

English Bowling Federation Rules 2024/5

Laws of the game (outdoor)

It should be appreciated that no Code of Laws governing a game has yet achieved such perfection as to cope with every situation. The Code of Laws governing bowls is no exception. Unusual incidents not definitely provided for in Laws frequently occur. It is well, therefore, to remember that the Laws have been framed in the belief that true sportsmanship will prevail; that in the absence of any express Law common sense will find a way to complete a happy solution to a knotty problem. The reference in these Laws to he, or his do not imply male exclusivity, but apply equally to both males and females.

I DEFINITIONS

1. "Skip" means the player who, for the time being, is in charge of the head on behalf of the Rink.
2. "Rink" means a combination of three players, whose positions in order of playing are named Lead, Second, and Skip.
3. "Team" means any agreed number of Rinks.
4. "Bowl in Course" means a bowl from the time of its delivery until it comes to rest.
5. "End" means the placing of the mat, delivering the jack and all bowls of all the players in the same direction on a rink, and determining the result of the head.
6. "Head" means the jack and such bowls as have come to rest within the boundary of the rink and are not dead.
7. "Mat Line" means the edge of the mat which is nearest to the front ditch. From the centre of the mat line all necessary measurements to jack or bowls shall be taken.
8. "Master Bowl" means a bowl which has been approved by the World Bowls Board as having the minimum bias required, as well as in all other respects complying with the Laws of the Game and is engraved with the words "Master Bowl".
9. "Jack High" means the nearest portion of the bowl referred to is in line with and at the same distance from the mat line as the nearest portion of the jack.
10. "Pace of Green" means the number of seconds taken by a bowl from the time of delivery to the moment it comes to rest approximately 27 m from the mat line.

II THE GREEN, DITCH, BANK AND DIVISION OF THE GREEN

1 The Standard Green - Area and Surface

The Standard Green shall be of not less than 34m nor more than 40m in length in the direction of play; it shall be level and shall have a natural grass playing surface or a synthetic surface approved by the English Bowling Federation, and shall be provided with suitable boundaries in the form of a ditch and bank.

2 Play on the Standard Green

All County and National finals and all inter-county matches (other than the Durham Centenary Trophy play-off matches) shall be played on the Standard Green.

3 The Ditch

The Green shall be surrounded by a ditch which shall have an internal surface which is non-injurious to bowls, and shall be free of obstacles, The ditch shall be not less than 200 mm nor more than 380 mm wide, and shall not be less than 50 mm nor more than 200 mm deep below the level of the Green.

4 The Bank

The bank shall be not less than 230mm above the level of the Green, preferably upright, or alternatively at an angle of not more than 35 degrees from the perpendicular. The surface of the face of the bank shall be non-injurious to bowls, and no steps likely to interfere with play shall be cut in the bank.

5 Division of the Green

The green shall be divided into spaces called rinks, each not more than 6.4 m nor less than 4.8 m wide. They shall be numbered consecutively, the centre line of each rink being marked on the bank at each end by a pin or other suitable device. The four corners of the rinks shall be marked by narrow strips of suitable white material fixed to the face of the bank. The corner strips may be connected by a string drawn tightly across the surface of the Green, If used the string shall be of such a thickness that it cannot influence the movement of a bowl or jack and must not be lifted while a bowl is in motion. The outer boundary mark of an outside rink shall be placed at least 61 cm from the side ditch. White strips or discs shall be fixed on the side bank to indicate clear distances of 2 m, 4 m, and 25 m respectively from the ditch on the line of play.

6 Permissible Variation of Laws II.1 and II.5

- (a) A county association is permitted to use a green shorter than 34m in the direction of play for domestic games within the county.
- (b) A County Association is permitted to divide a green into rinks with a minimum width of 4m for domestic games within the county.
- (c) County bowling associations may dispense with the use of boundary strings for domestic games.
- (d) The words "domestic games" used within this section shall be construed to mean any game which is not a county final, a National final, or an Inter-County match, such "domestic games" shall, therefore, include any round of a National Competition which is not a County final.

III BOWLS, JACK, MAT

1 **"A Set of Bowls"** means four bowls, all of a matched set, which are of the same manufacture, and are of the same size, weight, colour bias, and where applicable, serial number and engraving; only bowls from the same set may be used

2 (a) **Composition bowls** shall have a bias of not less than that of the master-bowl.

(b) The re-stamping of composition bowls is dispensed with for all games played under Federation Laws and Rules; composition bowls must, however, bear a clearly legible WB/WBB/IBB or BIBC stamp dated 1985 or later.

