

## **REGISTRATION OPENS TO ALL BOWLERS FOR THE 2023 PBA LBC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **JANUARY 1, 2023 PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION**

*Registration for next summer's inaugural National Championships, with an estimated \$500,000 prize fund, is now open to all bowlers of all skill levels.*

Entries are now open for the 2023 PBA LBC National Championships. The 2023 PBA LBC National Championships will be held on Saturdays and Sundays from June 3 to July 16, 2023 at Bowlero Wauwatosa in the greater Milwaukee area.

The 2023 PBA LBC National Championships will feature five divisions: Open Classic, Womens Classic, Men and Women's Handicap, and Senior Classic. There will be a sixth division exclusive to the top 50 PBA players from the previous year's points rankings.

#### **How to Register**

All bowlers are now able to register [here](#).

#### **Who can Register**

The 2023 PBA LBC National Championships is open to all bowlers from all centers of all skill levels, including non-Bowlero Corp Centers. *There are no PBA membership or average requirements to compete in this tournament.*

Bowlers will use their highest PBA LBC or USBC average from any league/center (including Bowlero string pin leagues) from the past calendar year with a minimum of 12 games bowled. Any bowler who does not have an average with a minimum of 12 games can enter this tournament, but will compete in a scratch division.

#### **Tournament Details**

The \$200 entry fee covers each bowler's singles event, which will feature six games across 12 lanes. A bowler may enter the singles event only once.

There will be optional Doubles and four-person Team Events that bowlers can opt-in to with multiple partners. Bowlers can cash unlimited times in each event. There is an entry fee of \$50 per bowler/event for Doubles and Team events.

The first three games of each player's six-game singles event will count toward their doubles score, and the second three games of the singles event will count toward their team score.

The top 50 PBA Tour stars will compete in their own division and squad on July 17. Their scores will not compete against the bowlers in the Open Classic division, but the pros will compete against each other in the PBA Exempt division.

However, all entrants in the 2023 PBA LBC National Championship will be able to combine their scores with any participant, including any of the top 50 PBA stars, to form Doubles and Team entries. This

means scores can be combined with your favorite pro bowlers like EJ Tackett, Sean Rash, Kyle Troup, Tommy Jones, etc.

### **Prize Funds**

Bowlers will be competing for an estimated \$500,000 prize fund with first place in the Open Classic division guaranteed to pay \$25,000. All other divisions will award \$5,000 first place prizes.

Beyond the guaranteed top prizes, divisions will pay an 1:8 ratio, meaning one prize for every eight bowlers who enter.

At the conclusion of the event, the top three (3) bowlers in the Open Classic division, the top three (3) in the Women's Classic division and the top three (3) in the PBA Exempt division, as well as the winner of the other three divisions (Men's Handicap, Women's Handicap and Senior Classic) will be invited to the PBA LBC National Championships Clash. That event will take place at Bayside Bowl in Portland, Maine, be televised on FS1 and include a total prize fund of \$100,000.

### **DAVE DAVIS, PBA HALL OF FAMER, DIES AT 80**

#### **JANUARY 1, 2023 JOHNNY CAMPOS**

*The PBA mourns the loss of Davis, the trailblazing left-hander who established numerous PBA records during his Hall of Fame career.*

Before Earl Anthony, Parker Bohn III, Mike Aulby or Johnny Petraglia became stars on the lanes, Dave Davis was the premier left-hander on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour.

Using a silky smooth delivery, Davis won 18 titles on the PBA Tour and five more on the senior tour.

He died early Thursday morning, December 29, at his home in Lake Placid, Fla., at the age of 80.

Davis had a history of heart problems, having undergone open heart surgery in February of 2021. His wife Joann said that his heart was OK after the surgery, but his kidneys started to fail as well. Davis had been under hospice care for a couple of weeks prior to his death.

"I told the hospice nurse that his mind was starting to go and he was starting to decline," Joann said. "I expected her to say he had a couple of months left. But she looked at me and said, 'Joann, he's got a couple of weeks.'"

Joann Davis spent the two days after her husband's death talking to many of his lifelong friends, including bowling greats Dave and Judy Soutar, Johnny Petraglia, long-time PBA Director of Player Services Larry Lichstein and long-time PBA lane maintenance consultant Lenny Nicholson.

Dave Soutar and Petraglia roomed with Davis for many years.

"The main reason we got together was that I signed with Brunswick in '71," Petraglia recalled. "There were only two staffers then, Davis and Soutar, and Judy was the lady on the staff.

"When I first joined we had to go to Europe together and stayed for about a month, doing exhibitions. The more you get to know them, we just started rooming together and it just never changed."

Not all of their travels went smoothly, however.

“We tried one year to travel together in a motorhome,” Petraglia said. “That was an experience! We weren’t very good at it. Or at least I wasn’t very good at it.

“But there were a lot of fun times. And everybody was in their prime and bowling pretty well, so that helped a lot, too.”

What was unusual about the trio was that Davis and Petraglia were both left-handed, while Soutar was a righty.

“We were all with Brunswick, but the connection was that we all liked each other,” Soutar said. “We always had a good time together. Dave and I got together first, then we got Johnny in. And I felt like a left-hander!

“In those days, all the right-handers were against left-handers. But I never was mad because they were left-handed. That’s probably why we could all room together. We were very good friends and had no problems with each other.”

Davis beat Petraglia for the 1975 Brunswick World Open title and beat Soutar for the title of the 1969 Canadian Open. But in 1970, Soutar turned the tables, beating Davis twice in a month for titles.

Davis went out on the PBA Tour in 1964, and won his first two titles, including the first of his two PBA National Championships, the following year. He had his breakout season in 1967 when he won six times, including his second PBA National Championship, and was the PBA Player of the Year.

Davis went on to win the Firestone Tournament of Champions twice, and won the USBC Senior Masters in 1995 and 1996.

“Dave was so elegant and wonderful to watch that even right-handers couldn’t knock him,” said Lichstein, who beat Davis for his only PBA title in 1971. “Keep in mind the righties did not like the lefties, especially lefties who could beat them.

“And when Dave started beating them, he was beating the legends. But they couldn’t knock him. The game was too pure. It was too good.”

Davis also broke a few barriers from the left side on the PBA Tour.

“He had a lot of firsts that I don’t think people will remember unless you bring it up,” Lichstein said. “The new bowlers of today have no idea of who he was.

“He was the first left-hander to win a major, the first left-hander to win two majors, and the first left-hander to win Player of the Year in 1967.”

Davis also was the youngest player to win three majors when he claimed the 1968 Tournament of Champions. He was 25 years and 343 days old. That record lasted until February of 2022 when Anthony Simonsen won his third major at the age of 25 years and 31 days.

Davis was inducted into the PBA Hall of Fame in 1978 and to the United States Bowling Congress Hall of Fame in 1990. In 2009, he was voted No. 19 on the list of 50 greatest players in PBA history.

"Davis had a beautiful arm swing," said Nicholson, who was friends with Davis for almost 60 years. "When I gave lessons, the first thing I would do is get a video tape of Dave Davis and Brian Voss. I'd show them to the new students and tell them to memorize what those guys looked like. That's what I wanted them to look like.

"Bill Allen was the first good lefty on tour when he came out in '61, and Jerry McCoy won a couple of times. But when Davis came out in '64, he won a couple of Firestones and a couple of PBA Nationals. He was a superstar."

Davis, who was born in Hackensack, N.J., also passed on his knowledge to another bowling great from the Garden State, Parker Bohn III, who has many of the similar traits that Davis had in his game.

"Dave was an extreme influence on me," Bohn said. "He and his wife took me under their arm and tried to show me the difference between right and wrong on the lanes. Back then they formulated my game to what it has become. Dave was very, very instrumental in building my game to what it has become today. And that style has been with me ever since."

At the time, Bohn was a rising star in the junior ranks in New Jersey, but needed more help than the junior coaches in his center could offer.

"My mom realized that she could no longer help me anymore through the local coaches we had," he said. "So, she reached out to Dave and Joann and asked them to lend a helping hand and try to teach me a better way and how to become a better bowler.

"The best part about it was that Davis owned a bowling center 30 minutes from where I grew up. I was 16 turning 17 when I met him – way before my pro career. It was a dream to bowl on the PBA Tour."

Bohn went on to win 35 PBA titles on the PBA Tour and 10 more on the senior tour – so far.

Bohn said he talked to Davis a couple of times a year, but had an opportunity to visit with him and his wife in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I caught COVID, but was going to be in the Sebring area to drop some stuff off," Bohn said. "Dave had just had heart surgery, but I wanted to see him. I told him I was stopping by, but was not getting any closer than the corner of where they lived.

"He and Joann sat on the back porch and I sat on the hood of my car and we talked for an hour. It was great conversation, but we would have loved nothing better than to embrace each other and get closer. But at that moment in time, that was the safest thing to do."

Dave and Judy Soutar, who live about 90 minutes from Lake Placid, were able to meet with the Davises a couple of days before Dave's death.

"When we were there, he was very alert," Judy said. "We talked and laughed with them, and then Lenny Nicholson called to talk with Dave. After he saw us, maybe he just said it was time to go. It's a shame. But you know what? He's in a better place. He had no quality of life."

Davis was using a walker and a wheelchair to get around his house in his final few weeks at home.

“He was down to about 120 pounds (on his 6-foot-3 body), and kept falling down even with the walker,” Dave Soutar said. “For a while he was getting stronger, got to walk from bedroom to kitchen and not fall over. He was always so cold and was very thin.”

That’s a far cry from the first time Joann Davis met Dave, just hoping to get his autograph.

“It was in Garden City (New York) in 1975,” she recalled. “He called me the next week and I hung up because I didn’t believe it was him. Then it went on from there. We got married in 1977.

“We were married 45 years this year, technically (they were divorced and then got remarried a few years ago). He has two daughters in Georgia, and they’re coming down next week. He will be cremated, and no service is planned. All of his friends are all over the United States, so it just wouldn’t work.”

But Davis will be remembered by many lifelong friends from his time on tour and beyond, especially by Bohn, his prized student.

“It truly hurts, because bowling truly lost a living legend, a gentleman,” Bohn said. “He was one of the kindest individuals that you could ever meet, on and off the lanes.”

## **WATSON, BEASLEY LEAD PBA50 QUALIFYING AT 2022 REGIONAL PLAYERS INVITATIONAL**

### **JANUARY 2, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

During qualifying for the PBA50 Regional Players Invitational, Bill Watson seized the lead after Game 3. He never relinquished it, pacing the field with a 238 average.

Watson shot 1,904 for his eight-game set at South Point Bowling Plaza in Las Vegas — 57 pins better than the next-best player.

“In practice I had a pretty good look with a couple different balls,” said Watson, who hails from Maineville, Ohio. “The plan I had all worked out, starting with an Idol Cosmos and then as they opened up I went to a Reality Check.”

While he enters the bracket as the top seed, Watson said today’s scores have no bearing on what happens in match play.

“Come tomorrow, everyone’s even,” he said. “I have to look at it that way. I can’t look at it as being the high qualifier. That doesn’t get you anything. I’ve got to bowl my match and see what happens.”

Mitch Beasley qualified second with a block of 1,847. The Clarksville, Tenn. native said he has battled numerous injuries in recent years, including a torn achilles, back issues and torn ligaments in his ring finger.

This past spring, he said a bad vertebrae in his neck forced him to have another surgery, which put him out another few months. He has slowly worked himself back into shape, just in time for the new year.

“The last four or five weeks, I’ve been getting stronger,” Beasley said. “I’ve been starting to throw the ball a little more like me. Six weeks ago, my rev rate was probably 100 less than it is now.”

But the injuries have brought his natural ball speed down, although he said that played to his advantage today. As transition hit, he said he was able to get left of everyone to blend the lanes.

Despite returning to competitive bowling only a few weeks ago, Beasley finds himself near the top of the PBA50 RPI standings.

“I’m a little tired,” the 54-year-old admitted. “I’m not used to bowling that many games in a tournament, but I made it to second. I’m excited about that.”

Darryl Bower, Eugene McCune and Sammy Ventura round out the top five. Troy Lint, who qualified in ninth, opened his block with the day’s lone 300 game. Complete standings are available [here](#).

The 16 advancers will resume competition tomorrow morning at 11 a.m. ET. All rounds of the bracket will be livestreamed on [BowlTV](#).

#### **ADVANCERS TO MATCH PLAY**

1. Bill Watson, 1,904
2. Mitch Beasley, 1,847
3. Darryl Bower, 1,833
4. Eugene McCune, 1,832
5. Sammy Ventura, 1,831
6. Ryan Shafer, 1,822
7. Andrew Rettig, 1,819
8. Gary Faulkner, 1,798
9. Troy Lint, 1,796
10. Jeff Atkins, 1,791
11. Lee Robison, 1,785
12. Rick Minier, 1,767
13. Rick Meneley, 1,759
14. Mac Sanders, 1,758
15. Brian Kretzer, 1,748
16. Shawn Horenberger, 1,743

#### **MATCH-UPS**

1. Watson vs. 16. Horenberger
2. Beasley vs. 15. Kretzer
3. Bower vs. 14. Sanders
4. McCune vs. 13. Meneley
5. Ventura vs. 12. Minier
6. Shafer vs. 11. Robison
7. Rettig vs. 10. Atkins
8. Faulkner vs. 9. Lint

PJ Haggerty, Darren Tang, Graham Fach, Trevor Roberts, Benjamin Martinez and Cody Shoemaker

## **REGIONAL AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2022 PBA SEASON**

### **JANUARY 3, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Award winners from the 2022 PBA Regional Tour season were announced last night during a banquet at the PBA Regional Players Invitational. Four award recipients from each of the seven PBA regions were selected.

Winners of the Player of the Year, Rookie of the Year and Senior Player of the Year were selected based on their performance during the 2022 PBA Regional Tour season. Recipients of the Pat Patterson awards were selected for their outstanding contributions to the regional program and efforts to promote bowling.

The award winners were determined by a vote among regional tournament directors: Russ Mills, East region; Bobby Jakel, Central region; Toby Contreras, Midwest region; Steve Taylor, South region; Tony Lanning, Southwest region; Josh Blanchard, West and Northwest regions.

Here are the 2022 PBA Regional Tour award winners:

#### **EAST REGION**

Ryan Shafer, Cody Shoemaker and Russ Mills

Player of the Year: Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa.

Rookie of the Year: Mark Artley; Milton, Pa.

Senior Player of the Year: Ryan Shafer, Horseheads, N.Y.

Pat Patterson: Mike Zanghi; Dover, Del.

Shoemaker, a former Rookie of the Year in the East, earned top honors in the East by virtue of leading the region in points and earnings, along with a title at the PBA Bowlers Discount Pro Shop Open. The 27-year-old Artley finished the season 19th in points.

Shafer bested the East in points and earnings, while his 216.93 average topped all players who bowled in at least three events. This is his second consecutive honor, and also owns three East PBA Player of the Year awards.

#### CENTRAL REGION

Graham Fach, Jeffery Mann and Bobby Jakel

Player of the Year: Graham Fach, Urbana, Ohio

Rookie of the Year: Jeffery Mann, West Lafayette, Ind.

Senior Player of the Year: Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J.

Pat Patterson: Thomas Graham, Youngstown, Ohio

When Fach won his first two tournaments of the season, he established himself as the frontrunner for Player of the Year; when he won three more times between June and August, finishing no worse than fourth in any of his seven tournaments, he wrapped it up. This is Fach's fourth Player of the Year honor in the Central region.

Mann finished the season fifth in points and cashed in 11 of his 15 tournaments. Bohn made the most of his six tournaments, averaging more than 230 and picking up a trio of wins.

#### MIDWEST REGION

Eugene McCune, Benjamin Martinez, Brenden Sramek and Bobby Jakel

Player of the Year: Benjamin Martinez, Elmhurst, Ill.

Rookie of the Year: Brenden Sramek, Bettendorf, Iowa

Senior Player of the Year: Eugene McCune, Munster, Ind.

Pat Patterson: Russ Oviatt, Sioux Falls, S.D.

In the Midwest, it was Martinez and then everybody else. In his nine tournaments, he took home four wins and never finished lower than ninth — he was twice as likely to win than finish outside of the top-five.

Sramek's four top-10 finishes propelled him to the regions' fourth highest point total. McCune earned his second consecutive Midwest Senior Player of the Year award after a dominant 2022 campaign.

#### SOUTH REGION

Trevor Roberts, Darryl Bower and Steve Taylor

Player of the Year: Trevor Roberts, Crystal River, Fla.

Rookie of the Year: Ryan Lane, Powder Springs, Ga.



Senior Player of the Year: Darryl Bower, Middletown, Pa.

Pat Patterson: Paul Kreins, Mooresville, N.C.

The heat was no problem for Roberts, as the Floridian's two titles during the summer powered him to Player of the Year honors.

Lane looked like a veteran in his debut season. He cashed in 11 of his 12 events, racked up six top-10 finishes and secured his first career title at the PBA Greater Nashville Open.

Bower won two titles and cashed in all 10 of his events, edging Walter Ray Williams Jr. to be named the region's top senior in 2022.

#### SOUTHWEST REGION

Cody Meiers, Eric Jones, Glenn Smith and Tony Lanning

Player of the Year: Ildemaro Ruiz Jr., McKinney, Texas

Rookie of the Year: Eric Jones, Edmond, Okla.

Senior Player of the Year: Glenn Smith, New York

Pat Patterson: Cody Meiers, Lubbock, Texas

With three players, Ruiz, Shawn Maldonado and Nathan Bohr, each winning a pair of titles, the Player of the Year race came down to the wire. Ruiz's strong finish to the season, plus his lead in points and earnings, proved to be the difference.

Jones, the high school senior, took home the honor as the region's top freshman. New York's Smith captured a pair of titles in his five southwest trips.

#### WEST REGION

PJ Haggerty, Cortez Schenck, Chad Lusche, David Leverage and Josh Blanchard

Player of the Year: PJ Haggerty, Roseville, Calif.

Rookie of the Year: Cortez Schenck, Phoenix, Ariz.

Senior Player of the Year: David Leverage, Peoria, Ariz.

Pat Patterson: Chad Lusche, Las Vegas

There wasn't much room for doubt out west. Haggerty's four-title campaign and Schenck's two titles and top-five performance in points and earnings made for easy decisions. Leverage would not be denied, leading all West region seniors in points and earnings, while cashing in all eight of his tournaments.

#### NORTHWEST REGION

Darren Tang, Tyler Cruz, Rich Corwin and Josh Blanchard

Player of the Year: Darren Tang, Las Vegas

Rookie of the Year: Tyler Cruz, Tacoma, Wash.

Senior Player of the Year: Rich Corwin, Portland, Ore.

Pat Patterson: Kevin Croucher, Grants Pass, Ore.

Tang's near-230 average and seven top-five finishes and PBA Dave Husted Open title powered him to Northwest Player of the Year honors, leading the region in points and earnings.

Cruz placed third in points and captured his first career regional victory in June. Corwin cashed in all seven of his events en route to winning a pair of titles in the senior division.

## **TROY LINT CLAIMS 2022 PBA50 REGIONAL PLAYERS INVITATIONAL TITLE**

### **JANUARY 3, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

For the fourth time this season, Troy Lint left the lanes with a trophy in his hand. This time, he exited South Point Bowling Plaza holding the Walter Ray Williams Jr. Championship trophy as the winner of the 2022 PBA50 Regional Players Invitational.

Lint earned his fourth regional title of the season and the \$10,000 top prize. Though the 54-year-old only joined the PBA three years ago, this victory marked the seventh of his career.

Lint's first title came in a 2020 PBA50/PBA60 doubles tournament. His partner was Darryl Bower, the same man he defeated in this afternoon's title match 246-237.

"Bowling against him meant more than you can imagine," Lint said. "He's my doubles partner. I hate bowling against him. He's a legend in Pennsylvania — he's a legend, period."

"If I couldn't win it, I'm just as happy for Troy," said Bower, who previously won the RPI in 1983 and 1985. "I didn't expect to win, but just as a tradition to come out and be a part of this tournament again means something to me."

Lint bowled exceptionally all tournament — he never shot a game below 200 — but he was particularly dominant on fresh oil. In Lint's five games on the fresh, he averaged more than 260, including a 300 in the first game of the tournament.

He said the pattern allowed him to utilize his power and take advantage of the shim. He used a combination of urethane and reactive throughout the tournament.

Lint could only think of one word to describe the feeling: incredible. He reflected on how he arrived at this stage in his bowling career.

"A really good friend of mine, Mike Markis, passed away (in April of 2021)," Lint said. "If it wasn't for Mike, I wouldn't be bowling in the PBA. I had no interest — and now it's all I care about."

"This win is setting my future plans in motion. I'm bowling everything."

In the semifinals, Lint, Bower, Rick Meneley and Brian Kretzer each opened with at least five strikes in a row. The scorching start ended with Meneley leaving a pocket 7-10 in the 6th frame, followed quickly by a wrap-10 from Kretzer.

Lint's string lasted one more frame before sparing the 4-7, but a second open frame from Meneley in the 8th gave Lint all the cushion he needed. Bower continued striking all the way to the 10th where a pesky 10-pin ended his bid for 300. He had more than enough to defeat Kretzer, who struggled with untimely pin carry.

In the Round of 8, Lint took the lead over [top qualifier](#) Bill Watson with a 280 in Game 1 — bringing his three-game total on the fresh to 803 — but Watson battled back to take Game 2. Lint fired seven of the first eight strikes to take Game 3, 249-215, ending the top seed's run.

Kretzer's opening match highlighted the Round of 16. He took a 1-0 lead over Mitch Beasley, who earned the No. 2 seed in qualifying. Beasley fell behind 1-0, but came back to take a 2-1 advantage with the help of a 300 in Game 3.

Beasley had a chance to take the match in Game 4, but wrapped a 10-pin and then left a stone-9 on his fill ball to lose a single pin. Kretzer advanced with a 218-200 win in Game 5.

Qualifying for the PBA division of the RPI begins at 6 p.m. ET on Tuesday, Jan. 3. All rounds of the PBA division will be livestreamed on [BowlTV](#). Live scores will be available [here](#).

## **FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Troy Lint, \$10,000
2. Darryl Bower, \$5,000
3. Rick Meneley, \$2,500
4. Brian Kretzer, \$2,500

## **MATCH PLAY SCORES**

### **Championship match**

Troy Lint def. Darryl Bower, 246-237

### **Round of 4**

Troy Lint def. Rick Meneley, 255-210

Darryl Bower def. Brian Kretzer, 279-246

### **Round of 8**

Troy Lint def. Bill Watson, 2-1

Rick Meneley def. Sammy Ventura, 2-0

Darryl Bower def. Lee Robison, 2-0

Brian Kretzer def. Andrew Rettig, 2-0

### **Round of 16**

Bill Watson def. Shawn Horenberger, 3-0

Troy Lint def. Gary Faulkner, 3-0

Sammy Ventura def. Rick Minier, 3-1

Rick Meneley def. Eugene McCune, 3-2

Darryl Bower def. 3-0

Lee Robison def. Ryan Shafer, 3-0

Andrew Rettig def. Jeff Atkins, 3-2

Brian Kretzer def. Mitch Beasley 3-2

Complete standings and game-by-game scores are available [here](#).

### **REMAINING RPI SCHEDULE**

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 3**

3 p.m. PST | 6 p.m. ET — PBA qualifying Round 1 (seven-game block)

#### **Wednesday, Jan. 4**

9 a.m. PST | 12 p.m. ET — PBA qualifying Round 2 (seven-game block)

4 p.m. PST | 7 p.m. ET — PBA division Round of 32 (best-of-five matches)

6:30 p.m. PST | 9:30 p.m. ET — PBA Round of 24 (best-of-five matches)

#### **Thursday, Jan. 5**

8 a.m. PST | 11 a.m. ET — PBA Round of 16 (best-of-three matches)

9:30 a.m. PST | 12:30 p.m. ET — PBA Round of 8 (best-of-three matches)

11 a.m. PST | 2 p.m. ET — PBA Round of 4 (single-game matches)

11:45 a.m. PST | 2:45 p.m. ET — PBA championship round (single-game match)

## **WILLIAMS, MAVRICK ADVANCE TO ROUND OF 16 AT 2022 PBA REGIONAL PLAYERS INVITATIONAL**

### **JANUARY 4, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

After a long day of competition at South Point Bowling Plaza in Las Vegas, 16 finalists have emerged at the 2022 PBA Regional Players Invitational.

Half of the advancers earned their spots through their performance across 14 games of qualifying.

Fero Williams continued his brilliance and led the 84-player competition through qualifying. Williams averaged over 247 — nearly five pins per game better than the next-best player — to pace the field with a 3,459 total pinfall.

“I feel good,” Williams said. “I’m trying to keep myself grounded more than anything and not get ahead of myself. That’s one of the biggest things in my career is always trying to stay level headed.”

During the first round of qualifying, a ball change helped spur a 300 game. But today, Williams said the pattern played a little bit longer. That allowed him to stay in the same ball for all seven games.

"The last three games I stayed around the track," Williams said. "I was tempted to switch balls like I did yesterday, but I was like, 'Well, this ball is getting to the pocket good. I can control it. If I miss a little bit right, it actually recovers. So let me just stick with this.'

"When it comes to people making a charge (at the lead), I wasn't really paying attention to scores. It was always more about staying in the top eight to try to get those two-round byes."

Cortez Schenck moved from fifth to second on the day, while Nathan Bohr, Colin Champion and Mykel Holliman each made strides up the leaderboard. Those five players, as well as [Day 1 leader](#) Cameron Weier, David Krol and Graham Fach, each clinched a spot in the Round of 16.

Eight additional competitors secured a berth in Thursday's competition. While the ninth through 16th qualifiers earned a one-round bye, qualifiers 17-32 needed to win a pair of best-of-five matches to advance.

Tom Hess secured the final spot of the 32-player bracket with a 3,112 total, edging Evan Nash by a single pin. However, Hess was soon sent packing by Tim Foy Jr. in the first round of match play in consecutive games.

While Zacharay Wilkins and Sean Lavery-Spahr also swept their opponents, all five other first-round matches went the distance.

John Furey's comeback from an 0-2 deficit against Deo Benard was briefly outshined by Trevor Roberts. The Floridian delivered his second 300 of the day to force a decisive Game 5 against Brian Robinson, but the West Virginian ultimately prevailed.

However, Robinson ran into a freight train by the name of Cody Shoemaker in the Round of 24. The East region's Player of the Year put up games of 288, 214 and 258 to take the match in a sweep.

The Round of 24 pitted Bailey Mavrick against Jeffery Mann, a pair of rising talents from central Indiana. Mavrick said the two compete almost every day back home.

Mavrick, a Midwest Region Qualifier finalist at the 2022 PBA Players Championship, leaped out to a 1-0 lead with a perfect game, the third of the day and sixth overall of the tournament.

Heading into the Round of 16, Mavrick said he'll stick with the same gameplan but will be ready to adjust if the lanes show otherwise. He said urethane has looked good on the 43-foot oil pattern, and playing inside with reactive has been successful as well.

"There are many angles to play," he said. "All week I've just been following what I see. If I see moves, I try to make them as quickly as possible and just stay in the moment."

The RPI resumes Jan. 5 at 11 a.m. ET on [BowlTV](#).

#### **TOP-16 MATCHUPS**

#1 Fero Williams vs. #17 Tim Foy Jr.  
#2 Cortez Schenck vs. #15 Cody Shoemaker  
#3 Nathan Bohr vs. #14 Bailey Mavrick  
#4 Colin Champion vs. #13 Alex Cavagnaro  
#5 Mykel Holliman vs. #12 Jean Perez  
#6 Cameron Weier vs. #22 Patrick Dombrowski  
#7 David Krol vs. #10 Matt Sanders  
#8 Graham Fach vs. #9 Anthony Schanen

#### **REMAINING RPI SCHEDULE**

##### **Thursday, Jan. 5**

8 a.m. PST | 11 a.m. ET — PBA Round of 16 (best-of-three matches)  
9:30 a.m. PST | 12:30 p.m. ET — PBA Round of 8 (best-of-three matches)  
11 a.m. PST | 2 p.m. ET — PBA Round of 4 (single-game matches)  
11:45 a.m. PST | 2:45 p.m. ET — PBA championship round (single-game match)

#### **DOMBROWSKI DEFEATS CHAMPION TO WIN 2022 PBA REGIONAL PLAYERS INVITATIONAL**

##### **JANUARY 5, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Patrick Dombrowski took the scenic route at the 2022 PBA Regional Players Invitational, but the final destination was worth the journey.

With a 267-259 victory over Colin Champion, he claimed the Walter Ray Williams Jr. Championship trophy and the \$16,000 top prize.

In the title match, Champion fired the first seven strikes. But Dombrowski, who began the match with a pair of single-pin spares, wasn't fazed.

Dombrowski struck on every shot from the third through ninth frame, waiting for an opportunity to sneak past the 30-year-old Floridian.

That moment came when Champion left a 4-pin in the 8th and a flat-10 in the final frame. With a strike on his fill ball, Champion forced Dombrowski to strike for the title.

Just like the previous seven shots, Dombrowski aced it to claim his ninth career PBA Regional Tour title, this one coming at South Point Bowling Plaza in Las Vegas.

"I got the monkey off my back," Dombrowski said. "I finally won outside of the Central region. It feels really good."

After qualifying in 22nd place, Dombrowski had to battle through six rounds of match play to claim the title. In the first two rounds, each best-of-five matches, he defeated Nick Borgaro in five games and Michael Schlabach in four.

Those victories gave the Ohio native a berth in today's Round of 16, which is where bowed out of last year's RPI. He said a better understanding of his arsenal helped him navigate transition and the subtle differences between pairs this year.

As the field whittled down, Dombrowski was the only player who used exclusively reactive equipment. He used a Fate in his semifinal win over David Krol, then a shiny Reality in the title match against Champion.

The 44-year-old said his "voodoo ball roll," as his friends like to call it, helps him utilize reactive equipment while many competitors use urethane. He said he moves his eyes back and forth on the lane to manipulate the ball motion as needed.

Champion, despite his surname, has yet to find the winner's circle on the PBA Regional Tour. He has finished fifth on the South region's points list over the past two seasons, racking up five runner-up finishes, he said.

He qualified fourth at the RPI and earned a two-round bye. But to reach the finals, a pair of southpaws in Jean Perez and Graham Fach stood in his path. Perez and Fach had been striking seemingly at-will, but the right-handed Champion knew they weren't invincible.

"When (the left-handers) started to bowl on the same pair continuously, they were forced to move," he said. "So I knew against Perez, if I could at least win one of the first two games, I was going to have a good chance in the third one."

In the semifinals, Champion would only have one game to knock off Fach. He dispatched the 11-time regional titleist with a 248-221 victory, marking Fach's second consecutive semifinal exit at the RPI.

Entering the 10th frame against Dombrowski, with both players sitting on max scores of 279, Champion felt his ball motion starting to go away.

"I knew I needed to make a move," said Champion, who works at Tom Daugherty's pro shop in Florida. "I moved half a board left, which is what I've been making all week, and trusted it. I threw a good shot, it just wasn't meant to be I guess."

Dombrowski enters the 2023 season with the validation that he can win outside of his home turf. The next tournament on his calendar: the U.S. Open at the end of the month.

#### **FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Patrick Dombrowski, \$16,000
2. Colin Champion, \$9,000

3. David Krol, \$5,000
4. Graham Fach, \$5,000
5. Cortez Schenck, \$2,500
6. Jean Perez, \$2,500
7. Bailey Mavrick, \$2,500
8. Tim Foy Jr., \$2,500

## **EXPANDED PBA COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS COMING IN 2023**

### **JANUARY 12, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The Wichita State men, champions of last season's first ever PBA Collegiate Invitational, will look to defend their title in 2023. This year's tournament includes more competition, an expanded field and a women's division.

The 2023 PBA Collegiate Championships will take place Feb. 2-3 in Indianapolis. The field will expand to 12 teams, including six men's and six women's teams. The teams were invited and will be seeded based on their ranking in USBC Collegiate's [Online Team Ranking System](#) as of Dec. 26, 2022.

The two finalists in the men's and women's fields will compete in championship matches that will air Feb. 19 on FS1. Preliminary matches will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

The new 42' PBA Steelsmith pattern will be used for this event, recognizing one of the greatest collegiate bowlers of all time in Rick Steelsmith. He won the 1987 Masters, while bowling for Wichita State, and the 1988 PBA Rookie of the Year award. Steelsmith is now the head coach of the Wichita State men's program.

Here are the teams competing in the 2023 PBA Collegiate Championships:

### **MEN'S FIELD**

University of Pikeville  
Wichita State University  
Lawrence Tech University  
Indiana Institute of Technology  
Tennessee Southern University  
Calumet College of St. Joseph

With six victories in nine tournaments under their belts thus far, the Pikeville Bears closed the 2022 calendar year as the top-ranked team in the nation. Indiana Tech's squad oozes young talent; they started four freshmen en route to a third place finish at the 2022 Intercollegiate Team Championships.



The second-ranked Shockers return almost every player from last year's rotation, including first team All-Americans Alec Keplinger and Ryan Barnes (the son of Chris Barnes), plus 2021 Masters finalist Spencer Robarge.

## **WOMEN'S FIELD**

Wichita State University  
University of Pikeville  
Mount Mercy University  
University of St. Francis (IL)  
Tennessee Southern University  
Trine University

The Shocker women, who finished runners-up at the 2022 Intercollegiate Team Championships, are the top-ranked team in the women's field. Former National Player of the Year Madison Janack and Team USA's Mary Orf headline this year's Wichita State team.

Both Tennessee Southern squads, with Bob Learn Jr. coaching the men and Bill Holbrook coaching the women, will be competing in Indianapolis, as will Kyle Wilson and Bobby Brown's Bears. The Mount Mercy women, spearheaded by Team USA assistant coach Andy Diercks, have been ranked first or second in each of the past three seasons.

## **QUALIFYING**

All qualifying will take place at Royal Pin Expo Bowl in Beach Grove, Ind. on Thursday, Feb. 2 starting at 5:15 p.m ET. All rounds are best-of-seven baker matches and will be streamed live on BowlTV.

