

AUGUST 12, 2021

# CALIFORNIA BOWLING NEWS

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## JEN HIGGINS WINS 2021 PWBA INTERNATIONAL BOWLING CAMPUS CLASSIC

ARLINGTON, Texas - Jen Higgins of Lewis Center, Ohio, averaged more than 252 in three championship-round matches Saturday to win the 2021 Professional Women's Bowling Association International Bowling Campus Classic for her first PWBA Tour title.

The 39-year-old righthander faltered just once midway through the finale against top seed Verity Crawley of England but was able to maintain her look on the way to a nine-strike 252-155 victory at the International Training and Research Center.

Higgins opened the match with five consecutive strikes, before a 4-6-7 split ended her run at perfection and a \$10,000 bonus for a 300 game in the stepladder setting. She rebounded with four more strikes to take the win and \$10,000 top prize.

"I don't have the words to describe the feeling just yet, but it's definitely something I've always dreamed of," Higgins said. "I didn't really know if it would happen, but I'm glad it did. I'm super excited. Since this is supposed to be my last stop of the season, it was nice to

go big before going home."

The 2021 International Bowling Campus Classic was the second of three national events at the PWBA Summer Classic Series. All rounds of competition at the Summer Classic Series, including a regional event, are being broadcast live at BowlTV.com.

A two-time member of Team USA and four-time member of Junior Team USA, Higgins has been a familiar face on the PWBA Tour since its relaunch in 2015 and was a regular threat in top-tier women's events in the decade prior, collecting a pair of fourth-place finishes at the United States Bowling Congress Queens in 2013 and 2014 and continued success at the U.S. Women's Open.

Her best previous finish in PWBA Tour competition was another fourth-place effort, which came early in her official rookie campaign in 2016. She finished that year as the runner-up for PWBA Rookie of the Year.

Being a regular casher on the PWBA Tour has kept Higgins motivated and able to continue competing.

In her first event this continued on page 5

WYOMING, Michigan - A moment that all bowlers practice and prepare for played out during the championship match on Wednesday at the PBA50 Spectrum Lanes Open. Parker Bohn III had the opportunity to strike out to defeat top seed, Bob Learn Jr. to win a title.

"I was able to step up in the 10th frame and throw all three shots that were more imperative than any of the other ones," the 58-year-old said. "The other ones position you to give you an opportunity, but in the 10th frame is where you have the chance to seal the deal."

Bohn became the only player to defeat Learn on the day, winning 214-192.



Parker Bohn III

Learn had gone 12-0 during match play to earn the top seed.

Prior to the 10th frame, Learn held a 10-pin lead in the 8th frame but then he

left the dreaded 2-8-10 split to give Bohn the chance to put the match away.

"I was not figuring he was going to have the unfortunate circumstances there in the ninth," Bohn said. "As a player you are sitting there on the bench, not rooting against your opponent, you just want to have an opportunity to win. At that point in time that was my opportunity to stand tall and fortunately it went my way."

After the win, Bohn shared an embrace with his mother-in-law who showed him on her phone that a room full of family members were watching and celebrating his win together back home. Bohn, who lost continued on page 5

## MATT RUSSO WINS PBA JONESBORO OPEN FOR FIRST CAREER PBA TOUR TITLE

*Defeats No. 1 seed Mykel Holliman in championship match*

by Jef Giidger

JONESBORO, Ark.— Twenty-four-year-old Matt Russo became the newest PBA Tour champion when he defeated Mykel Holliman, 225-197, in the championship match to win the PBA Jonesboro Open at Hinx Family Entertainment Center. Russo qualified in the second position for the stepladder finals and eliminated seven-time PBA Tour champion Jakob Butturff in

the semifinal match before besting Holliman.

When Russo, who would finish the title match first, came up in the ninth and 10th frames, Holliman's maximum possible score was 210. Russo spared in the ninth and struck on his first shot in the 10th, meaning he'd need count to clinch the victory. Russo struck two more times, emphatically posting a 225 for

his first PBA Tour title.

Holliman, the 2019 PBA Tour Rookie of the Year, was in third place after first-round qualifying, second after cashers qualifying and then won all eight of his matches to earn the top seed for the stepladder. His final match win, during position round, was against Russo to clinch the top seed.

That match was Russo's

only loss in match play, who lurked near the middle of the pack, albeit well inside the cut, during qualifying before winning his first seven matches to claim the second seed.

Russo's first opponent on the stepladder, Butturff, eliminated 16-year-old Eric Jones in the opening match of the stepladder finals.

