

# BIIL OWEILL WIIIS SEASON OPEENING MAJOR IN WICHITA 

Despite a chaotic and do this again." start to the season for After finishing third Bill O'Neill, in which in the 2023 Players he missed the practice Championship near session due to weather- his hometown in eastrelated travel issues, he ern Pennsylvania, the earned his third career major title with a PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers victory.
O'Neill defeated collegiate star Ryan Barnes, the son of Hall of Famers Chris and Lynda, then top-seeded Tom Smallwood to win his third career major championship, 14th career PBA Tour title and \$100,000.
"It still hasn't sunk in yet," O'Neill said. "It's just an incredible feeling to win the biggest prize in the game. You can't duplicate it, you know? I'm so thankful that I Barnes rolled the could be in this position front-eight strikes in his

## RAY GAUNT It. Is

 "Bowler of The Week"by Frank Weiler
REDLANDS - RAY GAUNT Jr. is "Bowler of The Week" and a strong candidate for "Bowler of The Year". What does it take to be "Bowler of The Week" and why has RAY been selected "Bowler of The Week"?
A bowler is selected "Bowler of The Week" based on his/her contributions to our sport and the rolling of a significant bowling score.

Why is RAY GAUNT Jr. this week "Bowler of
 The Week"? First of all he is a Team Player. He is a positive influence on everyone around him. He

opening match against In his second match, former U.S. Open cham- Barnes drew a familiar pion, Chris Via. The foe in Nate Stubler. The 21 -year-old won, 267- sophomore left-hander 233.

Ambrose University, one of Wichita State's fiercest rivals over the past few seasons.
Stubler fired the first five strikes but splits in the sixth and ninth frames allowed Barnes back into the match.

Stubler struck on his first shot in the 10th, benefiting from an electric messenger, but wrapped a 7 -pin on the second. Just like in the 2021 and 2023 Intercollegiate Team Championships, the Shocker got the best of the Fighting Bee.
In the semifinals, transition hit Barnes like the frigid weather that froze the central United States. He missed a $10-$ pin to start the match, then split and couldn't figure out how to carry the 10-pin.

By the time Barnes solved the puzzle, O'Neill had built an insurmountable lead. The devout crowd sent Barnes off with a standing ovation.

O'Neill's semifinal win set up a rematch with Smallwood, who got the best of O'Neill in the position round on Saturday. Additionally, when Smallwood made his iconic debut in the 2009 PBA World Championship, he defeated O'Neill in his opening match.
Neither player was able to replicate the torrid scoring pace of qualifying and match play. A pocket $7-10$ in the third frame left Smallwood little room for error, though O'Neill opened the door for him with a split in the seventh frame.
continued on page 4

##  <br> A new U15 Mived division and expanded regional qualifier season highlight the 2024 PBA JI: schedule

 by Nolan HughesWith Gianna Brandolino, Kayla Starr, Dmitri Richardson and Ernesto Reynoso advancing to the PBA Jr. National Championship Finals, airing Saturday, March 23 at 7:30 p.m. Eastern on FS1, attention turns towards the 2024 season.

During the upcoming 2024 PBA Jr. season, there will be additional PBA Jr. regional qualifiers, more qualifying finalists and a new U15
continued on page 2 Mixed division.


In 2024, all roads now nament will be a regional pionship lead to the PBA Jr. finals. qualifier for the 2024

Two regional qualifiers continued on page 3

THREE EIECTED TO 2024 USBC HALL OF FAME IN SUPERIOR Performance category

ARLINGTON, Texas - Missy Parkin of San Clemente, California, Tommy Jones of Simpsonville, South Carolina, and Sean Rash of Montgomery, Illinois, have been elected to the United States Bowling Congress Hall of Fame and are the final additions to an eight-person induction class in 2024.

Parkin, Jones and Rash were elected in the Superior Performance category and join Debbie Kuhn of Abingdon, Maryland, Jodi Woessner of Oregon, Ohio, and Brian Waliczek of Frankenmuth, Michigan, in the Outstanding USBC Performance category, Roy Buckley of Columbus, Ohio, in the Veterans category and Darlene Baker of Mahomet, Illinois, in the Meritorious Service category. Those five were elected by the USBC Hall of Fame Committee in November

The induction ceremony will take place April 24 during the 2024 USBC Convention in Las Vegas.

