



## **Dorking Bowling Club**

### **Guide to Etiquette On and Off the Green**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Joining a new club or starting a new sport can be a daunting experience so, to help new bowlers know how the Club operates, we have highlighted some guidance to simplify and smooth the settling in process.

#### **2. DRESS CODE**

Dress code is, and always will be, associated with the game of bowls.

- When bowling, flat-soled shoes must be worn on the green at all times. Heels will damage the green.
- The Club dress code when bowling is described in the DBC Club Bylaws but is generally Greys below the waist and a White shirt, with collar, or a Club Shirt.
- Tailored shorts are allowed but multi-pocketed shorts are not.
- See later for the Dress Code for matches shown in the Fixture List.

#### **3. BASIC ETIQUETTE**

- For Organised Roll Ups and Home Matches – always arrive in plenty of time. Help in setting up the green will be appreciated and your efforts remembered, as will turning up late.
- Mobile Phones should be turned OFF on and around the green.
- Smoking at Dorking BC is not allowed on the green. Never dispose of stub ends around the green. There are bins for these. Other clubs may have differing restrictions and these should be observed.
- Step on to the green sideways thus reducing the risk of your foot slipping if the grass is damp and avoids damage to the green.

- Players should not run on the green at anytime.
- Do not drop your bowls on to the green before play. It may damage the green and it could be your bowl that is deflected by your carelessness.
- Greet your own team members and opponents at the start of the game and congratulate or compliment them at the end of play. Shaking hands before a match and after the last end is a gesture of sportsmanship whether you have won or lost.
- Difficult as it may be when introduced to your opposing team, try and remember the name of your opposite number as you shake hands.
- When bowling, ensure that you deliver the bowl correctly and smoothly so that you do not damage the green otherwise you risk embarrassing your team members and cause resentment from the opposition.
- In competitive games you toss for the mat; in “friendly” matches it is customary to give the mat to the visiting team.
- Be aware of other games that are in progress. You may disturb players by moving on your rink while others are bowling.
- During the game do not move around or behind the player preparing or delivering their bowl, or while observing the head, as this can distract the bowler’s attention.
- Stand still behind the mat when a bowl is being delivered and, at the head, stand still and clear allowing the bowl to come to rest without having to jump out of the way.
- If standing at the head, please position yourself with consideration for the bowler who may be using the rink or boundary markers behind you as their aiming line or reference. Do not stand in such a position that your shadow falls on or around the jack.
- Do not talk prior to, or during, a bowl being delivered by a player. Commenting that their bowl is short, long, wide, narrow is not helpful as they probably realise this as soon as the bowl left their hand and don’t need reminding. Of course, acknowledging a well delivered bowl is acceptable and is encouraged whether delivered from your, or by your opponent’s, team.
- As soon as each bowl has come to rest, possession of the rink is transferred to the other team, time being allowed for marking a ‘toucher’ or a bowl removed from the ditch that is not a ‘toucher’.
- A ‘toucher’ is a bowl that on delivery touches the jack. It is then marked with chalk. Only the bowl being delivered can become a toucher. If a bowl already on the green

is subsequently knocked into the jack by another bowl, it does not become a toucher.

- Any bowl that goes into the ditch is removed for that end unless it is a toucher, in which case it stays in the ditch as a 'live' bowl for that end.
- If the jack is knocked into the ditch, it stays in the ditch for that end. Any bowl that is subsequently delivered into the ditch, and touches the jack in the ditch, does not become a toucher and is removed.
- After you have delivered a bowl, and before it has come to rest, you have 2 options.
  - a) If you want to track your bowl's progress you must be behind the head as it stops. In other words you must beat it to the head.
  - b) If you don't go to the head, you must be on or behind the mat as your bowl stops.
- All the players on a rink, when not directly involved at the bowling end, must stand not less than one metre behind the mat.
- Whilst at the head, those who are not directly involved with the play at any given time are required to stand behind the jack and away from the head. If the Skip, or a player who is controlling the head, is in front of the jack they must retreat behind the jack as soon as a bowl is delivered.
- Where there is no space beyond the green for players, they are required to stand well away from the head when bowls are being delivered. If you do not observe these requirements you could be penalised under the 'Possession of the Rink' law.
- Bowls should not be kicked out until the shots have been decided.
- If your opponent is the last to bowl it is courteous to pick up their mat and place on the bank but do wait for them to get off!
- If you have lost the end it is also courteous to pick up and give the jack to the opposition for them to cast the jack.
- Whether you have won or lost an end, it is courteous to assist the losing lead in collecting all the bowls.
- Spectators should refrain from walking past a head when a bowler is on the mat. They should wait for the bowl to be delivered before moving.
- After a match at Dorking help to put away the equipment and not leave it to others.
- Drinking glasses should be taken back to the bar after the game.

