

CALIFORNIA BOWLING NEWS

FEBRUARY 9, 2023

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EJ TACKETT WINS 2023 U.S. OPEN

Tackett becomes ninth player in PBA history to win the Triple Crown

by Nolan Hughes

After 48 games and nine frames, the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! title came down to a single frame.

EJ Tackett needed a strike and eight pins to win the title he so desperately coveted. In perhaps the biggest moment of his bowling career, he delivered a pair of strikes to claim the green jacket and \$100,000 top prize.

Tackett defeated Kyle Troup in the title match 221-208, for his 17th career PBA Tour title and third career major. After winning the 2016 World Championship and 2017 Tournament of Champions, the U.S. Open title made Tackett the ninth player in PBA history to win the Triple Crown.

More than that, Tackett, at long last, picked

up a PBA Tour victory in his home state of Indiana.

"This is just absolutely incredible," Tackett said. "I have so many people here supporting me. What this tournament means is a whole mountain of things. The Triple Crown. The U.S. Open. Winning here at Woodland. Winning in the state of Indiana. Getting my flag down there in the Beer Thirty bar along with everyone else. Another major. The list just compiles what this tournament means."

The match was tied through nine frames as Troup stepped up to finish the match. Troup, looking to win his 10th career PBA Tour title and achieve Hall of Fame eligibility, struck on his first



shot in the 10th.

But on the second shot, he missed left and left the big-four on the second shot.

"It's probably the only frame I broke my pro-

cess mentally," Troup said. "I should have stepped off. I don't know why I didn't but that's something I'll never get back, so I've just got to learn from that."

After losing in last last year's U.S. Open title match, Tackett had an opportunity to complete the fairytale ending.

"I never looked at the score to know exactly what I needed," Tackett said. "I felt like I just needed to keep on my process and throw the best shot that I can."

"I knew if I got up there and threw a really good shot like I had been, the tournament would be mine."

He said he thought he left a wrap-10 on the first shot, but the pin fell late. He needed eight pins on the second shot to claim the title, but before the ball reached the pins, Tackett had already begun his celebration.

The 30-year-old unleashed a flurry of Tiger

Woods-esque fist pumps as he hurried to where his parents, wife and brother waited with tears of joy. In a moment reminiscent of his 2016 World Championship, Tackett hugged his father, who he said has been his coach his entire life.

"We don't really need to share words," Tackett said. "We both know what it means."

Troup, who advanced to this afternoon's championship round after defeating Justin Knowles in the [No. 5-9 seed step-ladder on Saturday afternoon](#).

In the semifinal, Troup took down Tomas Kayhkö, who was making his television debut on the PBA Tour. Kayhkö made excellent shots continued on page 6

The U.S. Open - A Tournament Of Ordinary Foreigners?

by Dave Williams



It was almost 20 years ago to the day that the popular movie, *A League of Ordinary Gentlemen*, came into prominence among those that follow professional bowling. The flick featured the new ownership of the PBA, three retired executives from the high tech world that decided \$5 million for an entire pro sports organization was a bargain. They positioned former Nike executive, Steve Miller, to transform the PBA and make recog-

nizable stars of the top players.

Fast forward twenty years and I'm wondering if an appropriate title for a sequel at the 2023 U.S. Open might be: *A Tournament of Ordinary Foreigners?* The cast of pro bowlers featured in the original movie from twenty years ago are gone from active participation on the regular tour, with the exception of Chris Barnes. There's no more Wayne Webb, Walter Ray Williams Jr., or Pete Weber on

the regular tour for "the young guys."

In their place a number of foreign players have infiltrated the 2023 U.S. Open finals. Among the top 24 bowlers at the tournament this year you'll find names like Thomas Larsen (Denmark), Tomas Kayhko (Finland), Jesper Svensson (Sweden), Richard Teece (England), Francois Lavoie (formerly from Canada, but now listing Kansas as his home), and Stu Williams (formerly from England,

but now listing Texas as a current residence).

