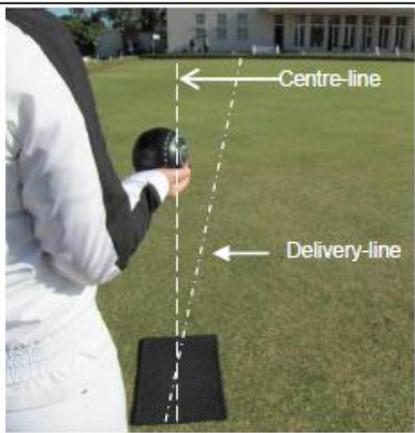


THE NEW CLINIC GRIP

The Clinic Style or Technique of playing bowls has never been cast in concrete. Last year the NSCC accepted that the old way of coaching the grip was archaic and adopted Graham Mackenzie's "new way" which is far easier to coach and learn. An article did appear in Forum last year, but it was felt that it should be explained further, using the picture and explanations from the new Lawns Bowls Coaching reference book; the level one part of which was published by Bowls South Africa in 2011. (See page 7-3 & 7-4 if you have it.)

	The Right-Hander	Explanation	The Left Hander
1.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pick up the bowl in the bowling-hand and hold it palm upwards (not gripped), facing the jack – check that the bias is correct. <p><i>Caution: getting the bias correct is more important than 'saving' the bowling arm and minimising movement.</i></p>	
2.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest the bowl flat in the other hand Place the arc created by the index-finger and thumb of the bowling-hand around the dimples or rings. <p><i>Caution: The thumb should never be on the running surface as this places unnecessary strain on the muscles of the hand.</i></p>	
3.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the other fingers comfortably spread on the running surface as bowling-hand is turned to face palm up. The bowl should rest on the fingers, starting from the pads of the palm – not the full palm. <p><i>Caution: The little finger should not be curled up the side of the bowl as this may cause a wobble on delivery.</i></p>	
4.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The centre-line of the running surface of the bowl should be on the same line as the centre of the forearm. 	

Graham Mackenzie's Coaching Corner: Does your bowl "bump" on delivery?

The bowl should be released smoothly as it leaves your finger tips. Greenkeepers hate bowlers who thump their bowls down as if they are playing "gooibal" and not "rolbal", thereby making indentations and marks on the green he is working so hard to keep at a high standard.

To correct this problem, start by looking at when the bowl is released. This bumping problem is often caused by an early or late release of the bowl. The bowl should be released just in front of the front foot and not behind it.

Another possible reason is the player is too high from the green and this is rectified by bending the back knee and keeping it bent on delivery.

The most common fault is that the back swing is too fast. Both the back swing and the step are linked together. By slowing the back swing you will slow the step allowing more time for a smooth release. To prove this you cannot walk slowly and swing your arms fast or visa versa.

Make your greenkeeper very happy by having bump-free deliveries on the rinks. Then you and he will have a win/win situation. Happy greenkeeper/ better bowler with a smooth delivery!

Coaching Bits & Pieces

Coaches who do not attend Refresher Courses

At a recent meeting of NSCC the above thorny problem was discussed at length. The general feeling of the committee is that whilst we cannot stop anybody from coaching, all coaches should be made to realise that they need to keep abreast with the ongoing changes for the betterment of coaching and indeed coaching in general.

In order to not lose track of these coaches all together, it was decided that they and their hours should be recorded on the database. However, they will be marked as inactive until they refresh, redo the course or upgrade.

Next Level 2 Course

The next course is planned for 2013.

Next Level 3 Course

Depending on whether the new material for the new coaching book is ready by July of this year, it will then be decided whether or not a course will be held towards the end of this year. **Watch this space!**

Next Train the Trainer Course

At the same NSCC meeting it was decided that in view of the many requests from districts, a survey to establish the needs of the districts would be sent out by Bowls SA. This was sent to all districts a few weeks ago. Responses should be sent to the district's Liaison Coach as soon as possible. (**List of districts and their NSCC Liaison Coach below**)

Coaching is alive and well on the Border!

The editor is applying her editorial licence to promote bowls coaching on the Border! Requests to other districts have fallen on deaf ears. If you would like your district's coaching to be promoted in the next edition of Forum you know what to do!

The Border District Standing Committee for Coaches meets once a quarter and all 3 district coaches are on the committee, report backs are given at every meeting and so everybody is involved and informed.

