

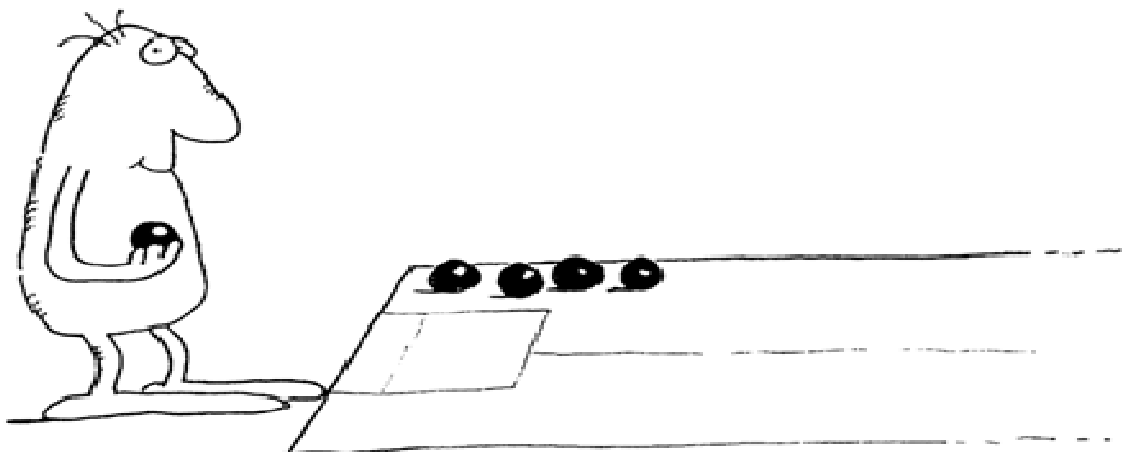
# INDOOR

# BIAS



# BOWLS

The sport for those who  
dare to be different  
(Junior to Senior)



This IBB program has the approval of the Australian Indoor Bias Bowls Council

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks go to:

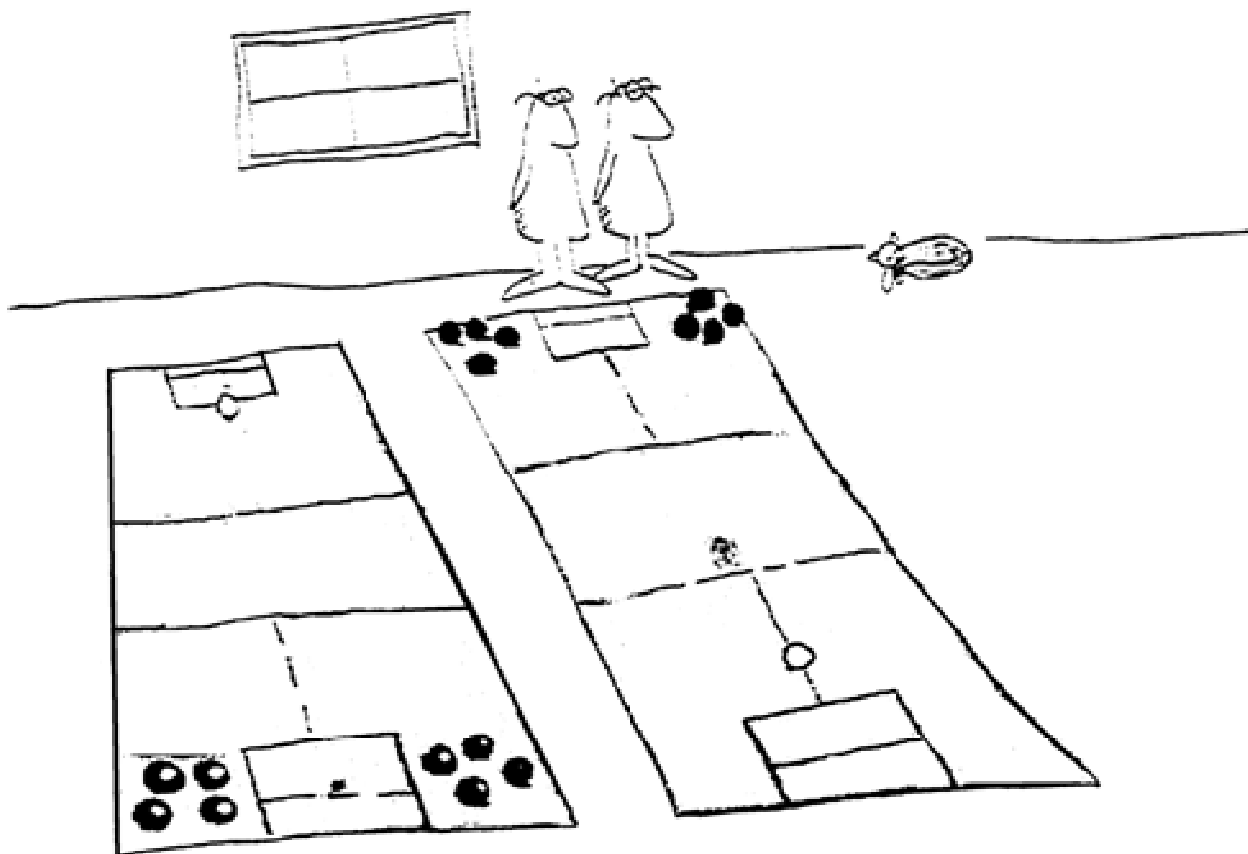
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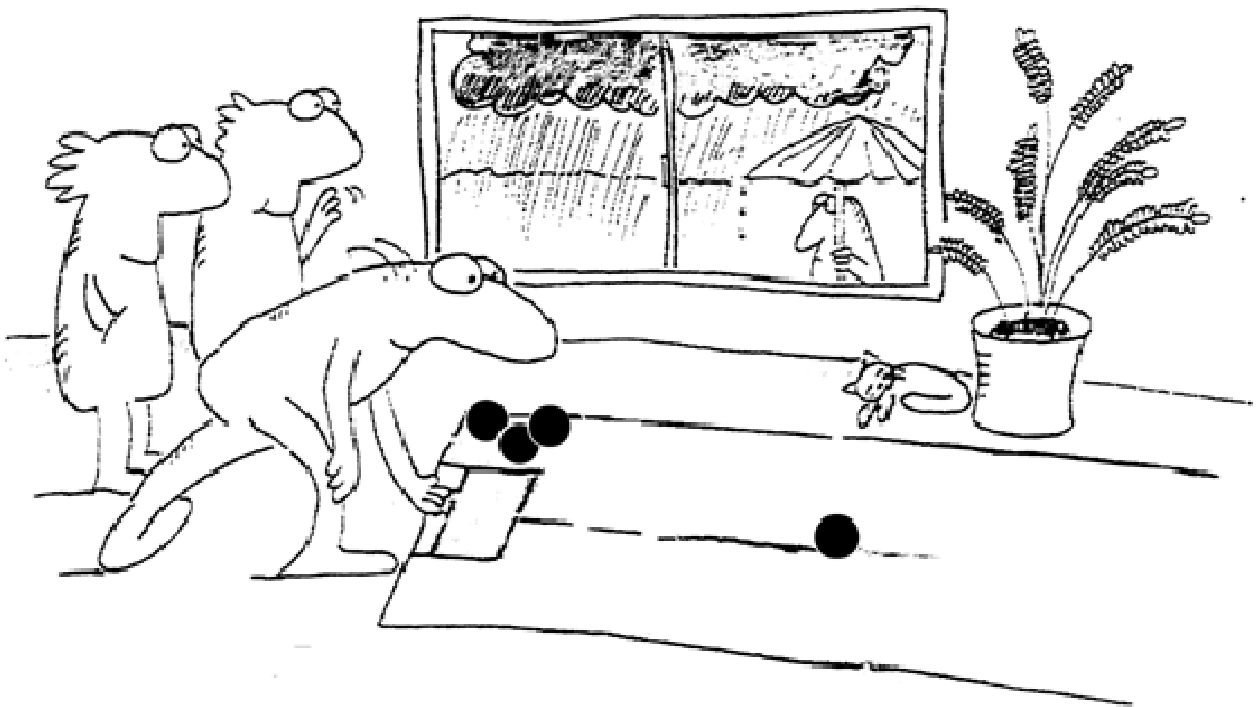


## HISTORY

Indoor bias bowls is a fun sport that older members of the community have been enjoying for years. Now it is being discovered and enjoyed by young people through to the older generations, as well as those with disabilities (wheelchair, amputees, etc).

