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DIGEST

August 1998

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Don't Expect the Ball

■ *I am having trouble getting revolutions on my ball. I use a reactive resin ball, so it should rev and then hook, but I can barely get the ball to hook at all. Is there a trick to getting revolutions on the ball?*

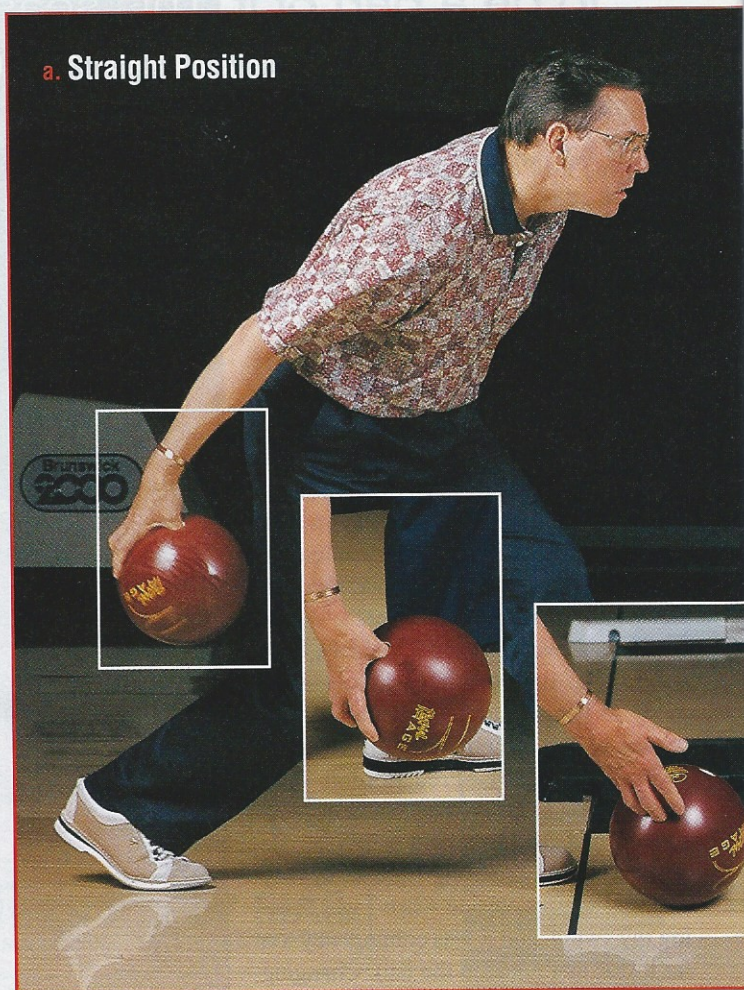
Reactive resin balls don't automatically rev and hook. Many of the newer balls will rev up faster than older-model balls because the center of the ball is much heavier. What this does is make the ball roll earlier than the older-model balls. The ball is a round object; without the right spin, rotation, and speed, the ball will not hook. With the right action applied by the release, the newer resin balls can increase hook.

Lifting the ball with the fingers after the thumb has been released creates revolutions. The release of the thumb should occur when the ball reaches the bottom of the swing and is beside your sliding foot. When the ball gets to this point, the palm of the hand needs to be behind the ball, with the wrist in a straight position. When the thumb comes out, the weight of the ball will transfer to the fingers. At this time, the arm will start an upward motion that will lift the fingers and, in turn, lift the ball.

You need the arm to help lift the fingers to lift the ball, not the fingers alone. The speed the arm and fingers travel after the thumb comes out will determine the revolution rate you will get. To get more revolutions on the

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.

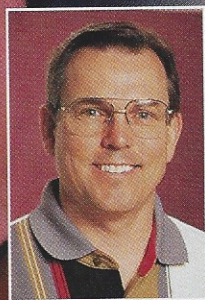
a. Straight Position



ball, you need to incorporate the wrist more.

First, you need to cup the wrist, to put your fingertips under the ball more. The ball will still need to hit the bottom of the swing by the sliding foot. The big difference with the cupped wrist is as the thumb exits the ball, the wrist needs to uncock. This motion is known as "unloading."

With the wrist bending back when the ball is released, the fingers increase the speed with which they move from under the ball to the top of the ball, producing more revolutions. With any release, the faster the fingers travel after the thumb exits the ball, the more revolutions can be put on the ball. The combination of wrist position, the speed of the arm, and finger lift produces the rev rate.



