

CALIFORNIA BOWLING NEWS

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Kyle Troup Reaches New Heights With 2021 PBA Players Championship Win

by Lucas Wiseman

JUPITER, Fla. – The ascension of Kyle Troup has reached new heights. Known more for his colorful outfits and hair in the past, Troup put to bed any questions of his ability to be a dominating player on the PBA Tour on Sunday as he captured his first career major title.

Troup defeated Dick Allen, 257-212, at Bowlero Jupiter to win the \$250,000 first-place prize and secured a major trophy for the first time. He now has seven career titles, just one shy of his father Guppy Troup.

“I’ve put in a ton of work for a long time now, and I just told myself let’s go to work for one more day,” Troup said. *“For the hard work to pay off, it’s an unbelievable feeling. I’m on cloud nine, and I feel like I’m up in heaven with my mother right now. It’s a blessing.”*

During the shortened 2020 campaign, Troup had the best season of his career, winning three titles to double his career title number in a short span.

He’s now started off 2021 reaching the next level by capturing a major title, making him the leader in the clubhouse in the 2021 PBA Player of the Year race, an award he has made clear is another goal of his.

Although the margin of



2021 PBA Players Champion Kyle Troup

victory may seem high in his win over Allen, the path was a bit more challenging. Troup started the match playing a tighter line but opened the lane up a little bit in the back half of the game to pull away.

Allen actually held a 19-pin lead after seven frames but things fell apart down the stretch. In the eighth frame, Allen got the ball to the hook spot too quick and it went high leaving the 4-7.

In the ninth frame, Allen left what can only be described as a devastating pocket 7-10 split to all but end his chances of winning

his first career major.

Troup, meanwhile, left a pair of 10 pins in the fourth and fifth frames. After opening up the lane, he wouldn’t miss again until an insignificant fill ball.

Making it to the final

match was an adventure for Allen, who defeated Francois Lavoie, 244-227, in the semifinal. The drama happened in the second match of the show, however.

Coming out of the commercial break, Allen

stepped up and tossed a key double to pull to within 10 pins against his Motiv teammate Tom Smallwood.

That’s when Allen accidentally dropped his water bottle. Somehow the lid came unscrewed and when

he picked up the bottle, the bottom fell off spilling water everywhere.

After a lengthy delay that resulted in another commercial break, Smallwood left a 10 pin on his next shot and never really looked as sharp the rest of the way.

Smallwood went on to miss wide right and leave the 1-2-5-7 in the ninth frame, which he missed, and the 4-10 split in the 10th frame, which he also missed.

Allen needed just nine on two shots to win, which he was able to accomplish easily and take a 216-195 victory.

In the opening match of the show, Smallwood started out with the front nine and settled for a 278-225 victory over Anthony Simonsen.

Smallwood left a high nine pin on his first offering in the final frame, ending his run at a televised perfect game.

Kris Prather Set To Defend Title At 2021 PBA Tournament of Champions

by Jill Winters

JUPITER, FL – Going into last year’s PBA Tournament of Champions, Kris Prather was bowling with a heavy heart and determination. He had lost both of his grandfathers just a few weeks earlier and wanted to make them proud.

“I was really focusing on performing well for them,” Prather said. “The grandfather on my mom’s

side funded me for the first three years I was on tour. He just wanted me to go out there and have a chance at my dreams.”

Prather’s grandfathers were undoubtedly watching as climbed the ladder as the fourth seed and defeated Sean Rash, Jason Belmonte, Anthony Simonsen and Bill O’Neill to earn his

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Kris Prather



Dick Allen accidentally dropped his water bottle

PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL STANDINGS

Bowlero Jupiter – Jupiter, Fla.

Kyle Troup	\$250,000
Dick Allen	\$130,000
François Lavoie	\$80,000
Tom Smallwood	\$60,000
Anthony Simonsen	\$50,000

MATCH SCORES

- Match 1 – No. 4 Smallwood def. No. 5 Simonsen, 278-225
- Match 2 – No. 3 Allen def. No. 4 Smallwood, 216-195
- Match 3 – No. 3 Allen def. No. 2 Lavoie, 244-227
- Match 4 – No. 1 Troup def. No. 3 Allen, 257-212

Why No BOWLING CALENDAR?

Hi - Bette Addington has been going thru a rough patch lately. She had her last Chemo session last week and is starting the road to normal again. She still has lingering tiredness, a bit weak and short term memory loss. It looks like she will be on immunotherapy for the long term. We have scheduled a PETscan to make sure she is cancer free but to weak to go thru it right now.

We will reschedule this in the short term. If you have tried to communicate with her don’t fret, she is still here, just not active on her phone, computer or other social me-

Bowling News is praying for Bette to have a speedy recovery and thanks her for all she does for our sport.

dia. If you really need to get something to her, email her at her personal email address at baddington@bak.rr.com I check that email daily for her.

She is resting a lot and going to the oncologists a couple times a week to get her system back in balance. Bette is getting her hair back which is nice as she always enjoyed her hair. **Sorry no bowling columns or car event calendars**, she is just not ready, but she will be back for sure. She did get her 2nd covid shot, thank goodness as its still among us for awhile.

