

## 20 QUESTIONS

# Barry Tyler

*At this year's NCAUSBCA Open Championship Tournament, everything came together for Greenbelt's Barry Tyler, who scored 755 (290-233-232) in doubles, 749 (247-246-256) in singles, and 726 (258-279-189) in the team event, resulting in titles in the handicap and scratch all events divisions—the latter of which earned the 26-year-old right-hander and 1996 Youth Invitational champion a spot in the prestigious USBC Masters next February in Las Vegas.*

*Tyler, a purchasing manager at LaserArts, recently responded to 20 questions from editor Bob Cosgrove.*

**What were the keys to your success in the NCAUSBCA Open Championship Tournament?**

Consistency—consistency and accuracy. They were on, and once I stayed on, everything moved in the right direction. I shot over 1,500 (for six games) the first day.

**Did your perception of yourself as a bowler change as a result of your performance?**

Actually it did. You see more of the mistakes you might have made versus in the tournaments you used to bowl and the ones you do bowl currently. There are certain things you see that you're doing wrong, and it kind of shocks you as you move on out.

So once I left from bowling that [tournament], I'm like, *There were a lot of things I did differently this time than what I would normally do. Why don't I just stay consistent and do it all the time and always shoot the scores?*

So, more concentration and more or less not worrying about the scoreboard but going shot to shot.

**Has your confidence level changed?**

Yes, more so more aggressive—that's all. Not skeptical about certain shots. I'm more aggressive. I try more difficult

shots than I would normally play. My confidence is a lot higher, and I challenge myself a lot more on each shot.

**Did you have to change equipment at all?**

Throughout the whole entire time, to be honest, the only thing I did was clean my ball between sets. I used The Rejuvenator cleaner; I did that between my first and second sets. We switched lanes and went right back at it. A couple of ad-

justments in the beginning, and I was on my way.

**What ball did you use?**

The Rapid Fire, made by Storm.

**Do you use Storm products often?**

All Storm equipment exclusively. I'm hoping once I send my application in, I can get on (the amateur) staff. I don't throw anything but Storm.

**What will you do to prepare for the challenging lane conditions you're likely to face at the USBC Masters?**

A lot of this game is mental. There's a whole lot physical, but mentally I'm going out there with the mindset that I'm going to shoot good. I'm just going to go out there and *know* that I'm gonna play well. That right there gives you more confidence to go out there and actually play the shot.

If you're scared to play the shot, then your mechanics aren't going to be right.



I think that's what more or less got me through the City Tournament—going in *knowing* I was going to shoot good, *knowing* I was going to throw the ball well, and that's makes me more confident and aggressive.

### **What are the major strengths in your game?**

I've got to say, right now, *accuracy*. The most improved part in my game? *Spare-making*.

### **And the major weaknesses?**

My weakness now—I didn't have this at the tournament—is finishing the game. I can start out with the front six and go 240—you know? Just staying focused and finishing the game.

### **You take mental vacations?**

It's so known to the bowling game. That's one thing that I've been working on for so long, and when I can complete a game, that's when I'm the most happy. Finishing the game is really what I strive for.

Having the spare and the next seven is not good enough for me. It's just actually finishing, making it to the tenth. If you leave something on the floor, cover it, you know? That's the biggest weakness I have right now.

Or, putting three nice games together. Lately, I've worked on that and improved on that—go 230-240-250 or 250-230-240, not dropping too far be-

consistent and won't get frustrated and lose your eye for the game.

### **What lane conditions cause the most problems for you?**

I would say oil. The only reason I would say that is—not that I can't hit the shot, I hit it very well—but the way that my ball drives, I kinda have to shoot at a different angle because my ball cuts hard, and I leave a lot of back-row pins on the oil.

Of course, I'm a power bowler, so if the shot calls for slowing the ball down, I have to slow my approach down, slow my ball speed down. Have I done it before and succeeded? Yes. I've done that before and really stood out.

But oil is a major adjustment for me because I'm a power player, and I crank it hard.

### **What do you think about just prior to tossing your first practice ball at a tournament?**

Normally for the first shot at tournament play, I'm taking a deep breath, and my main focus is pretty much the lane and watching how that ball reacts, and I adjust from there, and I just try to keep a pattern going. But the lane is the focus for me, seeing how the ball reacts—where it's jumping at, where it's holding at. That's my game.

I tend to, depending on who's on my lane, watch other peoples' bowling balls to see where they're throwing the ball, to see what kind of piece they're throw-

you get up there and say, *Wow! I didn't know it was going to do that! Let me get prepared for that.*

I don't want to make a *big* adjustment, but in getting to know that, I don't end up in that situation!

