

Marshall Holman on 'The Power Game' • How To Dump That Slump

BOWLING

DIGEST

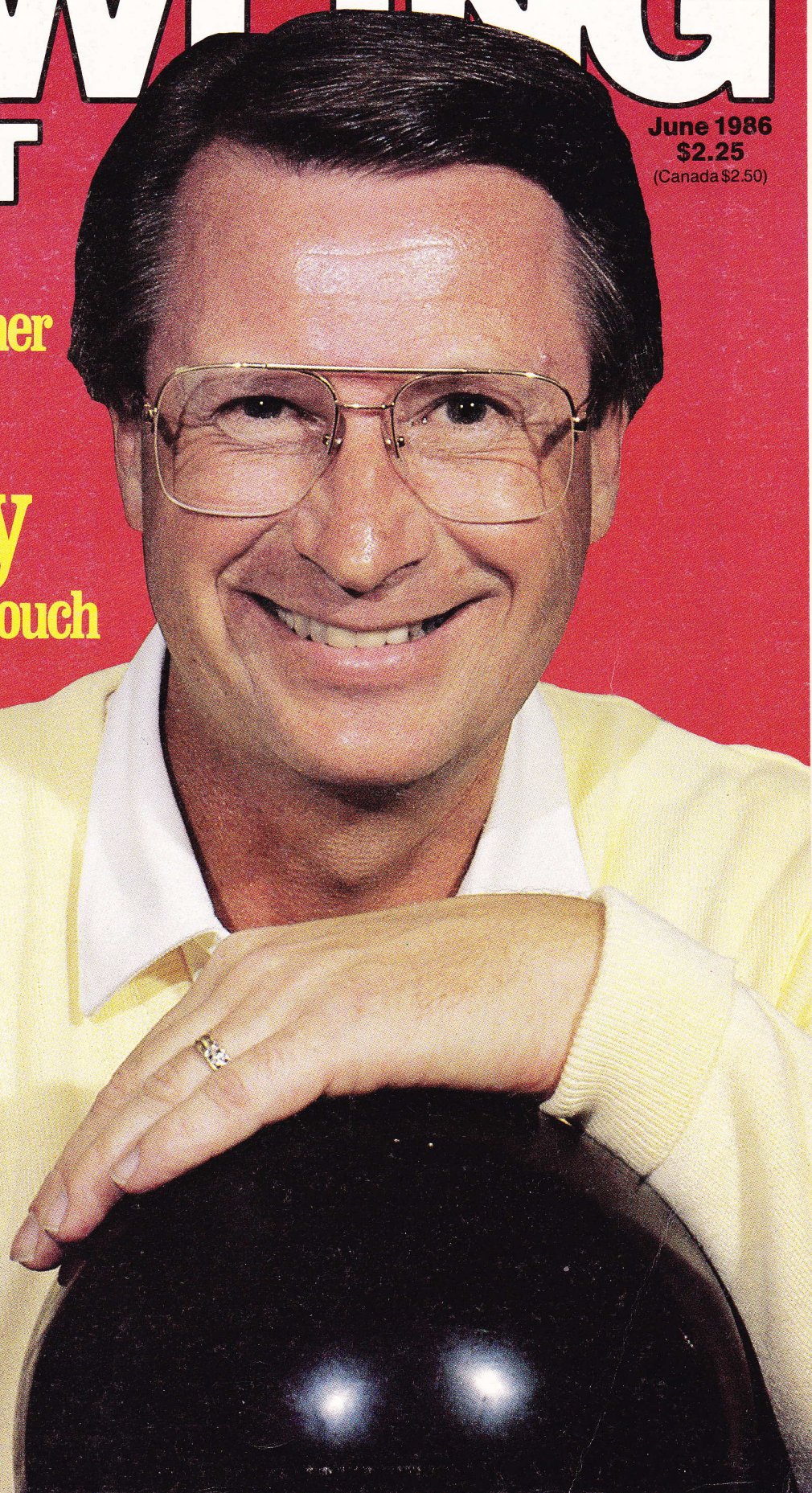
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ABC Hall-of-Famer

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'The perfect final touch
to my career'



Bill Spigner's **Bowling Clinic**

■ **When you have a good strike line to the pocket and splits start coming, what is the correct move to make to get away from them? I have tried moving right on the approach, left on the approach, changing lines, changing delivery, and nothing seems to help.**

First you have to determine what types of splits you're leaving. Are they pocket splits such as the 5-7, 5-10, 8-10, or 4-5-7 (these are righthanders' pocket splits). Or are your splits caused by hitting high on the headpin, such as the 4-9, 4-6, 4-7-10, 6-7-10, or 4-6-7-10.

