

Debriefing Your Performance

Question:

Lachlan:

I have read a few times in your many articles that we ought to debrief our performance. Can you give me some guide as to what I would be asking myself to gauge the performance, apart from me winning or losing.

Thanks

Response:

This is a simple answer in that you need to know what you set out to achieve in winning.

If I was your coach, a pattern of our discussion may be as follows:

What was your specific goal for the latest competition?

What was the best aspect of your performance at the recent games?

What strategy worked well to be the best part of your singles (or team) game plan?

What was planned for and not done and why?

Why did you win / lose?

What tactical approaches were successful and which were inadequate?

What mental approaches were successful and which were inadequate?

Explain what placed you under pressure?

How will you deal with it (pressure) in future?

How would you rate your performance?

How could you improve on the performance you gave at the recent games?

(Note what was done well, the mistakes and the reasons for them).

The premise behind all this is that you planned how you were to play the game; you set measurable objectives of your performance.

Very few bowlers do this. Elite representative bowlers around the world do it more today than ever before, but it is still not universally done.

Therefore don't be too critical of yourself if this is a new approach to your game.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Question: Repetition In Training

Question:

This same question came from two bowlers from different parts of Australia, so it seems they are reading some of my articles. Here we go.

Response:

Afternoon Gareth:

Interestingly your question was much the same as one given to me this week and the advice I gave the other bowler applies, so here it is copied.

Hi Paul:

You answered your own question with the answer in your statement that using eight bowls appears to have raised intensity and efficient use of time.

I add the notion of increased repetition enabling natural rhythm to occur or be trained.

You can audit a skill, say a minimum length backhand draw, and score out of eight attempts, and each training session do one skill audit from these eight: draw, add a metre draw, draw within a mat length of the ditch, play a metre through, play two metres through, trail a jack, running delivery losing the bowl, drive.

Audit on both backhand and forehand, at minimum and maximum lengths which overall is a total of 32 audits.

One audit per training session means you have 32 sessions to audit each skill once.

If you presently train two times a week, that means it will take you four months to audit all skills that once.

Additionally by using eight bowls you can introduce competition between the two sets of bowls.

And, as we did just last night with two players in competition at training, you have a 'fours team' with your eight bowls to compete against the other bowler and their 'fours team'.

You can modify games as well so one set of bowls has to be all on a backhand for example, which restricts decision making, yet focus increases with that set as no other hand option is available.

Website menu- ...Q & A
TOPIC repetition in training

Refer to my website menus on training and games are fun training for diagrams to assist your own training;
Enjoy the bowls

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Using Players' Expertise

QUESTION

Hi Lach, How are you going mate?

Hope everything is going well with the extra body around? Trust both Sam and bub are doing well!

Looking forward to getting you down at my club for a few (coaching) sessions and to watch us play once you've settled into Dad life again! Let us know as soon as you feel ready, no pressure!

Anyway, wanted to pick your brain if I could?

A really nice guy at our club about a week ago had to withdraw from pennant for the remainder of the season due to a shoulder injury. He has been a club coach and was heavily involved in the under 18 program in group regional sides when I first started 10 years ago.

He has kept himself exceptionally fit and arguably has one of the best techniques in the club! A very competent bowler as well... skipped Division 1 many years ago and has played in our top side for a number of years. Has a heap of experience.

In my opinion, he is one of the best club coaches going around and has an astute understanding of the game. It would be a real shame to lose him because of this injury and it is my priority to keep him around for the remainder of the season as an assistant to me.

My question to you is. In what capacity can I use him on Saturday? How can I give him a role or responsibility that can somehow quell his thirst to still be playing. I feel as if I can use him as a real asset to my coaching regime, but I'm not quite sure how!

Advice would be appreciated

ANSWER

Hi fellow coach:

As I mentioned on the phone in response, my initial reaction is for you to approach him today, with pennant looming on the weekend again, and if you are happy, he becomes the formally appointed team captain for the club top team.

Website menu- ...Q & A
Website TOPIC using expertise

In that formal role he gives the team talk pre-game and again at half time.

He mingles with the skips pre and during the game at the break to sound out how they are progressing with their teams.

He sits in or shares the rink debriefs at the end of the game. He meets with you at some stage before the next selection meeting and gives his insights from his observation of the top team and the players in competition each Saturday.

I think you are fortunate to have someone prepared to do this as everyone feels they have to play week in week out.

I hope you find his contribution is an added asset for your club and its top team.

Talk soon, pal

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

The Role Of A Head Coach

QUESTION:

I am head coach at a club. I listen to what other coaches do / don't do. Expectations (from clubs) vary as do our skills.

What do you think is your role / responsibility as the club coach?

ANSWERS

With a large audience we allowed for ample response as cited below:

- Club:
 - Does a coach need accreditation?
 - Job description / KPI's
 - Influence culture, attitudes
 - Club leadership
 - Setting season goals
 - Guard the interest of the team
 - An employee on a limited tenure
 - Selector or only participate in selection in an advisory capacity
 - Team and player performance appraisal
 - Numerous club executives dumbfounded as to what to expect of the coach

- Players:
 - Understanding skills and a players role
 - Structuring training drill sessions
 - Providing basic technical ski programs
 - Motivate players
 - Captain of the top side in the club
 - Developing new, hidden talent;
 - Assisting new members
 - Analysing opposition and analysing competition venues
 - Be an amateur psychologist
 - Being approachable to players;
 - Coach for every member
 - Take different approaches to different individuals

Website article
The role of a head coach

During the year 2018 I shall have a YouTube clip on my website where I asked a panel of nine elite players / coaches to react to this question also and their views and experiences with clubs, varied no end.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Falling short of the jack

Q: Falling short of the jack

Hi Lachlan:

Could you tell me when bowling with 'hockey stick' bowls, at what point the shoulder is at about 65% occurs.

Is the 65% of the straight line distance from the mat to the jack? ie on a 30 metre end would this be at a point on the curve line of the bowl opposite the 19.55 metre straight line point?

Or

Is the 65% on the actual line that the bowl takes from the mat to the jack?

So on a 30 metre end when the bowl actually runs a total distance of about 32 metres (plus) dependant on the green speed. So, for an approximate run of 32 metres, this would make the shoulder opposite the straight-line distance about 20.8 metres from the jack.

I am constantly falling short of the jack and am actually trying to work out the correct position of the shoulder and bowling to it.

MY RESPONSE

Hello:

You are focusing on the incorrect solution to your issue, falling short of the jack.

Many a bowler I find with an engineering or scientific or (over) analytical approach seeks these types of means as solutions. The attention to the shoulder has merit in understanding where bowls turn, however an efficient fluent technique and importantly, a change in physical behaviour / action is the clue to your issue.

One gentleman who rang last week told me about his shoulder injury and its impact on his level of short bowls - guess what my suggestion to him is yours too.

Simulate your set up posture and see where you have your bowl in pre delivery mode (he had his bowl at about knee height).

Now, with him I advised him to raise the bowl to about hip height (which also meant he stood slightly more upright). The consequence, as he spoke over the phone, is that your pendulum range has now gone about an extra foot from preparation phase to backswing to follow through, and that, is the factor that will ensure your bowl goes the further distance beyond the short delivery distance previously experienced.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A

Falling short of the jack

What I also suggest to bowlers is to go out with eight bowls and do a handful of ends by yourself to get a better sense of rhythm. No value just joining in with others to 'practice.' No skill addition in that.

Know your body (posture,) know your bowl.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

What is pressure?

QUESTION:

What is pressure? It seems bowlers react differently to situations; can you explain?

ANSWER:

Pressure: It could be these examples.

- Adverse reaction to opponent 'fluke' shots
- Many shots down on the head
- Consistent poor bowls or specific type of delivery
- Opponents score extending
- Body language that spells / smells trouble
- Verbal language that spells defeatism
- Score oriented over riding skill execution
- Unrealistic expectations of bowlers and then their teams

Self Knowledge: Pressure might well come because of players inability to respond to these realistically.

- Do you know your general skills?
- What are your specific skills?
- Are you aware of general tactics?
- Are you aware of specific tactics for specific situations?

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
My bowls, your view

How do you think I bowled?

Question:

Hello Lachie:

From your comfy chair watching our pennant game, I was just wondering if you had any feedback on my game last Saturday and our rink in particular?

Was going to have a chat to the Selectors tonight so anything that you suggest, could be kept in confidence if you wish?

Answer:

Hi fellow club member:

This will be a frank response as once anyone asks me my opinion, as apart from my advice, they get it straight from the shoulder;

As you asked, quite honestly, I think you can be the variable to alter the improvement.

Too often you display anxiety, disagreement with the decision or choice of the skip especially when he asks you to deliver a certain bowl.

Selectors choose we players in positions and all we do is perform the role.

Your skip chosen by selectors has to feel he has full commitment and trust in how he chooses to steer the rink.

At times I thought your advice to him was flawed, more importantly, your request to know where the jack is shows a tendency to be preoccupied with you holding shot rather than fulfill the request of the skip. Many a player reckons knowing where the jack is gives them perspective, whereas I am of the view you train yourself to judge exact distances from the mat so in a game you know reasonably well jack to bowl perspective.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A

My bowls, your view

You need to understand how your behavior saps the energy out of him. As a team, I thought the front end, or the lead specifically, lost the standard toward the end of the game, so requiring you to play well as third, which you did, well done.

If you could refrain from being preoccupied about your game performance, accept what the skip requests, as vice captain seek to push and foster the front end to keep achieving, that gives the skip comfort to trust his team mates. He should not have to concede to your pushiness to 'keep the peace'.

I felt you struggled with the skip, as his form is not as good as can be and I wonder if he blames others in that mood. We all go through phases of bad form and it is how you address it. I think he would benefit from a bit of direction toward confidence building. He, in fact, walked over to me frustrated by your presence. What I told him I tell you - selectors chose him, so take that responsibility.

Finally take credit as a rink for securing the win for the side.

This past year I have been sought by clubs and group sides and individuals to provide training and in every case I said I would focus on 'back end team skill training' - tactics and people management and the communications apparent in that.

You and the club or clubs could go down that learning track; again well done as a rink, you played ok, the side won, all that counts really.

For the future games my suggestion is be yourself, enjoy, accept mistakes will occur, gee up the other rink members, don't advise future skips unless he asks as he is an assured player (as we all should be) who knows what he is going to do with the next delivery. Be really encouraging to the skip. Oh and trust your good technique, it works well, invest in it.

Thanks for asking my input and I hope I am not too blunt, though upfront.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Clubs using statistics

Question:

Hi Lach:

Would love to hear from you or anyone on success stories with a push towards statistical analysis in coaching and selection, perhaps even more importantly, how they were able to “sell the benefits” to their prospective clubs and then “continue to sell the benefits” ongoing.

Response:

Hi Rob:

As we have worked together you know some players are prepared to keep statistics as a tool to guide their performance;

Wherever I have coached it is a prerequisite of the top side(s) they keep stats. as a guide to their team performance, their personal performance and finally to assist with credible selection.

Last year at MCC our three head coaches and chairman of selectors required measures of all bowlers and it was begrudgingly undertaken by players.

Now we no longer have two of the three coaches and no remaining chairman. So what goes, measuring performance across the club?

However these recent Saturdays, observing while Sam competes, I noticed the skips in the top sides, two of whom are selectors, kept stats. on the players in the rink and that tool was used to inform the players of their performance.

Two clubs, Donvale and Upway Tecoma both require all players to measure their deliveries and I understand that is still applicable. But they have strong people steering their clubs and know the value of recording.

That is the ultimate difference, the strength and character of the leadership at the club in knowing the benefit of measurement and enforcing it as a tool for the club overall.

Thanks.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Game Plans Need Margin Of Error

Game plans, too many questions

How much margin for error should your game plan allow for?

REPLY

In years gone by, Chris O'Meagher, the mighty Bear, used to urge me to lower the boom on mat length (ML) effective bowl standards.

The table below shows the declining effective ML skill level.

My response to him was I hang in with the ML effective bowl measure and lower the expectation which is in line with the table of content.

As you see we can gauge performance standards from premier to division seven level.

Next aspect of course is the expectation for every delivery.

Over many years, elite bowlers have said to me their expectation of the first and second delivery was a resting toucher or within one bowl of the jack.

They were aghast that I said only three-quarters of the front end team bowls need to meet a required objective.

And I did that, allowing for one poor delivery, so as to leave (emotional) room for human error.

Watch any elite player, or any skip, or a selector, or a coach react to a player's shithouse bowl and in nearly every case they display irritation, anger.

Idiots!!!

Never allowed for human error (except maybe if it is their own delivery).

If every delivery has to be 'perfect' then when bowl one is unsuccessful we are F*#&-D as no way we can meet our team front end game plan objective of every bowl counting.

Pennant fours team rink

% Statistics standards: the figure in brackets is the number bowls deemed Mat Length (ML) or effective delivery from a total of 42 bowls delivered over 21 ends as accepted pennant performance objective at stated levels.

Website column www.lachlantighebowls.com
Game Plans having an error margin

	LEAD	Second	Third	Skip
Premier league	50 (21)	50 (21)	45 (19)	45 (19)
Division 1.	40 (17)	40 (17)	33 (14)	33 (14)
Division 2	36 (15)	36 (15)	30 (12)	30 (12)
Division 3.	33 (14)	33 (14)	26 (11)	26 (11)
Division 4	32 (13)	32 (13)	30 (12)	30 (12)
Division 5.	30 (12)	30 (12)	30 (12)	30 (12)
Division 7	24 (10)	24 (10)	24 (10)	24 (10)

(No previous recording at Div. 6 from any source, so unable to have set objectives).

Lachlan Tighe, 2021

Facing Pennant Relegation

Question:

With a month to go in the season our club has all our competition teams facing relegation unless there is a marked change in results, hence performance. Can you meet us to provide advice on what might be done to address this issue?

RESPONSE:

Rest assured you are not alone addressing the pennant competition position issue facing your teams. Only last week I know one club held a special meeting by their coach to address:

- Selection, coaching, practice, attitude, culture

So to all of you in attendance tonight I ask....What could / would YOU do now:

As a team member of valued character;

As a selector, to counter our feeling of despair, demise, losing trend, relegation and to influence the acceptable successful standards and behaviours of a winning team?

Now, let's move to history, a history that had success taking you from division two to division one.

What did we do well as that team?

What did you do well individually in and for that team?

Heading that we are 4 rounds to go.

What have you seen as good in this team this year?

What have you done well in this team?

Honesty here. What is a specific deficiency you have as a competitor that you could address for the benefit of the rink and team.

What have you done over and above the 2015 success to justify a division one place?

Having concluded that discussion session may I add these to the list of things affecting success.

Selection & Teams

Attitude has an affect on teams. It is observed in the moan, the body language, the energy level. One negative trait is enough to influence (morale

Website menu- Q&A
Confronting club pennant relegation

of) the team. Selectors need to identify this, to negate or eliminate it, as consequences are brutal.

Team spirit ??? A team is a unit, with a collective task, that no one individual can do alone. Teams can achieve success even if their members have no / little liking for one another. Fulfilling the task of the team is the drive and satisfaction to successful teams. Working together the team can succeed.

We feel stronger because of who is around us in the team. And, when it all goes pear shaped everyone knows you are the one who gets us all (attitudinally) back on the bike. Be that team member who reminds us what we need to do to get back to winning. (3)

Winning is a Mindset (as is losing)

Attitude about the competition environment – cultivate a positive outlook to the conditions, note the elements that distract you and neutralize them e.g. greens are slow (shit) to judge the speed better; windy day to play the wind assisted hand; change the story the outlook because the conditions are there, they remain so better for you to readjust the attitude to allow you control by that shifted mindset.

Doubt & belief - a clash of mental control;

Concentration is the ability to focus on the task and to be impervious to all outside distractions.

Behaviour under pressure - Doubt is mandatory. Losing is optional.

Where the mind goes everything else follows. As Safuan and I did, see pressure as a challenge.

May I summarise the session overall-

Can you be an energizer rather than an energy sapper in our team?

If others falter in the game will you step up to support them, us.

Will you be invested positively Saturday in the team at all times?

It is smart to invest ***yourself*** in making the team better.

Lower the boom on false expectations, let the statistics tell you what to achieve to succeed.

Plan to succeed, practice makes the player, makes the team.

Oh practice that has a purpose.

Which is, what is our target with four rounds to go?

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

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What Is Mental Toughness?

QUESTION:

Hi Lachlan, we all experience the fate of losing, yet few of us know how to fight through the contest. Do you have any idea on what is mental toughness?

And, can we train for it?

Mark

RESPONSE:

Hello Mark:

Every week we hear coaches, players and commentators on TV and in the newspapers say their code of professional sport is mostly played above the shoulders.

No different our sport, bowls.

Simply stated for me, mental toughness is being able to be in control (of yourself).

Great competitors know how to respond emotionally to problems and crises that can arise. They become challenged, inspired and more determined to succeed.

Mental toughness controls the ideal performance state, so how well you perform depends on how successful you are at maintaining the right mental attitude within yourself. The goal is not to triumph over your opponent, but to obtain control over yourself.

Everyone makes mistakes somewhere, sometime. They are a part of life. They occur too often in sport.

Mistakes are not the issue, but your inability to do anything about them remains the issue.

Mistakes infer a high degree of pressure.

One of the lessons learnt in my time in elite bowls (as coach) is the need to take pressure off the player. Players rarely perform better when they feel under pressure. They perform well by their ability to take the pressure off themselves and concentrate on the moment or the present.

Succeeding in bowls, becoming the best you can be, often carries with it a price. Time, money, dedication, commitment, personal sacrifice and frustration, all combine to challenge your goals, your motivation and there will be disappointments and doubts on your ability.

That is the test of mental toughness.

What was that song years back...when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

Website menu- ...Q & A
TOPIC: What is mental toughness?

Now in response to the second part of your question:

Winning is important and personal.

An obsession with winning can be self-defeating. Your contest should be directed solely toward performing to the very best of your ability at the time. And you have a measure of that level of performance. Doing your very best at any moment needs to be your focus and goal. Winning comes as a consequence of that approach.

To perform at your best, guess what?

You have to work hard to attain and develop those skills applicable to bowls, it is important to repeat and reinforce those skills with regular coach driven intense training.

Repetition is fundamental to all a high level of skills, realize that and put it into practice, and you will not be surprised at how much you achieve in bowls.

Repetition however, requires a level of persistence, a level of mental toughness to work hard when it seems more like hard work.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

‘Encouraging We Coaches’

QUESTION:

A game plan applies in all modern sport, yet our sport does not adopt such approaches. As fellow coaches what game plan model do you think we could have for us to use in pennant (team) bowls?

ANSWERS:

Numerous responses to the question were provided below at a forum I hosted.

- One club has a generic plan for each division / side:
 - Mat length is the measure.
 - Lead and second draw to mat length.
 - 3rds and skips to not lose more than two.
 - Divide 21 ends into sections – 4 x 5; last end.
 - Drills based on short and long ends drawing to zones.
- Another club states:
 - Simple goal – beat the bowl.
 - Lead focus on importance of jack rolling.
- A third club approach – Land the Mat.
 - Front ends role is not to get shot – set the foundation.
 - Of the first four bowls – two to finish behind.

Other input included:

- Mat length (ML) as the measure of acceptable draw bowl;
- Front end one or two bowls in the head;
- Back end to keep shots lost per any end 2 or 3 shots maximum;
- Break pennant game into 5-end mini games;
- Last 5 ends at one club is the shoot out mentality;
- Elementary process always play long or short ends;
- Beat the shot bowl;
- Build a head;
- Take what won last week as a base for the next week;
- Consider our home club advantages and play to them; use statistics we keep to decide on selection and the game plan;
- Always be aware of the side scoreboard;
- No rink plans exist at one club;
- Club has a game plan for all 4 rinks and it varies on venue and opposition;
- One club expects top side skip to have their own game plan;
- Employ strategies during the game to negate the opposition;

Website article
Game plans in bowls

- If game plan to apply heeds whether there is a break halftime, the momentum at the time, the level of communication happening out there;
- Set a target of 23 shots per rink and keep opposition to 21 shots;
- Avoid multiple shots lost;
- Win more ends than the opposition;
- Divide the pennant game into 5 sets and win more sets than opposition;
- Front end has a measurable role of 2 in the head and 2 behind;
- Front end to be at least 2nd shot;
- Lee Schraner was quoted as one who had team practice the plan and Lee was renowned for skill at maximum length;
- One club always starts long as the opposition can only go shorter than that which we know is the response;
- Play opposition lead's hand at opposition venue as they know their preferences;
- Always re-evaluate the game plan at the break, or if no break after 10 ends;
- One club has a series of 4 game plans to use for away games and a different one for home games;
- The club has a measurable target as priority of the game plan;
- Game plan directed by the coach;
- Game plans set by each of the skips.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Using the placement of the mat to advantage

Using Mat Placement To Advantage, Taking Training Into Competition

QUESTION

Hi Lachie;

I trust all is well with the new bowls season.

I have returned from my month's holiday fully relaxed and ready to prove to myself (and others) that I am more than just a 'part time' Div. 1 pennant bowler. I still consider myself good enough to play at Premier grade, but am regularly frustrated by work commitments and other circumstances to demonstrate my potential.

Nonetheless, I continuously try to make best of whatever opportunity I have to play bowls and improve my standing at both Club and State / National level, although consistency continues to be my downfall.

Strategically though, I am always thinking about gaining 'that' competitive advantage over my opponent by thinking differently to conventional bowls strategy.

In this regard, do you have a view or any anecdotal evidence around mat placement. That is, when playing maximum length I always place the mat on the T, rather than just in front.

But when playing minimum, is there an advantage from playing to the centre of the green or from the centre to the ditch? I suspect the answer lies in personal preference or after weighing up the strengths / weaknesses of my opponent. Placing the mat on the T allows my opponent to find his line, given the consistent mat placement, whereas moving the mat up the green might give me an advantage, if I regularly practice long / short ends.

I also notice that the good / national bowlers tend to play long ends from near the T rather than on the T. I presume this is to nullify any perceived strengths of driving the jack over a full length.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A

Using the placement of the mat to advantage

Any advice / information in this regard would be appreciated.
Many thanks

RESPONSE

Welcome back mate:

Thanks for seeking my view which is all it is of course.
I react in order of the email content as that is easier for an old bugger like me.

In my mind, you are the only one having to prove something to yourself as a skilled bowler. As soon as you are attempting to prove to others you make assumptions and one is they know how to assess you.

Ultimately wins are the gauge and anyone who gets a gig in a national, even a state side, gets selected not as a pennant player, as a successful singles player, sometimes an odd pairs / fours, but the event would have to be an elite level event.

I like your self confidence saying you would make a premier pennant player. Good ambition, however, others who work and may even be in your age bracket, compete at that level.

First you have to join a premier league club which requires commitment. Then you have to set your skills set, so as to embarrass the selectors into seriously considering you. Then, you need to give over time on weekends / evenings to compete in serious events such as Group championships, profile tournaments, club singles (and win one / some) to gauge your progress as a regular premier pennant player.

I am of a view that Div.1 pennant and above is the nursery for elite players so I would not sell Div.1 too short, noting no doubt, there is an elevated mindset as you move to premier level. You enter serious events to foster that serious mindset and you damn well choose playing partners who enhance that mindset, otherwise that is wasteful as well.

On consistency, refer my latest column (16 Oct. titled Consistent Competitive Formula) on my website in the what's new menu as it answers that very question.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A

Using the placement of the mat to advantage

As you well know from my coaching experience, I never allowed players to say maximum was anything other than the mat on that two-metre spot and the jack had to be, at worst, only a metre from the two-metre spot at the other end. Anything less is not maximum, it is nearly maximum and nearly is not good enough.

Now that is a mindset you have to gain to be much, much better; in other words be intolerant of mediocrity. I don't coach a lot of people as the vast majority are happy to accommodate mediocrity, whilst wanting to be, in many cases, an elite bowler. It doesn't happen.

Same approach with minimum; it has to be the mat either on the two-metre spot or at the 21-metre mark, if that is our minimum up the green. The jack has to be no more than a metre beyond that 21-metres to be acceptable.

Why? Simply because mediocre bowlers play medium and my experiences, all recorded, validate that notion. Taking the mat up the rink a bit is OK if, and only if, you knew from training where 21 metres was at any length you set the mat from. In coaching I use the pegs and rink numbers on the side as a tool for the players to know the respective 21 metre marks from a set position up the green. Again, that is a mindset I would instill, did instill to those players wanting success at the highest level.

You know me quite well so it would not surprise you to read me saying forget the opponent and know your strengths, work on maintaining them, know your weaknesses and work to reduce or eliminate them. If I said to you or anyone, declare your level of competence in these seven skills - communication, fitness, mental, sensory, tactical, team, technical - can you measure / gauge the level you are at for some or all. I have no doubt moving the mat may be a ploy, but in general I think dominating at minimum and maximum will get you over the line. Remember you only have to win an event by one shot.

Your final note on where good / perceived bowlers place the mat caused me to laugh. Danny, who assisted me at Alphington coaches workshop has said, may even have said it that day, that he feels the good bowlers don't think much and base everything on the sheer technical prowess they possess, even work on. I agree with him in that these bowlers

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Using the placement of the mat to advantage

would not rate highly on my self appraisal form; and, years ago chatting to well known international bowlers they played set lengths as much to be consistent and to entertain the audience, wow!!!

We should chat, have a red, and work out how to get your success at a higher level.

I am as near as the phone mate.

Regards

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Coaching bowlers via remote means

Coaching Bowlers From A Distance

Question:

Hi Lachlan:

I have received your book over here in WA. Thanks. The question I want to ask is do you ever do a form of remote coaching for bowlers like me on the other side of our country?

Response:

Afternoon Rob:

My Elbows squad numbers 25, myself included, and for many of them my coaching is of a remote nature, given nine of them are national representatives from overseas, for are interstate players.

They have a few common denominators, but one is...commitment to learn, to be better.

Each year I reckon I get about 20 plus requests from individuals to have some form of coaching, remote or hands on. In every case, I would ask them to consider these questions I pose:

Why do you want coaching?

What are your strengths in bowls?

Set out their goals (sample on the website), even a calendar of commitments to training & events (also on website).

Identify their technical skill (on website) and maybe even do a self appraisal (again website).

Then we get around to sessions.

More often than not, only about 3-4 go to the effort as my requests are too daunting.

So I leave all that with you too.

I have done a few YouTube coaching videos and for the future the website manager, Terry O'Neil, and I are conferring about video interviews on YouTube and the website.

