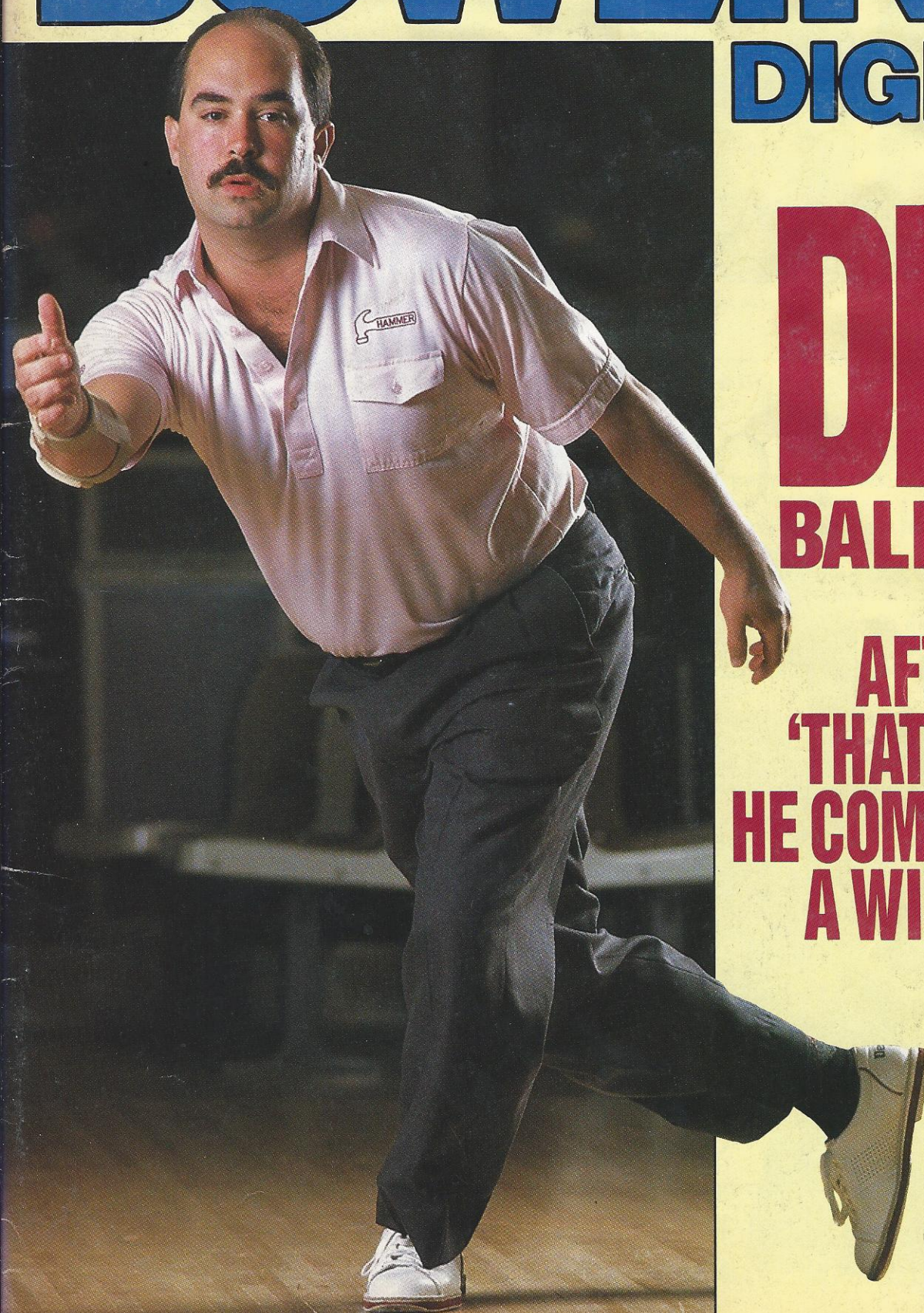


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# BOWLING

## DIGEST

July/Aug. 1991



# DEL BALLARD

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## Bill Spigner's **Bowling Clinic**

■ I understand there is going to be a big change in how lanes are going to be oiled within the next year. They say there will be more oil, and it will be longer. However, some people say it won't be that much different than this year. I would like to purchase a ball for this oil. What should I purchase, and what is the real story with the oil?

What bowlers are referring to is the "System of Bowling," a study done by the ABC, WIBC, and other member organizations of the bowling community. For the past two years they have been studying the effects of pins, balls, lane surfaces, and oiling on scoring. After all the research they have come up with a formula for oiling lanes that would not restrict the distance the oil is applied down the lane, but only restrict how it is applied across the width of the lane. Research concluded that there has to be a minimum of three units of oil across the width of the lane for the entire length that the oil is applied to the lane.