Although similar games have been played with wooden bowls in former centuries, the sport as we know it originated in Australia and was initially known as “carpet bowls”. It was pioneered by Ray W. Hensell, the founder of Henselite (manufacturers of all bowls equipment) to cater for lawn bowlers who were continually being frustrated by unpleasant weather conditions. Now Indoor Bias Bowls is an international sport in its own right, with the Trans Tasman Cup being played every second year.

Indoor bowls is played most Commonwealth countries around the world.

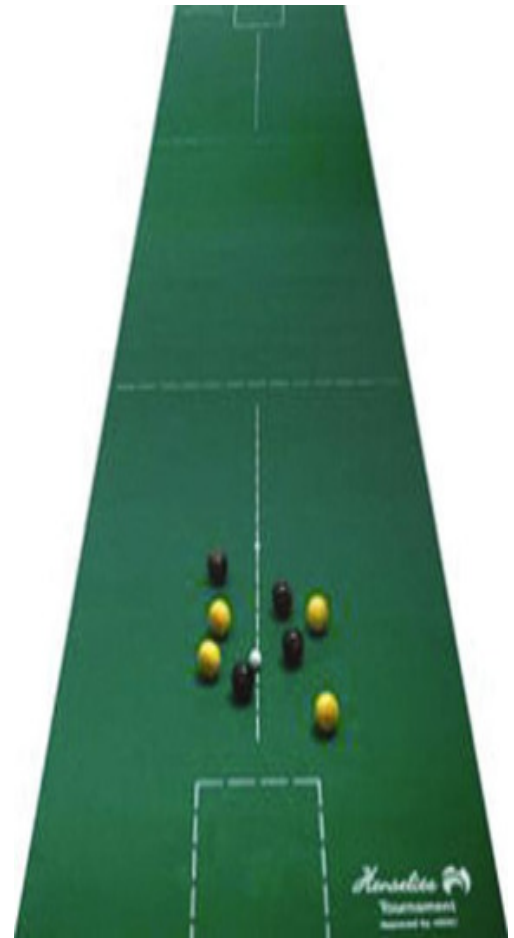


## IBB EQUIPMENT

### THE MAT

To understand the descriptions below, please refer to figure 1.

1. The 'delivery rectangle' or 'bowling area' is the space from within which each bowl must be delivered. At the moment of releasing the bowl, a player's bowl must pass within the front points of the delivery rectangle. All parts of the bowler's body, except the bowling hand, are required to be clear of the carpet.
2. The carpet is divided into three equal sections by the broken white lines drawn parallel to the ends of the carpet. These have 3 functions:
  - a) as aids in mentally calculating distances
  - b) to provide marks by which aim can be taken in anticipation of the track of a bowl
  - c) to indicate the length required for a legal jack delivery
3. The halfway point of the mat is indicated by small white lines drawn at each side of the carpet.
4. At each end of the carpet, a white line is drawn from the centre of the nearest aiming line to the centre of the front of the nearest delivery rectangle. This indicates where to position the jack once the length of delivery has been determined.
5. A white dot, called the 'Jack Replacement Spot' is placed at the centre of the lines described in section 4. This is the correct position for the jack when neither player has been able to deliver the jack within the last third of the carpet.



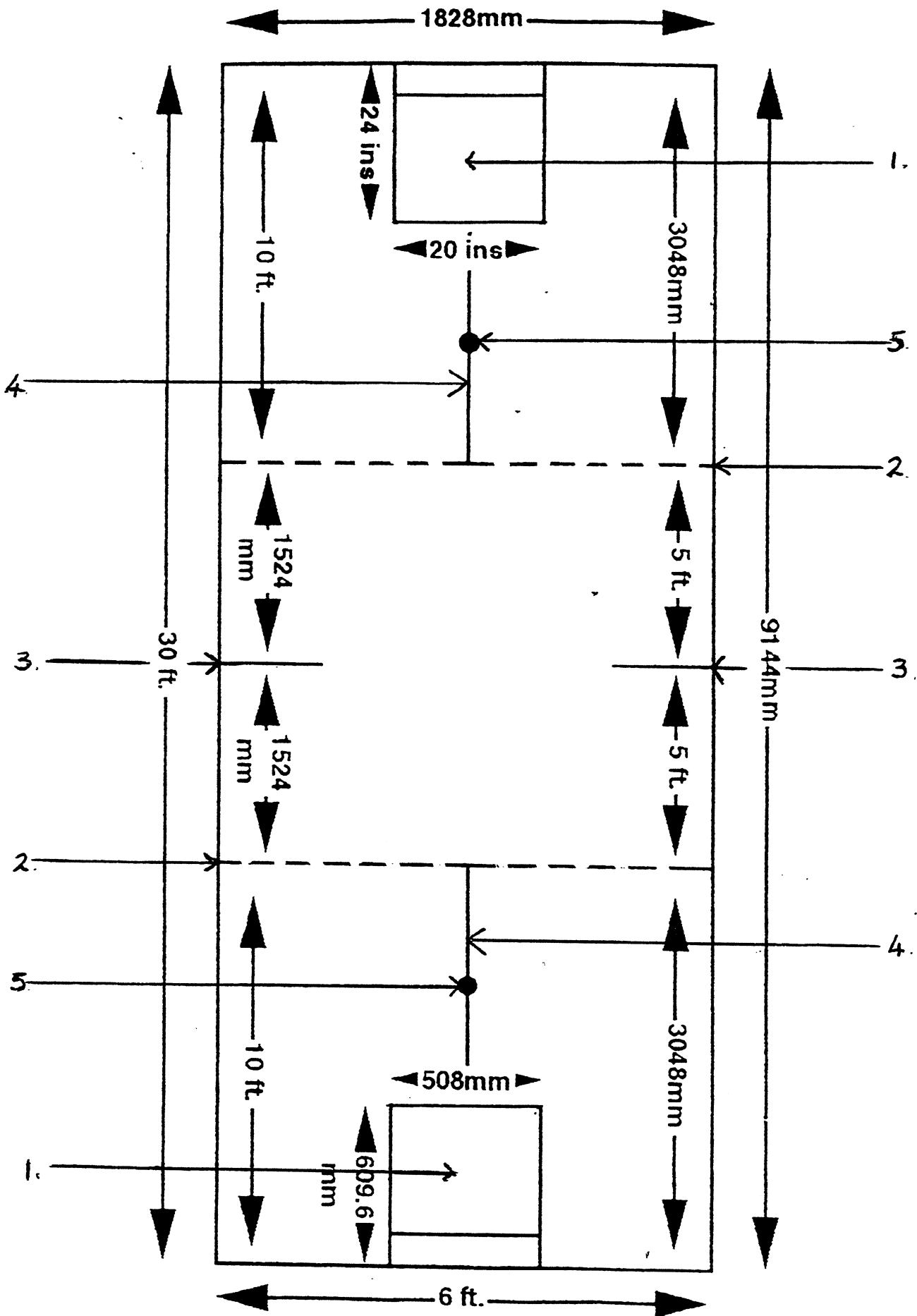


Figure 1. Layout of a standard IBB carpet.

## BASIC CONCEPT OF IBB

Bowls is played on long green felt carpets, using at least four black and four contrasting colour 4" (red/brown or yellow) bias bowls, with one smaller white jack.

