

THE KILLERS of GOOD BALANCE in BOWLS DELIVERY.

1. Standing square to the delivery line especially with your feet together.

Feet together is not conducive to good balance. We never stand with our feet together normally. Check yourself out. This results in twisting your body as you step forward and back again when you release your bowl which then becomes a lottery releasing it at the precise split second it is travelling along the delivery line.

The 'Shooters Stance (google it at 'biomechanics lawn bowls') gives an easier, more reliable method of delivering bowls accurately as it has the advantage of biomechanical principles, unknown a 100 years ago, over the traditional 'square to the line' stance as espoused by R T Harrison which relies on muscular strength and, more especially, muscular control, that he brought to bowls after his three years of military service in the Boer War over a hundred years ago.

2. Taking too long or short a step resulting in lunging or lurching.

Check the length of your step by placing a coin in front of your anchor foot on the mat and then another one in front of your leading foot AFTER delivery. This gap indicates the length of your step. In normal walking, this varies according to how fast you are walking. Your body knows how far to step to maintain good balance. So too in bowling. The speed of your delivery will govern the length of your step for you i.e. 'let your body do it'.

3. Stepping with feet in line, one behind the other.

Step with your leading foot at about 45 degrees to the delivery line. This gives a wider base to balance over rather than just the width of your foot. It also gives greater resistance to forward body sway.

4. Round-arming your arm swing or swooping it inside out.

Either will result in your body swaying off line. Arm swing throughout must be vertically over the delivery line.

5. Not having a focal point on the green to fix your eyes on.

Three to six metres in front of you to aim to roll your bowl over. Stay down in delivery mode with your head still until your bowl passes over it. This controls body sway away from over the delivery line. Looking beyond 6 metres makes aiming too difficult, or even wrong, as after that distance the bowl has perceptibly begun to turn. Shorter than 3 metres increases the margin of error - miss your focal point by 25mm (an inch) means an error in width of 300mm (a foot) at the jack end - more commonly narrow.

Doug Cole/Mar 19.