

BOWLING NEWS

KENT
AREA
B.T.B.A.

AUGUST 1966
ISSUE NO.12.

The Water County Hall Theatre Players present

ALI BABA AND HIS FORTY 'THOU'

in

UNITED WE STAND

A Tragic Ballad of Paradoxical Autopsy

A Satire on the Level, complete with Depressions, played on High Boards, with Feelers, Tapes and Mighty Rulers !!!

Any resemblance to any characters living or dead, fictional or non-fictional, sanctioned or non-sanctioned is purely coincidental and should in no way be considered insulting or defamatory.

CREDITS

Words and Music:	ROGERS & BERNSTEIN
Stage Lighting:	EXCELSIOR
Choreography:	FREDDIE RANKLE
Theatrical Makeup Artistes:	AERIATED BREAD CO. (Dov ⁿ by Joe Bowler)
Cigarettes:	KENT FILTER TIPS
Costumes and Disguises:	GARNETT, HARPEY, THWACK & ASSOCIATES LTD.
Off Stage Noise Effects:	PINKY & PERKY Assisted by the above.

SONGS FROM THE SHOW(ER)

"Birth of the Blues"
"Little White Lies"
"You Took Advantage of Me"
"Hello Folly"
"You're Tiny Mind is Frozen"
"How Deep is the Oil Patch"
"The Way You Hook Tonight"
"Somebody Stole my Ball"
"Sanctioned Centre here I Come"
"Where Have all the Bowlers Gone - No Time Passing"
"Bowlers Come Back to Me"
"Who's Sorry Now?"
"The Best Things in Life are Free"
"Lets Call the Whole Thing Off"

OPENING SCENE - THE YEAR 1959

As the Sun set in the West a mammoth metal bird descended upon London Airport and from within it's inner sanctum stepped a man whose knowledge of the sport of Tenpin Bowling was surely, more extensive than any one individual in the whole World - the Executive Secretary/Treasurer of the American Bowling Congress, with over five million members.

Purpose - to advise the potential owners of Bowling Centres in this Country of the necessity for a players organisation. The meeting took place and at high noon the man with the knowledge and experience returned to the U.S.A. with a depression in excess of specification requirements.

Reason - he was informed that the owners of Bowling Centres in this country intended to both, operate and control their own players association.

CO-OPERATION ?

ACT ONE - Scene I - 28th. May 1961

After sixteen months of chaos resulting from ex cinema managers and others without knowledge of the sport, trying to interpret non-existent rules for the game in this country, hundreds of bowlers who grew to love their new sport decided that rules and regulations were a must for it's survival. No greater indication of their sound thinking could be shown than in the field of skittles, where for hundreds of years, through a lack of uniformity, the game retrogressed into a form of public house entertainment with no future.

The manufacturers, in their wisdom, invited a man with 25 years practical experience in the sport of Tenpin to assist, guide and advise British bowlers on how to form their own association. To the customers of the Bowling Centres this was an overdue, commonsense idea, but in the background the centre owners were showing concern at the formation of a "union". Possibly an understandable fact when viewed through the eyes of a projector in a cinema! Their arguments concerning unions, however, were really no concern of their customers, as unions are invariably limited to employees.

Despite this opposition the British Tenpin Bowling Association was formed and were so keen to co-operate with the proprietors that they opened the ranks of their Council and elected a proprietor as one of their founder members.

CO-OPERATION !

Scene II - June 1961

The new players association were informed that they would not be allowed to inspect the owners lanes! This was not the brainstorm of any niggardly, objectionable character, but the reasoning of a wise businessman who stated, "Why should I allow a man who doesn't know his 'rear end' from his elbow to decide whether a quarter million pound investment meets his requirements". Nobody could disagree with such a statement but the fact still remained that a 12" ruler is generally accepted to be 12" long!

CO-OPERATION ?

ACT II - Scene I - 13th. July 1961

A meeting took place between proprietors and the President, Vice President and another Council member of the B.T.B.A. The subject was lane certification, and in order to dispel the anxiety of the owners they were invited to draw up a six part agreement covering all points. The only requirement on their part was that the B.T.B.A. be allowed to certify the correctness of the lanes.

The B.T.B.A. Council unhesitatingly signed the agreement which afforded complete and absolute protection to the owner, and it is considered that this agreement is as binding today as it was five years ago.

CO-OPERATION !

