

Wisborough Green Short Mat Bowls Club

The Game

The principles of the game are similar to the more familiar game played on grass. The objective is to try to bowl as near to a jack placed at the other end as possible. Extra difficulties for short mat bowlers are - the speed of the mat (which can vary significantly from venue to venue), a centre block (partially obstructing some more direct play!) and a dead line.

Short Mat Bowls is played, as you would expect, on a mat indoors, often in a church or village hall. The mat must be at least 12.2m long up to a maximum of 13.75m and is 1.83m wide. It has a centre block which is 0.38m long. There are various taped markings at each end which govern:

1. The position of the delivery mat
2. The extent of the ditch
3. Two delivery lines
4. The Jack line
5. The dead line

The delivery mat: must be located between the two delivery mat lines and, when bowling, one foot must always be on or over this mat.

The ditch: as in green bowls if a delivered bowl goes into the ditch area it will be removed from play. If it strikes the jack during initial delivery then it is regarded as a "toucher" and remains in play in the ditch.

Two delivery lines: these two lines govern the position of our other foot. When delivering the bowl our second foot must be positioned between these lines.

The jack line: The jack (sometimes called the pill) is always placed along this line. Normally the jack is placed centrally along the line for the first game (end) but subsequent ends the winning captain from the previous end can place it anywhere along the line.



Wisborough Green SMBC
Club Members
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The setup

The dead line: a delivered bowl must completely pass this line or, if not, it will be removed from play.

The centre block: a delivered bowl must not touch the block in any way or, if it does, it will be removed from play.

Short Mat bowls is not an expensive game to play.

Many players play with the same bowls (woods) as they use outdoors. Although some players prefer to use woods made especially for indoor use.

The game is regulated by the English Short Mat Bowling Association.