RAY LANGHAM: Cedar Rapids
Born

Ray Langham began his bowling career at the Lincoln Lanes in 1936. He developed a keen interest in the game and as time went on, the many hours of practice began to bear fruit. In 1944 he rolled his only 300 game but this was a mere indication of things to come. In 1945 Ray purchased Lincoln Lanes and continued to sponsor his Lincoln Lanes team. As owner of the lanes Ray was continually trying to come up with something new for his customers. In 1948 he offered free instructions to the public and in October of that year, he was the first proprietor to install rangefinders on his lanes. In early 1949 Ray joined with Virg Hammer of the Parlor City Lanes in organizing the first mixed league in this area. Because of Ray's tournament expertise, he was able to become close friends with many out of town bowlers and often invited them to Cedar Rapids for exhibitions. Among those who came were Frank Benkovic, Connie Schwogler, Buzz Fazio, Junie McMahon, Joe Willman, and Andy Varipapa. All of these are members of the A.B.C. Hall of Fame.

Over the years Ray won 4 City Championships: All events twice, doubles once, and team once. He participated in 3 U.S. All-Star tournaments and 10 A.B.C. championships. In 1949 he won the prestigious Corn Belt Classic tournament and in 1951 topped it by winning the Iowa Match Game championship. As a result, Ray became the holder of many championships and earned the title of "Mr. Bowling" in Cedar Rapids. Ray had a total of 9 700 series with 726 his high, his high average was 199, and high game 300.

Ray was locally and statewide a big part of the match play era, head to head, home and home, before tournaments, after tournaments, or any time a couple of fine bowlers with different opinions about their ability got together. Around Iowa, he bowled anyone, anywhere, anytime and was noted for always risking his own money in these matches. He went against the top bowlers in the State on their own lanes and held his own. But in Cedar Rapids, on his own Lincoln lanes, he was invincible. He had what we call a solid game. Not only a fearless competitor, he was also unerring. He seldom missed the 1-3 pocket. And through his long hours of practice, he developed one of the smoothest deliveries in the bowling game.

An avid tournament bowler, Ray was one of the first from Cedar Rapids to enter some of the Midwest's finer meets, such as the Devito and Peterson Classic tournaments in Chicago. In the Iowa State match games, he was a finalist 5 times, and in 1951 he became the Iowa State Match game champion. Due to his high finishes in this tournament, 3 times he received a paid entry to the United States All Star tournament, representing the state of Iowa.

Inducted in 1999 in the Posthumous Category.