HARPENDEN BOWLING CLUB

Etiquette at the Head – Understanding Possession of the Rink

HBC's existing guidance on Laws and Etiquette reminds us that **possession of the rink belongs to the player or team whose bowl is being played and passes to the opposition when that bowl stops.**

A few points about what this means in practice are worth emphasising.

Communication – it works both ways

While your side has possession, communication may take place **in either direction** between the player on the mat and the player controlling the head. Questions may be asked and information or advice given, including while the bowl is travelling.

Once the bowl has come to rest, possession passes to the opposition and all communication between the mat and the head must stop.

No further "you're two feet short", "you're a yard through" or "you're still holding shot" from the head – and equally no further questions or comments from the player who has just bowled.

Your bowl has stopped – so should the conversation.

While your opponent's bowl is travelling

Your opponents retain possession until their bowl has come to rest.

Remain still and **do not start walking towards the head while their bowl is still travelling,** particularly after the final bowl of an end. Allow them to complete their shot without unnecessary movement or distraction.

After the final bowl of the end has been bowled

Once the final bowl has come to rest, the opposing 2's in Triples or 3's in a Rinks game enter the head, inspect the position and agree the score. Other team members of both sides should stay out of the head and leave it to the 2/3s to agree the score. Only enter into conversation with the 2/3s if you are asked to do so. It is their function in the game - not yours.

The simple principle

When your side has possession, communicate as necessary.
When your bowl stops, so should the conversation.
When your opponents have possession, stand clear and give them the head.

A little consideration at the head makes for a fairer and more enjoyable game for everyone.

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