**Bowling
Clinic**
By BILL SPIGNER

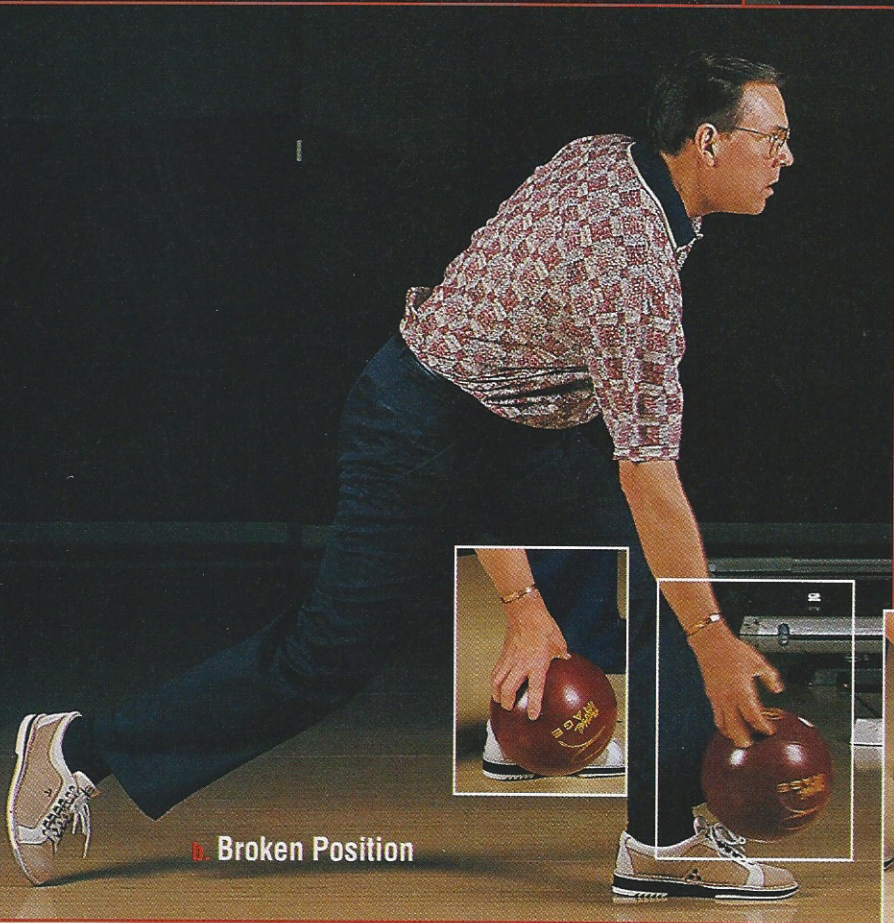
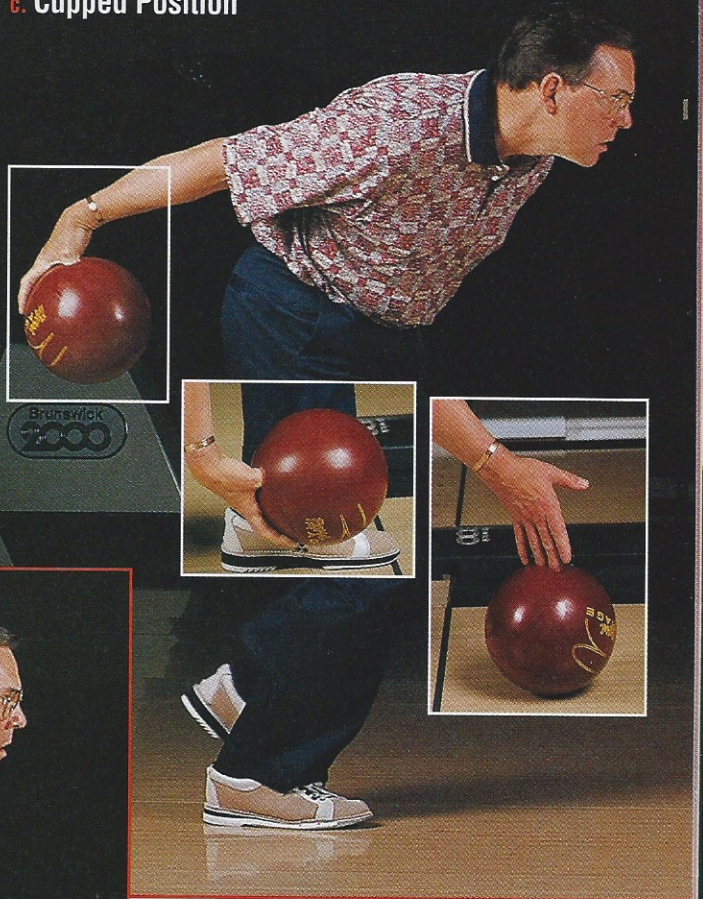
to Deliver Revs

a. **Revolutions** are created by wrist position, the speed of the arm, and finger lift. **Keeping the wrist in a straight position** throughout the release will give you a **medium amount of revs**.

b. The **broken-wristed** or **"suitcase"** position produces a **minimum amount of revolutions** on the ball.

c. For **maximum revolutions**, you must **cup the wrist** to get your fingers farther under the ball. As the thumb exits the ball, **"unloading"** with the wrist produces a **maximum amount of revs**.

c. Cupped Position



b. Broken Position

■ *I was reading the 1998 ball guide in a recent issue, and I have a question. Let's say I buy a Columbia Tour Boss from one of the wholesalers who advertise in the bowling magazines and on the Internet, and the price of the ball is a lot lower than the retail price in the pro shop. Is this a scam or is it the same ball only at a lower price?*

What has happened in bowling is that the wholesalers are selling equipment directly to the consumers at the same price the pro shops would pay for

the products. But with bowling balls, the service on the ball is what is really the key that will make that ball work for you.