Right now there are two acceptable methods of oiling lanes. One is short oil, where the oil cannot be extended beyond 24 feet past the foul line. With this system there must be oil across the width of the lane; the oil can be applied in any way as long as there is a trace of oil across the width of the lane. The other method of oiling is long oil: The oil has to be applied across the width of the lane, but it can be any distance down the length of the lane. With long oil, though, the oil cannot be more than double in the middle of the lane in relationship to the edge of the lane.

For example, on short oil there can be one unit of oil on the first 10 boards on each side of the lane and then 20 units of oil in the middle of the lane. With long oil, if there are 20 units of oil in the middle of the lane, then there must be a minimum of 10 units on the other boards.

The only real difference between long oil and short oil, as they are currently defined, is that on a short oil condition the oil is applied 24 feet, and on long oil it's applied anywhere beyond 24 feet. So, in reality, oil could be applied one-eighth of an inch past 24 feet and be considered long oil. With the System of Bowling, the proprietors can lay down any length of oil and any crosswise pattern of oil they want as long as there is a minimum of three units of oil across the width of the lane the entire length the lane is oiled.

Bowlers are afraid the oil will be applied in great amounts and the ball will not hook, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Three units of oil is not very much—in fact, it would take less than eight ounces of oil to condition 40 lanes. Many bowling centers

currently put down three units or more across the width of the lane, but they don't know they do because of the expensive equipment needed to measure a unit of oil.

You cannot decide on what type of equipment you will need next year until you see how the lanes are going to be oiled at the center where you bowl. If you want to get a new ball, think of how you want that ball to fit in with what you are currently using so you can logically expand your equipment to cover a wider variety of lane conditions.

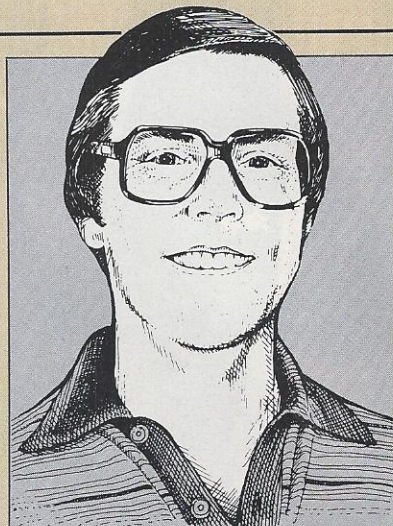
Go into next season with an open mind: Seeing a little different lane condition will help you become a better bowler. Understanding how your ball is reacting to the lane and being able to adjust for it is a major factor in becoming a better bowler.

■ I am a senior citizen (68 years old) who has always rolled a full-roller. However, with the changing lane conditions and new balls I thought I would change the roll on my ball to a semi-roller. I've tried for several months without much success, but the furthest I can move the track is over the thumb hole.

Changing over to a semi-roller is not always easy; if you are close I would keep working on it. The key to rolling a semi-roller is keeping the hand open long enough so that when the hand gets to the release zone the fingers turn counterclockwise while the thumb is coming out. With a normal full-roller the hand closes during the swing; when the hand gets to the release zone it already has turned to a position that will allow the ball to hook. Then the fingers turn slightly clockwise to get some lift on the ball, which produces the full-roller.

In your situation, going over the thumb hole and rolling a semi-roller occasionally, a change in the way the ball is balanced could be enough to get the semi-roller track you are looking for. You should buy a two-piece urethane ball, leverage weighted. Tell your pro shop operator you want a leverage weighted ball with  $\frac{7}{8}$ -ounce positive side-weight and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce finger weight, with the pin close to the label and toward the finger holes. This ball should have a pre-drilling top weight of around three ounces, and also have your pro map out your ball as if you are already rolling a semi-roller. A leverage weighted ball causes the ball track to flare and move away from the thumb hole as the ball is traveling down the lane. This type of drilling requires an extra hole in the ball to balance it.

The pin on the ball is a small plug that all balls have. In the manufacturing of the ball the core is suspended in a mold and is hanging from a spike. The resin is poured into the mold, and after the ball is removed



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from the mold the spike is taken out. This leaves a small hole, which is filled in with the same type of epoxy that is used to plug a ball. The pin on all two-piece balls is where the heaviest spot of the core is located, but the pin is not always located in the center of the label, which weighs out on a static beam scale (commonly referred to as the "dodo" scale) to be the heaviest spot on the ball. The location of this pin is important to the performance of the two-piece ball. The knowledgeable pro shop operator will know at least the basics of how to place the pin to work for you.

■ I am 15 and average about 145. I've used a 12-pound polyester ball the past two years, but this year I switched to a 15-pound urethane, and my average has gone up. One problem is that I like to use my polyester ball for fun, but whenever I try to use it I can't seem to get my approach right. I was wondering if that is a correctable problem, or should I stop using the polyester ball?

I would stop using the lighter ball because of the great difference in the weight. The 12-pound ball will play too light in your swing, and you'll dominate the ball too easily, which can affect your swing and timing. It's not a bad idea, though, to use a light ball when trying to develop a strong hand and wrist position for a powerful release. ●

*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.*