

4-Rock Free Guard Zone Strategy

The strategy suggestions presented here are intended for teams of all ages who are competitive at a club, regional or provincial/territorial level of play.

INTRODUCTION

Strategy is commonly defined as "deciding what shot to play". Although this is an important element, it is not all there is to strategy. More broadly defined, it is "the decision making process a team goes through before, during and after a game". This includes setting goals, making game plans, deciding game style, shot selection, and game evaluation. With this in mind it is essential that all team members contribute to "team strategy" and as a result require a solid understanding of the following:

1. Basic terminology relative to strategy.
2. The factors that influence shot selection decisions.
3. How the Free Guard Zone Rule affects strategy and shot selection.
4. Basic strategy relative to last rock advantage.
5. Methods for playing different ice conditions.

TERMINOLOGY

When considering strategy, the terms used for different styles of play must be clearly defined and understood. The words **offensive** and **aggressive** generally means that the game has more rocks in play and involves guards, raises, come arounds and freezes. Teams using this strategy are attempting to score more than one point or to steal points. Associated with this style of play is the word **finesse**, referring to a more delicate type of shot such as come-around draw shots. Other terms synonymous with this strategy are **risky** or **complicated** because of the number of rocks that are usually in play. A general name for this kind of strategy is the offensive approach or "**offense first**" approach.

On the other hand, the words **defensive** and **cautious** generally refer to a takeout style of play where there are relatively few rocks in play. Other terms used for this style are **conservative**, **safe** and **open**; as a result of very few rocks being in play most shots are relatively simple. A general name for this kind of strategy is the defensive approach or "**defense first**" approach.

The following chart provides for a clearer understanding of this terminology:

Offense First	Defense First
aggressive	cautious
finesse	conservative
risky	safe
rocks in play	open
guards	hits
freezes	peels
come around draws	run throughs

Most teams will combine offensive strategy with defensive strategy and will therefore have a "**balanced attack**".

FACTORS INFLUENCING SHOT SELECTION

The six major factors that influence shot selection are:

F Free Guard Zone Rule

The Free Guard Zone Rule influences shot selection relative to the first four stones of an end and impacts strategy decisions throughout the course of a game.

E End

The FGZ Rule provides substantial opportunities for offense including comebacks in the middle and late ends of a game with or without last rock.

S Score

The score in relation to the end you are playing will greatly influence shot selection decisions.

R Last Rock

Last rock advantage plays a key role in shot selection decisions. Having last rock advantage may result in a more offensive approach. Not having last rock may dictate a defensive approach.

A Ability

The skills of opponents and teammates required to successfully play both offense and defense are critical to planning strategy and making appropriate shot selection.

Knowing the position by position strengths and weaknesses of your team and your opposition will have a great impact on the strategy you employ. The key element is knowing how to maximize your own team's strengths.

The strategy you design for your team and the shot selections you make during a game should be based on the abilities of the individual players and the team as a unit.

I Ice

Ice conditions will play a key factor in determining the strategy a team is able to apply. Fast, swingy ice will produce optimum playing conditions. Straight ice conditions will restrict the aggressive come around approach and may dictate a raise style game plan.

It is important to note that, of these factors, last rock advantage and the relative skills of both your team and the opposing team are the main factors that influence shot selections for the developing curler. To be successful however, all team members, but especially the skip, must have a good understanding of how the six factors influence shot selection.

BASIC CONCEPTS

The Free Guard Zone Rule provides a number of offensive and defensive options to well prepared skips. Strategy and shot selection relative to the first four stones of each end will provide teams with numerous interesting and challenging decisions.

1. The ability to think on your feet and make shot selection decisions based on "FESRAI" is very demanding and is influenced by the number of stones in play. Teams are constantly faced with reevaluating their game plan and shot selection options as they analyze the relative "risk vs reward".
2. "Flexibility" plays an important role in designing game plans and developing strategy as teams are faced with having to change their strategy within many ends as they move from defense to offense and vice versa.
3. The terms "patience" and "caution" cannot be tossed to the wind by an over-creative skip. Teams who cannot back up their creative and aggressive strategy with precision shot making will find themselves on their way home ahead of schedule.
4. Effective skipping requires the ability to think two or three shots ahead, thus the common reference of "chess on ice".
5. Establishing the relative ability of your team compared to the opposition and the "playability" of the ice surface will play a major role in developing your team strategy.
6. The ability of a team to score 2+ points with last rock or give up only 1 point without last rock will have a significant effect on shot selection particularly in mid to late ends. A two to four point variance with two or three ends to go cannot be considered an insurmountable lead.

7. Teams with last rock may prefer to score their 2+ points to the side of the sheet but will often find themselves forced to the centre in search of offensive opportunities and to defend against a potential steal. Teams without last rock will be presented with many opportunities to steal but will also be challenged with trying to defend against multi point ends being scored against them by offensive-minded last rock skips.
8. The main challenge will be on how to defend against an offensively adept team.

GENERAL STRATEGIES WITHOUT LAST ROCK

Defense

In situations where the score is close or a team is ahead in points, defense is the word that will best describe the approach of teams without last rock. In these situations, skips will attempt to apply a strategy that will limit the opposition to the scoring of only one point. To accomplish this, knowledgeable skips will direct play towards the centre of the sheet, thus restricting the opposition's ability to spread their stones out. This may ultimately block the opposition's path to the four-foot circle, thus enhancing the opportunity to steal a point(s). Teams without last rock are usually more cautious in their shot selection, in that takeouts are played rather than draw shots when opponents have stones in the rings.

Teams without last rock, who as a result of score, end, ice or opposition, would prefer to play a defensive style of game are faced with an interesting dilemma. Their lead cannot remove any opposition stone from the FGZ and as a result, they have a few shot selection options available with the final decision being greatly dependent upon the skill level of the lead. Remember -

giving up a deuce in many situations will be perfectly acceptable.

Offense

Orchestrating offense without last rock is very easy with the FGZ Rule. The placement of centre guards which cannot be removed by the opposition until the 5th stone of the end can produce a number of opportunities for a team to control centre ice and potentially steal a point(s). The only major concern the skip without last rock is faced with relative to the placement of a centre guard is "if" the last rock skip will elect to come around it. The further out the centre guard is the more likely the last rock skip is to play an aggressive come around draw in search of 2+ points.

GENERAL STRATEGIES WITH LAST ROCK

Offense

In situations when early ends have passed and the score is close or a team is down in points, offense is the word that best describes the approach of teams with last rock advantage. In these situations, skips will attempt to apply a strategy that will result in the scoring of more than one point. To accomplish this, knowledgeable skips may direct play to the sides of the sheet, thus enabling them to spread their rocks out. This also tends to keep the path to the four foot circle open for a possible end-saving last rock draw shot.

Last rock teams will attempt to initiate their offense to the side of the sheet by establishing a corner guard(s) but may also find themselves developing offensive opportunities on centre ice as a result of attempting to prevent a potential steal. Aggressive last rock skips will take advantage of centre guards by playing come around draws in an effort to score 2+ points, even though this strategy will put them at greater risk to a potential steal. Ice conditions may also force last rock skips to

direct play towards the centre of the sheet if rocks are not curling much from the centre line out.

It is important to note that it is common practice for a skip who cannot score more than a single point to throw the final stone through the house or to hit and roll out, thus blanking the end and keeping last rock advantage.

Defense

Teams with last rock advantage who would prefer a defensive style of play because of score, ice conditions or the relative abilities of the opposing teams have a number of shot selection options available to them. Their objective may well be to ensure the opposition does not have the opportunity to steal a point(s) and therefore controlling centre ice will be a key factor. If the opposition lead places a centre guard the last rock skip will have to decide which of several defensive options best suits the situation.

GROUPING OF ENDS

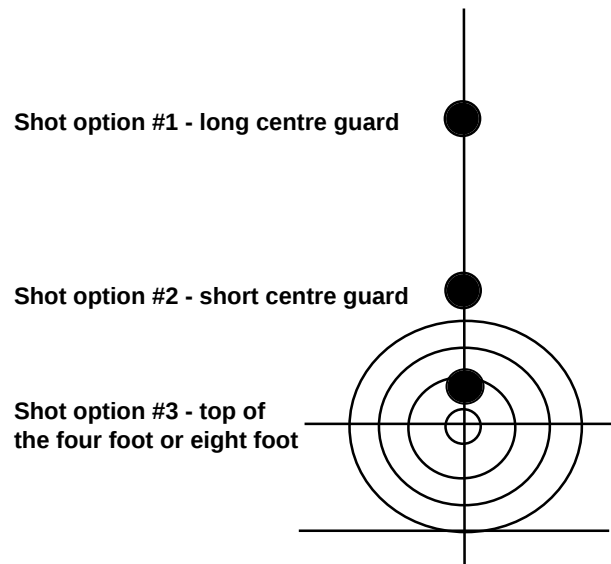
Game strategy may vary dramatically as the game progresses. For the purpose of developing a game plan including shot selection, we recommend dividing the game into segments based on an 8 to 10 end game.

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Early ends (1 to 3) Without Last Rock

Most teams will attempt to implement a defensive game plan during this segment of the game especially as it pertains to avoiding high risk finesse shots. Remember, you do not have to score (steal) in the early ends without last rock to ensure victory. It is more important to keep the score close as you build your team's confidence while learning the ice and assessing the abilities of the opposition. A general objective is to limit the opposition to scoring a single point when you do not have

last rock. Even a two-ender is acceptable. There are three basic options relative to the placement of the first rock of the end:



The safest choice is selection #3 (defensive). Note: Your team's familiarity with the game plan and ability of the opposition and knowledge of ice conditions may influence your decision to be more offensive in your shot selections.

