



## SHOP TALK

**JERRY FRANCOMANO**

### **My Wish List**

Summer is here. It's time for vacations, the beach, golf, and relaxation. Time for maybe a summer league or two to keep sharp. Time for some of you to hit the tournament trail to try your hand at making some bucks with your bowling skills. Time for me to pen my last column.

The following list is not in answer to any specific question; it was compiled during the course of this season through conversations with other bowlers and some things that yours truly would like to see in the game we play. So here it is, my wish list for the 1988-89 bowling season and seasons to come. I wish...

- that there never be another award score turned down in a sanctioned league, bowling in an ABC-certified and sanctioned house, by an ABC-sanctioned bowler in good standing.
- that there be a way to check the ball used in shooting award scores. Rather than weighing the pins, have the person who rolled the score take the ball to a qualified pro shop for certification.
- that bowlers, proprietors, and association members realize that the scoring boom taking place in some area houses is due to diligence and hard work by the management and staff of said houses and the ability of the bowler. This is only 15 to 20 years behind the boom of other areas like New York, California, Texas, Florida, and on and on and on....
- that we bowlers get to see our center manager on nights other than the first night of league play and contract time.
- that area centers take the time to educate their customers about what is going on in their house. Tell them what their lane maintenance program is, tell them why they get "grease" (oil) back on their bowling balls sometimes...or better yet, why they don't. Tell customers of their

learn-to-bowl programs and practice specials and treat them as semi-literate adults concerned about the game they play.

- that there be a committee made up of association members, proprietors, and local PBA members to address the education problem and other bowling-related problems, locally and nationally.
- that our association take a look at the bowling talent in our area not in our hall of fame: Mike Hahn, Greg Goetz, Chuck Gannon Jr., Steve Sipe, and Mike Ladd, to name a few.
- that our area see its first national PBA Tour champion come from one of the many talented professionals in our association.
- that ABC realizes this is the 1980s and that scores on the upswing are a positive and not a death march. When bowlers knock pins down, they bowl more. They roll more practice games. They bowl more leagues and tournaments. Let's applaud them for their accomplishments, not degrade them by saying they bowled on a soft or illegal condition.
- that there is another area scratch league formed to complement the Northern Virginia All-Star League.
- that Chuck Gannon Jr. comes out of retirement. We miss his talent and ability, and we need new "Gannon stories."
- that the local media realize the importance of bowling in our area and that it deserves at least as much coverage as lacrosse, arena football, wrestling, and the rodeo.
- that our area has more scratch tournaments to give the 200-average bowler something to bowl in.
- that there be a system of periodically checking the lanes in sanctioned centers before league play begins rather than after the award score is rolled.
- that our snack bars stay open at least until after we have thrown our

last ball for the evening.

- that more area centers treat us like the valued customer we are—not just another \$10 bill for the evening.
  - that there are less than six new bowling balls on the market next season; I think we have enough to choose from now.
  - that Ken Jones keeps smiling.
  - that Gary "Guru" Parsons completes the alphabet run in front of IFA (inside joke—ask Gary).
  - that success matches the desire and ability of the young lions on the PBA Tour like Rich Wolfe, Jim Lewis, Richard Dodge, and others.
  - that the great ones like Jim Robinette, Larry O'Neill, and Steve Sipe never lose their desire to compete because they are a big plus for our game.
  - that more second shifts start play at 9:30 p.m. so I could be on time more often—or at least once.
  - that ABC publish their rules on bowling ball specifications in local and national publications for all to see.
  - that more attention and instruction is given to area youth bowlers.
  - that there be more requirements to open a pro shop than simply having a drill press and a sign. Some ball drillers are professionals and some are hole makers. I wish the professionals continued success and the hole makers a Mister Donut franchise.
  - that Billy Hall or Larry Litchstein are the color commentators on the PBA broadcast and are allowed to discuss equipment and drilling techniques that the players are using over and above "dull/shiney ball."
  - that Bo Burton allows us to take some Roloids *before* giving us his "tip of the week."
  - that some of you enjoyed this column as much as I enjoyed writing it.
- Last, but not least, I wish that all your bowling wishes come true in the coming season.
- To make those wishes come true, keep practicing, keep in touch with the pro shop of your choice, and try that new grip or new ball you were thinking about. It could make a difference!
- See you in September....