

APRIL 15, 2021

CALIFORNIA BOWLING NEWS

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2021 PBA50 TOUR SEASON KICKS OFF THIS WEEKEND

by Jill Laufer - PBA Public Relations

New York, NY – After a year-long hiatus from competition, the PBA50 Tour triumphantly returns to the lanes this weekend in Fort Myers, Fla. with the PBA50 Lightning Strikes Open, presented by Hammer. The event marks the first national PBA50 stop since August 2019. The 2020 season was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first event of the 2021 PBA50 season will feature three days of competition – qualifying and match play all streamed live on FloBowling.com, April 11-13.

145 senior bowlers are set to compete for the first title of the season, with many notable players making their PBA50 debut. Among the new competitors are PBA Hall of Famers Chris Barnes and Jason Couch along with PBA Tour champions Brad Angelo, Tom Hess and Mitch Beasley.

Also, in the field are PBA Hall of Famers Walter Ray Williams Jr. and Pete Weber who both recently announced their retirements from the PBA National Tour at the PBA World Series of Bowling XII in March.

The PBA50 Tour then moves to Clearwater, Fla. for the PBA50 Johnny

Petraglia BVL Open, presented by The Law Offices of Lucas & Magazine and Brunswick, April 18-21.

Following Clearwater, the PBA50 returns to The Villages for the Florida Blue Medicare PBA50 National Championship, presented by Spanish Springs Lanes April 25-29, then to Aberdeen, N.C. for the PBA50 Granville Financial Open May 2-May 5, and to Centreville, Va. for the PBA50 Bud Moore Classic May 8-11.

The 2021 Super Senior Classic and USBC Senior Masters, a highlight of the 2021 PBA50 season, will be held consecutively in the fall as part of the West Coast swing at Sam's Town Bowling Center in Las Vegas. The Super Senior Classic will be contested first, taking place Sept. 9-13 followed by the Senior Masters Sept. 13-19.

Shifts in timing also include the 2021 Suncoast PBA Senior U.S. Open, which will be held Aug. 29-Sept. 3 at the Suncoast Bowling Center in Las Vegas and the PBA50 Northern California Classic in Brentwood, Calif., from Sept. 5-8.

The complete PBA50 Tour schedule is available at www.pba.com/pba-tour/pba50-tour. More dates will be announced and added.

Chris Via Wins 2021 U.S. Open

Anthony Neuer picks up the 7-10 split - last one on a PBA telecast was in 1991

by Matt Cannizzaro, USBC Communications

RENO, Nev. - Chris Via of Springfield, Ohio, has continued to put himself in position to become a champion on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour, and he broke through in a major way Sunday at the 2021 U.S. Open.

The 29-year-old righthander claimed the first title of his career and a \$30,000 top prize with a dramatic 214-213 victory over Jakob Butturff of Tempe, Arizona, at the famed National Bowling Stadium.

The show aired live on FOX Sports' FS1 as part of the 2021 PBA Tour television schedule. The event is one of the five majors on the PBA Tour and was the final one of the 2021 season.



Via became the first No. 1 seed to win the prestigious title and coveted green jacket since 2015, and the title tilt came down to the final delivery of the long week.

Butturff had the opportunity to throw three strikes in his final frame to force

a roll-off, but he fell short. He left a 2 pin after delivering two strikes, the second of which featured a messenger taking out the 7 pin.

"I fully expected to be bowling in a roll-off, especially after Jakob's first two shots, but the last one was a little off and didn't strike,"

said Via, who won a team gold medal with Butturff at the 2017 International Bowling Federation World Championships. "It was more shock at first when he didn't get it, then the realization that I won, and I'm a major champion. To do it continued on page 5

Donkee Tour Founder Bert Strain Teamed Again With Her Keith Kenworthy

by Carol Mancini

Bert Strain was a wonderful friend I met in 1973 at Alhambra Valley Bowl.

I took over the General Manager job on Halloween 1973 so I really didn't get to meet bowlers face to face until the masks came off and the Blue Chips were passed out.

Bert was the first one to welcome me at the center.

Over the years we shared many trips, tournaments and tales!

In 1991 Bert and I plus nineteen other Southern California bowlers flew to Tokyo Japan.

In one week we bowled three separate tournaments in three separate cities, plus visiting Temples and The

Grand Opening of Disney World. We took with us 100 lbs of See's Candy to share with our new friends.

Her Donkee Tour Events made weekends special for hundreds of club members.

When she and Keith Kenworthy teamed up, the DONKEE name was attached to merchandise and events. A winning combo.

