

ZONE 9 COACHING COMMITTEE

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL LEAD BOWLS

(As developed and produced by Tony Taylor)

- 1) **An ability to consistently roll the jack to within one meter of the length indicated by the skip.**
Failure to do so hampers the skip's strategy to best attack the opposition.
- 2) **An ability to bowl equally successfully with either hand and at any length.**
An inability to do this presents the opposition with a way to diminish your effectiveness by bowling to a length you do not like or bowling on your favoured hand so as to get in your way.
- 3) **An ability to reach the head consistently. Avoid short bowls at all costs. If you are having difficulty reaching the head, then bowl to a point one meter behind the head. If you reach this point you have an effective bowl, if short of this point then you are near the jack.**
Short bowls are of no use to your team especially if they are in the drawing lanes blocking a hand and creating an impediment to reaching the jack. Short bowls impede weighted shots by reducing the team's ability to attack the head effectively when required.
- 4) **An ability to bowl such that your bowl consistently finishes on the centreline.**
Bowls finishing wide of the jack often act as backstops for opponent bowls to rest upon. The best lead bowl is a front resting toucher.
- 5) **Strive to make both bowls count. A bowl within one half a mat length in front of the jack to one mat length behind the jack, and less than half a mat's width wide of the jack is an effective bowl. If you can consistently put two bowls in this envelope you will be sought after by every skip in the club.**
- 6) **Negate an opponent's good shot with one of your own. Get as near to your opponent's bowl as you possibly can.**
Resist the temptation to niggle at an opponent's bowl near the jack. If you miss this shot you put the team in jeopardy by having wasted your bowl (now not in the head) forcing the second to do your job for you.
- 7) **Bowl to your skip's instructions without question. It is his job to plot strategy, not yours.**
- 8) **Develop coping skills to counter adverse conditions. This usually entails practising draw shots in windy and/or wet conditions. Also practise on both slow and very fast greens to enable you to develop proper weight control skills.**
Coping skills usually involve some sort of selective memory. When you play a bad shot you must get it out of your head immediately so that you can concentrate on your correcting shot. Dwelling on bad shots will sink you.

SUMMARY

Roll jacks in practise until you are good at it over all lengths
Develop a good reliable draw shot that you can get up to the head and onto the centreline
Develop draw shot proficiency with both hands at any length
Develop weight control so that you can adjust to a relocated jack or to a position behind the head as indicated by the skip

ZONE 9 COACHING COMMITTEE

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL SECONDS

(As developed and produced by Tony Taylor)

1) Must possess a very good, reliable draw shot that can be played with either hand at any length.

A 'one-armed' number two bowler is a liability to a triples or a fours team.

2) An ability to change hands on alternate shots while maintaining effectiveness.

Changes in the position of the jack and/or the presence of an opponent bowl in your line often results in the skip requiring you to change hands for your next shot. You must be proficient at this.

3) An ability to reach the head consistently. A second must avoid short bowls at all costs.

4) An ability to draw effectively to a relocated jack. Especially critical positions are jacks near the ditch and/or near the boundary lines.

A second who can bowl 'off-line' is a real asset to a team.

5) An ability to play weighted shots with skill and accuracy when required. Especially critical are skills with 'swingers' and with 'yard-on' shots to trail the jack or wrest an opposing bowl.

Many skips use their number two to disturb the head early in an end so as to avoid an unfavourable position becoming much more difficult later in the end.

A number two who can play weight is a valuable asset.

6) Develop your weight control skills so that you can add or subtract 75 cm of weight with skill.

7) Follow your skip's instructions exactly. When the skip instructs you to add a meter to your last bowl's length then he means "add one meter" and not more.

Too often a number two hears the word 'weight' and then stops listening to the rest of the command resulting in a bowl finishing in the ditch or far removed from what the skip asked of the number two.

Avoid running your own agenda at all costs.

SUMMARY

Develop and fine tune your draw shot. You will be playing it 80% of the time.

Bowl equally as effectively with either hand at all lengths.

Develop skills at bowling off-line.

Practise your weighted shots for some portion of your practise sessions.

Practise weight control such that you can change your bowl's length by 75 cm with confidence.