Otherwise enjoy the website and I now have a new menu ...Q&A.. on the site. Thanks

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Skip skills “Leadar”

(‘*Leadar*’ my acronym to describe concisely a snapshot of an ideal skip)

Leadership

The best skips are those marshaling their team, using their team skills as tools to success, giving the teammates the opportunity to amaze, to inspire fellow teammates, rather than a skip leading as a pacesetter who never allows others ‘in on the action.’

Exemplary

Energizer for and of the team
Sporting behaviour
Commitment to excellence
Person in whom the team trusts

Analytical: Takes in information

Team skills, conditions, length, hand, scoreboard, player behaviours
Uses sensory attributes and skills
Uses brain as a sifter mechanism
Trouble shooting in the heat of battle - situation awareness today

Decision maker

Trained, planned, instinctive, clear, positive
Trouble shooting in the heat of battle - maintaining, chasing, attacking, defending, momentum

Action

Technical skill, game plan, focus
Maximizing player skill contributions
Uses both body muscles and brain in a relaxed manner

Responsible, Accountable

In control of the team; a bowler, team member, does not have to be physically gone (absent) to be out of the team. If it can be observed by skip during the game a player is bored; negative-resentful-disruptive-passive-obstinate-downcast-rattled, they have already left the team. They are passengers, that attitude to be offloaded, that is confronted,

**Website menu – teams
skip skills, the team leader within bowls**

immediately by skip. Or player will be, offloaded, in post game review.

Sources

Thirteen authors as featured in my website articles & papers shared from other coaches.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

*Bowls directory : Web column
'the view from the mat', January.2017*

Measuring Is A Team Thing

Question:

Good morning Lachlan:

About three seasons ago we introduced the "Mat Length" measurement into our pennant teams. Apart from the obvious vagaries with skip interpretations it appears to have worked well.

However, I would like to get your thoughts on matters that have crept into the "system."

Two division one skips recently recruited, refuse to use the system and just give an opinion on how each player performed. This would appear to fly in the face of all the other pennant skips (and the other 2 Div.1 skips) who carry out the selectors wishes. It appears the selectors do not want to upset the new recruited skips. In my eyes they compromise the whole system.

One other issue is one particular skip in the No.2 side has the idea that in order for a third and skip to obtain a "tick" they have to alter the head by either adding or obtaining the shot. One wonders how they would rate a bowl placed for position. Apparently forget finishing within a mat length of the kitty with this idea.

As the former chairman of selectors and a club coach and having possession of your book "Winning Becomes You" (a great asset to me) I seek your opinion.

Response:

Hello Richard:

Ah ha! The vagaries of those who play for 'us' as team members.

A few things:

A club here in Melbourne started recording two seasons back and all three side players are involved and they now know their necessary level of player performance at ML to enable them to succeed as they had two sides promoted and one retained their division.

Very, very few bowlers and less number of clubs worldwide record performance, so your two skips are in the vast majority. However, Schuback and Bryant, as two of the MOST successful players ever, both knew their performance level because they recorded it.

Now the hairy one. Culture and selectors: If the club agreed on a system then bugger me have the new skip recruits comply or at least not be chosen as

***Bowls directory : Web column
'the view from the mat', January.2017***

skips as they do not reflect the leadership. Bit like Tony Abbott as our prime minister since deposed with his liberal party. Sounds as if selectors have weak knees, not unusual.

And you are correct about the number 2 skip / third- agreed there is a degree of subjectivity in declaring a delivery is effective if and when it requires weight and a near miss can be an effective bowl (without result), however all draw deliveries are measured within ML of wherever it is these two players are asked / choose to draw to.

Ultimately my ML concept is a tool to keep our mind on the game and to aspire to a best standard knowing what is our best over the season.

In an hour I am off to my club to coach two premier league bowlers who sought me out as their personal coach and one of the two made the approach only this Tuesday. He has shared his goals with me, done a self appraisal, shared his game plan and given me debriefs of three major events he played in during 2015.

And, he has kept his ML performances at premier league for this season so far, all done without my being his coach.

I asked him about this and he said he has followed my approach for two years but was uneasy about approaching me to be even better.

My comment to him...be selfish in your pursuit to be as good as you can be.

Finally, two clubs have asked me to come and conduct a session over February as their top sides loom toward finals. My theme in all cases will be about team first second and last.

Hope that is of some benefit.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Coping with competition pressure

QUESTION:

As a Division one skip, I feel frustrated that I am not as productive in conversions compared to my opposing skip in playing the big pressure shot; what pressure training for skips do other coaches use?

ANSWERS:

- Train with intensity.
- Have a purpose each session.
- Sets up heads to experiment with, in readiness for pennant.
- Expectation is for 5 conversions in a pennant game.
- Prepare by competing in singles.
- Is the expectation exceeding the reality.
- Visualize delivery.
- Head reading and pressure training.
- Practice on the task at hand.
- Practice having the distractions.
- Conduct club session on avoiding verbal distractions.
- Session on identifying our sources of being flustered.
- Training to deal with being flustered.
- Learn to energize yourself.
- Learn who and what saps your energy.
- Repeat simulated pressure training.
- Score the training to register your capacity.
- Tangible rewarding the training effort.
- Analyse how and what you are missing in converted shots and replay in training.
- Include training of the mind in sessions.
- Training to acquire mental and delivery skill will result in confidence.
- Self talk the delivery in training then into the game.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Pre-Game Roll Up

QUESTION:

Hi Lachie;

I attended the bowls' coaching workshop at Mount Martha where you did a presentation to coaches in early September.

My question to you concerns roll ups before pennant, or any event for that matter.

Would this suggestion of mine make sense to you? Instead of everyone on the rinks, just drawing to the jack (leads excepted), each player each end has one draw to the Jack and then do something useful like playing a position bowl to the skips feet, playing a bowl off centre to the skips feet, playing through the jack, drawing to the ditch etc., skip directed by third?

Thanks John

ANSWER:

Hello John;

Sorry for the delay of response as I must have overlooked your email earlier. Oldtimers maybe.

Anyway, there is nothing that says you have to do anything specific in the roll up prior to the event.

Traditionally in Victorian pennant and likewise elsewhere, from my bowls experience, we all hurl the two bowls to where the lead, ours or the opposition, rolled the jack regardless what team position we are playing that day.

What I see over time is one bowl one hand, one bowl the other hand and the same on the return end.

A few bowlers and I mean only a few in all my years, give it much thought beyond the above.

As coach, what I have persuaded some of the squad members to do is two deliveries on the same hand that end and set your line on the adjacent rink peg both times. If the bowl goes narrow both times you have the knowledge to take relevant grass as your grass line was a constant.

In addition, watch the various lines where all other bowlers deliver their bowls and see if you can presume where these bowls will end up so

Website menu- Q&A
Pre game roll up (bowls)

you are using their deliveries to switch on. Then, on the return roll up end

apply the same practice / principle you did in roll up end one.

John, you may remember the brief session on the green where I had the bowler tell a partner where they felt their bowl was going to finish whilst that bowl was still only halfway up the green.

I added another aspect where the non-bowler partner had to inform the bowler where the bowler's delivery would finish up whilst that bowl was also in progress.

All these are tools to make us aware early on what to expect of the conditions on the day.

UHope that helps.

Thanks

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Why do clubs need coaches?

To answer this I referred to many of the topics I have presented to clubs over a decade and all the topics display a skill a coach may / should have to provide quality service to the club, to the committed individual bowler.

These are the broad topic headings, the content I conducted was either in the form of a discussion presentation to club members or a practical program as befits the headings that follow:

Bowling fundamentals
Club culture
Coaching coaches
Coach adverts
Coaches KRA
Committee proposals
Debriefing performance
Event initiatives
Finals
Game day, team talk
Game plans a lead in to success
Goals, a WIP
Mental skill
Planning success
Pre-season talks, plan
Reviews
Selection
Standards - measured
Structured training - developing skill of a bowler
Structured training - pennant positions
Team, teamwork is related to success
Workshops- planning, training

I am sure clubs would be delighted to have many if not all these services from their head coach.

Who else could provide that array of skill service?

Website menu- Q & A
Topic: Why clubs need coaches

OBSERVATION

ONE

Fascinating to read after 18 years of recorded presentation (practical & formal) the absence of invitations to cover these areas:

- Tactical skills
- Role of each player in a pennant team
- Skips and their ideal attributes
- Selection criteria
- Selectors, taking responsibility
- Goal setting.

And that in a few of the earlier headings above, viz, mental skill, club culture, measuring performance, there were only one, or two, programs in all those years.

TWO

Reference my website - these are the articles I have done which as headings seem to add weight to the need for clubs to have coaches.

- The Energy & Attitude coach;
- Alphabet on coaching;
- Exerting influence as coach;
- Coaching; what we learn;
- What you the bowler need;
- Deliberate practice is intensity;
- Self appraisal, bowler.

These handful of headings listed within the two observations is what I would prefer to present to change attitudes toward the need for clubs to secure a head coach.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Weight Control Drills

QUESTION:

Hi Lachlan:

I have been watching your videos and they are great. Do you have a video on controlled weight drill. One that I can click on to view.

Keep up the good work.

Regards Pat

ANSWER:

Evening pat:

One of the videos you make reference to is titled ‘Royal Take 2: Body Postures.

To some extent that video focuses on varying weight as it shows how to go from medium to minimum to maximum in the set up of your body posture.

Next march I shall do another 20 videos having already started the script for such and recruited six premier league bowlers and coaches to participate and interact.

I shall check to ensure we do one video clip on controlled weight.

I have done numerous sessions at clubs since August and weight control drills feature except for one thing, the players lose composure and forget all about the discipline in the drill when it comes to a game.

Then it is a mental skill drill as a priority.

Just these last few days I conducted some sessions the purpose of which was training with intensity and a few good bowlers joined the few elite bowlers I invited to attend.

The good bowlers had little idea of how to adjust weight until such time as I explored what it felt like when they delivered so as to be able to feel how to adjust.

Website menu- ...Q & A
TOPIC – weight control drills

Good bowlers seem to be technically capable without realizing what and how they do it.

Elite bowlers are a cog above that in sensory awareness and in the main, younger.

Hope that helps,

Thanks

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Head Coach Performance

QUESTION:

How well did the club head coach perform?

ANSWER:

I found many reactions to the question and much of it shows a lack of communication from committees about stated performance criteria versus the expectations from many within the club. Here is a list of some of those reactions:

Too many players at clubs are somewhat critical of the head coach. This would be due to player expectations of what they perceive the coach doing. Some members perceive the coach being solely there to coach the club top side, others in the club actually expect personalized coaching.

None of the coaches in attendance ever had a committee prescribe their role (in fact sounded as if the coach spelt it out as they experienced the role) and certainly nothing ever went public within the club to say this is what our head coach will do as their responsibility to the club members.

The reaction from the room on their experience as a player with regard to their head coach was generally quite favourable.

It was felt that coaches and selectors need to build a relationship together. Comments flowed on the dual role of coach and selector in striving to get players to commit to training. Most club players feel they are training by being in social matches on other days hence no need to attend, say, Thursday training. One idea was to organize pennant practice on Thursday training. Or, make it more specific to the pennant game. One view was that training requirement need only really apply to the top side and maybe the second side if you are at a large club with numerous pennant sides. Perhaps the role of the coach is to guide players to train with a better approach, which is transferred at pennant.

One coach shared his pre-season practice approach that had players compete in positions different from their previous season to see how they performed in new roles.

Website article
Head coaches performance

One coach felt it important to keep a record of what they did with individual players so as to be able to offer continuity of service when the player returned for more assistance.

The coaches in the room valued the support from their own top side players who could and would assist in training.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Coaching Career ?

QUESTION:

Hi Laughlin:

Due to recent small achievements I feel that my goals and dreams need an overhaul.

A coaching opportunity has presented itself to me so I'd like to re-qualify and pursue this dream.

I would like to make a difference to my club, my game and bowls in general and along the way also contribute to helping others achieve their best for themselves and their club or clubs.

Having had Premier League experience as a skip and won a few titles I believe I want to take the next step to coach and also fulfill my dream to represent Victoria in the over 60's when I get to be that old!

Can you help me, or advise me how and what I need to do.
Kind regards.

RESPONSE:

Great chance to make an impact Mike so go for it.

Anyway, more than happy to chat and even meet to hear your approach, share some insights, share some training sessions I have on computer, though a geek at my website will have an enormous amount of material to ponder and do your way.

As well, don't sell short your prior swimming experience to remind you how the best in that spot went about improving.

This month I am training Fridays from 10:30 a.m., where about three head-club coaches and four players are digesting my approach for them to consider and apply their own approaches back at their clubs.

Not sure if you are around but feel free to attend and 'entry fee' is a bottle of red.

And to get your mind into the future, list what you have done in competitive bowls, some strengths of yourself as a bowler / coach, and importantly, what is the goal for you as a coach.

So champ I shall leave the ball in your court and feel free to chase me up as love sharing the passion.

Regards.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

***Bowls website : Q&A
A COACHING CAREER***

The Keys To Success In Bowls

QUESTION

Lachlan:

I am at a point where I feel I can commit to being much, much better as a bowler, even to the extent of getting identified as an elite bowler.

What do you see in elite bowlers that sets them apart as they aspire to being elite bowlers?

RESPONSE

Hi:

Sounds to me like you are thinking about setting your sights higher on success in bowls. Good for you.

You compete against good level bowlers at Division One already and within those ranks you happen to have a handful of current and former national players. As good as these players are they had to make a commitment to achieve that standard, that status and for some the word champion is apt to describe them as bowlers.

Why are they champions ?

It would not surprise me at all if they did many of the points I make as follows:

- Plan, evaluate and set new goals as meet each level of standards.
- Develop leadership skill.
- Committed not involved
- Stick to the basics (of skill excellence)
- Identify areas / skills that require attention to excellence
- Plan of action to improve those areas
- Decision making skills refined
- Develop the will / program in practice to train at an intensity of best performance
- And also eliminate disruptive elements that can hinder performance levels
- Develop self confidence by stretching skill levels
- Honest - mirror & window analogy- seek feedback, appraise themselves
- Foster a positive attitude toward team mates
- Use coach / others to develop new ideas for performance

Website menu- Q&A
Success in Sport (bowls)

- Know their skills and when to use them
- Know and use relaxation techniques
- Seek a role model (not necessarily within the sport) to emulate
- Self-development opportunities
- Work on all forms of skill beyond technical

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Training For Skips

QUESTION:

As a top side club skip, I feel frustrated that I am not as productive in conversions compared to my opposing skip in playing the big pressure shot.

What pressure training for skips do other coaches use?

ANSWERS:

We asked our forum attendees for responses:

- Train with intensity;
- Have a purpose each session;
- Sets up heads to experiment with in readiness for pennant;
- Expectation is for five conversions in a pennant game;
- Prepare by competing in singles;
- Is the expectation exceeding the reality;
- Visualise delivery;
- Head reading and pressure training;
- Practice on the task at hand;
- Practice having the distractions;
- Conduct club session on avoiding verbal distractions;
- Session on identifying our sources of being flustered;
- Training to deal with being flustered;
- Learn to energise yourself;
- Learn who and what saps your energy;
- Repeat simulated pressure training;
- Score the training to register your capacity;
- Tangible rewarding the training effort;
- Analyse how and what you are missing in converted shots and replay in training;
- Include training of the mind in sessions;
- Training to acquire mental and delivery skill will result in confidence;
- Self talk the delivery in training then into the game.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Website menu – Q&A
Bowls club culture

Hi Lachlan:

As head coach at a bowls club we are having member issues around pennant and commitment levels from too many.

I'm inviting them all to the club next Thursday, as I'd like to address the playing group and give my thoughts on how we're going both on the green, but more importantly off the green. This will also be an opportunity to share their thoughts directly to myself.

The areas I'd like to discuss are:

- *Selection*
- *Coaching*
- *Practice*
- *Attitude / Negativity from bowlers*
- *Culture*

Have you faced similar issues and have you any input, advice, on my approach to addressing the club issu.

Thanks

Well coach:

Join the ranks of so many others of us who take on that club coach role.

The areas you chose to cover I agree with, and some of the content within each may be:

- Selection (are members handing in stats. or votes post game; disgruntled yet not prepared to register a performance rating on themselves or their team).
- Coaching (are you providing structured training, are you advising players who are in a form slump).
- Practice (do you foster team practice as rinks with skip).
- Attitude / Negativity from bowlers (how evident is the sniping, the energy sappers, the members withdrawing from teams at late notice because they object to who they are listed to play with, or not happy with their new position).
- Culture (what is it you are seeing around the club that is good and bad, and, have you a vision for the club).

Website menu – Q&A
Bowls club culture

If I was a new recruit, I would ask myself what is the culture I expect at the club?

A successful club in the prime competition league with standards, characters and behaviours that fostered this constant goal.

I expect the culture to be evident in/ by:

Habits of training that reinforced the playing approach for the winning standards.

Everyone knew what it is to win; and we can measure it (process, pressure).

Players of character whose whole being was to motivate fellow team members, be the one others trusted, that others wanted in the team.

Players who invested in the team to make it an even better unit.

Players who would be such magnets as core leadership of the pennant teams I would be desperate to be beside in the team.

Feeling stronger just simply seeing who else is in this team.

I thought I would see a hell of a lot of energisers, players who commit to the team, to the standards, to the preparation we want for a successful team.

I thought the energy sappers, the passive passengers, would be kept low in influence, profile, on the radar.

I wish to know I was around others who when we lost, looked in the mirror (together) and, also could look out and praise others in the team.

Behaviours from leadership that knew to reward, redirect, reprimand accordingly to retain club standards.

Hoping to be in a team that works together to succeed; that when one of us falls short, literally in bowls, the teammates would be there to help (energise) because if you feel and see and hear the strength of that supportive team mate if fortifies that player and then the team.

That is exceptional, maybe a hint unrealistic, but what I would savour if it existed.

One suggestion, though bound to cause confrontation, is to ask members in attendance to put their hands up as you call out each team in the club and ask:

What could / would YOU do now as a team member of character to counter our demise, relegation, loss, or to influence the acceptable successful standards?

Boy that would throw them.

Website menu – Q&A
Bowls club culture

One final thought from me in your role as coach: Maybe see the role of the coach as being the guardian of the team's (club) best interests:

3Rs _ reward, redirect, reprimand.

Hope that helps.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017.

Why practice?

I actually am posing the question to you the reader.
Probably I should restate the question as “Why you should practice.”
Let me provide an answer in a different way by citing an elite state player from interstate who came to Melbourne for a weekend of coaching with me ,and our **Elbows** squad.
Here is his reaction to that weekend of training:
‘...Yesterday blew me away! I have not enjoyed practice, or training as you keep telling us Lach.
And that skill enhancement stuff we did. Maybe in my early days of bowls when this new sport thrilled me have I enjoyed myself so much.
My head hurts from the intensity of the weekend. And that is due to the great atmosphere that each **Elbows** member contributes.
And that caterpillar routine, wow!
I have never felt more at home, even among my state team, with a bowls squad of dedicated players as I experienced over the weekend.
And your input and energy Lach, as coach, was vibrant and being on the receiving end was fabulous.
But your willingness to have each squad member add to or contribute or maintain standards made it exceptional.
The positive energy just threw me. Where oh where are my state coaches compared to this experience. Some states do not even have coaches.
The way you steered us; the purpose in each and every hour of the weekend; the excitement of the squad to have me and another state level newcomer join in, just made me drool and be disappointed the weekend was over.
When you told us how chuffed you were way back in 1996 that Geoff Maskell, a name well known in Australian bowls, approached you to be his personal coach I can see what he saw. As you said personal career circumstances prevented you from taking up his offer.
Well I reckon, all these years on I might quote the late Robin Williams in the film Dead Poets Society - captain my captain - as your coaching with emphasis on skill and purpose and fun makes us all want to be in your team. Thank you for having me...’

Lachlan Tighe, 2019

Bowls Website column
Menu- Q&A

A Better Performance At Lead, Second

Question:

While most players in our top side are consistently bowling around the "benchmark" of 17-18 Mat Length bowls each match, three of the four Leads are significantly below that average. Unfortunately no one in our second side is bowling any better!

We coaches have identified the issue and tried to address it at pennant practice - so far, with little success.

Lachlan, do you have any tips and or training routines specifically for Leads? Emphasis on jack delivery and weight control in draw bowling rather than line. Too short, too long and minimal or over correction!

Answer:

Hi:

I read your text and so impressed with the diligence of one Lead to deliver 400 jacks in between the fortnight of pennant.

I compile personal performance stats, which I share with you, which I record in the hope it gives me focus. Pity I was not that alert on Saturday, and motivation to bowl better.

What you can read is my effective bowls Saturday, ordinary effort; and read where as the front end, we only get 10 ends with 2 in the head when I know from facts that we win when we have at least 12 ends with 2 in the head as front end team. What I also do is keep stats of effectiveness for an average and a PB so I should strive to beat my average each week and aim for that PB.

I coach / advise three premier league bowlers and with all of them I set a target for the effectiveness of their first bowl, for as we know, meeting that will instill confidence, raise team spirit and get us all off to a good start. And you could say that in whatever position we bowl.

So for you and the club, coaches should get together and do specific training on Thursday (regardless of selection) to work on consistent contributions for all front end team members at the club.

A fellow coach had these comments to add for the club asking the above question:

In answer to the question from the division one president I provide the following:

Bowls Website column

Menu- Q&A

Thanks for the stats. I have been keeping a record of ML bowls for my rinks over the past few weeks, partly to stop the skip from complaining that's his lead and second were giving him 'nothing' , ha,ha! But mainly so the team knew exactly what they had to do to achieve victory.

We have a number of drills that our Division 1 leads are completing on a regular basis, but the drills are only of use if the players are excited about getting better and contributing to the team. I explained to the whole team that if we wanted to succeed this season we were going to invest time in improving our leads and seconds as I saw far more room for improvement in the leads and seconds than the skips and thirds. The leads and seconds were excited about being the centre of attention and seen as a valuable asset that are worth spending time on.

I find the large majority of club bowlers who have poor weight control do not have 'feel' as part of either their pre delivery, delivery or post delivery routine. If you ask most club players to play the same shot again they can't because they have no real idea of what they did the first time and that is partly because the only thing they are interested in is the result (where in fact the only thing they should be interested in is the process that got them there).

It takes a bit to teach someone 'feel' or rhythm when it doesn't come naturally (especially when all they are focused on is the result). It's a bit easier when its one on one. We start off with a little dance, moving our weight from one foot to another as we hold the bowl in both hands as it moves from side to side in time with the feet. I then get the player to deliver some bowls into the ditch with their eyes shut and then we move onto delivering caterpillars with their eyes shut on the green.

I am constantly amazed by the people who complain, because they missed their line, (when the exercise is about feel). But it just goes to show how focused they are on the end result and not the process.

This is where we need to spend the most time.

To take this to the next step after they have delivered I get the player to keep their eyes shut until I ask them to open them. Once again, I am amazed by the number of players who can't help but peep. Once I can get them to keep their eyes shut I get someone down the other end to remove the bowls they just delivered and replace it with a coin. We do that three more times and then go and see how close the coins are. This way the player can't use their eyes and has to use feel to achieve the objective.

Hope some of that helps.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Winners' Mindset 2021

**Practice like you've never won.
Perform like you've never lost.**

Those two sentences exude elite mindset, come from credible elite sports men and women.

Practice, for the great majority of bowlers, including the elite, is playing competition games during the week, sometimes as much as four or five times in a week.

Practice might well be joining three other mates at a rink to roll together and in fact having a pairs contest for which they enjoy, sledge, compete, relax, be frivolous and for the boys to fuel their testosterone.

Practice is rarely skills and or team game related training.

Practice is boring no doubt if it is the coach setting up flap jacks in a circuit and you the player go around the green completing a circuit of drills. And more often than not the coach is either doing the circuit too or inside, rarely if ever wandering around to reinforce things.

Practice has to be intense, challenging, game related, purposeful, enjoyable, varied, performance measured, and suited to a person's playing position in the fours team.

And, coach supervised.

'Practice like you've never won,' should imply every ounce of energy and skill is expended on the training track.

'Practice like you've never lost,' is about doing the drills, routine, exercises, fruitless times until it is 'second nature successful' and you gain total self confidence, self belief in yourself, the bowler.

The source of the wisdom in those two sentences above:
Kate Carriage, former Australian player, AO winner and a member of our current bowls squad, pBus.

Lachlan Tighe, 2021

Skips, Useful Or Useless

QUESTION:

I am the one this time actually posing the question to you, bowlers & readers.

Why do we need skips in fours teams, specifically pennant teams?

RESPONSE:

What prompts me to ask the question, and provide my own response, is a series of dreadful situations I have been privy to in this season which are all too familiar to all of you I bet:

Skips with no game plan

Skips unable to sense the conditions, behaviours of players, us or them

Skips who have no back bowl end after end

Skips who tells selectors he blames the front end for the team loss

Skips who allows the length to be anywhere

Skips who does nothing to energise the team when losing (badly)

Skips who drive anyway as he blames the others in the team for the situation

Skips who are tactically deficient, bloody useless to be exact

Skips who have as much personality as this computer screen

Skips who do not embrace the club training program

Skips who are poor role models to newer players seeking best practice in the sport

Skips who are defeatist at the first sign of a contest by the opposition

Skips with unrealistic expectations of their players at certain levels

Skips who have no idea of the skills set, or defects, of any one team member

Those observations were made in 2017 at the Australian Open, The Victorian Open, state contests, club championships, premier league pennant and why not, at lower grades of pennant.

I reckon we lay the blame for all of the above on...*selectors*.

Fancy allowing any team, in any sport, to go out on the playing field (green) with no plan as to how we play the game to use our players to WIN.

Website menu- ...Q & A
TOPIC – why do we need skips

It is called a game plan.

Selectors and the coaches can require skips to outline their plan and where there is no plan given or a reluctance to do one, don't have that person as a skip in the team. Yeah, hello!

If skips have no game plan, well, why shouldn't each player on the mat have all the choice about what to deliver next bowl as there is no rhyme or reason to the skip decisions.

Some of you will say it is about holding shot, or getting shot every delivery. Not so. We only need to be holding shot when all deliveries are complete that end.

A former Australian cricketer was recently asked in his capacity as a fast bowler what allowed him to be successful and his answer on TV was that he had skippers who had a plan, knew what they wanted from him, and he knew his role.

I would add if you know the plan during the week you can train, with your team, to hone your skill for the role you will play in the fours bowls team at the weekend.

I find it infuriating that in 2018 we see even our best national and state players go into games on raw skill (technical) without enhancing their tactical, team and mental skills as well.

