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# US BOWLER

February 2011

## MASTERS NEXT?

CAN TOC CHAMP  
MIKA KOIVUNIEMI  
HOLD OFF THE  
SPORT'S YOUNG  
STARS?

THE  
RIGHT SHOT  
DIFFERENT  
SITUATIONS CALL  
FOR A DIFFERENT  
APPROACH

BOWLING  
FOR SOUP  
ROCKS THE  
TOURNAMENT  
OF CHAMPIONS





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## NATIONAL NEWS

January was a busy month in the world of bowling. Not only did Team USA member Chris Barnes claim the PBA World Championship title on Jan. 16, defeating fellow Team USA member Bill O'Neill, 267-237, to become just the sixth player in history to complete bowling's triple crown, but bowling fans were treated to a wild Tournament of Champions show that ultimately saw Finland's Mika Koivuniemi snag the \$250,000 top prize Jan. 22. In between, the USBC Team USA Trials were contested and the final 2011 rosters were determined (see p. 8). Upcoming events in February include the live streaming of the Backhaul Direct Hoosier Classic collegiate bowling tournament exclusively on BOWL.com.



### Indiana Bowler Rolls 900

There's a new member of the official "900 Club"! Check out the video above of Bob Kammer Jr. of Crown Point, Ind., rolling his 900 on Jan. 8.

[CLICK FOR MORE](#)



### ENTRY DEADLINES EXTENDED FOR NATIONALS

You have until March 1 to register for the USBC Women's Championships and until March 4 to enter the Open Championships.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



### NEW USBC HALL OF FAMERS

Del Ballard Jr., Wayne Webb and Carol Gianotti elected to USBC Hall of Fame.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE.](#)



### USBC PARTNERS WITH HUMANA

Humana is now the official health benefit provider of USBC.

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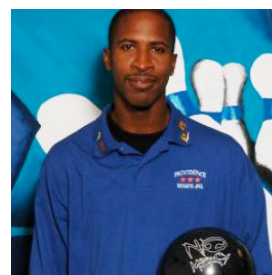
[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



### Kerm Helmer Horizon Award Winner Announced

Steve Lawson of Mahomet, Ill., wins coveted youth bowling leadership award.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



### DAVID DAHMS COACH OF THE YEAR

Marty Jones of Providence, R.I., is recognized for his coaching achievements.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



# PUBLISHED BY THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS

621 Six Flags Drive Arlington, Texas, 76011 (800) 514-BOWL

## MANAGED BY LUBY PUBLISHING

122 S. Michigan Ave.,  
Suite 1506  
Chicago, IL 60603  
(312) 341-1110

## USBC EDITORIAL STAFF

**Pete Tredwell**  
Managing Director, Media

**Jason Overstreet**  
Editorial Director

## LUBY PUBLISHING STAFF

**Keith Hamilton**  
President

**Mike Panozzo**  
Editor-In-Chief

**Jim Arehart**  
Editor

**Barbara Peltz**  
Advertising Manager

**Michael Stassus**  
Digital Content Specialist

## ADVERTISING

Headquarters | 312-341-1110

**Keith Hamilton**  
Luby Publishing, Inc.  
keithh@lubypublishing.com

## ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE

**Harry Church**  
GLM Communications, Inc.  
242 West 27th Street, Suite 1B  
New York, NY 10001

Ph: 212-929-1300 Ext. 303  
Fax: 212-929-9574

hchurch@glmcommunications.com  
www.glmcommunications.com

## UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS EXECUTIVES

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Darlene Baker • Mahomet, Ill.

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US Bowler is an official publication of the United States Bowling Congress, 621 Six Flags Drive, Arlington, Texas, 76011. E-mail: **bowlinfo@bowl.com** for membership information. Editorial and other US Bowler questions can be e-mailed to **usbowler@bowl.com**, mailed to Customer Service at the address listed above, or call (800) 514-2695, ext. 3161. For more information on USBC, visit **bowl.com**.

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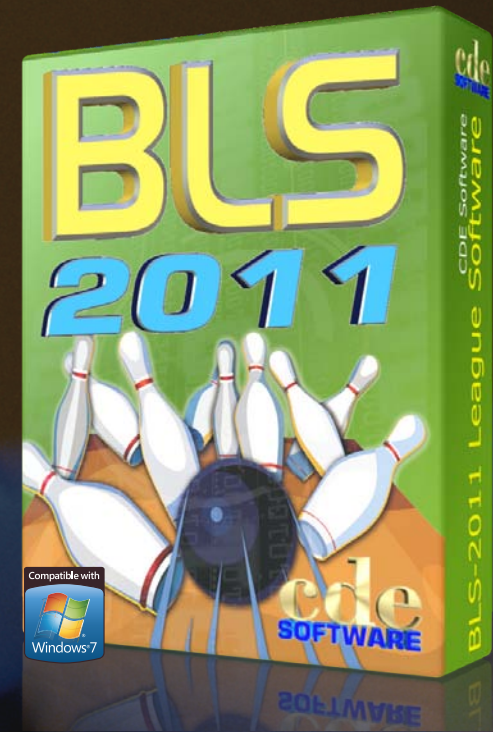
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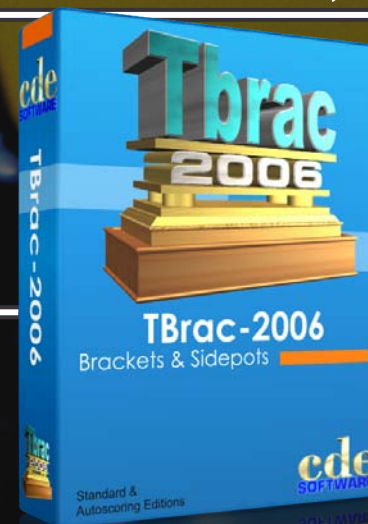
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# Bulletin Board

NEWS, NOTES AND HAPPENINGS FROM THE WORLD OF BOWLING /// FEBRUARY 2011



**ROCK-N-BOWL:** Best known for their hit single “1985,” Bowling For Soup performed their newest song, “S-S-S-Saturday” during the PBA Tournament of Champions in January.

