

Mark Miller's *Bowling* well worth your time

Bowling by Mark Miller. Copyright 2012 by Shire Publications. 64 pages. ISBN-13: 978-0747811367. \$9.95 at amazon.com

By Karen Jost

Sportswriter and bowling historian Mark Miller recently published an historical account of the sport, *Bowling*. The book is a concise yet detailed description of the evolution of America's greatest indoor pastime. A variety of historical and contemporary photos throughout enhance and reinforce the content, making it an easy read for bowling and non-bowling fans alike.

Miller begins with a discussion of contemporary bowling in America and describes four levels of participation in the sport: open play, leagues, tournament, and elite. He goes on to describe the continued existence of variations of bowling in New England and the Mid-Atlantic states known as candlepins and duckpins. By far, however, tenpins is the most prevalent form of bowling throughout the country today.

While nobody knows exactly when bowling began, Miller tells of potential beginnings in the Stone Age, findings in Egypt (dated 3200 B.C.), and the gradual movement of various forms of kegling from Europe to the United States in the early 1600s. Early bowlers used implements such

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as rocks, balls, bones, and wooden discs to knock down their targets.

Miller recounts the development of organized bowling in America, including membership organizations such as the National Bowling Association (TNBA), the American Bowling Congress (ABC), the Women's International Bowling Congress (WIBC), and the American Junior Bowling Congress (subsequently known as the Young American Bowling Alliance). As organizers of America's greatest indoor pastime, membership restric-

tions in ABC and WIBC paralleled America's history of limiting participation of non-whites and females and ultimately allowed participation by all Americans. He describes the evolution of bowling into the modern era, including the boom in league participation between World War II through the 1970s and popular bowling programs on television, including "Celebrity Bowling," "Jackpot Bowling," and "Make That Spare."

Finally, Miller discusses the growth in technology and identifies a variety of circumstances that likely contributed to the decline in league bowling participation. Despite this decline,

bowling is one of the fastest-growing high school sports, and youth bowling and collegiate programs are offering more scholarships than ever.

Miller's overall treatment of the history of America's greatest indoor pastime is well worth your time.

Karen Jost, a USBC board member, is NCAUSBCA second vice president.

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