

HOW TO BEAT YOUR OPPONENT

We each have our personal standard which is sometimes very good and at other times not to our own satisfaction.

Personal Best

This is a phrase used throughout many sports to identify the very best that the sports person has achieved to date.

We often observe the delight that a swimmer shows when they better their Personal Best even though that had them finishing outside a placing.

I am sure that other sporting bodies have similar reactions from their players.

Coaches across these many sports use the Personal Best to motivate their athletes to strive for higher standards of performance.

Standard of Performance - Personal Average

Another Performance Standard used other than the Personal Best is to establish the average of each performance.

That average is your target performance as a minimum as anything below that is by the very nature of things is: -BELOW AVERAGE

Of course every time you have a higher than average game, then that average becomes higher again as your next target.

Standard of Performance - Bowls Victoria Pennant Grades

Whilst Bowls Victoria does not have a specified performance standard, the organization attempts to provide Saturday competition at approximately the same standard via its promotion and relegation systems.

Those Clubs/Sides which win the Section/Division are seen as being too strong for that grade and are moved/promoted to the next higher level next season.

Similarly those Sides at the bottom of their sectional ladder were seen as being inferior to that grade standard and are placed/demoted to the next lower grade.

Thus the evenness of the various Pennant grades is kept at the approximate same level hopefully providing an even competition each match.

Standard of Performance - Personal Average v Bowls Victoria Pennant Grades

If we were to have a similar basis of measuring our performances we could place our individual players into the grade that will challenge them to produce their average performance.

This way a below average game will probably lose to the opposition whereas an above average may well result in a win.

These statements are of course subject to the 'rub-of-the-green' as far as lucky results are concerned.

Pennant Matches

It therefore follows that the Side which can inspire their players to develop a skill and therefore a performance level above the average of the Bowls Victoria Pennant average will have the better chance of winning its matches.

Who is the Opponent?

Under this viewpoint our opponents are the personal average as it applies to each and everybody in the Side and also the average of the Bowls Victoria Pennant Grade.

Therefore to beat our opposition we must develop our game and the ensuring average to be higher than the average of that Pennant Grade.

Players wishing to play in a higher grade or in a higher Position are at a loss to provide evidence that they deserve the opportunity in matches to be placed in their preferred spot.

We all know from experience, the disappointment that is felt when we are not placed in the Side/Position that we believe is our true level. Even if it has not happened to us personally, we all know of a fellow club mate who has reacted in frustration. Let us not be too critical of that individual but rather to recognize that the data that the selectors receive is unable to be challenged other than by our own opinion. Who is to say that one person's opinion is any better than the next person's opinion. The selectors can only go on what is the agreed method within the club - albeit flawed.

If we had a more finite and accurate method then we could select the Sides and Positions more accurately. Likewise each player will be able to gauge the 'correctness' of their own selection against another player who is a contender for that spot.

The rate of development can be identified and where selectors wish to react to 'potential' they can then calculate the effect of displacing a superior performer in favour of another who is recognized as having greater potential but not yet up to it.

Each player can practice, train and develop in a measured method that will give the true indication of their playing skills and level of development. They can then be placed in a Pennant grade that will challenge them in terms of their established ability - Measured performance average.

Measuring the Performance Standard

Of course all that has been outlined is true and logical but just what to measure and at what value to place upon that measured result?

There are many Clubs and authors put forward their own thoughts and opinions about the zones which form the basis of measured performances. It is of little consequence which method is to be adopted by a Club as long as all members stick to that chosen, so that all can be compared to each other.

Planning Development Activities

Obviously from the foregoing, each Pennant Grade is of a higher standard than the lower grade, but just how much is the difference.

Whatever, the answer, a side being promoted will need to increase the average of the Side's performance up to the average of the new higher grade.

Disadvantages of Measured Systems

The advantages are all positive and of great value, however, there are always two sides to anything.

The negatives of a measured system are: -

- The act of recording the data
- Who records it
- Who collates it
- Who analyses it
- Is it published or kept 'secret'
- When to act upon the data
- How much influence does it carry?

Etc...