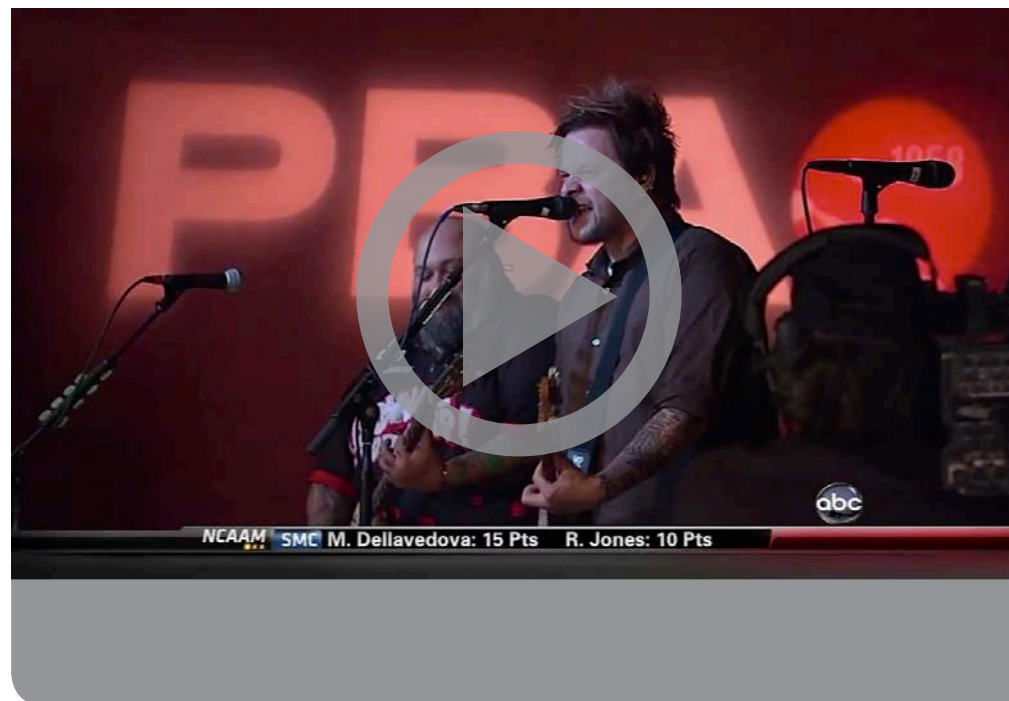
## Bowling Rocks

### Punk Rockers Bowling For Soup Play T.O.C.

**GRAMMY-NOMINATED** rock/punk band Bowling For Soup (BFS) performed its newest song, “S-S-S-Saturday,” during the ABC telecast of the \$1 million PBA Tournament of Champions finals Jan. 22 at Red Rock Lanes in Las Vegas.

The single is the first from the band’s upcoming 11th studio album, *Fishin’ For Woos*, which will be released May 3.

Longtime PBA star and Finland native Mika Koivuniemi of Hartland, Mich., defeated top qualifier



**S-S-S-SATURDAY:** Click on the play button (bottom left) to see Bowling For Soup’s live performance at the Tournament of Champions.

Tom Smallwood of Saginaw, Mich., 269-207, to win the unprecedented \$250,000 first prize in the \$1 million event.

This isn’t the first time Bowling For Soup members have been to a pro bowling event. BFS lead singer Jaret Riddick attended the 2010 Tournament of Champions, witnessing the historic victory by Kelly Kulick from the front row.

“As you can imagine, we’ve done our share of bowling alley appearances,” said Riddick. “None have been as exciting for me as attending last year’s Tournament of Champions as a fan. It was amazing to watch history being made when Chris (Barnes) took on Kelly Kulick in the championship match

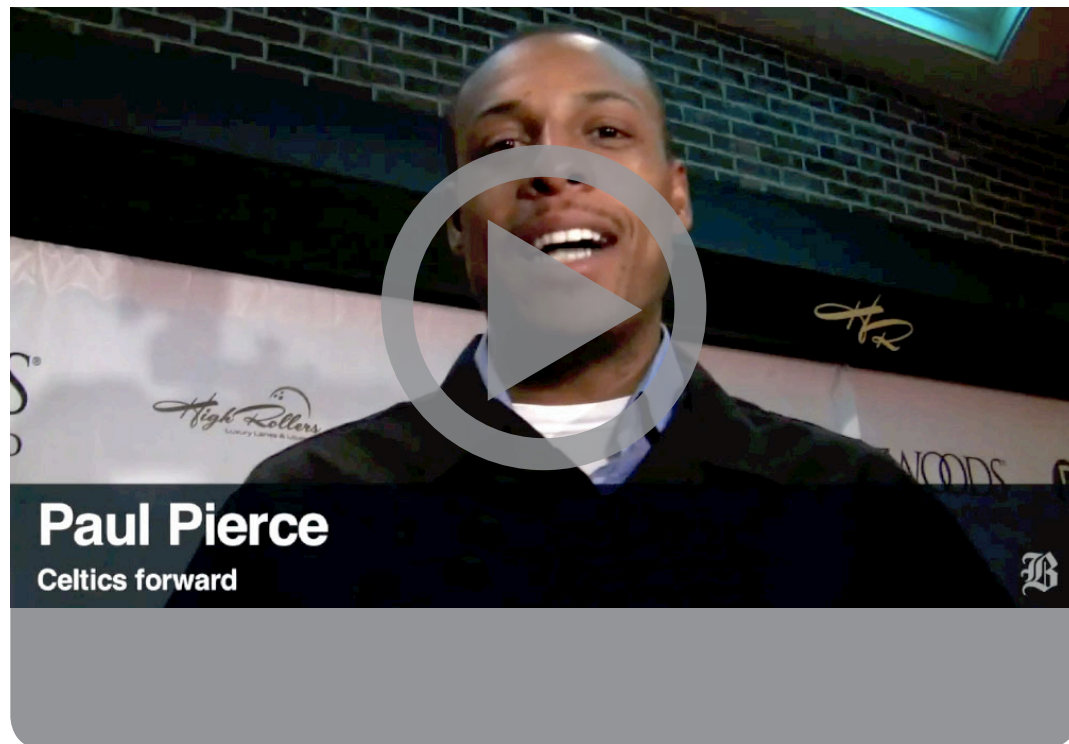
**Can’t wait for the album to come out? Go to [www.bowlingforsoup.com/pba](http://www.bowlingforsoup.com/pba) to download it for free!**

