

TRAILING the JACK

Trailing the jack happens where a boule is delivered using the same technique as for a point. It can be an extremely effective tactic which has the potential to change the situation of an end completely, and turn it around in your favour.

However, unlike a usual point which attempts to leave the boule close to the jack but without moving it from its position, this type of delivery aims to directly meet the jack and carry it away, as both roll in a synchronized way (as if joined together) to a more favourable position.

In which situation is trailing the jack used?

Usually when there is a crowded head. The opposition have a number of boules closely positioned around the jack and probably in front of it. Boules already played by the player's own team may be lying behind the jack by some distance, and not in any effective position at all at the moment.

Shooting to improve the situation would mean hitting and clearing away a number of boules, but where there's a crowded head, may result in an unfortunate ricochet to the opponent's advantage.

The player is able to identify a pathway from the playing circle to the jack. It may be a clear line with no obstacle or a path which uses another boule to glance off.

The player will deliver a point with more force than one arriving by the jack. This point will not only meet and touch the jack but carry it away to gain the advantage. The boule needs to be carefully and accurately played. Most importantly it must be a positive one, played with considerable determination, conviction and purpose to be successful. A weakly played boule which finishes short and doesn't succeed in its purpose, is of no use and may well make the situation worse.

The very skilled player may even be able to meet the jack on one side or the other, in order to move it in the desired direction. ie arrive on the right of the jack and move it forwards and to the left.

Disadvantages

1. This delivery requires a positive attitude, confidence and high level of skill and accuracy.
2. Should the boule miss its target, it becomes yet another one in an ineffective position behind the jack: "gone through."
3. Not always easy to find a way through a crowded head to get at the jack.
4. A difficult wet, sticky, uneven and/or rocky terrain surface.