Early Ends (1 to 3) - With Last Rock

Teams may be a little more aggressive in early ends when they have the advantage of last rock but generally speaking, still try to avoid risky situations that require the making of finesse shots. Last rock skips will also tend to play a defensive style of play as they build the confidence of their teammates while assessing the ability of the opposition and learning the ice. They will attempt to score their 2+ points to the side of the sheet but will not be overly concerned about scoring a single point, blanking the end or giving up a steal of one. There are three situations teams with last rock are likely to face when they go to throw their first rock of the end:

Situation #1 - long centre guard
Situation #2 - short centre guard
Situation #3 - rock in top of four foot or eight foot

The following early end shot selection suggestions represent the safest choice (defense first).

Shot option - situation #1 - draw to the 8 foot behind the tee line and to the side of the sheet.

Shot option - situation #2 - draw to the 8 foot behind the tee line and to the side of the sheet (Bump the short guard into the rings on an angle).

Shot option - situation #3 - hit and stay on opposition stone.

There are many other options that last rock teams have when presented with the above situations. Many of these are discussed in the Shot Options section of this chapter. Remember to apply the FESRAI factors and choose the shot that best suits your team.

Your team's familiarity with the game plan and ability of the opposition and knowledge of ice conditions may influence you to be more offensive in your shot selections.

Middle Ends (4 to 6) and Late Ends (7 to 9) - Without Last Rock

The middle and late ends of a curling game often present teams without last rock many interesting and difficult strategy situations. Skips must continually analyze the situation, apply the FESRAI factors and determine the most appropriate shot for their team. The ability to "think on your feet" is critical as game situations will force teams to switch back and forth between offense and defense.

Teams who are comfortable with the score relative to the end of play may well continue their defensive approach and attempt to limit the opposition to only one point or try to engineer a safe steal. Teams who are either down in points or prepared for the

challenges of finesse shot making will move to a more offensive style of game.

There are three basic options relative to the placement of the first rock of the end when the score is reasonably close:

Shot option #1 - long centre guard

Shot option #2 - short centre guard

Shot option #3 - top of the four foot

Teams who are comfortable with the score relative to the end of play will probably stay with shot selection #3 or consider #2 as the option with the potential for a safe steal.

Teams who are either down in points or prepared to move to a more aggressive draw style game will choose shot selection #1 or #2.

Remember, your team's strategy in the middle to late ends of a curling game should be to position yourself for the win. Aggressive shot selection must be backed up with excellent shot making.

Teams who are protecting a substantial lead late in a game may well choose to throw their first two stones of the end through the rings.

Middle Ends (4 to 6) and Late Ends (7 to 9) - With Last Rock

The middle and late ends provide last rock teams with their greatest opportunity to take control of the game and position themselves for the victory. The ability of the opposition and condition of the ice should no longer be a mystery. Your team should be mentally and physically prepared to implement both the strategy and shot making required by the game situation.

In games where the score is close or the last rock team is down in points, the ultimate objective will be to score two plus points. As a result, skips will apply offensive minded tactics while attempting to avoid the steal. The more desperate the situation relative to score and end of play the more offensive the shot selections will be.

When the score is close, last rock skips would likely prefer to engineer their offense to the side of the sheet. Last rock skips who are down in points will take their offensive opportunities wherever they can find them. "To go for it or not to go for it" will be the most often asked question.

Teams who enjoy a comfortable lead during this stage of the game or wish to avoid a draw style game will maintain the defensive tactics of the early ends.

There are three situations teams with last rock are likely to face when they go to throw their first rock of the end:

Situation #1 - long centre guard

Situation #2 - short centre guard

Situation #3 - rock in top of the four foot

Most common "offense first" approaches:

Shot option - situation #1 - come around draw shot.

Shot option - situation #2 - come around draw shot.

Shot option - situation #3 - corner guard.

Most common "defense first" approaches:

Shot option - situation #1 - draw to the 8 foot behind the tee line and to the side of the sheet.

Shot option - situation #2 - draw to the 8 foot behind the tee line and to the side of the sheet (bump the short guard into the rings on an angle).

Shot option - situation #3 - hit and stay on opposition stone.

There are many other options that last rock teams have when presented with the above situations. Many of these are discussed in the Shot Options section of this chapter. Remember to apply the FESRAI factors and choose the shot that best suits your team.

Final End - Without Last Rock

The intricate strategies applied in the final end with the game on the line will provide skips with their greatest challenges. Teams

without last rock with a one or two point lead will be faced with some interesting choices as the end unfolds. Those teams who initiate the end with defensive tactics designed to provide them with last rock in the extra end may well find themselves having to switch to offense in fear of not making it to the extra end. Most teams who do enjoy a two point lead will probably start the end with defensive tactics while some teams with a one point lead will play the final end to steal a point. The four basic shot selection options for all situations remain the same.

Shot option #1 - long centre guard

Shot option #2 - short centre guard

Shot option #3 - top of the four foot

Shot option #4 - through the house

Teams who are tied or down in points will choose either shot selection #1 or #2.

Teams who are one point up have the choice of all four shot selections with #2 and #3 being the most common choices.

Teams who are 2+ points up in score will probably choose shot selection #3 or #4.

The ability to immediately recognize situations that warrant a change in game plan will be a skill critical for final end success. A flexible game plan is critical to winning in these situations.

Final End - With last Rock

Every skip dreams of having the opportunity to win the game with a dramatic last rock. The trick is to engineer this golden opportunity into being by implementing sound strategy.

Last rock skips who enter the final end anywhere from two points up to two points down are going to be in for some fun. The shot selection options will be endless with the game hanging in the balance. A one or two point lead may prove to be difficult to defend even with last rock and yet a one or two point deficit may well put the last rock team in a position to win.

The most interesting situation will be a one point variance on the score board and two offensive minded skips dictating the strategy!

Last rock teams will typically face four situations in the final end when their lead plays his/her first shot.

Situation #1 - long centre guard.

Situation #2 - short centre guard.

Situation #3 - rock in the top of the four foot.

Situation #4 - rock through the rings.

Teams who are either tied or up in points will probably be looking at situation #1 or #2. A defensive approach is recommended early in the end as the key factor is controlling the four foot area. A light weight "chip" or "tick" on the rock in the FGZ that only pushes the stone off to the side of the sheet or into the rings on an angle is the best choice of shot. (Remember, you can't kill it).

Teams that are one point down playing the 10th end should anticipate having to deal with any one of the four situations.

Teams that face situations #1 or #2 have some interesting choices to make. There will be a great deal of variation in the way that last rock teams skip this scenario. A couple of the shot options are:

Shot option #1 - situation #1 or #2 - play a corner guard.

Shot option #2 - situation #1 or #2 - play a come around.

Shot option #3 - situation #1 or #2 - play the open side in the house.

Teams that face situations #3 or #4 will usually respond with a corner guard. Remember, in analyzing last end situations it is a good idea to base your strategy on the opposition making their shots, not missing them! As well, you should be playing to your own team's strengths.

There are many other options that last rock teams have when presented with the above situations. Many of these are discussed in the Shot Options section of this chapter. Remember to apply the FESRAI factors and choose the shot that best suits your team.

BASIC SUMMARY:

Offense First (Draw - Finesse)	Defense First (Takeout - Conservative)
after early ends	early in the game
with last rock	without last rock
down in points	up in points
team strengths	team strengths

STRATEGY - "THE HUMAN FACTOR"

One of the key ingredients to being a good skip is maximizing the abilities of your team while trying to take advantage of any opposition weaknesses you may be aware of or knowledge you may have relative to their game plan.

Your Team

The recommended approach to developing a team game plan and making shot selection decisions is to factor in the strengths of your individual players. This approach should include consideration of type of shot, preferred weight, most consistent turn and even weight judging skills and sweeping ability. Confidence comes with success and is the key factor in developing a winning attitude. Whenever possible, allow your players to play the shots they have the greatest chance of making!

The Opposition

Like other sports, knowledge of the opposition is essential for the development of a winning game plan. The type of information that will assist you in developing your strategy includes individual strengths and weaknesses in all components of the game as well as an analysis of their

strategical approach to the game in a variety of situations. Scouting the opposition prior to a big game is well worth the time and should provide you with the opportunity to enter the game completely prepared regarding your opponent.

Reading of Ice

The reading of ice is every player's responsibility. Players should make an effort to familiarize themselves with the curl of both turns from the centre of the sheet to the outside, and from the outside towards centre. Learn the ice for both draws and takeouts, commit this knowledge to memory and update it as the game progresses.

From the start of the game, the skip must gather information from every shot. This task can be made easier by calling shots while using the tee line as a reference point and watching closely when the opposition delivers. The skip must memorize where the stone stops relative to the type of release as release may vary from player to player.

The importance of reading ice cannot be overemphasized. It is often the difference between making and missing shots and separates the great skips from the rest of the pack. The key is to concentrate for the entire game because ice conditions may vary from early to middle and from middle to late ends. This critical skill can be improved with practice.

KEY TEAM/ATHLETE FACTORS

“Attitude” A positive attitude and knowing your team's strengths are strongly recommended.

“Confidence” Your confidence in throwing the shots and making the right strategical choices will increase with experience and comfort.

“Game Plan” Your game plan should be based on what works best for your team. Developing pre-determined responses to

specific game situations is the recommended strategy.

“Scouting” Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of your opposition on a player by player basis will positively affect your game plan.

“Flexibility” There will be a need to remain flexible within your game plan as you will often be kept hopping from offense to defense and vice versa.

“Communication” Both sweeping and shot communication are of great importance given the number of precision shots that are attempted.

“Conditioning” Physical conditioning will lend itself not only to the vigorous demands of sweeping but the strain of a long tough competition.

“Mental Toughness” The number of key decisions and difficult shots places great importance on all of the mental components.

“Finesse” Depending on your game plan, your ability to execute difficult shots requiring the combination of touch and accuracy will be of paramount importance.

