

GUIDE NOTES FOR MARKERS

Aim

The aim of the marker in a game of singles is to help the players ensure that the game can proceed smoothly. The marker is only to advise – all decisions must be agreed by the respective players.

Before the Game

1. Arrive in good time before the due starting time, e.g. 30 minutes.
2. Check the rules for the particular competition.
3. Check the booking diary to identify the rink that has been reserved.
4. Prepare the rink if it has not already been prepared. Ensure that there is a mat, 2-metre stick, a bowls “pusher” and ditch markers at each end of the rink. Set the scoreboard to zero, unless the match is a handicap game.
5. Put the headings on the scorecard, including match, date and rink. The challenger’s name goes on the left side of the scorecard. For a handicap match, ensure the correct shot allowance is noted on the card. (Check the handicap list).
6. Ensure you have the following equipment – spray / stick chalk – set of wedges – coin – box measure – watch with a second hand. If necessary use the Umpires Kit case.
7. Ask permission to remove dead bowls (*The laws state that only the players can remove dead bowls*).

Starting the Game

1. Introduce yourself to the players.
2. Make sure they understand the rules of the competition, e.g. number of ends to be played, number of shots to be scored by the winner, what happens to killed jack (end replayed or jack positioned).
3. Perform the toss. One player tosses and the other calls. The winner has the option to take the mat or give it away. (Customary for the challenger to spin the coin and the opponent to call)
4. Tell the players that you will check that the mat is centred before the jack is cast at each end.
5. Tell the players that you will chalk “touchers” before the next bowl is delivered.
6. Trial Ends. Ask the players how many bowls they will bowl for each trial end. When a player has cast the jack, ask if they want it centred where it comes to rest, or at full length. Indicate verbally, or by signal, the distance each bowl comes to rest from the jack. Place each player’s bowls on opposite sides of the rink, beyond the jack.
7. At the completion of the trial ends shake each player’s hand and wish them an enjoyable match. Remind the players that they can ask questions when they have possession of the rink.
8. Request that the players inform you if and when they intend to “fire”, so that you can take up an appropriate position.

9. Request that the players update the scoreboard when it is at the end they have just completed.
10. Offer to measure any disputed situations. The players can measure themselves if they wish. Make sure you can identify each player's bowls.

During the Game

1. Check that the player casting the jack has centred the mat correctly. Centre the jack when cast.
2. If the jack is not cast correctly (outside the confines of the rink, in the ditch, less than 23 metres from the front of the mat) return the jack for the other player to cast it.
3. If the jack is cast within 2 metres of the ditch, using the 2 metres stick, place it so that the jack is actually 2 metres from the ditch (jack level with the end of the 2 metre stick, **not** in front of it).
4. If both players cast an invalid jack, place the jack 2 metres from the ditch (as no 3 above). The original player to cast the jack can now place the mat where they wish, as long as it is 23 metres from the jack.
5. Take a position about 2 metres behind the jack and 1 metre to the side. Try to ensure you always position yourself to the same side of the centre line. Ensure you don't obstruct the players' view of any legal marking (centre of rink and rink boundary).
6. Try to anticipate questions so that you have the answers ready. **When a bowl is on its way up the rink, take a few discrete steps forward to evaluate the head for distances and shot bowls.** In particular, note if the bowl touches the jack, in which case chalk it.
7. Use the appropriate markers to indicate the position of a jack or "toucher" bowl that end up in the ditch. Make sure that any "toucher" bowl is chalked.
8. Answer any questions asked by the player in possession of the rink. Be concise in your replies. If unsure, e.g. if two bowls are roughly equidistant from the jack, say so. Avoid giving potentially misleading information.
9. At the completion of the end, wait for the players to agree the number of shots scored by the winning player. Record the number of shots on the scorecard, and on the scoreboard and progress to the next end.
10. Be prepared to measure any contested shots, as described below.
11. Check from time to time that the shots recorded on the scorecard and scoreboard are correct and the same. Although it may not be necessary to record the ends on the scoreboard, it can be a useful check that all ends have been recorded.
12. Remember that a player can only ask questions when they are in possession of the rink.

Measuring

1. Before you carry out any measure, wait 30 seconds from the time the last bowl has come to rest, and place a wedge(s) under any bowl that is slanting and likely to fall.

2. Before measuring, confirm with both players which bowls they wish you to measure. It may be sensible to remove any bowls that are not to be measured.
3. Try to ensure that you measure from a position where you are unlikely to touch or move any bowl.
4. Measure from the jack to the nearest point of the bowl. Move the string of the measure slightly from side to side, and up and down, to demonstrate that you are measuring to the nearest point of the bowl.
5. If you are measuring a bowl which is far enough from the jack that you cannot extend your arms to complete the measure accurately, ask one of the players to help. They place the box measure as close to the jack as possible. As the marker, you take the string end to the bowl, where the decision is being made.
6. Do **not** remove any bowls. You can indicate which bowl you think is closer to the jack, but the final decision must be agreed by the players.
7. If the players cannot agree with your measuring, they can decide to measure for themselves. If they still cannot agree, they can ask an “umpire” or an independent person to make the final decision. If this is done, both players and the marker must leave the head. The decision of the “umpire” is final.

At the End of the Game

1. Complete the scorecard by recording the final score. Ask each player to sign the scorecard to confirm the result.
2. Congratulate the winner and commiserate the loser.
3. If required, help clear the rink of all equipment.
4. Give the final scorecard to the winning player, who may need to send it, or a photograph of it, to the competition organiser.

Some Do's and Don'ts for Markers

- Be familiar with the key laws of the game. In particular, note the distances –
 - Jack > 2 metres from far ditch Mat > 2 metres from ditch
 - Jack > 23 metres from front of mat Legal bowl 14 metres from mat
- Always remain still when a player is on the mat and preparing to bowl.
- Try to ensure that spectators remain still when players are about to bowl.
- Remove invalid woods that are short (less than 14 metres from the mat), outside the boundaries of the rink, or “non-touchers” in the ditch. Place them on the bank beyond the ditch.
- Be prepared to ask for an umpire, or a neutral experienced person, if the players cannot agree the result of an end.
- Do not chat with spectators or players. You must remain impartial throughout the match.
- Do not question the decision of the players. The final decision is theirs.
- Do not allow bowls from other rinks to disturb the head on your rink. Remove them once they stray onto your rink.