### **Men's Quarterfinals: 5:15 p.m. ET**

No. 4 Indiana Tech vs. No. 5 Tennessee Southern  
No. 3 Lawrence Tech vs. No. 6 Calumet

### **Men's Semifinals: 7:15 p.m. ET**

Winner of 4/5 vs. No. 1 Pikeville  
Winner of 3/6 vs. No. 2 Wichita State

### **Women's Quarterfinals: 5:15 p.m.**

No. 4 St. Francis (IL) vs. No. 5 Tennessee Southern  
No. 3 Mount Mercy vs. No. 6 Trine

### **Women's Semifinals: 7:15 p.m.**

Winner of 4/5 vs. No. 1 Wichita State  
Winner of 3/6 vs. No. 2 Pikeville

*Winners of the semifinal matches advance to the PBA Collegiate Championships TV show.*

## **Finals**

The championship rounds move over to Royal Pin Woodland, home of the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!, on Friday, Feb. 3. The TV finals will air Sunday, Feb. 19 on FS1.

## **MAGIC DESTINED AS 2023 USBC MASTERS HEADS TO THUNDERBOWL LANES**

**JANUARY 13, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

It's where Tom Smallwood's Hollywoodesque, and later literal, story began. It's where Jason Belmonte ascended into PBA lore with his 11th career major title, and where Chris Via shot his second televised 300 of the 2021 season. It's even where Osku Palermaa lofted a ball to the moon and still struck.

It, of course, refers to Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Mich., the site of the 2023 USBC Masters and the third major of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour.

"It's the most historic bowling center in Michigan," said Andrew Anderson, who grew up an hour northwest in Holly.

No player has had more success at the Masters than Belmonte, who owns the record with four wins. He's also won four times at Thunderbowl, including the 2014 Tournament of Champions and 2019 World Championship.

"It definitely feels like a special event when you walk into the arena bay," Belmonte said. "It doesn't feel like a standard bowling center. It's just different for us players and I think that's one of the reasons why we do love that environment."

Allen Park hosted the first ever World Series of Bowling in 2009, where Smallwood blossomed from local legend to PBA major champion. Though Smallwood officially won the 2009-10 World Championship in Wichita, Kan., every round before the telecast took place at Thunderbowl.

And it seemed like every fan in Michigan was watching, Anderson included.

"I knew of Smallwood (before the World Championship run); we actually only grew up about 40 minutes from each other," Anderson said. "He was always unorthodox. He stood out in the crowd when he bowled. It really wasn't a surprise to those in Michigan who knew Smallwood, but the moment was just so big and for him to step up the way he did was really special. It ignited a lot of people's passion — not only in Michigan, but around the world."

Anderson won the 2018 Masters en route to a Player of the Year campaign. A second career major title would be a career changer, moving him one title away from eventual Hall of Fame consideration, but winning a title in his home state would mean "everything" to Anderson.

"As much as I would love to win the tournament in Jackson, I think we both know the bigger one is the Masters at Thunderbowl," he said. "That one would really hit home."

Long before Anderson can even think of winning a major on his home turf, he'll have to get past a two-time Masters champion in Anthony Simonsen. The 26-year-old is not only the defending Masters champion, but he won the last PBA Tour event at Thunderbowl at the 2021 PBA Tour Finals.

“The staff has always been so good to me and the rest of the PBA players while in town,” Simonsen said. “Detroit loves bowling and I can’t wait to go back and try to defend my Masters title there.”

With last season’s Masters win, Simonsen earned an automatic spot into this year’s 64-player match play bracket. With three-game matches on a single pair, the Masters places greater emphasis on preparation and gamesmanship. That’s where Simonsen believes he thrives.

“During a three-game set, so much can happen,” he said. “Being able to mentally stay in the match is a big help for the Masters.”

Because of the unique format, some players change how they attack the lanes based on their opponent’s strengths and weaknesses.

“It’s an element of the game that we don’t get to do very often, that type of strategic thinking,” Belmonte said. “I enjoy breaking down the puzzle and trying to see what is going to work this set.

“It’s one thing to find a line that you think is going to be great for your Game 1, but then how will that affect you Games 2 and 3? How will that affect your opponent? Will it benefit your opponent? Will it benefit you? Can you do something that will make it a little harder Games 2-3 for your opponent but also make it a little easier for you?”

Belmonte and Simonsen live on the precipice of bowling history. A pair of Michiganders in Anderson and Smallwood look to advance their Hall of Fame cases. And Dom Barrett is one Masters title shy of becoming the fourth Grand Slam winner in PBA history.

Add in the chaos of the bracket and mystique of Thunderbowl’s signature arena bay — something magical is bound to happen.

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The USBC Masters returns to Thunderbowl Lanes from March 26 through April 2. Subscribe to [Bow!TV](#) to watch qualifying and match play.

## **FIVE PRESEASON CANDIDATES FOR 2023 PBA ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**

### **JANUARY 17, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Last season, Santtu Tahvanainen became the fourth international player to win the Harry Golden PBA Rookie of the Year award. He joined the Tour at the World Series of Bowling and earned a top-10 finish in his debut tournament, setting the tone for his freshman campaign.

The Harry Golden PBA Rookie of the Year honors the top newcomer each season. Sometimes, the award becomes a footnote to a legendary career, as seen with Jesper Svensson (2014), EJ Tackett (2013), Jason Belmonte (2009) and Bill O’Neill (2006). Other times, winning Rookie of the Year represents the apex of a player’s PBA tenure.

With the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour now less than two weeks away, it’s time to consider potential Rookie of the Year candidates. A fresh crop of players each season makes this a difficult award to forecast, but here are a few rookies to watch entering the 2023 PBA Tour:

### **The Favorite: Cortez Schenck**

It's not often a presumed front-runner for Rookie of the Year exists before the season. But Cortez Schenck is, in many ways, an exception.

Schenck represented Junior Team USA six consecutive years from 2016-2021, including one year on the adult team, and has earned nine gold medals wearing the red, white and blue. In 2018, he won the gold medal at the World Bowling Youth Championships and the U.S. Amateur Championship.

The Arizona native elevated to the pro ranks last season. His debut at the West Regional Finals of [the Players Championship](#), where he pushed eventual champion Belmonte to the brink, appeared to be foreshadowing a Rookie of the Year campaign.

Unfortunately, Schenck's father passed away not long after the Players Championship and Schenck didn't touch a ball for months. While he bowled the Masters, 2023 will be his rookie season as he bowled in fewer than three PBA Tour events in 2022.

In June, he began competing on the regional tour, winning his first two tournaments en route to earning the West Region's [top freshman honors](#).

Schenck may be the on-paper favorite, at least to this writer, but he'll be up against a plethora of uber-talented and accomplished rookies. The following candidates are listed in alphabetical order.

### **Ryan Lane**

Lane tested the waters on the regional tour last season, where his six top-10 finishes and one title netted him South Region Rookie of the Year award.

His road to PBA Tour Rookie of the Year goes through many pre-tournament qualifiers far from his Florida roots, but the guy's name is literally *Lane* — he was born to bowl.

### **Dallas Leong**

The Las Vegas native has been among the nation's top amateurs for several years, finishing third at the U.S. Amateur Championship in 2022. The former Junior Team USA member was a First Team All-American in 2018-19 at UNLV.

After years of preparation, Leong has decided to make the leap to the Tour.

### **Jalen Mosley**

Mosley's run at the USBC Masters back in 2017, when the then-16-year-old finished tied-13th in the major, might be familiar to PBA fans. The right-hander has a low, smooth arm swing, but he rips the cover off the ball.

He'll kick off his freshman campaign in his hometown of Indianapolis at the U.S. Open.

### **Nate Stubler**

PBA fans got a glimpse of Stubler at the [2022 PBA Collegiate Invitational](#), and the southpaw is set to join the Tour following his exemplary career at St. Ambrose University. He earned back-to-back First Team All-American nods in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

He calls the Midwest home, but impressed on the national level in 2022. He took home runner-up finishes at the U.S. Amateur Championship and Intercollegiate Singles Championship.

This is, of course, not an exhaustive list; there are certainly quality candidates not mentioned in this piece. As seen with Tahvanainen last year, players can burst onto the Tour midseason and make a resounding case for the award.

## **PREVIEWING THE 2023 PBA PLAYER OF THE YEAR RACE**

### **JANUARY 18, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

From the first shot of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour to its last, consistency will be imperative in the race for the Chris Schenkel PBA Player of the Year award.

Jason Belmonte won the first and last televised tournaments of 2022, and three more in between, en route to winning his seventh career Player of the Year honor last season. He has captured all seven in the last 10 years, tying Walter Ray Williams Jr.'s record for the most POY awards in PBA history.

EJ Tackett (2016), Andrew Anderson (2018) and Kyle Troup (2021) have also earned the prestigious award over the past decade.

When discussing Player of the Year candidates heading into the 2023 season, there's only one place to start.

#### **The Favorite: Jason Belmonte**

Belmonte's 2022 campaign served as a reminder to any doubters following a down season in 2021. He tallied eight top-five and 13 top-10 finishes in 15 tournaments, winning a career-high five times last season.

But entering his age-39 season, the future Hall of Famer isn't feeling complacent about matching Williams's record of seven POYs.

"To equal him is a huge accomplishment and something I'm very, very proud of," Belmonte [said](#), "but it also motivates me to get one more, just one more and have that title all to myself."

Until proven otherwise, Belmonte is the top dog. His quest for an eighth POY trophy begins with an opportunity to complete a second career Super Slam at the U.S. Open.

#### **Top Contenders: Anthony Simonsen, EJ Tackett**

Many players have pushed Belmonte in spurts over the last decade, but these two players have consistently nipped at his heels.

Tackett earned Player of the Year honors in 2016 and led the Tour in average last season; Simonsen, who just turned 26, is coming off a season in which he won two of his four career majors.

Since Simonsen began competing full-time in 2015, the trio leads the Tour in major championship round appearances; Belmonte has made 22 major telecasts, compared to 13 for Simonsen and 11 for Tackett. No other player has more than seven.

But that's not the crazy part: It's more likely that at least two of the three reach a major telecast (12 of 38 majors) than none of them (eight). A combination of the trio have met in six major title matches over that stretch.

Simonsen and Tackett each won two titles and lost a title match to Belmonte last season. A few shots resulting differently could have flipped the script, and both will be tenacious to make sure that's the case in 2023.

### **In The Running: Kris Prather, Kyle Troup, Dom Barrett, Tommy Jones, Jakob Butturff, Jesper Svensson**

Outside of the top three, Prather and Barrett pose as great a threat as any walking into a major championship. But a lack of consistency has hampered their Player of the Year candidacy in recent seasons.

Troup, of course, took home this award just two seasons ago. After a midseason lull, he won his second consecutive PBA Playoffs to close 2022.

Jones regained his all-world form in 2022. He finished fifth, sixth, fifth, third and 13th in each major; his average finish of 6.4 was [the second best](#) on Tour. He struggled on each of those telecasts, but appeared to solve any TV woes with runner-up finish at the PBA Playoffs.

The left-handed threats Butturff and Svensson have to factor into any preseason Player of the Year consideration. When those two are dialed in, there isn't a player on the planet who can keep up.

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Recent history indicates the 2023 PBA Player of the Year is likely one of the aforementioned players. But this is professional sports — things rarely play out as expected and historical trends are meant to be broken.

Perhaps someone like AJ Johnson or Kyle Sherman flourishes this season, or a grizzled veteran like Sean Rash or Bill O'Neill finds the fountain of youth. Maybe a former POY candidate like François Lavoie or Chris Via reaches a new peak, or a young talent like Wesley Low or Michael Tang ascends to elite status.

As Norm Duke [wrote](#) recently, everyone is currently tied in the 2023 Player of the Year race. It's anybody's game heading into the U.S. Open.

## **SIX POTENTIAL BREAKOUT PLAYERS IN 2023**

### **JANUARY 19, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

As the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour approaches, one of the most fascinating things to watch each season are the breakout players.

The established competitors who elevate their games; the relative unknowns who become household names. The potent talents who at long last harness their explosive skills; the grinders who reap the rewards of paying their dues.

A handful of players showed tremendous growth last season and made leaps up the points list from 2021 to 2022. Kyle Sherman (45th to 11th), Brad Miller (43rd to 12th), Packy Hanrahan (31st to 13th), and Norm Duke (56th to 17th) fit the bill as breakout players. Okay, maybe not the last guy.

There are a multitude of avenues in which players can demonstrate improvement: increased shot repetition, sharpened mental game, refined ball roll — sometimes, a confidence boost is all a player needs to break out.

Here are a few players who could reach new heights in 2023:

#### **Darren Tang**

As he enters his eighth year on Tour, Tang has seen every challenge the lanes can throw his way. Those experiences allow him to decisively draw the correct arrow from his quiver.

If you've seen any of his vlogs, you know he's his own biggest critic. Over the years, he's matched a ceaseless desire to improve with a [greater appreciation for the game](#).

Tang owns one PBA Tour title and is among the most recognizable players in the world. This could be the year he becomes one of the game's best players, full stop.

#### **Sam Cooley**

Cooley finds himself in a similar career position to Tang. In 2021, when he won his first title and shot a televised 300 game, the Australian finished ninth in points. But he slipped to 38th in 2022 and earned a single top-20 finish.

Since the conclusion of the 2022 PBA Tour, Cooley has been, well, on fire. In July, he captured the singles gold medal at the World Games in Alabama. Later, he helped Australia earn the bronze medal at the IBF World Cup in his home country. On the PBA side, he won a pair of regionals and finished runner-up at the Coldwater super regional.

This offseason could serve as the injection of confidence needed to turn his career-best 2021 season into the status quo.

#### **Kim Bolleby**

Like Cooley, the 31-year-old has been collecting trophies across the globe all offseason. And therefore, he deserves his own terrible pun.

Bolleby has gone scorched earth on, well, the Earth this winter. He won the Singapore Open and a European Tour title in Stockholm, then finished second to Jesper Svensson at the Ballmaster Open in Finland last week.

The southpaw finished 75th last season in points. If his offseason growth carries into the Tour, he could cut that number in half.

### **Trevor Roberts**

The 26-year-old finished 66th in points last season, but if his improvement on the regional tour is any indication, he could be poised for a breakout in 2023.

After posting just one top-10 finish in 2021, Roberts racked up eight in 2022, including two wins, and earned South Region Player of the Year honors. At the 2022 Regional Players Invitational earlier this month, he [shot two 300s](#) in one day.

Roberts doesn't have EJ Tackett's rev rate, Chris Barnes' computer brain or Chris Via's biceps. He has to win with touch, precision and decisiveness, all abilities that take time to master. Perhaps his years of axe sharpening will pay off in 2023.

### **Anthony Neuer**

Neuer, to many PBA fans, is remembered for making the 7-10 split on TV. And while he'd rather [leave a legacy of winning titles](#) than fortuitous split conversions, that spare is indicative of Neuer's unique skill set.

Because of his ability to rattle the radar gun, Neuer can stay farther left, on top of the friction, when many other lefties cannot. When Neuer's able to cut loose — such as the short pattern at the last two Team USA Trials, where he averaged over 255 across 12 games — he can be unbeatable.

As he develops the finesse side of his game, he should become a more consistent fixture on the PBA Tour. And when he can throw fireballs, he's a threat to win.

### **Kevin McCune**

McCune and Neuer are each the sons of PBA Tour champions; McCune is also the [grandson of one](#). A childhood of learning from — or, more accurately, trying to beat — professional family members accelerates skill development and enhances instincts.

It can also help reduce the steep learning curve of the Tour. That was evident in McCune's stellar rookie season, in which he finished 50th in points and second in Rookie of the Year voting.

Outside of his 16th-place finish at the U.S. Open and T-25th place finish at the USBC Masters, he struggled to crack the top 30 in tournaments. With a little more consistency, McCune could make the borderline cliché sophomore leap.



## **INDIANAPOLIS' WOODLAND POISED TO EXPAND ITS EXTENSIVE PBA LEGACY AT U.S. OPEN**

**JANUARY 25, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Royal Pin Woodland in Indianapolis, the site of this year's U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!, has been at the forefront of the bowling's evolution for decades. It's the only center to have hosted all five PBA majors, and the game's most revered names have all left their mark — literally.

Each PBA Tour champion at Woodland earns a banner that hangs within its bar/restaurant "Beer Thirty." The bar serves as the center's personal hall of fame, as the names of past and present icons dangle from its rafters.

Walter Ray Williams Jr. tied Earl Anthony's record at Woodland with his 41st career PBA title in 2006. Norm Duke won the first of a PBA-record three consecutive majors there in 2008.

But arguably the most transformative victory in the Hoosier State's epicenter came 10 years ago.

With a 224-179 victory in the 2013 Tournament of Champions title match, Pete Weber equaled the great Earl Anthony with his 10th career major title. It was a triumph more than three decades in the making.

The 50-year-old, longtime face of professional bowling had finally ascended to the apex. As he raised both arms to the sky and his signature sunglasses descended to the floor, all the runner-up, 29-year-old Jason Belmonte, could do was watch.

In many ways, the match represents a turning point in PBA history. And much of the transition from one era to the next can be traced back to Woodland.

Belmonte, who only owned a single major title at the time (though a second would be retroactively awarded), accelerated his charge to surpass Weber and Anthony the next season. He won the next two Tournament of Champions, including the 2015 event at Woodland.

EJ Tackett was the Rookie of the Year in 2013, and made his U.S. Open debut on his home turf in 2010. Jakob Butturff won his first televised title at Woodland in 2018.

For Anthony Simonsen, the Indianapolis venue has been particularly momentous. It's where he became the youngest ever major champion in 2016, and where he became the youngest to win three majors at last year's U.S. Open.

Despite the mutiny by the game's next generation, the old guard didn't go down without a fight.

In 2015, Parker Bohn III snared his 34th career title and third major in a roll-off against Indiana's own Ronnie Russell. Eleven years after his 2008 win, Duke returned to Woodland and captured the first of his back-to-back titles at 54.

It's almost hard to fathom one venue could be the setting of so much history. And yet, as the banners within Beer Thirty are joined by the PBA Tour's own in the main concourse for the U.S. Open, Indiana's finest modern player, Tackett, is still in search of the former.

From Belmonte's ambitions of a second Super Slam to Tackett and Kris Prather's Triple Crown pursuit, not to mention the limitless potential for new legacies to be written, the scene is primed for another transformative moment in PBA history.

## **EJ TACKETT EYES REDEMPTION, TRIPLE CROWN AT 2023 U.S. OPEN**

**JANUARY 26, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Heading into last year's U.S. Open, EJ Tackett found himself in an idyllic position. The born-and-raised Hoosier entered Indianapolis' Royal Pin Woodland with a chance to augment his PBA legacy.

A dozen years earlier, Tackett made his U.S. Open debut at Woodland in 2010 as an amateur. And with major titles at the 2016 World Championship and 2017 Tournament of Champions under his belt, winning the U.S. Open would complete the Triple Crown.

Only eight players in PBA history have attained all three trophies. For Tackett, adding his name to that exclusive list, on his home turf, would be a career-defining achievement.

It was one of the rare moments in sports where everything — from the historic possibilities, to his internal motivations, to the ancillary narratives — came together. The potential script was so tantalizing Disney would find it too good to be true.

Tackett didn't let the noise cloud his head; if anything, it fueled him.

Over 56 games of grueling competition on four different oil patterns, he obliterated the field by 502 pins. The 502-pin difference between himself and the second-place qualifier, Anthony Simonsen, was greater than the gap between Simonsen and the 13th-place finisher.

The top seed earned him a berth in the championship match and placed him one game from a fairytale ending.

"With the Triple Crown and never winning (a PBA Tour title) in Indiana and it being the U.S. Open, the story was so great," Tackett said.

"It's just, that's where it ended."

*Anthony Simonsen stole the show and defeated Tackett for the 2022 U.S. Open title | Photo credit: USBC*

In the title match, a slow start snowballed into a disaster. It took Tackett three shots to strike on the right lane, then errant shots led to open frames on the left. By the time he found a groove, it was too late.

Simonsen engaged cruise control by the third frame and rolled to a 232-165 victory, becoming the youngest player to win three major titles.

Tackett did add his name to a historic list, just not the one he wanted. With the loss, he joined Jakob Butturff and Hall of Famers Earl Anthony and Walter Ray Williams Jr. as U.S. Open runners-up who led by more than 500 pins.

As the days following the tournament turned into weeks and months, the feeling of disappointment faded. He captured a pair of doubles titles with Marshall Kent, one of his best friends, and Diandra Asbaty and led the Tour in average.

Heading into 2023, a burning determination has filled the place of any lingering dismay for the 30-year-old.

“When something like that happens, I always feel like I have something to prove,” he said. “Leading by that much wasn’t a fluke. I can do it again.”

Tackett referenced the 2015 World Championship, where he also qualified as the top seed. He was the only right-handed player to make the show — “and then I bowled awful on the show.”

The next year, Tackett came back with vengeance and repeated as the tournament leader. Facing Tom Smallwood, who shot 266 in the semifinal, Tackett held a one-pin lead through six frames.

This time, nothing — not the pins, not the pattern and certainly not the past — would stand between Tackett and the trophy. He struck on his final six shots to earn the first major title of his career and secure 2016 Chris Schenkel PBA Player of the Year honors.

As the U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! once again descends upon Woodland, the picturesque narrative, now including an additional chapter and redemptive arc, remains for the future first-ballot Hall of Famer.

It’s his mission to write the ending.

## **JONES, BELMONTE TO CAPTAIN USA VS. THE WORLD TEAMS**

### **JANUARY 27, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

One of the highlights of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour is the return of the USA vs. The World event at the World Series of Bowling XIV.

During a pair of FS1 telecasts on April 15-16, four Americans will compete against four international stars for the right to the Hall of Fame Cup, which will reside at the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame in Arlington, Texas.

Tommy Jones is set to captain the Americans, while Australia's Jason Belmonte leads the World team. The remaining players will be determined during the 2023 PBA Tour.

On Feb. 13, before the PBA Shawnee Classic, each captain will select one player to join their team. Belmonte can choose any international player, while Jones can tab any American.

The final roster spots will be determined following the Tournament of Champions based on the 2023 PBA Tour points list. The top two Americans and international players in points through the Tour's first six tournaments will join the USA and World teams, respectively.

Jones is an 11-time Team USA member, and one of five players to win PBA Rookie and Player of the Year during his career. The 44-year-old South Carolinian owns 20 career titles, including two majors, and was inducted into the PBA Hall of Fame in 2020.

"I've always enjoyed bowling with USA on my jersey, whether it's been for the Weber Cup or bowling for Team USA," Jones said. "This is a little bit of a different animal and something that is pretty cool, bowling and coaching some of the greatest guys throwing the ball these days."

The 39-year-old Belmonte is still at the peak of his powers, earning a record-tying seventh PBA Player of the Year award in 2022. Belmonte owns 30 career titles, including a PBA-record 14 majors.

"I can't wait to captain the World team against the USA," said Belmonte, who was a member of the victorious World team at the last USA vs. The World event in 2019. "I have a few players on my radar I'm looking at for my selection, but before that I'm excited to bowl TJ for the seeding at the historic Holler House."

Milwaukee's Holler House will host a one-game match between Jones and Belmonte at the World Series of Bowling. Its two wood lanes are the oldest sanctioned pair in the United States. To this day, oiling, scoring and pinsetting are done by hand.

"I've been there a couple of times just to see the place and it's pretty nostalgic," Jones said. "I'm really looking forward to bowling a match there. I'm not sure that either one of us have had a whole lot of experience with that. I'm hoping that straighter is going to be greater and that we'll be able to prevail."

The winner of the match will earn the top seed for the TV finals and lane choice for every match of the finals. The match will be livestreamed on the PBA's YouTube channel for free. Any proceeds will be donated to the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame.

The two-part TV finals will be held at Bowlero Wauwatosa, kicking off the seven-telecast World Series of Bowling XIV. Both shows will air live on FS1.

On April 15, the teams will square off in four singles matches with five points up for grabs (one point per match and one point for total combined pinfall).

Teamwork becomes crucial on April 16 as doubles and baker matches take center stage. Two points will go to the winning teams of an alternate shot doubles match and best ball doubles match. A Race to Two team baker match worth five points will close out the competition.

The team with the most points will claim the Hall of Fame Cup.

“As competitive bowling continues to grow globally, we aim to make USA vs. The World the ultimate international team event,” said PBA Commissioner Tom Clark. “With this year’s twists of Tommy and Belmo as the playing captains, a new trophy and its spot at the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame, the captain’s match at historic Holler House and two days of live multi-event coverage on FS1 from the WSOB, we will reintroduce and elevate this annual competition.”

## **JASON BELMONTE AND HIS “OUT-OF-YOUR-MIND” GOALS FOR 2023 AND BEYOND**

**JANUARY 30, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

As Jason Belmonte relinquishes a blissful summer in Australia, where his wife and four children reside, for a wintry month in the American Midwest, it’s fair to wonder what makes it all worthwhile for the 39-year-old.

In 2019, he won the tenth and 11th major titles of his career, surpassing Pete Weber and Earl Anthony for the PBA’s all-time record. A year later, Belmonte won the U.S. Open, the lone major he had yet to conquer. He became the second player to complete the Super Slam, winning all five major championships.

His season-opening win at the 2022 Players Championship, upping his career total to 14 major victories, catapulted another Player of the Year campaign. That marked his seventh such honor of his career, all in the past decade, etching his name alongside Walter Ray Williams Jr. as the only seven-time winners in PBA history.

Williams still owns the record with 47 Tour titles, but beyond that, what’s left to chase? Belmonte said he’s been asked that very question for more than three years.

“I’ve heard people say to me, ‘Now that you’ve done that, what’s next?’” Belmonte said. “Nothing. It’s the same, like I’m not done with just beating the record. I want to get to double; I want to get to 20.

“I’ve got bigger goals than the ones that were laid in front of me. I’ve got out-of-your-mind goals.”

One of those ambitions begins this week at the U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! With a win, Belmonte would hold multiple titles at every major championship.

Mike Aulby is the only other player to have completed the Super Slam, enjoying nearly 25 years by himself at the mountaintop before Belmonte joined him in 2020. Now, the Indianapolis native could witness the two-handed sensation ascend to a new zenith in his own backyard.

“It’s unbelievable, unfathomable,” Aulby said. “But it’s Belmo — that’s what he does. He does things that nobody ever thinks of.”

In past seasons, Belmonte said, he’d prefer to spend a few weeks in the United States acclimating before such a prodigious tournament. But after last year’s win in the season-opener, he said he feels more relaxed about competing straight out of the gate.

In fact, he’s already gazing beyond the horizon.

“Eventually, if I can win (the U.S. Open) a third time, then I will have won the Super Slam three times over,” said Belmonte, who owns at least three wins at each of the four other majors. “That’s something

that would mean a lot to me because it's having a dominance in the major championships unlike anyone has ever done before.

The U.S. Open may be the tournament that checks the most boxes off for Belmonte, but perhaps it's the season as a whole that presents the grandest opportunity.

This season, he's pursuing a potential eighth Player of the Year honor, an achievement that would place him in rarefied air. Beyond surpassing Williams, the athletes with eight or more equivalent honors can be counted on one hand.

Tiger Woods owns 11 Jack Nicklaus Awards for PGA TOUR Player of the Year. Wayne Gretzky won all nine of his NHL MVP awards in a 10-year span during the 1980s.

Steffi Graf won eight Women's Tennis Association Player of the Year awards; Serena Williams only won seven.

Those are the names Belmonte is approaching. But those aren't the names who drive him, the ones who push him to spend an afternoon practicing at the lanes instead exploring the Outback.

Though Belmonte said he still considers Williams to be [the best ever](#), his current motivator isn't anyone in front of him. It's the ones chasing him, specifically EJ Tackett and Anthony Simonsen.

"For a long time, EJ has been a motivator of mine," Belmonte said. "And then Anthony gets involved (in 2015-16), and now you've got two people who are really gunning for you in particular.

"It makes you work even harder and focus even more because you've got to look over both shoulders now."

Tackett, 30, has two wins and five runner-up finishes in majors. He blew the doors off last year's U.S. Open, leading by 502 pins, before Simonsen knocked him off in the title match. Belmonte finished third.

Simonsen perhaps carries a more haunting presence, as he just completed his 26th trip around the sun. Belmonte won his first major at 28; Simonsen already has four, boasting an unprecedented track record in majors.

"I link the three of us to something along the lines of a Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic kind of trio," Belmonte said. "On any given day, all three of us can win against each other. And consistently through the season, it definitely appears that the three of us tend to be higher in the standings."

Because of those two, Belmonte's records — both the ones he's shattered and the ones he's invented — don't feel safe.

"My job is to make them chase my legacy and career as hard as possible," Belmonte said. "That's my job."

## TEECE LEADS AFTER DAY 1 OF QUALIFYING AT 2023 U.S. OPEN

**INDIANAPOLIS** – Richie Teece feels like he bowls his best when he's able to stay relaxed and avoid panic in the face of adversity.

The right-hander from England certainly appeared calm and collected throughout Tuesday's opening round of qualifying at Royal Pin Woodland (formerly Woodland Bowl) in Indianapolis as he fired an eight-game total of 1,756 to emerge as overall leader at the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!

Teece's day began at a modest pace with games of 201, 177 and 202, but things heated up considerably from there as he closed with scores of 258, 225, 182, 255 and 256 to vault to the top of the standings.

Teece averaged 219.5 per game on a day when only 30 of the 108 competitors in the field managed to average 200 or better, and he made the extremely challenging 49-foot Day 1 oil pattern look relatively easy when several past major champions were visibly frustrated by it from start to finish.

As such, it would be an understatement to say that Teece was happy with his opening-round performance.

"I've bowled in the U.S. Open six times now, but this is the first time that I've ever been the leader," Teece said. "It was definitely a rollercoaster of emotions, but it feels sensational."

That rollercoaster ride was experienced by just about everyone who was watching the scoreboard and trying to determine who would walk away with the lead after C Squad Tuesday night.

Heading into the eighth and final game, five bowlers on the squad – Tomas Kayhko of Finland; Shawn Maldonado of Sugarland, Texas; Kevin McCune of Munster, Indiana; Teece and Francois Lavoie of Canada – all had a chance to wrestle the lead away from Denmark's Thomas Larsen, who held the lead at 1,749 prior to the start of the final squad.

However, as the final game was drawing to a close, it was clear that the battle for the top spot would come down to just two players, Teece and Kayhko.

Teece began his 10th frame with a double, which forced Kayhko to strike on the first ball of his final frame in order to remain in the lead. It was not to be, however, as his shot missed the head pin to the right, ending the drama and giving the Day 1 lead to Teece.

There was no drama for Teece though as he didn't even realize he was still in contention for the top spot at that point.

"I'm not a scoreboard watcher at all, so I actually thought some other guys had already posted scores higher than what I could finish with. All I wanted to do was fill the last

frame and move on to the next day,” Teece said. “But then someone came up to me and told me I was leading, which, obviously, was really cool to hear.”

Maldonado finished tied for second with Larsen at 1,749 while Kayhko was just one pin behind at 1,748. Lavoie claimed the final position in the Day 1 top five; he finished with 1,744.

Defending U.S. Open champion Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas got his title defense off to a solid start, finishing the day in 20th place with a 1,627 total.

Although Teece was pleased with the strong start, he knows that the U.S. Open is a marathon, not a sprint. As such, he understands that it will take more than just one strong round to remain in contention come crunch time.

“Getting off to a start like this relaxes me a little bit because it gives me a small buffer, but that buffer can go away pretty quick in a tournament as challenging as this one,” Teece said. “Because of that, I just need to approach tomorrow and the day after that the same way I approached today, which is just to take it shot by shot and frame by frame.”

Teece and his fellow competitors will complete 16 more games of qualifying over the next two days on two different lane conditions before the field is cut from 108 to 24 for three rounds of round-robin match play, which will begin Friday morning at 10 a.m. Eastern and be contested on a fourth oil pattern.

Once match play begins, players’ 48-game totals, including 30 bonus pins for each win during match play, will decide the nine bowlers who advance to the two live televised rounds.

The first round will feature seeds No. 5-9 battling it out on FS1 Saturday at 4 p.m. Eastern. The bowler who wins that stepladder will join seeds No. 1-4 for the championship round Sunday at 2 p.m. Eastern on FOX.

The 2023 U.S. Open is a collaborative effort between the United States Bowling Congress and Bowling Proprietor’s Association of America and again will be considered a major on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour. The total prize fund for the event will exceed \$275,000.



**2023 U.S. Open  
At Royal Pin Woodland  
Indianapolis**

**Tuesday's results**

**ROUND 1 QUALIFYING  
(Eight games)**

1, Richard Teece, England, 1,756. 2 (Tie), Shawn Maldonado, Sugarland, Texas, 1,749 and Thomas Larsen, Denmark, 1,749. 4, Tomas Kayhko, Finland, 1,748. 5, Francois Lavoie, Canada, 1,744. 6, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 1,729.

7, Kevin McCune, Munster, Ind., 1,721. 8, Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., 1,715. 9, Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., 1,713. 10, A.J. Chapman, Lewisville, Texas, 1,694. 11, E.J. Tackett, Bluffton, Ind., 1,685. 12, Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 1,683.

13, Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 1,681. 14, Trevor Roberts, Tampa, Fla., 1,676. 15, Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, 1,669. 16, Ronnie Russell, Marion, Ind., 1,655. 17, Stuart Williams, Pflugerville, Texas, 1,638. 18, Frank Snodgrass, Sterling Heights, Mich., 1,633.

19, Petey Vergos, Apopka, Fla., 1,629. 20, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, 1,627. 21, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 1,617. 22 (Tie), Sam Cooley, Australia, 1,615. and William Jones, Anoka, Minn., 1,615. 24, Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 1,612.

25 (Tie), Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y., 1,610 and Matthew Sanders, Evansville, Ind., 1,610. 27, Richard Allen, Chapin, S.C., 1,608. 28, Zach Wilkins, Canada, 1,605. 29, Wesley Low, Palmdale, Calif., 1,604.

30, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 1,603. 31, Bill O'Neil, Langhorne, Pa., 1,599. 32, Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland, 1,596. 33, Matt Ogle, Louisville, Ky., 1,594. 34, Nathan Smith, Noblesville, Ind., 1,591. 35, Matthew Zweig, Scottsdale, Ariz., 1,589. 36, Nathan Bohr, Round Rock, Texas, 1,583.

37, Ric McCormick, Cincinnati, 1,582. 38, Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 1,576. 39, A.J. Johnson, Oswego, Ill., 1,573. 40 (Tie), Darren Tang, Las Vegas, 1,570 and Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., 1,570. 42, Michael Tang, Pickerington, Ohio, 1,565.

