

Stayner Lawn Bowling Club

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New Bowlers Information Kit



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WELCOME

Welcome to the sport of lawn bowling. This could be the beginning of a sport that will give you years of pleasure as well as the opportunity to make new friends.

Lawn bowling offers you an affordable activity that is:

- Fun
- Great exercise
- A challenge
- As competitive as you choose
- Age, gender or size is irrelevant
- Great way to socialize
- And did we mention FUN

The Stayner Lawn Bowling Club was established in 1924 and has been operated by volunteers as a non profit relying on membership fees and events such as tournaments and grants to cover costs.

Your membership allows you to play in on our regular scheduled dates. If you choose when you come to play you can contribute \$2 towards prize monies for the winning team that day and purchase a ticket \$1 for Share the Wealth – split with winners and the club.

Affiliations

The club is a member of the Ontario Lawn Bowls Association (OLBA) in a District with the lawn bowling clubs of Barrie, Collingwood, Midland, Orillia and Muskoka.

As bowling is played all across Canada, the OLBA is a member of the National Sport Association known as Bowls Canada Boulingrin (BCB). Each year Provincial Championships are held with the winners from each province going on to the National Championships. Those winners in turn go on the World Championships. Who knows – some year you might be a National Champion, World Champion or International Competitor in the Commonwealth Games.

What Equipment will you need?

To start all you need is flat-soled shoes (running shoes but no aggressive treads), sunglasses, a hat, sun screen and comfortable clothes. Oh, and a small towel to wipe the sand off your bowls as you play especially if there is dew on the ground.

You may borrow bowls at the club to use when you play along with the other tools of the game e.g. tape measure, chalk and such. You will learn about these during training.

As you progress you may choose to buy your own bowls as this assures that you will have the same set of bowls to play with each time you come to the club. Bowls come in different sizes - Size 7 is the largest and size '0000' the smallest with weights of regular and heavy.



There are four bowls in a set and each bowl has a matching pair of distinguishing symbols or decorations on opposite sides.

The symbols are how you recognize the bowls you are using during the game.



Bowls are not round; one side is slightly flattened and it is towards that side with its BIAS that the bowl is drawn into a sweeping arc. It is the mastery of this phenomenon that is at the heart of the challenge and excitement of the game. You will learn all about this as part of your training.

The number of bowls you use during a game is dependant on the format of play. For Singles – one player per team and Pairs – two per team you use 4 bowls, for Triples – three per team – 3 bowls and for Fours – four per team – 2 bowls. At our club we usually play games of pairs and triples.

Training

The club offers a Learn-To-Bowl training program as part of your membership. We encourage you to take advantage of the program as it will teach you best practices and includes practice time on the green. Want to jump right in and bowl? The lessons are available on-line so you can still have the benefit of reviewing. Members are always willing to help.

The Learn-To-Bowl program is three lessons on the green which typically runs during the month of June. Didn't come until after June – don't worry training is still available.

Each lesson is run on two days at different time slots during June. Lessons cover an introduction to the game with practice time, the rules and etiquette. The lessons along with supporting instructional videos are available on-line so you may review in advance of the lesson and refer to – in case of a what did they say moment. The videos help us make the best use of our time on the green so there is more time for practice. And, you are welcome to come on the other days of the week we play to practice.

Graduates of the program will be able to deliver a bowl, place the jack, know and understand the basic rules, terminology and etiquette and be competent enough to be warmly welcomed for a game with the members. Do not worry – all of us were new bowlers at one time.

If you have opted to just pay for the June Learn-to-Bowl program at the end of June you will need to pay the balance of a new bowler membership to continue bowling. We hope that you will have enjoyed the experience and will join us.

And if you want to learn more you can take advantage of drills to practice specific skills or attend clinics at the club or at one of the clubs in our district e.g. *Skips & Vices* or *Strategy & Tactics*.

The clinics are beneficial for both new and experienced bowlers. Some clinics are held by Cindy Higgins the 2023 Women's Singles Provincial Gold Champion a district celebrity.

Lawn bowling is an easy sport to learn but training will help you to master the game more quickly.

Rules

As an organized sport, bowls has a set of standard rules which are followed in countries all around the world. These rules have been developed by the World Bowls Board. The Laws of the Sport of Bowls, Crystal Mark 4th Edition as amended May 25, 2023 is the current version and has been adopted by the BCB and OLBA.

Our club encourages members to be aware of the rules but we follow the basic rules during play as we recognize everyone is here to have fun.

If you choose to go into the District Playdowns, Provincials or National tournaments you will need to be more familiar with the Laws of Sport rule book.

Hand Signals

Consider this - the game of bowls is played on a green that is a minimum of 100 feet in length with other teams playing on adjacent rinks. You are on one end and your skip is at the other end. Yelling back and forth is not an option; it is distracting and you would not be able to hear anyways. Does this make it impossible to communicate? No, a standard set of hand signals has been developed.

See some examples below and check out the 'Hand Signals' under Coaches Corner.



BOWL ON THE FOREHAND

Extend your left arm to the side
(if bowler is righthanded).



