



This Tournament Plays Favorites!

Hospitalized Vets



With the return to action following the conventional inactive holiday period, area bowling officials are set to kick off the 23rd Annual Washington, D.C., Bowlers Victory Legion Tournament. Concurrent with the resumption of league play will be the year's first tournament with thousands expected to participate in the bowler's favorite charity program.

This year's program will run from the 9th through the 29th of January. All area bowling organizations, tenpins and ducks, men and women, will conduct their tournaments during this period. Director W. Jack Millis will head the men's tenpin division while the women's association will be led by Director Doris Mathis.

Organized by Rod Thomas, who was then Bowling Editor of the Washington Evening Star, the BVL annually collects thousands of dollars for handicapped veterans in VA hospitals. The money is used for rehabilitation programs which include the purchase of athletic equipment and reading material.

The tournament is open to all league bowlers, men and

Will Benefit As BVL

women. Details are simple and uncomplicated with no inconvenience to the participants. Entry blanks are available at control counters or may be obtained from league secretaries. A one dollar entry fee is deposited when entry blanks are received. Bowlers then enter their league scores for that evening and return the form to the league secretary or the control counter.

One hundred percent handicap, based on the difference between the bowler's current average and 200 is then added to the scores rolled. Top scores with handicap will determine the cash prize winners upon completion of the tournament.

The one dollar entry fee is sliced three ways with 67

Expects Finest Year

cents earmarked for the BVL, three cents goes for covering the cost of printing entry blanks and 30 cents is deposited into the bowlers prize fund. Separate prize funds are established for men and women, the amount determined by the number of entries.

This area's history of the Bowlers Victory Legion is one of the most interesting and colorful of all established tournaments. During World War II, the Evening Star's bowling editor, Rod Thomas, organized a tournament for the newspaper in an effort to sell War Bonds for the Government. The affair was a huge success with over seven million dollars worth of bonds sold. The following year saw eight million dol-

lars in sales. The program was adopted by most major newspapers throughout the country and resulted in sales totaling over 485 million dollars. Thomas received the Treasury Department's medal for his efforts.

At the end of the war, Rod Thomas converted the bond tournament into what is today the BVL. The first tourney was highly successful with over \$7,000 collected for the hospitalized veterans.

The program grew locally and was highlighted with the BVL Parapalegic National bowling finals held here in Washington. President Harry Truman was on hand to present trophies to the champions.

With the invasion of Ten Pins in 1947, Thomas enlisted the support of the local tenpinners and the BVL gained what turned out to be its greatest and strongest supporter. Since 1947, hundreds of league officials and bowling establishment employees have assisted city association officials in conducting the annual event. Countless hours are devoted by volunteers whose services are given willingly year after year without compensation of any kind.

Over the years unofficial competition has developed between bowling establish-

ments with each vying for honors as the top participant in the BVL tournament. Congressional Plaza Bowl in Rockville has earned this honor for the past three years. Bowl America Silver Hill and Tenpin Coliseum round out the area's big three. The award is based on the number of entries per lane with the establishment averaging the highest percentage being declared the winner. Congressional Plaza averaged 37 entries per lane to win the 1966 award. The White House Lanes was rated tops of the small establishments with 34 entries per lane. On the military side the Pentagon Officers Athletic Center was high with an average of 19 entries per lane. Bowl America Silver Hill recorded the highest number of actual entries with 1,123.

Tournament directors have announced a new award for the 1967 tournament. This year the league with the best participation record will receive a special award. The participation award will be based on the league's total entries divided by its playing strength.

The highest series rolled in the 1966 tournament were recorded by distaff bowlers. Connie Hoffman of Washington, D.C., bowled a 776 handicap



ROD THOMAS
Father Of The BVL

set to take the top prize of \$100. Irene Cooke of Fairfax, Va., took home \$75 for second place. James Whited of Annandale, Va., finished on top of the men's division with 771 which was worth \$150. Second money of \$105 went to Donald Davis and Anthony Phillips who tied with identical 768 sets.

Last year's participation established a new record for the area with 9,544 entries. This outstanding effort places the nation's capital second in the country.

This area has long been known as a tournament city. Participation has always exceeded expectations. The Bowlers Victory Legion Tournament certainly deserves the support of all bowlers. The hopes of thousands of hospitalized handicapped veterans rest on the results.

Rod Thomas, known as the father of this tournament which bears his name, died this past year. What greater tribute can area bowlers pay to his memory than to earn the honor of being first in the nation in BVL participation, a goal that had always been his dream.