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*breaks 800 barrier  
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# **BOWL** MAGAZINE

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I EVER RECEIVED*

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ARE SERIOUS BOWLERS;  
RECREATIONAL BOWLERS  
BOWL FOR FUN*

**DAVE KNEAS**

*"No Hand" wins  
four PBA regional titles  
in 11 months*



# DAVE KNEAS

*Dave Kneas arguably has been the best area bowler in Professional Bowlers Association competition over the past 11 months, winning a regional in Middletown, Del., and capturing two senior regionals at Fort Belvoir and a third earlier this month in Brookville, Pa. Regular readers of the "Tournament Roundup" section in this publication know that many of the Annapolis right-hander's other checks earned during this period came after successfully qualifying for match play competition.*

*Kneas recently responded to questions posed by editor Bob Cosgrove.*

Anybody who wants to be a good bowler, anybody who wants to bowl the PBA regionals or even the national tour: If you're not in a Sport league, you're an idiot. Period!

## **How did you first get involved with bowling?**

I was about eight years old, and my brother's class—he was four years older than me, and it was Queenstown bowling alley—I remember that, duckpins. They took the class there after school to introduce them to this sport, and I went along because my mother was one of the drivers, so I had to go along. I saw all those people bowling, and it just looked like so much fun. Plus, I wanted to beat my brother so bad.

That summer, I joined a league at [Fair Lanes] University, which was probably like two miles away, and every Saturday morning, me and my three friends, we got up and we walked to University and bowled, and then we walked back.

## **How has Sport Bowling influenced your game?**

The Sport league at [The Lanes] Fort Meade—thank God for [center manager] Dean Ryan—has made me exactly what I am today. That was pretty much it. When the reactive resin bowling balls came out in, I guess, around the early '90s, that set me up to become one of the most, you know, one of the, say, Top 10 dominant scratch bowlers in the area—the [Nation's Capital/Baltimore Area] Masters tour and all that other stuff. People were shocked when I wasn't in the finals, just like [when] Lee Brosius wouldn't be in the finals or Darwin Wimer and another dozen people I can name.

They took my game to one level, but it was the Sport Bowling that took me from being somebody who struggled to cash on the PBA regionals to somebody who could have no fear of anybody.

Anybody who wants to be a good bowler, anybody who wants to bowl the PBA regionals or even the national tour: If you're not in a Sport league, you're an idiot. Period!

## **And as for your overall attitude towards bowling?**

It taught me so much about ... when you're somebody who averages 230, and you suddenly go into a league where you're struggling to average 200, reality hits home so fast. Heck, I know guys who have gone in with 230 averages and were struggling to average 185!

Reality hits home about your skill level really, really, really fast, and you start to

understand when you're watching these guys on TV, *why* they bowl so slow, *why* they take their time, *what* they're thinking about. After about two or three years in a Sport league, you're ready for anything.

**You said Sport Bowling made you what you are today. What *are* you today?**

What I am today is a four-time PBA regional champion who's like almost always favored to be in the finals now—although I think that's more of a hot streak than a reality. I'm always in the finals on the [regional] Senior Tour, but on the regular tour, it's a little tougher.

I'm sadly just too old to try and compete against the kids on the regular tour. If I was 27 and knew what I knew now, boy, I'd be out there fighting for a spot every week. But 55-year-olds, I don't care what kind of shape you're in, even if you're a Tom Baker, it's just too hard to compete against young kids.

## **How would you describe your game?**

I'm a stroker; I believe the less hook, the better. PBA patterns are real difficult to bowl on, so unless you're a Tommy Jones or a Robert Smith, or someone who can either just super, super—even a Wes Mallot—overpower the lanes or just someone who is so incredibly, incredibly deadly accurate that God gave you all that skill, you know?

If you're going to compete in the PBA, go with about 10 boards of hook and no more. The less the ball hooks, the less splits you're going to throw; the less splits you throw, the higher your scores.

## **What reactions do you get from players not familiar with your straighter type of game?**

Well, they call me "No Hand" in the regionals. Most everybody pretty much knows me when I walk up on the lane, and most of them are just gonna say, 'Don't worry about David; he's just gonna to walk to the foul line, and he's gonna drop the ball on the one board, and it's gonna roll right to the pocket.' And that's pretty much all I do—as long as I can play the gutter.

## **Have you ever been tempted to hook the ball more over the past few years?**

No. Hooking is great on a house shot; I mean, I can't shoot diddy on a house shot anymore. But on a PBA pattern where you have maybe a maximum of

two boards to hit your target to hit the pocket, hooking the ball stinks.