and to witness the first woman ever winning a major PBA event.

“When the PBA invited us to perform this year, we jumped at the chance to participate in this major sports event.”

Bowling For Soup is best known for its singles “1985”, “High School Never Ends” and the Grammy-nominated “Girl All The Bad Guys Want”. In addition, the band has had songs in the movies, “17 Again”, “Ice Age 2” and “Freaky Friday” and written theme songs for “Jimmy Neutron” and Disney’s “Phineas & Ferb.”





**CELTIC PRIDE:**  
Click on the play button (bottom left) to check out NBA star Paul Pierce's bowling skills.

# Boston Celtics Bowl For Charity

**NBA STAR** Paul Pierce and his Boston Celtics teammates feel at home on the hardwood — even if they are bowling, not playing basketball.

The basketball players took to the lanes Dec. 15 at High Rollers at Foxwoods in Mashantucket, Conn., for Pierce's "The Truth Strikes Again" annual bowling tournament as part of Pierce's Truth on Health campaign.

Pierce got a bit of help from his teammates, as Kevin Garnett, Ray Allen, Kendrick Perkins, Glen Davis, Nate Robinson, Avery Bradley and Marquis Daniels were in attendance. Joining them was Red Sox third

baseman Kevin Youkilis.

Pierce established The Truth Fund in 2002 to provide educational and life-enriching opportunities for underprivileged children. His Truth on Health Campaign was launched in 2009, and encourages young people to lead healthier lifestyles.

"Staying active and eating healthy have been very important to my success, so I think it's critical for kids to understand that exercise and nutrition are important keys to leading a happy and fulfilling life," Pierce said. "I was really excited by the success of last year's event, and I think that this year The Truth Strikes Again will be even better."

## CRAZY SHOT BURNS UP INTERNET

**THE AMAZING** footage of Josh Scanlan's errant shot during the BOWL.com live streaming coverage of the USBC Team USA Trials in early January hit more than 1 million views online!

Scanlan's shot apparently got away from him and he ended up striking .... on the next lane over to the left!

The shot has been featured on the homepage of Yahoo!, AOL.com, the Jimmy Kimmel Live show, ESPN's SportsCenter, CNN Headline News, numerous local television stations and various major blog sites such as The Huffington Post, Deadspin and The Big Lead.

Click the play button below to check it out.



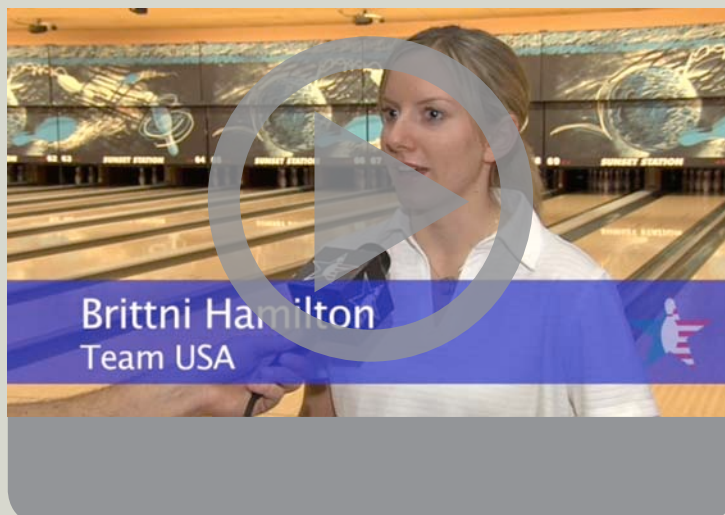


## TEAM USA TRIALS

**SCOTT BOYLE** of Salida, Calif., and Shannon Pluhowsky of Kettering, Ohio, scored victories Jan. 7 at the 2011 USBC Team USA Trials. [CLICK HERE](#) for the whole 2011 team.

Boyle led the men's field with a 36-game total of 8,180, an average of 227.2, while Pluhowsky shot 7,933, an average of 220.3, at Sunset Station's Strike Zone Bowling Center in suburban Las Vegas.

Joining Boyle on the men's Team USA were E.J. Tackett of Huntington, Ind., and Mike Fagan of Patchogue, N.Y. On the women's side, Brenda Padilla of Mansfield, Texas, Brittni Hamilton of Webster, N.Y., and Kim Yioulos of Rochester, N.Y., joined Pluhowsky, who had previously been selected to the team.



