



## Practicing on Tournament Patterns and Conversions

**The oil pattern for the 2012 IHSB regionals, semi-states and finals will be 40' oil, +/- 1' and the ratio will be between 3:1 – 5:1 ratio (The Kegel Challenge Range).**

At Kegel we get many requests for converting oil patterns to and from different lane machine technologies. Although we fully realize the intent, we also know that there are many factors that determine ball motion, and how easy or difficult lanes play, with the oil pattern being only one of them.

Even if the oil pattern is matched up perfectly from one technology to the next, there are still conditioner differences, cleaner differences, cleaner dilution differences, lane surface friction differences, lane surface topography differences, machine maintenance differences, and bowler differences, from your home center to wherever that championship pattern will be applied.

For instance; some lane conditioners play slicker than other conditioners, some conditioners affect the back ends more than other conditioners, and some lane cleaners leave more residue behind than others causing different amounts of back end hook. The dilution rate, amount of cleaner to water mixture, also affects ball motion, especially at the back end.

For lane surfaces, conditioned wood lanes tend to hook more than conditioned synthetic lanes. Higher textured synthetic lanes tend to have an “arcing” ball motion, while smoother synthetic lanes tend to be more “skid-snappy”.

Topography is also a huge variable when it comes to how a ball hooks (how a ball depletes energy) and how much it hooks. A portion of a lane sloped opposite the rotation of the ball will cause the ball to lose energy quickly, while a portion of a lane sloped with the rotation of the ball will cause the ball to lose energy slower. These slopes also make the ball move more easily towards the pocket, or make the ball more difficult to move towards the pocket.

Kegel has mapped thousands of bowling lanes around the world and we have yet to find two lanes that have the exact same measurements with regard to lengthwise tilts, crosstilts, crowns, and depressions. We also have yet to find a perfectly level lane. It could be said that bowling lanes are like finger prints; no two are the same.

Therefore, perfect and exact pattern oil patterns, or conversions, GUARANTEE that ball motion will be different at home versus where you will play on that pattern at whatever event you are going to.

The best players and coaches know this fact, and don't overly concern themselves with trying to practice on any specific pattern at home. They would rather just practice on a competitive type pattern that has a similar distance. It helps them keep an open mind.

Too many however tend to get overly caught up in oil patterns. They take the oil pattern as gospel, which more often than not, closes the mind and shifts focus to “what is” instead of “what might be”.

In conclusion, if you are practicing at home on a tournament oil pattern, and planning on competing or coaching in that tournament, take that oil pattern with a grain of salt and keep your mind open, very open. We can just about guarantee things will be different at the tournament than at your home center.