

BOWLING under PRESSURE to WIN*

TECHNIQUE:

- Good technique – minimise body movements and a smooth delivery.
- Have a practised shot routine. Have a key word for it. Say, “Process” to yourself, then just let your body do it.
- Remember the ‘must do’s’ of each delivery – line and length.
- Play more slowly, be decisive, play with skill and your brain.
- Breathe to relax and survive!
- Relax and use your senses – touch, sight and balance.

TACTICS:

- Display a winning image all the time even when things look grim.
Remember this is what the opposition sees.
- Every good bowl is worth cheering about.
- Team work means discipline and sharing the load – no dissent.
- Trust yourself and your team.
- Expect opponents to succeed at their shot. Prepare mentally for it.
- Pressure games are not won by spectacular shots.
- Pressure will cause mistakes by the opposition.
- Sustained pressure and performance is better than flashes of brilliance.
- Sustained pressure will cause opponents to become desperate and disillusioned.
- Great play under pressure comes automatically and when you are ‘in the zone’. Don’t think about the mechanics of your shot.
- Games may not be won until the last 5 ends, Be ready for extra effort and concentration.

TEMPERAMENT:

- Be patient, be well prepared, be tough, be determined, be confident in yourself and your team.
- Focus on key factors of the situation.
- Forget the consequences of success/failure.
- Don’t be distracted. If you are distracted, refocus straight away.
- Forget the chatter with opponents and spectators.
- Concentrate on things you can control.
- Confidence is a MUST.
- Avoid worry, anxiety to remove tension from your body.
- Learn to switch on and switch off. ‘Smell the flowers’.
- Simplify the task in your mind. Learn to visualise.
- Have positive thoughts – look for opportunities to score.
- Stop negative thoughts if they start.

*A revised version of an article by Robert Huddle at coach@ecoachbowls.com