

**BOWLING
CLINIC**

HOW TO
STAY ON
YOUR
TARGET

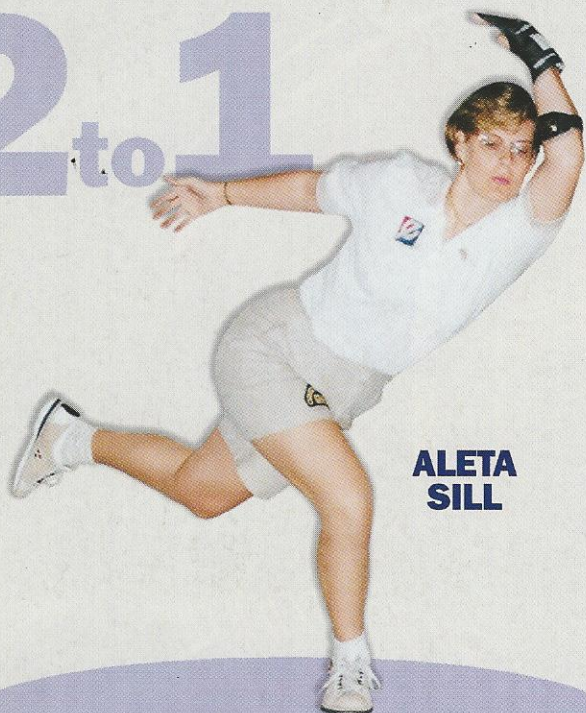
COACH'S CORNER: THE FREE ARMSWING

BOWLING

DIGEST[®]

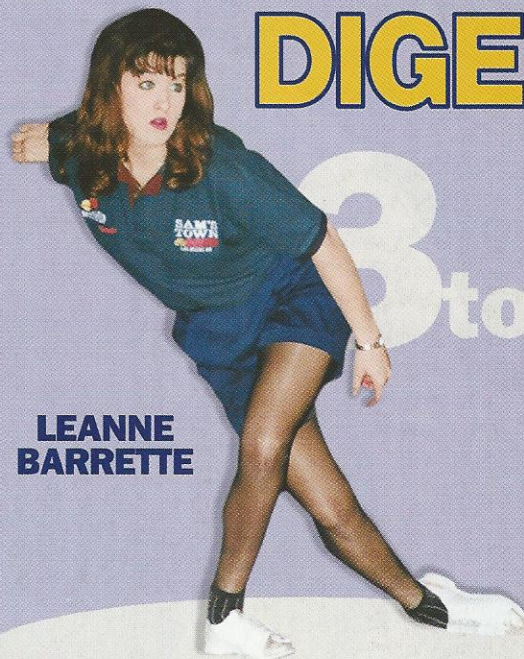
June 1999

2 to 1



**ALETA
SILL**

3 to 1



**LEANNE
BARRETTE**

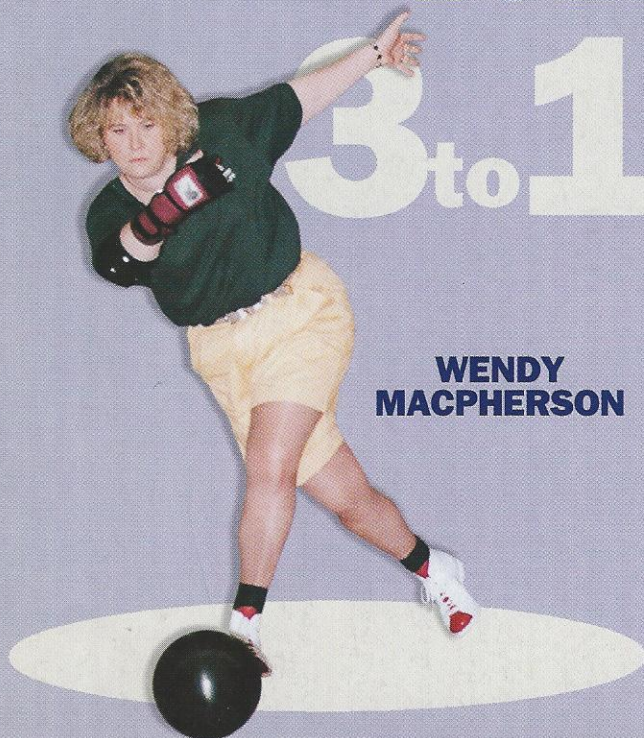
WHO WILL BE THE WOMEN'S BOWLER OF THE '90s?