Not good enough. Our approach should be to borrow from the best in other team sports.

Everyone I know here in Victoria loves pennant, whereas I disregard it. I love the club camaraderie, but my reaction is as much due to an abrogation of true team commitment and best seen by a continued absence of teams with skips having a game plan, teams not training as teams.

The bloody skips want the role, bugger me they don't want the responsibility that goes with it.

Thanks

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Books On Sport, Attitude

To start my 2017 year off in sport and coaching, I took an opportunity to browse through numerous sports book I have in my library to detect and refresh myself of any valuable messages from the books to refer over to bowls, bowls coaching and elite level bowls.

The generic themes I reacted to were these

Attitude

Choose the players of character

Culture and teams

Coaching

Leadership

Measuring performance, observing and statistics

Mental skill

Selection and teams

Skip skills

Teamwork

Team roles and positions

Winning is a mindset (as is losing)

Xcellence.

Here then are some précised statements, and my take too, on the specific theme below. Each theme will be on a separate article/column.

Attitude

Attitudes are habits of mind. Attitude is based on experience(s). It is a starting point. The strength of good players and coaches is their ability to learn from an experience and not have to be constantly relearning basic skills and strategies.

No need to rely on personality to lead if you inspire and aspire to standards. By not accepting mediocrity and being intolerant of it and anyone who accepted that good is good enough. (12)

Doing what you are good at will only make you good; focusing on what you can / could do better, exceptional, than other(s) teams is the path to higher levels of success. (5)

**Website menu- mental skill
Books on sport, Attitude**

Habits are formed by the way you train(ed). As coach be unforgiving of lowering the standards you set. Note the need to measure a player against their skill capacity, don't expect beyond that capacity. Kennedy said...from each according to their ability. Jeans said...get the basics done well, basics win games. (7)

Talent is an ingredient to the (hard) work ethic. Seek out the hungry competitor. They reflect who and what you want or NEED, in the team. (6)

Lombardi insisted his players strive to be the best (attitude); Lombardi said we are going to chase perfection and we won't catch it, but if we constantly chase it, we will embrace excellence. As the one out in front of the team he was their role model. (8)

Benincasa says ATTITUDE is
Pride says it's impossible
Experience says it's risky
Reason says it's pointless
Heart says let's rip into it

Have the attitude of motivating your team, not impressing your team. Be the one others trust, to count on, others want in their team. (3)

Practising what you are already good at, means you are good at what you do. Trying to do increasingly difficult things improves your attitude, your level of challenge. Great players love challenge, losing is not a barrier or even failure, simply a lesson to learn. For them ambition means they end up where they aim.

The right team culture when embedded is contagious allowing brilliance to be on display for the individual whilst they understand and are aware of the need for the team thing. That culture of excellence is one of team first, always. It may mean we push one another even though we are competing for the same position in the team as we share that understanding of the standards necessary. (4)

Never be afraid of experimentation; be aware not all experiments succeed. There is no total failure, solely a loss or a bit of a disaster. If you fear defeat you dare not to win, simply enjoy the challenge.

Losing is an occupational hazard. It has to be swallowed with acceptance this time, only.

**Website menu- mental skill
Books on sport, Attitude**

Practice makes the player. Practice with purpose makes the winner.(1)

Sources

1 Bryant	Bryant on Bowls
3 Benincasa	How winning works
4 Charlesworth	Shakespeare the coach; The Coach;
5 Collins	Good to great
6 Dwyer	Full Time
7 Matthews	Accept the challenge
8 O'Neill	Sport leaders and success
12 Syer	Sporting body, sporting mind; Team spirit

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Coaching large groups

Coaching Large Groups

QUESTION:

Hi Lachy:

I am running a club / group based coaching session at my club next week. I am anticipating about 50 members to attend. I ran one earlier in the season with great success and I am running another one. I was wondering if you had any suggestions for drills that may be suited for such a large group of people.

Cheers

RESPONSE:

Hi Nick:

My website has two menus for specific reference to your request and to assist both menus include items with diagrammed training programs for you to choose one / some that may help

One menu 'training sessions' has about 50 items with diagrams though just a few are specific for large groups. The other menu 'fun games training,' all with diagrams, has about 20 items and all of these could be suitable as the emphasis is on fun and learning as a secondary outcome.

I am sure something can be used from the 70.

Hope it goes well.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Self assessment of your bowls skills

Self assessment

A bowler recently asked me how he could improve in his game and I said first, Why not self assess your skills as a bowler?

HIS RESPONSE

Here is what he did:

As requested a few notes of self assessment:

Strengths:

Adjusting grass

Consistently disciplined in my routine

Can draw, up bowl and drive well

Being behind on the scoreboard never phases me, I believe if I bowl to the best of my ability I can prevail.

Areas I, meaning he, need to work on:

Fine tune routine – I have a set process set out below. I've been struggling with short weight and then over / under compensating. I figured it was down to spending too much time on the mat in my 'set' phase as I was losing my triangulation due to my low stance.

Recently I have taken a more relaxed and less staggered approach to my routine where I spend much less time on the mat and go more with a gut feel / touch. This has assisted in my weight control, but consistency is fluctuating and I am uncomfortable with this less methodical approach.

In my eyes bowls is a science.

Do I have too many steps?

Grip: Always the same (claw)

Approach:

Select bowl apex (or shoulder)

Visualise bowl path

Move on to the mat accordingly

Set:

Low stance

Square breath

Delivery:

Focus from apex target to jack back to apex

Bowls Website menu- Q&A

Self assessment of your bowls skills

Deliver always concentrating to move forward and not sideways or backwards after release.

Watch bowl and where it passes the target apex as a reference for future adjustment.

Issues that seem to be present in my game:

First bowl – tends to be loose. Most often short or narrow. I want to have the ability to put that pressure on with the first bowl every time. It's my greatest flaw.

Bowling short – I tend to bowl short at the start of matches (all forms) and occasionally at the end in tight matches.

ANSWER

We met when he came to Melbourne and worked together for a few hours and this was what we realized could assist.

- Follow through: Reaching out with my delivery arm.
- Weight focus drill: Bowling to the ditch behind then the ditch at full length.
- 1m Behind: Aiming to finish 1 metre behind the jack to address my tendency of falling short too often.

- Driving: Most of all my drive! With a vastly altered stance to my normal delivery I am now standing tall and vertical with only a slight bend of the knees. It took a week to get used to it and after reducing the speed of delivery which was previously just resulting in excess weight anyway I have been a dead eye hitting 50% of all targets which is pretty high for a drive at my level, is it not?

Thank you again.

Lachlan Tighe 2017

How To Deal With Pressure

QUESTION:

How do you deal with pressure?

The questions should be able to flesh out observations on players' focus...concentration...composure...relaxation...arousal levels compatibility...communication...team harmony...verbal language...body language...use of eyes and ears.

ANSWER:

Maybe we need to check what we do in readiness for competition by seeking some answers to these few questions:

What is the mental preparation level of players during competition?

What is the response by team members when we lost a big score?

What is the response when a turnover occurred through our fault?

Is there any compliance with team meetings?

Is there consistent behaviour of all team members throughout the contest?

Now in answer to the question above answers may well include:

- Focus concentration on basics of delivery,
- Confident in ability to draw,
- See pressure only as self applied,
- Concentrate on shot, not outcome,
- Imagine self playing perfect shot,
- Self talk and active relaxation,
- Taught myself to exclude it in games,
- Use pressure as motivation to thrive on,
- Consider the situation not the pressure,
- Block out negative thoughts,
- Pretend that I hold the shot,
- Deep breathing,
- Don't let it affect me.
- Sheer confidence.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Game plans

QUESTION:

A game plan applies in all modern sport, yet our sport does not adopt such approaches. As fellow coaches, what game plan model do you think we could have for us to use in pennant (team) bowls?

ANSWERS

- One club has a generic plan for each division/side:
 - Mat length is the measure.
 - Lead and second draw to mat length.
 - 3rds and skips to not lose more than two.
 - Divide 21 ends into sections – 4x5; last end.
 - Drills based on short and long ends, drawing to zones.
- Another club states:
 - Simple goal – beat the bowl.
 - Lead focus on importance of jack rolling.
- A third club approach – Land the Mat:
 - Front ends role is not to get shot – set the foundation.
 - Of the first four bowls – two to finish behind.

Other input included:

- Mat length (ML) as the measure of acceptable draw bowl.
- Front end, one or two bowls in the head.
- Back end to keep shots lost per any end 2 or 3 shots maximum.
- Break pennant game into 5 end mini games.
- Last 5 ends at one club is the shoot out mentality.
- Elementary process always play long or short ends.
- Beat the shot bowl.
- Build a head.
- Take what won last week as a base for the next week.
- Consider our home club advantages and play to them; use statistics we keep to decide on selection and the game plan.
- Always be aware of the side scoreboard.
- No rink plans exist at one club.
- Club has a game plan for all 4 rinks and it varies on venue and opposition.
- One club expects top side skip to have their own game plan.
- Employ strategies during the game to negate the opposition.
- If game plan to apply heeds whether there is a break halftime, the momentum at the time, the level of communication happening out there.

- Set a target of 23 shots per rink and keep opposition to 21 shots.
- Avoid multiple shots lost.
- Win more ends than the opposition.
- Divide the pennant game into 5 sets and win more sets than opposition.
- Front end has a measureable role of 2 in the head and 2 behind.
- Front end to be at least 2nd shot.
- Lee Schraner was quoted as one who had team practice the plan and Lee was renowned for skill at maximum length.
- One club always starts long as the opposition can only go shorter than that which we know is the response.
- Play opposition lead's hand at opposition venue as they know their preferences.
- Always re-evaluate the game plan at the break, or if no break after 10 ends.
- One club has a series of 4 game plans to use for away games and a different one for home games.
- The club has a measurable target as priority of the game plan.
- Game plan directed by the coach.
- Game plans set by each of the skips.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Situation Awareness, SA, Explained.

Question:

Hello Lachlan:
My name is Casper. You have made a few references to the term 'situation awareness' for bowlers competing in events. Can you explain what that means please?

Response:

Hello Casper:
Situation awareness (SA). Simply, being aware of what (else) is going on beyond watching the bowl roll down the green toward the head.

A few examples I have observing the 2017 Australian Open in Broadbeach this June.

One _ A fours team had an underperforming lead who showed his heightened anxiety by loudly expressing his discontent in verbal negativity. In fact you could hear him tell his team, firstly not to pick up his bowls, then, when they didn't, he berated them for not at least kicking them closer to the mat for him. Prickly to say the least.

If that team wanted to get to finals contention they had to do something about his (disruptive) contribution. I reckon they had to get together and challenge him to be a better team contributor both with his bowls and importantly, his demeanor. And let go being a cantankerous individualist.

Two _ Opposing pairs teams, both with two wins and their contest to decide the section winner. Team ONE lead immediately, in the warm up end, displays his dissatisfaction with the miserable wet cold windy conditions. (Those of us who played the AO those days when it was like this would agree, stiff mate.) After the very first end of this game there is a prolonged delay due to a downpour and Team ONE lead continues to deplore having to compete at all.

Team TWO lead hears all this yet talking to that team after their (losing) game he declined to share that observation with his skip during the game. They may have been able to alter the tempo of the game, staying out longer in these conditions, changing the process of the game, the attack on the mental toughness of the ONE lead.

Website menu- ...Q & A
Website TOPIC Situation awareness

In fact the TWO lead may have lacked the toughness being aware, but not being accountable to advise the skip. Team ONE won, team TWO, though aware of the situation made no decision which is a decision, inaction.

In sharing this insight with the TWO team skip was unaware of the ONE lead attitude so how much situation awareness did he have, though in his defence he is 30 metres away. Or is that a defence, as you have all your senses to use to be in “situation awareness’ mode.

Hope the AO examples demonstrate what SA is from my view.
Thanks for asking.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

How To Set Goals

Hi Lachlan:

We have spoken and met a few times and I struggle to write my goals. I know I want to be better but you then challenge me to ask what the hell that is?

Can you guide me a bit more on the setting of goals.
Sheila

Sheila:

Not easy for everyone to set goals.
I think many of you have unrealistic goals and expectations. I said you ought to look at your life and see how to plan the hours you can give over to bowls and keep the other aspects functioning, work, home, etc.

I would like to pose a series of questions for you to think about and respond, to yourself.

What will you do to set and state your goals for bowls?

Will you make yourself accountable to the goals?

What will you do?

When will you do it?

How will this act of setting goals serve your goals?

What are the obstacles?

How will I know (you the player)?

How would I know (if I was the coach)?

Who needs to know?

What support do you need?

How are you going to get that support?

When are you going to get that support?

What other personal considerations do you need account for?

Website menu: Q & A
Topic- what to do to set goals

How would you rate your commitment level out of 10 presently?

A 10 already, really?

If not 10 what prevents it being a 10?

Do you intend recording and writing this stuff?

That final question is there because I can read and see commitment and accountability whenever I can read it as written by a player.

These responses may help to no end in setting realistic goals within your capability.

Hope that helps.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

On Personal Coaching

Question:

I get asked these type of questions on a regular basis.

Will you coach me?

Do you do one on one coaching?

I want to be a better bowler, so I need you to coach me?

I want to be a top level skip. Will you help me develop those skills?

I have ambition to be an elite bowler. Can you coach me?

Answer:

I find it difficult to have a one answer fits all response though I do set out to challenge the bowlers motivation and I do this by asking them to meet with me and have answers to these questions I forward them beforehand:

What do you want to achieve?

Why?

Where is your technical skill level presently?

How would I be able to measure that if observing you?

Give me an overall appraisal of yourself as a bowler.

Do you have an annual program calendar?

What is your game plan playing singles?

And, if a skip of a fours team, what is the team game plan?

Do you know any of your strengths as a bowler?

Have you a training goal?

Are you a cautious player or do you wish to play exciting bowls?

Now for those of you reading this you might say heck, why be coached by this guy! But that's my point on motivation - I can only help those already highly motivated.

Can I just indulge a little and provide some ideas? I do give to those few bowlers who have that motivation (in no order).

GOALS

Work out what a successful approach is from other elite bowlers, or, in a team environment the culture of the success.

And what is required to achieve that success.

Website menu- ...Q & A
Topic personal coaching

GAME PLANS

Have one that works.

Have a contingency for when it does not work - specifically a player with a form lapse.

Have one for a team that maximizes the (skill) contributions of all four players.

SKIPPING

Sessions on calling every delivery based on a game plan, which will mean calls become quicker, precise, positive.

Research shows decision making is a cause for fatigue, tiredness, loss of focus. Pondering the next shot every bowl is demanding. Bowls is a chess game on a green. By having a game plan with player objectives, you as skip have the next delivery all ready to call and you are not having to make a decision every time, hence, you remain fresher, important for when you have / need to make decisions - it's called petrol in the tank.

TRAINING GOALS

Coach communication: as the player have trust, listen, don't justify your skill level.

Team integration: as a team member do drills per week with the team at extreme lengths, on both hands, and include an emphasis on team spirit, i.e practice positivity, motivation as a foursome, energize one another at training.

Purpose: as a player have specificity of skill development each session.

If we get back to the questions I pose interested bowlers I would add they have to accept a balance in life, as bowls is after all a leisure pursuit to all except a few full time bowlers.

However, even among the full time bowlers the motivation of some is questionable. Therefore if you were to be seeking a committed coach to further your goals then ensure you don't lower your standards simply because the motivation and standards of fellow bowlers is not on par with yours.

Stay true to yourself.

Go for it fellow bowlers.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Website menu- Q&A
What do you want to achieve this season?

Keying on Season's Achievements

Question

Hi Lachlan:

You asked me to provide my reactions to these questions from you.
What do you want to achieve this season?

Kay

Response

Hi Kay:

YOUR ANSWER

To be more consistent, make state champions week at Bendigo and trial for state senior women's team.

ANSWER I MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED

I re-read your earlier email and your answer did not say make the state team, it said make state champions week at Bendigo and to that reply my reaction is ... yeah so what, because you can get knocked out round one or lose every game, yet you made state champions week - not ambitious enough!

And again in the earlier email you said you wanted to trial for the women's team and my reaction is...ok, but why not say perform at my best % performance to give myself the best chance of selection - again not ambitious or aggressive enough a statement.

Don't forget you write these to yourself so it is not as if you are being arrogant to impress anyone.

However, what I read is self doubt.

Ok, so you want to get into the state side and I ask the questions (which I don't need any answers for, as I am not coaching you, BUT YOU DO)

Do you know the criteria for selection to get into the state team - if not, find out.

As a coach and selector I would be looking at:

Championships to win

Championships to be a finalist in

Website menu- Q&A
What do you want to achieve this season?

Regional representation

Tournaments to compete in where quality opposition guaranteed

Club championships / COC / state titles

Your planned schedule of events for the season

Your skills audit level and progress (my website has such a chart in a menu called measures somewhere.)

I used to be state ladies coach and one of the squad used to come from Sale every Friday for a year to join my regular training sessions.

Now that was commitment, yet I said to her, god I hope your talent / skill is good enough as your motivation is what I would want from anyone at elite level.

Sadly in the selector's she was not good enough, but, what a lovely warm human being and a treasured relationship.

Lastly Lina (World champ from Malaysia) and where she watches - forget it, you choose where you watch and best way to know it works is when the bowl gets close regularly.

Without question there are numerous spots to watch on the bank, on the green, or not at all and all work, for that individual.

Try a few, discard as many as you try and sort out what is best for you.

Enjoy, feel the breeze, explore, experiment, measure (as in skill and performance) and don't get too over analytical.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Measuring Player Performance In Pennant

QUESTION:

Measuring performance in pennant bowls: Who in the room keeps personal stats or their club has a process for the team keeping stats. Please share the process and experience.

ANSWERS:

The bowler who asked the question was a former club chairman who demanded from his club the collection of all recorded performances from every pennant player. Here is what others do at their clubs:

- Premier league player – reason for keeping stats was to drive my performance – what level am I at so I know how to improve; feedback received was that if the side won then he did not play well; first bowls pressure – first bowl within mat width; mat length.
- A second premier league player – recording effective bowls for each bowl during the game.
- A third premier league player noted – discuss game plan before the game; keeps stats for the whole team during the game and discuss as a team (with red) after the game; re-write the card – examine score cards at the end of a game and looks at ends where losses were reduced to two.
- Division one player – one rink of the four examines and looks at consistency of bowls in the head for lead.
- Division one club – invited members to participate in a forum to present ideas for improvements to the club; every skip measures mat length bowls; mat length front end – 2 in the head; head situation after the first 4 bowls; same for 3rds and skips; 42% front end and 38% for back end; after 2 and a half years of stats they have found that if they win 11 ends and win more multiples than lose then they win the game.
- Club coach – if front end is holding circle that on the card and assess results at the end of the game.
- One club expects 40% effective bowls from our division one pennant players.
- We know a club that won division two by players performing at 38% effective.
- Another club knows they win every time they win the majority of the 21 ends in pennant.
- A premier league side years back knew whenever the front end team players had 2 bowls with a ML of the jack 17/25 ends the rink always won.

Website article
Measuring player performance in pennant

- One club records a series of indicators - everyone on a mat length (ML) basis, score on the changeover for the skip, score at completion of the end, number of ends won in a segment of 5 ends, total ends won on the day, multiples either won or lost; players in the rink mark each other and also do the 3.2.1. at pennant for the merit of the selectors; players use a typical score card to mark a tick or X to indicate an effective delivery; the club has printed a specific card for pennant players marking;
- One club has front end expected to achieve 40-45%, third 38% and skip 30% as measured benchmark at division one.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Game plans, reactions

Some of the replies from pBus squad members were of such interest that I wish to react to what I read where I paraphrase the bits that caught my eye:

Pennant fours team rink

% Statistics standards: the figure in brackets is the number bowls deemed Mat Length (ML) or effective delivery from a total of 42 bowls delivered over 21 ends as accepted pennant performance objective at stated levels.

Pennant competition level	LEAD	Second	Third	Skip
Premier league	50 (21)	50 (21)	45 (19)	45 (19)
Division 1.	40 (17)	40 (17)	33 (14)	33 (14)

Gavin

Reference is made to their WA synthetic surfaces running at 20sec. (bragger) restricting the delivery skill to either draw or drive.

I have heard that (drive or draw) a million times over the years and it is flawed.

I shared this insight with a sports psychologist mate years back and his view, if I recall, was the player accepting this factor already had a barrier to excellence as they sought to accept it and not be challenged to acquire the added skills.

If you restrict yourself to those two deliveries, on either hand, and an opponent can call on about another four weight variance deliveries and on either hand, the law of averages means you have four options, whereas they have 12 options in the long run you are hampered in your deliveries and your game plan.

How to overcome it?

Don't accept there are only two delivery choices and get out and develop your competence, your proficiency with the other four weighted deliveries - which would be a metre over/ 2m over/ 4m over/ a running or firm delivery without it being a full drive.

Joanne

Jo asked which bowl goes where with the first four deliveries in the team format.

I well remember Danny at MCC at training last year when he teamed with a good young bowler (now in the national squad) when the four-five rinks had two players simulating what they planned to do.

Danny commented to us all at the conclusion he was rapt to know he had an objective as a team objective and it did not matter whether he or the young bloke secured the objective so long as one of their four bowls did the deed.

And Dan and Simon also trained as a pair with game plan objectives at the time and again the goal was meet the objective of the front end team deliveries and not in any order.

Gavin

His statistics are so, so informative as he knows and the club know if 75% is met with a bowl within ML and one behind after four deliveries, they win.

And that is only 2/4 with a specific role.

Sometimes the lead does it immediately, sometimes the second has to do it with the lead being off, sometimes, both put in one effective delivery. All in all, 75% is their dual target.

Pat

That Dave Peitz anecdote about moving on when having 75% success rate really resonates.

Over a period I have urged players keep stats. so as to have an ongoing average % for performances, and of course, the pb, which may get updated every so often.

A handful of years back when coaching Robbie we sat and set some objectives in his role as a lead in premier league pennant here.

What we know from that is:

He averaged 52% effective deliveries (which will adjust each time he competes.)

His pb for effective deliveries was 61.

Of 21 ends played he had an effective bowl average was 17/21.

And his pb was a 19/21 contribution.

Game Plans, questioned

We agreed on a target for the first bowl being within MW as 12/21 ends.

Well we know the average was 9/21 times or ends.

And his pb first bowl was 12/21 times or ends.

Quoting Pat, I reckon Robbie knew what to pitch for as a new average based on that record, which incidentally has him leading in the premiership winning team that year.

All of us can use the records you keep to apply this Dave Peitz formula.

Dan

Your player example of one member under-performing is spot perfect and might be our game plan B or C when things aren't on for us any one game or period of a game.

Note that, you squad as many of you shall skip at times; don't let the poor form period last long as it is important to intrude to change our collective effort.

Alison said she called her team together yesterday every five ends and had not realized it could so upset the opposition.

As long as you have the mat (courtesy) it is you setting the tempo of the game, may well be a component of the game plan.

When Dan refers to specific deliveries - tuck, hide, trail n- I view them as choices at the time to apply a plan rather than any one delivery being a requisite for the game plan.

You as the skip call deliveries for the players to adhere to a game plan.

Again harking back to Danny asking the lead to drive.

It could have been the second but the game plan may have been to intimidate the opposition for the first five ends and then see how will we go about it.

Danny

His opening statement about the best opportunity to grow and improve when the skill is just beyond our current level. Hence, I cite Robbie's previous stats., I cite Gavin WA exploring those other four weighted deliveries in our armoury. And as Danny says we use training and coaching (which includes sharing views like these here) to elevate our capacity to meet the next level of skill, which takes our performance level onward and upward.

Lachlan Tighe, 2021

Bowls website menu- Q&A
Performing as a lead in a team

Performing As A Lead

Q: what is a good performance for a lead in teams?

Hi Lachlan:

I'd like to pick your brain please regarding what you consider to be a good performance by a lead. My question is prompted by a Pairs event in which my friend and I finally got to play with each other after all these years. We played five games (13 ends) in the drizzling rain over a couple of days and even though we finished fourth out of 42 teams it was very obvious we have different performance assessment standards.

First I'll set the scene: Greens were running 12 - 13 seconds and true on both hands with no wind. As the skip, I instructed my lead we were to play wet weather bowls. That is, he was to draw 2 to 3 feet thru the jack to ensure he was 'up', not to leave anything jack-high, and if we did have the shot that was jack-high, we were to trail / hide the jack before they did. If he missed the jack it would be in a good home.

Alas my lead was consistently three feet short of the jack so technically he was 5 - 6 feet short of what I asked for. However, in probably 4/5 games he was closer than his opposite. I started out with encouragement and gentle reminders to be 2 - 3 feet thru. He repeatedly fell 3 feet short for all five games and by late in the 3rd game and most of the fourth my body language deteriorated. I didn't verbally abuse him, but my body language clearly said I was very frustrated. I would tell him to "concentrate on correcting", "three feet thru mate, three feet thru" but he kept failing. He didn't apologize or say he would try harder and because it was our first event together I thought perhaps he thinks he's bowling well? We chatted about it after the third match and he said he beat his opponent most times so therefore he'd done his job. I said he wasn't putting pressure on the opposition skip and was allowing him an easy draw. He still maintained he beat his opposite lead so job done. He even quoted Ian Schuback, who apparently said if the lead gets his bowls closer than his opposite then he's done his job. Don't know if Ian said that. I asked: "What, even if he's five feet away and you're four feet away?" and he said yes.

We're friends and he'd driven a few hours to play and I didn't want to

Bowls website menu- Q&A

Performing as a lead in a team

tell him how disappointed I was with his performance and then he rang me this week and asked me. I told him my appraisal of his performance and he was stunned. "But we came fourth," he said. During our chats at night we

learned he concentrates on results and I concentrate on execution of delivery and tactics. I said, results only come after the execution and that I focus on beating my own standards. For instance, if the jack has been moved and there's four feet to draw the shot, I focus on a resting toucher, rather than landing it somewhere in the four foot area. That way my focus stays sharp. I said I wasn't interested in other games because I couldn't control them and he said he wants to know what's happening. He's a very friendly person on the green and I've previously mentioned to him that I got the feeling he felt he had an obligation to be friendly to his opponent. I've watched him chatting all the time and looking at the other rinks and recommended he simply concentrate on his own game, encourage his team mates and wait till the game is finished to socialize with the opposition. He said he just couldn't play this way.

I could chat all day about self awareness, but back to my original question.

Considering the conditions of the green, how would you rate his performance? Of course drawing to within three feet on a slippery 17 second green with a cross breeze is a very different equation, but conditions for us were conducive to quality bowls.

