

PLAYERS' ROLES IN TEAM PLAY



As a lead in a triples or fours game if it is obvious that you have the shot, fetch the mat and be prepared to put it down where the skip directs whilst the other bowlers shepherd the bowls back to behind the mat. You should always put the mat down where your skip dictates. Don't decide to move the mat just for a change or the fun of it. Try to find the best hand on the trial ends and stick to it unless you are struggling for consistency. Your job is to lay the foundation of the head by getting your bowls close to the jack. Often a rink will be a different pace on each side and you may be more consistent if you just bowl up and down one side of the rink. Try to bowl the jack to the length your skip wants. Don't just toss it down the green any old how. Casting the jack to the right length can determine the course of a game and can be more important in team games than where your bowls end up.

As number two your job is to cover for any failings of the lead or to consolidate the position. You may even be asked to bowl a positional bowl. This is just as important as bowling to the jack so concentrate and do your best to get your bowl where the skip wants it. Try and keep a neat, legible card. At the completion of each end remember to write the score down straight away, change the scoreboard and check your card with your opponent. Keep the card in your possession at all times. Don't leave it at the end of the rink or give it to a spectator to look after! At the end of the game give your card to your skip for signing and retention.

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As number three you will be one of the more experienced bowlers – your skip's right hand man/lady. You may feel you know better or are a better bowler but you should work with your skip at all times and not fight against him/her. As a general rule give advice only when asked but convey significant changes to the head. Answer any questions clearly and unambiguously. If the skip wants to know where the second bowl is tell him/her. Don't give a description of whose bowl is where! Remember that the skip has been standing at the head watching it build up and should know what it looks like. Don't spend ages staring at the head trying to decide the outcome of the end. If it isn't obvious straight away get the measure out and get on with it. Take care that you agree the number of shots with your opposite number as each bowl is removed from the head. You may find it useful to put them together in a group or on a duster or towel.

As skip you are the captain of the rink and should have a good appreciation of the finer points of the game. You should be a good man manager, know the strengths and weaknesses of your players and lead by example. Don't fidget, go walk about or chat to the people on the next rink when you should be concentrating on your own game and giving your players every chance to bowl well. Don't show your displeasure or frustration with your bowlers. Find something good to say or don't say anything at all. Encourage them at all times. Let them know how far short or through they are but remember the law on possession of the rink. You shouldn't continue giving information when your team's bowl has come to rest.