

Hickling Bowls Club:

Team Selection Guidelines

1. Objectives

The team captain(s) will aim to:

- Field the strongest possible teams in the two higher-level leagues (namely the Norfolk League and the Yarmouth League) as well as any cup games Hickling Bowls club enter.
 - Provide development opportunities for new and less experienced bowlers.
 - Encourage progression between leagues.
 - Ensure fair and transparent selection.
 - Promote enjoyment, team spirit, and member retention.
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2. League Structure

Performance Leagues (Norfolk League, Yarmouth League and cup games)

These leagues are intended for:

- Experienced players
- Higher-performing players
- Players capable of competing consistently at a higher standard
- Players seeking competitive bowls

Development Leagues (Broadland League and the North Walsham Triples League)

These leagues are intended for:

- New bowlers
 - Less experienced players
 - Players returning after a lengthy break
 - Players developing confidence and consistency
 - Members who prefer a more social level of competition
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3. Selection Criteria

Players will be considered on:

Playing Ability

- Current form

- Consistency
- Shot execution
- Tactical awareness
- Ability to perform under pressure

Commitment

- Availability
- Reliability
- Attendance at club competitions and practice sessions

Team Contribution

- Sportsmanship
- Positive attitude
- Ability to work with teammates
- Respect for opponents and officials

Development Potential

Particularly relevant for players in the Broadland league and North Walsham triples league who are demonstrating improvement and readiness for promotion.

4. Stronger League Selection (Norfolk League, Yarmouth League and cup games)

Selection should normally prioritise:

1. Current performance level
2. Recent league and competition results
3. Experience at higher levels
4. Compatibility within team combinations

Players may move between Norfolk League, Yarmouth League and cup games according to:

- Form
- Availability
- Team requirements
- Performance trends throughout the season

No player has a permanent entitlement to a place in either league.

5. Development League Selection (Broadland League and the North Walsham Triples League)

Selection should focus on:

- Providing regular playing opportunities
- Building confidence and experience
- Introducing players gradually to competitive bowls
- Pairing newer bowlers with experienced mentors where possible

The emphasis should be on development rather than results.

6. Promotion and Relegation

Players may be promoted when they demonstrate:

- Consistent performance
- Improved skills
- Good understanding of team play
- Confidence in more competitive matches

Players may be moved to a lower league when:

- Form declines significantly
- They request less competitive play
- A period of rebuilding confidence is beneficial

Such movements are not disciplinary and should be viewed as part of normal player development.

7. New Players

New members should generally:

- Begin in the Broadland League and North Walsham Triples League
- Receive guidance from experienced players
- Be reviewed regularly by selectors

Exceptionally skilled new members may be placed directly into the Norfolk League or Yarmouth League where appropriate.

8. Availability and Commitment

Players should:

- Confirm availability to team captains ahead of team selection, where possible
- Notify team captains promptly of any changes
- Understand that late withdrawals may affect future selection where avoidable

Regular availability may be considered when selecting between players of similar ability.

9. Communication

Selection decisions should:

- Be communicated respectfully
- Be consistent with these guidelines
- Be reviewed periodically throughout the season

Players are encouraged to discuss their development and selection with team captains in a constructive manner.

10. Managing Expectations and Rotation of Players

The club enters teams in four leagues, and the number of matches available each week will vary throughout the season. There will be some weeks when all four leagues have fixtures, creating more playing opportunities, and other weeks when only one or two leagues are scheduled, resulting in fewer places being available.

To ensure fairness and transparency:

- Selection is based on the needs of each team and league, rather than guaranteeing all players a game every week.
- Players should expect that opportunities to play may fluctuate during the season depending on the fixture schedule.
- During periods with fewer matches available, team captains may need to leave some players unselected despite them being available.
- During periods with more matches available, team captains will seek to maximise participation opportunities across the membership where practical.
- Team captains will monitor playing opportunities throughout the season and aim to avoid significant disparities in the number of matches played, while recognising that absolute equality is not always achievable.
- Performance leagues (Norfolk League, Yarmouth League and cup games) will continue to prioritise competitive team selection, while Development Leagues (Broadland League and

Yarmouth League) will place greater emphasis on providing playing experience and opportunities for participation.

- Availability alone does not guarantee selection, nor does missing one or more matches indicate a player's standing within the club.
- Players are encouraged to view selection over the course of the season rather than focusing on any individual week.

The club will strive to balance competitive success, player development, and fair participation opportunities, recognising that fixture variations throughout the season will naturally affect the number of games available to individual players.

11. Annual Review

The selection policy should be reviewed annually to ensure:

- Fairness
- Competitive success
- Adequate opportunities for developing bowlers
- Alignment with club objectives

Guiding Principle

The top two leagues should provide the club's strongest competitive teams, while the lower two leagues should provide opportunities for participation, learning, development, and progression to higher levels.