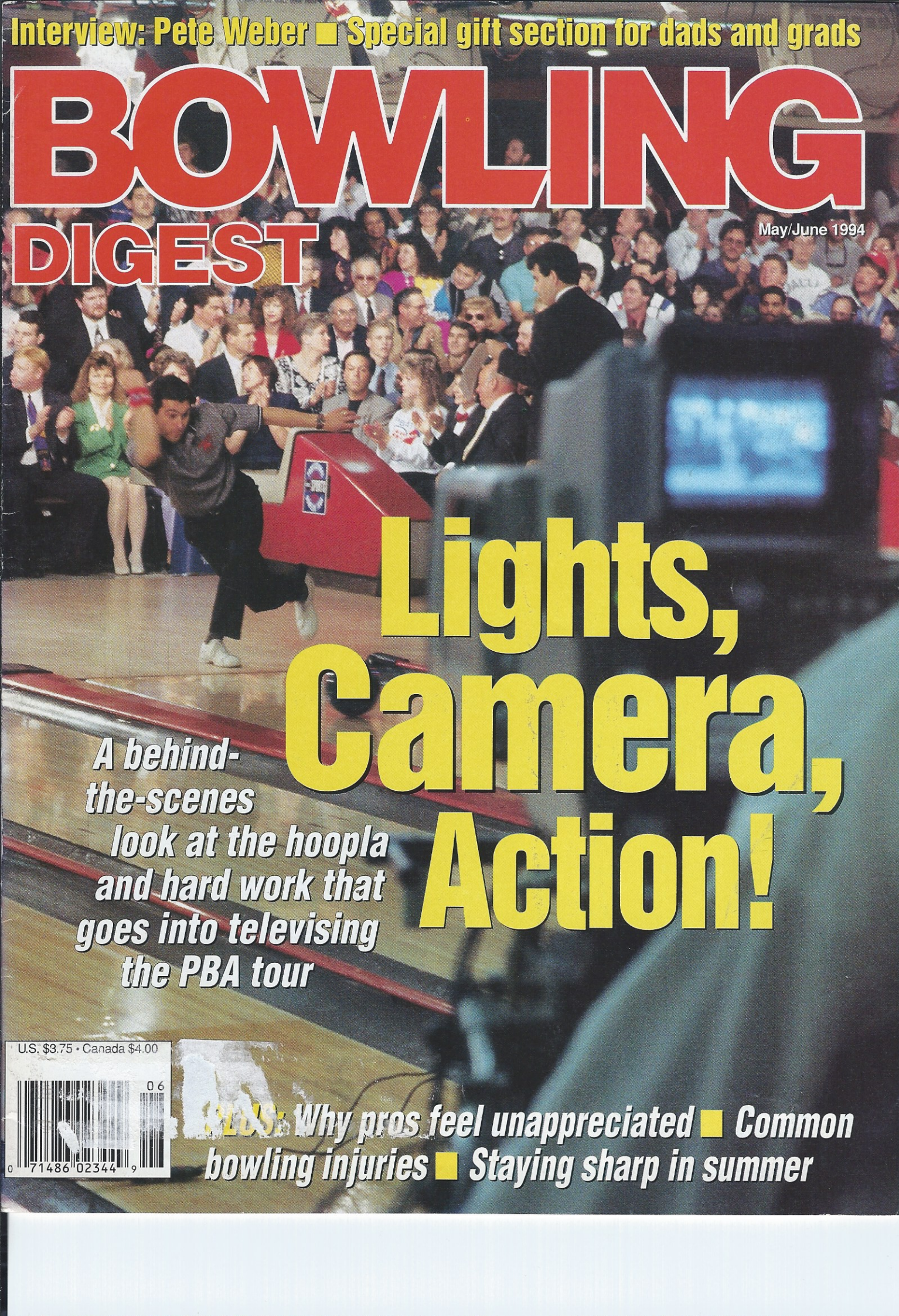


Interview: Pete Weber ■ Special gift section for dads and grads

BOWLING

DIGEST

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Lights, Camera, Action!

A behind-the-scenes look at the hoopla and hard work that goes into televising the PBA tour

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Bill Spigner's Bowling Clinic

■ I'm 56 years old and a solid 185 average bowler. I watch all the bowling shows on TV and own most bowling tutorial tapes. My question is, when TV commentator Nelson Burton, Jr. says that a pro bowler wants his ball to roll through an area some 40 or 50 feet down the lane, does he mean that the bowler is looking and targeting that far out on the lane? Or is he looking 16 to 20 feet out on the lane at a target, and he wants his ball to then roll to a point out on the lane and pass through it on its way to the pocket? How far do pro bowlers look onto the lane when they are targeting?

When Burton says a pro wants his ball to roll through an area 40 to 50 feet down the lane, he is referring to an area on the lane the bowler wants to get his ball to for a good ball reaction.

