

Holmes, Slater to be inducted into NCAUSBCA Hall of Fame

National Golf Club at Tantallon to host November 7 ceremonies

Arlen "Yogi" Holmes started bowling at age 22 on a dare from childhood friend Kevin Diggs. Kevin bet Yogi a lunch he could beat him in bowling and then did so all six games.



When Kevin and Yogi had their rematch, Yogi beat him four games out of six and became hooked.

Yogi is a founding member of the Poison Bowling Club (1989) that promotes community service

and youth bowling in addition to the competitive yet fun side of bowling for adults. He has been a youth coach since 2004 and received his coaching certification in 2010. Yogi has coached youth leagues at Rinaldi's Riverdale and AMF Capital Plaza, where he also coached a travel league team. He currently coaches at The Lanes Fort Meade.

His coaching style not only teaches the basics for beginners; it prepares them for the advanced levels in bowling. He has coached several 600 Club bowlers, taking them out of the area to expose them to tournament play on various levels. Several of his students have moved on to bowl at the collegiate level, including his two sons, Najee and 2013 NCAUSBCA Ted Gruszkowski Jr., Youth Star Award recipient Zahir Holmes, along with Brandon Lowe, Cameron Brooks, and also Kayla Meadows, who competed for a national championship last April representing Bowling Green University. Several of Yogi's students have placed high in the Youth Invitational Scratch Singles Tournament.

Yogi works hard to improve his knowledge of the game and shares that knowledge with youth and adult bowlers. He has spent many hours assisting bowling teammates, opponents, and those that

want to improve their game. For several years, he has spent every Sunday morning, as soon as the doors opened at Rinaldi's Riverdale and now The Lanes Fort Meade, coaching and training any youth or adult that needs assistance. He explains the importance of stretching before starting, having the proper equipment, adhering to the basics, and being on time.

On the lanes, Yogi, a 30-plus-year USBC member who has competed in over 25 national tournaments, has recorded numerous 300 and 299 games and 700 series. This past season, he composited a 220.464 average for 390 games.

Yogi believes many in our area are losing interest in bowling, and it is his passion to help others find their appetite for our sport. There is hope for the sport with people like him encouraging our youth. His sons are young men away at college, yet he keeps showing up every Saturday morning on time, even though the parents may not be around, to encourage, mentor, train, and coach our youth bowlers. He keeps showing up, ready for anyone who wants to be a better bowler.

For his untiring efforts in supporting youth bowlers and promoting the sport in this area, Arlen "Yogi" Holmes is a most worthy addition to the NCAUSBCA Hall of Fame.



Billy Slater was introduced to bowling by his cousin at age 21 at Wheaton Triangle Lanes in 1973 after his passion to play professional football ended that year due to a devastating back injury. His first two leagues were at Fair Lanes University, where

his averages were 163 (tenpins) and 113 (duckpins). He gave up duckpins after one year, and after two years of bowling with no formal coaching, he averaged in the 170s. Billy has become a very proficient bowler, consistently averaging over 200 and is well respected for his bowling, knowledge of the game, coaching, mentoring, and continuous passion and dedication to helping all bowlers, young and old, to promote the game of bowling. In addition, he incorporates real life experiences needed to help youth survive in life.

During his coaching sessions at the age of 22, Billy became interested in drilling bowling balls. He asked Wayne Shoemaker's dad (the owner of Bowlers General Pro Shop) to teach him the art of drilling, and Billy has been drilling balls for over 41 years. He employed his art major skills towards fitting and created an offset thumb grip that allowed him to release the ball easier and cleaner. His knowledge and understanding of the human hand has allowed him to custom-fit the grip of many bowlers, including those with arthritic and deformed hands, especially when working with elderly clients. His clients range from beginners to PBA members.

Billy currently volunteers his time at the Ft. Meade Pro Shop, where he drills balls for a number of youth and adults, while continuing to mentor and coach others in an effort to enhance their knowledge and enable them to have free and proper training. Ironically, he was denied help from many when he inquired about the game, which forced him to read and watch pro players to pick up the game and learn adjustments. Then, future Hall of Famers Willie Jelks and Elmer Breeden thought well of Billy's game, and Earl Anthony's books also helped enhance his bowling knowledge.

Billy owned and operated the Twelve In a Row Pro Shop for 21 years with Tony Walton, Chris Ward, and Tom Washington. He has promoted

Roto Grip since 1975 and received national awards as a "Top 5 Salesman" two straight years.

Billy is also a certified USBC coach, and he has worked with collegiate players from Howard, Morgan State, and UMBC. While he has fulfilled and accomplished many goals during his career as a coach and mentor, a few deserve special mention:

- He coached his daughter to a 183 average at the age of 13.
- Verra Diggs, a student at Bowie State, bowled her first 300 in a collegiate tournament.
- Billy is extremely proud of his most recent protégé, 12-year-old Tavera Johnson of Glen Burnie, Md., who won her U12 division scratch championship last April in the Pepsi Challenge at Forest Hills, Md., and competed in the Junior Gold event in Chicago.

On the lanes, Billy has rolled 10 perfect games, a dozen 299 games, and three 800 series, in addition to winning over 25 league championships, numerous tournament titles, and he's cashed in PBA regional competition.

Billy has always had a passion to help individuals of all levels, but especially the most challenged individuals who have been overlooked by others to help them with confidence, self-esteem, mental development, and being accepted as a viable, active, and competitive group who also wants to improve their skills.

Billy has been complimented by many for helping them to better their attitude, learn to read lanes, and giving them confidence by stressing, "Don't you ever give up!" He has always taught his students that bowling is not just throwing the ball and scoring but is a gift and a form of meditation. Ms. Diggs said Billy enhanced her game by teaching her that discipline is an essential part of life that goes beyond the scope of bowling. Needless to say, his experience as a bowler and athlete has enabled him to develop a keen eye in helping others with their game.

For more than four decades, Billy Slater, through his coaching and mentoring of bowlers of all ages and skill levels, including those with disabilities, his ball drilling skills, his equipment donations for bowlers in need, his volunteerism, and his genuine concern and care for human beings, has made bowling better for so many in this area. He is a welcome addition to the NCAUSBCA Hall of Fame.

Hall of Fame members wishing to attend the Hall of Fame Induction & Dinner Celebration on November 7 who have not been contacted by the Hall of Fame Committee should promptly communicate with the NCAUSBCA office.