There's a 25% chance that at least one of these six players will advance to the live televised finals on FOX, Sunday, February 5, at 2:00 pm eastern, and an outside chance that we will have an entire field of foreign players for the finals of the U.S. Open. Who says it's not a tournament of ordinary foreigners?

Observations

It was almost 50 years ago that this writer ap- continued on page 4



Gang of Eight, Plus One -- Top nine seeds from the U.S. Open (l-r), E.J. Tackett, Tomas Kayhko, Anthony Simonsen, Richard Teece, Kyle Troup, Thomas Larsen, Marshall Kent, Frank Snodgrass and Justin Knowles. Photo provided by PBA, LLC.



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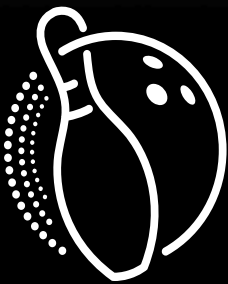
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TIM FRANK Leads The Monday Doubles League

by Frank Weiler

REDLANDS – With the new Kegel Lane Machine cleaning the backends like never before, Empire Bowl scores are down across the board.

Even JASON BELMONTE of PBA fame would probably struggle to meet his expectations bowling here. Most of our “league rats” and social bowlers are feeling the pinch. Few have been free of low scores and frustration.

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5.	Mike Rick	194.0	

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HIGH SERIES so far:

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Tim Frank

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FINALS 2:30 PM

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


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Ordinary Foreigners continued from page 1

peared in his first (and only) U.S. Open. I had won the right to represent California by winning the BPAA sponsored "Win-A-Spot" that was contested at L & L Castle Lanes in South San Francisco (just up the road from the famous Cow Palace), and Downtown Bowl, a 2-story bowling emporium in the heart of San Francisco. I lapped the field at the familiar Castle Lanes drives for the first five games, and then held on to win in the final five games at Downtown Bowl, throwing a Brooklyn strike in the 10th frame of the final game to beat out veteran Ed Bourdase.

There was no cash prize included in the “Win-A-Spot.” Instead, the prize was an all-expense paid trip to the U.S. Open at Jeanie Hulsey’s Forum Bowl in Grand Prairie, Texas. My hotel was located near Lion Country Safari, about 7 miles away. I remember the hotel provided a free shuttle to and from the lanes in a vehicle with zebra stripes. My fellow competitors were so envious of that free shuttle!

In the 1975 U.S. Open there were a total of 56 qualifying games rolled, instead of the current 48 game format. After the qualifying rounds of 24 games (8 each day, Monday-Wednesday), the field was cut to the top 80 bowlers, who came back on Thursday morning for an additional 8 games. Then the normal match play competition began, with 8 games Thursday evening, another 8 games Friday morning and the final 8 game block on Friday night. The top five would advance to Saturdays TV finals, where Steve Neff was the ultimate winner with a final 279-217 victory over Paul Colwell.

Those additional 8 games after the qualifying rounds were especially hard for me to swallow, as I was in 32nd place after 24 games, but didn't even cash (80 places). I have written about this before in an article titled, "*Billy Hardwick Makes It Right In Grand Prairie.*" A combination of the pressure, change in oiling pattern, and all of the admonishments from Harry "Goose" Golden finally caught up with me. However, it was a tremendous experience, and one that I vividly remember to this day.

Speaking of oiling patterns, I could not help but notice the frustration of most players while watching the qualifying rounds on bowltv.com. Virtually ALL of the right-handed players that were having any success at all were literally throwing the ball out over the top of the lefthand gutter. Is this really bowling? Most lefties (one or two handed deliveries) were playing straight down and in shots near the second arrow.

Another obvious change that I noticed from 1975 was the crowd. While the cameras never turned to show the audience during the qualifying rounds, I could only hear a couple of people clapping. Even the pro-am segment was a sell out to paying spectators in 1975. Everything from beginning to end was standing room only. I suppose that this could be a carryover from the COVID years, but perhaps it's something that the PBA should address.

