

Measured Expectations is Excellence

After a Bowls Workshop one night, I read this comment about Brett Kirk, the Sydney Swans AFL footballer, captain and anointed great, citing his approach going back 12 years to his teenage days.

Brett, though a cheeky kid, developed some earnest routines as a junior. Before matches he would compose a checklist of personal expectations. After that game he would review it and give himself a mark out of ten (10) for each category.

His family instruction was that the kids never follow the pack simply for following the pack's sake.

A friend and former work colleague was a Skills Acquisition expert (who I used frequently in my bowls coaching) and professional adviser to the North Melbourne Football club ('Kangaroos') in the AFL during their successful period of the 1990s. He would tell me that based on statistical evidence, whenever the Kangaroos were in front at three quarter time, they would win. He knew that position based on fact. Those elite footballers knew that based on emotion and fact.

Bowls has had people who knew that too. In 2002, Ian Schuback came over to me at Manchester, UK, prior to the Games and lamented how all the bowlers out there on the greens kept no record of their performances. With glee, I corrected Ian ('Shooey') because the Malaysians, minnows at the time in bowls, kept records both in training and in competition. All these years on the Malaysians now amongst the best in the world all keep records of performance.

To those of you aspiring to elite level bowls, move on, start the honesty system that applies to self. Measure yourself each performance in training and games for your long-term benefit. It should be part of your development in bowls too.

The topics eventually covered in the Wet Weather discussion forum were:

Game plans

Modified games and their application in training

Club culture and the difficulty as a coach

Website menu: facts, knowledge, measures

www.lachlantighebowls.com

Tactical training

A former advisor of mine maintained that players and certainly skips have to know whether a bowler is playing at his A Game level, the B Game level or the C Game level and use the player accordingly, while that bowler is in the level of performance.

That level of tactical awareness and mental skill is rare in bowls currently.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017