

Pro Instruction • Eddie Elias • Regional Tournaments • Lisa Wagner

BOWLING

DIGEST

Sept./Oct. 1988
\$2.50 (Canada \$2.95)

The Super Seniors

Dick Weber, Glenn Allison
and Carmen Salvino
are rekindling rivalries
and friendships
on the PBA's
Senior Tour



Bill Spigner's **Bowling Clinic**

■ **On the PBA tour the pros often drill a new ball on the spot to combat lane conditions. This service is offered by a traveling pro shop that accompanies the PBA tour from stop to stop. Can the typical bowler buy a bowling ball from this truck when the PBA is in town, or is it only open to PBA players?**

The "truck," as it's referred to on tour, is Larry Lichstein's traveling pro shop. Lichstein is the PBA's player services director, and he started this traveling pro shop to further serve the touring players.

The services provided by Lichstein and his staff are for PBA members only, and the players have to show their PBA membership cards to purchase equipment.

Some people think the bowling balls the pros use on tour are different from those available to the public. This is not true; the pros use the same balls that you can buy off the shelf in any pro shop.

■ **I have been told that negative weight will make the ball break more, but I've also been told that positive weight will make the ball break. Which is correct, and which are the positive and negative sides of the ball for a right-handed bowler?**

All bowling balls have a weight block, which is located just under the label of the ball. This is the top weight. To create positive or negative weight balances in a bowling ball, this weight block must be moved in the direction that you want the weight. Moving the weight block is done by drilling a new ball off-label, or, in other words, drilled in a place other than right over the label. The different types of positive weights are finger, positive side, and top weight. The different types of negative weights are thumb, negative side, and bottom weight.

To visualize where these weights are located, take a ball that has already been drilled and set it on something that will hold it in place. Now face it toward you with the finger holes on top and the thumb hole on the bottom. Take a white crayon or grease pencil and draw two straight lines—one vertical, running from between the finger holes through the thumb hole, the other horizontal, midway between the thumb and finger holes. Mark these straight lines north, south, east, and west as if the ball were a round compass.

Looking at this ball now, the positive sides of the ball are to the north and east. The negative sides of the ball are the south and west.

For finger weight, the ball is drilled so the weight block is more in the northern part of the ball. For positive side weight, the ball

has to be drilled so that the weight block is toward the eastern part of the ball.

To put thumb weight in a bowling ball, the ball has to be drilled so that the weight block is more toward the southern part of the ball. For negative side weight, the weight block is offset toward the western part of the ball. As I said earlier, the weight block is located under the label; this provides the top weight. To get bottom weight you have to drill out the top weight.

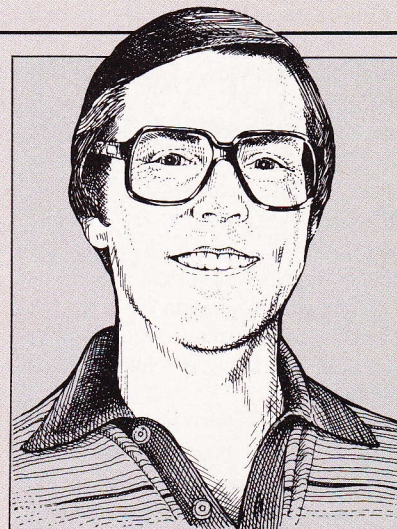
As a basic rule of thumb when comparing what weights will do, positive weights will make the ball break late and hard; negative weights will make the ball break earlier and smoother. The more offset the weight block is, the stronger the reaction that weight balance will have on the ball.

Both negative and positive weights can aid in getting the ball to hook, but lane conditions can determine which weights will hook more. Another factor that can determine how weight balances will affect your shot is the location of your ball track and the rotation of your ball. You can have one ball with one ounce of positive side weight and another ball with one ounce of negative side weight in it, and both balls could hook the same number of boards. But the ball with positive weight will break later and harder than the ball with negative weight. To know which weight to use, you have to figure out what will give you the best control and angle of entry into the pocket on the lane condition you are playing on.

One word of caution: If you do not hit the pocket 80% of the time or average better than 200, I wouldn't worry about what a little difference in weight balance will do. No one has ever become a high-average bowler because of the weight balances they have in their bowling balls.

■ **I am a young bowler with a 125 average. I always hear bowlers saying "look at the second arrow" when they are telling other bowlers how to spot, but I look between the second and third dots by the foul line. Does it really matter what you look at? If I keep looking at the dots, will I get to a certain average and stop?**

Looking at a target close to the foul line is fine. What you should do in addition to your primary target is pick out a secondary target farther down the lane. The reason for the second target is so you have a line you can project your ball down the lane on. For example, if you are spotting at the second dot at the foul line, which is the fifth board on the lane, and your secondary target is the second board on the lane out by the arrows, you are rolling the ball away from the pocket, which is a swing shot. In another



Bill Spigner is in his 13th year on the PBA tour. He has won three PBA titles and recently established an ABC record by averaging 242.15 for a league season.

example, if your close target is again the fifth board, but your secondary target is the seventh board, you are playing more of a point shot to the pocket. As your bowling game progresses, this more sophisticated two-point targeting system will help you to play different lane conditions.

■ **I am 5'2", weigh 90 pounds, and am only 13 years old. I have a high backswing and I'm starting to bowl well with it. Since I'm fairly small, I'm wondering if I should keep the high swing to maintain some speed on the ball. Some of my coaches say to cut it down because it's making me inconsistent. But now I feel comfortable with it. Do you think I should cut it down or keep it?**

Considering your age and size, you should keep the high swing. The swing is helping you create power, which is definitely an asset with the urethane balls and lane finishes. Be careful when making big changes in your game—always think them out and keep track of what the changes do. All styles work in bowling, provided that you have the talent and you are working on the type of game that's right for you.

At 13, you are just starting to develop your style. It's good that you realize your high swing lets you roll the ball faster. It takes many years to learn your physical game and how to play lanes.

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.