“Release” Controlling the release will play a major role for teams striving for consistency when ice conditions do not lend themselves to a come around game. Players will need to develop the ability to vary the release and thus influence the amount a stone will curl. This is a high performance area.

“Creativity” Creative skipping is a key factor as the ability to think on your feet while the game hangs in the balance will be critical.

“Ice Reading” The ability to consistently execute finesse shots is, to a great degree, based on ice reading skills. This requires a total team effort.

“Ego” Too much ego can prove to be a major detriment to teams who cannot back

up “risk vs. reward” strategy with consistent execution.

“Team Strengths” Maximizing the abilities of your players will contribute greatly to your success.

“Risk vs Reward” The ability to consistently evaluate “risk vs reward” will always have a positive impact on strategy discussions.

The application of these two principles does not facilitate a change in strategy based on poor execution or a change of heart. The changing of strategy within the playing of an end is common and should always be the result of applying the FESRAI factors.

SITUATIONAL PLAY

The following situational play section provides teams with and without last rock, offensive and defensive shot options via a three rock progression.

Two main principles are applied throughout this process.

- a) The shot that was made was the shot that was called. (There are no situations based on missed shots.)
- b) The strategy that is applied with a team’s second rock of the end is consistent with the strategy they applied while playing the first rock of the end.

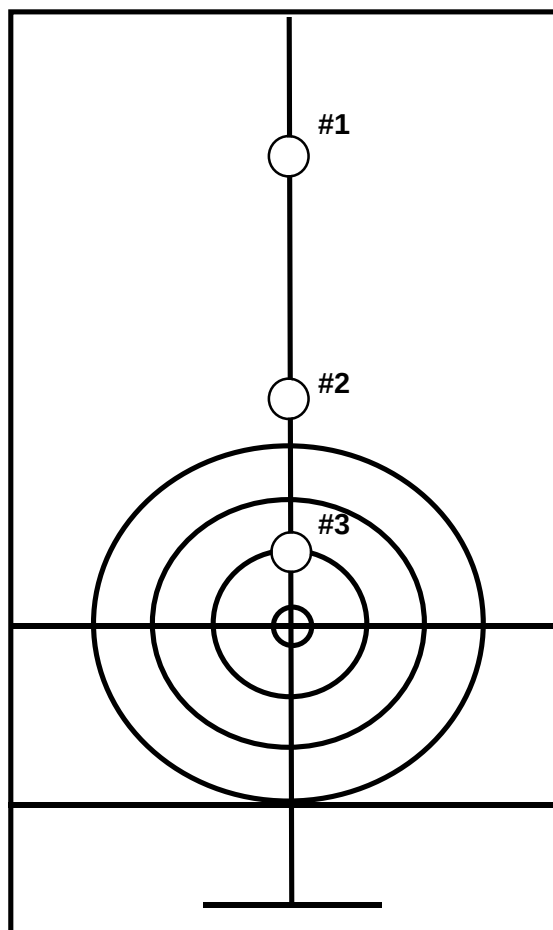
FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

The team with last rock always throws black rocks.
The team without last rock always throws white rocks.

The following three shot selection options represent the three most common choices of first rock placement without last rock when the score is reasonably close (within 2 points).

The subsequent shot selection options reflect the most common choices for teams with last rock that range in competitiveness from a club, regional or a provincial/territorial level of play.



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1 - LONG GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

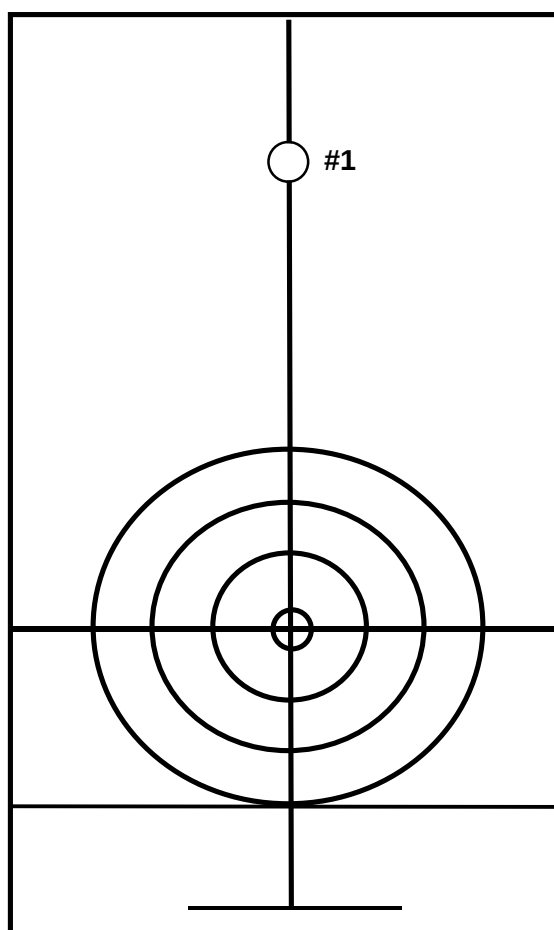
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" down in points
score close
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1A - OPEN DRAW

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

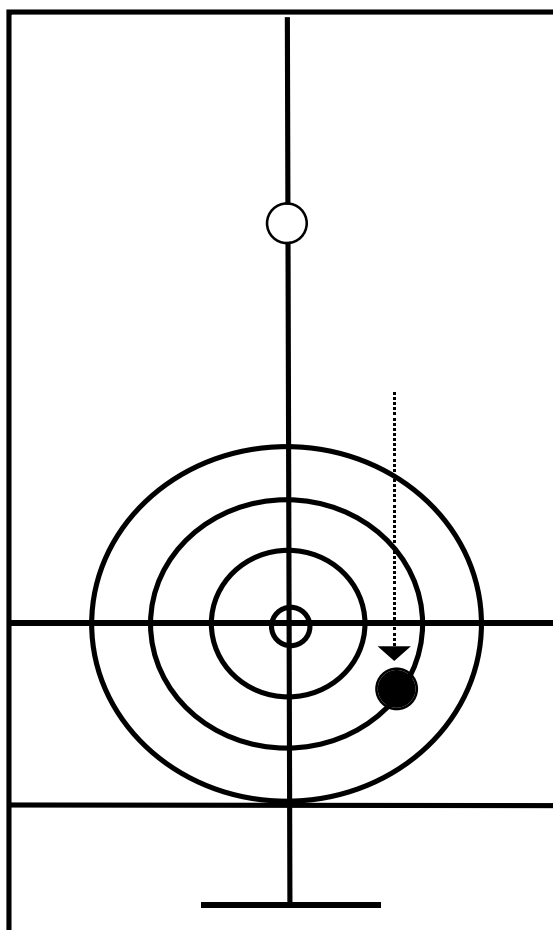
"E" early, mid or late ends

"S" up in points
score close

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1 A - i - OPEN HIT

GAME PLAN: Safe Offense Approach

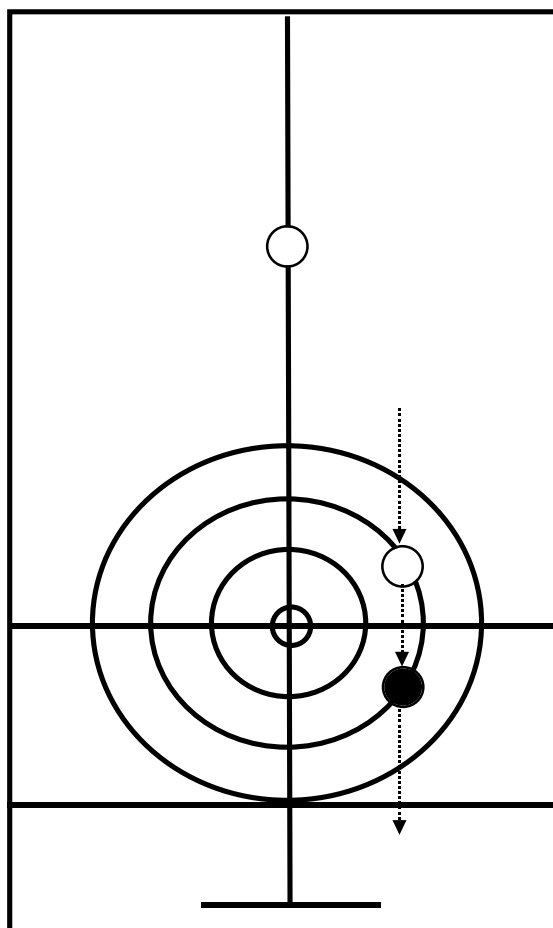
"E" early, mid, late ends

"S" score close
safe steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1 A - ii - SHORT GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

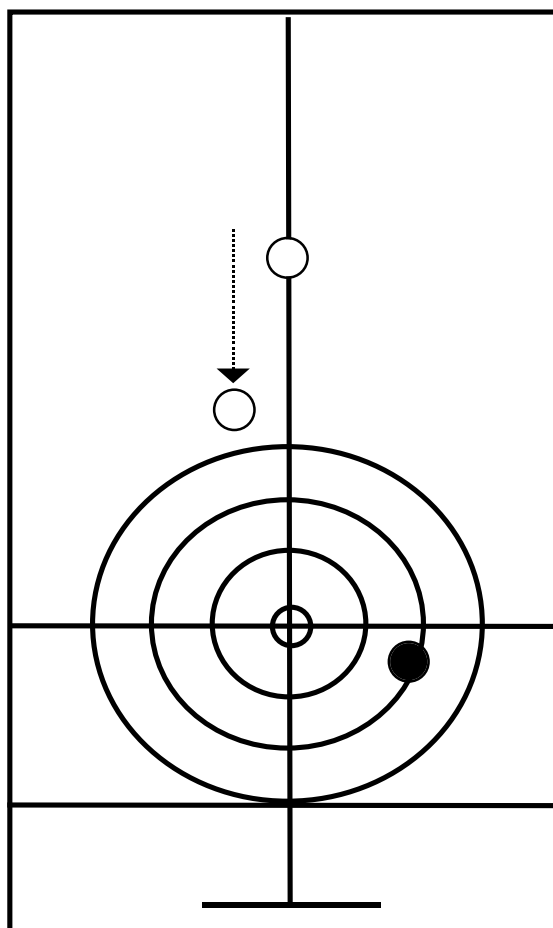
"E" mid or late ends

"S" down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1 A - iii - COME AROUND DRAW (either turn)

