

THE PROS AND CONS OF DUAL MEMBERSHIP

In the March 2013 issue of Queensland Bowler magazine, John Dawson, head of Bowls Queensland's Umpire Committee, wrote about the benefits and pitfalls of dual membership

Having a number of players being members of more than one club can be a lifesaver for some country clubs.

In fact, without multiple memberships many Queensland clubs would simply cease to exist. There is also the obvious advantage for the really keen bowler in that they can compete in numerous championships.

However, apart from the cost of belonging to more than one club, there is another price to pay!

A dual member can only represent the club in the district Champion of Champions that they declare for.

If you are a member of more than one club in Queensland, you must declare to the appropriate district which club you will represent in the event that you succeed in winning a club championship. This declaration must be made before the start of that competition.

The state conditions of play for Champion of Champions stipulate that no member can represent more than one club in a bowling year.

The penalty is that if a dual member represents a club at the district Champion of Champions other than the club for which they declared, they and the club will be disqualified from all disciplines.

This disqualification applies to the club in all events, singles, pairs and fours, even if that player only competed in one discipline.

To explain the situation more clearly, let's say that I am a member of two clubs, Kallangur in the Moreton Bay District and Tewantin-Noosa in the Sunshine District.

I declare for Tewantin-Noosa and play in the singles championships losing in the first round.

I also play in the fours championship at my other club, Kallangur, with more success and my team goes on the win.

Kallangur, along with all other clubs in the district, enters teams into the district Champion of Champions in all disciplines, with me included in the fours.

As I had already declared for Tewantin-Noosa, my inclusion in the Kallangur team at these championships was illegal and the club would be disqualified in all three disciplines, leaving them no representation at all the Champion of Champions.

Could Kallangur have excluded me from the district event and played a substitute instead? Sadly no! While eligible substitutes are allowed in the competition, a substitute is a proxy for a player, so it would be as though I was still playing in that team.

Here's another scenario, remembering that I had declared for Tewantin-Noosa.

Suppose that after entering the fours Club Championship at Kallangur, I play one bowl in the first end of the first round.

I then realise that if my team were to win the Club Championship they could not, with me as a member, go on to play in the district Champion of Champions.

Too late...I had already become a constituted member of that team and, as at that stage it not possible to have a replacement player; the only option would be to have a substitute for me.

If that team then went on to win the club championship it would still have me included as part of that team, even though I had not contributed to the win.

This means that Kallangur should not enter a team in the fours Champion of Champions. As this club had not entered a defaulting team this would not stop them participating in these championships in the other discipline; singles and pairs.

Sounds complicated? Not really, dual members can play championships at many clubs as they are a member, **but before the championship commences the dual member must have**

declared for just one club and that is the only one they can represent at District or State level for that bowling year.

If I had omitted to declare for a club then the first club that I played for in any club championship in that bowling year becomes my declared club in all disciplines.

I could not, for example, declare for singles at Tewantin-Noosa and the fours at Kallangur.

Some clubs, in an effort to make sure they are not left without representation at the Champion of Champions, have made it a condition of membership that theirs is the only club that a member can declare for.

If dual membership is for you, and then make sure that you are aware of the limitations both for yourself and the clubs that you intend being a member of.

If you play in any championship at other clubs that your declared club, you are preventing that club from being represented in Champion of Champions in that event should your team win.

Before joining more than one club you should also find out if they have any conditions regarding dual membership.