

## Our sporting Demons

*(An Article About Teams)*

We are in a competition, and not doing well.

Though we try harder we still seem not to be able to progress to succeed as a team on the day.

In the AFL football here in Australia, the Melbourne Football club is called the Demons. This club promises a lot to supporters each year, but has appeared in the AFL grand final once in two decades.

And lost, big time.

This year they followed well trodden patterns. Win well, lose as often. Following a recent loss which keeps them clinging, desperately, to a finals berth the coach told the press his sentiments that these players needed to be ruthless, disciplined, and give more concerted effort.

Reacting to this, a former great Demon player, now commentator, felt the clubs' best players misinterpreted these sentiments to mean they had to go even harder at the contest than they currently were; say going from a 98 to a 99% effort.

The commentator felt the extra effort was futile as the good players were expending enormous effort. His view, adjust the game strategy, the way they played, to effect a better, a winning, performance.

I agree with the commentator not the coach.

Hear me out by way of recalling a bowls' experience.

Years ago, being a second in a fours rink of pennant inter-club competition we were skipped by an elite player, who still plays well all these years later. We were getting belted, so I tried to urge him to use some strategy to turn our performance around, but he dismissed me and any idea other than we three in his team should know what to do.

We lost, convincingly.

Over a beer I later forced we four to chat about the game. Wasn't too pleasant.

My input was telling them our skip always played at +85% of his ability on any day, today included. We others would play anywhere from 40-80% of his ability. Note his ability. If we three were only going at 40 and if he could shift each of us to a 50, boy, we might change the momentum as we can alter performance by a total of 30%, whereas he as one player might change say maximum 10%, more likely 5%.

Website column [www.lachlantighebowls.com](http://www.lachlantighebowls.com)

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His Demon equivalent 'concerted effort' then is 5%, whilst our strategy alteration is a performance changing 30%.

To this day that skip still operates with that same approach. And he is not alone among elite players who get the skip gig.

The Demons coach could learn from the bowls skip approach by not doing what the skip does and ensure his best players adapt their game to a winning performance and not just apply more of the same concerted effort (to a losing approach).

This article might touch a nerve of my pBus squad mate, Lloyd, a mad but disconsolate Demon fan.

**Lachlan Tighe, 2020**

**Elbows- attitude, all about practicing habits**

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