

Lachlan Tighe.....Talking tactically

Lawnbowls.com.au/weeklycolumn

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‘Bosisto on Bowls’

Jon Bosisto was gracious enough to share the thoughts and experiences gleaned from his famous dad, the great Glyn Bosisto at an informal session held Wednesday 24/1/2001 immediately after the ‘Elbows’ practical program.

Great players like great ideas never date.

Jon was understandably and demonstrably proud of his dad and those achievements and summarised these include

- 7 Australian national titles
- 5 state titles
- 29 club championships
- 296 state games
- 3 Empire (now Commonwealth) games selection

Jon was quite happy for me to jot down what he said to the squad for this to be sent around for later consumption. .

Jon spoke on 3 topics from his dad’s experience- preparation, concentration, tactics

Prior to this he gave a few insights his dad had :

Why do bowlers continue to lose

Because of a lack of bowls intelligence due to a lack of perception and comprehension

Because of greed in their excessive desire for power, success

Learn to lose and learn from the loss, write down what you learnt

Respect every opponent

Minimise bad bowls(errors)

Concentrate harder on the easy shot

Leads- play one side of the green or be versatile; not keen on around the clock drawing

2nds- most important player in a fours

3rds- should be a draw shot player

skips- to be the only firm shot player/ driver in the four

Preparation

He never practised the day prior to an event as he wanted to be hungry to play on the day

Had an early night pre the game

Followed a normal pre game routine

Never did manual work pre the game

Never practised on the green pre the game but limbered up at home beforehand

Dressed rarin’ to play by 11am on pennant day

Only had a light lunch as big meals ‘weigh you down’

Checked out rink when it was known to be the one to play on

As skip watched every bowl that came down in warm up ends

If lost, went out straight after and ‘released the demons by quick practice’

Kept fit to play at elite level

Never had alcohol in competition

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Concentration

Practised focusing on an object (Jon brought a tea jug to show us how to practice focus)
Chose a line and fixed on it, any technique was acceptable so long as it was done
Done on environment to include grass, green, wind
Alert to change during event affecting pace, parts of the surface, etc
If playing badly quick to think about it, react, change
If in fours first 3 team bowls short, made next bowl go long i.e. behind the head
On only beating the bowl holding shot not to be sitting on the jack
Whenever a green was sub standard play long ends as less adverse influence on draw
If you think you are going to win (during a game) you are now about to lose so play with determined concentration until the end of the game (a recent lesson for 'young tiger')

Tactics

Careful never to drive with only one team bowl in the head
Drive on the hand where the bias is going away from your bowl you do not want to dislodge so as to hit the opposition
Playing the last end do not throw the jack to the 2m mark (near the ditch) as opponents have the opportunity to get the ultimate shot if trailed into the ditch
A player must not have a preference of hand for any shot (if you do go and perfect the shot/ hand to remove the current deficiency)
If a player is out of form, skips should not change the hand as retaining player on the familiar hand gives the player an opportunity to improve his performance
Similarly skips should alter the zone space for that player to draw into to enable their success rate to be a realistic and achievable one (think of reducing pressure for player)
Don't widen the head with another bowl as it creates options for opposition
Remember the width of 2 bowls and a jack and the added width of a third bowl (in 'elbows' we refer to this as mat width and mat length measures)
The 'bozzie block' a shot played with the opposite hand at minimum distance to finish in the draw/ grass line of the opponent to create a 'mental / visual block' for the intended prime delivery option
Finally, in good company, respect their skill and accept that holding 2 shots is a bonus and not seek out greater, therein riskier, shots to the score

It was interesting to note 4 years later, now 12 years on, in light of the presentation to recall what I sent out re future workshop titles

- . Tactics – poor v. good Decision making
 - maximising the options (not letting short bowls curtail choice)
 - not changing a winning game
 - pairs/ fours
- Skipping – how and why
 - Reading the head, anticipating the head
- Winning ways- comments from regulars to the 'winners circle'
- Attitude- aspects of +/- communication
- Rituals and pre delivery routines
- Mental toughness – do you mind, it matters/ Composure in competition

In thanks to Jon he showed how much is to be learnt inside the club house as well as out on the green.
Lachlan Tighe, 8/12/2012 actual seminar held 29/01/2001