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September 2011

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MYTH BUSTING
THE TRUTH ABOUT
ADJUSTING BALL SPEED

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Combine for College
Prospects connected
youth bowlers with
college coaches.



NATIONAL NEWS

Maybe President Barak Obama should listen to his bowling constituents more often! The bowling community cringed in 2008 when the newly elected President of the United States suggested that he might tear out the two-lane White House bowling alley and replace it with a basketball court. With strong protest having been lodged by bowlers nationwide, including official responses from USBC and BPAA, President Obama kept the Harry S. Truman Bowling Alley and added a basketball court elsewhere in the White House. According to ABC News, the move proved to be a popular one. Official visitor logs released by the administration show that more than 4,100 have visited the White House lanes since Obama took office. In May 2011 alone, 230 bowlers tossed balls down the Truman Alley. And that basketball court President Obama insisted on building? A mere 60 visitors showed interest in shooting hoops in May.



THE VOTERS HAVE SPOKEN: Business is booming on the White House bowling lanes. **CLICK ON THE PLAY BUTTON** ABOVE FOR A VIDEO CLIP FROM THE WHITE HOUSE



Hall of Fame Raises \$61,000 During Bowl Expo

A bevy of fund-raising events during Bowl Expo, including an auction on the field at Cowboys Stadium, generated more than \$61,000 for the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame.

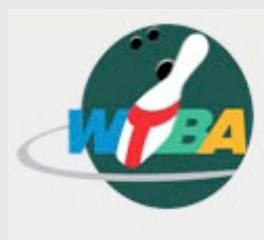
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Youth Events Merge To Create \$250,000 Tournament

The USBC Junior Gold Championships and the BPAA High School Singles Championships will join to form the North Pointe Junior Gold Championships, with \$250,000 in scholarships available to youth bowlers.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



New World Bowling Tour Event Scheduled For 2012

Sunset Station Casino and Hotel will host the World Tenpin Bowling Association's first owned and operated World Bowling Tour event in Henderson, Nev.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



USBC Hall of Famer Roger Tessman Dies At 84

Former ABC executive director Roger Tessman died Aug. 14 after a brief illness. Tessman was 84. In addition to his ABC post, Tessman was president of the Federation Internationale des Quilleurs, the IOC-recognized governing body of bowling, from 1984-85.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



Exclusive Welcome Package For New Members

USBC has partnered with the leading brands in bowling to create a welcome package for new members that includes offers for equipment and coaching.

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Hamilton Elected Hall of Fame Chairman

Luby Publishing president Keith Hamilton was elected Chairman and President of the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame.

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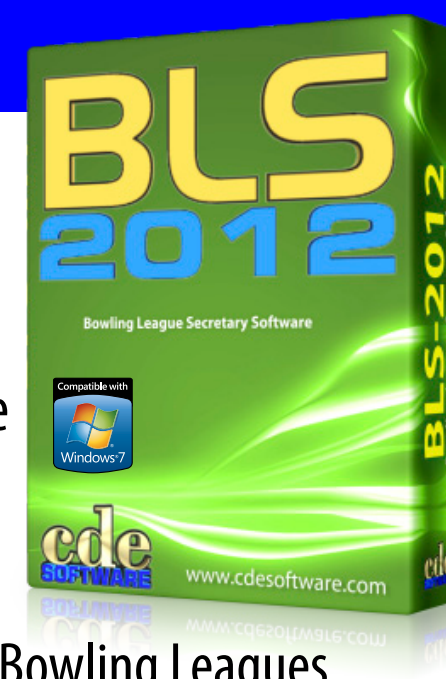
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Bulletin Board

ASSESSING TALENT

The First Bowling Combine Brought College Prospects And Coaches Together Under The Watchful Eye Of The USBC Coaching Staff

More than 70 youth bowlers descended on the International Training and Research Center in Arlington, Texas, in August to take part in the first Bowling Combine for College Prospects.

The combine was for youth bowlers with college eligibility looking to learn about their games and show off their talents to college

coaches. Over the course of the two-day program they were put through tests that measured bowling skills, athleticism and bowling IQs.