Chris Addington



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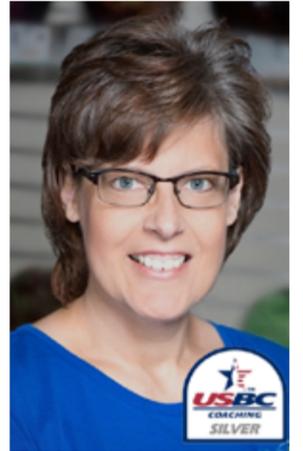
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The Return of the PWBA Brings Back Memories of Aleta Rzepecki-Sill

A LPBT (Ladies Pro Bowlers Tour) Superstar

by Frank Weiler

Aleta Rzepecki turned professional at the age of 18. She won her first National Title at the age of 19 during her first full year on tour at the Gallery of Homes Classic in Los Angeles. When she retired from the Tour in 2001, she had won 31 titles including the "Triple Crown" (Women's US OPEN, USBC Queens and The Sam's Town Invitational) twice. She is the only bowler to win the Triple Crown twice.



Aleta Rzepecki-Sill

During her illustrious career Aleta was the first woman to earn \$1 million dollars bowling. She was a money bowler. Her attitude was "trophies be damned, just show me the money". This was evident from her success at winning Major Tournaments.

Some of her most notable accomplishments include:

- Induction into 8 Halls of Fame
- Only bowler to win two Triple Crowns
- Selected to 8 WIBC All American Teams
- BWAA Player of The Year 1984 and 1985
- LPBT Player of The Year 1984
- Six time LPBT Top Money Winner

Many experts consider Aleta to be a strong candidate for Greatest of All-Time (G.O.A.T). That is, Greatest Female bowler of All-Time. Her resume of accomplishments justifies such an assessment but only God knows who really is the G.O.A.T. In my opinion Aleta is definitely a candidate for that title.

Once when asked, Aleta admitted that she had a lot to be grateful for. There were many people who were instrumental in helping her to achieve her career goals. It all started with her maternal grandparents, Steve and Adeline Zuke. They encouraged her to follow her dream and were her first sponsor. Her youth coach, Joe Naso, nurtured her dreams and was always supportive of her desire to become a professional bowler.

Detroit area bowling proprietor Mark Voight always made his lanes available for Aleta to practice. He was also instrumental in encouraging her to develop her business acumen and prepare for life after professional bowling. Finally, Aleta's long time business partner Michelle Mullen has been there for her during the good times and the bad.

I was there when Aleta began her professional career on the LPBT. I remember her competing in the early 1980s and thought of her as being very competitive. She was a beast on the lanes. She reminded me of a predator, a wildcat on the hunt. Hunting pins and defeating competitors. To me she appeared to be a cold-blooded gunslinger ready to take down anyone in her way. I guess that is the game face necessary to become a winner. I guess that is the attitude necessary to become a champion. A bowling champion must focus and be on the attack. It's all about taking care of business.

While her game face made her appear to be unfriendly and made her inaccessible to the average fan, I believe she was on friendly terms with most of the players on tour. No one can survive on tour without support and encouragement. Aleta must have gotten that from her inner circle since she didn't encourage fan support.

Aleta is a great example of what any young girl can accomplish if she has the desire to succeed and is willing to work hard at accomplishing her goals. According to Aleta, it's all about having that "CAN DO" attitude. That's the attitude instilled in her by her grandparents.

Girls go for it. Ladies go for it. The PWBA is up and running and waiting for you to compete and win on the new Professional Women's Bowling Tour, the PWBA. You could be the next Aleta Rzepecki-Sill.

Bowling's First Black PBA Champion George Branham III Was 'A Natural'

by Jill Winters - FloBowling.com

The PBA Tournament of Champions is filled with history. From Don Johnson's memorable 299 game in the title match in 1970 to when Kelly Kulick became the first woman to ever win a title on the PBA Tour in 2010.

For 30 years, Firestone sponsored this crown jewel of bowling, and in that final year in 1993, another historic moment took place when George Branham III became the first Black bowler to win a major title on the PBA Tour.

His dad, George Branham II, introduced him to the sport at age 6 in Detroit, Michigan. A few years later, the family moved to California and the junior programs provided Branham III more competition. At age 13, his dad began to teach him even more about the game.

"Bowling seemed to keep my attention a little bit more (than other sports) because it was individual," he said. "You had to have skill and be repetitive. I felt that was what I was good at. I was a natural at it at the beginning, averaging 200 at age 14." He competed in his first PBA Tour event in 1985 and quickly learned his game was good enough finishing in 18th place.

"I entered three tournaments, that is how much money I had to bowl," Branham said about that first experience. "I made the cut the first week, so I entered three more tournaments. For my first year, I ended up bowling 27 tournaments, and I never stopped bowling. I sponsored myself for my whole career."

For many, having the pressure to cash each week to allow you to bowl for another week could be too much, but for Branham that is the way he wanted to do it. He learned how to be competitive and patient. "I believed enough in myself that I knew I was going to make it," he said.

He was now bowling alongside guys that he had watched on TV every Saturday and seeing those men competing while bowling for a living attracted him to the sport. He surrounded himself with a support system of positive people like his dad, and former roommates, Amleto Monacelli, Randy Pedersen and Rod Pasteur. Also, his first roommate ever on tour was Walter Ray Williams Jr.