Parkin, Jones and Rash were on the ballot featuring one woman and five men voted on by a national panel of USBC Hall of Fame members, veteran bowling writers and USBC Board and Hall of Fame Committee members. Each gained the required $70 \%$ of the votes needed for election either through the results from the national ballot or from the USBC Hall of Fame Committee. Jones and Rash earned induction in their first year on the ballot.

Parkin, a 42-year-old right-hander, has enjoyed a decorated youth, college, international (Team USA) and professional career.

Her most memorable professional win came when she collected the title at the 2011 USBC Queens in Syracuse, New York. That win was one of seven top-10 finishes Parkin owns in the event. She also has finished in the top 10 six times at the U.S. Women's Open and once at the USBC Masters (tied for ninth in 2012).

In addition to those professional accolades, Parkin has enjoyed success at the USBC Women's Championships. She was part of the team that won the Classic Team title at the 2003 event in Reno, Nevada. Parkin contributed 645 to the winming team total of 3,220 .

Parkin is a 13 -time Team USA and four-time Junior Team USA member and has earned more than 40 medals during international competition, including 23 gold medals.

She was a collegiate standout at California State-Fullerton where she was a two-time National Collegiate Bowling Coaches Association first-team All-American (2001-2002 and 2002-2003 seasons) and NCBCA Most Valuable Player for the 2002-2003 season.

In 2003, Parkin was the Intercollegiate Team Championships Most Valuable Player and was named to the All-Tournament Team in the men's division (California State-Fullerton did not have a women's team at the time). Parkin was selected as the Bowling Writers Association of America (now IBMA) 2003 Female Collegiate Player of the Year.

Parkin made headlines on the youth bowling scene with a win at the inaugural Junior Gold Championships in 1998 and was the recipient of the prestigious AIberta E. Crows Star of Tomorrow award in 2001

Jones, a 45-year-old right-hander, has enjoyed a storied career on both the Professional Bowlers Association Tour and as a member of Team USA.

He's accumulated 20 PBA Tour titles (tied for 13th all-time), which includes a pair of major championships. Jones' first win on the PBA Tour came at the 2004 Japan Cup in Tokyo, and his 20th win came at the 2020 PBA Hall of Fame Classic in Arlington, Texas, where he shot 300 on TV on the same weekend he was inducted into the PBA Hall of Fame.

Jones earned his first major championship at the 2006 U.S. Open in North Brunswick, New Jersey, and followed that up a year later with a major win at the PBA Tournament of Champions in Uncasville, Connecticut.

He also has left his mark as an 11-time member of Team USA where he won more than 25 medals during international competition, including 10 gold medals.

Jones hasn't limited his success to just professional and international competition. He brought home an Eagle at the 1999 USBC Open Championships in Syracuse, New York, when he won Regular All-Events with a total of 2,158.

He is one of five PBA players to have been named PBA Rookie of the Year (2001-2002 season) and PBA Player of the Year (2005-2006 season) during their careers. In 2009, the PBA ranked its 50 greatest players of all-time, and Jones checked in at No. 30 on the list.

Like Jones, Rash has made his mark on the PBA Tour and during international competition as a nine-time Team USA and three-time Junior Team USA member as well as earning an Eagle at the USBC Open Championships.

Rash, a 41-year-old right-hander, boasts 17 PBA Tour titles including two major wins. He collected his first PBA win at the 2006 West Virginia Championship in Parkersburg and notched his 17th at the 2021 PBA Chesapeake (Virginia) Open.

His first major championship was a memorable one as it came at the 2007 USBC Masters at Miller Park in Milwaukee (home of baseball's Milwaukee Brewers). His other major championship came at the 2012 PBA Tournament of Champions in Las Vegas.

Rash was PBA Player of the Year for the 2011-2012 season and won both the PBA High Average and Points Leader awards that season.

During his time with Team USA and Junior Team USA, Rash collected 19 medald, including 14 gold.

Rash also claimed an Eagle at the 2003 USBC Open Championships in Knoxville, Tennessee, when he paired with Derek Sap to win Regular Doubles with a then-record total of 1,540 . That win is one of 11 top-10 finishes for Rash at the Open Championships.

