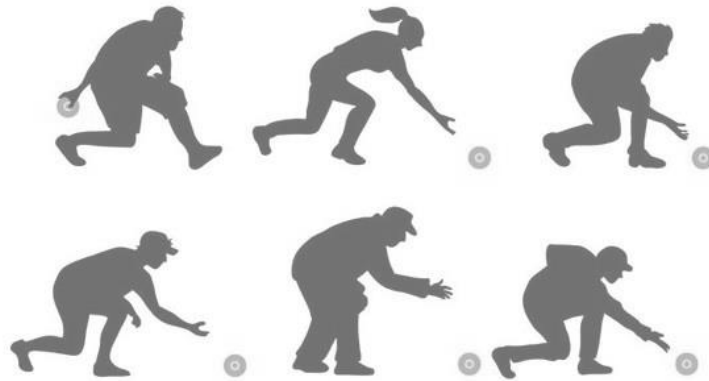


**FROM THE DESK OF THE
KRUGERSDORP
BOWLING
CLUB'S
COACHES**



“HOW TO PLAY BETTER BOWLS”



“DON'T DO WHAT WE DO”

“DO WHAT WE TRAIN YOU TO DO”

How to become a better bowler

My Thoughts (Andy)

Over the last couple of years, I have read numerous books, seen lots and lots of YouTube videos, and studied many papers from various sources, on how to play bowls, the mental side of bowls and what makes a great bowler. However, the very best piece of advice that I have heard, was from Jason Evans (Protea bowler) who said "I am not a better bowler than you the club bowler, I am just a great deal more consistent, that the normal club bowler".

Having said that, it's up to the mediocre bowler, themselves, to develop from a "normal" bowler into a competitive one. So how do you become more consistent? How do you become a "competitive" bowler? Well, there is no easy solution or quick fix, but if you're willing and committed to getting better and to put yourself on a learning path, there is a way that works, and it's called "**practice with a purpose**".

This document is aimed, not at the top bowlers in South Africa, and it also only offers limited help to beginners or new bowlers. Rather, it is aimed at developing the mediocre "club bowler" who wants to play better bowls, and wants to start competing at a higher level.

It is not going to show you how to grip the bowl or what stance to use when delivering your wood. It is going to give you some insight into the mental side of the game while showing you some exercises and practice schedules, which are going to help with consistency in your delivery routine.

But, in order to get the best out of what I am trying to show & tell you, you first have to commit to "practicing with a purpose".

"Practice with a purpose"

It doesn't help going down to your local club for a "roll-up" with some friends, and using it as a practice session, or pretending that it is a training session. What "practice with a purpose" means, is that that you have a plan for each practice / training session that you do, complete with a goal or an aim of what you are trying to achieve for each session. I am not saying that you can't have a roll-up or play social bowls, all I am saying is that at least 2 to 3 times a week have a serious practice.

- You need to train with the same (or close to the same) intensity that you would have in a game scenario
- Keep the practice sessions to a maximum of 1 hour and **score each training session**
- Start keeping a training / practice diary with your scores and how you did (be honest with yourself), and understand what works and what doesn't work for you
- Do planned exercises that will help with your weight & line consistency as well as shot making or shot playing ability
- Detail a pre-delivery and a post-delivery routine that you can follow consistently

So remember; always have a purpose to your practice



Foundation / beginning the process (pre-delivery)

The best bowlers in the world, all have a process. They all have a routine that they use or fall back on, when times are tough, and that starts with the foundation of your delivery routine, the pre-delivery process or routine.

It is vital that you do this pre-delivery routine / process, the same each time you send a bowl “down green”, and this is where it all starts.

What you do behind the mat, determines whether you are going to play a good or a bad shot.

As a beginner, you probably would have been taught about pre-delivery routines, and the importance thereof, but it was a basic idea of what should be done, and probably did not include all the aspects of what a pre-shot routine needs to encompass.

A typical pre-delivery routine starts from before you pick your bowl up, and should include the following critical points:

- Information gathering
 - Shot selection,
 - What shot are you going to play
 - What shot have you been called on
 - Weight needed to execute that particular shot
- Breathing
 - Relaxed, controlled belly breathing
 - Breathing properly will reduce your stress and anxiety levels
 - It will calm your emotions and re-focus your mind
- Focus and concentration (self-talk, visualization)
 - Positive mantra
 - Get yourself a positive saying that will enhance your positivity
 - Positive self-talk will increase your confidence (do not doubt yourself)
 - Confidence
 - Have confidence in your own ability, self-doubt destroys great shots
 - Do not fear failure, do not be scared of playing the shot
 - Visualization
 - See the shot before you play it
 - See the pathway your bowl needs to travel along (the line)
 - Visualize the weight needed for the shot
 - Clear minded
 - Re-set yourself
 - Be “in the moment”
- Walking the line
 - Ensure you walk towards your “aiming point” from behind the mat
 - Walking the correct line, ensures bowling the correct line, every time

The best way of getting your pre-delivery routine correct is to let somebody watch you go through your delivery, and write down (on a piece of paper) what you are currently doing.

Then check your list against the list above and add the points that you are missing. Once this is done, practice them over and over again, until it becomes second nature to do them.

As can be seen, most of the pre-delivery routine has to do with the mental side of the game, which is a crucial part that is usually overlooked, but significant to your game development.

So, that’s probably the best place to start with your training

You have to remember that this is not a quick fix, it requires practice

The mental side of the game

Introduction

Bowls is all about enjoyment (you have to enjoy the experience, or why do we do it), but having said that, the mental side of the game has a huge impact on how much we enjoy it or how frustrated we get.

Concentration and focus must be harnessed into each delivery, so that for the 15 or 30 seconds that you are on the mat, you need to be focused and concentrated, to perform the task at hand, which is to deliver the bowl to the area you want to, consistently.

Although the mechanics of a good delivery are vitally important to your game of bowls, the more you play and practice or the more advanced you become as a bowler, the more the mechanics and style of your delivery is ingrained in your sub-conscious, and your ability to perform under pressure, or to repeat the same delivery over and over again, in different scenarios and in different arenas, becomes more of a mental ability than that of technical one.

Mental skills need to be developed as tools to combat the undesired effect that one bad bowl can have on your entire game, you need to be “mentally tough”.

Concentration (re-setting yourself)

We know that it is virtually impossible to hold a high concentration or focus level for a complete game, lasting 2 hours, but the key aspect to playing at your peak, is to re-set your mind between each delivery.

In order to achieve this (re-setting of the mind), you need some sort of trigger mechanism, to tell your brain that it is now time to lift the concentration and focus levels again, before delivering your bowl.

We have all had that feeling of “being in the zone”, or the feeling of that “I can’t do anything wrong today”. Well there is a way of getting that feeling every time you bowl, and it’s using a “trigger” to enhance and re-set your focus.

This “trigger” needs to form part of your pre-delivery routine, and can be anything from clicking your fingers, to tapping your leg, to touching your cap, but it has to be something you don’t normally do in everyday life, it has to be unique.

You can learn to obtain a “trigger” by using the following process, but again, it’s not something that is going to happen overnight, you have to practice the process repeatedly for a couple of weeks before you will get results.

“Trigger” Practice process

- Sit down / relax and close your eyes (deep belly breathing helps you relax)
- Remember a time when you really played well and you were on top form, when everything was going right, you played that great shot
- Try to relive that moment,,, remember the things that were going on around you, when you were playing well or played a great shot
 - Where were you, what club were you at, who you were playing with
 - Remember The smells around you
 - Remember The sounds (music, songs)
 - Remember The sights
 - What the weather was like, was there a breeze
- Now try to remember that feeling of confidence that was running through you, during that time

- Remember the concentration, the focus you had during that time or that special delivery
- When your feelings reach their peak levels, and you can visualize how fantastic it was

Apply your specific “trigger mechanism”

If you practice this 2 or 3 times a day for at least 3 weeks, your brain will begin to recognise the gesture of your specific trigger mechanism, and it will react as if it has been pre-programmed and click into positive focus mode

Fear of Failure

The fear of failure is probably the most influential emotion we, as bowlers, experience during a game. The thought of letting your team down, or what people think of me, is the main cause of all the stress and anxiety while delivering a bowl. So for this reason, it needs to be addressed

There are two types of fear within the sporting world

- Rational fear
 - Is associated with being hurt physically
- Emotional fear
 - Is the anxiety of feeling embarrassed or looking bad or letting team mates down

More than anything else, it’s the fear of failing that keeps us from reaching our full potential, in sports and in life. Being afraid to fail is a self-fulfilling prophecy,

We need to change to a “Growth Mind-Set”

- We must change our attitude and our mind-set, to one of a “growth mind set”, whereby we have the ability to learn from everything we encounter, **and become better from every experience.**
- If we accept the challenge, as an opportunity to succeed, and our self-belief is in place, and we have practiced the correct positive mind set, then failure is not an option, it has been told to “go away”.
- If we start playing a game of bowls, and are already thinking of the consequences of either winning or losing the game, we have already failed, we need to control the “controllable” and forget the things which are out of our control

Michael Jordan, (American basketball star) once said:

“I’ve never looked at the consequence of missing a big shot When you think of the consequences you will think of a negative result”

We need a change of attitude

If winning becomes the be all and end all of your bowling life, then you have the completely gone down the path of failure, we must adopt an outlook of a “growth mind set” whereby we enjoy and learn from every game we play.