I would love to hear from anyone who would like to share a story or thought. Email me at CarolMancini83@icloud.com

To the Strain family – weren't we lucky to have loved her for so long... she will be forever in our hearts.

No services will be held.

In loving memory

Biruta Aldona Strain

March 12, 1925 -- March 23, 2021

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Of the special ones who meant so much
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DAVE WODKA WINS PBA AMF AIRPORT LANES OPEN ON HIS 50TH BIRTHDAY

by DDZIOMBA - BowlersJournal.com

CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. – Dave Wodka of Muskegon, Mich. defeated Matt White of Warren, Pa. by 163 pins to win the PBA AMF Airport Lanes Open in Cheektowaga, N.Y. on Sunday.

Wodka finished with a near perfect 11-1 match play record and a total of 4,956 pins for 20 games, including match play bonus pins. The title was Wodka's first in the PBA East Region since 1998 and his 23rd career PBA Regional title. Wodka, who also celebrated his 50th birthday Sunday, earned \$3,200 for his win at AMF Airport Lanes.

Next week, the senior bowlers travel to Corning, N.Y. for the PBA50 Crystal Lanes Open. The event is open to bowler age 50 and above. The next full-field tournament is April 16-18 in Towson, Md.

PBA AIRPORT LANES OPEN

AMF Airport Lanes, Cheektowaga, N.Y., Sunday

Final Match Play Standings

(after 20 games, including match play bonus pins):

- Dave Wodka, Muskegon, Mich., 11-1, 4,956, \$3,200.
 - Matt White, Warren, Pa., 6-6, 4,793, \$1,900.
 - n-Chad Mee, Hamburg, N.Y., 8-4, 4,647, \$1,600.
 - Tim Foy Jr., Seaford, Del., 6-6, 4,640, \$1,300.
 - s-Troy Lint, Blandon, Pa., 7-3-2, 4,564, \$1,100.
 - n-Andrew Herbert, Orchard Park, N.Y., 6-5-1, 4,554, \$1,000.
 - Keith Laing, Oakdale, Conn., 7-5, 4,517, \$950.
 - n-Ryan Reese, Buffalo, N.Y., 5-7, 4,515, \$900.
 - n-Kevin Bienko, Kenmore, N.Y., 4-8, 4,434, \$850.
 - John Furey, Howell, N.J., 5-6-1, 4,427, \$800.
 - Ryan Graywacz, Canastota, N.Y., 4-8, 4,353, \$780.
 - n-y-Nate Purches, Marlborough, Mass., 7-5, 4,345 \$760 (SMART).
 - s-Brad Angelo, Lockport, N.Y., 3-9, 4,343 \$740.
 - Kevin Donovan, Painted Post, N.Y., 4-8, 4,293 \$720.
 - Scott Kinkaid, Elizabethtown, Pa., 5-7, 4,292, \$710.
 - Paul Smith, Madison, Conn., 6-6, 4,187, \$700.
- s-denotes PBA50 player
y-denotes youth scholarship player
n-denotes non-member

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EDITORIAL OFFICE

11459 Imperial Hwy.

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TEMP. OFFICE NUMBER: 626-252-2985

24-HOUR FAX NUMBER:

E-mail: news@californiabowlingnews.com

Website: www.californiabowlingnews.com

CHARLES KINSTLER.....Publisher

DEAN LOPEZEditor / Typesetter

CAROL MANCINIEditor / Publisher

DOUG HOSKINSComputer Consultant

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Carol's Corner

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

I hear that some centers are open and others are in the wrong county. But, let's get ready. How's your bowling hand? Soft? Long fingernails? Calluses gone? You are NOT ready.

Go get your ball. Find an overstuffed chair or couch and add a few pillows. Stand two or 3 feet in front of the chair and swing, swing, swing the ball. After three swings release the ball into the pillows. That feel good? Start out slow and add a few tries every day.

Did you put new strings in your shoes? Keep your ball out of the heat! It won't be long before you can greet old friends and enjoy the game.

Yes I still have a few books. Send your name and address. They are free! The right approach. CarolMancini83@icloud.com

When I look back at some of the league bowlers from San Diego, Los Angeles, San Gabriel, and Orange County - a few come to mind.

One guy would takeoff his belt and strike the ball if he missed a spare.

Another showed up with an extra artificial leg over his shoulder.

An old codger in Downey always had a new joke and wouldn't shoe up until everyone heard the joke.

One girl had her husband's ashes put into his ball and she brought him every week!

How can you forget how many 300 rings you earned? I know two guys.

