

The Scott's

TBBC

The Path to Awesomeness – Half Way

With the first half of the season behind us most of us will look at our respective team's position on the ladder and review what we have to do to reach our team goals. Although this is all well and good, in essence the best thing we can all do as bowlers is to improve. It goes without saying that this should always be each of our goals, whether we have bowled for 20 years or 20 minutes.

I have seen two major issues that many members have had, that can actually be the source of many bad, or at least inconsistent bowls. The first is:

1. Position of feet on the mat.

If the feet are incorrectly 'aimed' when standing on the mat before delivery then the bowler will either miss their line, or need to twist their body to achieve the right line. When any form of twisting enters a delivery, not only does it add extra movements to a delivery (therefore meaning more things can go wrong) but also that the bowl may be delivered on an incorrect angle altering the intended running profile of the bowl. If this twist is done differently each time then the bowl will take a different line with each delivery thereby being unpredictable. This is easy to solve.

Before standing on the mat stand behind your intended position and place one foot where you would usually line up (preferably the same foot as the hand you use to bowl). Look down your foot and ensure it is pointing toward your intended aiming point. Once you are satisfied step into your ready position with your other foot pointing in the same direction. Do not alter your feet position while on the mat, if you are not satisfied, step off and repeat.

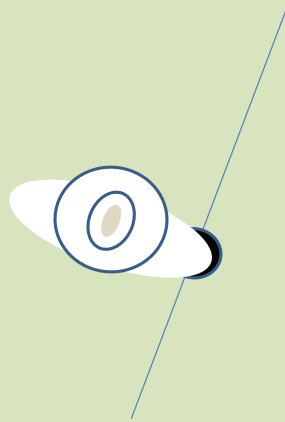
Now when you step out along your aiming line to deliver your bowl you should (thereabouts) hit your required grass with each delivery.

2. Angle of backswing.

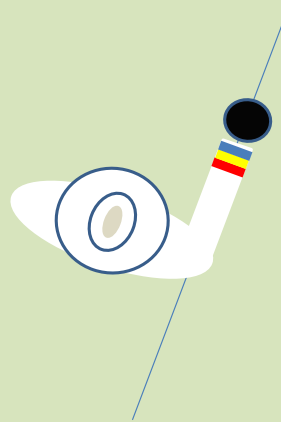
It is very important to have your backswing and follow through along the same arc, meaning that if your arm was dropped without your muscles assisting it would swing back to the same position like a clock pendulum. This problem is the major reason why some bowlers prefer their back hand to their forehand.

If you start your backswing in front of your body then you will either need to twist your body for the backswing to go back normally, or it will naturally want to go across your body. You see your body is in the way of a straight backswing due to the starting position. Because of this natural motion the swing will go across your body and therefore be more useful and consistent on the backhand. The forehand suffers because to correct one must either incorporate a flick to alter the natural trajectory or the swing will take the form of an off shaped triangle meaning it would start in front and go sideways away from the body, then out and away from the body during the delivery portion of the follow through. Confused? Thought so!

Delivering on-line



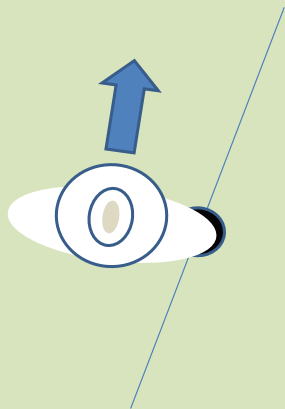
Place your feet
so that you are facing along
your bowling line



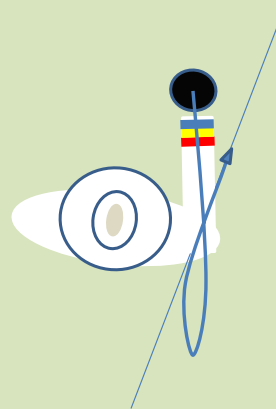
Swing along the line

Figure 1

Common Faults



Taking an off-line stance



Beginning your swing off-line

Both faults will result in a looping delivery,
which can be hard to control

Figure 2

Fortunately there is an easy way to fix the problem just like before. If you start with your arm, and bowl, to the side of your body, still in a prepared position, the pendulum action will be able to follow its naturally intended path, i.e. straight back then straight forward. It will feel weird at first, but this should both solve the problem of inconsistency and lack of confidence on the forehand and also iron out a percentage of tight lined deliveries.

These two solutions to style issues, like with any problem, will only work with practice. So make sure you get on the track and put in the hard yards!

If you are a leader or need some work on the draw, try having some two bowl sets play against a friend. You get to both practice leading and put yourself under the pressure of a competition situation.

For those playing up the order, or wanting to practice an 'in pennant' scenario try doing everything you can to throw off your rhythm. Drive then draw, bowl to numerous kitties at the same time i.e. one bowl forehand draw to a short jack, one bowl back hand to an off centre long jack etc.

Bowling all four bowls to the same length is good practice when you are working on your style or if you have delivery issues, but when you are looking to work on your weight control and in game mentality you really have to get creative to simulate the same situations.

Always remember, if you need some help, ask!