

BERKSHIRE BOWLS COACHING SCHEME

When the Jack Is in the Ditch

Mark the position, understand what remains live and continue the end correctly

WHY THIS MATTERS

A jack in the ditch does not automatically make the end dead. If it remains within the rink boundaries, the end continues, and players must understand how to mark the jack, identify live bowls and decide the result.

What Happens When the Jack Enters the Ditch?

- The jack may be knocked into the ditch and remain live, provided it stays within the side boundaries of the rink.
- A marker is placed against the bank in line with the jack so players at the mat can see its position.
- The end continues until all required bowls have been delivered.
- If the jack finishes completely outside the rink boundaries, the end is dead.

Marking the Jack Position

Step	Action	Purpose
1	Locate the jack in the ditch.	Confirm that it remains within the rink boundaries.
2	Place the recognised jack marker on the bank directly in line with the jack.	Show the bowler the jack's position from the mat.
3	Keep the marker aligned if the jack is later moved.	Maintain an accurate reference throughout the end.

What Bowls Remain Live?

Situation	Status described in the source
Bowls already resting on the green	They remain in play and may count when measured to the jack.
A toucher resting in the ditch	It remains live unless it is completely outside the rink boundary.
A toucher knocked into the ditch	It remains live and may affect the jack or final count.
A non-toucher delivered into the ditch	It is dead and is removed from play.

Touchers After the Jack Is in the Ditch

- The source states that once the jack is in the ditch, no later bowl can be marked as a toucher.
- A bowl that contacts the jack while the jack is already in the ditch is treated as dead unless it was already a toucher.
- If a live toucher moves the jack in the ditch, the jack remains in its new resting position.

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Drawing to a Jack in the Ditch

Player question	Practical answer	Main risk
Where should the bowl finish?	On the green, nearer to the jack than the existing live bowls.	Stopping short of the scoring area.
What line should be used?	A route that avoids or passes the existing toucher or bowls.	Clipping an obstacle and losing length.
How much weight?	Positive enough to reach the ditch-end scoring area but not enter the ditch as a non-toucher.	Running into the ditch and becoming dead.

How Is the Result Decided?

- At the end of play, shots are decided by which live bowl or bowls are nearest to the jack in its final position in the ditch.
- Bowls on the green and live touchers in the ditch may both be compared.
- Measure from the nearest point of the bowl to the nearest point of the jack.
- Keep the head and ditch area clear while measuring.

A Simple Player Check

1 — BOUNDARY	2 — MARK	3 — STATUS	4 — PLAY
Is the jack still within the rink width?	Has its position been marked clearly on the bank?	Which bowls are live, dead or existing touchers?	Choose the line and finish, then continue the end.

Player Self-Check

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| ☐ Do I know when a jack in the ditch remains live? | ☐ Can I explain how its position is marked? |
| ☐ Can I distinguish a live toucher from a dead non-toucher? | ☐ Can I identify the safe finishing area for the next bowl? |

RULES NOTE: This handout follows the uploaded source material. In match play, always apply the current laws and the competition conditions, and ask a marker or umpire when unsure.

KEY POINT: A jack in the ditch remains live while it stays within the rink boundaries. Mark it clearly, identify the live bowls and continue the end.