



Bowling Fundamentals: A book all about basics

Bowling Fundamentals by Michelle Mullen. Published by Human Kinetics (Sports Fundamentals series). Copyright 2004. 144 pages. ISBN: 0736051201. \$14.95 (available at amazon.com for \$10.47).

There are tips and reminders in Michelle Mullen's new book, *Bowling Fundamentals*, that all bowlers need to remember and yet often seem to forget. As a youth coach for over eight years, it was reassuring to know that what I was teaching bowlers were the same fundamentals I found in her book. In fact, the most interesting reminder for me occurred shortly after I started reading.

I recently competed in the Virginia Bowling Queens tournament at AMF Seminary, and my first squad Saturday, to say the least, was not going well. I could not get out of the ball cleanly no matter what I tried. The second squad went a little better, but I still was not clearing the ball. I don't know how I scored well that day.

That evening, I started reading *Bowling Fundamentals* and, low and behold, the first chapter was titled "Gripping the Bowling Ball." After reading that chapter, I realized exactly what I was doing wrong all day Saturday: I was squeezing my finger inserts so tightly that it caused my armswing to tighten, and the result

on the lanes, and several bowlers wanted to know where to get it!) I ultimately finished fifth, but I felt more relieved that I was rolling the ball 100 percent better and this was something I could carry over into my leagues and tournaments.

The book points out the simplest areas of bowling from explaining what the arrows are for, all the way up to how a correct release is supposed to happen. Other chapters include issues such as timing, how to finish strong, and your footwork on the approach. In each section of the book, I bet you will find, just as I did, something that reminds you and ultimately helps your game.

Bowling Fundamentals is not only for the beginner bowler; even scratch bowlers need a little reminder of the basics now and then. You hear a lot of people say, "When you are struggling, go back to basics" ... well, this book is all about basics. Mullen, a four-time Professional Women's Bowling Association champion and a certified USA Bowling Gold-level coach, provides quality "Take it to the lanes" drills you can perform while practicing at your local center.

I particularly enjoyed her explanations for left-handers. Being a lefty myself, many books will just state in so many words, "left-handers do the opposite." Mullen, however, provided the targets,

Mullen's book is long overdue and will help bowlers of any level who want to improve their game.

was my muscling the swing to control the ball. I was reminded of how important it is to have a free armswing.

Thus, for the first squad Sunday, I made it a point not to squeeze the inserts so much and apply what I had read. My armswing was so smooth; I had forgotten what it felt like to have an "effortless" armswing and, boy, did the score show it: I shot a 930 four-game block (232.5 average), and it moved me from 11th to third place. (I was even reading the book down

lines, and angles not only for right-handers but also for left-handers and bowlers who throw a reverse hook. It was nice to see someone talking in "lefty" terms because this surely will help any beginner left-hander better understand bowling.

I enjoyed reading this book and hope Mullen writes a "Part 2" that explains various lane conditions and adjusting to them, discusses drill patterns and different ball surfaces, and covers other top-

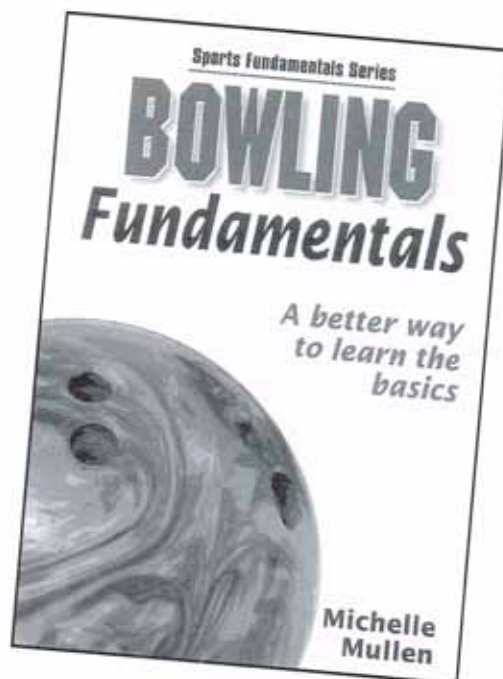


Table of Contents

- Chapter 1. Gripping the Bowling Ball
- Chapter 2. Finding Your Stance
- Chapter 3. Footwork and the Approach
- Chapter 4. Pushaway and Back Swing
- Chapter 5. Timing
- Chapter 6. Finishing Strong
- Chapter 7. Delivery and Hook
- Chapter 8. Hitting the Pocket
- Chapter 9. Left-Side Spares
- Chapter 10. Right-Side Spares
- Chapter 11. Open Bowling and League Play

ics maybe geared to the more advanced bowler.

Mullen's current book, however, is long overdue and will help bowlers of any level who want to improve their game. Just remember: It doesn't matter if your average is 100 or 200, everyone needs *Bowling Fundamentals*.

Carla Sessions has appeared in the Washington, D.C. Area Women's Bowling Association Official Top 10 Ranking five times in the past six seasons. She has rolled five perfect games and two 800 series—her 832 is the highest ever recorded by a woman in Virginia, and her 812 is the house record at AMF Williamsburg.