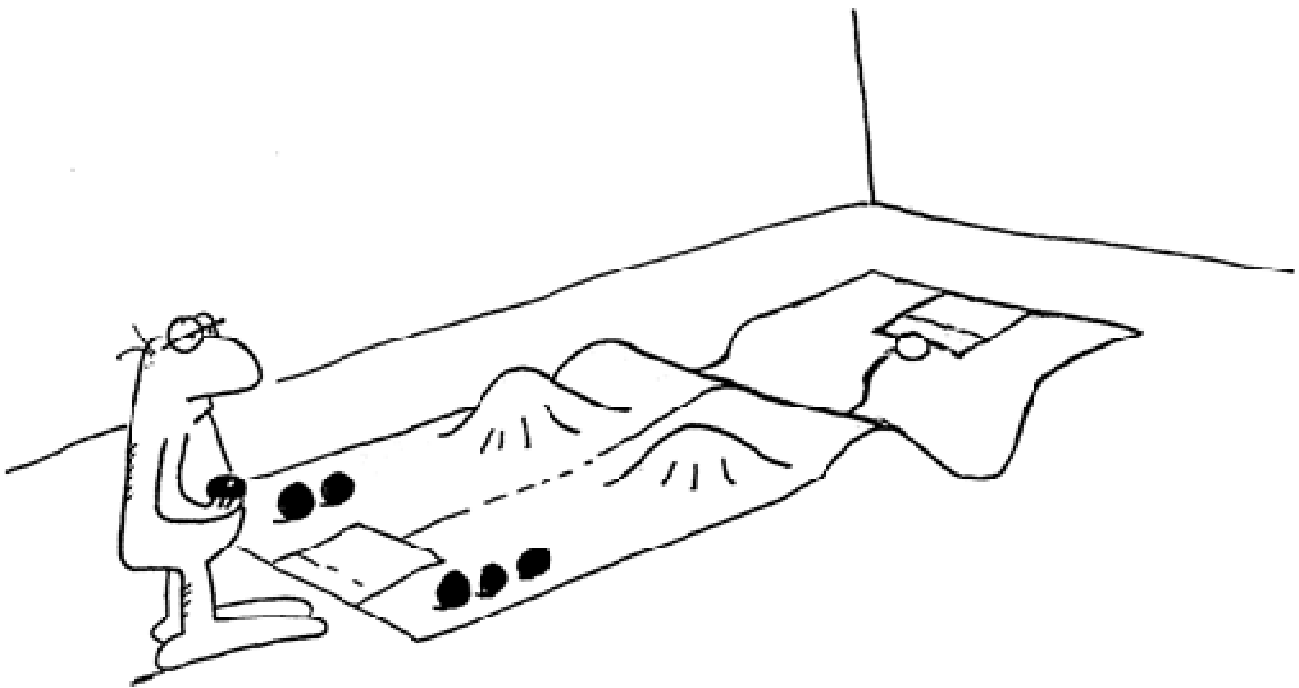
The object of the game is to position your bowls closer to the jack than those of your opponent.

For singles there are 4 bowls of each colour, and for pairs, triples and teams of four people, either 6 or 8 bowls of each colour are used. This leaves no room for boredom!



The carpet is laid directly on any hard floor surface. Sufficient clear floor space (approximately 2 metres) at each end needs to be available to allow the players room to move.

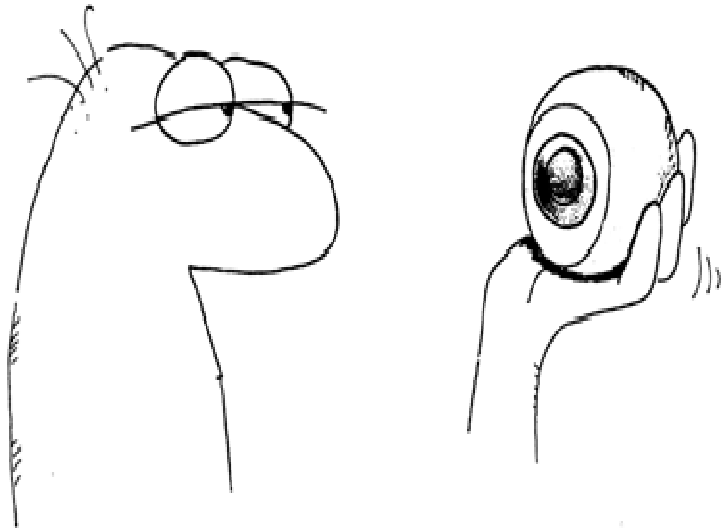
IBB is mostly played in buildings and halls that were not specifically built for the game. Whilst the floors are flat they are not necessarily level and usually have irregularities which affect the track the bowl will take. Part of the skill of IBB comes from a player's ability to master these irregularities.



The carpet is the most expensive item of IBB equipment, but with proper care will last for many years. For best results the mat should be turned over before being rolled up onto a strong tube. It should then be stored on a rack rather than resting on the floor. No eating, drinking or smoking should be allowed near IBB carpets and smooth flat-soled shoes should be worn when playing.



## THE BOWLS

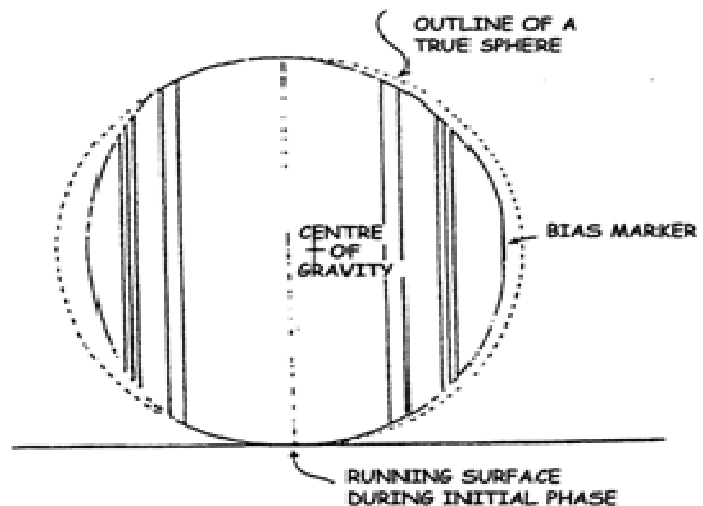


A complete set of bowls consists of 8 black and 8 of a contrasting colour (usually red/brown or yellow). Each bowl has a diameter of 101.6mm to 102mm (approximately 4”) and weighs 755 grams.

Every bowl is marked with engraved circles on both sides. The smaller circles (with the manufacturer’s trademark) indicated the bias side and the larger circles indicate the side that should face the outside in delivery.

Many people believe that the bias tracking of indoor bowls is caused by weights being added to the bowls in the manufacturing. This is a fallacy. The bowl travels its curved path because it is not truly symmetrical about its centre of gravity.

Figure 2.  
The irregular shape of a bowl.  
The outline of a true sphere is shown by the dotted line. The irregularity is exaggerated for clarity.



In the early part of its trip down the carpet, the bowls speed of rotation is quite high and its axis is parallel to the carpet. Gyroscopic action tends to keep this axis parallel to the carpet, by gravitational force – greatest on the bias side of the axis – tends to tilt the axis. As the bowl slows down, the gyroscopic force weakens and the axis tilts more and more. This shifts the running surface of the bowl off the crown causing the bowl to follow a path of increasing curvature until it eventually comes to rest.

## THE JACK

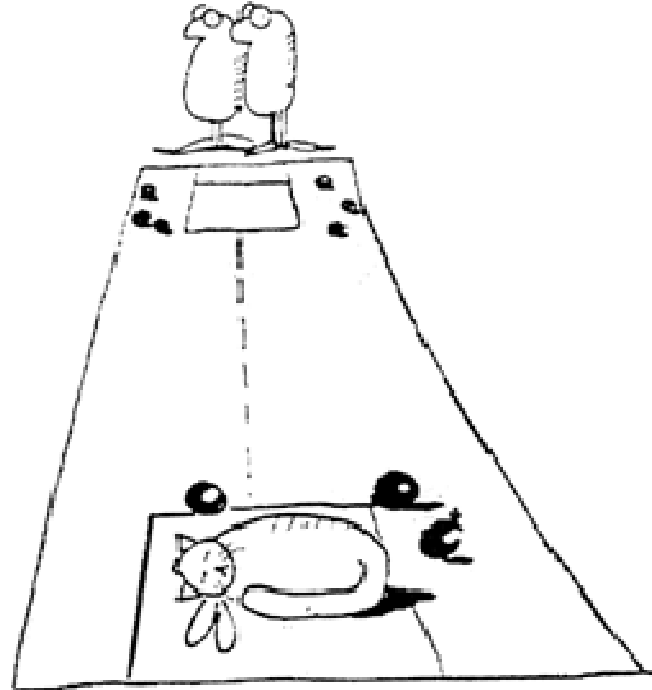


The jack (or 'kitty' as it is sometimes called) provides the focus for the game. It is always white, and has a diameter of 52.4mm and weighs 142 grams. The jack is perfectly spherical and therefore has no bias.

At the start of a game, the jack is rolled by the player who won the toss or elects to let the opposition roll the jack. For subsequent ends the jack is rolled by the player who won the previous end.

The term "end" signifies each "round" of a game when the jack and all bowls of all competitors have been played in the same direction from one end of the carpet to the other.

The jack must be rolled into the furthest third of the carpet, and then centred.



## THE SCOREBOARD

This provides a clearly visible tally of scores of each team (or player in a singles game), and the number of ends completed.



A Henselite Scoreboard

## DELIVERY OF BOWLS

A comfortable, stable stance with unimpaired movement of the bowling arm is essential for every IBB player. This can vary from standing to squatting to kneeling, with many factors determining a player's choice. Whatever the stance, no part of the bowlers body is allowed to come in contact with the carpet.

