

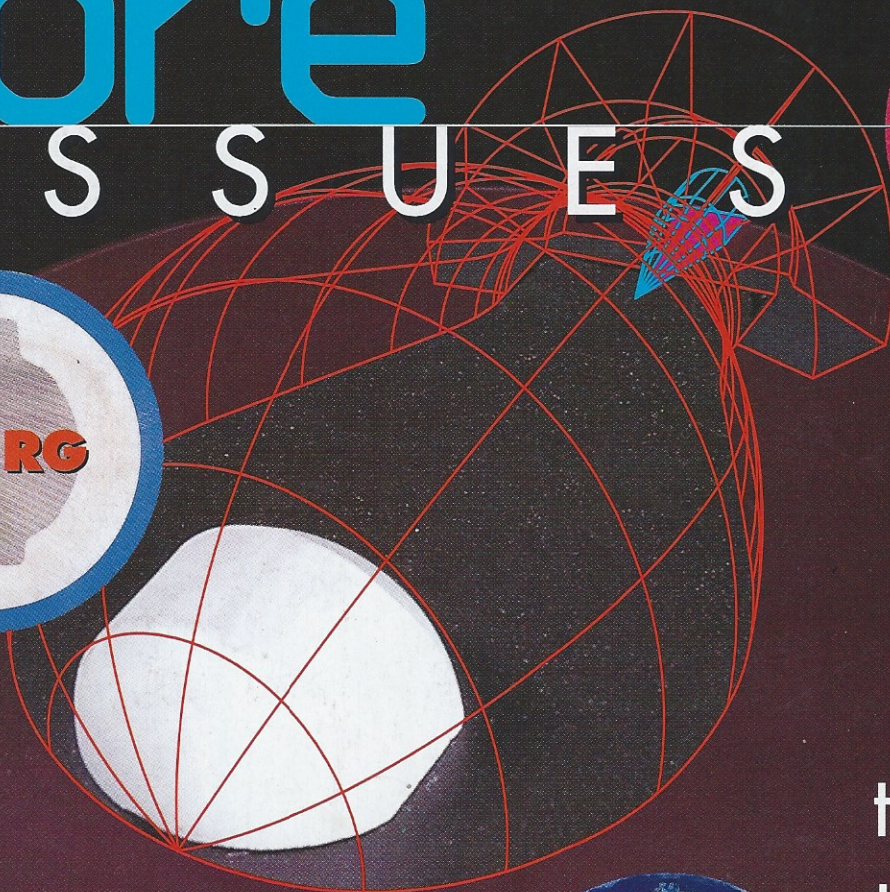
Why your first and third steps are so vital to a winning approach

BOWLING DIGEST

WHEN
TO
CHANGE
YOUR
OIL
LINE

HARD-
Core

ISSUES



Custom-fit your bowling ball with the weight that works for you



August 1997

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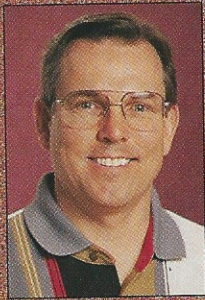


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Construction Instructi

■ *I do very well on freshly dressed lanes; my problem usually arises by the time the second series rolls around, when the lanes are dry and my reactive Hammer is breaking quite a bit more than it was when I started. What should I do when the lanes dry up?*

The first adjustment you should make as the lanes dry up is to move your feet closer to the center of the lane; you want to



Bowling Clinic

By BILL SPIGNER

move inside of the line you were playing to find some oil to help the ball slide down the lane. If that doesn't produce positive results, the next thing to try is to change your delivery. You can roll the ball faster, take some turn off the ball, increase your

