**Etiquette of Lawn Bowls**

Etiquette is a code of behaviour and common decency whereby individuals treat others as they expect to be treated themselves.  Breaches of etiquette are sometimes wilful, and sometimes inadvertent. Particularly in the latter case, injured parties should avoid over-reacting. Otherwise a second breach of etiquette more objectionable than the original transgression could occur.

Remember bowls is a friendly sport and should be played in good spirit, your attitude and demeanour can often reflect on the Club you represent.

There are two main facets of bowls etiquette. There is etiquette associated with the obligations and privileges of club membership. The proposer of a new member should take the responsibility of providing instruction on this subject. Also there is etiquette associated with participation of the game itself. The Club Coach should take the responsibility of providing bowls etiquette instruction to new players.

**Club Etiquette**

Nominators should act as mentors for new members they sponsor. They should provide information about clubhouse rules and customs, fees and attire. They should introduce new members to club officials. They should also arrange to play with new members when they have their first game.

New members should remember that all club officials are elected volunteers who willingly give their time for the benefit of fellow members. Officials generally act in good faith but sometimes make mistakes. Members are entitled to question decisions of officials that affect them, but in those circumstances the members and officials themselves should resolve matters in contention in a courteous way.

Members should be respectful and quiet when officials are making P.A. announcements. The club recognises the work of voluntary officials with privileges such as reserved car parking bays, these bays should only be used by the nominated officials.

Employees such as Greenkeepers and Bar Attendants are employed under industrial awards and contracts. The Club Secretary is their nominated employer and has the authority to direct them. In no circumstances should other members attempt to give directions to such employees about their work.

The steadily rising cost of seasonal and daily maintenance of grass greens always exceeds the amounts collected as green fees. The cost of preparing facilities for bowling has always been cross-subsided by revenues from bar trading, raffles, bingo, poker machines, etc. Consequently bowlers have a duty to give the club’s fund raising operations their reasonable support.

Club membership fees should be paid on or before the due date. These membership fees may include amounts specified as capitation fees or affiliation fees. The club affiliates with both the district and state association. The total capitation and affiliation fees paid by the club are calculated on a per capita basis. However it is the clubs that are affiliated and liable for the fees, not the members.

The amounts billed to members as capitation and affiliation fees are simply a mechanism whereby clubs achieve reimbursement of their liability to state and district associations.

**Game Etiquette**

All bowlers should have an understanding of the Laws of the Sport of  Lawn Bowls. Club coaches should act as mentors in game etiquette for new members. They should ensure the appropriateness of member’s attire including footwear.

They should explain the fragility of the plinth area and why sitting on the bank, spitting, and dumping bowls onto the green should be avoided. Step sideways when getting on or off the green, step at least 150mm (6”) away from the plinth. Never put your foot near or in the ditch when retrieving bowls from the ditch. Take care to protect the greens at all times.

They should emphasise the need for punctuality for all games, cards are called 15 minutes before the commencement of play. They should also endeavour to join with nominators in playing with new members when they have their first game.

Bowlers should give their support to teams representing their club by attending inter-club events. As spectators they should demonstrate sporting bipartisanship in the fluctuating fortunes of the event.

Cohesive teams are often successful teams. Bowlers should address one another by their given names during the course of a game. They should fairly share the task of kicking bowls after completion of an end.

Bowlers should give the skip their loyal support and comply with directions. If the skip’s bowl remains in the ditch from the previous end, team mates should dust it and place it handily near the mat before changing ends. Players not in the act of delivering a bowl or in control of the head should stand a minimum of one metre behind the mat or clear of the head behind the jack.

In changing ends, players should avoid straying on to neighbouring rinks or distracting  play on them. Opposing leads should facilitate play by courteously handing the mat and jack to each other, as convenient. Players can similarly hand bowls to one another when convenient.

It is good sportsmanship to acknowledge displays of exceptional skill from members of either team. Flukes are simply revelations of unrecognised opportunities. They balance out over time, it serves no purpose to take too much notice of them. If an umpire is called for a measurement, players must stand off the green and not bring any pressure to bear on the decision.

The enjoyment of a game is diminished if either team indulges in gamesmanship. Inconsiderate distractions such as loud noises or conversation, visible movement of players, objects or shadows should be avoided while a bowler is on the mat preparing for delivery.  Mobile phones and pagers should not be audible or used during a game.

Bowlers should not delay play by leaving the rink without consent. They should not seek consent to leave the green when there is no reasonable necessity. Bowlers not involved in counting the head should stand off the rink and not interfere with the head until the result of the end has been agreed and declared, good sportsmanship should prevail.

Immediately the head has been declared the Lead of the wining team, unless instructed by the Skip to forfeit the mat to the opposing team, should place the mat and be ready to bowl the jack.

Bowlers should shake hands at the end of a game. The graceful losers should congratulate the modest winners. Borrowed personal items such as tape measures should be returned to their owners with thanks. Mats and jacks should be collected and returned to the usual distribution point.

After games, players should sit with their opponents. Home team players should offer visitors refreshment. After domestic games, winners are normally the first to offer drinks. After singles matches, markers should be included in the invitation. Courteous losers normally reciprocate in turn. They should avoid making excuses for their lack of success on the day a topic of conversation.

Considerate thought and common sense are the keys to acceptable standards of etiquette of Bowls which makes playing the game a pleasure.