We need to change the following thought patterns:

- “what if I don’t make the shot” becomes “ when I make this shot”
- “I must not let the team down” becomes “ I have practiced well, and I’m going to enjoy the game”
- Winning must not become the key point of focus. A belief in “work hard, practice hard and play hard” combined with a quality of sportsmanship is the way forward
- Note that:

- Success and failure are just 2 sides of the same flip coin
- Failure should be considered as a means of improving, and with this type of attitude it can

John Wooden, (a successful American basketball coach) said:

“Success is never final.... Failure is never fatal... and it’s courage that counts

Remember “everyone tries, no one dies”

Self – Talk & Mantra’s

I am a firm believer in positive thinking and positive self-talk. It is the way to overcome most of the negative emotions we have while bowling. However positive “Self-talk” is never easy to manage and overcoming negative emotions and self-talk is difficult to achieve, but if practiced it can be accomplished.

Consider this:

When we are young we typically viewed every event as positive, and in a positive light, we gave less consideration to the risks and / or the failures of the task at hand.

But as we get older, we gradually develop an inner sense that not everything goes according to plan, life teaches us that rejection and failure can be a bitter pill to swallow and so we become our own worst enemies, we struggle with internal and external pressures that turn us to negativity.

We need to become mentally tough so that, during competition, we eliminate our own self-doubt,

If we don’t get rid of this self-doubt, we have lost before we have even started,

- we need to change the negative self-talk to positive belief
- positive self-talk is the solution and essential for success
- confidence is built up through training your mind as well as your technique
- repeat positive messages over and over again
- a positive way of thinking must become a habit

It is easy to be swayed by your thoughts. Self-sabotage is a very real mental block that needs to be overcome, so we need to strive to replace **“I can’t” with “I CAN”**.

Get rid of the “I’ll never get it right” or “I’ll never win” , let go of the defeatism, and replace it with a positive mantra that you can repeat when times are tough and it will free you of all the negativity

Training process

- come up with one or two of your own personal positive Mantra’s,
- that you can repeat over and over, every time you bowl
- use words in this Mantra that makes you feel relaxed
- use words that makes you visualise yourself in a positive light
- picture yourself relaxed and free of negativity

Practice these Mantra’s during your practice or training sessions

- these Mantra’s can be used in times of duress, when things are not going your way, as a tool to put the positive focus back into your game

Research has shown that, mantra’s can be a very powerful tool if used correctly

Visualization

“See the shot before you play it” and “feel the weight needed to play that shot”

Ok, so what do we mean by “see the shot”, well basically, it means to play the shot, **successfully**, in your head before you actually send the bowl down green.

It means to visualize the line your bowl is going to take, as well as the speed your bowl is going to travel at in order to get the desired result.

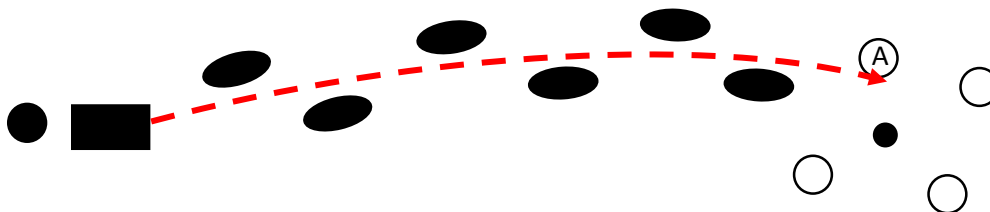
Practice

Once again, this is something that needs to be practiced, it’s not going to be easy, but when you get it right it has a huge impact on your game as well as your confidence in playing different shots

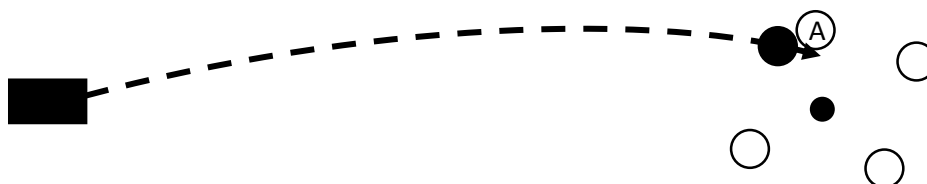
- Start by using 4 other bowls, and set up a head, that you will play to, (bowls can be put in any position)



- From behind the mat, decide on the shot you want to play (nominate your shot), in your head. (for example, you want to rest bowl A)
- Then leave your bowl at the mat, and actually walk the line to the jack, and see the shot that you have just nominated, (to rest bowl A)



- Walk back to the mat, along the same line you have just walked.
- Go through your pre-delivery routine, and play the shot you have just nominated



This practice drill will obviously take time, but if done correctly, it will help you tremendously in visualizing the shot before you play it

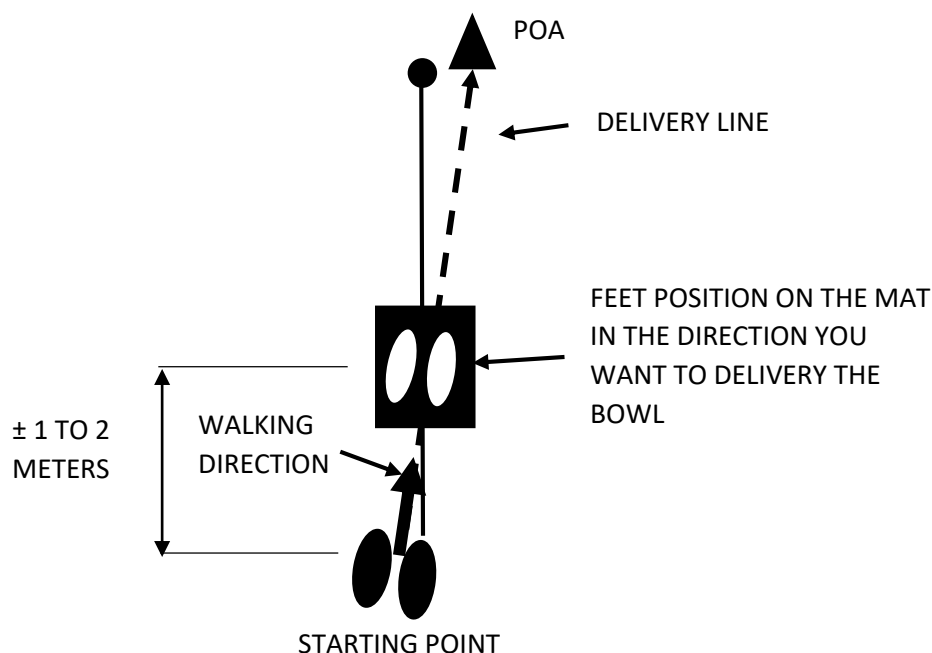
“Walking the Line”

In order to deliver your bowl down the same line, every time, it is important that you walk the line and place your feet in the direction that you want to deliver your wood.

“Walking the line” is vital to ensure that you send your bowl down the chosen point of aim (POA) to accomplish the shot you want to make.

So, let’s first describe what “walking the line” is:

It basically means that, after your pre-delivery routine, and your POA is chosen, you walk, from behind the mat, on that chosen delivery line, in order to get your body and feet square to the direction you want to deliver your wood on. (Sketch 1)



When walking the line ensure that your head is up and that your eyes are fixed on your POA, try not to look down at your feet.

Practice Exercises

Introduction

Before we get into the actual practice drill, it is imperative to know and understand the different types of shots that you are going to play during a game.

It is important that you practice each of these types of shots in order to gain confidence and consistency in them.

To become competent in each shot, you first need to understand what each shot is meant to do, or in other words, what you are trying to achieve out of playing each shot.



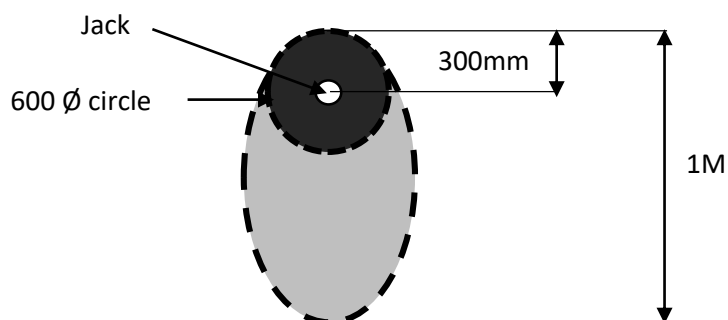
Drawing shot

Drawing to the jack is probably the most mundane shots of all. It's not as exciting as playing a drive or a running shot, but, during a game of bowls, undoubtedly, 70% to 80% of the shots you are going to play is on the draw, be it at skip or be it at lead.