If you could give me your thoughts I'd really appreciate it.

Regards

My Response

Interesting and coincidental that this week two players asked me to conduct a session for them as a consequence of meeting at which I had challenged them to define their skill level. Also this week a club has discussed with me how to go about coaching players beyond just the delivery skill.

Bowls website menu- Q&A Performing as a lead in a team

Anyway, to respond to your question, and I shall do it as we venture through your content.

1. Performance of a lead: As skip you can set anything you want so long as you both can measure it; example from your 65 ends over 5 games would be how many deliveries, in fact, went beyond the jack, how many jack deliveries were within a metre of length requested, how many ends did he in the role of lead have one bowl contribute per end; and in fact if that analysis was briefly done after each game you then have info. For averages, 'pb' game by game; then the objective may be to meet the average say by games 3, 4 & 5.
2. Individual perspective on performance: In defence of your mate nigh on all bowlers, including internationals, have no damn idea of how they went except for the emotional feel and that is cause they do not measure, or may not even know what is expected at a certain level.
3. Being closer than opponent: Agree with you having a bowl four feet away and saying it is ok cause my opponent is worse, yuk!
4. Myths: The beat your opponent tag is commonplace and I find absurd. I use mat length (ML) as the zone for contribution and if a player can lead at 45% effectiveness, yes 45%, they are doing well as ML is rather hard to achieve be it 12 or 17 seconds speed.
5. Drawing shot: You mention your focus is on a resting toucher if last bowl has about four feet draw space. Again all I do is have all my players focus on a ML draw mindset so then a skip is gauged to be doing ok if 35% of deliveries are effective ML.
6. Focus: Again your mate may not be as serious as you in events and you, not he, has to accept that. He enjoys the company of people and in between time he tries doing his best. Welcome back to the real world of bowls mate. Unless you choose a like-minded partner, then just enjoy doing as well as you did coming fourth.

My bowls book has chapters to cover measuring skill and preparing

Bowls website menu- Q&A
Performing as a lead in a team

players for performance in games as these two aspects were so obviously absent out there in the learning world of bowls, and still is given my chats this past week.

Have a browse in my bowls website too, as I have numerous articles on all that you cover in the question.

Hope that helps.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Personality clashes in Teams

QUESTION:

As a coach I also skip in our club top side. I have a number of players who refuse to play in the rink team with me and refuse to explain why. What advice fellow coaches can you give me?

ANSWERS:

- This is not a bowls issue – this is a human interaction, communication.
- Work place and a need for mediation.
- Have a mate watch them in pennant and seek the mate's feedback.
- May be a team crisis meeting to resolve.
- For the future sort this out pre-season.
- Good skip would have sorted this before it became quite a personal issue.
- Shows the need for positive behaviour at all times.
- Can we suggest the person look in the mirror first.
- Question the character of the selectors in allowing players to override their choice.
- Bring the issue out in the open for honest input.
- Is this player intimidating by nature.
- Are the other players simply jealous he has the role.
- Seems it may be the player lacks good communication skill reflected in body language.
- Player may be too stubborn to accept teammates angst.
- Raises a question of the level of trust now, and also for the future.
- Has the coach some input in this issue.
- Selectors should demote the players refusing to join in a selected team.
- How can we get all this team to appreciate one another more.
- Try doing a role play with all concerned or even video a pennant game to sight the behaviours of the team.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Website menu- Q&A
How do you measure performance?

Measuring Performance

QUESTION

Hi Lachlan:

You asked me to provide my reactions to these questions from you on the expected number / % of effective bowls you set yourself for the day.

Kay

YOUR ANSWER

I aim to try and have at least a 50% effective bowl rate each time I play.

ANSWER I MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED

Hi Kay:

Your answer is fine, for the present.

But, guess what, that answer is unrealistic. That answer leaves little room for error at this stage trialing in a new club.

Where then did you get that figure anyway? National level bowlers might perform at 50% effective if the measure is a mat length draw score.

Determine a set of objectives pre game (5 here below) based on how you measure your skill in training, if you do!!!

You can set your score at 40% effective in mat length, 17/42 deliveries.

You can set your ends contributed at 12/21 ends.

You can set your target where both bowls effective 4/21 ends.

You can set your target where first bowl is effective 10/21 ends.

You can set your target where first bowl is within a mat width, 4/21 ends.

You had that figure as a base, though not sure where the base comes from, and did you measure the performance that day. If you answer no, then question your level of motivation to fulfill your goal of state representation, as the answer in the future to the question of measuring performance has to be a yes.

A great coach and friend of mine, Danny Simmons, explains our pennant game thus:

21 the amount of minutes taken to deliver your 42 deliveries in pennant

210 about the number of minutes for the pennant game

10 the % of time you are specifically involved in bowling

90 the remaining % of time all players have available for WHAT!!!

Website menu- Q&A
How do you measure performance?

I keep harping...where your mind goes everything else follows.

It is inexcusable for **ANYONE** purporting to be elite not to be able to take 10 seconds each end to assess the effectiveness of their two deliveries.

Such factual information is great during the game, greater as post game debrief.

The reaction is given for you to see how you might set yourself stepping stones, measurable steps to know you are progressing along your track to your destiny in bowls.

In itself the track is your success.

Thanks

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Behaviour Of Champions

What to expect from those who gain championship status

If we as bowlers took time to realize that in any one calendar year there are among us maybe 5,000 champions within the sport of bowls.

Think about it, around 50 countries with bowls, perhaps 4,000 clubs worldwide, world titles, national titles, state / province titles, regional / zone titles, and our base, the club titles.

And with playing formats for singles, pairs, triples and fours for men and women.

Hence my 5,000 champion estimate.

In fact, there are more than 5,000 as that number is the current champion list only.

All of you bowlers with a champion tag have a responsibility to behave in a manner that makes others of us want to be that champion we see in you.

Though a champion, one should never stop learning and especially learning from those who are elite level champions.

And a champion is defined too as that person who exemplifies good sport behavior.

Years ago I wrote to one of my squad after their world title win and what I wrote as follows has pertinence to all of you champions and aspiring champions, out there.

Your Next Goal

You decide.

I suggest ...planning to be a better bowler.

Speak positively

The power of life and death is in the tongue.

Speak positively about everyone else.

Speak positively to yourself about your current performance.

Your emotions under control

As a champion you had to control your emotions to win the event, keep that in mind for all future events.

Website column
Behaviour of champions

Limit your event entries

Decide which events are priority as you chase your next competition goal, which requires you to leave off some events to prepare.
Be prepared to disappoint people by your refusal to enter an event.

Team expectation

Teammates know you are a champion, speak of mutual success with them.
Be alongside them not above them, attitudinally.
Use your status to build them up.
Encourage a game plan that has objectives for all of you in the team.

Measuring statistics

Use training sessions to keep record of your performance.
Record your performance in all events.
Set objectives and use the data as part of the debrief session with me.
Disregard the opinion of others on this aspect as you are the champion, not them.
Noted the difference between evaluating and justifying (emotional) a performance.

Playing is not practice

Practice different styles of play, different tactics to extend your skill set.
Set a schedule of training, and priority events, and reduce the volume of games you enter.
Experiment with game plans especially on tactic / decision making.

Act like a champion

Be modest and supportive to others.
Model yourself on a champion in sport whose manner is well regarded.
Be positive with everyone.
Be confident without being arrogant.
Humble in more victories, gracious whenever incurring a loss.

Champions make contributions

Share with others interested what you learned on the road to success.
Be a leader in the bowls community.

Website column
Behaviour of champions

Be assertive internally

Disregard critics who ridicule your achievement.

Resentment from others over your success is a natural hazard, deal with it.

Confound selectors who overlook you, despite the champion tag, by winning, again.

Stick with your successful approach (until someone else betters it).

Be prepared to face whatever comes with serenity in the knowledge you are a winner.

Mental skill

Experimenting (results don't count in training) is what champions are prepared to do.

Know yourself to accept behaviour that ensures better preparation.

Offset anxiety in training by use of calming approaches, coping mechanisms.

Learn to reset goals where the result is beyond doubt (either well up or unable to win).

Where your mind goes, everything else follows, so train the skill of intense focus.

Your time in the sun

Enjoy the path so few tread, the pathway of champions from club to world.

As a world champion, History ONLY recalls the names of those who were there first and you are, first.

For the rest of us bowlers, lets aspire to what those champions can inspire in us all.

Lachlan Tighe, 2021

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Footwork & aiming line

Footwork And Aiming Line

QUESTION:

Hi Lachlan and happy new year.

Can you please tell me what foot you tell your bowlers to use when aiming down the green?

I've always used my right foot but after practising with my left the other day I got the feeling my shoulders and hips were more squarer to the target than when I used my right foot. I seemed to gain more consistency with my line. Thoughts? Thanks.

ANSWER

Hi Scott: Gee can't remember when I last told someone which foot to direct.

If you watch elite players there is no one stance, though it seems a good chance both feet are aligned toward the aiming line with many of these players.

A young guy named Neville Rodda (former Australian squad member and 2017 NZ pairs champion) has some interesting YouTube videos on pre-delivery routine worth watching.

The way I coach is to get a player to bowl numerous bowls and when there is a handful of excellent ones I ask them to internally replay what it was they did to get that excellence.

Quess what?

Very, very few know what they did.

Last week I had an international player from overseas here with me for a fortnight of coaching to put her in contention for selection to represent her country in the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Her pre-delivery routine was constant, all her body was in alignment whilst on the mat, but, once she made that first footstep on her backhand the step went up the rink line and not the grass line, and she was unaware of what she was doing, except she knew she was often narrow on the backhand.

Hence a learning tool they now have.

Incidentally, I now have YouTube videos on my bowls website too which may help with the fundamentals of stance and step and delivery.

Hope that helps.

Thanks and regards for the year.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Advice From The Head

Question:

Hi Lachlan:

I'm a member of a Women's Bowling Club in NSW (New South Wales) and normally read your articles. I am 64 years old and have been playing lawn bowls since 1999/2000.

I read a lot of your articles and have a question to ask.

Why shouldn't the skip tell her players whether they're two up or two down?

I know to direct them to where I want them to go, but I also know that the players in my team want to know whether we are holding shot or not.

Thanks

RESPONSE:

Hello:

Sorry for the delay in response as I have only returned recently from a holiday in France.

I assume you ask the question as I have probably made some comment on the necessity for telling players the score or not.

There is no one-way to play or behave in this game, so feel free to trust your own instinct.

Now for me, working with elite players and using sports psychologists, I would demand skips only advise players of the precise required delivery and to do it with positivity.

At that level the mind game is to complete the delivery task.

At club level and a bit above too, players want to know as they feel they can play better if they know the situation.

No, it really highlights either their anxiety or their preferred role of knowing what is going on, that is pseudo skip.

Web menu- Q&A
Website www.lachlantighebowls.com

This weekend we have all codes of football going on in Australia and England and I bet the players in all positions, in all codes, know only what their role, their task is, no more, no less.

All except bloody bowls and bowlers. Ah well them is the breaks.

So whatever you do, do it because you want to operate that way, not to suit how I or anyone else may think or say.

Oh and enjoy.

Regards.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

What It Takes To Improve

QUESTION:

What does the club need to do to improve the top side's performance for next season?

ANSWER:

Gee, how often does that question occur over a few beers at the club.
And we all point the finger at the committee.

The question was posed at the seminar as the final question on the agenda.
We were coming to the end of our allotted time at this seminar so we finished by an around the room invitation to respond to the above question with a simple statement and from memory these were samples of the responses:

Greater commitment to training,
More coaching,
Stable team selection,
Accountability,
Recruitment,
Pre-season coaching,
More responsibility from everyone,
Game plans,
Knowledge of role in pennant playing positions,
More involvement from players,
A commitment from all members to show what they are prepared to do (more),
Host a pie night and invite all members to spell out what we want to do as a club next season,
RIP (recruit, improve, preparation and planning)
And my input here 3Rs - reward, redirect and reprimand.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Bowls Web menu- Q&A
Selection criteria & statistics

Selection Criteria Used, Statistics And Responsibility For Communications

Question:

Thanks Lachlan:

Some interesting reading in that coaches network report, 2017 from the January seminar.

If the next session is post pennant season, perhaps a question around selection criteria might be timely.

For example, if a player needs to be dropped from the #1 side, who has responsibility for that 'difficult' conversation: Skip, Side Captain, Coach, Head of Selectors?

Even more relevant if no rink stats are kept (rink voting slips are often inconclusive) what is the hard evidence relied on to drop a player for 'poor form'?

Another also, - apart from 'player of the year' awards, do rink stats mean anything? I sense a lot of players go through the motion of completing the marking sheets in order to avoid conflict.

Hope to catch up soon.

Regards, Richard

Response:

Hi mate:

Selection, in my view, is the weak link in the whole competitive system of bowls, right up into international level and it all stems from our unwillingness to measure performance against a comparative standard.

As an aside, I recall now being in the BA role and requesting selectors describe to me what their criteria for national squad and team selection; oblique words that included commitment, harmony, team spirit were voiced, yet not one of the national selectors had a measurable criteria.

One criteria abounded though - prejudice for / against some players; continuing on.

I don't get concerned about the fickleness of player expectations in second side and below at any club, as I believe it is always the top side that

Bowls Web menu- Q&A

Selection criteria & statistics

has to be the model for our desired behaviour at our respective clubs, so it is

the best players who set our standards, thus honestly appraising their form, better still if they kept stats, to use to monitor the form.

Anyway, your question - from my experience if I was the coach I would talk to the (top side) players who are underperforming and urge that they train with me as we value their place in the side.

If continuous poor form requires their being dropped, a selector must contact them as well as the coach who should discuss what we (he/me) could do to get them performing well enough to be back in contention for the top side.

As you say, voting slips are inconclusive and often not submitted. Poor old selectors.

Let me illustrate a better way - if our rink lost 18-30, someone is off their game, maybe even two players. Voting slips handed in should show that person.

A debrief post game as a rink, where we furnish honest public voting is the ideal (we had that at Richmond if you remember for many rinks).

However, what we all experience is a stupid silent vote where sometimes that losing rink all votes one another 5-6/10 F*%k; Get a life people.

In that absurd case, all four players do not have a leg to stand on so selectors should call in the skip and challenge this nonsense. I say the skip in this case, because that person was given the leadership role so lets challenge their status.

I notice at one club the criteria for selection says:

Positions are not guaranteed.

Minimal changes will be made to sides.

Compatibility in rink personnel.

I have no idea what that means and I can say this fluid criteria applies at elite levels too as I described a bit earlier.

How can any player know what constitutes a performance requirement to remain in a team, go up, or be dropped.

My club handbook does state players will be contacted when dropped, but I always see that as the consequence. What about how and why you get selected somewhere to start with.

The other side of the coin though Rich, is players have unrealistic expectations and are bloody minded in their dealings with selectors, who are well intentioned volunteers.

Bowls Web menu- Q&A
Selection criteria & statistics

Still we lack measures and we continue that way because bowlers would die if they had to be measured on performance.
And as our executives are also bowlers, hell no change there my friend.

Hope this response helps and keen to include selection criteria on a future session.

Catch you for coffee soon.

Lach

Lachlan Tighe 2017

Personality Clashes In Teams

QUESTION:

As a coach I also skip in our club top side. I have a number of players who refuse to play in the rink team with me and refuse to explain why. What advice fellow coaches can you give me?

ANSWERS:

- This is not a bowls issue – this is a human interaction, communication work place, and a need for mediation.
- Have a mate watch them in pennant and seek the mate's feedback.
- May be a team crisis meeting to resolve.
- For the future sort this out pre-season.
- Good skip would have sorted this before it became quite a personal issue.
- Shows the need for positive behaviour at all times.
- Can we suggest the person look in the mirror first.
- Question on the character of the selectors in allowing players to override their choice.
- Bring the issue out in the open for honest input.
- Is this player intimidating by nature.
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- Has the coach some input in this issue.
- Selectors should demote the players refusing to join in a selected team.
- How can we get all this team to appreciate one another more.
- Try doing a role play with all concerned or even video a pennant game to sight the behaviours of the team.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Situation Awareness SA, again

Question:

Hi Lachlan, it is Casper again. Thanks for explaining situation awareness recently. Does situation awareness ever apply to the playing of the bowl?

Response:

Hello Casper, you are a glutton for punishment and thanks.

Anyway, yes to your question, guaranteed. Two examples of Situation Awareness SA, again from me observing the competitors at the 2017 AO in Broadbeach.

1 Same length:

One team I knew set out to play a particular length whenever winning the mat. I noted one end where having won the mat they chatted quickly and placed the mat that same length where they won the previous end, a length different from their regular length. Observing their decision I felt it was because they had 6/8 bowls in the head to the opposition 1/8 even though the shots won was only one. Reasoning behind the decision: if they get 6:1 ratio of effective bowls in the head, chances are they may pick up multiple shots one end at this length.

2 Unkind hand

Greens for the 2017 AO ran superbly given the rain downpours, yet sometimes a rink was fiercely narrow on one side. One game I witnessed the skip calls took little heed of this narrow factor, limitation, and called players to draw that hand, supposedly with an outcome of drawing around a head of earlier delivered bowls for shot bowl. What happens, bowls delivered stays out at jack high anywhere from a mat length to a metre wide of the jack. Here, SA is the skip if wanting to call the narrow hand not as a draw delivery which they know will hang out but as a delivery using the weight that will get a favourable outcome (not the shot yet at this stage).

Casper, here then is a first hand observation of players in competition. We can all do this if we stop simply watching the bowls as spectators.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Another winner's mindset, 2021

If you don't think you can win, you're never going to win.\
What pearls of wisdom.

And the first place you set out to win is when you state your goals, your ambition as a bowler to win something, and then, to write it down as your record.

You need to say you will win, not compete, not get selected, not to enter the event, not to be a finalist.

These statements are not a winning mindset, though they are the stepping stones to victory.

Those of you with aspirations of winning events or titles heed the words from the opening sentence.

It is a mental skill, winning.
A winner's mindset.

To fulfill your aspirations you need to train with the intensity that enables you to win.

It requires you to train the mental skills required to succeed.

Near enough.
Not good enough.

It is cold, miserable and wet the night you train. Gosh, do I want to be out here. Discipline is needed to remind you of your aspirations, your goals.

Have you goals???
Are they written anywhere?

Have you a training schedule to give yourself every chance of reaching your aspiration?

The bloke who spoke the words for the opening sentence in this article uttered them in 2013.

Website column www.lachlantighebowls.com

Another winners mindset

Years ago.

Nothing new.

And who was, is this bloke?

World champion, Commonwealth games gold medalist David Holt, a member of our bowls squad, pBus.

Lachlan Tighe, 2021

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Taking training into the game

Taking Training Into Competition

QUESTION

This question I posed myself to fellow coaches I am in regular contact with. How can we guarantee that our training (standard) can be taken into competition games?

And that was revised by one of them, as his question is. What were you actually practicing on Thursday and what do you now need to practice to rediscover your 'pb' of 52% effective bowls?

RESPONSES

(Mine and some from other coaches)

I well recall a world cup coach saying, when we get thrashed go out and have a beer.

When we win, especially an important one, sit down and analyse what we do so well.

My game Saturday as a lead in the fours team was the worst ever recorded, ever.

One of the new lines I added on my weekly analysis was to account for our front end being at worst, second shot by the time both front ends had finished; both as a tool to exert pressure on opponents and as a guide as to how we are helping our back end.

Last weekend, it was our second who did all that good work as I just happened to be a member of the front end team. Yet after 13 ends we were 14-14 and I only had 3 contributions from 28 though my damn jack rolling was spot perfect.

Our collective wheels fell off those last 8 ends, but I am sure the three boys got sick of carrying me, poor buggers.

Our side 4 rinks is always in the hunt till about end 14 so it seems to be we lose the steel to persist.

However, training during the week I was BOG and put in a three-hour effort Thursday, come the game the player who attended was not the LTighe from Thursday, perhaps a ring in I think. And we played at my old club on superb greens.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A Taking training into the game

Anyway, back on the training track keeping the game in perspective whilst enjoying the red wine.

Legendary AFL premiership coach, Alan Jeans, said something similar after we had been given a thrashing one day. We are all human beings, we have the occasional poor day, we have the occasional shocker, as long as we are having more good days than shockers, ignore it, move on, "You don't lose your skills in a week son!"

One of my coach colleagues gave this insight.

Reading with interest what has been happening since the Victorian Open at Shepparton. Found getting back into the groove from the quick surface over the week not an easy task, even though my head was telling me what I should be doing and the eyes (these days through glasses) telling me all I needed to know. Last Saturday got on the positive side but was disappointed with myself for taking too long to adjust.

Over many years of playing competitive sport I have found there are players who do all the right things on track, but often when in the field of battle fall apart. Front-end simulations are great in practice. I emphasize this aspect at training and focus on what I call "Land the Mat".

There have been front-end combinations at training who fire and look set for a great game on the Saturday, so I ask the question what is missing when this doesn't happen?

We need to remember that the front end is not an isolated unit. It is the first half of the team, so if Thursday training is being set and done by the front without the skip you are missing the point. The skip in the main controls the agenda; game plan, calls the shots, makes the decisions, determines the strategy, etc.

A second comment was:

One example from pennant competition last Saturday. I have encouraged the selectors to promote a couple of promising bowlers into the second side under my guidance as skip. The lead was playing his second game, the second her first game. Both had not played at this level. At training I did repetitive drills with them to "Land the Mat" over minimum

Bowls Website menu- Q&A Taking training into the game

and Maximum length. Emphasis was on pre-delivery and delivery technique, staying down on the mat and extending down the line.

I reinforced the notion to make each bowl count, land the mat and finish with bowls behind. Their practice on both short and long ends was excellent.

On the basis of training I thought we would play well as a team. (We did win be seven shots). During the course of the game, both front-end players were struggling to produce their Thursday practise form.

We had a mid-game break.

Coming back to resume the competition, the second who was playing her first game said to me that the lead playing his second game was struggling with the change of length, min to max and vice versa.

This was a strategy we had discussed and was employing against our opposition. On reflection she was also finding adjusting to length change challenging. I am glad she provided this feedback because knowing this I was able settle the front-end down and started to get the bowls from them that I knew they were capable of producing.

I might also add that I should have picked up that things were not working as expected though we did meet at times on changeover to talk about things.

I think it was a big ask by me to expect a two-gamer and a one-gamer to adjust so dramatically to length change.

I guess what I am saying is that you can practise as much as you like, but if it doesn't fit in with the game plan that the skip is going with then the real benefits of training may well not be realised.

The great teams in all forms of sport, business etc. play as one not as individuals or groups within the unit and take into account the experience and confidence that team members have in meeting expectations of performance.

And a third coach commented:

I find the large majority of club bowlers have inconsistent performances because they do not have 'feel' as part of either their pre-delivery, delivery or post delivery routine. If you ask most club players to play the same shot again they can't because they have no real idea of what they did the first time and that is partly because the only thing they are interested in is the result (where in the fact the only thing they should be interested in is the process that got them there).

***Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Taking training into the game***

And that in no small way is because they do not train with that purpose in mind.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Taking training into the game

Taking Training Into Competition

QUESTION

This question I posed myself to fellow coaches I am in regular contact with. How can we guarantee that our training (standard) can be taken into competition games?

And that was revised by one of them, as his question is. What were you actually practicing on Thursday and what do you now need to practice to rediscover your 'pb' of 52% effective bowls?

RESPONSES

(Mine and some from other coaches)

I well recall a world cup coach saying, when we get thrashed go out and have a beer.

When we win, especially an important one, sit down and analyse what we do so well.

My game Saturday as a lead in the fours team was the worst ever recorded, ever.

One of the new lines I added on my weekly analysis was to account for our front end being at worst, second shot by the time both front ends had finished; both as a tool to exert pressure on opponents and as a guide as to how we are helping our back end.

Last weekend, it was our second who did all that good work as I just happened to be a member of the front end team. Yet after 13 ends we were 14-14 and I only had 3 contributions from 28 though my damn jack rolling was spot perfect.

Our collective wheels fell off those last 8 ends, but I am sure the three boys got sick of carrying me, poor buggers.

Our side 4 rinks is always in the hunt till about end 14 so it seems to be we lose the steel to persist.

However, training during the week I was BOG and put in a three-hour effort Thursday, come the game the player who attended was not the LTighe from Thursday, perhaps a ring in I think. And we played at my old club on superb greens.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A Taking training into the game

Anyway, back on the training track keeping the game in perspective whilst enjoying the red wine.

Legendary AFL premiership coach, Alan Jeans, said something similar after we had been given a thrashing one day. We are all human beings, we have the occasional poor day, we have the occasional shocker, as long as we are having more good days than shockers, ignore it, move on, "You don't lose your skills in a week son!"

One of my coach colleagues gave this insight.

Reading with interest what has been happening since the Victorian Open at Shepparton. Found getting back into the groove from the quick surface over the week not an easy task, even though my head was telling me what I should be doing and the eyes (these days through glasses) telling me all I needed to know. Last Saturday got on the positive side but was disappointed with myself for taking too long to adjust.

Over many years of playing competitive sport I have found there are players who do all the right things on track, but often when in the field of battle fall apart. Front-end simulations are great in practice. I emphasize this aspect at training and focus on what I call "Land the Mat".

There have been front-end combinations at training who fire and look set for a great game on the Saturday, so I ask the question what is missing when this doesn't happen?

We need to remember that the front end is not an isolated unit. It is the first half of the team, so if Thursday training is being set and done by the front without the skip you are missing the point. The skip in the main controls the agenda; game plan, calls the shots, makes the decisions, determines the strategy, etc.

A second comment was:

One example from pennant competition last Saturday. I have encouraged the selectors to promote a couple of promising bowlers into the second side under my guidance as skip. The lead was playing his second game, the second her first game. Both had not played at this level. At training I did repetitive drills with them to "Land the Mat" over minimum

Bowls Website menu- Q&A Taking training into the game

and Maximum length. Emphasis was on pre-delivery and delivery technique, staying down on the mat and extending down the line.

I reinforced the notion to make each bowl count, land the mat and finish with bowls behind. Their practice on both short and long ends was excellent.

On the basis of training I thought we would play well as a team. (We did win be seven shots). During the course of the game, both front-end players were struggling to produce their Thursday practise form.

We had a mid-game break.

Coming back to resume the competition, the second who was playing her first game said to me that the lead playing his second game was struggling with the change of length, min to max and vice versa.

This was a strategy we had discussed and was employing against our opposition. On reflection she was also finding adjusting to length change challenging. I am glad she provided this feedback because knowing this I was able settle the front-end down and started to get the bowls from them that I knew they were capable of producing.