The same could be said about the professional attendance. In 1975 the event was limited to 240 entries (this was before the introduction of the pro tour qualifier, or PTQ). In the 2023 version a PTQ is mentioned in FAQ, but only necessary if the full complement of 108 bowlers isn't reached. Wow, what a change from 240 entrants and 80 cashing spots in 1975, to 108 entrants and 36 cashing spots in 2023. The only thing that has remained the same is a 1 in 3 cashing ratio.

Scores

Rather than list all of the scores for the week, I invite you to visit bowl.com. There you will find a news release for each day of the tournament. It was fun watching all of the qualifying rounds on bowltv.com. If there's one suggestion that I have for them above all others, it would be the selection of broadcasters. To put it politely, there's too many announcers with too much gossip, and they're not paying attention to the bowlers on the lanes.

On at least five occasions, I found myself muting the sound so that I could concentrate on the bowlers. Aside from that one negative aspect, there are many pluses. I especially liked the four to six different cameras that were provided as options for viewing the bowlers as they crossed the lanes, and the unbelievable amount of statistics provided by lanetalkstats.com.

Recap

I wonder if the bowlers still write their scores on a recap sheet, requiring the signature of the other PBA members bowling on their pair during the tournament as a verification? Hopefully they're not relying on a computer to keep track of their scores as a fail-safe method, like it is in most states with computerized voting machines. Does anyone else wonder why we can't get a copy of how we voted? Somehow that carbon copy with the signatures of the other players was particularly reassuring for me.

It's now Saturday evening and the TV Stepladder Seeds 5-9 competition has just wrapped up on FS1. In this instance, the foreigner (Thomas Larsen) did not prevail, and instead superstar Kyle Troup won the right to advance to the finals tomorrow on FOX (Sunday, 2:00 pm eastern). In keeping with the theme of this article, I'll be rooting for Tomas Kayhko of Finland or Richard Teece of England.

But quietly, of course, I'll be cheering for one of the three Americans that made it to the top five: E.J. Tackett, who led the field by 120 pins; or Anthony Simonsen, who has a way of putting it all together for the big ones; or Kyle Troup, who appeared lost earlier in the day but found a way to defeat Justin Knowles of Michigan in the last match of the Saturday semi-finals, 215 to 191. I've never been much of a gambler, but my hunch is that the winner will be Anthony Simonsen.

Editors Note: I'm going with EJ Tackett :)

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U.S. Open continued from page 1

throughout, but struggled to carry late in the match. He wrapped a 10-pin in the eighth frame, followed by a devastating stone-9 in the ninth and another wrap-10 in the 10th frame.

Troup then converted a 10-pin to shut out the Finnish two-hander and advance to the title match.

The long-awaited match between PBA superstars Troup and No. 3 seed Anthony Simonsen lived up to the hype. Troup opened with a hambone, but allowed Simonsen back into the match by leaving the big-four in the fifth frame.

Troup again opened the door for the defending champion after failing to convert a washout in the 10th frame. Simonsen needed all three strikes to win the match by a single pin, but left a game-ending 3-4-6-7 split — the inverse of the split Justin Knowles left in his loss to Troup last night.

Troup defeated Richie Teece in the opening match of the day. He had a chance to take a commanding lead with a strike in the eighth frame, but just as he began his celebration, he noticed the 8-pin still standing.

Teece could not capitalize on the opportunity, missing a washout in the eighth frame, then throwing another errant shot in the ninth. Troup converted a 2-4-5 spare in the 10th frame to secure the match.

