



## World Bowls Law Committee Decision

**Law #**                    **Members' Enquiries and Laws Committee Decisions**  
**July 2016**

23.3

Law 23.3 states that “No measuring (that is, the use of equipment such as that described in law 54, placed between the jack and bowls to decide which bowls are shot) will be allowed before the process of deciding the number of shots scored starts (as described in law 23.1).

In the light of uncertainty being expressed about how this law should be implemented, the LC would like to clarify the intent of the law and to give examples of what is and what is not permissible.

**LC Clarification:**

The Oxford Dictionary of English defines ‘to measure’ as: ‘to ascertain the size, amount, or degree (of something) by using an instrument or device marked in standard units’.

As mentioned above, law 23.3 describes measuring as “the use of equipment such as that described in law 54, placed between the jack and bowls to decide which bowls are shot”. In a bowls context ‘measuring’ means deciding which bowl or bowls are nearer to the jack than any of the opponent’s bowls – there is no requirement to calculate the distances between the jack and the bowls using imperial or metric units. Therefore, since ‘measuring’ when used in a bowls context does not mean using an imperial or metric unit to calculate a distance, it is technically ‘estimating’.

The equipment described in law 54 is fixed in its length when used to compare the distance of one bowl from the jack with that of another. The phrase ‘such as’ in the law means that equipment other than that specifically listed in law 54 may be used (e.g. equipment approved by individual MNAs, such as trammels which are approved for use in some southern hemisphere countries). As ‘measuring’ in law 23.3 means deciding (not calculating) a distance and law 23.3 allows for

equipment other than that specifically listed in law 54 to be used, the LC is of the view that the placing of any equipment or other fixed-length object between the jack and bowls to decide which bowls are shot would constitute 'measuring'. The use of such equipment or objects during an end, therefore, would be in breach of law 23.3. Examples in addition to those described in law 54, include equipment used whilst playing the game (mats, scorecards, pens, cloths, bowls lifters and so on) and objects such as a player's foot.

Examples of equipment or objects which, when used during an end, would not be deemed to be in breach of law 23.3 include cross-fingers and **devices comprising concentric circles within a transparent frame which are held approximately waist high**, and equipment or objects (such as a player's foot) placed alongside or parallel to (but not directly between) the jack and the bowls.