43 (Tie), Timothy Foy Jr., Seaford, Del., 1,564; Dan Higgins, Lewis Center, Ohio, 1,564; Bryan Hahlen, Greenwood, S.C., 1,564 and Alec Keplinger, Wichita, Kan., 1,564. 47 (Tie), Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 1,562 and Andrew Anderson, Holly, Mich., 1,562.

49, Ryan Ciminelli, Monroe, N.C., 1,560. 50, Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., 1,559. 51, Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, 1,557. 52, Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., 1,555. 53, Toby Sambueno, Orlando, Fla., 1,550. 54, Zach Weidman, Indianapolis, 1,549.

55, Brandon Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 1,548. 56, Patrick Hanrahan, Wichita, Kan., 1,543. 57 (Tie), Dominica Barrett, England, 1,542 and Spencer Robarge, Springfield, Mo., 1,542. 59, Ronnie Fujita, Richmond, Calif., 1,540. 60, Michael Jachcinski, Camden, Mich., 1,539. 61 (Tie), Mookie Betts, Encino, Calif., 1,538 and Jason Belmonte, Australia, 1,538.

63, Brad Miller, Lees Summit, Mo., 1,537. 64, Trent Mitchell, Chicago, 1,536. 65, Christopher Sloan, Ireland, 1,531. 66, Mitch Hupe, Canada, 1,530.

67, Brandon Runk, Milton, Pa., 1,522. 68 (Tie), Ryan Barnes, Denton, Texas, 1,521 and Osku Palermaa, Finland, 1,521. 70, Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., 1,517. 71 (Tie), Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 1,513 and Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 1,513.

73 (Tie), Ramsey Basurto, Verdes, Calif., 1,506 and Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., 1,506. 75, Nicholas Pate, Inver Grove Heights, Minn., 1,500. 76, D.J. Archer, Houston, Texas, 1,495. 77, Alec Reseland, Urbandale, Iowa, 1,490. 78, Tommy Jones, Simpsonville, S.C., 1,486.

79, Wes Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind., 1,485. 80, Arturo Quintero, Mexico, 1,483. 81, Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, 1,482. 82 (Tie), Charlie Brown Jr., Rockford, Mich., 1,477 and Nathan Stubler, LaSalle, Ill., 1,477.

84 (Tie), Andrew Hall, Westborough, Mass., 1,476 and Cameron Crowe, Orland Park, Ill., 1,476. 86, Dwight Adams, Greensboro, N.C., 1,475. 87, Martin Larsen, Sweden, 1,473. 88, Justin Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 1,468. 89, Peter Fox, West Hartford, Conn., 1,467. 90 (Tie), Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., 1,466 and Ildemaro Ruiz, Venezuela, 1,466.

92, Brent Boho, Indianapolis, 1,463. 93, Jean Perez, Greenwood, Ind., 1,459. 94, Timothy Gruendler, St. Louis, 1,457. 95 (Tie), Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., 1,451 and Anthony Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 1,451.

97, Bailey Mavrick, Fishers, Ind., 1,443. 98, Matthew T. Kuba, Tinley Park, Ill., 1,433. 99 (Tie), Terrance Rock III, Las Vegas, 1,432 and William Clark, Montgomery, Ill., 1,432. 101, Zach Greim, Poway, Calif., 1,423. 102, Michael Eaton Jr., Byron Center, Mich., 1,422.

103, Eric Jones, Edmond, Okla., 1,417. 104, Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 1,406. 105, Joseph Grondin, San Pedro, Calif., 1,399. 106, Matt Russo, Fairview Heights, Ill., 1,370. 107, Jordan Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind., 1,368. 108, Cristian Azcona, Clermont, Fla., 1,362.

## **LARSEN LEADS 2023 U.S. OPEN HEADING INTO FINAL ROUND OF QUALIFYING**

**INDIANAPOLIS** – With one qualifying round remaining before the first cuts are made, Thomas Larsen of Denmark leads the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!

Wednesday's second round of qualifying was an interesting one as many competitors made strong moves up the leaderboard while others struggled to hang on.

Larsen, on the other hand, stayed consistent, recording an eight-game total of 1,728 (a 216 average) on Day 2 to go along with the 1,749 he notched on Day 1.

Larsen's two-day, 16-game total of 3,477 allowed him to stay just in front of second-place E.J. Tackett of Bluffton, Indiana (3,473) and third-place Shawn Maldonado of Sugarland, Texas (3,463), both of whom had solid second rounds of their own.

The consistency that Larsen has shown over the course of the first two rounds is a commodity that would serve any bowler well, particularly during the pursuit of a U.S. Open title.

Larsen attributes his steadiness to his early experiences learning the game in Denmark.

“Growing up, we were never really exposed to bowling on house shots like you see over here. We didn’t necessarily always bowl on tough patterns, but we saw a lot of variety, dry patterns, bad patterns, you name it. Even the easy conditions we saw weren’t as easy as normal house shots,” Larsen said. “That forced me to grow up having to be able to hit my target and repeat shots. I think that’s something that I’ve kept building on ever since.”

On Wednesday, Larsen built upon his overall score, and he didn’t wait long to begin.

Larsen opened Round 2 with games of 227, 220, 232, 227, 204 and 248 before finally beginning to slow down.

Oil pattern transition and a couple of tricky pairs of lanes led to finishing scores of 183 and 187, the latter being a clean game in which Larsen didn’t record a strike.

Still, Larsen’s ability to control the pocket and convert spares allowed him to minimize the damage and remain the tournament’s overall leader with just one qualifying round remaining.

Even though Larsen has won a major championship before – he was the 2021 United States Bowling Congress Masters champion – leading a U.S. Open through two rounds is uncharted ground.

Nevertheless, he isn’t wasting time and energy looking too far ahead. He and his squad-mates will, however, have to wait longer than their fellow competitors to get back to action as B Squad will be the last group to bowl its third and final qualifying round on Thursday.

“From the perspective of jetlag, it would probably be better for me to get back out there earlier in the day. However, by bowling later, I’ll get to watch two squads, see what the lanes are doing and have a good idea of what I have to go out there and do,” Larsen said. “I don’t think bowling later is going to end up being a big issue.”

Larsen is correct; the big issue will be reaching the top 24 by the end of Thursday’s final qualifying round because all bowlers who fail to do so will see their 2023 U.S. Open runs come to an end.

Several players will come into Thursday’s round looking to build upon the stellar efforts they put together during Round 2.

Tom Daugherty of Riverview, Florida, bowled the round of the day, coming in with an eight-game total of 1,832, which was good for a 229 average and helped move Daugherty up from 52nd place after Day 1 to seventh place after Wednesday's round.

Matt Ogle of Louisville had a memorable day himself, using a 285 in Game 4 to propel himself to the day's second-best series with 1,804. The effort was enough to move Ogle all the way up to sixth.

Nevertheless, the position everyone is eyeing at this point is 24th, and through two rounds that spot is held by Kristopher Prather of Romeoville, Illinois. Prather shot an A Squad-best 1,789 on Wednesday to reach a two-day, 16-game total of 3,274.

Nevertheless, there are 20 bowlers within 100 pins of the final spot, and with eight games remaining on a flat 39-foot oil pattern that is expected to be the most challenging the players have faced yet, it's likely that there will be lots of movement in the standings as qualifying comes to a close.

Once all competitors complete their final eight games of qualifying on Thursday, the field will be cut from 108 to 24 for three rounds of round-robin match play, which will begin Friday morning at 10 a.m. Eastern and be contested on an oil pattern the players haven't seen yet.

Once match play begins, players' 48-game totals, including 30 bonus pins for each win during match play, will decide the nine bowlers who advance to the two live televised rounds.

The first round will feature seeds No. 5-9 battling it out on FS1 Saturday at 4 p.m. Eastern. The bowler who wins that stepladder will join seeds No. 1-4 for the championship round Sunday at 2 p.m. Eastern on FOX.

The 2023 U.S. Open is a collaborative effort between the United States Bowling Congress and Bowling Proprietor's Association of America and again will be considered a major on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour. The total prize fund for the event will exceed \$275,000.

For more information about the U.S. Open, visit [BOWL.com/USOpen](https://www.bowl.com/usopen).

**2023 U.S. Open**  
**At Royal Pin Woodland**  
**Indianapolis**

**Wednesday's results**

**ROUND 2 QUALIFYING**  
**(Eight games)**

1, Thomas Larsen, Denmark, 3,477. 2, E.J. Tackett, Bluffton, Ind., 3,473. 3, Shawn Maldonado, Sugarland, Texas, 3,463. 4, Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, 3,435. 5, A.J. Chapman, Lewisville, Texas, 3,410. 5, Matt Ogle, Louisville, Ky., 3,398.

7, Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., 3,387. 8, Frank Snodgrass, Sterling Heights, Mich., 3,386. 9 (Tie), Richard Teece, England, and Tomas Kayhko, Finland, 3,383. 11, Kevin McCune, Munster, Ind., 3,371. 12, Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 3,369.

13, Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., 3,368. 14, Francois Lavoie, Canada, 3,359. 15, Stuart Williams, Pflugerville, Texas, 3,385. 16 (Tie), Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., and Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 3,352. 18, Trevor Roberts, Tampa, Fla., 3,345.

19, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, 3,352. 20, Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 3,330. 21, Sam Cooley, Australia, 3,325. 22, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 3,321. 23, Bryan Hahlen, Greenwood, S.C., 3,317. 24, Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 3,302.

25, Tom Hess, Granger Iowa, 3,288. 26, Richard Allen, Chapin, S.C., 3,278. 27, Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 3,275. 28, Mitch Hupe, Canada, 3,274. 29, Christopher Sloan, Ireland, 3,273. 30, Ronnie Russell, Marion, Ind., 3,270.

31, Nicholas Pate, Inver Grove Heights, Minn., 3,265. 32, Matthew Sanders, Evansville, Ind., 3,259. 33, Alec Keplinger, Wichita, Kan., 3,253. 34, Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y., 3,250. 35, Nathan Smith, Noblesville, Ind., 3,247. 36, Tommy Jones, Simpsonville, S.C., 3,242.

37, Nathan Bohr, Round Rock, Texas, 3,239. 38, Ryan Ciminelli, Monroe, N.C., 3,235. 39, Wesley Low, Palmdale, Calif., 3,228. 40, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 3,227. 41, Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland, 3,224. 42, Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 3,223.

43, Zach Weidman, Indianapolis, 3,205. 44, Trent Mitchell, Chicago, 3,204. 45, Andrew Anderson, Holly, Mich., 3,200. 46, Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., 3,196. 47, Zach Wilkins, Canada, 3,191. 48, Timothy Foy Jr., Seaford, Del., 3,188.

49, Charlie Brown Jr., Rockford, Mich., 3,186. 50 (Tie) Spencer Robarge, Springfield, Mo., and Matthew Kuba, Tinley Park, Ill., 3,183. 52, Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, 3,179. 53, Matthew Zweig, Scottsdale, Ariz., 3,177. 54, Darren Tang, Las Vegas, 3,175.

55, Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 3,174. 56, A.J. Johnson, Oswego, Ill., 3,172. 57, Bailey Mavrick, Fishers, Ind., 3,169. 58, Patrick Hanrahan, Wichita, Kan., 3,158. 59, Jason Belmonte, Australia, 3,155. 60, Michael Jachcinski, Camden, Mich., 3,152.

61, Cameron Crowe, Orland Park, Ill., 3,151. 62, William Jones, Anoka, Minn., 3,149. 63, Dominic Barrett, England, 3,142. 64, Michael Tang, Pickerington, Ohio, 3,136. 65, Dan Higgins, Lewis Center, Ohio, 3,135. 66, Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, 3,121.

67, Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., 3,120. 68, Brad Miller, Lees Summit, Mo., 3,114. 69, Ronnie Fujita, Richmond, Calif., 3,105. 70, Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., 3,098. 71 (Tie), Brandon Runk, Milton, Pa., and Nathan Stubler, LaSalle, Ill., 3,097.

73 (Tie), Bill O'Neil, Langhorne, Pa., and Martin Larsen, Sweden, 3,095. 75, Ildemaro Ruiz, Venezuela, 3,094. 76 (Tie), Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., and Terrance Rock III, Las Vegas, 3,092. 78, Justin Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 3,085.

79, Ramsey Basurto, Verdes, Calif., 3,081. 80, Timothy Gruendler, St. Louis, 3,079. 81, Ric McCormick, Cincinnati, 3,078. 82, Petey Vergos, Apopka, Fla., 3,074. 83, D.J. Archer, Houston, Texas, 3,060. 84 (Tie), Toby Sambueno, Orlando, Fla., and Andrew Hall, Westborough, Mass., 3,057.

86, Osku Palerma, Finland, 3,056. 87, Peter Fox, West Hartford, Conn., 3,055. 88,

Wes Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind., 3,047. 89, Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., 3,019. 90, Anthony Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 3,017. 91, Matt Russo, Fairview Heights, Ill., 3,005.

92, Ryan Barnes, Denton, Texas, 2,995. 93, Brandon Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 2,992. 94, Alec Reseland, Urbandale, Iowa, 2,967. 95, Joseph Grondin, San Pedro, Calif., 2,966. 96, Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 2,961. 97, Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., 2,958.

98, Jean Perez, Greenwood, Ind., 2,953. 99, Dwight Adams, Greensboro, N.C., 2,952. 100, Cristian Azcona, Clermont, Fla., 2,945. 101, Michael Eaton Jr., Byron Center, Mich., 2,928. 102, Jordan Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind., 2,922. 103, Brent Boho, Indianapolis, 2,918.

104, Arturo Quintero, Mexico, 2,908. 105, Mookie Betts, Encino, Calif., 2,906. 106, Eric Jones, Edmond, Okla., 2,902. 107, Zach Greim, Poway, Calif., 2,862. 108, William Clark, Montgomery, Ill., 2,786.

## **TACKETT TAKES LEAD, FIELD CUT TO TOP 24 AT 2023 U.S. OPEN**

**INDIANAPOLIS** – Qualifying round competition came to an end Thursday night, and the first cuts were made at the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!

A field that started with 108 competitors has been whittled down to the top 24 who have advanced to the match-play portion of competition, which begins Friday morning at 10 a.m. Eastern at Royal Pin Woodland (formerly Woodland Bowl) in Indianapolis.

For the second year in a row, E.J. Tackett of Bluffton, Indiana, found his name atop the overall standings at the end of qualifying.

Tackett began the final round trailing Day 2 leader Thomas Larsen of Denmark by four pins for the lead, but it didn't take long for Tackett to take over once action began on B Squad Thursday night.

The powerful right-hander got off to a quick start and remained steady throughout his final qualifying set, at times making the lanes look easy on a very challenging 39-foot flat oil pattern that gave most competitors trouble all day long.

Tackett rolled games of 215, 244, 248, 245, 224, 191, 184 and 202 to shoot a Day 3 best 1,753, which pushed his three-day, 24-game total to 5,226.

That placed Tackett 138 pins ahead of Frank Snodgrass of Sterling Heights, Michigan, who fired an eight-game total of 1,702 on Thursday to move into second place overall with 5,088.

Despite being pleased with the lead he established during qualifying, Tackett was quick to point out that there is plenty of work left to be done.

"I'm in a great position just like I was last year, but this tournament is only halfway over. There's still lots of games and lots of bonus pins out there to be had," Tackett said. "It doesn't really matter how big of a lead you have after qualifying because anything can happen during match play."

Aside from his outstanding physical talent, Tackett's ability to remain focused at all times and take nothing for granted is part of the reason why he is a two-time major champion on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour – Tackett won the 2016 PBA World Championship and the 2017 FireLake PBA Tournament of Champions.

He would love to walk away with his third major title and first U.S. Open victory when all is said and done this week.

"All majors are special and mean a lot, but the U.S. Open just has that extra prestige and history to it that puts it over the other events," Tackett said. "It's cool to get off to a good start and be in a position to try to make a run at that title."

Although Tackett begins match play in the top spot, he'll have to contend with 23 talented opponents who have designs on making their own championship runs this year.

Several heavy hitters are among the group, including defending champion Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas, who qualified fourth with 5,062, and 2016 and 2019 U.S. Open winner Francois Lavoie of Wichita, Kansas, who narrowly made the cut by qualifying in 22nd place at 4,912.

Tom Hess of Granger, Iowa, grabbed the last spot for match play after finishing 24th with a three-day, 24-game total of 4,907, which was good for a 204.5 average.

With qualifying completed, advancing players will now compete in three rounds of round-robin match play, which will begin Friday morning and be contested on an oil pattern the players have yet to face at this year's U.S. Open.

After 24 games of match play, players' 48-game tournament totals, including 30 bonus pins for each win during match play, will decide the nine bowlers who advance to the two live televised rounds.

The first round will feature seeds No. 5-9 battling it out on FS1 Saturday at 4 p.m. Eastern. The bowler who wins that stepladder will join seeds No. 1-4 for the championship round Sunday at 2 p.m. Eastern on FOX.

The 2023 U.S. Open is a collaborative effort between the United States Bowling Congress and Bowling Proprietor's Association of America and again will be considered a major on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour. The total prize fund for the event will exceed \$275,000.

For more information about the U.S. Open, visit [BOWL.com/USOpen](https://www.bowl.com/usopen).

**2023 U.S. Open**  
**At Royal Pin Woodland**  
**Indianapolis**

**Thursday's results**

**ROUND 3 QUALIFYING**  
**(24 games)**

1, E.J. Tackett, Bluffton, Ind., 5,226. 2, Frank Snodgrass, Sterling Heights, Mich., 5,088. 3, Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., 5,074. 4, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, 5,062. 5, Thomas Larsen, Denmark, 5,057. 6, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 5,048.

7, A.J. Chapman, Lewisville, Texas, 5,039. 8 (tie), Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., and Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, 5,028. 10, Richard Teece, England, 5,026. 11, Matt Ogle, Louisville, 5,024. 12, Matthew Sanders, Evansville, Ind., 4,992.

13, Kevin McCune, Munster, Ind., 4,980. 14, Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 4,977. 15, Alec Keplinger, Wichita, Kan., 4,971. 16, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 4,963. 17, Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 4,957. 18, Tomas Kayhko, Finland, 4,939.

19, Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., 4,931. 20, Bryan Hahlen, Greenwood, S.C., 4,918. 21, Stuart Williams, Pflugerville, Texas, 4,913. 22 (tie), Francois Lavoie, Wichita, Kan., and Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 4,912. 24, Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 4,907.

#### **DID NOT ADVANCE**

25, Shawn Maldonado, Sugarland, Texas, 4,905. 26, Nicholas Pate, Inver Grove Heights, Minn., 4,888. 27, Cameron Crowe, Orland Park, Ill., 4,882. 28, Nathan Bohr, Round Rock, Texas, 4,877. 29, Wesley Low, Palmdale, Calif., 4,876. 30, Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., 4,867.

31 (tie), Mitch Hupe, Canada; Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y. and Michael Jachcinski, Camden, Mich., 4,851. 34, Bill O'Neil, Langhorne, Pa., 4,844. 35, Richard Allen, Chapin, S.C., 4,837. 36, Tommy Jones, Simpsonville, S.C., 4,834.

37, Ronnie Russell, Marion, Ind., 4,824. 38, Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 4,823. 39, Spencer Robarge, Springfield, Mo., 4,822. 40, Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 4,821. 41, Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland, 4,820. 42, Zach Weidman, Indianapolis, 4,808.

43, Trevor Roberts, Tampa, Fla., 4,804. 44, Brandon Runk, Milton, Pa., 4,801. 45, Ramsey Basurto, Verdes, Calif., 4,799. 46, Timothy Foy Jr., Seaford, Del., 4,793. 47, Darren Tang, Las Vegas, 4,782. 48 (tie), Ryan Ciminelli, Monroe, N.C., and Matthew Zweig, Scottsdale, Ariz., 4,779.

50, Nathan Smith, Noblesville, Ind., 4,778. 51, Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., 4,774. 52 (tie), Andrew Anderson, Holly, Mich., and Patrick Hanrahan, Wichita, Kan., 4,773. 54, A.J. Johnson, Oswego, Ill., 4,768.

55, Zach Wilkins, Canada, 4,767. 56, Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., 4,765. 57 (tie), Christopher Sloan, Ireland, and Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 4,758. 59, Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., 4,755. 60, Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, 4,753.

61, D.J. Archer, Louisville, 4,741. 62, Matthew T. Kuba, Tinley Park, Ill., 4,732. 63, Sam Cooley, Australia, 4,721. 64 (tie), Trent Mitchell, Chicago, and Wes Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind., 4,714. 66, Nathan Stubler, LaSalle, Ill., 4,712.

67, Justin Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 4,709. 68, Matt Russo, Fairview Heights, Ill., 4,701. 69, Bailey Mavrick, Fishers, Ind., 4,686. 70, Jason Belmonte, Australia, 4,681. 71, William Jones, Anoka, Minn., 4,678. 72, Ric McCormick, Cincinnati, 4,667.

73, Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., 4,663. 74, Toby Sambueno, Orlando, Fla., 4,658. 75, Charlie Brown Jr., Rockford, Mich., 4,655. 76, Andrew Hall, Westborough, Mass., 4,653. 77, Ronnie Fujita, Richmond, Calif., 4,652. 78, Martin Larsen, Sweden, 4,649.

79, Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., 4,644. 80, Peter Fox, West Hartford, Conn., 4,636. 81, Dominic Barrett, England, 4,635. 82, Terrance Rock III, Las Vegas, 4,634. 83, Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., 4,631. 84, Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, 4,625.

85, Dan Higgins, Lewis Center, Ohio, 4,619. 86, Petey Vergos, Apopka, Fla., 4,613. 87, Ryan Barnes,



Denton, Texas, 4,574. 88, Osku Palermaa, Finland, 4,567. 89, Brandon Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 4,563. 90, Brad Miller, Lees Summit, Mo., 4,558.

91, Michael Tang, Pickerington, Ohio, 4,520. 92, Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 4,514. 93, Joseph Grondin, San Pedro, Calif., 4,497. 94, Timothy Gruendler, St. Louis, 4,496. 95, Jean Perez, Greenwood, Ind., 4,495. 96, Alec Reseland, Urbandale, Iowa, 4,484.

97, Ildemaro Ruiz, Venezuela, 4,464. 98, Mookie Betts, Encino, Calif., 4,460. 99, Eric Jones, Edmond, Okla., 4,431. 100, Michael Eaton Jr., Byron Center, Mich., 4,409. 101, Anthony Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 4,395. 102, Jordan Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind., 4,379.

103, Cristian Azcona, Clermont, Fla., 4,354. 104 (tie), Arturo Quintero, Mexico, and William Clark, Montgomery, Ill., 4,346. 106, Zach Greim, Poway, Calif., 4,312. 107, Brent Boho, Indianapolis, 4,288. 108, Dwight Adams, Greensboro, N.C., 4,284.

#### TACKETT STAYS ATOP STANDINGS AFTER OPENING DAY OF MATCH PLAY AT 2023 U.S. OPEN

INDIANAPOLIS – Friday was a long day of competition at the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! as the 24 players remaining in the field completed two eight-game blocks of round-robin match play at Royal Pin Woodland (formerly Woodland Bowl) in Indianapolis.

Most of those bowlers saw their names rise and fall on the leaderboard at various times throughout the day, but when the final balls had been thrown, qualifying leader E.J. Tackett of Bluffton, Indiana, was once again sitting atop the overall standings.

The right-hander went 8-8 during his 16 matches Friday to end the day with an 8,963 total, which includes 30 bonus pins for each win in match play.

Defending U.S. Open champion Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas went 10-5-1 to finish the day in second place with 8,829.

Tomas Kayhko of Finland (8,811), Kyle Troup of Taylorsville, North Carolina (8,730) and Frank Snodgrass of Sterling Heights Michigan, (8,730) secured the remaining spots in the top five.

All 24 match-play competitors will be back on the lanes Saturday morning at 9 a.m. Eastern for a final eight-game block of round-robin matches, after which the field will be cut down to just nine bowlers.

The players seeded No. 5-9 will compete in a five-person stepladder competition live on FS1 Saturday starting at 4 p.m. Eastern.

The player who wins Saturday's stepladder will join seeds No. 1-4 Sunday for another round of stepladder competition, this one to determine the 2023 U.S. Open champion.

Sunday's stepladder finals will be broadcast live on FOX at 2 p.m. Eastern.

Despite holding a lead of more than 250 pins over fourth place and nearly 350 pins over ninth, Tackett knows that he can't take anything for granted heading into Saturday's final block of round-robin matches.

"As we've already seen, no matter how big a lead is, within a couple of games, everyone can catch right back up to you," Tackett said. "It doesn't take much to lose a lead of 100 pins when you're adding 30 bonus pins for each win."

Tackett learned that lesson the hard way on Friday as Simonsen and Kayhko each took turns going on runs to move ahead of him in the standings.

However, Tackett is no stranger to the up-and-down nature of major championship competition having won the 2016 Professional Bowlers Association World Championship and the 2017 FireLake PBA Tournament of Champions.

As such, each time he took a punch from a contender on Friday, he absorbed the blow and responded with a counterattack of his own to get back on top.

Tackett closed his morning set with a 279 to finish at 4-4, and in the evening, he rebounded from a 1-3 start by shooting scores of 223, 234, 278 and 237 to win three of his final four matches and finish at 4-4 yet again.

According to Tackett, his 8-8 record on the day was indicative of the difficulty of U.S. Open competition, and he fully expects more of the same on Saturday.

“Today was a grind. I started out good and had a better gameplan, but then I struggled for a couple of games of each set before finding it and finishing with some better scores,” Tackett said. “But all of these guys are good enough to put up some big games to catch me or go around me, so with eight games to go, there can’t be any let up on my part.”

Marshall Kent of Yakima, Washington, and Michael Martell of West Babylon, New York, certainly showed the ability to put up big scores as each recorded a 299 game on Friday.

Kent started Game 4 of the morning block with 11 strikes in a row before a solid 10 pin thwarted his bid for perfection.

Martell made his run at 300 during Game 7 Friday night, but his final shot left the 8 pin standing, forcing him to settle for a tie with Kent for the highest game of the 2023 U.S. Open thus far.

Even though neither Kent nor Martell was able to achieve perfection, their strong runs proved that higher scores are very possible from this point forward, which should make for a very interesting final round of match play and beginning to stepladder finals competition.

But regardless of where the scoring pace goes or who is shooting what around him, Tackett’s plan is just to remain focused on himself and his own game.

“I’m not a really big scoreboard watcher,” Tackett said. “I already know that I’m going to have to be firing on all cylinders in the morning to maintain this lead and hopefully stretch it out, but it’s going to take some good bowling to do that.”

Tackett will have plenty of incentive as finishing match play in the top four would guarantee him a spot in Sunday’s stepladder and a check for no less than \$10,000, which is what the fifth-place finisher will earn. This year’s U.S. Open champion will take home \$100,000.

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## 2023 U.S. OPEN

At Royal Pin Woodland

Indianapolis

Friday's results

### MATCH PLAY

(40 games – 30 bonus pins for a win, 15 bonus pins for a tie)

1, EJ Tackett, Bluffton, Ind., 8-8-0, 8,963. 2, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, 10-5-1, 8,829. 3, Tomas Kayhko, Finland, 12-4-0, 8,811. 4, Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 11-5-0, 8,754. 5, Frank Snodgrass, Sterling Heights, Mich., 10-6-0, 8,730. 6, Thomas Larsen, Denmark, 8-8-0, 8,694.

7, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 6-10-0, 8,620. 8, Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 10-6-0, 8,616. 9, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 8-7-1, 8,615. 10, Richard Teece, England, 7-9-0, 8,609. 11, Kevin McCune, Munster, Ind., 8-7-1, 8,541. 12, Matt Ogle, Louisville, 8-8-0, 8,539.

13 (tie) Matthew Sanders, Evansville, Ind., 9-7-0, and Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 8-8-0, 8,506. 15, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 8-8-0, 8,450. 16, Stuart Williams, Pflugerville, Texas, 9-7-0, 8,414. 17, Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., 4-12-0, 8,392. 18, Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., 7-8-1, 8,364.

19, A.J. Chapman, Lewisville, Texas, 8-8-0, 8,343. 20 (tie), Bryan Hahlen, Greenwood, S.C., 5-11-0, and Francois Lavoie, Wichita, Kan., 9-7-0, 8,328. 22, Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, 6-10-0, 8,319. 23, Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 8-8-0, 8,306. 24, Alec Keplinger, Wichita, Kan., 3-13-0, 8,201.

### DID NOT ADVANCE

25, Shawn Maldonado, Sugarland, Texas, 4,905. 26, Nicholas Pate, Inver Grove Heights, Minn., 4,888. 27, Cameron Crowe, Orland Park, Ill., 4,882. 28, Nathan Bohr, Round Rock, Texas, 4,877. 29, Wesley Low, Palmdale, Calif., 4,876. 30, Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., 4,867.

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37, Ronnie Russell, Marion, Ind., 4,824. 38, Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 4,823. 39, Spencer Robarge, Springfield, Mo., 4,822. 40, Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 4,821. 41, Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland, 4,820. 42, Zach Weidman, Indianapolis, 4,808.

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73, Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., 4,663. 74, Toby Sambueno, Orlando, Fla., 4,658. 75, Charlie Brown Jr., Rockford, Mich., 4,655. 76, Andrew Hall, Westborough, Mass., 4,653. 77, Ronnie Fujita, Richmond, Calif., 4,652. 78, Martin Larsen, Sweden, 4,649.

79, Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., 4,644. 80, Peter Fox, West Hartford, Conn., 4,636. 81, Dominic Barrett, England, 4,635. 82, Terrance Rock III, Las Vegas, 4,634. 83, Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., 4,631. 84, Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, 4,625.

85, Dan Higgins, Lewis Center, Ohio, 4,619. 86, Petey Vergos, Apopka, Fla., 4,613. 87, Ryan Barnes, Denton, Texas, 4,574. 88, Osku Palermaa, Finland, 4,567. 89, Brandon Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 4,563. 90, Brad Miller, Lees Summit, Mo., 4,558.

91, Michael Tang, Pickerington, Ohio, 4,520. 92, Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 4,514. 93, Joseph Grondin, San Pedro, Calif., 4,497. 94, Timothy Gruendler, St. Louis, 4,496. 95, Jean Perez, Greenwood, Ind., 4,495. 96, Alec Reseland, Urbandale, Iowa, 4,484.

97, Ildemaro Ruiz, Venezuela, 4,464. 98, Mookie Betts, Encino, Calif., 4,460. 99, Eric Jones, Edmond, Okla., 4,431. 100, Michael Eaton Jr., Byron Center, Mich., 4,409. 101, Anthony Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 4,395. 102, Jordan Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind., 4,379.

103, Cristian Azcona, Clermont, Fla., 4,354. 104 (tie), Arturo Quintero, Mexico, and William Clark, Montgomery, Ill., 4,346. 106, Zach Greim, Poway, Calif., 4,312. 107, Brent Boho, Indianapolis, 4,288. 108, Dwight Adams, Greensboro, N.C., 4,284.

## TACKETT EARNS TOP SEED, TROUP WINS FINAL SPOT IN U.S. OPEN STEPLADDER FINALS

INDIANAPOLIS – The 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! began Tuesday morning when 108 competitors took to the lanes at Royal Pin Woodland (formerly Woodland Bowl) in Indianapolis.

Each and every one of those competitors hoped the week would end with the green jacket on their back, the U.S. Open trophy in their hands and the \$100,000 first-place check in their bank account.

After Saturday's final eight-game block of round-robin match play and the No. 5-9 seed stepladder competition on FS1, just five bowlers still have the chance to turn those dreams into reality.

Those five players will compete in Sunday's stepladder finals competition live on FOX beginning at 2 p.m. Eastern.

Kyle Troup of Taylorsville, North Carolina, earned the No. 5 seed by defeating Justin Knowles of Okemos, Michigan, 215-191 during the final match of Saturday afternoon's No. 5-9 stepladder battle.

Knowles nearly ran Saturday's stepladder, defeating Frank Snodgrass of Sterling Heights, Michigan (211-203), Marshall Kent of Yakima, Washington (206-191) and Thomas Larsen of Denmark (215-190) before falling to Troup in the final match.

The victory earned Troup a spot in Sunday's final stepladder, where he will tussle with No. 4 seed Richard Teece of England, who secured the final automatic berth for Sunday's show by holding fourth place at the end of Saturday morning's final block of round-robin match play.

The winner of the Troup-Teece match will advance to face defending U.S. Open champion Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas in Match 2.

Simonsen will be looking to complete the first successful U.S. Open title defense since Dave Husted accomplished the feat in 1996.

In order to do so, Simonsen would have to defeat either Troup or Teece and then get past No. 2 seed Tomas Kayhko of Finland in the semifinals.

Kayhko earned his position in the stepladder finals by authoring a field-best 17-7 record over the course of three eight-game rounds of round-robin match play.

Nevertheless, despite Kayhko's impressive win-loss record, he was unable to chase down tournament leader E.J. Tackett of Bluffton, Indiana.

Tackett earned the top seed for Sunday's stepladder by leading this year's field in average at 217.46 per game and authoring a more than respectable 14-10 match-play record of his own.

Now, Tackett sits just one win away from capturing his first U.S. Open title and the third major of his Professional Bowlers Association career – he won the 2016 PBA World Championship in Reno and the 2017 FireLake Tournament of Champions in Owasso, Oklahoma.

As the only finalist from Indiana, Tackett is likely to have at least a slight home-field advantage during Sunday's stepladder; however, he knows that it's going to take more than fan support to reach the winner's circle.

"I know that no matter who my opponent ends up being in the finals, I'm going to have to bring my best and bowl a very good game if I want to hoist the trophy and slip on the green jacket," Tackett said.

The trophy and jacket narrowly eluded Tackett last year after he earned the top seed for the 2022 U.S. Open stepladder finals only to fall to Simonsen in the title match.

Tackett certainly hasn't forgotten the sting of last year's runner-up finish, but he's not dwelling on the past; instead, he's staying focused on the opportunity that lies in front of him.

"Last year was really disappointing for me, but it's cool to be in this position again," Tackett said. "I'm really excited to be the top seed for the second year in a row. If I can win, it will be one of the greatest achievements of my career."

While Tackett has the luxury of having to win just one match in order to capture the title, Troup will have to run the ladder if he hopes to end the day wearing green.

The charismatic two-hander isn't bothered by that, however. On the contrary, he's looking forward to the extra TV time.

"Winning today and advancing to tomorrow's show means double TV, so I'm super pumped about that," Troup said. I always feel like if you can win the first match in a stepladder, you have the advantage because you've already bowled on the pair. Because I already bowled on the TV lanes today, I think I'm starting with the advantage against Richie (Teece) from the first frame tomorrow."