I therefore, class it as the most important shot of all, and your ability to draw your bowl, within a mat length, of either the jack or a designated "target area" around the rink, **consistently**, is vital.

You also get a positive draw shot, this is where you are trying to end up to a target area behind the jack, never be short on a positive draw shot

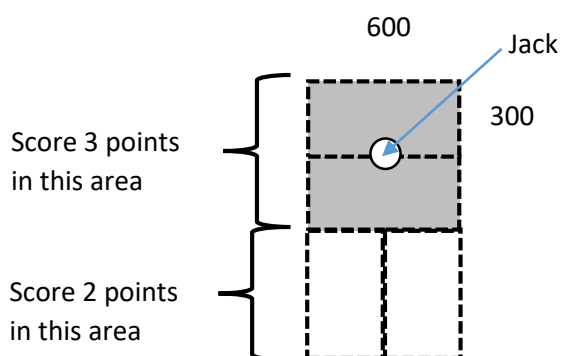
This "target area" I recommend, (as detailed in the sketch below), is called the "value" area, it is an egg shaped area that starts 300 mm in front of the jack and extends to a meter behind the jack.



This "value" area can be placed anywhere on the rink, and can be used in most of the practice exercises to score your shots.

Scoring as follows: inside the circle (dark area) = 3 points
 Inside the egg shape (light area) = 2 points

If you haven't got the "egg shaped target area" you can also use the mat or a measuring stick, as a measuring tool to score your bowls, (described below)



Note:

A mat size is about 300mm wide by 600mm long, so you can measure where your bowl lands using the mat (as shown) and score accordingly

Controlled weight

This is probably the most difficult shot to master, especially on quick greens, but it is a shot that brings you the most reward, when you get it right.

The name describes the shot “controlled weight”, you need to be able to add on just enough weight to achieve the desired result. If you miss the shot, you intended to play, your bowl must stay in play, and by that I mean that your bowl must be within that 1 to 1, 5 meters through the jack.

This is an attacking shot and must be played that way. You get no results from being short of the jack, so it is important to be positive and through the head with your bowl.

These types of shots include,

- trailing the jack
- resting the bowl
- chop and lie

The controlled running or drive shot

Controlled running shots and the drive shot, are normally used to open up a congested head in order to create room to draw, it can also be used to remove an opponent’s bowl to create multiple shots.

It is an exciting shot to play, but you need to remember that it can go horribly wrong if you don’t play the shot correctly.

Your delivery routine should stay the same, while the way to increase the speed of your bowl comes from the speed of your back swing in your pendulum movement.

You can also stand a little straighter (more upright) in your delivery stance, but the most important things to remember are:

- Have good balance
- Keep your head still
- Stay down in your follow through
- Fix your eyes on your aiming point

NB – Good bowlers, play the right shot at the right time

As we have said before, you need to practice with a purpose, and to this extent I would also recommend that you keep score of each exercise, each practice session and each delivered bowl.

The reason behind keeping score, is not only to monitor your progress, but also to see the areas you are stronger in or areas that need to be worked on. It is also a good way of setting yourself a goal, before each session, as to what score you want to achieve



Warming up

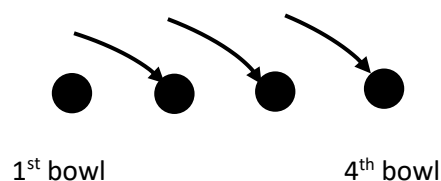
It is essential that you warm up before every practice or game. I know most of us don't do it, but it does help, and you will see a difference in your game, so it's worthwhile to spend 5 to 10 minutes warming up as you don't want to start off cold.

Exercise 1 "the Caterpillar" (warm up)

This exercise is taken from Lachlan Tighe's video's, and as far as I am concerned, one of the better ways to get a feel for the green you're are going to play on, as well as loosening up your delivery action, and stretching the muscles that you use during your delivery.

You don't need a jack or a mat, just two or four woods, which you roll up and down the green, trying to add a meter of weight on after each delivery (as shown in the diagram).

- Try to keep the same line with each bowl
- Try to add a meter of weight on each bowl



Trial ends

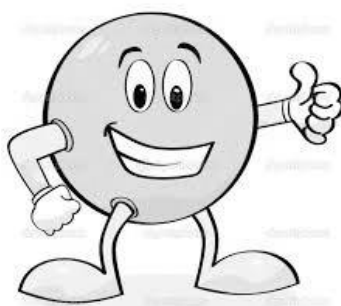
After your warm up, and before you start the actual exercises you have set out to do, firstly, do a couple of trial ends (2 up & 2 down) on the circuit or the practice drill you have set out. This will enable you to get the line and the weight before you start the scoring, and it also simulates a game scenario where you are allowed trial ends.

Use these trial ends (as you would in a game) to search out the lines (on both hands) as well as getting a feel for the weight.

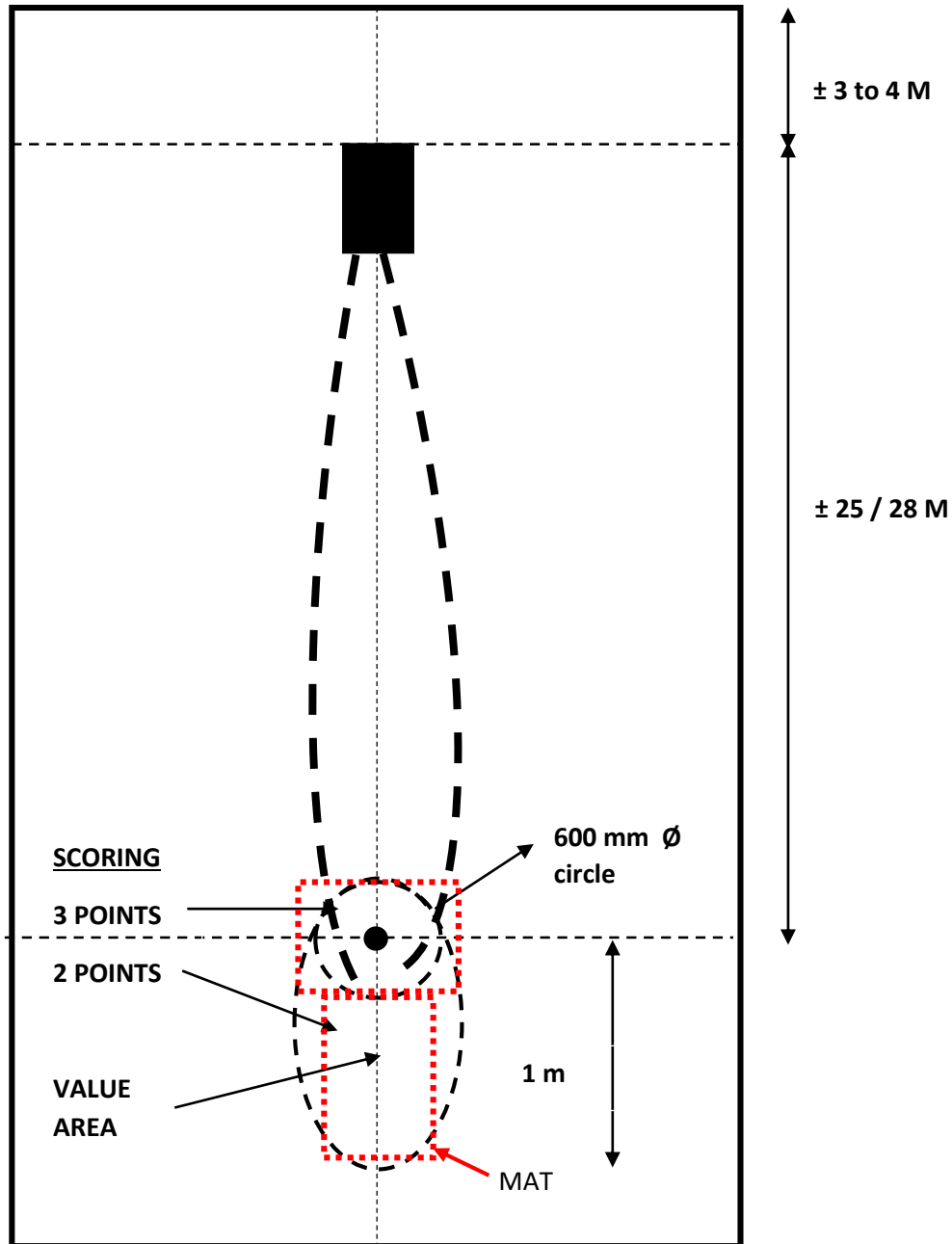


The following are exercise drills that you can set up in order to practice different types of shots that might occur during a game.