Squad practices started in May and will continue up until the 2013 Inter-districts, normally on a monthly basis. Arthur Brandt (the current President of Border Bowls) is the Border Men's coach whilst Merle van den Berg is the Ladies' coach. A strict programme has been set out, registers of attendance are kept and each player hands in two 20/20 assessments at each squad get-together. These are analysed by an IT expert and explanations of strengths and weaknesses given to the players. Squad members remain in the squad during the duration of the season (2012/2013) and even those not selected for teams remain in top form in case reserves are needed or a selected player loses form. We use a holistic approach during squad sessions and handouts are given on Technical, Tactical, Psychological, Physical and Personal Lifestyle – without going into a classroom/lecture mode! The majority of the time is spent on the green – either in skills improvement exercises or game situations. The aim is to peak at the next Inter-Districts competition. The ladies squad consists of 40 players, which includes 10 new squad members including 3 under-25's. In view of rising costs we have started a major fund-raising effort.

Neville Hort is the Under-25 coach and doing a splendid job as Border's Development Officer. The pictures below illustrate some of the Development projects.



A church group after being introduced to bowls on a Friday night at Bonza Bay Club in East London by Neville Hort.



Part of a group of young players from Cambridge High School who practice with Neville at Comrades Club every Wednesday afternoon.



Gabi Du Toit, a 12-year-old from Grens Primary who was first coached by Neville and is now being coached by Merle van den Berg after school on Thursdays.

Get your Non-Verbal Communication right on the Bowling Green!

An updated version of an article written for Bowls Action by Merle van den Berg in 1998.

You must have heard it said that bowls is 80% in the mind and 20% technique. It has also been stated that psychology creeps into every phase of bowls. So does communication! In Forums 26 & 27 we looked at the Feedback aspect of communication. In this article we will be focussing on Non-Verbal Communication.

Body Language (a term more familiar to us than Non-Verbal Communication) is actually only one form of Non-Verbal Communication. Body Language includes facial expressions, gestures, eye contact and posture. Other forms of Non-Verbal Communication include Sign Language, Ceremonial Protocol, Movement (Kinesics), Touch, Dress (Objectics), Personal Hygiene, the use of Space (Proxemics), Silence and Time as well as Paralanguage (e.g. volume, tone, rate, the choice of words, etc.). "Para" means over and above so here we refer to the **meanings** which are **added** to the words used. The latter type of Non-Verbal Communication positively or negatively affects the message **contained** in the words, thereby reinforcing or contradicting the verbal message. "It's not what you say but the way you say it" is an old adage. Whenever we communicate verbally, we are simultaneously communicating non-verbally, but the reverse is not true. We can and do communicate non-verbally without using words. Non-Verbal Communication conveys much of what we wish to say and often what we would prefer to withhold! Let's clear up another common misunderstanding: "verbal" means dealing with words – it does not mean oral or speaking/spoken!

Having defined some terms to help orientate ourselves, let's get onto the bowling green and look at some everyday bowling experiences and situations. There are two provisos however. Firstly, no non-verbal meaning can be interpreted in isolation. We must consider the context, the overall situation with reference to our knowledge (if any) of the player's normal verbal and non-verbal behaviour patterns. Then we measure this against the "template" of our experience. The second proviso is that we should never jump to conclusions. Sometimes our interpretation is incorrect – our interpreted meaning more or less than was actually intended.

The analysis of non-verbal interactions can of course be applied to all players on the green. The examples used here to illustrate various situations however, will concentrate mainly on skips – because they are the leaders and main motivators of the team. They set the tone of the game for the whole team besides being the one expected to have the best technical skills and knowledge.

Situation		Skip's Non-Verbal Communication	
		Negative	Positive
1	A player has failed to get a bowl near to the jack.	Ignores the player as they walk past each other. (Denies Eye Contact or feedback in a verbal exchange – Silence .)	"I know you can do better than that Nellie. Focus during the next end, breathe deeply and you'll be there!" (When said kindly and enthusiastically – motivational Paralanguage .)
2	A player has played a few metres through and not drawn a shot as asked.	Shouts: "I asked you to draw not to drive." OR "Leave skip shots to the skips." OR "Going like a Boeing!" (Indicates displeasure by choosing sarcastic phrases and talking loudly so that everyone can hear – negative Paralanguage .)	"Not exactly what I wanted but it's the best back bowl – put the next one on the jack." (Motivational Paralanguage .)
3	A player is repeatedly playing short.	"You were short last time too." OR "I didn't ask for a blocker." (Undiplomatic, embarrassing Paralanguage .)	Wait till walking past each other or standing in the head, and quietly say, "You seem to have a problem with your weight today and are playing short. I've been watching you. You are not putting enough power into the forward swing but I'm not a coach. Perhaps you should make an appointment with Chris the club coach and he will be able to pinpoint your problem." (Motivational, helpful Paralanguage .)
4	A lead or second comments about the score or stands in the head whilst the thirds are measuring.	"Don't you know leads must shut up?" OR in a shouting manner so that everyone can hear, "Stay out of the head." (Again undiplomatic, rude and unkind Paralanguage .)	Discuss the problem quietly with the individuals concerned and, in this way, (positive Paralanguage) you will gain respect. Explain that if they think a shot has been overlooked by the third they are entitled to quietly draw it to the attention of their third.
5	A player has played a poor shot.	Look away (possibly with your hands on your hips and a shake of your head or the throwing down of your duster) before the player has stepped forward off the mat. OR criticise the shot in discussion with your third, or even worse, with the opposing third and skip. (Negative Body Language and insensitive Paralanguage and/or Undiplomatic choice of words.	Touch their arm or shoulder whilst walking past or at the head and say, "Bad luck – focus and concentrate and your next shot will be better." (Touch combined with positive Paralanguage .) OR In a quiet moment during play, tea or whilst having a drink afterwards, discuss the problem and suggest solutions such as an appointment with the club coach. (Timing and positive Language and Paralanguage .)