### **What three area bowlers do you admire the most?**

That's a good one! I would have to say, first and foremost, Greg Turner. He's a very consistent bowler, and I commend him on accuracy. Greg Turner is my number one.

After that one, I would definitely have to say Keni Lowe. He's a very consistent player. These bowlers are so much alike in accuracy that I just kinda follow them!

The last person is Tony Walton. He's always been a favorite of mine, so I've got to keep him in there!

### **So Bobby Hall II doesn't make your Top 3?**

I admire his consistency. I'm probably not too admiring of his style of bowling. He's more of a finesse, straighter player—not too much into grip type of a bowler—more like an off-the-hand bowler.

Now I admire how he throws the ball; he definitely puts scores on the screen. I just wouldn't admire, you know, his style.

These particular bowlers that I named, I admire their style, their style of bowling.

### **How does Chris Johnson rate with you?**

He's one of the straighter bowlers, too. I respect a lot of the straighter bowlers' games; to me, they have less to worry about versus us crankers who hit the ball a lot more.

Straighter, down-and-in players—I respect their games because they still have to be accurate.

The ones I *admire* are the ones that actually play certain shots that other people don't want to play in order to score. It's just taking that chance out there, wanting to be aggressive, and saying, *Look, I'm going to play that shot anyway. Nobody's out here, let me get out here and rip it across the lane*—and just show that you can score that way. You don't have to play where everybody else is playing. That gives you the extra advantage.

I know that I'm not totally the number one bowler in the area, but I can definitely compete with them if you want to go in that area—averagewise.

cause people are known to go 260-180. And that just so hurts your game, and people are already expecting you to go down when you put that big game up.

So that's my main goal: Finishing the game and putting games together. You know, staying consistent—not looking like I was found and then got totally lost.

That's what really makes you a bowler—when you can have consistent games. A lot of people want to pick you up on their teams; they know you'll stay con-

ing, see where it's reacting at, and see where that may help or hurt me. That way, I'll know where to throw the ball.

That's one thing I know some people actually do—some people throw the ball and leave the lane! But I hang around, check balls out, and see how they roll, see where they're hooking and not hooking, depending on what piece they're throwing.

I can relate off that; sometimes when the lanes start changing, you can see what someone else's [ball] does before

**Are there any players on the PBA Tour you get excited about when they're going to appear on television?**

Excited about? No. But one person that I definitely bowled against in the Junior Scratch Bowling Association [was] Tommy Jones. I really stepped my game up for him. I admire Tommy Jones over anybody on the Tour right now—a very, very quality bowler.

I bowled against him 10 years ago in Charlotte, and he shot 300 on me in match play. I shot 268! We're battling back-and-forth, we both got the first seven, and I'm like, *I'm not going to let him win! I'm not going to let him win!* But I caught two bad breaks, and he kept going.

But that's my favorite pro bowler—very aggressive, very determined, very confident. Doesn't worry about anything on the lanes but getting the ball to the hole.

And that's me. That's the eyes I'd like to have for bowling—being aggressive, confident. Just determined that you're going to strike, no matter what the condition is or how hard the shot is. So he's my number one out there.

**How do you rate yourself among area bowlers?**

I know that I'm not totally the number one bowler in the area, but I can definitely compete with them if you want to go in that area—averagewise.

I'm not the top averagewise—I'm in the area—but I definitely can compete all with them. And they know that, too. If they get on the lanes with me, they're definitely going to have to shoot their game. I won't make it easy on 'em!

**How do you stay informed about the latest equipment?**

The Internet and [World Class Pro Shop] at [AMF] Capital Plaza. I definitely go there and consult with Derek Payne, who is actually my contracted puncher! He's the one who punches all my equipment. I definitely gotta commend that man because every piece I get, I make money with it within the first couple of hours I buy the ball.

**Do you make any special requests regarding the drilling of the ball?**

If I get a very aggressive ball, I let him know to punch it so that it gets down

the lane further. If it's a very weak piece, drill it to the max, I can handle the rest!

**What role does bowling play in your life—how important is it today versus when you were a teenager?**

I think that it was very exciting as a youth bowler, and there was a whole lot more recognition because I kinda stood out. Now it's like, I stand out still, but you stand out in a *whole loop* of good bowlers—you know what I mean?

But one thing about it: You being competitive and throwing the ball well, it gets around—no matter where you throw that good game at, people talk. It's gonna get around, and people hear about you, know about you—through adult bowling leagues.

Once I did well in the City Tournament, the whole bowling alley knew about it. They knew right away. That word travelled very far!

I'd have to say that now it's a whole lot more competitive because there are a lot of good bowlers out there.

