

SPORTS

Bowling on the Island the way it once was

By ANDY GOLDBERG
BY ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

With 14,000 bowlers, seven bowling centers (and an eighth on the way) and 182 lanes (and 64 more on the way), bowling remains the number one participatory sport on Staten Island in 1986.

And although the numbers may have been different in the first half of this century, bowling was still number one on the Island. The borough's population was centered on the North Shore and the bowling alleys were where the people were.

At the outset, houses with more than a dozen lanes were a rarity. The norm was four and six-alley houses. In the late teens, alleys such as Nero's in Port Richmond Square, Lambert's on Union Ave., Mariner's Harbor, and the Village Bowling Academy on Richmond Street, West Brighton, were main attractions. Other lanes included Weigand's and Barbo's, located within a half mile of each other on Clove Road in Grasmere.

Today's bowlers pay as much as \$2 per game, but Island bowling legend Vic Richie remembers paying slightly less in 1921. "I first bowled at Nero's and paid 15 cents per game," recalled the 85-year-old Richie. "And Lambert's was

only a nickel more."

As the game progressed into the 20s and 40s, popular alleys such as the Boulevard Bowling Academy in Tompkinsville, Plaza Lanes and Orbach's Bowling Alley in West Brighton, the Gaynor Coliseum Bowling Alley in Port Richmond Square, Park Lane Bowling Academy in Stapleton and the oldest active Island center, Victory Lanes, came onto the scene.

Boulevard hosted one of the top leagues in the Island's bowling history, the S.I. Individual Classic. The top 20 bowlers from the previous season were invited to participate in this Sunday evening league. The Individual Classic ran from September through May, with the bowlers squaring off head-to-head weekly.

"We used to get really big crowds to come down to the Boulevard to watch us," said Richie, who won the Classic league title in 1946. "We charged half a buck to watch, and the money went to charities." Richie collected \$200 for his 46 title, excellent money for those days.

Richie also teamed with another legendary Island kelter, 70-year-old Ben McNeve, to capture the American Bowling Congress national doubles title on three occasions.

McNeve was also a regular in the Individual Classic, as were other Island greats Paul Paruso, a three-time individual champ, Barney Spicella, owner of Boulevard, Johnny Bomba, a Jersey native who did his bowling on the Island, John Doyle, Al Lamm, Jim Crowley, Harry "Harp" Miller, and Vic's brother Jack Richie.

Bomba, according to sports fixture Lou Maril, performed a feat that not too many have accomplished in the long history of the sport. "Bowling in the North Shore League at Victory Lanes," said Maril, "Bomba rolled back-to-back 300 games."

As the 50s rolled around, so did some of the lanes that currently exist — Columbian Lanes in Cliff-ton, and Sunset Lanes in New Springville. The 1960s saw many of the older houses close. Boulevard Park, Plaza Gaynor's and Madhouse's Tompkinsville Bowling Center ceased operations while bowling was introduced closer to the South Shore with the opening of Bowling on the Green in New Derry.

The biggest change in the game, however, has been a cosmetic one. "Today," says Richie, "you walk into these alleys and you see carpeting and fancy bars. It's like a night club at some of these places. The old houses were never like that."

It's not too late to take a shot at winning \$5,000. The 4th Annual



Vic Richie, who has a lifetime of memories in his bowling scrapbooks, looks over a picture of himself and one-time partner Ben McNeve.

Big Apple Dream Classic takes place today at 1 p.m. at Country Lanes. The entry fee is \$150 and the format provides for one of every two bowlers to get back some prize money, with a minimum of \$50. The top prize is based on 184 entries and a minimum of \$3,000 is guaranteed on top. There is also a loser's bracket in the match-play tournament that has \$1,000 to offer based on 184 entries.

By the way, if you've been to Country lately, like in the past six weeks or so, you might have no-

ticed a brand new Subaru parked around alley 15. Donated by S.I. Subaru, it will go to the winner of an end-of-summer tournament open to all bowlers in a summer league at the Dungen Hills center.

The tournament, with no date set as yet, will have a \$10 entry fee. Bowlers will roll three games with 100 percent handicap based on 200. The top five scorers will then roll TV-format for the wheels.

campaign is no easy feat and we would like to recognize ALL of Staten Island's league champion teams. Regardless of how big or small the league is, champions deserve recognition. When the league champion has been determined, send down, along with the high score sheet, the name and day of the league, the house it bowls at, the name of the first place team, and the FULL names of that team's bowlers. This applies for men, women, mixed and junior leagues. Please do not call in the information. We'll publish a list of all the winners as soon as possible.

Make schoolwork the No. 1 priority

By PAT MCNALLY

Question: With all of the embarrassing academic problems so many college athletes are having, do you think the fault lies with the kids or the system? Also, do you have any suggestions how youth coaches, such as myself, can better prepare our players for success in the classroom?

