

Article reprinted with permission from Letterbox in NSW Womens Bowling Association Newsletter, August 2011.

**Dear Editor,**

### **THAT FIRST GAME**

Out on the green for my first real game! My coach had said not to worry - as Lead I would only have to roll the jack and try to draw near it. I would pick up the finer points of the game in due course.

Someone tossed a coin and my opponent said it was her mat. She threw the jack and told me to hand her the first bowl as this was good manners but not to bother with any other bowls. When everyone had bowled I was elated to see one of my bowls second closest to the jack and I expected it to win some points for my team. But no fuss was made of it and it was just kicked away after a third called out, "One, only 1".

Thinking it was my turn to have the mat I picked it up and laid it down, but the other Lead grabbed it saying, "My mat, thank you". Put it somewhere else and rolled the jack a second time. Fourth from the jack was all I managed this end but to my surprise one of the thirds said "Here's another one" and lovingly placed my bowl with some others on a cloth, "Four" she called.

"Why didn't I get anything the first end", I asked. "My bowl was second".

Still puzzled I rushed for the mat, determined not to have it snatched from me this time, but my opponent reached it first and politely handed it to me saying, "Your mat", surprise!

I sent down a nice straight jack but the skips shook their heads over it and sent it back. My opponent grabbed it and had her go after all. Shrugging my shoulders I handed her, her bowl but she said no, she had to hand me mine, I had to bowl first.

Exasperated by now I let fly with my bowl and to my horror it hit the jack and carried it all the way into the ditch. Sure I had done something wrong, I was amazed when both teams cheered and said it was an unbeatable shot. Most of the other bowls entered the ditch.

I then handed the mat to my opponent just as she had previously to me. This time she said it wasn't her mat but mine, we didn't have turn about. So I rolled the jack, crookedly this time, but my skip did not send it back. In fact she seemed quite pleased with it.

Since my unbeatable bowl had been such a success I sent down another hard bowl, but this time my skip frowned and said only draws please. My next bowl stopped right beside the jack and she said, good bowl! But when my opponent hit my bowl with hers and sent it flying, everyone said good bowl for that one too, so it seems to be anyone's guess as to just what is a good bowl and what is a bad bowl.

After a lot of walking back and forth the game finally came to an end and we went inside for drinks and sandwiches. After a while a Selector fiddled around with a gadget containing some little wooden balls, then the President announced that my team were the lucky winners and we each received a frozen chicken. Lucky losers also had chickens .....

Win or lose, bowling is a puzzling game.

*This has been reprinted from July, 1999 and is possibly still as relevant today to some of our bowlers.*

*Thank you to the lady who originally sent this in to us. It brought back memories for me.*

**Handwritten note follows**

*Not everyone knows The Rules. Including me. Yes, I know I have broken some of them, mainly because I didn't know them. I wish to be enlightened. I have trouble separating Rules and Traditions.*

*Please help me out with a Rules and Traditions Night.*

*Thank you. A new and Dumb Bowler.*