

# One-to-one with Neil Dalrymple, World Bowls CEO



## WORLD BOWLS LAUNCH EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) TO HOST THE 2027 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

The World Bowls Championship event is a unified championship held every four years featuring able and para bowlers.

Due to the uncertainty around when the next Commonwealth Games will be held, the board of World Bowls has elected to stage the next World Championship in mid to late 2027.

Following an open championship in 2023 on the Gold Coast in Australia and the feedback that has ensued, World Bowls have elected to return to having a closed championship with a maximum of 24 countries per open discipline. Qualification will be based on the finishing position from the 2023 World Championship (top 12 from each discipline) with the remaining positions being filled via a qualification process from the staging of regional championships (across all five regions) in the year prior to the event i.e. 2026.

To recognise the importance of para bowlers, a new discipline has been added to the championship for the bowlers selected which means that all para bowlers will now play for two medals at this championship – a pairs and a singles event.

World Bowls has recently invited expressions of interest from a host nation and venues to continue the great reputation of this championship in 2027.



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I was very pleased to recently attend and represent World Bowls at SportAccord, an international sport summit which was held in Birmingham.

The SportAccord World Sport and Business Summit brings together more than 1,700 leaders and key decision makers from over 120 International Federations (IFs), the International Olympic Committee, and organisations involved in the business of sport. The summit provides a platform enabling global business leaders and host cities to have access to all the International Federations and their stakeholders in one location over several days.

The event featured a combination of official sports meetings, networking gatherings, a themed conference programme, and exhibition space enabling International Federations, industry, cities and regions to showcase and advance their sport, services and facilities.

Some of the high-calibre participants in the conference programme included Olympic champions and leading industry figures such as Epic Games vice-president and co-founder Mark Rein, UK Sport chair Dame Katherine Grainger, Olympic Broadcasting Services CEO Yannis Exarchos, Rob Alberino, vice-president of content and production, Kansas City Chiefs, Wayne Barnes, former Rugby World Cup referee and many more. Topics of discussion and debate ranged

from sustainability, innovative technology, fan engagement and new event models to governance, esports and athlete wellbeing.

From a World Bowls perspective, It was great to be able to meet many other International Federations, prospective event host tourism organisations, many consulting firms operating across international sport, representatives of Sport Accord, the IOC, CGF and WADA.

Importantly, I met the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) and received an update on the status of the next Commonwealth Games and I attended a meeting of the Alliance of International Recognised Members of Sport (AIMS) where the process and criteria for membership and IOC recognition were explained.

In summary, there is much competition around the globe for sporting events and products and there are many new sports emerging and growing quickly who are gaining new members quickly and have strong commercial reach. It's very competitive market that we exist in!

It emphasised the importance of why bowls as a sport needs to improve how are events presented and broadcast globally, the need to grow our brand, profile and membership globally and by doing so, I can foresee more opportunities for all bowlers across the world and will improve the positioning of bowls.