

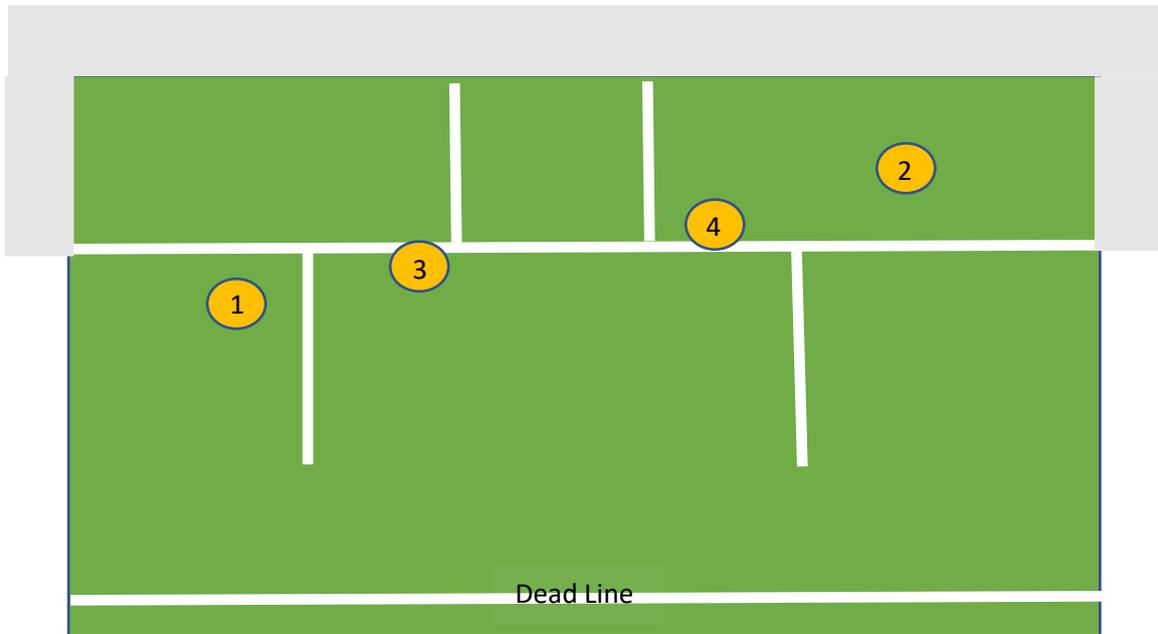
Umpire's Corner – Mike Weston

Hi everyone,

I've been asked to produce an Umpire's Corner section for the newsletter, I hope that you learn something from the topics and if there is anything in particular that you would like covered or answered, please let me know.

I thought that I would start with some basic rules, my apologies to some of the Harwell and Cholsey members who I have already covered these topics with, but perhaps a recap would be of help.

I'll start with jack positions as I always get different answers to the question "is the jack live or dead?" Please note that the drawing is not to scale or complete in every detail..



Jack 1 - I'm sure that you recognise that Jack number 1 is still live and so can be played as normal.

Jack 2 - I'm also sure that you recognise that Jack number 2 is a dead jack and its position should be marked with chalk. If jack 2 is disturbed by a toucher then its new position should be marked.

What's not always clear is that if a toucher in the ditch is moved by another toucher and then it disturbs the jack, its new position should be marked.

Of course if a non toucher disturbs the dead jack then the jack should be returned to its marked position and the bowl removed.

Jack 3 – What do you think is the status of this jack?

How many of you thought that it was dead?

The rules state that if any part of the jack is still in the live area then it is still a live jack. The definition of the live area is - the section of the rink mat between the dead line and the ditch, **delineated by the inside edge of the half inch marking.**

So, in this case jack 3 is still live and can be played as normal.

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Another little puzzler, what happens if a delivered bowl without touching another bowl in the ditch or the fender travels into the ditch and topples so that it rests on jack 3?

Is the bowl dead and should it be removed?