Troup is hoping to turn that advantage into a run up the stepladder and an eventual victory over Tackett in the title match.

If he can pull it off, he would walk away with his ninth PBA title and second major – he won the 2021 PBA Players Championship in Jupiter, Florida.

Although all victories are sweet, like Tackett, Troup acknowledges that capturing the U.S. Open would mean even that much more.

"With how I've bowled in the U.S. Open in the past, I honestly never thought I'd have the chance to do this," Troup said. "So to bowl this well in this event as the first tournament of the year really gives me a lot of confidence. I know that I'm a tough opponent just like the rest of the guys, and I'm just going to go out there and give it my best."

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2023 U.S. Open

At Royal Pin Woodland

Indianapolis

Saturday's results



#### SEEDS NO. 5-9 FINAL STANDINGS

5, Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 215 (one games), Advances to Sunday's stepladder finals.

6, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 823 (four games), \$7,750.

7, Thomas Larsen, Denmark, 190 (one game), \$6,500.

8, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 191 (one game), \$6,000.

9, Frank Snodgrass, Sterling Heights, Mich., 203 (one game), \$5,500.

#### STEPLADDER RESULTS

Match No. 1 – Knowles def. Snodgrass, 211-203.

Match No. 2 – Knowles def. Kent, 206-191.

Match No. 3 – Knowles def. Larsen, 215-190.

Match No. 4 – Troup def. Knowles, 215-191.

#### MATCH PLAY

(48 games – 30 bonus pins for a win, 15 bonus pins for a tie)

1, EJ Tackett, Bluffton, Ind., 14-10-0, 10,858. 2, Tomas Kayhko, Finland, 17-7-0, 10,738. 3, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, 15-8-1, 10,665. 4, Richard Teece, England, 13-11-0, 10,621.

5, Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 16-8-0, 10,552. 6, Thomas Larsen, Denmark, 12-11-1, 10,509. 7, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 13-10-1, 10,420. 8, Frank Snodgrass, Sterling Heights, Mich., 13-11-0, 10,419. 9, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 15-9-0, 10,416.

#### DID NOT ADVANCE

10, Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 11-12-1, 10,342, \$5,000. 11, Matthew Sanders, Evansville, Ind., 14-10-0, 10,292, \$4,550. 12, Kevin McCune, Munster, Ind., 10-12-2, 10,272, \$4,300. 13, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 9-15-0, 10,233, \$4,150. 14, Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., 12-10-2, 10,221, \$4,000.

15, Matt Ogle, Louisville, 10-14-0, 5,024, \$3,850. 16, Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 12-11-1, 10,191, \$3,700. 17, Stuart Williams, Pflugerville, Texas, 13-11-0, 10,160, \$3,550. 18, Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., 8-16-0, 10,139, \$3,400. 19, Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, 9-15-0, 10,097, \$3,300.

20, AJ Chapman, Lewisville, Texas, 11-13-0, 10,044, \$3,200. 21, Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 10-13-1, 10,041, \$3,100. 22, Bryan Hahlen, Greenwood, S.C., 8-16-0, 10,024, \$3,000. 23, Alec Keplinger, Wichita, Kan., 7-17-0, 9,930, \$2,900. 24, Francois Lavoie, Wichita, Kan., 11-13-0, 9,921, \$2,800.

## **EJ TACKETT WINS 2023 U.S. OPEN**

### **FEBRUARY 5, 2023 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 process 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 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 stepladder](#) on Saturday afternoon.

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

## **EJ TACKETT FULFILLS CHILDHOOD DESTINY, WINS PBA'S TRIPLE CROWN IN HOME STATE**

### **FEBRUARY 6, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

EJ Tackett dreamed of this moment ever since he was a kid.

On Sunday afternoon, he stepped up onto the approach of lanes 59-60 at Indianapolis' Royal Pin Woodland, the very lanes where dozens of legends have won major titles and etched their names into PBA lore. After 48 games and nine frames, the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! would be decided by his next two shots.

Tackett needed a strike and eight pins to win the U.S. Open title. To finally win a PBA Tour title in his home state of Indiana. To complete the Triple Crown. To avenge last year's loss. To fulfill a childhood dream.

"It's what we live for," Tackett said. "I can't tell you how many times when I was a kid that I'd go practice, get into the 10th frame and say that I needed to throw a double to beat Norm Duke at the U.S. Open."

But this time, the stakes were real.

If he didn't strike, he would have to watch a competitor celebrate his dream on his home turf; if he didn't strike, he would walk away empty-handed after leading the U.S. Open for the second consecutive year.

There was one more difference between this scene and the one a young Tackett imagined, something he kept to himself: Norm Duke wasn't in the opposing corner — he was in Tackett's.

"Norm texted me this morning," said Tackett, while unsuccessfully holding back tears an hour after the show. "Outside of my family, that man means a lot to me. Norm and I have had so many conversations over the years. For him to text me this morning, that meant a lot."

*Post your shot. Post your score. Everything else is just fishing stories. I love you. Go get 'em.*

Those words served as the perfect reminder: Nothing else — not his recent struggles on TV, not the annoying interview questions about last year's failure, not the abundance of history at stake — mattered.

This moment was no different than the one he imagined as a kid. Just an Indiana boy, a bowling ball, a lane and a dream.

Tackett painted his intended line like Pablo Picasso, delivering the all-important first strike. The 10-pin nearly withstood a tap from the 6-pin, but no corner pin could deny the most powerful one-handed player on the planet.

Some had doubts if Tackett would get the job done under the enormous pressure. The man wearing a black and red argyle shirt in the front row did not.

"I knew it," said Ed Tackett, EJ's father. "I just knew he was gonna do it because he's been so calm and relaxed this whole week."

"When he got the first one, you just take this sigh of relief," said Natalie Tackett, EJ's wife. "I was sitting next to my mother-in-law and we instantly grabbed each other's hands, because this was it. We just had a good feeling about it."

After the first strike, just eight pins stood between Tackett and the green jacket. He knocked them all over for good measure, then unleashed the victory screech of a prepubescent child.

Those voice cracks were emblematic of his inner child, the one who had waited more than 20 years to come through on this exact stage.

"It's those moments that make you a fan of EJ," Natalie said. "You see the real him in those situations, and he's most vulnerable there."

Tackett soaked in the roar of the crowd, where more than 20 family and friends and dozens more fellow Hoosiers cheered him on. He finally reached his father — his lifelong coach who had dreams of competing professionally, but instead lived his dreams through his son — hugged him, and crumbled to the floor. The emotion had finally overtaken him.

"That's a dad-son moment that will live forever. It can't go away," Ed said. "Those two (shots) were a lifetime of hard work that he's deserved since he was eight years old. With all the hard work and everything that he's put into it, there's nobody that deserved it more."

"That emotion was kept inside all week, because of how much this actually does mean to me," Tackett said. "I'm not bowling for just me. So many people live and die on every shot that I make. So many people want me to be successful. They've done everything that they can for me, given up so much for me to even be here."

While Tackett exuded a quiet confidence throughout the week, the road to another No. 1 seed bore no resemblance to 2022.

"Last year, nobody challenged him all week," said Brett Spangler, Motiv's PBA Tour staff manager and Tackett's close friend. "This year, with two games and two frames left of match play, he still had to show up. Over and over through match play, EJ had to show up and he did it every time."

As showtime neared, anxiety crept in. The weight of a state rooting him on, of wanting to prove himself, of rewriting last year's disappointment began to set in. Tackett said he hadn't been that nervous before a show in a long time.

"There was a lot of talk and interview questions that really brought back the string, but I think that probably motivated him more to come out and prove himself," Natalie said. "We've seen this pair before — what are you going to do differently?"

Tackett and Spangler devised a detailed plan to how they would use the dozen practice shots on the TV pair.

"There was no guesswork in how we were using those 12 shots," Spangler said. "I don't know if you asked me a year ago if I'd have said there was no guesswork, but there was a blueprint this year."

The preparation paid dividends. They were able to notice the differences between the lanes — the left lane hooked about three boards less than the right — and calculate exactly how to attack the beaten-up pattern.

Tackett's natural tendency, especially on shows, is to get too far left and try to force the ball to hook, instead of letting it naturally come off of the friction, Spangler said.

Tackett made that mistake last year. He would not make again.

"Everything happens for a reason, my dad always said that," Tackett said. "He always told me to just go bowl and let your bowling speak for itself. I did that this week. I did that on the show. I just bowled the best that I could, made the best shots that I could. There's been plenty of times where the pins haven't fallen my way, the breaks haven't gone my way.

"Today, they did."

The \$100,000 top prize is the largest single check of Tackett's career. It's a footnote.

"It had nothing to do with money, not a darn thing," Ed said.

"Winning in Indiana has been at the top," Natalie said, "I don't know if I want to say more than winning the Triple Crown, but like, this is in Indiana, his home state. He's wanted nothing more than to win here."

EJ Tackett is just a kid from Huntington, the same part of Indiana that bred Chris Schenkel, the iconic sportscaster who the PBA Player of the Year award is named after. He's one of five players to be named PBA Rookie of the Year and PBA Player of the Year and future first-ballot Hall of Famer.

With this 2023 U.S. Open, his magnum opus, he is now one of nine players to win the PBA's Triple Crown. And he did it 90 minutes from his hometown.

"I tried to play it off, but... *this is it, man. This is it,*" he said. "To get up and do it, throw a double for the U.S. Open like I'd practiced so many times when I was 12 years old, to finally come through, is just unbelievable."

"I'm living in a fairytale. You can't draw it up any better."

## **PBA SPRINGFIELD CLASSIC PREVIEW**

### **FEBRUARY 8, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The Super Bowl is rapidly approaching, but the biggest sporting contest of the weekend will take place three hours southeast of Kansas City, as the PBA Springfield Classic goes down at Enterprise Park Lanes in Springfield, Mo.

Here's what you need to know as the tournament gets rolling on Thursday morning:

### **HOMETOWN HEROES**

Springfield's own Keven Williams and Spencer Robarge, the Wichita State star who advanced via the pre-tournament qualifier (PTQ), will draw considerable local support. Williams captured his first career title at the PBA Shark Championship last year, but he said he'll be more nervous bowling in his home center than defending his title in Wauwatosa.

"In my mind, there's no way I should miss that telecast," Williams said before the season. "I should be on the stepladder and bowling for a title, just because I've bowled so well in that center."

But the 29-year-old is known for his authenticity.

“To have a national tour stop at Enterprise, there’s no way I make the cut!” he said laughing. “I’m gonna overthink it way too much.”

## **PLAYERS TO WATCH**

U.S. Open champ EJ Tackett goes for back-to-back titles to kickstart the season, while runner-up Kyle Troup seeks his 10th career title to achieve Hall of Fame eligibility.

Tomas Käyhkö, Justin Knowles and Frank Snodgrass all parlayed their TV debuts at the U.S. Open into top-five performances at the PTQ and advanced to the main field.

Conversely, Jason Belmonte, Dom Barrett, Chris Via and AJ Johnson will look to bounce back after missing the cut in the season opener. Missouri native Brad Miller continues to chase his first career title as well.

## **FORMAT**

Players will be competing on the 34-foot Wolf oil pattern, the shortest pattern of the 2023 season.

Eighteen games of qualifying between Thursday and Friday, all livestreamed on BowITV, will whittle the field down to the top 22 players. A final six-game qualifying round on Friday evening will determine the 12 players advancing to Saturday’s round-robin match play.

After 12 games of match play, the top four players will advance to the stepladder finals, livestreaming at 7 p.m. ET. The champion will receive \$25,000.

The PBA Springfield Classic represents the second stop of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour and the first of the five-tournament Classic Series. The top eight point earners across the five Classic Series events will earn the chance to compete in July’s PBA Skill Ball Challenge.

More information on the PBA Springfield Classic is available [here](#).

## **TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

### **Thursday, Feb. 9**

12 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 1 (six games)

6 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 2 (six games)

### **Friday, Feb. 10**

12 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — cut to top-22 players

6 p.m. ET — Top-22 Qualifying Round (six games) — cut to top-12 players

### **Saturday, Feb. 11**

11 a.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 1 (six games)

3 p.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 2 (six games) — cut to top 4 players

7 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

## **LAVERY-SPAHR, WILLIAMS LEAD PACK AT PBA SPRINGFIELD CLASSIC**

**FEBRUARY 9, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Two rounds into the PBA Springfield Classic, a pair of players familiar with Enterprise Park Lanes find themselves atop the leaderboard.

Anthony Lavery-Spahr and Springfield's own Keven Williams each averaged over 236 across 12 games to lead the field.

The scoring pace is significantly higher than at last week's U.S. Open, but Lavery-Spahr's resurgence after a 101st place finish is noteworthy. He said conversations with his brother Sean, who sits in seventh place, and close friend AJ Chapman helped put him on the right track physically.

The Texan averaged more than 245 to lead the first six-game round of qualifying and maintained his lead through Round 2. He is no stranger to the southwestern Missouri center, even winning a doubles tournament with Packy Hanrahan last fall.

But for Williams, this is personal: He's competing in his home center.

"This morning, I will say I was a little nervous and I'm not one to get too nervous whenever I bowl," Williams said. "Knowing that I have high expectations for (myself), it's hard to live up to that sometimes. I'm glad I'm holding to that right now at least."

Ildemaro Ruiz Jr., Anthony Simonsen and Bill O'Neill round out the top five, while Chris Via closed Round 2 with a 279 game to climb into the top 10.

After six more games on Friday morning, the field will be cut to the top 22 players. Tom Daugherty occupies the last spot inside the cut at 2,648, averaging over 220.

Advancers will bowl six more games on Friday evening to determine the 12-player field for round-robin match play on Saturday.

Qualifying resumes at 12 p.m. ET on [BowlTV](#). Full standings are available [here](#).

### **TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

#### **Friday, Feb. 10**

12 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — cut to top-22 players

6 p.m. ET — Top-22 Qualifying Round (six games) — cut to top-12 players

#### **Saturday, Feb. 11**

11 a.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 1 (six games)



3 p.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 2 (six games) — cut to top 4 players  
7 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

## **KEVEN WILLIAMS TAKES LEAD, BELMONTE CLIMBS AS MATCH PLAY FIELD FINALIZED**

**FEBRUARY 10, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

After 24 games at Enterprise Park Lanes, the match play field of the PBA Springfield Classic has been set.

Springfield's own Keven Williams surged into the lead by firing 776 over his last three games. He had struggled near the end of blocks in previous rounds, but dug deep when he needed it most.

Williams has a total pinfall of 5,525 through 24 games of competition, narrowly besting two of the game's best: Anthony Simonsen and Jason Belmonte.

After an opening block of 1,252, which placed him in 48th, Belmonte has averaged 236.5 over the past 18 games. He credited his ball reps and a new Pitch Black urethane ball for helping him solve the 34-foot Wolf pattern.

However, his scores have dipped during the final games of each block.

"I'm going to need to figure out what to do during Games 5-6 of each round," Belmonte said. "If I can figure that out and I keep bowling the way that I am, I've got a good chance of at least making the show."

Anthony Neuer sat 29 pins outside of the cut with one game to go, but he left no room for debate. The left-hander shot 300 in the final game to solidify his spot in match play.

"I got a break with a trip-6," Neuer said. "I knew I needed to make a move, and my ball went through the pins the way I wanted to see it."

After that, he said he wanted to make quality shots and leave fate up to the pins.

"I gave myself 10 solid shots, I bowled 300 and we're onto tomorrow," he said.

It is truly anyone's game as round-robin match play begins on Saturday, Feb. 11 — just 80 pins separate Williams from the final qualifier.

The first round of round-robin match play begins at 11 a.m. ET on [Bow!TV](#). A second round of match play at 3 p.m. ET will determine the four finalists for the 7 p.m. ET stepladder finals.

## **TOURNAMENT STANDINGS**

1. Keven Williams, 5,525 (+725)
2. Anthony Simonsen, 5,517 (+717)

3. Jason Belmonte, 5,509 (+709)
4. Chris Via, 5,501 (+701)
5. Sam Cooley, 5,494 (+694)
6. François Lavoie, 5,492 (+692)
7. Anthony Neuer, 5,488 (+688)
8. Bill O'Neill, 5,458 (+658)
9. Jakob Butturff, 5,455 (+655)
10. Nick Pate, 5,453 (+653)
11. Ildemaro Ruiz Jr., 5,452 (+652)
12. Kevin McCune, 5,445 (+645)

Full standings are available [here](#).

## **SAM COOLEY DEFEATS KEVEN WILLIAMS TO WIN PBA SPRINGFIELD CLASSIC**

### **FEBRUARY 11, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

To win the PBA Springfield Classic, Sam Cooley needed a mark in the 10th frame.

He left a 10-pin on the first shot, one he felt he could have thrown better. The 31-year-old took his time, a few deep breaths and converted the spare — and he knew exactly what he wanted to say:

“This is my house now!”

Cooley defeated Springfield’s own Keven Williams, competing in his home bowling center at Enterprise Park Lanes in Springfield, Mo., 223-217 to claim his second career PBA Tour title.

Despite a rough third day at the U.S. Open, the Australian felt very confident after the practice session on the 34-foot Wolf oil pattern.

“I do like bowling on shorter patterns,” Cooley said. “I can use my uniqueness, creating steeper angles and throwing it at the gutter as a benefit. My ball roll helps me do that, too.

“In any event that we bowl, if you can use uniqueness to your advantage, if you can do something that no one else can and do it well, then it’s a benefit to do that.”

Cooley earned the No. 2 seed for the stepladder finals after losing the top seed to Williams in the position round. But throughout the title match, Williams struggled on the left lane. He left a 7-pin in the fourth frame and a 6-pin in the sixth, before leaving and missing the 3-5-6 in the eighth.

The 30-year-old southpaw said he needed to slow his ball speed down on that lane, and didn't trust the adjustment until the 10th frame. In that frame, Williams delivered all three strikes on that lane to force Cooley to mark.

"He proved why he has a win," Cooley said.

"Anytime you're bowling for a title in any tournament in any building, it's got to be success," Williams said. "Am I frustrated? Yes. But it's a good start to the year and we got a long ways to go. And this just gains confidence, so we'll get back there."

Both players sought their second career PBA Tour titles, and the Springfield faithful wanted the trophy to stay in town with Williams. Everyone, especially Cooley, knew it.

"It's a weird feeling," Cooley said of the environment during the title match. "It's not really a feeling of defeat; it's like the odds are stacked against you. I've been on that side a few times where I bowled against the local favorite, and I've always been on the losing side of that, whether that's mental mistakes, nerves, or a combination of both of those things."

"When he gets up and strikes, all you hear is noise," Cooley said. "And when I get up and strike, you hear like one or two (people clapping)."

Cooley knew he was in a hostile environment and he remembered what Williams said when he locked up the top seed during the position round.

However, Cooley said he prefers to save his grand reactions for when it's officially over.

"I could hear the people behind me saying, 'This is your house' and things like that," he said. "I was like, 'Okay, well, if I get this chance, you're going to hear about it.' Once I spared the 10-pin, I yelled 'This is my house now!'"

"There was not a sound in the building," he said. "That's kind of the reaction I was going for. I wanted them to know that's why you don't poke the bear."

In the semifinal, Cooley defeated Jakob Butturff in another close match. Through eight frames, Butturff had seven strikes and one spare, while Cooley couldn't buy a strike on the left lane.

However, the left-hander left a devastating split in the ninth frame, which opened the door for Cooley. He struck in the ninth, then doubled in the 10th to force Butturff to double, which he was unable to do.

"For the first half of the game, he hit me dead in the water," Cooley said. "And he let me back in."

With two games left of match play, Butturff sat 168 pins behind Chris Via for the last spot in the stepladder. But he rallied with games of 255 and 237 and won both matches to usurp Via for the No. 4 seed.

Butturff then defeated François Lavoie in the opening match. Both players struggled early — in fact, Butturff switched from plastic to urethane in the third frame — but a late split from Lavoie ended his tournament.

The PBA returns to action with the PBA Shawnee Classic on Tuesday. The pre-tournament qualifier will be held on Feb. 14 in Shawnee, Okla., while qualifying for the main field begins on Feb. 15.

## **FINAL SCORES**

Sam Cooley def. Keven Williams, 223-217

Sam Cooley def. Jakob Butturff, 237-229

Jakob Butturff def. François Lavoie, 223-192

## **FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Sam Cooley, \$25,000
2. Keven Williams, \$16,000
3. Jakob Butturff, \$12,000
4. François Lavoie, \$10,000
5. Chris Via, \$8,000
6. Anthony Neuer, \$7,500
7. Jason Belmonte, \$7,000
8. Nick Pate, \$6,500
9. Ildemaro Ruiz Jr., \$5,500
10. Anthony Simonsen, \$5,100
11. Bill O'Neill, \$4,800
12. Kevin McCune, \$4,500

**PBA REGIONAL RECAP: CHRIS BARNES BEGINS REGIONAL SEASON WITH PAIR OF WINS**

**FEBRUARY 14, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN**

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For as quickly as the 2022 regional season ended, the 2023 season began. Patrick Dombrowski capped off his season with a victory at the PBA Regional Players Invitational after sneaking inside the cut line. He

put it to good use, winning his first five matches before taking down Colin Champion, 267-259, in a dazzling final bout.

For the PBA50 RPI, Troy Lint did just the same. The lefty went eight-for-eight on bracket games above 200 en route to a five-figure payout. It was a tough final, facing Darryl Bower, who also hadn't shot under 200 in the bracket and had just come off a 279. Lint fought to the end, taking home the title after a 246-237 triumph.

But all that is now history. A new season begins, and everyone is back to square one. Each player has multiple opportunities at cashing for the first time, making their first cut or stepladder, or even winning their first tournament. More importantly, everyone has the opportunity to snag a banner and be in the record books forever.

#### PBA BOWLERO OPEN

A familiar face in Jakob Butturff sat atop the standings after eight games of qualifying at +274, but everyone knows with match play on the schedule, movement on the leaderboard is bound to happen. After 11 games and one to go, Ramsey Basurto jumped from third to first, but Cerell Cardines sat hot on his tail. However, Basurto stood his ground delivering a 226 with a win to hold off the competition and grab his first career title.

#### PBA Bowlero Open Final Standings

Ramsey Basurto, 2,500 points, \$2,300

Gregory Thompson, Jr., 1,500, \$1,600

Cerell Cardines, \$1,300

Robbie Patterson, \$1,100

#### PBA Bowlero Open Full Results

#### PBA50 BOWLERO OPEN

Same format, same weekend, same pattern, but different bowlers — 55 of them, to be exact — as Bowlero Kyrene hosted both the under-50 and over-50 divisions. On the over-50 side, Michael Haugen Jr. led after qualifying at +173. Eleven games later, William Graham filled that spot after going 10-1 in his match play games. Things weren't over yet, as Ron Mohr sat 41 pins behind Graham with the position round left. Two great competitors hit the lanes for one last game and tied at 244, giving Graham the win and his first career title.

#### PBA50 Bowlero Open Final Standings

William Graham, \$1,900

Ron Mohr, 1,500 points, \$1,200

Rich Corwin, 1,150, \$1,000

Robert Wiley, \$850

#### PBA50 Bowlero Open Full Results

#### PBA ODESSA SOUTHWEST OPEN

Over at Diamond Lanes in Odessa, Texas, both PBA and PBA50 bowlers competed in the qualifying-to-match play format just like the Arizona tournaments. Plenty of big-time names piled at the top of the leaderboard after qualifying as AJ Chapman led the way. Illdemaro Ruiz, Jr. snuck past Chapman after the advancer round, but match play allowed for plenty of changes, and the young gun Eric Jones found his way to the top. He still needed a position round win to take the title and did just that with a 212-193 victory.

#### PBA Odessa Southwest Open Final Standings

Eric Jones, 2,500 points, \$2,700

Illdemaro Ruiz, Jr., 1,500, \$1,700

Anthony Lavery-Spahr, 1,150, \$1,300

Shawn Maldonado, 950, \$1,100

PBA Odessa Southwest Open Full Results

#### PBA50 ODESSA SOUTHWEST OPEN

There were also big names up top for the PBA50 division, as Tom Hess qualified first at +311, which would have been good for a third-place spot on the PBA side of things. But even though Hess held a triple-digit lead over everyone else, it didn't stop Chris Barnes from staying in the fight, averaging 248 for his five advancer round games. Match play rolled around, and although Barnes and Hess both went 5-2 to start, a pair of late 270s ultimately propelled Barnes to victory.

#### PBA50 Odessa Southwest Open Final Standings

Chris Barnes, 2,500 points, \$2,500

Tom Hess, 1,500, \$1,500

Pete McCordic, 1,150, \$1,100

Keith Lesko, 950, \$950

PBA50 Odessa Southwest Open Full Results

#### PBA50 WESTERN BOWLING PROPRIETORS INSURANCE CENTRAL/MIDWEST OPEN

As the U.S. Open wrapped up, Crawfordsville, Ind., hosted a PBA50 regional, just a short drive from Indianapolis. A couple of guys who bowled the U.S. Open must have gotten enough practice in because Parker Bohn III and Chris Barnes earned the one and three seeds for the stepladder, respectively. Barnes faced Knowlton in the first match, where Barnes won 228-192. Lyle Kuhlmann was up next, but again Barnes got it done, this time 212-187. The two all-time greats gave us an exciting final match where Barnes ran the stepladder and defeated Bohn III 241-236.

#### PBA50 Western Bowling Proprietors Insurance Central/Midwest Final Standings

Chris Barnes, 2,500 points, \$2,000

Parker Bohn III, 1,500, \$1,150

Lyle Kuhlmann, 1,150, \$1,000

Dan Knowlton, 950, \$950

PBA50 Western Bowling Proprietors Insurance Central/Midwest Open Full Results

#### PBA50 TRACY SENIOR OPEN

Many miles away out West, a trio of tournaments took place in Tracy, Calif., at West Valley Bowl. In the PBA50 region, Robby Porter started out with a 201 to put him around the middle of the pack, but then he stepped up. Porter delivered his next seven games no lower than a 229 and did just as well the next day. With five games above 240, Porter built himself a 250-pin lead with position round left. Porter went on to win his fourth career title and earned \$2,000.

#### PBA50 Tracy Senior Open Final Standings

Robby Porter, 2,500 points, \$2,000

Joe Petrovich, 1,500, \$1,500

Mike Keough, 1,150, \$1,100

Scott Critchfield, \$950

PBA50 Tracy Senior Open Full Results

#### PBA60 SUPER SENIOR TRACY CLASSIC

In the 60-division, things were quite a bit tighter. Darron Peters and Ty Dawson started qualifying on top, but after match play, Marty Deh, and Joe Goldstein, Sr., jumped into the mix. With just the position round to go, those four were within 64 pins of each other. Deh struggled in the last game, while Goldstein only put up a 202, so it was down to Peters and Dawson. Needing a win, Peters got it done, defeating Dawson 233-206 to take home his 3rd career title.

#### PBA60 Super Senior Tracy Classic Final Standings



Darron Peters, 2,500 points, \$1,500

Ty Dawson, 1,500, \$1,000

Joe Goldstein, Sr., 1,150, \$900

Marty Deh, 950, \$800

PBA60 Super Senior Tracy Classic Full Results

#### PBA WOMEN TRACY OPEN

In what may have been the most exciting of the three tournaments, the only two perfect games came from youth bowlers in this division. Avery Domaguin delivered a 300 in qualifying to lead at +237. The next day, Ashtyn Woods woke up and immediately fired off a 300 of her own in game one. With one game left, it came down to Domaguin and Katelyn Abigania, who sat just six pins apart. Both put up great scores, but Abigania shot a 255 to grab the win and over \$1,000 in scholarship.

#### PBA Women Tracy Open Final Standings

Katelyn Abigania, \$1,050

Avery Domaguin, \$800

Ashtyn Woods, \$600

Brittney Hillman, \$500

PBA Women Tracy Open Full Results

Only a handful of tournaments are in, and we've already seen some new titleists and some familiar faces on the podiums. There's plenty of action left to go this season and numerous questions we can ask. Will Walter Ray Williams Jr. expand his lead on the all-time titles leaderboard? How many debutants will earn their first title? Will anyone break the all-time single-season record for titles, set by Jakob Butturff (9) back in 2016? Only time will tell.

#### PBA SHAWNEE CLASSIC PREVIEW

FEBRUARY 14, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

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The third stop of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour will be in central Oklahoma for the PBA Shawnee Classic.

Two stars return to action this week as they recover from significant injuries, while more than a half dozen players look to continue their exemplary starts to the campaign.

The PBA Shawnee Classic begins on Wednesday morning and all rounds will be livestreamed on BowITV. Here's what you need to know:

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

Anthony Simonsen, Kevin McCune, Matt Sanders, Kris Prather, Jesper Svensson and AJ Chapman will look to build off their strong starts to the season, each finishing among the top 20 in both tournaments.

Simonsen is the lone player with two top-10 finishes. McCune finished 12th in both tournaments, while Prather and Chapman finished 16th and 20th in each event, respectively.

Shawnee has produced a pair of major champions in EJ Tackett and Jesper Svensson, who each won the Tournament of Champions, while Kyle Troup's first career title came at the 2015 PBA Wolf Open.

A-squad notables: Andrew Anderson, Jakob Butturff, Sam Cooley, Tom Daugherty, Tommy Jones, François Lavoie, Sean Rash, Tom Smallwood, Jesper Svensson, Kyle Troup

B-squad notables: Chris Barnes, Jason Belmonte, AJ Johnson, Brad Miller, Kris Prather, Kyle Sherman, Anthony Simonsen, Jason Sterner, EJ Tackett, Chris Via

The full tournament roster is available [here](#).

#### STORYLINES

Sean Rash owns three career titles in Shawnee, including each of the last two PBA Tour stops, the 2020 PBA Oklahoma Open and 2019 Roth-Holman PBA Doubles Championship with Matt Ogle.

Rash announced last week that he has been diagnosed with degenerative disc disease. While he missed the PBA Springfield Classic to recuperate, he said he feels about 75-80% entering this tournament.

Another notable player returning from injury is Kyle Sherman. The 28-year-old missed the first two tournaments of the season recovering from torn labrum surgery on his left hip during the offseason.

Sherman said he's not back to 100% yet, but is itching to return to competition. He said he doesn't have any expectations; his lone goal is to get through the week.

This will be the second of five Classic Series events this season. The top eight players in points across those five tournaments will earn the chance to compete in July's PBA Skill Ball Challenge. Sam Cooley, champion of the PBA Springfield Classic, leads that race after one event.

#### CLASSIC SERIES POINTS LEADERS

Sam Cooley, 5,000 points

Keven Williams, 3,000

Jakob Butturff, 2,300

François Lavoie, 1,900

Chris Via, 1,700

Anthony Neuer, 1,550

Jason Belmonte, 1,490

Nick Pate, 1,430

Ildemaro Ruiz Jr., 1,370

Anthony Simonsen, 1,310

#### FORMAT

Players will be competing on the 41-foot Bear oil pattern. Sixteen games of qualifying (two eight-game blocks) across Wednesday and Thursday will determine the 12 players advancing to Friday's match play round.

After 12 games of round-robin match play, the top four players will advance to the stepladder finals, livestreaming at 7 p.m. ET on Friday, Feb. 17. The champion will receive \$25,000.

## TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Wednesday, Feb. 15

12 p.m. ET — A-squad Qualifying Round 1 (eight games)

6 p.m. ET — B-squad Qualifying Round 1 (eight games)

Thursday, Feb. 16

12 p.m. ET — B-squad Qualifying Round 2 (eight games)

6 p.m. ET — A-squad Qualifying Round 2 (eight games) — top 12 overall players advance

Friday, Feb. 17

11 a.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 1 (six games)

3 p.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 2 (six games) — top 4 overall players advance

7 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

More information on the PBA Shawnee Classic is available [here](#).

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## STU WILLIAMS OUTSHINES TACKETTS IN ROUND 1 OF PBA SHAWNEE CLASSIC

FEBRUARY 15, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

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The PBA Shawnee Classic saw a battle of brotherly love as qualifying kicked off Wednesday, Feb. 15 at Firelake Bowling Center in Shawnee, Okla.

Zac Tackett held a narrow eight-pin lead through seven games on A-squad. He proceeded to fire the last 11 strikes in Game 8 to extend his lead to nearly 100 pins.

On the 41-foot Bear oil pattern, players found a multitude of angles to the pocket early on. As the lanes transitioned, of course, the right-handers migrated left — that's where Tackett did most of his damage.

"When I can slow hook it and my ball is hooking from everywhere, I'm going to strike," Tackett said.

His older brother refused to let him bask in the spotlight for too long. EJ Tackett came out on fire to start B-squad, shooting 264 and 289 his first two games.

Heading into the final game, EJ trailed Zac by 207 pins. EJ needed a double in the 10th frame to pass his sibling and, with the help of some fortuitous pin carry, got the job done.

"It's one of those things, that brother rivalry. I don't want to lose to him ever," EJ said with a laugh.

Just a few pairs to the right, Stu Williams polished off a 255 game to usurp both Tacketts for the lead. Williams fired a field-high 1,920 series (+320), including a 300 in Game 5.

Williams said it was nice to get back on track after struggling last week in Springfield.

"I think (the pattern) really suited my game. I could control the break point with speed," Williams said. "Tomorrow is another day. No doubt the lanes will break down a little bit differently. Everybody's going to have a different game plan. We'll see how it goes, but I've bowled here a lot of times so I kind of know what the lanes do."

Qualifying resumes at 12 p.m. ET on Thursday, Feb. 16 with B-squad taking the first shift on the lanes. A-squad players will bowl at 6 p.m. ET.

After Round 2 of qualifying, the field will be cut to the top 12 players. The dozen advancers will compete in round-robin match play on Friday, Feb. 17, with the top four players advancing to the stepladder finals at 7 p.m. ET.

**ROUND 1 LEADERS**

Stu Williams, 1,920 (+320)  
EJ Tackett, 1,915 (+315)  
Zac Tackett, 1,906 (+306)  
Tomas Käyhkö, 1,899 (+299)  
Dick Allen, 1,812 (+212)  
Joseph Grondin, 1,805 (+205)  
Kris Prather, 1,804 (+204)  
AJ Johnson, 1,791 (+191)  
Kevin McCune, 1,790 (+190)  
Shawn Maldonado, 1,785 (+185)  
Arturo Quintero, 1,785 (+185)  
Keven Williams, 1,783 (+183)  
Full standings are available [here](#).

#### TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Thursday, Feb. 16

12 p.m. ET — B-squad Qualifying Round 2 (eight games)

6 p.m. ET — A-squad Qualifying Round 2 (eight games) — top 12 overall players advance

Friday, Feb. 17

11 a.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 1 (six games)

3 p.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 2 (six games) — top 4 overall players advance

7 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

More information on the PBA Shawnee Classic is available [here](#).

## STU WILLIAMS LEADS, SEAN LAVERY-SPAHR DOMINATES DURING ROUND 2 OF PBA SHAWNEE CLASSIC

FEBRUARY 16, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Stu Williams and the Tacketts, EJ and Zac, remain on the podium after qualifying at the PBA Shawnee Classic. The man in fourth place, however, was closer to the bottom of the standings than the top after Round 1 of qualifying.

Sean Lavery-Spahr averaged more than 253 during the eight-game second round, racking up three games over 270 down the stretch to climb from 48th to fourth at Firelake Bowling Center in Shawnee, Okla.

“When I came in today, I didn’t really have a goal,” Lavery-Spahr said. “It just came together. I bowled 257 the first game and I felt like I had pretty good ball reaction and feel.”

After grinding out a 215 in Game 4, Lavery-Spahr needed a massive surge to advance to match play. He said the 41-foot Bear pattern is typically not conducive to high scoring, but the way the lanes transitioned and his experience at Firelake helped him average a blistering 267.50 the last four games.

“I just put my head down,” he said. “I said ‘Make some good shots. If it works out, it works out. If not, at least you have some positives to build off of.’ Thankfully, I caught a couple good breaks in the middle of those three 270 games and it all worked out.”

Also advancing to match play are Dom Barrett, Matt Ogle, Joseph Grondin, Anthony Simonsen, Dick Allen, DJ Archer, Tomas Käyhkö and Sam Cooley.

Cooley will aim for his second consecutive title, while Grondin, a 24-year-old from San Pedro, Calif., makes his PBA Tour debut in the match play round.

“The last game, as some people probably saw on BowlTV, I was pretty emotional,” Grondin said. “I knew that I was close (to the cut), but I also knew that I was okay as long as I kept pressing.”

Grondin said urethane had been thrown on his final pair earlier in the day, which forced him to move right and change balls. After an open frame in the sixth frame, he struck on his final six shots to ensure his spot in Friday’s match play round.

Despite the exhilaration of a new career-best week, Grondin said he is trying to stay neutral as he pursues his first career title.

“Just stay in the fight as long as you can,” Grondin said of his mindset this week. “Do what works well for your game with what others are doing, and just go forward from there — but it takes a lot of work to get to that point. Don’t fool yourself about that.”

The first half of round-robin match play begins at 11 a.m. ET Friday, Feb. 17 on BowlTV. After the final six games wrap up on Friday afternoon, the top four players will advance to the stepladder finals at 7 p.m. ET.

#### MATCH PLAY ADVANCERS

Stu Williams, 3,868 (+668)

EJ Tackett, 3,833 (+633)

Zac Tackett, 3,751 (+551)

Sean Lavery-Spahr, 3,672 (+472)

Dom Barrett, 3,658 (+458)

Matt Ogle, 3,619 (+419)

Joseph Grondin, 3,614 (+414)

Anthony Simonsen, 3,604 (+404)

Dick Allen, 3,602 (+402)

DJ Archer, 3,590 (+390)

Tomas Käyhkö, 3,590 (+390)

Sam Cooley, 3,564 (+364)

#### **EJ TACKETT WINS SECOND TITLE OF SEASON AT PBA SHAWNEE CLASSIC**

##### **FEBRUARY 17, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

For the second time this season, EJ Tackett earned the No. 1 seed. For the second time this year, Tackett needed a strike in the 10th frame to win the title, this time at Firelake Bowling Center during the PBA Shawnee Classic.

And for the second time this year, Tackett delivered in the clutch. In a battle between the two most recent Triple Crown winners, he defeated Dom Barrett, 231-226, to win the PBA Shawnee Classic and claim his 18th career PBA Tour title.

“I’ve been there so many times over the years and either thrown bad shots or thrown good shots and got nine,” Tackett said. “I feel like I’m on the roller coaster. You just have to take the good and the bad, continue to put yourself in position, do the best that you can and let the pins fall where they may.”

The 30-year-old led the field by 545 pins, a margin of more than 15 pins per game, to earn the top seed.



“This pattern developed and ended up playing, to me, very similar to the fourth pattern at the U.S. Open,” he said. “I’ve always bowled well here (at Firelake). A lot of things gave me confidence, so when I saw my ball start striking, it really loosened up my swing.”

Despite two low-scoring matches on the championship pair, Tackett knew that wouldn’t hold true for long against Barrett.

“Dom Barrett is obviously one of the greatest players of the time, so I fully anticipated him to bowl a good game,” Tackett said. “I never expected it to be easy. I would’ve liked it to be a little easier, had I not thrown two bad shots in the middle of the game. But I put myself in the position to be able to get it done again.”

Tackett seized the lead during the fourth game of match play and never looked back. He won his final nine matches to, in Barrett’s words, lap the field a few times.

Barrett said he was a bit frustrated with his performance in the championship round. A missed 10-pin almost cost him in the semifinal against DJ Archer, then failed to get count after leaving a pocket 7-10 against Tackett.

But after the 7-10 gaffe, Barrett spared a 7-pin leave then struck on his final six shots to put pressure back on Tackett.

“I’m a guy who always digs really deep, finds a bit of heart no matter what and finds a way to push the other guy,” Barrett said. “EJ’s a fully deserving winner. He lapped the field a few times so he absolutely deserved to win.”

Barrett defeated Archer 174-170 in the semifinal. Archer needed a double in the 10th frame to win the match, but a devastating 7-pin leave after the first strike ended his run.

The veteran Archer took down Joseph Grondin, who was making his championship-round debut on the PBA Tour, in the first match.

Archer said he wanted to get off to a hot start to put pressure on the 24-year-old. Strikes in the second and third frame appeared to do the trick. Grondin threw four different balls, but failed to double until the ninth frame, when Archer had taken an insurmountable lead.

Tackett, who has won two titles in three events this season, said he has not yet won back-to-back titles in his career. He’ll begin his quest for consecutive titles next week in Kansas at the PBA Wichita Classic.

#### **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES**

Championship: EJ Tackett def. Dom Barrett, 231-226

Semifinal: Dom Barrett def. DJ Archer, 174-170

Match one: DJ Archer def. Joseph Grondin, 225-165

#### **FINAL STANDINGS**

1. EJ Tackett, \$25,100
2. Dom Barrett, \$16,000

3. DJ Archer, \$12,000
4. Joseph Grondin, \$10,000
5. Sean Lavery-Spahr, \$8,000
6. Zac Tackett, \$7,5000
7. Anthony Simonsen, \$7,000
8. Dick Allen, \$6,500
9. Stu Williams, \$6,100
10. Sam Cooley, \$5,500
11. Tomas Käyhkö, \$5,100
12. Matt Ogle, \$4,800

#### WICHITA STATE WOMEN, INDIANA TECH MEN WIN 2023 PBA COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

FEBRUARY 19, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

For the second straight year, the elite teams of college bowling competed under the bright lights of the PBA Tour. The 2023 PBA Collegiate Championships featured an expanded field and a women's division.

The 12 teams were invited based on their Dec. 26, 2022 rankings in the USBC Collegiate's Online Team Ranking System. They competed in bracket play at Royal Pin Expo Bowl on the all-new 42' PBA Steelsmith oil pattern.

The two finalists in the men's and women's division advanced to the televised championship matches, which aired this afternoon on FS1. The TV finals were held at Royal Pin Woodland, the host of the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!

#### WOMEN'S DIVISION

The Wichita State Shockers defeated the Mount Mercy Mustangs, 2-0, to win the women's division of the PBA Collegiate Championships.

The Shockers were the top ranked women's team in the nation heading into the tournament, earning the No. 1 seed for the bracket. They defeated St. Francis (Illinois) 4-1 in the semifinal to advance to the TV finals.

Meanwhile, the Mustangs took down Trine and Pikeville, each a seven-game thriller, to reach the title match.

Wichita State's Brooklyn Gagnon and Mount Mercy's Megan Kolberg exchanged strikes to open the TV finals. The Shockers held an early lead as each team struck in four of the first five frames, but the scoring pace slowed down in the second half.

The first game of the Race-to-Two format came down to the anchors, where Madison Janack came up clutch for the Shockers. She doubled in the 10th, then knocked down nine pins on the fill ball to lock up the Game 1 victory.

After opening in the first frame of Game 2, Kolberg and Jenna Williams tallied strikes for the Mustangs. But Juliana Botero's 3-10 conversion in the fourth and another Janack strike put Wichita State in front. Olivia Komorowski kept the Shockers ahead with a strike in the eighth.

Mount Mercy's Jaelle Hamman wouldn't let her squad go down easily. She threw all three strikes in the 10th frame, just as she did in Game 1, to put the pressure back on the Shockers.

Two years ago, Janack struck out to secure the 2021 Intercollegiate Team Championships title. This time, she just needed a mark.

After leaving a 10-pin, Janack converted the spare to win the PBA Collegiate Championships.

"I just love pressure situations," Janack said. "I feel like I thrive so well in those because I am so mentally tough now. Like 16-year-old Madison, there's no way I could do that."

The 2021 NCBCA Player of the Year missed most of the 2021-22 season battling a back injury. She said she's back to near-100% and has returned to her role as anchor.

"We definitely missed her, but it also gave some others some opportunities to step up," said Holly Harris, Wichita State's head coach. "So now it's nice to know that we've got three, four or five of them that can do it at any given moment. Adding (Janack) back into that mix is huge."

## MEN'S DIVISION

Indiana Tech celebrates as Alex Horton delivers a key strike.

On the men's side, the Indiana Tech Warriors started a lineup of all freshmen and sophomores and defeated the experienced Wichita State men 2-0.

Indiana Tech, the No. 4 seed, swept Bob Learn Jr.'s Tennessee Southern squad in the quarterfinals, before taking down Bryce Oliver and top-seeded Pikeville in seven games to reach the finals.

The Shocker men, champions of last year's inaugural PBA Collegiate Invitational, earned the No. 2 seed and a first-round bye. They overcame a 3-2 deficit against Lawrence Tech in the semifinals.

Michael Harmon Jr., Bobby Habetler and Alex Horton each struck to give Indiana Tech the early lead over the defending champs. But a missed 4-pin from anchor James Bennett opened the door for the Shockers.

Ryan Barnes and TJ Rock struck in the seventh and eighth frames to help bring the Shockers back. However, Spencer Robarge, who made the 2021 USBC Masters finals as a high schooler, couldn't get the 7-pin to fall in either frame as the Warriors took Game 1.

Harmon stayed hot for the Warriors, striking in both of his frames once again. A hang spot on the left lane gave Indiana Tech's two-handers issues. Habetler left a 2-4-10 split in the seventh frame, then Bennett left a 2-10 in the 10th frame.

After the latter open frame, the match seemed destined for a roll-off.

Wichita State moved Rock to anchor and Robarge to fourth before the must-win game — but the lineup change backfired as the team switched lanes. The left-handed Robarge struck on both attempts, while Rock opened both frames, including a missed 10-pin in the 10th that ended the match.

Chemistry proved to be the difference for the young and fearless Warriors.

"Ever since the get-go, we just meshed super well," Harmon said. "We've got great guys that are just so appreciative of the moment and are just there and we'll support you, no matter what. I feel like that's definitely what helps us and differentiates us from other teams."

## FINAL SCORES

### Women

Game 1: Wichita State def. Mount Mercy, 213-211

Game 2: Wichita State def. Mount Mercy, 190-184

### Men

Game 1: Indiana Tech def. Wichita State, 204-175

Game 2: Indiana Tech def. Wichita State, 172-168

## PBA WICHITA CLASSIC PREVIEW

FEBRUARY 21, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

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The fourth stop of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour, for many of the game's finest talents, marks a return to old stomping grounds.

The PBA Wichita Classic will take place at Northrock Lanes, the center where dozens of Tour stars developed as part of the illustrious Wichita State University program.

Chris Barnes, Jake Peters, Mitch Hupé, AJ Chapman and last week's finalist Joseph Grondin, among others, graduated from the Shocker ranks — as did Packy Hanrahan and François Lavoie, who still live in town.

The city last hosted the PBA Tour in 2018, when Dom Barrett defeated Jakob Butturff to win the U.S. Open. Butturff, the PBA's top lefty this season, led the tournament by over 550 pins that week.

The action begins on Wednesday morning and all rounds will be livestreamed on BowITV. Here's what you need to know:

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

Seven-time Player of the Year Jason Belmonte's pursuit of a record-setting eighth award hasn't gotten off to the start he envisioned, posting finishes of 70th, seventh and 25th. With the second major of the year still a month away, he can get back on track this week.

Kevin McCune, sixth overall in points, has been one of the PBA's breakout players this season. He made match play at the U.S. Open and the PBA Springfield Classic, finishing 12th in each event, before finishing 21st last week in Shawnee.

Matt Ogle excelled at the PBA League last season, and that success has carried into 2023. He has finished among the top 15 in each of his two events this season. The 38-year-old is a player to keep your eyes on this week, pun intended.

#### STORYLINES

The top story all season has been the brilliance of EJ Tackett. The former Player of the Year has laid the groundwork for a second honor, winning two of the first three tournaments of the season.

While Tackett struggled at the PBA Springfield Classic, perhaps due to an emotional hangover after winning the U.S. Open, he'll look to win back-to-back titles for the first time in his career this week.

Anthony Simonsen has been knocking on the door each week, finishing no lower than 10th this season. Despite the remarkable résumé compiled thus far by the 26-year-old, he has yet to bring home Player of the Year honors in his career. A win this week could be the impetus to a first-ever POY campaign.

Sam Cooley has racked up consecutive top-10 finishes, including a win at the PBA Springfield Classic. In his attempt to return to the PBA League, the Australian has been looking to prove his stellar 2021 season — in which he won one title and finished ninth in points — was no fluke.

#### CLASSIC SERIES POINTS LEADERS

This will be the third of five Classic Series events this season. The top eight point earners across those five tournaments will earn the chance to compete in July's PBA Skill Ball Challenge. Cooley and Tackett, who won the first two tournaments, lead the way thus far.

Sam Cooley, 6,310

EJ Tackett, 5,280

Dom Barrett, 3,510

Jakob Butturff, 3,310

Keven Williams, 3,260

Anthony Simonsen, 2,800

Sean Lavery-Spahr, 2,770

DJ Archer, 2,490

Anthony Neuer, 2,360

Chris Via, 2,190

Dick Allen, 2,120

François Lavoie, 2,040

Jason Belmonte, 2,020

Kevin McCune, 1,920

Joseph Grondin, 1,900

FORMAT

After competing on short and medium lane conditions in the first two Classic Series events, the players' next challenge is the 45-foot Dragon oil pattern.

All players will bowl 18 games of qualifying, bowling three six-game blocks across Wednesday and Thursday. Then the field will be cut to the top 22 players for an additional six-game round, which will determine the 12 finalists for Friday's round-robin match play.

#### TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Wednesday, Feb. 22

12 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 1 (six games)

6 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 2 (six games)

Thursday, Feb. 23

12 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — cut to top 22 players

6 p.m. ET — Top-22 Qualifying Round (six games) — cut to top 12 players

Friday, Feb. 24

11 a.m. ET — Round-robin match play Round 1 (six games)

3 p.m. ET — Round-robin match play Round 2 (six games) — cut to top four players

7 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

THE PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES 'GO BOWLING! PBA NASCAR INVITATIONAL AT PHOENIX RACEWAY'

FEBRUARY 22, 2023 PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION

PBA and NASCAR stars to compete on custom bowling lanes at Phoenix Raceway during 2023 March NASCAR Weekend

PHOENIX — February 22, 2023 — The inaugural Go Bowling! PBA NASCAR Invitational, bringing the worlds of bowling and auto racing together in bowling competition at Phoenix Raceway, will air March 12 at noon ET on FOX Sports' FS1. The telecast will air prior to the 2023 NASCAR United Rentals Work United 500 on FOX.

Go Bowling!, a proud sponsor of Phoenix Raceway and the PBA, is partnering with QubicaAMF to construct a custom pair of lanes inside The Barn on the grounds of Phoenix Raceway. Fans and guests are invited to attend the event free of charge, which will be taped March 10, and have the chance to bowl on the lanes once competition concludes.

“We are thrilled to extend our relationship with NASCAR with the addition of the made-for-TV event in Phoenix,” said Kevin Krauss, President, Bowling Proprietors’ Association of America (BPAA). “It will demonstrate the fun of bowling to everyone tuned in and also to everyone following their favorite drivers, bowlers and celebrities on social media.”

The Go Bowling! PBA NASCAR Invitational at Phoenix Raceway will feature four professional bowlers—PBA Tour players Kyle Troup and Jesper Svensson and PWBA Tour stars Daria Pajak and Verity Crawley—teaming with four NASCAR drivers and celebrities, including NASCAR’s Aric Almirola and Ryan Preece in doubles competition.

In addition to the doubles tournament, the event will feature a special shootout in which celebrities will compete against each other in fast-paced bowling competition.

“Many NASCAR drivers have shown a great interest in bowling, so to be able to bring stars from the PBA and PWBA together to team with current racing personalities at Phoenix Raceway during a big race week will be a treat for fans of both sports,” said Tom Clark, PBA Tour Commissioner. “This event is going to be a lot of fun, but highly competitive. When you bring the best in the world at their respective sports together, there will be fireworks.”

“The friendly competition among the drivers, the stars of the PBA/PWBA Tours and other celebrities should make for a fun show and a great way to get ready for the big NASCAR Cup Series race in Phoenix,” added Krauss.

Viewers can livestream the PBA on the FOX Sports and FOX Now apps or at FOXSports.com. Select highlights will be available on @FOXSports social handles across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. International fans can watch on BowITV, the exclusive streaming partner of the PBA.

## DOM BARRETT LEADS PBA WICHITA CLASSIC THROUGH TWO ROUNDS

FEBRUARY 22, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

The last time the PBA Tour visited Northrock Lanes in Wichita, Kan., Dom Barrett left wearing a green jacket. The 2018 U.S. Open champion is on track towards another title as he leads the PBA Wichita Classic through two rounds of qualifying.



I haven't been here in five years since I won (the 2018 U.S. Open)," he said. "It was great walking in, the memories came back of having a great event and winning my second major."

On the 45-foot Dragon oil pattern, Barrett racked up a total pinfall of 2,852 across two six-game blocks on Wednesday. He averaged 236.67 to eclipse other top-five finishers Jason Belmonte, David Krol, Bill O'Neill and Santtu Tahvanainen.

After a second place finish in Shawnee last week, Barrett said his physical game has rounded into form.

"You practice a lot at home and you try and get sharp, but nothing replicates the Tour," Barrett said. "Last week it really started to click. I'm still keying off the same thing physically. (My) timing and pushaway has always been a key for me ever since I was a kid."

Missouri's David Krol sat in 11th after the first round of qualifying, but by the third game of the evening, he found himself in the lead. He began tonight's block with a 257, then converted two spares to begin Game 2.

After that, Krol struck 31 consecutive times. He turned in games of 277, 300 and 265 to surge into the lead before ultimately settling in third place.

"I've never thrown 31 in a row before," Krol said. "It's just having a clear mind. I came in with the idea of getting to +300. After the first two games, I was at +150 already, so my arm swing was loose."

Anthony Simonsen led the first round of qualifying, firing 815 his first three games of the tournament. Simonsen said urethane equipment looked okay during the practice session on Tuesday, but he slowly convinced himself that would be his plan of attack today.

"I'm big on 'You don't know if you don't try' so I gave it a go and was fortunate enough it worked out," Simonsen said.

His plan worked again on the fresh, shooting 279 in Game 1 tonight, but he couldn't match his morning's torrid scoring pace.

With a total pinfall of 2,623, Andrew Anderson currently occupies the final spot in the cut.

The third round of qualifying begins at 12 p.m. ET on Thursday, Feb. 23. Six more games will decide the 22 players advancing to an additional six-game block on Thursday evening.

After all 24 games of qualifying, the field will be trimmed to the top 12 players for Friday's round-robin match play competition.

#### LEADERS AFTER ROUND 2

Dom Barrett, 2,852 (+452)

Jason Belmonte, 2,847 (+447)

David Krol, 2,832 (+432)

Bill O'Neill, 2,817 (+417)

Santtu Tahvanainen, 2,809 (+409)

Anthony Simonsen, 2,804 (+404)

Tom Daugherty, 2,778 (+378)

Jakob Butturff, 2,767 (+367)

Anthony Lavery-Spahr, 2,755 (+355)

Tommy Jones, 2,750 (+350)

Full standings are available [here](#).

#### TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Thursday, Feb. 23

12 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — top 22 players advance

6 p.m. ET — Top-22 Qualifying Round (six games) — top 12 players advance

Friday, Feb. 24

11 a.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 1 (six games)

3 p.m. ET — Round-robin Match Play Round 2 (six games) — top four players advance

7 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

#### ANTHONY SIMONSEN WINS 11TH CAREER TITLE AT PBA WICHITA CLASSIC

FEBRUARY 24, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Anthony Simonsen has never been one to shy away from breaking conventional wisdom. This week at Northrock Lanes for the PBA Wichita Classic was no exception.

The 26-year-old defeated Dom Barrett, 257-213, to win his 11th career title.

Just as he did during the first round of the tournament, Simonsen opted to throw urethane on the 45-foot Dragon oil pattern. He aimed directly at the 1-3 pocket, using the shape of the long pattern and the characteristics of the center to his advantage.

"I know this is one of those buildings that if you get lined up, you're able to throw a few strikes," Simonsen said.

"Mentally, I haven't been the sharpest the last couple weeks," he said. "I think that's kind of due to a lack of competing and I'm slowly trying to dial that back in. I'm looking forward to the next couple weeks because I was able to find my feet much sooner in the season."

The Player of the Year race is starting to heat up between Simonsen and EJ Tackett, who won the U.S. Open and PBA Shawnee Classic.

Simonsen achieved his fourth consecutive top-10 finish of the season and is the lone player on Tour to reach match play in all four tournaments. But he isn't concerned about the potential for a first career Player of the Year nod.

"I'm not really a guy who looks big into that," he said. "If I bowl well and that's what it gets me, then that's awesome. But ultimately, I try to look at every event as it's own individual event and try to bowl as well as I can that week."

For Barrett, this marks his second straight runner-up performance after falling to Tackett at the PBA Shawnee Classic last week. The 37-year-old, while disappointed in another second place finish, said he is satisfied with his progress this season.

"If you told me after my first two missed cuts that I'd have back-to-back seconds, I'd be really happy," he said. "I'm much happier with where my game is at now than a couple weeks back."

In the title match, a pair of 2-10 splits on the left lane put Barrett in an early deficit. He said neither shot was too bad and that he changed balls after the first split. He added the lane transition could have been affected by Simonsen's use of urethane.

"After that, it was going to be hard to beat him," Barrett said.

Barrett took down Santtu Tahvanainen, last season's Rookie of the Year, in the semifinal. Tahvanainen, who shot 280 in the opening match of the stepladder against Jakob Butturff, tallied 14 strikes in a row on the championship pair.

The semifinal matchup flipped when Tahvanainen left a pocket 7-10 split in the eighth frame. Barrett seized the opportunity, striking in the eighth and 10th frames to clinch the match.

The next PBA Tour stop will be March 6-9 in Jackson, Mich., for the PBA Jackson Classic.

#### CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES

Anthony Simonsen def. Dom Barrett, 257-213

Dom Barrett def. Santtu Tahvanainen, 238-235

Santtu Tahvanainen def. Jakob Butturff, 280-238

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Anthony Simonsen, \$25,000

Dom Barrett, \$16,000

Santtu Tahvanainen, \$12,000

Jakob Butturff, \$10,000

Kris Prather, \$8,200

Bill O'Neill, \$7,500

Jason Belmonte, \$7,000

Tommy Jones, \$6,500

Chris Barnes, \$6,000

Darren Tang, \$5,500

Tom Daugherty, \$5,100

Anthony Lavery-Spahr, \$4,800

OIL PATTERN RELEASED FOR 2023 PBA LBC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

### **FEBRUARY 27, 2023 PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION**

With just over three months until the 2023 PBA LBC National Championships begin, the PBA has announced the oil pattern that players will be competing on.

The oil pattern for the 2023 PBA LBC National Championships will be 42 feet with 28.7 mLs of Kegel "Ice" conditioner. With a ratio of 5:1, it falls under the parameters of a Challenge pattern.

You can download the oil pattern [here](#).

Eric Pierson, the PBA LBC National Championships tournament director and head of lane maintenance, said players may enjoy the pattern better than a typical house shot, as the pattern structure will allow many of them to play in their comfort zone.

"It is very playable for different styles and skill levels of bowlers," Pierson said.

Check out this video breakdown of the oil pattern, featuring Kris Prather and bowlers from the Milwaukee area. Prather won the 2022 PBA World Championship at Bowlero Wauwatosa, the host center of the 2023 PBA LBC National Championships.

The 2023 PBA LBC National Championships are open to all bowlers from all centers of all skill levels, including non-Bowlero Corp centers. There are no PBA membership or average requirements.

All bowlers are now able to register [here](#).

Players will bowl six games of singles competition across 12 lanes. They can also enter the optional Doubles and four-player Team divisions an unlimited number of times.

Players can enter one of five divisions: Men and Women's Handicap, Open Classic, Women's Classic and a Senior Classic. First place in the Open Classic will pay \$25,000, with the other divisions awarding \$5,000 first place prizes. All divisions will award prizes on a 1:8 ratio.

Additionally, the top three (3) bowlers in the Open Classic, Women's Classic division and the PBA Exempt division, as well as the winner of the other three divisions (Men's Handicap, Women's Handicap

and Senior Classic) will be invited to the 2023 PBA LBC National Championships Clash. That FS1 televised event will take place at Bayside Bowl in Portland, Maine, and include a total prize fund of \$100,000.

More information on the PBA LBC National Championships can be found [here](#).

## PBA REGIONAL RECAP: THOMSEN, VILLARREYNA AND FRANKLIN GRAB TITLES

### MARCH 1, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN

The PBA Tour is in full swing, but the PBA and PBA50 Regional Tour still bring in some big names along the way. South Carolina, Kansas and Colorado hosted events to add regional titles to three competitors' résumés.

### PBA50 PARADISE LANES SPARTANBURG OPEN

Chris Johnson started things off in Spartanburg, S.C., with a 300 in Game 4 to propel him to the lead after eight games of qualifying at +284. He held onto the lead after the advancer round to earn a double-bye, but he fell in the semifinals to Michael Painter 204-198.

In the lower half, the No. 14 seed, Scott Thomsen, took a W in his first three matches to earn himself a matchup with Walter Ray Williams Jr. in the semifinals. He kept the momentum going, defeating the all-time great, 235-210, thanks to a late five-bagger. In the finals, Painter started with two splits, while Thomsen began with a three-bagger on his way to earning his first career title.

### PBA50 Paradise Lanes Spartanburg Open Final Standings

Scott Thomsen, 2,500 points, \$2,000

Michael Painter, 1,500, \$1,300

Chris Johnson, 1,150, \$950

Walter Ray Williams, Jr., 950, \$950

### PBA50 Paradise Lanes Spartanburg Open Full Results

### PBA STARLITE SOUTHWEST OPEN

After the PBA Wichita Classic wrapped up on the PBA Tour, a handful of guys packed up their things and headed towards McPherson, Kan., for regional action. Dylan Burns led the field at +264 for eight games, but Jake Peters, Zach Wilkins and Arturo Quintero sat right behind him. Peters took the lead after the first advancer round and held onto it to claim the top seed for the stepladder

In the first match, Andres Villarreyna defeated Wilkins 239-233, and then defeated Tomas Käyhkö 247-223 in the second match. Villarreyna continued his run in the finals, taking down Peters 213-164 for his first career title.

#### PBA Starlite Southwest Open Final Standings

Andres Villarreyna, 2,500 points, \$2,800

Jake Peters, 1,500, \$1,800

Tomas Käyhkö, 1,150, \$1,400

Zacharay Wilkins, 950, \$1,200

#### PBA Starlite Southwest Open Full Results

#### PBA50 LOVELAND SOUTHWEST OPEN

Sweetheart Ten Pin Bowling in Loveland, Colo., brought in 51 competitors on the Mike Aulby pattern, where PWBA Hall of Famer Tish Johnson took the lead after the first round of eight games at +246 in her home state.

Tom Hess smoked the field in the first advancer round, averaging almost 250 for his six games. He held onto the No. 1 seed for the stepladder, with Ricky Schissler, Bryan Pogor and Tony Franklin joining him.

Franklin barely slid past Pogor in the first round, 229-225, and then beat Schissler 234-193. Just as the No. 4 seed ran the table in McPherson, Franklin did the same in Colorado, defeating Hess 238-226 for his ninth regional title and first since 2002.

#### PBA50 Loveland Southwest Open Final Standings

Tony Franklin, 2,500 points, \$2,400

Tom Hess, 1,500, \$1,500

Ricky Schissler, 1,150, \$1,200

Bryan Pogor, 950, \$1,000

### **PBA JACKSON CLASSIC PREVIEW**

#### **MARCH 6, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

After a brief intermission, the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour is back on track in Jackson, Mich. JAX 60 hosts the PBA Jackson Classic, the fifth event of the season.

In 2022, Jesper Svensson won the PBA David Small's Best of the Best Championship, which was also held at JAX 60. He led the tournament wire-to-wire before defeating fellow two-handed southpaw Packy Hanrahan in the title match.

The action begins on Tuesday morning and all rounds will be livestreamed on [BowlTV](#). Here's what you need to know:

## **STORYLINES**

Two players have inarguably stood above the rest this season: EJ Tackett and Anthony Simonsen, who have taken home three of the four titles. Tackett ranks first in points, average and earnings, while Simonsen sits second in all three categories.

Their brilliance is of little surprise given their exploits over the past seven years, and the dichotomy in how Tackett and Simonsen have excelled this season is fascinating.

Tackett has two wins and two missed cuts; in fact, in the first round of qualifying following both of his wins, he sat in 64th and 63rd out of 64 competing players. The emotional hangover after a victory, especially one as momentous as Tackett's U.S. Open title, is real.

Simonsen, meanwhile, has finished no lower than 10th and has yet to miss a match play round.

Overall, there have been 22 rounds of competition thus far in 2023. Simonsen has finished all of them within the top 20, including 18 top-10 finishes; Tackett has been in the lead after six of 22 rounds, but been among the top 20 players after less than half of rounds this season (10).

Today's impossible-to-believe-but-I-promise-it's-true stat: Simonsen concluded more rounds in the top five (11) than Tackett has in the top 20 (10).

In early March, these are just fun numbers. But come May and June, these are the stats that can swing the Player of the Year race.

## **PLAYERS TO WATCH**

Dom Barrett, coming off consecutive runner-up finishes in Shawnee and Wichita, is among the sharpest players on tour right now. The 10-time titleist will be looking to throw his hat into the early Player of the Year conversation with a win this week in Michigan.

Barrett's countryman Richie Teece took an extended hiatus following his fifth place U.S. Open finish — for good reason: he had to help plan his wedding! — but he's back in the States in search of a second career title.

Rejuvenated by his Kansas homecoming and a ninth-place finish in Wichita, Chris Barnes will look to keep that momentum going. He won the PBA50 David Small's Jax60 Open in 2022.

A trio of Michigan natives will seek titles in their home state: Saginaw's Tom Smallwood, Holly's Andrew Anderson and Okemos's Justin Knowles.

## **CLASSIC SERIES POINTS LEADERS**

The field for July's PBA Skill Ball Challenge is starting to take shape as this will be the fourth of five Classic Series events this season. The top eight point earners across the Classic Series earn spots to the tournament.

With top-10 finishes in each event and a win in Wichita, Simonsen sits atop the list heading into the PBA Jackson Classic.

1. Anthony Simonsen, 7,800

2. Dom Barrett, 6,510
3. Sam Cooley, 6,310
4. EJ Tackett, 5,850
5. Jakob Butturff, 5,210
6. Jason Belmonte, 3,510
7. Sean Lavery-Spahr, 3,500
8. Keven Williams, 3,450
9. Bill O'Neill, 3,290
10. Kris Prather, 3,030
11. DJ Archer, 3,000
12. Tommy Jones, 2,930
13. Tom Daugherty, 2,740
14. Santtu Tahvanainen, 2,740
15. Anthony Lavery-Spahr, 2,570

## **FORMAT**

After competing on short, medium and long lane conditions in the first three Classic Series events, a dual pattern format awaits in Jackson. Players will compete on the 39-foot Chameleon pattern for the first round of qualifying, then the 44-foot Hardwick for the second round. After Tuesday, players will compete on both patterns for the duration of the tournament.

All players will bowl three six-game qualifying rounds between Tuesday and Wednesday, totaling 18 games of qualifying. The top 24 players will advance to a fourth six-game round on Wednesday evening, which will determine the 12 advancers to Thursday's competition.

A final six-game block will determine the four finalists for the stepladder, livestreaming at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday evening.

## **TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

### **Tuesday, March 7**

11 a.m. ET — Qualifying Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. ET — Qualifying Round 2 (six games)

### **Wednesday, March 8**

11 a.m. ET — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — cut to top 24 players

5 p.m. ET — Top-24 Qualifying Round (six games) — cut to top 12 players



## **Thursday, March 9**

12 p.m. ET — Top-12 Qualifying Round (six games) — cut to top four players

6:30 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

## **SIMONSEN STAYS HOT, LEADS PBA JACKSON CLASSIC AFTER ROUND 2**

### **MARCH 7, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

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The recent trend of slow starts from reigning champions came to an abrupt halt at the PBA Jackson Classic. Anthony Simonsen, who won the most recent PBA Tour event, spent the first two rounds at JAX 60 in Jackson, Mich. atop the leaderboard.

Simonsen led opening six games on the 39-foot Chameleon oil pattern, averaging more than 255. After six more games Tuesday evening on the 44-foot Hardwick pattern, the 26-year-old outlasted a host of challengers to maintain the lead with a 2,923 total pinfall (+523).

Matt Russo nearly ran down Simonsen, tying him after the fifth game of Round 2, but closed the day 10 pins behind in second place. EJ Tackett, Richie Teece and Cody Shoemaker round out the top five.

