



# **BISHOPSWOOD BOWLING CLUB**

**Capital Ring, Lyttelton Playing Fields, (off Norrice Lea), London N2 0RE**  
**Tel: 020 8058 2212 E-mail: [info@bishopswoodbc.co.uk](mailto:info@bishopswoodbc.co.uk) Website: [www.bishopswoodbc.co.uk](http://www.bishopswoodbc.co.uk)**

## **Subject: Possession of the rink**

When the bowl stops you must give way to your opponents. I try to signal when my partner or partners return to the mat. If you do it before, I feel you are also giving your opponents information. Instead of shouting, use your hands showing the distance they are from the jack. Above the waist for past and below the waist if short. Please remember once your bowl has stopped you must vacate the mat and at the receiving end you must walk away from the head.

**George Taylor**

**[geo\\_heather@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:geo_heather@yahoo.co.uk)**

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Bowlers who are in charge at the non-bowlers end often get confused as to what or when they can signal to the bowler on the mat. In other words, what they are allowed to do/say when the bowl is delivered and is moving and when the bowl has come to a stop?

This is called, “possession of the rink”. The rule is according to the Laws of the Sport as follows

1. Possession of the rink will belong to the player or team whose bowl is being played.
2. 13.2 As soon as each bowl comes to rest, possession of the rink will transfer to the opposing player or team after allowing time for marking a toucher as soon as it comes to rest.

So, in practice this means that when your team member is on the mat, you have possession of the rink. When the bowl is delivered the person at the non-bowler’s end can talk or signal to the bowler how the bowl is progressing and how far it is from the jack by the usual hand/arm signal. In theory when the bowl has stopped they should not be signaling or shouting out the distance from the jack because the possession of the rink transfers to the opposing player or team. In practice (and by unwritten convention) the signal or shouted instruction is often given literally just



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after the bowl has come to rest but the opposition is entitled to complain if they think it's interfering with their possession.

Quite often, after the bowl has stopped, I've seen the bowler who is in charge of the head, go up to the head and try to work out who is holding. They cannot do this as they do not have possession of the rink once the bowl has come to rest. They can check who is holding once their team player has the mat again.

Remember, you still have possession of the rink even if the bowler walks away from the mat well before the bowl has finished rolling. This often happens when a player bowls a poor shot and walks off the mat in disgust and turns their back on the bowler who is in charge of the head.

Generally speaking, this is understandable but not good practice. The bowler on the mat should remain there until his bowl has come to a stop so that the person who controls the end can signal to him and so that the bowler can see where the bowl ends up. If you're a right hander bowling a forehand shot and the bowl ends up three feet to the left of the centre line, you'll know next time how to adjust your shot. Remember, you can learn just as much from a bad shot as you can from a good shot.

**Ian Kaye**