



Wish List VI

Well, it's that time of year again—another season behind us. Time to remember the great accomplishments we had and to forget those awful nights that were filled with bad breaks. It's time for us to look forward to next season and to plan on how we are going to have our best season ever.

It's time for some of us to hit the tournament trail in search of some "bowling bucks," time for others to try that new grip or make a change in our game, or time to just take a break and relax.

Time for me to wish....

- I get to read some *positive* articles about bowling in our game's periodicals. I am sick and tired of reading about everything that's wrong with our game and how we are doomed.

How about sharing more creative, motivational, success-oriented thoughts and accomplishments. Who knows, they may be contagious—Lord knows the negative ones surely are.

- The bowling greats of the PBA Tour and our own local heroes stop whining about scoring, equipment, and how they seem to be the only ones with any talent. We are approaching the year 2000 A.D. and in case you have not noticed, the dinosaurs are gone!

Our game/sport have finally come out of the dark ages—the equipment is better, the proshop/ball driller is more educated and, like it or not, bowlers are better for it.

Some of these self-proclaimed saviors of our game refuse to give the bowler *any* credit. I don't care what they think or what the marketing people tell us about their latest bomb, even the most advanced ball on the market today with the latest drilling technique still has to be rolled by the bowler and told what to do. They *do not* hook all by themselves or hone in on the pocket. There has to be some degree of talent by the bowler to get results.

So it is my wish that we recognize the accomplishments of all concerned—the designer, manufacturer, pro shop, and bowler. And for those "stars" who can't, I have some old wooden, two-fingered bowling balls you can have so you can complain some more. But do it to someone else; I don't want to hear it anymore—unless you have something positive to say.

- For the continued support of the bowling community in the charitable efforts for Muscular Dystrophy's Strike Force, Big Brothers/Bowl for Kids' Sake, and any of the other worthwhile organizations that seek our support. They know that nobody does it with more striking results than bowlers.

- To thank Theodore "Crazy Ted" Gruszkowski for his commitment to bowling and bowlers of all skill levels. His time, effort, and concern given to our game is unmatched by few and surpassed by none. He is one person who truly emphasizes the positive in bowling and all bowlers and has not lost sight of the fact that bowling is not just a sport but a game that was intended to be *fun* for all of us.

- The youth programs continue to grow and that more of our top bowlers get out and get involved with the young "stars" of our game. Rodney Cahow, Gary Parsons, Pete Gunn, Pat Blackmore, and Larry O'Neill (just to name a few) are a tremendous help to the youth programs. Those of you who have not yet been involved, give a call to your youth league coordinator and offer your help. They would love to have you, and, who knows ... you may enjoy it!

- All of you were able to bowl in leagues this past season that were run as well as the ones I bowled in. Thank you, Mr. Ransom. Thank you, Mr. Cantrell.

- My staff and those people associated with our pro shop continue to make me look good.

- My good friend, Mo Pinel, still has a couple of aces up his sleeve to spring on the bowling scene in the not-too-distant future.

- The professional players of our sport are appreciated and recognized for what they have to endure to achieve their stature as the greatest bowlers in the world. If you have any doubt about their superior ability, try bowling 48-plus games in three days with the thought that if you do poorly, your next meal could be a "wish" sandwich.

Maybe the tour should let the spectators bowl on a PBA condition the week before or after the tournament—or better yet, after the last squads *during* the week of the tournament

so they can see for themselves how "easy" the shot is.

- If we happen to miss the tour on TV on Saturday afternoon on ESPN or ABC that we can just tune into "SportsCenter" or the local news telecast and actually get the results of an event that was aired on their network—*now there's a novel idea!*

- Some day soon the members of our game/industry (owners, proprietors, center managers, pro shop operators, association officials, certified instructors, and PBA members) can get together to openly discuss our game and the direction it will take in the future for all of us to continue to enjoy the business of bowling. So expect an invitation from me soon.

- If you have a pleasant experience in a bowling center or a pro shop, share it and let someone know. If you have a creative idea or suggestion, also share it with someone. I am convinced that if we all start communicating in a more positive way concerning our game, we will all see that this is really a great game/sport.

- At the next Hall of Fame banquet, I am standing and applauding the induction of Mike Hahn—he has earned it.

- Some day the people involved in bowling—who are involved because they really and truly care about bowlers and the game—who have a tendency to stay in the background and let others take the bows are recognized for all they have done.

- My "cousin" Syd Jones's golf swing and bowling swing start to look like they are *not* one and the same!

- IBPSIA (International Bowling Pro Shop & Instructors Association) continues to grow to be the force that is needed to lead our game/sport into the 21st century.

- The instructors/coaches of our youth programs are recognized for the fine job they do, not only in teaching but in letting our young bowlers *enjoy* the game.

And last but by no means least, I wish to remember Al Maya, a great friend not only to me but to bowling. In talking about Al, the thing that comes to mind was that he truly loved bowling and bowlers of all sizes, ages, shapes, and colors. Bowling was better because of Al, and we will all miss him ... especially me.

NCABA Hall of Famer Jerry Francomano operates the Sports Plus/Carmen Don Pro Shop in Alexandria.