

# Learn to BOWL

## CHAPTER 5

### History of 5-Pin Bowling

#### HISTORY of BOWLING

For thousands of years bowling has been a source of enjoyment and a means of staying active and social. Archaeologists discovered relics of a form of bowling in an Egyptian grave dating back to 5200 BC (that's 7,000 years of bowling!). Since then bowling has gone through many variations, using clay, wood, and stone equipment on grass, dirt, ice, and wood floors. In different parts of Europe, a variety of bowling-like games developed. Bocce, lawn bowling and curling are games directly related to bowling.

Throughout history some key historical figures have been known to partake in one form of bowling or another. In fact, King Edward III (circa 1366) had to outlaw the game in order to keep his troops focused on their Archery practice. And literature points to Rip Van Winkle being awakened by the sound of "crashing ninepins", a version of bowling still popular today in Europe.

Most recently, in 1909 Tommy Ryan of Toronto invented a variation of bowling which is uniquely Canadian and is played almost exclusively in our country. Mr. Ryan felt that the American game of Tenpin Bowling took too long to play (especially since pins were set by hand at the time). By reducing the number of pins, he reasoned, a quicker and more exciting game would emerge. Using a lathe he turned down the pins to a smaller size and used 5 pins instead of 10. He also reduced the size of the ball making it easy for men, women and children to participate and have fun. Just like that our national sport of 5-Pin Bowling was invented.

Did you know that:

- Each week nearly 1 million Canadians go bowling
- Fivepin bowling was recently voted the 4th greatest Canadian invention of all time on the CBC Television series *Greatest Canadian Inventions*
- The Canadian government recently recognized 5-Pin Bowling as a Canadian Heritage Sport.

## HISTORY OF 5-PIN BOWLING

- 1909 Thomas F. (*Tommy*) Ryan invents 5 Pin Bowling in Toronto, Ontario. Original Pin Count (values) are established as (from left to right) "4-2-1-3-5".
- 1910 First 5 Pin Bowling League was formed at Ryan's Toronto Bowling Club.
- 1912 Rubber band was added to the Pins.
- 1921 First perfect "450" game bowled by Bill Bromfield in Toronto, Ontario.
- 1921 First Ladies' 5 Pin Bowling League started by Marion Dibble in Toronto, Ontario.
- 1927 First 5 Pin Bowling organization "Canadian Bowling Association" (*CBA*) formed in Toronto, Ontario.
- 1928 First "Official 5 Pin Rule Book" printed by the CBA.
- 1952 Pin Count revised to (from left to right) 2-3-5-3-2 (as current)
- 1953 First Canadian Championship (*East vs. West*) conducted in Regina, Saskatchewan.
- 1957 First automatic pinsetting machine introduced.
- 1958 First "Pepsi-Cola High School Championships" held in Alberta.
- 1962 Lane Certification and Tournament Sanctioning introduced.
- 1963 Bowling Proprietors' Association of Canada (*BPAC*) formed.
- 1963 BPAC introduces program for young bowlers named National Youth Bowling Council (*now named Youth Bowling Canada and often referred to as YBC*).
- 1963 First automatic string pin-setter introduced.
- 1965 Bowling pin measurements standardized.
- 1970 Master Bowlers' Association of Canada formed.
- 1971 Tommy Ryan inducted posthumously into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame.
- 1972 BPAC introduces a program for senior citizens named National Golden Age Bowlers' Club (now named Club 55+)
- 1975 Government survey reveals 680,000 bowlers in 20,000 leagues across Canada.
- 1976 National 5 Pin Bowling "Instruction & Coaching" Program introduced by the Master Bowlers' Association of Canada.
- 1978 The Canadian 5 Pin Bowlers' Association (*C5PBA*) is formed to become the new Sport Governing Body for the sport of 5 Pin bowling.
- 1983 5 Pin Bowling participates in Canada Winter Games in Chicoutimi, Quebec.
- 1990 Rules changed to allow the use of personal bowling balls.
- 1995 Government statistics report 521,000 Canadians participate regularly in 5 Pin Bowling
- 2007 CBC Television Series "Greatest Canadian Inventions" lists 5-Pin Bowling as the 4th Greatest Canadian Invention of all time (as voted by the Canadian public).
- 2007 Youth Bowling Canada leagues qualify for the new Children's Fitness Tax Credit
- 2008 Heritage Canada recognizes 5-Pin Bowling as a Canadian "Heritage Sport"
- 2008 To kick off the Centennial Anniversary bowling season, Terry Burns of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories bowls in 100 bowling centres coast to coast over 100 days.
- 2009 5 Pin Bowling celebrates its Centennial Anniversary