**What PBA condition gives you the biggest problem?**

Actually, none of them—I love 'em all. None of them give me any problem.

After eight years of bowling on the Sport shot, the lanes at Fort Meade, their PBA shots are usually wetter than the actual PBA shots, so when the PBA uses wet shots, I'm 100 percent ready for them. I'm a drop-and-roll bowler, so if the lanes are really, really dry, that just makes me happy. So I don't worry about anything.

When I enter the tournaments now—I'm deadly serious—I don't even ask people what the pattern is. I don't even look; I just go in and roll. I start on the one board, and I just keep moving left until I find someplace where I get that five- or six-board hook reaction, and that's where I start bowling.

**How far will you travel to bowl in a PBA regional tournament?**

Anything within six hours is pretty much my goal. The farthest I went in the past year and a half is down to North Carolina.

**Do you ever have a travel companion?**

No, I'm a loner. There aren't that many PBA members around here, especially on the seniors. I betcha there aren't more than six or seven PBA seniors in the state of Maryland. Well, that's probably not true; there's probably 15 of them, but there's not too many of them in the Annapolis area. But you only have maybe 25 senior members in the whole state. It's a big state, and they're all scattered everywhere.

I usually just travel to the tournaments by myself and then, depending upon whether we need rooms the night before the tournament or while waiting for the finals, I'll just hook up with somebody.

**What's been your most memorable match?**

Actually, I bowled Johnny Petraglia two years ago. That only stands out in my mind because it was the first time in my entire life of bowling that I've had an entire bowling alley cheering against me, *rooting* against me. Every time Johnny got up and threw a strike, the whole bowling alley broke into cheers, and every time I struck, there was dead silence.

**If you were the PBA commissioner for a day, what one change would you make for the good of the organization?**

I'd get rid of the exempt tour—it stinks. I'm one of those people who thinks that anybody who's willing to join the PBA deserves the right to try and win a national title. And to just tell them, *Nope, you're not one of the select few that we're going to allow out there*, I think is wrong.

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**How has your recent success changed your perception of yourself as a bowler?**

Boy, I'm super conceited now! I just feel a lot more confident now when I walk into a [center].

Actually, it's really sorta strange. I don't think anybody pays attention to regionals, but it's amazing: I go into bowling alleys now—I'll pick out a bowling alley and go in to practice—and people will walk up to me that I don't even know and say, 'Hi, how are you doing? What's up, Dave?'

And I'll be just like, *I don't know these people!* And it happens a lot, and it's not like my picture's been in newspapers or on TV or anything, but I sure get a lot of 'Hellos' now.

**Has your success been a surprise to you?**

Yeah. I was probably three-quarters through making all these finals and

still a threat to win any tournament he enters.

As far as women go, Joy Esterson ... you can't take anything away from her. When that girl's on, she's just absolutely awesome.

We could go on ... Brian Cavey, who's won more tournaments in the past two years than probably anyone around as far as I know—could be wrong. There's just a whole bunch of standards. Bobby Hall II—Bobby can pretty much hit anything, anytime.

**How do you stay current with the constant equipment changes?**

I actually don't. Brunswick's been real nice to me for about the past two or three months; they've sent me some balls and stuff that helped me out, but most of my scoring and everything I've done in the past four to five months has all been done with three-, four-, and five-year old equipment.

Let's see: I'm 55, I want to win at least four more regional titles before I'm 60 because I don't think I'll be able to do this much after 60.

finishing in the Top 4 and all that stuff before it even hit me what I'd done because bowling out there—that ain't no joke. My God, those guys are good!

It's just fortunate that the highlight of my game is my sparing ability. When I'm at 100 percent concentration, if I miss one spare in eight games of the PBA event, it bothers me for weeks.

But the lanes in the PBA regions in the East have just been so difficult. You look sometimes in the Northwest and you see the tournament leader at 380 [pins] over, and then you look in the East and the tournament leader is at [plus] 75.

They've just been so hard; that just plays into me. The harder the lanes, the better the spare shooters are who go and make the finals. The easier the lanes, it favors the strikers.

**Which area players impress you the most?**

[NCAUSBCA Hall of Famer] Lee Brosius. Even though he's in his sixties now, he is still everybody's idol just because of what he's been doing for 30 years. He's

Even though my game is walking to the line and just dropping the ball—just sort of pushing the ball down the lane and letting the ball do all the work—a lot of these new balls that are out are just way too powerful, even for me!

I go into leagues sometimes, and I bowl one game, and let's just say the score is 237. By the time I'm halfway through the second game, I'm like 11 boards to the left. That's just absurd for somebody who just pushes the ball out on the lane and lets it roll.

