

## 8-Week Training Plan - Bowling

The following bowling season plan should be used as a *guideline*. It may be adapted and implemented according to the needs of your specific athletes. In addition to conditioning, review the sport specific rules and regulations that will be followed at the local, regional and state competitions. Integrate skills that will best prepare the athletes for success in all aspects of the competition. Note, if the team only practices together once per week, this plan may be modified for training at home between practices.

### **Preseason**

*Four weeks before season work with your LPC or Sports Manager regarding the following:*

- Preseason Planning
  - Improve your knowledge of bowling and of coaching athletes with intellectual disabilities by attending a Special Olympics training if available.
  - Arrange for a bowling facility that will accommodate your needs throughout season.
  - Arrange for equipment and include any adapted equipment if necessary.
  - Recruit, orient and train volunteer assistant coaches.
  - Coordinate transportation needs.
  - Ensure that all athletes have been medically approved before the first practice.
  - Obtain copies of medical and parental releases.
  - Establish goals and develop a plan for the season.
  - Consider establishing a bowling league sanctioned by your national bowling association or federation to extend the season, lasting longer than eight weeks if feasible and desired.
  - Establish and coordinate seasonal schedule, including league play, training practices, clinics and demonstrations, and confirm any planned dates for local, area, sectional, state, national and Special Olympics, Unified Sports® bowling competitions.
  - Hold orientation for families, teachers, and friends of athletes and include information about physical conditioning and “at-home trainings between practices.
  - Establish procedures for recognizing each athletes progress.
  - Establish a seasonal budget.
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## **Weekly Session Overview:**

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

1. Quickly review previously taught skills.
2. Introduce the theme of the skills activity.
3. Demonstrate the skills simply and dramatically.
4. Physically assist and prompt lower ability players when necessary.
5. Introduce and practice new skills early in the practice session.

### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Players learn a lot by simply bowling with prompts to practice/focus on new skill that was introduced. The game is a great teacher.

### **The Cool-Down and Wrap-Up Discussion**

*The cool-down is as important as the warm-up, however it is often ignored. Abruptly stopping an activity may cause pooling of the blood and slow the removal of waste products in the athlete's body. It may also cause cramps, soreness, and other problems for athletes. The cool-down gradually reduces the body temperature and heart rate and speeds the recovery process before the next training session or competitive experience. The cool-down is also a good time for the coach and athlete to talk about the session or competition.*

## **Week 1 – Season overview, Athlete Ability Assessments, Competition Preparation.**

*Also an opportunity to allow athletes to try tryout different equipment as available and become familiarized with the equipment (balls, shoes, ramp, etc.), lane management and technology.*

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count to 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times

- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching
- Walking in place and lunges
- Walking approach on the lane w/out the ball (with proper weight shift, etc.)

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

Week 1 is time to **introduce the season** as the theme and **complete athlete skills assessments**, especially for athletes who are new to the program. The assessments can be done either in a circuit manner or in the context of game play. Basic instructions and demonstrations of bowling techniques are provided by coaches to the athletes. Some athletes will probably be very experienced and can move quickly into game play, while others who do not have experience will need basics in selecting a ball with the proper weight, putting on the bowling shoes, how to approach the lane, etc.

### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Athletes complete 1, 2 or 3 games depending upon abilities and assessment strategies. Coaches make note of whether the athletes need the use of a ramp or not. Also, week 1 is the time for athletes, depending on their abilities, to become familiar and competent with the lane technology and score keeping, ball return, and how to request a reset, etc. Coaches may also use the initial game time to see which athletes can be grouped together for meaningful practices in the weeks to follow.

### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the 1<sup>st</sup> bowling practice went. What worked well, what needs work this season? What goals do athletes have. What kinds of healthy habits can athletes do at home during the week to help them reach their goals? Make sure that athletes leave the 1<sup>st</sup> practice with the season information and calendar of events and coach contact information about who and when to call the coach. Reminders about covid related information should be distributed as well.

## **Week 2 – Theme: Rules, Bowling Etiquette and Best Practices**

*Resources to be included are the updated 2022 Special Olympics Bowling Rules and Guidelines*

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times
- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching
- Walking in place and lunges
- Walking approach on the lane w/out the ball (with proper weight shift, etc.)

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

Provide examples of sportsmanship and etiquette specific to bowling. Coach can provide a quick overview and then these questions can be “answered” during the game play for reinforcement.

- What is needed to be “ready for your turn?”
- How do athletes know when it is their turn?
- What do I do when it is not my turn?
- Why is it important to select and use the same ball each turn?

Also, the coach can ask the athletes to be on the lookout for other etiquette and sportsmanship examples that come up as they practice during their games.

### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Athletes practice and recognize the Theme topic skills throughout their game play. Also, coaches can review the information with the athletes throughout game play of *Special Olympics Oregon 2022 Rules and Guidelines for Bowling*.

### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the bowling practice went.

### **Week 3 – Theme: Retrieving the Ball**

*Key words: Use your own ball, Remember lane courtesy – look left- look right, 2 hand pick-up*

#### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times
- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching
- Walking in place and lunges

#### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

1. Make sure the athlete knows the correct lane that he/she is to bowl on before stepping on the approach.
2. Ensure that there are no bowlers on the adjacent lanes, one lane right or left of the athlete, before stepping onto the approach.
3. Athlete reaches for his/her own ball. Bowlers always use the same ball.
4. Athlete grasps the ball with both hands, placing them on opposite sides of the ball, away from incoming balls. This prevents the fingers from getting crushed. Remember always use 2 hands.
5. Athlete cradles the ball in one arm and moves to his/her starting position on the approach. For a right-handed athlete, the ball rests in his/her left arm and is supported on the side by the right hand and body.

#### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Watch for the athlete skill progression below.

- Observe lane courtesy
- Approach ball return from the correct side
- Identify their ball
- Pick up ball correctly from ball return
- Cradle the ball in one arm and moves to their starting position on the approach.

#### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the bowling practice went.

## **Week 4 – Theme: Grip**

*Key Words: Fingers first – then thumb; non-bowling hand under the ball; make sure hands are clean and dry*

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times
- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching
- Walking in place and lunges

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

There are 2 basic types of grips used in bowling: conventional grip and fingertip grip.

- *Fingertip grip* is recommended only for advanced bowlers who have their ball specifically drilled with shallow fingertip holes for increased span or ball surface coverage of the hand which allows for greater lift at the release.
- *Conventional grip* is used by most Special Olympics athletes because it provides a firmer hold with the fingers. It also gives the bowler a more secure feeling about having full control of the ball, thus providing for a more secure release. The finger holes are drilled deep enough to allow the fingers to enter the ball to the 2<sup>nd</sup> knuckle. The thumbhole, similar to the fingertip grip, is drilled to allow the whole thumb to be inserted into the ball.

Teaching the Grip:

1. Athlete places fingers in the ball. The ring and middle fingers go in first, then the thumb.
2. Fingers always go in to the same depth.
3. The grip needs to feel natural and comfortable. Do not place any strain on the thumb, fingers or wrist.
4. Fingers not in the hole may be spread out from or held close to the fingers in the ball.

Tips for practice:

1. If the athlete is having difficulty with proper finger placement, try marking those fingers (stars, fingernail polish, magic marker, etc.) to further remind him/her.
2. Have the athlete pick the ball up from the ball return with both hands. While holding the ball with both hands, rotate the ball so that the holes of the ball are on top.

3. The non-bowling hand is under the ball, providing support, while the bowler places his/her fingers and thumb in the holes. Then have the athlete place the fingers and thumb in the ball.

### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Coach demonstrates, observes, corrects, and reinforces good gripping practices based on the skills described above, in the context of game play.

### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the bowling practice went.

\*See Sport Specific Weekly Conditioning Exercises for – Bowling at the end of this document and/or go to SOOR Active site during the week and be ready to report back next week on the activities accomplished.

### **Week 5 – Theme: Stance**

#### *Teaching the Proper Stance*

*Athletic Pose – the athletic pose is also referred to as the “coach’s eye.” This concept is used to analyze a bowler’s delivery into four points. See skills instruction for specific points.*

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times
- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching
- Walking in place and lunges

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

4 Points of the Athletic Pose (note differences and accommodations are made for athletes with varying physical abilities).



1. Waist Down – Foot placement, knees and hips



2. Waist Up – Spine, shoulders, head and eyes



3. Ball Position – Height and position side to side



4. Hand Position – Grip, position of the fingers and thumb

### Tips for practice

1. To encourage proper foot placement for athletes standing at the foul line, use a mat with footprints for the beginning bowler. Remove the mat as athletes get used to the proper position.

2. A helpful hint in determining the athlete's starting point for the four or five-step approach is to have the athlete stand at the foul line, facing the seating area. Have the athlete take 4½ to 5 steps toward the seating area. This is close to where the athlete's starting point is located.
3. Ensure that the ball is between waist and chest high and to the side of the body so as to not block the view of the pins or target arrows. Have the athlete pick a target – either the pins or targeting arrows/dots. Tell the athlete to keep his/her eyes on the mark as they bowl.
4. The athlete's shoulders are at a slight angle because of the weight of the ball. The body is square to target.
5. Not all of these suggestions will work for everyone. Try them, modify them and use what works best for the athlete. Variations are acceptable provided they are comfortable and help the athlete bowl well.

### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Coach demonstrates, observes, corrects and reinforces proper stance practices based on the skills described above, in the context of game play.

### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the bowling practice went.

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### **Week 6 – Theme: Approach and Delivery**

*The proper approach involves the movement of the bowler and ball at the same time toward the goal of delivering the ball down the lane. There are 3 basic approaches; described in the skills instruction section below.*

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times
- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching

- Walking in place and lunges

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

#### **Three Basic Approaches:**

1. Step and slide
2. 2. Four-step approach
3. 3. Five-step approach

Each of these includes the push away, the pendulum swing and the delivery. Although not called an approach, the one-step delivery is included here to provide a transition from standing at the foul line to a full four-four or five-step approach.



Beginning bowlers have a hard time putting all the components of the approach together at first. Start bowlers at the foul line using the pendulum swing, then move to a swing-and-slide approach, and ultimately to a full approach. At first, the full approach will probably be nothing more than the athlete trying to take the proper steps up to the foul line and then performing the pendulum swing and delivery. Have the athlete master each part before proceeding to the next part. Evaluation of the athlete during the first two training sessions will provide you with an idea of a starting point for training.

Remember, that although these standard approaches are encouraged, some athletes will continue to bowl using the two-handed pendulum swing in a straddle stance position.

#### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Coach demonstrates, observes, corrects and reinforces proper progression of approaches and deliveries as needed, based on the skills described above, in the context of game play.

#### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the bowling practice went.

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## **Week 7 – Theme: Delivery Adjustments**

*We bowl differently when we are excited and fresh, focused and calm, tired and muscle fatigued. The mental game is important, as well as the physical game. This is a good week to have the athletes bowl multiple games and identify when and how their delivery changes based on mood, fatigue, stress, excitement, etc.*

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times
- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching
- Walking in place and lunges

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

The majority of the practice is game play with minimal direct instruction. The athletes are observed for changes in delivery. For example, during the first game when they are excited and eager, do they overthrow the ball instead of letting the “ball do the work” with a proper pendulum back swing? Did they eat a proper meal, get enough sleep, etc. and does it impact their game? Do they tense up when fatigued and pull the ball off center? If so, coaches can try and help the athlete identify strategies for aiming differently, try calming techniques or adjusting stance or approach.

### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Coaches and athletes should be working together throughout the practice to communicate needs and possible variables to make adjustments with reciprocal feedback.

### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the bowling practice went.

