

The Yips

(and how to cure them)

**In recent times, my bowling went
From middling bad to worse
And I have had to come to grips
With a problem that gives us all the pips,
A pestilence and a curse.
I've heard it called the Bowler's Yips,
-The title of this verse.**

**Of't times I've heard poor skipper mutter
Oh, woe is he, alack;
His bowling, never strong, has gone right to the pack,
And he's forgotten how to draw
Within ten metres of the jack,
And I have seen the skipper's frown, from anguished brow to balding crown,
Going down - and coming back.**

**So out I went to get some tips
From all who offer help.
I tell them of my hurt and pain
And ask them if they might explain
How I might find some form, and fix
These dreadful bloody bowling yips.**

**These kindly well-intentioned souls,
All very good at rolling bowls -
Offer plenty of tips , all guaranteed to cure my yips,
And I take them all on board;
What works for them should work for me
And I know I can't afford
To ignore from them a single tip
Or leave an avenue unexplored
To cure a single yip.**

**I am advised to take more time,
More time on the Henselite mat
By a man who controls and loves his bowls,
And does just exactly that.
Another one says that it's back-swing,
It's back-swing that you lack
And your follow-through isn't straight and true;
And your delivery lacks conviction,**

Another one says that I need to bend -
You have to bend your back
But you'll need to be straight, right at the end
Could this be a contradiction?

Yet another one says I must take more grass,
And to be careful not to raise my arse,
It's not a tail-fin, so you must keep it tucked in,
But the method of tucking the lemon and sars
Was not to me all that clear;
I may just have to work it out for myself
If it takes 'till the end of next year.

Then another good man - my bowls he decried
Saying scrap them bowls, them old Drakes Pride;
They're taking you out, far, far too wide
And they draw like a poultice of mustard.
So I'll lend to you, my almost brand - new
Set of Almarks - the bowls which can surely be trusted;
They're narrow and true, and a lovely light blue:
Try these new bowls, and I do promise you
Your yips will be cured, done and dusted.

Another advised - watch a spot on the grass
For your line, and never look up
As you seem to be constantly doing,
And your arm must be straight,
It's bent arms that I hate
And yours looks too much like a figure of eight;
That's causing those yips you're now rue-ing.

The matter of stance was then raised, quite by chance,
As the probable cause of my troubles
But if you now bowled, I am earnestly told,
From the standing or fixed position....
My adviser was bright, so I assumed he was right
And agreed to this minor transition.

Now, as I recall,
My advisers, one and all
Were in full and certain agreement
On only one thing, not at all surprise-ing,
And who am I to doubt their sagacity -
That a man can't expect to bowl true and correct
When he round-arms 'most all his deliveries,

I'm prepared to concede, and guilty I plead
To this charge, to retain some veracity.

So now, fully - armed
With a ship-load of tips,
To correct those God-awful lawn- bowler's yips,
And the duck-egg blue bowls as a bonus,
I enter the Thursday Triples.
I lurch to the rink, head spinning, can't think;
Trying hard to recall - at least some, if not all,
Of the gist of my recent coaching.

I am handed the mat - I forgot about that,
And I'm clutching the Almark, duck-egg blue
My poor brain feels like a bucket of glue,
So what now - what next should I do?
My old head, it's awash with instructions;
With all those should-does and must-does,
And those bad habits I must lose
And the rest of those coach's deductions.

I lean to the left, then I lean to the right
And I line up a peg on the bank,
With one eye on a spot, on the green (which it's not)
And the other one blank as a plank.
My eyes are now crossed and my balance is lost,
My rear end projects, for special effects
And I look like that poor Quasimodo
My stance hovers between, fixed fast to the green
And stretched out, as if I am running.
My arm comes right back, and I hear a joint crack
My knee hits the turf and it's way out of whack
And the duck-egg blue slams down on the track
And races like hell for the ditch;
Then it picks up a kitty - not ours - more's the pity,
That treacherous, borrowed, blue, son of a bitch!

I get up from the grass, where I'm flat on my arse,
And look up at my Skip - from Wonthaggi,
And Skip - a cool dude,
Said - I don't want to be rude,
But, tell me, who was it that taught you your bowling?
I replied - here's the rub - it was the Whole Bloody Club,
No single poor coach could have done it.
He said not a word - at least none that I heard

**About this opening fiasco,
But "your high- level training needs no explaining
And such training must never be wasted,
So come with me, son, there's still work to be done,
But I want you to start coaching Wonthaggi! "**

Harry Dunn