I'm like everybody else; I'm tempted to start getting the urethane stuff back out.

**Anything special about your grip or the drilling of your equipment?**

No, it's all pretty just standard stuff. I just let the guys [Lee Hosgood and Mike Warboy] at Crofton Classic Pro Shop drill up all my equipment. They've been taking care of me since 1978.

I don't even tell them what I want or anything; I just give 'em a ball and say, "Make it work," and that's what they do.

**How often do you practice?**

Thank God for the Hall family that owns Severna Park Lanes, Greenway Bowl, and Annapolis Bowl—and there's actually [The Lanes] Fort Meade, too, who let all the PBA members bowl for a buck a game. When you're paying a buck a game to bowl, you can get in a *lot* of practice!

**What do you find yourself working on the most with your game?**

It's almost always now accuracy—because when you don't have any power, you better be accurate—and hand release.

**How do you rate your mental game?**

In PBA tournaments, I'd put it up against anybody, even some of the pros—come close to some of the pros, I should say. But in leagues and smaller tournaments where there's maybe only 20 or 30 bowlers, I don't even think I get over 75 percent anymore. It's just not worth the effort.

**What do you focus on while competing on league conditions?**

Having fun. I used to bowl in leagues and my first goal in the first game was always to shoot 300. Any games over 250, the second goal kicked in, which was to bowl 800. And if that didn't happen, the third goal kicked in: Don't bowl under 700. And then came the fourth goal: Avoid the embarrassment of shooting in the 600s, which PBA guys should never do, but we do it all the time.

**Are there any benefits to your bowling in leagues—anything you can learn?**

The only thing league conditions do for you is get you adapted to bowling high scores. So if you go out in the PBA and you shoot 740-something, you don't freak out because you're used to shooting those scores. If you bowl the first seven on a PBA shot, you don't start to shake and get nervous and go crazy because you've got 18 300s already, and bowling another one is no big deal.

So it helps your mindset a little, but as far as improving your game or anything else, it's pretty darn useless.

**What three bowling balls do you currently use the most?**

As I've said, Brunswick's been real nice to me, so I'm using the Brunswick Wild

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## **KNEAS, from page 10**

Thing and Seige, and probably my third choice would be the Hammer Cherry Vibe, which I've won a tournament [at Fort Belvoir] with—*dominated* a tournament with!

**What ball do you use to shoot spares?**  
Ebonite Maxim.

**Does anyone currently serve or has anyone served as your coach?**

No, I haven't had lessons for ... well, it was probably in the early '80s the last time I took lessons. Most of my learning comes from reading—actually almost all my learning comes from reading bowling magazines [such as] *Bowlers Journal [International]*. You can read 30 magazines and get absolutely nothing out of them. But then one day, if you get *one* tip....

I tell you one thing I read once was from [PBA Hall of Famer] David Ozio, who was talking about releasing the ball right as the ball started to reach his ankle. That's when he started to release the ball, and he said he had a much more powerful reaction on the back-end.

And I went out and tried it, and darn if he wasn't kidding! For someone like me, if you just start your release just as the ball gets near your ankle, it probably

adds two revs onto the ball, just from good leverage.

**What interests do you have outside of bowling?**

Stock market—it's the only way I make my living now. I lost \$700 today if you're interested! I've been in it for probably about 12 or 13 years now. You have your up days, you have your down days.

For someone who didn't go to college to learn about it—take economics and all that good stuff—it's sort of like playing poker. But it doesn't take long to learn when to get in and when to get out, except on days like today when I goofed really bad, and I should have got out as soon as it opened and I didn't.

I was in retail music for 35 years—didn't do anything but sell CDs and DVDs and anything else related to it. It was fun. I had a job where for seven hours a day all I did was listen to music.

I had three [stores] once upon a time, but they all just faded down into one. Then of course came the Internet and the end of the music business.

**What do you generally do on evenings when you're not bowling?**

Pretty much nothing ... just watch

movies. My best friend lives about seven or eight miles from me, so I'll probably go over to his house and just play cards. I'm a card player.

**What are your current bowling goals?**

Let's see: I'm 55, I want to win at least four more regional titles before I'm 60 because I don't think I'll be able to do this much after 60.

**Do you ever have any physical problems after a tournament?**

Nothing after bowling—I'm just old, and things are starting to wear out. I've noticed that the knee is starting to twitch a little every now and then and give me pain. The arm is starting to get sore sometimes after eight, nine, 10, or 11 games.

As I say, I don't think I'll be able to do this much after 60, unless I want to suddenly wake up some day and want to start going to the gym like three times a week and working out, jogging, and ... I'm just too old for that! ●