



NEWARK INDOOR BOWLS & BOCCIA CLUB

THE SHOWGROUND, LINCOLN ROAD, NEWARK, NOTTS, NG24 2NY

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Key Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls

A guide for new members



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350 CLUB INFORMATION BOOKLETS

Information Booklet 1: Welcome Booklet

Information Booklet 2: New to the Game of Indoor Bowls

Information Booklet 3: Key Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls

You can download these booklets by visiting the club website – www.newarkindoorbowlscentre.org.uk
“Members” menu.

Newark Indoor Bowls & Boccia Club aims to make your introduction to Indoor Bowls to be as simple and pleasurable as possible. We welcome/need your feedback on your overall experience as a new member in order to help us continue to improve the welcoming package.

Your feedback will help us to lead the way on recruiting and retaining new members into the sport of Indoor Bowls here at NIBBC.



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Introduction

This booklet is intended to give you a guide to the laws of the game. It is not a full explanation, but will cover the key rules that you will need to know in order to compete in social or internal club games.

You will find that the Club operates some variants to the rules in some club competitions, these will be highlighted on the competition notice boards along the side of Rink 1. You have been introduced to some of the definitions of player positions, and duties within a team, in Booklet 2 “Are you New to the Game of Indoor Bowls”. You are also reminded that Booklet 2 includes the very important Rules of Bowls Etiquette. It is assumed that you are now familiar with the rink, bowls and other regularly used equipment.

Finally, a quick note on bowls marks – a frequently asked question. Every bowl (wood) has an oval stamp denoting manufacturer/tester and a date of expiry. An “expired” bowl can be used at club sessions – an important consideration should you opt to buy second hand bowls at this time in your playing career. You will need to have them retested, or buy new bowls with a valid expiry date, only if you enter external competitions.

Arranging a Game

- i) League team games during the day are played as two hours or 18/16 ends sessions dependent on the relevant league stipulation, league games played at night are 16 ends with no time limit.
In competition play, singles play a defined number of sets or alternatively the first player to 21 shots. The notice board for the competition you enter will confirm the duration required, or any specific format.
- ii) In club competitions, it is the first named player/team that is responsible for arranging the game and booking rinks etc. The steward will be able to assist you with contact numbers. In League matches, a rink will be allocated for you.

Before the game

The leads toss a coin to decide who has the first mat, i.e. cast of the jack and plays the first bowl. The toss winner has the option to accept the toss or ask the opposition to have the mat. The opposition is not allowed to refuse.

Placing the mat

The starting/winning lead player places the mat lengthways along the centre line of the rink. The mat must either cover the “T”, or be no further forward than having its front edge to the fifth spot in front of the “T”.

The mat must not then be moved during play, except in the following circumstances;

- i) The mat slips out of alignment with the centre line, or is accidentally moved. It can then be straightened and replaced to its original position.
- ii) If the jack has been cast, but does not meet the required distance, then the opposing team may recast from a different mat position if they so wish. N.B. The legality of the position of the mat, or jack, cannot be challenged once the first bowl of the end has been played. At the finish of each end’s play, the mat should be put out of the way of play on the bank at the end of the rink ready for the next end to be played.



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Foot-Faults

A player delivering the jack or a bowl must have (all or part of) one foot within the confines of the mat area. The foot must be in contact with, or above, the mat. Players in wheelchairs, the same rule applies to one wheel of the chair.

Casting the Jack

The jack must travel at least 23 metres from the front edge of the mat. For example, for a mat on the "T" at the delivery end, the Jack must travel beyond the first spot met (and bank mark) at the head end.

The player casting the jack must ensure that the jack has been properly centred on the rink before playing the first bowl of the end. If the cast jack comes to a stop on the rink behind the "T", it is repositioned onto the "T" for that end.

Should the casting of the jack be obstructed or deflected by anyone other than a member of the casting team, then it shall be recast by the first player.

Should the casting be obstructed or deflected by a member of the casting team, or does not meet the required 23 metre distance, or comes to a stop outside the rink or in the gutter, then it shall be recast by the first player of the opposition, who will also be able to reposition the mat to their own choice. The original first player retains first shot now using the opposition's choice of mat position and length.

Should the opposition's recast also fail to meet the rules, then the jack shall be placed on the "T", and the first player may again move the mat to their own choice.

Bowls in Play

Live Bowls

A bowl, that has travelled at least 14 metres from the mat, is **LIVE** if any part of the bowl remains within the limits of the rink, i.e. on the boundary line (as defined by the bank markers) is **IN**.

Dead Bowls

A bowl which travels less than 14 metres from the mat, or comes to a stop outside the confines of the rink, or leaves the rink obviously under the influence of a wrong bias, is considered **DEAD**, and can be removed/stopped. (In the last case, efforts must be made to prevent the bowl from disturbing bowls in play on the adjacent rink.)

Touchers

A bowl which touches the jack on its original course, even though it might subsequently end up in the ditch within the confines of the rink, is considered both **LIVE** and a **TOUCHER**.

