

## Training To Become A Better Bowler-Athlete

In 1996 we decided to conduct another research study, which we reported to you monthly during that calendar year. Re-read all of 1997 or contact BTM for back issues if you were not a BTMer at the time. We took a highly skilled bowler, put him on The Bowling-Specific Training Program, monitored and controlled several variables in his life, and reported the findings to you in our monthly section.

We chose a very competent and experienced, legitimate, scratch bowler named Mark. He worked hard, succumbed to scientific testing on several occasions, and spent over a year dedicated to serious athletic training. His work, dedication, and commitment to improve his functional and physical fitness were admirable. His family was supportive. His colleagues had no idea. Only Mark and I knew the scenario.

His functional and physical fitness improved tremendously. I don't have the numbers in front of me, but his health risk factors were significantly reduced and his bowling-specific strength and flexibility were greatly enhanced. Furthermore, his bowling average was legitimately raised, his overall mental focus and concentration strengthened, he recorded his first two sanctioned ABC 300's, he managed to "hit" the tough lane condition he bowled on, and his own omission qualitatively verified his position.

I interviewed Mark on several occasions before, during, and after the study. Listen to one thing he had to say.

### **Question: What benefits did you perceive from your training?**

***I am bowling longer, stronger, and more effectively.** I won a lot of \$\$ from the positive changes in my game. I realized that the difference in good bowlers really isn't that great, and that physical conditioning and serious training could be the deciding factor differentiating them. I have my first two sanctioned 300 games. I had some compromised knee (joint) pain from an old baseball injury - the leg exercises improved my pain-free range of motion. I now have a greater range of motion without pain. The pain diminished as the study went on.*

***The confidence boost** that comes with the knowledge that I am training to be a better athlete is awesome. I didn't train to be a bodybuilder; **I trained to be a better bowler-athlete.** I can feel and see the difference. I'm sharper now, more focused (clarity of thought). I have finally achieved a tremendous self-esteem boost from doing something good for myself. It has helped my mental outlook, the amount of anxiety and stress in my life is reduced, and I have noticed many psychological benefits.*

***My physical ability ...** I have a greater range of ball speeds without degrading my form. I can confidently achieve greater speeds without sacrificing my form. Where I bowl, the heads are deteriorated and ball speed is a premium. I struggled with that over the years. I have seen a definite ball speed increase 1-2 miles per hour without diminishing my form at the line. I can throw the ball harder more consistently and not lose my balance as in years past.*

The weight loss and subsequent fat reduction seems to have freed my arm swing even further and another honor score is the result. Lowering the girth in my midsection and loosening my shoulder joint has reduced the tendency for my swing to 'bump' out. I feel the ball closer to my ankle and see it on video. My leverage has increased at the bottom of my swing and the pro-groove is looking good.

WOW, that's a lot of good information. Thanks my Friend.

The program was designed, tested, and modified through experimental and biomechanical research at a major university. We spent years conducting research with several sport scientists to devise a valid and reliable program. This same program is now highly specific for the bowler-athlete. It wasn't at first, but now it is. We selected the safest and simplest exercises to train only those muscle groups and bony joints used by the bowler-athlete. The two training principles were selected from the over dozens of training principles available to meet the functional needs of the bowler-athlete. In a nut shell, after hundreds of hours in the lab testing and training bowlers: after thousands of dollars spent utilizing biomechanical and ergonomic equipment measuring outputs of bowlers and the tensions, stresses, and stressors of our game; and after years of qualitative information gathering, we have designed and now offer the world's only Bowling-Specific Training Program.

I can go on and on about how the strength-training principle is the chosen training principle; or how we don't recommend training the back such as the lats too much, or how we don't recommend training the chest too much, or how the full range of motion training enhances flexibility, but you can read about all that in articles of past, or our training manual.

For now, realize there is more to becoming an elite bowler-athlete than just buying bowling balls, practicing, and learning how to hook the ball more and more. Understand that I advocate a great many things off the lanes. The mental (psychological) and physical (physiological) aspects of sport performance and athleticism are greatly under-appreciated and under-addressed in our sport. I'm quite thankful for those people like Dr. Dean Hinitz and Dr. Charles Martin who have taken their intellectual interests beyond the conventional norm to research and write about the many undiscovered facets of athletic excellence and our sport. Furthermore, I feel it my job, as the leader in sport science for bowling, to deliver the most high tech information and training aids to you in your quest for athletic excellence.

Next month, learn about training on the road, what can be done while away from home, and how you can prepare for your traveling and training needs.