Scene II

We see the mushrooming of the bowling industry and with it the expansion of the players organisation, who were immediately accepted by the World Organisation of Bowlers as a member.

Behind the scenes, individuals who had a lifetime in entertainment but in such surroundings that they were unable to tell the difference between putty and butter were proclaiming, "Leagues are not the answer, Open Bowling must be promoted to the full to introduce new blood". The blood, however, was already flowing — OUT! A lack of sufficient qualified instructors and a pathetic ignorance of the game itself took a large toll of potential regulars. How many times have we heard people say, "I don't like tenpin bowling because no one bothers to show you how to play and the ball is too heavy anyway!"

The pulse of the life blood was, is, and always will be at management level. Not the man with the big, fat cigar who attends a meeting once a month and regards bowlers as peasants or a necessary evil, but the man who is required to face his customers and make them welcome and encourage them to return.

Why, after all, does anyone spend his hard earned money rolling a ball down a lane? Surely because he likes to spend his leisure hours in comfortable surroundings, in a pleasant atmosphere, with amenable people and at the same time to match his skill against the next man. Every effort is made to teach management how to operate a till but how can one teach them tact, diplomacy and courtesy, all adding up to good public relations, which is the basis of any successful business?

ACT III - Scene I - 1962

Return to the conference room - where we find the T.B.P.A. objecting to having their lanes resurfaced every two years. Their complaint is logical and understandable, and the B.T.B.A. General Secretary offers sympathy to their feelings and sets the wheels in motion to remove their objections. Action in this respect was completed shortly afterwards. CO-OPERATION !

Scene II - Tournament Field - Great Britain

In pursuance of the idea that tournaments open to all must produce more money in the till, sponsors were forced to accept the advice and ruling of the centre owners and rightly so! After all, they did own the building.

Who was there, however, with the knowledge and ability to provide rules for these tournaments? Unfortunately none of the sponsors and organisers. What happened to the sponsors who were under the impression that they were sponsoring an organised sport? What happened to the magnificent trophy offered by the 'News of the World'? What happened to the once famous tournament sponsors - Pepsi Cola, National Benzole, Playtex, Canada Dry, Smirnoff Vodka, Bristol Cigarettes, Ovaltine, Daily Express, Daily Mail, Evening News, Dagenham Post, Sandemans, Seven Up, Stanley Bridges, etc etc? What happened to the "Annual" £5000 John Davis Tournament? What happened? Possibly the B.T.B.A. could have provided the answer when they graciously declined the offer from the Daily Mirror to sponsor the 1961 B.T.B.A. National Championships to the extent of £5000. The B.T.B.A. Council honestly felt that such a sponsorship could not, in all honesty, produce £5000 worth of publicity, which is, after all, what a sponsor pays for. In addition they were not prepared to give their members a false sense of values by offering such magnificent prizes for just one year with the possibility of not being able to repeat the service the next. Another point was the belief that their members would eventually produce a prize fund in excess of the sponsors figure anyway, entirely by their own enthusiasm. (Prize Fund for 1966 B.T.B.A. National Championships - £4,800!)

Scene III - 1st European Championships - France

Through lack of income the players organisation went cap in hand to you can guess who, for assistance in sending a British Team to France. Sufficient was raised but the B.T.B.A. were told that they should be self sufficient for any such future events and that they need not come back again with a similar request.

Scene IV - The World Championships - Mexico City

More money needed by the B.T.B.A. to send the British Team to Mexico City. One proprietor offered assistance and gave it, and receives the undying respect of all those who participated. Others also assisted by allowing the use of their lanes for tournaments to raise money - but the games, of course, had to be paid for in the usual way! How did the British Team get there? It is time you knew that our B.T.B.A. General Secretary risked every penny of his personal money to guarantee the charter of the aeroplane which provided a once in a lifetime experience for over one hundred people. Morris Glazer will not thank Bowling News for providing this information but it is felt that this often maligned gentleman should also have the very occasional bouquet.

Scene V - 2nd European Championships - Birmingham

For the first time in the history of Tenpin Bowling there was 100% attendance by all European Member Nations of the Federation Internationale de Quilleur, (F.I.Q.) at the championships, held for the first time in this country. This tournament was held in Great Britain as a direct result of co-operation between one proprietor, one manufacturer and the B.T.B.A. and in the eyes of all participating nations it was a WOW! - taking no fewer than 16 curtain calls with this country taking 8 Gold Medals and 1 Silver and also the limelight.

