

Good Skips Being Good

One bowler writes in response to the skip anecdote from the earlier website column:

”From my point of view, a good skip might be one who is quite a good bowler with a lot of experience who wants the best out of his team.

No problem when we are doing well, but when some are in trouble they get frustrated and this shows in the decision making and in their communication with the team.

I know from my experience with skips, in a number of occasions when my first bowl is poor he will change the shot on me with my next bowl, despite no change in the head. This is when I am prepared and confident in playing the original shot he called me on. This does not help confidence.

Also he will revert to driving when in trouble and mostly when he is frustrated with our position.

Now I play third often to skips in pennant and this is my experience.

As third I feel my role is to positively influence and support the front end as well as encourage the skip when he is not going so well.

I feel the lack of a game plan is one of our biggest problems.

Even if the plan was to draw second shot, when down a number, would be something that we can revert to rather than the more risky weighted shots or drives if five down. “

A second bowler has chosen to react to the column and writes:

“We were beaten recently in pennant.

Our skip was outplayed and the subsequent loss caused him to boil over and lose his cool, his confidence, his tactical nous.

He was driving at shadows as they say.

I played third to him and as third I joined him at the head for five ends to gee him up, bolster his ego.

We lost, but his game improved marginally to stop the rot being more than was.

I am of the belief our lack of a game plan is what we are missing, especially when we do get into trouble.

Attitudes are hard to change.

When I chat about the need, all I get is we have to get bowls close. Yeah guess what? We did not!

My reaction to these contributions:

What I have read with these contributions is an obvious lack of training for skips.

I had a bloke ring me last week and reminded me he was my skip (once).

Once I remembered who he was, I recall saying to him at the time after the game (and we are talking years ago) he was dreadful as a skip, yet I rated him as a reasonable bowler.

He had no bloody idea of team, of people management.

Guess what? He is an accredited coach. Heaven help me, us!

Lachlan Tighe, 2021