They are set up to replicate shots that need to be performed, but as you work through the exercises, you might find variations that you can add to improve the "game scenario" that we are trying to achieve.



Value area drawing exercise



Drawing exercise

Process:

2 X bowls on the left hand side

2 x bowls on the right hand side

Set – up:

- Place the mat 3 to 4 meters from the ditch
- Place the jack on the 27 to 28 meter centre mark
- Use the template to draw the target area

Scoring system:

- Use the score card provided
- Mark the scores as per the scoring system
- Remove the bowls after each delivery

Objective:

- The objective of the exercise is to score with at least 2 of the 4 bowls, which will give you 50% scoring woods and 50% wasted woods
- The ideal is to be scoring with at 75% of your woods, in other words, land the value area with 3 of the 4 bowls

: Draw to a hidden jack

Set up

As detailed below

Exercise

Bowl 2 woods on the left hand side, around the front bowl to the jack

Scoring

- Inside circle (1 mat length) = 3 points
- inside value area (outside circle) = 2 points

: Rest / sit the bowl

Set up

As detailed below

Exercise

Bowl 2 woods on the left hand side, to rest / sit the bowl

Scoring

- Inside circle (1 mat length) = 3 points
- inside value area (outside circle) = 2 points

: Rest / sit the bowl

Set up

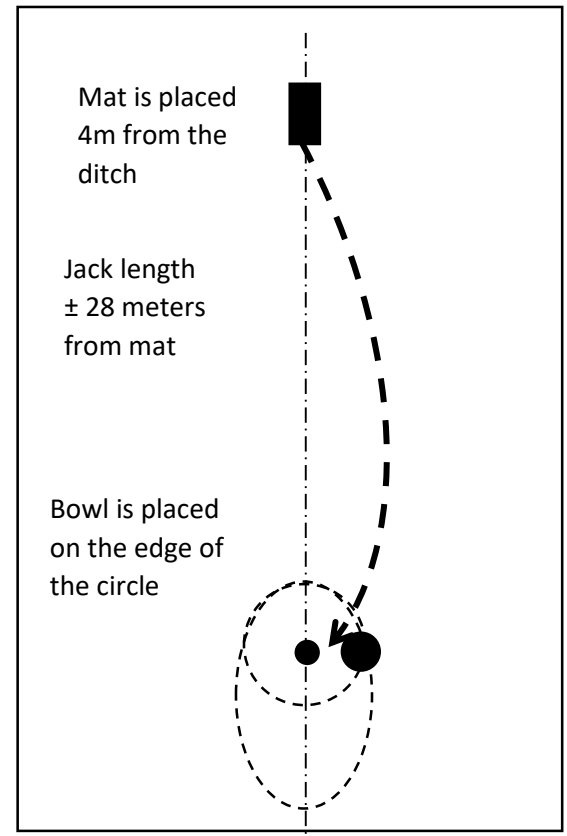
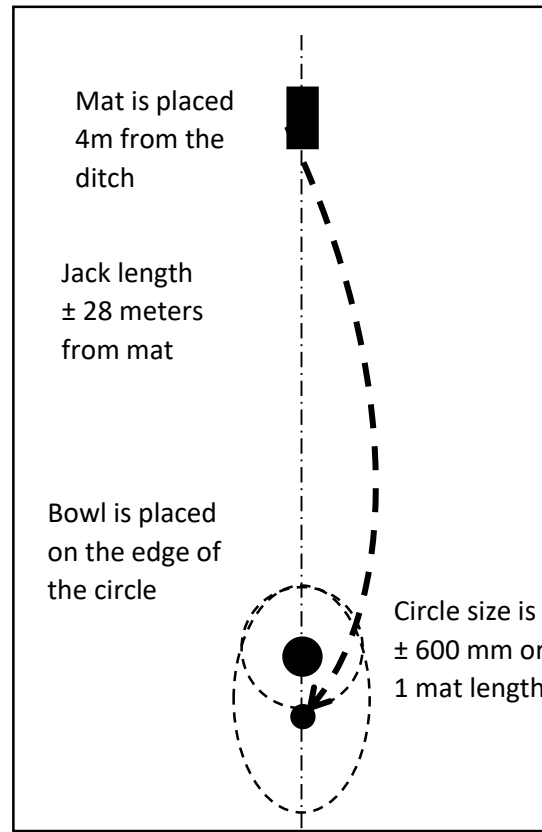
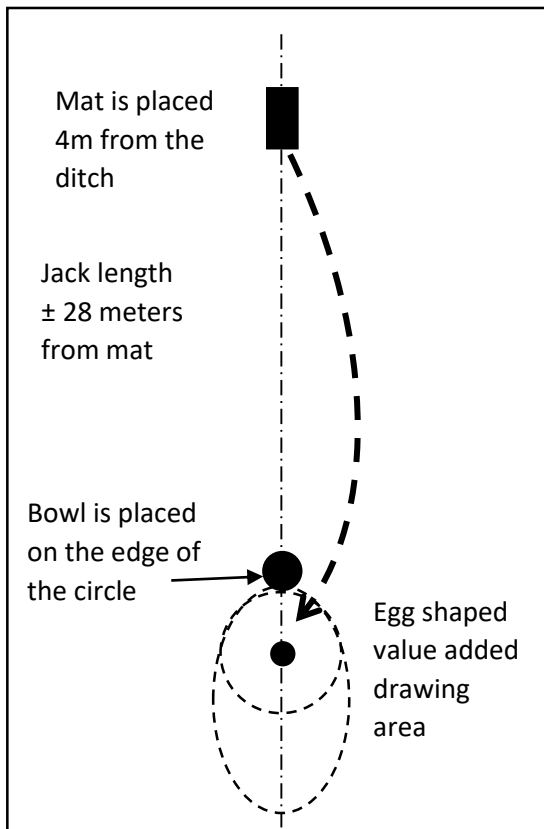
As detailed below

Exercise

Bowl 2 woods on the left hand side, to rest / sit the bowl

Scoring

- Inside circle (1 mat length) = 3 points
- inside value area (outside circle) = 2 points



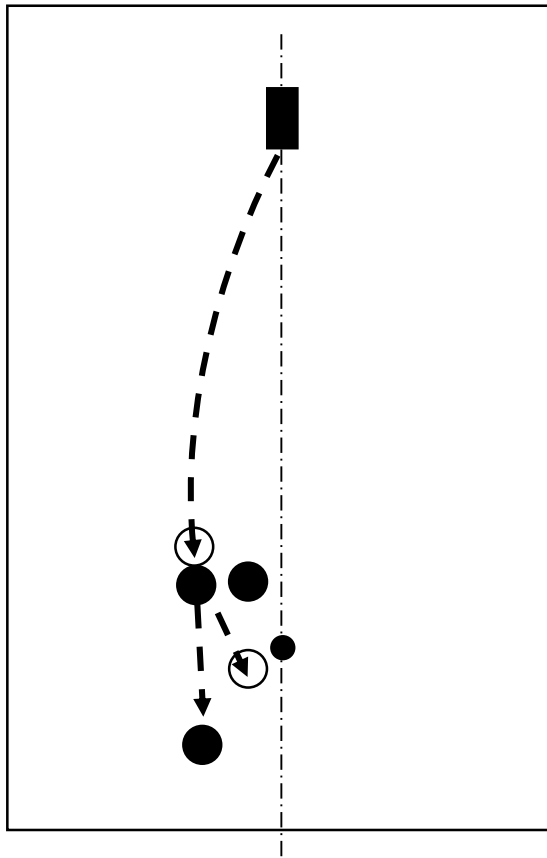
: chop and lie

Jack is placed on the 27 M mark and 2 bowls about 500 mm in front of the jack, in the line of the draw shot

Objective

Bowl on the left hand side of the green in order to push the woods through the head and lay the shot

Weight control: Take note of the weight needed, do not be too heavy or too soft



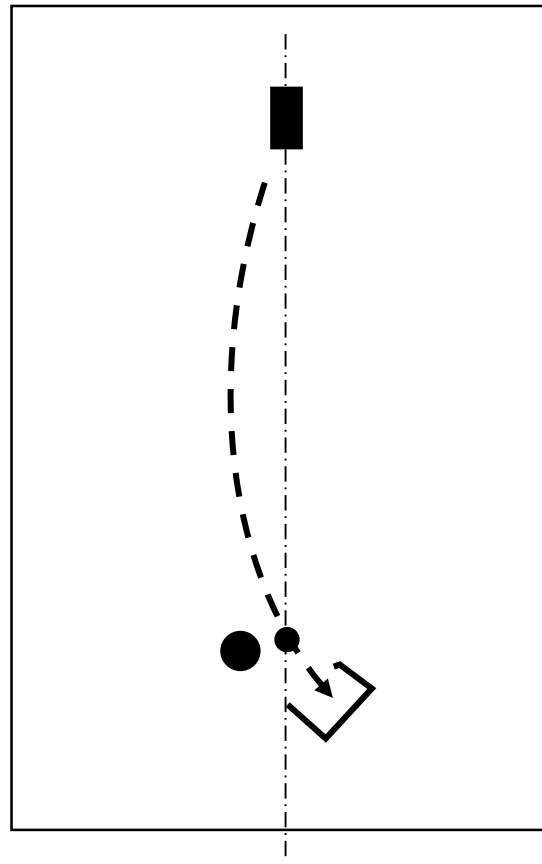
: trail the jack

The jack is placed on about the 27 M mark and the goal posts about 1 meter behind, in the arc of the draw

