

# CALIFORNIA BOWLING NEWS

MARCH 23, 2023

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## JASON BELMONTE WINS RECORD-SETTING FOURTH TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS TITLE

by Nolan Hughes

FAIRLAWN, Ohio — On the most iconic pair in bowling, lanes 27-28 at AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio, Jason Belmonte further cemented his place in PBA history.

Belmonte defeated top seed EJ Tackett to claim his fourth career Tournament of Champions title — surpassing Mike Durbin and Jason Couch for the most ever — and the 15th major championship of his career.

The 39-year-old prevailed in six consecutive matches on TV, defeating three former Player of the Years, two hungry veterans pursuing their first major title and the most accomplished under-26 player of all-time.

His brilliance on TV highlighted perhaps the greatest comeback of his 15-year career.

Belmonte sat in 58th after the tournament's first round and crept up to 51st after the second. With six games left of qualifying, the two-handed sensation sat 154 pins outside of the cut.

Over the final round of qualifying and three rounds of match play, Belmonte steadily rose up the leaderboard. By tournament's end, the trophy belonged to him.

"This will be one that I will remember," Belmonte said. "At any other event moving forward where I have a slow start, I can call on this event as a reminder: Wherever you are on the



Jason Belmonte

leaderboard, that doesn't matter anymore.

"Now it's all about how are you going to make a shot? Just you. Don't worry about everyone else. How are you going to make the shot? And if I do that, no matter how low (in the standings), if I make enough good

ones, I can make a run back." Belmonte threw urethane on the very first shot of the afternoon, which resulted in a 4-10 split. He said the 40-foot Don Johnson oil pattern broke down quickly during the few minutes between practice and competition.

"As soon as I saw that (split), I'm like 'you're going to have to start fishing and it's not going to be pretty,'" Belmonte said.

Belmonte switched to reactive equipment the next frame. He never looked back, rattling off wins against Jason Sterner and Matt Ogle.

Those wins ensured the podium of the 2023 TOC would be Belmonte, Anthony Simonsen and EJ Tackett. Norm Duke, calling the tournament in the broadcast booth, described the trio as the world's three best players.

"You'd have to go back a long way to find a major championship show without one of us on the show," Belmonte

said.

At least one member of the trio has made the championship round in 32 of 40 majors since 2015 (Simonsen's first full season on Tour).

Simonsen, who many on Tour believe is the most creative player on the planet, opted to about two arrows right of Belmonte in the semifinal. While the 26-year-old made quality shots, the pins did not cooperate.

The title match set up a rematch of the 2019 TOC championship between Belmonte and Tackett. The latter took the opposite path to the title match, leading the tournament wire-to-wire.

Tackett missed a pair continued on page 2

## 60-Plus Years With The PBA Tournament of Champions

by Dave Williams



Jack Biondolillo (1967)

The PBA Tournament of Champions has been around longer than most of the aficionados of the sport. I can still remember the very first event in 1962, featuring the 25 tour title holders dating back to the start of the PBA in 1958. It aired on the ABC television network. Joe Joseph, a bowling proprietor from Lansing, Mich., was the first winner of the tournament in a two-game, 3 player final with a 480 total. He defeated Billy Golembiewski from Detroit with a 416 total, and Carmen Salvino of Chi-

cago with 409.

For his efforts, Joseph received a generous \$15,000 payday, which would be equivalent to about \$150,000 today. Last year's first place prize of \$100,000 went to Dominic Barrett of Great Bentley, England. The 2022 event was held at the AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio, which had played host to the event during the Firestone years from 1965 to 1994. If you're like me, you probably just assumed that the TOC had always been contested at Riviera Lanes, just a

stone's throw away from Firestone's world headquarters in Akron.

Surprisingly, that first TOC was held at Play Bowl in Indianapolis. In 1963 and 1964 there was no TOC. Then in 1965, Firestone stepped in to sponsor the tournament for an incredible 30 year run. Riviera Lanes was host to all of those Fairlawn events. There were many "firsts" during those thirty years, but the one that is forever etched in my mind is the "bomb threat" of 1991. It would be my first and last visit to the TOC.

