

# BOWLING DIGEST

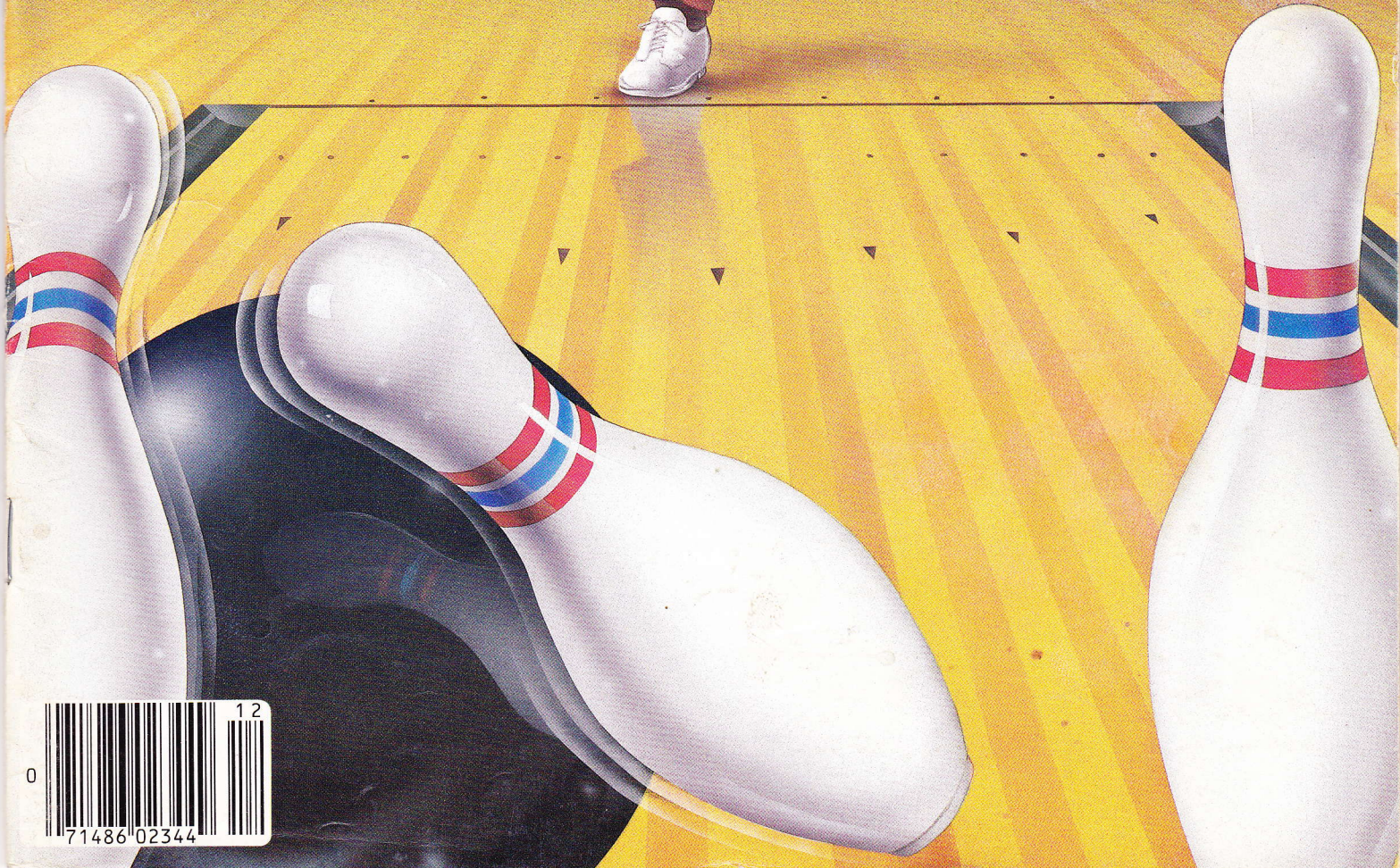
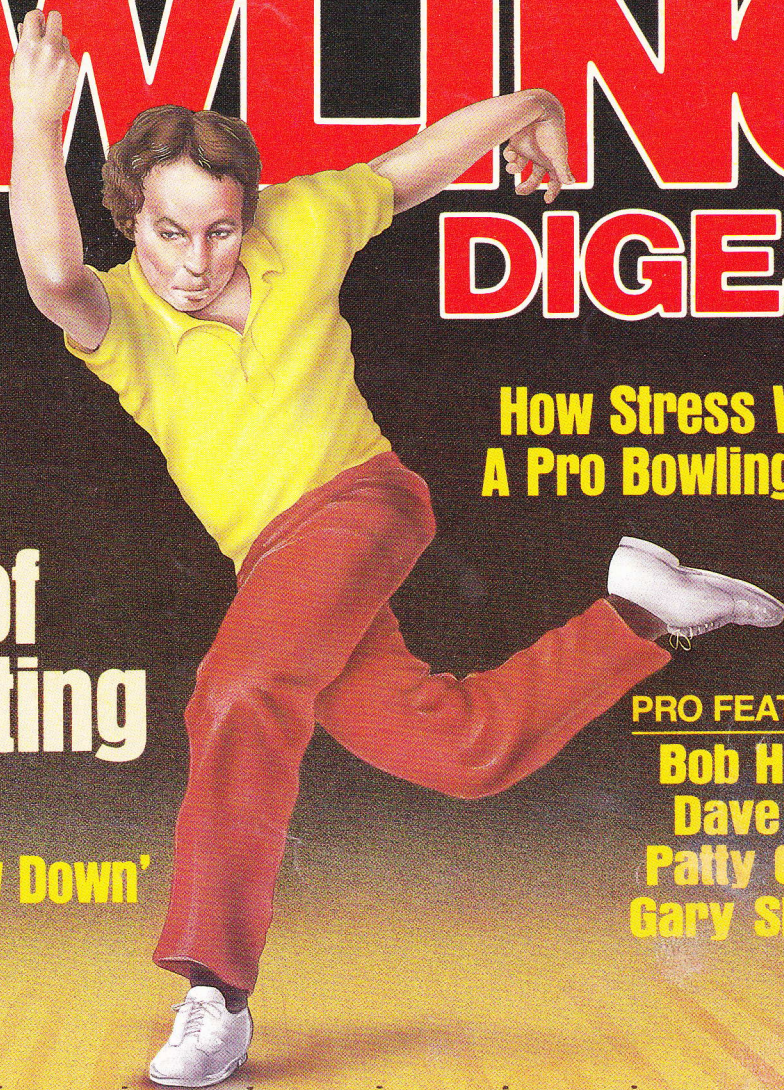
## Mark Roth's Secrets of Spare Shooting

