

Dear Storm Staff,

Hi, my name is Andrew Gronich and I believe I am the next bowling prodigy! I am now 16 years old and even though I've been bowling since I was little, I never understood how to bowl properly until I joined a bowling league just three years ago. This was mainly due to my having ADHD, a disorder which causes me to lose my focus easily and PDD-NOS, a disorder on the autism spectrum which affects social skills. My participation in bowling has helped me overcome these disorders and in turn, I have improved my average from a 130 to a current 180.

How do I bowl? Well, I put my heart and soul into it. When I get up on that lane, my heart and soul transfer to the ball and I give it all I've got. If I don't get a strike, I try my best to pick up the spare, even if it's a seven-ten split. In fact, when I get a seven-ten split, I don't say "game over", I laugh and get at least one pin down knowing it could be the difference between a win and a loss. My high school bowling coach, Mr. Neil Lasher, taught me that. I think of him telling me get the pin count right before I start my approach. It really helps. My high game may not be a 300 but it is a 268. This high score of mine I bowled during the Long Island Youth Bowling Tournament (LIYBT) in Garden City, NY last year. Although I only came in seventh place, it was really fun bowling a 207 average for the eight games I bowled. One of the reasons I had such a difficult time making the top 5 was due to my having only two bowling balls. The first one I ever got was an Ebonite Tornado, The second ball I got was a Columbia 300 Freeze, which was way better and allowed me to bowl the 268. The third ball I got was one of yours, The Reign of Fire. It has taken me to a whole new level!

My first experience with league bowling was when I was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and I bowled on a Special Education PAL team. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade I bowled on the middle school team and again the emphasis was not on the score but on bowling the best that I could and being a part of a team. I started entering LIYBT tournaments in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I met other bowlers from around Long Island and became friends with quite a few people. These friendships

helped me to realize that even in competitive bowling it's not just winning and thinking about myself, but it's about encouraging and inspiring others. We cheer each other on, support each other, and that makes us better bowlers. This past year I joined the St. Martins Bowling League which is a teaching/scholarship league and has really helped me to improve my game. I also tried out for and made my high school bowling team. Each year I have improved myself and I expect I will continue to do so, which is why I think I am the next bowling prodigy!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Gronich". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and larger than the others.

Andrew Gronich