Before you begin to wonder what national PBA stop I won to qualify for the Firestone that year... it didn't happen, unfortunately. I was working for American Recreation Centers (ARC) at the time, and longtime President and CEO Bob Feuchter had just retired. His replacement was Bob Crist, a "numbers cruncher" that was promoted from the position of Chief Operating Officer. Obviously, Crist was not at all interested in attending the promotional festivities at continued on page 8



### Weekly Scratch 5-Gamer Every Tuesday

\$50 Entry Fee with Optional Pots and Brackets

Check-in at 6pm • Bowl at 7pm • 1 in 5 Payout

March 21 Carman Salvino / March 28 Cheetah

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# JANICE RILEY Leads The Inland Empire Ladies Club (IELC)

by Frank Weiler

REDLANDS – Janice Riley likes EMPIRE BOWL LANES and EMPIRE BOWL LANES like Janice Riley. “THE BEST LIKE THE BEST”. Empire Bowl is the best bowling center in Southern California and Janice Riley is one of the best female bowlers in Southern California.

Janice finished last month as the TOP BOWLER of the Inland Empire Ladies Club. She lives in the present and the present is her time to shine. At the present time the ladies club league is her league. First place is her place.



The IELC standings at the end of the February follows:

Place	Name	Peterson Points	Average
1.	Janice Riley	19.66	166
2.	SueLee Santero	18.82	184
3.	Ruthie Kelley	17.32	147
4.	Amber Teresin	16.84	109
5.	Kathy Nakano	16.80	153

### The IELC Scoring Average Leaders:

1.	SueLee Santero	184
2.	Stephanie White	171
3.	Janice Riley	166
4.	Victoria Fox	165
5.	Therese Weiler	164

High Scratch Series:	SueLee Santero	791
High Scratch Game:	Janice Riley	226
High Handicap Series:	Amber Teresin	842
High Handicap Game:	Barbara Jackson	230

Great bowling ladies. You make California proud. You show that “CALIFORNIA BOWLERS ARE THE BEST BOWLERS IN THE WORLD”.

**T.O.C.** continued from page 1  
of 3-6-10 spares, which he had been perfect on all week, in the first and sixth frames.

“If I make both of those, I don’t know if the match changes a bunch, but it definitely puts a little bit more pressure on Jason,” Tackett said. “It’s been a great year so far. I had another opportunity to win another major championship. I threw some good shots, just failed a little bit at spare shooting and I have to chalk the loss up to that.”

While Belmonte avoided the early friction that doomed Tackett’s comeback attempt, he said he could feel the transition coming his way.

“I think he saw what I was going to see if the match went just a little longer,” Belmonte said. “He was a little further right than I was, but I knew that my ball was going to do what he’s doing. I just had to hope I can get through nine frames.”

Four years after Belmonte defeated Tackett to win his record-tying 10th career major, Belmonte won No. 15 on the very same pair of lanes.

“You walk into (Riviera) and you get that ‘Field of Dreams’ feeling,” Belmonte said. “You just gotta close your eyes for a second and think about who’s walked through those doors and take that in.

“I don’t know how I can truly describe how proud of myself I am and how excited I am.”


### CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES

No. 6 Jason Belmonte def. No. 1 EJ Tackett, 246-179  
No. 6 Jason Belmonte def. No. 2 Anthony Simonsen, 219-200  
No. 6 Jason Belmonte def. No. 3 Matt Ogle, 237-170  
No. 6 Jason Belmonte def. No. 4 Jason Sterner, 231-217

### FINAL STANDINGS

1.	Jason Belmonte,	\$101,000
2.	EJ Tackett,	\$55,000
3.	Anthony Simonsen,	\$30,000
4.	Matt Ogle,	\$20,000
5.	Jason Sterner,	\$15,000
6.	Kyle Troup,	\$10,500
7.	Andrew Anderson,	\$9,000
8.	Marshall Kent,	\$8,500
9.	Chris Via,	\$8,000
10.	Jake Peters,	\$7,500
11.	Stu Williams,	\$7,000
12.	Wes Malott,	\$6,500
13.	Tom Smallwood,	\$6,000
14.	Kris Prather,	\$5,500
15.	Tim Gruendler,	\$5,000
16.	François Lavoie,	\$4,500
17.	Packy Hanrahan,	\$4,000


More information on the tournament available [here](#).



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ARLINGTON, Texas – The United States Bowling Congress announces a new relationship with Farmers Insurance® as the official insurance carrier of USBC.

Farmers joins USBC Member Rewards and will provide home and auto insurance options for bowlers through the USBC program. Farmers offers a number of potential discounts on offerings across multiple categories for auto, home, renters, motorcycle, RV, boat and business insurance.

“We’re excited to enter into this relationship with Farmers Insurance,” said USBC Executive Director Chad Murphy. “Farmers is a great national brand and known as a leader in the insurance industry. We’re thrilled Farmers sees bowling as the sport they want to join forces with and provide value for our members.”

As part of the relationship the Farmers brand will be visible on site at USBC Championship tournaments and other events. Bowlers can access offerings from Farmers online and get an insurance quote at Farmers.com/USBC.