"This has been two years in the mak-

ing," said Team USA head coach Rod Ross, who along with program director Bryan O'Keefe, Team USA assistant coach Kim Terrell-Kearney and USBC performance specialist Nick Bohanan,

evaluated the young bowlers. "We tried to develop measurables that took simple bowling average out of the equation. We're trying to create a benchmark that will allow us to evaluate all bowlers, year after year."

In addition to being evaluated in the gym and in the classroom, the youth bowlers spent four hours on the lanes. Bowling-specific drills included spare shooting, repeatability in launch, break point and release, minimum

and maximum RPM, and accuracy in increasing and decreasing ball speed.

Each bowler left the combine with a detailed summary of their results and their Performance Evaluation Test (PET) score, information they can forward to bowling programs around the country. The PET score allows bowlers to measure themselves against bowlers at future combines and, eventually, against all bowlers. Additionally, the youth bowlers had

an opportunity to interview with representatives from 18 collegiate bowling programs. The combine gave college coaches the opportunity to watch and evaluate players they otherwise might never have been able to see.

"The coaches all agreed that some sort of uniform evaluation of college-eligible bowlers would be extremely helpful in the development of their programs and the sport in general," added Ross.



USBC coaches conducted the tests.

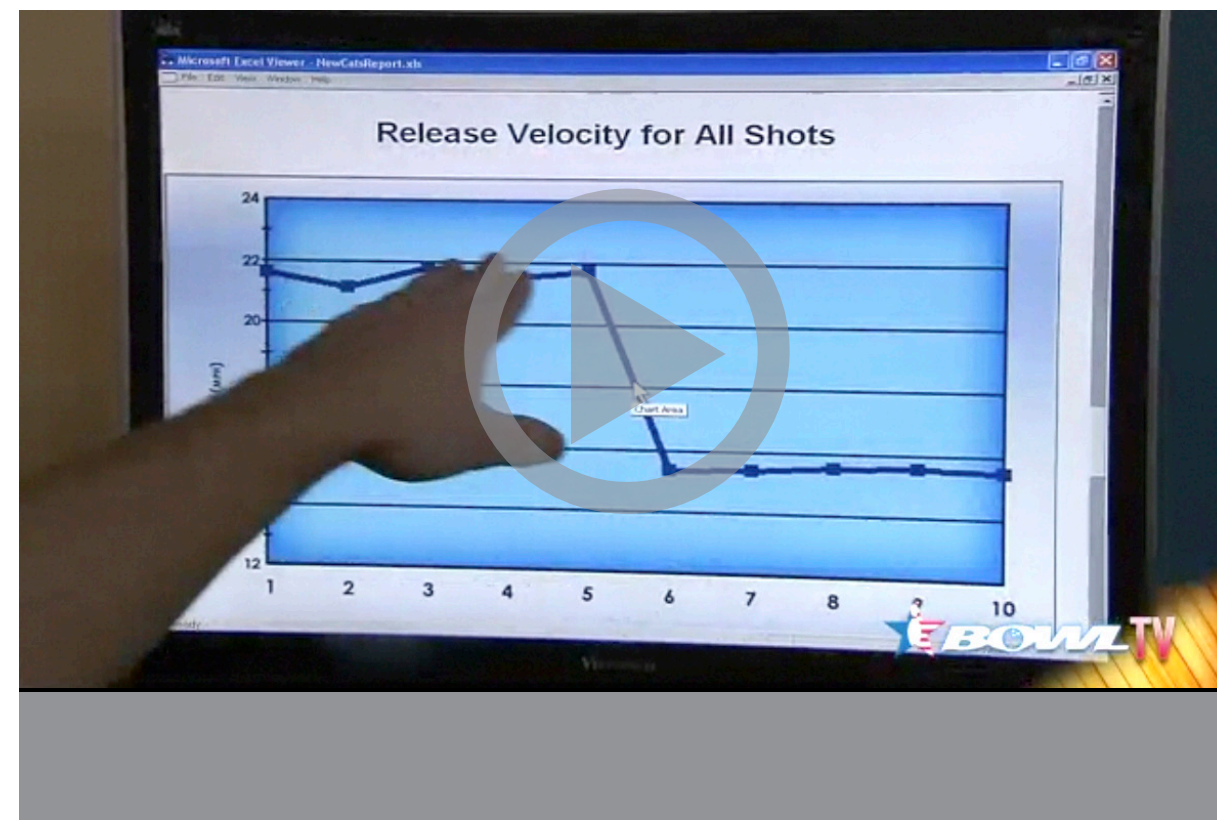


CHART TOPPERS: Click on the play button (above) to view footage from the recent Bowling Combine for College Prospects.



Youth bowlers received interview time with college coaches.

MILEY 'CLIMBS' INTO BOWLING HALL

IF THE LATEST

Celebrity Bowling Hall of Fame voting is any indication, bowling fans have a fascination with female pop stars.

Songwriter/actor Miley Cyrus, who is regularly spotted bowling with friends and attending charity bowling events, was tabbed as the 2011 inductee in the celebrity wing of bowling's hall of fame a year after fellow pop star Taylor Swift received the same honor. Cyrus, the 18-year-old daughter of country singer Billy Ray Cyrus, outdistanced fellow teen pop star Justin Bieber in fan voting that was conducted on GoBowling.com from mid-July until early August.

Cyrus and Bieber were joined on the 2011 ballot by the Jonas Brothers, actors Jeff Bridges and Bill Murray, basketball legend Michael Jordan, talk show host



Miley Cyrus

Jimmy Fallon, Lady Gaga, rapper Lil Wayne and Kim Kardashian.

