

# “Ten in the Pit”

By Jon Gammon

America's favorite past time has taken the country by STORM!!! Taking your first step into a bowling alley, the faint smell of cigarette smoke fills the air, while the humming of balls rolling down synthetic lanes are on target to collide into pins . The painful cries of bowlers missing that one pin that would have given them a strike or the elation of laughter when a little child knocks all the pins down on his first push of the ball down the lane. The competitive nature of the sport fills the room, when cocky teenagers throw a strike and come back taunting their fellow competitors in hopes that he will be the only one that round. Sounds pretty easy, well many bowlers, including myself, have spent years perfecting their game, let me introduce to you the next bowling PRODIGY.

Bowling brings out the best and worst in me and everyone else. A game of chance and skill; an intimidating undertaking to throw a round ball roughly eight and half inches in diameter down a lane sixty-two feet long and 42 inches wide. I am attempting to knock down 10 pins positioned in an equilaterally formed triangle spaced 12 inches apart. Learning to bowl effectively and accurately is a very difficult challenge. Most of us competitive bowlers spend countless hours perfecting our techniques. I, myself, spend hours and hours just working on my release, or playing countless number of games working on spare conversions. I have played a few games just to practice seven and ten pins. I learned very quickly that bowling strikes is great and it is awesome to slam the pocket leaving ten in the pit however, spare conversions are even more important. Going in with a 206 average on my league, and a 190 average on a sport pattern, I have posted a

289 high game, countless 600-700 series; however, have to humbly admit that I have never thrown a 300 or an 800 series. With no prior coaching and basically self taught, my time is now. Training, however, is something not easily found in Charleston, SC., so I am headed to the Kegel Training Center in Florida at the end of September for much needed skills assessments and evaluations.

We all strive for excellence in the things we do. I always put 100% into everything, and now feel the urge to follow a path that most only dream of doing. Why? It is out of the norm, it isn't one of those go to school and do this for a living career. I have a long road ahead, and even though I am starting off late in the game, that doesn't mean there still isn't a chance to fulfill a dream. Bowlers like, Brian Kretzer, started off later on in his life to pursue his dreams. Whether we are trying to defy VIRTUAL GRAVITY, conserve VIRTUAL ENERGY, or trying to tame the INVASION, maybe with some determination and a lot of persistence, one day I too will REIGN over the lanes. The roar of stringing eleven working on your first perfect game to the sigh of slamming the pocket only to leave the seven-ten split or a ringing ten missing that elusive 300, the thrills of the sport of bowling run in my blood, and it is still as magical at the age of 39 as it was when I began 30 years ago.