Established in 1928, Farmers serves more than 10 million households in all 50 states. The relationship with USBC gives members access to potential savings on products and partner products, and will provide access to Farmers award-winning claims department and dedicated team of service representatives.

USBC welcomes Farmers and will begin activation of the relationship through a number of touchpoints that will allow its member to explore the broad range of Farmers product offerings and available discounts.

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# 2023 CALIFORNIA PEPSI YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS IS LOOKING TO AWARD \$60,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS!

The 2023 California Pepsi Youth Championships is coming soon! Competition is open to all 2022-23 California USBC Youth members that are currently bowling in a California USBC certified youth league. **Entries must be submitted through the league no later than FEBRUARY 18. ASK YOUR YOUTH PROGRAM DIRECTOR TO SIGN YOU UP!!**

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**DISTRICT FINALS:**

- On-site bowling ball raffle at each site
- U8 & U10 Champions (scratch) in each District will earn a **FREE** entry into the **2023 Youth State Championships** in July at AMF Rocklin Lanes
- U12, U15 & U18 first place finishers (scratch) in each District will qualify into the **2023 DW Challenge Semi-Finals** (Aug 12-13, 2023; Bowlero Fresno). See Rules.

**STATE FINALS:**

- First place scratch finishers in each division will receive a **FREE berth** (6 total) into the Junior Gold Championships held July 14-22, 2023 in Indianapolis, IN (if they have not previously qualified).
- Six scratch Champions will earn a travel stipend up to \$500 to Indianapolis for Junior Gold.
- **Strike 12 Creations** will provide the six scratch Champions a **FREE** "California" jersey to wear at Junior Gold (\$65 value) to represent California.

**DISTRICT FINALS – MARCH 11-12, 2023**

- #1 – LARIAT BOWL, Red Bluff
- #3 – VALLEY CENTER BOWL, Salinas
- #4 – YOSEMITE LANES, Modesto

**DISTRICT FINALS – MARCH 18-19, 2023**

- #2 – GOLD COUNTRY LANES, Sutter Creek
- #5 – CAL BOWL, Lakewood
- #6 – EMPIRE BOWL, Redlands

**STATE FINALS – MAY 6-7, 2023**

COUNTRY CLUB LANES, Sacramento

Contact Lynn at (562) 449-4527 or email: [info@calusbc.com](mailto:info@calusbc.com) with questions.

Visit **CALUSBC.com** for Tournament Packet

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\$40 Per Event

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**TEAM SQUAD TIMES:**

**Saturday: 12:30pm**

**Sunday: 9am**

**D/S SQUAD TIMES:**

**Saturday: 9am & 4:30pm**

**Sunday: 12:30pm**

**Separate OPEN & WOMEN'S Divisions**

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Questions? Contact (415) 492-8880 or  
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*\*When space is available*

**The Handicap Team Champions will earn a FREE team entry into the 2024 State Championships!**

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*Check CALUSBC.com for availability*

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**May 6-7**

**May 20-21**

**May 27-28**

*Memorial Weekend*

**June 3-4**

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# 2023 CALIFORNIA STATE YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

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TEAM, DOUBLES, SINGLES & ALL-EVENTS:

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**DATES:**  
JULY 22-23, 2023  
JULY 29-30, 2023

**TEAM SQUAD TIMES:**  
**Saturday:** 3:30pm  
**Sunday:** 12:30pm

**ENTRY FEES:**  
\$25 Per Event  
\$5 All-Events

**D/S SQUAD TIMES:**  
**Saturday:** 8:30am & 12pm  
**Sunday:** 9am

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SINGLES EVENT  
CHAMPIONS WILL  
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2023 PBA Schedule				
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				

## 60 Plus Years T.O.C. continued from page 1

the Firestone, so Feuchter made the suggestion to ask me about attending the event. What a tremendous week! It was an honor rubbing elbows with all those champions. The culmination of the week’s festivities was the televised finals on Saturday. While we were waiting for the show to begin during the players last one hour warmup, an announcement came over the public address system by Sergeant David Graham of the Fairlawn Police Department to evacuate the building.

There was an eerie calm among everyone as we began an organized two-by-two exit out of the building. I remember walking across the street and standing under a blossoming apple tree that reminded me of home in Sebastopol, Calif., the “Gravenstein Apple Capital of the World.” While we were waiting, we discovered that there had been an actual bomb the previous week at the PBA stop in Windsor Locks, Conn., that had been detonated.

