

History of the Tyler Women's Bowling Association

November 16, 1945 marked the beginning of the Tyler Women's Bowling Association. Thirty-seven persons attended the organizational meeting in the City Hall, and the officers elected were: President, Dorothy Whyte (Snipes); Vice President, Ann Welch; Secretary, Mary Lynch; Treasurer, Buna Souliere; Sergeant-at-arms, Emma Warren.

The first women bowlers in Tyler were assisted in many ways by Mr. O. R. Van Orman who was the Secretary-Treasurer of the Tyler Bowling Association at this time.

By the season 1956-57 the membership of the TWBA had almost doubled, and in 1957-58 it jumped to 153, from which point it has steadily increased. For the past two seasons we have had more than 600 members.

In February, 1951 the Tyler Bowling Center burned to the ground, and for the next two years Tyler was without a bowling establishment. Most of the members of the association went to Longview to bowl during this period. Bowl-Mor Lanes was opened in 1953 and was taken over by Evelyn Thomas in 1954, at which time she made a concerted effort to reactivate the TWBA.

During the seasons 1953-55 there was just one organized league in the TWBA, but the next year the Cotton Belt General Offices were moved to Tyler bringing new bowlers to town, thus enabling the formation of another woman's league.

About this time there was a revolutionary change in bowling equipment, and bowling enjoyed the greatest boom in the history of the sport everywhere. In Tyler, Rose Bowl Lanes were built early in 1957, Green Acres Bowl in 1958, and College Bowl in 1963. Also, 1957 marked the end of the old bowling era in Tyler as that is when Bowl-Mor Lanes, where so many of us learned to bowl, burned down.

The bowling season of 1957-58 showed an increase in our membership from 71 to 153, and an increase of from two-to three leagues sanctioned by the TWBA, marking the beginning of the morning housewives' leagues in Tyler. During the seasons 1963-65 the number of sanctioned leagues increased to 21.

The earliest City Tournament on record, sponsored by the TWBA, was held in 1947 at the Tyler Bowling Center. The fee was \$2.00 per person per event. The results of this tournament are not known. A

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city tournament was also held at Bowl-Mor Lanes on February 5 & 6, 1955. The winning team was composed of Edna Wynn, Lera Scott, Gertrude Thoreson, Beatrice Bacile and Evelyn Thomas. Evelyn Thomas was All-Event champion.

From that time on, a city tournament was held each year. 1956 winners: Frances McCauley, Leona Commons, Georgia Brown, Mickey Warren, and Evelyn Thomas; Dottie Snipes, All-Events. 1957 winners: Avis Anderson, Audrey Haskett, Margaret Saleh, Sarah Clark and Garvice Minard; Jane Broadfoot, All-Events. 1958 winners: Edna Wynn, Lera Scott, Adele Johnson, Carmie Alter and Beatrice Bacile; Verleen White, All-Events. This was the first tournament held at Rose Bowl Lanes, and eighteen teams competed. 1959 was unique in that there were two city tournaments held during the year. In February, 1959 at Rose Bowl, the winners were Mary Ring, Dorothy Tyer, Foye Wilson, Erma Parnell, Bozie Hamiter; All-Events, Gene Wylie. In November, 1959 at Green Acres, the winners were: Elaine Doyle, Mary Cook, Margaret Barnett, Amelia Rhodes, Laura Barrow; All-Events, Charlene Glass. An early tournament was again held in November, 1960 at Rose Bowl due to our being host to the State Tournament in the Spring. The winners were: Erma Parnell, Bozie Hamiter, Winnie Johnson, Marge King, Foye Wilson; All-Events, Erma Parnell. 1962 winners: at G. A., Jonnie Hallmark, Garvice Minard, Jackie Sewell, Charlene Glass, Gene Wylie; All-Events, Foye Wilson. 1963 winners at Rose Bowl: Class A, Beauty Counselor Team; Class B, Percy Andrews Team; All-Events, Charlene Glass. This was the first year to have a "classified-handicap" tournament. 1964 winners at G. A.: Class A, Gay Thirties Team; Class B, Southern Aluminum; All-Events, Ann Morris. 1965 winners: at Rose Bowl: Class A, East Texas Bowling Supply; Class B, Tyler Pipe & Foundry No. 1; Ann Morris successfully defended her All-Events Championship.

The Tyler Women's Bowling Association reached its zenith when it hosted the Texas State Bowling Tournament during the Spring of 1961. Mattie Tippit acted as tournament chairman in close coordination with the State officials, and when she was ably aided by capable committees chosen from the ranks of the membership. It was an experience none of us who participated will be likely to forget.

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