All pro bowlers "spot bowl." It's the most accurate guide they have for rolling the ball down the lane and making adjustments. They use the arrows, dots, and even certain marks on particular boards to help them adjust and play different parts of the lane. It's also a way of reminding themselves and documenting where they are playing the lanes. Many pros will visualize a path they want their ball to travel down the lane and pick out second and third targets for their ball to travel through on its way down the lane. Using multiple targets is especially important for the bowler who covers a lot of boards.

But just as important to targeting is having your shoulders aligned correctly at the release point so your swing can project your ball along the line you want it to follow. You will never be consistent in your targeting if your shoulders are not aligned correctly at the release point.

Very few bowlers target 40 to 50 feet down the lane, mainly because you won't be able to see how the ball is rolling soon enough to be able to make adjustments. And 40 to 50 feet down the lane is just too far to be able to hit a target with any consistency.

Bowlers will use many different methods of spot bowling. Just make sure your system allows you to be able to make logical adjustments. The system you use must allow you to pick up sight of your ball soon enough to read the overall reaction of it on the lane. Your spot bowling system should also allow your arm to swing through your target area and the line you want your ball to take through your target. If your target is off in relationship to your

shoulders and arm swing, your ball can't get to your target and travel the direction you want it to.

■ I am 46 years old, and I would like information on joining the PBA Senior tour—age and bowling average requirements, cost, and rules. How do you suggest I prepare physically?

The first thing you need to do is write or call the PBA to get a membership application. The address is 1720 Merriman Road, Akron, OH 44313; the PBA's phone number is (216) 836-5568.

In order to join the PBA you need to have a 190 league average for two years with a minimum of 66 games bowled each year. To play on the Senior tour you need to be 50 years old. As far as cost and rules go, you can get that information from the PBA.

Getting ready to play on the Senior tour will take work, and at age 46 you should start preparing now. To help prepare yourself and gain experience, I would suggest you join the PBA right away and bowl in as many PBA regional tournaments as possible. You also should play in some national pro tour events.

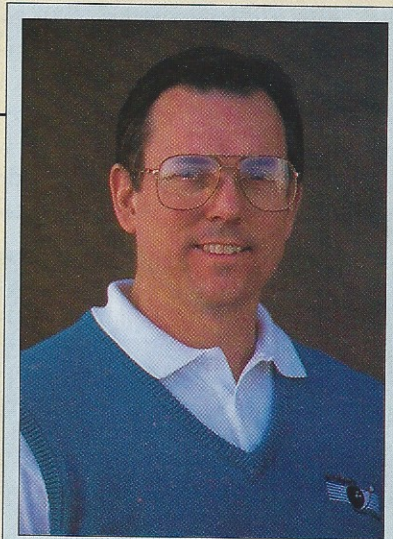
Bowling in PBA events is much different and more demanding than what you encounter in league play. You'll find out that many of the players on the Senior tour have been bowling professionally for many years either in PBA regionals or on the national tour, or they were top amateur players before they turned pro.

You also need to be physically prepared to bowl. Having strong legs is very important to competing on a regular basis, so I would suggest a good overall training program that will help you build stamina, strength, and flexibility in your legs. Many players on the Senior tour train very hard to keep themselves in good physical shape.

Consult your physician or the fitness therapist at your local fitness center to develop a workout program.

You will also need a good understanding of ball balance and pin placement and know how to maintain your own equipment. There is a traveling pro shop on the Senior tour that will drill balls for you, but you'll need to know how to fine-tune the fit and to finish the ball off.

To be successful on the Senior tour takes a full-time commitment. Just because the bowlers are older doesn't mean that the competition isn't stiff. The three "D's" are neces-



Bill Spigner has won three national PBA championships and seven regional PBA titles. He is co-owner of Hawthorn Lanes in Vernon Hills, Ill., and teaches at Pro Bowling Camps summer camp in Connecticut.

sary for success: desire, determination, and dedication. Best of luck!

■ I am a 14 year old Young American Bowling Alliance league bowler, and I currently hold a 170 average. I bowl in a small bowling center in Wisconsin, and the problem I'm facing is that they do not oil the lanes for the youth bowlers. I have learned to adjust to the dry lanes by using a lower friction ball (a sapphire Turbo) but now that I have learned to bowl on drier lanes, I often struggle on lanes that are properly oiled. I was wondering what bowling ball I should get that would react on wet lanes as my sapphire Turbo reacts on dry lanes.

The sapphire Turbo is a two-piece, 81-83 hardness pearlized urethane ball. You will want to drill up a two-piece, 76-77 hardness dull reactive resin ball for heavy oil. There are many excellent balls to choose from, and I would suggest you talk to your local pro shop about which would be best for you. Make sure you have your sapphire Turbo with you when you do this so your pro can look at your ball track when you are talking about your new ball. I would also recommend you have your new ball drilled with a balance and pin placement similar to your sapphire Turbo. ●

Bill Spigner welcomes questions from readers and will answer as many as possible in this column. Mail your questions to: Bill Spigner, Bowling Digest, 990 Grove Street, Evanston, IL 60201.