The race for PWBA bowler of the decade is wide open, so we rate the field and give you the odds

PLUS:

- **Jeri Edwards on playing lane angles**
- **Interview: High Roller's Brad Edelman**

3 to 1



**WENDY
MACPHERSON**

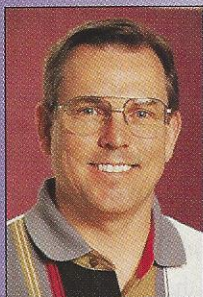
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Conserve Energy for



Bowling Clinic

By BILL SPIGNER

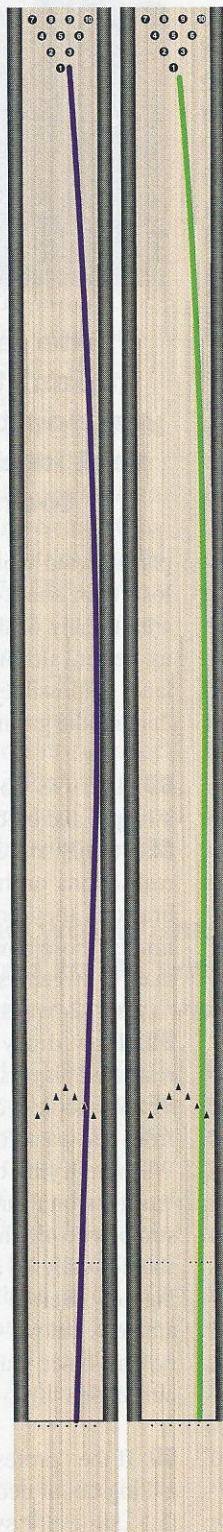
■ *I'm a 69-year-old right-handed bowler with a 200 average in three leagues. I use a 16-pound reactive ball with leverage weight, inserts in the fingers and thumb. My track is two inches from the fingers, and while I can use any part of the lane, I commonly put the ball on the No. 14 board and roll it to the second arrow to about the No. 2 board at the breaking point. I usually play three or four games before my league, with my last league game normally my best game, with my ball at 13 or 14 mph.*

My teammates ask me why, since I keep the ball in the pocket, I'm leaving so many corner pins—sometimes both of them. And I'm also wondering whether I should go to a 15-pound ball, or whether that would make me leave more corner pins.

I would definitely recommend changing to a lighter bowling ball. Many players on the PBA and PWBA tours use 15-pound balls; some even use 14-pounders. You should go down to at least 15, with some thought of possibly a 14-pound ball.

There are two big reasons to do this. No. 1, your ball speed is too slow to carry the 10-pin on less-than-perfect hits. The 6-pin needs to come off the kickback and out of the gutter to kick out the 10-pin. No. 2, the amount of boards your ball is covering with the slow ball speed is too much. The balls today are very strong: The cover stocks cut through the oil, and the cores are designed to

Need some help with your game? Bill Spigner welcomes questions from readers. Mail your questions to: Bowling Clinic, Bowling Digest, 990 Grove Street, Evanston, IL 60201.



make the ball rev up quick and start rolling early. Even resin balls designed to go long will still hook earlier on dry boards than balls of the past.

Along with using the lighter ball, try to increase your ball speed up to 16 to 17 mph—and with the faster ball speed, you need to cut down on the number of boards your ball is covering. Based on your laydown point of the 14 board, projecting the ball to the 2 board, and coming all the way back to the pocket, your ball is covering about 28 boards. The lane is only 39 boards wide, so your ball is covering more than two-thirds of the width of the lane.

The two big problems with this are: (1) control over the ball, and (2) the ball will lose a lot of energy trying to get back to the pocket. The loss of energy will cause the ball to hit soft and not kick the 6-pin out of the gutter to carry the 10-pin. For a ball that hooks as much as yours does to be effective, it needs to be traveling around 17 mph and have about 18 to 20 revolutions.

