

The Pattern Did Not Play Like at Home

Often times I hear this comment and there are many reasons why this can happen.

Frequently, the center that you are going to bowl the tournament in (say for example the USBC Open Championships) is using a different brand of cleaner, different oil, and a different lane surface (not even taking account of one of the biggest differences....topography). Those are very obvious factors, but often people think that because they have the same lane machine as at the tournament site that it should cover all of those differences. Ultimately, even if you have the same lane surface, oil, cleaner, and lane machine, differences will still remain.

One of the differences we see often is the physical condition of the lane machine. Even though each Kegel lane machine leaves the factory meeting all of our strict adjustment and performance specifications, what happens to it from there is totally dependent on the maintenance (or lack thereof) that is given to it.

For an example, let's compare two cars: Two 2011 Chevrolet Corvettes.

One Corvette lands in the hands of a business man who uses it strictly as a commuter car. He washes and waxes it every week, changes the oil right at 3000 miles, and always uses synthetic oil. He manages to put 25,000 miles on the car in a 12-month period.

The second Corvette ends up being a rental car. The car is in numerous drivers' hands many of which perform routine burnouts and jackrabbit starts. This car also logs 25,000 miles in a 12-month span.

Though both of these cars started their life exactly the same, do you think both cars are going to look the same and perform the same after 12 months? Do you think the interiors are going to be the same? It wouldn't surprise me if the rental car's transmission doesn't shift as crisp and probably a few of the basic items are a little more worn out (brakes, parking brake, tires,

etc.) All I know is, I'll take Corvette number 1 and you can take a chance with the rental car, haha!

Knowing this, do you think all lane machines are treated the same? We've seen many lane machines after one year look like they've never been cleaned! Oil drips out of the vacuum motor (where it never should), the transfer brush is filled with dirt and hair, the paint is peeling off due to cleaner being spilled on it numerous times, and the frame has been tweaked throwing the factory adjustments out of spec since the machine has been dropped more than a half-dozen times due to negligence.

- Do you think that this machine I described above will put out the pattern the same way the brand new machines we have at the USBC Open Championships will?
- Do you think the pattern will be the same with a machine that doesn't clean the lane well because the squeegee blades or cushion roller have never been changed?
- Do you think the pattern will be the same even if the cleaner tank filter is clogged and the Norprene cleaner tubing hasn't been changed in over a year which results in half the amount of cleaner coming out (resulting in poor cleaning) and now you're oiling on top of a film?
- Do you think the pattern will be the same even if the transfer brush has so much dirt in it that it keeps the oil in the transfer brush an extra 6 feet down the lane?

Many factors will make a pattern play different from center to center but often one of the biggest is the physical condition of the machine itself. Stay up with the maintenance of the parts that commonly wear out (squeegee blades, buffer brush, cushion rollers, etc.), keep the machine clean, and your lane condition will be more consistent from week to week and month to month.

Like our VP of R&D Mark Davis once said: "Machines that look like new....tend to perform like new."