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

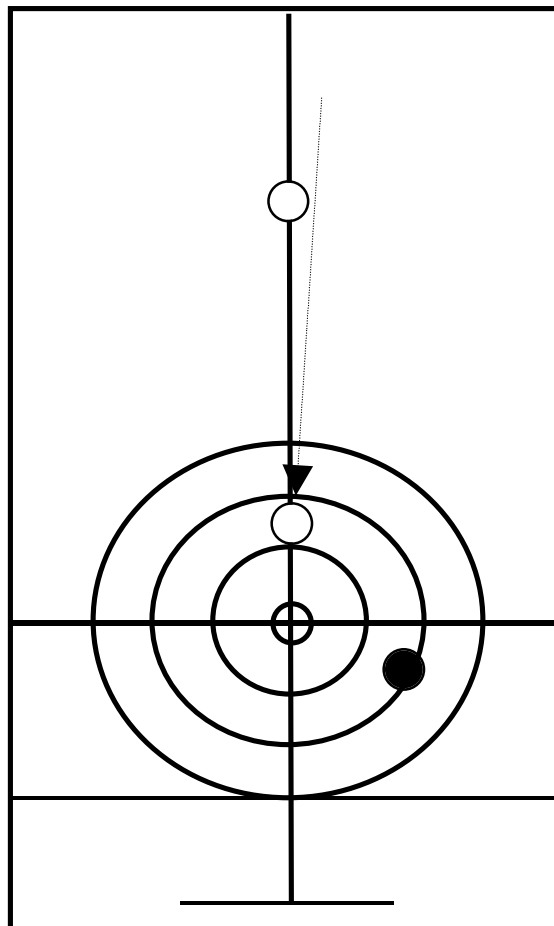
"E" mid, late, last end

"S" down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1B - LIGHT WEIGHT SPLIT/TICK

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

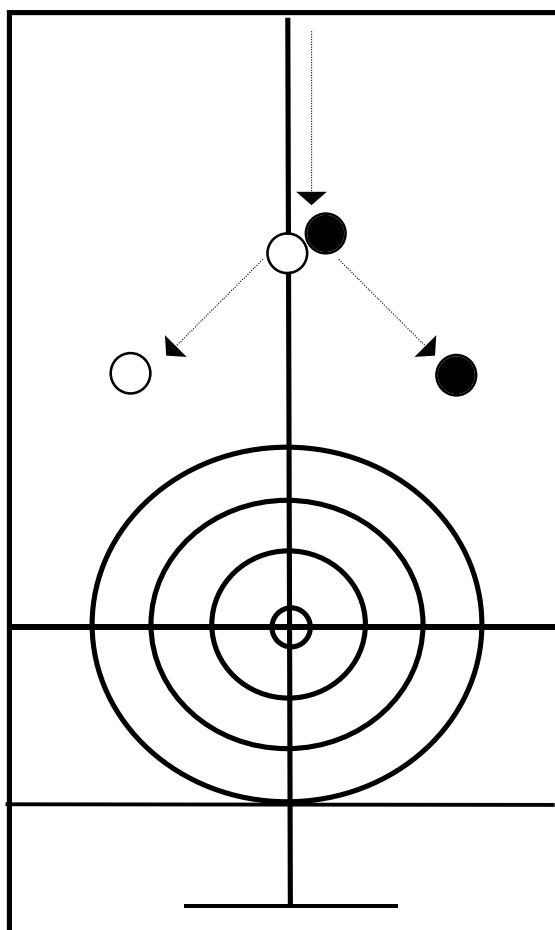
“E” early, mid, late, or last end

“S” score close
up in points

“R” with last rock

“A” enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1B - i - GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

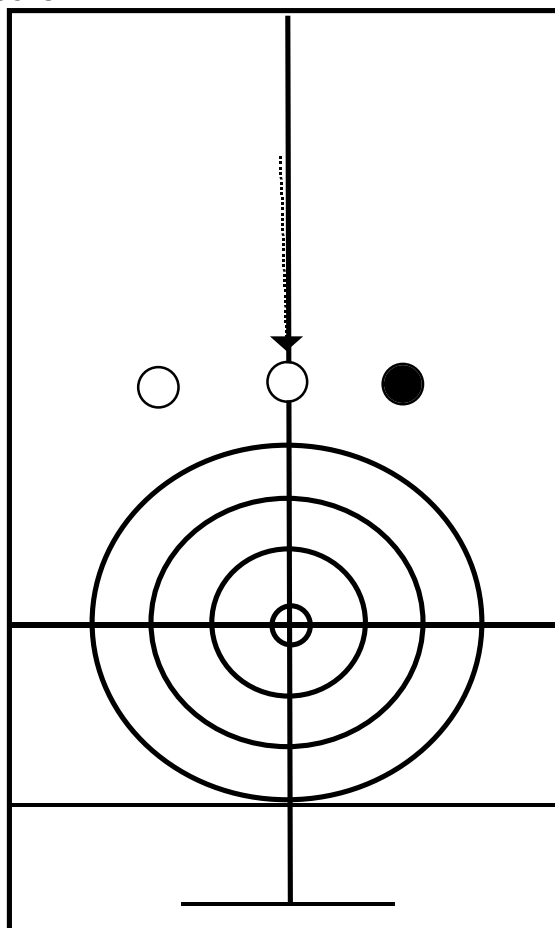
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" score close
down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1C - COME AROUND DRAW

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

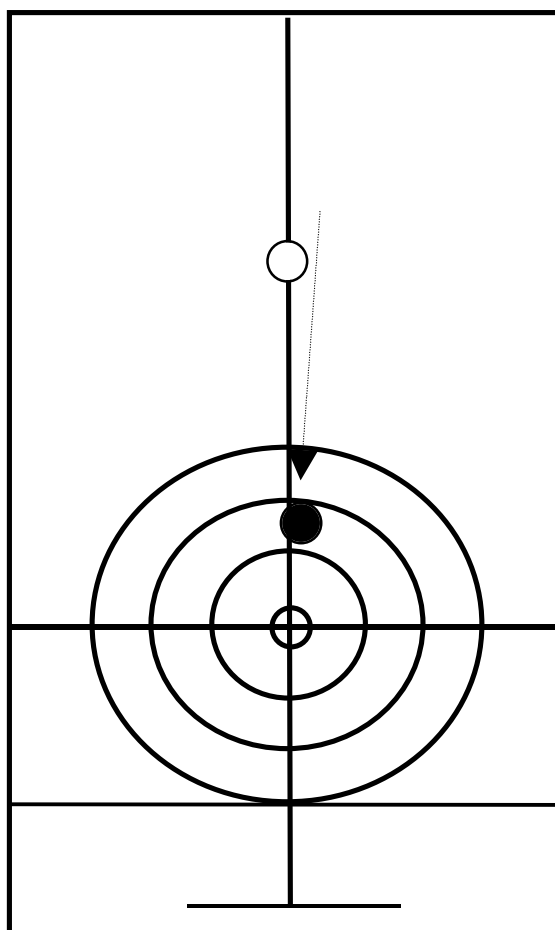
"E" mid, late, last end

"S" score close
down in points
need to score two points

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #1C - i - COME AROUND FREEZE/TAP BACK

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

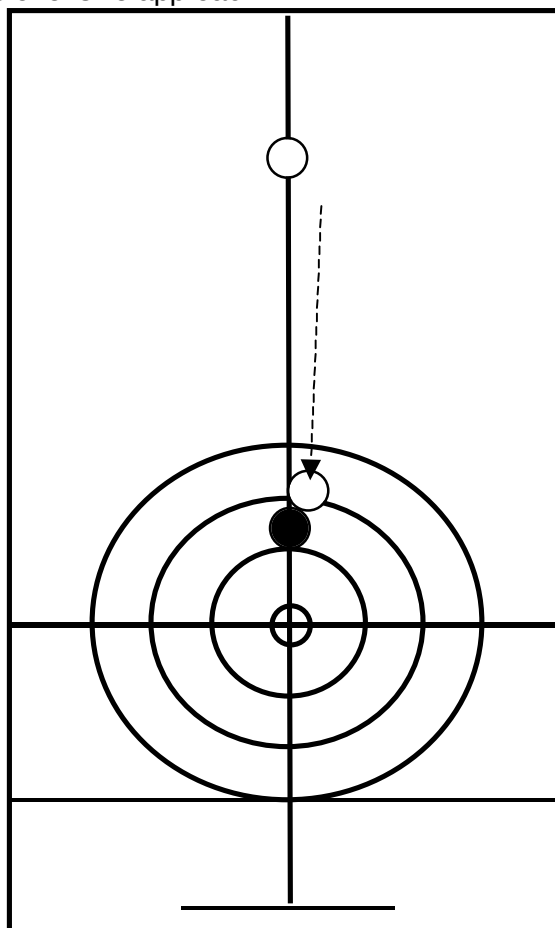
"E" mid, late, last end

"S" score close
down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots.