"We are honored to welcome Miley into the Hall of Fame," said Steve Johnson, executive director of the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America, "and we are grateful for her support of the great sport of bowling."

"From pop musicians and Hollywood stars to professional athletes and hip hop artists,

this year's inductees represent the surging popularity, diverse appeal and inclusive experience that is bowling today."

They also represent a direct link to mainstream media, as was evidenced by the number of media outlets that picked up on the story, including *The Washington Post*, HuffingtonPost.com, nbcports.com, thebiglead.com, E! online and starpulse.com.

Barnes To The Rescue



BARNES RESUCES MOTHER-DAUGHTER DAY: Click on the play button (above) to view the recent Today Show bowling outing.

WHEN KATHIE LEE GIFFORD and Hoda Kotb, fourth-hour co-hosts of NBC's Today Show, decided to take their respective mothers on a mother-daughter excursion, they decided bowling would be the perfect form of family entertainment and competition.

The four ladies went to Bowlmor Lanes in mid-town Manhattan, where they laced up and took to the lanes. After several frames of missed pockets and gutter balls, expert advice was sorely needed.

Enter USBC spokesperson and PBA star Chris Barnes. With a modicum of coaching the ladies were quickly adding pins.

"Anytime you get the chance to go to New York and be a part of something as big as the Today Show, it's a great experience and great opportunity for bowling," said Barnes of the top-rated morning news show. Today averages more than 5 million viewers a day.

Definition of a Perfect Storm?

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Technique



Mike Fagan

CONTROL YOUR ROLL

INCREASING/DECREASING BALL SPEED

By Bryan O'Keefe

Bowling is about the ability to repeat shots and the readiness to adjust to changing conditions.

Today, we have bowling balls that absorb oil and we compete on an invisible playing field that changes with virtually every shot that goes down the lane. Bowlers need to constantly adjust to those changes.

Too often bowlers immediately feel the need to adjust by moving on the approach, left-to-right across the lane. Remember, the lane is 60 feet long but only 39 inches wide. There's much more room to make front-to-back than left-to-right adjustments. Sometimes the best adjustment is stay on the same line and

simply increase or decrease the ball speed to better read the changes in the lane. If you need the ball to slow down faster, throw it slower. If you need the ball to not slow down quite as quickly, throw it faster.

Of course, increasing and decreasing ball speed is not a new concept in bowling, but the manner in which people attempt to adjust their ball speed is the subject of considerable debate.