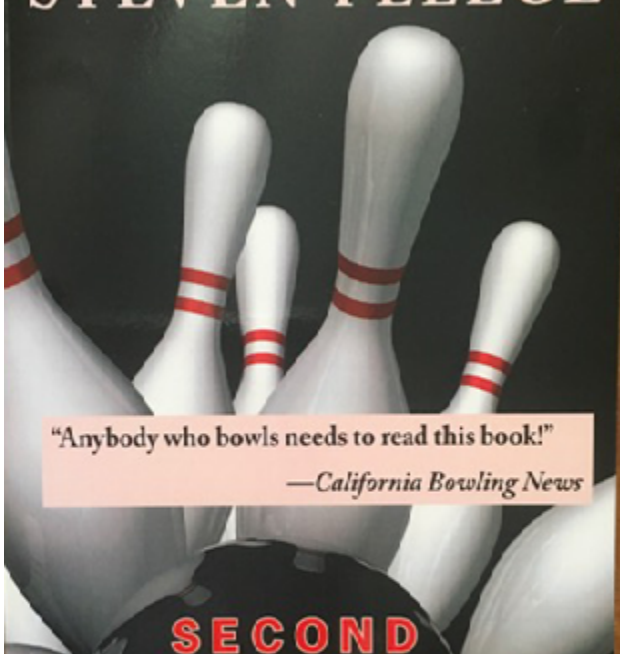
Old Jim rode the bus to the center every week for over 30 years.

One hot shot rolled in weekly with over 20 balls on three carriers. His one167 average was confusing. Maybe he was selling balls!

I saw one regular wear the same bowling shirt for 31 weeks!

Can you bowl with the ball in one hand and your cell phone in the other? Don't let me catch you!

STEVEN FELEGE



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—California Bowling News

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EMPIRE BOWL REOPENS!

by Frank Weiler

REDLANDS – I have faithfully driven by EMPIRE BOWL twice a week throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic lockdown. It was as if I was visiting a hospitalized friend every week to see how he/she was doing. Or even worse, visiting a friend's gravesite to say a prayer. I wanted to be the first to know if Bowling here would be resurrected. The first to know when bowling was back in this area.

On Monday April 5,2021 at 6:52 PM I stopped by a darkened Empire Bowl again to find a Notice on the front door:

ATTENTION BOWLERS

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE WE
ARE OPEN! OUR HOURS OF OPERATION
FOR NOW, WILL BE 11AM TO 7PM

San Bernardino County has entered the California State "Orange Tier" for tracking new COVID-19 cases and deaths which means Bowling Centers may reopen. BOWLING IS BACK!

For the next few weeks Empire Bowl will be open on a limited basis from 11AM to 7PM Wednesday through Sunday. The Center is offering Lane Rentals by RESERVATION ONLY.

Reservations may be made by phone (909-793-2525) or on the Center's Website (INFO@EMPIRE-BOWL.COM).

THANK GOD! Bowling is back. Our nightmare of life without BOWLING is over. We can bowl again. We can live again. FOR MANY BOWLING IS LIFE and life without Bowling isn't worth living! Now, life is worth living again.

ATTENTION BOWLERS

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JUNE 5-6: BOWLIUM LANES – MONTCLAIR, CA

JUNE 19-20: PHOENIX AREA, ARIZONA

JUNE 25-27: MIRA MESA LANES – SAN DIEGO, CA

JUNE 28-JULY 4: TAT SUMMER CLASSIC – LAS VEGAS, NV

JULY 9-11: MIRA MESA LANES – SAN DIEGO, CA

JULY 16-18: LAS VEGAS, NV

JULY 30-AUGUST 1: PHOENIX AREA, ARIZONA

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Feel Good Story of the Year...

Food Bank Reopens Bowling Center!

by Dave Williams

One of the favorite memories that I have of my bowling career with AMF is driving. Because I was young, unattached and perhaps a bit naive at the time, I thought nothing of throwing my belongings into the back of my '71 Mustang and heading out to yet another destination for AMF Bowling Centers as a promotion specialist.

In those early years my territory was the western United States, and most of the properties were along the Interstate 5 corridor from San Diego to Seattle. Because I was a geography major in college, I looked forward to each temporary move as an opportunity to view yet another part of the physical and cultural makeup of the greatest country the world has ever known.

