

Actress Sylvia Miles, who appears in the movie, "Parrish," confounds her bowling foe with another strike.



The feminine invasion of the bowling lanes has caused a revolution in the sport, and the effects are sometimes even reflected on the score sheets

By BOB DRISCOLL

CAN WOMEN BOWL BETTER THAN MEN?



NOT TOO LONG AGO, bowling alleys were frequented strictly by men. In recent years, however, the not-so-aromatic smell of stale beer and cigars has gradually been replaced by the fragrance of cosmetics and perfume.

And bowling-lane operators have acknowledged the surge of feminine interest by installing such niceties as modern snack bars, barbecue pits, swimming pools, even nurseries.

There's no doubt about it: women are entrenched in our bowling lanes to stay. Already, 13.4 million out of a national total of 30.4 million bowlers are women, and the number is increasing every day.

Men have readily adjusted to the "invasion" and now bowl side by side with their wives and girl friends. Their only concern is the realization that the gals can often bowl every bit as well as they can—sometimes embarrassingly better.

"Muscles don't make the bowler," observes Don Carter, widely considered the greatest bowler in the world today (he has racked up 13 perfect 300 games!). "It's the proper delivery of the ball—holding and releasing it correctly—that makes the high scorer. There's absolutely no reason why a gal can't practice until she's as adept as her husband."

Marion Ladewig, who has bowled as high as 288 during a professional career that has seen her average more than 190, says that a casual once-a-week woman bowler ordinarily averages 115-130 against the once-a-week male industrial-league bowler's 140-160.

"But that's only because the man has tougher competition and has probably been bowling longer," she explains. "A man and woman of identical bowling background can be expected to roll approximately the same score."

So if your wife takes up bowling, she'll probably beat you about half the time once she gets the knack of it.

MOST MEN have gallantly taken the attitude that it isn't so bad if they lose a game to a woman. Only the disgruntled husband who misses his "bowling night with the boys" still bothers to lament, and this group of malcontents is growing smaller. The majority admits that the interest of women has been the best thing that has happened to the sport since the invention of the automatic pin setter.

"Now that there are thousands of women coming to the lanes," as one long-time bowler puts it, "you can always look forward to first-class facilities; women simply won't settle for less. And it's not so hard on the eyes, either, to see women rolling a game or two with their neat, specially tailored bowling togs after years of seeing nothing but stout men with their shirttails hanging out and cigars clamped between their teeth. As a matter of fact, the presence of women has made the fellows spruce up."

If the trend continues, it shouldn't be long before husbands are boasting of their wives' bowling scores in much the same way as they've always boasted about their cooking.

FREE BOWLING BOOKLET

(If you would like a free copy of "More Pins, More Fun," a 24-page illustrated booklet on better bowling, write to Bowling Editor, Family Weekly, P. O. Box 4616, Chicago, Ill.)

SPORTS



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