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## The "Long and the Short of It" is now reality...is it also the future?

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By [Ted Thompson](#)

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An ultramodern proprietor, Ronald Dol of Bowling Dolfijn, along with avant-garde event organizer Luc Jensen of The Netherlands, and the forward thinking European Bowling Tour (EBT) have just completed a major bowling tour event which employed lane conditions like never before, at least on purpose.

During the entire 2007 EBT Bronzen Hammer Schietspoel Open, every left lane was conditioned with a 45' oil pattern designed to play more towards the inside part of the lane and every right lane was conditioned with a 35' oil pattern designed to play towards the outside part of the lane. Paul Moor, the reigning three times defending European Bowling Tour Ranking Champion proved those titles are well deserved as he defeated Osku Palermaa, Peter Smits and Maarten Pittens in a final one game shootout of this ground-breaking major event.

In the year 2000, then WTBA President PS Nathan called for a World Symposium in Malaysia to address many perceived problems related to the sport of bowling. Out of the symposium the WTBA Technical Committee, which was headed by Sid Allen at the time, concluded "that a single condition format was unfair, since it favored a particular style of play regardless of how the lane was oiled."

Until now both the EBT and the PBA Tour formats make use of a single oil pattern for all rounds of competition. With these single condition events at times come social acceptance if the outcome is perceived fair by the bowling public but far too often the opposite is true. This social unrest comes as the winner of the event is perceived to have "matched up" because of their dominant style of play instead of just plainly performing better than the rest.

During that symposium in Malaysia the WTBA Technical Committee also felt the question of "who is the best bowler?" needed to be further examined. Through discussion and digging deeper into the question, the WTBA defined what they feel the traits that make up a World Class bowling player should be. The committee created what is known as **VPARK: Versatility, Power, Accuracy, Repeatability and Knowledge**. There was one trait however that was at the very top of each members list, Versatility.

The members felt that "the ability to bowl over a wide range of conditions elevated a player from one of quality to that of greatness" and therefore led to the conclusion "that WTBA's present oiling procedures were not conducive to identifying and rewarding great players, but instead only identified the specialists." Then committee member Craig Woodhouse suggested the concept of multiple conditions and it was unanimously agreed that this is the path for all future World Championships.

An over whelming majority of single condition events employ conditions in the thirty-seven to forty-two foot range. The WTBA dual condition events however use oil patterns thirty-five feet or shorter and forty-three feet or longer. So where does that leave the bowling players of the world to prepare for these World Championship events? The answer is you either need to own or have parents that own a bowling center or have a federation that supports such training. Not many participants have either.

For the EBT Tilburg dual condition tournament to be successful and socially accepted, it was evident that during the event some educational seminars dedicated to playing the short and long patterns were needed. With the help of Hammer's Mike Quitter and bowling ball expert Denny Torgerson, material about what bowling ball types and layouts should be used was presented. With the help of Kegel and this writer, material about the bowling lane, oil patterns and keys to play those patterns, was also presented. With almost ninety tournament participants attending the seminars, the tournament players and coaches got a head start of what to expect.

Fully realizing "baby steps" needed to be taken, the design of the patterns were on the forgiving side and such that the widest variety of bowling balls could be used. In contrast to some of the early dual condition Championship events, it was refreshing to see the players in Tilburg clearly understood how the patterns needed to be attacked. [Click here](#) to see Paul Moor in action at the event.

The feedback from the players according to Ronald Dol confirmed what Sid Allen's group had concluded in that year 2000 symposium, that "dual lane conditions are fairer than a single condition event." Will dual conditions be a thing of the future? Ronald Dol sure believes it will and he felt "they had a tremendous event with a great deal of enthusiasm from the players and spectators." Dol and Jensen have already confirmed the 2008 EBT event in Tilburg will be dual lane conditions again.

It's only a matter of time before more tournament organizers follow the lead of the innovative group in The Netherlands. Dual conditions may not be the answer the sporting players are looking for at each and every event or might it? After all it does satisfy the most essential criteria of becoming a world class bowling player...**VERSATILITY**.

*More articles by [Ted Thompson](#)*

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