Collegiate and youth-level success are included in Rash's bio as well. He was a member of the winning Wichita State University team at the 2003 Intercollegiate Team Championships and was a two-time member of the NCBCA AllAmerican First Team.

As a youth, he won the 2002 Junior Gold Championships in Winter Haven/ Lakeland, Florida, and was named the Chuck Hall Star of Tomorrow in 2001.

Rash won the 2012 ESPY Award for Best Bowler and was the first player to roll multiple 300 games on TV during PBA competition (2014 and 2015).

In addition to Jones and Rash, the men's national ballot included Bryan Eoebel of Shawnee, Kansas, Wee Malott of Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Mike Scroggins of Amarillo, Texas. Parkin was the only woman on this year's national ballot.

Through 2023, there are 452 members of the USBC Hall of Fame - 230 in Superior Performance, 126 in Meritorious Service, 54 in Veterans, 22 in Pioneer and 20 in Outstanding USBC Performance. The USBC Hall of Fame was created in 2005 by merging the former American Bowling Congress and Women's International Bowling Congress Halls of Fame.

Visit BOWL.com/HallofFame for more information on the USBC Hall of Fame.

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## Gaunt coniturued from page 1

is particularly supportive of his bowling teammates looking for ways to help them and always encouraging them. RAY is also a Bowling Coach who currently is coaching several dozen bowlers for free! Ray believes in giving back to the sport of Bowling. He loves the sport of Bowling and competing. He competes in several leagues and loves competing in local tournaments and USBC tournaments.

Then there is Ray's Sense of Humor. Locally he is a legendary comic. He has a natural talent for making people laugh. He is willing to make himself the brunt of his own jokes to make people happy. That's the whole point of Ray's humor: Making People Happy. It's as simple as that, Ray Gaunt is a good guy who is all
about uplifting everyone around him and making our "Bowling World" a better place to be and compete. Thank You for that Mr. Ray Gaunt Jr.

Second, RAY is lighting up the scoreboard in reveral leagues this season including carrying the high average in the Senior Laughlin League (227). He has also bowled several 279 games this season and regularly is bowling 700s in several leagues. His 731 series in the Senior Laughlin League led the league up until just a few weeks ago.

Congratulations to RAY GAUNT Jr. for his great bowling and high scoring. He is another example of why "CALIFORNIA BOWLERS ARE THE BEST BOWLERS IN THE WORLD".

## PBA JR

continued from page 1
will be held in the East, Midwest/Central and Southwest regions, and three will be held in the South and West regions.
The U18 Boys, U18 Girls and U15 Mixed division champions of each regional qualifier will advance to the 2024 PBA Jr. National Championship, which wil be held in early 2025

The first event of the 2024 season will be held March 8-10 in Sacramento, Calif.

PBA Jr. players can compete in as many regional qualifiers as they choose. If a player earns a spot in the PBA Jr. finals, they can still compete for titles and SMART money in subsequent 2024 regional qualifiers.

PBA Jr. tournaments are scratch and open to all bowlers under the age of 18 (as of Dec. 31, 2023) though members receive a $\$ 50$ discount on entry fees.

The U18 Boys and U18 Girls championship matches will be televised with the winner receiving \$10,000 in SMART funds. The U15 Mixed champion will receive $\$ 5,000$ in SMART funds, though the match wil not be televised.

Each 2024 PBA Jr. regional qualifier will feature the same tournament format

All players will bowl three five-game qualifying rounds on the O'Neill, McEwan and Tackett oil pat terns, respectively. The top 12 players will advance o a single-game elimination bracket, with the top four players receiving a one-round bye.

The champion of each division will qualify for the 2024 PBA Jr. National Championship, which will be held in early 2025

In each regional qualifier, \$2,000 in SMART funds will be added to the prize fund. All PBA Jr. regiona qualifiers will now award Tier 1 points for the 2024 PBA Jr. Jim Welch Memorial Scholarship

More information on the 2024 PBA Jr. program is available here.

For questions related to the PBA Jr. program, please reach out to PR@PBA.com.