Although he missed the continued on page 6

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GERMANY’S BIRGIT NOREIKS WINS  
2021 PWBA GO BOWLING CLASSIC

ARLINGTON, Texas -  
When Germany’s Birgit Noreiks won her first Professional Women’s Bowling Association Tour title in 2017, she knew there were skeptics trying to devalue the performance because it came in a doubles event.

She spent the next four years working and striving to prove her critics wrong, and she did that Thursday night with a win at the 2021 PWBA Go Bowling Classic, the first event of the PWBA Summer Classic Series.



All rounds of the Go Bowling Classic at the International Training and Research Center were broadcast live on BowlTV, and Noreiks earned \$10,000 for the victory.

“After the doubles title, I overheard people saying it didn’t mean as much because it wasn’t a singles win, so I’ve wanted to prove them wrong and show that I can win a singles event, too,” said Noreiks, who won the 2017 Professional Bowlers Association/PWBA Striking Against Breast Cancer Mixed Doubles with Jason Sterner. “I’m really happy about that.”

The 35-year-old right-hander entered the championship round as the No. 3 seed and won three matches on the way to the winner’s circle, including a 228-177 title-tilt victory over top seed Dasha Kovalova of Ukraine.



Kovalova, a 27-year-old right-hander looking for her third win in 2021, averaged more than five pins better than anyone else in the field over 21 games, but her first strike in the finale didn’t come until the sixth frame.

Noreiks was clean, but unable to double, so good count and spares from Kovalova kept the match close.

A 4-6-7-9-10 split from Kovalova in the seventh frame gave Noreiks the opportunity to pull ahead, and she crossed the finish line with four consecutive strikes, starting in eighth frame.

Kovalova was the leader Wednesday after nine games of qualifying on the event’s 43-foot oil pattern, and she turned in a 10-2 record in match play Thursday to earn the top spot in the finals by nearly 200 pins. She averaged 213.57 over 21 games and added 30 bonus pins for each win in the 12-game match-play round.

The effort marked Kovalova’s third championship-round appearance in four events this year at the ITRC, but she has struggled there under the BowlTV lights, averaging just 173 in her three stepladder games.

She had finishes of 17th, third and fifth at the ITRC during the season-opening PWBA Kickoff Classic Series and went on to win the PWBA Twin Cities Open in Minnesota in April and the PWBA Louisville Open in June as the defending champion.

Despite her success in 2021, Kovalova continues to work on her game, both mentally and physically. Regardless of her finish Thursday, she’s happy with her progress.

“I’m happy with how I’ve bowled so far this week and excited that I made it to the TV show,” said Kovalova, a four-time PWBA Tour champion. “I definitely struggled a little my last block, though. I started losing ball reaction, and I was confused on my ball changes, so that’s something I’ll need to work on. Overall, I’m pretty happy with my performance, and I’m very happy for Birgit. This title was long overdue.”

Noreiks earned her spot in the final with a 225-196 win over two-time PWBA Tour champion Jordan Richard of Maumee, Ohio.

The two were nearly even halfway through the match, before a 4-10 split from Richard in the sixth frame turned the momentum in Noreiks’ favor. The German star struck on three of her last four shots, including the first shot of her final frame, which locked up the game.

In the opening match Thursday, Noreiks started with a double to grab an early lead, while England’s Verity Crawley was slowed by two splits and a washout and struck just twice in the game. Noreiks advanced with a 204-157 victory.

Crawley, who missed the Kickoff Classic Series in January due to visa issues, quickly made her presence on the PWBA Tour known during the second swing of the season by winning the PWBA Greater Nashville Open in June for the first title of her career. She previously had four runner-up finishes.

While climbing the stepladder Thursday, Noreiks made sure to keep her attention on her own game.

“I just really tried to not watch anyone else,” said Noreiks, who averaged 207.24 on the way to the finals and posted a 7-5 record in match play. “I wanted to focus on myself and keep doing what I was doing, which was repeating shots and making my spares. I’m really happy with the outcome, of course. I felt like it was about time, and I’m relieved that it happened.”

The Go Bowling Classic is one of four events at the 2021 PWBA Summer Classic Series, which has brought players from more than a dozen countries to the ITRC. The field of 12 bowlers in match play Thursday featured competitors from nine countries.



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# Bill Rhodman, Ted Rebain, and The Paradise

by Dave Williams

This month’s issue of Bowlers Journal International contains a two page article by Dennis Bergendorf about The National Bowling Association (TNBA), and their rebound from the uncertain reported illnesses of the COVID-19 virus that have affected every bowling organization around the globe to some degree. But the association, once known as The National Negro Bowling Association, is up and running once again according to Bergendorf, with Bill Rhodman Classic Tournaments being held in Canton, Michigan, and Smyrna, Tennessee during the past couple of months.