A recommended position for a right-handed player is to face their left foot towards their chosen bowling line, bend low their left knee whilst stabilising themselves by stretching out their right leg behind them and placing their left hand on their left knee. This is reversed for left-handed players.

Bowler's aids such as Bowling Arms and Lifters can be used if required.



## USE OF MIND

Intense concentration, observation, planning and imagination are vital components of successful IBB playing. A good bowler mentally plays every bowl of every player, observing opponents style, attitude and tactics, and the idiosyncrasies of the carpet.

Each player is allowed 60 seconds to deliver his/her bowl from the moment the preceding bowl come to rest. In this time the player needs to study the head (i.e. the configuration of the jack and bowls already delivered), assess the playing options and decide on the best shot available. Imagination is then needed to mentally draw on the carpet the shape of the path of the bowl from its targeted finishing position back into the bowling area. The chosen bowling line will then be that part of the imagined track of the bowl which is within the bowling area.

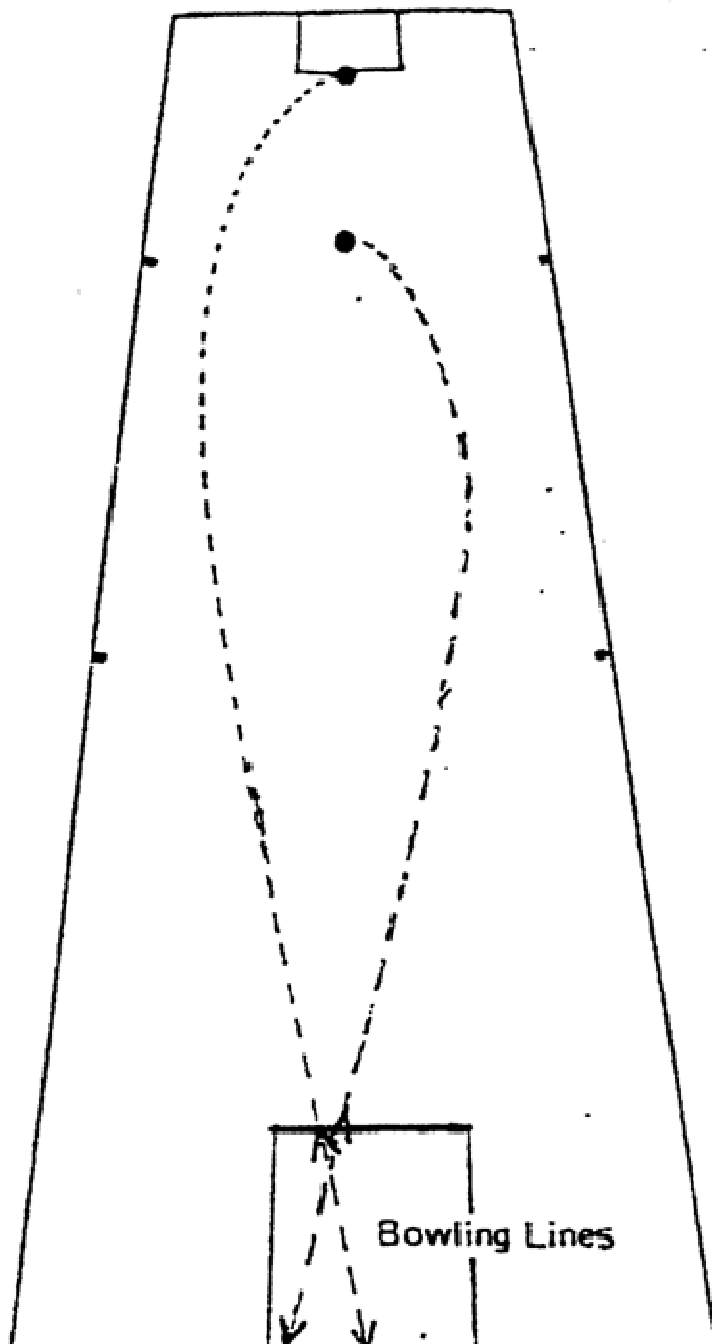


Figure 3. Illustration of the bowling line.

## HOLDING THE BOWL

The bias side of the bowl has the name of the manufacturer and a single ring in the centre. The outside of the bowl has two rings in the centre, and the rings are usually painted.

When the bowl is properly held, the centre of the second finger pad will lie on the centre with the pads of the first and third fingers equi-distant from it. All four finger pads should be under the bowl for control (see figures 4 and 5).

The thumb forms the opposing pincer of the grip and should rest as near to the centre as is comfortable. Its actual position is not critical as long as the grip is secure and it does not strain the hand or arm.

Similarly, the fingers and thumb should not be strained by forcing them too far around the bowl. The bowl should be held on the upper half of the finger pads only. The little finger may be rested lightly on the bowl surface, but should not enter into the delivery area.



Figure 4. Cup grip, with thumb on side.



Figure 5. Position of fingers with bowl tilted forward.

A few players may find the recommended grip difficult or uncomfortable. Where this is so, the grip may be modified as long as two points are observed:

- The active fingers must be symmetrically placed about the equator of the bowl, and
- The finger pads of the active fingers are on a line of longitude.

Provided that these criteria are observed, the bowl should run true when delivered.

It is essential that the bowl runs along the carpet on its designed running surface ... the so-called equatorial line. The grip should therefore hold the bowl during delivery in such a way that a line drawn through the two poles is parallel to the carpet surface and at right angles to the desired direction of travel (i.e. the bowling line). These conditions need to be met when holding the bowl in a sighting position just before delivery. It is also important to ensure that the hand is not twisted at any time during the bowling action.

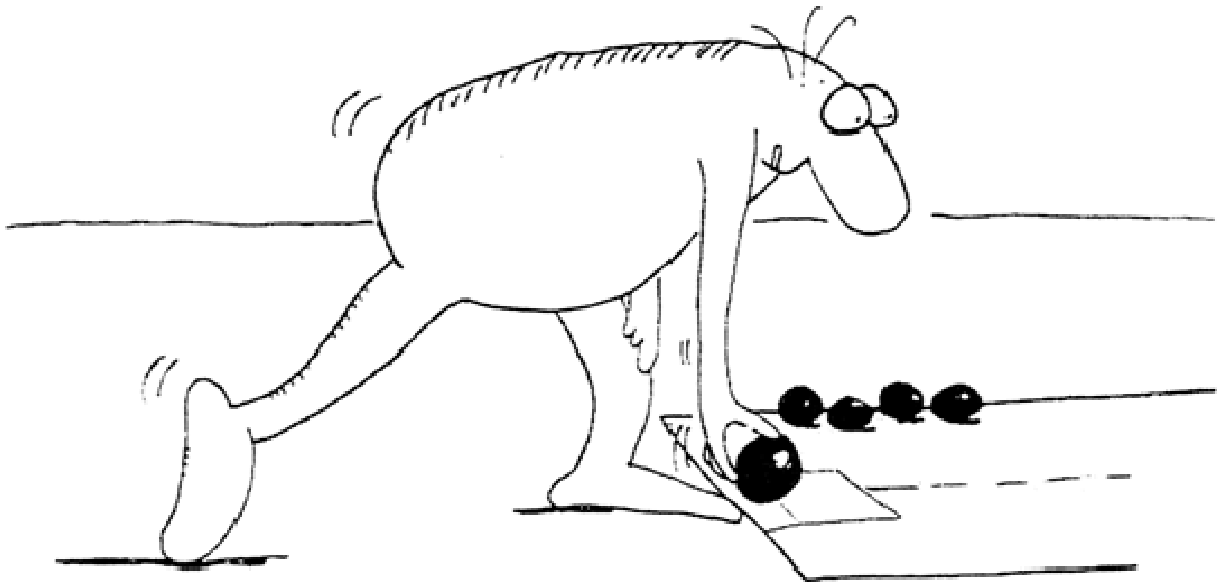
## THE DELIVERY

The player checks the colour of the bowl and adjusts the bias marker according to whether a forehand delivery (away from the body) or a backhand delivery (across the body) is planned. The bias must always be on the side needing an inward curve.

The toes of the forward foot are placed near (but not touching) the edge of the carpet with the player's body facing the chosen direction of bowling. The shoulder of the bowling arm should be directly above, and perpendicular to the imagined bowling line.

The player needs to lean well forward with head down, body weighted towards the balls of his/her feet and knees relaxed. The bowling arm is drawn back along the predetermined bowling line with a smooth action from the shoulder. The player allows the weight of delivery to regulate the backswing.

