



"Take No. 2" on two columns

During the past few months, I wrote two articles that were either poorly worded, taken out of context, or wrongly interpreted.

The first, and most important, was my column regarding the possible extinction of the television contract between ABC Sports and the PBA [see Summer 1992 issue]. The story merely repeated quotes by ABC Sports president Dennis Swanson and Denny Lewin, who criticized the bowling industry for its lack of advertising support of ABC's "Pro Bowlers Tour." They specifically singled out the American Bowling Congress, WIBC, and the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America as principal benefactors of the 30-year television program.

I am in full agreement with the advantages gained by bowling proprietors. I am, in no way, in accord with their mistaken notion that the American Bowling Congress or the WIBC must shoulder the responsibility for the promotion of the game, particularly on national television commercials for extended periods.

Although the BPAA contributes lane sanctioning dollars to the American Bowling Congress and WIBC, these organizations represent the bowlers whose dues are not designed to promote proprietors' investments.

Perhaps the ABC Sports executives noticed the American Bowling Congress's commercials on the PBA Fall Tour on NBC-TV. Perhaps they weren't aware that the shorter fall series permitted sponsorship of a specific segment, something completely out the question on ABC-TV.

The American Bowling Congress and ESPN have engaged in several projects. However, ABC-TV is probably three to five times the cost of ESPN; therefore, ESPN is more affordable to the limited budget of the American Bowling Congress. The difference to sponsors is that it is on national TV, just like NBC, and not cable, like ESPN.

As for the PGA and LPGA advertising, it is not an investment. Those organizations spell it out in the television contract that promotional advertising of the organization be included. In defense of the American Bowling Congress, why didn't the PBA and ABC-TV buy television time on ESPN's "Bowling World" to promote the PBA Winter Tour?

Is there a bowling proprietor in America who can deny the increase of open play following a PBA Tour telecast?

The American Bowling Congress spends at least 14 percent of its budget to promote the sport, not just the organization. Can you imagine the amount of money that could be generated by the BPAA if it spent 14 percent of its budget on television commercials? Or even 10 percent?

For example, during the existence of the National Bowling Council, more than \$1.5 million was available for promotional purposes. Could there have been a better place to spend at least a third of this amount promoting the game than a 90-minute show that was a top attraction in its time slot? I cannot conceive anything that would have created a greater impact on the public in selling the bowling game than a show that was viewed by as many non-bowlers as was by bowling participants.

Is there a bowling proprietor in America who can deny the increase of open play following a PBA Tour telecast? Is there a proprietor in the country who can honestly ignore the impact that television has made on the game? If one can be found, he or she did not exist or have any recollection of the disasters or debacles of the bowling game in the early 1960s—an era of insolvency, decadence,

and strained circumstances.

There are those who point fingers at bowling manufacturers as the greatest benefactors. In reality, however, where are the balls, bags, and shoes being used? In the streets? On the sidewalks? Of course not. They are being utilized on alleys! Not those used by drivers for short cuts, but in the streamlined vernacular of the sport, bowling lanes! And where are the lanes located?

At the risk of further alienating myself with the BPAA, I contend that proprietors must shoulder more responsibility for keeping the game in the public eye.

The second correction, or explanation, concerns my story about the PBA Steve Nagy Sportsmanship Award. [This column did not appear in *BOWL Magazine*.]

Parker Bohn III, one of the nicest and most amiable bowlers on tour, repeated as the winner of this award for 1991. My suggesting other names and spreading the honor in no way refuted, disputed, impugned, or maligned the selection of Parker. No one is more worthy than the likeable New Jersey native.

However, in the interest of rewarding other deserving bowlers, I merely proposed the choice of many others who have been overlooked for so many years. My recommendation to spread the award was meant to make the bowling public aware of many other outstanding personalities within the PBA organization.

My apologies go out to Parker Bohn III, his family, and his friends who may have misinterpreted my judgement in the selection of this award.

To the bowling fans throughout America who are not privy to some outstanding gentlemen who have somehow been bypassed, I submit the following choices for this award: Mike Aulby, Steve Cook, Marc McDowell, Rick Steelsmith, Bob Handley, Ron Williams, Mark Thayer, Curtis Odom, George Branham III, and Mike Jasnau.

PBA Hall of Famer John Jowdy, a director of the Bowling Writers Association of America and a Tour consultant for Columbia 300, has coached many of the nation's best professional bowlers. He was elected to the PBA Hall of Fame in 1988.