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2 - SHORT GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach (safer than #1)

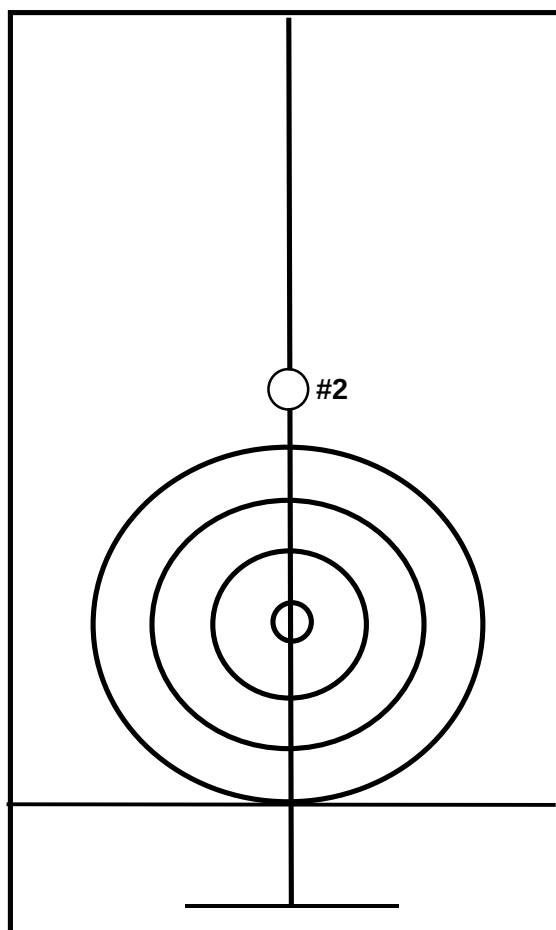
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" down in points
score close
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2A - OPEN DRAW

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

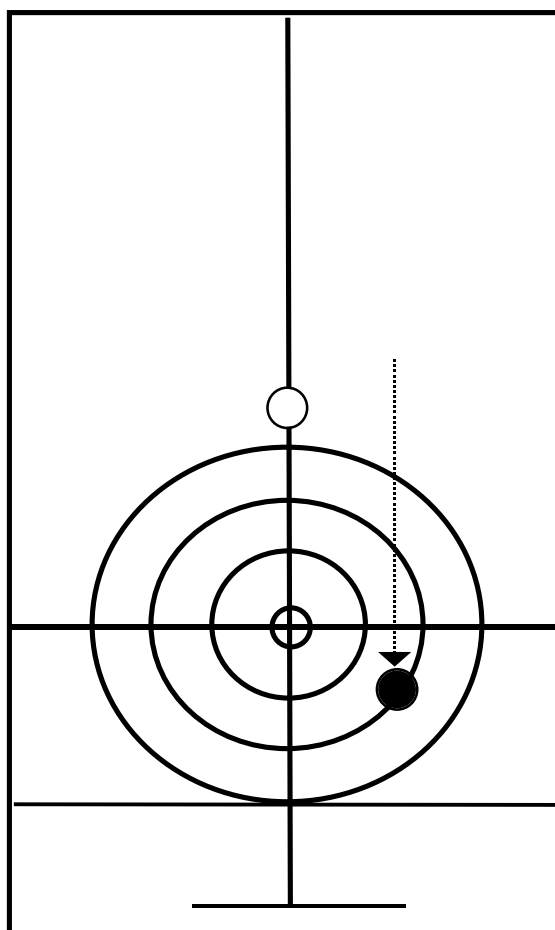
"E" early, mid or late ends

"S" up in points
score close

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2 A - i - OPEN HIT

GAME PLAN: Safe Offense Approach

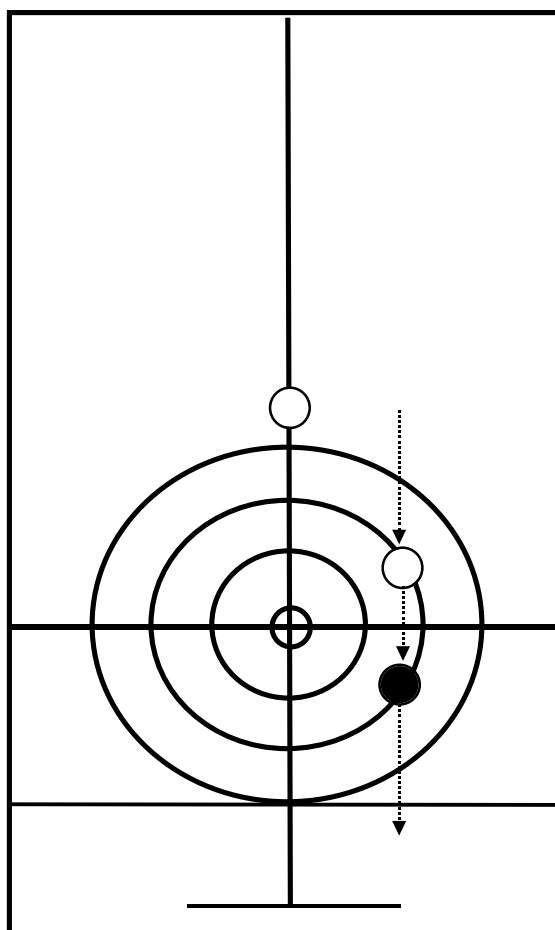
"E" early, mid, late ends

"S" score close
safe steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2 A - ii - LONG GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

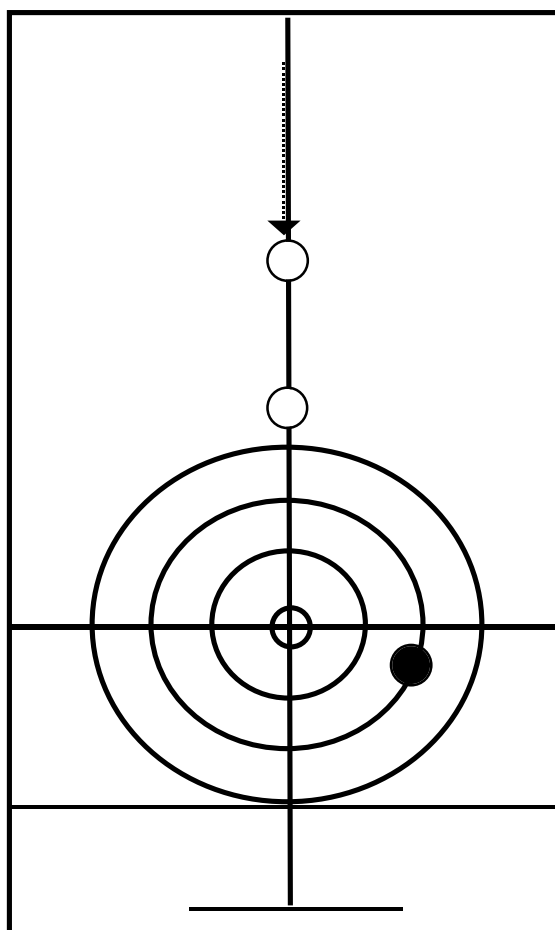
"E" mid, late, last end

"S" down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2 A - iii - COME AROUND DRAW (either turn)

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

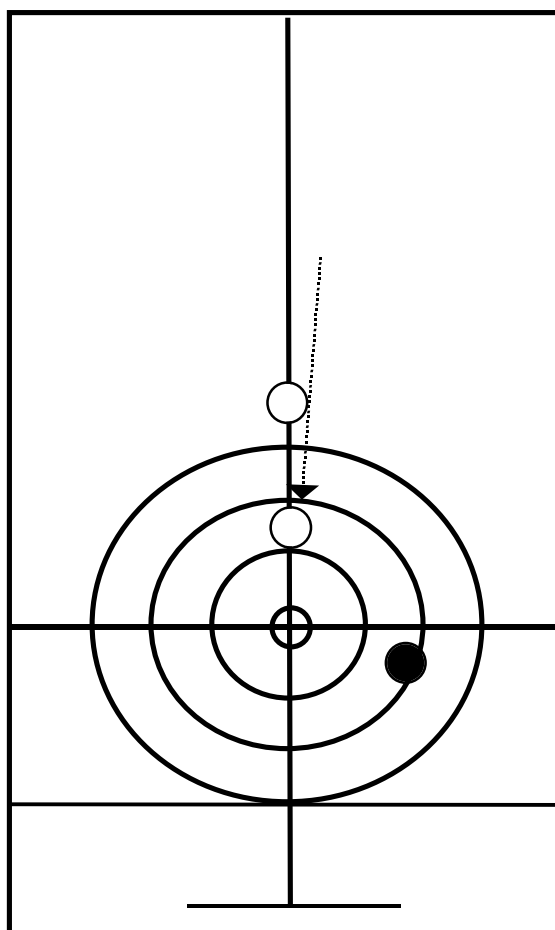
"E" mid, late, last end

"S" down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2B - LIGHT WEIGHT RAISE/SPLIT

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

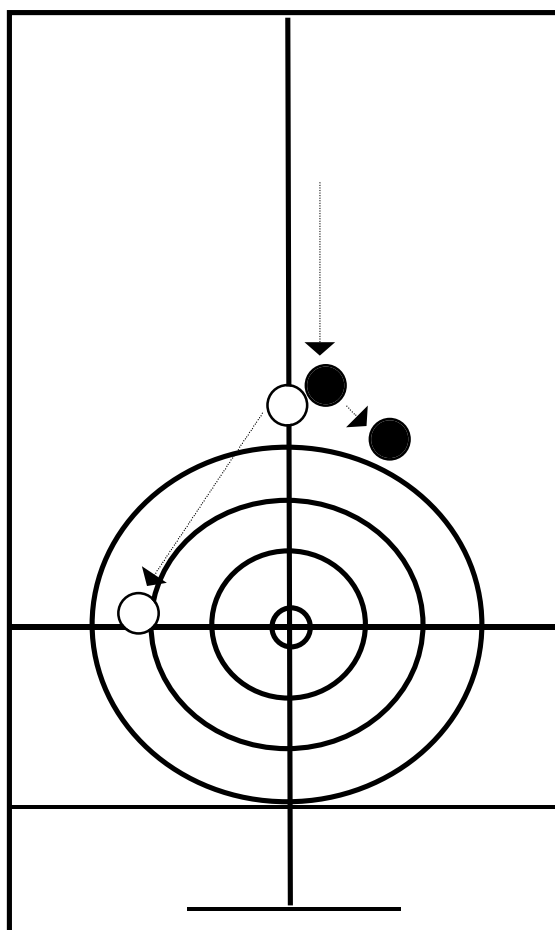
"E" early, mid, late, or last end

"S" score close
up in points

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2B - i - GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