I might also add that I should have picked up that things were not working as expected though we did meet at times on changeover to talk about things.

I think it was a big ask by me to expect a two-gamer and a one-gamer to adjust so dramatically to length change.

I guess what I am saying is that you can practise as much as you like, but if it doesn't fit in with the game plan that the skip is going with then the real benefits of training may well not be realised.

The great teams in all forms of sport, business etc. play as one not as individuals or groups within the unit and take into account the experience and confidence that team members have in meeting expectations of performance.

And a third coach commented:

I find the large majority of club bowlers have inconsistent performances because they do not have 'feel' as part of either their pre-delivery, delivery or post delivery routine. If you ask most club players to play the same shot again they can't because they have no real idea of what they did the first time and that is partly because the only thing they are interested in is the result (where in the fact the only thing they should be interested in is the process that got them there).

***Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Taking training into the game***

And that in no small way is because they do not train with that purpose in mind.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Back End Team Skills

QUESTION:

I have competed at premier league these past few years as lead or second; now I want the skills to be a back end team player at that elite level.

What are these skills?

How do I train for them?

ANSWERS:

This question was posed at a seminar I convened and the responses of participants is summarised within these skills / attributes of back end personnel.

1. Management
2. Tactical
3. Communication
4. Mental
5. Technical

More specific comments included:

- Skips can play every shot and perform well under pressure.
- Fitness – physically fit, mental strength.
- People skills – communication; positive reinforcement.
- The skip doesn't need to be the best bowler in the side.
- Head reading;
- Psychology;
- Team player;
- Tactician;
- Capacity to convert shot position;
- Coping with pressure;
- Leadership;
- Decisive;
- Confidence;
- Game awareness;
- Percentage player;
- Visualisation skill;
- Draw shot prowess;
- Capable of drawing off centre;
- Mental toughness;
- Lengthy concentration;
- Managing the team emotions and behaviours;
- Game plan knowledge;

Website article
Back end team skills

- Energiser for the team;
- Situation awareness of us, the opposition, the score; analyses game in progress;
- Firm, fair, fun and fighter for the team;
- Really good communicator.

I think this collection of responses gives an overview of what you need to be competent at elite level to be a back team bowler.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Preparing for pennant performance, 2017

Question:

Hi Lachlan:

We are a handful of top side players who as coaches within the club are taking on the coaching roles at a strong pennant club for the first time and already are planning a training schedule in readiness for when the (pre) season gets going in the next month or two.

Wondering what (else) you would do before the season starts?

Response:

Hi guys:

Firstly, well done on your keenness and the good sense of your club to use your skills to service your own club.

Sounds as if you have planned the schedule to offer regular weekly training and one off coaching to all members for the entire season, which I would do too.

It seems you seek my advice for the top side hence my offering that follows is based on that factor.

It is imperative that the club does a review of the previous season top-side pennant performance – sometimes even wins hide sins. I suggest everyone who played at least a game for you in that top-side be invited to attend a two-hour forum, and others keen to get selected this coming season. Oh and any recruits you target which allows them to see and hear how serious you guys take this role.

My idea for the forum is give more than 30 minutes to these three items and each and every one of the bowlers who played a game at that level last season is to:

- State one thing they learnt from opponents.
- State one strength of yours, of the team.
- State one thing you / the team needs to do to remain in top pennant level this coming season.

Now for 15 minutes

- Have the four top-side skips explain their game plan and specific use / expectation of their team.

Then allow you coaches to summarise as a panel for the final 15 minutes. You might be amazed by what you gain from such a forum. You are immediately displaying to the players how serious you are in the role as coaches providing benefits to them, to the club. Be delighted to hear the outcome.

Thanks.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Effective Bowl Measures

Hi Lachlan:

I was interested in your thoughts about effective bowls, as often a mat length is used as the measure.

I on the other hand feel it should be weighted to the bowl that passes the jack.

I came up with a mat in front and 1.5 mats past to give a more accurate measure of the player who is giving their bowl a chance.

I realize that this would mean an increased percentage should be achieved compared to a mat length.

For division pennant 1 what do you consider an expected mark for each position?

Regards

Hi fellow coach:

Quite simply I use ML (mat length), like a par in golf, because it is a specific measure (2 feet or 60cm) from the jack or called position bowl, and is a measure from premier to division ten.

Your bowl 1.5ML behind is invaluable to the team. In fact, the player asked to deliver say one metre behind the head is, in my approach, given a ML (any direction) leeway from the one metre spot to earn the effective tick. Again the ML and the stats are intended to raise the bar on performance and to use the stats collected at intervals in the game.

So as you get the team to refocus at halftime, that is a good time for rinks to see who and what is doing well.

Some of the estimates of effective bowls may be a bit out, but one or two errors is no big deal. With back end players there is a bit more subjectivity in measuring them.

As coach you have to feel comfortable with your definition of acceptable deliveries and let the troops know what that is. Yesterday for example, our skip nominated that he was going to do these deliveries in 3 ends:

- one metre over, but glanced off the jack with the one metre delivery;
- three metres through, yet found the smallest of gaps to end up 3m thru and no change.
- drive the head and drive hit their shot bowl parked next to the jack still we were 2 down.

Web menu- Q&A

Website www.lachlantighebowls.com

In each case I say that is an effective delivery, as it is the performance not always the result.

Sometimes when a player is asked to play just one metre over and they come 4-5m through, get a result and reckon that is a good bowl. I take the result, but I don't give them a tick for an effective delivery as it hides his incompetency especially had it missed.

We may all disagree on this definition.

Hope that helps and here is the report update too.

Oh! I add here my effective bowls expectations listed for all playing positions.

My Pennant Competition Expectation for 2016/17

FOURS TEAM RINK % Statistics standards (number bowls from total 42)

	LEAD	2nd	Third	Skip
ML Std accepted % Div.1.club level & objective	40 (17)	40 (17)	33 (14)	33 (14)
ML Std accepted % Div.2.club level & objective	36 (15)	36 (15)	30 (12)	30 (12)
ML Std accepted % Div.3.club level & objective	34 (14)	34 (14)	25 (11)	25 (11)
ML Std with first bowl - personal objective	12/21	same	same	same
ML Std with ends contributed target	14/21	same	same	same

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

The Performance Of Selectors

QUESTION:

How well did the club selectors perform?

ANSWER:

To start off the discussion the question was asked, how many clubs select their selectors = 2; the other 16 clubs represented elect their selectors by vote at a general meeting, regardless of any published document on the qualities or skills of a selector at any club.

I asked the audience to indicate if anyone was / shall be a selector and if the club committee furnished them with any objectives, any responsibilities, any criteria for selection. The answer was a resounding NO.

No selectors were given a brief on what was expected of the sides. It was obvious some club selectors set their own guidelines, though will that change with next year's intake of selectors. Therein was a problem recognised within the room, a lack of continuity in the role as selector.

Within the discussion, we sought both a selector and a player view on what is meant by...commitment, compatability and team spirit. With so much variation in responses it demonstrated how emotional and subjective it all is and there is a need to measure. When asked if clubs used votes to provide to selectors, all clubs had some system, but it was all too obvious that each system is flawed by the quality of input, that old computer acronym GIGO garbage in garbage out - e.g. rink loses by 13-30 yet all 4 players rated as a 7/10, lack of honesty. Or the one I love...the skip racing to the selectors saying my front end gave me nothin'...Everyone in the room acknowledged these both occurred at their club yet this (dishonest) approach seemed to go unchallenged back at the club. Is that saying something about the values at your club?

A handful of clubs, a number that was a pleasant surprise to me, now measure every delivery and that data is submitted to selectors as a fact in selection. One club could even display to players the required % needed in positions within the fours team.

A regular issue voiced is that selectors don't always choose the best 16 players for the top side.

No one indicated that the club committee set the objectives for the performance and pennant and that selectors set about choosing with the club direction in mind. Still the old complaint about self-serving selectors. What also arose was the frustration the selectors and the club have dealing with acrimonious, recalcitrant team members, some of whom are in your top side. And members of your top side, many being your skips, who just do not want to go along the new line the club committee, the selectors want for the top side to perform.

Website article
The performance of selectors

My bowls mates who I met last week referred to these players as ‘roadblocks’ and they have influence. A suggestion in the room was to take these top side skips who are barriers to your club progress and move them from that role, diminishing their influence. They still deserve to be in your top side, simply lower their role. Why keep rewarding them to oppose your club, in a simple way you are reprimanding them, subtly lets hope.

Another old hoary one to feature in discussion is the bowlers who pull their name off selection having seen the team selections. When this came up it appeared most clubs faced the issue. I piped up why reward them, why not show some club fibre and suspend them for a game without a guarantee where they will feature the following round. Again depends on the culture prevailing at your club.

Many in the room felt skips should be selected firstly on their ability to be a team leader, inference being able to get the best from the team mates, and then able to play well enough to hold that position.

General impression from all this was that selection criteria is important. Issue will be will this occur back at the club.

A new player to bowls felt there was a need for regeneration in that new people, new ways keep a club abreast of competitors. However, the question everyone had then was how do we do that (regeneration) back at our club?

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Bowls Web column –Q&A
Playing weaker players

How To Concentrate, Especially Against Lesser Bowlers?

QUESTION:

Hello Lachlan:

Could I please get your thoughts on how to concentrate against weaker opposition?

I play One Grade and have no problem concentrating against my One Grade teammates in club championships. A sure sign that my arousal level is healthy is when I start thinking about the next round as soon as I've won the previous. I'm guessing it's because I play second in pennants and haven't had the opportunity to play back end.

In club championships I skip and play with lower graders and relish the challenge to show my pennant teammates how good I am playing back end. It's also very satisfying to get a win for my lower grades teammates.

On the weekend I played against weak opposition in the club triples semi-final. Before the game I was very aware of my inability to concentrate and was confident that once the game started I would get in the zone being an important game. I was never pumped, we won easily, but unfortunately it was a very scrappy game and I didn't play close to what I wanted. I was annoyed by it and tried 100%, but sometimes you just can't get in the zone. You know you're in the zone when nothing distracts you, you're composed and you're so attuned to your technique allowing you to make corrections easily. I'm guessing my problem started when I couldn't get pumped?

Fear of failure definitely works for me as a skip. Usually a case of, "If I don't play well we will lose." I relish that responsibility. I'm more inconsistent playing second in pennants because I think I fall into the trap of believing others will win it for us. I'm very aware of that too and only seem to play better against the stronger teams.

Do you have any suggestions for getting in the zone?

I assume having the optimum arousal level plays a big part in this so

***Bowls Web column –Q&A
Playing weaker players***

how do you get motivated?

Regards,

RESPONSE

Re-reading your content again, methinks you are a bit like the majority in that if I read correctly you only get pumped being at the back end.

I find that is because bowlers have not set goals to climb up the ladder of self improvement.

If I was to say to you I am selecting you as a second in the Aussie team can I assume you would jump at it. Yet, everyone seems to think they have to skip to be better – bullshit.

An international player I coach will be a lead and second in the 2016 world champs, later this year.

We have set that player the object of rolling the jack within a metre of the skip's request 90% of times and their first delivery objective, note that, is to be within a mat width of the jack 75% of the ends played. Thus the player is innately contributing every end by striving to achieve the objectives.

Recently whilst in Canada, I watched a Canadian national player I coach play in their national championships and she set out measured objectives for the two games daily and then would record her performance each end so she and I could check out how she went on the day. And twice she joined me to train briefly after the days event to reinforce what she needed to do.

Would most bowlers be prepared to do that, doubt it!

So mate, if wanting to be better, set your sights on something and train to achieve it.

Hope that helps.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Measuring Pennant Performance

QUESTION:

Measuring performance in pennant bowls: At a recent seminar the question was asked, Who in the room keeps personal stats, or, their club has a process for the team keeping stats? Please share the process and experience.

ANSWERS

- Premier league player – reason for keeping stats was to drive my performance. What level am I at so I know how to improve. Feedback received was that if the side won then he did not play well. First bowls pressure – first bowl within mat width, mat length.
- A second premier league player – recording effective bowls for each player during the game.
- A third premier league player noted – discuss game plan before the game. Keeps stats for the whole team during the game and discusses as a team (with red) after the game. Re-write the card – examine score cards at the end of a game and looks at ends where losses were reduced to 2.
- Division one player – one rink of the four examines and looks at consistency of bowls in the head for lead.
- Division one club – invited members to participate in a forum to present ideas for improvements to the club. Every skip measures mat length bowls. Mat length front end – 2 in the head. Head situation after the first 4 bowls; same for 3rds and skips; 42% front end and 38% for back end; after 2 and a half years of stats they have found that if they win 11 ends and win more multiples than lose then they win the game.
- Club coach – if front end is holding circle that on the card and assess results at the end of the game.
- One club expects 40% effective bowls from division one pennant players.
- We know a club that won division two by players performing at 38% effective.
- Another club knows they win every time they win the majority of the 21 ends in pennant.
- A premier league side years back knew whenever the front end team players had 2 bowls with a ML of the jack 17/25 ends the rink always won.
- One club records a series of indicators - everyone on a mat length (ML) basis, score on the changeover for the skip, score at completion of the end, number of ends won in a segment of 5 ends, total ends won on the day, multiples either won or lost; players in the rink mark each other and also do the 3.2.1. at pennant for the merit of the selectors; players use a typical score card to mark a tick or X to indicate an effective delivery; the club has printed a specific card for pennant players marking.

- One club has front end expected to achieve 40-45%, third 38% and skip 30% as measured benchmark at division one.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

What To Observe Of A Bowler

QUESTION:

Hi Lachlan:

Thank you for your advice recently. My first pre-season pennant practice match is on 19th September. If you are available would you come and have a look at my technique, delivery etc. I would appreciate your assistance?

Cheers,

Kay

ANSWER:

Hi Kay:

I don't want or need to come to that pennant trial all day, as an hour of observation of your game will be ample time to provide feedback, and I also wanted to do a 30-minute practical session with you after the game.

Now one thing. I am not as interested in your delivery, your technique, as you appear to be, as those are base ingredients and will be expected if you are any good.

You can find good bowlers / coaches nearby to tinker with your technique if so required.

What I want from you is an email telling me:

What you want to achieve this season;

What amount of training have you done in readiness for the trial;

How good your technical skills are;

The expected number / % of effective bowls you set yourself for the day;

If skipping what is the team game plan;

And if not the skip, what is your team role as you expect to apply it;

Long term, what goals have you set (I always have goals even as a part time bowler).

As you would expect from that level of detail I seek from you, not many people seek me in coaching nowadays.

That response to detail is an early indication of their motivation level. I do not encourage them if their motivation is dubious, not honest, as these are the standards I set the players need understand I may be able

Website menu- Q&A
What to observe of a bowler?

to give them best chance to really improve, to drive their motivation.

I hope I shall read your return email in due course.

Thanks

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

SELECTION PROCESS IN BOWLS 2017

SELECTION, THE PROCESS SOLVING THE ISSUES IN BOWLS CATCH THE BUS 2017

SELECTION PROCESS, DUE DILIGENCE

The selection process provides the tool to solve the expected issues (refer Selection Issues), as well as the role and responsibility of being a selector:

Selectors need to:

Know their responsibility to the club (committee) direction, goal and despite all the critics and apparent loss of friends, hang tough with that purpose.

Criteria for selection on display in a public forum in line with the stated direction of the club committee.

Knowledge about club bowlers / recruit skills, maybe a documented skill appraisal.

Knowledge about club bowlers / recruits previous season pennant performance.

Knowledge about club bowlers / recruits commitment level last season.

Knowledge about club bowlers / recruits developed commitment level for this season.

Seek game plans from skips to measure post game the result to the plan.

Measurement of performance tools - PENNANT rink & side score; voting cards.

Measurement of performance tools - debrief session for both team and player(s).

Measurement of observable indicators for player(s) specified in criteria.

Measurement of player skill levels compared to the event / pennant division standards.

Observable behaviours of players to reflect their attitude.

Choosing teams of players with skill & requisite competitive attitude.

Liase with head coach to have this expert advice, always.

Reward-reinforce-reprimand the commitment / behaviours of players.

Explain the criteria for selection and appeal process to players in a formal setting / meeting.

Explain to players when there is concern about current performance

Elbows- attitude, all about practicing habits

Lachlan Tighe, email l.a.tighe@bigpond.com mob.0409 532 953

SELECTION PROCESS IN BOWLS 2017

and discussion had occurred between both about player being subject to possible exclusion.

Explain to players why they are dropped.

Have a set time early in a week for the selection meeting to enable players / teams to work / be coached together.

Don't reward players (in positions or teams) not willing to fit the team/club's agreed culture, purpose - know your role, accept your role, play your role).

THE APPEALS PROCESS - DUE CONSIDERATION

The chairman together with the head coach and one other selector will hear credible, rather than dubious, appeals. A dubious appeal (which will not be heard incidentally) is exemplified by these:

A person being moved within the side(s) at the same pennant level;

Where the rink lost by >10 shots, and, that player performance rating was recorded by fellow team mates as 'below average' either numerically or descriptive;

There was no recorded statistics on the player effective deliveries % as required or recommended by selectors;

Where statistics were kept, the player recorded a below pennant level of performance in effective deliveries;

They are appealing on a simple personality clash with another rink member;

They object to the team position assigned them.

Selection & Teams

Attitude has an affect on teams. It is observed in the moan, the body language and the energy level.

One negative trait is enough to influence (morale of) the team. Selectors need to identify this, to negate or eliminate it, as consequences are brutal.

Team spirit ???

A team is a unit with a collective task, that no one individual can do alone. Teams can achieve success even if their members have no / little liking for one another. Fulfilling the task of the team is the drive and satisfaction to successful teams. Working together the team can succeed.

SELECTION PROCESS IN BOWLS 2017

We feel stronger because of who is around us in the team. And, when it all goes pear shaped everyone knows you are the one who gets us all (attitudinally) back on the bike. Be that team member who reminds us what we need to do to get back to winning.

Team success - research, 'Athlete assessment' source

- 36% more team development programs than opponents (Group 13, KHBC)
- 60% found unsuccessful team leaders due to an inability to work as a member of the team (skips or others in 4s team)
- Prime reason felt for the failure of these team leaders was due to their lack of clarity and what they are expected to do, their own goal, their teams goal (overcome if a game plan and roles are spelt out)
- 9% said teams failed due to a lack of technical ability
- Summary – successful teams and organisations know their success is due to the functioning and efficiency of, and within, the team.

The BUS (organisational) concept

Selectors, please hear me!

I want to look at the DESTINATION written on the front of the bus so as to ensure I am jumping aboard a bus being taken in the right direction. And before I jump on the bus I want it to appear contemporary and be well resourced (fuelled for energy).

Then where I am willing to be on the BUS, for me as a coach, the bus driver, I ask myself:

Let's get the right people on the bus.

Get the wrong people off the bus.

Get the right people in their right positions.

Let the passengers off where they do the least damage.

Take the role. Take the responsibility.

Do we have the right people on the bus in all capacities.

If not, is the leadership able or willing to pursue the recruitment of the right people connected to all aspects of a better level of performance?

SELECTION PROCESS IN BOWLS 2017

Summarizing:

...Hire the inspired, inspire the hired.

&

...First WHO, then what as the who probably know the what.

Lachlan Tighe 2017

*Bowls Website menu – Q&A
winning*

How To Win From In Front Or Behind

Question:

Hi Lachie:

It was good to have a bit of a chat recently and watch as three of the best young bowlers around were listening to you and bouncing comments off you.

It got me thinking that I could send you this email and ask for some input from you as to what I should do next. Happy to take on board whatever you have to offer.

My problem is basically that I find myself playing a lot of singles matches and getting some pretty awesome results and then scattering a couple of "bad ends" in there and f*cking it all up.

I have made some big changes to my lifestyle recently, losing some weight and practising more than ever.

I am better suited to coming from behind in games rather than leading comfortably as I seem to be able to do everything correctly when I absolutely need to, but become a bit blasé when I have a big lead.

Hoping that there is a strategy you might suggest.

Wondering if a sports psychologist might be useful even though I think that my issue is partly tactical in nature.

Hope this doesn't present to onerous a task.

Cheers and kind regards.

Response:

Hi mate;

Quite interesting that these last two years I have had an international, two premier leaguers, and three division one (skips) all seek me for personal coaching and in every case a common factor was... how do I win the close ones, the profile events.

Three or four of the six will be at the Sunday program too which may be good to share when we chew the fat.

I throw the comments below in no priority for you to check for relevance to you, so we can talk over a red in the near future:

- attitude is a big thing in winning or losing
- what did you change from a winning game, why?
- doing what you are good at only makes you good (still); focusing on what you could do better, exceptional is the path to being much, much better; but,

Bowls Website menu – Q&A winning

it is an attitude shift;

- many a hotshot in sport does this: record objectives you can change your plan to succeed but not your objective;
- doubt & debrief: doubt is mandatory, losing though is optional; debriefing every game with a view to learning about yourself and what to do in readiness for the next event is invaluable;
- two things about training for your issue - train with a specific skill purpose and relevant intensity, and, simulate the game at training so have a practice partner where you are say 21-18 and play to 25 so as to get used to how to set a mini plan to win the final ends; remember skill is more than delivery, skill so tactical and mental skill are trained too; mate practice makes players;
- momentum, self control pressure can all be trained for where you have a process to take to games, it can be measured and it is habit forming;
- finally mate winning - know what you have to do to win, plan for it, train for it, not worry about what if I lose; don't stay safe / consistent / comfortable; the winners prize is there for those of us prepared to chance it, explore, develop, work, initiate and fight using the tools we trained with;
- challenge yourself to go further.

I reckon that is a snapshot of my thought processes.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Club Competition Achievements

QUESTION:

What did the club set out to achieve in a competitive sense this past season?

ANSWER:

We had about 35 bowls people from about 18 clubs in the room and we had group discussion around these views:

Anyone in the room can say that their club has not set out any pennant objectives - hands up.

Anyone in the room can say that their pennant team has an idea of what they want to achieve but there is nothing formal from the committee to inform all members of the objective – hands up.

Anyone in the room can say their club publicly informs all members of the objective – which club / explain.

Fair to say club boards / committees don't set out pennant objectives.

Only two clubs formally communicated their committee objective to all members.

It was agreed among attendees that we clubs need to have something to set our sights on, the goals that are important for direction, but the issue seems to be as clubs, we do not know how to we achieve the goals.

In setting club objectives there has to be a realization that players have other facets of their life and bowls is after all a pastime, even for your top side players.

Lachlan, 2018

Reading Is Revealing

I picked up a small book about the thoughts and views of a local media commentator cum local identity, Waleed Aly.

I especially liked this excerpt from his book:

‘...that preparedness to take risks, to be prepared to be embarrassed, and just to explore the limits of what it is you can do, its amazing the places (success) that it will take you’.

As always I put a sporting spin on this and think of the basis for being elite and a lot of that excerpt explains the basis of gravitating toward elite success.

Never explain, as in justify or excuse, never complain, simply gain.

As our pBus bowls squad motto aptly expresses it...no limits.

Lachlan Tighe, 2021

How Good Is Your Technical Delivery?

QUESTION:

Hi Lachlan;

You asked me to provide my reaction to this question. How good are your technical skills?

Kay

YOUR ANSWER:

I believe my technical skills are okay, but possibly could be improved. That is why I think it is good to have someone else observing who may be able to see any blatant problems that might hamper my improvement, whether physical or mental.

ANSWER I MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED

At my club a keen and reasonably good bowler, though not having your desire to aspire to elite, impressed me when I observed he set himself an objective of counting how many resting touchers he could achieve from 100 deliveries; his result 6.

What impressed me was his discipline to get over by himself to set up the jacks at minimum each end and do the exercise without supervision.

I indicated to him that his endeavor would do three things for his skill set - reinforce, reward and inform him of his skill. His intensity and sense of enjoyment were obvious to anyone watching.

Apparently two days later he did the same exercise at the same length and achieved an outcome of 13/100 resting touchers. Reinforce, reward and information again for him.

I share with you a skills audit table I recorded and also a version of it is on my website.

TECHNICAL DELIVERY SKILLS MEASURE

Experience at minimum length forehand - the number of deliveries ending within '**Mat Length**' (ML) of delivery being attempted at the minimum length RH forehand.

Website menu- Q&A
How good is your technical delivery skill?

Types of delivery, (10 attempts all type of deliveries)	Total Number bowled	BC Ave.	BC 'pb'	Elbows Squad 'pb'
Jack roll				10
Draw				
1 Within ML	720	4.5	10	10
2 Resting toucher	190	0.2	4	
3 Add yard beyond jack	400	2.8	7	6
4 Draw to ditch, ML	490	2.2	6	9
Weighted deliveries				
1 Running delivery, 4m				6
2 Wrest out toucher	120	1.1	4	5
3 Trail a metre				4
4 Trail – hide it	150	1	4	3
5 Metre on / over shot	120	2.5	6	7
6 2 metres on/ over shot	100	1.8	5	6
7 Drive	450	4.3	9	9
8 Firm up shot/ swinger	100	3.6	8	8

This is a far more extensive answer about technical skill than your one of ...ok.

If wanting to be elite, see the table as a tool to aim to develop as a bowler.

Thanks

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Being Better Bowlers

Question: How do I get to be a better bowler; how to I get to the next level?

I continue to receive queries from bowlers wanting to be better; rarely do I get any insight into their reasons for the request or the current calibre of bowler. Here are a handful of similar questions and the difficulty in responding to these vague calls to being better.

Hi Lachlan:

Hope this email finds you well. Read your book and loved it. I'd like some advice if you can give it. I now find myself with lots of time and no kids on my hands and really wanting to devote lots of time to lawn bowls at the age of 49. We had a work team that played night owls earlier in the year and now I've signed up to play pennants with the club. I want to get my bowling to the highest level I can attain, and I have lots of time to devote to achieve this. Are you aware of anyone over here that coaches privately?

Hi Lachy:

Hope you're well!
I'm looking at progressing my game to next level and I think you're the right coach for the job.
I've been meaning to ask you before however haven't... for reasons.

Lachlan Tighe:

Thanks for all the info re: coaching and lawn bowls in general on your website. This is my third year of lawn bowls and I have been slowly incorporating info on your website into my training routines after discovering your website last year. I made it to the post sectional matches of the Queensland state championships this year in the singles losing my match 25-19. I am hungry to progress further in this game and was wondering what are the requirements to be coached by you.