One of the most gratifying trips from the standpoint of physical geography was a section of I-5 from Redding, California to Medford, Oregon. It's really hard to describe to anyone east of the Rocky Mountains just how beautiful and fulfilling each of those journeys was for me, with the incredible variance in temperature and altitude, and perhaps some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

Traveling in the summer months from the 110 degree temperatures along the high desert near Redding, the thermometer takes a 40 degree drop in the space of less than one hour as you approach the foothills of Mount Shasta, a 14,000 foot conical volcano that seems to rise out of the interstate at Weed, California (yes, there really is a town called Weed). After a brief stop at Cedar Lanes in Weed, I would often take the scenic route, if time permitted, to the next hamlet of Yreka, home of Siskiyou Lanes.

And that brings us to the topic of this week's article... Siskiyou Lanes, which is now operating as Yreka Lanes. As I was looking on the internet for additional bowling centers that had permanently closed as a result of the COVID-19 flu virus, I stumbled upon the following business write up that appeared in the Siskiyou Daily News: "Food Bank to Open Yreka Bowling Alley."

The article goes on to explain that the local food bank, which shares a space in the same building with Yreka Lanes, had purchased the building about three years ago. Laura Leach, Executive Director of the Siskiyou Community Food Bank, explains in the article that the bowling center had been leased out for three years and that the agreement had recently expired.



A temporary sign adorns the main entrance to the new Yreka Lanes



Entrance to the Food Bank is on the eastern side of the bowling center, on Kegler Lane

I contacted Yreka Lanes to see if I could get some more information and they put me in touch with Ms. Leach. Laura confirmed in a phone conversation that the bowling center tenant decided not to renew the lease because of the COVID-19 uncertainty. Rather than look upon this negatively, Leach decided to approach the Food Bank Board of Directors about the possibility of operating the bowling center as a nonprofit.

Willis Thompson, an avid bowler and President of the Board (and Laura's father!), really pushed for this to become a reality, and it happened! Under the unique arrangement, all money collected, over and above expenses, will be a donation to the Food Bank. Laura's background as a 25 year employee of Health and Human Services in Siskiyou County had a lot to do with the success of this project, as she has become an expert at policies and procedures, and writing grants. "For now, we are open for the bowling leagues, and 75% of them are senior citizen groups," stated Leach. But beginning this week, the bowling center will be available for open play customers under the 25% capacity recommended by the state of California. Laura goes on to say, "One of the first big expenses that we will need to address is new air conditioning for the summer months at a cost of \$30,000."

There are so many "feel good" aspects to this story that I can't help but wonder why this would not be the bowling story of the year... were it not for political correctness. Some of the unheard of concepts that Laura has offered to the public:

- If a family can't afford to pay for the bowling - we ask that they give what they can!
- If a family can't afford the additional cost for rental shoes - we give it to them!
- If a family can't afford the additional cost for a burger - we give it to them!

Here's another interesting twist: the former employees of the bowling center have all decided to stay on during the reopening, and all have volunteered their time! Many others in the town have committed to the efforts of the Food Bank, including Raley's Supermarket of Yreka. Leach says that every day Raley's makes a donation of "day old" goods to the Food Bank, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, that's the primary ingredient for 50 pounds of groceries once a month, to families in need.

At the present time, Mary's 10-Pin Cafe and a Pro Shop (operated by Bob Reed) are open; but the game room, billiards and alcoholic beverages are still on hold. "We hope to have everything open again real soon," says Ms. Leach. She also asks that if anyone would be interested in making a donation to the Siskiyou Community Food Bank on behalf of the bowling center effort, you can go to their website, siskiyoufoodbank.org and click on the donate button near the top left of the main page.

So, if you're driving on I-5 in the area of Siskiyou County, why not take a break and grab a bite to eat or bowl a few games at Yreka Lanes? You will be benefiting a good cause and enjoying your contribution at the same time!

(Photos compliments of Siskiyou Community Food Bank)

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U.S. Open continued from page 1

at this event, and at the Stadium, the Mecca of bowling, is a dream come true.” The final-ists were separated by one pin after seven frames and both working on spares in the eighth frame. Butturff followed with the first errant shot of his two games on the TV show, and a 3-7-9 split gave Via the opportunity to win. After a fourth consecutive single-pin spare, Via could’ve put the game out of reach with nine, spare, strike in his final frame. Instead, he left the 2-8 combination on his first offering, spared it and struck on the fill ball to force Butturff to throw three strikes for a tie.

The loss marked the third runner-up finish for Butturff at the U.S. Open, with the first two coming in 2017 and 2018, where he was the top seed by more than 550 pins. He also lost the 2018 event by a single pin, falling 207-206 to England’s Dom Barrett. Former Team USA member Rhino Page cruised to the win in 2017.

