
Parting Shot – Touchers and the “30 Second” Rule

Various comments, etc. have been heard regarding touchers and the so-called “30-second rule” and the use of the “30-second rule” after the delivery of the last bowl in an end. In an attempt to clarify this, one must look at the following:

Law 14.2:

“14.2 A bowl is also a toucher if after having come to rest:

14.2.1 it falls and touches the jack before the next bowl is **delivered**, or
14.2.2 in the case of the last bowl of an end, it falls and touches the jack within the period of 30 seconds that applies under law 23.1”

Law 23.1 and Law 23.2:

“23.1 the process of deciding the number of shots scored must not start until the last bowl required to be played in an end has come to rest, or 30 seconds after that if either skip, or opponent in Singles, asks for this 30 second period.

23.2 if either skip, or opponent in Singles, asked for the 30 second period, no bowl which is likely to fall must be secured during this period.”

It is thus clear that a bowl can only become a toucher, once it comes to

rest if it falls and touches the jack before the opponent delivers his/her next bowl or if **immediately** upon the last bowl coming to rest (and then only wrt this specific bowl) either skip, or opponent in Singles, calls for the 30 second period. The question may be asked as to why one would request this 30 seconds if the last bowl is lying right by the Jack – “**So what if it becomes a toucher or not?**” The answer is simple but two-fold:

If the Skip of Team B (the opponent) calls for the 30 second period it could be because if the bowl, of Team A falls and touches the jack the jack may move closer to one of Team B’s bowls thus decreasing the number of shots scored by Team A, allow Team B to score the shot(s) or even result in a no shot.

If the Skip of Team A (the team lying the shot) calls for the 30 second rule it could be because if their bowl falls and touches the jack the jack may move closer to their other bowl(s) just out of

count for additional shot(s) and thus increase the number of shots, they score in that end.

It is also important to note that any of the Skips, or opponents in Singles, may call for the 30 second period (again immediately upon the last bowl coming to rest) if he or she is convinced that any previously played bowl may fall thus resulting in an additional shot(s) or if he/she is the opponent cutting down the number of shots by the other team.

It is important to note that the request for the 30 second period must be made immediately upon the last bowl of the end coming to rest. Failing to do so gives any player in the opposing team the right to prop any bowl that may fall.

David Hamer, Bowls GN President