THE BOWL IS THIS FAR IN FRONT OR BEHIND OF THE JACK

Spread your hands one above the other. **NOTE: Always give the DEPTH distance not the WIDTH.**

Terminology

You will hear fellow bowlers use terms that are new to you. To make it easier here is a glossary of the commonly used terms that will soon be familiar to you.

Bias

Bowls have distinctive designs or symbols to assist in identifying your bowls from others. The design is on two sides of the bowl with the running surface in between. The smaller of the two designs identifies the 'bias' side. When rolled the bowl will travel in a straight line for some distance but as it slows down it will curve towards the bias side, the side with the smaller design.

Wrong Bias

If the bowl is accidentally delivered with the 'Bias' on the wrong side, the bowl will NOT curve towards the Jack but away from the Jack. Make it a practice to check your bowl every time you pick it up and position it in your hand correctly.

Weight

This is the amount of energy you use to propel the bowl a desired distance. If the Jack is almost at the end of the rink green you will have to give the bowl more momentum than if the Jack is positioned closer to you. Judging the 'right weight' will become easier as you acquire more experience.

Line of Aim

The imaginary line along which you deliver your bowl so that it will curve in and stop on the centre line of your green. The Jack is on the centre line (at the beginning of each end) and your line of aim should bring your bowl to rest on the centre line near the Jack. If the Jack is moved, you will have to adjust your line of aim accordingly.

Draw Shot

A draw shot is a bowl delivered with just the right weight to reach the Jack, or sometimes to match an opponent's bowl. This is the fundamental bowling shot – and should be practiced at different lengths.

Narrow Bowl

A bowl incorrectly delivered inside the normal line of aim.

Wide Bowl

A bowl incorrectly delivered outside the normal line of aim.

Light Bowl

This bowl may have 'good line' meaning your bowl stops in the centre of the rink but is not the correct weight to reach its objective (sometimes called a short bowl).

Wick Shot

If your bowl touches another bowl, changes direction and continues to move, it is described as a having 'wicked off' a bowl. Highly skilled players make this shot deliberately to have their bowl reach a particular target. For the rest of us it's usually accidental.

Wing Bowl

This is a bowl that comes to rest in a lateral position to the right or left of the Jack. The disadvantage of a Wing Bowl is that the expert bowlers will use them to 'wick in' to the Jack.

Toucher

If you deliver a bowl that touches the Jack it is called a 'toucher'. This bowl will be marked with chalk and is still be 'in play' even if it comes to rest in the ditch. However if the bowl goes outside the rink boundaries it is dead and must be removed from the green.

Guard or Blocker

Usually a 'light' bowl positioned to obstruct the opponents from making an easy shot. However, too often this type of bowl can be an obstacle to your team as well. However, your skip may ask for a blocker if your team has the points and it is a tight game.

Drive Shot

This too is a shot for the experts. The bowl is delivered with great speed and may not curve at all as it travels down the green. It can have quite an effect. Bowls will scatter if hit, or a particular bowl or the Jack can be knocked out of play. This type of bowl is sometimes called a 'runner'. You must let the players know you are going to throw a runner so they can move out of the way.

Port

This is an opening between two bowls which is large enough to allow another bowl to roll through it.

Shot Bowl

The bowls of one team that are closer to the Jack than the bowls of another team. Also referred to as counters as they are counting for scoring purposes. You will hear 'who has shot' meaning which team is scoring or 'which bowl is the counter' meaning identify which bowl is counting.

End

The playing of the Jack and the bowls of each side in one direction. Games are usually a pre-set number of ends.

Dead End

If the Jack is knocked outside the boundary of the rink whether accidentally or intentionally, the Jack is placed at the two-metre mark and the end continues. The old rule was when the Jack was knocked out of the rink the end was dead and should be replayed. Note: if the Jack is touched and knocked into the ditch it is still in play and the end continues. If the bowl that touched the Jack goes into the ditch it is also still in play, however if the bowl that touched the Jack goes outside the rink boundaries it is dead.

Dead Bowl

A bowl that is delivered and rolls into the ditch without touching the Jack or outside the boundaries of the rink is dead and must be removed from the green to the surround or bank of the green before the next bowl is played.

The Head

The Head is the Jack and the bowls that have been delivered during the end. The Head will change many times in an end as more bowls are delivered.

Rink

The green refers to the entire bowls playing surface. The green is separated into 'rinks' identified by a 'rink number' and at our green the rinks have two red boundary markers.

Jitney

Some clubs run leagues with teams that run at a set time to bowl and there are obligations to find someone to play in your place. At our club we have opted for flexibility so we do Jitneys. This means that there are no pre-set teams only pre-set times we play. Teams are setup based on who has come out to play that day and we generally play two games. Where possible the team format (pairs, triples) is set so that for the second game the teams can switch who they are playing against. We will also set aside a rink for drills or just practice. Our focus is fun so we are very flexible.

