

## 20 QUESTIONS

# Bobby Hall II

*Landover's Bobby Hall II fulfilled a lifelong dream when he earned an exemption on the 2010-2011 Professional Bowlers Association Tour with his second-place finish in the PBA Regional Players Invitational at the National Bowling Stadium in Reno, Nev., this past December.*

*Hall, who turns 40 in March and has four PBA regional titles, first experienced tenpins at age 6 at Riggs Plaza Bowl in Chillum, Md. He progressed through the youth program, even making an Invitational finals appearance in 1988, and, after joining the adult leagues, became a PBA member at age 24.*

*The tall right-hander placed second in the association's men's ranking last season after garnering his first-ever No. 1 position in 2007-2008. He currently bowls in five evening leagues—Monday through Friday—and has rolled “maybe 40 or 50” perfect games to go along with a top series of 863.*

*He joined the International Bowling Pro Shops and Instructors Association for a period to learn how to drill a bowling ball and gain more knowledge about the game. Not surprisingly, he often is seen going in and out of local pro shops, making adjustments to his latest equipment.*

*All agree that the PBA exemption offers Hall the bowling opportunity of a lifetime. Some question whether he actually has what it takes to succeed in competition against the best bowlers in the world, but he'll get his chance to display his skills for at least one full season beginning this fall.*

*Hall recently responded to “20 Questions” posed by editor Bob Cosgrove.*

**What are you currently doing to prepare for the PBA Tour?**

I practice a lot. Right now, what I'm getting back doing is working out—strong body, strong mind, in terms of being healthy. More resistance bands, more cardio, squats, push-ups, leg lifts, knee

bends. These things make me stronger when I throw the bowling ball.

**What PBA lane pattern is your favorite?**

The Cheetah because it's the shortest of all the patterns and that's one of my games is going straight. That just sort of feeds to my strength.

The Shark pattern is my least favorite. It's a long oil pattern, and so it just forces me to have to slow it down—that's one of my weaknesses that I'm trying to correct—and be a little bit more angular.

**What are other shortcomings in your game that in the past have prevented you from succeeding at the national level?**

My weakness is knowing where I belong in this game. Sometimes I try to do something that's not [part] of my game. I try to hook it when I'm not seriously hooking, and sometimes I try to go real straight when I'm not exactly straight. Once I learn where I fit in this game, it would become a lot easier for me to bowl.

**Is there any one player you particularly you pay attention to when you walk into a PBA event?**

Usually I watch people like Walter [Ray Williams Jr.], where he's playing, and Norm Duke, where's he's playing—especially Norm Duke. His roll is a little similar to mine, so I kinda generally watch where he's playing, and then make my adjustments from there if I'm lost.

**What's the strongest part of your game?**

To be able to repeat shots—consistency.

**Does your father offer you any feedback on your game today?**

He deals with me, more or less, as far as my mental aspect—reading of the lanes, what am I throwing. He always tries to help because he's a ball driller himself. He pretty much keeps my mental focus when we talk bowling. To be honest, the only person in the world that I actually admire the most is my father because without him there is no me.

**How do you handle pressure situations?**

Actually, I embrace the pressure. The best way to deal with it is to acknowledge that it's there and then keep moving. It's an adrenaline rush. It's like drinking ... it's a natural high.

**Have the changes in the game over the past 20 years been beneficial or a hindrance to your game?**

Actually, it's been helpful. In anything, there are some modifications you're going to have to make. For me, it hasn't harmed me; I just had to grow up. I had to become a little bit more knowledgeable in what I'm doing.

**What one thing would you change about today's game?**

Slow down all the bowling balls they are making. They make so many. I just think the sport is oversaturated with bowling balls. Everybody says this ball revolutionizes the sport—okay, now you've gotta choose. Too many choices.

**Are there people you rely on for equipment knowledge?**

I go to places like Bowlers Supply [in York, Pa.]—[Bret Stabley] helps me out. I go to Spare Time Sports in Waldorf—[Dale Underwood] keeps a lot of things in his pro shop that allow me to read and get involved, and he talks to me personally.

**Which area players do you admire the most?**

For the respect aspect, I would go with Ricky Henderson because he just won the True Amateur Challenge. I've known him since his beginning; he's been in the game 10 years, and he came so far in so little time. I really respect that. I respect his dedication.

Another person I admire is George Jenkins because he's been in the game so long and he shot his first 300, and I was so proud of him at his age to still be able to accomplish a goal. And he proved it

again when he shot his second one. And he came so far. When he shot that, I was proud of him. That's what I admire—to finally accomplish a goal.

**Which area player would you say has the best physical game?**

Best physical game ... this is a rough one. You're actually asking me questions that I don't even have an answer to—that's a good question! I just rarely look at people like that. *Who would I say that has a good physical game?*

If I have to go with one person, I would go with the same person I told you on the other [question] ... a great physical game ... I would go with Ricky Henderson. I just love the way he throws the ball. I love the way he feeds it to the lane. He has the potential to go as far as he wants to go.

**What pleasure outside of winning do you derive from bowling today?**

Competition—I love to compete. Always trying to do better than what I did last time. How many times can I shoot 300 or 800 in a year, you know? Just the act of competing, that just gets me there. I just love the competition because no matter how old you get in this game, as long as your body is able, you can compete.

**Does a 300 game still have any special meaning to you?**

I still feel that butterfly in my stomach when I'm on 11 in-a-row anyway. I still get nervous. I still feel that, *Man, I need it, take your time, I need to [do] it, to shoot three.* So, I do get it.

**What determines your choice of leagues?**

Usually the competitiveness of it and also the people. Usually with me, these leagues I've been in for years. The people I bowl with are usually family-like friends to me.

**Do you consider yourself a role model for youth bowlers?**

I've been called that, but I've never thought of myself that way. I try to help out as many kids as I can. When parents or a kid in a bowling alley asks, 'Can you look at me?' I say, "Sure," and if there's anything I can do to help their game, I just go for it.

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**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

That's a good question because bowling does give me a lot of joy. Sometimes I like going to the movies; sometimes I like to hang out with my friends.

I love my [one-year-old] niece, so when I get a chance, I love to go and see her. She brings me so much joy just to see her smile.

**What are your plans if you do not retain your exempt status on the PBA Tour?**

Right now, I've been toying with the idea of going back to school. I'm trying to get into computers—like A+ certification, networking.

**What would you still like to accomplish in bowling?**

A [national PBA] title.

**Where do you see yourself in five years?**

Still bowling, still competing, and still on Tour.