One misconception is that you can adjust your ball speed by using your upper body. It's a mistake to think that you can keep your lower body the same and simply use more muscle to throw the ball harder, or slow the ball down by grabbing it more and forcing yourself to throw the ball slower. In truth, you may

“The best way to increase or decrease ball speed is by using your legs, not your upper body.”

actually accomplish faster or slower ball speed, but your accuracy and consistency is going to be very difficult to repeat.

The best way to increase or decrease ball speed is by using your legs, not your upper body. Using your lower body to adjust your tempo to the line will allow you to maintain a fluid, natural swing and will greatly increase your ability to repeat shots.

To increase ball speed, start your approach a step behind your normal starting point, which will give you more room so that you can walk faster. By moving faster to the line, your stride will be slightly longer. That extra pace to the line will get your lower body working while your upper body stays relaxed and ball speed will still increase.

Conversely, if you want to decrease your ball speed, move up a foot in your approach. Whether you're using a four-step or five-step



SPEED THRILLS: Click on the play button (above) to view Team USA Assistant Coach Bryan O'Keefe discuss how to increase and decrease your ball speed.

approach, your steps will be shorter and your pace will be slower.

Naturally, a byproduct of quicker/slower tempo to the line is that your timing must adjust with the tempo, and that's where the biggest misconception about adjusting ball speed comes in.

Prevailing wisdom suggests that in order to throw the ball harder you start the ball higher (lengthening your swing), and to slow it down you start the ball lower in your stance (shortening your swing).

By adjusting your tempo to the

line, the opposite is actually true. Start with the ball about six inches lower if you want to increase ball speed, and start with the ball slightly higher if you want to decrease ball speed.

Confused?

Here's how it works: By speeding up your tempo to the line, you've actually got less time to get the ball from your stance, through your swing and to the release point. Let's say your normal swing takes four seconds from stance to release point. There's a natural tempo, so your feet

are instinctively going to keep track of that to keep you in your timing. Now, if you cut your swing to 3.5 seconds, your feet are going to move faster to stay in synch.

It's all about the distance your swing travels. If you take a shorter swing, your feet automatically have to go faster in order to stay in time. In essence, your feet have to move faster to make up for the lost distance in your swing. If your swing is longer, your feet have to move slower to maintain proper timing.

So, to increase ball speed, move back one foot on the approach and adjust the ball position six inches lower in your stance. To decrease ball speed, start one foot forward on the approach and position the ball six inches higher in your stance.

To a certain extent, the distance of your swing dictates your foot speed. Adjusting the length of the swing shorter or longer than normal will allow you to increase or decrease ball speed.

That can come in handy because often times you're on the right part of the lane. Instead of moving left or right, adjust your ball speed to adapt to the changing lane conditions.

— *Bryan O'Keefe is Assistant Coach and Facility Manager at the International Training and Research Center in Arlington, Texas.*

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FITNESS

STABILIZATION IS HIP!

Strong hips will aid leg strength and balance

By Nick Bohanan

Bowling puts your body in positions it is not always used to being in, so it's important to have good leg strength and good balance, particularly at the finish. Part of establishing good strength and balance comes from hip stabilization.

Hip stabilization gives you strength in the way balance does. The primary benefit of stable hips is added strength at the finish, but stabilization also helps your hips stay level in each step of the approach. If you have weakness in one hip or the other, it can affect your posture from side to side and front to back as you move from one step to another.