Pace of Greens

This is the number of seconds it takes for a bowl to travel 30 yards (27.4 metres) from the moment of delivery. If the grass is wet, or a little bumpy, the pace will be slow – possibly 10 seconds. However, the grass could be short, conditions excellent and dry and the pace will be fast – as much as 20 seconds. What does this mean? If the pace is slow your bowl will take a narrow path and travel with greater speed to reach the Jack. If the pace is fast your bowl will take a larger arc and thus a longer time to reach the target.

Lawn Bowls Etiquette

Etiquette in Lawn Bowling is simply defined as good sportsmanship and common courtesy. This may seem like a long list but most of it is common sense and courtesy so easy to remember.

- Show respect, be on time for jitneys and scheduled events.
- Start every game with the traditional handshake or an elbow bump. At the end of a game, congratulate the winners and shake hands/elbow bump with all.
- No matter how competitive the game may be, always compliment a good shot – whether by your own team or your opponents. Your opponent today may be your team mate tomorrow. Similarly, do not criticize a bad shot or cheer at an opponent's misfortune, no one willfully plays a bad bowl.
- Refrain from a running commentary on every bowl and continuous chat.
- Remember, friendly sporting acts toward team mates and opponents will be appreciated and reciprocated.
- Never try to distract your opponent with noise or movement while they are on the mat (keep behind the opponent on the mat to avoid a visual distraction).
- Keep track of play and be ready to play when your turn comes. 'Stay in the game'.
- Always pay your skip the respect of waiting for his/her instructions. If you would prefer a different shot have the courtesy to indicate to your skip your plan. Remember they are in the head so have a better view of the situation.
- Skips should always remember the players on their team are doing their best but anyone can have a bad day.
- Admit a 'fluke' shot when you get one (you will get many).
- After delivering your bowl, do not stray onto the adjacent rink or walk part way up your own rink to observe the bowl's progress and wait for it to come to rest. Doing so may obscure the path of your bowl or its entry into the head from your opponent. Stand on the delivery mat to watch the progress of your bowl until it comes to rest.
- Players should stand at least six feet behind the Jack when standing at the head. Be sure to stay in your rink.

- Always stand still at the head when a player is about to bowl. Movement talking or gesturing at the head is very distracting and is considered gamesmanship. Do not use gamesmanship to beat your opponent. Win your matches on the green.
- Be sure that complete access to the head is accorded to the team with possession of the rink.
- Leads are responsible for gathering the bowls at the conclusion of the end. Do your share.
- When changing ends, walk close to the center of the rink with minimum of delay so you will not distract play on adjacent rinks.
- When bowls need to be measured, the team or singles player that will probably or certainly concede a shot(s) should do the measuring. Place identified counters together.
- Be a gracious winner as well as a gracious loser.
- Don't criticize the performance of colleagues after the game. Anyone can have an off day.
- Do not openly criticize the condition of the green, particularly if you are visiting another club.
- Respect the green at all times. Wear appropriate shoes. Do not drop or loft bowls. Develop a smooth delivery to avoid damaging the green.
- Help to set up the required equipment for a playing session and contribute to the putting away of that same equipment at session's end.
- Above all, enjoy the game of bowls for the fun, fitness, pleasure and lasting friendships it provides.

Tournament Specific Etiquette

- Be conversant with the Laws of the Sport of Bowls and observe them at all times.
- For open, district and provincial tournaments team members are expected to wear matching attire i.e. same colour pants and tops.
- Keep quiet and refrain from moving when players are on the mat.

- When an umpire is called, retire away from the head as you no longer are apart of the decision making. Respect the decision made.
- The team or singles player that rakes the bowls should mark the scoreboard if one is being used.
- Always inform your opponent if you wish to leave the green.
- It is always gracious and appropriate to thank event administrators and the umpire(s) before leaving the green.
- When playing singles, whether you have won or lost, be sure to thank the marker. Remember that markers are volunteers and have given their time to assist you in your game. Your courtesy is their only compensation.
- Learn to be a good marker. Markers can make or break a game. Obtain a current copy of the Laws of the Sport of Bowls to learn the duties of a marker.

What's next?

If you are new to the game now you know have an insight into the sport of lawn bowling and how we operate. The next step is to sign up for some lessons and come out to the greens to practice.

Experienced bowler – well what are you waiting for? Come out and start playing in our jitneys.

Want to learn more about our club and what we do, etc?

Go to our website – www.staynerlawnbowlingclub.ca

This is where you will find all sorts of additional information e.g. when do we play, our club event listing, tournaments, photos, etc.

After you have registered as a new member and paid your fee for membership or the Learn-to-Bowl program, you can set up a user name on the website to access member only pages e.g. Coaches Corner.

On our website:

1. Click the **LOGIN** tab on the banner
2. Choose '**Forgot your password**'
3. Enter your **email address and click the submit button**
4. **Check your email** box for an email with **your user name**
5. Click the **LOGIN** tab on the banner – **input your user name** and you will be prompted to set up a password.

Now you have access to Coaches Corner under Membership with the lessons, etc. and more.

WELCOME TO THE STAYNER LAWN BOWLING CLUB !!!