Why Earl Anthony Tells All Bowlers: 'Slow Down'

How Stress Wrecked A Pro Bowling Career

PRO FEATURES ON:

- Bob Handley
- Dave Davis
- Patty Costello
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## Bill Spigner's **Bowling Clinic**

■ I am a 23-year-old, right-handed bowler. The ball I use is a Columbia Yellow Dot, semifingertip grip. I take a four-step approach. My problem is I bend my elbow when I begin my backswing and it remains that way until I release the ball. My ball just slides, so I can't get anything on it. I would appreciate it if you would help me correct this elbow problem.

Your bent elbow is caused by your carrying the ball into your swing. There are two primary things you will have to work on to cure this.

First is your pushaway. You should try to move the ball in a forward and downward motion at the same time you move your right foot. At the completion of your first step your arm should be perfectly straight and ready to go into your swing. If you get your pushaway down pat with your arm straight at the completion of your first step, you will not bend your elbow.

Second, you have to take all the "muscle" out of your swing, which will aid you in your pushaway. Don't squeeze the ball, just let it hang on your hand. If the ball feels like it's going to fall off, put some tape or a cork grip into the hole so you can let the ball hang on your hand. At first this might not get you more ball, but it will help you get your elbow straight and put you on the path to a looser swing and better bowling. Remember, muscling and carrying the ball in your swing causes your bent elbow. Correct this and you'll find more power, control—and higher scores.

