

BERKSHIRE BOWLS COACHING SCHEME

Coaching Part 2 — Week 2 Coach's Notes

Aiming Line, Target Control and Essential Hand Signals

ROLE OF THE WEEK

Transfer observation into target control

LESSON LENGTH

60 minutes

1. Why Week 2 Matters

Week 1 asked the pupil to recognise line and length and use Bowl 2 to correct or repeat. Week 2 applies that learning to visible targets. Jack Rolling isolates the aiming line through a straight-rolling object; Half Diamond transfers the same discipline to a biased bowl travelling on a curved path; hand signals introduce simple communication that supports the next delivery.

CORE PRINCIPLE: Select a clear aiming line, picture the intended finish, deliver consistently, and use the result to guide the next attempt.

2. Jack Rolling: What the Exercise Teaches

Jack Rolling is more than practice at casting the jack. It simplifies target control because the jack does not have bias. The coach can therefore observe whether the pupil can align the body, release smoothly and send an object along an intended line without the additional complication of bowl curvature.

- Stage 1 - roll to the coach's feet at varied lengths: develops release direction and length awareness.
- Stage 2 - roll through a gate about 10 metres from the mat: creates a visible aiming-line test.
- Two consecutive jacks: the first gives information and the second tests correction or repetition.
- Transfer to bowls: the same habits of alignment, target selection and controlled delivery remain relevant.

3. Technical Points for Jack Delivery

- Stable stance and balanced body position.
- Clear aiming point before movement begins.
- Smooth, low release rather than pushing or bouncing the jack.
- Hand and arm continuing towards the selected line.
- A nominated intended finishing area, not simply passage through the gate.

A gate gives immediate feedback, but it can also cause the pupil to stare only at the gap. Encourage an aiming point through the gate towards an intended finishing area. This prevents the exercise becoming a narrow accuracy trick with no length intention.

4. Coaching Jack Rolling

- Begin by asking the pupil to roll to the coach's feet so that the target is simple and personal.
- Move to a wide gate before narrowing it.
- Ask the pupil to name the intended line and length before each pair of jacks.

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- Correct the delivery method immediately where necessary.
- After a miss, ask whether the main change is line, release or length.
- Progress only when the action remains smooth and repeatable.

GOLDEN RULE Never miss an opportunity to correct a delivery or explain how the intended shot can be achieved.

5. Half Diamond: Purpose and Geometry

The Half Diamond develops the draw shot by giving the pupil visible references for both route and depth. Two front bowls sit one metre either side of the centre line. The jack is 30 cm behind them on the centre line, and a rear bowl is one metre behind the jack. The front bowls define the useful channel; the rear bowl gives depth to the head.

- The front bowls are guides, not targets.
- The bowl should enter inside them on its curved draw path.
- The rear bowl helps the pupil picture a useful finishing area beyond the jack.
- The winning bowl only needs to beat the nearest opposing bowl; it does not have to touch the jack.
- Draw weight must be retained throughout.

6. Avoiding Jack Focus

Beginners often become fixed on the jack and either bowl too straight or stop short of the useful scoring area. The Half Diamond deliberately encourages a wider view of the head. The coach should ask the pupil to identify a finishing area rather than simply “bowl at the jack”.

The source exercise includes the useful confidence cue “deliver a good second bowl”. This can reduce pressure because the pupil is no longer demanding perfection. A bowl that finishes safely inside the front bowls and beats the nearest opposing bowl has achieved the task.

7. Line and Length within the Half Diamond

Observation	Likely issue	Coach response
Bowl clips an outside front bowl	Line too tight, alignment altered or bowl forced straight.	Widen the aiming point and re-show the curved route.
Bowl enters the channel but stops short	The pupil is focused on the front bowls rather than the finish.	Name an intended finishing area in or beyond the head.
Bowl passes through and finishes long	Line is successful; only length needs changing.	Keep the line and reduce the finishing weight.
Forehand succeeds but backhand fails	The aiming reference or confidence differs between hands.	Rebuild the picture and use the same two-bowl process.
Delivery changes under pressure	The pupil is trying to steer the bowl.	Restore normal stance, rhythm and follow-through.

8. Essential Hand Signals

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Only a small set should be introduced in Week 2: forehand, backhand, short, long and Shot held. The purpose is not to memorise the full handout. It is to show that clear factual information can support the bowler's next decision without shouting or delaying play.

- Face the bowler and make one deliberate signal at a time.
- Make the movement large enough to be seen.
- Use the signal to communicate a fact, not several uncertain opinions.
- The bowler should confirm the information before delivering.
- Clubs may use slightly different conventions; agree meanings before play.

9. Integrating the Three Parts

The lesson should feel like one learning chain rather than three unrelated activities. Jack Rolling establishes a straight aiming line. Half Diamond transfers target control to the curved draw. Hand signals then provide the information needed for the next adjustment.

LEARNING CHAIN AIM -> DELIVER -> OBSERVE -> COMMUNICATE -> CORRECT OR REPEAT

10. Differentiation and Progression

- Less confident pupil: roll to the coach first, use a wide gate, shorten the Half Diamond and practise the preferred hand.
- Developing pupil: vary gate length, practise both hands and require a stated Bowl 2 correction.
- More capable pupil: narrow the gate, nominate a finishing zone, increase the Half Diamond distance or slightly reduce the front-bowl separation.
- Mixed group: retain the same set-up but give different success targets, such as entering the channel, beating the nearest bowl or finishing within a defined zone.

11. Coach Questions

- What is your aiming point?
- Where should the jack or bowl finish?
- What did the first attempt tell you?
- Was the miss mainly line, release or length?
- Which hand gives the clearer route?
- What information does this signal give the bowler?
- How will that information change the next delivery?

12. Evidence of Learning

- The pupil repeatedly sends the jack towards or through the selected gate.
- The second jack or bowl reflects the stated correction or repeat.
- The pupil enters the Half Diamond channel and reaches the head more consistently.
- Both hands are practised without losing the basic delivery routine.
- The pupil recognises and uses the five essential signals clearly.
- The pupil connects factual information with a purposeful next-bowl adjustment.

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13. Link to Week 3

Week 3 uses Square and Diamond patterns to introduce more options and obstacles. Week 2 should therefore finish with pupils understanding that a clear aiming line, useful finishing area and concise communication make more complex heads easier to solve.

COACH SUMMARY Keep the target visible, the correction specific and the communication factual. The pupil should know both the route and the intended finish.