**Pamela Bryant - Pennant a Team Sport**

**Pennant is a team sport where each member of a Team strives to achieve the goals of a Side!**

**There are a number of must have's if you wish to compete at the optimum level.**

**Firstly - A Liberal amount of Individual and Team practice.**

**Achieving success requires you to come to the team or indeed any game, armed with an ability to play all shots which, in your position you might reasonably be called upon to play.**

**This means that when you play a "shot" you should be able to play it with confidence knowing you've played that shot umpteen times in practice and have been able to visualise that shot every time you've played it, not just "giving it a burl and see how we go".**

**You should also know your percentage of success in accomplishing each and every shot in your repertoire and only then can you bring out the "right tool for the right job".**

**Can anyone tell me how many bowls they can draw within a Mat Length with say 40 bowls?**

**Or the percentage of direct hits on a drive?**

**If your practice is a social hit up, that's the standard of play you bring to the team and your**

**opposition will be on to it in a flash, i.e. can't play the forehand, can't play shots, can't**

**manage the narrow hand, can't reach on long ends, can't manage synthetic, can't find a line**

**when the mat is moved up the green etc, etc.**

**It's good if you have the dedication to practice your skills alone, and of course it's good for**

**you. You will stand out as a valuable team member and bring confidence to the Team and**

**Side. However, if you still only want to practice in groups of 2 or more, that's OK too, just as**

**long as you get out of your comfort zone and try all lengths, hands, sides, shots etc. and**

**learn to measure your improvement. Ideally you should be keeping a written record. If**

**you're not improving, you are wasting your time.**

**It's your job to work on all aspects of your game if you wish to be of value to the team.**

**Secondly - Good Communication**

**The next most important attribute in a winning team is good communication.**

**We all have 2 ears, 2 eyes and 1 mouth. But**

**It's the Skip who has the "rite of passage" in the latter!**

**The Lead, Second and Third should use their eyes and ears to maximum advantage.**

**The Skip needs to be encouraging, positive, personable, supportive, clear, concise and**

**confident NO MATTER WHAT!!! Words ending in "n't" have no place on the green (find**

**another way to convey it). Instead of shouting in fear "Don't be narrow!" calmly indicate a**

**road into the head saying, for instance, "safe to come in here".**

**Skips worth their salt should be able to draw a picture in the mind of their players and have**

**the trust in and of the player, to pull it off. You need to get what you ask for so take the**

**time to maximise the odds. (Be aware that your opposition has also been blessed with 2**

**eyes and 2 ears and never give too much away. i.e. "We've got nothing back here", or "if**

**that shot goes....!") Use your head find another way of dealing with it.**

**Thirdly - Confidence**

**Confidence really takes some work too. Expect to win as a team, not as just as an individual!**

**If you think you can, you will, if you think you can't ....well you might as well be painting**

**your nails, because you won't.**

**The Skip at the head is the only one who knows how a bowl or a jack in a head will react if**

**contacted and the relative distances between the bowls in the head. It is therefore**

**imperative that you trust your Skip's call. If you have doubts visualizing the call, ask for**

**guidance. It's no good saying after a failed shot..."Well I just couldn't see it that way".**

**The seeing and the doing of any shot should be a joint effort between the Skip and Player**

**or if you like the Sender and the Receiver/Exponent.**

**Trust and Loyalty within a team is invaluable, it builds confidence and makes the**

**impossible, possible.**

**If it isn't happening for your team on the day and it's simply due to Opposition's good**

**fortune in experiencing a "purple patch" or "day out" (we all have 'em and the opposition**

**earns them too!) you still have to work vehemently to minimize the damaged to the SIDE.**

**Turning yourself inside out and looking for blame in your midst...won't get the result the**

**other Teams in your Side deserve. Stay calm; united and confident....you never know, it**

**might ruffle your opponent's feathers.**

**Playing a gun player should be "no sweat", if you remember that they're not a gun player**

**every day and you are not alone. Play the bowl, not the persona. There's no reason to play**

**poorly just because you think you might be outclassed. Play with confidence, never dwell**

**on bowls that didn't quite meet your expectations and never doubt your ability to turn it all**

**around with your next. Every player has the ability to influence an outcome at some time**

**during a match; the next moment might be yours!**

**The result at the end of the day is entirely in the hands of the players. All 32!**

**Make sure the 15 you are with have your confidence, loyalty and trust and you'll be off to a jolly good start!**

**Today we will deal with the last two Communication and Confidence!**

**Communication**

**Be aware of your position, options and how to use your players to best advantage bearing in mind that;**

**The team holding shot has the following options:**

**• Adding another shot**

**• Blocking an opponent's preferred approach to the head**

**• Placing a bowl in anticipation of a rearward movement of the jack**

**• Nudging the Jack into a less exposed position**

**• Dislodging one or more of an opponent's shot saving bowls**

**The team not holding shot has the following options:**

**• Drawing for shot or to save**

**• Wresting shot bowls out of the count**

**• Moving the jack to save or to score**

**• Killing the end**

**Find the best way of achieving the best outcome in light of the above. In short;**

**Be clear, concise, motivating, encouraging and guiding to whatever level may be req'd at**

**any given point in a game. I.e. Step up when the situation demands, or you are with new**

**players who haven't quite had jelled to the team experience. Talk Player's thru' the shot.**

**Subtly impart the line, length and weight you require, as req'd thru' a game. If you don't ask**

**you won't get, and if your player just doesn't get it ....then neither will the scoreboard.**

**Think for a moment on the last time a Skip went to the head and asked you, the third to tell**

**her who all the bowls belong too? She doesn't ask that does she? So why do thirds insist on**

**telling her? Simply they are deaf, befuddled or incapable of visualizing the position.**

**Train yourself to listen! Train yourself to read a head!**

**In this first example**

**"Where is fourth shot?" is being asked?**

**Why does the Skip want to know this/what is she planning?**

**In the second example**

**The skip should not change the leads hand, as the team is trying to dominate that hand.**

**There are many options available w/o changing hands. What are they?**

**In the third example**

**A good Skip if needing 2 for a draw, 3 for a win would look at this head and salivate.**

**What should she plan to do? What could go wrong?**

**In the fourth example**

**How many options do you have here?**