



# BOWLS ETIQUETTE

*Edited from an article by the Bowls Chairman of 1972*

The trouble with writing about etiquette is that in many cases you are preaching either to the converted or to the incorrigible. However, there are points which must be mentioned for the benefit of new bowlers but many not so new bowlers could also profit by a consideration of them.

Extreme breaches of etiquette are very rare even though included in the many ambulance visits to Bowling Clubs were two for "broken jaws following altercations". This information was revealed by a speaker from St Johns Ambulance at an RVBA general meeting.

Also, every month RVBA correspondence includes the names of bowlers (and their club) suspended or even expelled - we are not told for what.

The key to bowls etiquette is simply that of ordinary good manners - consideration for others, respecting their rights as well as knowing your own, do as you would be done by. Remember a knowledge of the etiquette of the game will enable the individual to get more pleasure from the game while making it more pleasant for others.

The most important point of all of etiquette is for experienced bowlers to do everything they can to introduce new bowlers to a right understanding of the game's etiquette.

## **SOME DO'S and DON'TS**

DO make requests politely. DON'T for instance yell at people who wander across rink lines (They might yell back).

DO be at fixtures on time which means in time to start on time (in the old game of Whist the only excuse for not leading your partners suit was not having any or sudden death - your own). The idea is the same in bowls. You are excused if you are taken ill or involved in a traffic accident but NOT if you are booked for speeding while running late. DO advise forfeits – DON'T just let them find out.

DON'T nitpick your Skips decisions. He may well be wrong, but you will get a better result by playing his shot with conviction rather than half-heatedly after some inanity like "I can't see it". If not convinced, tell him so and he will probably call you up to have a look but always remember the Skip can see (or should) so if you take the grass and the weight asked for the shot should look after itself. If it doesn't, it's the Skips responsibility.

DON'T leave your Skips bowls on the bank or next rink. If it is his mat, put one on it. It stops the Skips playing out of turn and the wind shifting the mat.





## MULGRAVE COUNTRY CLUB BOWLS ETIQUETTE

Skips DON'T roast your players if they are not firing. They know they were overweight without the bowl being hurled down on the bank as if you would like to crack their skull with it. What's more some players won't cop it (why should they?). They may answer back, or even hit back, and everyone loses.

DON'T barrack. An experienced player will humiliate you by simply stepping off the mat and waiting till you shut up.

LEADERS: Find your opponents bowl and hand it and the jack when he/she has placed the mat in position.

THIRDS: Remember "silence" is golden, "A still tongue makes a wise head", "Least said soonest mended".

DON'T accompany your opponent to the head unless he asks you. When he is in possession of the mat you should be 2 metres behind it. This also means until his bowl comes to rest.

I have seen unnecessary friction between and within teams arising from nearly all of these - and many more - even the ultimate "no - no", alleging bias in an umpire. But never from real top players.

### **PROVERBS**

"You only get back from the game what you put into it". "Courtesy begets courtesy"





# BOWLS AND BOWLERS

*Edited from an article by Geoff Maskell in the Mulgrave CC Newsletter Nov 1982*

## **PENNANT**

### **LEADERS:**

1. Always ask your Captain where he wants the mat placed.
2. Try to roll the jack within three feet of where it is required.
3. Make sure you get at least two rolls of the jack during the roll-up.
4. Hold your bowl when rolling the jack; you don't have to go looking for it after - this aids concentration.
5. Practice rolling jacks (at least 20) on both Tuesday and Thursday - this is pennant practice.

### **SECONDS:**

1. Let the Skipper build the head. Play to keep your bowl in the head unless instructed otherwise.
2. If you are asked for a position bowl off the centre line make sure that's where it finishes.
3. Cross-check score cards after every end.
4. Stay alert and involved.

### **THIRDS:**

1. Your real title is Measurer; carry one and use it.
2. Keep the Leader and Second motivated and, above all, encourage them.
3. Advise the Captain of any significant change in the head.
4. Let the Captain play his natural game. Advise him on weight correction if necessary.
5. The Golden Rule is be up and shut up.
6. Become a qualified umpire.

### **CAPTAIN:**

1. All of your team is trying to do what you want. Don't criticize - but offer constructive advice.
2. Involve your team in what you are trying to achieve. It helps if they know both what you want and why you want it.

### **MANAGERS:**

1. Be early - there is nothing worse than a Manager arriving late.
2. Know the laws of the game. If you are not a qualified umpire then see the Bowls Section Chairman about becoming one.
3. If it is not possible for you to attend to the main scoreboard then delegate the job to someone who can.





## MULGRAVE COUNTRY CLUB BOWLS ETIQUETTE

### CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY

1. If the event will require you to roll the jack then this most important task must be practiced. Championships are won and lost on the roll of the jack.
2. Know the conditions of play before you start, i.e. number of ends or to what score.
3. Arrive 30 minutes prior to the starting time; you will be more relaxed and will adjust to conditions better.

### HANDICAP PLAY

1. Use your handicap wisely! If you are off minus 10 and your opponent is off scratch don't try to catch him in three ends - you're more likely to drop a bundle.
2. Look for opponents' weaknesses and try to exploit them.

### CHAMPIONSHIP SINGLES

1. Be confident! If you go out thinking that you may not win then you have already lost.
2. Don't look for fours; you may be lucky enough to get some by accident but if you have two good shots then try to anticipate your opponent's next shot and negate it.
3. If you are well down on the card, KEEP FIGHTING! The hardest shot to get is the one that finishes the game. Change the style of game if you think it may help.
4. Before you take a big chance think to yourself "WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I MISS?" If you are prepared to accept the consequences then play the shot with confidence.
5. Championship matches are not the time to practice. If you can't drive then don't. Stick to your strengths.

### CHAMPIONSHIP PAIRS

#### ***LEADER - THIRD:***

1. Yours is basically a draw game. Too many up shots as third will ruin your game as the leader.
2. Get your lead bowls as close as you can. There will be time enough later to get the absolute shot.
3. See Position Play under "PENNANT".

#### ***SECOND-SKIP:***

1. Don't leave running shots too late, it is better to play a yard over the head early than a drive when it is too late.
2. Don't take chances unless your partner agrees with the shot. Team work, i.e. confidence in each other is essential. Dropping a 5 when you are two ends to go is not good skipping.





## MULGRAVE COUNTRY CLUB BOWLS ETIQUETTE

### GENERAL

1. Whenever you are playing remember that you are representing the Mulgrave Country Club. Do it with honour, application and dedication to the best of your ability.
2. If it is a practice session and you are just having a social roll STOP and THINK. Practice without purpose will do more damage to your game than anything else. You will lose touch and you could ruin the delivery that took you ages to perfect.
3. Practice your weaknesses and they will become your strengths.
4. Get the Club Coach to check your delivery once each month.
5. Which of the following categories do you fit into?
  - a. He is a nice chap.
  - b. He puts in some nice bowls.
  - c. He is a good bowler; if he only practiced more he could be a champion.
  - d. He is a great bowler but I could never play for him.
  - e. He is a good bowler, always practising to overcome his weaknesses and would have to be the Mulgrave Country Club's keenest competitor. I love playing bowls with him.

## GOOD BOWLING

