

The notes below form an introduction to marking basics.

When do we need a marker? For singles matches only.

Why do we need a marker – to keep score, to centre mat and jack, make sure jack is legal, to provide information to players when asked, to mark touchers, to measure disputed shots when asked (all so as to keep the game flowing).

Bowlers should all have a copy of the rules – Red Book. Cost a few pounds. There is a browse-only link on our web site. Law 42 covers the Marker's duties.

Responsibilities: The *challenger* is responsible for  
arranging the date and the marker,  
booking the rink  
setting out equipment, and  
writing out the card.

Always check the competition whether ends or shots, any handicap involved. Mark on card. This information is posted on the board next to the competition draw charts.

At the end of a game, the players sign the card and the time is noted. The time is there because a player has 10 minutes to lodge a challenge to illegal bowls (Law 52.4 ...)

At the end of a game the marker returns the completed card to the challenger, who puts it in the box in the clubhouse (by the rink reservation book).

The marker's kit consists of:

Card holder

Pen

Pencil (in reserve)

Chalk (stick or spray – latter is better because the bowls don't need to be touched).

Tape (box measure)

Wedges (may be home-made eg an indiarubber cut in half diagonally)

Callipers/feelers (many box measures have small callipers attached).

Coin.

(It goes without saying that as marker you may need a white (sun) hat, sunglasses, sunscreen applied, cold drink if it is a hot day.)

## On the rink

The big tape measure (Long Tape) should be at the side of the rink.

Make sure there is a Blue box at each end - What's in the Blue box?  
More wedges, indicators of different colours to hang on the bank when the jack/bowls go in the ditch. (White for the jack, red/yellow for bowls of the two opponents).

Check the rink markings quickly before the game starts. They should match in colours at each end.

Check bowls - Whose is whose. Look at serial number, markings, logos, colours, especially on reverse. Stickers should match in a set of bowls. One layer only.

(There are only 2 sets of bowls in a singles game so no excuse for not knowing which is which.)

## **Distances**

2m mat line (top of mat),  
23m jack minimum.  
2m end of rink.

(Bowls can be removed if less than 14m. from mat.)

The mat line (ie top end of mat) must be between 2m and 25m from the front ditch.

## **Marker to advise/check with Players**

Note that Marker needs to ask permission to remove bowls which are out of play.

Marker needs to explain you will need time to chalk bowls, preferably just after they have come to rest.

Marker to remind players to allow for centring the mat before casting the jack.

Marker to check if players wish to update the scoreboard when they are at that end. If not, marker will update both boards – and anyway will check against the card.

Coin toss, Marker has a coin and either player can toss (marker should not). Challenger will be on top of score board, even if loses the toss.

Trial ends (optional) 1 each way, players agree how many bowls, does not need to be same number for each player. Player may change bowls during or after trial ends but not after start of match.

A player may give the mat away at the start, or at the start of extra ends.

### **Trial ends**

Not compulsory. Marker centres mat and jack as normal. Move it back if player requests.

Players bowl, marker shows distance bowl finishes in front or behind. If the jack is moved, replace it.

### **In a game.**

After the trial ends, if any, wish the players luck and shake hands.

At each end the marker will centre the mat and jack with the lead player.

If the jack is illegal (too short – not reaching the 25 m line from the rear ditch -, off the rink or in the ditch), return it the first time, for the opponent to cast it.

If it is illegal the second time, place it on the 2 metre line at the front ditch. Use the 2m stick for this. The face of the jack needs to be level with the top of the stick. DO NOT place the jack on the end of the stick. When this is done, the mat may be placed anywhere up to the front 25m line (ie the 2<sup>nd</sup> line walking up the rink from the rear ditch to the front ditch). It is the Marker's responsibility to ensure it is a legal jack.

During play, the marker should stand about 1 metre to the side and 2 metres behind the jack, but not obscuring any bowls from view or any rink markers.

During the game do not move around the head when your opponent is about to deliver his bowl. Stand well back from the head, keep quiet and do not do anything that would distract your opponent. **Wait** until the bowl has been delivered **before moving**.

During play the marker must not react in any way to bowls sent. The Marker is impartial, so do not encourage any party, especially if a

relation or friend, i.e. no well done, clapping, or you need a bit extra etc.

If a bowl goes into the ditch, and is not a toucher, remove it and place it on the bank. If a toucher goes in the ditch, mark it as usual and show it with a coloured indicator on the bank. Similarly if the jack is in the ditch, show it with a white indicator.

[A Toucher is a bowl that during its course (which may involve striking other bowls) touches the jack before finishing within the boundaries of the rink. If, after coming to rest, a bowl falls over and touches the jack, it is also a toucher, providing the next succeeding bowl has not been delivered.

A toucher is marked with chalk to denote it is a toucher. Chalking the bowl: best to use a spray as it will not move the bowl. Put two spots, one either side of the running surface for easy visibility. These marks must be erased before the bowl is reused. In the next end, if a bowl arrives with pre-existing toucher marks, erase these after the bowl has come to rest (Law 42.2).

A bowl is not a toucher if it has been knocked on to the jack by a bowl in its original course.

Once the jack is in the ditch, no further bowls can become touchers. You should be ready to stop a bowl that is about to enter the ditch so that it does not move the jack. Note where the jack or a bowl is in case either is disturbed by a non-toucher – they need to be replaced back to where they finished originally.

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During an end, a player may ask questions, but **only while in possession of the mat and about to play.**

The marker should give sufficient information to answer the questions, which may involve indicating where the jack is, which bowl/s is/are shot, position of various bowls etc, though no advice on play.

Answering questions: "old school" will say only give minimum answers, but rules have been relaxed and you can give a little extra. Not a dialogue.

If they ask who is closest, and you cannot tell, advise a measure. You can say "I favour yours. Etc". They are free to visit the head if it's their last bowl.

When the last bowl comes to a rest and if any bowls which may need a measure are not lying flat, note the time (in seconds) so as to allow for the 30-second rule before wedging.

The marker should position the pusher ready for the players to bring the woods to the other end.

As the bowlers arrive at the head, allow them to agree shot(s) if possible, or which bowls may need a measure. The Marker does not offer to measure, they must ask you to measure and what bowls they want measuring.

If a measure is needed, ask the bowlers to remove any bowls not required to be measured. If any bowls to be measured need wedging, check that 30 seconds have elapsed, then apply the wedges.

Complete the measures and agree the shot count with the bowlers. Do not move the bowl(s) out of the head, just advise them the closest bowl(s).

At this point, whether there has been measuring or not, the marker should head straight for the other end and take position for centering the mat. When the jack is sent, centre this.

Update the scorecard and scoreboard so as not to make the players wait for you to complete this.

Possible order of events –  
Marker walk to other end  
Centre mat  
Write down the score from previous end  
Centre Jack  
Update scoreboard.

*Do not* make the players wait for you. Do all the marking duties during or in-between bowls being played. Stay still while a bowl is about to be played.

### **Firing**

If a player fires:

Move in front of the head if a wood is fired, but pay close attention to the head, what woods move where, and if it was a toucher etc. Always watch the bowl coming up.

### **At the end**

When the game has finished, congratulate the winner as appropriate, commiserate with the loser, get the players to sign the card and note the time. Return the card to the challenger to put it in the box.

The marker may assist bowlers to return equipment.

Club etiquette is that the winner offers the loser and marker a cup of tea/coffee (or a drink if the bar is open).