- When playing in a club roll up or internal match and you are on the winning team, it is courteous to offer your opponent a drink after the game.
- When playing a match at Dorking against another club, offer your opponent a drink after the game and stay with him/her and socialise. When playing at other clubs you should be offered this courtesy as a matter of course. When the round is finished you then offer them a drink.
- If a marker has been used in a singles game, you should offer him/her a drink.
- Bowling is a friendly game and all players should always show courtesy and good sportsmanship.
- All bowlers should have a basic knowledge of the rules of bowls. A guide has been produced for this purpose and we would encourage both new and existing bowlers to read it.

#### **4. PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE FOR MATCHES AGAINST CLUBS**

Each week throughout the season we play a variety of matches against other clubs. Some are men only, some ladies only and some mixed. Both men and ladies play in league matches as well as 'friendlies' and we also play 'mixed matches' which are very popular. You will receive a copy of the season's Fixture List when you become a member.

Don't be afraid to put your name down for these because you think that you are not good enough. You should enter your name on the yellow sheets that advertise matches. These are in the glass cabinets on the walls outside the Visitors' Changing Rooms.

Selection for the forthcoming matches is made by the Match Selection Team on a Monday at 5.00 p.m. Details of the teams selected are then posted on match sheets and exhibited in the glass cabinets outside of the Visitors Changing Rooms. A photo of the match sheet will also be posted on the club website. If you have been chosen, it is your responsibility to:

- 1) Visit the club as soon as possible and tick off your name to indicate that you have seen that you are playing and to confirm availability.
- 2) For Away Matches, indicate with a clear letter 'D' against your name if you are driving direct to the ground either by yourself or with someone else. If there is no letter 'D' against your name, the Captain-of-the-Day will expect you to be waiting at our clubhouse at the prescribed departure time (on the match sheet) for a lift.
- 3) If you later find you are unavailable to bowl, you should notify the appropriate Club Captain as soon as possible by phone.

If you have a car and are going direct to the away ground, be prepared to offer a lift to others. The team sheet will show the time that cars will leave the club. It does not help you

or your team if you arrive late. If you are being given a lift, it is appreciated if something is offered towards the cost of petrol.

Don't be disappointed if you have not been selected. There may be many reasons for this and it is not based on ability. Being a reserve for one match may increase your chances of being selected in the next match. The selectors try to give everybody an equal opportunity to play so please put your name down.

All players representing the club must wear similar clothing to achieve a common club image. A player must always conform to the designated dress code that appears in the fixture list and on the team selection sheets. This is normally:

1. Greys' (G) – grey below the waste + white shirt; or
2. Whites (W) – white below waist + white shirt.
3. A CS (G/CS or W/CS) indicates club coloured shirts must be worn with grey or white below waist as appropriate

Men and ladies should observe the dress code after a match, including for any refreshment, and you should not change into informal clothing as this is considered disrespectful to the hosting home team.

Playing shoes are brown, grey or white with no heels.

A Diary of Fixtures throughout the season, that includes the post code for away matches, can also be found on the Club's website under the Members Area – [www.dorkingbowlingclub.co.uk](http://www.dorkingbowlingclub.co.uk)

## 5. TYPES OF GAMES

In all formats, before play starts, one player tosses a coin (the challenger) and one player from the opposite side calls. The winner of the toss can choose whether to start first or allow the opponent to start the game by positioning the mat and casting the jack.

The game consists of a number of ends. Each 'end' consists of the delivery of the jack, the delivery of all the bowls required to be played by all of the opponents in the same direction, and then the deciding of the number of shots scored on that end.

The winner of each end must start the next end. If extra ends are required to decide the match the coin should be tossed again and the winner has the choice to start the end and start with possession of the rink or allow the opponent to start the end

**SINGLES** - 4 bowls each player – the winner is the first to score 21 shots. A Marker is needed for competitive matches, to keep score and measure, as well as for centring the jack. Each player bowls one bowl alternately until all 4 of their bowls have been delivered.