The National Bowling Association is rich in history, as Bergendorf outlines in his article:

*“TNBA was formed in 1939 as The National Negro Bowling Association, an alternative for blacks that wanted to bowl sanctioned, well run competition. The American Bowling Congress (ABC) and Women’s International Bowling Congress (WIBC) were only open to caucasians at the time. They changed their name to TNBA in 1944 but continued the fight to fully integrate the sport of bowling.”*

Mr. Bergendorf goes on to reveal that

the mission of TNBA was accomplished in 1951, when the national governing body of ABC opened their doors to all races. It’s interesting to note that since their founding, TNBA has always been open to anyone, a fact that was brought to my attention by James Alston, National Tournament Director for TNBA, during my tenure with AMF Bowling Centers.

Mr. Alston would contact me often, perhaps at the coaxing of fellow AMF director Jack Graziano (an honorary life member of TNBA), to bid on their national tournament. It was a difficult balancing act, because AMF executives were always interested in maintaining the highest price per game in a particular market, but at the same time I realized the value of the tournament when factoring in the food and beverage aspects of the event.

It all came to a fever pitch when John Weber, son of bowling great Dick Weber and AMF’s Bowling Activities Representative for the midwest United States, was interested in hosting TNBA’s national tournament at AMF Dick Weber Lanes in St. Louis. John felt that in order to secure the event he would need to quote a price of 50 cents per game, and that was something that didn’t sit too well

with AMF’s senior officials in Westbury.

John decided to get some figures together that would highlight the potential food and beverage revenue from the event, in addition to the lineage revenue. While it was important for AMF to show the benefits of computerized scoring to increase pricing, John was able to show how it was difficult to take “price per game” to the bank. Somehow he convinced the AMF hierarchy, and we were successful in securing the tournament. Incidentally, the revenue achieved was well beyond our calculations!

“We surprise everyone with our food and beverage revenues,” states Dewann Clark, President of TNBA. “On average, we generate \$1,000,000 in revenue to a local economy per 1,000 attendees. That’s one of the highest ratios of any national tournament.” Clark, who grew up in Los Angeles and began bowling at Midtown Lanes, now resides in Las Vegas, but the national headquarters for TNBA is in Cincinnati, Ohio.

When our conversation got around to the Bill Rhodman Classic Tournaments, I mentioned some of the previous articles that I had penned about Ted Rebain, Bill Rhodman and the High Five (the most recent was earlier this year, *Another Visit With Ted Rebain*, in which I outlined Ted’s involvement in helping to break the caucasian only bowling barrier, along with his father, at Detroit’s State Fair Recreation, a 70 lane bowling center with pinboys).

In an article from the *Detroit Free Press* (February 24, 1990), Ernest Wallace of the Paradise Bowl Old Timers Club remembered Ted Rebain from State Fair Recreation. “Ted and his father were among just a few proprietors who helped open doors. They operated the big Motorbowl tournament at State Fair and invited us to join,” Wallace said.

A group of black investors, headed up by professional boxer Joe Louis, opened the Paradise Bowl in 1942, according to Wallace. “It was really a special place, and became the mecca of black bowlers and the standard by which they measured other bowling centers.” Paradise lasted until 1960, when the roof collapsed during a snowstorm. It was never rebuilt, but remained such a major part of black bowling history in Detroit, that in 1984 Wallace and several others formed the Paradise Bowl Old Timers Club, as stated in the article.

Eddie Page, another veteran bowler from Detroit, remembers Paradise as a special place as well. “It was one of the nicest bowling alleys. The basement had a locker room with showers and everything. And there was a lot of space behind the lanes so that when they had a tournament or exhibition, they could set up bleachers.”

When I asked about Mr. Alston, Clark informed me that he unfortunately passed away last year at the ripe old age of 93. James was a resident of Richardson, Texas, where I remember sending many proposals for the national TNBA tournament whenever there was an AMF center within a reasonable distance. Ted Rebain also passed away last year at the age of 90, and thankfully both gentlemen died peacefully at an old age, and not at the hands of the uncertainty surrounding reported COVID-19 illnesses.



