

## Current NSCC Members

The current members of NSCC are shown below, so that we all become faces for you rather than names on various documents!



Brian Sayce – Convenor (centre), (clockwise from 12 'o clock) Jill Atkinson, John Busshau, Trevor Davis – ExCo Liaison, CH Dixie, Graham Mackenzie.

Note that Simon Botha has accepted a contract as Director of Target Sports in the Malaysian Academy and will no longer be with NSCC. Brian Sayce will be the care-taker convenor until the next Bosberaad after the August AGM. The contact name and details of *your* liaison member are listed in the table at the end of each Forum.

## Why Upgrade?

Many coaches ask why they should go to the effort and expense of upgrading their qualifications, when many district and even national structures do not appoint coaches to positions or have an established hierarchy where coaches have the opportunity to move up the ranks in a clear hierarchy, based on a transparent policy. This issue has been a problem since coaching started in bowls, despite numerous efforts to rectify this by NSCC and the Bowls SA Executive. This long-term coaches' pathway is something should be well established by now, just as it is for most workers with ability in most organisations. Unfortunately, to date, there are mainly two problems that have inhibited the establishment of this structure – i) policies get written by one District Executive, but are ignored by the next and ii) Bowls SA is only in a position to recommend most practices to districts & clubs rather than force these semi-autonomous bodies to comply.

Until this lack of hierarchy for the appointment of coaches exists, why should coaches upgrade? To answer this question, please answer these two questions: i) Did you improve your coaching knowledge and skills by attending your last coaching course and / or coaches' day? ii) Have

you made use of the coaching opportunities you have had since then, to pass this on to players in terms of helping them to be better players in terms of Technical, Psychological, Tactical, Physical & Lifestyle skills? If your answer to either (hopefully both! ☺) is YES, then these questions have answered your question – the primary value of furthering your knowledge in coaching is to apply it to your coaching *to help players become better and better*. The value is not in what title one may get, bestowed by some hierarchy, but in the work done to the benefit of one's own coaching activities and to the benefit of the players one works with, at whatever level they play at.

In the absence of an established structure of coach-appointments, a coach can find and make opportunities to make improving coaching knowledge very worthwhile and very valuable in achieving an enormous level of satisfaction when his/her players to better and better, at whatever level of play these players choose to play – whether social players or elite, international players. CH Dixie

## Opposition to Coaching

**Why is a qualified coach not used at club / district level?** NSCC (and probably DSCCs also) have heard this complaint from coaches over and over again for many years. There is no 'silver bullet' to solve this problem – it takes hard work in a number of ways: find out WHY and do something about it – e.g. marketing what you can do in the right way to the right audience; showing what you can do by doing it; and looking at your own personal actions and communication skills.

First you need to identify the reason (WHY). Secondly, you need to figure out what a plan of action to overcome this, with the clarity of mind to identify things you can change and things you cannot change! – but a plan of action either way. Finally, DO IT!

One of the often heard complaints is lack of support from Club / District Executives. You need to find out WHY! Is it because they don't really know what a coach can offer their players? Your task would be market your skills to them in an assertive manner – never in a submissive, whinging manner or an aggressive, demanding manner as this will only put up their backs.

Another often heard complaint is that the players have no commitment to or interest in coaching. WHY is this? Even social, tabs-in players enjoy their games more when they play better. Also, the more one learns about coaching, the more one realises how the best players in the district can truly reach their potential, but they prefer to merely rely on their base talents and hope for the best! WHY is this? Ask players to answer this question for you, rather than make assumptions and then tailor your

action plan to accommodate their areas of concern, which will make your plan easier to sell too!

Sell players and administrators ideas in baby-steps, so that they can deal with just enough information to make a difference. When I became a coach and started developing all this knowledge about coaching, I could see what could be done for players so clearly, but I tried to do it all at once instead of building it in baby-steps and failed to achieve the grandiose goals I had made! Rome was not built in a day – sell your grandiose ideas in little bits at a time and just keep plugging away, eventually, with hard-work, dedication, positive energy and avoiding brick-walls!

