

# **‘Improving Knowledge To Improve Performance’**

In a past life I attended an interesting workshop hosted by the Victorian Institute of Sport using golf as the model on developments in coaching in sport.

The head coach for golf displayed to an eager audience from various sports the value of set goals, record keeping and skills analysis for their golfers to know what has to be done to be the next Tiger Woods, so to speak.

Then the audience went out on the golf range to witness one of these golfers display their skills, which he knows he can apply as he and his coach have a base for that knowledge, rather than guesswork or instinct. And it was interesting to hear that the golfer is the one, with either the caddy or coach, who compiles and inputs his statistical data on to a computer after keeping a hard copy during training and in competition.

And I had an opportunity to apply the valuable approach we heard at the golf session with two players I coach. We detailed our knowledge and record keeping and here is one way I wish to share with you on how we did the game analysis of their weekend club championship pairs victory which was wholly based on knowledge factors.

GOAL \_ Win consecutive club championships

## **STRATEGY**

Train regularly for this format.

Enter similar format competitions as lead up.

Discuss, set, practice and review objectives over seven months as partners in readiness for the final.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. Throw jack to only two specific lengths, minimum or maximum.
2. Ensure a minimum of two bowls are in the head within a mat length (ML) after the pair have delivered 4 bowls and after six bowls delivered by this team.

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3. Each teammate to aim to have two bowls per end within a mat length (ML) striving for 50% effectiveness of total deliveries.
4. Win two of every four ends of the expected 18-end game.
5. Keep shots lost to a maximum of two on any end.
6. Divide the game into 4 X 4 end segments where teammates meet mid-rink to assess progress of the above objectives up to end 16.
7. Decision making: avoid greed and decide on tactics to ensure no turnovers of shots held are provided to the opposition by our skip decisions.
8. Composure: be positive, happy, confident with knowledge of training and preparation, ensure body / verbal language is fun and supportive.

## ANALYSIS

As coach I based the following analysis of the players' game on a comparison to the goal, strategy and objectives statements, which we detailed above.

Goal - The team won 18-8 and fulfilled the goal of consecutive club championships.

Strategy - The three factors were trained and honed over a 6-month application and review.

Objectives (in order):

12 of the 13 jacks thrown were the full ditch to ditch maximum length distance;

12 of 17 ends the team had two bowls within ML after four bowls, and 14 of 17 ends after six bowls.

One player had 33/68 deliveries (48%) within ML, teammate had 30/67 (45%) and apparently a sideline scorer observed the two opposition players were in the 30% result region.

Won a total of 12 of the 17 ends played and the four X four segment record was as follows: Won 3 of 4, 1 of 4, 4 of 4, 3 of 4 ends; and contribution of ML deliveries per segment was the lead player 7/16, 9/16, 10/16, 6/16 and the skipper record of ML over the 4 segments was 9/16, 9/16, 4/16, 7/16, which resulted in that 48% and 45 % contribution of ML deliveries from each player for the game. Only one multiple loss end conceded in 17 ends resulting in a 3 shot loss.

The pair met after each segment to share information recorded by the lead to affirm their plan for the next segment.

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Decisions also reflected in other data compiled by the pair included these:

Eleven of 17 ends held shot with skip still to play deliveries,  
Skip converted result or reduced shots down on four ends,  
There was one end where skip added to the score,  
There were 10 ends where score was maintained, thus  
unchanged.

A final piece of detail was determining a 'pb' for each player and on this analysis the lead has a segment 'pb' of 10/16 deliveries within ML, and the skip has 'pb' of 9/16 deliveries within ML.

Listened to the conversation after the game with opposing players, and spectators, and the number of times comments were forwarded without any base of fact (data) and it implies that many involved in bowls cannot experience a game (i.e. watch or compete in ) and make clinical, analytical comments after the game based on what they see, hear or record as the momentary emotion, or ego, intrudes into providing a useful analysis.

My concern is that too many very good bowlers have this attitude of an emotional analysis being the only analysis and it carries on down through the ranks, so, our future bowlers have only that experience to know to draw on as they progress in bowls.

As Ian Schuback and Jim Yates, both former world champs, often lamented, bowlers and the coaches are unwilling to keep records and documented analysis. If they are unable to keep records then coaches ought to come to the fore.

Oh, one thing about that bowls analysis – one of the pairs players compiled that data during the event having sat with me as coach the day before to write up a specific score card to use to record data in the 'idle' time while competing.

So, recording can be done.

And I am pleased to note that performance recording by numerous players, and an increasing number of clubs, is being done a lot more than was ever seen even a decade ago.

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So well done you bowlers and you clubs recording your knowledge and lets hope it emerges your performances are improving.

**Lachlan Tighe, 2020.**