

BOWLING

DIGEST

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PRO INSTRUCTION

How To Master Grind-Out Lanes
by **MIKE DURBIN**

Lane Adjustments That Work
by **LISA RATHGEBER WAGNER**

The Right Way To Use Tape
by **STEVE FEHR**

BOWLERS OF THE YEAR

Men – Mark Roth
Women – Aleta Sill
Amateur – Rod Toft

The TV Bowling Jinx



Bill Spigner's **Bowling Clinic**

■ **Is there any way to show a ball driller exactly how you want your ball drilled? Many times, I have purchased expensive balls, but the ball drillers weren't able to do the job to my satisfaction. Also, I had two balls drilled the same day by two different shops, and the balls came out different even though I asked them to drill the balls the same.**

The ball driller or pro shop operator should drill the ball the way you want it drilled, but if he feels there is a problem with the way you want it drilled, he should express his opinion and discuss the problems that he sees. Good pro shop operators should be knowledgeable ball fitters, and they should be open-minded to their customers' wants and needs.

If the pro drills the ball the way he feels your ball should be drilled and that ball hurts your hand or isn't balanced correctly, the pro is obliged to correct the problem.

Remember that drilling bowling balls is not an exact science. It is hard to get two balls drilled the same by two different people. There are several different drill presses, drill bits, and measuring devices in use that would make it difficult to duplicate drillings from one shop to another.

If you have the fit you like, have the same ball driller drill all your equipment. You should also ask your pro for the measurements of your grip, just in case you are out of town bowling in a tournament and need to drill a new ball. This will save you time when you get a new ball.

■ **I am a 200-average bowler, and I use a 14-pound ball. I'm 5'6" and weigh 135. I've tried using heavier balls, but I lose endurance. Would you please tell me of any professionals who use balls weighing less than 16 pounds, and also what weight balls do those great lady bowlers use?**

There are only a few men who use lighter weight balls all the time. Dave Soutar uses 15-pound equipment all the time. Joe Hutchinson and Mike Aulby used 15-pound balls for a long time. And Dave Davis even used 14-pound balls for a while on tour.

The trend toward using lighter-weight balls on tour started a few years ago when the lanes hooked a lot. The pros used the lighter balls because it was easier to throw them harder to overcome the hooking lane conditions.

Today's lane condition has less hook, so the trend has been away from lighter equipment. Also with the ABC raising the minimum pin weight to three pounds, six ounces, the lighter ball will not carry as well as it did with lighter pins.

When deciding what ball weight to use,

the most important factor is to choose a weight that is easiest for you to control. If you can't handle or control a 16-pound ball it won't help your average to use one. The majority of women pros use 16-pound bowling balls, and a few use 15-pound balls.

■ **I bowl on lanes that seem to have more oil on the outside than in the middle and hook a lot. While I have tried to shoot outside I just can't get the ball up to the pocket consistently. Would you advise going to a ball with more top weight so that my shot will skid more at the beginning? The lanes already hook as much as they can at the end.**

The lane condition you have described is called a reverse block, because the center of the lane is drier than the outside portion. This happens because the middle of the lane gets more play, which causes the oil to dissipate sooner.

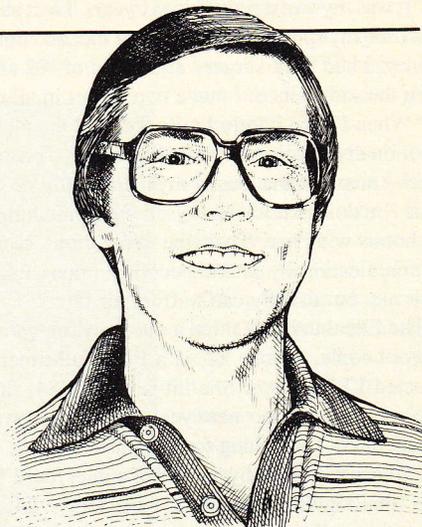
Putting more top weight in your ball will cause it to slide longer and can help if you play the lanes correctly. The most important thing to do on a reverse block is to keep moving left (righthanders) with your feet and target until you can find a place on the lane where the ball will slide through the heads easier. You might have to end up playing the fourth arrow or deeper.

Usually the heads are smoother to the left of the fourth arrow, so by moving inside the track area (second to third arrow), the ball will slide down the lane more easily. In this portion of the lane the ball will be rolling from a lower friction area in the heads into a higher friction area in the lane's pine section. If you tried to play the second arrow on a reverse block you'd be doing the opposite. You would be laying the ball down in a high friction (drier) area, and if you missed a little to the right, the ball would go into the oil (lower friction area) and miss the headpin. If you miss left of your target on this reverse block, the ball would hook too much.

The farther you move outside on a reverse block, the tighter the lanes get. If you decide to play this area of the lane you will have to go with a very straight shot to the pocket. To do this effectively you'd want to use negative side and thumb weight, but very little top weight. The negative weights will get the ball into an early roll, so the ball will roll up toward the pocket rather than hooking into the pocket.

Watch what your ball is doing. If the ball continually misses the pocket by more than you feel you are missing your target, you are playing the wrong part of the lane or using the wrong equipment.

■ **I am 15 years old and average 175. Most men bowlers tell me that if I would**



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change balls my average would rise sharply. I currently use a black Angle with a conventional grip. The lanes are extremely dry and the finish is lacquer. Did I make a good choice in ball selection, or should I take their advice? What ball would you use on these lane conditions?

The lane conditions you are bowling on call for a hard rubber ball such as a Brunswick Black Diamond or AMF 3-Dot. I don't think your average would rise dramatically with a different ball. Your average would have a better chance of going up by switching to a fingertip grip.

■ **When is it to a bowler's advantage to spot farther down the lane?**

Usually when a bowler spots farther down the lane or past the arrows it is because he's trying to get the ball to slide down the lane farther. The reverse would be to spot closer—at the dots or foul line—which a player might do to try to get the ball into an earlier roll.

Most bowlers on tour target just past the arrows where the maple (heads) meets the pine section of the lane. They do this because it is much easier to distinguish one board from another in that portion of the lane. The maple and pine boards are alternately interlocked there and the pine is a different color from the maple, which makes it easier to look at one board.

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.