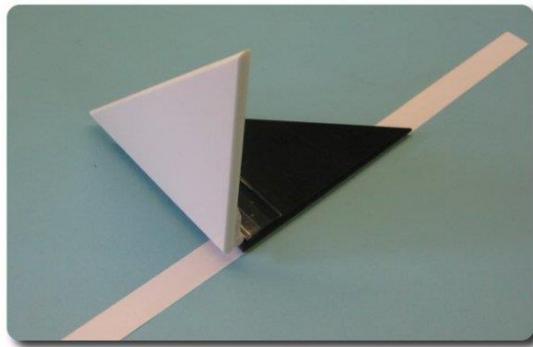
Actually no, the bowl becomes a toucher. It matters where the bowl finishes and not necessarily its route. So, be careful when lifting a bowl out when it has crossed the ditch line and still moving! The important part is that it must not touch another bowl or the fender before contacting the jack.

Jack 4 – Dead or live?

Remember the definition of the live area and the words that are in bold text, the inside line of the live area delineates the area, so in this case, the whole of jack 4 has crossed the line and is dead and should be treated the same as jack 2.

So, how do umpires when called to make a line decision on a jack's position decide on the outcome?

You may have seen things like sheets of paper, credit cards, set squares and other objects used at some of the venues, but I think that the easiest method is to use something called a Rooney Measure. No, it's not named after the footballer, but a player called Len Rooney who played in the Merseyside bowls leagues.



Basically, it is made up of two triangles hinged together, one triangle edge is placed on the line adjacent to the jack to be measured and the other triangle is lifted up, if it contacts or misses the jack the correct decision can be made.

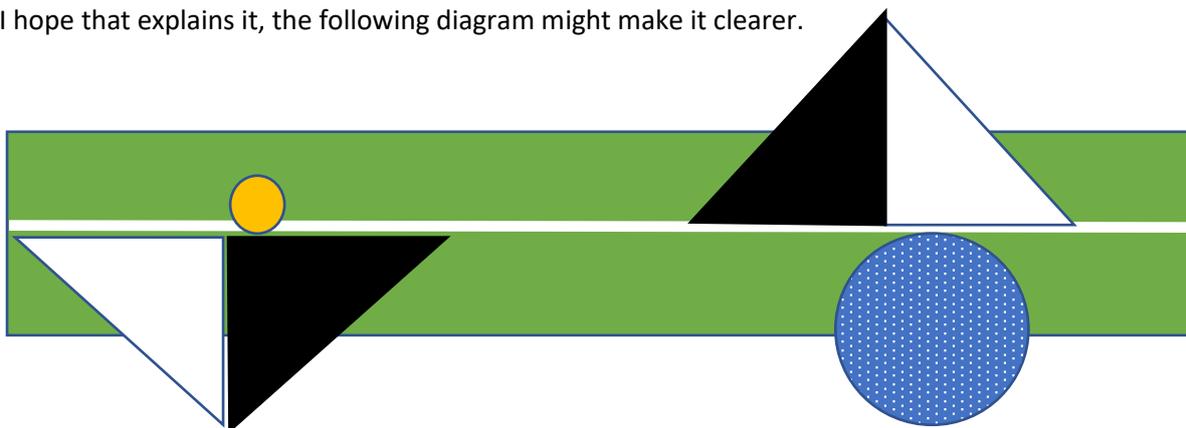
So, you will notice that one triangle is white and the other black, why is this?

The measure can be used for line decisions on both bowls and jacks.

To measure a jack the white triangle will be used on the inside line of the live area and eased towards the line until no more green is visible, the black triangle will then be lifted.

To measure a bowl, the black section will be placed on the ditch side of the line and moved forward until no more white is visible, the white triangle will then be lifted to see if it contacts the bowl.

I hope that explains it, the following diagram might make it clearer.



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I hope that all makes sense and many of you will already know what I've covered, but having been around a few clubs I often find differences of opinion on what is correct.

I've mentioned one of my pet hates already, that's lifting a bowl from the ditch while it is still moving. Yes, it may be obvious that it's not going to affect anything, but it just might.

Another is feet on the fender, one function of the fender is to be a shock absorber, putting your foot on it makes it a solid object and possibly more likely that the bowl may go over it. Two points here, one is the danger to bowlers, the other is that shots can be deducted for a bowl going over the fender. Always make sure that the fender is back in place at all times and especially when measuring anything in the ditch.

That will do for now, hope that you enjoyed reading it and hope that we will be back bowling in the not too distant future.

Please let me know if there is anything that you would like answered or covered in more detail from either an Umpiring or Coaching perspective and I'll try to include it in the next newsletter.

Mike Weston