The top 24 players will advance following six more games on Wednesday morning. After another six-game block Wednesday evening, the field will be cut to the top 12 players. A final six-game round on Thursday will determine the four stepladder finalists.

The remainder of the tournament will feature a true dual-pattern format: Hardwick on the left lane and Chameleon on the right lane. All rounds will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

### **LEADERS AFTER ROUND 2**

1. Anthony Simonsen, 2,923 (+523)
2. Matt Russo, 2,913 (+513)
3. EJ Tackett, 2,896 (+496)
4. Richie Teece, 2,834 (+434)
5. Cody Shoemaker, 2,825 (+425)
6. Tommy Jones, 2,815 (+415)
7. AJ Johnson, 2,792 (+392)
8. Jesper Svensson, 2,765 (+365)
9. Marshall Kent, 2,765 (+365)

10. Tom Smallwood, 2,747 (+347)

Full standings are available [here](#).

#### **TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

##### **Wednesday, March 8**

11 a.m. ET — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — cut to top 24 players

5 p.m. ET — Top-24 Qualifying Round (six games) — cut to top 12 players

##### **Thursday, March 9**

12 p.m. ET — Top-12 Qualifying Round (six games) — cut to top four players

6:30 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

#### **TACKETT, SIMONSEN MAINTAIN DOMINANCE HEADING INTO FINAL DAY OF PBA JACKSON CLASSIC**

MARCH 8, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

After 24 games at the PBA Jackson Classic, the two hottest players on the planet continue to dominate. EJ Tackett and Anthony Simonsen, champions of three of the season's four events, lead the field into the final day of competition.

Tackett has tallied a total pinfall of 5,724 (+924), averaging more than 238, while Simonsen sits 62 pins behind. Santtu Tahvanainen, Cody Shoemaker and Matt Russo fill out the top five and trail Tackett by less than 200 pins.

Tommy Jones seized the lead after the third round of qualifying on Wednesday morning, but Tackett surged in front during the evening's Top-24 Round.

The scoring pace slowed down on Wednesday as the players competed on two lane conditions simultaneously. Players bowled on the 44-foot Hardwick oil pattern on the left lane, with the 39-foot Chameleon pattern on the right lane.

Those conditions, however, proved futile in slowing down Jason Belmonte.

The 30-time champion catapulted nearly 30 spots up the leaderboard. Belmonte closed the evening's six-game round with 279 and 276 to solidify his spot in Thursday's competition.

Marshall Kent's strong finish, firing 813 over his final three games, helped him stave off the Australian.

After tallying four straight games over 255 to begin the night, Tom Smallwood secured the final spot in the top 12.

The dozen contending players will bowl a final six-game round on Thursday morning, which will determine the four stepladder finalists. The finals begin at 6:30 p.m. ET on BowlTV.

#### LEADERS AFTER TOP-24 ROUND

EJ Tackett, 5,724 (+924)

Anthony Simonsen, 5,662 (+862)

Sanntu Tahvanainen, 5,536 (+736)

Cody Shoemaker, 5,536 (+736)

Matt Russo, 5,531 (+731)

Shawn Maldonado, 5,516 (+716)

Tommy Jones, 5,515 (+715)

Marshall Kent, 5,509 (+709)

Kevin McCune, 5,504 (+704)

Jason Belmonte, 5,501 (+701)

AJ Johnson, 5,488 (+688)

Tom Smallwood, 5,476 (+676)

Full standings are available [here](#).

#### **EJ TACKETT WINS THIRD TITLE OF SEASON AT PBA JACKSON CLASSIC**

**MARCH 9, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The story of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour has been the unrivaled brilliance of EJ Tackett and Anthony Simonsen. The story of the PBA Jackson Classic was no different.

Simonsen, who has finished in the top 10 in every 2023 event, prevailed late in the final round of qualifying to earn the No. 1 seed — but Tackett, already a two-time champion this season, got his revenge in the title match.

Tackett defeated Simonsen 277-199 for his third title of the season and the 19th of his career.

“This is maybe the best title match I’ve bowled this year,” Tackett said. “I hope I can keep bowling well, putting myself in position to win. Hopefully this train keeps rolling.”

This week on dual patterns at JAX 60 in Jackson, Mich., Tackett and Simonsen battled for supremacy every step of the way.

They were separated by just a handful of pins as the conclusion of the final game of qualifying drew near. Simonsen's key ball change on the left lane — which featured the 44-foot Hardwick oil pattern — proved to be the difference, bringing an end to Tackett's bid for a third No. 1 seed this season.

Tackett's win over the No. 3 seed, Shawn Maldonado, in the semifinal set up the championship match that almost everyone at JAX 60 wanted to see.

Early in the championship match, Tackett appeared to display a heightened level of focus compared to his title in Shawnee a few weeks ago. Why?

"I was bowling Anthony Simonsen, probably the most talented player any of us have ever seen," Tackett said. "There are some players that you know can pop off a great game at any time. But you assume that Simo is going to be one that is going to bowl good every time he steps on the lanes.

"The last time I bowled him in a title match, it was a 267-tie and I lost in the roll-off."

In the title match, the same pattern that Simonsen solved to earn the top seed came back to bite him. A split in the third frame put him in an early deficit, then a super-washout in the ninth frame all but ended the match.

Tackett threw an emphatic strike in the ninth frame to seal the victory. He closed the game on the left lane, throwing the very same Venom Shock that he used to win the U.S. Open earlier this year.

"I used that ball a lot to make the show in Shawnee as well," he said. "That ball has a ton of games on it this year — a ton of really good games. Sometimes balls get retired, but that thing is going to stay around until it stops striking."

Tackett switched to that ball following a clean 247 in the semifinal against Maldonado. A trio of 10-pins were the lone blemishes on his scoresheet.

The first two frames of a match don't decide the outcome, but in the opening match between Maldonado and Tommy Jones, it felt that way. Jones left a pair of brutal splits — a 4-8-10 on the left lane and a 4-9 on the right lane — while Maldonado carried all 10 pins on both.

Maldonado took advantage of the opportunity and fired the first 11 strikes. However, he missed right and came up just shy of 300, shooting 298.

With a 19th career title, Tackett tied Chris Barnes on the PBA's all-time list.

"Chris is one that I grew up watching and definitely one of the greatest players that's ever played this game," Tackett said. "To be able to share history with him, forever at this point, is pretty cool."

Tackett will look for title No. 20 and to carry over his dominance for the first time this season as the Tournament of Champions, the second major of the season, is set to begin this weekend.

## CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES

EJ Tackett def. Anthony Simonsen, 277-199

EJ Tackett def. Shawn Maldonado, 247-190

Shawn Maldonado def. Tommy Jones, 298-192

#### FINAL STANDINGS

EJ Tackett, \$25,000

Anthony Simonsen, \$15,000

Shawn Maldonado, \$10,000

Tommy Jones, \$7,500

Cody Shoemaker, \$6,000

Santtu Tahvanainen, \$5,300

Matt Russo, \$4,900

AJ Johnson, \$4,650

Tom Smallwood, \$4,400

Jason Belmonte, \$4,200

Marshall Kent, \$3,900

Kevin McCune, \$3,900

#### **PBA Hall of Famer Jim Doty Dies at 73**

#### **PBA HALL OF FAMER JIM DOTY DIES AT 73**

#### **MARCH 11, 2023 JOHNNY CAMPOS**

Jim Doty, the general manager of Indianapolis' Royal Pin Entertainment and one of the most iconic venues in professional bowling, leaves behind a tremendous legacy.

For more than 40 years, Jim Doty set the gold standard for how to host a bowling tournament, especially for the Professional Bowlers Association Tour.

As the general manager of Royal Pin Entertainment, which includes Royal Pin Woodland (formerly known as Woodland Bowl), Doty was host to all five PBA major tournaments, as well as standard PBA events and a few other non-standard events since 1981. No other venue has hosted all five PBA major championships.

He was there for the first tournament, the 1981 True Value Open, all the way up to the U.S. Open earlier this year.

Doty died of a heart attack on Saturday, March 4, at the age of 73, leaving a strong legacy and a long list of friends in the bowling industry.

"The response has been unbelievable from the locals and from the bowling world," said Doty's son Jeremy. "It's been pretty overwhelming."

Jim Doty and his wife Mary were in New Smyrna Beach, Fla., at the time of his death.

"My mom and dad 'snowbird,' and they were down there when it happened," Jeremy said. "My wife and I had just gotten off a cruise ship, so we were in the area and were able to hang out with mom and dad for a couple of hours. We were getting ready to get on a plane when mom called and said dad had passed. We left the airport and got back to her."

"It was sad and upsetting, but somebody was looking out for us, making sure she wasn't alone when it happened."

Jim Doty was inducted into the PBA Hall of Fame in 2019 for meritorious service. But he was very unassuming about his contributions to the organization.

"Jim was a serious businessman, but could be wickedly funny," said award-winning bowling writer Bob Johnson, who also was in the 2019 PBA Hall of Fame class. "He was highly accomplished but extremely humble. He was genuinely bewildered when elected to the PBA Hall of Fame. I remember spending 10 minutes on the evening of our induction convincing him that he was deserving."

"It was an honor knowing him."

Doty gave a speech at his PBA Hall of Fame induction in 2019.

Hosting PBA events was one of the highlights every year for Doty, who spent most of the tournament weeks at the center.

"Dad always loved having the PBA there," Jeremy said. "The one year he didn't have it he was so bummed out. Every year he had them he wanted to go above and beyond to make those guys happy."

"He was so proud to have the U.S. Open last year, this year and next year at Woodland. He would be there in the morning and stay usually until they were done at night. He was a very passionate advocate for the sport."

That was not lost on many of the players, who made some fond memories at the center over the years.

"I won three major titles and two regionals there, so Woodland Bowl will always have a special place in my heart," said Pete Weber. "Jim knew everybody and went out of his way to make sure that everything was going to run smoothly."

"It was always a pleasure to go there and see Mr. Doty and be in Indianapolis."

Woodland was also the site of one of Weber's most memorable moments – dropping and breaking the eagle trophy after winning the 1991 U.S. Open.

"I think Jim probably has a piece of the trophy somewhere," Weber said. "I'm pretty sure I gave him one or he picked one up from the approach. It's hard to not remember that. One of my great moments in bowling, along with saying, 'Who do you think you are? I am!' They come back around again and again."

Weber won the 2013 PBA Tournament of Champions at Woodland.

What makes the center (which will always be Woodland Bowl to many of the long-time pros) even more special to Weber is the display of trophies and memorabilia from his father, Dick Weber, who was originally from Indianapolis.

"Jim called me right after Dad died and asked me if there was anything he could have to put on display there," Pete said. "I dropped off some trophies, and the next time I was there they were on display. What a great honor for my dad!"

Also on display at the Beer Thirty bar and other areas of the bowl are championship banners of bowlers who have won titles at Woodland.

"When we walk into Woodland Bowl and see our banner, it might seem like a small thing, but it means the world to us," said Norm Duke, who has won four titles there. "This place will go down as one of the most iconic and one of my favorite places to compete.

"It has become like a second home, partly because of the way they welcomed us – the way they have respected us over the years. Jim was so loved by the players not only because of his commitment to us, but also the genuine respect and love that he had for us."

"Woodland is a part of the fabric of the PBA," said PBA Commissioner Tom Clark. "For most of us, it simply feels like home. This is largely because of Jim Doty, the perfect host. He loved the sport, treated our professionals with the utmost respect, and his business acumen and negotiations were always fair and accommodating. We are very proud Jim is forever in the PBA Hall of Fame."

The first of Duke's back-to-back titles in 2019 came at Woodland.

Duke won his first title at Woodland in 2007, but capped his Hall of Fame career 12 years later when he claimed the 2019 Go Bowling! PBA Indianapolis Open – his 39th title – a month before turning 55.

"You're talking about 42 years of history in that building, and some pro bowlers' lives have changed there," he said. "Jim knew that he was facilitating some things we wanted more than anything. He gave us a chance to complete careers in some cases, and to start careers for others. In my case, he gave me a chance to end it."

One of the bowlers who started their careers there is Sean Rash, who has been friends with the Doty family for more than 20 years.

"I bowled my very first college event at Woodland Bowl when I bowled for Wichita State," Rash said. "I have some great memories there, including the 300 game I shot in the Tournament of Champions and multiple shows there."

Rash gifted Doty the jersey he wore when he shot a televised 300 game during the 2015 PBA Tournament of Champions finals.

The one thing that Rash has not done yet is win at Woodland, which would earn him a championship banner at the bowl. Doty took care of that, too.

"He did a banner for me and Ryan Shafer, the two guys who shot televised 300s in the building," Rash said. "Jim was just an unbelievable human being. He was a mentor to so many people in the industry, on how to run a bowling center and be successful. He was a friend to so many people in the industry – from the USBC to the BPAA, the PBA and all the manufacturers."

Another player who got his career kick-started with success at Woodland is Ron Palombi Jr., who won two of his six career titles there, including the 1990 U.S. Open.

"I did get to spend some time with Jim every year that we were there," he said. "I made it a point to find him right away or he would come find me.

"It all goes back to my rookie season. I had my best finish (ninth) of my rookie year there and was pretty much an unknown. He went out of his way to say he had watched me bowl and enjoyed my game and wished me luck. Every year we went back, the friendship was there. He was just such a down-to-earth, genuine guy."

Doty's death left a void at Royal Pin Entertainment, where he worked in management for 45 years.

"Jim lived and loved the sport of bowling," said Craig May, the chief executive officer at Royal Pin Leisure Centers. "I personally met daily with Jim for over 20 years, and the friendship that we developed was priceless. He will be truly missed both personally and professionally. Jim has made countless friends and touched so many lives in the bowling community."

There will be a visitation for Doty on Sunday from 2-7 p.m. at the Randall and Roberts Funeral Home, located at 1685 Westfield Road, Noblesville, Ind. The funeral mass will be at 11 a.m. on Tuesday at Our Lady of Grace Church, also in Noblesville. More information is available [here](#).

"We're expecting quite a few people to drop in, but we really don't know what to expect," said Jeremy Doty, who works for Brunswick. "But we hope we don't stop hearing those stories about him. Every time I walk into a bowling center that I'm traveling to, I love when they hear my last name and say, 'Are you Jim's son?' Then they will go on for half an hour with stories about him.

"I always joked with him that I'm glad he had a good legacy, because it would be very hard for me to walk into bowling centers if people didn't love him."

Based on the response from the bowling world about Doty's death, there's not much chance of that.

## **KYLE TROUP, ARIC ALMIROLA AND JIMMIE ALLEN TAKE HOME WINS AT GO BOWLING! PBA NASCAR INVITATIONAL AT PHOENIX RACEWAY**

**MARCH 12, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

In a battle between superstars from professional bowling and racing, Kyle Troup and NASCAR's Aric Amirola emerged victorious at the Go Bowling! PBA NASCAR Invitational at Phoenix Raceway.



The tournament teamed up PBA and PWBA talents with NASCAR racers for a doubles competition. A custom two-lane venue built within The Barn at Phoenix Raceway was the only suitable host for the special crossover event between the PBA and NASCAR.

In the opening match, Troup faced off against his best friend on Tour, Jesper Svensson. Almirola picked up a pair of spares early to put him and Troup ahead.

Svensson's 2-4-6-7-10 conversion in the fourth frame seemed to wake up his teammate Chase Briscoe, who struck in the fifth frame. But the driver of Stewart-Haas' No. 14 car fell back asleep in the ninth frame, throwing a gutter after using the wrong ball.

He converted the spare, using his own ball time time, to give Svensson a chance to shut out Troup and Almirola. However, the two-handed southpaw left a 2-4-7 and put the match in Troup's hands.

"The oven is hot," Almirola told FS1's Randy Pedersen when asked about the pressure of the final frame.

The temperature was just right for Troup, who cooked up Thanksgiving dinner with a turkey to secure the win.

In the other semifinal, close friends on the PWBA Tour Daria Pajak and Verity Crawley went head-to-head as well. Crawley's quick double pushed her and Ryan Preece to the halftime lead over Pajak and 2023 Daytona 500 champion Ricky Stenhouse Jr.

Open frames from Preece and Stenhouse in the seventh frame knotted up the score. Stenhouse converted a clutch spare in the ninth frame to take the lead and Crawley's split in the 10th all but sealed their fate.

Another tough spare conversion from Stenhouse commenced the championship match.

Scores were tough to come by on the Checkered Flag oil pattern, but Almirola's strikes in the fifth and seventh frames put him and Troup back in front.

Troup's high shot in the eighth tripped out the 4-7-10, doubling to capitalize on Almirola's strike and putting the match out of reach.

Jimmie Allen, a multi-platinum, GRAMMY Award nominated country musician, joined the NASCAR crew for the Celebrity Super Clash. The one-ball roll-off competition pitted Allen against six NASCAR drivers, including Gray Gaulding, who shot a certified 300 game last October, and Jeffrey Earnhardt.

Gaulding wore his 300 ring, but the jewelry only held him down. A six-count eliminated the 25-year-old in the first round.

Briscoe may have struggled in the opening match, but he caught fire in the Super Clash. He tallied four strikes and a nine-count to reach the championship round against Allen.

The 28-year-old's hot streak stalled out in the final round. A six-count proved to be no challenge at all for Allen, who competed in the pre-tournament qualifier at the U.S. Open and PBA Jackson Classic earlier this season.

Allen knocked over eight pins with ease and added another piece of PBA hardware to his collection.

## MATCH SCORES

Semifinal 1: Kyle Troup and Aric Almirola def. Jesper Svensson and Chase Briscoe, 178-159

Semifinal 2: Daria Pajak and Ricky Stenhouse def. Verity Crawley and Ryan Preece, 167-134

Championship: Kyle Troup and Aric Almirola def. Daria Pajak and Ricky Stenhouse, 176-135

## CELEBRITY SUPER CLASH SCORES

Round 1: Aric Almirola 7, Chase Briscoe X, Ricky Stenhouse Jr. 7, Ryan Preece 9, Gray Gaulding 6, Jeffrey Earnhardt 8, Jimmie Allen X

Gray Gaulding eliminated.

Round 2: Aric Almirola X, Chase Briscoe X, Ricky Stenhouse Jr. 7, Ryan Preece 9, Jeffrey Earnhardt 8, Jimmie Allen 9

Ricky Stenhouse Jr. eliminated.

Round 3: Aric Almirola 3, Chase Briscoe 9, Ryan Preece 8, Jeffrey Earnhardt 7, Jimmie Allen X

Aric Almirola eliminated.

Round 4: Chase Briscoe X, Ryan Preece 7, Jeffrey Earnhardt X, Jimmie Allen 9

Ryan Preece eliminated

Round 5: Chase Briscoe X, Jeffrey Earnhardt 0, Jimmie Allen 7

Jeffrey Earnhardt eliminated.

Round 6: Chase Briscoe 6, Jimmie Allen

Chase Briscoe eliminated — Jimmie Allen wins.

## **BORESCH, MCCORDIC, BORDEN ELECTED TO PBA HALL OF FAME**

### **MARCH 12, 2023 JEF GOODGER**

Lennie Boresch Jr., Pete McCordic and Fred Borden will make up the PBA Hall of Fame Class of 2023. Boresch will enter in the superior performance category for his PBA50 career and McCordic and Borden will both enter for meritorious service.

The PBA Hall of Fame induction ceremony will be held March 12, 2023 in Fairlawn, Ohio prior to the PBA Tournament of Champions.

The induction ceremony will be livestreamed for free on BowlTV.

### **LENNIE BORESCH JR.**

Boresch, of Kenosha, Wis., won the 2022 Senior U.S. Open in June for his fifth PBA50 title and second major, making him eligible for PBA Hall of Fame consideration. At his first opportunity of eligibility, he was elected and will enter the PBA Hall of Fame in 2023. He's already a member of the USBC Hall of Fame, having been inducted in 2012.

PBA Tour commissioner Tom Clark broke the news to Boresch prior to the Friday-morning league at Castle Lanes in Racine, Wisconsin, where Boresch owns Bowler's Choice Pro Shop. Clark addressed the league—a league Boresch created—under the guise of relaying information on the new PBA LBC National Championships tournament, then surprised everyone by announcing Boresch's upcoming induction into the Hall of Fame.

"It was a total shock," said Boresch. "I saw Tom earlier and he told me he was making the rounds to talk about the tournament, and then when he said I was going into the Hall of Fame, I was caught way off guard. I met the criteria for consideration this year, but I don't know how that all plays out. I thought maybe some-day, but not this quickly."

In addition to Boresch's five PBA50 titles, he has eight second-place finishes and also owns 33 PBA Regional Tour titles (25 standard and eight PBA50).

"I was always a late bloomer," said Boresch. "I joined the PBA when I was 19 and didn't win my first regional until I was 32. I never gave up and then all of a sudden, I've put together a little success these last several years. It's still kind of surreal to me."

"Lennie is a great example of a bowler who extends his bowling career with the PBA50 Tour," said Clark. "He joined the Tour, went full-bore into it, won some big titles against some of the best ever to play, and now he gets into the Hall of Fame. It's inspirational for a lot of people."

"It really hasn't sunk in yet," said Boresch. "I look around at all the Hall of Famers out there and it's the guys I watch on TV, and now I'm one of them? Going into the Hall of Fame was a goal of mine. I've been very blessed in my career."

### **PETE MCCORDIC**

Long-time Southwest Region manager McCordic, of Katy, Texas, retired in 2022 after 25 years running the region. Overwhelmingly respected by the players for his excellence, consistency and fairness, McCordic will enter the PBA Hall of Fame for his meritorious service to the game.

"Having bowled on Tour for about 18 years, I know what it's like trying to make a living competing," said McCordic. "I did the best I could to give the bowlers chasing that dream a great experience in every tournament."

“The PBA has been blessed with great regional managers,” said Clark. “They keep the PBA together by running a regional system that is the backbone of the PBA. They understand tournament bowling and how to create a consistent, fair environment for the players. Pete McCordic was all those things, and he was also a great player.”

Prior to devoting his time to amplifying the regional program, McCordic was a touring pro, winning two PBA Tour titles and bowling a perfect game in the 1987 Greater Los Angeles Open. It was the fourth televised 300 game in PBA history and first in 13 years. In 2018, during the PBA’s 60th anniversary season, McCordic’s perfect game was designated the fourth-most memorable moment in PBA history.

“He sacrificed his own playing career to take on the Southwest Region and give opportunities for so many players to compete,” said Clark. “Pete’s going into the Hall of Fame for meritorious service, and his unforgettable performance on the lanes is the cherry on top.”

“I was literally speechless when Tom told me,” said McCordic. “I loved my job. I was blessed to be able to be around great bowlers 25 weekends a year, if not more. I got to see Chris Barnes and Wes Malott win their first titles and it was a joy to watch those players and so many other greats. I have no complaints or regrets. It was a great way to spend my adult life and it’s a tremendous honor to be inducted into the PBA Hall of Fame.”

## **FRED BORDEN**

Coach, teacher, proprietor and author Fred Borden’s impact on the PBA began at the very beginning. When Eddie Elias announced the formation of the PBA in 1958, 17-year-old Borden, like Elias a resident of Akron, Ohio, fast-tracked his devotion to bowling.

“When I was 15, I made up my mind I was going to own a bowling center or two,” said Borden, “but I knew I wasn’t going to bowl professionally. Our junior coach had us older kids coach the younger kids, and one of the kids I coached bowled a 300 game. I always respected my coaches and I realized there was a lot to coaching beyond just the Xs and Os. Then when Eddie announced the PBA, I got really serious about bowling. I never expected it would lead to this. I’m really taken aback by this honor.”

Borden, studied biomechanics, sports psychology, physiology and began coaching women’s learn-to-bowl schools that had 600 women taking lessons at the same time.

“Harry Smith started telling people I’ve been coaching,” said Borden, “and up comes Don Johnson. He hadn’t won yet but he was a very coachable person. He would try anything, saying, ‘Bords, that’s so clever, I’ve never heard of that.’ Then he started telling a lot of players. George Pappas, Johnny Petraglia, Barry Asher—they all started showing up. They became friends, not students. My wife would make spaghetti and they’d stay at the house and show up and bowl.”

Borden continued coaching the top players and honing his own coaching skills, eventually famously working with eight-time PBA Tour champion John Mazza. “I told him, Johnny, I want you to think of yourself as world class every time you go out there. To this day, he calls me World Class. The relationships I’ve developed in this game are so special to me.”

“Fred’s credentials are amazing,” said Clark. “The work he did with the PBA and its players since the sixties is unmatched. The art of coaching is something Fred mastered and the PBA is proud to recognize that skill and how important and influential it is on the game and the players.”

Borden, a member of the USBC Hall of Fame since 2002, owns five patents in the world of bowling and is a former head coach of Team USA. Borden was instrumental in creating the USBC Bowling Coaches Certification Program and spent time as the color analyst with the PWBA among many other roles in the industry.

“Bowling is a sport that’s good for everybody,” said Borden. “This is the biggest thrill of my life. I didn’t do these things for the accolades, so I just need to know how blessed I am to be appreciated. I didn’t do this by myself by any means.”

## **BORESCH, MCCORDIC AND BORDEN INDUCTED INTO PBA HALL OF FAME**

### **MARCH 13, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

On Sunday evening, three bowling icons were inducted into the Professional Bowlers Association Hall of Fame. The 2023 PBA Hall of Fame class included Lennie Boresch Jr. of Kenosha, Wis., Pete McCordic of Katy, Texas, and Akron’s Fred Borden.

The ceremony, held at The Hilton Akron/Fairlawn in Fairlawn, Ohio, commenced the week of the PBA Tournament of Champions.

Boresch entered the Hall of Fame in the superior performance category for his PBA50 career, while McCordic and Borden were recognized for meritorious service.

### **LENNIE BORESCH JR.**

Boresch became eligible for the PBA Hall of Fame [last June](#) when he captured the 2022 Senior U.S. Open title, marking his fifth PBA50 win and second major. The 60-year-old owns eight runner-up finishes as well as 33 PBA Regional Tour titles (25 standard and eight PBA50).

“His journey to the Hall of Fame has been unconventional to say the least,” said Lennie’s son Jacob, who introduced his father. “But it’s been a journey filled with hard work, perseverance and resilience. His longevity is an example of a major sport so unique. It’s a game you can do your whole life and continue to get better at regardless of age.”

Boresch joined the PBA at 19 and spent years grinding on Tour as a part-time player without much success. He later won his first regional at 32 and made his first PBA telecast at 48.

In 2012, the PBA50 Tour presented an opportunity for Boresch.

"It was a chance to chase the dream again," he said. "To do this and compete with some of the legends of the game. It's just surreal to me. I never thought that this could happen.

"Believe in yourself, work hard, chase your dreams and never sell yourself short of what you can achieve," Boresch said in closing. "Dreams do come true. It did for me."

### **PETE MCCORDIC**

After a quarter-century managing the Southwest Region, McCordic hung up his clipboard last year. His 25 years at the helm followed an 18-year career competing on the PBA Tour.

"My goal was to carry on the reputation of the Southwest Region as the one with the best prize funds," said McCordic, who took over as full-time director in 1997. "I wanted to run the most efficient professional events possible and be fair to all who entered."

On the lanes, McCordic made his first PBA finals at the 1974 Painesville Open. He credited that performance, in part, to the help of an Akron-based coach he worked with prior to the event.

That coach's name was Fred Borden.

However, it would be nearly 15 more years before McCordic would win on the Tour. He captured both of his PBA Tour titles in 1998 at the Fresno Open and Miller Lite Challenge.

McCordic's bowling career remains known for a singular moment: His [300 game](#) at the 1987 Greater Los Angeles Open. It was the fourth televised perfect game in PBA history and the first in 13 years. In 2018, McCordic's 300 was named the fourth-most memorable moment in PBA history.

"Watching so many great players compete for over 25 years in regional events, meeting so many bowlers who enter those events, getting to know the host proprietors, talking to fans at those events," McCordic said. "That was my job. Wow."

### **FRED BORDEN**

To many, Fred Borden is simply the greatest bowling coach who ever lived. The 81-year-old continues to coach players who come through his hometown of Akron, Ohio.

Borden opened his speech by pointing out the ring on his right hand. He said over 40 players gifted him the ring, which was made by Johnny Petraglia's jeweler and has 68 diamonds in it.

"I wear this ring with pride," Borden said. "It meant so much to me because it's the players that we've had a chance to help. There is no bigger thrill than to help a friend that was struggling to pay the bills, and all of a sudden they have money in the bank and titles in their pocket."

For more than 60 years, Borden has educated and elevated players within the sport. The list of players Borden helped succeed mirrors the list of all-time PBA Tour champions.

To illustrate the breadth of Borden's pupils, he coached Harry Smith, who Borden called the game's first power player, and Don Johnson in the 1960s. In recent years, Borden has coached Parker Bohn III's kids.

Throughout the decades in between, he worked with Sean Rash (starting when he was 15), PWBA stars Liz Johnson, Tammy Turner, Rocio Restrepo, Diandra Asbaty and Lynda Barnes, and many more renowned players.

“It was really a mission to try to help people,” Borden said.

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Player award [winners](#) from the 2022 PBA Tour season were honored during the ceremony, including the Chris Schenkel Player of the Year, Jason Belmonte; Harry Golden Rookie of the Year, Santtu Tahvanainen; George Young High Average Award, EJ Tackett; Tony Reyes Community Service Award, Ryan Shafer and Steve Nagy Sportsmanship Award, Jake Peters.

The PBA also honored Norm Duke, who retired from PBA competition last year at the PBA League. The 58-year-old proved he could still channel his A-game when he needed, earning the top seed at the USBC Masters and helping the Dallas Strikers reach the Elias Cup Finals as player-manager.

When his Strikers fell to the Portland Lumberjacks in the Elias Cup Finals, Lumberjack anchor Wes Malott, who won two Roth-Holman Doubles titles with Duke, ceded his fill ball to the departing legend.

Duke, of course, aced what would be the final shot of his career.

The Hall of Fame ceremony begins PBA Tournament of Champions week at the historic AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio. More information on the Tournament of Champions is available [here](#).

## **PBA TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS PREVIEW**

### **MARCH 13, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

No PBA tournament carries an aura quite like the Tournament of Champions.

This year, the hallowed ground of AMF Riviera Lanes hosts the Tournament of Champions for the 34th time. The center held the tournament for nearly 30 years from 1966-1994; after a two-decade hiatus, the PBA returned to Riviera in 2018.

*The world-famous entrance to AMF Riviera Lanes*

“The very first thing you notice is the sign above the door and there’s this flashback through the history of the game,” said Jason Belmonte, a three-time TOC champion. “When you see that sign and you walk in, it’s an immediate slap across your face of respect that your feet are not the only ones in here. You’ve had the greats of our game walk into the same place, lace their shoes and bowl on the same approaches.

“There is a moment in which you feel connected to that generation, that you and them and the ones that will come after you — this is something that you have in common.”

From Don Johnson's 299 game in 1970, to Jason Couch's three-peat from 1999-2002, to Belmonte's record-tying 10th career major title in 2019, the Tournament of Champions has been the setting to so many iconic moments in PBA history.

Three of the most significant "firsts" in PBA history came at the Tournament of Champions.

Jack Biondolillo rolled the first-ever televised 300 in 1967. George Branham III became the first African American to win a PBA Tour title in 1993. Kelly Kulick became the first woman to win a PBA Tour title in 2010.

The prestige of the Tournament of Champions is apparent in its name, but it radiates across the lanes as well.

"Everywhere you look, there's major champions," said Andrew Anderson, who made his first career telecast at the TOC during his 2018 Player of the Year season. "Making match play at that event is just incredibly grueling. It's the hardest tournament to win in my opinion, just because of who you bowl against every single game."

The quest to join PBA lore and the \$100,000 top prize begins on Tuesday morning. All rounds will be livestreamed on [BowlTV](#).

## **STORYLINES**

There have been five PBA Tour events thus far in 2023 — EJ Tackett has won three of them. The 30-year-old leads the Tour by over \$80,000 in earnings, two pins per game in average and nearly 5,000 points.

Though Tackett has followed a hot/cold trend this season, he appears poised to end that streak in Fairlawn. He has made three career championship rounds at the Tournament of Champions and won the 2017 event as the top seed.

Tackett's dominance this season has assured him of a spot on the American team for the USA vs. The World event later this season. The final roster spots for the USA vs. The World event will be determined following the Tournament of Champions, as the two Americans and international players with the most points will join the respective teams.

Team USA's Tommy Jones used his selection pick on Anthony Simonsen, while World captain Jason Belmonte tabbed Jesper Svensson. After Tackett, the remaining three positions are up in the air.

## **Current Top American Players**

1. EJ Tackett, 18,350 points (first overall)
2. Kyle Troup, 6,700 (fifth)
3. Jakob Butturff, 5,925 (sixth)
4. Tom Daugherty, 5,355 (eighth)
5. Kevin McCune, 5,255 (ninth)

## **Current Top International Players**



1. Sam Cooley, 7,425 (third overall)
2. Dom Barrett, 7,075 (fourth)
3. Tomas Käyhkö, 5,040 (10th)
4. Santtu Tahvanainen, 4,785 (13th)
5. Stu Williams, 4,115 (20th)

The full points list is available [here](#).

## **PLAYERS TO WATCH**

In a field littered almost exclusively with PBA Tour titleholders, the champions among champions stand above the pack.

Past TOC Champions in the field include Dom Barrett, François Lavoie, Kris Prather, Belmonte, Tackett, Jesper Svensson, Pete Weber, Sean Rash, Tommy Jones, Chris Barnes, Steve Jaros and Mark Williams.

Barrett's win last season gave him his third major title. With previous wins at the U.S. Open and World Championship, Barrett became the eighth player in PBA history to complete the Triple Crown.

There is one player in this year's field who could follow Barrett's footsteps: the living legend, Walter Ray Williams Jr.

"Deadeye" owns two U.S. Open titles and three World Championships; with a win this week, he'd become the oldest PBA Tour champion and the 10th Triple Crown winner.

Prather, who earned the top seed last year before falling to Barrett, has been in the TOC title match two of the past three seasons. Moreover, both of his TV appearances came at AMF Riviera Lanes.

The 31-year-old has battled injury and illness to three top-16 finishes this season, but has yet to make a championship round. A return to Riviera could spell the end of that streak.

Another elite player seeking their first championship round this season is Belmonte, who has reached the Tournament of Champions finals in nine of the last 11 years. Three of his record 14 major titles have come at the Tournament of Champions; he could become the first four-time winner of the event with a win this year.