A toucher should be clearly marked with chalk. This must be done before the next bowl played comes to rest. The position of a toucher which has dropped into the ditch is marked with a red marker attached to the ditch wall. (N.B. The jack that is knocked into the ditch is similarly marked by a white marker.) If it is subsequently moved by a non-toucher dropping into the ditch, then it is the original marked position that is counted, and the toucher repositioned below its marker. If the jack is already in the ditch, a bowl dropping into the ditch and touching the jack is **NOT** a toucher. When the end is complete, including the scoring process, all chalk must be removed from any touchers before being used in the next end.



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Unintentional Movement (Displacement)

Bowls at rest. If a played bowl (at rest) is moved by a player of the same team, it shall be declared **DEAD**, however in the true spirit of the game providing that both teams agree the bowl can be replaced in its original position. Any part of the head that has been subsequently disturbed by the movement shall be repositioned. If a played bowl is moved by a player of the opposing team, it should be replaced. If the head has been disturbed by the moved bowl, then the skip of the team that played the bowl has the option of either repositioning the head and replaying, or to declare the end as dead.

Bowls in motion. If a bowl in motion is touched by a player, the opposing skip can move the bowl to where he believes it would have come to rest or declare a dead end. A bowl at rest on the rink, if in danger of being moved by a bowl played from an adjacent rink, may be lifted by any player at the head to allow the neutral bowl to pass, and then repositioned.

Order of Play

In all team games;

The order of play within a team cannot be changed after the first end has been played. Players not in the act of playing shall stand at least one metre behind the mat, or behind and away from the jack at the head end. They should not distract the player at the mat. All players must stay within their own rink at all times.

Fours

The players are designated as lead, two, three and skip. Players have **two** bowls each end. The leads shall play their **two** bowls alternately, and so on, each pair of players in succession to the end.

The skip is in charge of the team. When the skip is playing, the **Threes** can delegate for him/her at the head and have all measuring duties. The **Two's** acts as scorer. The **Lead** has the task of casting the jack at the start of the end, and all the players clear the bowls after all scoring has been completed.

Triples

The players are designated as **Lead**, **Two** and **Skip**. Players have **three** bowls each end. The **Leads** shall play their three bowls alternately, and so on, each pair of players in succession to the end. The skip is in charge of the team. When the skip is playing, the Two can delegate for him/her at the head; and have all measuring duties and acts as scorer. The **Lead** casts the jack at the start of the end, and the opposition players clear the bowls after all scoring has been completed.

Pairs

The players are designated as **Lead** and **Skip**. Each player has **four** bowls each end. The **Leads** shall play their **four** bowls alternately, followed by the **Skip's** in succession to the end. The **Lead** is in charge of the team when the **Skip** is playing, the **Lead** at the head acts in all measuring duties and as scorer. The **Lead** has the task of casting the jack at the start of the end, both **Leads** normally helps clear the bowls after all scoring has been completed.



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There is a variant of the Pairs game called **Australian Pairs**. In this game, at the outset the **Lead's** play just **two of their four bowls** alternately, and then move to the head end. The **Skip's** then play their **four bowls alternately**, and then move back to the head. The **Lead's** then play their last two bowls. The **Skips** are now in the position to act as measurers and scorers. The Two's now lead off the next end, and the roles are reversed. The ends alternate in this fashion through the game.

Scoring

It is required that a paper copy of the score card is maintained throughout the game by the first named team. After each end, the agreed outcome is recorded on the card, and should reflect the score shown on the electronic scoreboard. The score cards are signed by both teams after the game. The completed cards are then put in the respective league prefix slot of the card holder; in front of the window, near the blackboard.

Marker Duties

It is possible that you may be asked to perform the role of marker for a competition singles game. Here is a brief summary of the duties involved.

- i) The marker must establish the duration of the game at the outset, e.g. 21 shots or best of 3 sets
- ii) The marker must have a measure and chalk.
- iii) The marker introduces him/herself and shakes hands with both players before doing the coin toss.
- v) The marker ensures that, for every new end, each jack is centred, and has travelled at least 23 metres from the mat.
- v) The marker stands to one side of the rink, and to the rear of the "T".
- vi) The marker, when asked, will answer any specific question about the state of the head.
- vii) The marker shall mark all touchers immediately they come to rest.
- viii) The marker will remove any dead bowls from the rink or ditch after the agreement of both players.
- ix) The marker shall not move jack nor bowls until both players have agreed a score.
- x) The marker shall measure carefully all shots when requested by either player.
- xi) The marker will ask for an Umpire (neutral player) in the case of a dispute. The Umpire's decision will be final.
- xii) The marker shall enter the score on the card after each end, ensure the scoreboard is in agreement, and indicate to the players the state of the game.
- xiii) The marker will permit only one visit to the head, per player, per end.
- xiv) The marker will ensure the mat is removed from the rink at the completion of an end.
- xv) At the end of the game, the marker will ensure that the scorecard is signed by both players and the card then deposited as required by competition rules.
- xvi) The marker should adhere to the correct dress code. Greys & whites' shirt or club shirts & greys or whites or club shirt & whites whichever is appropriate.

Want to know more?

A full set of rules may be purchased from the **English Indoor Bowling Association Ltd.**
World Indoor Bowls Council
Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls