

# Bowlers Journal

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## Heart of Gold

Tales of courage and resiliency from the 2015 Junior Gold Championships

Junior Gold U12 runner-up, Cameron Hurwitz.

# THE PRO APPROACH

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## Not All 2-Handers Bowl the Same

**THERE'S A NEW SHOW-MAN** on the PBA Tour, and his name is Kyle Troup. His dad, Guppy, was one of the most colorful players the PBA ever had, so it's no wonder his son is the modern-day Guppy with those loud, colorful, unusual uniforms.

But it's not the clothes that make this man; it's his talent. Kyle is one of the new breed of two-handed players on tour who are changing the face of bowling. Four different two-handers have won national PBA titles this year. All have different styles and don't always play well when their peers do.

I first saw Kyle three years ago at the World Series of Bowling in Las Vegas, and I was immediately impressed with his smooth, simple game and a style that was quite different than the "big two" among two-handers at the time, Jason Belmonte and Osku Palermaa.

I asked Guppy how Kyle got started with the two-handed style, and Guppy said that when Kyle was five or six, he would bowl using Guppy's 15-lb. bowling balls, and the only way he could roll them was with two hands. At a young age like that, even a lighter ball is difficult to handle with one hand and a swing. The light ball is the same overall size as the heavier balls, but for a little kid, it seems like the size of a beach ball.

I think using the two-handed style makes it much easier for a kid to roll a



Unlike many two-handers who have a bend at the elbow at the top of their swing, Troup's arm is straight at this point in his approach. His game also features a very good knee bend, with his upper-body compressed down. That creates a very low upper-body profile as he sets up for his powerful release.

ball down the lane at that age. Also, the hardest thing to learn in bowling is a good release, and the two-handed style puts the hand in the strongest position possible. So, bowlers develop a big release without having to work really hard to do it — which is the main reason older bowlers are now trying it.

Compared to the original way the two-handed style was being taught, Kyle's delivery has a few variations. He

is a five-step player, and holds the ball below waist-high in his stance with his feet together and facing fairly straight ahead, knees flexed, right shoulder just slightly lower than the left, and with a slight forward tilt in his spine — a good, solid (dare we say it?) *normal* set-up.

Starting his approach is when some things are different. Although he takes five steps, his first is almost a no-step, as the foot moves only a couple of inches;

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Troup's release features long extension through the back of the ball at the finish. He releases the ball out in front of him, parallel to the lane. Also, his slide foot still is not finished sliding at this point.

The most unusual thing about Kyle's game is that he's a straight player, much like his dad was. Kyle's bread-and-butter shot is playing outside of the five-board straight, and he loves using older urethane balls to play this angle. He has won a number of PBA regionals and now a PBA national title on the 32-ft. Wolf pattern, playing outside. Historically, the PBA's short patterns have been dominated by the high-speed straight players and the lower rev rate guys. Kyle is a high-speed, higher rev straight guy.

Four things contribute to his straight style. Besides his (1) long fourth step, (2) hips remaining straight, and (3) continuing

to slide after the ball has come off his hand, (4) his right arm remains straight throughout his approach.

The right arm starts out fairly straight in his set-up, and as he walks to the line, it does not bend from the elbow at the top of the swing like Osku's and Belmo's. His type of swing is simple, with fewer moving parts, because the arm doesn't bend in the backswing and unbend in the down swing. It's the fourth key to his success as a straight player.

Kyle's release also is good, as he stays behind the ball well and does get enough rotation to hook the ball more. His PAP is 4½ over by ¾ up, which shows his ball has enough tilt and rotation to expand his range of play.

But the big challenge for him in learning to play a wider range of angles is his timing. He would need to learn to delay his timing and be stopped when the ball is ready to be released — not an easy thing to do after so many years of bowling a different way.

PBA Hall of Famer Danny Wiseman used to slide a lot after releasing the ball, and won a couple of times with

## LESSON PLAN

**THE BIG THING** for all aspiring two-handers to take from Kyle Troup's game is to develop your style in a manner that comes naturally for you.

Revs are not an issue for most two-handed styles, but speed is. You want to roll the ball fast.

What I have seen with many aspiring two-handers is that they try to hook the ball a lot, but sacrifice accuracy in the process. Play it straight like Kyle with speed and weaker bowling balls, and you will be on your way to better bowling in no time.

— Bill Spigner

that style. However, even being a champion did not stop him from revamping his timing so his sliding foot was stopped when he was ready to release the ball. The timing change opened up the game for him, leading to his Hall of Fame career.

At 23 years old, there is lots of time for Kyle Troup to develop. It will be nice to see his smiling face on TV again — if you can take your eyes off the wild clothes.



Troup's well-balanced finish position is one all bowlers should try to achieve. Note as well that the toe of his slide foot is now right up to the foul line, about six inches further up than when the ball left his fingers. This is reminiscent of the great Marshall Holman, who slid a lot after his release.