2024 PBA JR. REGIONAL QUALIFIER SCHEDULE
PBA Jr. West Regional Qualifier
Bowlero North Sacramento | Sacramento, Calif. March 8-10

PBA Jr. South Regional Qualifier Bowlero Altamonte | Altamonte Springs, Fla. April 12-14

PBA Jr. South Regional Qualifier Bowl America Southwest | Midlothian, Va. May 3-5

PBA Jr. East Regional Qualifier Bowlero North Brunswick | North Brunswick, N.J. May 24-26

PBA Jr. Midwest/Central Regional Qualifier Sun Valley Lanes and Games | Lincoln, Neb. June 12-14

PBA Jr. Southwest Regional Qualifier Bowlero Thousand Oaks | San Antonio, Texas June 28-30

PBA Jr. South Regional Qualifier Myrtle Beach Bowl | Myrtle Beach, S.C. Sept. 6-8

PBA Jr. Midwest/Central Regional Qualifier Bowlero Vernon Hills | Vernon Hills, III. Sept. 20-22

PBA Jr. Southwest Regional Qualifier Bowlero Northrock | Wichita, Kan.
Oct. 4-6
PBA Jr. West Regional Qualifier
Bowlero Gilbert | Gilbert, Ariz.
Oct. 18-20
PBA Jr. West Regional Qualifier
Bowling center TBD
Nov. 15-17

PBA Jr. East Regional Qualifier
East Providence Lanes | Rumford, R.I.
Dec. 6-8



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PBA Players Championship continued from page 1
Smallwood, seeking a third career major title himself, failed to seize the opportunity. He missed a spare in the eighth and threw an errant shot in the ninth, handing the title to O'Neill.
"I haven't really won many matches on TV where I didn't have a good ball reaction," O'Neill said. "I got kind of lucky there that Tom bowled the game he did. I didn't think in a million years he'd bowl a 170 game with his ball reaction."

The 2024 season continues with the U.S. Open presented by GoBowling on Jan. 27 in Indianapolis.

Championship Round Scores
No. 4 Ryan Barnes def. No. 5 Chris Via, 267-223
No. 4 Ryan Barnes def. No. 3 Nate Stubler, 224-220
No. 2 Bill O'Neill def. No. 4 Ryan Barnes, 215-205
No. 2 Bill O'Neill def. No. 1 Tom Smallwood, 209-178

## Final Standings

1. Bill O'Neill, $\$ 100,000$
2. Tom Smallwood, $\$ 55,000$
3. Ryan Barnes, $\$ 35,000$
4. Nate Stubler, \$30,000
5. Chris Via, $\$ 25,000$

More information on the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers is available here.


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# Cortez Conquers The PBA 

by Dave Williams
A few years ago I made a tongue in cheek comment about how Cortez Schenck might possibly follow in the footsteps of his namesake, Hernando Cortez, and one day conquer the PBA Tour and make Phoenix a mecca for 21st century bowlers.

The reality of that statement came one step closer in 2023, as Schenck led all rookies on the PBA Tour in points, earnings and average, and was appropriately named the Rookie of the Year. Cortez received $55.3 \%$ of the votes from PBA members to easily outdistance Andrew Hall, a distant second in the voting with $16.1 \%$ of the vote
"I'm super honored and happy to win the award," said Schenck in an article by Nolan Hughes of the PBA staff. "I have high respect for a lot of the rookies out there this year. There were a lot of really good bowlers that l've bowled against throughout the years. I know it was not easy for me, so I can imagine it was a mental grind for a lot of us."

My first introduction to Cortez was at Steve Mackie's New Mexico Open bowling tournament, where he added the 18th annual event to his list of tournament conquests with a $\$ 12,000$ victory at Ten Pins and More in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. I boldly predicted at the time that Schenck would one day be a star on the PBA Tour.

I compared Cortez to Dave Husted, the PBA Hall of Fame kegler from Milwaukie, Oregon, not so much for his style, but for his accomplishments. My comparisons have sometimes sparked criticism. In the case of Husted, I was not comparing Dave's physical style to the 24 year old Schenck, although they are somewhat similar, but more to his incredible amateur record at such an early age Here's a short excerpt from the article I wrote in September of 2022 ("Will Cortez Conquer the PBA?"):

When I first met Dave Husted at AMF's Cascade Lanes in Portland, Oregon, he was an 18 year old rookie on the tour. I headed out of the office and was on my way to do some outside sales canvassing when I heard the crack of the pins by Husted's bowling ball. I wandered over to the lanes where he was practicing and introduced myself. The mere crack of the pins and flawless approach was enough for me to think to myself that this was a Hall of Fame bowler in the making.