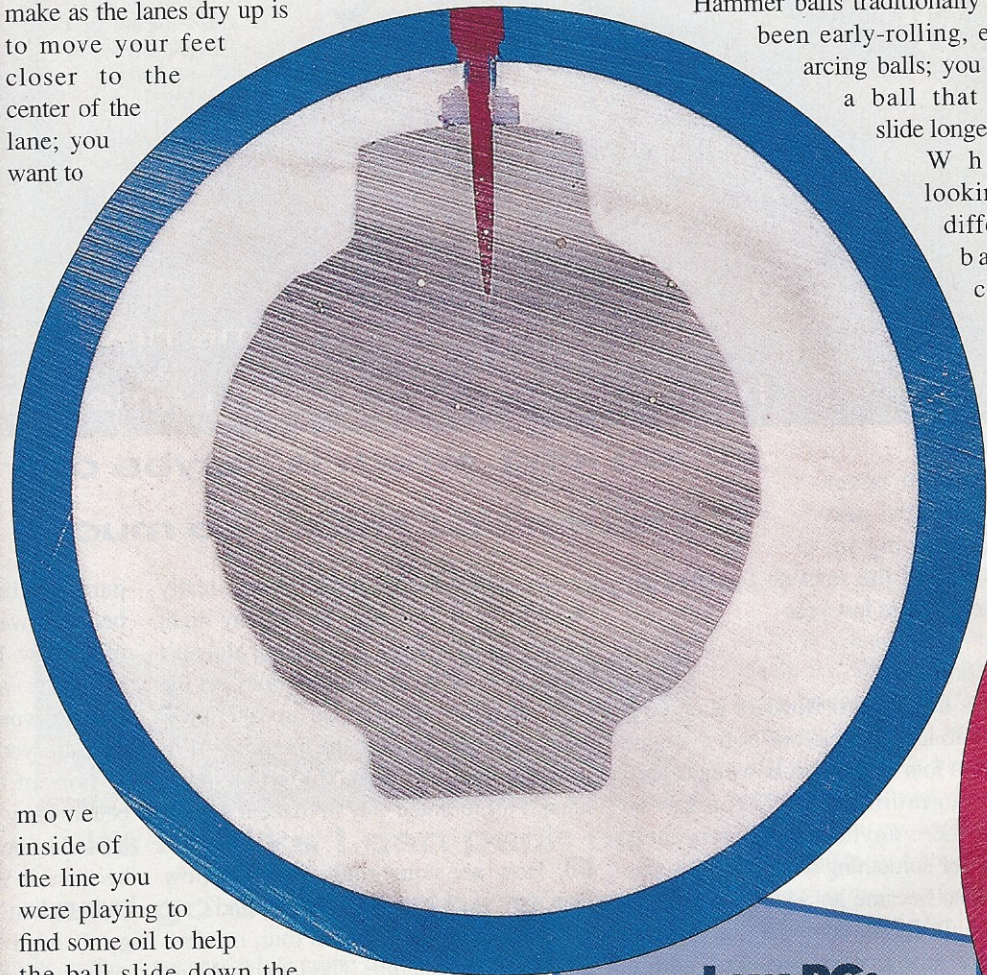
Need some help with your game? Bill Spigner welcomes questions from readers. Mail your questions to: Bowling Clinic, Bowling Digest, 990 Grove Street, Evanston, IL 60201.

loft, or spot farther down the lane; often, you'll need to use a combination of those maneuvers to fix the problem.

If you try all of the above and still don't get the results you're looking for, you should find a ball that will complement your Hammer for when the lanes are dry. The

Hammer balls traditionally have been early-rolling, even-arc balls; you need a ball that will slide longer.

