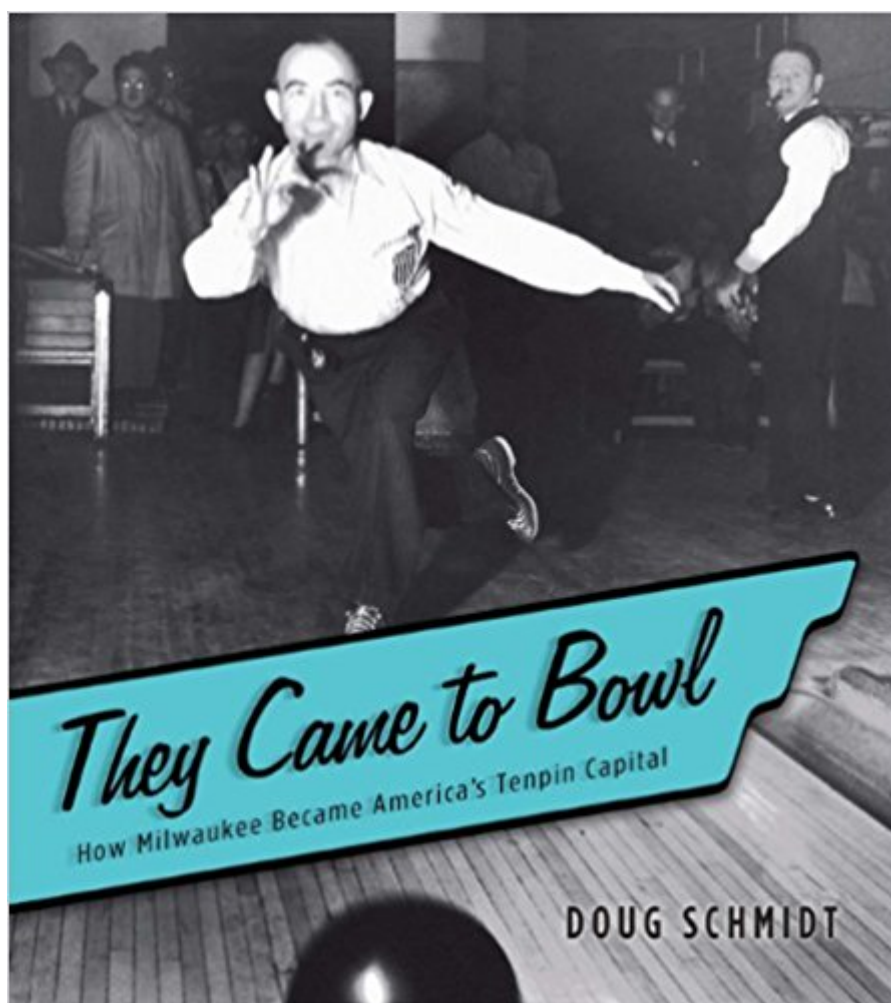


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# They Came To Bowl: How Milwaukee Became America's Tenpin Capital



## Synopsis

A frozen rope. A urethane split on the drives. Chicken tracks on the telescore.\* Do you know your bowling lingo? You will along with much more when you read *They Came to Bowl: How Milwaukee Became America's Tenpin Capital*. From the thrill of the perfect strike to the agony of a ball gone astray, anyone who has rolled a ball down the lanes will find themselves or someone they know in the people, places and stories covered in this book. In this authoritative and lively book, Doug Schmidt traces bowling's roots from a German religious rite centuries ago to the sport that made Milwaukee famous. From the taverns and saloons that housed recreational games to the sell-out crowds and million-dollar beer sponsorships of televised tournaments, this well-illustrated book covers both sport and city, charting the changing face of bowling over the century. Packed with memorable showdowns and improbable heroes, *They Came to Bowl* will take you back to the changing lanes of bowling in Milwaukee — and the sport as a whole.\* frozen rope=a ball rolled with excessive speed almost straight to the pocket; urethane split=2-8-10 or 3-7-9 split caused by sharp breaking point of reactive resin balls; drives=alleys; chicken tracks=string of strikes

