

ROLE OF THE SKIP

A skip must be courteous, tactful and encouraging, a tactician and possess leadership qualities. A skip must be ready to compliment good bowls but not condemn bad bowls. Complaining bitterly to a player because he/she fails to get the shot required will be counterproductive. Harmony in a team is essential, once it is shaken, defeat will be the result.

Don't broadcast advice from one end of the rink to the other, and beware of unconscious gestures of disgust, frustration and displeasure. Actions such as these will adversely affect the morale of your team and loss of the game will follow. If anyone persists in making the same error a quiet word on passing should be sufficient to rectify the mistake.

It is not necessary for the Skip to tell a player, on the mat, that his/her bowl is too narrow or too wide. An intelligent bowler will know this before it becomes apparent to Skip. Indicate to your player how short or long he/she is with his/her first bowl, if not an embarrassing distance away, but only after his/her opponent has delivered their bowl.

It is the Skip's task to control his/her team as to tactics, mat position, roll of the jack and shots to be played. Don't allow team members to dictate length or shots to be played. Know the strengths and weaknesses of your own players and opposition. Modify your tactics accordingly. Practicing as a team will greatly assist your knowledge of your players' capabilities.

Study the head carefully, there may be a number of alternatives, and first impression might not be the best. Always give clear and concise directions without any sign of indecision. Never give a choice of shots requiring different paces. A choice of hand may be given if open for a draw on both sides. However, even then, it might be preferable to give a precise direction, as frequently there is an optimum spot for the bowl. In addition, a definite instruction should aid your player's concentration.

There must be a purpose with every bowl played. Don't run into the head and hope something will happen. There should be a preference somewhere, e.g. a better result could be obtained by running through one bowl as opposed to others. Think about and ask for the percentage bowl.

For these lightly weighted shots, or over draw length/weight shots, there will be a preferred weight depending on the disposition of others in the head. Always indicate this by showing, using your foot, where the bowl would finish if unimpeded.

Give your player a second chance at a shot if he/she has made a reasonable attempt with his/her first and there has been no significant alteration in the head to warrant a change.

Don't attempt to call a team member on a shot beyond his/her capability. However, it is your responsibility, together with the side coach, to organize special practice to overcome such deficiencies.

At all times remember no head is safe with only one bowl near the jack. Get a second shot or another bowl in the head. Don't be too greedy and neglect the need for a bowl to cover the opposition shot or possible shot.

Always place your foot on the spot where you require the jack. Your lead's high level of concentration commences with the rolling of the jack and this precise objective will assist in this regard. Do not change your lead's hand for his/her second bowl; or side of rink unless it is evident that he/she is playing an untrue hand.

If however having lost the last 4 ends in a row, make a change. Change the hand that the lead is playing as you cannot alter the mat position or jack position and you must change something.

Directions can be by hands, feet, visual or voice. For visual, use your hands above your waist for long and below your waist for short bowls with your hands apart the distance long or short.