With eyes focussed on the aiming line, the bowl is allowed to roll out of the player's hand at the lowest point of the swinging action, skimming onto the carpet with no discernible bump. The player's arm should be firm and straight as the bowl is released. The player's head needs to be kept down while his/her arm follows through the pendulum motion until the height of the forward knee is attained. At this point the player may raise his/her head and study the course of the bowl.



## WEIGHT AND GREEN

In delivering a bowl, whatever its purpose, the IBB bowler has two critical decisions to make:

1. the speed at which a bowl will be bowled (in bowling terms the 'weight' to be given to the bowl), and
2. The exact direction in which the bowl will be aimed, or the bowling line (and this is often referred to as how much 'green' is taken).

### 1. WEIGHT

The speed with which a bowl has to be bowled is dependent on the texture of the carpet, the surface of the floor, the slope of the floor and the type of shot required.

A thick carpet needs a greater weight applied in bowling than a thin carpet. The thick carpet is said to be 'slow'. Similarly, a damp carpet is slower than a dry carpet.

A carpet laid on a concrete floor is faster than one laid on timber. On linoleum the same carpet will be slower still, while on carpet it will be so slow that it is almost unplayable.

A floor with a general slope along the length of the carpet produces a fast carpet when the bowls run downhill, and a slow carpet in the reverse direction. Such changed of required weight on alternate ends really tests the bowler's ability to the full.

The type of shot to be played affects the choice of weight. A basic draw shot requires the lowest bowling speed. Shifting the jack or a bowl required a little higher speed than a draw. More speed still is required to shift a number of bowls at once.

### 2. GREEN

The speed with which a bowl has to be bowled is dependent on the texture of the carpet, the surface of the floor, the slope of the floor and the type of shot required.

Positioning the bowling line occurs by visually tracing the path of the bowl back from the target area (commonly the jack) into the bowling area. The bowl is then delivered along that line of the path which lies within the bowling area. Provided that the path of the bowl has been correctly imagined and the weight is accurate, the bowl will finish on target.

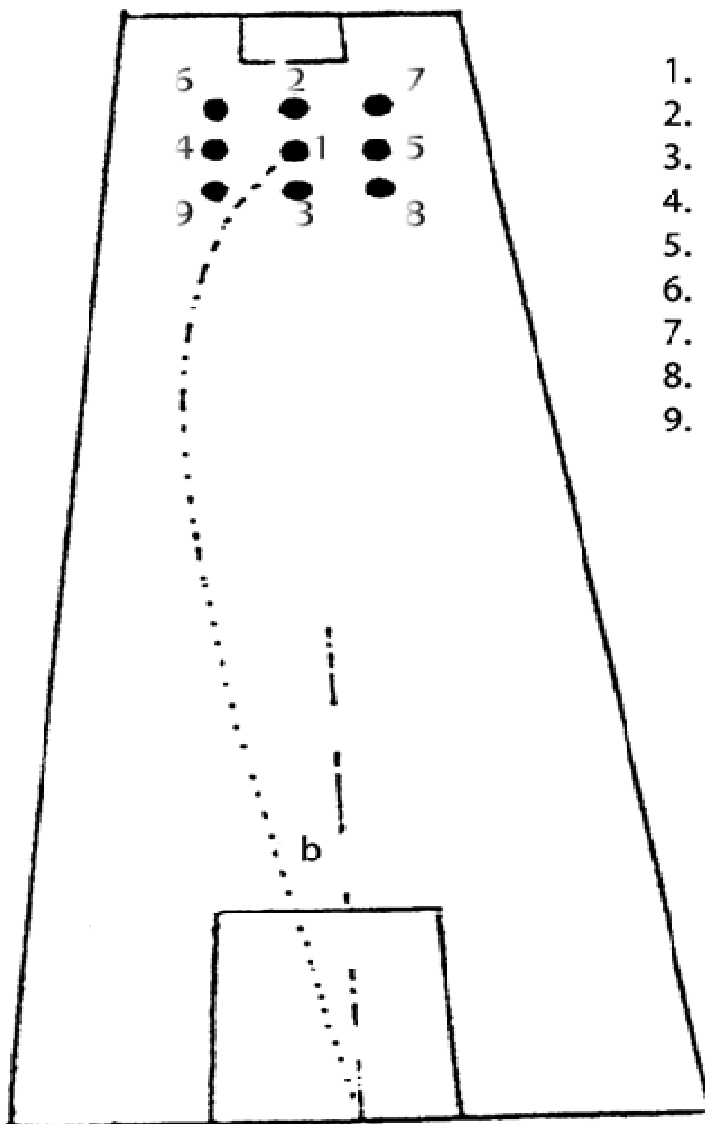
The advantage of this method of positioning the bowling line is that it does not required the use of aiming points such as marks on the carpet or the wall beyond. The use of such marks is convenient when the jack remains in one spot and drawing to the jack is the only



requirement. However, when the jack is moved or the need is to position a bowl elsewhere on the carpet, such marks do not help. Using the bowling line approach, the track of the bowl can be mentally drawn from any finish point on the mat that may be required.

The first bowl on a mat should be bowled with the assumption that the mat is flat and level. The next bowl played can be suitably corrected by a slight change of the angle of the bowling line and/or weight. (See figure 6.)

Once on target the actual path of the bowl should be carefully memorised. Knowing the shape of this path will enable the bowling line to be readily reset when the jack is shifted or a positional bowl is called for. To put it in IBB language – the green will be readily found.



1. On target
2. Reduce Weight
3. Increase Weight
4. Reduce bowling angle
5. Increase bowling angle
6. Reduce weight and angle
7. Reduce wight and increase angle
8. Increase weight and angle
9. Increase weight and reduce angle

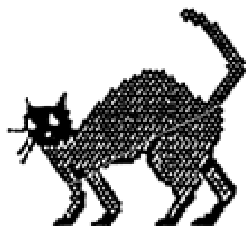
b. Bowling angle (green)



## Weight and Green Skill Development Exercises

1. Using both forehand and backhand deliveries, practice drawing to an open jack, with each bowl being removed as soon as it comes to rest. This exercise is most efficient when carried out with one player at each end of a carpet taking turns at practice and removing bowls. The jack length should be altered after consistent close drawing has been achieved, and gradually the full range of variation in the jack position should be attempted.
2. Place an obstacle in the middle of the mat and practice drawing the bowl to the jack behind it.
3. Roll bowls over selected marks on the aiming line.
4. Deliver eight bowls to the jack, removing each bowl before the next delivery. Measure the finishing distance of each bowl from the jack, and average the distances measured to give a performance index.
5. Use pieces of tissue paper as 'jacks' with co-ordinating scores of prizes.

The more I  
practise, the  
luckier I get!



## SCORING FOR IBB

During the game the score is recorded either on standard score cards (see Figure 7) or on a score board.

Each team has three columns on the card. In the left hand column any penalties are recorded, in the middle column the score of the team for that particular end is shown, while the right hand column indicated the cumulative score as the game progresses.

In a singles game the score is recorded by a non-playing helper called a 'marker'. In a game of pairs or triples one of the skips keeps the score. In a fours game the score is kept by one of the seconds.

One point is allowed for each bowl nearer the jack than the nearest bowl of the opponent. If the nearest opposing bowls are equidistant from the jack, the end is proclaimed a tie, and no score is added, although it still counts as a complete end.

If the jack is knocked off the carpet during a game, penalty points are awarded according to the following guidelines:

In a Singles game:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| a) Either the first or second bowl played by one player | 1 point  |
| b) The third bowl played by one player                  | 2 points |
| c) The fourth bowl played by one player                 | 3 points |

In a Pairs or Triples game:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| a) Either the first or second bowl played by one team   | 1 point  |
| b) Either the third or fourth bowl played by one team   | 2 points |
| c) Either the fifth or sixth bowl played by one team    | 3 points |
| d) Either the seventh or eighth bowl played by one team | 4 points |

In a Fours game:

- |                                    |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| a) Either of the leads two bowls   | 1 point  |
| b) Either of the seconds two bowls | 2 points |
| c) Either of the thirds two bowls  | 3 points |
| d) Either of the skips two bowls   | 4 points |

As shown on the example score card (figure 8), it is possible for a team to collect a penalty and a score for a "live" end. (See AIBBC Laws Book)

N.S.W.A.I.B.

Event \_\_\_\_\_ Carpet \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Versus \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

START TIME \_\_\_\_\_ FINISH TIME \_\_\_\_\_

v						
End	penalty	score	total	penalty	score	total
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						

Signatures: .....

