

Monora Lawn Bowling Club

Bowler's Handbook

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What is Lawn Bowling?...

Lawn bowls is usually played on a large, rectangular, precisely levelled and manicured grass or synthetic surface known as a bowling green which is divided into parallel playing strips called rinks.

This game can be played singularly or doubles or as a team play.

The large balls used are not completely round and are referred to as Bowls. These balls are slightly radially asymmetrical balls which means they do not roll straight away. The ball will curve depending on distance, weight and speed of bowl thrown.

The small white ball is called a Jack and is thrown first and then centered on the rink. This becomes the initial target for delivery of the Bowls. The Jack remains centered unless and until a player's Bowl strikes and moves it. The new position of the Jack is now the new target for the remaining Bowls.

Good Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is a vital component in the game of Lawn Bowling. Observation of the following practices ensures that everyone enjoys every game.

- Begin and end each game with handshakes and friendly greetings with each player in your game.
- Don't hold up play. Be ready to bowl when it is your turn and follow your Skip's instructions.
- Don't distract other players when it is their turn. Don't move around or behind players or make any distracting noises or actions while the player is at the mat.
- Take care not to damage the rink by wearing inappropriate shoes **or by dropping your bowls.**
- Do not applaud an opponents' bad shot or one that enhances your own team score.
- Do not make remarks about the point spread in the scores.
- Do not argue with your Skip/Vice about shots or points.
- When moving to around the green or going to the Clubhouse, walk around the perimeter of the greens and not across other games in progress.
- In games where the rinks are next to each other pay attention to the action beside you, so your bowls don't collide with those of the game beside you.
- Be a gracious winner and a good loser.
- Always be aware of where the bowls are positioned on the rink so as to avoid tripping over them.
- Always be aware of where your position is in relation to the ditch as to avoid falling.

If You Can't Make Your Regular Play game

If you are unable to play during a Regular Play game It is your responsibility to try to get a Spare Player from the List of Spares. If you cannot find a spare you must inform your Skip so that other arrangements can be made.

Game Play

- The determination of the first team to play the first end is done by either coin toss (heads/tails) or by rolling a bowl (big/small circle). The Skips make the call.
- Order of play is Leads, Vices, Skips, with each position delivering all their bowls by turn
- Bowls must come to stop within the boundaries of the rink.
- Out of bounds bowls or bowls that fall into the ditch must be removed and placed on the grass beyond the ditch - **UNLESS** a bowl in play touches the Jack and either comes to rest in the ditch or is later struck by another bowl and lands in the ditch. The Skip or Vice marks this bowl with chalk and remains in “live” play and must not be removed.
- A chalked bowl is removed from play only if it is struck and goes out of bounds.
- If a bowl hits the Jack out of bounds, the Jack is repositioned at the 2-meter mark and play continues.
- If the Jack is propelled into the ditch by contact with a bowl it remains in the ditch and is considered live.
- During play the active players are on the rink and other players must stay off the rink, either beside if the neighbouring rink is not being used, or behind on the grass. Ie: Leads throwing: seconds and vices to be off the rink.
- When the Skips are throwing, only the Vices are permitted to be on the active rink. All other players are to be off the active rink and out of the way of active play.
- In case of bad weather, a completed 6-end game is considered a legal game. Games are cancelled only by a majority vote of all players on the teams
- In high heat conditions reaching 35 degrees, a 20-minute rest period is required during the game. Over 36 degrees game play is to be suspended.
- Cancelled games that are less than 6 ends can be rescheduled
- Each player on a team is responsible for arranging a spare from the spares list if they are unable to play
- On a 3-player team only 2 players can be spares. If all 3 players can't play then the game is defaulted to the opposition unless it is agreed to reschedule.
- At the end of the game each team is expected to help store equipment away.

Players Duties

Lead

The Lead is the first player on a team to deliver bowls. This is the position most often played by new players. The duties of a Lead player are:

- Set the mat so it is centred on the rink and at least 2 meters from the back ditch and 25 meters from the front ditch
- Deliver the jack to the position indicated by the Skip and then center the Jack based on the following criteria:
 - It must stop in the active rink;
 - If it stops less than 2 meters from the ditch it is placed on the 2-meter mark.
 - If it stops short of the hog line, goes out of bounds or goes into the ditch the opposing lead can reposition the mat and throws the Jack but does not bowl first.

- If the opposing lead also is short of the hog line, out of bounds or in the ditch the Jack is placed by the Skip on the 2-meter mark
- If the Jack is placed on the 2-meter mark after two unsuccessful throwing attempts, the first lead to bowl may again reposition the mat.
- After the Jack has been set, the Leads throw their bowls in turn. The Lead whose team won the last end throws their bowl first. Then the opposing team Lead throws until all Lead bowls have been delivered.
- Leads are mainly concerned with drawing, usually to the Jack.
- When you have delivered all of your bowls you must stand outside the active rink, either beside in an inactive rink or behind the mat on the grass. You should not be on the rink if it is not your turn to deliver your bowl.
- When it is the turn of the Skips to play, the initial Lead on that end sets their Skips' first bowl beside the mat ready for play before walking to the other end of the rink.
- Walking from end to end must never encroach on another rink that has active play.
- When the end is complete the winning team Lead will pick up the jack and prepare to set the mat and be ready to play as soon as the bowls are collected
- The losing team Lead will rake the bowls and deliver them to the right side (when facing the Skips at the far end) of the rink.