Allen Super Market from Detroit (L-R)--George Williams, Maurice Kilgore, Lafayette Allen Jr, Lavert Griffin, **Bill Rhodman**, Clarence Williams Jr

**Did you know?** ..... That in 1951, Bill Rhodman was a member of the historical team “Allen Super Market” which became the very first all-Afro-American team to participate in the ABC national Tournament immediately after their constitution was changed to allow non-Caucasians to become members of ABC. Then in 1953 only two years later, at the ABC national tournament, Bill Rhodman led the “Allen’s Five” team to nearly top the leaders board with a 2974 team score. Rhodman also posted near-the-top with 719 and 1922 in the singles and all events respectfully as well as a 1278 doubles score. Earlier that same year, Rhodman had hung up the all-time all events record in TNBA’s National Championship Tournament in Toledo, Ohio with a 1939 and rolled a 300 game. He also posted a 689 series to capture the singles title and completed the sweep when he paired up with team mate Maurice Kilgore to win the doubles event.

Photo and Caption provided by Dewann Clark and TNBA



PWBA continued from page 1

year, the Twin Cities Open in Minnesota in April, she finished two pins shy of the cut and cash line, but she felt like things were progressively getting better each week after that.

Higgins had every intention of bowling in the majority of the events on the 2021 PWBA Tour schedule, but a broken toe in early June halted the progress she felt she was making since her season debut. She actually tripped over the suitcase she had packed for her trip to the 2021 PWBA Albany Open.

A month away from the lanes may have been disappointing, but it also may have been the best thing for her game.

“I had a month where I could hardly walk, let alone practice or work out or anything,” Higgins said. “When I came back to bowling, it was almost like I dropped all my keys and started from fresh. Then, I started worked on some new stuff. Maybe that’s what I needed - a reset button. A reset of my brain and my keys.”

While Higgins was away, Crawley found the winner’s circle for the first time in her career, following four runner-up finishes since 2017.

Crawley won the 2021 PWBA Greater Nashville Open in June and also felt like her year has been getting progressively better, especially since she missed the first three events of the season due to visa issues.

The 27-year-old right-hander backed up her claim by being the only bowler this week to make the cut in all three national events, and she used a 268-204 position-round win over Stephanie Zavala of Downey, California, to erase a 45-pin deficit and lock up the No. 1 spot for Saturday’s stepladder.

“I’m just really happy that I’ve been putting myself in position to get there, so for me, it’s not all about winning,” Crawley said. “It’s about enjoying the experience and taking away something from every opportunity. I think I’m doing a very good job of that, and I think that’s what helping me event to event.”

On her way to Saturday’s meeting with Crawley, Higgins bowled two nearly flawless matches against a pair of two-time PWBA Tour winners, Bryanna Coté of Tucson, Arizona, and Zavala, striking 16 times in 22 opportunities.

In the opening match with Coté, Higgins tossed eight strikes, including four to start her first championship-round appearance since 2016, and cruised to a 248-176 win.

Coté was making her third finals appearance in 2021.

She picked up a victory at the ITRC in January, defeating Junior Team USA member Jillian Martin of Stow, Ohio, in the title match of the ITRC Classic. The event was part of the 2021 PWBA Kickoff Classic Series, the first of the year’s three Classic Series events on the schedule.

Against Zavala, who led for nearly the entire IBC Classic, Higgins opened with three strikes and capitalized on a second-frame washout from her 25-year-old opponent, who is a top contender for this year’s PWBA Rookie of the Year Award.

Zavala managed to rally with five strikes in her next six frames, but it wasn’t enough to keep up with Higgins, who won 257-196.

“I’ve been bowling my whole life and watching it since I was a kid, and this is something I’ve always wanted,” said Higgins, a six-time Ohio Queens champion and a 2018 inductee into the Ohio USBC Women’s Bowling Association Hall of Fame. “I’ve put in the time on the lanes and in the gym, and I’ve practiced with pops, and this is something I truly knew was going to happen. I just didn’t know when. It took a while, but I finally got it.”

The 2021 PWBA Summer Classic Series brought players from more than a dozen countries to the ITRC, and Germany’s Birgit Noreiks was the first to hoist a trophy this week, winning the 2021 PWBA Go Bowling Classic on Thursday. Crawley also made that stepladder but fell to Noreiks in the opening game.

Higgins, Noreiks, Crawley, Zavala and Coté all are among the 24 players who qualified for the final event of the Summer Classic Series, the BowlTV Classic.

They will be back on the lanes at the ITRC on Monday at 11 a.m. Eastern for the first of three rounds of head-to-head matches.

The 24 players qualified for the final tournament based on their 18-game qualifying totals from the Go Bowling Classic and IBC Classic (nine games each).

Total pinfall will drop at the start of the BowlTV Clas-

sic, and the advancers will bowl 24 games of round-robin match play Monday and Tuesday to determine the five bowlers for the stepladder finals, based on total pinfall and bonus pins for each match they win.

The BowlTV Classic will conclude live on BowlTV on Tuesday at 9 p.m. Eastern.