He fell short in the Rookie of Year voting having not made a TV show appearance, but in year two, he made history. The then 24-year-old, climbed the ladder to earn his first title, defeating his bowling hero, Mark Roth, 195-191, at the 1986 Brunswick Memorial World Open in Glendale Heights, Ill. "It was my first TV appearance, my first title and being the first Black to win," he said. "None of those things I thought about until way after the show was over."

While growing up, Branham admits he was pretty much the only Black junior bowler, and while on Tour, there were about four other men with him at the same time.

Since the PBA's inception in 1959, there have only been a few other Black bowlers to compete regularly on Tour. The list includes Charlie Venable who had two top-five finishes between 1977 and 1978, Willie Willis who finished 13th at the 1980 Firestone Tournament of Champions, and lefty Gary Faulkner Jr., who is the second Black bowler to win a major. He did that at the 2015 PBA World Championship in Reno, Nevada.



George Branham III and Randy Pedersen



George Branham III

Branham relates his 18-year PBA career to a roller coaster ride. He had highs and lows, and many of his highs came after some struggles where he worked on his game. From 1988 to 1992, he was winless. He turned to Pedersen for some help prior to the 1993 Flagship City Open in Erie, Pennsylvania. They went to a bowling center to practice and Pedersen noticed Branham's swing and slide were crossing into each other, so they worked to fix that. Branham bowled well at that event and decided to bowl the next tournament, the 1993 Baltimore Open, because he was feeling confident.

He led the tournament and went on to collect his third PBA title. It had been seven years since he had bowled in the Firestone Tournament of Champions but since he was bowling well, he felt ready. In an event with a field of all champions and Branham's game improving, he earned his way to the No. 1 seed.

During the practice session before the televised step-ladder finals, lane 27 was presenting a major challenge for the players because balls were hooking early. The field included No. 4 Dave Husted, No. 3 Parker Bohn III and No. 2 Dave Ferraro. "It was almost impossible because it was hooking way more," Branham recalled. "My Brunswick ball rep had drilled up this ball setup for a left-hander and it made the ball skid. I had one more practice shot left. I tried the ball on the left lane, and I hit the pocket. I said, 'I'm going to win that tournament.'"

Branham felt relaxed from that moment on and knew he could play his game. He did just that defeating Bohn, 227-214, to become the first Black bowler to win a major PBA title. "It makes me emotional just thinking about it," he said. "I knew I was going to win, and nothing was going to stop me. That solidified to me that I made it to the top of being a professional bowler."

He earned the \$60,000 check then defeated Del Ballard Jr. in the King of the Lanes match, 244-226, to earn another \$5,000. The trophy from the final Firestone PBA Tournament of Champions sits on his mantel today.

Branham had five top-24 finishes in 1993. He won five PBA titles, earned more than \$747,000 during his career and retired at the end of 2002. The last time he bowled at the Tournament of Champions was about 10 years ago. "I was visible for 18 years, and at one point, I had led at all major tournaments," he recalled proudly. "I got to the top spot at each of the majors."

After he retired, Branham went to an interview to be a truck driver for Pepsi in Indianapolis. To his surprise, his bowling career helped him get the job. When a worker recognized him as a PBA player he was hired. He has been working for Pepsi for 18 years and for the first time, his work decided to celebrate his bowling achievements this year. "For the first time, they are recognizing me for Black History Month, which is pretty cool," Branham said.

Branham said they put up poster boards with pictures from his bowling days and included a baseball-style bowling card with his picture on it, which he appreciated.

When it comes to the topic of diversity in bowling, Branham recalls talking to other Black bowlers on Tour and they agreed money is a factor.

"I always thought that money was the issue; the prize fund," he said. "The expense it takes to be a pro bowler. It cost a lot of money and you do not see enough of us out there. Bowling is a blue-collared sport. You would have thought there was a lot more diversity."

Branham's wife Donna, who is also a bowler and former high school bowling coach, believes a way to see more diversity in bowling would be to include individuals like her husband in PBA television broadcasts. "Having him involved in the PBA in commentating, they have got to get somebody involved to attract attention to the sport," she said. "Our Black youth do not even know him because he is not being seen. It is history, and he should be accounted for and included." Donna does see positive signs in youth bowling. "They are moving forward to create more opportunities for youth as they say, 'a future for the sport,'" Donna said. "I think it is going to change. It might be a way down the road, but I see it coming."

Branham enjoyed every minute of his career and he feels that bowling and its athletes do not get the respect they rightfully deserve. "To me, it is the toughest sport to be great at, because it is all about timing and technique," he said. "In other sports, you can see the obstacles, but in bowling, it is the foul line, it's the gutters and the pins. Between the line and the pins, it is a maze. You cannot see where the oil is. It is all about trial and error."

The now 58-year-old no longer has his PBA card. He has considered bowling PBA50 events, but since he only bowls league once a week, and works full-time, he does not have the time to dedicate himself to his game. Instead, he bowls league with Donna, and he averages 232.

As he reflects on his career, it was a dream he wanted to pursue, and he loved it.

"I believed in myself," he said. "If you believe hard enough and you dedicate yourself, work ethic and all that stuff, put all of that stuff together; it all lines up for you."

