

SCHEDULES

Johnny Petraglia: The Match I'll Never Forget

BOWLING

DIGEST

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Bowling Digest's Annual
BOWLER OF THE YEAR

MARSHALL HOLMAN

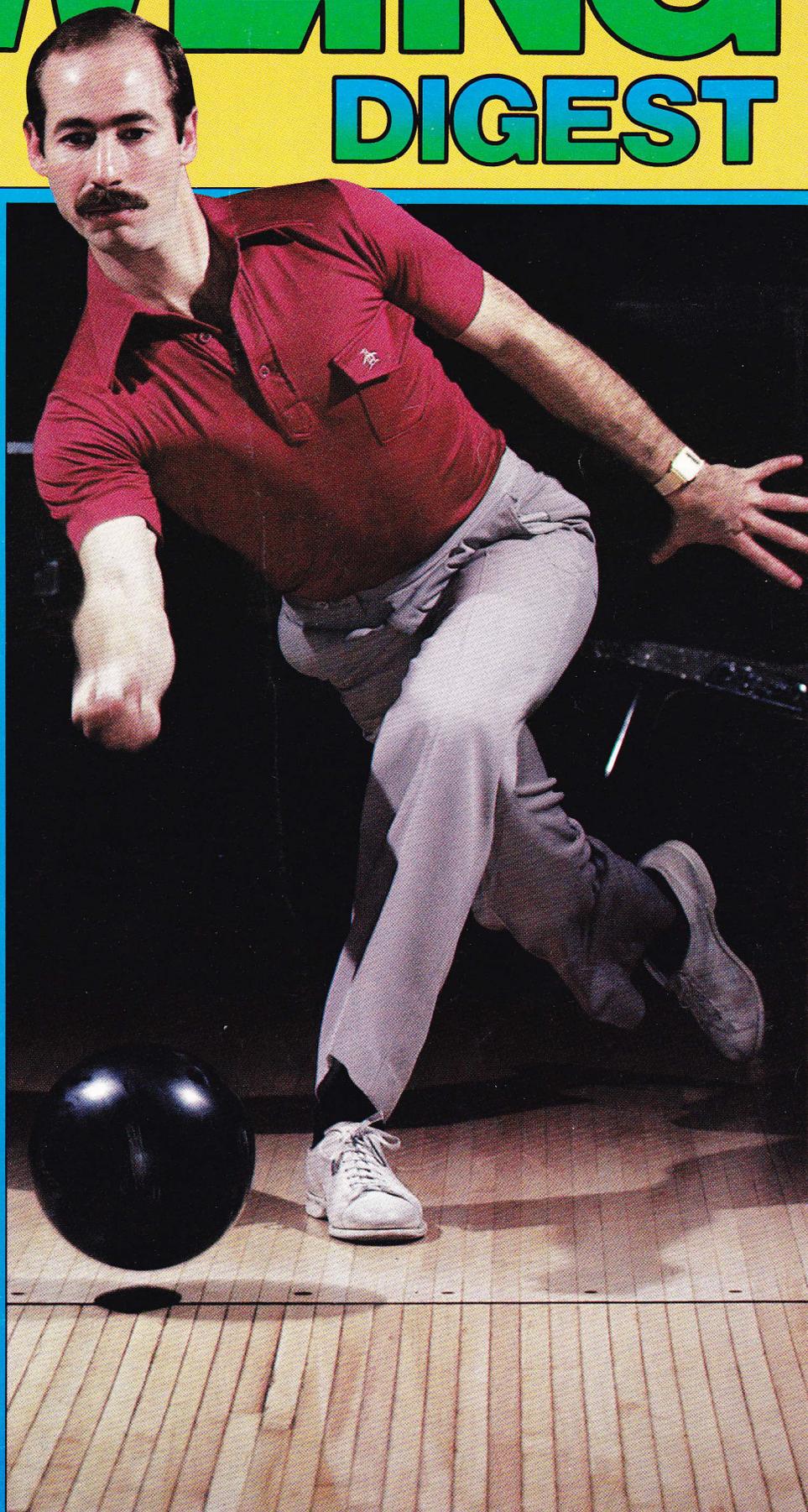
SPARE BOWLING TIPS

- *Why a Two-Finger Grip Might Be the Key for You*
- *The 3-6-9 System To Cover Every Spare You'll Face*

**Exclusive Interview
With PBA Star
DAVE HUSTED**

BOWLING INJURIES:
How To Cure & Prevent Them

Life On Tour – by LPBT Pro
LISA RATHGEBER



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Bill Spigner's Bowling Clinic

Q. I'm an avid bowler who carries a solid 185 average. I've been bowling for seven years. I've bowled an average of three leagues in each of those seasons. I'm striving to make it to the PBA Tour. How much practice should I get in each week? How serious should I be about the game without spoiling the enjoyment? What kind of conditioning should I be doing to stay in shape?

A. First of all, you need to have a 190 average for two years before you can join the PBA, or else cash in two regional PBA events as a guest.

The amount of practice varies with each person. When I was in my teens and early twenties I would practice an hour each day that I didn't bowl in leagues or tournaments. So I bowled just about every day. One thing about practice is, if you are doing the same things wrong all the time, all the practice in the world won't help you. You need to have quality in your practice sessions rather than quantity.