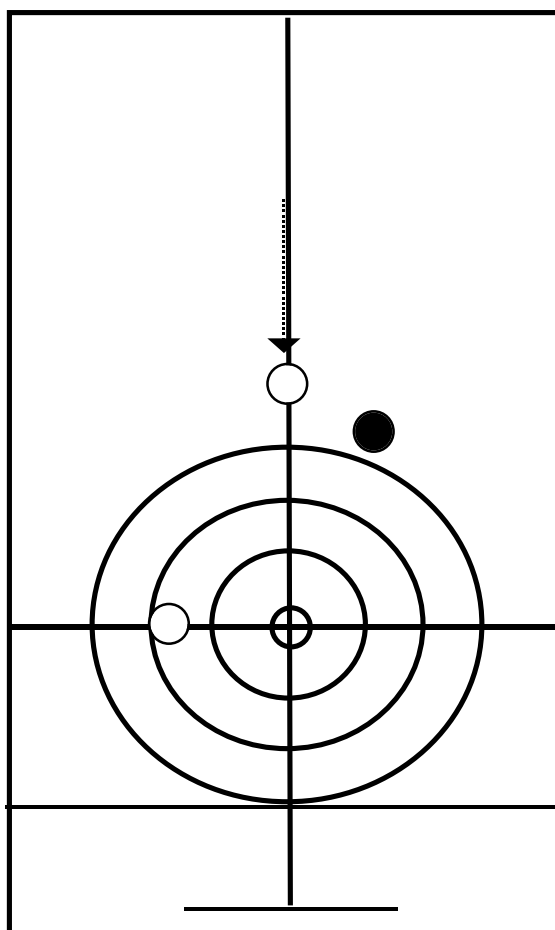
"E" early, mid, late, or last end

"S" score close
down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2B - ii - COME AROUND DRAW

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

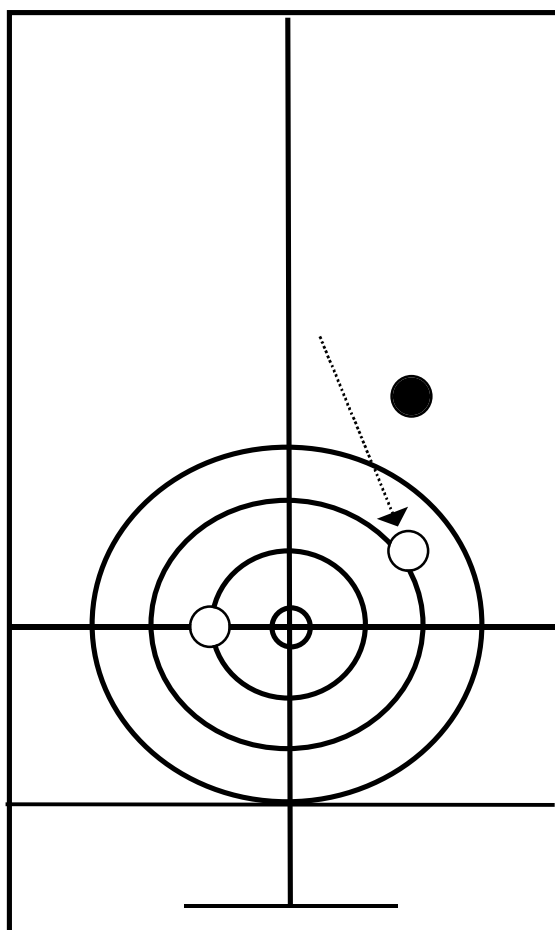
"E" early, mid, late ends

"S" score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2C - COME AROUND DRAW

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

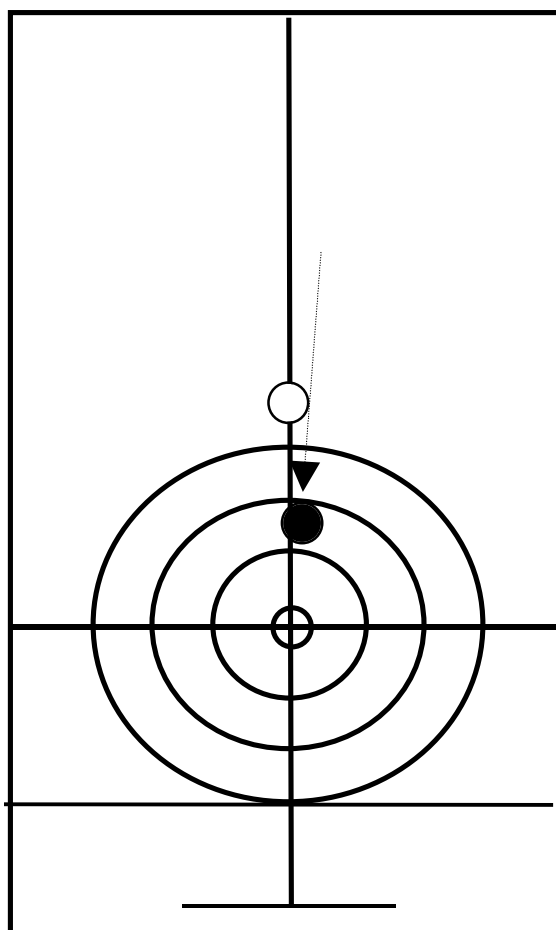
"E" mid, late, last end

"S" score close
down in points
need to score two points

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2C - i - LIGHT WEIGHT RAISE/SPLIT

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

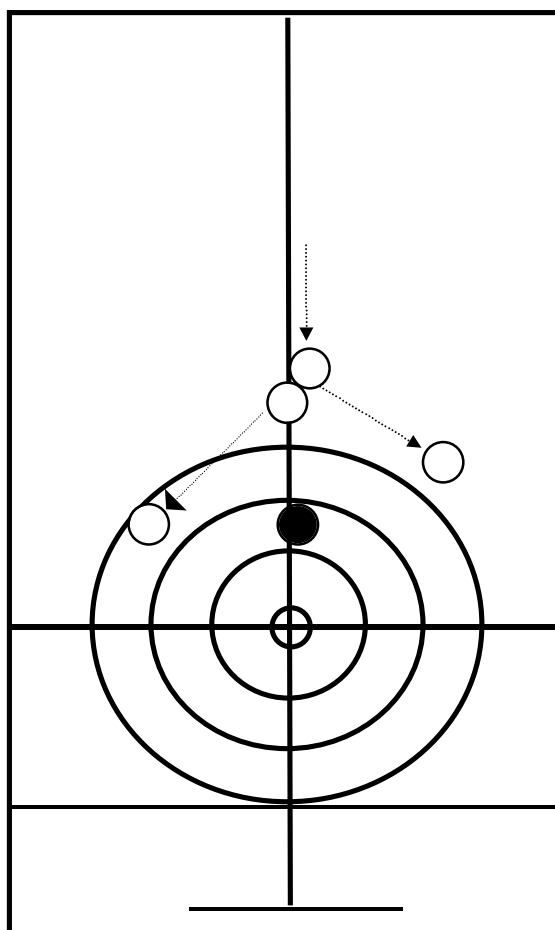
"E" early, mid, late end

"S" score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2C - ii - COME AROUND FREEZE/TAP BACK

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

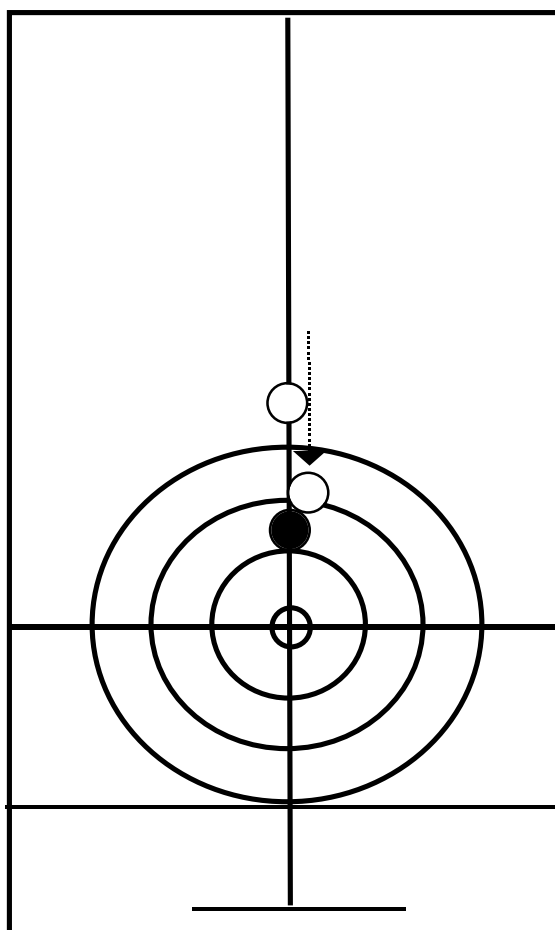
"E" early, mid, late, last end

"S" score close
down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2C - iii – SHORT GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