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## **Week 8 – Competition or competition prep**

*Athletes should be familiarized with the details of competition elements including venue expectations, flow of competition and become familiarized with their own bowling differences and strategies to consider.*

### **Warm-Up and Stretch (10-15 minutes)**

Every player participates in a warm-up period on the lanes (i.e., shadow bowling). Stretch each muscle group while waiting to practice bowling.

- Pendulum Arm Swing with palms forward – count 10 or more, each side.
- Big arm circles forward and backward and Shoulder stretches
- Gentle Hand Stretches
- Wrist rotations and Fingers open/close 10 times
- Gentle knee bends in parallel and then alternating with toe raise forward foot for stretching
- Walking in place and lunges

### **Skills Instruction (15-20 minutes)**

Coaches should review and assess for basic understanding and the athletes' familiarization of the current **SOOR Rules and Guidelines** distributed at the beginning of each sport season.

### **Competition Experience (1, 2, or 3 games)**

Coaches should provide a "mock competition experience, as much as possible, observing, describing and demonstrating strategies to assist athletes through the progression of their games, noting the differences in performance as the games proceed. Note if the athlete becomes tired, complacent, reluctant, or consistent and hopeful. Check for qualities of good sportsmanship and etiquette as well.

### **The Cool Down and Wrap Up discussion of activities to do during the week to stay healthy!**

Static stretching, especially for the arms and shoulders can be done standing or seated with the discussion of how the bowling practice went.

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The Final practice cool down is a great time to emphasize the well-executed qualities demonstrated by the athletes and to equip them for the competition experience by answering questions with enthusiasm and patience, ensuring that the details are met including proper attire, transportation, eating schedule, hydration, etc.

## Sport Specific Weekly Conditioning Exercises for – Bowling

### Basic

#### Strength and progressive conditioning

Push-ups 30 seconds record reps

Crunches 30 seconds record reps

Leg raises 1 minute

Back Extension 30 seconds

Lunges 1 ½ minutes

Triceps dip 30 seconds record reps

Side stretch

Walking - start with 20 minutes and increase # minutes throughout season.

Athletes unable to walk may substitute a different aerobic activity and increase minutes.

If above exercises done in a circuit format, athletes may follow and increase their rotations through all the exercises, increase reps or time, or decrease recovery time between stations or circuit cycles. See quick reference chart below:

<b>Number of Full Circuit Cycles</b>	<b>1 - 5 full cycles</b>
<b>Time at each station:</b>	<b>30 seconds - 1 1/2 minutes</b>
<b>Recovery between exercises:</b>	<b>15-45 seconds</b>
<b>Recovery between Full Circuit Cycles:</b>	<b>2-5 minutes</b>

## Advanced

### Movement Preparation

Jog x 5 min. Walk-outs x 5 Walking Spiderman x 5 each side Lateral slides x 5 each side Reverse lunges with rotation x 5 each side Supine leg swings x 8 each leg Prone leg swings x 8 each leg Hamstring roll-overs x 5 each leg Single-leg hip bridges x 8 each leg Supermans x 12

### Injury Prevention

Scarecrows x 10 Front-V empty cans x 10 Bent-over lateral raises x 10 Lateral raise and rotation x 10 Banded knee lockouts 2 x 15 each leg

### Resistance Training

**Core Circuit** x 2: Prone stabilization w/reach x 20 sec. each side, off-bench obliques x 10 each side, med-ball diagonal chops x 10 each side **Set A** x 3: Front squats x 6, med ball cleans x 6 **Set B** x 3: Step-ups x 6 each leg, incline bench press x 6 **Set C** x 3: Stability ball leg curls x 10, body rows x 8

### Conditioning

#### **Tempo Run**

Run 100 yards/walk 30 yards Run 200 yards/walk 50 yards Run 300 yards/walk 100 yards Repeat 2-3 times

#### **Cardio Machine (interval workout)**

5 min. warm-up 30 sec. as hard as possible 60 sec. easy Repeat 9 times 5 minute cool down

