

INFORMATION FOR NEW BOWLERS

Welcome to the game of lawn bowls and your coaching sessions.

The aim of your time with your coach is to equip you with the knowledge and skills to start playing bowls. The sessions you have with your coach are all about you. Do not hesitate to stop and ask questions when you do not understand something or need more time on a skill.

Let your coach know if you have a problem with session times or any other matter. When you have begun to play bowls regularly, let your coach know if you would like extra help with your game. You may receive well-meaning advice from others wanting to help you. It is advisable to check back with your coach before adopting others' theories.

Your coaching time should be the start of many years of enjoyment as a lawn bowler.

SAFETY

Your safety on and around the greens is very important. Here's a quick review of common hazards and actions to be taken to prevent adverse consequences.

Weather –

Put in place your sun safety strategies – slip, slap, slop – appropriate shirt, hat and sunscreen. Sunglasses are helpful.

Drink plenty of water before, during and after the game.

In cold and windy conditions, make sure you are dressed appropriately. A spray jacket is useful in rain and windy conditions.

Greens –

Be aware of equipment and objects on or around the greens:

Boundary pegs, markers and flags – Shorts or skirts can catch on these.

Concrete surfaces around the club and grassy slopes - Smooth soles on bowls shoes can cause you to slip.

Place bowls bags and other personal items under the seats and out of walkways. Bowls bags should never be placed on the benches.

Be careful with bowls lifters and umbrellas. Always leave them safely so that others won't trip over them.

Step sideways between bank and green. Stepping forwards may cause you to trip.

Poisons –

Avoid contact of your hands with eyes and mouth. Wash hands after bowls. The green keeper may use various substances on the greens.

Health –

Discuss your plans to play lawn bowls with your doctor. Remember that a game of bowls can take 3-4 hours to play.

Discuss relevant known health problems with your coach. Inform the coach if you have a relevant disability.

Do some stretching exercises before and after you bowl. Perhaps check with your doctor about appropriate stretching exercises.

Discuss your technique with your coach if it is causing pain.

On the Green –

Never step backwards. You can trip over bowls or fall in the ditch.

Position undelivered bowls 2 metres behind the mat to avoid falls.

Place the mat correctly on the bank if it is not in use. People could trip over it.

THE GAME

The object of the game is to deliver your bowl to the jack or a point designated by the skip or director of the head.

Games are played in fours, triples and pairs to a number of ends or a set period of time. Singles are played to a prescribed number of points. The controlling body for each event will tell or display the conditions of play for each event.

After the completion of an end, the number of a team's bowls closer to the jack than that of the opponents score one point each. The team with the highest number of points at the end of the game wins.

THE GREEN

A green is divided into a number of playing areas called *rinks*.

Boundary pegs show the area of the rink and a *rink number* is displayed at the centre of both ends of the rink.

Corner flags are located in each corner of the green. These are wind indicators at green level.

A *ditch* surrounds the green and the lip of the grassed area near the ditch is called the *plinth*. Do not step on the plinth to protect the edge of the grass and to avoid accidents.

The *bank* is the vertical wall of the outer edge of the ditch above the surface of the green.

A *chalk line* is marked on the centre of each end of the rink with a T, two metres from the ditch. The chalk line is referred to as the *centre line*. The mat is placed on the chalk line to start an end by facing the rink number on the nearest bank.

A *score board* is located at one end of each rink.

Green Care – The quality of our greens is vital. Our green keeper and Greens Director work hard to maintain a high quality of the greens. All bowlers need to treat the greens with a high level of care and avoid actions that will damage the greens. For example, place your bowls on the green rather than dropping them from the bank.

LAWS OF THE GAME

Purchase of a law book is recommended for all bowlers. Ask for one at the club bar.

Knowledge of the rules enables a bowler to enjoy the game and avoid embarrassment.

GENERAL ETIQUETTE

Bowls etiquette is a combination of good manners, sportsmanship and social skills. Some points to keep in mind are:

Be punctual. Arrive at least half an hour before the game commences.

Listen for your name and rink number when the cards are called. Proceed to the rink and ready yourself for play.

Check with the opposite lead to see if they want the bowl handed to them after the mat is placed and the jack delivered. Some people prefer to pick up their own.

It is a law that you need to inform your opponent when you need to leave the green briefly.

Watch the progress of the game carefully and always be ready when it is your turn to play and, when the end is finished, to kick the bowls back behind the mat. All players assist in kicking the bowls.

The lead needs to drop the mat close to the desired position promptly and then help with kicking bowls. The mat can be straightened after the bowls are in place two metres behind the mat.

When changing ends, walk down the centre of the rink. Spreading out may interfere with adjacent rink bowlers.

Follow your skip's instructions.

Learn the laws of the game.

At the end of the game, shake hands with your opponents and thank them for the game. Be a good sport. Winning or losing is not as important as enjoying the game. As a winner, it is a custom followed by most people that you should offer to buy your opponent the first drink. If the opponent is a guest at our club, you are the host.

PRACTICE TIMES – ST LUCIA BOWLING CLUBS

Monday All afternoon. Coaches are usually available to assist. Appointment is preferred.

Tuesday The ladies club usually occupies one green so the other is free if you are not playing and need to come down to practise on Tuesday morning .

Both greens are available all afternoon. Coaching by appointment.

Wednesday Not available as morning preparations are underway for the men's club play in the afternoon.

Thursday All day Thursday. The twilight bowls group begins play at 3 pm (winter) or 4 pm (summer) but only on one green so the other is available in the afternoon.

Friday Not available on the first Friday of the month. Otherwise, all day.

Saturday Not available as morning preparations are underway for the men's club play in the afternoon.

Sunday Available all day.

NOTE:

All practice is to be conducted in an East-West direction, that is, to and from the clubhouse.

Practice mats must be used. These are on the veranda table.

Disks and half tennis balls are available in the table drawers. Any other equipment there can be used.

Correct footwear must be worn.

Sometimes the clubhouse will be open and you may use the jacks and mats inside the door. These must be replaced inside on completion of practice.

Make sure that the clubhouse doors are closed as you exit to stop birds from going inside.