When looking at different balls, concern



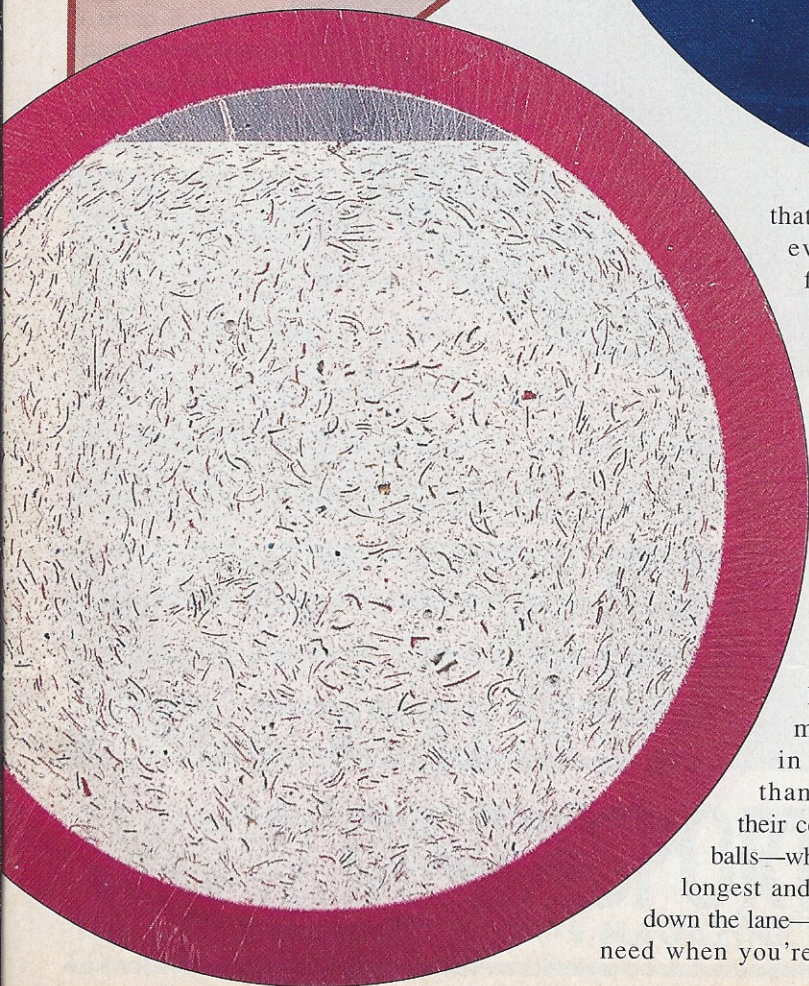
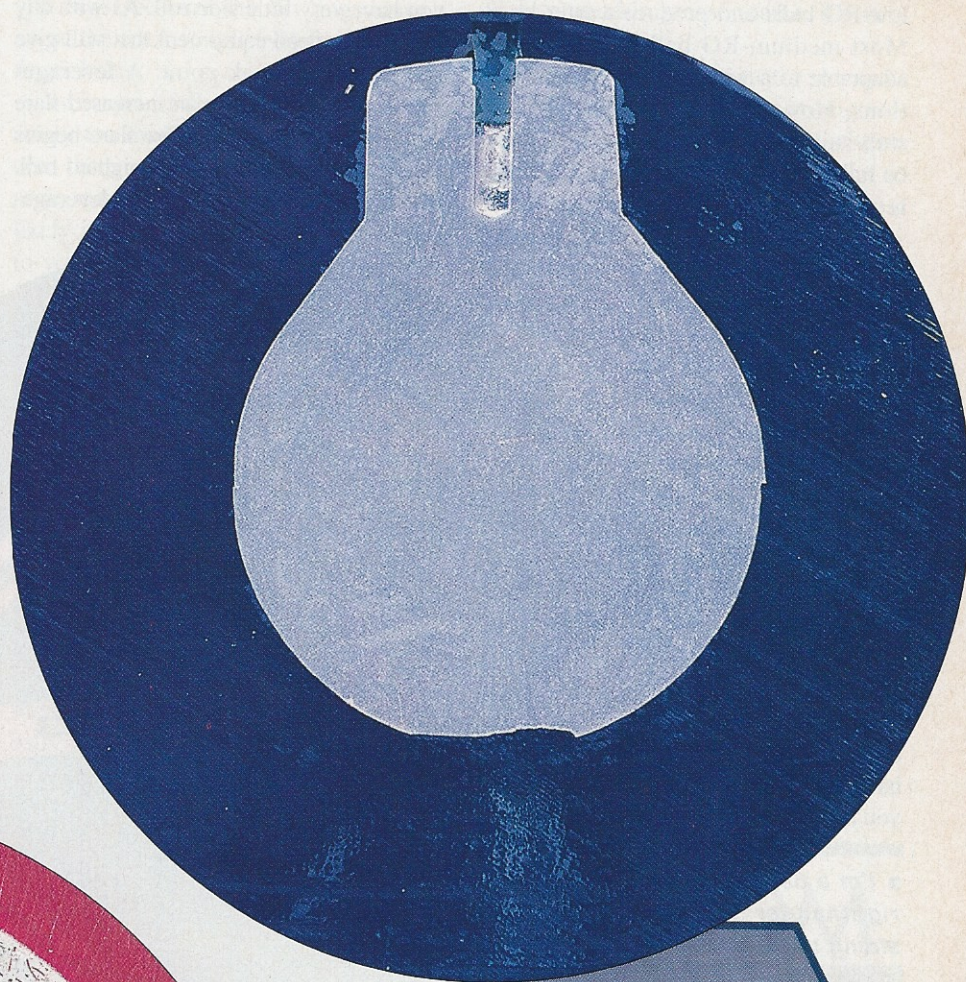
Low RG:

These balls, which have an extremely heavy center, rev up fast and have a tendency to roll early and hook quickly, so they're best on oily lane surfaces.

yourself first with their cover stocks; in general, I think it's best to stay with a reactive resin ball. The next consideration should be the core of the ball—this is where you'll find the biggest differences in the type of roll the balls have.

When trying to understand the basic makeup of a bowling ball, keep in mind

High RG: The even weight distribution makes these balls slide long and rev up late, so they're what you need on dry conditions.



that every ball fits into one of three general categories: high RG (radius of gyration); low RG; and the broadest category, medium RG.

The high-RG balls have more weight in their cover than they do in their center. These balls—which slide the longest and rev up later down the lane—are what you need when you're confronted

Medium RG: The constructions can vary greatly from ball to ball, so these are suitable for many—but definitely not all—lane surfaces.

with drier conditions, on which you want a skid-and-snap type of reaction.

The low-RG balls are those with an extremely heavy center. These balls rev up fast and have a tendency to roll early and hook quickly, so they're best on lane surfaces that are heavy with oil.

There are more medium-RG balls than either low- or high-RG balls, and they can have very different constructions and looks. In general, the medium-RG balls aren't as heavy in the middle as low-RG balls, so they slide longer before they get

into a roll. Also, they rev up later than the low-RG balls and produce a later hook. Most medium-RG balls are relatively adaptable to a wide range of lane conditions. However, they definitely aren't well-suited to *every* condition, so don't be lulled into thinking a medium-RG ball is all you need.

In your situation—on those dry conditions—a high-RG ball seems to be what you need. For other people, there are a number of balls out there that don't fall neatly into any of the three above categories. This is when it's important to understand that factors like drilling and surface preparation can greatly influence a ball's reaction. Don't be bashful—consult your local pro shop operator about what type of equipment you have, and what type you need.

■ *I'm a 68-year-old righthander with a strong upper body and strong legs; I favor a down-and-in style, with a shoulder-high follow-through. I recently purchased a leverage-weighted ball, and ever since then I've left a great deal of pocket splits with medium pocket hits. Our local ball driller says my follow-through should be by my right ear for good hook, but my ball hooks very little. He also says the only way to drill my ball is leverage-weighted, even though my label-weighted balls hook much more. What should I do?*

You don't have a big problem; your ball simply doesn't match up with you and/or the conditions you're playing on. That's why it's so important for all bowlers to understand who they are and what needs to be in place for them to perform at the optimum level. Only then can you figure out what's going on when situations arise that keep you from playing your best.