Final Scores
EJ Tackett def. Kyle Troup, 221-208
Troup def. Tomas Käyhkö, 219-215
Troup def. Anthony Simonsen, 203-177
Troup def. Richie Teece, 207-192





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2023 PBA Schedule				
DATE	TIME	CHANNEL	TOURNAMENT	LOCATION
U.S. OPEN PRESENTED BY GO BOWLING!				
SAT. 2/4	4:00P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	ROYAL PIN WOODLAND INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
SUN. 2/5	2:00P	FOX	FINALS	ROYAL PIN WOODLAND INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
SUN. 2/19	1:00P	FS1	PBA COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIP	ROYAL PIN WOODLAND INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
SUN. 3/12	12:00P	FS1	GO BOWLING! PBA CELEBRITY EVENT (TBA)	PHOENIX, ARIZONA
PBA TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS				
FRI. 3/17	10:00P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	AMF RIVIERA LANES FAIRLAWN, OHIO
SAT. 3/18	7:30P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	AMF RIVIERA LANES FAIRLAWN, OHIO
SAT. 3/18	9:30P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	AMF RIVIERA LANES FAIRLAWN, OHIO
SUN. 3/19	12:00P	FOX	FINALS	AMF RIVIERA LANES FAIRLAWN, OHIO
SAT. 3/25	7:30P	FS1	PBA JR. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP	AMF RIVIERA LANES FAIRLAWN, OHIO
USBC MASTERS				
FRI. 3/31	7:00P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	THUNDERBOWL DETROIT, MICHIGAN
SUN. 4/2	1:00P	FOX	FINALS	THUNDERBOWL DETROIT, MICHIGAN
GUARANTEED RATE PBA WORLD SERIES OF BOWLING XVI				
SAT. 4/15	2:00P	FS1	USA VS. THE WORLD MATCH PLAY	BOWLERO WAUWATOSA WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN
SUN. 4/16	12:00P	FS1	USA VS. THE WORLD	BOWLERO WAUWATOSA WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN
MON. 4/17	7:00P	FS1	PBA CHEETAH CHAMPIONSHIP	BOWLERO WAUWATOSA WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN
TUES. 4/18	7:00P	FS1	PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP	BOWLERO WAUWATOSA WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN
WED. 4/19	7:00P	FS1	PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP	BOWLERO WAUWATOSA WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN
SUN. 4/23	12:00P	FOX	PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY PABST BLUE RIBBON	BOWLERO WAUWATOSA WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN
PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP				
SAT. 5/6	10:30P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	BOWLERO NORTH BRUNSWICK NORTH BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
SUN. 5/7	12:00P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	BOWLERO NORTH BRUNSWICK NORTH BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
SUN. 5/7	9:30P	FS1	MATCH PLAY	BOWLERO NORTH BRUNSWICK NORTH BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
SAT. 5/13	12:30P	FS1	SEMI FINALS	BOWLERO NORTH BRUNSWICK NORTH BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
SUN. 5/14	1:00P	FOX	FINALS	BOWLERO NORTH BRUNSWICK NORTH BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
PBA SUPER SLAM CUP				
SAT. 5/20	2:00P	FS1	PRELIMS	BOWLERO JUPITER JUPITER, FLORIDA
SUN. 5/21	3:00P	FOX	FINALS	BOWLERO JUPITER JUPITER, FLORIDA
PBA LEAGUE ELIAS CUP PLAYOFFS PRESENTED BY PABST BLUE RIBBON				
SUN. 9/24	8:00P	FS1	QUARTERFINALS	BAYSIDE BOWL PORTLAND, MAINE
MON. 9/25	8:00P	FS1	QUARTERFINALS	BAYSIDE BOWL PORTLAND, MAINE
TUES. 9/26	8:00P	FS1	SEMIFINALS	BAYSIDE BOWL PORTLAND, MAINE
WED. 9/27	8:00P	FS1	FINALS	BAYSIDE BOWL PORTLAND, MAINE
SUN. 10/1	7:00P	FS1	PBA LEAGUE BOWLER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP CLASH	BAYSIDE BOWL PORTLAND, MAINE
TIMES ARE ET. SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE				



TACKETT RETURNS AS TOP SEED AT 2023 U.S. OPEN, TROUP JOINS CHAMPIONSHIP FIELD

by Nolan Hughes

The five finalists for the 2023 U.S. Open at Indianapolis' Royal Pin Woodland were determined on Saturday afternoon and a familiar name led the 48-game marathon.

