



An insight into marking

The marker is a crucial match official. Marking is an 'art' and like all other arts will take time to master. A good marker will make a game whilst a bad marker can ruin a game so the players have a right to expect the best standards you can reach.

You will see from Law 42 – Duties of the marker that there are several mentions of measuring, marking touchers and positions in the ditch and indicating to spectators the situation in the head.

This leads us to understand that a marker will need to be carrying some important equipment to allow them the carry out those duties. Ideally, we want to keep the number of items being carried to an absolute minimum. Carry too much and you will be dropping things all over the rink, carry too little and you will need to keep returning to the bank or your kit to retrieve it.

Normally you will only need the following items:

- Chalk spray. To avoid moving a bowl when marking it as a toucher, chalk sprays are preferred to a stick of chalk
- A box measure, which should ideally be carried in a pocket or fastened securely to a belt.
- Three or four wedges
- A pen or pencil is essential for completing the scorecard (a pencil is better if it is raining).
- A coin to toss for start of the game or start of sets and tie-breaks.
- Wristwatch with a second hand or digital second timer just in case a player asks for the 30 second rule to be applied.
- Lollipops or shot indicators if required by the governing body
- A scorecard holder can also be carried but ensure it does not fall out of your pocket when you bend. Also, avoid carrying the scorecard holder in your hand during the game as you will have enough to worry about

Top:
To avoid moving a bowl when marking it as a toucher, chalk sprays are preferred to a stick of chalk

Middle:
A marker should always carry three or four wedges

Bottom:
Lollipops are used to indicate the number of shots scored on an end

Do not carry items that could easily get displaced or will become a distraction, for example:

- Small change mixed in with a handkerchief. A quick sneeze and there could be coins all over the bowling green.
- Wallets and purses should not be carried – lock them away.
- Mobile 'phones should never be carried on the green. Switch them off and lock them away.

Finally, ensure all necessary equipment such as additional wedges, string measures, long tape, callipers and feeler gauges are available and to hand in an umpire's kit, in order to maintain the flow of the game. This is not necessary when an official umpire is present of course.

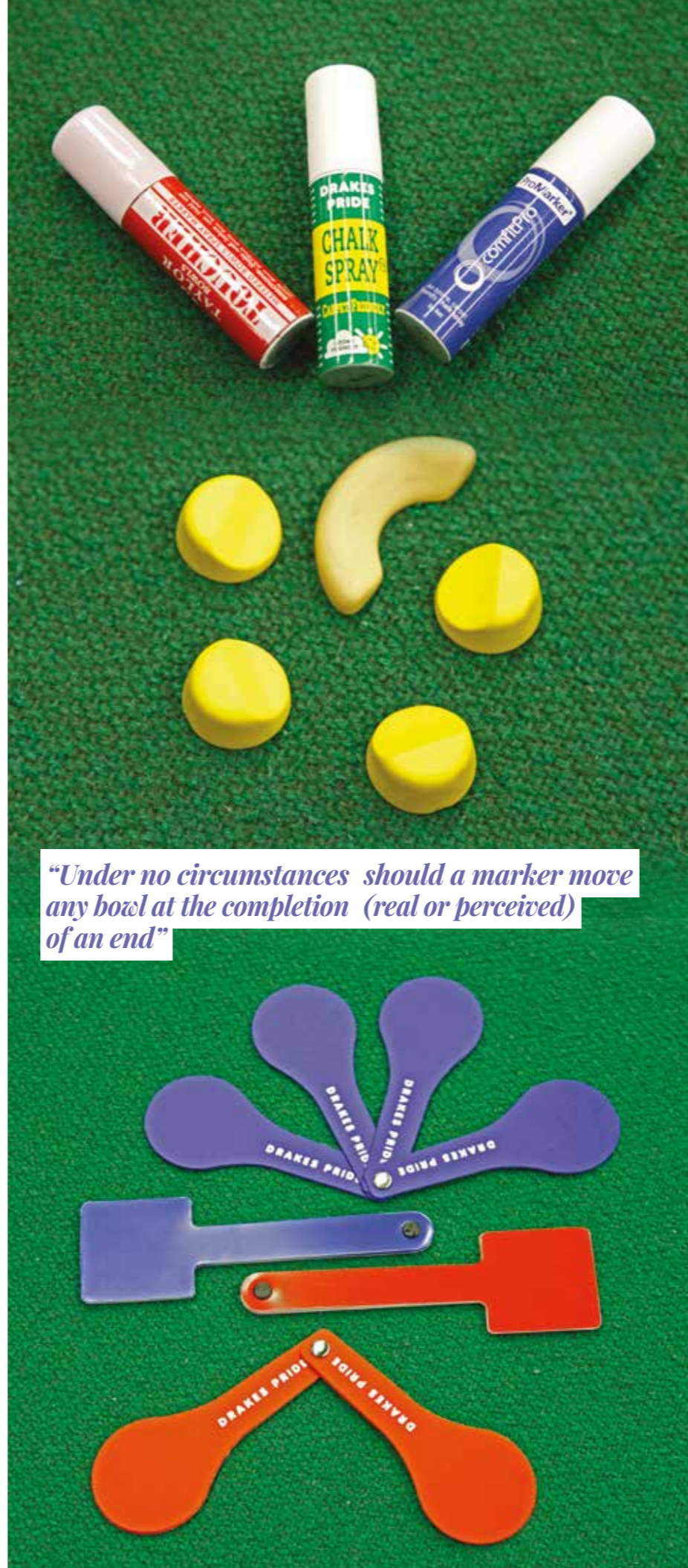
As a marker, it is your duty to ensure that the jack is delivered to at least 23 metres at the start of each end.

