



The Stance

The foundation of a good delivery is the stance. Starting from the feet, ensure that they are positioned 10 centimetres back from the front of the mat. This is the distance for delivery of both jack and bowl. Next, make certain the knees are relaxed slightly in a position where the muscles in the legs are not taut or hard. The shoulders should be brought forward so that they are about 12 centimetres forward of the toes. The bowling arm is then brought forward of the body in a position as shown in Photo A, with the forearm running down. The fingers at this point will be below the level of the wrist. This finger position is the same for both jack and bowl. The bowling arm should be steadied with the other hand. It is very important not to put the fingers of this hand any farther forward than the wrist of the bowling hand. To do so could pull the non-bowling shoulder off line. At this point make sure that the bowling arm is in line with the side of the body, the weight towards the balls of the feet without lifting the heels, the body square to the line of delivery; and last, that very important point – ensure the eyes are focused on the skip's feet for the jack, or along the aiming line for the bowl. This focus should not be broken from the start of the delivery until the bowl is released.

The Delivery

From the stance position many things are going to happen, and the coach must be aware of the most important points to observe. The movement of delivery starts with the hands dropping, and as they drop the non-bowling hand will be going towards the forward knee, while the bowling arm falls with the weight of the bowl. When the bowling arm is almost straight, the front foot will start to move forward as the whole body starts on a downward movement. See Photo B.

As the bowling arm reaches the completion of the back swing, the heel of the forward foot will be on the green, that is, of course, if the player takes a normal walking step. See Photo C. Note the eyes are still focused along the aiming line.



When the bowling arm starts the forward swing the front foot is anchored well before the bowling hand releases the bowl on the green about 15 to 20 centimetres forward of the front foot. You will see from Photo D that the body is still going down, and the arm and wrist are still held firm; 90 per cent of the body weight will be on this front foot as the bowl is released. The completion of the delivery shows that the palm of the hand after releasing the bowl is facing up and no higher than the front knee; the shin of the back leg is almost parallel with the ground and the sole of this foot is sloping back at an angle to the green. At this point you can see from Photo C a normal walking step has been taken. The knee of the back leg is just in behind the heel of the front foot. The back leg bent like this allows the player to keep the eye focus well out along the aiming line (see Photo E). The player should stay in this position until the jack or bowl has travelled well down the green.

When to step

Commence the step as the bowling arm straightens, which will be almost at the base of the pendulum stroke (see Photo B). At the base of the pendulum the left foot will have moved about 6 to 10 centimetres, but remember the back swing should be completed as the front foot is anchored as seen in Photo C.

The normal step

You are most probably aware that some bowlers do not know what a normal walking step is when delivering a jack or bowl, so try this fool-proof method: Ask the player to walk along the green (Photo 1) and if right-handed, to stop when next the left foot is in the forward position. From this position ask the bowler to bend both legs and get down to a position ready to deliver a bowl (see Photo 2). You will see that this is a normal walking step.