First, though, the ITRC will welcome nearly three dozen competitors for the PWBA Dallas/Fort Worth Regional, which will take place Sunday and feature an eight-game qualifying block, with the top four players, based on total pinfall, advancing to the stepladder finals at 9 p.m. Eastern.

Bowlers with PWBA national titles, as well as those who qualified for the BowlTV Classic, are not be eligible for the regional event. Qualifying for the regional will begin at 3 p.m. EDT.

PBA50 continued from page 1

his mother in March, dedicates his win to her and hopes his victory will help propel his children to want to win this weekend in a bowling tournament as well.

To get to the championship match, no. 2 Bohn defeated no. 4 Tom Hess 244-193. The lefty had the first seven-in-a-row before a stone 9-pin caused him to drop down on the lanes in shock. Once the ball left his hand, he thought it was perfect, yet that 9-pin ended his string.

“I have let a couple wins slip through the cracks over the last couple of years but being victorious now just eliminates everything in the past,” he said.

In the first stepladder match, Hess beat John Shreve Jr. 277-201 then he defeated Eugene McCune, 224-178, in the second match.

2021 PBA50 SPECTRUM LANES OPEN  
FINAL STANDINGS:

Parker Bohn III	\$7,500
Bob Learn Jr.	\$4,000
Tom Hess	\$2,500
Eugene McCune	\$2,000
John Shreve Jr.	\$1,800

Match Scores

Match 1 – Hess def. Shreve Jr. 277-201  
Match 2 - Hess def. McCune 224-178  
Match 3 – Bohn def. Hess 244-193

Championship match – Bohn def. Learn Jr. 214-192



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# CALIFORNIA’S Best Struggle at The PWBA “GO BOWLING CLASSIC”

by Frank Weiler

ARLINGTON, TX. - The PWBA is back. The 2021 PWBA Tour season continues after a short break during the month of July. The GO BOWLING CLASSIC is the first National tournament of three being competed at the International Training and Research Center during the PWBA August swing. The International Bowling Campus Classic and the the Bowl TV Classic will follow.

The Go Bowling Classic was competed on the PWBA version of the 43 foot Shark oil pattern and on Kegel’s medium slick oil. The pattern was challenging, and scores were as low any this season. Some bowlers were heard to say they felt they were bowling on the U.S. OPEN pattern. Only qualifying leader Dasha Kovalova scored well. She averaged 219 for the nine games of qualifying which was about ten pins higher than second-place qualifier Jordan Richard. Everyone else was approximately five pins below Jordan. This type of scoring differential is unusual. The bowlers attributed the disparity in scoring to the oil pattern.

California’s best PWBA bowlers finished in 15th and 22nd place. PWBA rookie STEPHANIE ZAVALA (Downey) averaged 205 (Plus 49) for the nine games of qualifying and finished in 15th place. She was just 14 pins below the cut line. Stephanie rolled the only perfect 300 game of the Tournament and cashed for \$1,200.

PWBA veteran MISSY PARKIN (Laguna Hills) finished 22nd averaging 203 (Plus 29) and cashed for \$1,150. Her high game was 256.

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## Carol's Corner

by Carol Mancini  
E-mail: [CarolMancini83@icloud.com](mailto:CarolMancini83@icloud.com)

As I watched the Olympics this week. I keep wondering, why isn't bowling an Olympic sport?? So thats my question for this week. Should Bowling be an Olympic Sport? Send in your thoughts to [News@californiabowlingnews.com](mailto:News@californiabowlingnews.com).



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**PBA** continued from page 1  
cut to cashers qualifying, EJ Tackett earned enough points with his 52nd-place finish to retain the lead in the PBA Summer Tour points race with two events left to play. After finishing 13th in Jonesboro, Anthony Simonsen is now just 30 points back of Tackett. The 10 best players on the PBA Summer Tour will receive a portion of the \$40,000 bonus prize fund, with the top performer earning \$20,000.

The PBA Summer Tour resumes Saturday with qualifying for the PBA Bowlerstore.com Open Presented by Moxy’s Xtra Pair in Coldwater, Ohio.

PBA JONESBORO OPEN FINAL STANDINGS  
Hijinx Family Entertainment Center – Jonesboro, Ark.

Matt Russo  
Mykel Holliman  
Jakob Butturff  
Eric Jones

**MATCH SCORES**  
Match 1 – No. 3 Butturff def. No. 4 Jones, 216-178  
Match 2 – No. 2 Russo def. No. 3 Butturff, 234-207  
Match 3 – No. 2 Russo def. No. 1 Holliman, 225-197



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