

# Plymouth pin wizard on roll to pros

By Tom Henderson  
staff writer

**T**IM DETERAGE of Plymouth knows what it's going to take to make it on the pro bowling tour: single-mindedness of purpose to go with his outstanding skills.

He's prepared, for a while at least, to forgo the comforts of a girlfriend or wife; he has no time to learn a trade; college doesn't interest him. Unlike many youths, he's known for seven years exactly what he wants to do — bowl with the stars on the Professional Bowlers Association (PBA) tour.

TO THAT end, Deterage, 20 and a graduate of Salem High School, lives at home, bowls in six leagues a week, practices up to two hours a day, pays to have himself videotaped when he's in a slump and plays all the tournaments he can on weekends. The results: a 207 average in his leagues and enough success cashing checks in local tournaments to support himself and his dreams.

Of girls, he says: "They don't work out too well. Bowling takes a lot of my time. The free time I have, they want to do something and I like to be by myself."

Of not learning a trade, or not really having anything to fall back on if life on the PBA tour doesn't materialize, or if it materializes and doesn't work out: "Yeah, I kind of worry about it. I'd get a job, I guess."

But, "I don't want to work," he adds with a laugh. "You know how that goes. I make more money in tournaments now than I would by working, though."

SEVEN YEARS AGO, it would have seemed almost impossible that Deterage would have pro potential. In his

## bowling

first summer league, he bowled 99 — not once, but as an average.

A couple of buddies from school talked him into joining a league, and although he didn't score well, he was hooked.

He's been hooked since, and his average has slowly climbed. It is an indication of his dedication that Deterage can roll off his progression of averages through the years without a second's thought or hesitation. Following the 89, he went to 110, to 140, to 166, then, in a big breakthrough, to 184, and then to 193.

"I WANTED to be a pro ever since I started," explained Deterage, taking a break from practice one morning at the Plaza Lanes in Plymouth. "But the first time I thought I could really do it was when I hit 184 in the teen leagues. Everybody then thought I was real, REAL good."

No wonder, since he was about 34 plus over the league average. That was his conversion from throwing a straight ball to one with a small hook was responsible for his escaping the relative mediocrity of the mid-160s.

His hook has grown a bit since, but is hardly a big bender. He doesn't over-pow the ball or the pins, doing his scoring with smoothness and accuracy.

AND SCORE HE DOES. He has four 300s to his credit and a 799 series a year ago at Fiesta Lanes in Westland. "I needed a nice on the last ball and I got an eight," says Deterage painfully.

"I'd rather have an 800 than a 300. That's what I'm shooting for."

His latest 300 came recently in singles in the ongoing Dick Raw Tournament in Bridgeport. But the real story there was in doubles, where Deterage and his partner, Ron Aman, 34, the manager of Canton Trophy Sales, each racked up a 738 for a 1476 total. The tournament runs through July 1. If their score holds up — and Deterage expects it might — they will win \$3,000 apiece.

THIS PAST weekend, there was a nine-pin, no-tap tourney in Toledo (nine pins on the first ball counts as a strike). Upcoming is a 20-game marathon tournament, also in Bridgeport. "I like to hit a lot of tournaments to stay sharp and for the experience," says Deterage. Not to mention the money. He finished first in a one-day tourney at Super Bowl in Canton three years ago and won \$500.

The first big test for Deterage, to see if he can compete with the big boys of the PBA tour, comes this summer in a series of regional PBA tourneys.

The regional tournaments involve putting up \$100 for the entry fee, then paying for transportation, hotel bills and meals. The money's not much — in fact, only the top 15 or so on the national tour make a good living from their sport — but cash four checks from the regional events and you're eligible for the nationals.

QUALIFYING FOR the nationals is hardly a guarantee of financial suc-

cess. That merely means you can enter what are "rabbi" tournaments.

At each tour spot, 100 or more aspiring pros roll off in a pre-tournament that qualifies them for the main tournament. Often the national tour means living out of a van or cheap motel rooms, with crummy food, tight budgets, too much travel and little glamor.

Still, if you make it to the top, there are the bright lights of ABC-TV and an annual income in six figures.

