



Coach's Corner Tip of the Month

Why Work on Your Game?

Ok, so you're bowling well in league – maybe even over a 220 average, and you feel very comfortable with your game. Should you make some changes? Is the effort worth the reward? When should I make changes to my game, and when should I keep things as they are? Let's discuss some of these issues this month.

First, if all you want to do is bowl well in league, and you are already there, should you make changes? The answer is yes, provided you have time to work on those changes. The changes you make to be a better league bowler will not be as extensive as those for tournament play, but they will still take time to implement. The end of a league season, or a league season in which you do not have a significant league in progress are particularly good times to work on your game. To be a better league bowler, learning to roll the ball with higher ball speed and revolutions is a good idea. Also, even in league the lanes change, so you need to learn to recognize those changes and make the appropriate adjustments. Of course, improving your spare shooting is always a good thing.

The basic rule of thumb is to allow 21 days of sustained, regular practice for a change in your swing to take hold and become somewhat natural. When you are working with a coach, make sure you are ready to commit the time to implement the changes. Also, make sure that you clearly state your goals to your coach at the start of a lesson or a series of lessons, as those goals will help your coach to appropriately focus the content of your lesson(s).

So, even league bowlers need to work on their games. What then, are the guidelines for a tournament bowler preparing for competition? After those three weeks of learning changes to your game, you need to continue to practice the changes as an integrated part of your game, learn how the changes affect lane play, how much the ball will hook in certain situations, how different releases and ball speeds work with the changes. You also need to learn how these changes have improved your game, and you need mental rehearsal to build confidence in the changes. Allow a total of 5-6 weeks before a tournament to practice changes you have made to your game.

Sometimes you work on your game and you can not incorporate all the changes you are working on. In this case, you must decide what you can get built into your game before your next tournament and what to discard at this time. Even the best intentions of both coach and student don't work out perfectly when you attempt to make the changes a part of your game. It's ok to "wait until later" to add something to your game. You must remember that it's more important to be consistent, so you must be willing to postpone changes that will introduce inconsistencies in your shot making.

I always recommend that people take lessons to improve your game. Just make sure that you're ready to commit to change when you're taking lessons, and you'll find that you have some great new abilities that will help you bowl better.

As always, if you'd like to see a specific topic discussed, e-mail me at proshop@denverbowling.com.

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