

## **“Common Sense, Skips???”**

There are oodles of sources out in the sports world on visualization, imagery, etc, etc, but hey, don't forget the green as a vital location for using your senses to gather information to assist in the road to success in competition.

You have two eyes, two ears and a brain in that cranium and (other opponents) mouths to gather a lot of important (tactical) information to use to win (most) events.

Elite bowlers need to have their senses working overtime to strengthen their mental and tactical skill development.

Skips in bowls get up the other end to lead us (!!!) for often the wrong reasons, so the development of the elite player toward a skip responsibility may require them to listen and watch all members of the opposition to gauge information and knowledge to help them be even better as skippers in future elite events.

Skips can be identified in leadership who:

- Convey directions clearly,
- Clearly gets on well with the team,
- Talks to the team on (many) of the crossovers,
- Convene rink meetings at agreed times during the course of the event.

Skips can be seen to have composure who:

- Give and seek supportive advice from the team or at least the third,
- Never get grumpy with the team,
- Enable players to play percentage shots, not unrealistic hero stuff.

Skips can be seen as capable tacticians who:

- Uses team to build heads,
- Uses players to drive with purpose,
- Uses a player's strength on the day when that player is out of form,
- Plays a length that wins for the team not to suit himself.

***Lachlan Tighe***  
*Column: common sense, skips*

Skips can be seen (poorly) as people managers who:  
Walk off the rink during the game when teammates are still in play,  
Display dreadful negative body language,  
Do not display any reaction when teammates deliver a ripper bowl.

Skips can be seen (poorly) as ‘glory boys’ who:  
Seem to save the winning shot for themselves,  
Never allows anyone else but himself to drive.

A few years back I did a presentation and called it ‘Skip; a four letter word’ and the inference hasn’t altered much in the meantime. Because nowhere can we find a practical program that will train people to learn the role of skip in readiness for the elite level of competition so many bowlers, male and female, can aspire to.

The only school (of training skips) is that one called ‘ the school of hard knocks’ and that organization is as dead as a dodo.

Unbelievably, it still has the most enrolments.

One day we may see miracles happen – a spread of formal programs where we can go and learn from experts able to share their skills \_ hopefully not so far away as, I see more evidence of the bowls fraternity setting up this structure.

Mid-2019, our state bowls body BV commenced a program called COACHFORCE and it may be this area of skip development gets a Guernsey in their schedule of programs in 2020.

In my pBus squad training we try to learn the skills for skips by setting game plans and reviewing game performances, observing communication skills, so as to give feedback among the squad. The recent BV open championships were a convenient time to apply all that training.

I think it seems to assist these bowlers in our squad to better understand both the people and tactical management skills inherent in the success of the game.

**Lachlan Tighe, 2019**