



THE HISTORY OF BOWLING

Bowling is one of the oldest and most widely played of the world's sports. Its history has been traced to Egypt of 5200 B.C. and has been played in dozens of forms, both indoors and outdoors, for more than seventy centuries.

Although tenpins and the American Bowling Congress brought the world's heaviest concentration of organized, competitive bowling to the United States, some kind of bowling has existed at times in most areas of the world.

Tenpins is an outgrowth of the European ninepin game that was brought to this country in the 1600s by Henrik Hudson and other early explorers who settled the northeastern seaboard. The tenth pin was added, according to popular legend, to circumvent a ruling in the 1840s by the Connecticut legislature which

outlawed ninepins because of widespread gambling then rampant in the game.

The earliest known example of bowling was discovered in the grave of an Egyptian child buried in 5200 B.C. Bowling implements found in the grave were similar to those in a contest of accuracy.

Ula Maiké, a game very similar to modern tenpins, flourished among the Polynesians in ancient times. The game involved rolling a stone 60 feet toward a target in a contest of accuracy.

Many of the early European games were played outdoors, some as lawn games and others using a narrow wooden board as a lane. These games often adjoined eating places or clubs and eventually either went indoors or were at least provided with a shelter at the player's end of the lane.

CHANGES TODAY IN THE BOWLING WORLD.

In the past ten years, bowling has increased in popularity. While it used to be primarily a male sport, females now account for 48% of the bowlers. Many new bowling centers have sprung up, and they are larger. Automatic scorers have barely scratched the surface of the industry, and there are some who distrust over-automation and feel better about doing their own scoring.

Northlanes at 8 Mile and Greenfield has facilities for blind people. Strange as it may seem, blind people can bowl. There are guide ropes to help them. There are leagues for blind people and leagues for deaf people.

Annual certification (measurement and inspection) of bowling lanes is one of the ways the American Bowling Congress (ABC) assures bowlers of standard playing conditions wher-

ever their sanctioned competition may take them.

ABC certification requirements concern not only the ball and the tenpins, but such items as length of lane from the foul line to center of the headpin, length of approach, diameter and distances between pin spots, span between the side partitions, gutter width, and a few others. Lanes themselves must be flat and level to within 40/thousandths of an inch.

Ever hear of "Moonlight Bowling?" It's very romantic. They turn off all the lights except for those at the score-table and those illuminating the pins. Moonlight bowling is available only during certain hours and/or upon request. Ask your local bowling center about it. It's one of the few romantic things left that's still safe.

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