Rash, the 2012 champion, will look to make his fourth consecutive telecast at the TOC. If he follows his linear progression, earning the fifth, fourth and third seeds in previous events, he'll earn the No. 2 seed this week.

Though Simonsen already has four major titles, he has yet to win this event. This week, the 26-year-old aims for his third straight championship round (and title match) this season.

## **FORMAT**

The Tournament of Champions, contested on the 40-foot Don Johnson oil pattern, features a traditional qualifying format: 18 games of qualifying across three six-game blocks with the top 24 players advancing to round-robin match play.

The 17-player stepladder finals, spread across four telecasts on FS1 and FOX, is anything but traditional.

## TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

*All times are listed in Eastern time*

### **Tuesday, March 14** | BowlTV

11 a.m. — Qualifying Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. — Qualifying Round 2 (six games)

### **Wednesday, March 15** | BowlTV

11 a.m. — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — top 24 players advance

5 p.m. — Match Play Round 1 (eight games)

### **Thursday, March 16** | BowlTV

10 a.m. — Match Play Round 2 (eight games)

5 p.m. — Match Play Round 3 (eight games) — top 17 players advance

### **Friday, March 17** | FS1

10 p.m. — Stepladder Round 1 (seeds No. 13-17)

### **Saturday, March 18** | FS1

7:30 p.m. — Stepladder Round 2 (advancer and seeds No. 9-12)

9:30 p.m. — Stepladder Round 3 (advancer and seeds No. 5-8)

### **Sunday, March 19** | FOX

12 p.m. — Stepladder Finals (advancer and seeds No. 1-4)

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

TACKETT STAYS RED HOT, LEADS AFTER TWO ROUNDS AT TOC

MARCH 14, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

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EJ Tackett, already with three titles under his belt this season, remains red hot at the PBA Tournament of Champions. He led the field through the first two rounds of qualifying, shooting 2,828 across 12 games on the 40-foot Don Johnson oil pattern.

The TOC, contested at the legendary AMF Riviera Lanes, is the second major of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour season. Tackett won the first at the U.S. Open.

“Typically in this building, [playing] the slow loop has been good,” Tackett said. “It’s touchy. You’ve got to make some good shots. But if you get your ball to do the right thing, I feel they’re very scorable.”

Jesper Svensson, Stu Williams, Dick Allen and Frank Snodgrass round out the top five. Allen and Svensson finished second and third, respectively, after the first round.

Snodgrass averaged over 247 during the second round to climb from 43rd to fifth. His 300 in Game 10 propelled him from outside the cut into the top five.

Competition resumes on Wednesday at 11 a.m. ET. A final six-game block will determine the 24 advancers to match play.

Denmark’s Carsten Hansen currently occupies 24th place at +204.

Andrew Anderson, Jakob Butturff and 2021 TOC champion François Lavoie are each less than 50 pins outside the cut.

#### LEADERS THROUGH 12 GAMES

EJ Tackett, +428

Jesper Svensson, +396

Stu Williams, +351

Dick Allen, +345

Frank Snodgrass, +325

Jake Peters, +322

Packy Hanrahan, +289

Osku Palermaa, +289

Kyle Troup, +273

Marshall Kent, +273

Full standings are available [here](#).

## TACKETT, SIMONSEN LEAD TOC THROUGH FIRST ROUND OF MATCH PLAY

MARCH 15, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

The cream often rises to the top at Tournament of Champions. This year's event, thus far, is no exception.

EJ Tackett continues to lead the field through 26 games, while Anthony Simonsen, surged into second place after the first round of match play. The two met in the PBA Jackson Classic title match last week — won by Tackett — and have combined for four of the season's five titles.

Entering the final round of qualifying at the famed AMF Riviera Lanes, Jason Belmonte sat in 51st place and 154 pins out of the cut. He said he wanted to have a good day, adding that he knew there were other things, like points, to fight for.

"I also knew mathematically I could still get there," he said.

The 39-year-old fired a field-high 1,446 series (+246), climbing into 20th place and inside the cut. The three-time TOC champion, currently in 21st place, seeks to become the first player with four TOC and 15 major titles.

François Lavoie, the 2021 TOC champion, wasn't far behind. He shot 1,441 to move into the cut as well, and he tied Belmonte with a strike percentage of 71%. He sits in eighth place.

Stu Williams and Dick Allen continue to hover within striking distance of Tackett, while Andrew Anderson moved into the top five on Wednesday evening.

Anderson said he has never missed the match play round at the TOC in his career. Despite a rough season so far, he said, a return to Riviera helped boost his confidence.

"This is a really good place to have a good track record," he said.

The final two rounds will take place on Thursday, March 16 at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET. After the evening's round, the top 17 players will advance to the four-part stepladder finals, airing Friday through Sunday on FS1 and FOX.

Tickets are available for TV shows on Friday and Saturday, including the finals of the PBA Jr. National Championship on Friday afternoon.

## STANDINGS THROUGH 26 GAMES

EJ Tackett +912

Anthony Simonsen +858

Stu Williams +785

Dick Allen +785

Andrew Anderson +749

Marshall Kent +742

Kris Prather +679

François Lavoie +657

Jake Peters +657

Matt Ogle +656

Jesper Svensson +628

Jason Sterner +626

Graham Fach +622

Tim Gruendler +611

Wes Malott +596

Shawn Maldonado +592

Kyle Troup +589

Tom Daugherty +561

Packy Hanrahan +550

Richie Teece +493

Tom Smallwood +475

Jason Belmonte +469

Frank Snodgrass +433

Chris Via +415

## TACKETT SECURES TOP SEED, 17 PLAYERS ADVANCE TO TOC STEPLADDER FINALS

MARCH 16, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

The Tournament of Champions is the second major of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour. And for the second time this season, EJ Tackett earned the No. 1 seed.

At the historic AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio, Tackett led the TOC wire-to-wire. He averaged more than 225 for 48 games on the 40-foot Don Johnson oil pattern.

The Indiana native makes his fourth title match of the young season, owning a 3-0 record thus far. Tackett's win at the U.S. Open served as a major catalyst for his incredible start to the season.

"Knowing that I got up and threw the shot when I needed to, and things worked out, that gives you a lot of confidence going forward," Tackett said. "I think that's shown itself each time that I've been in the same position."

“Confidence goes a long way, man,” he continued. “We see it in sports all the time. It’s clear the people that have the confidence in themselves and what they’re doing. (Anthony Simonsen) is one that’s never, ever wavered from that.”

Simonsen, who secured the No. 2 seed, sits one game away from a rematch. He lost to Tackett one week ago at the PBA Jackson Classic.

Tackett and Simonsen will be joined by Matt Ogle and Jason Sterner — who surged from seventh to fourth in the position round — in Sunday’s championship round.

The fifth competitor in the championship round will be the advancer from Rounds 1-3 of the 17-player stepladder finals.

Kyle Troup, Jason Belmonte, Andrew Anderson and Marshall Kent secured the fifth through eighth seeds.

Troup made a massive leap in the final round of match play. He won his first five matches while averaging 248 to climb from 12th to third. He slipped to fourth prior to the position round, where Sterner surpassed him by 10 pins.

Belmonte sat in 51st place after the second round of qualifying before firing a massive 1,446 series to sneak inside the match play cut. After another slow start, the 14-time major champion won 13 of his final 14 matches to climb from 22nd to sixth.

The ninth through 12th seeds — Jake Peters, Stu Williams, Chris Via and Tom Smallwood — earned one day off for their efforts. They will bowl on Saturday night, awaiting the advancer of Friday’s show.

Last year’s No. 1 seed and 2020 TOC champion Kris Prather headlines the stepladder’s opening round. Wes Malott, Tim Gruendler, François Lavoie and Packy Hanrahan round out the field for the 17-player finals.

Lavoie sat outside of the cut heading into the position round, also against Hanrahan. After shooting 164, 187 and 183 in the three previous games, the former TOC champion came into the final game on a sour note.

“I was pretty upset,” Lavoie said. “I just couldn’t find any good ball motion. It was unraveling.”

For the position round, the fellow Shockers moved to Lanes 1-2, which Lavoie said hooked less than the other pairs. He changed up his strategy during the three minutes of practice, a move that paid immediate dividends.

Lavoie fired the front-nine and 279 to circumvent Hanrahan.

Despite the 182 on his scoresheet, Hanrahan felt he did all he could aside from a missed 7-pin. The two-handed southpaw managed to stave off Dick Allen for the final spot by seven pins.

“I missed the pocket on the first shot of the game,” Hanrahan said. “The rest of them slammed the pocket and ended up with like three strikes. I gave ‘em what I think is all I had. That’s all you can really do.”

Hanrahan said he feels like the luckiest person in the world, in part because he did not think 182 would be enough to stay inside the cut — but also because he missed the cut at the pre-tournament qualifier.

“I am literally not supposed to be here,” said Hanrahan, who got a spot in the main field as the first alternate after a late withdrawal.

And yet, Hanrahan will kick off the 17-player stepladder finals on Friday night against Lavoie, who looks to replicate his 2021 performance.

“When I won the TOC, I did run the ladder,” Lavoie said with a grin. “It’s a bit of a tougher task ahead of me, but I have done it before... with five people.”

#### TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

All times are listed in Eastern time

Friday, March 17 | 10 p.m. on FS1

No. 16 François Lavoie vs. No. 17 Packy Hanrahan

Winner vs. No. 15 Tim Gruendler

Winner vs. No. 14 Wes Malott

Winner vs. No. 13 Kris Prather

Tickets for the 6 p.m. taping are available [here](#).

Saturday, March 18 | 7:30 p.m. on FS1

Advancer vs. No. 12 Tom Smallwood

Winner vs. No. 11 Chris Via

Winner vs. No. 10 Stu Williams

Winner vs. No. 9 Jake Peters

Saturday, March 18 | 9:30 p.m. on FS1

Advancer vs. No. 8 Marshall Kent

Winner vs. No. 7 Andrew Anderson

Winner vs. No. 6 Jason Belmonte

Winner vs. No. 5 Kyle Troup

Tickets are available for Saturday’s shows [here](#).

Sunday, March 19 | 12 p.m. on FOX

Advancer vs. No. 4 Jason Sterner

Winner vs. No. 3 Matt Ogle

Winner vs. No. 2 Anthony Simonsen

Winner vs. No. 1 EJ Tackett

## **RESILIENT WES MALOTT ADVANCES IN FIRST ROUND OF TOC GAUNTLET**

### **MARCH 18, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Battling a lower-back injury, Wes Malott didn't know if he would be able to bowl tonight, let alone how he made it through 42 games of qualifying. And yet, the Big Nasty found a way.

Malott advanced through the first play-in round of the unprecedented 17-player stepladder finals at the 2023 PBA Tournament of Champions.

At AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio, Malott defeated tonight's top seed Kris Prather, the 2020 TOC champion, and TV debutant Tim Gruendler to advance to Saturday night's second round.

Before Malott's first match, he choked up during an interview with FS1's Kimberly Pressler. Malott said the amount of support he has received from his fiancée, kids, sponsors and fans as he has battled the injury, which has forced him to miss or withdraw from all four of the season's six events, has been overwhelming.

"To have that support, (the emotions) just caught me," Malott said. "To even think that I'm standing out there on the TV set, and then at the end of it to have two wins under my belt and advance to the next show. I know I've made some TV shows in the last few years, but I couldn't tell you the last time I've actually won a match on TV."

The injury forced Malott to be more upright at his release, which in turn created a higher release point and more loft.

"Most weeks, that loft probably wouldn't be very good," Malott said. "But when you factor in the pattern and lane surface that we're on, which is a high friction surface, the lofting kind of worked in my favor."

Prather, who was the top seed at last year's TOC, began Friday night's final match with a strike. But the two-time major champion only mustered two more strikes the rest of the way.

"The whole entire week I've had to dead pure it off my hand every single time to throw a strike," Prather said. "I threw three good ones and they struck. The ones that were halfway decent just weren't good enough."

"I've struggled this whole entire week. (Finishing 14th) is nothing to complain about at the TOC, but I feel very disappointed with how I'm bowling and how poor my scores are."



Malott's veteran savvy proved monumental in the previous match against Gruendler, a rookie under the bright lights of national television. The Big Nasty tallied five strikes early in the match, while Gruendler, a 27-year-old St. Louis native, didn't record a strike until the seventh frame.

"The transition definitely got me," Gruendler said. "I just missed the big move left. I should have taken a huge step and out here, especially on these TV shows, you can't be scared to do that."

Gruendler looked like a seasoned vet in his first match against three-time major champion François Lavoie. The Canadian needed a double and seven pins to advance — the exact same situation he conquered in the first match — but the 4-pin stood tall on his first shot in the 10th.

Lavoie's hopes to replicate his 2021 TOC championship run — albeit with four times as many competitors — came to an abrupt end.

In the opening match, Packy Hanrahan wasn't able to channel the luck of the Irish on St. Patrick's Day. The lone lefty among the 17 finalists fell to François Lavoie, dropping his career record to 0-6 on TV.

The gargantuan stepladder finals continues on Saturday night. No. 12 seed Tom Smallwood awaits Malott in the first match of the second round at 7:30 p.m. ET on FS1, while No. 8 seed Marshall Kent kicks off the third round at 9:30 p.m. ET on FS1.

Jason Belmonte, who holds the PBA's all-time record with 14 major titles, looms in the third round. As does No. 5 seed Kyle Troup, who almost won the U.S. Open earlier this year from that exact position.

Tournament leader EJ Tackett, a three-time champion in 2023 alone, as well as the red-hot Anthony Simonsen await the advancer of Saturday's competition. They, along with Matt Ogle and Jason Sterner, secured berths in Sunday's championship round at noon on FOX.

#### Round 1 Scores

No. 14 Wes Malott def. No. 13 Kris Prather, 211-171

No. 14 Wes Malott def. No. 15 Tim Gruendler, 222-178

No. 15 Tim Gruendler def. No. 16 François Lavoie, 212-195

No. 16 François Lavoie def. No. 17 Packy Hanrahan, 214-210

**JASON BELMONTE ADVANCES TO CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND, WILL BOWL FOR RECORD-FOURTH TOC TITLE**

**MARCH 19, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The unprecedented 17-player stepladder finals at the 2023 PBA Tournament of Champions has been whittled down to five finalists.

Jason Belmonte, a three-time TOC champion and 14-time major champion, both PBA records, joins top seeded EJ Tackett, as well as Anthony Simonsen, Matt Ogle and Jason Sterner in Sunday's championship round. The finals will air live at 12 p.m. ET on FOX.

In the finale to Saturday night's four hours of live television coverage, Belmonte defeated Kyle Troup in a battle of the past two PBA Player of the Year award winners.

Troup opened the match throwing urethane, a type of equipment none of the previous 12 competitors utilized, at least on TV, on the 40-foot Don Johnson oil pattern.

"That's pretty much what I did through each block of match play on the fresh," Troup said. "I had a pretty good look and a bunch of confidence with that. I felt pretty good about it because there wasn't that much traffic, just Marshall (Kent) playing to the right.

"I just didn't execute very well," continued Troup, who tallied two six-counts and a pocket 7-10 in the first five frames. "But I was prepared to switch if need be."

Troup made the switch to reactive in the sixth frame, a ball change that flipped the momentum of the match. After leaving a stone-9, Troup fired three straight strikes to put pressure back on Belmonte.

"Kyle is a momentum player," Belmonte said. "When things aren't going well, you really need to just jump all over him. Because if he senses an opportunity with a momentum shift... that plays into his personality, which I actually think makes him focus more and relaxes him."

Belmonte threw a double of his own in the ninth and 10th frames, but could not generate the nail-in-the-coffin third strike he needed to shut out Troup. The 7-pin stood on his 11th shot, opening the door for Troup to steal the match.

Troup, looking to advance to the championship round from the No. 5 seed just as he did at the U.S. Open last month, needed a double to defeat Belmonte. The bowling gods offered him a fortuitous Brooklyn strike on the first one, but rescinded their gift as he left a ringing-10 on the second.

In the previous match, Belmonte dispatched Andrew Anderson in another battle between former Player of the Years. After starting off on fire against Marshall Kent in his previous match, Anderson hit a wall against Belmonte.

Kent was the first player among the stepladder finalists to test playing straighter angles on the legendary championship pair of Lanes 27-28. That strategy worked as Kent defeated Chris Via in the first match of the Round 3 stepladder.

Via emerged victorious from the second play-in round, where he defeated Jake Peters, Stu Williams and Wes Malott, but struggled after the lanes were re-oiled between shows.

Saturday night continued a long comeback for Belmonte, who sat near the bottom of the leaderboard after the first round of qualifying.

"I walked out of his building in 58th at one point," Belmonte said. "Mathematically, as long as there's enough games and I think I can get there — I'm going to get there. There's not a doubt in my mind.

"That's the kind of journey through a tournament that I pride myself on," he continued. "I love it when the guys talking, 'Oh, he's gonna miss it.' I love it. You guys have no idea how fired up I am; you have no idea. And I'd love to be able to prove them wrong."

Belmonte will have that opportunity on Sunday. He'll pursue a record-setting fourth Tournament of Champions crown and chase a record-extending 15th major title.

In order to do that, he'll have to first get past Sterner and Ogle. Then, he'll need to take down the two hottest bowlers on the planet and his two fiercest rivals: Simonsen and Tackett.

Only one player has been able to defeat Simonsen and Tackett in the same tournament this season. That man, Sam Cooley, also hails from the land down under.

"I'm on a TV show which historically I shouldn't be on," Belmonte said. "For me, that means I've got nothing to lose; I've got everything to gain. Everyone that I'll be playing has a position to lose."

#### ROUND 3 SCORES

No. 6 Jason Belmonte def. No. 5 Kyle Troup, 216-210

No. 6 Jason Belmonte def. No. 7 Andrew Anderson, 214-146

No. 7 Andrew Anderson def. No. 8 Marshall Kent, 216-181

No. 8 Marshall Kent def. No. 11 Chris Via, 225-172

#### ROUND 2 SCORES

No. 11 Chris Via def. No. 9 Jake Peters, 211-180

No. 11 Chris Via def. No. 10 Stu Williams, 193-176

No. 11 Chris Via def. No. 14 Wes Malott, 247-172

No. 14 Wes Malott def. No. 12 Tom Smallwood, 196-156

### **PBA REGIONAL RECAP: TOM DAUGHERTY, TOM HESS WIN IN STAR-STUDED CUYAHOGA FALLS**

#### **MARCH 18, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Four more regional events hit the books as bowlers continue accumulating points to advance to the RPI next January for their shot at some big bucks. Florida and Ohio each held a pair of events and bowlers flocked to the centers for a chance at some hardware.

#### **PBA Lightning Strikes Challenge (Non-Champions)**

In early March at Lightning Strikes Bowl in Fort Myers, Fla., two bowlers without a crown eventually found one in both the PBA and PBA50 divisions. Even with two sub-200 games in the middle of her block, PWBA star Verity Crawley dominated qualifying, going +242 for seven games to lead the day.

In bracket play, after earning a double-bye, Crawley was eliminated in her first match by Colin Champion, who in turn was dropped by Dallas Leong. The final bout pitted Leong, who had won his last seven games, against Ethan Fiore. Leong stayed strong, winning both games to clinch his first regional title.

### **PBA Lightning Strikes Challenge (Non-Champions) Final Standings**

1. Dallas Leong, \$1,500
2. Ethan Fiore, \$1,200
3. Evan Baranecky, \$1,000
4. Colin Champion, \$1,000

#### [PBA Lightning Strikes Challenge \(Non-Champions\) Full Results](#)

### **PBA50 Lightning Strikes Challenge (Non-Champions)**

Simultaneously, the PBA50 bowlers also looked to crown a new champion. Ralph Brunt Jr. started strong, leading at +258 for his seven games. He earned a double-bye for his efforts, but still had some work to do as they entered bracket play. Brunt fell in his first match, opening the doors for others to take the title.

Joe Fulner III defeated Albert Mountcastle in the first semifinal, while Danny Battles slid past David Taylor in the other Race-to-Three match. Battles dominated in the finals, winning the first game by 95 pins and the second by 77 to pick up his first regional title.

### **PBA50 Lightning Strikes Challenge (Non-Champions) Final Standings**

1. Danny Battles, \$1,300
2. Joe Fulner III, \$1,086
3. David Taylor, \$850
4. Albert Mountcastle, \$850

#### [PBA50 Lightning Strikes Challenge \(Non-Champions\) Full Results](#)

### **PBA50 Strike Zone Lanes Central Classic**

In Canton, Ohio, the NFL Hall of Fame was no match for the big names that came to the Strike Zone Lanes Central Classic earlier this month. After qualifying fifth, Eugene McCune stepped up and led through the next three advancer rounds, grabbing the top spot in the stepladder. But with big names still in the way, his odds remained at 50/50.

In the first match, nine-time regional titleist Brad Angelo took down four-time champion John Marsala, 267-204; then Angelo defeated Mark Sullivan 256-236. To finish the stepladder, Brad Angelo delivered a 280 to McCune's 209, giving Angelo an 803 series and his 10th career regional title.

### **PBA50 Strike Zone Lanes Central Classic Final Standings**

1. Brad Angelo, 2,500 points, \$3,000
2. Eugene McCune, 1,500, \$1,700

3. Mark Sullivan, 1,150, \$1,300
4. John Marsala, 950, \$1,000

#### [PBA50 Strike Zone Lanes Central Classic Full Results](#)

#### **PBA/PBA50 Doubles/Clutch Lanes Central Open**

As the PBA Hall of Fame ceremony and the Tournament of Champions sat on the horizon in Fairlawn, Ohio, many of the game's biggest names took the short drive down to Cuyahoga Falls. Nate Garcia and Walter Ray Williams Jr. qualified as the top seed thanks to a monster day from Garcia, who averaged over 250 for his eight games.

They were one of four teams to earn a bye, but they fell in their first match to the duo of Tom Hess and Tom Daugherty, who eventually advanced to the final contest. There, the team of Toms took on Central Region bowlers Larry Verble and Patrick Dombrowski, where the best-of-five match took the minimum three games.

Hess and Daugherty won 269-235, 205-202, and 265-197. The pair stepped into the TOC on a good note, earning themselves \$2,000 and a regional title.

#### **PBA/PBA50 Doubles/Clutch Lanes Central Open Final Standings**

1. Tom Hess/Tom Daugherty, 2,500 points, \$4,000
2. Larry Verble/Patrick Dombrowski, 1,500, \$2,000
3. Mike DeVaney/EJ Tackett, 1,150, \$1,600
4. Michael Haggitt/Graham Fach, 950, \$1,600

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

##### **MARCH 19, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

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 Players of the Year, 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 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 people on Tour describe as the most creative player on the planet, opted to about two arrows right of Belmonte in the semifinal; he was one of the few brave enough to play that zone across all four shows. 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 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

Jason Belmonte, \$101,000

EJ Tackett, \$55,000

Anthony Simonsen, \$30,000

Matt Ogle, \$20,000

Jason Sterner, \$15,000

Kyle Troup, \$10,500

Andrew Anderson, \$9,000

Marshall Kent, \$8,500

Chris Via, \$8,000

Jake Peters, \$7,500

Stu Williams, \$7,000

Wes Malott, \$6,500

Tom Smallwood, \$6,000

Kris Prather, \$5,500

Tim Gruendler, \$5,000

François Lavoie, \$4,500

Packy Hanrahan, \$4,000

## **AFTER PROPHETIC COMEBACK, JASON BELMONTE HAS NOTHING LEFT TO PROVE**

**MARCH 21, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

It's one thing for an athlete to say they believe they can still win after a bad start. Lots of them say that.

It's another thing for one to truly believe it when they say it. Only a few have the requisite conviction and resolve.

It's a whole other thing to actually do it.

Jason Belmonte just did it at the 2023 PBA Tournament of Champions.

Belmonte won his 15th career major and a record fourth TOC title on Sunday afternoon. He did that after finishing the first six-game block of the tournament in 58th place of 64 players.

"If I make good shots and use the right bowling ball, I'm going to win this tournament," Belmonte said after the first round on his YouTube channel. "I've looked back through my career and there are plenty of times where I've won tournaments, where most people would think, 'He's not going to win from here.' This is just another story to add to that list."

Belmonte surged into the match-play field after a monumental third round. After making another leap in match play, he earned the No. 6 seed for the 17-player, four-telecast stepladder finals.

Late Saturday night, he defeated Andrew Anderson and Kyle Troup — the only two players since 2017 who have won a Player of the Year award other than Belmonte — to reach Sunday's championship round.

"Look at any of the greatest champions of all time and ask them: Do you think you're gonna win today?" Belmonte said after winning the third play-in round. "Their answer is the same everywhere. Every person. Any sport. Yeah, I'm going to win today. Of course I'm going to win today.

"That's probably something that I've come to learn to accept. You have to believe it. You have to know it. And then you've got to let everyone else know that you know. I think anyone that reaches the very top has to have that mentality."

EJ Tackett, who Belmonte defeated in the title match, was on the verge of perhaps the greatest start to a season in PBA Tour history. With one major title, two standard titles and now one runner-up finish at a major in six events, Belmonte said Tackett has that same mentality right now.

"What he's doing this season is ridiculous and remarkable," Belmonte said. "I actually don't know if it's hit him quite (as hard) as it's probably hit the rest of us."

Ditto for Anthony Simonsen, who Belmonte beat in the TOC semifinal. Simonsen has finished top 10 in all six events and no lower than fourth in the majors.



"These two boys right now, they're setting the bar really high," Belmonte said, "which for me is great because that means I'm going to work harder. I don't like to be the third best player in the world. I want to be the best player."

Despite the ferocity of their on-lane rivalry, a deep level of mutual respect exists between them, particularly Tackett and Belmonte.

Sunday marked the second time Belmonte defeated Tackett on AMF Riviera Lanes' iconic lanes 27-28. Their admiration for one another was apparent as the two embraced after each match.

"Jason's maybe the greatest ever to do it. Obviously in major championships, he's by leaps and bounds the greatest and cemented himself even further into it today," Tackett said on Sunday afternoon.

"When greatness is happening in front of you, you have to acknowledge it. That's how I feel about just being around and watching him do what he has done for 10 years."

Over the years, a friendship has developed between the game's elite talents.

"It's not easy to be friends with your fiercest rival. Because everything that I do to beat him, and what he does to beat me, is something that lessens your own career," Belmonte said. "But somehow with EJ, it's just a mutual respect and love. We really do value each other."

"He wants to take my crown. He wants it and he's worked so hard for it. And I look at him as I don't want to give it to him. That relationship on the lanes is so fierce, but then as soon as we walk off it's hugs, it's 'you're amazing'"

Belmonte's veneration for Tackett and Simonsen is part of the calculus behind his goal of winning 20 majors. While his 15 titles are 1.5 times more than the previous record holders, Earl Anthony and Pete Weber, he still feels he has to raise the bar even higher.

He calls 20 majors his "out-of-your-mind" goal. The way he phrases that is particularly interesting: His goals are out of your mind — not his.

"Anyone who thinks that 20 is out of reach, talk to me 14 years ago. Tell me I won't get to 14. It's certainly a very, very realistic goal," he said after advancing to the championship round on Saturday night. "What was more realistic: me getting to 14 or now that I'm at 14, getting to 20?"

Fourteen hours later, Belmonte won No. 15. He's drawn many comparisons to Tiger Woods throughout the latter half of his career, and those parallels won't stop after tying the golf titan in major victories.

After Woods won his 14th major at the 2008 U.S. Open, a series of injuries derailed his career. Belmonte, though five years older at the time of his 14th win, appears poised to extend his prime much longer.

Since winning his first major at the 2011-12 Players Championship, Belmonte has won 15 of 50 majors. He's also earned five runner-up finishes, 32 top-five finishes and 37 top-10 finishes.

Despite a decade and a half of dominance, the 31-time titleist still has skeptics.

"I didn't do this for (the doubters) per se," Belmonte said. "This was really more about telling myself I can, and in doing so, sending a message to the ones that were writing me off earlier in the week."

As much as Belmonte relishes proving people wrong, he feels it may be time to shift his focus to his supporters.

“I think it is important for me to probably start to let that go,” Belmonte said. “I think if I attach myself to that narrative, it takes away from the other side, which is all of these people that are really supportive and believe I can still make it.

“I think I need to let (the doubters) chirp away and turn to those that are in my corner.”

## PBA KOKOMO CLASSIC PREVIEW

MARCH 21, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

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The Tournament of Champions lived up to and exceeded even the wildest of expectations. For an encore, the PBA returns to central Indiana for the PBA Kokomo Classic.

Last year, Jason Belmonte claimed The Storm Cup: PBA David Small's Kokomo Classic title at Heritage Lanes. He defeated Nick Pate in a thrilling title match that came down to the final frame.

After a thrilling comeback to win a record fourth TOC on Sunday, Belmonte is back atop the bowling world.

The action begins on Wednesday morning and all rounds will be livestreamed on BowITV. Here's what you need to know:

## STORYLINES

It felt like only a matter of time, but a third horse has entered the Player of the Year race. After defeating Anthony Simonsen and EJ Tackett in succession to win last week's PBA Tournament of Champions, the second major of the season, Belmonte is up to third in the points list.

Heading back to his home state of Indiana, Tackett will look for title No. 20. Despite the loss in the TOC title match, he has been utterly dominant this season: Tackett's 16 rounds led, including championship rounds, is as many as all players not named Simonsen combined.

Furthermore, Tackett or Simonsen have been the leader following 23 of 39 rounds this season. Before Belmonte won the TOC, the last player other than Tackett or Simonsen to lead a round was Tommy Jones after the third round of the PBA Jackson Classic — two weeks ago Wednesday.

All three titans made the championship round last year at Heritage Lanes, where Belmonte got the win. Could the trio return to the stepladder in 2023?

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

By virtue of his success in majors, Kyle Troup sits fourth overall in points this season. He hasn't fared as well in the standard events, posting an average finish of a 27.5. He'll look to buck that trend and potentially throw his hat in the ring for Player of the Year.

It's been a similar story for Marshall Kent, who finished eighth in both majors but has yet to tally a top-10 finish in a standard event.

Perhaps a ninth place finish at the TOC, which included three straight wins on the first Saturday night telecast, could signal a turning point in Chris Via's season.

Fellow Hoosiers looking to win a title in their home state include Kevin McCune, Matt Sanders and Ronnie Russell. Wes Malott, who moved to Indiana a few years ago, will not be competing this week.

#### CLASSIC SERIES POINTS LEADERS

As the final Classic Series tournament, the Kokomo Classic will determine the final field for July's PBA Skill Ball Challenge. The top eight point earners across the Classic Series earn spots to the event.

It's consistency versus dominance at the top of the Classic Series points list: Two-time champion Tackett holds the slimmest of leads over one-time champion Simonsen.

Keven Williams occupies the final spot heading into Kokomo, but virtually any player could jump into the field with a win this week.

EJ Tackett, 10,850

Anthony Simonsen, 10,800

Sam Cooley, 7,260

Dom Barrett, 6,940

Jakob Butturff, 5,580

Jason Belmonte, 4,860

Tommy Jones, 4,830

Keven Williams, 4,340

Santtu Tahvanainen, 4,290

Bill O'Neill, 4,100

Shawn Maldonado, 4,050

Sean Lavery-Spahr, 3,950

Tom Daugherty, 3,750

AJ Johnson, 3,500

DJ Archer, 3,490

#### FORMAT

Just like the PBA Jackson Classic, another dual-pattern format awaits in Kokomo. Players will compete on the 41-foot Harry Smith (left lane) and 37-foot Viper (right lane) patterns.

All players will bowl three six-game qualifying rounds between Wednesday and Thursday morning, totaling 18 games of qualifying. The top 24 players will advance to a fourth six-game round on Thursday evening, which will determine the 12 advancers to Friday's competition.

A final six-game block will determine the four advancers to the stepladder finals, livestreaming at 6:30 p.m. ET on Friday evening on BowlTV.

#### TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

All times listed in Eastern

Wednesday, March 22

11 a.m. — Qualifying Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. — Qualifying Round 2 (six games)

Thursday, March 23

11 a.m. — Qualifying Round 3 (six games) — top 24 players advance

5 p.m. — Top-24 Qualifying Round (six games) — top 12 players advance

Friday, March 24

12 p.m. — Top-12 Qualifying Round (six games) — top four players advance

6:30 p.m. — Stepladder finals

More information on the PBA Kokomo Classic is available [here](#).

Updates from the PBA Kokomo Classic

PACKY HANRAHAN LEADS THROUGH ROUND 2 AT PBA KOKOMO CLASSIC

MARCH 22, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

After the first two rounds of the PBA Kokomo Classic, Packy Hanrahan sits atop the leaderboard. The 27-year-old averaged more than 237 across 12 games at Heritage Lanes in Kokomo, Ind.

Players competed on the 37-foot Viper pattern for the first six-game round, and the 41-foot Harry Smith for the evening's round.

Hanrahan threw a different Purple Pearl Urethane ball during each round. He said he used a stronger ball on the shorter pattern; on the longer pattern, he said he used one that retained more energy to allow himself to play a similar shape.

Indiana native EJ Tackett, who won the U.S. Open in Indianapolis earlier this season, sits in second place. Kris Prather, Graham Fach and Sean Lavery-Spahr round out the top five.

Prather averaged over 251 to lead the first round of qualifying. He started the block throwing a Pitch Black, but switched to a Reality Check at the end of Game 2.

"I had a really good idea as to what was going on, as far as where the oil was and where the friction was," Prather said.

Anthony Simonsen and Jason Belmonte, who both made the championship round at Heritage Lanes last year, sit in 19th and 20th place. Belmonte defeated Nick Pate to win The Storm Cup: PBA David Small's Kokomo Classic title last season.

Jakob Butturff occupies the 24th position, besting Tommy Jones and Darren Tang by four pins for the final spot in the cut.

The third round of qualifying begins at 11 a.m. ET Thursday morning. The top-24 players after Round 3 will advance to a fourth six-game round on Thursday evening.

The remainder of the tournament will feature a true dual-pattern format: Harry Smith on the left lane and Viper on the right lane.