It is with co-operation such as this that Great Britain can repair some of it's prestige in the sporting world. This was team work - not a singles event!

ACT IV - Scene I - The Home Front 1963 - B.T.B.A. Membership 14,000

The T.B.P.A., temporarily designated as the Prices and Incomes Board, decided that those of their members who were spending too much, needed more, that those who couldn't make enough, needed more, and those who could make enough, wanted more! The first step towards ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ! ! ! ! !

3/6d a game for peak periods, 4/-d if you were able to afford it, 2/6d in the wee small hours, free games with lunch and so on, until the poor manager who was asked the price of a game must have felt like saying, "Think of a number, double it, take away three pence and I'll use that to phone Head Office and find out!"

Eventually the 'firm rule' was fixed - minimum price to be charged per game in peak periods 3/6d - unless any member wished to ignore the rule, in which case if he was big enough and important enough the T.B.P.A. would change it for him!

Scene II - The Home Front 1964/5 - B.T.B.A. Membership 25,000

The anticipated income from the increased prices didn't materialize, the wonderful picture drawn on paper to show the possible loss of custom as compared to the increase of income amounting to 16 2/3% and 33 1/3% on week-ends, was painted in a rosy hue, but somebody forgot to use fast colours and the picture began to take on a muddy hue.

'Break Even' became the catch words of the day. You the bowler must bowl more as we must have more money to keep going says the proprietor. So who takes the blame for the muddy hue? - not the manager or proprietor but you, the bowler for not spending more and we, the Area Association for not bringing in new customers and forming them into leagues.

Scene III - B.T.B.A. Annual General Meeting 1964

The B.T.B.A. Council recommend a change in the Tournament Rules to allow for optional sanctioning. Yes until this time all team tournaments had required to be sanctioned if members were to participate! However, it was felt that the rule was illogical and that it's removal would allow for greater co-operation with the proprietors.

The result of the rule's relaxation produced an increase of non-sanctioned tournaments and also an increase of problems and trouble resulting from blatant cheating and the fact that the manager of each centre was now the tournament manager, and his decisions were final - result a return to the chaos of 1960!

Complaints poured in thick and fast and the situation came to a head with the Daily Mirror Tournament. The Officials of the B.T.B.A. - against their better judgement but because of their desire to co-operate agreed to sanction the tournament only from the Regional Finals. The result was put down to experience - who verifies the declared entering average of non-members who knock out B.T.B.A. members from the competition, only to fall under the jurisdiction of our governing body at the stage of the Regional Finals, by which time it was too late to bring back the members who had been beaten solely by virtue of a false entering average on the part of the non-member?

Scene IV - Emergence of the N.T.B.C. 1964

We see the formation of the National Tenpin Bowling Council - an advisory body set up to deal with problems in the bowling industry - composed of the manufacturers, the proprietors association and the players organisation. An excellent idea that was suggested and put into operation by the so called novices of the trio, the B.T.B.A. The Chairman was the President of the players organisation, and the N.T.B.C. secretary came from the proprietors association. After the first meeting, however, nothing transpired for a whole year, until the B.T.B.A. called a meeting as they were unable to condone the use of the name N.T.B.C. to cover a junior programme that had been prepared by the proprietors association, who were using the names of N.T.B.C. and B.T.B.A. without prior reference to either of these bodies. An offer to operate this programme by B.T.B.A. with full acknowledgement to T.B.P.A. was, however, refused.

At this time authority was given for the production of a beginners booklet to be issued by the N.T.B.C. This contained the basic playing rules of the B.T.B.A. with acknowledgement and on the clear understanding that it would not be used by the proprietors to promote non-sanctioned tournaments or leagues. It now appears that copies of this booklet are being distributed for use in non-sanctioned tournaments.

CO-OPERATION ?

Scene V - B.T.B.A. Annual General Meeting 1965

It was the unanimous recommendation of the delegates at this meeting to set up a sub-committee to investigate the future position of tournaments and to decide whether or not to revert to the original rule regarding sanctioning of team events. The sub-committee invited members of the T.B.P.A. to be present at their deliberations and to discuss the problems of both sides. The invitation was ignored until the eleventh hour when all that the proprietors association were prepared to do was to have a letter delivered by hand a few hours before the meeting expressing their concern that the B.T.B.A. should even consider such a thing!

CO-OPERATION ?