Objective

Bowl on the left side of the rink in order To trail the jack into the goals

Weight control: use enough weight to complete the shot, be careful of not being too heavy,



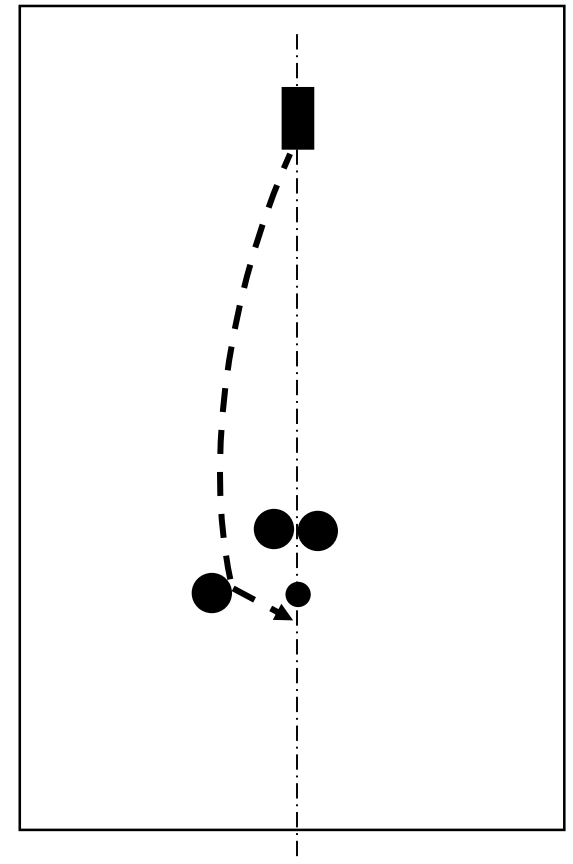
: wick draw

The jack is placed on about the 27 M mark, a bowl is placed jack level about 200mm from the jack, & 2 bowls in front of the jack

Objective

Bowl on the left hand side of the rink in order to use the jack level wood to obtain the shot

Weight and line control: the weight and line of the shot is important in order to complete the desired result



: "crack an egg"

Set-up

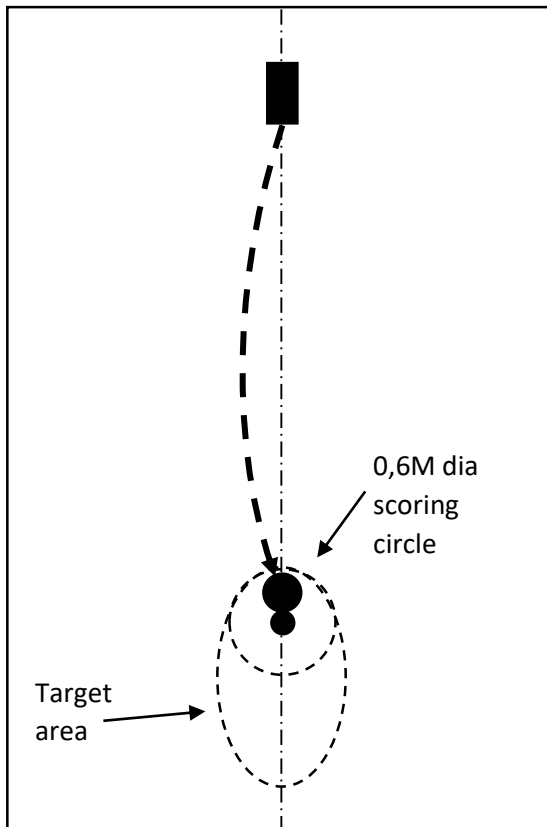
Mat is set 3M from the ditch, jack is placed 28M from the mat. 1 bowl placed in front of the jack (touching), the target value area set-up 0,5M from the jack (as shown)

Objective

Bowl on the right hand side of the rink, Draw to touch the front bowl "crack an egg" and move the jack to the designated area (1 meter behind the bowl)

Weight control:

Take note, drawing weight needed, do not be to heavy or short,



: "rest the bowl"

Set-up

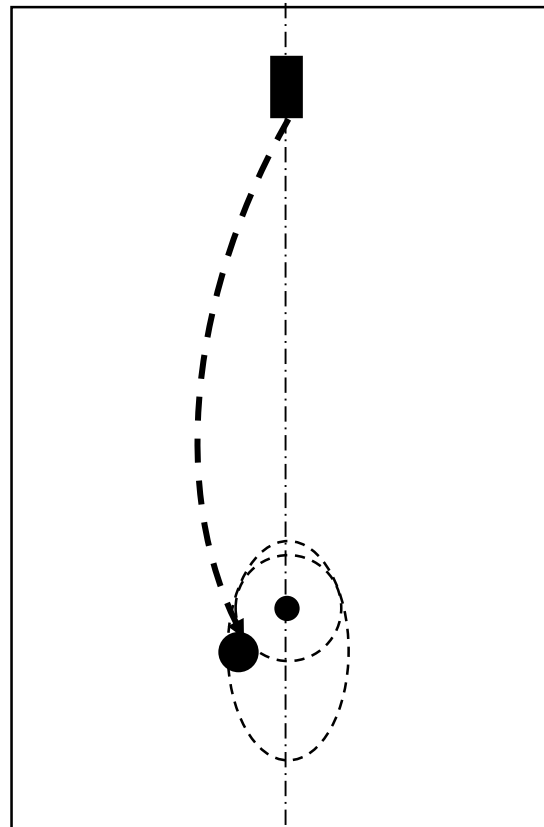
Mat is set 2M from the ditch, jack is placed 29 M from the mat. 0,6M circle is drawn around the jack, a bowl placed on the edge of the circle (as shown)

Objective

Bowl on the right side of the rink in order To rest the shot bowl & stay for shot

Weight control:

Use enough weight to complete the shot, be careful of not being too heavy,



: wick draw

Set-up

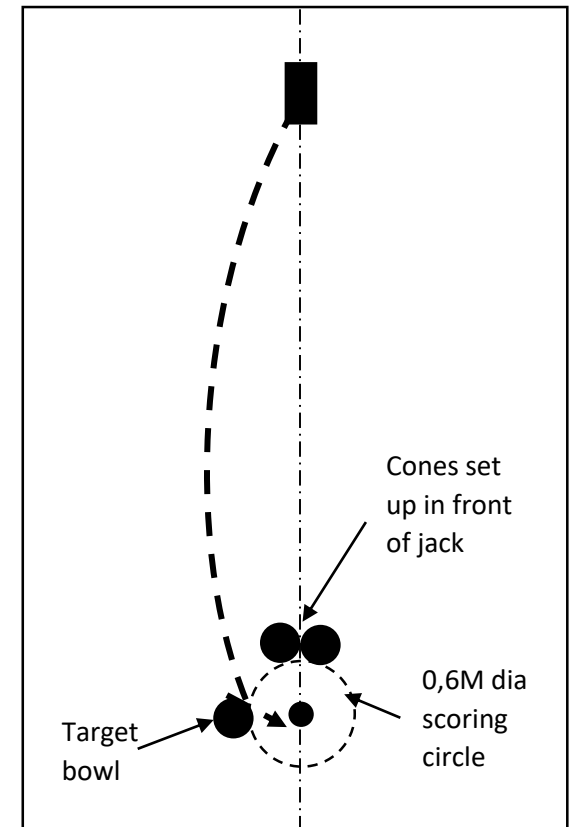
Mat is placed 4M from the ditch, jack is placed on 2M mark , a bowl is placed jack level on the edge of the 0,6M scoring circle (as shown) & 2 cones in front of the jack

Objective

Bowl on the right hand side of the rink in order to use the jack level wood to obtain the shot

Weight control:

