

I will not bore you with the definition of what a Prodigy is. My goal is to tell you how I am a bowling Prodigy.

I am a 41 year old bowler whose desire for bowling has grown into a fiery passion. I started bowling when I was 10 years old and have a total of 10 years of bowling time under my belt.

It all started on Saturday Morning Bantam leagues. This was the beginning for me. I loved bowling back then as I do today, I would even walk ½ mile to the bowling alley carrying my bowling ball when I could not get a ride. I won many trophies and patches and became quite a little bowler. I would watch the PBA on ABC and then practice rolling my bowling ball into the couch cushions I stacked in the corner of the family room. It's odd that I don't remember much from my childhood, but I remember my bowling days, I remember bowling tournaments and the struggles I faced as my hands would outgrow my finger holes. I remember working at throwing that curve ball as I had seen on TV. I remember bowling my first 150 and then 175 games. I remember my bowling birthday parties and I even remember that my first bowling ball had a black and silver swirl pattern. This lasted for 2 years and I left bowling with a 150 average.

Since then life has had its twists and turns. For over 20 years I never touched a bowling ball. The daily tasks of school, College and work seemed to fill my time. But then in 1998 I joined a men's league and started throwing the ball again. I averaged 175 in this league. I was quite happy with my average, and again the fire was relit for my bowling passion. But once again time passed by without bowling. Then in 2000 I started bowling again. From this point on bowling was my desire. I started bowling 1-2 leagues a season and today I have stepped up to 3 leagues a season. During all this time my average has consistently risen from 179 to over 200, to today's average where I will finish my 3 summer leagues with an expected average of over 220.

You may ask how I have managed to keep my average moving up. That I cannot answer. Bowling has always been a natural talent for me. My form and release come naturally. I have only taken 2 lessons my whole life and I hardly practice. Today many bowlers come up to me to say how well I roll the ball. I can pick up any bowling ball and roll a strike with it. I can roll these balls with my middle and ring finger or if the holes are too small I can roll with my ring and pinky fingers, striking with either hand position. Thumb or no thumb, I can still get the ball to the pocket. I jump from house to house for the challenge of different lane conditions. I have even have some bowlers laugh when I throw their balls with a smiling comment that no matter what ball I throw I can get a strike.

Over these past few years I know that the better I get the more there is to know and learn, and I do my best to respect this aspect of bowling. Bowling has come so easy to me that I do my best not to take the skills required to bowl great for granted. I have gained the respect of fellow bowlers, just as I respect them as well.

Currently I am jumping up to the next level. I have just signed up with the PBA and have started bowling local scratch tournaments as well. It is time to come out of the shadows of typical house shots and start to make a name for myself. I have taken up coaching my two daughter's bumper and prep leagues since want them to enjoy bowling just as I do.

I feel that I am on the verge of something big, since 700 series are starting to become very common for me. I am anxiously looking for my average to cap out, maybe it will be 230, and maybe it will be 240. Do I consider myself a prodigy? NO. I consider myself a gifted bowler. But according the definition and to others I am a bowing Prodigy.

David Gillson