ACT V - Scene I - 1965

One proprietor decides that our sport of bowling is not a sport but an entertainment and introduces disc jockeys to amuse the players - perhaps they will next introduce tenpin bowling to their dance halls?

In most parts of the country the recession is now in full swing and who was now taking the blame? Not those who had tried to turn their bowling centres into amusement arcades, not those who decided that regular league customers were not wanted but the only target left to them - the B.T.B.A. Whether their poorly directed finger pointed at the B.T.B.A. Council, the General Secretary, the Area Association, the League Secretaries or the bowlers is not important as we are a united organisation whose byword is sportsmanship and fair play - not profit!

n.b. Collins Westminster Dictionary defines 'sanction' as 'solemn ratification, legal use of force to secure obedience to rules and observe a given mode of conduct'.

control that a You are open b

Let us now examine the Press Release and Resolutions produced by the controllers of a multi-million pound industry. The proprietors express their concern that after five years, organised bowling expressed as a percentage, is as low as 20%. You are the bowlers and the customers - what do you think? Are the lanes filled with open bowlers during the day are are they practically deserted? How many proprietors allow only half of their lanes to be used for organised league play? Who decreed that their organised leagues could only bowl on two days out of seven anyway? Why does the position change from centre to centre within the same group? Why are the only centres showing a really worthwhile profit operating a 100% sanctioned league programme or at least a fully organised league programme? Even with these restrictions do you still consider that organised play at your centre is as low as 20%? If it is who is to blame? The B.T.B.A? Don't make us laugh!!

Scene II

Comes the big, bad bogey - lane certification. What does this entail? Inspection of the lanes by the B.T.B.A. involves nothing more than the same right experienced by every organised sport to lay down specifications and then ascertain that they are kept.

The certificate issued is in the form of an agreement that allows for the proprietor to maintain the standards during the life of the certificate. Independent inspection is not objected to, but who will accept your complaints when the pins are off spot, when high boards pop up, when the pin-tables on the concourse are not the only pieces of equipment in the centre with tilts? Who will you turn to for sympathy and assistance? - hardly the professional man with letters after his name who gets paid by the hour, but the dedicated idiot at area level who, in turn, reports to the dedicated lunatic at Head Office, who by the age old process of diplomacy gets things done - for you - the bowler.

Scene III

At this time we have just enjoyed the thrills of the Football World Cup. The sport of football is fortunate that the owners of the pitches on which the tournament was played do not feel that every casual player should be given the opportunity to play in this great event! In most sports there is a place for the casual player but if tournaments are to be designed to attract only those who are not sufficiently interested to join the players association governing their sport then, surely, crossword puzzles and bingo would produce better results for the promoters!

This is the position as now indicated by the proprietors who state that they will not seek B.T.B.A. sanction for any tournament they promote - come on cheats, welcome sandbaggers, we're not fussy - it's all MONEY !!!

Facts in a situation like the one we now face are all important. Is it not true that the amateur players association in Great Britain has forged ahead more rapidly than any other bowling association in the World? - even faster, although not greater due to the size of our little island, than the Americas - North and South.

Why did the B.T.B.A. Championships this year show an increase of 62% when a certain World famous non-sanctioned event dropped to such an extent that there were less entries from nearly 70 centres throughout the country than the B.T.B.A. had in the one centre? Now we are told that the Powers That Be, may not apply for sanction for any tournament that they promote - democracy? - PHOOEY !!!

What delights can you expect upon which to spend your non-sanctioned money? Rules by which to play - yes! those of the N.T.B.C. who don't have any! Right of Appeal - yes! to your manager after your money is safely in his till! Enter the tournament at your local centre and bowl 5 games to qualify, enter the same tournament at the centre just over seven miles up the road and you only bowl 3 games to qualify - it is perfectly in order, however, as the tournament is non-sanctioned!

Dear Manager what is a foul? - answer a feathered bird. Dear Lanesman what is a ball track? - answer dont bother me now I'm the car park attendant. Dear Car Park Attendant where can I park my car? - answer dont bother me now I'm dressing the lanes. Dear Mechanic I have waited over five minutes for a ball jam - answer don't bother me now I'm repairing the one armed bandit. Dear Assistant Manager I have struck! - answer don't bring your trade union ideas in here. Dear Shoe Girl your shoes smell - answer you're complaining you should work in here!