Weight and line of the shot is important in order to complete the desired result



: trail the jack

Set-up

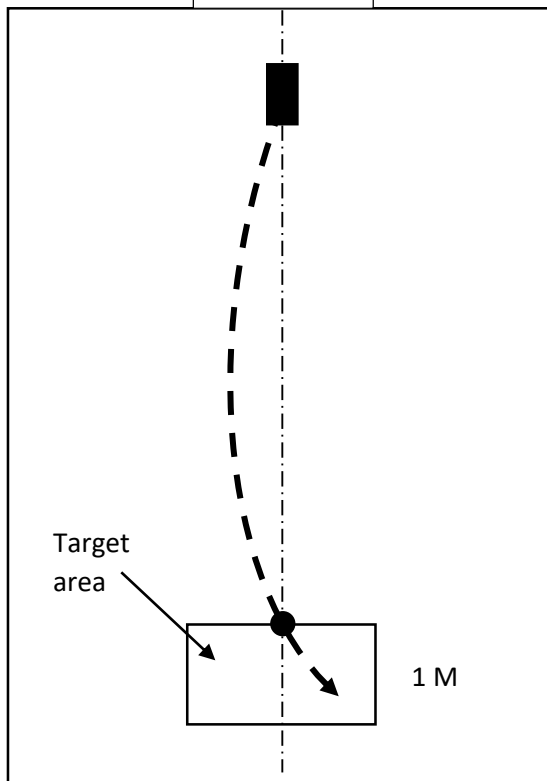
Mat is set 3m from the ditch, jack is placed 27m from the mat, chalk lines drawn as shown

Objective

Bowl on the right hand side of the green with the correct weight & line, in order to trail the jack into the scoring area

Weight control & line: Take note of the weight & the line needed to complete the objective

RINK 1 & 2



: trail the jack

Set-up

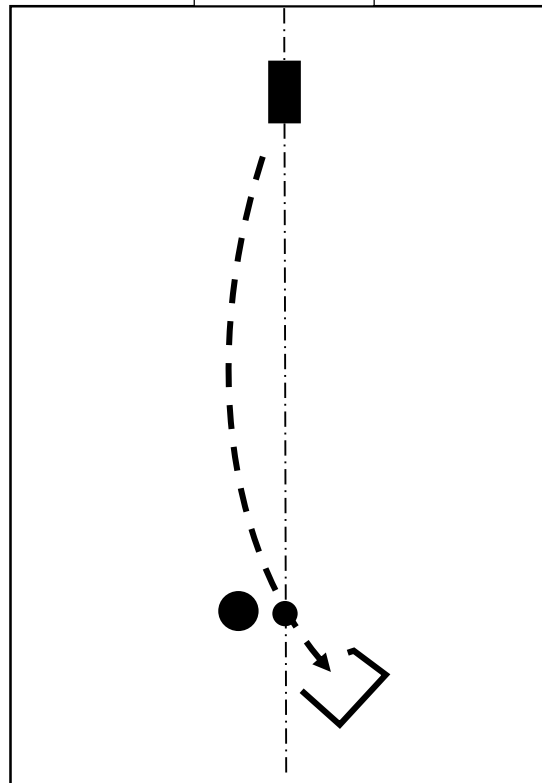
The mat is set 5m from the ditch, the jack is placed on about the 27m from the mat and the goal posts about 1 meter behind the jack, in the arc of the draw, 1 bowl is placed 200mm from the jack (jack level)

Objective

Bowl on the left side of the rink in order To trail the jack into the goals

Weight & line control: use enough weight and adjust your line, in order to complete the shot,

RINK 3 & 4



: trail the jack (alternative)

Set-up

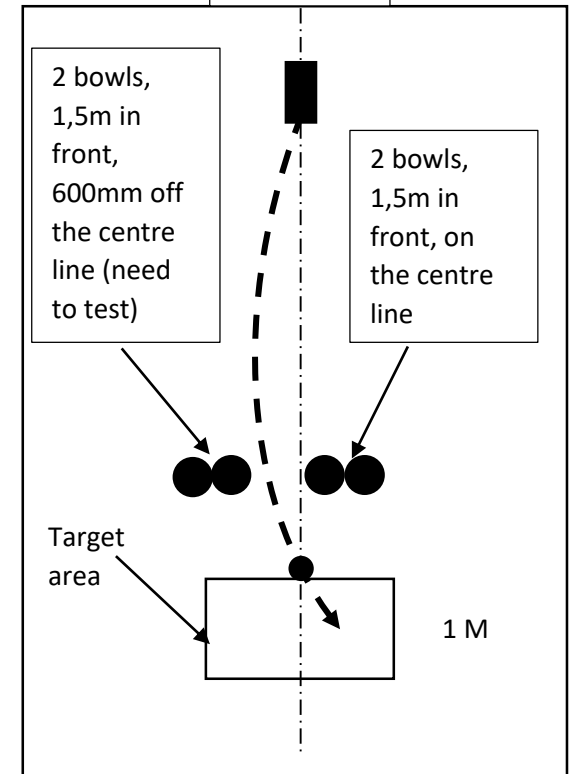
Mat is set 4m from the ditch, jack is placed 28m from the jack, 4 bowls are placed 1,5m in front of the jack, as shown

Objective

Bowl on the right hand side of the rink, through the gap, in order to move the jack into the target area

Weight and line control: the weight and line of the shot is important in order to complete the desired result

RINK 5 & 6



Target area draw shots

Set up

- 1 x jack needed
- 1 x mat needed
- 6 x cones are needed
- mat is placed 3 meters from the ditch (as shown)
- the jack can be placed at any desired length
- Place the cones about 1,5 meters behind the jack and about 1 meters either side of the jack (as shown)

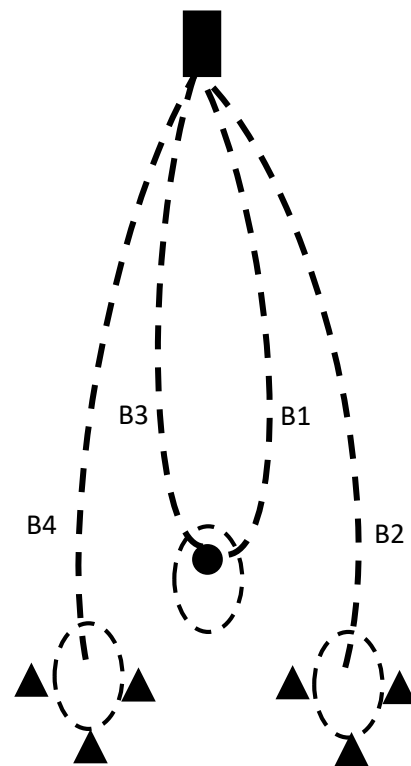
Practice exercise

- Play 1st bowl to the jack on the backhand
- Play 2nd bowl to the cones, on the same hand
- Play 3rd bowl to the jack on the forehand
- Play 4th bowl to the cones, on the same hand
- Try to get within 1 meter of the designated areas

Important

- Walk the line (very important)
- Feet position on the mat (very important)
- Foot position on the step, step the line
- Arm movement (straight back, straight through) the line you want to bowl
- Feel the weight that you need to add on

The idea is to practice the line and weight adjustment that is needed to be able to draw to designated areas



Value added draw areas

Scenario: playing 4's (district tournament)

- last end of the 1st set; (3 sets of 7 ends)

Scores are: ○ = 4

● = 5

○ Holds one shot

○ Has the last wood

Green speed is about 14 sec; and a medium bend on both hands

Do you!

A = take the 1 shot and peel the set

B = play a shot to win the game

If you decide to play the shot; what shot do you play?

Scenario: playing singles (Final of the club singles)

Scores are: ○ = 17

● = 15

○ Holds one shot

○ Has the last wood

Green speed is about 14 sec; and a medium bend on both hands

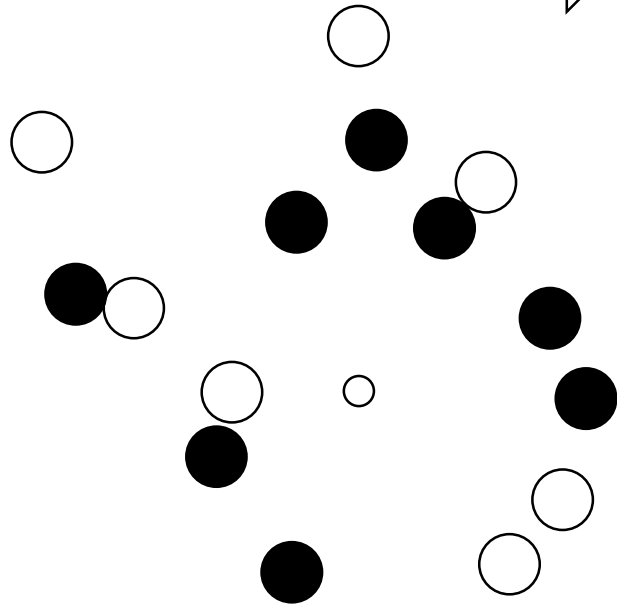
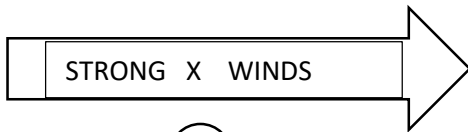
Do you!

