



COACHING PLAYERS WITH BOWLING ARMS



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FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

There are various physical reasons why the person may have decided to try a bowling arm. In conversation, or by observation, you may be able to clarify what are the issues for the individual.

These are some:

- Balance problems-bending over to pick up the bowl; unstable stance on the mat; bending to deliver the bowl; maintaining balance during delivery; falling to one side after delivery
- Back, shoulder, hip or knee issues
- Arthritis; osteoarthritis
- Muscle weakness -inability to lift the bowl; tiredness resulting from movement
- Any mobility issues associated with a medical condition such as Parkinson's disease

What are the physical issues that led them to take up the arm? This may affect how they pick up a bowl, choice of stance, etc.

BUYING AN ARM

If a bowler seeks advice about buying an arm or if you are recommending they use one it is important to try before you buy. There are different types of arms to choose from. It is essential that they do not buy one that is too big for them. Your club may have arms that they can try or they can try different arms at the regular Bowling Arm days at Tranmere Bowling Club on the first Monday of every month. Alternatively they can contact the Bowling Arm Players Association for assistance.



Drakes Pride

The most versatile arm.

Contact the Bowling Arm Association for advice.

Thumb or hand grip. Must exert pressure continuously to hold bowl in - not good if you have arthritis in the hand.

Versatile.

Green Bionic Bowler

Holds bowl continuously. Trigger to release

Thumb operated.

DHB Hacksaw

Open hand to release.

Made to your height and bowl size.

Lightweight

Separate section to hold the kitty.

Notch on the end of the arm to pick up the mat.

PICKING UP THE BOWL

Pick up the bowl and adjust it to fit in the arm lined up with the centre of the metal grip.

Some people cannot pick up the bowl and they use their feet to position/hold the bowl while they pick up the bowl with their bowling arm.

It is important that the bowl be exactly in line with the arm to avoid an irregular delivery.



STANCE

Depending on their physical problems and on personal preferences there are 3 basic stances with a bowling arm:

1. Normal stance with a step forward as you deliver.
2. Fixed stance with one foot forward of the mat.
3. Fixed stance with both feet evenly on the mat.

Whatever the stance it is important to stand with shoulders square to the intended line of delivery. Stand consistently in the same position on the mat to achieve a regular routine for delivery.

For balance place the unused hand against the front of the hip or top of the leg.

Possible errors

Body/shoulders not square towards the line of delivery.

Swinging around the hips. Solution: The player may need to tilt the hips to one side to allow the arm to swing through vertically.



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LINE

Before delivering the bowl take 3 or 4 practice swings making sure that those swings are exactly along the line. On the final swing keep the exact same line and the bowl should run out on that line. Practice without a jack to eliminate thinking about weight. Soon it will become natural. No more wildly off-line bowls!

Possible errors

Swinging arm around the body (hips) will lead to the bowl being off-line.

Not looking up the green when delivering the bowl. This will cause inconsistency of line and length. Look along the line to the aiming point.