3 Non-composition bowls must bear a clearly legible WB/WBB/IBB or BIBC stamp of a date not earlier than the date of the year in which they are being used.

4 Any objection to the bias of bowls must be made not later than the sixth end of a match.

5 In all inter-County matches the umpire shall examine all bowls for stamping prior to the commencement of play; in the absence of an umpire the skips will be responsible for examining their opponents' bowls.

6 In all competitions if no umpire is present at a county match or competition, players must examine their opponents' bowls prior to play.

7 (a) Players may be permitted to temporarily affix not more than one set of adhesive markings to each of their bowls in any competition match; any such temporary markings shall be regarded as part of the bowls for all purposes under these Laws.

(b) No other marking except for the decorative painting of dimples and rings or device other than those incorporated by the bowls manufacturer shall be allowed.

8 The jack shall be made of white or yellow earthenware or other material approved by the Federation, and be of a diameter of not less than 63 mm, nor more than 64 mm, and shall weigh not less than 225 gm nor more than 285 gm.

9 The mat shall be of a definite size. namely 600 mm long and 360 mm wide.

IV ARRANGEMENT OF PLAY

1 Lead

In a Rinks match:

(a) The lead whose turn it is to cast the jack shall place the mat correctly.

(b) He shall cast the jack according to his skip's instructions, and whilst standing on the mat give instructions to his skip for centring the jack,

(c) After delivering his bowls he shall remain behind the mat until both seconds have delivered all their bowls.

In a Pairs match:

(d) Laws IV.1 (a) and IV.1 (b) also apply to the lead in a pairs match.

(e) The lead shall not visit the head, and shall remain behind the lie of the mat until both leads have delivered all their bowls.

(f) He shall take charge of the head only when his skip is in possession of the rink.

(g) He shall inform his skip if the head has been altered, and direct his skip's play accordingly.

(h) When his skip is at the playing or mat end the lead at the opposite end shall remove any bowl that is bowled into the ditch or is moved there by the effects of play. If the jack is moved into the ditch the lead shall indicate its position with an appropriate marker and ensure that the jack is not disturbed.

(i) He shall agree the shots and inform his skip of the score so that it may be recorded on the scorecard.

(j) He shall prove his claim for shots by measuring, if necessary; his claim to any shot shall be agreed before the bowl is moved, and he shall allow the opposing lead the opportunity of measuring also.

(k) If both leads cannot agree, they shall call their skips to adjudicate.

2 Second

(a) The second shall bowl strictly to his skip's instructions.

(b) He shall not visit the head, and shall remain behind the lie of the mat until both seconds have delivered all their bowls.

(c) He shall take charge of the head only when his skip is in possession of the rink.

(d) He shall inform his skip if the head has been altered, and direct his skip's play accordingly.

(e) When his skip is at the playing or mat end the second at the opposite end shall remove any bowl that is bowled into the ditch or is moved there by the effects of play. If the jack is moved into the ditch the second shall indicate its position with an appropriate marker and ensure that the jack is not disturbed.

(f) He shall agree the shots and record them on the scorecard, and inform his skip of the score.

(g) He shall prove his claim for shots by measuring, if necessary; his claim to any shot shall be agreed before the bowl is moved, and he shall allow the opposing second the opportunity of measuring also.

(h) If both seconds cannot agree, they shall call their skips to adjudicate.

3 Skip

(a) The skip shall take charge of his Rink, and his instructions must be obeyed by the other players.

(b) He shall control the play, but he may delegate this duty to his lead or second.

(c) He may also delegate some or all of the duties of his second to his lead.

(d) When he is at the head he shall remove any bowl that is bowled into the ditch or is moved there by the effects of play. If the jack is moved into the ditch the skip shall indicate its position with an appropriate marker and ensure that the jack is not disturbed.

(e) The two skips shall be the judges of all disputed shots, and whether the jack or a bowl is in or out of play, and when they agree their decision is final. If they cannot agree they shall call the umpire, whose decision is final. In the absence of an appointed umpire a neutral person, mutually agreed, shall adjudicate.

4 Non-playing Captain

When on duty, the non-playing captain shall:

(a) Wear match-dress.

(b) Be responsible, with his opposite number for drawing of rinks as described in Law V.1

(c) Ensure that his players are in match dress and in attendance at the green before the agreed time of commencement of the match.

(d) Ensure that his players have their bowls on the green for inspection not later than twenty minutes before the time of commencement of the match.

(e) On no account go on to the green; all his duties during the match shall be done from the bank.

(f) Carry out any consultations with his team through the skips only, but on no account may he interfere while an end is in progress.