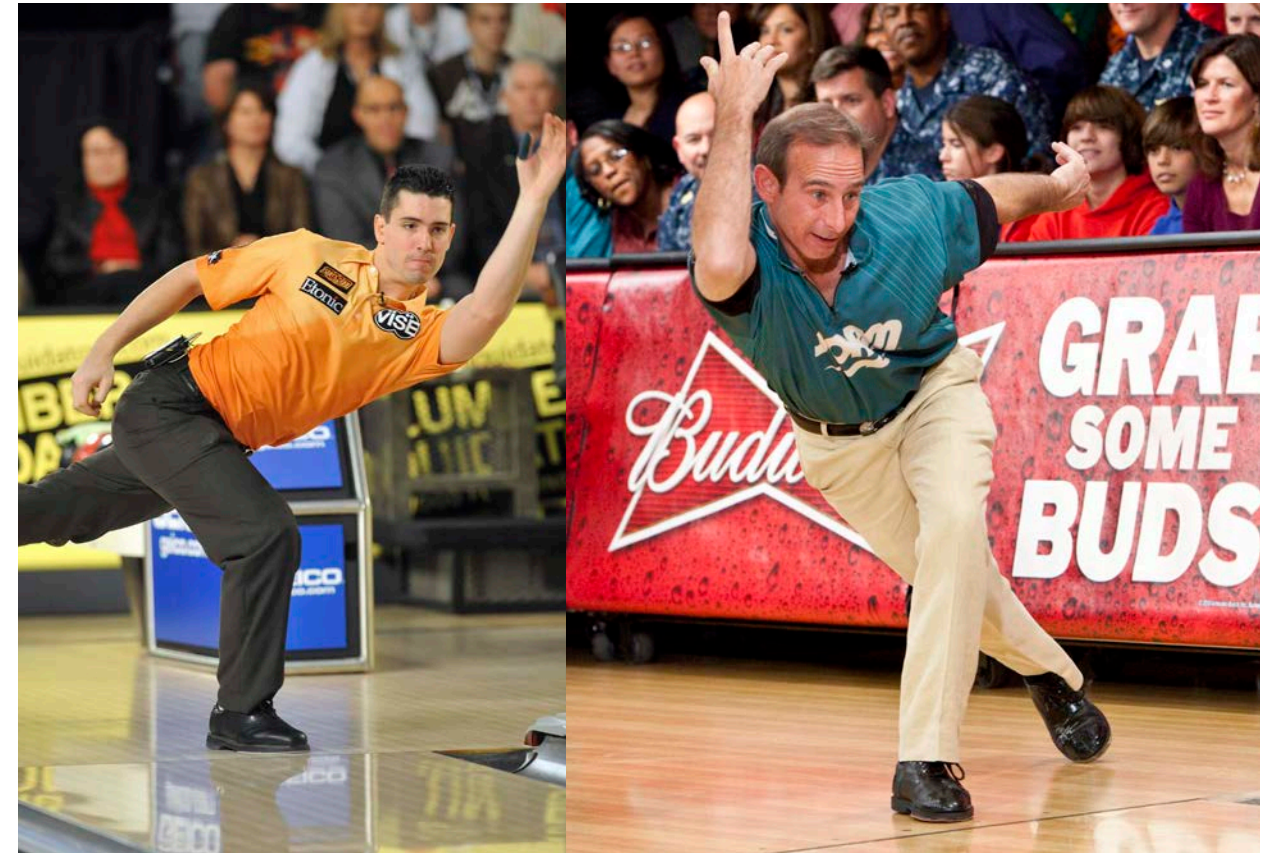
“In the finish position your slide hip has the greatest strain. You still need flexibility in that area, but you also need strength and stabilization.”

Hip stabilization is mostly about the pelvic bones. Your hips are ball-and-socket joints and the pelvis is the bone that connects your hips with your spine. There's a little bit of movement in that area and it needs to be stable in order to provide your lower body with support.

If you're not strong in those areas you tend to compensate with one side or the other. The result is pain in one hip or the other, or in your lower back. Because of the natural imbalance in weight distribution, bowling can accelerate that pain.

In the finish position your slide hip has the greatest strain. You still need flexibility in that area, but you also need strength and stabilization.

Also, weak glutes are prevalent in bowling. Many bowlers are



THE FINISHING TOUCH: The greatest strain on a bowler's hips comes at the finish, when there is an imbalance in weight distribution.

bent forward at the finish, which strains the glutes. There are a few exercises that can help strengthen the gluteus medius, which correlate with abduction, extending one leg away from the other.

First, lay on your side. Lift the top leg straight up and away, tightening your glutes while relaxing your abs. You only need to raise your leg 12-18 inches to be effective. (Going higher than 18 inches reduces the effectiveness of the exercise.) Hold the leg at

that angle for five seconds. Do three sets of 10.