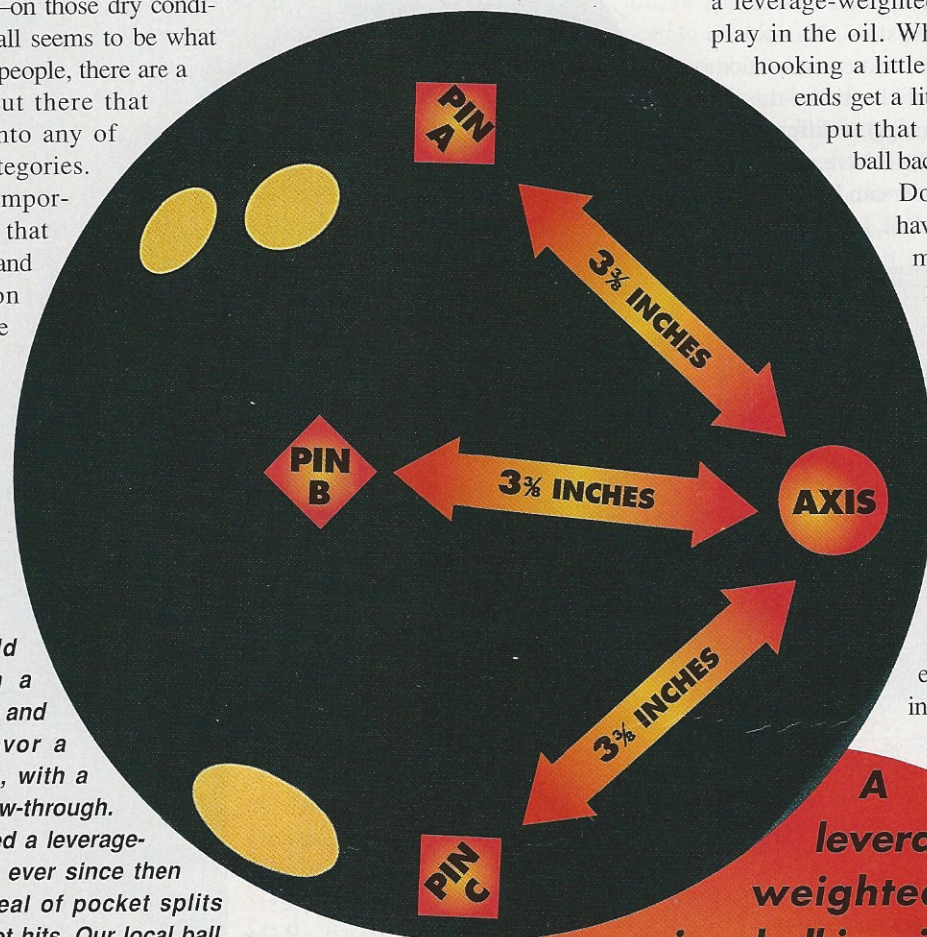
Let's look at your game. You're a

down-and-in player; more than likely, you have very little side roll. As with any player, you need equipment that will give you the right break point. A leverage-weighted ball develops an increased flare in its track; a ball with more flare begins rolling sooner than a label-weighted ball. But with very little side roll, a leverage-

When would a leverage-weighted ball work well for you? When the heads are very oily and there is strong mid-lane oil and dry back ends. On this type of condition, a leverage-weighted ball won't skid out when it hits the heads, whereas a label-weighted ball may slide too long and hook too late. Basically, if you use a leverage-weighted ball, you have to play in the oil. When the heads start hooking a little early and the back ends get a little tight, it's time to put that leverage-weighted ball back in your bag.

Down-and-in players have a harder time than most when it comes to moving inside with their feet on the approach as the oil on the lane surface is changing. If you can't keep following the oil line by moving inside, then you'll have to control your break point by either changing equipment or changing your way of delivering the ball.

Pay close attention



A leverage-weighted two-piece ball is said to have a balance in which the pin is located $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches from the axis, toward the grip. For more length, the pin is placed above the leverage point [pin A]; for an earlier roll, the pin is placed below the leverage point [pin C]; and for an even roll, the pin is positioned on the leverage point [pin B].

weighted ball loses whatever side roll it does have early, which causes it to lose a lot of its energy early. When this happens, the ball hooks early and doesn't finish strong at the pocket (something commonly referred to as "roll-out").

to what the ball does when it makes its initial move on the lane. If it starts moving early, it has less chance of making a strong move on the back end. If you want the ball to slide long and finish, a leverage-weight drilling won't be good for you; if you want the ball to start rolling early and have a good finish when the lanes have a lot of oil on the heads, then that drilling might be exactly what you need.

In the book "Revolutions," by Chip Zeilke, a leverage-weighted ball is said to have a balance in which the pin (for a two-piece ball) or the center of gravity (for a three-piece ball) is located 3/8 inches from the axis, toward the grip. The exact positioning depends on desired reaction. A leverage-balanced ball can be adjusted for an earlier roll, as can be done with any type of drilling. For more length, the pin is placed above the leverage point; for an earlier roll, the pin is placed below the leverage point; and for an even roll, the pin is positioned on the leverage point. Of course, as with

any of today's high-performance balls, you must be sure the drilling doesn't cause the track to roll over the thumb or finger holes.