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

PBA TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

SUN. 2/28 | 1PM ON FOX

PBA JR. FINALS

SUN. 3/7 | 12PM ON FS1

PBA WORLD SERIES OF BOWLING XII

PBA WSOB XII GUARANTEED RATE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

SAT. 3/13 | 2PM ON FOX

ROTH/HOLMAN DOUBLES FROM THE PBA WSOB XII

SUN. 3/14 | 3PM ON FS1

PBA WSOB XII CHEETAH CHAMPIONSHIP

MON. 3/15 | 8PM ON FS1

PBA WSOB XII CHAMELEON CHAMPIONSHIP

TUES. 3/16 | 8PM ON FS1

PBA WSOB XII SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP

WED. 3/17 | 8PM ON FS1

[VIEW THE FULL 2021 SCHEDULE »](#)



Carol's Corner

by Carol Mancini
E-mail: CarolMancini83@icloud.com

Greetings from snow covered Oregon. Winter has set in - sadly for the hundreds (maybe thousands) of people who are homeless - the result of the fires last August. People are allowed to live in their vehicles. The Salvation Army has given away 10,000 new coats to kids, free meals are available and new businesses are popping up.

One has many TV ads. It is called "SkillBillys". If you have a skill but not a business, you can sign up. Anyone needing a small job done can call SkillBillys. I don't know any details, but someone was using their noodle to get "needs and skills" teamed up.

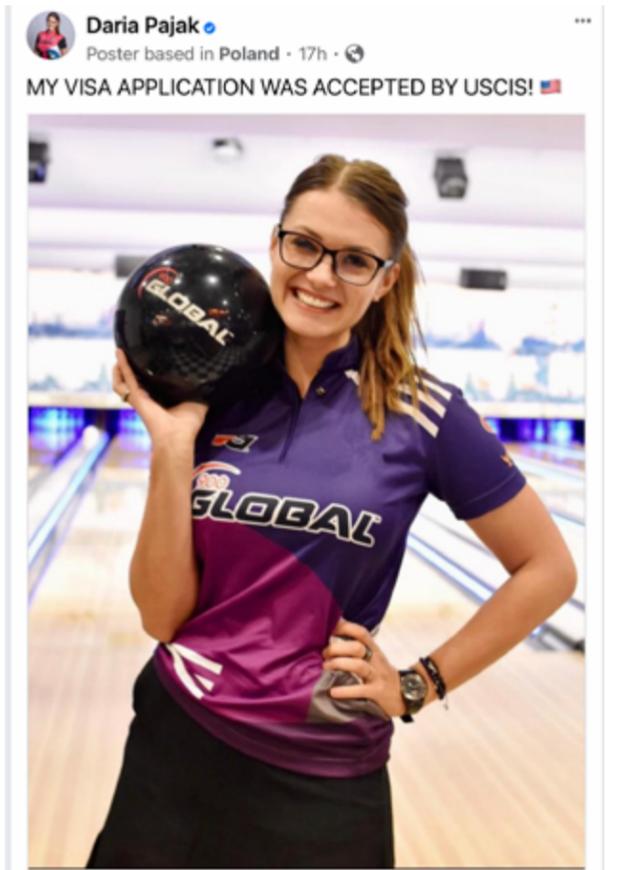
The casinos and bars are open. Not cafés. Only take out and delivery meals available. It's a good thing that free meals are available many places. There is even one free laundromat!

P.S. Thousands of homes, businesses, cars, fruit trees etc. were destroyed but not one church was touched. A thought to ponder.

You can read past issues 2006 to 2020 of The Bowling News online.

A free copy of the "Essentials of Bowling" is available if you send your address to CarolMancini83@icloud.com

Here's Some Great News!



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Looking Back 2007

by Carol Mancini

The First Six Months will be all about tournaments, clubs, leagues and change in ABC/WIBC. We will highlight headlines - according to proper news coverage - the headlines should include Who, What, Where, When and sometimes How Much.