Hi Lachlan:

I just spent the weekend playing at the state regionals in Swan Hill, playing third to a class player who you know. Playing with her at that level has motivated me to get serious about my bowls again. I feel last season I

Bowls Website menu- Q&A BEING BETTER BOWLERS

was just going through the motions a bit, emotionally up and down and because I was only able to play Saturday pennant and nothing else. After starting the first few games as second, I played most of the season as skip in our division 1 team. I did quite well for our club standard, but there are lots of things I would like to work on, to improve my own game. Can you let me know if there is any possibility of doing some work with you over winter period?

Hi Lachlan:

As discussed with you, I would like to learn some drills or work with you further to develop my draw bowling and my driving. I tried out with the state squad last August and after performing well below what I know I can do, came away determined to improve to a level where I can at least hold my own and possibly push for selection if given another chance to try out. During the season, I practiced mainly on a drill to draw 2 bowls to a minimum length jack and 2 to maximum length, as this seemed to be what was required to bowl well at the trials. My draw bowling became a lot more consistent and I played nearly the whole season in our men's division 1 team as a second, and won the club championship. However, I know I need to improve a lot further to reach the level I want to be. So any help you can give me to develop a practice schedule or drills that I should be using would be fantastic.

Responses

Now for all these players who made contact I may say this generic response to the questions above may summarise the variety of answers to assist their own development.

- Secure the services of a coach at the club, or, a really good player who you simply seek some (regular) advice from. Want to know who a good bowler is - refer to the club championship board and see who features on it regularly, they are good.
- We need to a chat to hear what you want and where you hope to progress to.
- Have you ever set down in writing a set of goals / objectives and if so can I view them.
- Refer to my website where there are samples of goals set.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
BEING BETTER BOWLERS

- Interesting I recently started personal coaching of a young premier league bowler on a twice a week basis. What these guys have done before we start is them providing me a goals' statement in which they and I know what they hope to achieve.
- And the first session we have is all about measuring their technical skill.
- Take advantage of my website that has numerous training programs illustrated and again many articles on all manner of bowls stuff.
- Here are some examples of goals that can be set for the coming season:
 - To improve the consistency of draw bowl delivery to average 40-50% mat length deliveries.
 - To improve the mental side of your game so that you don't give up big leads in single games and go off the boil during pennant.
 - To defend club singles title.
 - To be a strong lead or 2nd in our division 1 Saturday side.
 - Draft either a monthly or season long plan for training sessions, so you know what drills and skills to be practicing.
 - We can plot a schedule of training (sessions) to use over these months
 - I can draft something and email it for your consideration.
 - I would detail the content for each session so it covers the 4 goals nearly every session.
 - Show you how to measure your goals so you know where you are now and how you are progressing; per instance to 'improve my consistency' well we need to know that both technically and performance.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Team Dysfunction

QUESTION:

As a coach I also skip in our club top side. I have a number of players who refuse to play in the rink team with me and refuse to explain why. What advice fellow coaches can you give me?

ANSWERS:

What a challenging position to find yourself in. And the audience was honest in providing these responses:

- This is not a bowls issue – this is a human interaction, communication;
- Work place, and a need for mediation;
- Have a mate watch them in pennant and seek the mate's feedback;
- May be a team crisis meeting to resolve;
- For the future sort this out pre-season;
- Good skip would have sorted this before it became quite a personal issue;
- Shows the need for positive behaviour at all times;
- Can we suggest the person look in the mirror first;
- Question on the character of the selectors in allowing players to override their choice;
- Bring the issue out in the open for honest input;
- Is this player intimidating by nature;
- Are the other players simply jealous he has the role;
- Seems it may be the player lacks good communication skill reflected in body language;
- Player may be too stubborn to accept team mates angst;
- Raises a question of the level of trust now and also for the future;
- Has the coach some input in this issue;
- Selectors should demote the players refusing to join in a selected team;
- How can we get all this team to appreciate one another more;
- Try doing a role play with all concerned or even video a pennant game to sight the behaviours of the team.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

What Are Your Goals?

QUESTION

Hi Lachlan:

You asked me to provide my reactions to these questions from you long term, What goals have you set.?

Kay

YOUR ANSWER

To represent my State and see how far I can go in this sport.

ANSWER I MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED

Hi Kay:

Representing your state is an indicator to me you want to be an elite bowler. However, I don't read from that statement there is a burning desire to be a winner, only a representative.

Elite sports players would state their goal with conviction. Thus, I expect to be selected in the state side having won state singles, region singles, club singles, Moama womens pairs, skipped the regional womens rink undefeated, etc etc.

Elite sports players would detail their goals with timelines and measures as two types.

Performance

Skills

The detail under performance may include:

Knowledge of performances necessary to be included in a state squad.

Wins in stated events during a season(s).

Finalists in other stated events.

De-briefing performances and game plans.

The detail under skills may include:

Present technical skills measured.

Standard to meet to be an elite bowler.

Progress in these, and other necessary bowls skills over a season.

Self-appraisal of skills template at the end of season(s).

Your second part of the goal statement is too airy fairy...how far can I go?

If you are not specific in your aim, anywhere is good enough, as you did say how far and you did go somewhere even if not far.

Website menu- Q&A
What are your goals?

The reaction is given for you to see how you might set yourself stepping stones, measurable steps to know you are progressing along your track to your destiny in bowls.

In itself the track is your success.

Thanks.

Lachlan Tighe 2017

Role Of Coach

QUESTION:

I am head coach at a club. I listen to what other coaches do / don't do. Expectations (from clubs) vary as do our skills. What do you think is your role / responsibility as the club coach?

ANSWERS

• Club:

- Does a coach need accreditation?
- Job description / KPI's.
- Influence culture, attitudes.
- Club leadership.
- Setting season goals.
- Guard the interest of the team.
- An employee on a limited tenure.
- Selector, or, only participate in selection in an advisory capacity.
- Team and player performance appraisal.
- Numerous club executives dumbfounded as to what to expect of the coach.

• Players:

- Understanding skills and a player's role.
- Structuring training drill sessions.
- Providing basic technical ski programs.
- Motivate players.
- Captain of the top side in the club.
- Developing new, hidden talent.
- Assisting new members.
- Analysing opposition and analysing competition venues.
- Be an amateur psychologist.
- Being approachable to players.
- Coach for every member.
- Take different approaches to different individuals.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

‘Team Success: Victory And Adversity’

Right now in 2017 here in Australia the models of sporting excellence abound and appear in every media outlet – Australian Rules football AFL finals, Australian rugby league finals, the Spring racing carnival, Australian Open Tennis, and cricket in all its forms.

I saw a documentary once a few years back on SBS titled ‘Seabiscuit’ which for me highlighted that victory over adversity as a feature of sports excellence has been around a long time.

Seabiscuit was a racehorse, who ran in the USA during the late ‘30s, who was described as a ‘dog of a horse.’ Fast forward to late 2016 and that sounds like the description applied unfairly to the Western Bulldogs (Doggies) these past couple of years, even from 1954 when they last won a football premiership.

Seabiscuit’s critics said he could not win a race to save himself as a 2 year old. He was described as...ungainly, unglamorous, compared to the other equine heroes of the day. To make matters worse for poor Seabiscuit, the jockey who bestrode him, Reg Pollard, was partially crippled through previous race fall injuries and to add to the flaws was blind in his right eye. Gee again a parallel to the Doggies with injuries befalling everyone this football season.

But, they, horse and jockey, teamed together through the astute management of the trainer, like a good skip in bowls, who knew all about managing his charges (and that is what a team is) to start to win races, many races.

Once results occurred, frequently, the team was then rightly perceived as dedicated, talented, totally committed. Seabiscuit was pipped on the post into second place in the then richest race in the world and the media of the day felt this was the beginning of his end. However, over the next few years, both jockey and horse revived their winning spirit to prepare and win that richest race two years later.

Website menu: teams

Team success, victory over adversity

How many Olympians do we read about who get flogged in their first Olympics and through sheer grit and determination come back four years later to take gold. Or the Doggies, from a finalist in 2015, to a lowly finalist the following year, onto premiers.

According to the trainer the losses, jibes, gloom in those periods without success made each of the trainer, jockey and horse.

Driven; driven for the hunger of success.

The bad times, the tough times, the adversity was part of the journey. More to savour when victory finally came about. And victory would come about as they believed in its ultimate arrival.

There is ample application from this horse racing tale in 1930, the Doggies tale in 2016 for us in bowls to note, adopt and apply whether we be coaches, skips of teams or players.

One big difference in these two tales to what I witness in various levels of bowls. In this sport, bowls, many talk about the victory, but given we are part of clubs, sides, teams and squads there is a necessity to be in sync with one another.

My recall of the SBS show was that the Seabiscuit team was as one in their utter dedication to work toward achieving the goal they cherished as a team. And all of us here in Australia witnessed the repeat of the tale with the Doggies victory and the magnanimous gesture of the coach post game.

That was one of the abiding memories I had in watching a show that was telling a sports story from nearly 80 years ago; not much has changed to the main ingredient of success in all that time, circa Doggies parallel 2016 premiership story.

Lets hope more bowlers stop the talk and work the walk as successful results will be more likely to occur because you understood the responsibility to work, together, for the success.

Website menu: teams

Team success, victory over adversity

More of us in bowls should seize the lesson from the subject in the documentary. And from the Doggies soaring to the summit of sport excellence.

Lachlan Tighe 2017

Skips Ability To Read Heads

Question

Hi:

Thanks for getting back to me on this matter.

I have noticed that whilst competing in Pennant competition with my club many of our skips and thirds, especially in our lower divisions seem to struggle reading a head, both defending and attacking (for want of a better word) the head.

I have requested that a couple of our club coaches consider addressing this issue and possibly conduct a few clinics on this subject. I was wondering if you could recommend videos that would help out in this area.

I look forward to your response and assistance.

Tom

Response

Hi Tom:

Your email from May 2018 was only brought to my attention this afternoon having gone off to an unused old email address.

What a pertinent query to have for the coaches as I provided a workshop for a premier league club recently, and on Sunday I spent part of our all day 'coach the coaches' program on the topic of reading heads and importantly, game plans.

Last Monday I had two national players from Thailand join me for coaching, specifically about tactics, so I used two local premier level players to talk through their successful pairs game plan taking them to the Victorian state titles in April 2019.

I was bemused by the absence of a game plan by the national visitors, hence your issue at club level is obvious if national players who come up through the ranks of clubs still have no experience in game plans for any competition format, though especially pennant competition.

My input with the premier league club in Brisbane included a priority of the introduction and application of a game plan for their fours pennant.

All of which (the game plan) is the precursor to reading a head. The skip reads a head with the game plan strategy in mind when opting for calls of the earlier six deliveries from the teammates.

Website menu- ...Q & A
TOPIC skips able to read heads

And the other variable is knowledge of how many options there are for the backhand and forehand delivery, choices available to a skip every delivery. My website (www.lachlantighebowls.com) has numerous sessions on game plans in the menus on the site.

Again, sorry for the delay in responding. Thanks.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018

Bowls Web column –Q&A
Game plan detail examples

Game plan detail examples

Question:

Hi Lachie:

Twass good to have a bit of a chat recently and watch as three of the best young bowlers around were listening to you and bouncing comments off you.

I, maybe they too, still am unsure of what is game plan for bowls, be it the pennant fours or singles?

Response:

A few coaching peers had views on the question and I include their (edited) response as an example of some approaches to the question.

Over many years of playing competitive sport I have found there are players who do all the right things on track, but often when in the field of battle fall apart.

Front end simulations are great in practice. We emphasize this aspect at training and focus on what is called "Land the Mat."

There have been front-end combinations at training who fire and look set for a great game on the Saturday competition so ask the question what is missing when this doesn't happen.

We need to remember that the front end is not an isolated unit. It is the first half of the team, so if Thursday training is being set and done by the front without the skip you are missing the point.

The skip in the main controls the agenda; game plan, calls the shots, makes the decisions, determines the strategy, etc. A good skip will be inclusive in all of those aspects, communicate and show positive leadership and conduct, support and encourage the training.

We think if you are conducting front-end training in isolation this can come unstuck if the rest of the team is not on the same page.

We guess what we are saying is that you can practice as much as you like, but if it doesn't fit in with the game plan that the skip is going with, then the real benefits of training may well not be realized.

The great teams in all forms of sport, business etc. play as one, not as individuals or groups within the unit and take into account the experience

Bowls Web column –Q&A Game plan detail examples

and confidence that team members have in meeting expectations of performance.

Game Plan sample provided by these coaching peers:

Side Game Plan (4 rink teams):

- Meet as a side 10 minutes prior to roll up for briefing.
- Gauge playing conditions and maximize feedback from roll up.
- Teams focus on the big board.
- Provide ongoing encouragement and support to all four teams.
- Use altering the length of play to advantage. Play Minimum length to ditch and middle and alternate between Minimum and Maximum.
- Keep side losses to <10.
- Struggling teams try to finish first.
- Skips never drive at the head with their last bowl with only one bowl in the head.
- Gather for debrief when final team has finished.

Rink Team Game Plan:

Front End: (first 4 bowls)

- Place mat as instructed.
- Roll jack to within 2 mats either side of skip.
- Objective is to set foundations for "Building the Head"
- Expected standard of performance is to "Land the Mat".
- 2/4 bowls must finish behind the jack.
- Achieve at least 2nd shot following 4 bowls.
- Play a position bowl "Land the Mat" as called for by skip.
- Alter the head as requested by skip.
- Maintain a positive and supportive disposition.
- Keep accurate record of assessment scorecard.

Back End: (final 4 bowls)

- Build on the work provided by the Front End.
- Must ensure there is more than one bowl in the head.
- Must work to at least get 2nd shot.
- Add to advantage.
- Reduce damage when down.
- Convert when opportunities present.
- Play position bowls to advantage.

Bowls Web column –Q&A Game plan detail examples

- Alter the head as called upon.
- Be precise and strategic in decision making and shot selection.
- Keep end losses to < 3.
- End losses > 2 kept to no more than 2.
- Maintain a positive and supportive disposition.
- Provide feedback on bowls delivered.
- Meet during game at changeover to discuss progress and game plan.
- Use assessment scorecard to assist team debrief at end of game.

Provide feedback to selectors and coach on performance and skill practice requirements.

These comments above are an amalgam of comments from a few coaches. Hope it helps.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Live your bowls dream

A joy to me is hearing and seeing how some bowlers are striving to live their dream of being elite, of being a regional, state or even a national representative in bowls.

Yih Hwa Choo was my esteemed colleague coach with the Malaysian national team and in front of an audience of prospective national squad players she said, “Lachlan said to me, “Live up to your own expectations”.

In my own life, and especially within bowls, I strive to meet my own goals, aspirations, expectations and dreams, and within bowls as a coach.

I wonder if many bowlers as athletes have their own expectation? What are they...probably winning something of significance!!!

If they are pursuing representative goals are their expectations in-line with that of the relevant governing bowls body? The coaches need to find out and then nurture them.

That makes an assumption the bowler has a coach before they get to any representational level.

Certainly here in Australia elite players ending up in state sides may well find there is no state coach or that state coach is only available to them that once, at the annual representational competition.

One observation of mine is that few, if any, elite bowlers ever played another sport at similar elite level, a fact being they are still young.

An aside, I have met many (an older) bowlers who were elite in other sports and know all about elite mindset.

Bowlers who are true athletes must be allowed to be ‘themselves’ in order to let their creativity grow.

In my style of coaching I am more than happy to create a training environment which allows our squad players to explore, enjoy, initiate, be inquisitive, thrill with the new skill learning.

Some elite level bowlers still retain their (mental) weaknesses.

Two such weaknesses spring to mind: keeping statistics during games, and debriefing after games.

Siti Zalina and Safuan Said as two of the best bowlers in the world felt that keeping stats kept them more focused and they were able to concentrate better and not easily distracted.

In team events, the Malaysian team used the stats in match debriefs, which made them more objective and thus eliminated finger-pointing.

Website article
Live your bowls dream

As a goal towards improving themselves as elite bowlers, it might be worthwhile to consider the following:

Good is not good enough...especially internationally...you need to be better than good.

Excellent will be best!

Everyone is a good bowler, therefore to don the national colours you need to stand out.

Photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson

(Something I read at an exhibition in Mantua, Italy on an overseas travel in 2011).

Intuition imagination & spontaneity

Master of the instant, which in visual terms questions and decides simultaneously.

This attitude requires concentration, discipline of mind and a sense of geometry.

It is an economy of movement above all for forgetting oneself to arrive at a simplicity of expression (execution).

Boy, do I react to those words, those images, did you?????????

Lachlan Tighe, 2021.

Bowls Website menu- Q&A
Skip conversion shots

Skip Conversion Shots

QUESTION

Hi Lachie:

Hope all is well with you, your bowling and coaching.

As you may have observed, our season has had "mixed results" thus far.

Yesterday in Division 1 was a gut-wrenching one-shot loss, made worse because we were holding shot (& match) with one bowl left. Opposition skip drew the shot, so we tumbled from potentially 3rd on the ladder to 8th.

Character building!!!!

The question I'd appreciate your feedback about is: A challenge mainly for skips is bowling to add or to protect the head without giving the shot away. Consequently, we often see a skip put in a "chicken bowl" with their last delivery. Personally, I find I do it "subconsciously" at times. Afterwards, I think maybe I should've just put it in my pocket rather than play a half-hearted shot.

The problem is compounded if the opposing skip has last bowl. I know every situation is different, but in such circumstances what should be the rule of thumb?

Thanks in anticipation.

Cheers

RESPONSE

Hi mate:

Gee you could have been talking about me playing in the team as third and my game and our front end.

You place undue pressure and responsibility on yourself is my first reaction.

You are one of four, so share the joy, the responsibility.

Start with the first bowler. What I notice is the inability of a skip to be able to alter the behaviour of the player(s) with instructions that can alter the feeling that it all revolves around you (pressure).

Example, if the lead is short get him to play five feet thru each bowl for a few ends to allow the second to be, in effect, the lead with no cluttered

Bowls Website menu- Q&A Skip conversion shots

barriers and back bowls per courtesy of the lead.

Example, seek the preference of the lead and the second beforehand and attempt to have them on their preferred hand as much as possible.

Example, use the rink meeting after five ends to reinforce what is working, stimulate change, forum for input for improvement, rather than a hollow rah rah.

What I am saying is that better use of the three players in front of you reduces the pressure on yourself as skip and maybe raises the pressure on the opposing person.

And as I said to you, your reaction is an emotional feeling as you and he had no idea how many times he converted better today as compared to any other Saturday.

I refer you to the menu on my website (www.lachlantighebowls.com) called "Training Sessions" and somewhere there will be diagrams to run your own simulated pressure sessions.

Again as we did 'call' your delivery in training and reinforce the yes I can do this attitude, which we know worked wonders when we came and did the training reinforcing this positivity.

As John Snell said to me recently, Lach, it is all about repetition, repetition, repetition at training.

Once you do that, recall the repeated training session into the game.

Keep in contact.

Regards to all at your club.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Club Performance

QUESTION:

How well did the club perform recently?

ANSWERS:

From an audience of bowlers reacting from a club viewpoint where here in Victoria numerous teams of 16 go off and represent their club:

Some interesting insights as to what constitutes success on and off the green.

No doubt finals appearances and relegation are the two extremes to gauge success on field.

Now a scenario that featured in two clubs to my knowledge:

Your top team wins the pennant final, all your other teams get relegated - how well did the club perform: varied reactions to that example. Again what came out of the discussion is the general absence of a committee / board direction.

One person said his club is now looking to define performance beyond pennant success to include measures in revenue, coaching, selection, membership, development squads, junior programs etc. thus making the club one that others could view as a model to consider.

An important feature for this question and the first question earlier is the level and effect of communication. If members feel as if they have been properly informed they will accept the message coming from the committee and if that also says we want more attendance at training for a better level of competitiveness, then there is a much better chance of the satisfactory outcome.

A popular view on performance is that despite our pennant record no one chose to depart our club.

Lachlan, 2018

Regrets And Defeats

Question:

Hi Lachlan:

I seem to worry excessively pre game about the pending losses and I regret the absence of a positive nature in my makeup. Can you advise?

Response:

Hello:

I once read a quote from a great man...

One must never court defeat; if it comes accept it as a warrior; but, don't anticipate it for that destroys your fighting spirit (Woodrow Wilson, USA president).

And coincidentally last night I watched an interview where the person said he never had regrets, only lessons from the experience (Jeff Kennett, Hawthorn FC president).

If, like numerous other bowlers, you have ambitions to be a better bowler you might well take heed of Wilson and don't over emphasize the prospect of defeat in your bowls competitions. Win, lose or draw you are still the same human being. Preparing as best you can (time constraints are a given) in a constant state of positivity will add fuel to your fighting spirit. And fuel in all skills is important as you don't want to compete on an empty tank (of skills).

And regret!

Don't regret lack of time

Don't regret lack of opportunities

Don't regret selection (in teams)

Don't regret lost opportunities

Don't regret bad luck

Face up to your bowls future, face up to what you can reasonably do and control, given your balance in life, and set sail for the fun in your future bowls.

Hope that helps.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

A Performance Worth Measuring

Question:

Hi Lachlan:

I heard you comment at your seminar this year that some players, teams, clubs were recording their deliveries in pennant. How do they do that?

Answer:

Hi:

I shall use an example as this player's performance at Premier league (here in Victoria, Australia) over the season was worth his measuring.

It is worth saying that he (or a team) wants to measure how they are performing in competition so as to improve.

The worry warts (even in some cases the club coaches) can't hack it, the fact your performance may be legitimately effectively measured.

Anyway, this player by simply ticking his scorecard when each bowl was satisfactory or putting a – to signify it being no good after each end has a record that took 2-3 seconds. He collates this after the 21 ends to get his information to review performance. Oh, when he is not bowling he is totally immersed in support of his rink teammates.

And what did he collect over the season. Here are three measured factors:

1 Bows within a mat length (%)

average	51
pb	63
lowest	29
range	29-63
median	50

2 First bowls within a mat width (from 21 ends)

average	8
pb	12
lowest	5
range	5-12
median	8

Website menu- ...Q & A
Website TOPIC performance worth measuring.

3	Ends having an effective bowl contribution (from 21 ends)
	average 16
	pb 21
	lowest 10
	range 10-21
	median 16

This player has information about himself. Knowledge of how he does / can perform. As a member of the winning Premier League premiership team, he knows, too, he is among the best players around as the premier league is the pinnacle level of pennant in our state (with 10 lower divisions offered to about 30,000 players).

So why wouldn't he continue to gather such information. Those that say they can't / won't do it, do not face up to their unwillingness to challenge themselves to new horizons of performance. I disregard these players and do so more knowing they are not in that winning Premier League grand final side.

This player was. Heed his approach and willingness to measure how he goes.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Back End Team Skills

QUESTION:

I have competed at premier league these past few years. Now I want the skills to be a back end team player at that elite level. What are these skills? How do I train for them?

ANSWERS:

Summarised within these skills / attributes of back end personnel

1. Management
2. Tactical
3. Fitness
4. Mental
5. Technical

More specific comments included

- Skips can play every shot and perform well under pressure.
- Fitness – physically fit, mental strength.
- People skills – communication; positive reinforcement.
- The skip doesn't need to be the best bowler in the side.
- Head reading.
- Psychology.
- Team player.
- Tactician.
- Capacity to convert shot position.
- Coping with pressure.
- Leadership.
- Decisive.
- Confidence.
- Game awareness.
- Percentage player.
- Visualisation skill.
- Draw shot prowess.
- Capable of drawing off centre.
- Mental toughness.
- Lengthy concentration.
- Managing the team emotions and behaviours.

- Game plan knowledge.
- Energiser for the team.
- Situation awareness of us, the opposition, the score; analyses game in progress.
- Firm, fair, fun and fighter for the team.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017

Games are FUN, training session

Ditch Drawing, team training

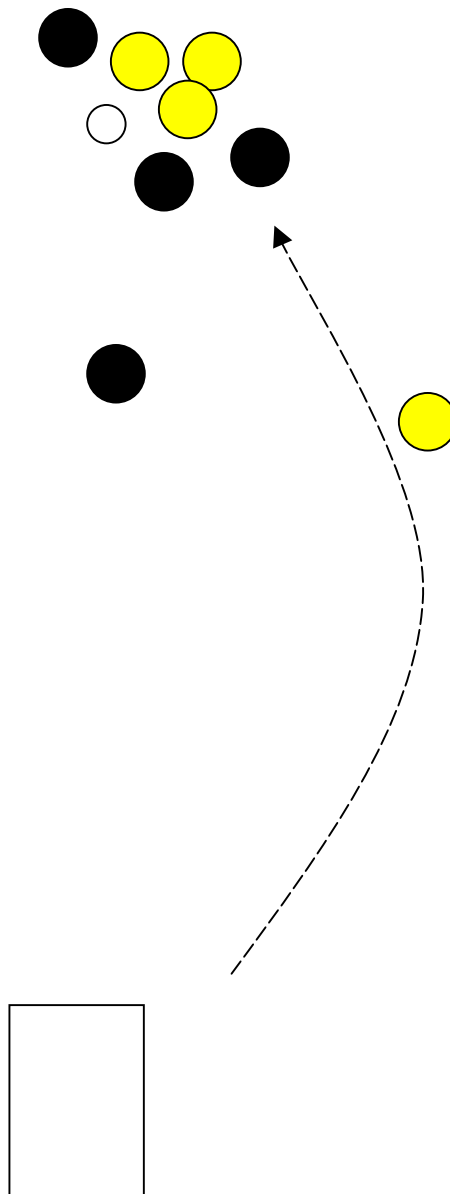
Draw your bowls as close to the ditch as possible and remove any bowl that ends in ditch, and the bowl on the green furthest from the ditch.

Allot 2-3 players per rink or peg to join in the team training game.

Deliver bowls forehand from one end at a minimum length for the first game.

Continue until one player has forfeited all their bowls and see who is in front.

Vary the games by use of different lengths, or opposite hands.



