



Duties of the Lead

The Lead of the team will play first in an end and should;

- Place the mat as per the game plan or as directed by the Skip; otherwise at the 2 m. mark
- Deliver the jack to the Skip and make sure that it is centred before delivering the first bowl of the end
- Set up for the next end if on the winning team or
- Return the lawn bowls to a safe position behind the mat to the right-hand side at the conclusion if on the losing team for that end. At NLBC we have rakes/scoops available.

Objective

Leads are required to draw their bowls as close to the jack as possible. The operative words here are “as close to the jack as possible”, not ‘hit the jack’. Moving the jack changes the setup of the head and may disrupt the Skip’s plans.

Control

Most experienced Skips will acknowledge the importance of good Leads. Good Leads must not act independently and understand the tactical reasons why the Skip is control throughout the game.

Mat and Jack Tactics

Tactics begin in trial ends; from the toss of the coin, the first placement position of the mat and playing length of the jack. It is therefore vital the Lead watches the Skip for instructions for the placement and delivery length. It is not the prerogative of the Lead to move the mat around at will or vary the length of ends.

To set the mat, stand centred (in front of the rink number) facing the Skip. Step forward toward the Skip at least two full paces, but as far as the hog line if requested to do so by the Skip. Place the mat, and seek instructions from the Skip regarding centring and straightening. Adjust accordingly until the Skip is satisfied. Occasionally, the pool of bowls will need to be moved closer to the mat by the opposing Lead for easy access by the players.

Trial ends (if applicable)

During trial ends lawn bowls are played on the forehand and backhand to determine the best side to play. After consultation with the Skip, the best side (usually the narrow hand) is chosen and played. This hand is not changed unless instructed by the Skip.

Self-Control and Focus

The requirement of Leads is to deliver their bowls as close to the jack as possible by keeping the

mind clear and focused on the objective. Remember in a team effort, a good close second bowl is just as important as the shot bowl. Congratulating others on their success is applicable, but do not criticise or give a running commentary on other bowlers' efforts.

Ideally, the lead's bowls should come to rest 6 inches or 15 centimetres directly in front and rear of the jack, its advantage is; it presents a very small target to the opposition.



Left-handed bowler delivering a bowl at "6 o'clock position"



Side on picture of the perfect position for a Lead's bowls