# SUPER BOWL COMES TO THE BOWLING CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

**ONE OF** the premier annual events leading up to the Super Bowl, the NFL Super Bowl Celebrity Bowling Classic comes to the Dallas/Fort Worth region, the "Bowling Capital of the World." In addition to serving as the host city of Super Bowl XLV, to be played at Cowboys Stadium, Arlington is home to the International Bowling Campus which houses the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame, the International Training and Research Center and serves as headquarters for USBC and the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America.

Dual sport Hall of Famer – football and bowling – Lynn Swann returns for his fifth year as host of the Classic. Depending on when you're reading this, the two-day event may be happening now or recently finished. The



first is Feb. 2 at 300 Dallas in Addison and the second is Feb. 3 at Main Event in Fort Worth.

"The Classic has become a true Super Bowl tradition and its enduring popularity is a credit to the fun and camaraderie that you'll only find when you go bowling as well as the tremendous fundraising power of bowling events," said Swann. "Once again, all proceeds from these events will benefit the NFL Charities, a wonderful cause that enables the NFL to leave

a positive mark in communities across the nation."

Prior to the Classic, the NFL greats will team with professional bowlers to lead a private bowling clinic for local at-risk Arlington area elementary school children Feb. 2 at the International Training & Research Center.

"We couldn't be more excited to bring the Super Bowl and the NFL Super Bowl Celebrity Bowling Classic to our home, the bowling capital of the world. With more than 71 million people taking to the lanes, it has been a banner year for the bowling industry – and it is only fitting for the biggest Classic ever to be hosted less than one mile away from the International Bowling Campus," said Frank DeSocio of Strike Ten Entertainment.



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Team USA's Stefanie Nation is a true student of the game. She is constantly reading the lanes during competition, making adjustments as necessary. Like most high-level competitors, she can throw straight or hook the ball as the situation demands.

## The Right Shot FOR THE RIGHT SITUATION

**H**ow many times have you seen this at league night? You're watching a team member or some other bowler — maybe even yourself — start out hot. He or she is hitting the pocket consistently, racking up mark after mark.

Things go great that first game. The second game starts out pretty good, too, but a few misses creep in here and there. Finally, on the third game, that bowler can't hit the pocket to save his or her life. The game is all about flat shots, misses and splits.

If that sounds familiar, there's a reason for it. There are literally thousands of good bowlers out there who can put up some decent scores and maintain decent averages by basically relying on one shot. Maybe they have a good hook and they can lay the ball down exactly where they want it every time. But they never move from that spot. They never adjust to the changing oil conditions. They never take into account the varying lane surfaces. And they never really work on changing their shot or approach when it comes to spares.

To truly become a better bowler — and certainly a more versatile one — you don't necessarily need to become a student of the game, but you do need to learn a bit more about why using variations on a single shot won't be effective in the long run.

### Lane Conditions

The first things you need to know about are lane conditions, most importantly the oil on the lane. Maybe you've heard other bowlers talking about "dry" or "wet" lanes? That has to do with the oil and how that oil effects your ball



down the lane.

In a nutshell, a wet or “oily” condition means that your ball will slide further down the lane than it will on a dry condition before it hooks. When you are bowling on a wet condition, your ball seems to slide down the lane without hooking until it’s too late. When bowling on a dry condition, your ball will hook much earlier than you want it to.

The good news is that most house shots won’t fall into either of those extremes and instead fall somewhere in between. But that doesn’t mean there won’t be small degrees of “wetness” or “dryness” lane-to-lane or night-to-night that will still throw you off your game.

### Watch the Ball Reaction

When the ball hooks is as important as how much it hooks. Your job

## 3 Rules of Lane Conditions

There are really three things every bowler should think about when it comes to lane conditions:

**1. WHAT** are the lanes like when you first start to bowl on any given night? Figuring that out should be the goal of your practice time before league officially starts.

**2. WHAT** adjustments need to be made as the night goes on? Read on for a few tips about how to make those adjustments.

**3. HOW** are the other players you’re bowling with throwing their ball? Where are they placing it on the lane and how are their shots succeeding or failing? That will tell you a lot about where and how you should throw.

is to watch your shot all the way down the lane to see where the break point is. You need to remember where that point is and whether or not your shot hit the pocket the way you wanted it to. Also watch the shape of the line between the release and break point and between the break point and the pocket. Being able to accurately watch your shot requires that you remain in a balanced finish position until the ball hits the pins. There are three phases of ball reaction — skid, hook and roll. You need to recognize and watch them all so you can file the information in your brain for your next shot.

### Move Toward the Miss

When you start to need to make adjustments (and you will eventually on any given league night), the rule of thumb is to move in the



**TRANSITIONING FOR SUCCESS:** Click on the play button (above left) for tips from Team USA star Chris Barnes discussing oil transition tips.

direction of the miss, while keeping the same target on the lane. The concept of that adjustment is based on the use of a pivot, with the pivot being the target on the lane. If the ball misses to the left of the intended pins, move left on the approach. If the ball misses to the right of the intended pins, move right on the approach.

Bowlers often will need to make that same adjustment several times during a match. To do that effectively, you must be aware of your starting point on the approach and how the ball was released. That’s a bit more memorization than you might be used to, but the more you keep those in mind, the more it will become second

nature and pay big dividends on your scores.

### Master the Straight Ball

As conditions on your lanes change, it can make it tricky to find the right line. Rolling a straight second ball will help you on both oily and dry lanes. Remember that a lot of oil on the lanes will cause the ball to roll straighter no



### Learning Curve

IF YOU'RE already a straight ball shooter, you should learn to curve or "hook" the ball, too, and add that shot to your arsenal. The easiest way to learn to roll a hook is to set your hand in a handshake position. Right-handers should turn their bowling hand slightly so that the thumb points toward the 11 o'clock position on a clock face. A left-hander should turn his or her bowling hand so that the thumb points toward the 1 o'clock position.