- Deaf Bowler Connie Marchione received the National Bowling Writers Humanitarian award from John Jowdy.
- A headline announced "New Ownership for Orange County ABT" but article never said who.
- Frank Kietz hit 90 years old. He wrote about the history of bowling for the past 90 years.
- **Fountain Bowl** hosted PBA Dick Weber Open in January.
- All associations were running BVL tourneys.
- Dick Stoeffler passed away January 14, 2007.
- Joe Lyou wrote a weekly column called "10 Pin Slants."
- The Orleans had a big one on the calendar. The Mini Eliminator, \$20,000 First Prize.
- Bowling News now online!
- January 18, 2007 issue had a first! A Bowling crossword puzzle contributed by Dennis McNerney. Bet you can't solve it!
- Andy Moran rolls 833.
- L.A.B.A. hosted 68th City Tournament.
- New center **Moreno Valley Bowl** had auto bumpers for kids and eight dollar fees for the adults.
- The Orleans ran the 17th Annual Golden Ladies Classic.
- The USBC raised \$1000 for Susan Komen Cancer Cure Foundation.
- Blind bowlers league at Keystone amazing!
- Beautiful Bert Strain loved handing checks to her Donkee Club Champs.
- The USBC adopted a "lane hardness" rule.
- We named Joy McGregor "Queen of the headlines" they were always catchy!
- Papers in 2007 had 16 pages. They were delivered to all centers from Fresno to San Diego, plus Reno and Vegas. Now, just turn on your computer and read any issue 2005 to today.
- Connie Marchione was inducted to USBC Hall of Fame and Bowling Writer Hall.
- The Frank Del Conte family owned multiple bowls; Vermont Bowl, Saddleback Lanes, and Southwest Bowl. They also ran dinner houses. How many???
- Did you know Frank Austin rolled the first 300 game in California? (Not sanctioned). The game was rolled at Cosmopolitan Bowl located at Hill and Sixth in Los Angeles 1949.
- 1949 talk show host Art Linkletter opened his La Cienega Lanes in September.
- Alice Meglemre wrote weekly results of the 20 year old "Las Vegas Travel League". 16 teams of ladies completed every Monday morning, traveling to 16 different centers, sweeping in Vegas.
- **Cal Bowl's** weekly results took a full page. Some seniors rolled FIVE leagues a week!! Plus, the Friday tournaments.
- Jason Yeh won ABTA July 4 Vegas Event and banked \$7000. They paid 118 places. Bob Smith chalked up another victory.
- 300/220/279/799 for John De Festes at **Eagle Bowl** in San Marcos.
- Roger Dalkin retired as USBC chief after 30 years. Career high point was the ABC/WIBC merger.
- Kevin Gannon & Vaughn Doody are WCST top weekly cashiers.
- There's always "oops" in our lives. The "oops" for The Bowling News was the loss of the online issues for September through December from the computer. Hardcopies are in the 2007 book in the Bowling News office.

Hope you got a smile, remembered a bit of 2007 and checked over your old league sheets and recaps! Remember friends and places.

Drop Carol a note at

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Email at CarolMancini83@icloud.com.**

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Prather continued from page 1

first major title at AMF Riviera Lanes.

Starting Tuesday, Prather will enter a major event as the defending champion for the first time as he looks to bring home another PBA Tournament of Champions trophy. The event begins with qualifying live exclusively on FloBowling at 8 a.m. on Tuesday from Bowlero Jupiter in Florida.

"It is one of the greatest accomplishments that anyone could really ever achieve," the now 29-year-old said about the victory. "To me it is all about winning and being a major titlist. The money is just a bonus. I don't think I could ever top that performance unless I shoot 300 this year."

Prather, who has never been a No. 1 seed in his PBA career, was able to do what he wanted on lanes, which was slow hook it, en route to the win.

After talking to his ball reps Jim Callahan, Tim Mack and Shawn Ryan, Prather made his way into a part of the lane that he was more comfortable with against Belmonte, Simonsen and O'Neill as he won 252-179, 226-203 and 280-205, respectively. He knew what the lanes were asking him to do, he had a loose swing and he was relaxed.

After his first major, the man nicknamed "Shark" made the most of the COVID-19 shortened season. He also won the 2020 PBA Strike Derby Championship, earned the title of King of the Lanes and was a member of 2020 PBA League Champions with the Portland Lumberjacks. He was the fourth highest earner of 2020, cashing in eight out of nine events and taking home \$223,285.

With the TOC being the second major title up for grabs already this season and many players still trying to get loose for the major-heavy start to the year, Prather expects many bowlers to migrate to Florida earlier than usual to get ready, himself included.

"I felt the effects just coming back at the Players," he said after missing the cut at the PBA Players Championship by 43 total pins. "I bowled way below my ability and was not patient at all. Some guys will struggle initially, but we are the best in the world for a reason."

To get himself in shape for the grueling season, Prather's biggest focus is on maintaining a healthier diet and cutting out fast food. He also has a workout plan that includes leg and core exercises that he can do at home or in a hotel room to help build up his stamina so he can have longevity on the lanes through long blocks of competition. And if that is not enough, he is trying to make his swing straighter and to be more consistent with his ball speed.

Prather, who is coming off a third-place finish in the 2020 PBA Player of the Year voting, admits when it is major championship time, he needs to be patient and physically take his time to allow himself to make the best possible shot. And when he is mentally and physically ready, he believes he will be one of the guys at the top of the standings. "Not everybody gets the luxury and ability to compete at the highest level," he said. "Winning just gave me that little nod to myself that all the thousands of shots I put up and commitment to the craft of bowling; shows all that work, time and effort was worth it. It fuels me more to still get better."

The Illinois resident admits he plans to continue to lean on his ball reps for help with ball motion and ball selection rather than putting that added stress on himself, which he knows is a huge advantage for him. He also knows his game continues to get stronger the more consecutive weeks he bowls.

With a strong performance at the Tournament of Champions, the U.S. Open and the USBC Masters this year, Prather believes earning two major titles will pave the way for him to eventually be inducted into the PBA Hall of Fame. "I am still relatively new on tour, but I am a major championship bowler who is always in the competition," he said.

Primo, Leroy and The Glove

by Dave Williams

George Washington's Birthday, which has been combined with Abraham Lincoln's, and every other president's birthday, to form President's Day, always reminds me of an event that took place in my life during the 1960's at Sports Center Bowl in San Francisco, California.