— T.D., Ohio

Answer: I agree with you, the number of academic scandals being uncovered, highlighted by the Jan Kemp case, is embarrassing. (If you don't recognize the name, Jan Kemp is the former University of Georgia instructor who was fired for prearranging preferential academic treatment for athletes.) It's unfortunate and sad for our athletes, the institutions involved, and the poor kids who have been left unprepared or unwilling to succeed in their studies. There's no question that too many athletes are pushed through grade after grade simply because of their physical abilities. They are given preferential treatment, and teachers and administrators bend the rules and alter standards so that they can maintain their eligibility. The tragedy is that they've been left almost totally unprepared for life outside of athletics. However, the blame should not rest on our colleges completely. In fact, in many cases, they've inherited problems which are so far-gone that reversing their student athlete's academic inadequacies is almost impossible.

The foundation of anyone's education is the time spent in elementary school. Basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills are no different from the fundamentals you, as a coach, are teaching your young players. You wouldn't dream of sending one of your boys or girls into the batter's box in a game if he or she'd never been taught how to hold a bat, swing, or run the bases, would you? Well, that's exactly what's been happening to too many of our athletes. They've been advanced through school without learning the proper study techniques and fundamental skills they'll need to perform well in high school and college.

I believe more responsibility has to be shouldered by grade school teachers, parents, and youth coaches, such as yourself. Found it into your players' heads that they must do well in school if they're going to succeed as athletes. Impress upon and constantly remind them and their parents that sports are extracurricular activities. They are bonuses that are supposed to broaden one's experience and development. They're rewards that must be earned, not the primary thrust of their existence, which too many kids make them into.

Teachers and parents must start insisting on young athletes doing their homework and learning their basics. If they're truant or not doing their studies then they shouldn't be allowed to play after-school sports. Kids must be disciplined to be responsible to themselves and their education. You, as a coach, can influence them and remind their parents to push schooling over home runs, touchdowns, and jumpshots.

Athletes were never intended as a way to escape education or personal development. They weren't intended to be pots of gold for kids dreaming of lucrative professional contracts without achieving or even trying in their classrooms.

Athletics are supposed to build character as are the coaches who teach and govern their sports and the youngsters involved. You can make a difference. You can help keep athletics in perspective. You can remind parents to keep their children in line and help them discipline the ones who want to play but don't want to study or show up to class.

Unless our young athletes start being better prepared for higher levels of education, sports, as we know them now, will eventually die. They've already become too stressed, too glorified, and have, to a large degree, become more important than learning. When extracurricular activities start replacing one's education, they've become harmful and must be diminished. We must realign our priorities.

(Pat McNally, a Harvard University graduate, plays for the Cincinnati Bengals of the National Football League. His column runs each Sunday on the sports pages. If you have a question, send it to "Pat McNally," The Staten Island Advance, 550 Hylan Blvd., Staten Island, N.Y. 10310.)

Buying or selling? Your dollars go a long way when you look into the Advance's classified pages. To place your ad...

CALL 720-8000

EARLY SUMMER AUTO SERVICE SAVINGS

OLYMPIAN II

STEEL BELTED RADIALS
45,000 Mile Warranty

Sale Price \$155/80B13 Blackwall

36.97

*Limited Tread Wear/Warranty Details in Store

- Uniroyal Quality, K Mart Price
- European All Season Tread Design
- Radial Tire Traction, Mileage and Handling

SIZE	SALE
130/70R13	35.97
140/70R13	42.97
150/70R13	47.97
160/70R13	52.97
170/70R13	57.97
180/70R13	62.97
190/70R13	67.97
200/70R13	72.97
210/70R13	77.97
220/70R13	82.97
230/70R13	87.97

MEDALLION 73

BIAS PLY WHITEWALLS
25,000 Mile Warranty

Sale Price \$165/80D13

23.97

*Limited Tread Wear/Warranty Details in Store

- "78" Series Tread
- Modern Styled Whitewalls
- Economy Price
- 7 Multi-Siped Tread

SIZE	SALE
130/70R13	22.97
140/70R13	27.97
150/70R13	32.97
160/70R13	37.97
170/70R13	42.97
180/70R13	47.97
190/70R13	52.97
200/70R13	57.97
210/70R13	62.97
220/70R13	67.97
230/70R13	72.97

18.99 K Care Coupon Booklet

SAVE OVER \$160 ON MANY OF YOUR MOST NEEDED PARTS AND SERVICES

LAYAWAY AVAILABLE

MONROE

Our Reg. \$129.77 to 189.76. Monroe's Gas-Matic Struts Installed. A pair of front or rear on Omni, Horizon, K Car.

\$129

MONROE

Our Reg. 22.94 ea. Monroe's Matic Shocks Installed. The #1 selling replacement shock. Popular sizes for many cars.

13.97

MONROE

Our Reg. 69.97 ea. Sale Price, Air Adjustable Shocks Installed. Adjusts for heavy loads. For many U.S. cars.

69.97

MUFFLER

Our 28.85. Arrestor Plus Muffler Installed. Double wrapped, aluminum, to protect against rust. Sizes for many U.S. cars and light trucks.

18.97

MOTORATOR

with exchange Sale Price, Motorator 48 Battery. Maintenance free. Delivers up to 440 CCA's. Sizes for many U.S. and import cars.

39.97

2875 RICHMOND AVE. • 2660 Hylan Blvd.