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Commonwealth Youth Games inclusion sets Bowling World Buzzing

News of the inclusion of the sport of tenpin bowling on the Program for the II Commonwealth Youth Games in 2004 has set the bowling world buzzing with excitement.

Messages of support from bowlers, officials and administrators are criss-crossing the planet - from WTBA President, Dr. P.S.Nathan in Malaysia, (site of the XVI Commonwealth Games where the sport made its Commonwealth Games debut), from Jerry Koenig at FIQ headquarters in the USA, from Canada, Malta, Scotland, Guernsey, Singapore, New Zealand, Samoa, India, plus other large nations and small territories within and outside the Commonwealth. Emails, faxes, SMS and mobile phones have been running hot.

The messages have a common theme, united in their enthusiasm for the acknowledgement by the respected Commonwealth Games Federation in endorsing the sport's readmission to its Commonwealth family.

The sport of tenpin bowling features in almost every major international multi-sport event, including World Games, Pan American Games, Asian Games, Central and South American Games, South East and East Asia Games, Caribbean Games, Maccabiah Games, Masters Games, Solidarity Games, World Gay Games, CISS Games, etc.

In August 2002, the sport conducted its first Commonwealth Tenpin Bowling Championship in Stirling, Scotland and during this successful event, a momentous decision was made to form a Federation with a unique bond - the Commonwealth Tenpin Bowling Federation - with the specific goal of staging biannual Championships and ultimately melding these tournaments into the Commonwealth Games program on a permanent basis. The invitation to participate in the II Commonwealth Youth Games in Bendigo is the fulfilment of one of the new Federation's principal goals, reflecting the sport's primary focus on the development of pathways for its youth.

The honour of representing your country at the Commonwealth Games is almost certainly the epitome achievement of a bowler's career - said Australia's Cara Honeychurch, who stunned a sell-out crowd in Kuala Lumpur with a triple-Gold medal performance in 1998 and is now regarded as one of the world's leading professional bowlers on the PWBA Tour. Role models like Cara Honeychurch, and team-mate medallists Maxine Nable, Michael Muir and Frank Ryan - Shalin Zulkifli from Malaysia, Richard Hood from England, the Silver medallist men's doubles team from Bermuda - these and many other elite athletes are an inspiration to young bowlers who now have a unique pathway extended to them - said TBA Chairperson, June Voukolos today.

The Commonwealth Games Federation has set the CYG age limit at 18 years or less as at 31 December 2004. Competitors are eligible if their 18th birthday falls during 2004. Tenpin Bowling is renowned as a gender equal, low-impact, non-contact sport that appeals to the younger generation by requiring mental and physical precision, stamina, and excellent hand-eye coordination and muscle memory. The sport's inclusion in the Commonwealth Youth Games has struck a chord that has united and re-ignited the enthusiasm of bowlers of all ages worldwide.

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