Every year Sports Center Bowl would conduct the Washington Birthday Singles Tournament, which prior to the creation of the PBA Tour, was one of a select number of tournaments that top notch bowlers would attend while making an excursion to the west coast.

My first experience at the event took place while I was still a youth bowler. Primo Liberatore, the owner of L & L Lanes in Sebastopol, Calif., had recruited me and three of my friends to accompany him to Sports Center Bowl as scorekeepers. This was before the proliferation of automatic scoring, and the tips that we could garner were impressive and worth the trip.

This particular year was eventful in many ways. While almost every bowling center has an incredible story to tell, the circumstances involving this story were very sad; and yet looking back more than fifty years later, it has become not only meaningful, but also paradoxical in scope.

It's hard to believe that it's been over seven years that I recounted the events of that evening, at a website called bernalwood.com. Here's my recollection from November 30, 2013:

I have many memories of Sports Center Bowl. As a youth bowler I remember coming here with Primo Liberatore, owner of L & L Lanes in Sebastopol, and a group of my youth bowling friends. We were recruited to keep score while Primo bowled in the aforementioned Washington Birthday Singles tournament.

While we were keeping score a woman allegedly came in and shot her husband, or lover (I think his name was Leroy Skruggs, and as it was told to me, he was obsessed with bowling). Tom Collins (you can't make that name up!), a local politician, tried to revive the man on the approach. He came back to our lanes with blood dripping from his slacks and Primo said, "You're not going to bowl like that!"

Collins replied, "I've still got a chance," and Primo's reply was, "Well, I don't." And we left.

Years later I remember bowling in the event and winning the scratch portion in the mid-1970's. The shot was definitely off the edge. It was almost impossible to throw a gutter, but if you hit the third board it was a bucket. Professional bowler Don Bell bowled very well here and won the tournament a couple of



Sports Center Bowl, circa 1963
(photo from bowlinghistory.wordpress.com)

times. The shot was made for his down-and-in delivery.

A couple of years went by until I noticed that a pastor named Dale Ray Smith responded to my remembrance of that day. On April 30, 2015, Pastor Smith wrote:

Wow, my friend. I've waited for decades to hear somebody mention that night when Leroy was shot. I was there too. I am Dale Ray Smith, the young black bowler (16 years old) when I won the Washington Birthday Singles. Maybe you remember - they called me The Kid. I was taught by Don Bell and Dave Soutar when he came in and gave me a few pointers.

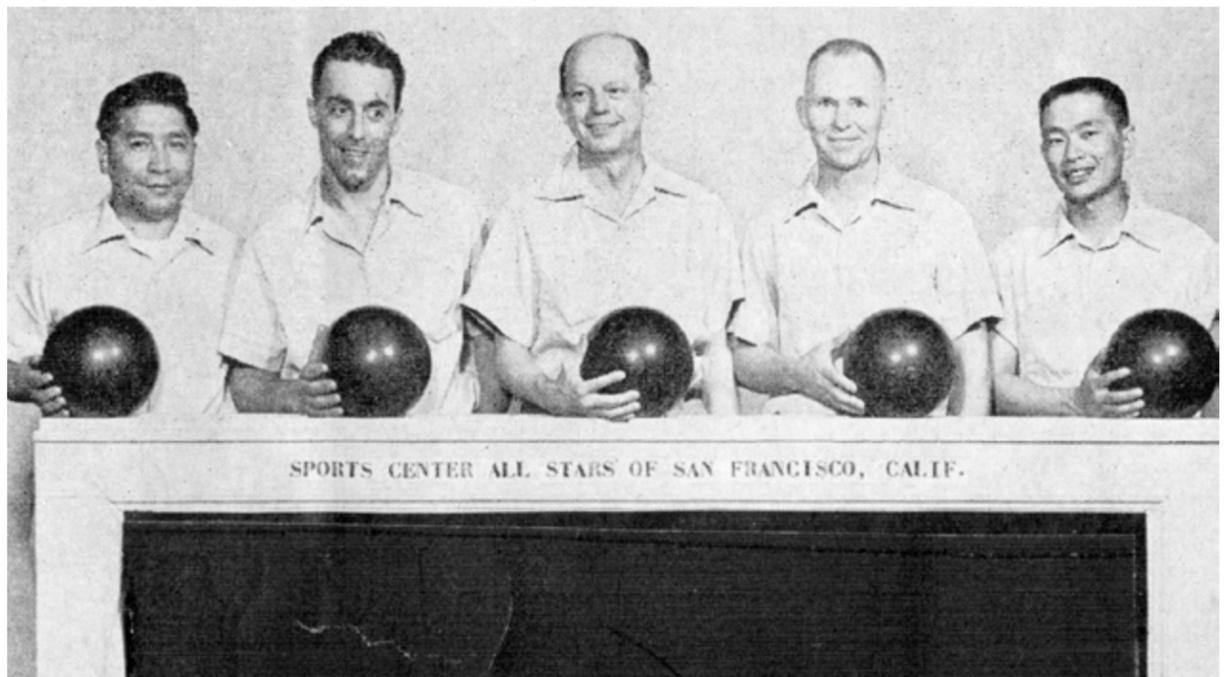
Another month went by, when former touring professional Wayne Chester chimed in all the way from Australia, where he now lives. Here's Wayne's reply to Pastor Smith:

I remember when you won the Washington Birthday Singles. In fact, I remember so much more that happened at Sports Center back in the 1960's and 1970's.