The other exercise is the Clam Shell. Lay on your side with your knees bent at about 60 degrees. Keeping your ankles together, separate your knees, lifting the top knee only. Do three sets of 10.

These exercises will help strengthen your hips and make you more stable through your approach and to the finish.

— Nick Bohanan is United States Bowling Congress Sports Performance Specialist.

A stylized blue icon of a person with a large circular head and a rounded body. Above the head is a thought bubble consisting of two smaller circles. The icon is set against a light blue background with a subtle gradient.

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By Stephen Padilla

THE SHOT CYCLE

**Like Riding A Bike,
Once You've Learned
To Use This Shot Ritual,
You'll Never Forget It.**

Bowling is to a large extent about repeating shots, but it's more than just that. To be a high-level bowler you also need to be able to process and adjust.

The need for better understanding of the process, or what some call "The Shot Cycle," became clear to me during the recent Bowling Combine at the International Training & Research Center in Arlington. The combine featured more than 70 very solid high school bowlers. Their skill level was probably very similar to that of the average league bowler.

In one session the bowlers were asked to repeat shots in a 10-shot cycle. They were instructed to hit the same target path or target line on each shot, keeping their feet in the same spot and their eyes on the same target. We were looking for consistent execution.

What was immediately apparent was that these bowlers didn't really have a process in place that prepared them to repeat the same shot over and over. And, not surprisingly, the results were inconsistent. It was easy to see that there were a few quick and simple things the bowlers could do to better prepare themselves mentally and physically to repeat shots.

That's where the shot cycle comes in. The bowlers' inconsistency stemmed from not preparing themselves the same way each and every shot. If you don't prepare yourself the same way each time, why would you expect to get the same result each time?

Watch the best professional bowlers. Or the best basketball free throw shooters. Or the top hitters in baseball. They all use a shot cycle.

It begins with the Think Circle. Before they step on the settee, get to the free throw line or step into the batter's box they're starting to focus on the task at hand.

Then there is the Pre-Shot Routine, which is a physical act. For all elite athletes it is a consistent act...picking



THE SHOT CYCLE

Keys to successful performance

The Think Circle: Beginning of the shot cycle. Prior to stepping onto the approach, the bowler's initial decisions regarding the next delivery.

Pre-Shot Routine: The physical act of preparation before each delivery. Consistency is critical.

Execution: Delivery of the shot, including the gathering of information from the ball's path on the lane and through the pins.

Reaction: The body and mind's response to the results of the shot.

Evaluation: Mental processing of what just happened.

The Think Circle: Return to the beginning of the Shot Cycle.

up the ball the same way, wiping their brow with their left hand or adjusting their batting gloves and helmet. It is, in every sense, a routine.

The third step is the Execution, the actual delivery of the shot, free throw or swing. We're not concerned here with the specifics of executing the shot. This is about the process on each side of the shot that will help increase your chances for consistency.

The fourth step in the cycle is the Reaction. We all have a physical reaction to the results. Sometimes it's elation, sometimes despair.

Finally, there is Evaluation, which is the gathering of information from the shot.

And then the cycle immediately begins all over again.

So, how can you develop your own shot cycle? It's easy, but realize that it's not a matter of practicing it as much as understanding the need for a system in order to prepare you to execute the same shot.

Once you recognize the need for a process, recognize what your process currently entails. Take inventory of your current shot cycle. Write down what you do that makes you feel comfortable setting up a shot. Inventory might entail something as simple as what you do when you pick up the bowling ball from the return. Pick it up the same way, with the same hand every time. Do you wipe the ball off with a towel? Do you use a grip sack



HITTING FOR THE CYCLE: Click on the play button (above) to view USBC Coaching Specialist Stephen Padilla explain the benefits of the Shot Cycle.

to take the moisture away from your hand? If you do, incorporate that into every shot. How many times have you seen Walter Ray Williams Jr. step onto the approach and NOT blow into the thumb hole of his bowling ball?

