

What We Learn

Nearly a million of us in the world play bowls. We are lucky that current and former world champions and gold medalists are adequately spread throughout so many bowls countries. It enables most of us some chance to view or hear what the best do. However, what are some of the things, as mere local bowlers, we can learn from all the experiences, especially those of the world's best bowlers.

And in my case recently in Alberta, Canada, having my eyes opened to a better approach to coaching by associating with a blind bowler and his director at the Royal bowls club, Edmonton.

If I was to guess what some of the insights of these world-class winners may be it amounts to the following:

BALANCE IN LIFE

- Remember to spend time elsewhere beyond the demands of bowls, as much as we love the game.
- Soul, passion, enthusiasm, feeling all of them is a nutrient of life.
- Family, as they are the people who know you best, care the most, always.
- Friends, few maybe, but never far away.
- Goals, realistic and in perspective toward our sport.
- Perspective about life as such.
- Sharing success has its extra reward as others belong to it too.

FOUNDATIONS – BRICKS & MORTAR

- Focus on your goal as it will help those times when you stumble.
- Lessons are learnt not lost.
- Plan, plan, plan - the battle is won before the war is fought.
- Train, train, train, for skill, skill, skill.
- Know what you want to get, however, know what you need to get it.
- Lose sometimes short term to win long term.
- Look back at history to progress forward.
- Simple things done well and repeated are a solid base.

THE CRITERIA

- In this case of winning teams is to have the right people, always.
- Be in the right team yourself.

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- Measure the standards for success.
- Measure up yourself.
- Setbacks make for comebacks.
- Think team.
- And think hard not hardly think, hence the emphasis on tactical skill development.
- Get the right people on the team bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats (positions) on the team bus.

CONFIDENCE

- So important to your motivation.
- Accept it slowly as you have to crawl before you walk.
- The tough times, form lapses, are a tool to sustain your effort, to keep your confidence.
- Underestimate – I read this one and included it as it keeps over confidence at bay.
- Opportunities are there to be grasped with confidence.
- In the value of your support team.
- That your goals can be fulfilled.
- That self belief that all the hard work pays off (don't misread self belief as believing you can win when you really have not done all the hard yards to success: that is self delusion.)
- To be able to contend with constructive criticism that is intended to steer you along the pathway to success.

THE PEOPLE

- Again have the right people.
- If you want success don't mix with turkeys.
- Quality people in your playing group, your coaches, your training partners.
- Respect – give it and get it.
- And remember the opposition deserve it too.
- Are our people prepared to take the role seriously.
- And accept the challenge.
- Be a person for the position, not, seen as a position for the person.

FUN

- Is contagious, starts with you.
- Breeds success.
- Extracts enjoyment from more passive members.

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- Attracts larrikins who know how to laugh.
- Allows others to see communication is happy in the environment.
- Allows for creativity.

Did you read all this and think what this was all about?

I wonder if you have experienced:

A higher level of success in sport.

Ample laughter in bowls, training or competition.

An electric coaching session on a green where FUN combined with intensity is a vital ingredient to high level skill development.

The more some of these facets above are allowed to flow into and through our sport of bowls, the more champions we may see in your neighbourhood.

Lachlan Tighe, 2016