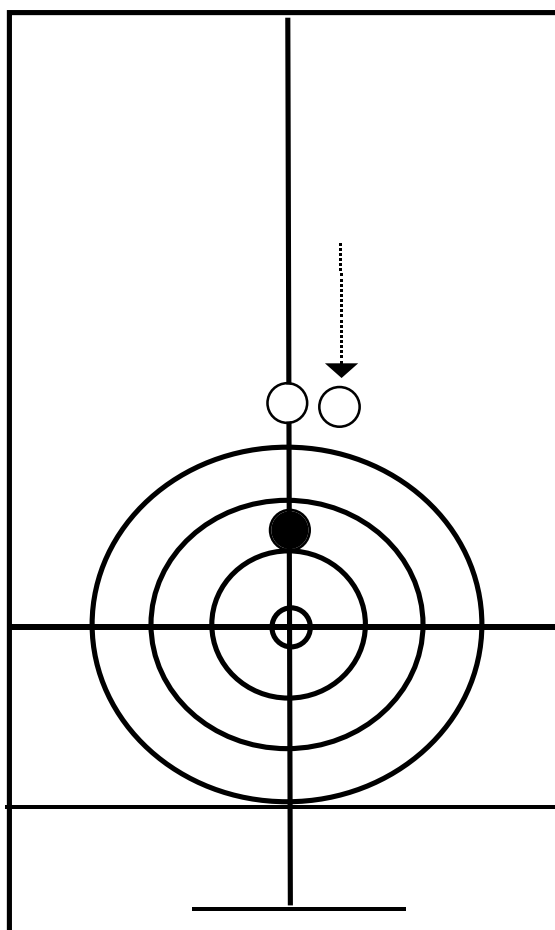
“E” early, mid, late, last end

“S” score close
down in points
may need to steal

“R” without last rock

“A” enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

“I” accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2D - SHORT GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

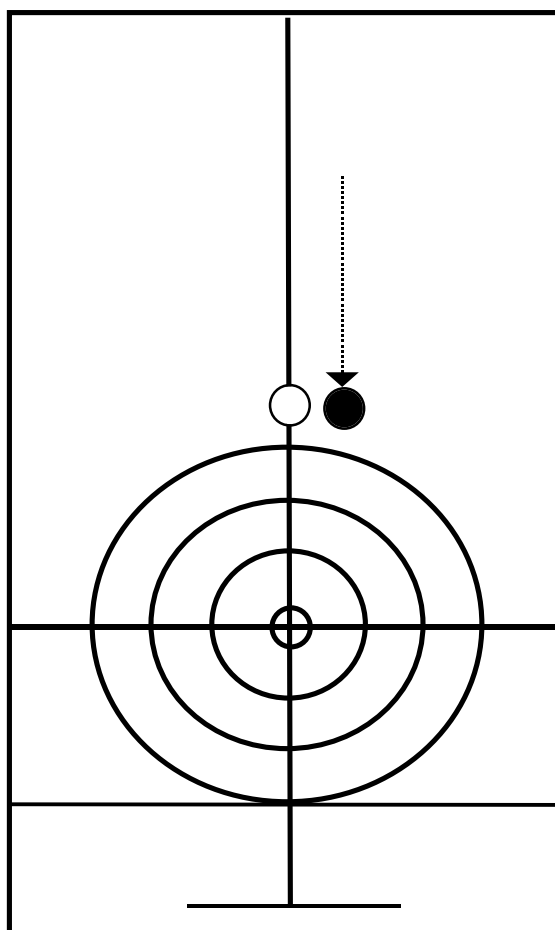
"E" early, mid, late, last end

"S" score close
down in points

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions
straight ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #2D - i - RAISE DRAW

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

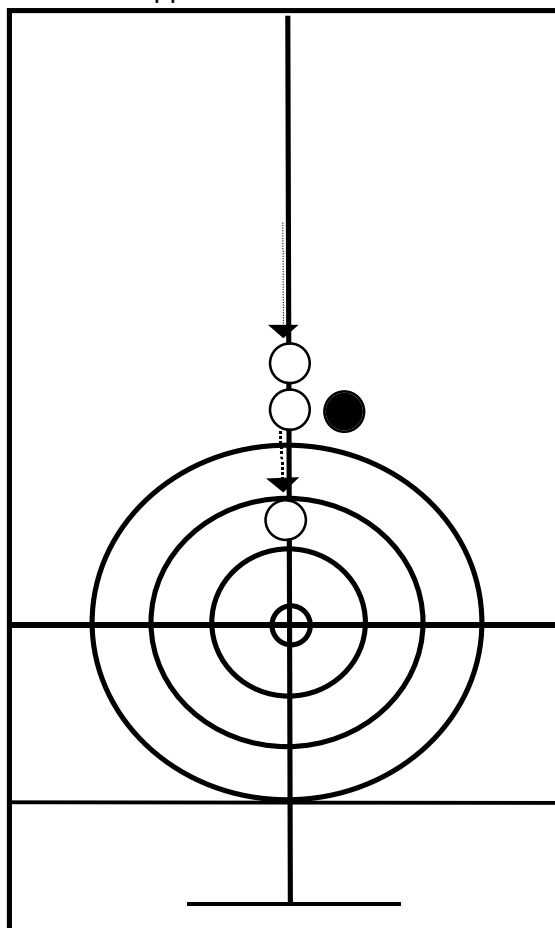
"E" early, mid, late, last end

"S" score close
down in points
may need to steal

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" accommodates offensive approach



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3 - OPEN DRAW

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

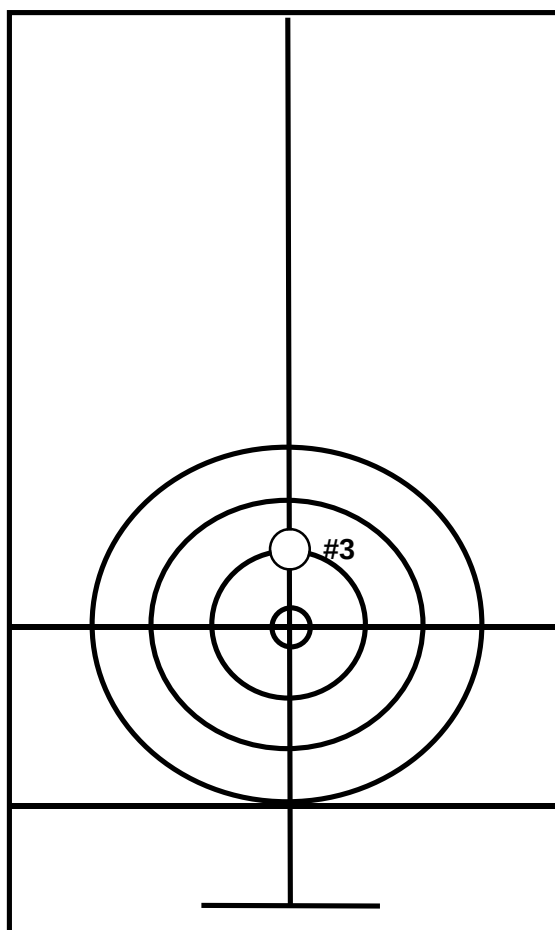
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3A - HIT AND ROLL

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

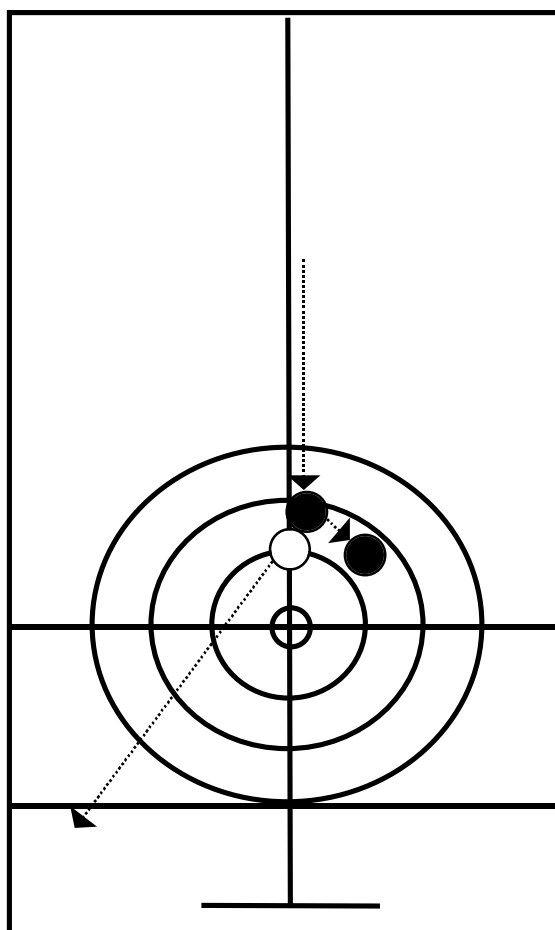
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3A - i - HIT AND ROLL

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

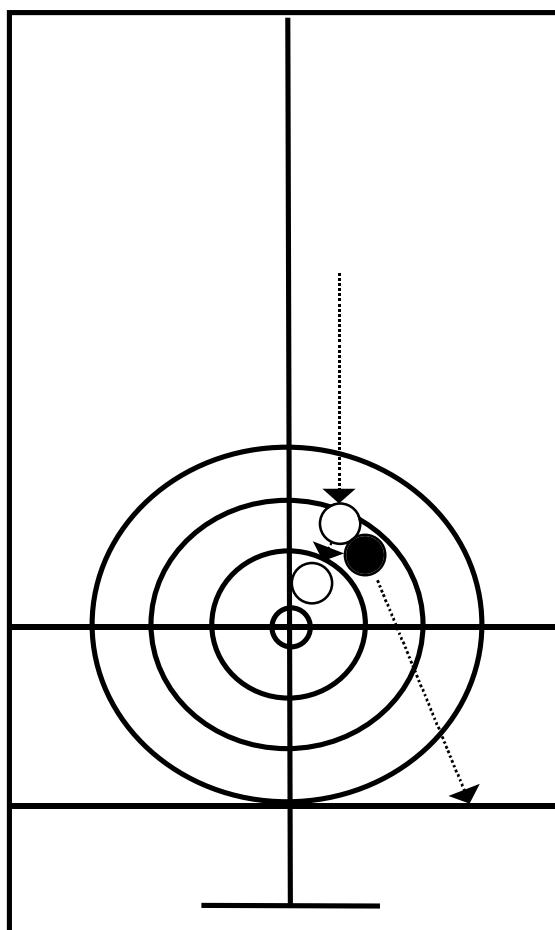
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3B - CORNER GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

