

POINTERS FOR PENNANT PLAY.

Here are some tips from John Snell's book, "So you want to be a Skip (or Third or Second or Lead)" on the role of each position in a pennant team or a four.

LEADS:

1. The lead sets the pattern and dictates whether the team adopts offensive or defensive tactics.
2. Concentrate on the rhythm of your delivery.
3. Decide and play the correct side of the rink to play – normally forehand one way, backhand the other. You are then playing over the same green conditions and similar aiming point every end. If there is a cross wind, this means bowl on the narrower side of the rink.
4. Roll the jack to the length the skip (or the team) decides that best suits the team.
5. Draw both bowls close. You don't **have** to get shot every end.

SECONDS:

1. Have command of the draw shot with little or no preference for either hand.
2. Back up your leader with draw shots unless your skip wants something different, such as a position bowl behind the head.
3. Learn what bowling line to take for position bowls or for a weighted shot.
4. **Don't** anticipate the skip's directions. Wait for his instruction.

THIRDS:

1. Speak only when asked and then agree with the skip (except in the face of sheer disaster). In such a situation, suggest the skip comes to the head to look for himself. It's better to resolve queries quietly to avoid alerting your opponents to a good opportunity for them.
2. When questioned, answer the skip confidently and authoritatively. If you are in doubt, call the skip to the head.
3. Practise all shots so you have confidence to play them in a game.
4. Read as much as you can about bowls – technique, tactics and mental aspects.
5. Be an understudy to your skip.

SKIPS:

1. Learn the art of leadership. It's your job to keep the team's morale high.
2. Expect to win. Develop a confident manner – know what body language is and the effect it can have on your team mates.
3. Observe the conditions carefully during the roll-up ends.
4. Top priority is to get bowls in the head. With this sound foundation, only then consider attacking to pick up a big score. A big score early in the game can have a demoralising effect on the opposition.
5. Temper your tactics with discretion. Be satisfied with being one or even two down. Teams that lose by one or two on an end rarely lose the game.
6. Know exactly when to play the right shot. Occasionally, it may pay to improvise.
7. Have a sense of humour. Use it sparingly for your own enjoyment and to put your team at ease. However, don't confuse sarcasm with humour.