A = take the 1 shot and move on

B = try to draw a 2nd shot

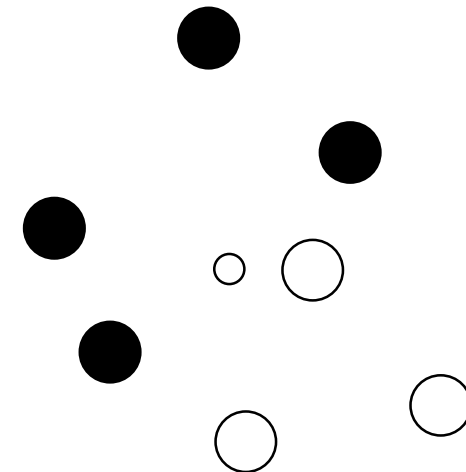
B = play a shot to win the game

If you decide to play the shot; what shot do you play ?



CONDITIONS ARE GOOD

NO WIND,



The Wandering Mat

Set up

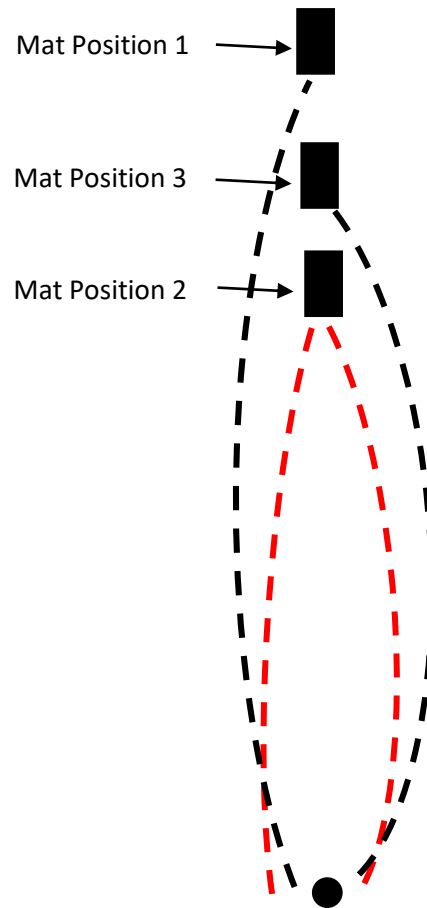
- 1 x jack needed
- 2 x mats needed (one at either end)
- Min 2 players needed

Practice exercise

- start off as a normal game
- Player 1, Rolls the jack, don't centre the jack, play it where it stops
- Player 1 plays the 1st bowl, and then moves the mat to wherever they want to (up or down the rink, as long as it's a legal length)
- Player 2 then plays their bowl from the new mat position
- Player 2 then, again, moves the mat to wherever they want it
- Player 1 then plays their 2nd bowl, and again moves the mat position to wherever they want
- The game carries on, until the end is finished
- The winner of the previous end then begins the process over again

Important

- The idea is to practice the line and weight adjustment that is needed to be able to draw to jack, from wherever the mat is moved to
- This is a singles game although it can be adjusted to suit more players if needed
- The important thing is that the mat is moved after each bowl, thereby making each player bowl from a different position (length)
- Try to draw within a 0,6 M from the jack
- Can play either hand, and can play any type of shot (as head dictates)



Practicing Consistency (practice exercise)

This is an exercise to improve your consistency. It is better to keep a score of this exercise, every time you do it, which will enable to see whether or not you are improving in your game.

Set – up:

- 1 x mat
- 1 x jack
- 1 x measuring stick (1 meter long)

Objective:

To get all 4 woods within 1 meter of your 1st wood bowled, then to bowl the jack (last) in order to get it also within 1 meter of the 1st wood bowled

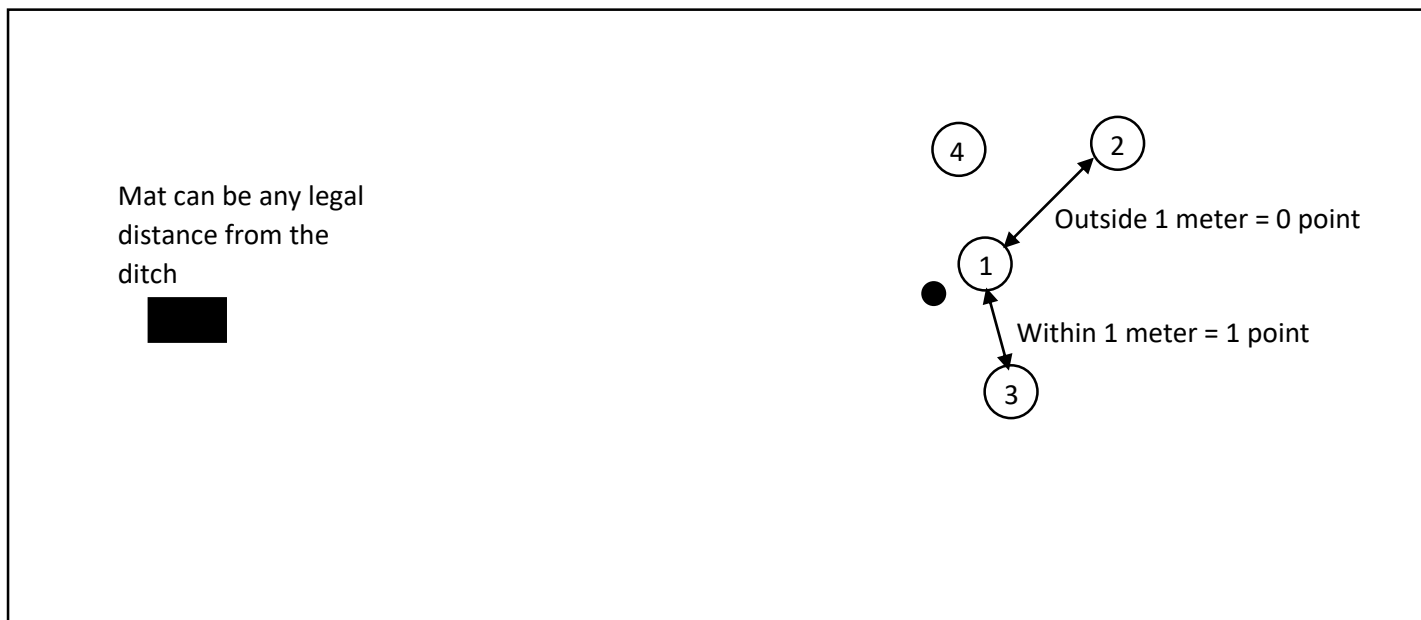
Practice exercise:

- Place the mat any distance from the ditch (as long as it's legal)
- Bowl your 1st wood to any desired length and line (can be either hand, backhand or forehand)
- Bowl your second wood to within 1 meter of the 1st bowl, (can be either hand, backhand or forehand)
- Bowl your 3rd wood to within 1 meter of the 1st bowl, (can be either hand, backhand or forehand)
- Bowl your last wood to within 1 meter of the 1st bowl, (can be either hand, backhand or forehand)
- Bowl the jack to within 1 meter of the 1st wood

Scoring:

- You score 1 point for every wood that is within 1 meter of your 1st bowl, and then 1 bonus point for the jack, (if you get it within 1 meter of your 1st bowl)
- So total available points per end is 4 points (3 x 1 point/bowl ; 1 point/jack)

To increase the skill level, use a 500 mm stick to score your bowls, (get 3 bowls within 500 mm of your 1st wood)



Practicing line and weight change

This exercise is to improve your ability to change of your grass line and your weight per delivery. This often happens during a game scenario when the jack moves from its original position to another position. It is better to keep a score of this exercise, every time you do it, which will enable to see whether or not you are improving in your game.

Set – up:

- 1 x mat
- 4 different colour cones or beacons
- 1 x measuring stick (1 meter long)

Objective:

To get all 4 individual woods within 1 meter of the cones or beacons, at different lengths and positions (as shown in the sketch)