After a little more than one hour, the all clear was given and everyone began to return to the building. The police and firemen were so efficient in their duties, and like everyone else, I just followed the herd back into the building. You can even see me on the youtube video below, as Nelson Burton Jr. gives the all clear and informs the television audience that the action is about to get underway. I’m the tall, slender man from the left side of the screen in a gray suit, at the 3:33 mark of the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b18c95geVm4>

What’s really amazing is that not one spectator left! Everyone returned to the telecast in which David Ozio defeated Amleto Monacelli, 236 to 203, to claim the \$50,000 first prize. Firestone would continue to sponsor the TOC for another three years. Since then, a number of different sponsors have carried on the tradition of the event, including General Tire, Brunswick, Dexter, H & R Block, Barbasol, and Kia. Part of the luster of the Tournament of Champions was lost when the U.S. Open began offering huge prize funds of more than \$500,000 courtesy of Seagram’s Coolers, with a nifty \$100,000 on top. But the TOC would return about 25 years later, in 2011, with a \$250,000 prize for 1st place. Pete Weber, in an article from the Las Vegas Review-Journal, said that he was looking forward to the event. “I always imagined we’d bowl for that much money, but I didn’t expect it now, during a recession,” said Weber.

There are so many other notable moments since that first TOC in 1962. One came in 1967, when Jack Biondolillo of Houston rolled the first nationally broadcast 300 game on live network television. Once again, I can remember the moment so well, as I was bowling in an afternoon junior bowling league at Continental Lanes in Santa Rosa, California. My friends and I would roll our frame, and then race back to the bar entrance to watch Biondolillo as he continued his quest for a perfect game and a \$10,000 bonus. Perhaps the most famous moment in all of professional bowling occurred a few years later at the 1970 TOC, when Don Johnson rolled a 299 game to defeat Dick Ritger with an equally impressive 268. Johnson left a “ringing” 10 pin and fell to the floor in disbelief. The photo of Johnson lying face first on the approach was featured in almost every sports section of every newspaper nationwide. There have been other 300’s (Sean Rash) and 299’s (Mika Koivuniemi) at the TOC, but they did not receive the national attention of Biondolillo and Johnson.


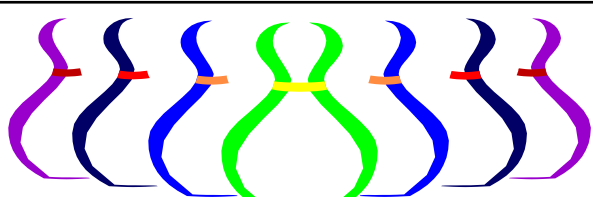
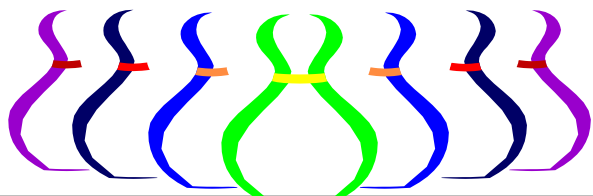
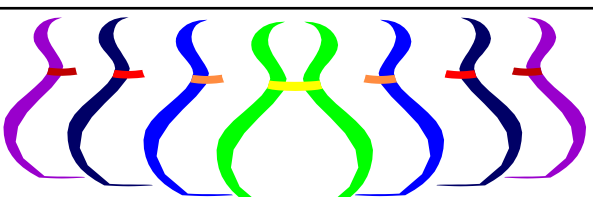
It’s also interesting that the only major PBA title that Walter Ray Williams Jr. has never won is the Tournament of Champions. Wouldn’t it be great to see both Walter Ray and Pete Weber in the finals just one more time? But alas, their names do not appear in the pairings that were announced Thursday. Among the favorites listed for the Sunday finals are the two hottest bowlers on the planet: Anthony Simonsen and E.J. Tackett. Since I’m batting .000 in my predictions, I will not make a prognostication on the outcome. Good luck and good bowling to all the competitors!

- YouTube video provided by Mr. Bowling 300
- Don Johnson photo provided by bowl.com
- Jack Biondolillo photo provided by pba.com



Don Johnson (1970)



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# BEATBOX<sup>®</sup>

## 36th Year! Brunswick<sup>®</sup> INVITATIONAL

### Finishing Touch Floors Remain On Top Of Round Four

by David Yamauchi

DOWNEY – The Brunswick Invitational hit the lanes for week five of seven on the 2022 USBC Nationals Team pattern. The top team was now a round-winner so the rest of the teams were looking to climb up in the standings for a shot at the round with just ten points up for grabs after tonight.