Get out onto the green and do it! You earn respect from players and administrators alike by actually doing it and getting results. Trevor (see Forum 39) started with ordinary club players – many new players who were hungry for success. Now that those same new players are getting to the final stages and even winning district-level competitions, elite district players are also participating and he is even getting calls from players in other districts who have requested his help and who are prepared to travel across the country to receive his help.

A prophet in his/her own country is often ignored – a local coach's abilities are often ignored and underestimated by local players and administrators. It may help to use a coach from another club or district to assist you to get things started at local level, as a guest coach. This does not by any means imply that you are not capable – we all need a little help at times, even the most highly qualified coaches. Ask your DSCC for help to run a coaching event at your club – this is one of the expected responsibilities of DSCCs. If your club / district can support the costs, you could also request coaches from NSCC or the National Academy to assist.

Is this lack of use of the coaching services you are so keen to provide because of something we do? This is the most difficult reason (WHY) to hear, accept and do something about. Often, but by no means always, the coach is not prepared to listen, does not accept the situation and does not see the necessity to change – unfortunately, these people end up ostracised and hurt and become lost to coaching. If you are prepared to change, there is a lot of help available and a lot of this help can be found in the domain of emotional intelligence (EQ), about which much has been written; on the Web, in books (e.g. see Chapters 4 (communication & conflict management) & 8 (foundations of PST) in *Lawn Bowls Coaching*) and journal articles. When talking to people about the problem, remember to be assertive (see Fig 4.1 in the reference book) rather than a submissive, whinging manner or an aggressive, defensive manner – either of these

approaches or attitudes merely causes a log-jam in communication and inevitably, an insurmountable brick-wall. Ask the right questions and really listen to the answers – they will be hard to hear, but if you can listen without self-justification, you could learn something really useful to help you improve both your future life and your future coaching activities so that you can fulfil your potential and make your dreams a reality.

We all hit 'brick walls' in life and coaching is no different. One of the best pieces of advice I was ever given, ever so casually, is this – *when you encounter a brick wall that is merely causing brick-marks on your forehead, stop banging your head and walk around the wall!* If you cannot possibly change a situation find a different way of doing what you are passionate about – e.g. if you want to get involved in training players, find people who are hungry for success rather than trying to coach players who cannot be sold on the idea of coaching – get involved with youth players or new players or players who are keen to break into the district squad; there are many opportunities than initially may meet the eye.

Complaining about something is human – finding out WHY and doing something about it takes courage, dedication, hard work and sometimes taking an alternate route to achieve your goals. *CH Dixie*

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. ***Do coaches need to wait for a player to ask for help?***
  - In the old days, this was the norm, as coaches did not want to antagonise players by imposing changes on them, that they do not actually want to make – we still advise very strongly against coaching during a game (match or tabs-in).
  - Coaches are more established now and should be pro-active (sell) their services and skills. There is no harm in quietly saying to a player after the game – “I could see why you were playing narrow / struggling with weight / whatever – I can help you with that. Give me a call and we can set up an appointment to meet.” If they don't call you – don't feel offended! You have done your job by sharing and now it is up to them to make the choice! Don't carry their monkeys on your back!
2. ***What can a DSCC do to support their small clubs who have no coaches?***
  - DSCC could organise roving clinics to visit a certain number of these clubs once a year or every 2 years and maybe join 2 or more clubs in the general area on 1 day.
  - Don't wait to be asked – offer the services as players & club executives are often ignorant regarding the broad range of development opportunities that coaches can provide.

## Getting into the Bubble (01) - Lead

In Forum 37, mention was made of coaches getting involved in positional coaching. But how to do this? Don't all players just need to be able to draw and play all other shots on occasion?

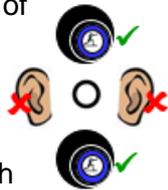
Playing the different positions requires a different mind-set and players need to understand, not only their responsibilities, but also how to think about the position – how to get into the bubble (or zone). This series of 6 articles will focus on the TEAM aspects of PST – psychological skills training – starting with the Lead, which coaches could use to help individual players and / or develop clinics focused on the various Team positions individually and the Team as a whole.