Games are FUN, training session

Draw & Drive Game

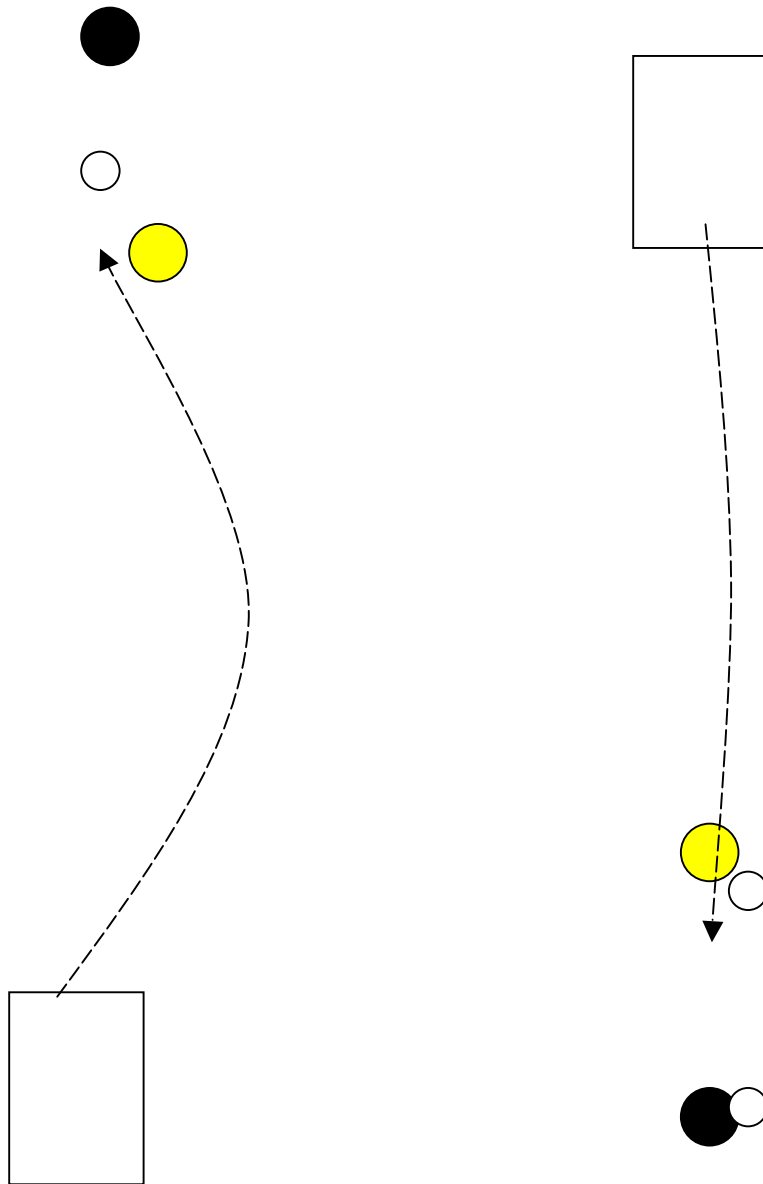
Work with a partner each having 4 bowls to play.

On one rink can only draw to score shots.

Return on other rink to score by driving successfully to the 2 target bowls / jacks

for a score maximum of 2 on this end.

Winner decided after a number ends of this game / drill.



Games are FUN, training session

Goal kicking game

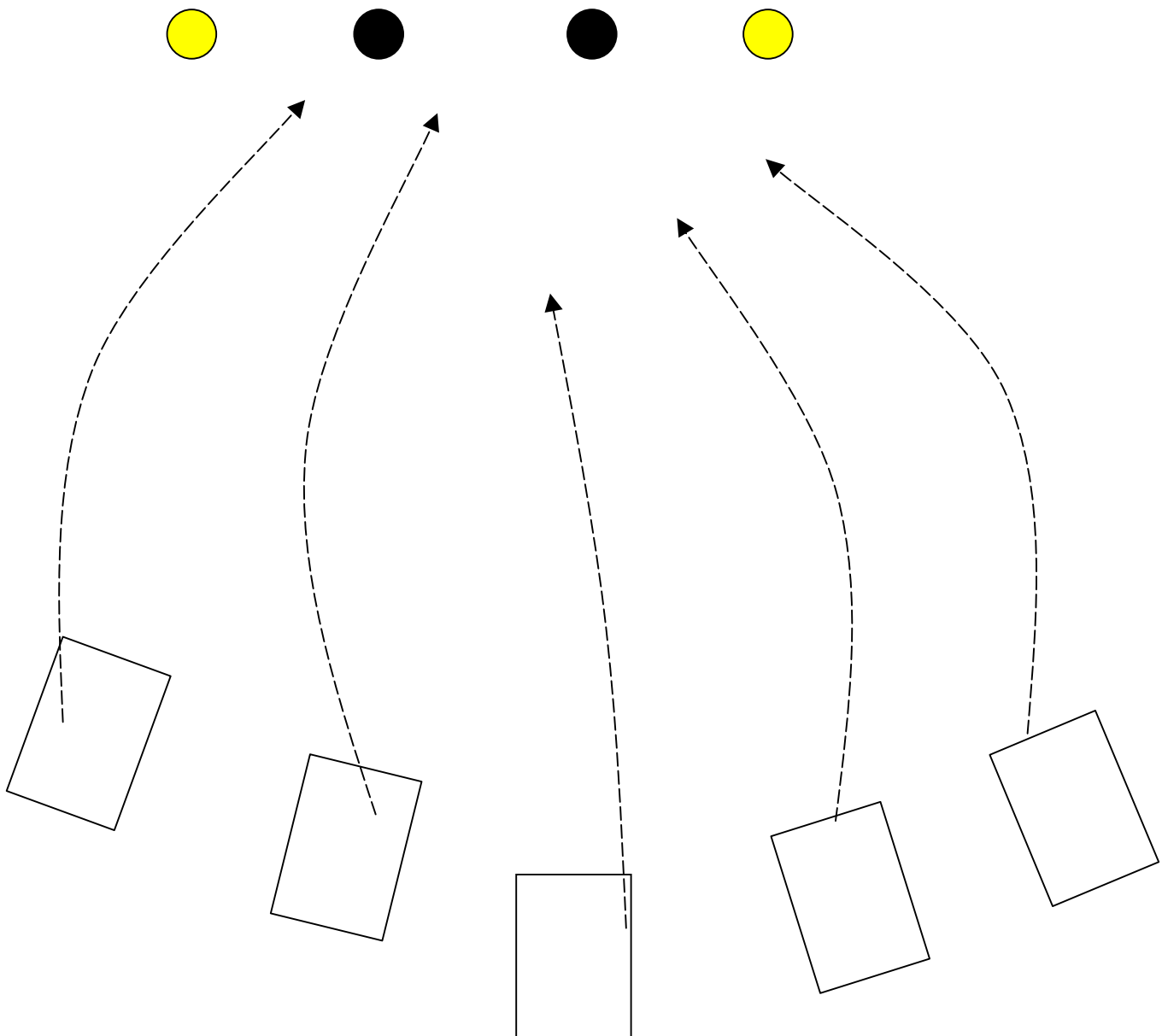
Set up 4 cones as goal and point posts about a metre or Mat Length apart.

Set 5 mats approximating minimum length at various angles representing positions for deliveries for goal scoring, or points scored too.

Each player delivers 4 bowls from each of the 5 mats for a total of 20 deliveries.

Number of players can vary as you can start groups from any of the mats as long as they do 4 deliveries at all mats.

Score like AFL footy (6 points for a goal, 1 point through off a cone) and record to see who scores most points.



Games are FUN, training session

'Noughts & Crosses'

Work with a maximum of 3-4 players, each player with 4 bowls and have 4-5 jacks as spread around the GREEN per the diagram.

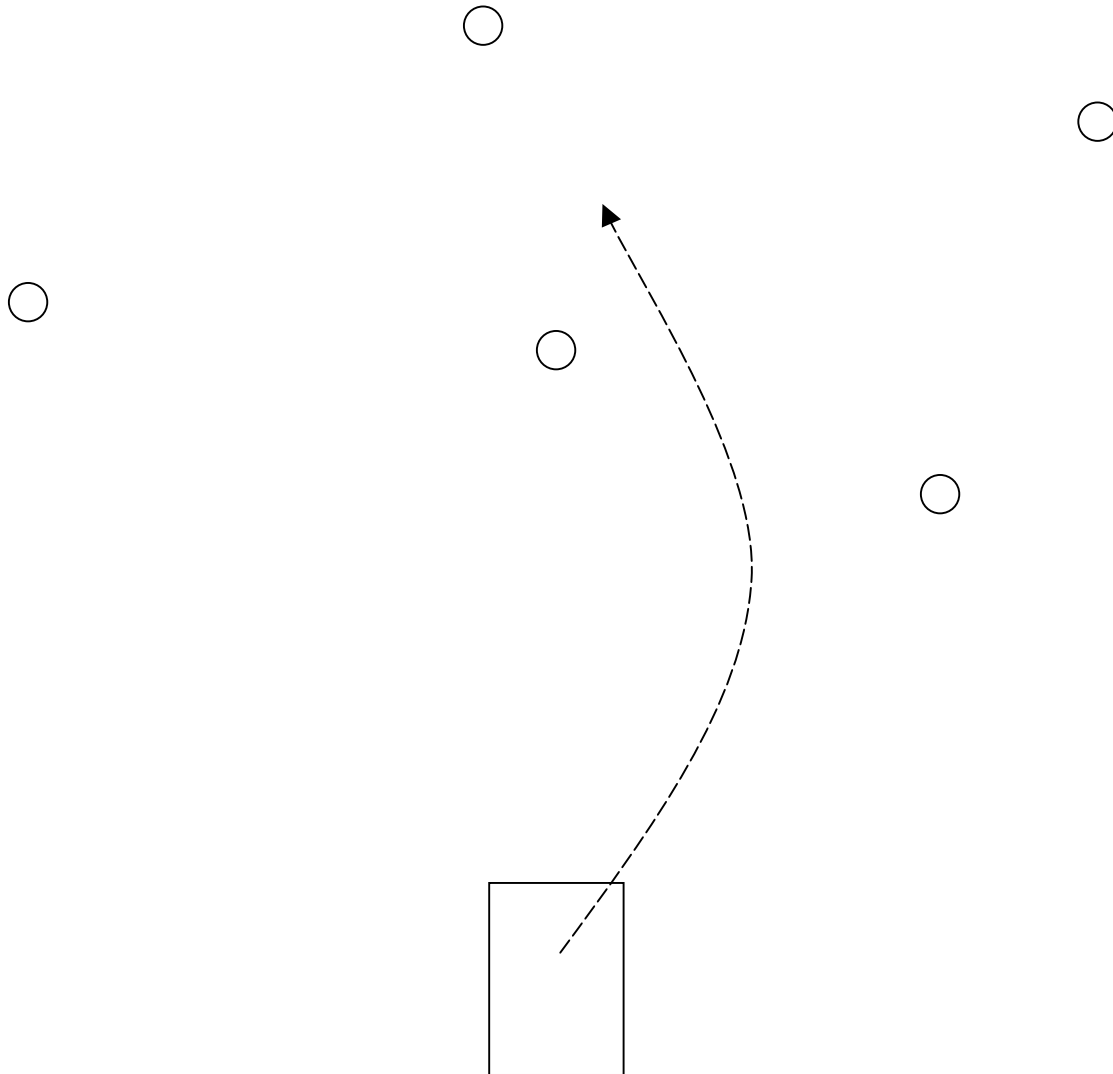
If about 8 players attending divide the green in half and have 4 players each half still having 4-5 jacks as targets.

Mat placement is generally at one end of the green to maximize varying jack locations.

Interesting to see who allies themselves to prevent another player winning shots.

Player holding the most jacks as shot, wins.

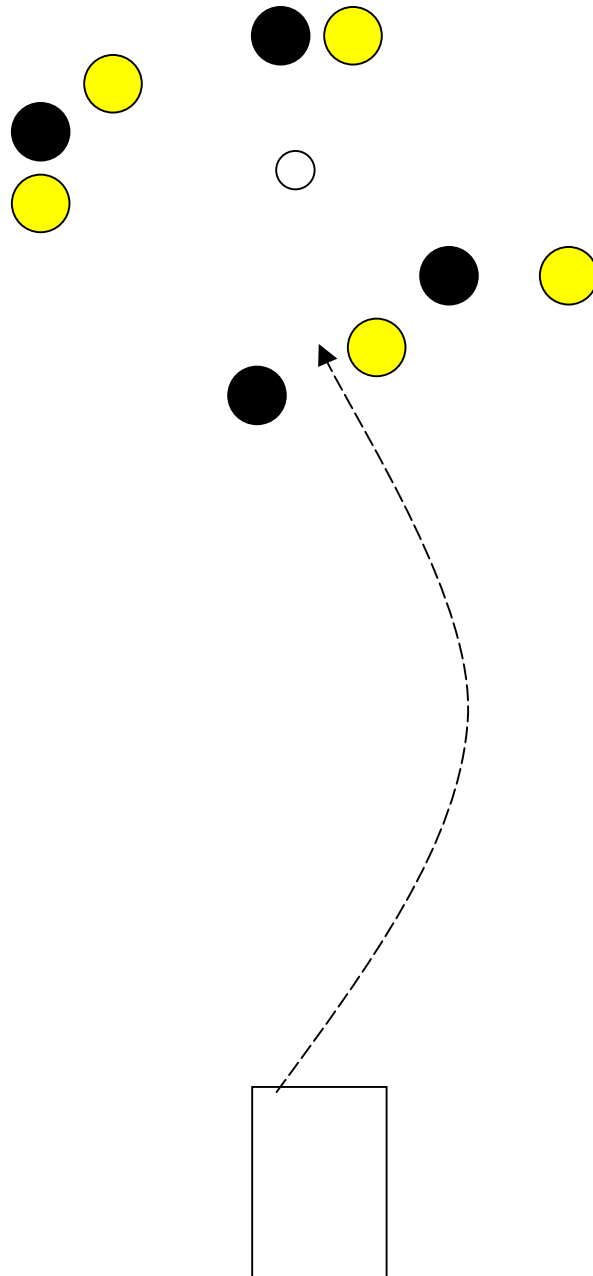
(Based on an idea learned at the Institute of Sport about training for decision making)



Games are FUN, training session

'Full House' decision making (Pappa concept)

Play singles where each player has to deliver these four types.
A forehnd draw. A yard to 2 yards on shot any hand of choice.
A backhand draw. A drive any hand of choice.
However, each player chooses / nominates the order when they use each of the 4 deliveries as part of the decision making process.
Play as a sectional format with other players in training of 2 end competitions.



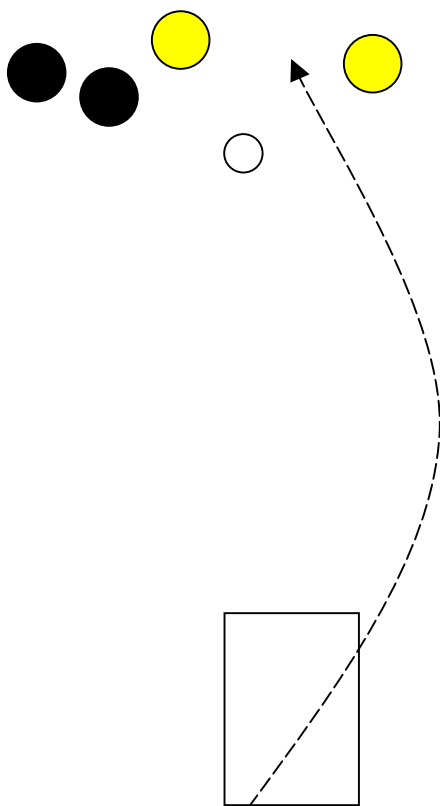
Second Shot Priority

Steve Glasson Training Idea At 2018 Coaches Conference

The Game where your rink of 4 competes against another rink of 4

Each bowler has two deliveries and play as per normal fours format. Your team wins the end and scores a point for being second shot.

The team with shot gets a point too, so your team may be shot yet not second shot so your team forfeits winning the end and mat.



Lessons:

Learn to draw to a zone.

Learn to cope and not succumb to pressure or the scoreboard.

Learn about the merit of a game plan.

Learn about the value of each team member contributing.

Games are FUN, training session

Restricted delivery choice games

Play any 4-end format of singles where one player has to deliver with these restrictions for the games described.

Game one:

3 of the 4 deliveries must be backhand.

Game two:

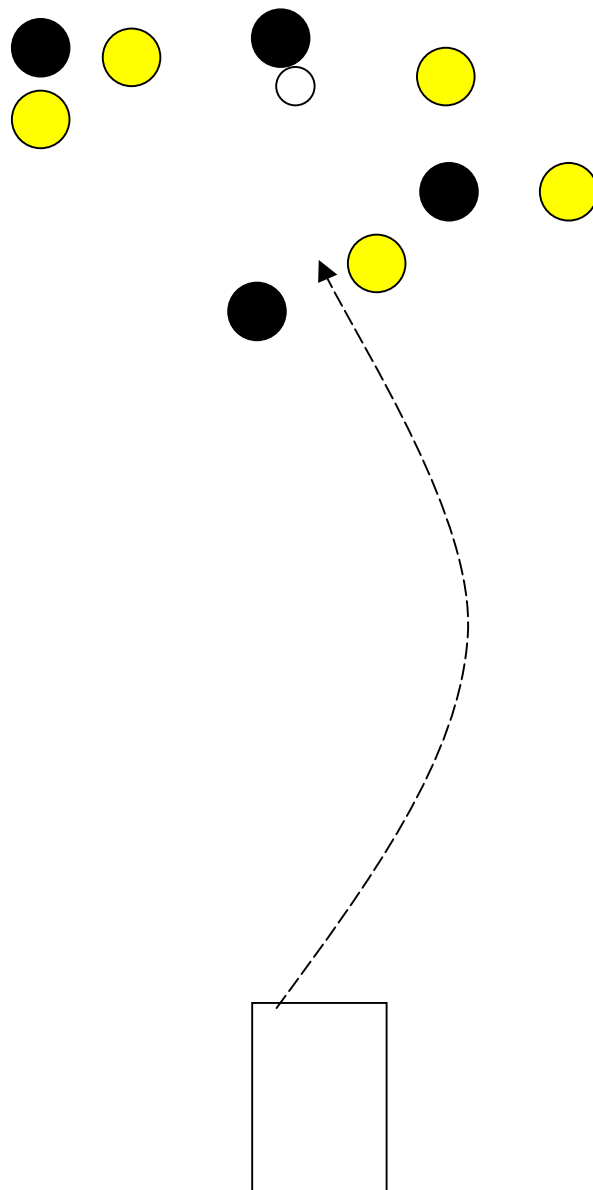
3 of the 4 deliveries must be forehand.

Game three:

1 of the 4 deliveries must be a drive.

Game four:

1 of the 4 deliveries must be a 2-3m over weighted delivery.



Singles serve modified game

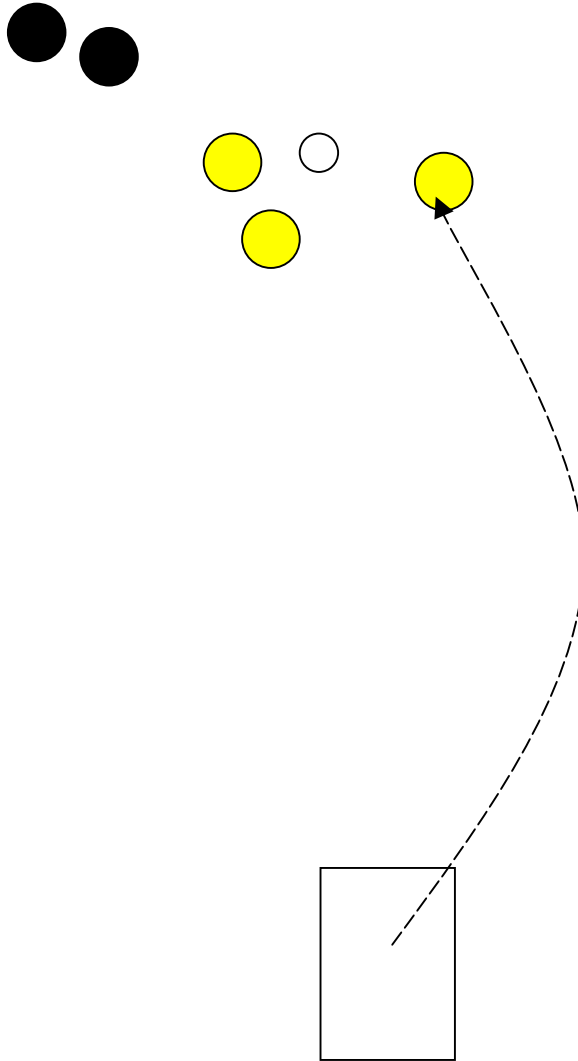
Singles game based on historical squash scoring system, serve to win a point/shot:

A player only scores by winning the end to secure serve and then to win the end to score points.

Losing that end means the other player has the serve and capacity to score on the next end.

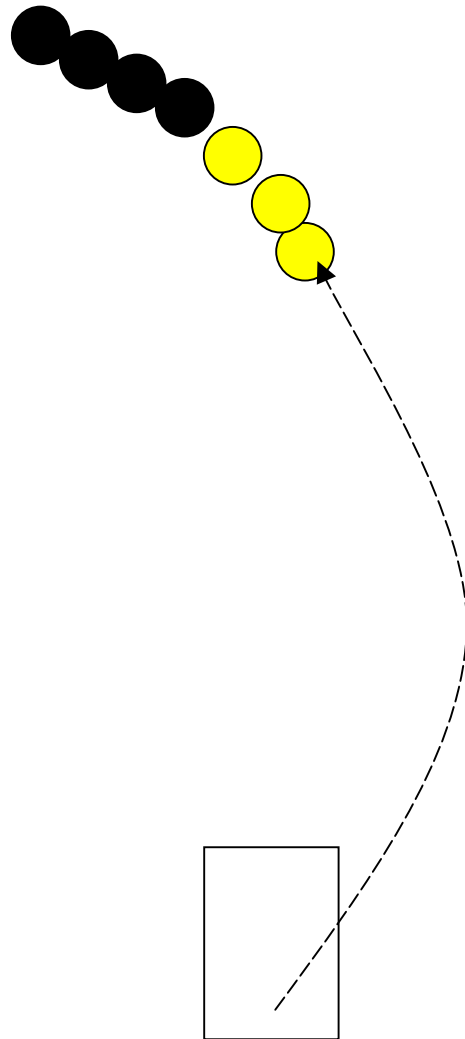
Play first to 7 shots.

If other bowlers are training as part of a team program, have a series of contests of 3 or 5 ends with winners competing against one another and losers competing against fellow losers until we have the ultimate winner.



Team Caterpillar

Line up in teams of 3 or 4 on separate rinks and see which team can link as many bowls as a team in caterpillar formation (illustrated).
Deliver the first bowl and then draw all the other team bowls in a single line so that they all rest against one another. Good fun way to finish a session.

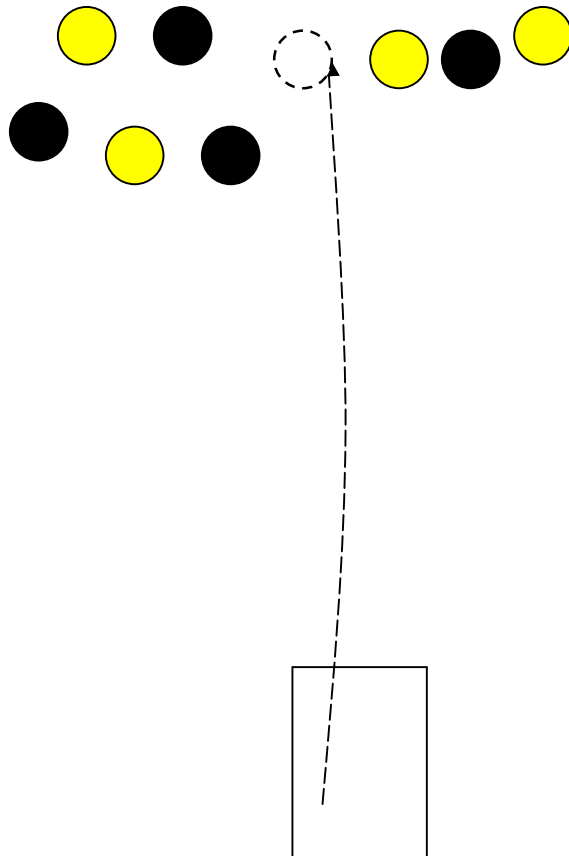


JACKO, Susie's blind bowls program

Pairs teams using their 2 sets of 4 bowls, e.g. black & yellow, and, all bowlers are at the mat end, no one is at the head, or to go to the head, **except**, after all bowls are delivered and then for the team rolling the jack to finalise their decision.

Players deliver alternately: bowler #2 has to consider where each of the deliveries need to finish as he will see the (bad) consequences if the jack ends in a position for him to lose maximum shots. The team has continuous discussion on the best placement of the next bowl delivery.

The jack is rolled by the first bowler #1 **after** each player has completed delivering all their bowls. If the jack goes out of bounds, or is short of the legal playing length or goes in the ditch, the opposition has a chance to roll the jack to their shot advantage. If heaven help us their roll of the jack is invalid, then the first team get another try to roll that jack to advantage.



Leapfrog – team discipline

Players are in pairs or here as triples team and use all 4 bowls.

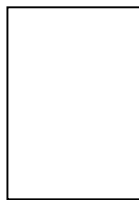
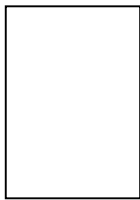
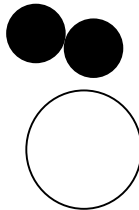
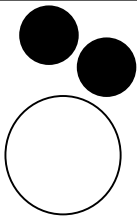
Place a visible disk a mat length (ML) from ditch in front of players as the ZONE.

The intention is for the team to draw 2 bowls (of 12) in the ZONE from the disk to the ditch.

To commence, place mat 4m from ditch for bowlers to deliver back to that closest ditch.

Once team has 2 bowls delivered within ZONE they can flip the mat back twice away from ditch and attempt 2 deliveries within ZONE.

Now repeat and continue placing mat further into the middle of the green as team succeeds getting 2 deliveries within ML ZONE. A program requiring team contribution and discipline.



Games are FUN, training session

Team relay

Fours teams – young turks, wise owls, molly dookers, bowls sizes / brands / colours.

Objective to have all members attempt and progress with the skills.