**PAIRS** - 2 teams of 2 players – 4 bowls each . Team to score the most after a fixed number of ends wins – traditionally 21 . This game is played by two teams – a Lead and a Skip. The Leads bowl alternately until all their bowls are delivered and then the Skips do the same.

**TRIPLES** - 2 teams of 3 players – 3 bowls each. The team to score most shots after 18 ends wins. This game is played by two teams consisting of 3 players – a Lead, a Second and a Skip. Each player has 3 bowls. The Leads each bowl 1 bowl alternately until all their bowls have been delivered followed by the Seconds and finally the Skips.

**FOURS or RINKS** - 2 teams of 4 players – 2 bowls each. The team to score most shots after 21 ends wins . This game is frequently referred to as Rinks. This game is played by 2 teams consisting of 4 players – a Lead, a Second, a Third and a Skip. Each player has 2 bowls. The Leads each bowl 1 bowl alternately until all their bowls have been delivered followed by Seconds, Thirds and finally the Skips.

## **6. THE ROLE OF EACH PLAYER IN A MATCH**

A game of Fours (or Rinks) is played by two teams each consisting of 4 players who are called a Lead, a Second, a Third and a Skip. Every member of a team has their role.

- Lead has a very important role to cast the jack to the length that the Skip may prefer. This may be to the advantage of their own team or to the disadvantage of the opposition. It is also their role, if their team loses an end, to collect the bowls at the completion of the end.
- Second to improve the position of the head. Also for home matches, update the scoreboard when the Skip is at the other end.
- Third (or three) to further improve the position of the head as instructed by the Skip. They also give advice to the Skip on position of the bowls whilst the Skip is on the mat. This is only usually done after the Skip has delivered his/her first bowl or has specifically asked for information.
- After the last bowl has been delivered by the Skip, the Thirds from each team decide and come to an agreement on the number of shots that are scored. If they are unable to decide on whether a bowl or bowls count, the Thirds will carry out measuring. If one bowl has been agreed as the shot bowl, it is normal for the Third, who is not holding shot bowl, to measure. A decision on whether a bowl counts must be reached by mutual verbal agreement. No bowl should be removed from the head until verbal permission or agreement between the Thirds has been reached. Other players at the head should stand aside, to allow the Thirds to complete this task.

- If agreement cannot be reached a Marker or Umpire, if available, should be called to measure and decide. If none is available then the players may ask an independent person. All players should retire to the edge or off the rink completely while measuring takes place.
- Skip – the Skip shall have sole charge of his team and his instructions shall be observed by his/her players. With the opposing Skip he/she shall decide all disputed points and, when both agree, their decision shall be final. As in all cases, if agreement cannot be reached, the advice of a Marker or Umpire should be sought.
- When each end is complete, the two Skips shall agree the score and enter the shots on the score card. This task cannot be delegated to another player.
- A Skip may, at any time, delegate his powers or any of his duties to other members of his team provided that such delegation is notified to the opposing Skip with the exception of keeping the score card.

In all team games it is the Skip's job to direct the play. It is ok for a player to question a shot (usually using hand signals) if they are uncertain about it. However the player should always play the shot then directed by the Skip even if they disagree, as the Skip has the best view of the head.

In Rinks the Third should direct the Skip when required to do so. In Triples or Pairs the Second or Lead may do this. .

If the Skip has requested advice from the Third on the position of bowls, or how they should best deliver their bowl, this is done for a reason. The Third should be the sole person that communicates from the head with the Skip, when the Skip has the mat. The Lead and Second should stand back behind the head.

The Skip and Third are usually the most experienced players on the team and it is incumbent on them to help develop less experienced players during play. This can involve brief discussion of possible shots and outcomes as well as being open to a question. Arguing within the team however causes confusion and delay and is counter-productive.

A good Skip should know the strengths and weaknesses of his team members. NO player intentionally delivers a bad bowl and knows that he has not delivered the bowl that he intended. The Skip should encourage players to do better on their next shot and guide them as to how the shot might be played to achieve the required result.

It does not help the morale or confidence of team members to be in receipt of Skips who comment for the whole of the green to hear ..."Short Again".... "2 yards".... "3 yards" – or sighs and turns away in despair.