Last month, we discussed the use of the long tape and you may be expected to conduct this measure with the help of the players, or to assist an umpire conducting this measure.

At the completion of an end, keep out of the head while both players agree the result.

Under no circumstances should a marker move any bowl at the completion (real or perceived) of an end. If you are asked to measure ensure that you know which bowls you are being asked to measure, and request the players remove, where practicable, all bowls not in contention. Don't measure unless you are asked.

Have wedges to hand if there is a leaning bowl that may be in the count, and wedge before measuring, remembering that if one of the players requests it, 30 seconds must



“Under no circumstances should a marker move any bowl at the completion (real or perceived) of an end”

first lapse from the time the last bowl came to rest. This request applies to any bowl in the head and not just to the last one that was delivered.

If a measure is too close for your tape or you cannot decide the shot, call the umpire. You may be asked to assist the umpire with the measure if the jack is in the ditch or the distance between the jack and bowls is too big for one person to manage. At some events, the marker may not be required to measure any shots if umpires are present. This is generally at the discretion of the controlling body. However, remember that the players have the right to measure for shots before any one and so may ask to borrow your measure.

If you are asked to measure, only indicate the bowl you believe is shot after completing your measure. Do not move it as the players may wish to call an umpire for confirmation.

Position yourself about three-four metres in front of the head and wait for the umpire to complete the measure. As soon as the shot is declared, you can make your way to the other end of the rink, showing the result with lollipops if required.

Finding time to complete the scorecard can be a challenge especially with fast players. This is where your routine on the rink is important.

Never write the card walking up the rink. If you do that routinely when marking and then you are given a set of lollipops to use to mark a final, you will not be able to mark the card as you would normally. It is very difficult to walk and write neatly at the same time without sauntering and delaying players and to put it bluntly, if you cannot remember a number between one and four from the time you leave the head to reaching the other end of the rink, then I would suggest you are not concentrating. There should be ample time to complete the card when the jack and the first bowl are on their way up the rink.

To inexperienced markers, the use of shot indicators or lollipops can be a daunting prospect during a game. It is important to get into a routine when marking so that the basic requirements become second nature and any additional task thrown at you such as using shot indicators will not throw your normal rhythm.

As I mentioned at the beginning, marking is an 'art' and takes practise so volunteer as much as possible to hone your skills. Attend a locally arranged markers course to learn more about the relevant laws and the tips and tricks for marking well.

LAW 42

- 42.1** In the absence of an umpire, the marker must:
- 42.1.1** make sure that all aspects of play are carried out in line with the Laws of the Sport of Bowls;
- 42.1.2** make sure, before the game starts, that:
- 42.1.2.1** all bowls have a clearly visible, valid World Bowls Stamp imprinted on them;
- 42.1.2.2** the rink of play is the correct width in line with law 49.1 by measuring it; and
- 42.1.2.3** the pegs or discs on the side banks in the direction of play are the correct distances in line with law 49.12 by measuring them.
- 42.2** The marker must:
- 42.2.1** check the mat is placed on the centre line of the rink;
- 42.2.2** centre the jack;
- 42.2.3** make sure that the jack is at least 23 metres from the mat line after it has been centred;
- 42.2.4** place a jack that comes to rest less than 2 metres from the front ditch as described in law 9.2;
- 42.2.5** stand to one side of the rink, behind the jack and away from the head;
- 42.2.6** answer any specific question about the state of the head which is asked by the player in possession of the rink;
- 42.2.7** when asked, tell or show the player in possession of the rink the position of the jack;
- 42.2.8** when asked, tell or show the player in possession of the rink which bowl or bowls the marker considers to be shot;
- 42.2.9** when authorised by the Controlling Body, signal to players and spectators (using the appropriate number and colour of shot indicators or some other suitable method) which player's bowl or bowls the marker considers to be shot;
- 42.2.10** mark all touchers with chalk and remove the chalk marks from non-touchers as soon as they come to rest;
- 42.2.11** stop any bowl that is from a neighbouring rink and could move a jack or bowl that is at rest;
- 42.2.12** if both players agree, remove all dead bowls from the rink of play;
- 42.2.13** mark the position of a jack and any touchers which are in the ditch as described in laws 14.4 and 18.2;
- 42.2.14** not move, or cause to be moved, either the jack or any bowls until the players have agreed the number of shots scored; and
- 42.2.15** measure any disputed shot or shots when asked to do so by either player. If the players are not satisfied with the marker's decision, the marker must ask the umpire to do the measuring. If the Controlling Body has not appointed an umpire, the marker must choose a competent neutral person to act as the umpire. The umpire's decision is final.
- 42.3** When each end has been completed, the marker must:
- 42.3.1** record the score on the score card;
- 42.3.2** if scoreboards are not being used, tell the players the running totals of the scores; and
- 42.3.3** remove from the rink the mat used during the previous end, if necessary.
- 42.4** When the game has been completed, the marker must make sure that the score card:
- 42.4.1** contains the names and signatures of the players;
- 42.4.2** contains the time at which the game was completed; and
- 42.4.3** is dealt with in line with the Conditions of Play.