The hand should remain in this position through the entire approach and release. In the finish position, it will look like you are shaking hands with your target. Because the thumb will release first, the fingers will put a bit of side rotation on the ball and make it curve.



**SHAKE HANDS WITH THE PINS:** Tom Daugherty set the low score record for a televised bowling match (100) during the Tournament of Champions, but he normally throws a very nice ball. Notice how he goes from straight hand position near the end of his backswing in the first photo to a classic "handshake" finish after release.



matter how you throw it and dry lanes can make the ball hook too much. By throwing a straight ball, you will increase the forward rotation on the ball and reduce the side roll, which decreases the tendency of the ball to hook.

Try these tech-

niques to throw a straighter ball: Point your forearm at your target line through the back and forward swings and release. Alternately, point your ring finger at your lane target at the point of release. Both of those will help keep your hand behind the ball



**IS STRAIGHTER GREATER?:** Click on the play button (above left) for tips from Team USA star Chris Barnes on choosing whether to throw straighter or hook the ball more.

instead of on the side at the release point.

One thing you may have noticed in bowlers who tend to rely on the same shot over and over is that they often have trouble picking up spares, especially when the pins are away from the direction of their hook (think the 10-pin for right-handers).

The key to single pin spares is to be accurate.

A straight ball is more accurate than a curve release.

If you use a big curve, get a plastic ball and/or learn to release the ball straight. With the straight ball, the ball reaction does not depend on lane conditions.

Straight on a dry lane and straight on an oily one look the same. Master the straight ball and you won't have to

go hunting for where to stand and aim when you are facing a different lane condition.

By learning how to make those adjustments in where you stand, how you release, the type of ball you use and when to make a change, you will become more versatile, and you'll find that your scores will go up and remain up through all three games.



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## FITNESS

# BRACE YOURSELF

## Protect and Straighten Your Knees and Wrist

**B**ecause the act of swing a heavy ball up to 23 times per game can put a lot of stress on your body, many bowlers use braces to help.

The two most common types of braces are the wrist brace, which usually consists of cloth or a hard plastic and is wrapped tightly around the wrist and forearm of a bowler's throwing hand, and the knee brace, which is made of flexible material and can easily be slipped onto your knee.

Both types of braces are designed to lend additional support to an area of a bowler's body that traditionally has a lot of stress and pressure placed on it during bowling.



### Braces and Injury

Bowlers often use wrist or knee braces in response to a previous injury. If you've injured either your knee or wrist, the first thing you should do is consult with your doctor, who can determine the extent of your injury and give you advice on what types of brace may be used.

When it comes to your wrist, the most common injuries are either a simple wrist sprain or carpal tunnel syndrome. A wrist brace can help offer support if your sprain is mild and your doctor agrees that you can bowl through the injury. For carpal tunnel, the condition is chronic and is caused by the pinching of a nerve in the wrist. A wrist brace can prevent the symptoms of carpal tunnel and give support to allow healing.

Like the wrist, a knee injury can be a sprain or it can be something more chronic and nagging. Many bowlers with chronic knee pain wear a knee brace to help reduce the pain and to alleviate some of the stress



### PRO SUPPORT:

Many elite bowlers use knee or wrist braces. Former Team USA star Lynda Barnes wears a wrist brace (left), while PBA legend Jason Couch (above) revealed his knee brace at the PBA Summer Shootout.

placed on the knee during bowling, which often flares up as pain and swelling later on.

### Other Uses for Braces

If you lack the strength to maintain a strong wrist position, or can't build up your forearm strength, wrist braces can be very helpful.

There are braces that are adjustable allowing you to lock the wrist into different positions. Some of these types of braces allow no lateral movement of the wrist and some permit it. Often the goal of a wrist brace is simply to keep the wrist straight.

When it comes to knee braces, some bowlers will opt to wear one strictly as a preventative measure to add strength to their knee during the slide and therefore help prevent injuries before they ever occur.

However you choose to use a brace, it is a good idea to consult both your doctor (especially if you're wearing the brace in response to an injury) and your pro shop operator, who can offer individual advice on how different types of wrist braces may impact your span or your throwing motion.





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Mika Koivuniemi already has a Masters title under his belt, and he recently claimed the \$250,000 top prize at the Tournament of Champions. Can he hold off some of today's hottest bowlers hungry for their first Masters win?

# MASTERS NEXT?

**M**ika Koivuniemi is bowling out of his mind. He's on fire. If Vegas oddsmakers bet on bowling, they'd be sure to have the best odds on him to win the USBC Masters on Feb. 13.

But the veteran pro from Finland remains as low key and down to earth as he always is.

"Winning the Tournament of Champions is unbelievable, of course," he said in his pronounced

Finnish accent when contacted at his Hartland, Mich., home a few days after the big win. "It's a dream come true."

Koivuniemi's win came just a week after making the TV show and coming in sixth at the PBA World Championships, which Team USA star Chris Barnes won. Now, the USBC Masters looms large. It's the third major on the PBA schedule in a one-month period and the only open one, drawing amateurs and pros





**\$250,000 WINNER:** Click on the play button (above left) to see BOWL.com's post-game interview with Tournament of Champions winner Mika Koivuniemi.

alike from all over the world. The competition is fierce to say the least.

But Koivuniemi — nicknamed “Major Mika” for his penchant at winning the big events — remains unfazed by the weight of such things. “I haven’t entered the Masters yet,” he said. “Of course I will... I probably

should do that soon.” (Just a hint to anyone else out there who may have dragged your feet — the Masters registration deadline is Feb. 6!)

