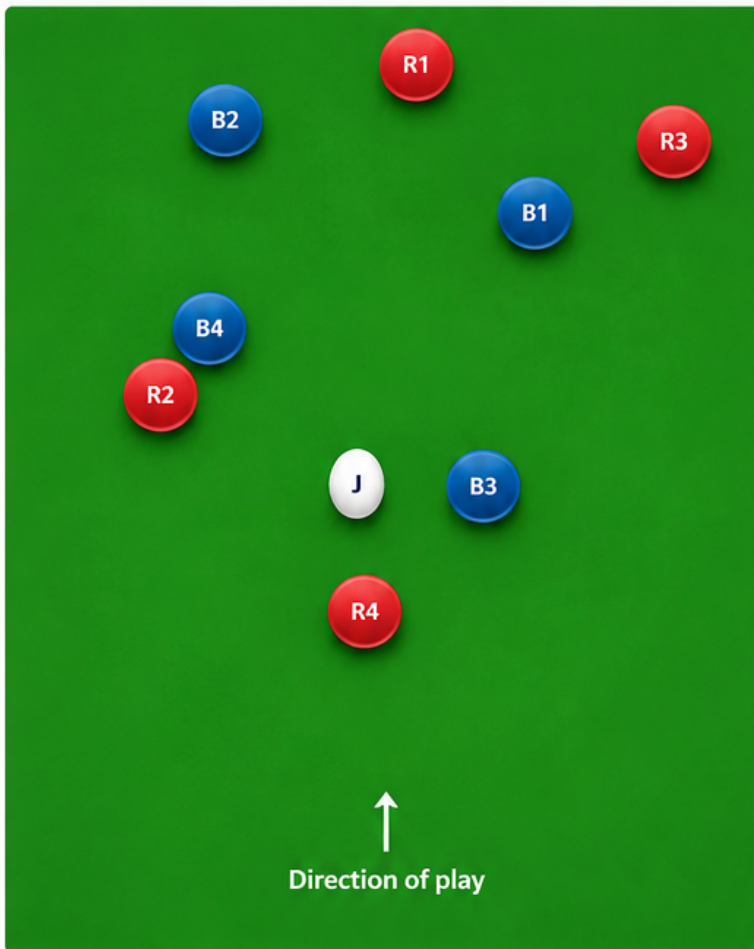




How to Read a Head

Look, Think, Choose, Play

Reading the head helps you choose the right shot, manage the risks and improve your team's position.



The Scenario

The shot is a measure. Both sides have useful bowls around the jack and bowls behind the head. It is not immediately clear whether Red or Blue is holding shot.
Blue to play.

What to Notice

- 1 Shot position**
The shot is a measure. Check which bowl is closest and how secure that position is.
- 2 Second bowls**
Both teams have supporting bowls that could become shot if the jack moves.
- 3 Back position**
Each side has bowls behind the head which may become important if a weighted shot is played.
- 4 Available space**
Consider the space for a draw, and what might happen with a slightly heavy or slightly short bowl.

The Options



Draw

A draw may gain the shot, but the space is limited. A miss could leave the head unchanged or give the opponent another opportunity.



Weighted

A controlled weighted shot may remove the nearest opponent bowl or promote one of Blue's bowls. Too much weight, however, could disturb a favourable part of the head or move the jack towards an opponent bowl.



Cover

The back of the head already has some protection, but an additional well-positioned bowl may reduce the value of an opponent's weighted reply.

The Coaching Question

What is the Required Result?

Before choosing the shot, decide whether Blue needs to:

Build **Protect** **Recover** **Reduce** **Attack**

Then ask yourself:

- What is the Bowl Job?
- What is the Useful Miss?
- What would be the Damaging Miss?
- What is the Minimum Effective Weight?
- What Opponent Permission would a poor finish give away?

Key Takeaway

Reading the head is not about finding the most impressive shot.

It is about understanding the current position, comparing realistic options, and choosing the bowl that best improves your position without giving away unnecessary risk.