■ I'm a right-handed bowler with a 159 average. Since I started bowling two years ago, the knuckle on my thumb (top, outside edge) has developed a large callus. Lately, it is so painful that I've had a hard time concentrating on my bowling. I know it is something I'm doing wrong, but I don't know what it is.

In order for you to develop a callus like that, you have to be bending your thumb and squeezing the ball hard while you're delivering it. This is usually caused by your thumb hole being too large, or by having too much reverse pitch in your thumb hole. You should bowl without bending your thumb and without squeezing the ball. If you have trouble holding on to the ball, there are three things you can do.

First, you can put tape in the hole one piece at a time until it is tight enough, or use a cork insert. Second, you can plug up your hole and have it drilled smaller. Third, you can try less reverse pitch.

Go to a reputable pro shop and have the pro check your grip. I'm sure he or she can give you a remedy that will work.

■ I have a problem getting myself to slow down my approach. For the past few months I have been fast, and I can't seem to shake it off. Could you give me some tips on how to overcome my habit?

The best way to slow down is to keep your feet slow. You can try counting your steps as you walk, which should slow you down. It will also tell you what steps are faster than others and you can work with that to get a consistent cadence.

Many times, fast feet are caused by getting the ball into your swing too soon. When this happens, your feet automatically speed up to catch up with your ball. This will cause you to run right past your ball and end up having to pull it through at the end. Check out your ball placement at the beginning, and keep your feet slow to prevent a fast approach.

■ I carry a solid 190 average. I have always had the problem of sweaty palms when I bowl, but I always seem to overcome it. Now I have a problem with my thumb and fingers swelling, especially in warm weather. I've tried everything to cure it, but nothing seems to work. As a result, I hang up in the ball. What can I do to correct this?

It is normal for your hands and fingers to swell in warmer weather. I would recommend that you have two balls with you when you bowl, one with your normal sizes, and the other drilled one to two sizes bigger in each hole.

You might want to consider using finger and thumb grips. You can have a few sets of different sizes and use the size you need when your thumb and fingers swell. They are easily removable if you use just a touch of glue to put them in. This grip-changing system can save you the cost of new equipment.

Also, if the ball is the cause of your fingers swelling, I would suggest you have your grip checked out and see if the span and pitches are correct.

■ It seems to be common practice for most bowling centers to refinish their lanes once or twice a year. When they refinish the lanes, most centers don't seem to do anything with the heads, and as a result, a lot of them seem to have ruts in them. Do these heads with the ruts have any effect on the roll of the ball? Or does it have to be in the midlane portion, from the arrows to the pindeck, to have any effect?

Some bowling centers resurface their lanes once a year, and many centers resurface every two to three years. When a lane



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is resurfaced, it is sanded to take out the scars left by all the lines bowled on it, and that includes the heads (first 15 feet of the lane).

You might be referring to a house recoating its lanes twice a year. Many houses will pull a coat of lane finish over the existing finish in midseason because the finish does wear.

The ruts you are talking about are boards that have split and have splinters of wood actually missing. If the rut is deep enough, resurfacing alone will not repair it. If this is the case, the bad boards are patched or replaced.

If the boards in the heads are bad, it can definitely have an effect on the ball. The heads are the laydown point of your shot, and if you hit a bad board, the ball will not do what you want. On tour, we have bowled in houses where the finish is worn off some of the boards in the heads. We call these "soaker" boards because the oil soaks right into the lane and leaves these boards dry. If you hit a "soaker" board on your shot, your ball will hook early; if you miss it, your ball will slide longer.

There are some houses where the boards in the heads are separated and you can actually put a coin between them. To repair these loose heads, the resurfer drills small holes across the width of the lane approximately 10 feet down the lane, and then injects these holes with epoxy.

*Bill Spigner welcomes questions from readers and will answer as many as possible in this column. Mail your questions to: Bill Spigner, Bowling Digest, 1020 Church Street, Evanston, IL 60201.*