As far as how serious you should be is up to you. Each person is different. If you want to be a professional, you have to be extremely serious and dedicated to the game while you're bowling. When you're through working on your bowling for the day, it's time to get away from it. With some people, bowling becomes an obsession—all they do is eat, drink, sleep, and talk bowling. If you get to that point, I would suggest you find something to take your mind off bowling.

The best thing to do to stay in shape for bowling is an overall conditioning program. Your legs are the most important, but you should keep all parts of your body strong. You need muscle control to roll the ball at your best. If your muscles get tired, you lose control. If your legs tire, you can't get the leverage you need. If your hands weaken, you lose hand control of the ball, etc.

The grind of the PBA Tour wears people down fast. Most of the time they don't know it's even happening to them. There are many players on tour who train every day, such as Dale Eagle, Ernie Schlegel, and Bo Burton. These people are all in their late 30s and early 40s, but are still top players on the tour because they know the importance of staying in shape.

Bowling is not a sport in which you can make millions of dollars each year, as athletes in other sports can. So it's most important to be able to last a long time on tour to make a good living. Staying in shape will do that.

Q. I have been leaving the 8-10 split unusually often after rolling the ball per-

fectly into the 1-3 pocket. What am I doing wrong and can it be corrected? I would also like to know how I can tell what kind of balance I have on my ball?

A. The 8-10 split is caused when the ball isn't entering the pocket at the right angle. This can be because of one of two things: (1) Your ball could be sliding when it reaches the pins. This would cause the ball to deflect off the pins. (2) Your ball could be rolling out. When a ball rolls out, it has lost all of its energy and momentum. In this case, the ball will also deflect off the pins.

The remedy for the ball sliding when it reaches the pins would be to slow down your shot and make sure you stay behind the ball at the release point. Also, you might consider going to a softer ball, which will grab the lane more.

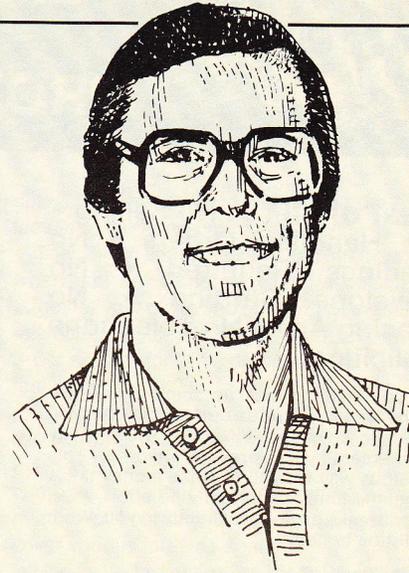
If your ball is rolling out, this is many times caused by a lack of speed on the ball. If this is the case, you should try to get more speed on the ball by speeding up your steps, or you might try a ball that slides down the lane farther.

When rolling a strike, the ball takes out the 1-3-5-9 pins (1-2-5-8 for a left-hander). You should watch to see where your ball leaves the pin deck to determine if your ball is deflecting too much. When an 8-10 is left, the five-pin did not take out the eight-pin. If the ball deflects off the head-pin, it will not get enough of the five-pin to knock out the eight. Instead, the five pin will go in front of the eight. Also, with the ball deflecting off the head-pin, you will hit the three-pin too full, and that will cause the three-pin to hit more to the back side of the six-pin, which will cause the six to miss the 10-pin. The result of these will be the 8-10 split.

To tell what ball balance you have, I would suggest bringing the ball to your local pro shop to have it weighed. Unless you asked for a specific weight balance when you had the ball drilled, it will probably have very little in it. Most pro shops don't weigh every ball, because of the time involved. They will drill the ball directly over the label, which will result usually in top weight only.

Q. I have a bad habit of twisting my arm on my backswing. Because of this, I can't throw the ball straight out. I throw a fingertip grip, so if I throw the ball a bit cross-lane, I'll completely lose the ball. What can I do to correct this?

A. Many times, when the arm twists or moves during the swing, it is caused by the wrist and hand rotating or moving a lot. If you keep a firm wrist, and your thumb in the eleven o'clock position throughout your swing and follow-through, your swing will be straighter.



Bill Spigner is in his 11th year on the PBA Tour. He holds three national PBA championships and seven regional PBA titles. He is also a head teaching pro and instructor at the PBC Summer Bowling Camps.

Think of your whole arm from your elbow down to your fingers as one unit, and you want that unit to be in one stationary position throughout the whole shot. If you can't hold your wrist in a firm position, you might want to try a lighter ball or a wrist aid.

Q. I would like to know the maximum amount of top and positive side weight I can have in a ball without one counteracting the other?

A. The maximum amount of top weight (which is always positive) you can have is three ounces and the maximum amount of positive side weight is one ounce. If both of these weights are positive weights, one will not counteract the other. They both make the ball slide long and hook hard at the back end. The amount of slide and hook depends on the amount of weight you use.

If you were to use negative side weight along with top weight, they would counteract each other, because the negative weight would get the ball into an earlier roll, and top weight would make the ball roll later.

You can use many different combinations of weight to get different results out of your bowling balls.

Bill Spigner welcomes questions from readers and will answer as many as possible in this column. Mail your questions to: Bill Spigner, Bowling Digest, 1020 Church Street, Evanston IL 60201.