Situation		Skip's Non-Verbal Communication	
		Negative	Positive
6	The leads and seconds are constantly chatting, seem more interested in the game on the next rink, or are moving around whilst the thirds or skips are playing.	Shout loudly, "Stand still when I'm on the mat" OR, "Can you please keep quiet?" (Two wrongs don't make a right and even the use of <i>please</i> is abrasive if shouted – insensitive Paralanguage .)	At the opportune moment you say something quietly like "It disturbs John and I when we are about to play and you are moving around or talking. You need to focus on every bowl played, even ours." OR "Check the Laws and Etiquette booklets concerning disturbing other players, in the meantime can we rely on your for the last ten ends of this game?" (Firmness is often necessary, but it depends on the way it is said – diplomatically and not in front of an audience – Language, Paralanguage and Timing .)
7	The player appears to have no confidence in the shot you have called and might even suggest another shot.	Frown and shout "I'm the skip here – do as I say." (Aggressive Body Language and Paralanguage .)	Show the player the end-path the shot needs to follow to be successful. (Demonstrative Body Language and say something like "I'd like you to try it this way." (Assertive Paralanguage .) OR "the skip can point out the dangers of the shot to the head when the player has walked up." (<i>Show</i>) (Neutral Paralanguage combined with Body Language .)
8	It looks as if the team is going to lose the game.	Pressurise the players with remarks like "You must be in the head" OR (when moving past), "We have to win this game – pull up your socks", accompanied by hostile glances. (This sort of aggressive Paralanguage and Body Language is self-defeating and, by increasing the tension, the player-s tend to play even worse.) Another effect defeat may have on a skip is the drooping of shoulders and body accompanied by the withdrawal of self. (Body Language and Silence .)	Smile and say "Linda, take your time and give me a shot in the head (or second shot)." OR any other motivational Paralanguage remarks or gestures (Body Language), depending on the person and the situation. If you do lose, a good skip can assertively point out the problem areas but choose the right Time and say something like "I would have liked us to win, but I am glad you were good sports about it all. There's always a next time." The skip also plays a part in losing the game – technically in the shots played as well as in the emotional environment he/she creates.

Many more examples could be given, but they are basically variations of the same theme, and a positive skip will let Non-Verbal Communication work **for and not against the team**. Bowler's **clothes, neatness and appearance** are also forms of Non-Verbal Communication that can work **for or against** the whole team. Watch a successful skip and you will notice that they have probably developed a Non-Verbal **Sign Language/System** (usually in discussion with the rest of the team), thereby avoiding shouting instructions, tactics and an analysis of the shots played. Successful skips will also arrange time for a "team talk" preferably a day or two before an important game. The sign system can be agreed and every team member given the opportunity to air their opinions, particularly what they like or dislike about each other's Non-Verbal Communication – as they have experienced it so far. Your team will know if there is honey on your tongue and resentment in your heart!

Non-Verbal Communication is definitely a factor in bowls, and if you get it right you will be a more perceptive, and consequently a more successful skip and bowls player.

NSCC Member	District Liaison Responsibility	Cell phone	Email
Brian Sayce (Convenor)	EGB, BGN, Mpumalanga, Limpopo	082 570 5884	sayso@sherwood.za.net
Jill Atkinson	All KZN districts	079 030 7418	jillatkinson@bergmail.co.za
CH Dixie	EP, WP	082 220 3707	dixie@nmmu.ac.za
G Mackenzie	NFS, SFS, NC	082 948 9262	gailmacwhite@gmail.com
Merle v d Berg	Border, Boland, S Cape	082 693 4227	merlof@telkomsa.net
Vacant	Sables, JBA, NW, Sedibeng	Contact Brian Sayce	
Kallie Haupt	Bowls SA Executive	082 927 3625	haupt4@telkomsa.net

Coaches Forum is the official publication of Bowls South Africa's NSCC. Please send your news and views to the Editor, Merle van den Berg at merlof@telkomsa.net or give her a call on 043 748 3985 or 082 693 4227. Her postal address is P O Box 2486, Beacon Bay, 5205.