Are you wondering about "The Glove?" Dan O'Glove was the proprietor of Sports Center Bowl, a very unique center with 31 lanes. Rumor has it that when O'Glove remodeled, an aisle was required for the mechanics which necessitated the removal of the first lane. O'Glove decided to leave the second lane in it's original state, complete with an over-lane ball return.

"The Glove" used the removal of the first lane to his advantage for many years, as all of his advertisements included the phrase... "Always a lane available for open bowling." Sports Center was also noted for their excellent hand-cut shoestring french fries.

Ah, memories... indeed!



Sports Center All Stars at the 1957 USBC Tournament in Ft. Worth, TX. (l-r) Fuzzy Shimada, Ed Bourdase, Kent Rose, Jerry Sones and Larry Mar (photo from bowlinghistory.wordpress.com)

New York Bowler Rolls 899 Series

What a night for Rich Wagner of Batavia, New York!

The 38-year-old left-hander came within one shot of perfection last week at Batavia's Mancuso Bowling Center. And, not just a perfect game, a perfect series.

Wagner started the night with 35 consecutive strikes, before a 6 pin on his final offering denied him the chance to be the 37th bowler in history to roll a USBC-certified 900 series.

Six of the 37 USBC-certified 900s have been rolled in New York.

The feat last was accomplished in July 2020 by former Team USA member Wesley Low Jr. of Palmdale, Florida, who also attacks the lane from the left side.

Read more about Wagner's 899 series here.

To see a complete list of all the certified 900s and other USBC records, visit BOWL.com/Records.

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TNBA REMEMBERS THOSE LOST, LOOKING TO REBUILD AFTER CHALLENGING YEAR

by Matt Cannizzaro

ARLINGTON, Texas - The National Bowling Association is built on a foundation of education, empowerment and celebrating success and togetherness, all in an environment that makes every event and meeting feel like a family reunion.

Sadly, though, when the tournaments and get-togethers resume for TNBA members later in 2021, after a long run of uncertainty and cancellations, the return to some sort of normalcy will be bittersweet, as there will be a few familiar faces missing from the long-awaited hugs and handshakes.

Like so many families across the globe, the TNBA membership could not avoid the unwelcomed reach of the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected thousands of members at every level of the organization and claimed the lives of more than a dozen dedicated bowlers who have served TNBA at the national level or were very active in the annual national convention.

Additionally, as time seems to be speeding by, a list of non-COVID losses also has grown since the last TNBA national convention. Traditionally, more than 100 bowlers already are recognized annually at the TNBA Memorial Service, a special and emotional part of the convention.

This only illustrates how important it is to be able to hold events and use all recruiting opportunities to attract and educate the next generation of TNBA leaders.

"These times are devastating, but we know we will come together once again, excel and strive to exceed anything we've accomplished before," TNBA President Dewann Clark said. "Our organization is exceptionally resilient, and we have overcome so many things as we've survived and thrived in our first 82 years. This is a different type of challenge, of course, and a year of incredible sadness at times."

Among those lost in the last year were many longtime TNBA volunteers who worked hard to help bowling and TNBA through its toughest times, including an uncertain 2020:

Dwight Dale, a 69-year-old from St. Louis, was the tournament director for the TNBA Southern Bill Rhodman Memorial Singles Classic Tournament. He died Jan. 16, 2021.

Tommie Lakes of St. Peters, Missouri, was a former TNBA South Region Tournament Director. He died Dec. 5, 2020 at age 72.

Former TNBA President and past United States Bowling Congress Board member **Perry Daniels**, 71, of Carrollton, Texas, most recently served TNBA as a field representative for Texas. He died March 31, 2020.

Vera Johnson of Detroit was a TNBA Central Region Field Representative. She died in March 2020 at age 68.

James Alston of Richardson, Texas, died in late February 2020 at age 93. His death was not related to COVID-19. His involvement in the sport transcended the decades. He was a longtime TNBA National Tournament Director and a former TNBA Vice President.

Alesia Bryant of St. Louis became part of TNBA's first all-female cabinet when she was elected vice president in 2000. Cornell Jackson was president and Margaret Lee served as executive secretary-treasurer. Bryant went on to serve as TNBA President, as well. She died in 2020 at age 77.

The list also includes **Sylvia Grayson** of Los Angeles, who was instrumental in the growth of the TNBA King and Queen program and died in January 2021 at age 92; **Helen Monroe** of Philadelphia, a past Philadelphia Senate President and strong



participant at the annual convention and executive meetings, who died in 2020 at age 83; and a trio of past former TNBA Queens who all died in 2020 - **Barbara Barnes** and **Cathy Sykes** of Chicago and **Trudy Peoples** of Washington.

"We had so many bowlers and families affected by this pandemic, from competitors to members of the administration to some of our most influential people," Clark said. "These few in particular, they all were key contributors and icons in our organization and were contributing to our progress until the day they died."

Soon, the world, and the bowling community, will move beyond COVID-19, but it will not be forgotten. Neither will the people who were lost along the way. Instead, they all will be remembered for their respective impacts on society and bowling.