In the first case, the splits indicate that the ball is not finishing or rolling enough to carry the pins. This would require an adjustment to the right on the lanes and approach (opposite for lefthanders) to give you more angle into the pocket. The question now becomes how much should you move? A good rule of thumb is that for every two boards you move your feet, move your target one board in the same direction. If you have a good strike line, small moves—moving two boards with your feet and one board with your target—are called for as the lanes start changing. Some people don't like to change where they stand and where they target. In that case a change of speed can help. The problem with changing speeds is that it's not easy to do and requires a fine sense of feel to maintain good speed control.

For high-on-the-headpin splits you should move left with your feet and target, using the same two-to-one ratio.

It is important to move your target along with your feet on your strike ball so that your natural swing and body positions don't get out of line with your target. For example, if you are standing on the 20th board on the approach and spotting on the 10th board on the lane (the second arrow) and your ball is constantly crossing over to the opposite side of the headpin, you should make an adjustment. Let's say you move your feet only five boards in the direction that your ball is deviating. This should surely get the ball back into the pocket, but there are some dangers to a move such as this. You are now 15 boards away from your target instead of 10 boards, which requires you to do something different with your swing pattern or shoulder alignment to get the ball to hit your target. If you are not aware of this and don't make an adjustment with your shoulders or swing pattern, you will find your shots becoming inconsistent. Also, by moving only your feet you are still rolling the ball to the same part of the lane on which the ball was hooking too much.

To score at a high level consistently, adjustments are important. Make your ad-

justments with some thought behind them. Constant awareness of what your ball is doing on the lane surface is your key in determining your adjustments. Just because you had a good strike line to begin with doesn't mean you will have it for the rest of the night. The lanes are slowly changing as you bowl and you will always have to make subtle changes in your line, speed, or delivery of the ball.

■ **Is there a rule regarding cleaning solutions? Acetone was recommended by a local pro shop, yet I was told it was illegal. True or false?**

You can clean your ball with anything that will not alter the surface hardness of the ball. In the ABC rule book under "Hardness" it states: "The use of chemicals, solvents or other methods to change the surface hardness of the ball after it is manufactured shall be prohibited."

Acetone is a strong solvent, and with repeated use it can alter the surface hardness of the ball. That's why acetone is illegal to use on a bowling ball, not to mention that it's also a volatile and dangerous chemical.

■ **I realize that the ability of people varies, but what is the approximate number of games one should bowl to maintain a 200 average? Also, would bowling several games a few hours before league competition result in an improvement or dull the desire to bowl?**

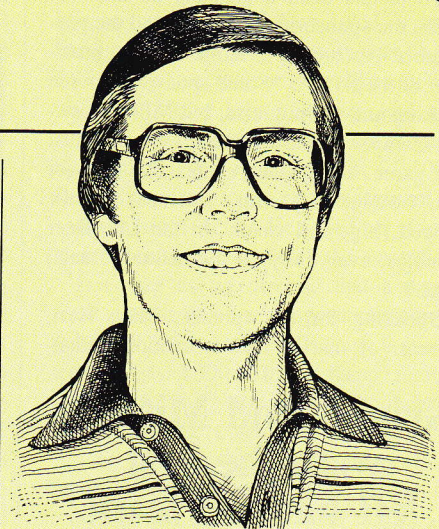
The amount of practice needed to maintain a 200 average depends on a few things. Lane conditions are one—the more demanding the lane conditions are, the more accurately you have to deliver the ball and the sharper your eye has to be on your ball reaction. If you are bowling on an easy lane condition, you would need less practice.

Probably the biggest factor is how well-trained you are in the mechanics of your bowling game and how well you can read your ball.

Once you have control of your game enough to carry a 200 average on a legitimate lane condition, you should roll 10 to 12 games a week in practice, besides bowling in a couple of leagues.

Bowling a few games a few hours before league play is all right if you are just working on getting loose and getting a feel for the ball and the lanes. Your heaviest practice sessions should be a couple of days before competition.

■ **I roll a semi-roller, and I want to know what type of weight combinations I should use to get a good working ball on oil. The type of ball I will be drilling is the**



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Blue Angle or Red Hammer.

With your type of roll and the kind of ball you are going to drill, I would use a combination of low positive weights. Use about one ounce of top weight with about one-half ounce of side weight.

With the availability of different shells on today's bowling balls, changing your weight balances to combat lane conditions is not as critical as it once was. You should keep your weight balances relatively the same in most of your equipment, and simply change to balls that will roll sooner or later. It is important that you know how weights affect your ball and what the best weights are to get your ball to roll the way you'd like.

■ **When using a videotape camera to tape someone, where should the camera be—on the side by the foul line, or behind the bowler?**

The position of the camera depends on what you want to see. The back shot is excellent for seeing the swing pattern, walk direction, release, and the direction of the follow-through. The shot from the side will help you see timing, type of steps, shoulder positions, swing height, knee bend, and finishing position. The third place you can shoot from is the front, which is excellent for seeing the release.

If I had only one choice of camera angle, I would use the side shot; you can read more from that angle than any other.

Videotaping is the best tool for teaching because the player can see what the coach is talking about. It makes it easier to correct or change something in your game.

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.