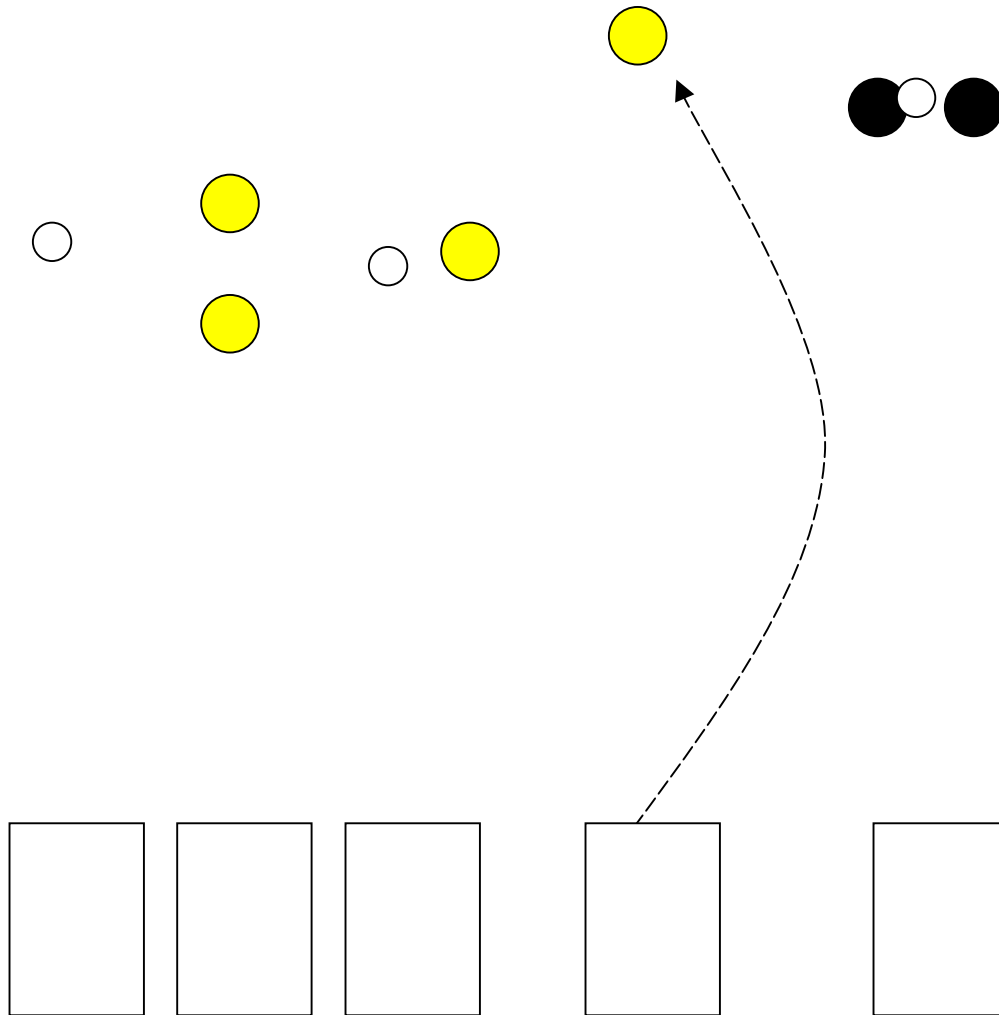
Winners, first team to complete the 5 tasks.

Process – player #1 starts and if successful all team can continue, if unsuccessful then #2 tries to allow the team to continue; continue till someone is successful.

Tasks:

- 1 Roll jack to minimum, within a metre of mark.
- 2 Deliver a bowl to finish in zone, MW between two bowls set at minimum.
- 3 Deliver a bowl to wrest out shot bowl set at minimum.
- 4 Deliver a bowl from maximum length to out draw a bowl set a ML from ditch.
- 5 Deliver a drive from maximum length to clear out the head.

A more intense variation of the above is everyone has to complete the 5 tasks to win.



Games are FUN, training session

Team Tunnelball

Fours teams having 4 deliveries where EACH player has to have ONE successful bowl in the ML zone as delivered at a suitable / tactical length by the lead's only bowl.

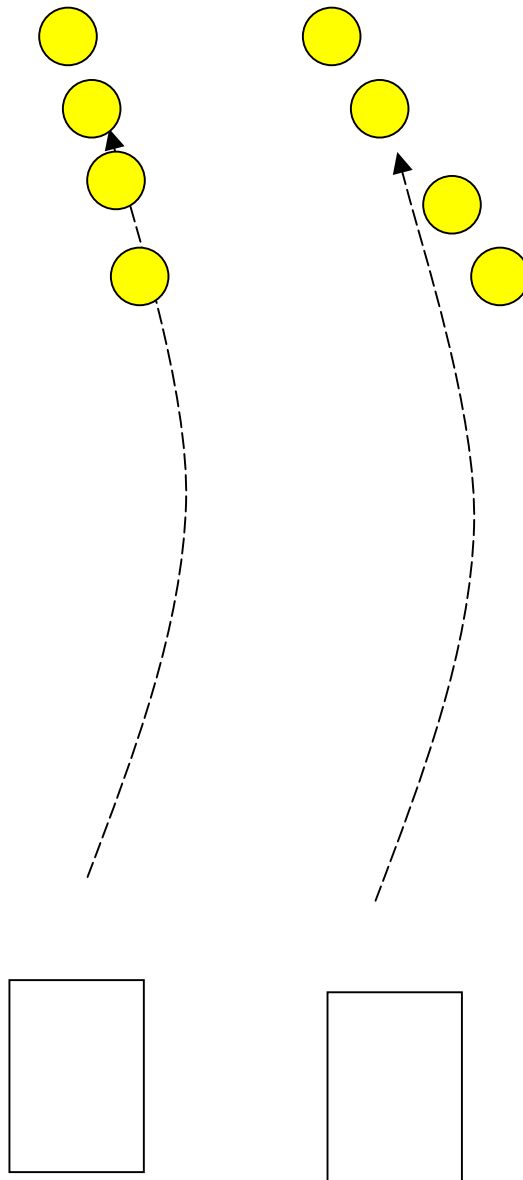
Lead bowls first delivery only, which is the ML ZONE for following deliveries.

2nd has 4 attempts to get one to finish in ML.

Then the third has 4 attempts until successful.

Then skip again 4 until successful.

IF any player did not succeed with their 4 attempts they repeat the effort with 4 for the team to have each player with ONE bowl successfully in the ML ZONE. As each player succeeds / finishes 4 deliveries they go to the head to CHEER team.



Games are FUN, training session

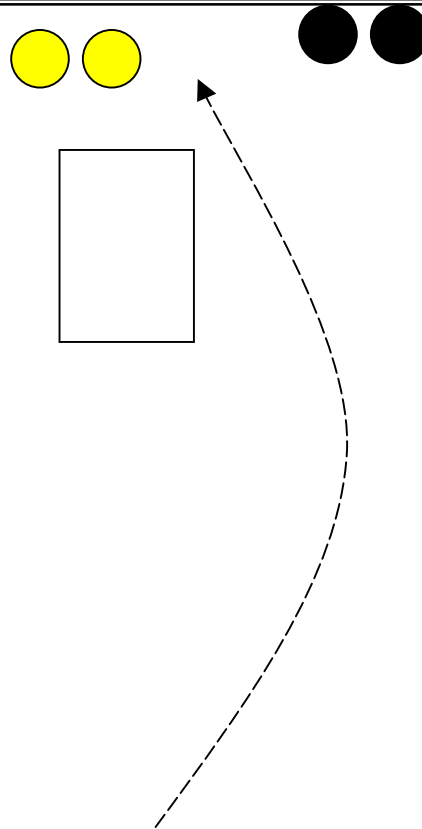
World Series: nearest the ditch, 2m

Purpose: fun tool to enable bowlers to become more aware of the soft/deft touch required.

All bowlers in attendance with their 4 bowls stand in line at 2m from the ditch.

The game is to see who can draw nearest to that closest ditch just 2m away from where they all stand and the winner is the World Series WS 2m champ.

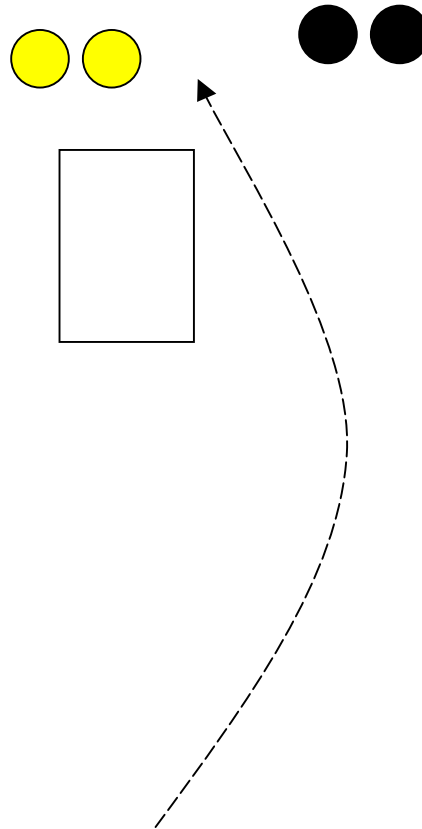
Have 8 series with 4 f/hand and then 4 b/hand for this session.



Games are FUN, training session

World Series: nearest the ditch, 4m

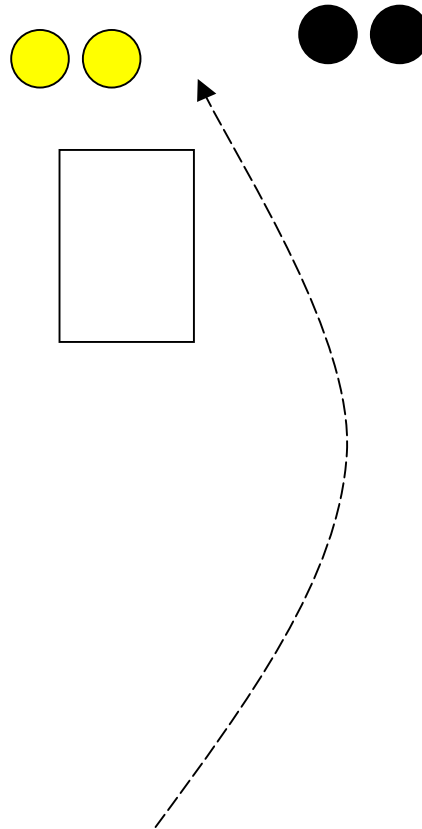
Purpose: fun tool to enable bowlers to become more aware of the soft/ deft touch.
All bowlers in attendance with their 4 bowls stand in line 4m from the ditch.
The game is to see who can draw nearest to that closest ditch just 4m away from where they all stand and the winner is the World Series WS 4m champ.
Have series with 4 f/hand and then 4 b/hand for this session.



Games are FUN, training session

World Series: nearest the ditch, 6m

Purpose: fun tool to enable bowlers to become more aware of the soft / deft touch.
All bowlers in attendance with their 4 bowls stand in line 6m from the ditch.
The game is to see who can draw nearest to that closest ditch just 6m away from
where they all stand and the winner is the World Series WS 6m champ.
Have series with 4 f/hand and then 4 b/hand for this session.



Games are FUN, training session

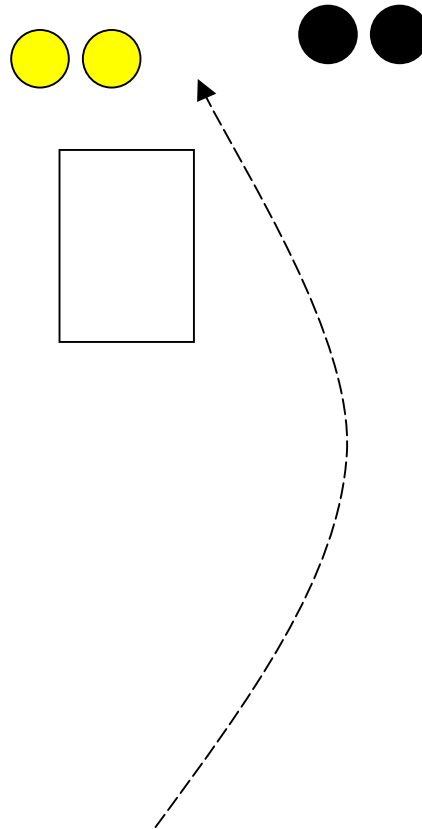
World Series: nearest the ditch, 8m

Purpose: fun tool to enable bowlers to become more aware of the soft / deft touch required.

All bowlers in attendance with their 4 bowls stand in line at 8m from the ditch.

The game is to see who can draw nearest to that closest ditch just 8m away from where they all stand and the winner is the World Series WS 8m champ.

Have series with 4 f/hand and then 4 b/hand for this session.



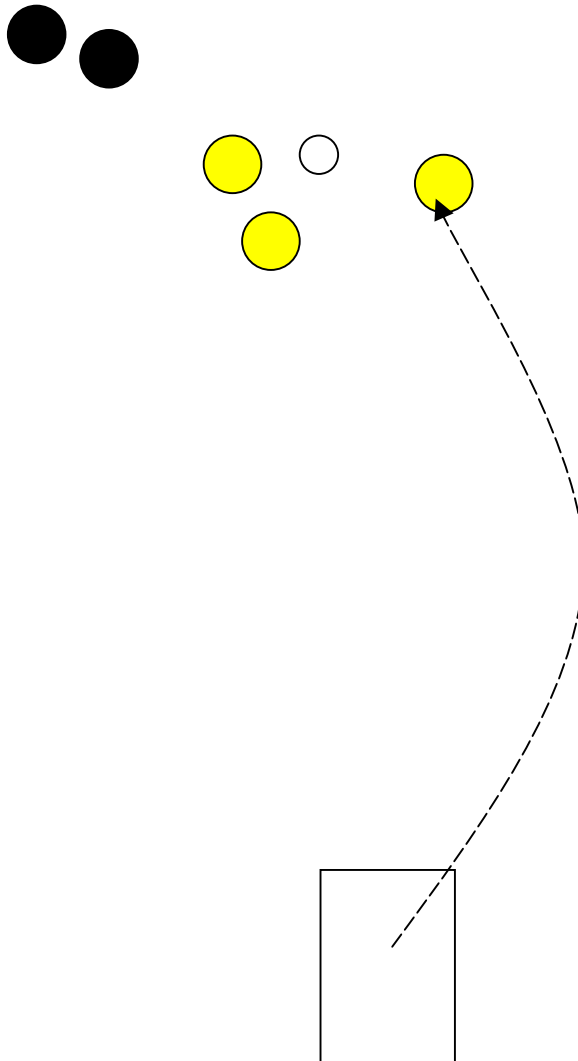
Games are FUN, training session

Add to 8, singles game

Both players per rink to have 8 bowls available and will always have 2 bowls to compete. Each player commences with 2 deliveries, as a minimum every end, however, whoever wins the first end can now add another bowl for delivery on the next end.

If they lose that following end they forfeit the extra bowl and both players are back to 2 deliveries for one of them to get the chance to add another bowl. Consecutive winning ends means you can add bowls to play with.

Alternate game is to add a bowl every time one player wins an end so no forfeiting of any bowl until a player is deemed the winner when they have 8 bowls on the rink to play.



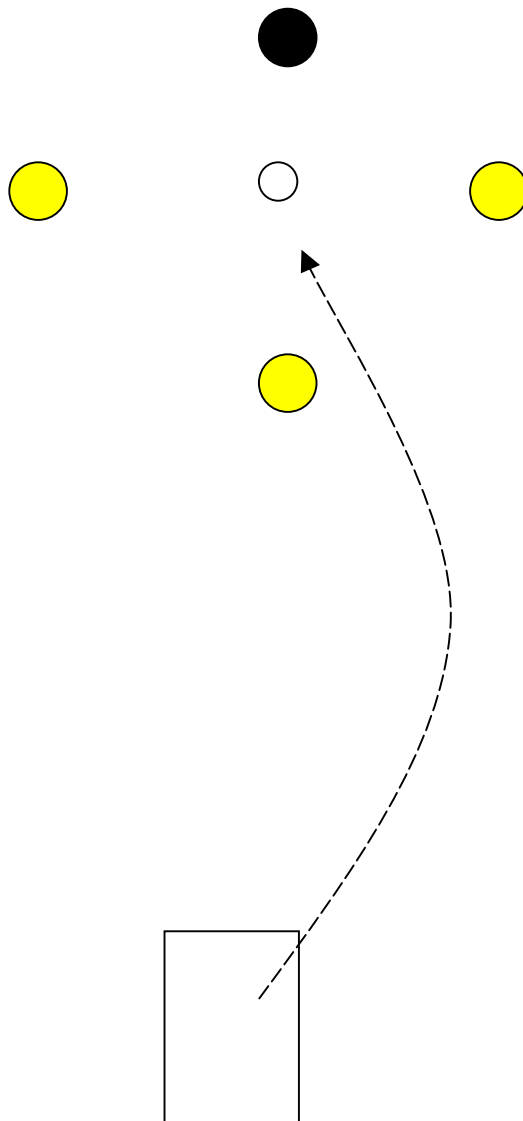
Games are FUN, training session

Attrition - Minimizing Error Games

If there is a team of players, split them into singles contests with the rule for the first game of singles is that for every end, remove any bowl not finishing within a mat length (ML) until one player has no bowls available and there is a winner on that rink.

Now rink winners compete in singles and remove any bowl not finishing within a MW each end until there is a winner (losing bowlers elsewhere are playing at original ML zone standard).

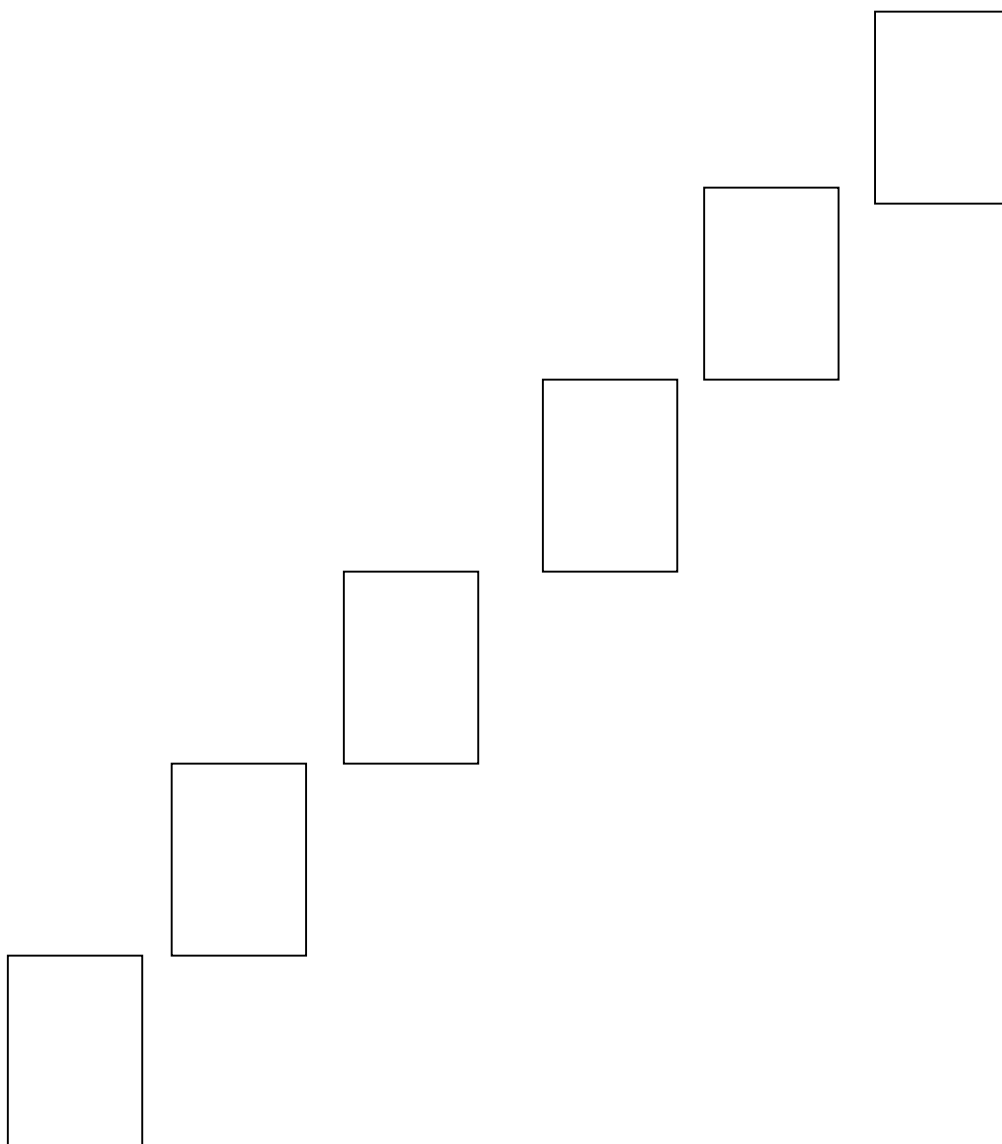
Winners compete against winners until there is an overall winner in the team.



Games are FUN, training session

Back Of The Queue

Players start at end mat on right and as they succeed in getting ONE of their 4 deliveries within a Mat Length of the ditch they proceed left to the next mat placed a little distance further from the ditch. If unsuccessful after 4 attempts, retrieve and replay till successful to proceed onto the next mat distance. See who is first to complete the drill having drawn within ML of the ditch from mats on the green.



BOCCE

A training idea gained from Bocce scoring.

The Game between two players - each bowler has 4 deliveries, although I prefer they each had used 8 bowls, as a minimum number of deliveries every end.

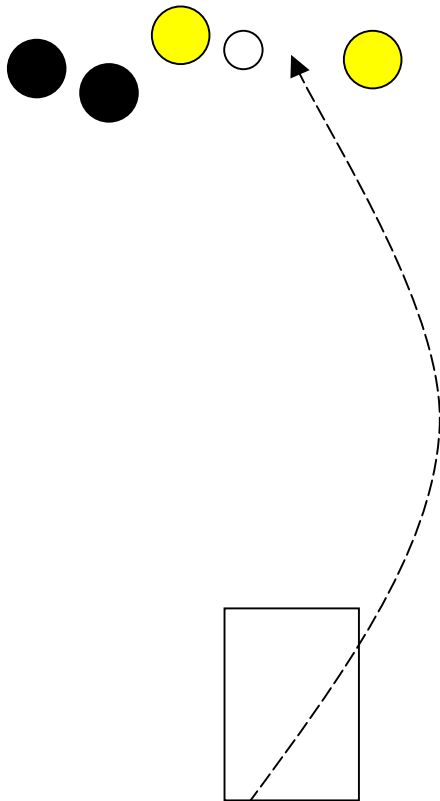
Bowler one delivers their first bowl and will be shot immediately.

Bowler two delivers their bowl, and, if not then shot, has to deliver more bowls until such time as they are holding shot.

Then, bowler one returns to deliver more bowls until they resume holding shot.

It will not be unusual for a bowler to still be holding shot with their opponent having no more deliveries and yet have 3-4 more bowls still to deliver;

In that circumstance, their priority is to add more shots to what is already a holding shot head for them.



Lessons-

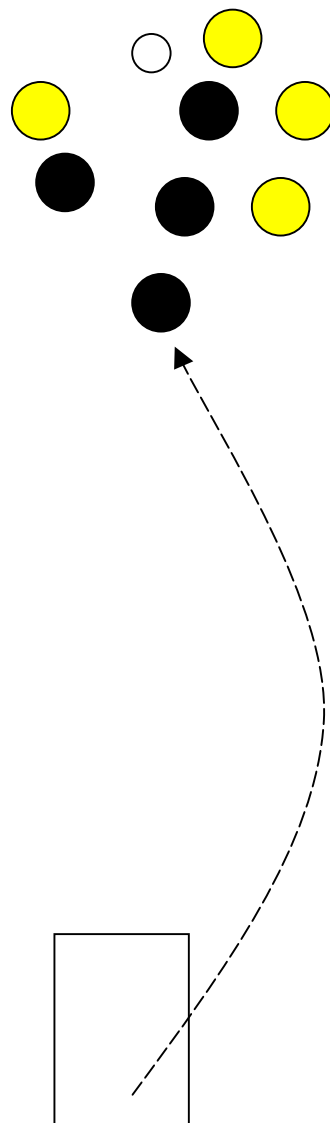
learn to draw close early,
learn to cope with being down and not succumb to pressure,
learn to add with final deliveries when opponent has exhausted their supply of deliveries.

Games are FUN, training session

Connect the Jack

Two to four players as a team using from 4-8 bowls each to suit the attendees. The process is for each player alternately to deliver their next bowl telling the team their intention with this delivery to connect the jack. **Objective** one is to see / record how many times the team of players connect onto the jack, with any weight from a toucher, trail or drive shot. **Objective** two is tactical skill - tactically sometimes player has to choose to deliver into a head as below to enable the next teammate access to 'connect' the jack with subsequent deliveries.

Objective three is team spirit as they work together and also experience what choice the player on the mat makes on their behalf. **Objective** four is mental skill, in this case self-talk the delivery, rehearse the delivery, visualization, confidence in calls and execution.



One In All In

Training idea from Steve Glasson at 2018 Coaches Conference

The Game with either your rink of 4 or have 8 players:

Each bowler has one delivery.

A jack is placed at the 2-metre mark and the objective for the group of players is for each delivery to be on the green but behind the jack, even trail the jack being acceptable though re-spot the jack in that situation.

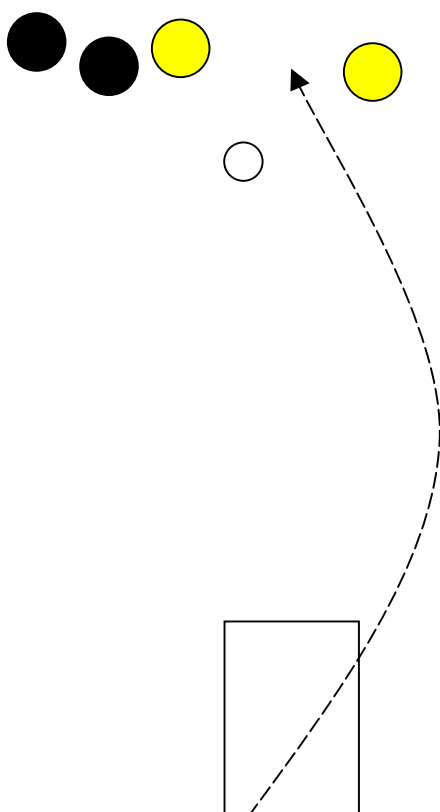
Play one at a time.

However, if any ONE bowl falls short or goes into the ditch, we all start again.

We can do this at the 3 regular playing lengths.

Raise intensity and place the jack a metre from the ditch with same rules and objective.

To work as a pairs team, have 4 bowls each apply same rules.



Games are FUN, training session

Lessons:

Learn to draw to a zone.

Learn to cope and not succumb to pressure.

Learn to add with later deliveries.

Learn about the value of each team member contributing.