You should straighten out the line your ball travels down the lane. Walter Ray Williams Jr. has been the bowler of the year for the past three years, and his best shot covers only between 12 to 18 boards. He can and does hook the ball more than this at times, but his bread-and-butter shot is one that covers fewer boards. He rolls the ball about 18 to 19 miles per hour and has no trouble kicking the 10-pin out.

Playing the tighter line on the right will conserve energy for the break to the pocket and help carry more pins.

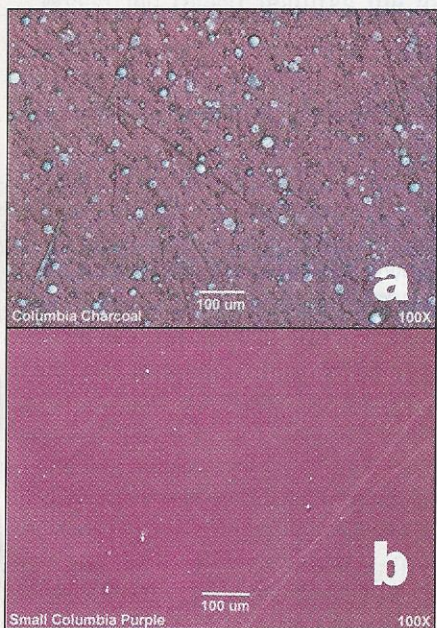
the Break Point

To make the ball hook as much as you are, you must already have a good release. You don't need to change the basic mechanics of your release—just get the ball traveling a lot faster with a tighter line, and your carry will definitely improve.

■ *I'm a 16-year-old youth bowler, a righthander with a 150 average. I'm planning to buy a new strike ball with either a reactive or the new micro-textured veneer. I play my first ball as a hook right between an inside line and a down-and-in line, and my ball speed is not that fast—about 12 to 14 mph. With my style, are there any disadvantages to me using the new micro-textured ball surface?*

The micro-fiber balls you mention are made with a new formulation of resin urethane, in which a filler is added to the urethane to produce more texture. At press time, three companies have produced these "textured urethane" balls:

The surface of textured urethane balls like Columbia's TEC urethane [a] grip through oil better than that of the smoother reactive resin balls [b].



Brunswick has its Proactive urethane; Ebonite, Pro-Reactive urethane; and Columbia, TEC urethane. I'm sure most companies will come out with some version of this newest technology.

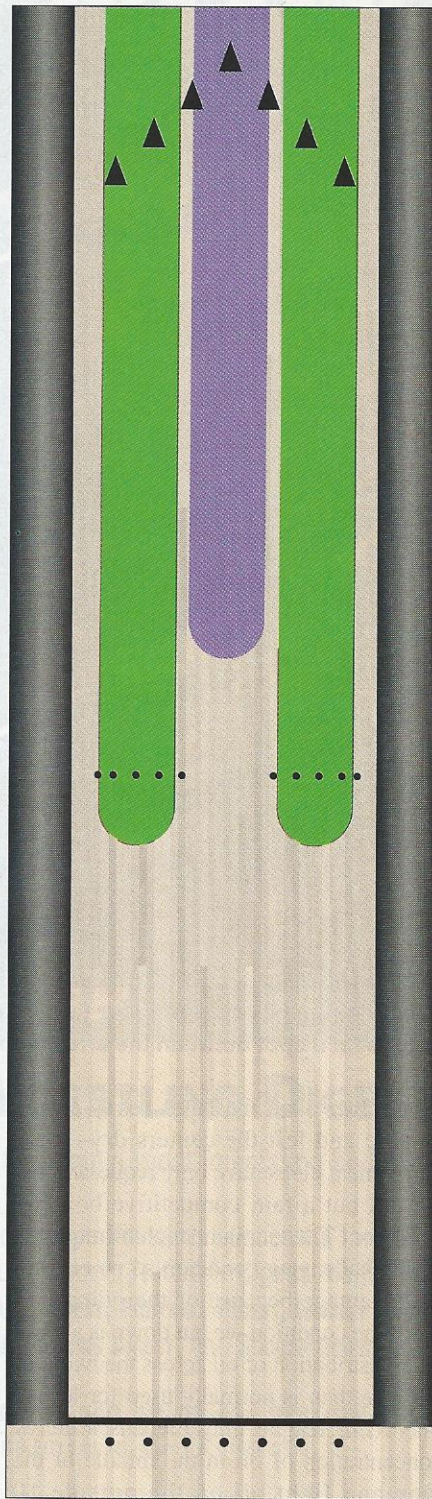
The textured-urethane balls are designed to be used in heavy oil. Because of the enhanced texture of the cover stock, the balls grip the lane through the oil, and they don't overhook in the dry part of the lane. Therefore, the best time to use them is when the ball is over-reacting to the lane condition. However, textured urethane—just like the original resin balls—will require that you use trial-and-error to learn how best to use them for your game.

