

Lachlan Tighe: Talking Tactically website bowls coaching column

(July 2010 column)

MasterChef- tactical ingredients to Success

The young contestant in a recent MasterChef show whose speciality was dessert gets himself eliminated in the heat where the theme of the night contest is dessert. Why? In my view because he was technically capable, but, tactically made the wrong decision when options arose. No need for me to expand, I am not a cook.

But, the lesson in bowls ESPECIALLY those of you I coach.....focus on the technical delivery only, as all bowlers do, yet (near totally) overlook the tactical and decision skills development , spells one word- DISASTER!

Worse, may even be reason for non selection.

How in the hell do you expect to win major bowls events as your ultimate goal- whether it is at club, state, national, world or Commonwealth Games level – If you don't work at those other major skills (tactical and mental) to get you over the line.

I was disappointed to see that young MasterChief contestant ejected because we viewers were privy to his thoughts during the programme pre the final decision of the judges. He decided to hold back on his perceived advantage. Boy, get yourself into contention first, as in bowls finals, before presuming you are going to win at the early stages.

Bowls Australia (BA) recently made a selection decision which was the cause of some discussion and controversy, unwittingly maybe, in the omission of Karen Murphy. Controversy not helped one iota by the inclusion of Sam Shanahan as the reserve (and assistant coach).That is no reflection on Sam at all, more a response to selectors by bowlers and some comment by BA on their view of the coaches as a fraternity.

However, without knowing the background to all this, did Karen anticipate what may be the outcome if her performances (read tactics) remained the same; selectors (aka MasterChef judges) judge who gets in and who contests the big events. Sure, accept that, yet were Karen's personal and national coaches advised of the selectors concerns to enable them to be constantly guiding her to remain in contention?

BA may not realise it overlooks we coaches. Why?

Well we all want , or should want, to guide those motivated bowlers to reach their goal and that goal may be to represent this country. The difficulty as coaches is that the HP unit within BA has not helped us coaches with the general and specific information on what is needed by our bowlers to get them into contention for future BA representation. All I know is that some players are targeted and then 'assigned' to a few approved coaches. Pity if you had a long association with a bowler as their coach.

Tactically, I as a coach feel seemingly rudderless to guide players to the top level in Australia not being able to access the ingredients to advance bowlers to BA selection. Fortunately I think further ahead and touch wood believe I know based on prior experiences what to do to take players to their very best levels. And I trust other coaches feel the same way. For me it is all about the right ingredients. The old saying used to be....have gun will travel; for bowlers I reckon it could be.....have talent, have goa, will succeed.

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Be selfish bowlers in your desire and be bugged what others think, or do, with regards to your bowls pursuit.

Here's hoping you cook up a storm on your way to your aspired dream of success.

p.s View my monthly training program suggestion on the Henselite website.

Lachlan Tighe, 2010