DETERAGE has the backing of his parents, despite the odds against him. They're really behind him. They wish they had the money to really support him.

His father, Tom, is a draftsman and avid golfer. Mom, Judy, is a waitress and once-a-week bowler at Plaza with a 150 average.

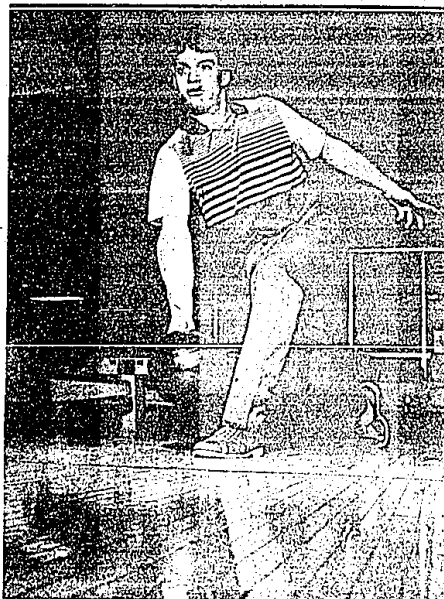
Tim has three siblings — Sara, 13, Ron, 11, and Barry, 23 — none of whom bowls.

Though Deterage is avid about his bowling, he's not obsessive about it. He finds time for other things, particularly running. He works out at Vic Tanny's and has modestly begun running road races.

HE RAN last year's Emily-Midas Run downtown, which drew more than 20,000 entrants, and on a hot day finished in a respectable time of 42 minutes, averaging under seven minutes a mile.

He likes running even though it's leaving a spot open on his bowling calendar for June 9, the date of Emily's run this year, which she expects to draw 30,000 runners, making it the second largest road race in the nation.

If Deterage can battle these crowds, the PBA should be no problem.



BILL BRESELEVSKI photograph

Tim Deterage, a resident of Plymouth, has brought his bowling average up from 99 to 207 in a short time and now he's eyeing the pros.

## It's tourney time at Farmington club

If you're looking for a tennis tournament, look no further than the Farmington Tennis Club.

Joel Rogus, the club's tournament director, has lined up three tournaments for the month of May and two in June. All the tournaments are sanctioned by the United States Tennis Association and refereed by Neil Longhurst.

Here's a brief rundown of the upcoming events:

• Junior Open Championships, Friday through Sunday, May 11-13. This singles-only tourney is for junior boys and girls 10s, 12s and 14s. Entry fee is \$2. Entry deadline is Sunday May 6.

## tennis

• Senior Spring Open, Friday through Sunday, May 18-20. Tourney includes singles, doubles and mixed doubles for men's and women's 35s, 45s and 55s. Mixed doubles play is for players over 35. Entry for singles is \$20 and \$20 per doubles team. Entry deadline is Sunday May 13.

• Spring Open, Friday through Sun-

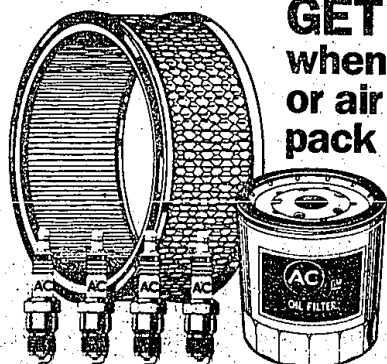
day, May 25-27. Tourney is for all men and women in singles, doubles or mixed doubles play. Prize money will be awarded — 10 percent of gross per event to winners and 10 percent of gross per event to runners-up. Entry fee is \$24 for singles and doubles teams. Entry deadline is Sunday, May 20.

• Junior Tournament, Friday through Sunday, June 1-3. Singles only tourney is for boys and girls 14s, 16s and 18s. Entry fee is \$12. Entry deadline is Sunday, May 27.

• Junior Tournament, Friday through Sunday, June 8-10. Singles only tourney for boys and girls 10s and 12s. Entry fee is \$12. Entry deadline is Sunday June 3.

All these tournaments will be played at the Farmington Tennis Club, located on Farmington Road between 9 Mile and Grand River. For more information and for specific registration details call the club at 476-3246.

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