One school of thought suggests that because these balls roll very evenly, they help players with consistency problems. I think most bowlers can expect a more consistent shot because the ball doesn't react to the oil and dry as much as the traditional resin urethane. In your situation, though, with your slow ball speed, I would recommend not drilling one of these types of balls. You need a ball that will go long, with a drilling that will help the ball go long. I would recommend a resin urethane with a mellow cover stock and a light-bulb shaped core. Also work on getting your speed and revs up.

■ *I'm a 193-average left-handed bowler. I've been trying to bowl in the ABT and NABI tournaments, but I've been having trouble bowling well in them. The other competitors tell me my equipment is all wrong.*

I throw a Hammer 3D Super Hook and a Columbia Piranha, and I stand on the 15 board and throw to the 6 board. The other guys say it's wet on the outside boards and dry in the middle. Do I need to learn a new way to bowl?

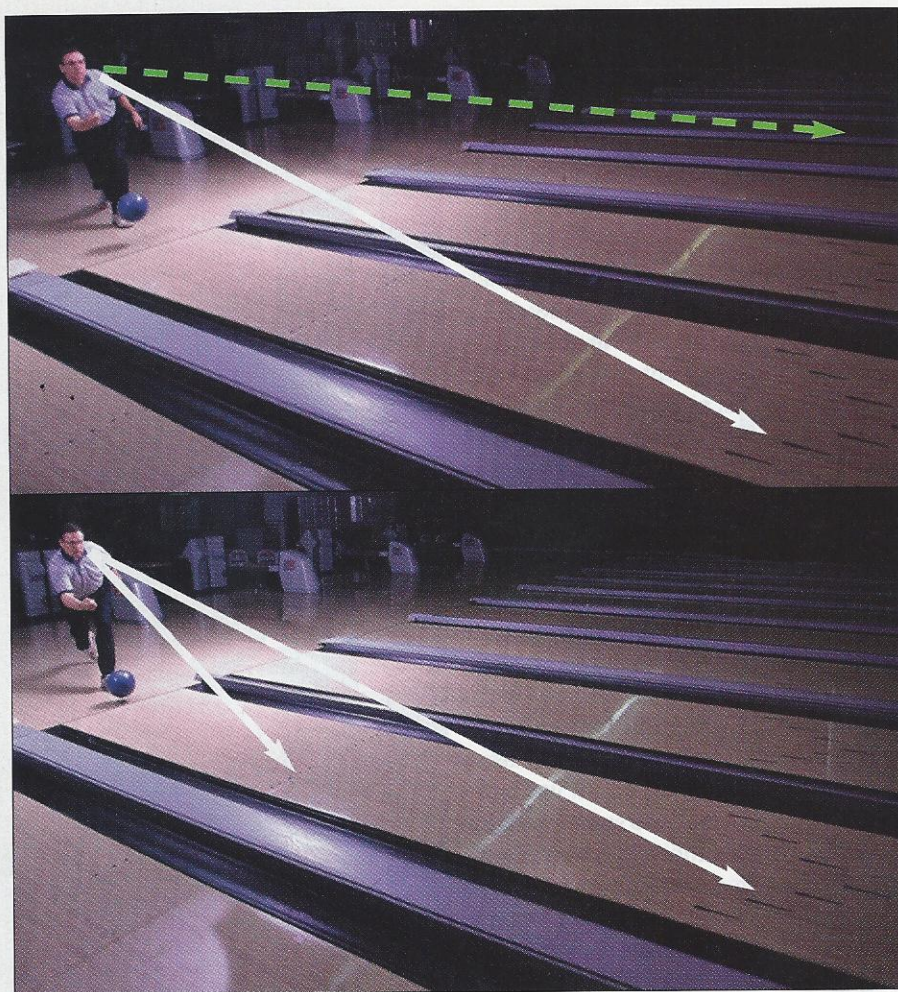
I would not look at your equipment as the primary problem playing the lanes.



