reno program this year and we are underway. I have come across a putty called Sun Fix and it is brilliant - it goes hard as steel and is great to use on roller shafts that have worn or bits on the mowers that are showing wear it is easy to use and quite cheap.

Wishing everyone a great growing season.

Keep your fluids up - it's gonna be a stinker.



## Northern Rivers with Duncan Elphick

South Lismore Bowling Club up here on the Northern Rivers was the scene for our annual charity bowls day. A heavy sky and a cool breeze didn't dampen the mood of the 128 bowlers from across Zone 1, helping raise \$2,000 for "Our Kids", a local charity who maintain the facility set up to support those kids and families who are doing it tough from our local area.

Northern Rivers Greenkeepers have raised \$15,800 over the past 8 years alone, a great concept adopted many years before that. All these funds have been passed onto worthy charitable organisations in our local area. A proud tradition and one we hope will be around forever. Newly elected President of Northern Rivers Greenkeepers Association John Sheehan hosted the day on our behalf and handed the club back over to the patrons at days end with full tills and empty kegs. Many thanks Patty for organising the day, and South Lismore Bowling Club for hosting us.

As mentioned we have a new leader at the helm in these parts. John Sheehan from Lismore City was appointed unopposed as President, yours truly as Secretary and Pat Nichols holds the purse strings as Treasurer.

Around the grounds, at Ballina RSL we Wintered well. There is some slight scaring from ERI type infections that were active last autumn in Air Force and Army Greens but the disease activity was minor, therefore severity of the scaring is considerably less than last spring. I can't say why this is so, but a programme based around plant health and root development is ongoing. Air2g2 aeration was carried out in late September and renovation procedures will be relatively minor but there will be soil applied to each surface for the first time in three seasons provided a decent soil type can be sourced.

Evans Head Greenkeeper Dave Turner reports his club will be running with the Water Park again this holiday season, which brings in the challenging scenario of planning a renovation around tournaments and holiday trade with only one green available for play at a three green club. Dave and his staff really do deserve high praise for the quality of the surface achieved over the winter months since last they had the structures on the green, considering the green is subjected to some pretty unreal extremes, I tip my hat guys.

Dave's set a very proactive disease control programme based around a variety of products to help with disease resistance and the results are evident for all to see.

Club Byron has a proud tradition being one of the first if not 'the first' site to plant Tiff Dwarf in their green. The late Roy Holbert (R.I.P) had the foresight to see the strange fine growth habit of Tiff Dwarf and implement into our sport. He would shudder at some of the imperfections we are experiencing on the hallowed home of Tiff this spring. Rhizoctonia, Spring Dead, Ground Pearl, ERI, Couch mite...all the usual suspects in this part of the world but togetherness in high quantities? A challenging early season ahead!

While South Lismore legend Pat Nichols sits and relieves the stresses and readies his tired body and mind on the beach at Evans Head, trusty offsider Marto fosters those brilliant, pretty green circles that have made South Lismore home....enjoy the break Patty - where are my fillets?

Graham Brown at Yamba is another who boasts a very clean site with little to no sign of any patch type disease symptoms. Soil fertility and diligent use of growth regulators have been key for the uniformity of the playing surfaces. New evidence of Ground Pearl in previously unseen areas of the site certainly have him on edge though.

The oldest club in the district, Lismore City's John Sheehan has a goal of rectifying poor areas of coverage in the Northern green, and getting strength in these areas which are struggling with shade and pest infestation also the odd tree root. Maintaining coverage next winter and aiming at a resurfacing process of his Southern Green next growing season.

I missed the deadline of the last publication of magazine, so I'd like to put a belated thanks to all those who attended the Champo week back in May. Congratulations Ben Morthorpe! Wow, what a year this guy has had with many a bowls victory at State level and of course Living Turf NSWBGA Greenkeeper of the Year 2018. Dunno how he will top this effort?

Looking forward, I hope those who are sorry they missed the boat last year and want to participate, please do. May 6th - 9th 2019 @ Ballina RSL Bowling Club.

# Machinery on display at Engadine Bowling Club



The machines and greenkeepers rolled in to Engadine Bowling Club on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018 for the NSWBGA machinery and trade demonstration day and BBQ lunch. Thanks to our partners for this event CMR Turfworks, Elite Haulage, SportsGrass Solutions, Dan Studders (Air2G2), Turfcare Australia, Supaturf Matt Keough (Hydroject), and Bayer.

There was a good crowd considering the weather. We had demos and a chat from Bayer and Campbell's about some new chemistry coming onto the market. Thanks for all that supported the day.



## Have a sea change next May for State Champs Week



Mark your calendars now for State Championship Week 2019 where we will return to Ballina Bowling Club from May 6-9 for another great week of bowls and mateship, hosted by Duncan Elphick and the team from the Northers Rivers. Enjoy bowls, the river, Ballina beaches, beautiful scenery and a short drive to more iconic beaches at Lennox Heads and Byron Bay.

*Image courtesy Ballina Visitor Information Centre.*

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