In the “A” match, second-round winners **Finishing Touch Floors** stayed in the top match now taking on **US Foods** after a sweep jumped them to the second-place spot. US Foods came out strong with a 19 pin win in game one but Finishing Touch Floors showed why they are leading the league coming back with two big wins and totals for the 4-1 result. Vernon Adams was big for Finishing Touch with a solid 660 set while subs Stephanie Zavala and Daniel Hong posted 563 and 562 to pace US Foods. Finishing Touch Floors will remain in the “A” match next week while US Foods drops to the “B” match against Cal Bowl.

The “B” match featured **Professional Approach** who dropped down one pair facing **Junior Amateur Tour** who jumped to 4th after a four win result last week. The first game came down to the 10th frame with Junior Amateur Tour coming out with the ugly 9-pin win. Games two and three were all Junior Amateur Tour as they swept the match 5-0. Junior Amateur Tour will move to the “A” match next week to face Finishing Touch Floors.

**Cal Bowl** and **HB Complete Builders** were bowling a rematch of last week’s battle where Cal started huge and held on for the 3-2 win. This week started the same with Cal Bowl taking game one by triple-digits but this week they fought tough all night for the 5-0 sweep. Ramon Torres was big for Cal Bowl with a 602 set while Christian Eichelkraut paced HB Complete Builders with a 577 set. Cal Bowl will move up to the “B” match to take on US Foods.

**Allied Paving** was looking to bounce back from a sweep last week as they took on **Forest Lanes** who jumped to 8th with their four wins last week. Allied Paving came out with a big start, dropped the second,

but came back to take the third game and totals for a 4-1 win. Michael Montano led Allied Paving with a 592 set while JT Diso was again big for Forest Lanes with a solid 575 series.

Third-round winners **DV8** dropped down to 10-10 facing **Westminster Lanes** who banked four wins last week to move to 10-10. DV8 came out striking with a big 844 game one but Westminster posted 837 to take game two. DV8 finished off the night with another 8 for the 4-1 win. Kyle Duster again was huge for DV8 with a 673 set while Jonathan Huezo cracked six for Westminster with a nice 608 series.

First-round winners **Family Ties** took on **Bowlium** in the 11th vs. 12th matchup. Family Ties came out big in games one and three by enough to take totals by 39 and take the 4-1 win. Mikey Villarreal was again huge for Family Ties with a 688 set while Arnold Cheesman paced Bowlium with a 567 set.

**Threadworks**, **Bowling Guys**, **J.K. Inc.** and **Don Julio Tequila** rounded out the night’s action. Threadworks put on a solid show as they swept Bowling Guys 5-0. Chris Hefner subbed to the lead for Threadworks with a nice 626 set while Preston Epps led Bowling Guys with a 541 set. J.K. Inc. started the night strong with a 780 game and they continued to score enough for a 5-0 result on the night. Iam Markstrum led J.K. Inc. with a 548 set while Max Castillo paced Don Julio Tequila with a 469 series.

**Financial Advisor’s Pot** went to Kurt Arakaki (258) for \$160 with 2nd to Mikey Villarreal (253) for \$70. Sidepots went to Kyle Duster (247) and Kurt Arakaki (258) for \$48 each with 2nd to Vernon Adams (228) and Mikey Villarreal (253) for \$24. SuperPot went to Jonathan Huezo (241) for \$144 with 2nd to Mikey Villarreal (237) for \$72.

Come on out and watch the teams take on the USBC Nationals Pattern again next Monday at Del Rio Lanes starting at 8:00 p.m.!

#### TOP 10 TEAMS OVERALL

Finishing Touch Floors \$	88	Threadworks	76
Family Ties \$	77	Forest Lanes	72
DV8 \$\$\$	75	Bowlium	67
Cal Bowl	81	US Foods	67
Junior Amateur Tour	79.5	Professional Approach	60.5

#### TOP 10 TEAMS ROUND 4


Finishing Touch Floors \$	20	DV8 \$\$\$	14
Junior Amateur Tour	18	Professional Approach	14
Cal Bowl	17	Family Ties \$	12
US Foods	16	Threadworks	12
Allied Paving	15	HB Complete Builders	12

#### TOP 10 THIS WEEK

Anthony Santos	690	Chris Hefner	626
Mikey Villarreal	688	Jonathan Huezo	608
Kyle Duster	673	Ramon Torres	602
Vernon Adams	660	Tyler Veneracion	601
Alejandra Urrutia	637	Eric Snow	595

#### SUPER SWEEPER POT

Sponsored by Dean Sanderson of Transamerica Financial Advisors Inc.  
1st Kurt Arakaki 258 \$160 • 2nd Mikey Villarreal 253 \$70



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