#### **Med-Ball Tempo**

Squat-to-overhead press x 12 Run 50 yards & back Diagonal chops x 12 each side Run 50 yards & back Reverse lunge w/rotation x 8 each side Run 50 yards & back Overhead pressing sit-ups x 15 Run 50 yards & back Push-ups x 8 Run 50 yards & back

### Flexibility

Standing V (middle-right-left) Seated V (middle-right-left) Half-hurdler Quad stretch Seated groin Prone back extension Kneeling hip flexor Cross-over quadruped Standing calf

## Special Olympics Bowling Skills Assessment

Athlete's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Coach's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Instructions

1. Use this tool at the beginning of the training/competition season to establish a basis of the athlete's starting skill level.
2. Have the athlete perform the skill several times.
3. If the athlete performs the skill correctly three out of five times, check the box next to the skill to indicate that the skill has been accomplished.
4. Program Assessment sessions into your program.
5. Bowlers may accomplish skills in any order. Athletes have accomplished this list when all possible items have been achieved.

### Layout of the Bowling Area

- Knows where the control counter, lounge area, bowling area are located.
- Can identify the pit area.
- Can identify the approach area.
- Can identify the foul line/foul light and understand their functions.
- Can identify the ball return.
- Can identify the automatic scoring equipment.
- Understands how the balls are returned and the operation of the ball return equipment.

### Equipment Selection

- Understands where to locate shoes and ball.
- Asks appropriate person for correct bowling shoe size.
- Wears clothing that is comfortable and provides freedom of movement.
- Returns bowling ball and shoes to appropriate places after game.

### Scoring

- Understands to count pins knocked down.
- Recognizes strikes and spares.
- Understands basic terminology (i.e., open, split, strike, spare).

- Understands method of scoring.

### **Rules of the Game**

- Shows an understanding of the game.
- Understands that game consist of 10 frames.
- Knows which lane to bowl on when alternate lanes are being used.
- Knows not to cross the foul line when bowling.
- Knows that pins knocked down when a foul is committed do not count.
- Knows to bowl only one ball in a frame when a strike is scored.
- Knows to bowl no more than two balls per frame, unless in the 10th frame where three ball may be permitted.
- Knows to bowl only when pins are standing.
- Adheres to the rules of the bowling area.
- Follows official Special Olympics bowling rules.

### **Sportsmanship/Etiquette**

- While participating in bowling, the athlete will consistently exhibit sportsmanship and etiquette.
- Demonstrates competitive effort consistently while bowling.
- Takes turns with other team members.
- Selects and uses the same ball throughout the game.
- Waits for bowlers on adjacent lanes (one lane right or left of athlete) to finish before bowling.
- Bowls cooperatively and competitively; cheers for fellow teammates.
- Maintains knowledge of own score.
- Helps teammates with their scores.

### **Retrieving the Ball**

- Observes lane courtesy.
- Approaches ball return from correct side.
- Identifies his/her ball.
- Picks up ball correctly from ball return.
- Cradles the ball in one arm and moves to starting position on the approach.

### **Grip**

- Places fingers and thumb in the ball properly.
- Supports the ball by placing the non-bowling hand under the ball, with elbows in.

## **Stance**

- Locates starting position on approach
- Stands appropriately for making spares.
- Demonstrates proper foot placement-left foot forward if right-handed.
- Assumes correct stance with eyes focused on bowling pins or target arrows/dots.
- Holds ball under control with two hands.
- Holds ball at proper height relative to body position.

## **Approach**

- Performs pendulum swing without push away.
- Performs pendulum swing with push away.
- Performs, with consistent rhythm. three-, four-, five-step approach with push away and pendulum swing.
- Performs smooth three-, four-, five-step approach with push away and pendulum swing.
- Delivers ball without going over the foul line.

## **Delivery**

- Athlete's last step is a slide forward toward the foul line.
- Ball is delivered over the foul line toward the pins or target mark.
- Performs two-handed pendulum swing in straddle-standing position.
- Executes proper follow-through with arm swing.