Since its inception in 1939, TNBA has maintained a focus on inclusion and giving bowlers of all colors a stage to develop their skills and enjoy the amazing camaraderie the sport has to offer. There have been many other challenges and exciting successes that have helped shaped TNBA's history. While the organization was created with Black bowlers in mind and initially named the National Negro Bowling Association, the diversity of its fast-growing membership led to a name change five years later.

TNBA was on the front lines of the fight to unify bowling completely, and that became a reality in 1950, when the American Bowling Congress and Women's International Bowling Congress eliminated the Caucasian-only clauses from their bylaws.

Even as the culture of bowling shifted in the decades that followed, TNBA has been careful to continue its own history and traditions, while continuing to recruit members and run top-tier events.

In recent years, the organization has included between 23,000-27,000 members across more than 115 local chapters, called senates, in four regions, and it is the pride, motivation and hard work of the members and leadership that allow the organization to thrive.

The biggest event of the year for the organization is TNBA Week, an extended get together that includes the annual convention, national tournament, a huge meet-and-greet party with games, music and dancing, a Gospel Fest and a day of remembrance for members and volunteers who died since the last TNBA Week.

"The competition is a major component of what we do, along with the camaraderie, but the reunion aspect of our events, especially TNBA Week, is unlike anything else we do," Clark said. "Things were much different from 2019 to 2020, and even to right now. It has been challenging and frustrating. We've seen a drop in membership due to everything, and, of course, the loss of some key members. It has been a challenging year, but we're ready to move forward."

Tournaments and fundraising are a very important aspect of TNBA's activities, and those are the things that help fund the programs and pay staff members.

Traditionally, the year's top fundraisers are recognized and celebrated at the end of TNBA Week. It marks the end of another cycle of friendly fundraising competition between the senates.

The man and woman who raise the most money during the year are crowned the TNBA King and Queen at the week-ending Coronation Ball, and the honor earns them the opportunity to travel and represent TNBA at a variety of events during the next season.

TNBA did not want to miss this tradition in 2020 and was able to hold a virtual coronation, crowning Roy Johnson Jr. (Greater Washington Senate) and Adrienne Hal (Greater Richmond Senate) as the King and Queen for the 2020-2021 season.

Johnson and Hal did have a chance to begin fulfilling their royal responsibilities, as they both were able to attend the 2020 TNBA Eastern Regional Tournament in Virginia.

Shortly after, though, both contracted COVID-19. Johnson died in December 2020 at age 53. Hal nearly ended up in intensive care, but she was able to make a full recovery.

Along with getting to represent TNBA at events across the country, Johnson also was looking forward to being married. Hal, an ordained minister, was going to perform the ceremony.

"We have such dedicated members, who work tirelessly in many capacities, year after year, to help make TNBA better," Clark said. "We definitely will miss those we've lost, but we will continue to add on to the things they helped build and make sure their contributions are not forgotten."

Next up for Clark and the TNBA leadership is a Zoom meeting to update senate leaders about the organization's plans for 2021, including the upcoming TNBA Week, which is scheduled to be held in Las Vegas during the final two weeks of May.

Bowling will take place at the Gold Coast Hotel and Casino, Sunset Station and Sam's Town Hotel & Gambling Hall.

TNBA bowlers also will have the opportunity to experience USBC's premier event while in Las Vegas, the USBC Open Championships, which has a history that began in 1901.

As partners, TNBA and USBC have worked together to set aside squad times that allow competitors to experience both events in one trip. These special squads will be May 26-June 1. Interested bowlers can visit BOWL.com/OCTNBA for more information.

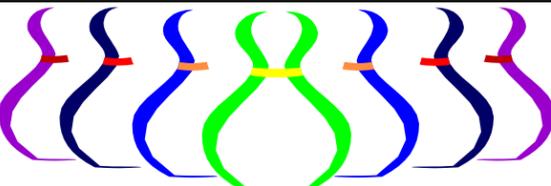
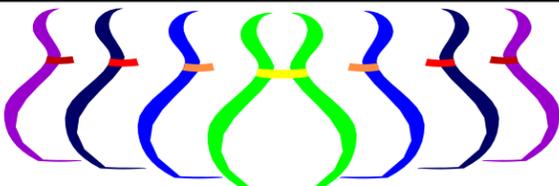
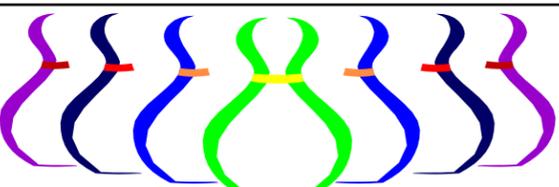
This telling of TNBA's story is part of an ongoing digital media campaign recognizing different groups, organizations and bowlers that make up the USBC membership, while also bringing attention to topics that affect the world on a larger scale.

USBC will continue to expand its diversity and inclusion topics and welcome the opportunity to showcase the people and other areas that are important to the members.

If you know someone who is a standout or inspiration in one of the areas listed above, or you'd like to suggest a topic close to you, please let us know more by sending an email to PR@bowl.com.

For more information about USBC and its programs and partnerships, visit BOWL.com/Diversity.

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