

Coaching Part 2 — Week 11 Coach's Notes

Final Game and Player Development Review

ROLE OF THE WEEK	Observation through normal play	LESSON LENGTH	60 minutes
------------------	---------------------------------	---------------	------------

1. Why Week 11 Matters

Week 10 provided guided consolidation. Week 11 completes the course by moving into normal play with less coach support. The purpose is not to create a formal examination or demand perfect performance, but to observe how well players bring together delivery, line and length, controlled weight, head reading, communication and game procedures.

The final game also provides evidence for the Player Development Review. Progress should be judged across the whole course: better observation, clearer decisions, more purposeful correction, improved procedures and greater confidence are all valid evidence of learning.

CORE PRINCIPLE: The final session should reveal what the player can now do independently and convert that evidence into one practical next step.

2. The Coach's Role in the Final Game

- Create a fair and organised game environment.
- Observe more and instruct less.
- Intervene where safety, rules, procedures or a significant learning opportunity requires it.
- Keep questions brief and allow the player to complete the thinking.
- Distinguish a poor decision from a reasonable decision that was poorly executed.
- Avoid turning the game into a sequence of stopped coaching exercises.

3. What Independence Looks Like

Area	Evidence of increasing independence
Preparation	Understands the format, role, scorecard and equipment responsibilities.
Delivery	Uses a recognisable routine without repeated reminders.
Decision	Reads the score and head before choosing a shot.
Intention	Names the hand, target and intended result.
Review	Uses information from the previous bowl to correct, repeat or reconsider whenever the format and order of play allow.
Communication	Provides concise factual information and positive support.
Procedure	Measures, scores and manages normal play correctly or asks for help when unsure.

BERKSHIRE BOWLS COACHING SCHEME

4. Observing Without Over-Coaching

The coach should resist the temptation to correct every imperfect bowl immediately. The final game must retain flow and player responsibility. Interventions should be selected according to importance.

Intervene now	Ask briefly	Record for review
Safety issue; incorrect order; serious rules or procedure error; repeated delivery fault that prevents the intended shot.	The player has not identified the score, job, hand or finish; a single question can restore the decision process.	Minor inconsistency, a missed opportunity, or a pattern better discussed after the end of game.

5. A Simple Observation Framework

READ	STATE AND CHOOSE	DELIVER	REVIEW
Identifies who holds shot, the score requirement, useful bowls and danger.	States the required result, then selects the shot, hand, target, finishing area and minimum necessary weight. Identifies the main risk where relevant.	Uses a stable routine and commits to the chosen bowl.	Separates decision quality from delivery execution and identifies one useful next adjustment.

6. Delivery and Technical Observation

- The aim is a repeatable delivery, not a single technically perfect model.
- Observe stance, balance, release direction, head stability, eye focus and follow-through.
- Look for whether the delivery remains recognisable when the player changes hand, length or weight.
- When a correction is needed, use one clear cue and allow the next bowl to test it.
- Record repeated patterns rather than isolated misses.

7. Decision Quality

A bowl can finish well after a poor decision, and a sensible decision can fail through execution. The review should therefore separate decision quality from delivery outcome.

Reasonable decision	Questionable decision
✓ Matches the number of shots required.	X Attempts more than the score requires.
✓ Uses an available route.	X Ignores an obvious safer option.
✓ Is within the player's current ability.	X Relies on a shot outside current control.
✓ Has a clear intended finish.	X Has no clear target or finishing result.

✓ Uses no more weight or risk than necessary.

X Creates unnecessary danger to friendly bowls.

8. Communication and Team Behaviour

- Instructions and information should be concise, factual and positive.
- The player at the head should allow the bowler time to understand the position.
- The bowler should confirm the hand, target and required result before delivery.
- Body language should support the team even after an unsuccessful bowl.
- Players should complete practical duties and respect possession of the rink.

9. Procedures and Rules in Normal Play

The final game allows the coach to observe whether knowledge resources have transferred into normal play. The aim is not to test every law. Focus on the procedures encountered in the game.

- Mat placement and jack delivery.
- Correct order of play and awareness of possession.
- Marking touchers and identifying live or dead bowls where relevant.
- Scorecard completion and running totals.
- Using the correct equipment and the Week 5 measuring procedure, then announcing the result clearly.
- Appropriate action when the jack enters the ditch or an end becomes dead.

10. The Final-End Challenge

- Use a score situation that creates a genuine but manageable decision.
- Do not introduce an entirely new technical demand.
- Ask the player to state: Score requirement → Required result → Chosen option → Hand and target → Intended finish → Main risk.
- Allow the delivery without further coaching unless clarification is essential.
- Review the decision, execution and possible next adjustment separately.

11. Completing the Player Development Review

The review should be evidence-based, balanced and manageable. It is not a fault list. The coach should help the player recognise progress and select a priority that can be practised.

Review element	Coach approach	Useful evidence
Strength	Name a skill or habit that has improved and should be retained.	Course practice, Week 10 guided game or final game.
Priority	Choose the one issue that will most improve future play.	Repeated pattern rather than one isolated bowl.
Practice method	Specify an exercise, target and frequency.	An existing exercise sheet or purposeful two-bowl practice.
Measure of progress	Agree what improvement will look like.	More consistent line, positive reach, clearer decisions or fewer prompts.
Next step	Identify further coaching, club play or independent practice.	A realistic action the player can complete.

12. Giving Effective Feedback

- Begin with specific progress rather than general praise.
- Use evidence: what the player did, how often and with how much support.
- Limit technical priorities to one main point.
- Agree the practice action with the player rather than imposing a vague instruction.
- End with confidence and a clear next step.

13. Common Coach Errors to Avoid

Coach error	Better approach
Stopping play after every bowl.	Allow the game to flow and select only important interventions.
Judging progress only by bowls close to the jack.	Include decisions, communication, correction and procedures.
Giving the player the shot before asking for a read.	Ask for facts and one preferred option first.
Listing several development faults.	Agree one priority with the greatest practical value.
Giving vague homework such as 'practise more'.	Name the exercise, success target, frequency and review method.
Treating the session as a pass/fail examination.	Use it as a final learning and development session.

14. Coach Questions

- What does the score require from this bowl?
- Who holds shot, and what is the actual job?
- Which realistic option carries the least necessary risk, and what is the main risk?
- Where should the bowl finish?
- What did the result tell you about the decision, line, length, contact, weight or delivery?
- What skill or habit has improved most during the course?
- What one priority will make the greatest difference next?
- How will you practise it, and how will you recognise improvement?

15. Evidence of Learning

- The player completes normal procedures with reduced prompting.
- The delivery remains recognisable under game pressure.
- Shot selection increasingly matches the score and head.
- Communication is concise and positive.
- The player reviews results and makes purposeful adjustments.
- The player can identify a strength, a priority and a practical next step.

16. Course Closure

Finish by confirming that development continues through purposeful practice, social and competitive play, and further coaching where appropriate. Encourage the player to revisit the development review after a period of practice and record what has changed.

COACH SUMMARY: Observe the player in normal play, intervene selectively, recognise evidence of progress and agree one clear, practical next step.