

Lawn Bowls Etiquette

The laws of the game are defined in full in the official Laws of the Game booklet Crystal Mark 4th Edition. All bowlers should familiarise themselves with these laws.

In addition to the laws of the game, a certain amount of “etiquette” is normally followed, in order to make the game as enjoyable as possible for everyone. The guidelines offered here should be noted by beginner and experienced bowlers alike. There might seem to be rather a lot of points of etiquette, but they are all based on common courtesy, so they do become easy to remember.

FOR BOWLERS AND SPECTATORS

Do not distract bowlers who are bowling towards you, by moving or walking across the end of the rink. Wait until the bowl has been delivered, then move. It is not good etiquette to interrupt other players when they are on the green, particularly during competitive matches. If you need to speak to players it should be done before or after the game.

Respect and protect the green – the club's most important asset. Do nothing in your actions, words or appearance that will reflect against your club.

BEFORE THE GAME

Make sure you know the rules of the game or competition you are playing. Know the correct dress (it could differ for different types of games) - if in doubt ask your captain and ensure you arrive correctly dressed with time to spare. If playing at home ensure that all equipment required is in place ready for the beginning of the game. Make certain your bowls have the correct stickers on them and are the same as all members of your team. No double layered stickers.

DURING THE GAME

Enter and leave the green in a safe manner using steps down onto the green.

Do not walk across other players' rinks. Respect the green surface at all times. Do not drop litter anywhere within the club premises and grounds. Use litter bins provided. Don't sit on the edge of the green or bank as it can cause wear on the edge of the green.

POSSESSION OF THE RINK MUST ALWAYS BE RESPECTED

Possession of the rink shall belong to the team whose bowl is being played. The players in possession of the rink - shall not be interfered with, be annoyed, or have their attention distracted in any way by their opponents. Never deliver your bowl before the previous bowl has come to rest. Stand well behind the mat or the head, keeping still and quiet while others are delivering their bowls. Questions, information or instructions should only be communicated while you have possession of the rink – as soon as your bowl comes to rest possession of the rink is transferred to the opposing player or team.

POSITIONS

When at the head bear in mind that some bowlers like a clear view of the rink markers. Stand behind the head, inside the rink markers, but do not obscure the central rink marker. When at the head in sunny conditions or as the sun sets avoid standing where your shadow is cast over the jack, making it difficult to see from the mat. Similarly standing directly behind a white jack with white shoes can make the jack difficult to see. Players at the mat end of the rink who are not delivering a bowl should stand at least 1 mtr behind and to the side.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Keep track of the play and be ready to play when it is your turn. You should follow the directions given to you by your skip whether you agree or not. You may only ask your skip a question when you are in possession of the rink. Equally the skip should not give you information when you are not in possession of the rink. Possession ends when your bowl comes to rest after delivery. Remember that instructions to the skip should only be given by the number 3 in a rinks game or number 2 in triples. Other players should not interfere unless asked.

RESULTS OF AN END

The result of each end including measuring where required is determined between the three in rinks and the number two in triples. Other players should not normally be involved. When 3's or 2's are measuring or counting bowls with the opposition the rest of the team members should stand well back and not interfere or crowd around them. Do not disturb the head until the result of the end has been agreed.

GENERAL

Do support your club and put your name on availability lists. If you have to with-draw please notify the captain at the earliest moment. Do play your part in assisting with the smooth running of your club and support your club officers. Check to see if you are expected to help with any duties. Teas etc. Encourage rather than criticize – no one delivers a bad bowl intentionally. Remember that it is unsporting to encourage failure by the opposition, e.g. encouraging a bowl to miss and verbally celebrate a shot by your opponent which has gone wrong and given your team an advantage. Commend good shots. Learn to accept lucky shots, both for or against you – they will eventually balance out in the long run. “Flukes are simply revelations of unrecognised opportunities”.

Shake hand and congratulate the opposing team and offer your opposite number a drink (after singles matches you should include your marker in the invitation). If playing at home ensure all equipment is returned to storage after the game. Avoid making excuses for your lack of success the topic of conversation.

Knowledge of the above will make you a better respected player and will contribute towards the enjoyment of the game for everyone involved, both on and off the green.

ENJOY YOUR BOWLING!

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