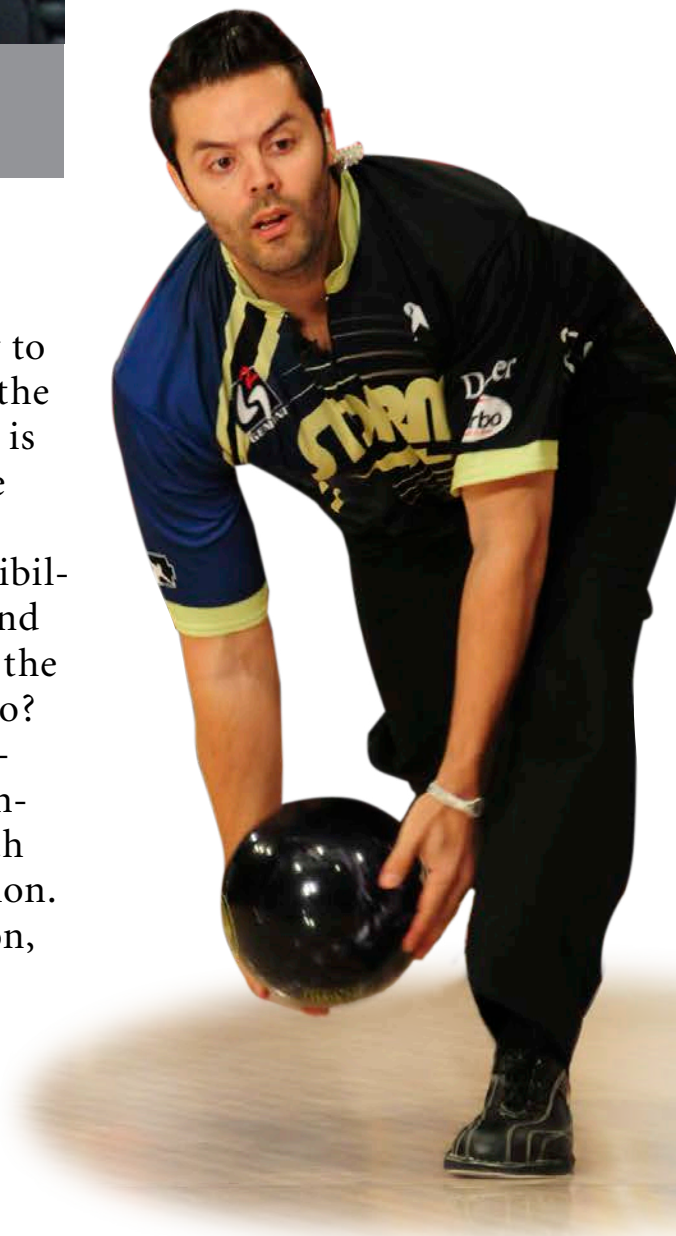
This also goes to your step onto the approach. How do you line up with the dots? Do you use the slide foot as the starting point, or the non-slide foot? Use that as a reference for your toes on every shot.

The pre-shot routine will become second nature, which will allow you to shift your focus to making decisions on how to execute the shot. Again, we're not

getting into the details of how to execute. We're going through the mental process of "everything is in place, now let my body take over."

You also have some responsibility during the shot. Observe and absorb what's happening. Did the shot do what you expected it to? Did it follow the target you intended it to follow? At the combine we weren't concerned with ball reaction, just shot repetition. But for a bowler in competition, you're going to need to process how the ball reacted to the lanes as well. Did it break where you expected? If not, what adjustments

"The pre-shot routine will become second nature, which will allow you to shift your focus to making decisions on how to execute the shot."



need to be made? Watching the shot and processing what you see will allow you to make proper adjustments decision-wise when you get back into the think cycle.

This has to be separate from the physical reaction you have after throwing a shot. You don't want emotion to get in the way of performance. Again, watch the elite players. When they get back on the approach and get ready to execute again, they've moved past whatever emotion the previous shot elicited. You need to get past your physical reaction quickly and start processing the information in order to restart the cycle.

The pre-shot routine and post-shot processing are there to help you keep your decisions in perspective.

