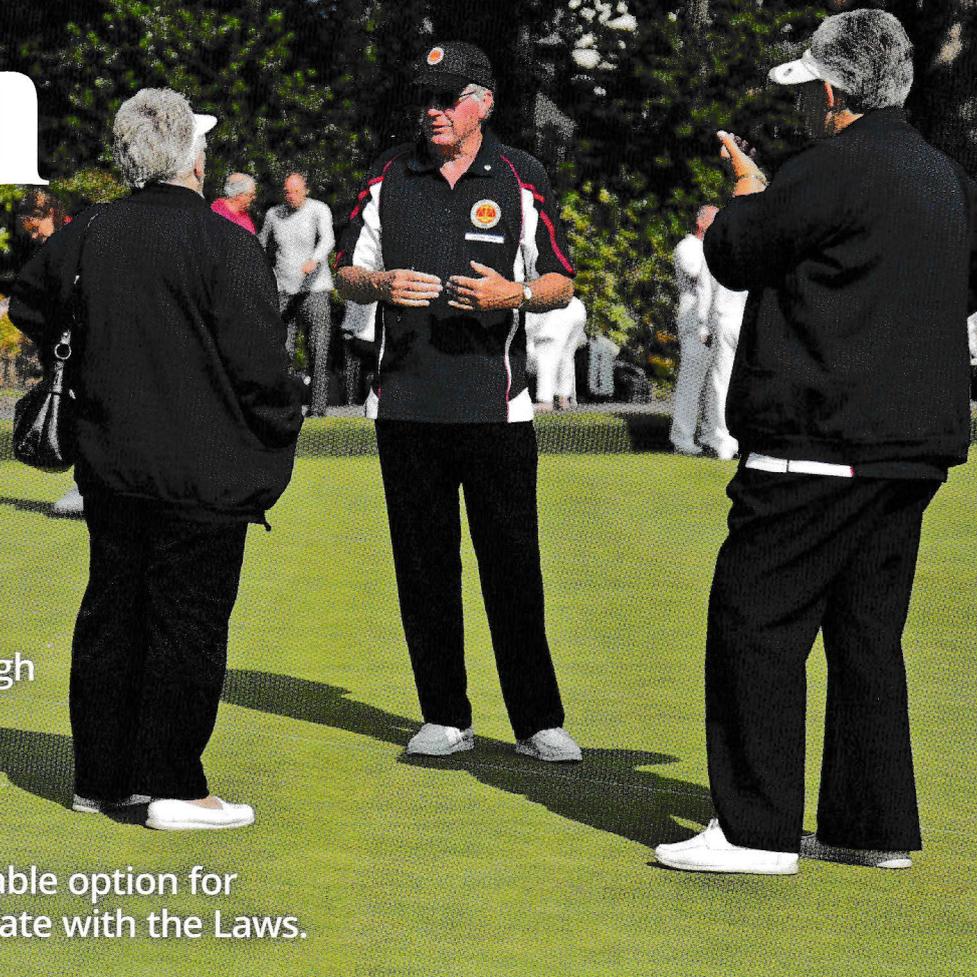




# Ask Allan

As some sense of normality has started to return to our greens over the past couple of months, I thought it was a good time to review the past 18 months and look forward to getting back to officiating again. Like players, the lockdowns have been tough for Umpires and Markers, unable to practice their skills and in many cases unable to complete their qualifications. The only viable option for many was to keep up to date with the Laws.



In the first lockdown last year I decided to try running a virtual questions and answer session on Facebook and Zoom. The first couple were reasonably successful and so I planned to run them fortnightly.

I started to invite umpire colleagues and players and these proved popular providing a different dimension to the questions.

Social media has played a key role in keeping us all in contact in the past 18 months or so. Some interesting groups have been established for players and officials to chat, question and seek answers to those tricky scenarios.

They have provided a valuable resource for discussion for both newcomers to the sport and seasoned pros alike.

I would hope they have established a decent forum for continued discussion as we return to the greens and some of those scenarios are played out for real.

These online discussions have highlighted how important it is for players to have a basic understanding of the fundamental laws in order to avoid challenging situations on the green.

## KEEPING UP TO DATE

I thought it would be interesting to run a quick poll on one of the Facebook groups to see how many people actually had a copy of the laws available and I was quite astonished.

Of the 300 responses, 56 per cent of people owned a hardcopy of the Law Book which, in the majority of countries, is the 3rd edition.

Twenty-one per cent of people had downloaded a copy of the latest edition (3.2) from the World Bowls Website but 24 per cent didn't have any copy available to them. For the price of a drink or a posh coffee it is worth getting a copy of the law book and keeping it in your bowls bag.

Indeed it can be even cheaper than that if you head over to the World Bowls website and download a PDF copy free of charge and keep it on your phone.

As the world begins to open up again, competition play has started and there is a need for umpires and markers. Many are awaiting re-qualification or are just starting on their journey as officials and not had the opportunity to take their qualifications yet. There will inevitably be a backlog but now is an ideal time to get out on the rinks and practice in preparation for any assessments and examinations.

World Bowls has recently held several International Technical Official accreditation processes in

Australia, Scotland and England. The timing of these has been crucial to allow those that have been unable to requalify, and new candidates, the opportunity to do so before the selection process begins for the Commonwealth Games.

To those that were successful in their accreditations may I offer my congratulations.

**“It is important for players to have a basic understanding of the fundamental laws in order to avoid challenging situations on the green.”**

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



With so much online activity over the past few months there were a wide variety of questions posted. I thought I would select and answer a couple of them here...

**QUESTION:** In a competition, if the skip decides to 'take' the one shot he believes he holds before delivering the final bowl but on a measure the shot is against him, is that the end of the end or can the skip still bowl their final delivery?

**ANSWER:** There are a couple of laws that will apply here, firstly we take a look at when measuring can be carried out:

Laws 23.3 No measuring (that is, the use of equipment, such as that described in law 54, placed between the jack and bowls to decide which bowls are shot) will be allowed before the process of deciding the number of shots scored starts (as described in law 23.1).

If a player measures before the process of deciding the number of shots scored starts, the defaulting team will lose the right to play any bowls remaining to be played in that end and the non-defaulting team will deliver their remaining bowls to complete the end.

We can then look at Law 25 Delivering the final bowl of an end:

It is not compulsory for the last player to play in any end to deliver the final bowl of the end, but the player must tell the opposing skip or opponent in singles of the decision not to deliver the final bowl before the process of deciding the number of shots scored starts (as described in law 23.1).

So in the question asked, the skip loses the right to deliver their final bowl as measuring had been started.

***"The skip loses the right to deliver their final bowl as measuring had been started."***

**QUESTION:** In a recent match the opposing skip constantly moved from side to side to stand in a position either side of the Jack to give his player on the mat a 'visual' guide on their required line so as to arrive at the head as close to the centre/jack line. I believe this to be an infringement of the laws but have been unable to confirm this. As far as I am aware they are only permitted to assist by placing perhaps their foot at a point to give that player on the mat an idea of the length of the Jack that may be obscured by bowls in the head. Am I correct with this?

**ANSWER:** Well, the actions of the skip are perfectly acceptable. The relevant law to allow this is Law 12 in particular the following:

- **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. which states the following:
- **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.

If you have any questions you would like answered, please feel free to write in and I will be happy to reply in future issues.