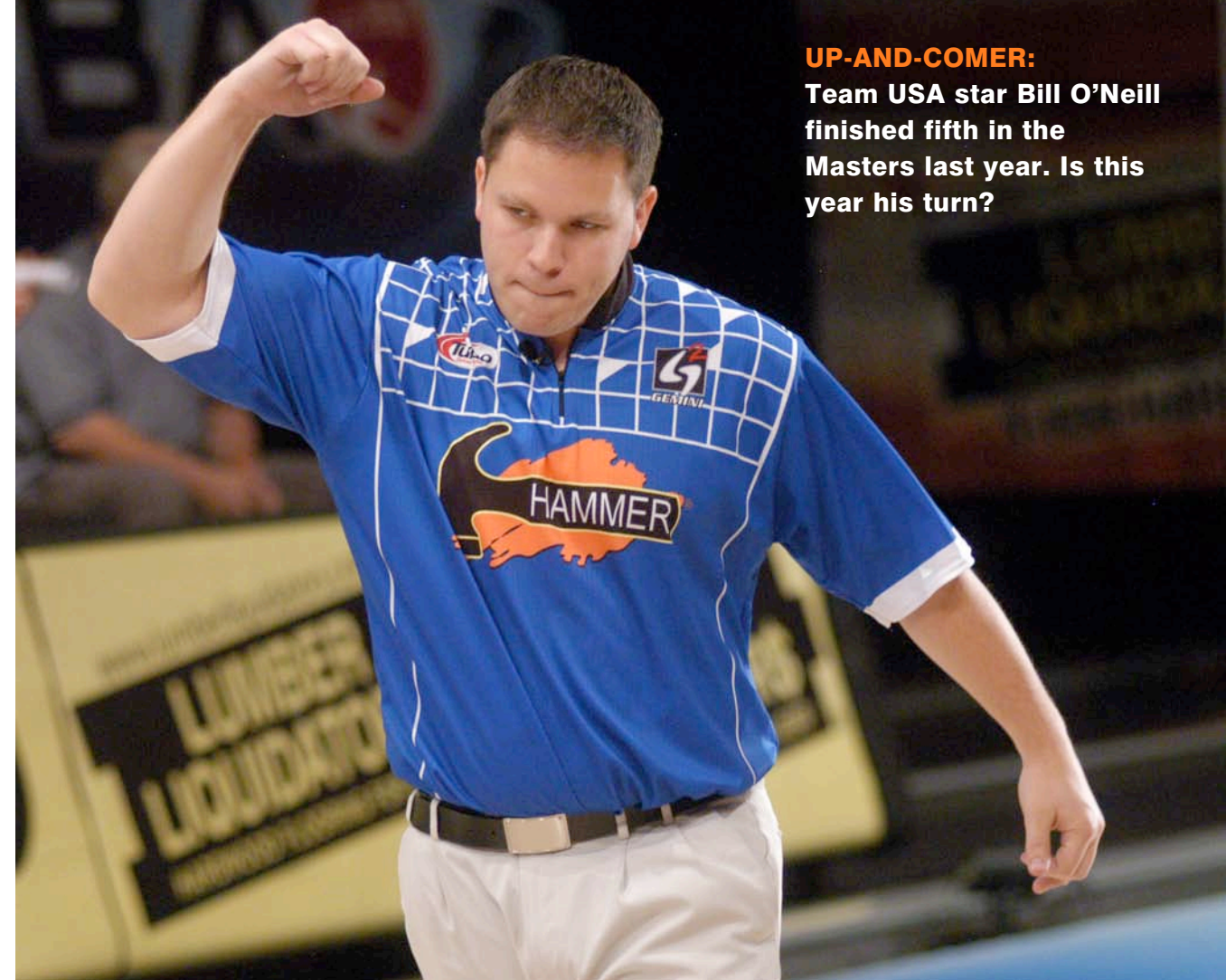
“I’m 43 now, but I was in my early 30s when I won the Masters in 2000,” said Kovuniemi. “It always has such special meaning to me because it was my first

ever win on the Tour. I look at the format of the Masters with its double elimination. It seems like it would be easier than a competition like the Tournament of Champions, but it’s not. There are so many who come to bowl and there is some luck involved. If you’re paired with the wrong guy or on the wrong lanes anything could happen!”

The laid-back Finn does get excited talking about some of his potential competitors,

**“It seems like (the Masters) would be easier than a competition like the Tournament of Champions, but it’s not.”**

**—Mika Koivuniemi**



**UP-AND-COMER:** Team USA star Bill O’Neill finished fifth in the Masters last year. Is this year his turn?

though. Especially, the younger pro stars, most of whom are in their 30s and hitting the prime of their careers. And all of them have one thing in common: They’ve never won a USBC Masters and they are definitely hungry for the title.

“Guys like Wes Malott, Bill O’Neill, Mike Fagan, Tommy Jones and Jason Belmonte — all those guys are playing so well now. If you

take away the luck factor, I think any one of those guys could grab their first Masters title.

“Malott especially is bowling so good these days. And Bill O’Neill is one of the hardest working bowlers I’ve seen. I love the way he sees the lanes and plays the lanes. He’s one of the best in the sport right now.”

Ask him about his own chances to win, and Koivuniemi just

smiles for a moment before saying, “Well that would be something wouldn’t it? I think I may have an OK shot at the Player of the Year then, eh?”

But what about those other guys? Malott, O’Neill, Fagan and Jones are all on Team USA and have popped up at the top or near the top of leaderboards this whole season. Belmonte is the international sensation who’s





## WATCH IT!

**USBC Masters  
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### TIME TO SHINE?:

Is the third time the charm for Team USA's Tommy Jones to capture his first Masters title?



### THE GOOD OLD DAYS:

Click on the play button (left) to watch the last bowler to win back-to-back Masters titles, Billy Welu, successfully defend his title at the 1965 USBC Masters.

taken the PBA Tour by storm the past few seasons.