Figure 7. Score card

N.S.W.A.I.B.

Event JHR GIRLS SINGLES Carpet 1

MARY SMITH Versus SUE BROWN

\_\_\_\_\_

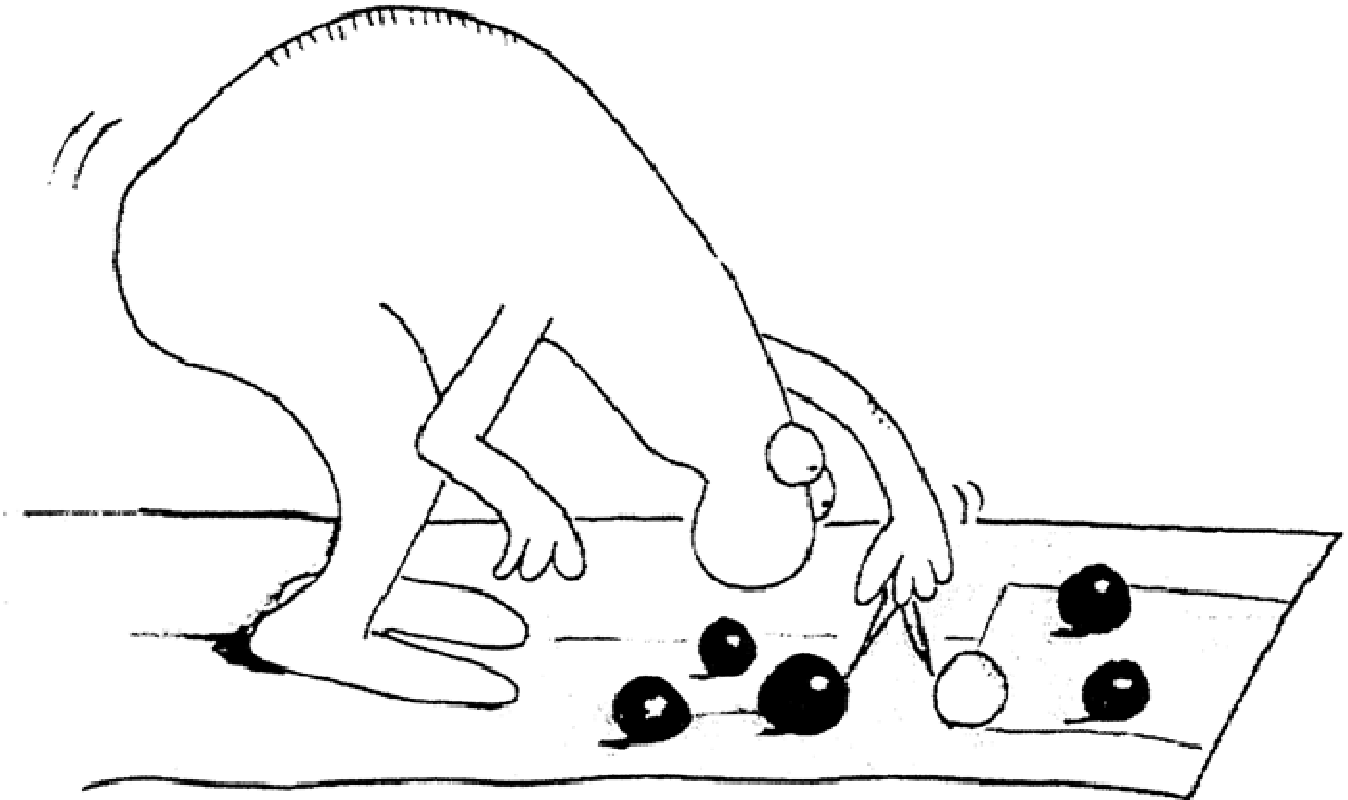
BLACK v				RED		
End	penalty	score	total	penalty	score	total
1		2	2		-	-
2		-	2		1	1
3	2	-	4		1	2
4		-	4		1	3
5		1	5		-	3
6		-	5		3	6
7		-	5	1	1	8
8		2	7		-	8
9		2	9		-	8
10		-	9		1	9
11		2	11		-	9
12		-	11	3	1	13
13		1	12		-	13
14	1	2	15		-	13
15		-	15		1	14
16		-	15		1	15
17		2	17		-	15
18		-	17		1	16
19		-	17		2	18
20		1	18		-	18
21		1	19		-	18

Signatures: M. Smith S. Brown .....

Figure 8. Example of a correctly Completed score card

## MEASURING IN IBB

Measuring is the act of using approved instruments to determine the relative distances of bowls from the jack once the end has been completed. Measuring is required only when those distances cannot be determined visually, or on the opponent's request.



### *Who measures?*

The first measure is usually conducted by the team who delivered the last bow (the person being the 'three' in fours, the 'two' in triples, the 'lead' in pairs and the singles player). If the opposing measurer is not satisfied with the indicated result, that player may then measure also. Only measurers may be on the carpet during this process. If after both measurers have measured and failed to reach agreement, the designated umpire for that competition can be called. The umpire's decision is final. No member of either team is allowed on the carpet while measuring by the umpire is in progress.

### *What instruments are used?*

Measuring instruments such as callipers, tape measure, white triangle (pieces of cardboard or plastic) and feeler gauges are placed between the jack and bowl of each side in turn.

*How are these instruments used?*

Calipers

The player finds a comfortable position on the carpet, preferably kneeling, with hands resting on the carpet and holding the callipers between the first finger and thumb of each hand. Calipers need to be adjusted away from the bowls being measured and then lowered carefully until the callipers just enter the gap between bowl and jack. (See figure 9). Adjustment is continued until the callipers are as close as possible to the bowl and jack. Using one hand only (ensuring that the adjustment does not move, the calipers are then carried over to the other bowl in question to make the comparison.

Tape Measure

When using a tape the player always measures from the jack to the bowl. This is done as a safeguard against moving the jack which is much lighter than the bowl and more likely to move if accidentally touched. Also, measuring tapes are designed to sit alongside the jack and not the bowl, as the jack is round and the bowl is not.

Feeler Gauges

These instruments are usually handled by umpires only. They are sets of precision engineered thin strips of metal that can determine measurements of less than 1mm.



Figure 9. Correct method of holding calipers

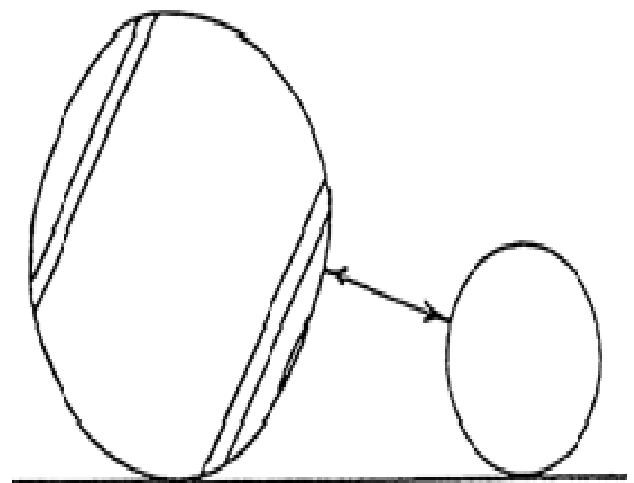
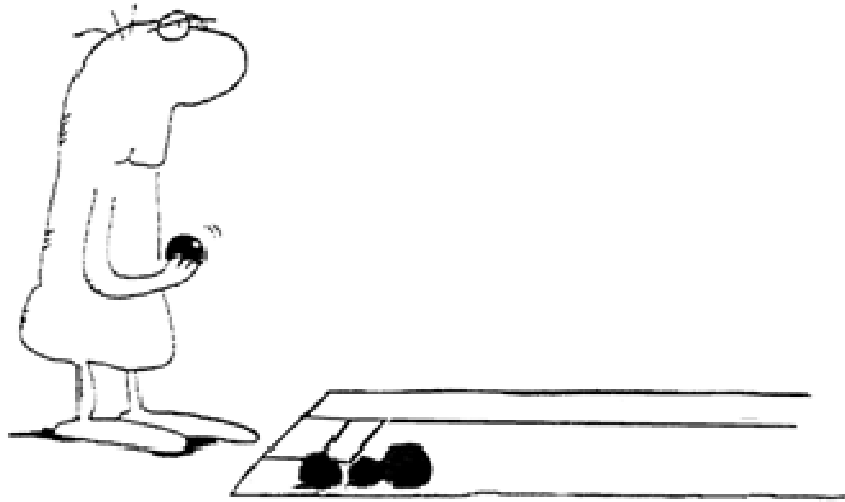


Figure 10. True shortest distance  
Between jack and bowl.

