

Seven Skills For Successful Bowls

Of late, I have been approached by prospective elite bowlers seeking me to be their personal coach, to guide and assist them fulfill their own (written stated) goal of being amongst the very best of bowlers.

I like that degree of motivation.

In early discussion as part of my role I sound them out about:

- Their level of skills and their strengths (see note ONE in response below).
- What it is they NEED to reach their ultimate (written) goal?
- Their concept of excellence (see note TWO below under ML)

so that I can conduct training, and review progress, suited to that reaction.

In all cases the answers are much the same as per:

- Technically feel they are sound, good draw bowler, capable drive delivery.
- No real comprehension of what it is they need to succeed in reaching their goal(s) and certainly no understanding of the technical skill standards and levels required for international level bowls (refer note THREE below to two tables from two international squads on technical skill and playing length information).

For me now, on reflection of the elite end of this sport of bowls, I have the view in 2017 that no one, or at best very few, understand that there are possibly *SEVEN* (7) skill sets required to be the very, very best at bowls.

For me the seven skills are:

- Communication
- Fitness
- Mental
- Sensory
- Tactical
- Team
- Technical

Presently I am devising a list of competencies for each of the *seven* skills to enable me to proceed on my own journey as a coach to have the

Elbows- attitude, all about practicing habits

Lachlan Tighe, email l.a.tighe@bigpond.com mob.0409 532 953

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capacity to train and coach and guide these and other bowlers to a greater level of competency in each and all of these seven skill sets.

What a thrill to be on this journey; on this bus going to a destination that will ultimately end at the stop called Success.

Here are the NOTES referred to above.

1. Where does any bowler, any national squad need to be by the end of a year?

We should be able to say and agree that as an elite bowler, “I want to be one of those who relentlessly chase perfection knowing we won’t catch it; but, if we constantly chase it, we will achieve excellence.”

2. Why do I refer to Mat Length (ML)?

If the perfect shot is the resting toucher for example, then **ML** is a reflection of high performance where we aim for perfection and in just falling short of that, achieve excellence. **ML** is approximately one revolution of a bowl from perfection. Because it is only ONE revolution short of perfection:

Beyond perfection
Narrow of perfection
Wide of perfection

and thus **ML** is essentially = EXCELLENCE as an outcome.

3. National squad One - Measuring Delivery skill performance from 10 attempts:

Scoring was done by the number of deliveries ending within ‘Mat Length’ (ML) of delivery being attempted at the minimum length RH forehand.

Types of delivery, (10 attempts all deliveries)	Total Number bowled	Total effective bowled	Ave. %	Ave. /10	‘pb’
1. Draw	720	324	45	4.5	10
2 .Wrest out toucher	120	14	11	1.1	4
3. Add a yard beyond jack	400	115	28	2.8	7
4. Trail – hide it	150	15	10	1	4
5. Yard on / over shot	120	31	25	2.5	6
6. 2 yard on / over shot	100	18	18	1.8	5
7. Drive	450	193	43	4.3	9

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8. Firm up shot swinger	100	36	36	3.6	8
9. Draw to ditch, ML	490	108	22	2.2	6
10. Resting toucher	190	5	2	0.2	4
Total	2840	859	240	2.4	4

National squad Two – survey of playing lengths

Survey of 3,600 bowls deliveries on choice of playing lengths and the difference of elite bowlers to club level bowlers:

At minimum length, difference was 2.8/ 10 deliveries

At medium length, difference was 1.3/ 10 deliveries

At maximum length, difference was 3/10 deliveries

Showing less difference at medium length. And shows the folly of playing medium length. You bring lesser skilled players into the contest.

Lachlan Tighe, 2017