

Head building principles

SKIPPERS

In building a head and most bowls games the skip has control. Very good team play and cohesion can be achieved if all the team players have confidence in and understand the purposes of the shots called.

SHOT SELECTION

In most situations in bowls there is always more than one way to achieve a result. Shot selection depends on the skipper's assessment of his player's ability, conditions, score, and risk involved. The opponents capabilities must be taken into account and generally expect that their next attempt will be successful.

BASIC STRATEGY

- ❖ Play the easiest hand to draw bowls into the head.
- ❖ Obtain a good 2nd shot. Your team is then only one shot down or holds 2 shots and also has two bowls in the head
- ❖ Try not to lose your bowl or be short and block the head.
- ❖ **Be up when you are down**, in particular the Second and Third players.
- ❖ Make every bowl useful, i.e. bowls in the head.
- ❖ Play with weight that allows your bowl to finish in a useful position if you miss your objective.
- ❖ Play the shot that gives you the **most chances for success**, rather than the perfect draw on the open hand.
- ❖ Play your opponents hand, draw onto and use their bowls.
- ❖ Try to beat your opponent's best or second best bowl. Progressively moving their second best bowl out of the head can create opportunities. If they have a very good shot (one that's hard to beat) create a situation so that it is then worth the risk in attempting to remove the bowl.
- ❖ Increase the pressure on your opponents and don't expect to hold easy/ vulnerable shots.
- ❖ Decrease your opponents potential success by covering bowls, blocking, playing their hand, draw another without increasing the target,
- ❖ Avoid building a target when holding.
- ❖ Create a target when down by drawing close.
- ❖ Have 2 or more bowls in the head. Be aware that both bowls may be hit out with a weighted shot from **either** team.
- ❖ Be happy with a score on an end and don't be too greedy. Many games are won or lost by a few shots. These may be the shots you lose if you give the shot away when holding, e.g. +1 shot to -1 shot is worth 2 shots to the opposition.
- ❖ Be careful in placing all your bowls on one side of the head. An unexpected result or a good shot by the opposition will be costly.
- ❖ Drive with a purpose, not in desperation. Check the head before driving and attack easy targets. Consider the value of **draw/ drive** when in trouble, rather than drive/ drive or drive/ draw. Create a target with a close "aggressive draw". If you attack the head without a close bowl and miss, your opponent will almost certainly add another.
- ❖ 2 down is bad enough but not as bad as 4 down!!!