

Unlike some of my competitors in the Prodigy Writing Contest, I can say that bowling has NOT been in my blood since I first set foot in a bowling center. My parents are not bowlers. I'm not very athletic, to be honest. In every sport I tried in the past, I was mediocre at best. (When a person gets the reputation as "The Bleeder" on the wrestling team, you know it isn't good.) I hoped I'd eventually be good at some sport. Then, I found bowling. I may be way past being a "child wonder", but that has not stopped me. I believe once you hear of my determination and bowling achievements, you'll see me as the next Prodigy.

When I was eighteen and in college, time between classes was a bore. Luckily for me, I found a haven from boredom at the bowling center. What started out as a way to chew up time became an obsession. Bowling a game of 100 was no longer acceptable to me. I wanted to get better. At first, I would bowl mindlessly for one to two hours at a time to try and get a rhythm, but that did not work. Frustrated, I turned to libraries for the answers. I borrowed every book on bowling I could find and read them voraciously. What I learned from reading the words of Dave Ferraro, Mike Aulby, Earl Anthony, and Mike Durbin became a bible to me. With those legends as my mentors, I studied everything from delivery to axis tilt and worked to understand all of the mechanics. I also watched ESPN Classic so I could see how the stars of the PBA Tour bowled.

I applied my new knowledge whenever I hit the lanes. My practice had purpose, and I started to improve. People say that practice makes perfect, but I learned that practice made my hand hurt! I went on with my hour-long sessions with book in hand for a whole year before I even thought of competing in leagues. I wanted to be prepared for competition and still believe that today. Even now as I bowl, I carry notes from my favorite bowling books as a checklist. Those notes remind me of when I started bowling and to never stop learning about the game.

My achievements may not be as great or as lengthy as others, but I believe my rise has been just as exceptional. In six years, I went from cleaning the gutters to averaging 217 over four leagues this fall. I have competed in leagues for just five years. Most remarkable is

the fact that in one year after completing USBC Youth, I averaged a composite of 205 in three men's leagues and participated in a PBA Experience league. I also enter numerous tournaments throughout the Cleveland and Akron, Ohio, areas to test skills against tough competition. This year I won my first Handicap Tournament held by the Portage County USBC BA. In that tourney I bowled scratch since I was averaging over 220 in the year. So far, I have four II-In-A Row Awards recorded and a 298 and 299. The 300 has slipped from my grasp, but I have no doubt I will conquer that hurdle this year!

During my bowling quests, my brother Jonathan Miller also thrived from my guidance. In the six years I've coached him, he has risen to become a Co-Bowler of the Year (PTC Metro Division 2010) as a junior on the Theodore Roosevelt High School team. You can also find him on www.ohiohighschoolbowling.com for his high score of 288.

My list of accomplishments may be short, but it is of no less quality than my older counterparts. As I gain experience, I will reach greater heights and even strive for a PBA Regional title.

In my history as a bowler, I have crossed paths with some of the best Ohio has to offer. At first, I was just another face in the crowd, but now I am earning their respect from my presence on the lanes. In my opinion, my rise in skill has been meteoric. To think that a few books and my own counsel has gotten me this far amazes me! The knowledge that I possess will never be enough, and I will strive to become better. I believe I have shown you through my determination and achievements that I deserve to be recognized. I have the heart of a champion, and I know I embody the qualities of your next Prodigy.