TIMING

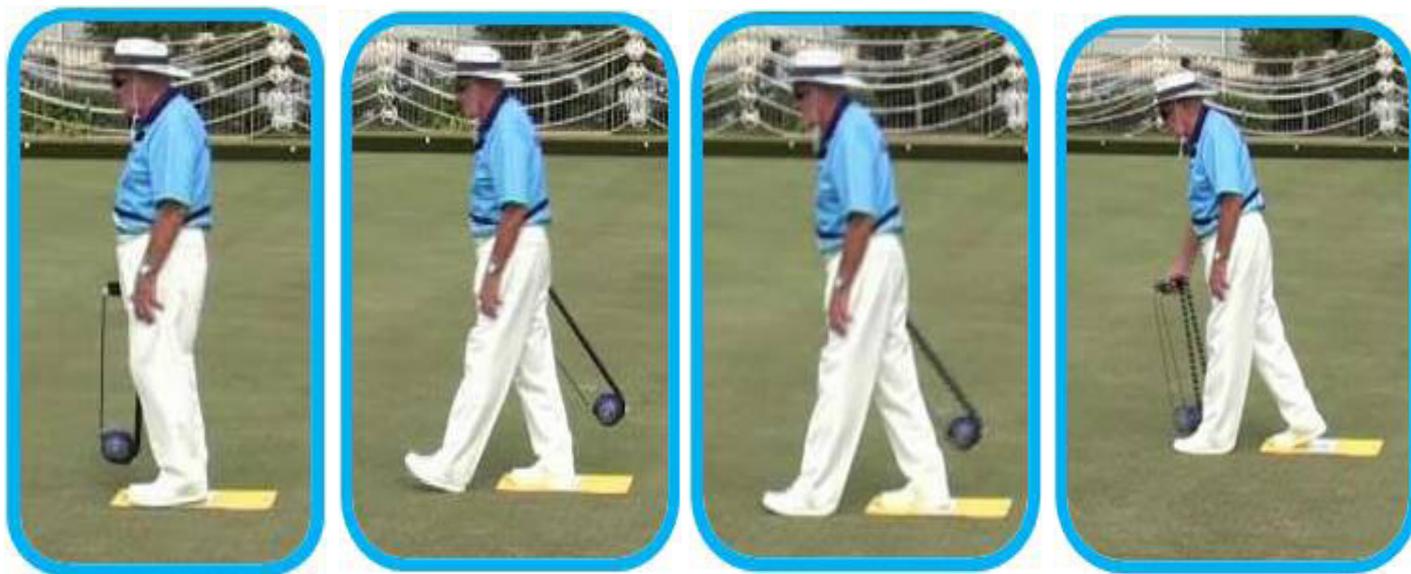
Release the bowl at the right time when the swing is at its lowest point so that the bowl flows smoothly out onto the green in line with the swing. It is essential to master this before anything else. Practise without a jack and do not worry about the line or length. Just concentrate on getting the bowl away smoothly.

Some people will find that it comes naturally to them straight away. Others will have to practise it for several days before they develop that natural rhythm. Just keep delivering bowls over and over again until you find that you are getting it right. Once the rhythm has been developed movement will come naturally.

Possible errors:

Bowl popping up into the air. Usually occurs if they are not moving forward with the delivery.

Hitting the ground. Either the bowling arm is too long or they are bending forward into the delivery. They should not need to bend at all.



WEIGHT CONTROL

Bowling with the right weight is not going to happen overnight. The bowler can no longer “feel” the bowl or kitty in the hand or on the fingertips. The mind has to learn a new skill; the relationship between the feel of the swing and the distance required.

The bowler has to re-program the feeling in the arm to judge the distance. This requires considerable practice. They will be better in a week, good in a month and will keep improving over time.

Encourage the habit of taking multiple (4 or 5) swings before each delivery while looking at the jack. This will train their mind about what the pull of the arm feels like for that distance.



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Getting a Permit

In order to use a bowling arm in any Bowls Australia or Bowls SA event you are required to have a permit. Getting a permit is not difficult. If you have knee, hip, back or other problems that prevent you from getting down to deliver a bowl properly then you are entitled to use a bowling arm but you must go through the following process:

1. First you must get a doctor's certificate.
2. Then you take your doctor's certificate to the Secretary of your Bowls Club and tell him/her that you want to get a permit for a bowling arm. The Secretary then fills out a standard " Use of Bowling Arm Request Form" that he/she then signs.
3. You then take/send the above form together with the doctor's certificate to Bowls SA.
4. You should get your permit within a week.

Bowling Arm Players Association of South Australia

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On the first Monday of every month (except January) a Bowling Arm Day is held at the Tranmere Bowling Club in Adelaide. For the month of October only we move to another club (to be advised in September each year) because Tranmere runs a carnival on that day.

The monthly Bowling Arm Days are a gathering of bowling arm players who come together to play together and learn from each other. 12.00 for 12.30 start. Casual wear. No notice is required, just be there before 12.20 pm latest and you will get a game.

We play 2 games in the afternoon with a break in between. During the first session we provide COACHING for those who want it while the others play a game. In the second session everyone joins in for the game. A \$5 fee applies.

This document was produced with the valuable assistance of Rodney Egge.

BOWLS SA

