

Lachlan Tighe: Talking Tactically website bowls coaching column

September 2010 Coaching Column

'What do the world best bowlers do???

EASY.....Plan

Prepare their competitive calendar program
train their habits through intense, purposeful sessions
Game planning
Practice habits in the game and
post game analysis

Why bowls can be so Easy

- Bowls is time consuming only if you think it is
- Keep your emotions in check with luck, wicks etc
- Maintain your inner rhythm
- Pre shot routine has to be a ritual
- Concentrate and energise
- Expel negative thoughts
- Deal with slow play(ers)
- Deal with the elements

Bowls is time consuming only if you think it is

- There is so much time in this game
- In the time it takes to finish a competition
- In the small amount of time you need to deliver each bowl
- So why not enjoy it
- Forget about the lousy delivery, bad bowl, weather conditions
- Manage your mind
- Better to be motionless than emotive
- Accept the challenge to rise to the occasion, the victory you cherish

Pre delivery shot routine to be a ritual

- That inner rhythm is a consequence of this routine
- Golf and cricket professionals employ it every time
- The routine should distract you from pressure, as others see it
- Your focus is on the process, the automatic aspects of the routine
- Those aspects that ensure best chance for giving the superb delivery
- What I do behind the mat as I prepare to step up for my delivery
- What I do when on the mat
- What I do with my bowl in the hand
- What my body will normally feel like
- How I choose my preferred shot delivery
- What I look for to visualise my chosen delivery shot
- Spotting my cues and targets
- Watching my cue as I commence my action
- The focus that millisecond pre executing the delivery
- How it (my body) will feel as I deliver
- Can I sense all that once I execute the delivery
- Now to self coach calling on eyes and motor muscle, body feeling

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Energise your concentration

- Know when to focus the intensity of concentration
- Know how to focus the intensity of concentration
- When not delivering know how to reduce, or soften, the intensity level
- Do not imply that to mean turning off or tuning right out
- Allow your senses to wander and be refreshed, energised
- When it is your time to deliver again, reload your concentration sources

Keep your emotions in check

- An emotional roller coaster is the last thing you want to give yourself
- Level out the feelings, expectations, perceptions of bad luck
- Train to keep check emotionally so you are on automatic pilot come event day
- Collect the cheque with extended hand delivery
- Check out all unnecessary emotions

Maintain your inner rhythm

- Elite players tend to be quick to deliver their bowls
- Reinforce your own rhythm and pace and not succumb to anyone else's speed
- Walking to the head after the third bowl is such a tool in singles
- Staying on the mat and watching your delivery until it finally rests is also a tool

Expel negative thoughts

- Use Training sessions to reinforce the positive
- speak, think and act positively in all training sessions
- Allow your senses to be aware how often others use negatives at training, events
- Be aware of how often negatives are reinforced by others
- Remind yourself how you are deleting these habits from your own mindset
- Practice finding something positive from every sub standard delivery you execute in training
- Or at least neutralise the negatives by saying or doing nothing as a start to this learning level

Contending with the elements

- Train in poor weather conditions to become accustomed to them
- Practice your coping mechanisms in such sessions
- Mechanisms would include
 - Goals even mini goals, segmenting a session as you would a game,
 - pre delivery routine, practice being positive, FUNdamental approach,
 - set realistic expectations for the conditions (A game may become just a C game standard for the conditions)

'.....where your mind goes, everything else follows!'

N.B. My specific training diagram for the month features on the www Henselite website – refer to 'Hints and Tips' on that site to view these training ideas in diagram form.

Lachlan Tighe.