The balls are the same, but when you order through the wholesale operators, all you get is the ball—you don't get all the services involved with making the ball be what you need it to be. With today's equipment, it's very important not only to get the right type of ball, but also the right pin placement, top weight, and surface preparation.

When you get the ball from a pro shop, you're paying not only for the ball itself but for the pro shop operator's expertise to put you into the right ball for your needs. To get the ball drilled, balanced, and ready to roll by a professional will cost anywhere from \$50 to \$70. If you include the drilling charges, surface prep, balancing and grips, the ball you purchased through the wholesale operators doesn't save you a lot of money. You may save \$10 to \$20 overall in some cases, but you may not get the right ball for you.

You also have to consider the warranty of the ball. If something goes wrong with the ball you bought at a pro shop, all you need to do is return it and the pro can usually make a decision on the spot if the ball is under warranty. But if you buy through the magazines or the Internet, you have to return the ball to the company from which you bought it and you won't have personal contact with the people who will be handling the problem.

In some ways, as a pro shop operator, I welcome customers bringing in balls that they bought elsewhere. I don't have to be concerned whether it's the right ball for the bowler, because they have already made their decision. I will give the customers my best effort to make sure the ball will do what they want, but if it's not the right ball to get a particular job done, there is only so much I can do.

If you are a very knowledgeable consumer or don't have access to well-stocked pro shops, buying from magazines and the Internet can save some money. But if you have any doubt about what you need, you're better off going to a pro shop.

■ *I'm a small-time bowling promoter from the Philippines and an average bowler. I also am a regular follower of your column in BOWLING DIGEST. It is in this regard that I decided to write to you for some assistance. First I would like to know more about the "end-over-end" delivery which Walter Ray Williams Jr. has popularized. What type of lane condition is it*

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most suitable for?

Lastly, I would like to obtain information on the formats and mechanics of the more popular megabucks tournaments such as the Hoinke Classic, High Roller, and International Eliminator. I am hoping I can introduce it here in the Philippines to provide our bowlers some variety and a break from the usual tournament/league fare we have over here, which are primarily handicap-based.

Walter Ray Williams Jr. is a very deceiving bowler to watch. He looks like he rolls a relatively straight shot with an end-over-end roll most of the time. But Walter Ray has the ability to play anywhere on the lane. He is so versatile that he can play from the gutter shot all the way to the deep inside line.

He achieves this versatility by using different hand positions and swing paths to change the axis rotation and tilt of the ball, lofts, speed, and the trajectory of the ball. Walter Ray can make all these changes and look the same rolling the ball because he has the physical and men-

tal game to overcome a wider variety of conditions than any bowler in this era.

Williams' best shot is the end-over-end roll, which he can use on certain lane conditions that allow it to work from the outside line. This roll normally works best on fresh oil patterns. On a freshly dressed lane, the heads are heavily oiled, the pines medium, and the back ends dry.

With an oiling pattern like this, the head oil automatically makes the ball slide down the lane, and with the back ends being dry, lets the ball grip the lane so it can hook and roll into the pins. You don't need a lot of side roll on the ball under these conditions.

Eventually the oil carries down and the head oil is depleted, and that's when you need a little more side roll to create some skid through the heads and more hook potential in the back end of the lane. Walter Ray can make these changes as the lanes change. It's not luck or conditions that makes him the best—it's his ability to make calculated adjustments based on what the playing environment calls for. All successful pros and top amateurs can do this; Williams just does it better, faster, and with more consistency.

For information about the megabucks events in the U.S., it's best to call for entry blanks. The numbers for High Roller are (609) 596-1967 and (800) 257-6179; the numbers for the Hoinke Classic are (513) 574-2200 and (800) 543-4010; and you can get information on the International Eliminator at (888) 617-6081.

These types of tournaments are a lot of fun. The formats are appealing to a wide variety of bowlers because of the quick action—the philosophy of the megabucks events is anyone can beat anyone in a one-game match, which is true to a certain degree. The number of these events going on, along with the ABC's team challenge and national championship events, have kept a lot of higher-average bowlers interested in playing the sport, and more bowlers than ever work hard to be prepared to compete in these events. Not all of the changes these events have brought to tournament bowling are to my taste, but I give them credit for encouraging participation. ●