

Myths, Myths And More Myths In Bowls

Bowls a game of correction

Whilst isolated this part of the 2020 calendar year because of the global virus, I read numerous books on various topics. One I browsed was from a sports psychologist and his involvement with professional golfers.

There were a few comments he made that could translate to bowls, but the first one I want to note struck me as a reason for rejecting a common bowls approach that our game is a game of correction.

He said ...great putters never putt out of fear. Regardless of the length of the putt, they are not concerned about the second putt. And the reason for that is because they tell themselves they are going to get the first putt and all they do is work out the best choice to make to execute that putt, successfully. They don't think get it close, they think sink it.

Not long after he won the world singles in 2012, Leif Selby was generous enough to spend time talking with a squad member of mine about his attitude to winning. He was one who was strongly convinced he would get his first delivery to be a toucher. And he had that conviction because he trained both his ball skill and his mentality to strive for that level of success.

Those players who think my next delivery will put me in contention are behind the eight ball, both technically, tactically and importantly mentally. The high achiever is exuding total confidence, while you the good bowler who corrects their delivery, is chasing, chasing, chasing. Even in my bowls' squad I have had to convert some players to strive to have that first bowl the impactful one. Even here, not all are convinced of the approach, pity.

A second comment made in the golf book stuck with me ... the more I watch professional golf, the more I am convinced that what separates the great from the merely excellent, is not the length of the tee shots it's their proficiency with the scoring clubs.

Website article ...Myths myths and more myths

I could equate that with the draw shot or the drive, but I prefer to make reference to length, playing length in bowls. From statistical analysis collected by myself and others over 20 years it is fact that the best performers are those who deliver extremely well / proficiently at the two extreme lengths, minimum and maximum.

Yet, I watch in amazement at the world level players in bowls who nearly all compete at medium length. Which is good as they are good at it. But then so are their opponents. Take them to the extremes and their proficiency drops off, not much, but enough to give one player the winning edge.

To win you only need to be one shot up, one % better, those one percenters make the difference.

And our golf book had one final comment to refer to our game of bowls ... players with good attitudes about their (short) game don't get upset as they have the skill to recover throughout the round.

Bowlers under pressure with shots down at the head in the main don't consider the period of time or the number of ends left to overcome one poor end. Drives and poor choices abound.

Players with good attitude, have trained to have that good attitude. Their game plan may simply be, keep losses any one end to a measure of two shots. A choice of delivery that gets that outcome, or to reduce, or if it is feasible to even save shot does wonders to our self-belief, and nothing deflates that poor bowler or team opposite, who thought they were going to win this end with a handful of shots. They had all but walked to collect the mat thinking of this success and we, you, simply drew to keep us in contention for the future ends still to play.

Oh! One thing I note I said - a game plan; if you have one and it includes contending when you / we are down shots at the head you stick to it, and when it succeeds as per the case above, well why are we surprised. We did plan for it after all. Enjoy.

Lachlan Tighe, 2020