

Elbows ***Website column***

Observations of bowlers behaviours, globally

(Random anecdotes, observations and lessons from numerous experiences over a decade in bowls worldwide, that apply equally for us anywhere in the bowls world.)

MENTAL SKILL

- The draw shot is ALWAYS on.
- The 'old fashioned' approach to good bowls – at Division 1 and an International team where was a prior agreement to record deliveries; as players they set out to collect simple stats as game analysis for the year, but after six games, a few of the lead players complained they could not focus on the game and their performance was suffering; the skips agreed with them, and, other players did not like stats taken on them so the selection committee / coach was overruled on stats collection.
- A measure (ML / effective delivery) is a focus to help you strive to be a better bowler, accept the statistics in that light and use as a discussion for post game analysis.
- When he skipped, the ***player*** forgot the objectives in the haze of the unfavourable results, thus the goal of win 9/21 ends got lost and was overtaken by the scoreboard. The ***player*** chose some rash shots and played some too, only adding to the progressive losing score.
- Body language of the ***player*** reflects worry, concern, anxiety whether bowling or not. Elite opposition will always feel confident sensing that demeanour, whether the ***player*** agrees or not, as it is not about him, but how others have a perception of him, his 'language.'
- Skip had the ***player*** pick up skip bowl every end so as to get ***player*** to focus on what the team was still doing, competing, despite the ***player*** having no more deliveries to influence result.
- The ***Player*** has to learn about A Game, B Game, C Game performance levels and know when he is in any of the three performance levels, and, when your opposition is too, as it influences your decision making, or it should.
- Red alert: watch out if you make the same error twice in a row, switch on.
- Concentration – think 'caterpillar' 'pb', segmenting the game all day
- In training, walking up to retrieve a short delivery is a good indicator of mental skill (concentration, sense of dissatisfaction).
- The 'pb' approach reinforces the standard, but without a guarantee of a win.
- Use training to reinforce winning behaviour; and team behaviour. Use games to apply the behaviour changes you are making. Learn to support team members during the event, not being introspective about your own performance. Work at being less defensive; accept mistakes yours and others; set personal goals and review progress.

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