

Zone 9 Coaching Committee

Delivery Adjustments

In the main, there are three types of bowler:

- The social player who just loves to play bowls 2 or 3 times a week with friends and doesn't really want to improve
- The competitive bowler who is happy with his/her standard and enjoys playing and socialising with friends. This bowler is happy at the present standard but loves playing pennants and competitions
- The ambitious competitive bowler who loves playing at a high standard and wants to improve. The catchcry of this group is, "There Is No Second Prize"

The attached chart is for people who want a reference point to analyse their own game and practice the improvements they perceive. It is recommended that this chart should be used in conjunction with a Club Coach to ensure all areas of improvement can be recognised and a plan of action developed.

The main areas for improvement as highlighted by the majority of bowlers are: Weight – too long or too short; Grass – too narrow or too wide; and not being able to make Adjustments. To improve direction these 2 tips may help: Firstly, aim your "plant" foot (the foot that stays on the mat) in the direction your bowl is to take and; Secondly, use a yard rule or a piece of straight, narrow, thin wood to check your direction by placing it against your instep and standing back to confirm the direction is correct.

The piece of wood should measure 960 mm and has 2 functions: one is to check the line; the second is to use it as a measure of how far your bowl is from the target. Measure a distance of 360 mm which equates to the width of the mat and a second measurement (from the same end) is therefore 600 mm which is equal to the length of the mat. Records can be kept to allow a record of improvement: the width of the mat scores 5 points; the width of the mat scores 3 points and; the length of the mat 1 point.

The last element for the effective use of the chart is to allow for a practice plan to be devised. A lot of bowlers practice during the week but don't necessarily have a definite plan. The Zone Coaching Committee recommends that practice sessions should be structured and, depending on the allocated time, consist of no more than three (3) routines. Maybe the needs can include: grass; weight control – long and short ends; delivery action – smoothness, timing, staying down, arm locked at the point of delivery etc; rolling the jack; on-shots and drives; or whatever you or your Coach has highlighted.

Two things to avoid when practicing:

- Doing sessions with others can distract from the prescribed plan, allow concentration to wain or games to start. Playing games is not considered practice because it detracts from concentrating on the shots in the original routine, rather shots played in normal games.
- Practice long and short lengths, most people roll at $\frac{3}{4}$ length ends and therefore lose the effectiveness of being able to win ends in games where the jack length is changed. In Grade 1 and higher games it's normal strategy to play long and short ends and to change the length constantly during a game.

In conclusion, improving at bowls has a price to pay, and that is the allocation of time to practice. A comprehensive list of common faults and corrections can also be found on pages 40-41 of the Zone 9 "Bowlers Manual".