In much the same way, I was attracted to Schenck's polished approach during last year's New Mexico Open. I could see that there was something different about this young man. There was never a mistake in his approach. It was perfection. As Dana Miller-Mackie, herself a Hall of Fame member in multiple organizations, said regarding Schenck's performance in this year's event, "Cortez has such a good release. Great roll. Not too much forward and not too much side."

As it turns out, Schenck was quite the accomplished bowler before winning the $\$ 12,000$ first place prize at Mackie's New Mexico Open. As a youth, Cortez won a record 99 Junior Bowlers Tour (JBT) titles across the southwestern United States. He also won 9 gold medals in six years as a member of the Junior Team USA from 2016 to 2021. His young career has been dutifully captured on film by Ashley Nicole Dunn. Here's a match between Schenck (age 13) and Jakob Butturff (age 18) from the 2012 JBT Forest Lanes Championship in Lake Forest, California:

## https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miMDeVmUVSA

Hughes notes that in his final four tournaments on the PBA Tour in 2023, Schenck notched three top- 25 finishes, including a season-high finish of 10th in the Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship with partner Michael Fitzgerald. In PBA regional competition, Schenck won his first two events in 2022, and finished runner-up in the next two, according to Hughes. He went on to earn the western region's Rookie of the Year title as well.


BOWLING ROYALTY AT NEW MEXICO OPEN -- (I-r) Cortez Schenck, Dana Miller-Mackie and Mike Miller (2022)

It's amazing how time has a way of creeping up on you. It's somewhat hard to believe that there have been 57 Rookie of the Year awards doled out since 1964, when left-hander Jerry McCoy of Fort Worth was the first recipient. I wonder why there was no award given in the first five years of the PBA's infancy? My guess is that the organization was more of a club in those early years, before the popularity of shows such as Championship Bowling encouraged many youngsters to consider bowling as a profession.

What an amazing list of bowlers are represented in the Rookie of the Year posting at pba.com. There's Jim Godman from Hayward, Calif., in 1965; Mike Durbin from Burbank, Calif., in 1967; Larry Lichstein from Windsor Locks, Conn., in 1969; Mike Aulby from Indianapolis, Ind., in 1979; Pete Weber from Florissant, Mo., in 1980; and Marc McDowell from Madison, Wis., in 1986.

I wonder if this means that the PBA will finally be addressing all of those missing files from the former website? Here's a few more rookies from the more modern era: Tommy Jones from Simponville, S.C., in 2002; Bill O'Neill from Langhorne, Pa., in 2006; Jason Belmonte from Orange, N.S.W., Australia, in 2009; E.J. Tackett from Huntington, Ind., in 2013; and Francois Lavoie from Quebec City, Que., in 2016.

Check out the whole list for yourself at the PBA website, because as science fiction writer and futurist Robert A. Heinlein once so eloquently stated, "A generation which ignores history has no past - and no future."

BOWLING ROYALTY photo provided by Rich Coffel


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# Brínnswick: CNMETKATEDNAE Cal Bow Banls four Wins To lead Round3 

DOWNEY - The Brunswick Invitational took to the lanes for the fourth week of the 3rd round pattern which has been allowing some numbers despite the 50' length. Halfway through the round, the bowlers were hoping the look from week two was back after week three played a bit different for a lot of players.

In the "A" match, Cal Bowl (Leonard Ruiz Jr.) was looking to keep the momentum going facing Bowlium (Billy Myers Jr.) who took a 4-1 result last week to stay in the top matchup. Bowlium took a close first game 764-742 but it was all Cal Bowl from there as they took games two, three and totals for the $4-1$ win. James Bael led Cal Bowl with a 606 set while Ramiro Garcia was high for Bowlium with a 564 series. Cal Bowl moves to 18-2 and stays in the "A" match again next week.

