

Lachlan Tighe...Talking Tactically

Website bowls coaching column

(May 2010 column)

Tactically on top

Jo Edwards, NZ, became the female world singles champion last week. Since 2008 NZ bowls(ers) have won this event (Val Smith, 2009) and the world bowls championships, 2008. A common factor – Dave Edwards, their coach since late 2006.

Why does NZ 'punch above their weight. I was fortunate enough to be involved with Dave and NZ bowls in 2006/7 and he approaches bowls, and coaching, along lines pursued in other profile and contemporary sport.

An important aspect is in the development of tactical skills. Here then let me place in front of you some pointers on fostering your tactical skill at your respective bowls playing level.

One tip – never assume you can apply this tactical nous IF you have not fully developed your technical delivery proficiency and consistency.
Read on....

Tactical factor – deception, difficulty

Ques- How can you make your opponent go onto their non preferred hand or delivery

Ans - Play the hand earlier before they have the opportunity
Block their entry in to the head when it is their easy delivery choice thus forcing their consideration of other lesser options
Covering the back for insurance minimizing the opposition's earlier preferred option to drive

Tactical factor – risk

Ques - Is the attacking delivery worth the risk

Ans - assess the score position of the game
Is my delivery to be the last delivery of the end
How many shots would I concede if damage was to occur
Why am I considering this option (only)
how good has this delivery been in training

Tactical factor – delivery selection and placement of opponent bowls

Ques - Your singles opponent has a resting toucher making the jack unsighted

Ans - Draw second if there are more ends to play as a loss of one is a good outcome
Choose a specific weighted delivery onto toucher subject to you having back bowls

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Choose that weighted delivery based on your expectation of the anticipated flight path of the jack

Tactical factor – time, duration of the game

Ques - How can you enable your team to recover emotionally and competitively after losing an end where the result was a disastrous big score

Ans - Reassess your game objectives to see if they can still apply
Appraise comparative situation in the game so far to fulfil the objective of winning
Re-establish each players performance objectives
Thrive on the new challenge, talk it up, live to fight for another day
always remember opponents talk and if you give up that attitude will be talked about at every bowls bar where alcohol 'fuels' views and opinions

Tactical factor – keeping possession of shot bowl

Ques - Do you add, attack, defend

Ans - Do all three weighing up the situation as each bowl adds to the head
Do not widen the head which helps to minimise the angles of bowls to wick off into our shot bowl
Ensure your shot bowl(s) are really close, as near enough is not good enough
Short bowls in the draw are advantageous and to be considered as a form of defence and value their usage
When your shot bowls are directly in line with the jack, other team bowls are best positioned behind the jack and the head
Skip, your job is to steer the team to a win, your job is not to win it by yourself with your two deliveries.

P.s... ..the *practical training diagram* on Henselite's website for this month is specifically a diagram on consistency– go to www.henselite.com.au (enter Hints & Tips, then Performance technique) for a read and maybe application for yourself and your team mates.

Regards,
Lachlan Tighe.