For the second straight year, EJ Tackett earned the No. 1 seed for the U.S. Open finals. He paced the field with a total pinfall of 10,858, leading the next-best player by 120 pins.

Tackett will be the top for the stepladder finals, airing at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 5 live on FOX. With a win, he would claim his third career major title and become the ninth player in PBA history to complete the Triple Crown.

Tomas Käyhkö, Anthony Simonsen and Richie Teece also qualified for Sunday's championship round by earning top-four seeds.

Simonsen, the defending champion, is seeking his fifth career major title, while Käyhkö and Teece are making their major championship debuts.

The final competitor with hopes of donning the prestigious green jacket is Kyle Troup, who advanced from Saturday afternoon's stepladder finals featuring the No. 5-9 qualifiers.

Troup, who slipped from the fourth to the fifth seed during the final two games of match play, defeated the No. 9 seed Justin Knowles in the final match of Saturday's stepladder.

Knowles, a two-handed lefty from Michigan, was one of the last players to earn a spot in the pre-tournament qualifier. After earning his spot into the main field at the PTQ, he secured the final spot in the 24-player match play field, then the final spot on Saturday's show.

The 32-year-old's late-game heroics came to an end against Troup. He needed two strikes in the 10th frame, but failed to make the proper adjustment and split for the second consecutive time on the right lane.

Troup, making his first U.S. Open match play appearance in seven tries, will bowl for the title tomorrow afternoon.

In the previous match, Knowles defeated Denmark's Thomas Larsen, who made his second career televised round at a major championship.

Knowles and Larsen exchanged missed single-pins early in the match, but Larsen's three-bagger in the sixth through eighth frames gave him the advantage. Larsen could have shut out Knowles with strikes in the ninth and 10th frames — when a pocket 7-10 split in the ninth frame ended his bid for a second major title.

In the second match, No. 7 seed Marshall Kent opened the game with a pocket 7-10 of his own. He responded with five strikes in a row and held a 15-pin lead through eight frames. A 2-10 split and open in the ninth frame opened the door for Knowles.

After Knowles left a 7-pin in the 10th frame, the match swung back into Kent's hands. He left another 2-10 split and failed to convert the spare, allowing Knowles to advance.

In the opening match, Knowles took down Frank Snodgrass, a fellow Michigan native. Snodgrass struggled to carry, compiling five single-pin-spare in the first six frames. Then a pair of errant shots in the 8th and 11th shots gave Knowles all the room he needed.

Troup returns to the lanes for a showdown with England's Teece, as the finals of the 2023 U.S. Open begins at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 5 live on FOX.

Final Scores


Troup def. Knowles, 215-191

Knowles def. Larsen, 215-190

Knowles def. Kent, 206-198

Knowles def. Snodgrass, 211-203



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DV8 Holds A Five Point Lead With Just A Week To Go

by David Yamauchi

DOWNEY – The Brunswick Invitational took the lanes for week 6 of 7 of the third round. With the top two matches involving previous round winners, there was the potential for the standings to tighten up with just one week to go.

In the “A” match, it was still **DV8** pacing the round with their 21-4 record facing second round winner **Finishing Touch Floors**. Every game was close in the match, but it was DV8 showing why they have owned this round taking the 5-0 sweep and putting themselves in the “A” match next week with a 5 game cushion over Cal Bowl with just 5 points to go. Sub Marquan Rivers led an even attack for DV8 with a 595 set while Vernon Adams led Finishing Touch Floors with a 570 series.

The “B” match featured first round winners **Family Ties** facing **Cal Bowl** who was looking to get back into the hunt after a tough week 6. Family Ties took game one by triple-digits, but Cal Bowl stormed back with two big games to take the 4-1 result. The 4 wins puts Cal Bowl in the “A” match next week needing a sweep just to force a rolloff for the round. Scott Smith was huge for Cal Bowl with a 654 set while Vince Duarte led Family Ties with a 610 set.