CH Dixie & E Davis

The Lead's first responsibility is to place the mat where the Skip indicates. "It is not the prerogative of the lead to move the mat around at will or vary the length of ends" (Jensen, 2016). Often Skips ignore or forget this tactical responsibility, especially in tabs-in games! If they do, the Lead needs to remind him/her by standing patiently at the 2m mark with the mat in hand until they receive this information from the Skip!

The Lead's next responsibility is to deliver the jack, using his/her regular delivery-routine, to within 1m (in terms of length) of where the Skip is standing – the strategic length in terms of the Team's tactics. The PST side of this delivery, is that the Lead needs to practise remembering the effort used in delivering the jack, so that s/he can deliver his/her bowls using exactly the same effort, with the same delivery-routine, to reach the same length as the jack.

A Lead needs to hone his/her delivery-routine, so that once the correct line has been found, hopefully in the trial-ends, s/he can play that line consistently, up and down on the same side of the rink, so that irrespective of weight (length), the bowl comes to rest in line with the jack, lengthwise of the rink. Inconsistent lines, even if the weight is perfect, result in 'lug' (ear) bowls, to the side of the jack, which are the easiest shot for the opposition to remove or use to snatch the shot!



If a Lead is not 'finding it' on their chosen side after 4 ends, the Skip should encourage the Lead to change sides. Some Leads are reluctant to do this as they are determined to 'find it'! While this is a commendable, fighting trait for any Lead to have, it is not in the best interest of the Team! Often, once up and down on the other side, either the Lead 'finds it' or, when they go back to the original side, s/he suddenly does 'find it'.

Why should coaches encourage a Lead to play up and down on the same side of the rink? The

reason for this is that the line and weight is similar playing in this way. Some players favour their forehand or their backhand, despite the fact that both deliveries should be exactly the same – just facing a different direction (delivery-line) and the bowl turned in the hand! Also, sometimes the Lead may just 'find it' on one side playing in one direction and on the other side playing back – i.e. playing in a circle. During competition play, let the Lead play wherever they can achieve the best success for the Team! During practise, build your Lead's confidence (PST) in playing both forehand and backhand – it will make his/her play much easier and more enjoyable in the long run – whether your Lead is a social-tabs-in player or an elite, International player.

All Leads want to draw the shot. While obviously this is ideal, what if the other Lead gets there first, right on the jack? Is it the Lead's job to play an attacking shot to move the shot-bowl or the jack? Resoundingly, the answer to the last question is NOOO! The responsibility of the Lead is to BUILD THE HEAD – if this includes getting 2 shots, great job! Otherwise, the Lead needs to get bowls in the head to help the Team. Resisting that urge to attack is vital for a Lead – attacking bowls that miss end up far from the head and immediately put the rest of the team under immense pressure. Drawing 2<sup>nd</sup>-shot is what the Lead needs to practise, using self-control by ignoring the distraction of being shot down! "The requirement of leads is to deliver their bowls as close to the jack as possible. Unless specifically instructed by their skip; they should strictly avoid niggling at close opposition bowls, keep their mind clear and focused on their objective. Remember in a team effort, a good close second bowl is just as important as the shot bowl: (Jensen, 2016).

**THE LEAD**

'Getting into the Zone' Bubble

**MY JOB: To Lay the Foundation:**

- Walk briskly around the green to get blood flowing, relate the green to one played well on & establish wind direction
- Warm-up delivery-routine (body) and mind (get into the bubble) before the game so as to start contributing from bowl 1
- Learn as much as from trial ends as possible (own and all other bowls – note types)
  - Prepared B4 so play with confidence
    - Strategically placing the Mat
    - Strategically delivering the Jack
- Every bowl delivered with the same delivery-routine – keep it SLOW!
- Remember, so can use same delivery-effort to deliver jack & both bowls:
  - ✓ Ideally one just in front & one just behind jack
  - ✓ If not shot – bowls in head (2<sup>nd</sup> shot)
- ✓ BUILD the head, not get THE shot! – **a driving lead wastes team bowls!**
  - Trust team-mates, especially the Skip
  - Support 2<sup>nd</sup> at the mat-end; 3<sup>rd</sup> & Skip at the head
- Watch every bowl delivered and contribute to team tactical discussions – if don't know why, think, then ask
- Play up and down same side of rink – **change sides if not finding it after 4 ends**
  - Rather behind than short