ZONE 9 COACHING COMMITTEE

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL THIRDS

(As developed and produced by Tony Taylor)

- 1) **Must possess a very good, reliable draw shot that can be played with either hand at any length.**
A 'one-armed' number three bowler is a massive liability to a fours team.
- 2) **An ability to change hands on alternate shots while maintaining effectiveness.**
Changes in the position of the jack and/or the presence of an opponent bowl in your line often results in the skip requiring you to change hands for your next shot. You must be proficient at this.
- 3) **An ability to reach the head consistently and effectively is a must in a number three. This may often require some form of weighted shot to either wrest or remove an opponent bowl.**
- 4) **An ability to draw effectively to a relocated jack. Especially critical positions are jacks near the ditch and/or near the boundary lines.**
- 5) **An ability to play medium to heavily weighted shots with skill and accuracy when required. Especially critical in number three bowlers is an ability to understand completely the skip's verbal instructions regarding the weight of the shot.**
*Too often the playing of weighted shots by the number two or number three bowler results in bowls finishing in the ditch when the skip is asking for a one, two or three yard weighted shot. **Weight** does not necessarily mean **ditch weight** unless the skip specifically asks for ditch weight!*
- 6) **Develop your weight control skills so that you can add or subtract 75 cm of weight with skill. This is especially important for a number three bowler. Your weight control skills are critical to the success of the team.**
The number three bowler is the "pressure release valve" for the skip. If the number three fails to execute his tasks, especially when down on the score during the end, the skip then becomes the last hope for a score or a reduction in the opponent's score. Constantly and continually putting pressure on the skip's bowls "to save" will generally result in a loss.
- 7) **Follow your skip's instructions exactly. It is the skip's job to plot strategy and build the head. Questioning your skip's calls or judgment leads to team dissention and will greatly affect team performance.**
- 8) **During the play of the lead and second's bowls be an active supporter of their efforts. Words of encouragement, high-fives for good shots, handing bowls to the player on the mat are all activities that build confidence and comradeship among team members.**
- 9) **Learn to read a head so that an accurate assessment of the status of the head, and ways to improve its condition, can be relayed to the skip when he requests this information.**

SUMMARY

Finetune your draw shot. You will be playing it 75% of the time.

Bowl equally as effectively with either hand at all lengths.

Develop skills at bowling off-line and to the ditch.

Practise your weighted shots for some portion of each practise session.

Practise weight control such that you can change your bowl's length by 75 cm with confidence.

ZONE 9 COACHING COMMITTEE

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL SKIPS

(As developed and produced by Tony Taylor)

- 1) **Must possess a very good, reliable draw shot that can be played with either hand at any length.**

A successful skip will probably possess the best draw shot on the team.

- 2) **An ability to change hands on alternate shots while maintaining effectiveness.**

Changes in the position of the jack and/or the presence of an opponent bowl in your line often results in the skip being required to change hands for his next shot. You must be proficient at this.

- 3) **An ability to assess the condition of the head and select the shot, or type of shot that has the greatest chance of success. This assessment needs to consider the game score, the overall leader board score, the number of ends remaining in the game and any factors that affect the outcome of the game.**

Keep in mind the consequences of missing this shot and its result on the game. If you miss your shot what is your opponent likely to do with his shot?

- 4) **An ability to draw effectively to a relocated jack. Especially critical positions are jacks near the ditch and/or near the boundary lines or jacks lying among opponent bowls.**

A skip will often be in a position wherein he is required “to save” from an unfavourable head. This will entail having to draw around, underneath or through opponent bowls to improve the team’s position. Saving from an unfavourable position is one of the skips most important tasks.

- 5) **An ability to play medium to heavily weighted shots with skill and accuracy when required.**

*When driving or playing a weighted shot the skip is the one most likely to have to play this shot. Drives are by their very unpredictable nature **desperation shots** whose outcome is problematic at best. If you can hit a weighted shot with your first bowl then you can use your second bowl to draw the shot or ameliorate the situation as required. Consider attacking a head early (perhaps with the number two bowler if he possesses weight skills) when you face an unfavourable situation. A hit from the number two position leaves you with four bowls to draw the shot from a relocated jack.*

- 6) **Develop your weight control skills so that you can add or subtract 75 cm of weight as required. This is especially important for a skip as an ability to control your weight can result in moving a jack to a much more favourable position resulting in added shots for your team.**

- 7) **One of the most important skills a skip must possess is player management. This entails encouraging your players to achieve at a higher level being sure to acknowledge good shots, or well played position bowls with the appropriate accolade.**

No bowler knowingly tries to play a bad shot, so overt criticism is counterproductive. Praise good effort and encourage the bowler who plays an errant shot.

- 8) **Learn your player’s strengths and weaknesses. Learn the motion and draw of each of their bowls so that you can design shots which both improve the score and enhance the chances of a successful delivery and outcome.**

- 9) **Keep the team informed as to the shots held or lost, position relative to the jack of their last bowl and the overall strategy or game plan you have devised. Remember that bowls is a *team sport* and every member is equally important. Skips who do not communicate well are not held in high regard.**

SUMMARY

Finetune your draw shot. You will be playing it 70% of the time.

Bowl equally as effectively with either hand at all lengths.

Develop skills at bowling off-line, to the ditch and around other (often short) bowls.

Practise your weighted shots for some portion of each practise session.

Practise weight control such that you can change your bowl's length by 75 cm with confidence.

If deficient you may want to work on your communication skills.

Be positive!!