"I've never had a whole lot of success at the Masters," said Fagan. "I had a top 24 finish once. The Masters is one of the events that people never forget when you win it. It's right near the top of goals I have to accomplish in my career, right next to the U.S. Open and Tournament of Champions. Those are the three you really want to win in your career.

"I think it's my turn to start winning the majors. I'm looking

forward to every major that comes along now. I turned 30 this year and the 30s is really where most bowlers start to excel in their careers. I'm at the point where I know what to do and now it's just a matter of executing."

For his part, Fagan thinks Koivuniemi has the best shot at winning the Masters going in.

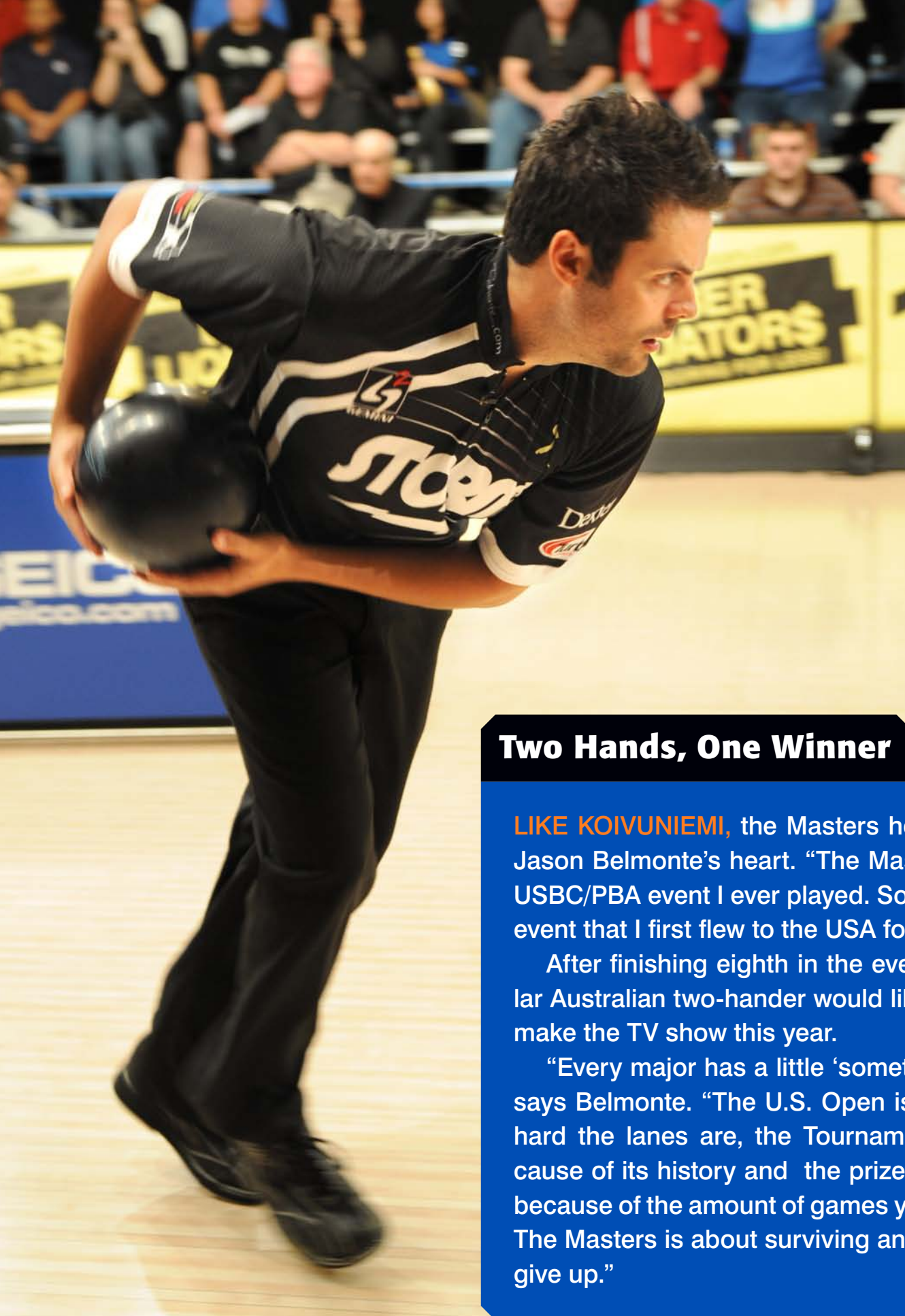
"I'd love to be like Mika," he said. "He won last week (the Tournament of Champions), and he just never gives up. He's very resilient. I abso-

lutely respect Mika and his game, one of the best out there. He's always going to be in contention. You can't help but respect what he's done in the sport and his ability. He'll just flat-out beat you."

Malott agrees. "Mika's a tough competitor and not someone you'd necessarily want to go up against at the Masters, but the old saying is you have to beat the best to be the best, right?

"Winning the Masters is definitely my goal this month. I want to win every major, though. Winning the





## Two Hands, One Winner

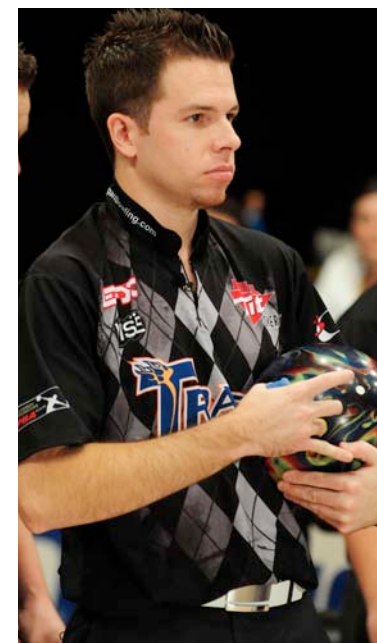
**LIKE KOIVUNIEMI**, the Masters holds a special place in Jason Belmonte's heart. "The Masters was the very first USBC/PBA event I ever played. So I would love to win the event that I first flew to the USA for," he says.