‘The Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bias Bowls’, as compiled by the Australian Indoor Bias Bowls Council, cover such matters as action to be taken in the event of jack or bowls being moved during measuring.

## COMPONENTS OF THE DIFFERENT IBB GAMES

### SINGLES



The singles game is played by two players who have four bowls each which they play alternately. As in any IBB game, the number of ends played is determined by the competition organiser.

The draw shot dominates singles, so accuracy in drawing is paramount in a good singles player.

An optimum shot for the first bowl is to position it directly in front of the jack, as drawing to an obscured bowl is very difficult for the other player. If the opponent fails to draw closer with their first bowl, a good second bowl position is directly behind the jack. If the opposing player gains 'shot' (which means that one of their bowls is the closest one to the jack), then the original player's continuing strategy has to be decided as the game unfolds. Basically, drawing to capture shot position is the top priority.

It is vital for every player to study their opponent, noting style and type of play, preference for jack length and hand played, and any strengths and weaknesses, then devise a game strategy that will turn these to personal advantage.

### MARKING

As both players are at the one end of the carpet at all times in singles games, a person is appointed to 'mark' for the players. A marker's duties include centring the jack when delivered, removing bowls that are no longer in play, answering questions about the 'head', when asked by the player about to bowl, and recording the score and end numbers.

## **PAIRS**

As the name suggests, a pairs game required two teams of two players each. The game is played with six bowls for each team. The leads play their three bowls alternately, and then change ends with the skips who play their three bowls alternately.

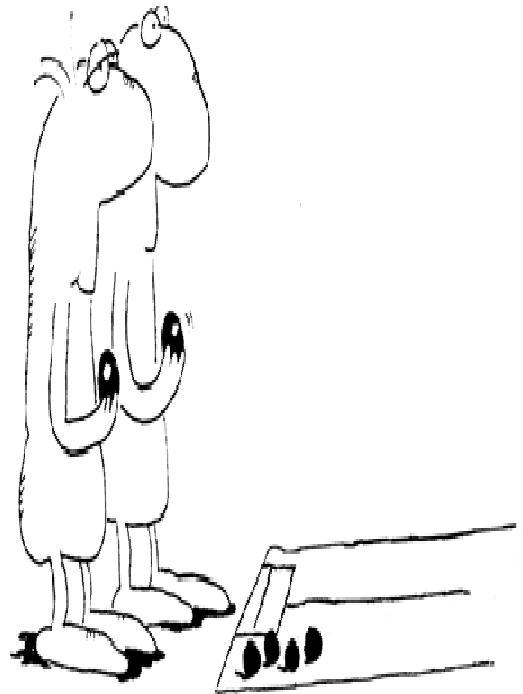
Pairs is a very popular form of IBB, because both players are fully engaged in the play at all times, with constant communication between lead and skip.

The leads role in pairs is to achieve a good position with three bowls. Many aim for one bowl on the jack, and the other two positioned just behind the jack. Whether your team has the shot when leads and skips change over is of less consequence than having a good position.

What constitutes a good position at changeover is dependant on the playing style of the opposing skip. If he or she is an aggressive player it is important to place the bowls behind the jack. If the opposing skip is essentially a draw player, there is advantage in having the jack obscured. Whatever the opponents; style, it is necessary to have all bowls up to or beyond the jack, as short bowls obstruct the skips play and can rarely be used to advantage.

With a maximum of twelve bowls on the carpet, a great deal of vigilance is required of the skip to either prevent the opposition from shifting the jack to advantage, or to spot the opportunity of doing so himself.

Pairs can also be played with eight bowls. In this game, the leads play two bowls each alternately, followed by the skips playing two bowls each, and this order of play is then repeated. This particular game is very helpful when teaching IBB to beginners.



## **TRIPLES**

The triples game is played between two teams of three players, with each team having eight bowls.

Using three bowls each, the lead and second lay the foundation for the skip to build on. The lead aims to position bowls close to the jack, preferably behind it. The second follows the instructions of the skip to improve the layout of the head. This sometimes involves drawing the bowl to a designated position where there is not jack as a target. The second can also be asked for light impact shots (where the bowling line is set so that the path passes through the object bowl or jack to the desired point beyond. The skip has only two bowls to complete the planned attack and win that end.

## FOURS

The fours game is played by two teams of four players, the lead, second, third and skip. Each player bowls two bowls alternately with his/her opposite number in order from lead through to skip. The players arrange themselves with the first three players of each team at one end of the carpet, and the skips at the other end.

As in other games, the skip tosses a coin, which is called by the opposing skip, to determine who starts the game and who plays what colour. However, in this game, the winner of the toss usually asked their opponent to bowl first, thus gaining the advantage of playing the final bowl.

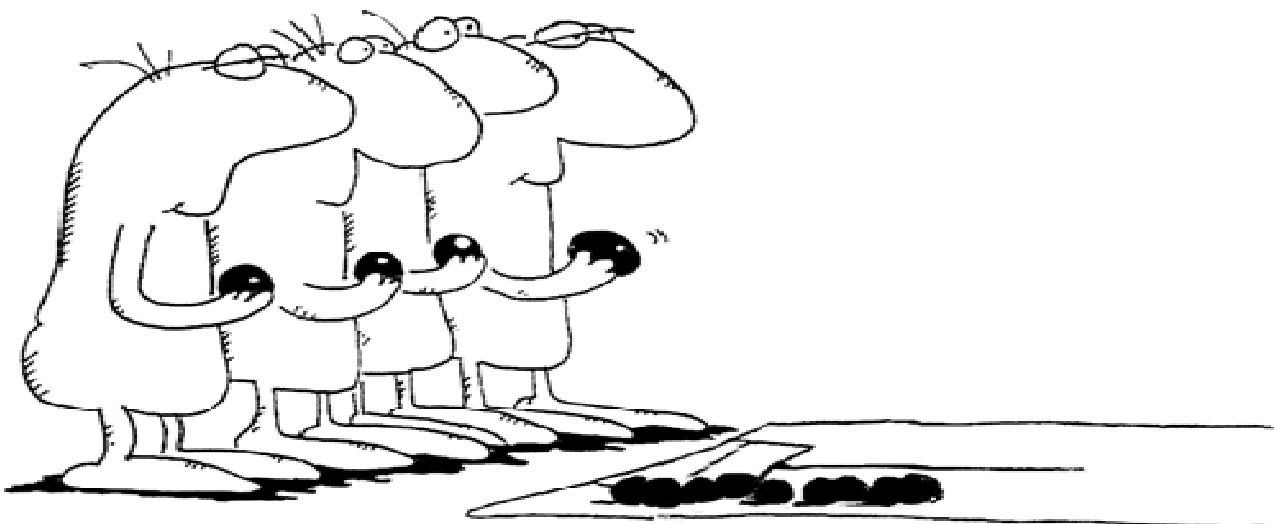
The skip directs all play, including the jack length desired. Unless directed otherwise, the lead plays two draw shots, preferably one bowl touching the jack and the second immediately behind it. The second player is often required to position bowls in order to work the head into the skips plan, or to defend against moved by the opposition.

The third requires all the skills necessary to play the full range of shots that may be called for by the skip. He/she also needs to understand what the skip is working towards, without the skip having to spell in out in such a way that enlightens the opposition as well.

The last bowl is the climax to each head, so the skip will build on the head in a way that will allow his/her last shot to be as easy as possible, and the opponent's last shot to be as difficult as possible.