Dear Manager why must I pay to book a lane, pay to park my car, pay to enter your centre, pay to hang my coat up, pay for my shoes, pay for my locker, pay for a pencil and pay for a games? - answer I must break even! Why did the snooker players set the red balls in a triangle? - answer because they must break even! Advice to the proprietor - BRAKE EVEN OR YE SHALL VERILY DESTROY THY LININGS !!!!!!!

n.b. Collins Westminster Dictionary defines 'dear' as precious: much loved: costly: expensive: scarce: As applied to Dear Manager take your choice!!!!!!

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE?

Recognising that nothing is perfect the B.T.B.A. Council have amended the Association Constitution in a number of ways prior to any meeting with the proprietors and in anticipation of some criticism in certain areas of the country.

Firstly optional tournament sanctioning returns and you will not now be able to complain to B.T.B.A. if you enter a non-sanctioned tournament and find that all is not well. Area Secretaries will not automatically have the job of certifying lanes and this now falls under the General Secretary who will appoint a representative if he considers that the local area secretary is inexperienced or is without the proper equipment. Any alleged problems that the proprietors may have experienced in the past are, therefore, removed.

No area secretary will be allowed to be under 21 years of age and all area secretaries, present and future will be subject to an examination and interview by members of the Council before being allowed to continue or take up office as the case may be. All Council members will be allowed to attend any meeting of an area executive and in this way will be able to keep an eye on what is going on. You may say that the B.T.B.A. have done quite a lot in a short time - and you would be right. What have the proprietors done in return? **PRECISELY NOTHING!** They still appear intent on their hell bent policy of destruction. Destruction of the B.T.B.A., destruction of the sport of tenpin bowling and destruction of their own multi-million pound industry!!!

We are constantly asked what we are going to do - we ask what are you going to do. If the position does not radically change this week meetings will be called at Bexleyheath, Chatham and Cliftonville and your Kent Area Executive will answer your questions and provide the information that you fairly need in order to make up your mind. The respective proprietors will be invited to these meetings in order that they can put their point of view before you - if they have one! If they do not take this opportunity to attend you will no doubt draw your own conclusions.

Some of you have asked why we do not call a 'strike' - it is not the policy or a part of the constitution of B.T.B.A. to attempt to direct your actions in this way, although it must be admitted that the proprietors policy is directing you, their customer, to forego your own association. It is said that the Customer is Always Right. This ruling cannot apply to bowling however at the present time, where, in effect you are being directed into something you do not want. Whose rules will you play under in a non-sanctioned league? What protection will you have against cheaters and those who abscond with your league funds. Are the proprietors to provide the same equipment to run your league as that provided by the B.T.B.A. and in addition are they to supply the same insurances. If the answer is 'Yes' who will pay for it all in the long run?

YES - YOU ARE DEAD RIGHT - YOU WILL !!!

KENT AREA NEWS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY

Of necessity our normal reporting on area matters has had to be curtailed. Some things must be mentioned, however and firstly is the new 1965/66 BRITISH record set up by the five junior bowlers at Bexleyheath known as TAKE FIVE. A fine team series of 2626 and a third game of 952 give this young side two chances of National honours. Special mention here to their anchor man Peter Rayment who rolled a very fine 248 game and 622 series to take both Kent Area records for the season to date.

Another fine performance was that of VERA PEACOCK competing in the 1966 Bexleyheath Singles House Championships. A string of 9X in a row brought Vera not only the title but a new Kent record game for ladies - a 268. Well done Vera.

Missed from last month's issue but what can't be missed out again was another new all time Kent record. A five man team game of 1033 put up by the BARBARIANS - and against the old record holders, THE COMMITTEE to boot! The players who look forward to a Kent Area Plaque are JACK MORTON, PETE RIGHT, DAVID JUDGE, MICK SCHORFIELD and skipper JIM WEARE.

NEW BADGES ARE OUT

The new badges inscribed "League Hi Average" have arrived from the makers and will shortly be dispatched to the individual high average man or woman in each league for which the final standing sheet has been received by the Area Secretary - who is swotting up for his forthcoming Council interview!

GREAT PERFORMANCE BY KENT BOWLER IN MAJOR TOURNAMENT

Congratulations to MIKE LUCKHURST of Whitstable upon finishing 3rd in the country in the T.B.P.A. Annual Tournament held last month at Edgeware. Qualifying over the first five games with an average of over 200 Mike beat most of the top stars of the country and in many ways was unlucky not to finish even higher.

WHEN YOU HAVE READ THIS BUMPER ISSUE PASS IT TO A TEAM MATE