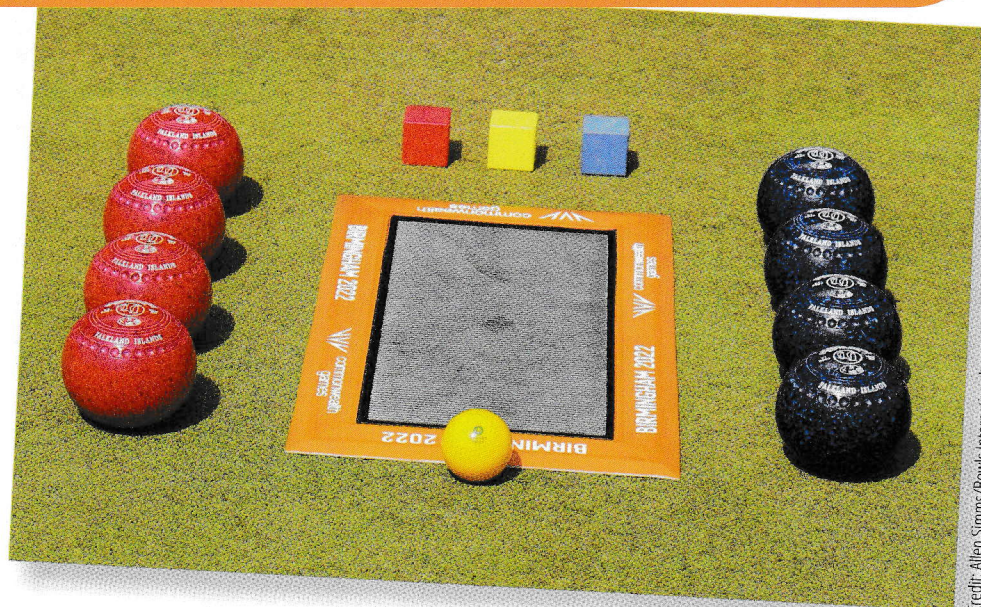




THE BLOCKER

Reader question answered

At the time of going to press, our umpire expert **Allan Thornhill** was busy leading a team of International Technical Officers overseeing the Commonwealth Games. Nevertheless, he took time out from his busy Birmingham 2022 schedule to answer an excellent question from reader Barrie Forse



Credit: Allen Simms/Bowls International

THE QUESTION

In a national outdoor area semi-final, I witnessed something I have never seen before and wondered what the ruling would have been?

Team A were leading by one shot playing the last end with just the skips to play their last bowls and the skip of team A to play first.

Before he bowls, his teammates discuss what shot should be played and decide on a blocker. One member of team A walks halfway up the green and stands where he wants his skip to bowl to and stays there until the bowl has come to rest.

Is this within the laws of bowls?

THE ANSWER

The answer is yes and no. Yes, it is permitted to stand in front of the jack to guide a player from your own team, however, the player must return to behind the jack when the bowl has been delivered and not after it has come to rest. The relevant law is 12.1.3 as follows:

Law 12.1.3

As soon as a bowl is delivered, a player who is controlling play from a position that is either level with or in front of the jack, must take their position as described in law 12.1.2.

This goes on to say:

12.1.2 Players at the head-end of the rink and who are not controlling play must stand:

12.1.2.1 behind the jack if they are members of the team which is in possession of the rink;

12.1.2.2 behind the jack and away from the head if they are members of the team which is not in possession of the rink;

12.1.2.3 on the surrounds of the green if the jack is in the ditch; or

12.1.2.4 well clear of the head if it is not possible to stand on the surrounds. Any breach of this could result in a penalty being imposed for rink possession if the opponent is annoyed, interfered with or distracted by that players position.



Credit: Allen Simms/Bowls International

Please submit any question about the Commonwealth Games or the laws of the sport and I will be happy to answer them