After finishing eighth in the event last year, the popular Australian two-hander would like improve on that and make the TV show this year.

"Every major has a little 'something special' about it," says Belmonte. "The U.S. Open is special because how hard the lanes are, the Tournament of Champions because of its history and the prize fund, and the Masters because of the amount of games you play and the format. The Masters is about surviving and I love to fight. I never give up."

Masters is a career-defining moment. People remember that and you'll always have that next to your name."

Jones, 32, already has two majors under his belt — the 2006 U.S. Open and the 2007 Tournament of Champions — and winning a Masters title would go a long way toward ensuring his high ranking in the greatest players of all time.



### LIKE MIKE?:

**Team USA's Mike Fagan is looking to get over the hump and make this year's TV show.**

He's come close to the title, making the TV show twice in his career (2006 and '09), but finishing fourth on both occasions.

"I'd love to change that this year," he says. "The Masters has a lot of prestige because of the names that have won the event and the mental strain that you go through to win the event, with match after match of bowling. It's basically all of bowling's event because all USBC members can compete. You get all of

the top amateurs come out to bowl so the field is always very strong.

"Winning the Masters would be another major on my resume and those are very hard to come by. I am a student of the game and have always paid attention to the records. There is a lot left that I want to accomplish in my career, but winning the Masters is right up at the top of that list."

Jones pauses his excitement for a moment before concluding, "I just look forward to a great event and hope to hold the trophy on that Sunday."

Whether it will be the veteran Finn Koivuniemi or one of the hungry young pro stars hitting their prime, or even a from-out-of-nowhere amateur sensation (which has been known to happen at the Masters from time to time), you can bet the competition will be fierce.



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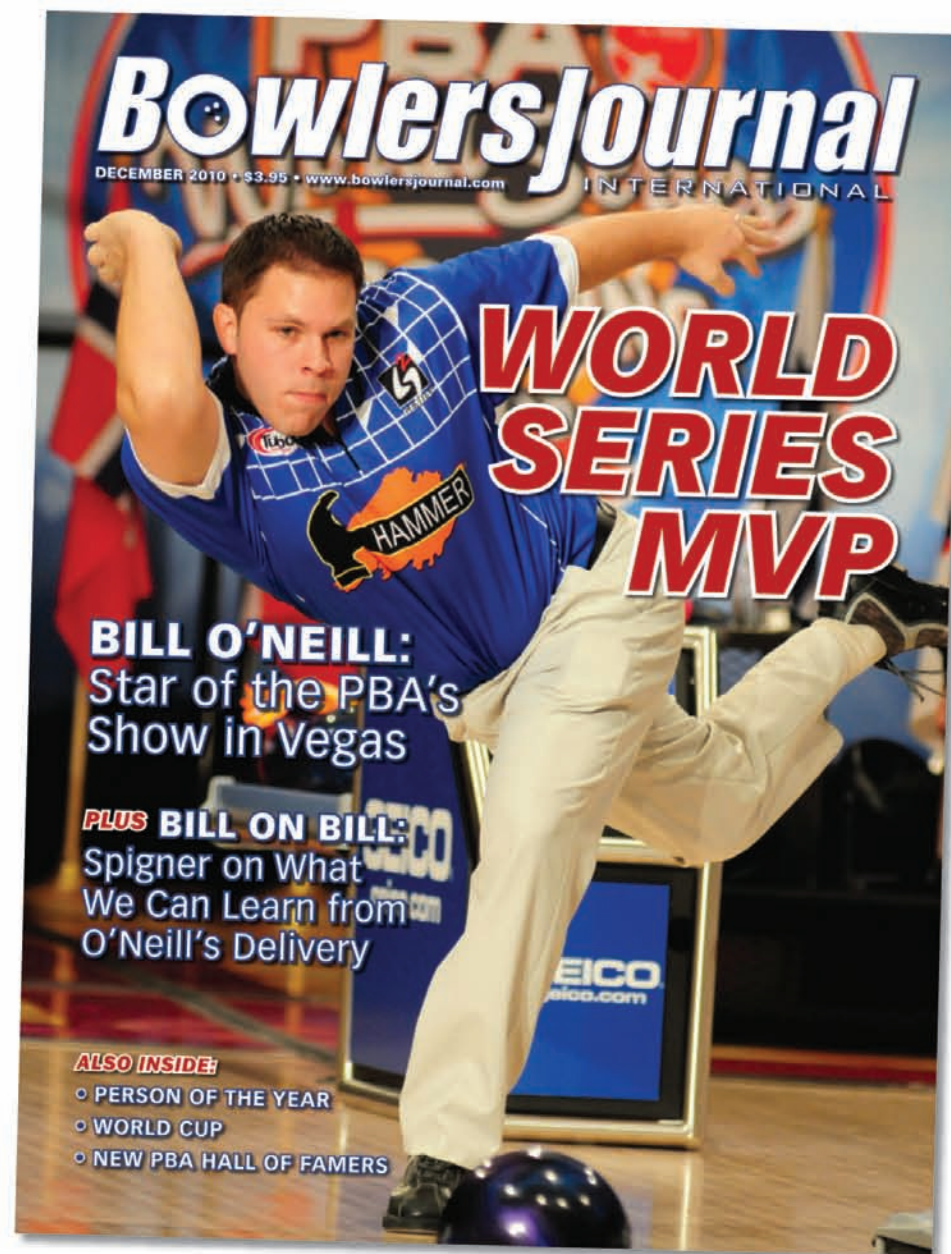
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