Lanes almost always have more oil in the middle than outside, but for tournament play the oil may be more evenly distributed—and be heavier outside than you're accustomed to.

You're using two fine bowling balls.

I've had the opportunity to host a number of ABT and NABI events, and we



**Avoid lifting your eyes off your target arrow [above] by “double spotting”: look-
ing first at a spot between the arrows and the foul line, then at your target.**

have never oiled the lanes heavy on the outside and left the centers dry—both tournament clubs have only requested that we put out a fair, competitive bowling condition. The tournament clubs request a more challenging condition so no one has an advantage because of the oiling pattern. The condition we put down is a more even distribution of oil across the width of the lane than is normally used for league play. (For league play there is a heavy concentration of oil in the middle of the lane and light oil on the outside 10 boards.) I can safely say that rarely will a bowling center have the lanes oiled so the middles are dry and the outsides are oily.

When the lanes are oiled more evenly across the width of the lane, the perception is there is more oil out than in. This happens because when you play outside you're farther from the pocket than when you play inside, and being farther from

the pocket means you need more hook.

You said you play the 6 board, which puts you about 12 boards from a solid pocket hit. If you've been getting the 12 boards of hook bowling in your league, where there is less oil out than in, the dry boards are helping you produce 12 boards of hook; the tournament condition—with more oil outside than you're accustomed to—will not allow your ball to hook as much as you need. There's also less room to miss and still get the ball to hit the pocket, and when you move inside, there isn't more oil there to keep the ball from hooking. You are closer to the pocket, so you now need less hook.

If you aren't getting enough hook with your present equipment, I would recommend that you dull the ball surface, using a Scotch Brite pad or sandpaper. Of course, it would be best to consult your ball driller for help—surface preparation

is very important for ball performance.

There are many excellent camp and clinics around the country now that can teach you all aspects of the game. Bowling education is blossoming these days, and there are a lot of coaches that have spent a lot of years studying the game and are teaching professionally. Here are some of the programs that are available: IBA 800-469-3549; PBI, 888-343-2695; Dick Ritger Camps, 800-535-0678; Carmen Salvino Schools, 847-619-6282; Super School, 800-282-7053; and PBA University, 330-836-5568.

■ *I'm 73 years old and trying to recapture some of my old skills, and I'm hoping you can help me with a problem. I just cannot keep my head down long enough to watch my ball roll over the second arrow. (Maybe that's why I was such a lousy golfer!) I know I can improve if I can keep my eye on the arrow, and I'd appreciate any advice.*

Without seeing your game it's difficult to see where the problem really lies, but pulling up is often a timing problem. It's a last-ditch effort to get some speed and or action on the ball.

Many bowlers don't see their ball roll over the target they start out looking at. The important thing about targeting is to use the target (1) as a guide to help you set up your body so your swing can travel in the direction you want the ball to travel and (2) to make adjustments. Another advantage to targeting at the arrows—or closer—is that it helps you pick up the sight of the ball so you can see how the ball is reacting to “the heads,” the front part of the lane.

To help you see the ball cross your target, try experimenting with “double spotting.” Pick out your primary target at the arrows, and set your body up for the target. Then draw an imaginary line back from the target midway between the primary target and the foul line. Pick out a spot there and look at this target until you release the ball. This early target—it can be by the dots six feet past the foul line—will help you see the ball sooner and help you better see the ball roll over your primary target area. The close spot also helps you keep your body down longer so you can pick up sight of the ball sooner. ■