

Attitude: the main ingredient

I have been to a handful of clubs here in Victoria this past month giving coaching advice and in the space of one conversation and a 10-minute observation of the training, I see the flaws in approach of most of their members, especially when not ‘supervized’.

In our sport we have not got the message through, that convinces them as competition members, of the merit of some of the approaches, though they nod their heads appropriately. Maybe I mistake this as agreeing when it is them nodding off to sleep. More fool me!

The issues of approach related to an attitude of firstly team support in competition, and secondly of repetition of (drill) practice as a reflection of a players attitude to go into contest, so that the practiced simulated game drill routine is a rehearsed skill to take into games as an automatic response.

The priority attitude issue for me is the team factor. In the conversation I heard last week with some members from one club, it turns out that in one of their recent games the fours team led 12-0 midway in the contest. Blow me I hear the ‘stirrers’ up the other end collectively approached the skip to alter the game plan approach. In so agreeing, they lose.

What a pack of dills!

Why didn’t the skip stand tall and dictate the continued successful approach?

Why didn’t the vice captain (the third) ‘put the others in their place’ and reinforce at the team meeting during the game the need to support the skip and the winning trend?

What level of leadership qualities did each of the four team-members have that day to allow the skip to be so challenged?

Or like so much of bowls do we still have four singles players making up a four and calling themselves a ‘team’ and everyone wanting to skip despite there

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being only one position for skip. And as selected by the club. And this exists in 2019, God spare me!

And if one player is struggling and yet we still are 12-0 in front the responsibility of the team is to support him emotionally without losing sight of the strength of our team. That player can be managed back into playing better as a secondary purpose, the primary one is to maintain what we are doing extremely well. Egos get right in the road as we can see right here with my story.

Players need reminding of the value they give to our team success, not of their own self-view of how they are going, it is too individual and introspective an approach.

In a game, the team meeting I am urging during a game exists to get the poor performer to be supported, to raise their playing and confidence levels, and be managed back as a contributor. That is the role of a good skip. If the skip cannot do that, then I question why they are skipping at the elite level.

Gee, I continue to be amazed at the fragile nature of bowlers – they tell me they have the desire to be better, to be winners, they even get out and practice a few times in these wintry conditions, but what for if the attitude as referred to in this article remains a constant.

My training, preparation, coaching and recording is an attempt toward a total application of attitude, an attitude to be the very best you can be. To know where you are in skill level at any point in time. To know what the best level is from other bowlers for these skills.

Yet few bowlers have the willingness to concede playing games, to spend an equal amount of time to acquire the optimum skill level, to lift their attitude.

How good do you want to be bowlers!!!

Lachlan Tighe, 2019