The 4th vs. 5th matchup was the third meeting of the round between **Junior Amateur Tour** and the always tough draw **Threadworks**. Once again it was a close match with Junior Amateur Tour taking game one the watching Threadworks roar back to take game two, three and totals by just two sticks. Eric Snow was the man for Threadworks with a 662 set while Kevin Valmonte paced Junior Amateur Tour with a 610 series.

Forest Lanes met **Professional Approach** with both teams sitting at 14-11. Forest Lanes started big with a 802 game and never looked back as they swept to the 5-0 win. J.T. Diso lit them up for Forest Lanes with a big 642 set while Scott Silva paced Professional

Approach with a 587 set.

Allied Paving and **US Foods** were looking to bounce back and put some wins on the board after a tough week six. US Foods came out strong and struck their way to the 5-0 sweep. Gabriel Martinez was huge for US Foods with a 693 set while Michael Montano paced Allied Paving with a 596 series.

J.K. Inc. and **Bowlium** matched up in the 11 and 12 spot with J.K. looking to keep their momentum going and Bowlium looking to get back on track. Bowlium bounced back strong as they took a 5-0 sweep of J.K. Inc. Ramiro Garcia was big for Bowlium with a consistent 640 set while Ian Markstrum nearly cracked six with a 594 set for J.K. Inc.

HB Complete Builders, Don Julio Tequila, Bowling Guys and Westminster Lanes rounded out this week’s matchups. HB Complete Builders swept Don Julio Tequila 5-0 led by Christian Eichelkraut’s 572 set. Don Julio Tequila was led by Justin Saaverdra with a 512 series. Bowling Guys came out strong and snuck out the first game by 13, then took game two and totals for the 4-1 win. Preston Epps led Bowling Guys with a 552 series while Westminster Lanes was paced by Jonathan Gale with a 526 set.

Financial Advisor’s Pot went to Gabriel Martinez (265) for \$160 with 2nd to Kyle Duster (246) for \$70. Sidepots went to JT Diso (234) and Gabriel Martinez (265) for \$50 each with 2nd to Vince Duarte (222) and Kyle Duster (246). SuperPot was Gabe Martinez (247) for \$150 with 2nd to Eric Snow (245) for \$75. The strikeout pot was only two bowlers as they split the pot- Anthony Santos and Paul Barraco take home \$500 each for the punchout!

Come on out and watch DV8 and Cal Bowl battle for the round championship in Southern California’s Richest League next Monday at 8:00!

TOP 10 TEAMS ROUND 3			
DV8.....	26	Finishing Touch Floors\$.18
Cal Bowl	21	US Foods.....	16
Threadworks.....	19	Junior Amateur Tour	15.5
Forest Lanes.....	19	Bowlium.....	15.5
Family Ties\$	18	Professional Approach ...	14

TOP 10 THIS WEEK			
Gabriel Martinez	693	Paul Barraco	623
Eric Snow	662	Vincent Duarte	610
Scott Smith	654	Kevin Valmonte.....	610
JT Diso.....	642	Michael Montano	596
Ramiero Garcia.....	640	Anthony Santos	596

SUPER SWEEPER POT
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1st Gabriel Martinez 265 \$160 • 2nd Kyle Duster 246 \$70



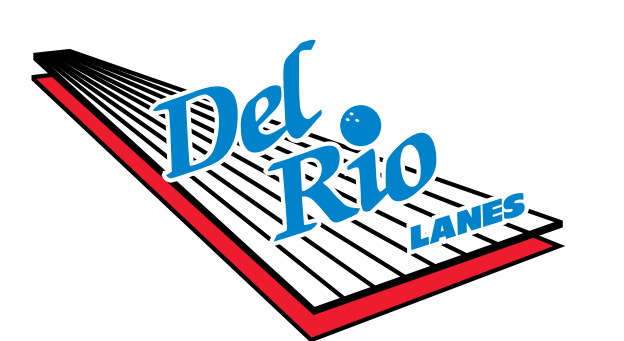
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