

## Foreword

I dedicate this book to God and the United States Bowling Congress.

May we all benefit from its words of wisdom.

## Simplified Bowling

By John Simanella

I feel my knowledge of the sport acquired from being a certified coach for 60 years and teaching bowling at Tri-C Cuyahoga Community College as part of the college curriculum for twenty years inspired me to write this book.

In order to simplify numbers, I will use writer's liberty to round out numbers.

The approach to the foul line is fifteen to sixteen feet. From the foul line to the headpin is sixty feet.

The pins are 15" tall and  $4\frac{3}{4}$ " wide at the belly. The pins, center to center, are 12" apart. The ball diameter is  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " wide.

The lanes are divided into thirty-nine boards- twenty for right handers and nine-teen for left handers. Since the ratio is twenty to sixty or one to three, every board you move right, the ball will finish three inches left at the pins. For example, if you leave a 5-10 split, you move 3 boards right, hit strike ball target, and the ball will finish nine inches left. You might say, the ball is  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " wide so I will not hit the 5 pin. You forget, I said the pins are five inches wide so two and half inches will protrude. As a result, the angle to the pin results in a conversion.

The mental phase of the game is knowledge. Knowledge plus practice equals skill. Skill plus practice equals competence. Competence plus practice equals confidence. If you have it in your head - you can apply it on the lanes.

The three phases of the sport is C.A.C-  
Control – Accuracy – Consistency.

By control, have a ball that you feel comfortable with. The USBC testing department told me the impact of a 14-15-16-pound ball is negligible. Thirteen pounds and under deflect more and depend on hand position for drive.

Accuracy depends on the use of the arrows on the lane as your target instead of looking at the pins. Remember, in order to be truly accurate, a second target is required for true accuracy. As on a rifle barrel, there is a sight on the front and one on the back – both sights have to be on the target for accuracy.

Consistency is achieved through proper shoulder alignment with the target and follow through toward the ear. As an example, three pin is your ear and the nose is the headpin. If your follow through goes toward your nose, the ball will go left, so bury the thumb in your ear.

Fred Borden states, the body bends 15° at the waist and the knee bend is 20°. Maintain this throughout the delivery until the fourth step. At this time, the knee bends lower. To determine your starting point on the approach, place the back of your heels at the foul line, walk four normal steps away and then add one half step to accommodate the slide.

This is a basic way to determine your starting point. You may have to make an adjustment so your sliding foot stops about three inches short of the foul line.

It is important that the movement of the arm coincides with the movement of the leg.

First, take your stance facing the target, press your elbow to your side and rotate your arm with the ball so it is clear of the body. This prevents round housing of the ball and results in a true pendulum of the swing. The fingers are

pointing up and thumb at the three o'clock. We recommend the four-step delivery.

1. On the first step of your right leg, your arm will push the ball out.
2. On the second step with your left leg, gravity will pull your arm down.
3. On the third step with your right leg, the ball will be in the arm pit area, shoulder high.
4. On the fourth step, gravity will pull the ball down to your ankle.

At all times, the hand remains behind the ball, and all parts of the arm movement comes from the shoulder arm joint pivot. No muscle of the arm is involved.

Turn and lift is initiated by rotating the arm inwards. At the point of release at the ankle, your fingers should be pointing straight up and as your wrist turn coincides with the rotating arm movement. At this time, the thumb should be out of the thumb hole and your fingers pressed against the inner part of finger holes.

On the follow through, the ball is released with a push from the lower part of the palm and the thumb pointing at the target. The arm rotation promotes turn and lift.

At the height of the follow through, the hand will be in the hand shake position. At this point, the middle finger will be parallel to the floor. At no time does the middle finger go past horizontal (John Jowdy).

If your finger ends pointing down, it means you are topping the ball. As a result, you are killing the action of the ball.

At the release of the ball, your trailing foot should never lose contact with the floor. This is why Lind's shoes have a piece of leather on the top of the trailing shoe. This tripod creates stability and accuracy.

The pocket (17<sup>th</sup> board) is important but in reality, the angle of entry in the pocket is the main factor for strikes. The ball must finish five pin to eight pin.

If the ball finished five pin toward seven pin, the result is a ten pin spare. Why? The answer is the ball hits the front of the three pin, causing it to go straight back, hitting the left side of the six pin causing it to go to the side board and rebound past the ten pin. Sometimes, the pin rebound knocks down the ten pin for a lucky strike.

The solution is a slight move right with your stance. Maintaining your same target causes the ball to finish higher on the head pin and hits the left side of the three-pin resulting in a true domino effect (3-6-10).

The old adage, make your spares, the strike will take care of itself. All good bowlers make their spares.

As I told you, the only time your shoulders are parallel to the foul line is on your first delivery at the pocket (1-3).

Any spare right of the headpin, you stand opposite the first arrow on the left side, you rotate so your shoes –waist – shoulders point toward the target. You aim your breastbone at the target. You must maintain that angle throughout the delivery.

For instance, you leave the ten pin, you do the above, but you release the ball between your third and fourth arrows toward the right side of the ten pin, you may have to make a slight adjustment at the arrows to accommodate your ball finish.

To convert the six pin spare, you move your shoes three boards right using the third arrow as your target. To convert the three pin, you move your shoes three boards right of your six pin stance still using the third arrow target.

Any spare left of the headpin, your stance starts at the first arrow (5<sup>th</sup> board). You pivot facing your target (7 pin) point your shoes – hips – shoulders at the target, aim your breastbone at the right side of the seven pin, releasing the ball between the second and third arrows on the right.

At the four pin, you move your stance three boards left, releasing the ball between the second and third arrows.

At the two pin, you move your stance three boards left of your four pin stance using the second arrow.

At all times, you must maintain the angle created by the spare conversion. At all spares, your breastbone will point at the right side of the pin. Again, you might have to make slight adjustments. By doing this, you will be utilizing the full twenty-one and three quarters inches ( $8\frac{1}{2}$ " ball X 2 and  $4\frac{3}{4}$ " of pin belly) in spare conversion.

In a perfect strike, the ball contacts four pins (1-3-5-9 pins), domino effect knocks down the remaining pins. The five pin takes care of the eight pin, headpin to two to four- seven pins. The three pin to six pin to ten pin.

A good way to learn how to throw a hook, use a miniature football. Pretend you are throwing an under arm lateral pass. Your fingers will impart a spiral spin to the ball. This is the same motion you do as you release the bowling ball.

Remember, the football must spiral, not wobble.

As Dick Weber once told me, if you miss a spare, forget about it. Don't let it ruin your focus. Instead, remember every frame is another game.

For a more detailed version of this book, I recommend reading two books:

“Par Bowling- The Challenge.”

By Tom Kouros

Or

“Bowl to Win”

By Fred Borden and Jeri Edwards.