The "B" match featured Forever Hope Foundation (Vernon Adams) coming off a sweep and climbing up to face US Foods (Gabriel Martinez) who was looking to bounce back after a tough week three. US Foods came out strong to take game one, but it was all Forever Hope Foundation from there as they struck to a big 4-1 win. Eric Williams Jr. was huge for Forever Hope Foundation posting a nice 716 set while Gabriel Martinez paced US Foods with a solid 629 series. Forever Hope Foundation moves up to the "A" match next week taking on Cal Bowl.

Forest Lanes (Jon Diso) took on DV8 (David Cogswell) with Forest sitting at 9-6 and DV8 the high of the three 8-7 teams. DV8 took the first game by 156 pins and banked the second game before Forest Lanes found their groove to salvage one game. Jon Diso was high for Forest Lanes with a 652 set while Daniel Hong paced DV8 with a big 691 series.

Professional Approach Oak Tree (John Struckman) faced Westminster Lanes (Jonathan Gale) with the two teams both sit-
by David Yamauchi
ting at 8-7 for the round. Pro Approach Oak Tree took the bookend games and totals for a 4-1 win over Westminster Lanes.

Del Rio Lanes (Jonathan Huezo) took on Threadworks (Eric Snow) who was looking to bounce back after a rough draw on week three. Threadworks took the bookend games, dropping only a close second game, for the 4-1 win. Eric Snow was again tough for Threadworks with a consistent 626 set while Marquan Rivers led Del Rio Lanes with a 604 series.

Family Ties (Mikey Villarreal) matched up with Junior Amateur Tour (Kevin Valmonte) in a rematch of week two's action. This time it was Junior Amateur Tour's match as they took the 5-0 sweep over Family Ties. Steve Gurrieri smoked his man for 597 to lead Family Ties while Kevin Valmonte was huge for Junior Amateur Tour with a solid 707 set.

Touchstone Homes (Christian Eichelkraut), Pro Approach Del Rio (Eric Daniels), iColor Printing (Javier Hernandez) and Pro Approach Keystone Lanes (William Morris) rounded out the night's action. Pro Approach Del Rio took a 4-1 win over Touchstone Homes led by June Travis' 583 set while Touchstone Homes was paced by Terry Hatley's 610. iColor Printing came out with a 40-pin game one win and it was enough to hold on for totals and a 3-2 win. Augie Labrado Jr. led iColor Printing with a 570 series while Darrion Tipton was high for Pro Approach Keystone with a 540 set.

The Financial Advisor's pot went to Daniel Hong (268) for \$160 with 2nd to Jeff Carr (267) for \$70. Sidepots went to Gabriel Martinez (237) and Daniel Hong (268) for $\$ 40$ each with 2nd to Kasey Uyesugi (225) and Eric Williams Jr. (258) for $\$ 20$ each. SuperPot went to Eric Williams Jr. (260) for $\$ 120$ with 2nd to David Silva (241) for $\$ 60$.

## TOP 10 OVERALL POINTS

Bowlium \$\$.
61 US Foods.
.52
Forever Hope Foundation 56 Junior Amateur Tour . . 51.5
Cal Bowl . . . . . . . . . . . . 53.5 Family Ties \$ . . . . . . . . . 51
DV8.................... 53 Forest Lanes.......... 43
ThreadWorks. . . . . . . . . 53 Del Rio Lanes . . . . . . . . 38

## TOP 10 ROUND 3 WEEK 4

Cal Bowl $\qquad$ 18 US Foods............. 11
Forever Hope Foundation 15 Junior Amateur Tour .. 10
Bowlium \$ . .......... 14 Forest Lanes......... . 10
DV8.................... 12 ThreadWorks.......... 10
ProApproach Oak Tree 12 Westminster Lanes. . . . 9

## TOP 10 THIS WEEK

716 Eric Williams Jr. 663 Jeff Carr 707 Kevin Valmonte 652 Jon Diso 691 Daniel Hong 677 David Silva
673 Frank Ortega 629 Gabriel Martinez 626 Eric Snow 623 Kaven Massey

## SUPER SWEEPER POT

Sponsored by Dean Sanderson of
Transamerica Financial Advisors Inc.
Daniel Hong 268 \$160 • 2nd Jeff Carr 267 \$70


Eric Williams Jr. was the first to go Clean-30 and is guaranteed half the pot for this round.

Come on out and watch Southern California's Richest League as they continue to conquer the 50' third round on Monday at 8:00!

