

Read the fine print



Stop! Don't enter until you read the fine print! But what if there isn't any fine print?

This is the cause of more phone calls and emails to members of the umpire committee than any other problem, except perhaps substitutes and replacement players.

Why? Because controlling bodies, mainly clubs, will not write a conditions of play document and publish it where everyone can see it.

In states outside Queensland, the state authority publishes a set of conditions of play for all events and, like the laws of the game, everyone knows what to do when things appear to go wrong.

Maybe we should have something like this in Queensland.

We cover a wide diversity of playing conditions and a set of conditions suitable for all areas would be very difficult to draw up.

So it's up to individual clubs and districts to do it for themselves.

And therein lies the problem....clubs won't do it.

This results in uncertainty among players and officials and phone calls or emails to the umpires committee.

During the recent District Sides event in Brisbane North many copies of the conditions of play for the District Sides and the

State Championships were distributed to players and officials.

Not all of these are appropriate to your club, but all of them can be adapted to fit.

Players and game controllers are bound by the conditions.

Conditions of play not only offer protection for players and club officials, they also tell you what to do if anything untoward occurs and who fixes the problem.

Conditions of play for your club should also say who is eligible to enter into your team events, club open events, club championships, B grade and novice events, mixed events and any other event you like, including "money" events.

So, as a player or official, don't enter an event until you have found and read the fine print.

Life would be a lot easier for you no matter what your status.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure and saves a lot of agro.

Umpires should be familiar with the conditions of play for all events, but the administration of the conditions is the duty of the games officials.

Bowls lifters are part of the player

Bowlers may use a walking stick, "bowls lifter", or bowling arm during any game of bowls.

The laws are careful to request that we respect the right of disabled people to enjoy our sport.

Any of these pieces of equipment are, for the purpose of the laws, part of the participating player.

If two people wish to share the convenience of a bowls lifter, the most common shared device, then those players must accept that the lifter is part of them.

If the head is displaced in any way by the presence or misuse of a lifter, the user is responsible for the displacement and the opponent may act according to the relevant law to seek redress for the infringement.

To step back from the mat after a delivery and risk being impaled on a stick should not be a hazard on any green.

The use of these devices is a problem only when the users do not stay attached to them.

It would be a great inconvenience, and unnecessary to insist that the lifter be placed on the bank between each bowl delivery.

Also it should not be necessary to call an umpire to police the misuse of any of the aforementioned pieces of equipment.

As part of the player a lifter is in the same category as a bowls cloth, hat, pencil or any other thing which players are permitted to use on the green.

In short, it is not the use of the lifter that creates problems.

It is the position of the lifter when not in use that creates problems for players on the rink.

So be careful and thoughtful of others.

Note! Some skips have a bad habit of either leaning a lifter on the green or placing it in the ditch sand.

This is fraught with danger. If a bowl or jack were to strike the lifter during the course of play, either law 28.1 or 33.1 may be invoked by the umpire.

Because of laziness, the umpire's decision may make one skip an unhappy chappie.

Placing the lifter behind the rink marker on the bank might be a good idea.