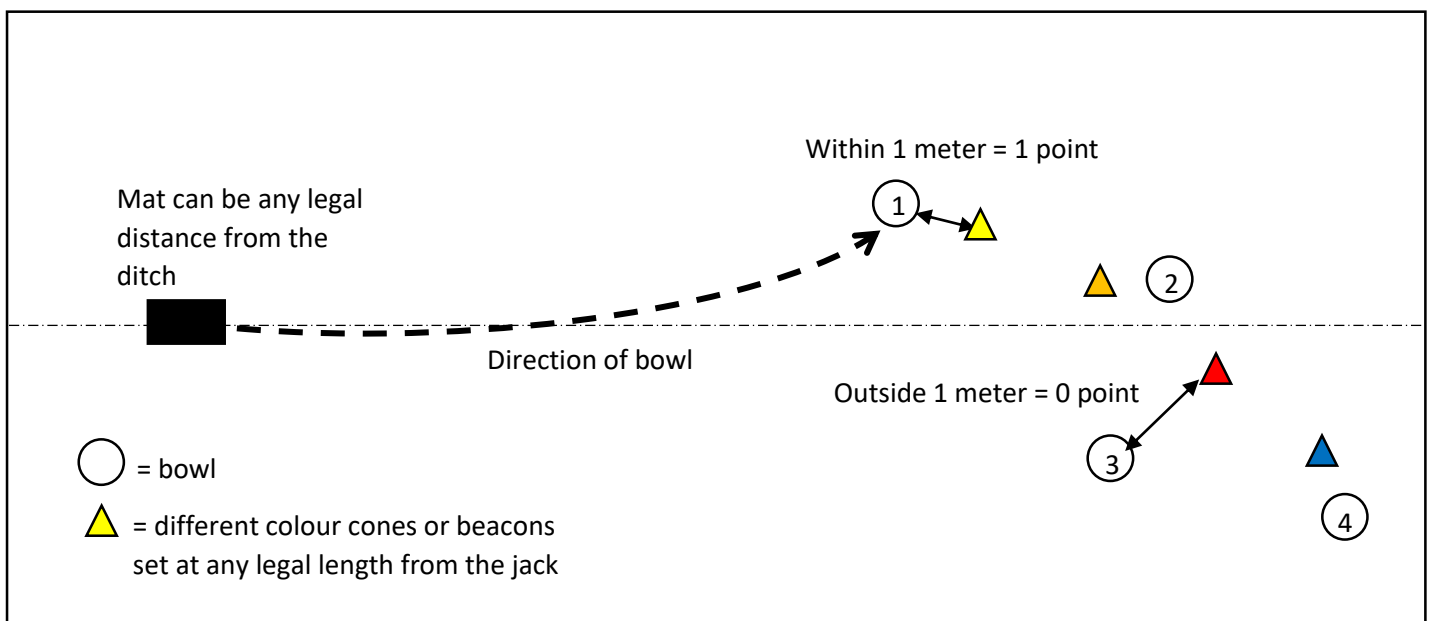
Practice exercise:

- Place the mat any distance from the ditch (as long as it's legal)
- Place the cones as shown in the diagram
- Bowl your 1st wood to the 1st cone, trying to be within the 1 meter target area
- Bowl your second wood to within 1 meter of the 2nd cone
- Bowl your 3rd wood to within 1 meter of the 3rd cone
- Bowl your last wood to within 1 meter of the last cone
- You can start at either the longest cone and work your way back to the shortest, or start at the shortest cone and work your way to the longest cone

Scoring:

- You score 1 point for every wood that is within 1 meter the cone you are aiming for
- So total available points per end is 4 points
- As an addition to the exercise, You can also try to nominate the cone you are playing for,

To increase the skill level, use a 500 mm stick instead of a 1 meter stick to score your bowls,



What is your role within a team structure?

Bowls is mainly a team sport. Yes, you do play in singles competitions, but the majority of the time, bowls is a team sport and so it is very important that you know and understand what your role is within the team.

Below is a brief outline of what is expected of you, (as a player) within the team

General

- Each individual will bring something unique to a team, it's up to each team member to respect and value the others attributes in order to succeed
- Never speak negatively about anyone in your team, remember, everyone is trying their best for the team
- Never disrespect the game or criticise any of your team mates
- Always have a positive, motivational attitude towards your team mates
- Always give your best, no matter what position you are playing in
- Never ever give up on a team mate or give up on a game

Lead position

A lead sets up the head, and, as everyone always says, it is an exceptionally important position within the team structure. Why is this? Simply because a lead sets the tone and the foundation for the rest of the players.

- It all starts with the position of the mat, and the rolling of the jack
 - Make sure you check with your skip about where they want the mat positioned
 - Roll the jack to where your skip is standing, (within 1 meter)
- 1st bowl
 - Try never to be short with your 1st bowl, always be through the head
 - It is easier to take-off weight than to add on
- 2nd bowl
 - Try to get your 2nd bowl into the "added value" or scoring zone
 - Woods in the head mean everything to a skip
- General
 - A lead must try their utmost to never change their hand (unless the skip asks you too)
 - Concentrate on line and length
 - Remain involved in the game
 - Pick up your team mates bowl
 - Support your team mates
 - Show the opposition that you have willpower and mental toughness
 - Show enthusiasm through your game

2nd position

- Undoubtedly the most important position in a 4's team. This is a key position that requires many talents, one of which is drawing to imaginary jacks, or in other words, positional bowls.
- It is imperative that when playing at 2nd you are never short of the jack (unless the skip asks for it, which is highly unlikely). Always play positively.
- You, as a 2nd, must have the ability to change from a weighted shot to a draw shot.
- If the lead has failed to get woods in the head, it is up to the 2nd to get bowls into the scoring zone

- General

- It is also vital that a 2nd remains involved in the game
- Pick up your leads bowl
- Support your team mates no matter what
- Show enthusiasm throughout your game

3rd position

- This position requires people who are capable and possess many abilities, as they will have to take on many roles throughout the game
- They should be able to:
 - Draw to add on shots
 - Draw to save shots
 - Be able to positional draw to imaginary areas
 - Draw to block
 - Be able to play weighted shots
- To change the head
- Conversion shots
- They should have:
 - Excellent communication skills
 - Experience in reading the head and calling the shots
 - Be able to develop a great understanding with the skip
- They must also:
 - Know the rules of the game
 - Be able to measure for shots
 - Look for opportunities to make multiple shots
 - Look out for dangers within the head
- The 3rd is the vital link between the front rank and the back rank
 - They must be enthusiastic and motivate the front rank, by not allowing negativity to creep in
 - Maintain control of the end
 - Never criticise the team mentally or verbally
 - They must build confidence within the team
- The 3rd is the skips “right hand man”

The Skips position

- The skip has to be the “captain of the ship”. They must be the chief motivator, in any situation
- They need to get the best from each of the players, by building confidence within the team structure
- They possess attributes such as:
 - Compatibility with their team
 - Show the team, direction and encouragement
 - Excellent and clear communication and precise instructions
 - Positive body language in all situations
 - Control their emotions
 - Knowledge and confidence

- A skip has to be a jack of all trades when it comes to the following:
 - Building the head
 - Reading the head
 - Realising dangers
 - Optimising opportunities
 - Think clearly and maintain control under pressure
 - They must be mentally tough and determined
- He/she must have the following bowling capabilities:
 - Draw to add on shots
 - Draw to save shots
 - Be able to positional draw to imaginary areas
 - Draw to block
 - Be able to play weighted shots
- To change the head
- Conversion shots
 - They must be able to perform these shots under pressure
- One of the most important aspects of a skip, and is more often than not overlooked, is the following:
 - Know your players and understand their capabilities
 - Know their strengths and weaknesses
 - Know what type of bowls their team mates are using, in order to understand what types of shots they can or cannot accomplish.

Remember:

- Matches can become boring and mundane. Players may find themselves losing concentration and just going through the motions.
- These situations are where your “team support” and your “character” is of the utmost importance.
- Have a positive attitude. Cheer shots, encourage your team mates, high five good shots, verbally support your team. All these actions help to increase energy levels and start to build confidence within your team.

In closing, we as bowlers, must prepare ourselves the right way, so that we do not disrespect the game of bowls and/or our team mates, therefore I have one last thing

I will bowl with PRIDE (taken from the Australian high performance centre)

- **P = preparation** – in both technique and mental skills
- **R = respect** – for both my team mates and opponents
- **I = integrity** – I will be honest and truthful to myself and my team mates
- **D = dedication** – I will put the effort in to better myself
- **E = excellence** – I will strive to do my best in everything I do

**DO THIS AND YOU WILL ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOALS TO
BECOME A BETTER AND A MORE COMPETITIVE BOWLER**

**FROM THE COACHES OF KRUGERSDORP BOWLING CLUB WE WISH YOU:
GOOD LUCK AND GOOD BOWLING**

An example of a planned practice session

1. Before you practice
 - Spend 15 minutes planning your practice session
 - Don't just arrive at the club and then try to decide on what you want to practice
2. 1st 10 min
 - Use this as a warm –up period
 - Do stretching and roll bowls up and down the rink
 - Don't use a mat or jacks for this
 - Can use the caterpillar method
3. 2nd 10 min
 - Use this as trial ends, as per a game scenario
 - Use a mat and a jack, as per a competitive game
4. 40 to 50 min
 - Set up your planned exercise
 - Practice your exercise, trying to get the same intensity as if you were in a game scenario
 - Don't forget to keep your score for each end
5. After practice
 - Sit and relax for 10 minutes
 - Reflect on how you played (where you were good, where you need to strengthen on)
 - Check you scores against previous practices

NB

- Take your time between bowling each of your woods
- Remember to do your pre-delivery routine before bowling
- Do your "trigger" mechanism, to enhance your focus
- Relax between bowls

Example of a simple score card that can be used to record your practices

Ends	Woods Del per end	Tot Score Per end	Scoring Bowls (qty)	Wasted Bowls (qty)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
totals				

