

RICO Layout Revealed

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The RICO layout is certainly creating a buzz. It has been used on Tour successfully this season including by Parker Bohn in his win in Spartanburg on the Viper pattern as well as in qualifying by Diandra Asbaty during her march to winning the Great Lakes Classic on the Cheetah pattern. Much discussion is appearing on the message boards, with various amounts of accuracy. So, with the goal of providing accurate information, I went directly to Ric Hamlin, the individual credited for the layout, to get details from him directly. Ric is the Consumer Products Specialist, for the Northwest region, Brunswick Bowling and Billiards. Here is an overview about the RICO layout including when to use the layout, how-to map the bowling ball, how-to alter the layout for a higher track player. I also provide a summary of how the layout was first used and why. This is intended to present a more accurate overview of the RICO for those who want to have a better insight into this useful layout.

When to Use the RICO Layout?

The RICO is best used on more challenging patterns, longer and flatter. Ric Hamlin makes it clear that this layout has bailed-out many pro staffers on patterns such as the Masters and US Open. It is best for those who are speed dominant or have a lower rev rate. Specifically, the layout will get the ball to react sooner on the lane. These type of players tend to get too much length on these type of patterns. In addition, this is a good layout for players with a higher rev rate. For this type of player, the layout helps the ball to react sooner and smooth-out over/under ball reactions. Ric recommends that all tournament players have a ball with this layout in their bowling bag. It is very good to help bowlers get through transitions into the pattern breakdown. I tend to use the layout, as I mentioned above, on tougher patterns, & RICO LAYOUT SPECIFICS

1.
Pin in the palm. Generally, this will be in the center of the grip. So, for most bowlers, the PIN to PAP will fit in the range of 3 ½" to 5 1/2";
2.
When choosing a bowling ball, make an effort to obtain a ball with a pin distance (PIN to CG) that is close to half the distance of the ring finger span (Ric's recommendation and what he tries to do when using this layout). Top weight should be around 2.5 to 3 oz.
3.
The CG is placed at an angle 45 degrees from the PAP, through the grip center (for a RH bowler this in the 4:30 position)
4.
Place a weight hole, 6 ¾" from the grip center. The weight hole will approximately be 1 ¼" X 2 ½";
5.
In other words, the angle created from the PAP to grip center through CG to weight hole will be 45 degrees.

NOTE: The weight hole is extremely important in this layout. In a bowling ball with a symmetrical core, this will create more asymmetry since the weight hole is drilled into the core 90 degrees from the PIN, or 6 ¾". So, it will increase the dynamics of the reaction. In a bowling ball with an asymmetrical core, the PSA/MB is placed at a 45 degrees from the grip center. The more asymmetrical the core is, the less a weight hole will have an impact on the motion. But, when adding a weight hole, the amount of asymmetry will be increased. Thus, this will increase the overall reaction of the ball.

Watch the ball reaction as Parker Bohn III throws it in South Carolina, on TV. Parker is throwing this on the Viper pattern (37 feet). [Click here to launch the Youtube video](#) In addition, Brad Angelo used this layout in the Finals of the Windy City Classic. This was bowled on the 44 foot Shark pattern. [Click here to see this Youtube video](#). Notice the smooth ball motion from the oil to the dry. Altering Pin Placement for Higher Track Player:

For higher track players, there is a greater chance of the ball hitting the middle finger. Although Parker Bohn (PAP of 5 & 3/4 over and 1/2 to 3/4 up) has no such issue when using this layout. To adjust, move the Pin up on the center line the amount, the distance, of the vertical PAP coordinate. This should raise the bowtie enough to miss the finger. This should alter the layout enough to avoid flaring over the middle finger. This is particularly important for those with a high lateral PAP (5 ½" and above ½" on the vertical). Moreover, to achieve a similar result, you can move the PIN closer to the PAP (more similar to leverage) or away from the PAP (to create more length).

How the RICO Layout Was Created (in Ric Hamlin's own words)

“Although I [Ric Hamlin] have been given credit for it's so called design, how it all got started was a few years ago, Brunswick sponsored the Mini Eliminator in Las Vegas. I was part of the tournament support team. We would lay out all the balls, that were being used during the week of competition. At that time, the lane surface at the Orleans had become worn, thus making the lanes play a bit more on the difficult side, as well as a higher amount of conditioner on the lane to compensate for the worn surface. On top of that, the lane was Brunswick Pro Anvil, which is a lower friction surface and tends to create hang anyways. Knowing that this layout generally worked on tighter and/or longer patterns as well as for those that were either speed dominate, rev challenged or just needed reaction help, I used this layout quite a bit with very positive results. One of Brunswick's staffers, Nick Smith, was there and I used this layout for him. He was a higher rev player, but very speed dominate and he was impressed with the reaction, thus nicknaming the layout 'Rico' after me.”

Successfully Used During the 2007-2008 PBA Season

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Parker Bohn, Winner Spartanburg Classic, Viper Pattern
- Diandra Asbaty, Great Lakes Classic, Used in Qualifying