Some Leads & Skips think that the way to counteract a good opposition Lead is play their hand and block it. While the idea of forcing the opposition Lead to change from their comfort zone has merit, the best way of heaping pressure on the opposition is to keep drawing the shot! The easiest way to play a block-shot is to play the opposite hand (slightly short), but slightly narrow, so that the bowl comes to rest across the head on the drawing-line of the opposition player. If the lead is used to playing the opposite side of the rink to the opposition lead, it would also be easier for him/her to continue to play the side s/he knows, but playing it slightly narrow to end across the head!

The final tip for the Lead is that after playing his/her bowls s/he MUST stay focussed on the game, supporting the second and watching what all the other bowls do – both at the mat-end and when s/he is at the head. In other words – the Lead must

not wander (in mind or body) or keep his/herself busy with other things! The Lead needs to stay focussed on the game throughout! An ex-Springbok player (now deceased) would fire anyone from her team who so much as smiled at someone on the bank!

*“Most experienced skips will acknowledge the importance of good leads, however good leads must not act independently but remember it is imperative that they understand the tactical reasons they are under the control of the skip throughout the game”* (Jensen, 2016). Help your Lead to get into the bubble with a clear understanding of the above and focusing on his/her job by focusing on the content of the blue bubble!

Jensen, M. (2016) *Playing your Part as the Lead* [http://www.como.bowls.com.au/customdata/index.cfm?fuseaction=Display\\_Image\\_Listing&CategoryID=24030&OrgID=16545](http://www.como.bowls.com.au/customdata/index.cfm?fuseaction=Display_Image_Listing&CategoryID=24030&OrgID=16545) Accessed 2016-04-14.

## Around & About

### 2016 Level 1 Courses (to date)

If your district is not planning on running Level 1 course this year, you may like to join a course in a neighbouring district. Contact the relevant NSCC district liaison member for information.

JBA	Jo-burg	29/04/2016 - 02/05/2016
Eden	George	16-17 & 23-24/07/2016
Boland	Swellendam	6-7 & 20-21/08/2016
Kingfisher	South Coast	19-22/09-2016

NSCC is hoping that more districts will register L1 courses soon, especially after the recent round of T-t-T courses!!

### Eden Leads the Way

Eden Bowls ran the first Level A (Assistant Coach) Course in the country – a course mainly aimed at school-affiliated teachers. With extraordinary enthusiasm, 15 teachers and 3 affiliated players embraced the wonderful game and how to coach youth players to play the game.



As a final ‘proof of learning’, all took on new school players and through their excellent coaching, future stars were born.

*Trevor Davis*

See NSC M&M’s newsletter *Get it Rolling 01* for more.

### EKB Coaches’ Meat & Greet

The EKB DSCC held their first “Meat & Greet” on the 10<sup>th</sup> April at Delville Germiston BC, where coaches enjoyed a braai and wonderful hospitality from the members.

The idea was to introduce and welcome our new coaches to our coaching community and re-new old friendships. We played a “tournament” of Last Man Standing and this was won by Marius van Kuijeren, with Jenny Jones as runner-up. The knock-out was won by Greg Estmann. Well done to all.

There was also a “Challenge” match between the Junior Managers and Delville. The Managers won convincingly 8 – 4 and won the challenge. The proceeds went to the “Junior Development” program. Brian and Paula Harley donated a further R1000.00 making the prize a total of R3000.00 for the Junior Development program. *Pat Roussouw*

**Coaches Info shared space (click on link)**

<https://goo.gl/LgKeiB>

**NOTE: to access the space, create a Google account first, then sign-in**

**Email additions for shared space to**

[dixie@nmmu.ac.za](mailto:dixie@nmmu.ac.za)

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***Coaches Forum is the official publication of Bowls South Africa's NSCC  
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