

# Kirby Muxloe Bowls Club

## Etiquette for the Game of Bowls Made Simple.

### 1) Introduction

Many older players will say that twenty or thirty years ago much more attention was paid to bowling green etiquette; however, lawn bowls remains one of the few sports, probably alongside golf, where common courtesy and etiquette is still prevalent. We should be proud of this and in order to make the game as enjoyable as possible bowling green etiquette should be promoted to members old and new. Much of this is common sense but here are some of the main guidelines of etiquette.

Bowling is a friendly game and all players and spectators should show courtesy, good manners and sportsmanship. Encourage team members, especially new bowlers to the sport.

Please note that some of these guidelines are as locally applied to Kirby Muxloe Bowls Club. Other clubs may have different views on this.

### 2) Dress Code

Dress appropriately and ensure that you know the dress code for each game or match in which you are participating (looking at the team sheet will help here). Do not show disrespect for your opponent(s) by arriving late, ensure that you leave sufficient time to change before the game. If you are representing the club on another green you should remember that you are a representative and ambassador for Kirby Muxloe Bowls Club. So, dress and behave appropriately.

### 3) Play

Mobile Phones shall **not** be used on or around the green. At least switch them to silent.

Smoking and drinking (especially alcohol) is **not** allowed **on** the green.

Do **not** walk or bowl across rinks that other people are using or going to use.

Do **not** sit on the banks while waiting to play. It is not the banks that are the main problem as most will withstand some abuse. However, players sitting on the banks tend to place their feet on the edge of the green which can cause damage.

Introduce yourself and shake hands with your opponent(s) both before play commences and after the game is complete.

Do **not** delay the game unnecessarily.

Bad Language shall **not** be tolerated on or around the green - the Club's Code of Conduct is clear on this point.

Never criticise your opponent, the Green, or your own team members. If you cannot say something positive – say nothing at all.

### 4) The Head

Do **not** move around the head when your opponent or fellow team member is about to deliver his/her bowl.

Stand well back from the head (at least 2M behind the jack), keep quiet and do not do anything that would be distracting. Wait until the bowl has been delivered before moving.

If you are at the same end as the player delivering a bowl you **must** stand behind the mat thus staying out of the player's line of vision.

Some players like to see the rink centre and boundary markers while playing, so make sure you are not obscuring them.

On sunny days you **must** ensure your shadow does not fall on the jack.

Spectators who are in the player's line of vision should also keep still while bowls are being delivered and they **must not** distract players on the green.

If you have to leave the green, for whatever reason, check that you are **not** walking across the ends of rinks where players are going to bowl. Use the paths around the green, do **not** walk across the green itself.

Bowls should **not** be moved until the number of counting shots has been agreed.

## 5) Bowling

Do **not** deliberately drop/throw your bowls onto the green and ensure that your delivery is not causing scuff/divot marks which could cause damage to the green. Do **not** be surprised if the decision is made to put the weather mats down in order to protect the green.

The Lead shall place the mat and shall deliver the Jack ensuring that the Jack is properly centred before playing his/her first bowl.

Observe the rules for possession of the rink! Possession of the rink/mat shall belong to the team whose bowl is to be played. The player in Possession of the rink for the time being shall not be interfered with, annoyed, or have their attention distracted in any way by their opponents. The head shall **not** be discussed by anyone else other than the side having possession.

As soon as each bowl has come to rest, possession of the rink shall be transferred to the other team, a reasonable time being allowed for marking a 'touching wood' and the player having relinquished possession of the mat (i.e. the player has stepped off the mat).

After a bowl has been delivered and before it has come to rest there are two options:

- a) If you want to track your bowl's progress you must be behind the head before it stops. In other words you must beat it to the head – and remember, there is no running on the green.
- b) If you do not go to the head you must be on or behind the mat as your bowl stops.

This ruling is quite clear but unfortunately many players, including many of those who should know better, show disrespect for their opponents by failing to observe it. How many times have you been on the mat, ready to play your bowl, when you have had to wait for your opponent to complete their stroll up the green or back to the mat? If your opponent is guilty of this you should ask him/her to stop. Remember that it is he/she who is in the wrong.

It is also worth emphasising that the head must not be disturbed by any player until the shots have been finally agreed. When the Thirds or Skips are deciding the shots the other players should stand well back from the head and give them the space to do so.

## 5. Team Game – players

In all team games it is the skip's job to direct the play. Other players should play the shot directed by the skip even if they don't agree with it.

In “fours” (Rinks) games the 'third' should direct the skip when required to do so.

In Triples or Pairs the Second or Lead may do this. Other players should not interfere unless invited to do so.

In “fours” (Rinks) the No. 2 player shall keep a record of all shots scored for / against his/her team and shall at all times retain possession of the score card whilst play is in progress. He/she shall see that the names of all the players are entered on the score card, compare his/her record of the game with that of the opposing player, keep the rink score board up to date and, at the close of the game, shall hand the score card to his/her Skip. In triples the score card/board shall be kept by the skip.

The Skip shall have sole charge of his/her team, and his/her 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. If both Skips cannot agree, the point in dispute shall be referred to, and considered by an Umpire or Captains, whose decision shall be final.

A Skip may, at any time, delegate any of his duties to other members of his team provided that such delegation is notified to the opposing Skip.

## 6. Markers

Markers are usually required for club / county competitions especially when singles games are being played. The duties of a marker are as follows:

- a) Ensure mats are centred correctly.
- b) Centre the jack when bowled.
- c) Ensure the jack is 23M from the front of the mat and if within 2M from the ditch place on the 2M line.
- d) Mark/chalk touching woods and remove chalk from non-touching woods.
- e) Remove any non-touching woods from the ditch.
- f) Remove any woods that are outside of the limits of the rink.
- g) Mark the position of the Jack and live shot wood in the ditch.
- h) Maintain the score card and score board.
- i) Measure when requested by players.
- j) Answer a specific question asked by the player currently in possession of the mat about the state of the head. The marker should **not** offer any additional information. If unsure, do not guess (e.g. when asked who is holding shot).
- k) Resolve disputes. Those that cannot be resolved shall be referred to the umpire / captain.
- l) Markers must **not** interfere with play.

## 7. Finally

Knowledge of the above will make you a more respected bowler, keep things friendly, be a gracious winner, a good loser and contribute towards the enjoyment of the game for everyone involved, both on and off the green.