“If you keep finishing second at one of the most challenging and prestigious events, you’re obviously doing something right,” said Butturff, who also finished second in the PBA World Championship and Chameleon Championship this year, both part of the re-cent World Series of Bowling. “In these longer formats, it’s about who has the patience and stamina, as well as versatility and the ability to both strike and spare. To keep getting to that level says something, and if I can keep giving myself opportunities to win it, hope-fully I can eventually be the one winning by a pin.”

The seven-time PBA Tour champion, including the 2019 United States Bowling Con-gress Masters entered the stepladder as the second seed, hoping the different perspective, and the recent success of the No. 2 seeds at the U.S. Open, would offer a different fate. It certainly looked like that could be the case as he delivered nine strikes in his first match Sunday.

The 26-year-old left-hander was in complete control in the semifinal and rolled to a 257-203 win over 18-year-old Junior Team USA member Anthony Neuer of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

Neuer, whose father, Andy, is a PBA Tour champion, was looking to become the youngest bowler to win a major title on the PBA Tour. Though he fell short of that goal, he did add his name to the record book by becoming the fourth bowler in history, and first since 1991, to pick up the 7-10 split on a PBA telecast.

Anthony Simonsen became the PBA Tour’s youngest major champion when he won the USBC Masters in 2016. USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Norm Duke set the overall record when he won his first title in 1983 at 18 years, 345 days old.

Neuer’s path to the semifinal was unobstructed, as a pair of open frames from Cristian Azcona of Clermont, Florida, helped the young southpaw pick up his first TV win on the PBA Tour.

The four-time member of Junior Team USA, struck in six of his first eight frames to deny Azcona the ultimate 27th birthday present by a score of 236-200.

Azcona also was looking to become the first bowler from Puerto Rico to win a PBA Tour major. His win at the PBA Xtra Frame Wilmington Open in 2018 made him the first bowler from the island to claim a PBA Tour title of any kind.

The day’s opening match was a high-scoring all-urethane battle between Azcona and three-time PBA Tour champion Jason Sterner of Rochester, New York.

Azcona started with four consecutive strikes to build a 13-pin lead, and he delivered three more strikes in his final frame to lock out the 37-year-old right-hander. The final score was 258-256.

Sterner, who finished fourth in last week’s USBC Masters and was looking for his first major title, bowled a near-maximum 100 games between the two events, both at the National Bowling Stadium.

All five major winners from this season now will meet in the PBA Super Slam, which will air live on FOX on April 18.

Joining Via in that event will be Kyle Troup (PBA Players Championship), Francois Lavoie (PBA Tournament of Champions) and Tom Daugherty (Guaranteed Rate PBA World Championship) and Thomas Larsen (Masters).

The 2021 U.S. Open started with 108 competitors, all of whom bowled 24 games of qualifying across three oil patterns, before total pinfall determined the 36 bowlers who advanced to Friday morning’s Cashers’ Round on a fourth lane condition.

The final pattern, a 42-foot condition, was used throughout match play and was fea-tured again on the TV show Sunday.

Following the Cashers’ Round, 32-game pinfall totals determined the 24 players for round-robin match play, and their 56-game totals, including 30 bonus pins for each match they won, determined the five bowlers for Sunday’s stepladder.

Via entered the Cashers’ Round in 24th place and closed with games of 279, 300 and 240 to secure his spot in match play, qualifying 16th. In the rounds that followed, he moved up to 10th, then third, before a position-round win against Jakob Butturff earned him the top seed for the show.

The majority of the competitors this week earned direct entry into the event based on their on-lane performances throughout 2020, while 43 bowlers advanced to the 108-play-er field through last Sunday’s eight-game pre-tournament qualifier.

Each round of qualifying and match play at the 2021 U.S. Open was broadcast live at BowITV.com and simulcast on FloBowling.



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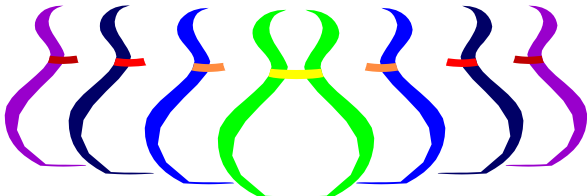
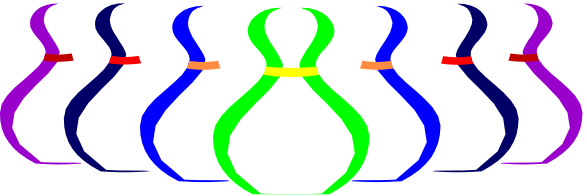
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