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Facing a formidable task in writing a history of bowling in Milwaukee, Doug Schmidt rolls a perfect game. From the founders, through the boom years and to the declining popularity of leagues, Doug's extensive research not only pays tribute to the greats of the sport but reveals the causes behind its fluctuations in popularity. All the names are there and revisiting them brought back a flood of pleasant memories for this reader." (Hank Stoddard, Retired Sports Director, WTMJ)

Milwaukee)"Bowling has played a significant role in the history of sports and games played in America. And They Came to Bowl focuses on Milwaukee's contribution to that history. Anyone who has ever rolled a ball down the lanes will find the people, places and events covered in this segment of its history a worthwhile read." (Al Matzelle, American Bowling Congress historian and past Executive Director)"The rock solid roots of bowling have always been Milwaukee. In Doug Schmidt's monumental They Came to Bowl: How Milwaukee Became America's Tenpin Capital, he digs, delves, researches, and reveals the names, dates, and doings to offer a fact-filled, fast moving, interesting, enjoyable adventure into bowling lore." (Chuck Pezzano, Bowling Hall of Famer, Author, Historian)

Doug Schmidt is generally regarded as Wisconsin's pre-eminent bowling historian. The editor and publisher of the state's Ten Pin Journal since 1992, Schmidt has been a contributor to United Press International, the Associated Bowlers Journal International Magazine, Bowling Magazine, Bowling Digest and American Bowler. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Schmidt was inducted into the Greater Milwaukee Bowling Hall of Fame in 2004.

The author didnt do his homework. My mother Carole Lemke had more titles than any other women bowler but yet didnt get any mention other than a passing mention along with another story. Dissapoining.

It will surprise virtually no one with a Wisconsin background to learn that Milwaukee played a key role in the rise of bowling as a popular recreation. Assisted by a strong German heritage and a love of drinking beer outside the home, Milwaukee took to recreational bowling like few others. It was, relatively speaking, an immediate hit. Beginning around the turn of the century, lanes quickly began popping up - first a few lanes in a few pubs, then several lanes in multipurpose recreation complexes. As the sport became more popular, systematic governance became necessary and Milwaukee supplied many of the important pioneering leaders - serving as the headquarters for some of bowling's most important organizations. Probably even more importantly, Milwaukee supplied more than its share of great bowlers during the sport's heyday. Like everywhere else, bowling declined in popularity in Milwaukee as the millennium drew to its close. No longer were local bowling programs sufficiently profitable, nor were seventy lane bowling centers of much use. Yet bowling remains a significant part of Milwaukee's past and continuing culture. Thanks in large part

to the prominence it gave Milwaukee when bowling was king. Doug Schmidt admirably recounts the history of bowling in Milwaukee, principally by introducing the reader to the places, people and personalities that led the way. The stories run the gamut - from tiny basements with two lanes to giant bowling centers with scores of lanes, from quiet and careful businessmen to live-fast, die-young shooting stars. The story probably isn't entirely coherent. Nor will everyone find great interest here - indeed, I struggled through portions where the author highlighted seemingly endless game and series scores. But, Mr. Schmidt successfully retrieves the lost glory of one of Milwaukee's truly glorious pasts. For a time Milwaukee was very nearly the center of the world as far as bowling was concerned, and for an even greater period of time one could not speak of top rank bowling without considering Milwaukee. Mr. Schmidt shows why that was so and tells us who was responsible. Perhaps, this isn't the most important history, but it is fun and it's a piece of the puzzle.

I have read this book from front to back there is a lot of information that I didn't even know. Specially growing up in a bowling family. Doug informed a lot of history in this book. I am glad he covered a lot. If you look in the back of the book he even have bowling centers from the Milwaukee area listed with all the different names. I was happy that he mention the three guys who shot a 900 series which included my brother PJ. This is a must read book.

Milwaukee is the ultimate blue-collar town, so it's no surprise that bowling was a huge sport in the area. Doug Schmidt is a fine writer and researcher who is a true expert on bowling history. Buy this book!

Although I have not yet read my copy, I have heard the author interviewed on Wisconsin Public Radio. If his writing is as informative and light as his conversation, this "history" of Germans in Milwaukee and the evolution of bowling as we know it today will be a great read.

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