

REVERSE BIAS

The reverse bias shot is unique to short mat bowls. The two obstacles that make it unique are the centre block and the edge of the mat. The block prevents you playing some shots across the mat and the edge of the mat stops you playing a wide line.

Theoretically, this shot is possible in carpet bowls but carpet bowlers are additionally restricted by the delivery box which does not allow them to play from wide enough on the mat to make the reverse bias shot of any practical use.

What is reverse bias? It is where the bowl is delivered backhand down the normally forehand side of the mat (or vice versa). Put another way, instead of the little ring to the inside, you play the shot with the little ring to the outside.

There are 3 main situations where the reverse bias can be very effective:

The target object(s) are at the very edge of the mat and there is not enough room for a conventional weighted shot to give you the desired result. The example in Figure 3 shows a situation where a reverse bias shot can either play the opposition bowl or get the jack off the mat.

The preferred shot is blocked by a short bowl. Figure 4 shows how the reverse bias shot can get round the blocking bowl.

To minimise the risk of a weighted shot. In Figure 5, you are holding shot and there is an opportunity to remove your opponent's nearest bowl for a count of 3 or 4. With the standard forehand weighted shot, there is a risk of being tight and pushing the jack to the 2 opposition back bowls or even taking 1 or 2 of your own shots out. By playing the shot with reverse bias, your bowl will swing away from the danger and the chance of disturbing the head is greatly reduced.

The reverse bias shot is usually played with more than draw weight. Otherwise it would fall off the mat well before it reaches its objective. To give yourself a broader choice of weight you should take a stance that allows you to release the bowl as wide as possible, preferably outside the delivery line. Deliver the bowl on a line to the inside of the target and let it swing outwards. The shot requires a bit of practice. Try aiming inwards toward the edge of the block and learn to trust that the bowl will bend away from it. The reverse bias shot is a powerful addition to your armoury but best to try it first in a club roll up rather than in a competitive match.

Thank you Brian for another great article. These articles will now be appearing on the website as a permanent fixture.

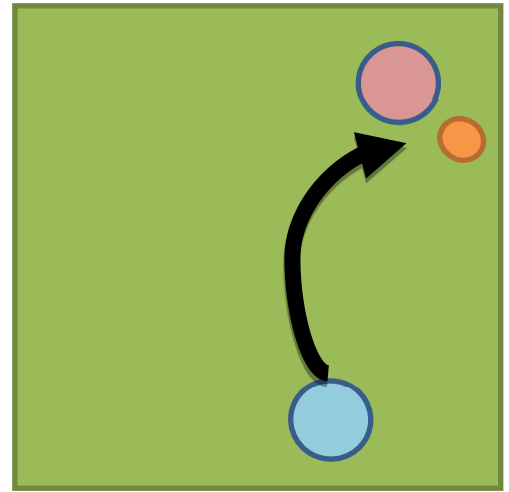


Figure 3: Objects at the edge of the mat

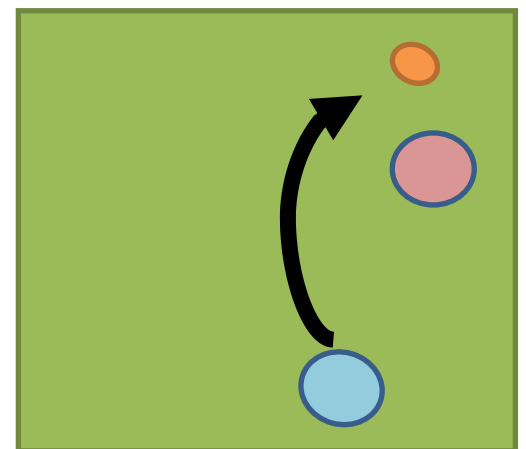


Figure 4: Path blocked by a short bowl

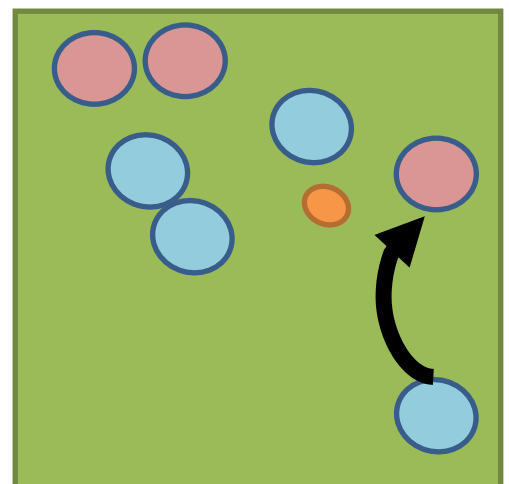


Figure 5: Minimising risk

NEXT TIME IN THINK ABOUT IT - PART 7

Failure is an option. If you can't play the perfect shot look for the best way to fail.

Also, how to learn from your "bad" bowls.