The takeaway is that you should understand what a shot cycle is and how it helps you prepare for each and every shot. Whether you're throwing shots just to execute and repeat, or throwing shots in competition, understanding the process and knowing how the pieces of that process fit into the shot is what makes good players great players, and great players elite players.

— Stephen Padilla is Coaching Specialist at the United States Bowling Congress

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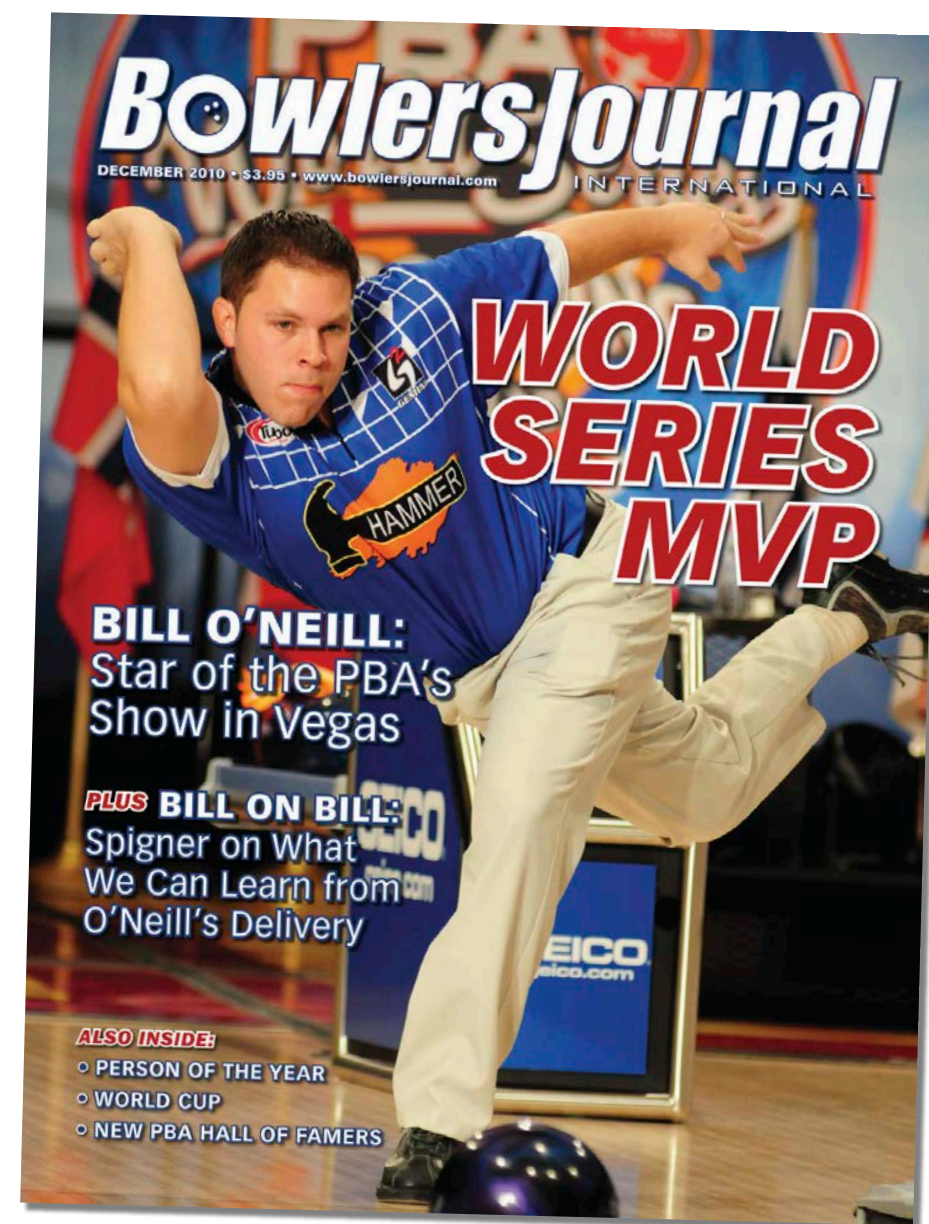
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