Second

The Second is a position only played in a game of fours. They play following the Leads.

Vice or Third

The Vice plays after the Lead in triples games or after the second in fours games. The Vice is responsible for score keeping, indicating win/loss of each end to the Skip, keeping track of ends played, measuring when necessary and determining if a bowl came to rest out of bounds of the rink. The opposing Vices will confer together to ensure the score is accurately reported.

Skip

The Skip is the captain of a team and plays last. The Skip will signal where to land the jack, the direction and position of bowl delivery, the desired landing place of the bowl, and the distance it was short or overshot. It is considered poor sportsmanship to not follow your skip's directions

Before you Deliver Your Bowl

- Make sure you are in contact with the Mat
- If you are a Lead or Vice, take notice of your Skips' signal indicating which direction the bowl should be delivered and how far.
- Determine if your delivery is to be forehand (to the right of the Jack) or backhand (to the left of the Jack).
- Check that the bowl bias is correct ie: the small circle facing the centre of the rink (facing the jack).
- Pick a reference point of aim or ask your Skip to give you a reference point
- Deliver the bowl

- Stance
 - Look down at your feet and see that they are pointing in the direction in the direction in which you (or your skip) want the bowl to go.
 - Upright. Player swings the arm back, then down and steps forward as the bowl is released.
 - Crouch. The body is partially lowered, but must move with arm and leg in a comparatively short step forward.
 - Fixed. The body is fully lowered with one foot forward along the line of bowl travel. Delivery is effected with an arm swing only.
- See that the bowl is perfectly level in your hand.
- Arm Swing
 - Free arm swing long the intended path of travel with no pivotal action
- Bowl Release
 - If a bowl leaves the hand shortly after passing the vertical position of the arm in its forward movement, the danger of side arm swing or unequal finger tension is diminished. (Good)
 - When the bowl is held too long, it will be “dumped” more or less awkwardly, or carried in the hand from the direct line of travel. (Bad)
 - **The position of the wrist should remain fixed until the bowl is released**

Basic Signals

- Centre the Jack: stand at the centre line marker at the end of the rink, use both hands at shoulder level on the left or right side of your body to indicate which direction the Jack has to be moved. Space your hands apart the distance the Jack has to move to be centred on the rink. Adjust the space between your hands and possibly the side being indicated in relation to where the Skip moved the Jack.
- Jack High: This means that your bowl is aligned with the Jack. This can be stated as “Jack High” or may be indicated by the movement of the arm in a pendulum motion. This is usually done by the Skip.
- Direction to bowl – either forehand or backhand: The Skip will indicate which direction to deliver the bowl by extending either the left or right arm.
- Score indicator: the Vices will indicate the score by tapping their shoulder once for each point in their favour or by tapping their thigh once for each point in the opposing teams’ favour.
- Out of bounds indicator: To check if a delivered Jack or bowl is within the boundaries of the active rink, a player will stand in-line with the markings at the edge of the active rink. An arm raised to shoulder height pointing towards the centre of the rink indicates a legal Jack or bowl. An arm raised to shoulder height pointing away from the centre of the rink indicates a Jack or bowl is out of bounds of the rink.

Scoring

- Games are usually 10 or 12 ends. Each trip down the rink is considered an end. Play continues back and forth within the same rink until the end of the game.
- Scoring is the responsibility of the two players in the Vice position.

- Score is determined by the bowls closest to the Jack and 1 point is given for each bowl that is closer to the Jack than any of the opposing teams bowls. The count stops as soon as the opposing team's closest bowl is encountered.
- When it is hard to see which bowl is closest, the Vice's will measure using a measuring device to determine the closes.
- Such measuring devices have a retractable measure, a pointed piece that is placed against the Jack and a brake that locks the length of the measuring tape so it does not move while measuring other bowl distances. Measuring devices **DO NOT INCLUDE THE FEET OF GAME PLAYERS.**
- Once the Vices have concluded the scoring, they are recorded on score cards. Each Vice must keep their own scorecard and the cards must match.
- The team that scores in one end rolls first in the next end.
- The team that did not score in one end will have "hammer" (last bowl) in the next end.

Types of Games

There are several types of games played at the Monora Lawn Bowling Club. Each has its' own policy for team picking and playing.

Jitney

A Jitney game is an ad hoc game among those members who are present at game time. You should arrive about 30 minutes prior to the game, get your name tag from the wall and leave it on the event desk. The game planner will get a headcount, select Skips and the Skips will pick team players anonymously. If there are multiple games on the same day, the process may be repeated to make new teams or you may play all games with the same team throughout the day.

Regular Play

There are 3 draws throughout the playing season, each lasting 6 weeks. The convener will make up teams from among the players who have signed up for each draw. Those teams will stay in place for the duration of that draw. At the end of the draw the convener will again review players signed up for the next period and make up teams again.

Tournament

The tournament planner will organize a team and will register the team with the tournament contact for that event at the host club. The tournament planner will also ensure that the team is aware of details for the tournament, ie: location, date/time, footwear, dress code, the need for currently stamped bowls.