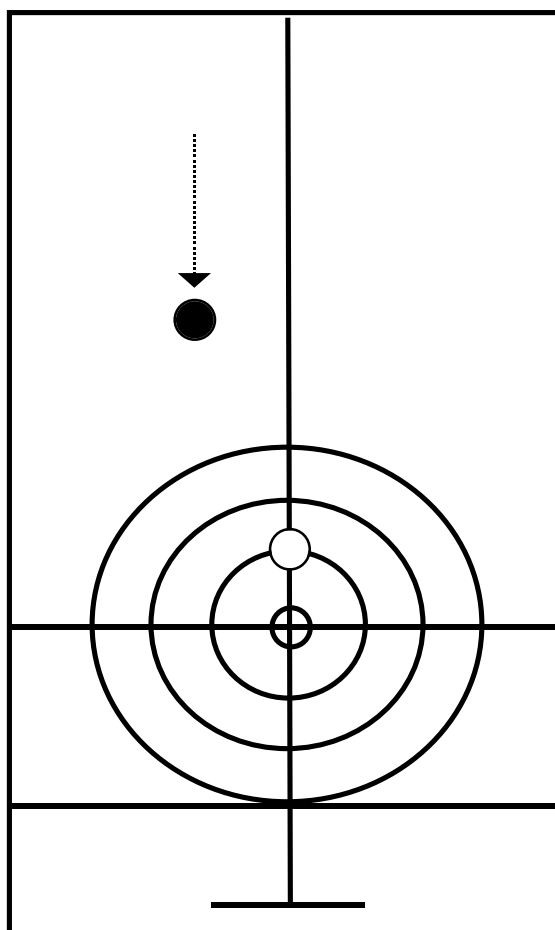
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3B - i – SHORT GUARD

GAME PLAN: Offensive Approach

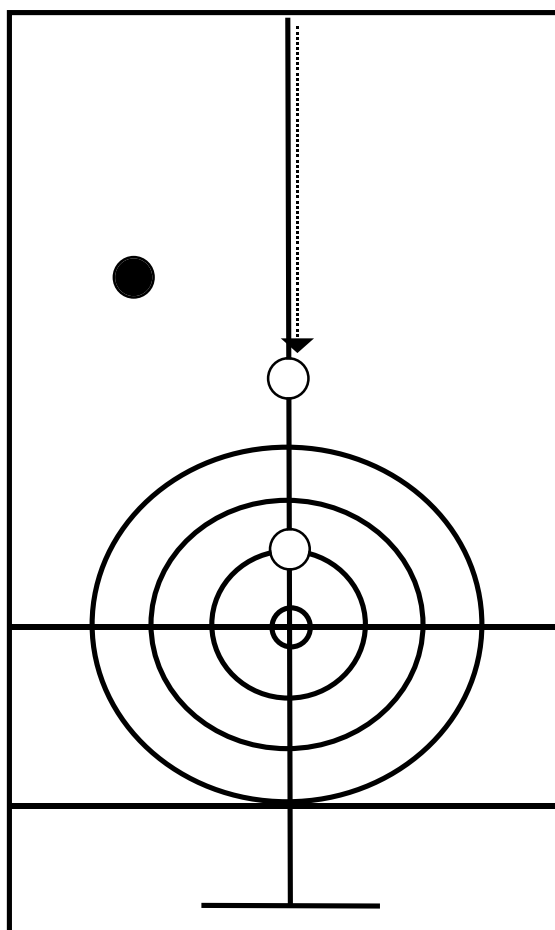
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3B - ii - TOP 8 FOOT DRAW/SHORT GUARD

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

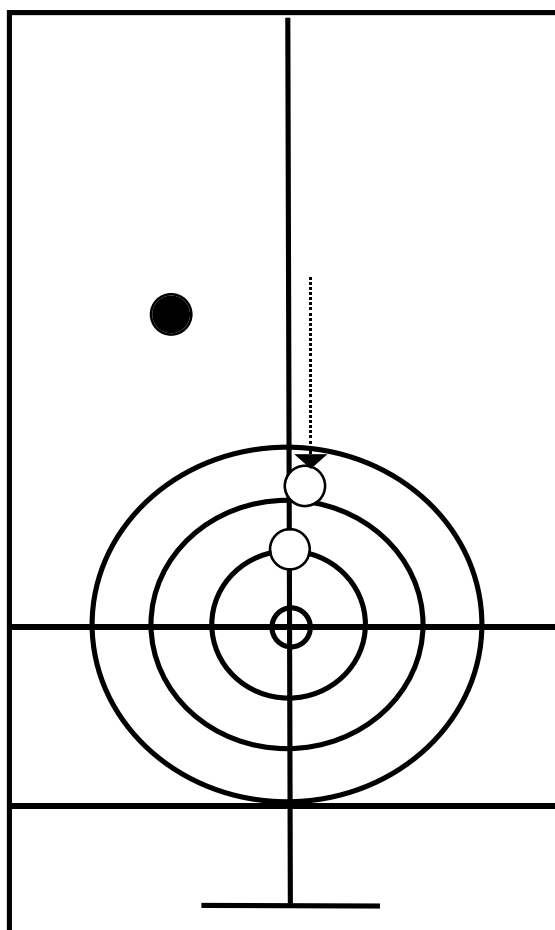
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3B - iii - COME AROUND DRAW

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

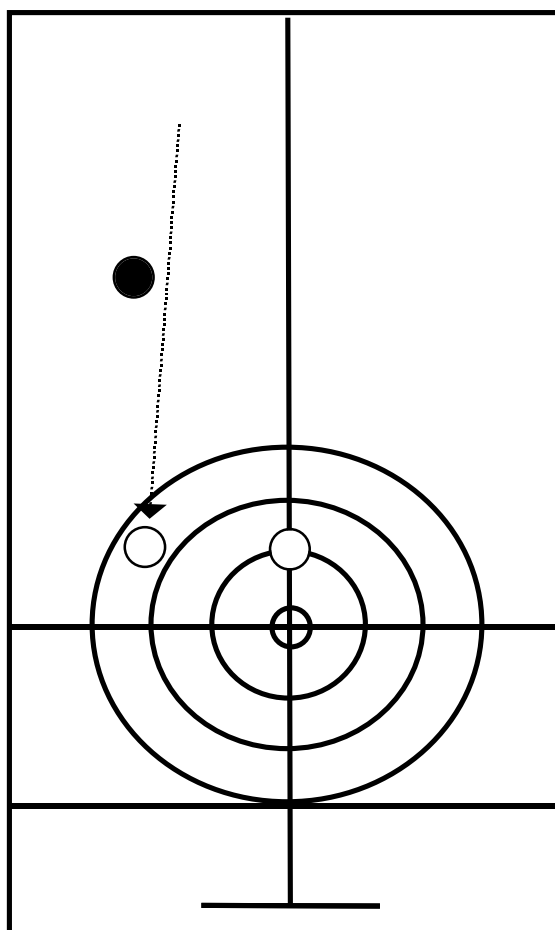
"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team With Last Rock - Lead's First Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3C - FREEZE/TAP BACK

GAME PLAN: Safe Offense Approach

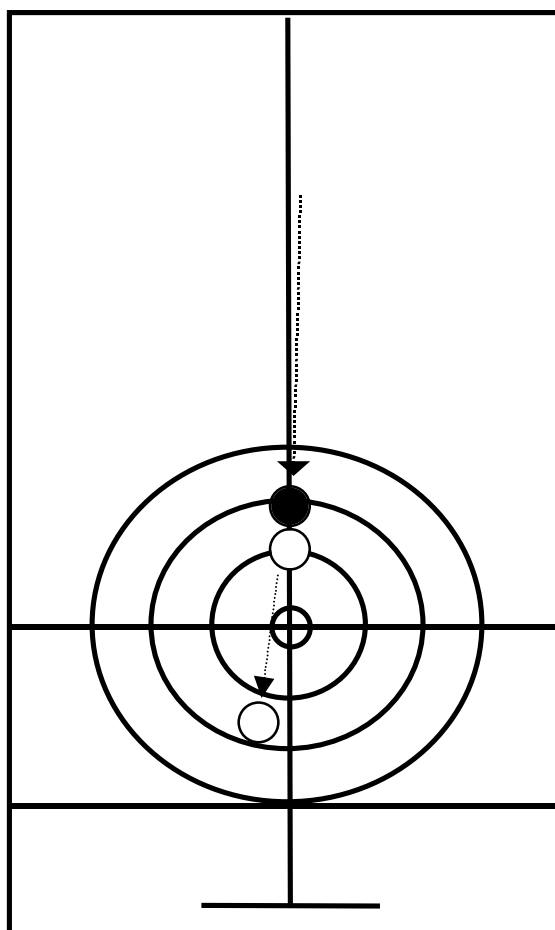
"E" mid, late or last end

"S" down in points
score close

"R" with last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions



FREE GUARD ZONE STRATEGY

SHOT SELECTION OPTIONS

Team Without Last Rock - Lead's Second Rock

SHOT SELECTION #3C - i - OPEN HIT

GAME PLAN: Defensive Approach

"E" early, mid, late or last end

"S" up in points
score close

"R" without last rock

"A" enables the team to play offensive or defensive shots

"I" most ice conditions