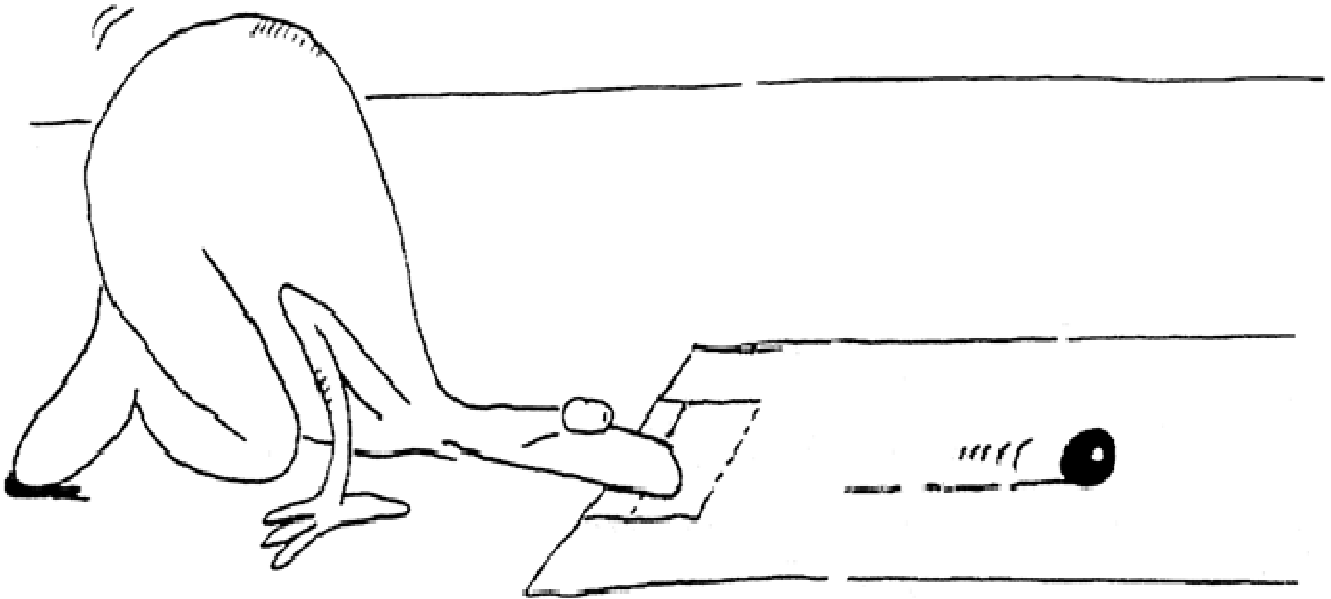
In general the skip needs to be the team psychologist, able to assess the qualities of the team, to blend their skills, and to gain their confidence so that they can paly with, and not against him/her. The skip needs to be able to communicate clearly and positively.

The skip must be a keen student of the game, able to assess strengths and weaknesses of the opposition and apply this information in tactics. The skip needs to be an accurate and flexible fowler, with the added ability to plan ahead for his/her own team whilst anticipating and sabotaging the plans of the opposition.





## WATCHING EVERY BOWL



In any IBB game, concentration is a vital factor. By carefully watching every bowl of every player it is possible to:

- become familiar with the slope and irregularities of the floor
- understand the speed of the carpet in both directions
- determine the draw of the carpet on both hands in both directions
- recognise the strengths of opponents and learn from them
- assess the weaknesses of opponents and develop tactics that turn those to personal advantage
- anticipate what you would do in your opponent's position and use that thinking in forming strategies of attack and defence
- mentally play every shot of every other bowler to practice assessing the requirements of every possible situation, then learn by comparing that with the shots actually played
- Practice IBB etiquette and sportsmanship in acknowledging good bowls.

## IBB ETIQUETTE

One of the distinguishing characteristics of BB is its strong emphasis on self-discipline and good sportsmanship. Throughout its history, a code of conduct has evolved into a distinct culture that could be described as IBB etiquette.

Players always shake hands with their opponents and team mates before each game, wishing them a good game. At the conclusion of each game, thanks and congratulations are again expressed through handshakes, not only with the players but also with markers and umpires.

Players stand right back from the layer delivering a bowl, and are careful to avoid any action that may distract that players' attention.

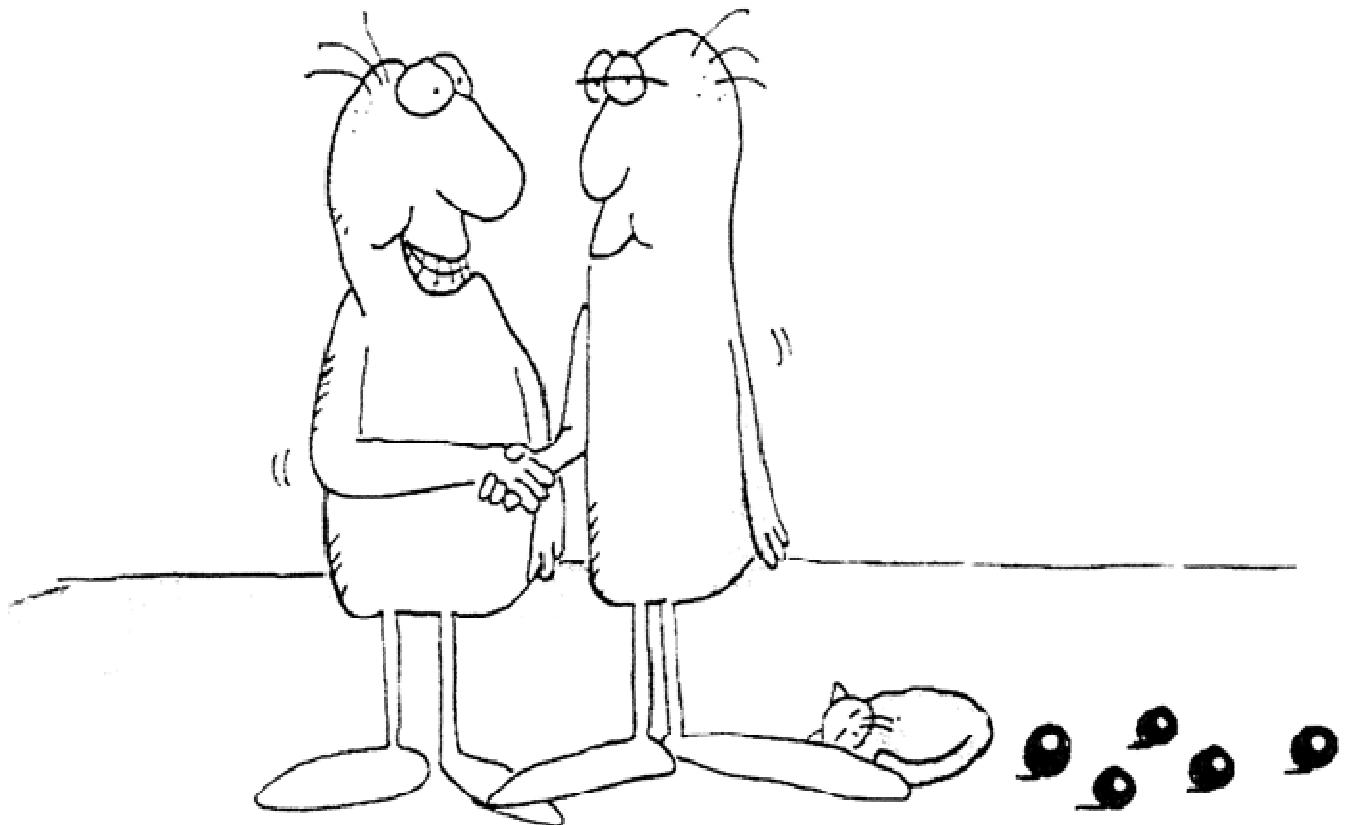
Good shots are applauded by both teams.

Clearing the head is a task shared by all players before the score is put up.

Players waiting at the other end of the mat are careful not to move or make any noises that may distract the player delivering the bowl towards them.

Players do not celebrate the misfortunes of their opponents, such as knocking the jack off the carpet.

As IBB is still a relatively small sport, there is a community-type bond amongst players which promotes easy friendliness.



## **BENEFITS OF IBB**

IBB is a great sport, exercising the mind as well as the body. To play IBB well demands skill in understanding the use of the bias of the bowl, mastering the judgement of weight in delivery and degree of turn in each particular carpet, and being able to plan and execute game strategies.

IBB is a 'thinking persons sport' and as such provided a much-needed alternative to sports that rely on strength, agility and speed.

IBB provides opportunities for individual and team competition, practising sportsmanship and self-discipline, developing strategic thinking as well as new physical skills, and building of self-esteem in the sporting arena.

As an indoor sport, IBB is not governed by weather.

After the initial outlay involved in purchasing carpets and bowls, there is no further cost imposed on IBB players, and no financial drain in maintenance or upgrading of equipment.

IBB holds virtually no risk of injury and is regarded as one of the safest sports in which to participate.

Indoor Bias Bowls is a sport suitable for people of all ages (from primary school upwards) and allows for a wide range of physical abilities. It is a great equaliser.

Indeed IBB has the potential to answers society's cry for a health activity for families to enjoy together in an age where families are constantly being pulled apart.

*So . . . . .*

*Do yourself and others a favour . . . . .*

*Dare to be different . . . . . and*

*Enjoy the challenges of IBB!*



A family playing Indoor Bias Bowls

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