

What is it about we bowlers?

Last week I, and about 30-40 spectators, were privileged to witness the best theatre of bowls in my lengthy experience with four world champions, three Aussie squad players and an eighth player forming the field for the finals of the Victorian masters singles, all on at the same time on the one green.

I have seen superb bowls before, not unusual, however never the enthralling theatre of performances on all four rinks at Richmond.

That same week, just a kilometer away, at the MCG (Melbourne Cricket Grounds), 93,000 spectators witnessed the cricket world cup final, many coming from afar to watch the best, and paying \$125 for God's sake.

We in bowls had our international champions down the road from the MCG, our hotshots, our brilliant exponents of bowls, all free of charge; and still we don't have the hearts and minds of you the bowls players to get off your behinds and come watch our best. Our association administrators, selectors and event directors are noticed by their absence; our coaches, advanced or not, are noticeably missing too.

How can anyone in any role to do with the better/ best level of bowling (selector, coach, player) from your top side club level to national level, be taken seriously in the role if they are not out there observing the very, very best. You tell me, I don't know!

And yet we all hear one another bemoan the lack of recognition within and beyond our sport. In all the time I have had within bowls, I still see, observe and hear the same parochial stuff that limits our emergence in modern day sport. We remain, to my chagrin the cellar dwellers in the sporting world.

From whichever angle you take, we in bowls could have learnt so much at Richmond.

Go look at that bloody mirror everyone!

I went to dinner with one world champion, sought advice for a player I coach from another world champ, and listened and conversed with a third world champ. And one other finalist and I spoke about the menu of winning.

Henselite Bowls Website column- Elbows
April 2015 column

Great for me, but why don't the rest of us attend to take similar advantage of the presence of these fantastic players. And why can't fellow coaches, selectors and association administrators network these guys and share the insights with their respective bowls fraternities.

The sport misses these opportunities. We would all learn so much in advancing our sport in whatever domain we are involved and interested; I think we are all too damn blinkered to go out (of our way) to learn. Know alls are we!!!

Advanced coaching courses, pennant, youth policies, coloured garb and bowls etc., are all tools of merit, but we don't tap the rich vein of these extraordinary athletes who are our elite.

After all of the above, can I share what I talked about with the finalists by saying the content covered mainly these three aspects.

- What is the prime reason for your wins.
- What drives you, motivates you, to be so good, so skilled.
- Do you know your particular strength as a bowler.

Incidentally, great to see Richmond initiative where the marker for Alex Marshall's quarter final against Aaron Wilson had a minute video camera on his headband on his forehead to film that entire game from the head. For those aware an app called 'coaches eye' does this.

And congrats to Aaron Wilson who won the tournament.

Lachlan Tighe, 2015
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