As for your follow-through, I wouldn't worry too much about it—the main concern there is that you follow through the same way all the time. The problem most likely is with your ball. I'd bring it back to your ball driller and give him another chance to help you. The ball probably needs to be plugged and re-drilled to get a better reaction.

■ *I've been having a hard time cleaning the grease, belt marks, and oil from my bowling balls. The cleaning products I get from pro shops just don't do the job without me adding a lot of time and "elbow grease." Is there some method that really works without taking too much time?*

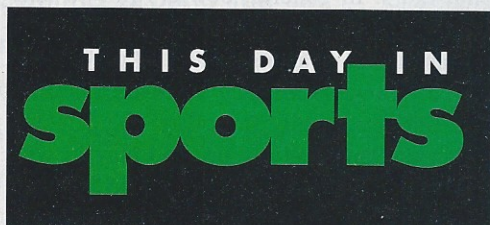
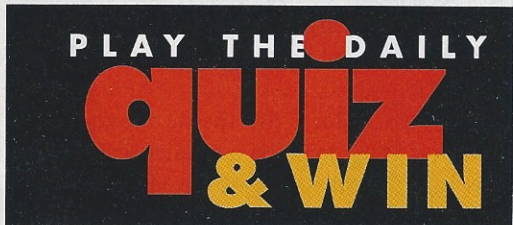
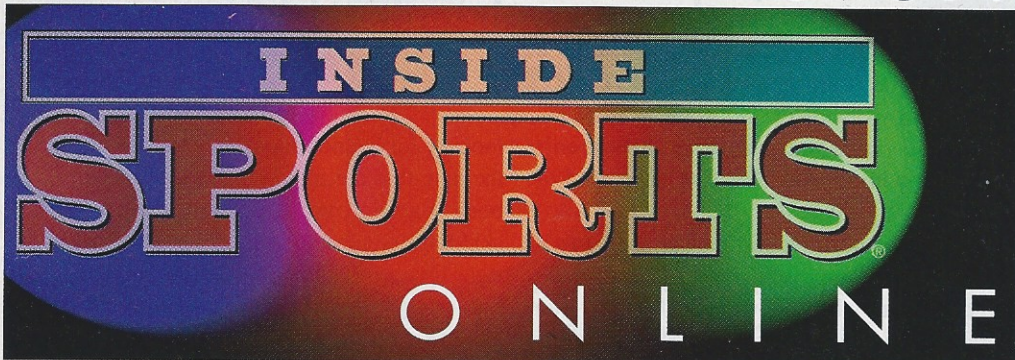
The cleaners and polishes sold in pro shops are formulated for use on bowling balls; as with any products, some are better than others. But the hard truth is,

when your ball picks up belt marks and thick, ground-in grease marks, it's very difficult to clean.

The only way to clean these marks with relative ease is to use strong solvents. The problem is, the strong solvents can be dangerous to your ball. If you do use them, don't use a lot, and don't use them frequently. A better idea is to show the ball to your local pro and ask him or her for the best route to take. With the really tough grease, you're best off letting pro shop operators take care of the problem. They have the tools to do a professional job of cleaning that ball and can advise you as to what products might be better-suited for you.

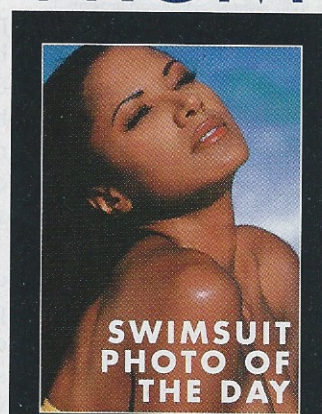
Something else you might consider doing is showing the ball to the manager of your bowling center. Many times, grease and belt marks are indications of operational problems with the ball-return machines. A good center manager will welcome your pointing this out; no one should want a legitimate problem to go unremedied. ●

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