#### LEADERS AFTER ROUND 2

Packy Hanrahan, 2,847 (+447)

EJ Tackett 2,796 (+396)

Kris Prather, 2,778 (+378)

Graham Fach, 2,776 (+376)

Sean Lavery-Spahr (+353)

AJ Johnson (+345)

Jason Sterner (+339)

Matt Ogle (+337)

Stu Williams (+337)

Matt Russo (+325)

Full standings are available [here](#)

#### USA VS. THE WORLD ROSTERS ANNOUNCED, EVENT BEGINS WITH CAPTAINS' ROUND AT THE HOLLER HOUSE

MARCH 24, 2023 JEF GOODGER

The one-game match between Tommy Jones and Jason Belmonte will stream live on the PBA YouTube channel April 8

The rosters for the USA vs. The World competition to be held during World Series of Bowling XIV were finalized with the conclusion of the PBA Tournament of Champions on Sunday.

Team captains Tommy Jones (USA) and Jason Belmonte (World) previously selected one player to join their teams, with Jones selecting Anthony Simonsen and Belmonte choosing Jesper Svensson.

The final two spots on each team were earned by the top two American and top two international players in competition points through the Tournament of Champions. EJ Tackett and Kyle Troup earned

positions on the USA roster while Belmonte's fellow Australian Sam Cooley and England's Dom Barrett fill out the World team.

Jones and Belmonte will begin the USA vs. The World competition with the Captains' Round at the Holler House, a one-game match held April 8 at Holler House in Milwaukee. The winner of the match will have his choice of starting lane and order for each of the seven matches during the two-day team finals, airing live April 15 on FOX and April 16 on Fox Sports' FS1.

The match will be streamed live for free on the PBA YouTube channel at 5 p.m. ET, with any proceeds from the livestream being donated to the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame.

Former PBA television play-by-play announcer Mike Jakubowski and PBA Hall of Famer Chris Barnes will supply the livestream commentary on the Captains' Round at the Holler House.

A limited number of tickets will be available for fans to watch the match inside the tavern at Holler House. Tickets will go on sale Monday, March 27 at noon ET on the PBA's Eventbrite page.

Once capacity is reached and tickets are sold out, overflow attendance will be directed to the outdoor viewing area, where there will be a large monitor showing the action live. There will be no charge for fans to watch outside.

Holler House, a tavern upstairs and the oldest USBC-sanctioned bowling alley downstairs, has been operating since 1908. The two wood lanes are still oiled with a spray can, the pins are placed by human pinsetters and scores are kept by hand.

The USA vs. The World event returns for the first time since World Series of Bowling X, this time featuring four-man teams. In the two-part finals on FS1, points will be awarded for singles, doubles and a race-to-two team baker match. The team with the most points at the end of competition will earn the Hall of Fame Cup.

#### USA ROSTER

Tommy Jones (captain)

Anthony Simonsen (captain's selection)

EJ Tackett (points)

Kyle Troup (points\*)

\*Captain's selection Simonsen is second in points, so the spot goes to Troup, who is third

#### WORLD ROSTER

Jason Belmonte (captain)

Jesper Svensson (captain's selection)

Sam Cooley (points)

Dom Barrett (points)

## **PACKY HANRAHAN CLAIMS FIRST CAREER TITLE AT PBA KOKOMO CLASSIC**

**MARCH 24, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

In a title match emblematic of his entire tournament, Patrick “Packy” Hanrahan claimed his first career PBA Tour title at the PBA Kokomo Classic. Hanrahan started with a spare, took the lead with a strike in the second frame and never relinquished it.

Hanrahan, a 27-year-old native of Greenwich, Conn., defeated Matt Ogle 268-214 in the championship match at Heritage Lanes in Kokomo, Ind.

“It’s what you always dream of,” Hanrahan said. “You worked all those years and you finally did it.”

The two-handed lefty seized the tournament lead during the second round of qualifying on Wednesday evening. He maintained that lead all the way to earning the No. 1 seed for Friday night's stepladder finals.

Hanrahan averaged nearly 233 across 31 games with the dual-pattern format, featuring the 41-foot Harry Smith pattern on the left lane and 37-foot Viper pattern on the right lane.

In the title match, Hanrahan stopped Ogle’s climb of the stepladder.

“Last week's show (at the PBA Tournament of Champions), the PBA League, all of our shows with me and Sean Rash, all that compounds into tonight,” Ogle said. “After the first match was over, I was free-rolling. I finally feel like I belong out here.”

Ogle defeated Graham Fach in the opening match, 212-206. After missing a 10-pin in the ninth frame, Ogle doubled in the 10th and forced Fach to match with a double of his own. However, Fach left a 10-pin to end his bid for a second career title.

EJ Tackett awaited in the next match. The Indiana native, making his fifth championship round appearance this season, aimed to make his third consecutive (and fifth overall) title match and win his fourth title of the season.

Ogle said he knew he needed 12 great shots to take down the hottest player on the planet. Eleven proved to be enough, throwing one Brooklyn strike en route to the front-nine.

Tackett, after a spare in the first frame, matched him strike-for-strike through six frames. However, a gutter-spare in the seventh frame put Tackett in a deficit too large to overcome.

The title match pitted two players who sought their first single title. (Ogle won the 2019 Roth-Holman PBA Doubles Championship with Rash.)

Hanrahan converted a 3-9 spare in the opening frame, while Ogle spared a 9-pin in the second. After Hanrahan took the lead with a double in his second and third frames, he never gave Ogle an opportunity to get back into the match.

His strike in the ninth frame secured the title, one more than a decade in the making.



"When I went to college, I wasn't the best player on the team — I didn't make the team," said the Wichita State alum. "I was on the developmental team. I practiced four hours a day for two or three straight years, and then practiced three hours a day for the next six years until this happened. If you put the work in, anything can happen."

Before he graduated from Wichita State, Hanrahan wasn't sure what he wanted to do. He planned on becoming a gym teacher, but he had ambitions to compete on the PBA Tour as well. A long conversation with his mom encouraged him to pursue his dream.

"(My family) always believed in me, even when I thought I wasn't good enough," Hanrahan said. "I thought 'those guys on Tour are way better than me' and they were. And now I can say there was a time where it was me. Nobody was better than me."

With the win, Hanrahan secured a spot in July's PBA Skill Ball Challenge. The top eight point earners across the five-event PBA Classic Series earned berths in the field.

Hanrahan will be joined July 22-23 in Detroit by Tackett, Anthony Simonsen, Sam Cooley, Dom Barrett, Tommy Jones, Jakob Butturff and Sean Lavery-Spahr.

If the lanky lefty could go back in time and tell his college-self he would win a PBA Tour title, he wouldn't have believed himself.

"I would've thought it would be a fun 1.5-2 years and then I'll go be a P.E. teacher," Hanrahan said. "I would not have believed myself that I would be a PBA Tour champion one day."

#### **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES**

Match One: No. 4 Matt Ogle defeated No. 3 Graham Fach, 212-206

Semifinal: No. 4 Matt Ogle defeated No. 2 EJ Tackett, 267-229

Championship: No. 1 Packy Hanrahan defeated No. 4 Matt Ogle, 268-214

#### **FINAL STANDINGS**

Packy Hanrahan, \$25,000

Matt Ogle, \$15,000

EJ Tackett, \$10,000

Graham Fach, \$7,500

Anthony Simonsen, \$6,000

Sean Lavery-Spahr, \$5,300

Tommy Jones, \$4,900

Stu Williams, \$4,650

Jason Sterner, \$4,400

Matt Russo, \$4,200

Tomas Käyhkö, \$4,000

AJ Johnson, \$3,800

## **KAITLYN STULL, JAKOB ROBERTSON CLAIM PBA JR. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **MARCH 25, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

North Carolina's Kaitlyn Stull and Mississippi's Jakob Robertson won the PBA Jr. National Championships, earning a \$7,500 scholarship.

The stars of tomorrow became the talents of today at the 2023 PBA Jr. National Championships. At AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio, Kaitlyn Stull and Jakob Robertson joined the long list of PBA legends to raise trophies on the iconic lanes 27-28.

Last summer, two PBA Jr. boys and two girls advanced from each of five regions to set up the 10-player championship fields. Ten games of round-robin match play at AMF Brookgate Lanes determined the seeding for the five-player stepladder finals. Competition moved to Riviera for the televised championship matches.

Stull, a 15-year-old from Raleigh, N.C., defeated Texas' Bella Love Castillo, 227-205, for the Girls Championship. She earned \$7,500 in SMART scholarship.

Castillo earned the No. 1 seed in the girls division, averaging over 222 on the 42-foot Mark Roth pattern and compiling an 8-2 match play record. The top seed secured an automatic berth on the televised finals, but this was not her debut under the bright lights — the 13-year-old two-hander won the Celebrity Super Clash at last fall's Jimmie Allen PBA Challenge.

Stull, the No. 2 seed, defeated Erin Klemencic of Powder Springs, Ga., to advance to the TV finals.

In the title match, the girls started slow with spares, but came alive midway through the match. Stull fired a triple from the fourth through sixth frames, while Castillo doubled to keep pace.

The match turned when Castillo missed a 7-pin in the ninth frame, setting up an opportunity for Stull to shut out the two-handed sensation. Needing a strike in the ninth and a double in the 10th to clinch the win, Stull struck on all four shots.

Robertson, a 17-year-old from Oxford, Miss., defeated Minnesota's Zach Andresen, 217-213 to claim the Boys Championship. In the 10th frame, Robertson delivered exactly what he needed to secure the title and the \$7,500 in SMART scholarship: a strike and seven pins.

Robertson fired the tournament's first 300 game during match play qualifying and averaged more than 232. He tied Andresen in the position round to hang onto the top seed by just five pins.

Andresen, also 17, wasn't far behind, averaging over 230 himself. He defeated Devan Skridla of Rockford, Ill. in the semifinal to set up a rematch — this time under the bright lights.

For Robertson, a key ball change proved to be the difference in the championship match. To break his dutch 200 pace, Robertson struck in the ninth frame after switching from urethane to reactive equipment on the left lane.

Andresen was unable to shut him out in the 10th, and the Mississippi senior delivered in the clutch to secure the title.

After the singles matches, PBA and PWBA stars joined the PBA Jr. players for a doubles competition.

Stull and seven-time PWBA champion Danielle McEwan took on Castillo and five-time PWBA champion Dasha Kovalova in a five-frame match. After Stull struck on both her attempts on the left lane, McEwan doubled in the final frame to clinch the win.

Nine-time PBA champion Kyle Troup paired up with Andresen, teaching him the art of the pick, to besiege Robertson and current Player of the Year front-runner EJ Tackett. Troup and Andresen nearly fired a first-ever perfect 150 game, but Troup ironically left the same split that he left against Tackett at the U.S. Open on his fill ball.

The doubles championship featured a single-game match between Stull/McEwan and Andresen/Troup.

After a slow start, each converting a 10-pin after Stull left a split in the first frame, McEwan and Stull fired five strikes in a row to take a commanding lead. Andresen — not "Anderson" — spared a pair of 5-pins, then tripped the 4-9 in the ninth frame. Troup struck in the 10th, but it was too little, too late.

McEwan, Stull's idol, polished off the 227-206 win. Stull and McEwan became the first women to win the doubles championship in the event's three-year history.

#### FINAL SCORES

Girls Championship: Kaitlyn Stull def. Bella Love Castillo, 227-

Boys Championship: Jakob Robertson def. Zach Andresen, 217-213

Girls Doubles: Kaitlyn Stull and Danielle McEwan def. Bella Love Castillo and Dasha Kovalova, 116-100

Boys Doubles: Zach Andresen and Kyle Troup def. Jakob Robertson and EJ Tackett, 146-86

Doubles Championship: Kaitlyn Stull and Danielle McEwan def. Zach Andresen and Kyle Troup, 227-206

#### GIRLS FINAL STANDINGS

Katilyn Stull, \$7,500 SMART scholarship

Bella Love Castillo, \$3,750 SMART scholarship

Erin Klemencic, \$1,875 SMART scholarship

Katelyn Abigania, \$1,000 SMART scholarship

Avery Domaguin, \$750 SMART scholarship

#### BOYS FINAL STANDINGS

Jakob Robertson, \$7,500 SMART scholarship

Zach Andresen, \$3,750 SMART scholarship

Devan Skridla, \$1,875 SMART scholarship

Zachary Smullen, \$1,000 SMART scholarship

Dohoon Kwon, \$750 SMART scholarship

## **2023 USBC MASTERS PREVIEW**

### **MARCH 26, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Anthony Simonsen breaks conventional wisdom and precedent at nearly every turn, and that is perhaps best exemplified by the USBC Masters.

In 2016, Simonsen won the Masters for his first career major title at 19 years old to become the youngest major champion in PBA Tour history. He won again last season at age 26, becoming the youngest to grasp four major crowns.

His title defense begins Monday morning with the first five-game qualifying round at the legendary Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Mich., where Simonsen also won the 2019 PBA Tour Finals.

Fifteen total games of qualifying set the stage for the event's signature 64-player double-elimination bracket.

#### STORYLINES

As the defending champion, Simonsen is guaranteed a berth in the match play field and will be among the favorites. The two-handed virtuoso has reached four championship rounds and tallied five top-five finishes in seven events this season.

Simonsen may be the most consistent player thus far 2023, finishing no lower than 10th place, but EJ Tackett has been the most dominant. The right-hander has made five championship rounds in seven events this season, collecting three titles, a runner-up and a third-place finish last week in Jackson.

But if there's any event that has Tackett's number, it may be the Masters. He has not made the championship round since he earned the No. 1 seed in 2014, falling to Jason Belmonte in the title match.

A win and the \$100,000 top prize would put Tackett at more \$315,000 in earnings for the season, potentially placing Kyle Troup's single-season earning's record (\$496,900) from 2021 in jeopardy.

Additionally, a Masters title for Tackett, as well as Dom Barrett or Chris Barnes, would make them the fourth player in PBA history to achieve the Grand Slam. Only Belmonte, Norm Duke and Mike Aulby have won the Masters, U.S. Open, World/National Championship and Tournament of Champions.

Belmonte, the only four-time Masters champion, always looms as a threat to win. Earlier this month, Tackett led the Tournament of Champions wire-to-wire before a red-hot Belmonte unseated him in the title match.

With their major titles, Tackett and Belmonte have secured berths in the PBA Super Slam Cup this May. The champions of the Masters, World Championship and Players Championship (or the runner-up in the event of a repeat winner) will join the duo in Florida for a chance at an additional \$100,000 top prize.

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

Andrew Anderson, the 2018 Masters champion, will look to become the 10th multi-time winner in the event's nearly 75-year history — and he'll look to do it an hour from his hometown of Holly, Mich.

Michigan's Tom Smallwood will strive for a second career major, notching his first after qualifying out of Thunderbowl Lanes at the inaugural World Series of Bowling in 2009.

Troup has earned top-six finishes at each major this season, though he has to make the championship round at the Masters in his career. Also looking to add a second major title to his résumé is Jakob Butturff, the 2019 Masters champion. A win this week would make both players Hall of Fame eligible.

The last player to make consecutive championship rounds was Alex Hoskins in 2017 and 2018; Simonsen, Brad Miller, AJ Johnson and Shawn Maldonado will look to end that drought.

#### FORMAT

The 64-player, double-elimination bracket distinguishes the Masters from every other tournament on the PBA calendar. The Masters features 15 games of qualifying across three five-game blocks — one of which is a "burn" squad, meaning the lanes are not re-oiled following the previous squad's five games.

The top 63 players and defending champion Simonsen will begin match play on Thursday. Each match will be decided by total pinfall after three games. After several rounds of competition on Thursday and Friday, eight finalists will advance to the television finals.

The last two players in the winner's bracket will clinch berths in Sunday's championship round (1 p.m. ET on FOX), while the six remaining players compete Friday at 7 p.m. on FS1 to determine the final two participants on Sunday's show.

## **FOUR-TIME MASTERS CHAMP BELMONTE LEADS AFTER DAY 1 OF 2023 USBC MASTERS**

**ALLEN PARK, Michigan** – Australia's Jason Belmonte came to the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Masters holding the distinction of being the only player to have won the event four times.

If Monday's opening-round performance is any indication of things to come, then he is well on his way to No. 5.

The 39-year old two-hander maintained a torrid scoring pace during his first five-game qualifying block at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Michigan, shooting 813 for his first three games (258, 279 and 276) and closing with 224 and 227 to lead the 390-player field with a Day 1 total of 1,264, (a 252.80 average).

Roommates Jakob Butturff of Tempe, Arizona, and Cody Shoemaker of Hanover, Pennsylvania, tied for second place with 1,228. Patrick Dombrowski of Parma, Ohio (1,196), and Jake Rollins of Glen Rock, New Jersey (1,195) secured the final spots in the Day 1 top five.

Ric McCormick of Cincinnati (1,169), Phillip Watson of Mascoutah, Illinois (1,168), and J.R. Raymond of Clinton Township, Michigan (1,092), didn't finish quite as high in the Day 1 overall standings, but each found his groove at least once on opening day as all three recorded perfect games.

Nevertheless, Belmonte stole the show on Monday, and he didn't need one big game to do it; instead, he was simply excellent from start to finish.

That's certainly nothing new for Belmonte, who is the Professional Bowlers Association's all-time leader in major championship victories with 15, the most recent of which came last Sunday when he defeated E.J. Tackett of Bluffton, Indiana, (246-179) to win the 2023 PBA Tournament of Champions at AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio.

According to Belmonte, last weekend's victory gave him a bit of extra confidence heading into Masters week.

“Bowling, like any other sport for that matter, is a momentum game. When you’ve got it, you have to lean into it and try to keep it going for as long as you can,” Belmonte said. “The two shows that I won to win the title last week definitely had me rolling the ball with a little more confidence coming in today.”

Some might expect Belmonte to always be extra confident at the Masters having already won the tournament four times; however, he quickly dispelled that notion.

“There’s no more of less confidence here because of my past,” Belmonte said. “This is a brand new Masters with different bowlers out there and bowlers at different skill levels than they were in previous years.

“Every single tournament I come into, every single Masters I come into, I treat it as if I’ve never won it before. If I’m going to win this one, I need to make my shots, not underestimate the field and make it my best event.”

Although he’s making sure not to take anything for granted after one strong round, Belmonte did admit that a good start has its advantages.

“To leave in the number one position for the day allows you to bowl the next round with a whole lot less pressure. If you leave a stone nine or ringing ten, you can let it roll off because you don’t need it so much,” Belmonte said. “Also, it’s always important to see your ball strike a lot because if you need it later on in the tournament, you can see yourself doing it. It’s always a positive to lead at any point in a tournament but especially the first day.”

Regardless of what kind of start they got off to, all competitors will return to Thunderbowl Lanes on Tuesday for the second of three rounds of qualifying. After 15 games, which includes two blocks on the fresh lane condition and one squad on the burn, the top 63 players will join defending champion Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas in the double-elimination bracket beginning Thursday.

Simonsen is guaranteed a spot in the bracket as the defending champion, but he can improve his seeding through qualifying. If he happens to finish qualifying outside of the top 63, he’ll be the No. 64 seed.

After the first round, Simonsen is in 84th place with a 1,077 total.

Qualifying and match play at the 2023 Masters will remain consistent with previous editions of the event prior to the introduction of TV on March 31. The double-elimination bracket will be retained, and all matches leading up to the final eight competitors will feature three-game total-pinfall contests.

However, once the Elimination Bracket is down to the final eight, television matches will start with four single-game matches replacing the final three-game head-to-head round

and four-player shootout to determine the finalists for the stepladder. These matches will be broadcast live on FS1.

These TV matches will implement a knockout-style format with the winners of the first two games advancing to the finals of the Elimination Bracket. The advancers then will take on players who lost in the semifinals of the Winners Bracket with each winner earning a spot in the opening match of the stepladder on April 2.

The two players who emerge victorious from the semifinals of the Winners Bracket will earn automatic spots on the April 2 broadcast with a three-game total-pinfall match determining the top seed. This match will be broadcast at BowlTV.com.

With only four players advancing to the stepladder, the top seed will need to be defeated twice on FOX to be denied the title.

The stepladder at the 2023 event will be April 2 at 1 p.m. Eastern on FOX, with the champion taking home a spot in the tournament's storied history, a major title on the PBA Tour and the \$100,000 top prize.

For more information on the USBC Masters, visit [BOWL.com/Masters](http://BOWL.com/Masters).

## **2023 USBC MASTERS**

### **At Thunderbowl Lanes**

### **Allen Park, Michigan**

## **Monday's Results**

### **QUALIFYING - ROUND 1**

### **(Five games - top 100)**

1, Jason Belmonte, Australia, 1,264. 2(tie), Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., and Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., 1,228. 4, Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, 1,196. 5, Jake Rollins, Glen Rock, N.J., 1,195. 6, Zach Wilkins, Canada, 1,190.

7, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 1,189. 8, Justin Veitch, Kenner, La., 1,187. 9(tie), Ronnie Russel, Marion, Ind., and E.J. Tackett, Bluffton, Ind., 1,178. 11, Cristian Azcona, Clermont, Fla., 1,171. 12, Ric McCormick, Cincinnati, 1,169.

13, Phillip Watson, Mascoutah, Ill., 1,168. 14, David Krol, Nixa, Mo., 1,166. 15, Allan Smith, Killeen, Texas, 1,162. 16, Dwight Adams, Greensboro, N.C., 1,157. 17, Timothy Gruendler, St. Louis, 1,156. 18, Sam Cooley, Australia, 1,153.

19, John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 1,149. 20, Ronnie Sparks, Redford, Mich., 1,148. 21, Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., 1,146. 22, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 1,144. 23, Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y., 1,143. 24, Mitch Hupe, Canada, 1,137.

25(tie), Jeff Austreng, Waterford, Mich., and Nathan Ruest-Lajoie, Canada, 1,134. 27, Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., 1,132. 28, Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C.,



1,131. 29, Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., 1,130. 30, DeeRonn Booker, Anaheim, Calif., 1,129.

31, Russ Oviatt, Sioux Falls, S.D., 1,128. 32(tie), Dominic Barrett, England, and Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 1,125. 34, Ryan Barnes, Denton, Texas, 1,122. 35, Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, 1,121. 36, Darren Alexander, Canada, 1,120.

37, Jeffrey Campbell, Sioux Falls, S.D., 1,117. 38(tie), Spencer Robarge, Springfield, Mo., and Brad Miller, Lees Summit, Mo., 1,116. 40, Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 1,115. 41, Kyle Bigelow, Troy, Ohio, 1,113. 42, Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, 1,112.

43, David Northouse, Byron Center, Mich., 1,110. 44, Chris Delaney, Frisco, Texas, 1,109. 45(tie), Justin Neiman, Macomb, Mich.; Douglas Herron, Jersey City, N.J.; Maverick Wagner, Mt. Vernon, Ill.; and Martin Larsen, Sweden, 1,107.

49, Kyle Sherman, O'Fallon, Mo., 1,106. 50(tie), Kai Yamada, Kanehoe, Hawaii, and Perry Crowell IV, St. Clair Shores, Mich., 1,105. 52(tie), Patrick Hanrahan, Wichita, Kan.; Hunter Kempton, Bourne, Mass.; and Kyle King, Glendale, Ariz., 1,103.

55(tie), Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas; Charles Easton, Sylvania, Ohio; and William Clark, Monroe, Mich., 1,100. 58, Zeke Bayt, Westerville, Ohio, 1,098. 59(tie), Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, and Ramsey Basurto, Verdes, Calif., 1,096.

61(tie), Brandon Novak, Chillicothe, Ohio; Tomas Kayhko, Finland; and Ryan VanHecke, Chesterfield, Mo., 1,094. 64(tie), J.T. Cherpeski, Fairborn, Ohio, and Samuel Brandt, Fremont, Mich., 1,093. 66(tie), J.R. Raymond, Clinton Township, Mich.; Stuart Williams, Pflugerville, Texas; Alan Runkel, Cincinnati; and David Owens, Mason, Mich., 1,092.

70, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 1,089. 71(tie), Robert Leser, Grand Blanc, Mich., and Arturo Quintero, Mexico, 1,087. 73(tie), Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., and Matt Russo, Fairview Heights, Ill., 1,086. 75, Brent Boho, Indianapolis, 1,085.

76(tie), Verity Crawley, England; Travis Kominek, Toledo, Ohio; Bryan Hahlen, Goodyear, Ariz.; and Anthony Scaccia, Voorheesville, N.Y., 1,083. 80, John Furey, Howell, N.J., 1,082. 81, Teemu Putkisto, Finland, 1,081.

82(tie), Karl Wahlgren, Sweden, and Mykel Holliman, Denham Springs, La., 1,080. 84, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, 1,077. 85(tie), Joshua Solomon, Jackson, Mich., and Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 1,076. 87(tie), Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland; Trevor Roberts, Tampa, Fla.; and Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 1,075.

90(tie), Darin Bloomquist, Rhinelander, Wis., and Matt Ogle, Louisville, Ky., 1,074. 92(tie), Zac Tackett, Huntington, Ind., and Brian Waliczek, Frankenmuth, Minn., 1,073. 94(tie), Noah Campbell, Livonia, Mich.; Deo Benard, Keller, Texas; and Bryan Bourget, Woonsocket, R.I., 1,072.

97, Daniel Gassera, Port Charlotte, Fla., 1,071. 98(tie), Andrew Anderson, Holly, Mich.; Wes Malott, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Jalen Mosley, Indianapolis; and A.J. Johnson, Oswego, Ill., 1,070.

## **JONES SHOOTS BEST ROUND ON DAY 2; BELMONTE RETAINS OVERALL LEAD AT 2023 USBC MASTERS**

**ALLEN PARK, Michigan** – Several players turned in impressive performances and improved their position in the overall standings during Tuesday's second round of qualifying at the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Masters, which is being contested at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Michigan.

Tommy Jones of Simpsonville, South Carolina, a Professional Bowlers Association Hall of Famer and two-time major champion, turned in the best block of the day, putting up a five-game total of 1,216 – an average of 243.2 per game – thanks to games of 265, 245, 203, 255 and 248.

Jones' second-round performance wasn't just impressive because it was tops in the 390-player field; more importantly, it gave him a two-day, 10-game total of 2,155, which allowed him to move from 292nd place to begin the day all the way up to a tie for 57th.

That means that with just one five-game qualifying block remaining on Wednesday, Jones is in position to make the cut to match play.

The same can be said for Jason Belmonte of Australia, but he wasn't forced to work nearly as hard on Day 2 in order to get there.

Belmonte remained the tournament's overall leader for the second day in a row by following up Monday's blistering 1,264 set with a solid 1,123 effort (247, 220, 222, 233 and 201) on Tuesday.

With a two-day total of 2,387, Belmonte is all but assured of a spot in the match-play bracket, and he stands a very good chance of being the No. 1 seed. If that happens, he will be in prime position to make a run at breaking his own records by collecting a fifth Masters title and 16th career major.

Belmonte won't get that top seed without a fight, however, as there are several talented players near the top of the standings right along with him.

Marshall Kent of Yakima, Washington, sits in second place with a 10-game total of 2,319 while Russ Oviatt of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, fired 1,180 on Tuesday to move into third at 2,308. Jakob Butturff of Tempe, Arizona (2,291), and Zach Wilkins of Canada (2,290) currently occupy the remaining spots in the top five.

Belmonte, Butturff and Kent have been full-time PBA Tour players for many years, so, for them, sitting at or near the top of the standings at a major is nothing new.

For Oviatt, however, putting up Tuesday's top score on B-Squad and moving into third place on the overall leaderboard is uncharted territory. After all, Oviatt isn't even a full-time competitor on the PBA Tour.

"I'm not out here week in and week out, so when I bowl these events, I just try to enjoy it," Oviatt said. "A lot of the guys press because this is their livelihood. I'm fortunate

enough to be in a position where I don't have to have this as my livelihood, so I can keep everything more relaxed."

He certainly appeared calm on Tuesday, staying locked in on the pocket throughout his set while firing games of 213, 224, 279, 228 and 236.

Through two days of competition, Oviatt has established a 230.8 average with a high game of 279 and a low of 211.

Some may not have been expecting to see such a high level of consistency out of a part-time PBA Tour player; nevertheless, Oviatt just sees it all as part of the plan.

"I came into the tournament figuring that if I could shoot 215 per game, that should put me close to making the cut," Oviatt said. "So my mindset from the beginning has just been to stay relaxed each game and try to throw a couple of doubles."

Holding onto third place with one qualifying squad remaining doesn't just put Oviatt in position to make the cut; it gives him the opportunity to earn a high seed in the match-play bracket.

However, Oviatt isn't allowing himself to get overwhelmed by the early success or to look too far ahead.

"I've never won a block before. Does it mean a lot to me? Yes and no," Oviatt said. "It's nice, but this is still just qualifying, so going into tomorrow, I need to have the same plan as the first two days, try to throw some doubles and just stay in it."

Another player trying to stay in it is Jesper Svensson of Sweden, who currently holds 64th place – the final spot inside the match-play cut line – with a two-day total of 2,147.

Svensson's position is a precarious one, however, as there are 39 players within 50 pins of him heading into Wednesday's final five-game qualifying block.

After 15 games, which includes two blocks on the fresh lane condition and one squad on the burn, the top 63 players will join defending champion Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas in the double-elimination bracket beginning Thursday.

Simonsen is guaranteed a spot in the bracket as the defending champion, but he can improve his seeding through qualifying. If he happens to finish qualifying outside of the top 63, he'll be the No. 64 seed.

Simonsen currently sits in 40th place with a 2,183 total.

Qualifying and match play at the 2023 Masters will remain consistent with previous editions of the event prior to the introduction of TV on March 31. The double-elimination

bracket will be retained, and all matches leading up to the final eight competitors will feature three-game total-pinfall contests.

However, once the Elimination Bracket is down to the final eight, television matches will start with four single-game matches replacing the final three-game head-to-head round and four-player shootout to determine the finalists for the stepladder. These matches will be broadcast live on FS1.

These TV matches will implement a knockout-style format with the winners of the first two games advancing to the finals of the Elimination Bracket. The advancers then will take on players who lost in the semifinals of the Winners Bracket with each winner earning a spot in the opening match of the stepladder on April 2.

The two players who emerge victorious from the semifinals of the Winners Bracket will earn automatic spots on the April 2 broadcast with a three-game total-pinfall match determining the top seed. This match will be broadcast at BowlTV.com.

With only four players advancing to the stepladder, the top seed will need to be defeated twice on FOX to be denied the title.

The stepladder at the 2023 event will be April 2 at 1 p.m. Eastern on FOX, with the champion taking home a spot in the tournament's storied history, a major title on the PBA Tour and the \$100,000 top prize.

For more information on the USBC Masters, visit [BOWL.com/Masters](http://BOWL.com/Masters).

## **2023 USBC MASTERS**

### **At Thunderbowl Lanes**

### **Allen Park, Michigan**

### **Tuesday's Results**

### **QUALIFYING - ROUND 2**

### **(10 games - top 100)**

1, Jason Belmonte, Australia, 2,387. 2, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 2,319. 3, Russ Oviatt, Sioux Falls, S.D., 2,308. 4, Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., 2,291. 5, Zach Wilkins, Canada, 2,290. 6, Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., 2,289.

7, John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 2,264. 8, Deo Benard, Keller, Texas, 2,260. 9, Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, 2,259. 10, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 2,258. 11, Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., 2,255. 12, Michael Martell, W. Babylon, N.Y., 2,249.

13, (TIE) Kai Yamada, Kaneohe, Hawaii, and Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y.,

2,248. 15, Darren Tang, Las Vegas, Nev., 2,247. 16, Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, 2,241. 17, Bryan Hahlen, Goodyear, Ariz., 2,239. 18, (TIE) Kyle Sherman, O'Fallon, Mo., and

Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., and Allan Smith, Killeen, Texas, 2,235. 21, Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 2,232. 22, Jeff Austreng, Waterford, Mich., 2,226. 23, Mitch Hupe, Canada, 2,216. 24, Matt Ogle, Louisville, Ky., 2,211.

25, Tomas Kayhko, Finland, 2,208. 26, Jeffrey Campbell, Sioux Falls, S.D., 2,205. 27, Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 2,203. 28, Nathan Ruest-Lajoie, Canada, 2,202. 29, Justin Veitch, Kenner, La., 2,201. 30, Robert Leser, Grand Blanc, Mich., 2,195.

31, Graham Fach, Canada, 2,190. 32, (TIE) Ildemaro Ruiz, Venezuela, and Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, and Sam Cooley, Australia, and Timothy Gruendler, St. Louis, Mo., 2,188. 36, Benjamin Sobel, Columbus, Ohio, 2,187.

37, (TIE) AJ Johnson, Oswego, Ill., and Trevor Roberts, Tampa, Fla., 2,186. 39, Wesley Low, Palmdale, Calif., 2,184. 40, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, Nev., 2,183. 41, EJ Tackett, Ossian, Ind., 2,182. 42, Perry Crowell IV, St. Clair Shores, Mich., 2,180.

43, Jake Rollins, Glen Rock, N.J., 2,179. 44, (TIE) Alexander Hoskins, Brigham City, Utah, and Karl Wahlgren, Sweden, 2,178. 46, Ronnie Russell, Marion, Ind., 2,175. 47, Peter Fox, West Hartford, Conn., 2,169. 48, Samuel DeWitt, Coraopolis, Pa., 2,165.

49, (TIE) Chris Loschetter, Avon, Ohio, and Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., and Ryan Barnes, Denton, Texas, 2,164. 52, Tim Pfeifer, Oak Dale, Pa., 2,163. 53, Darrell Bean, Decatur, Ill., 2,161. 54, Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 2,160.

55, Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, Nev., 2,158. 56, Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland, 2,157. 57, (TIE) Tommy Jones, Simpsonville, S.C., and Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., 2,155. 59, Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 2,154. 60, DeeRonn Booker, Anaheim, Calif., 2,151.

61, Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., 2,150. 62, Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 2,149. 63, Dwight Adams, Greensboro, N.C., 2,148. 64, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 2,147. 65, Hunter Kempton, Bourne, Mass., 2,146. 66, Zac Tackett, Huntington, Ind., 2,145.

67, AJ Chapman, Double Oak, Texas, 2,140. 68, (TIE) Brian Waliczek, Frankenmuth, Mich., and Charles Easton, Sylvania, Ohio, 2,135. 70, Jalen Mosley, Indianapolis, Ind., 2,134. 71, John Furey, Howell, N.J., 2,131. 72, Chris Martinez, Fort Collins, Colo., 2,130.

73, Kyle King, Glendale, Ariz., 2,129. 74, Chris Delaney, Frisco, Texas, 2,128. 75, (TIE) Zachary Brandt, Sand Lake, Mich., and Nicholas Pate, Inver Grove Heights, Minn., and Bryan Bourget, Woonsocket, R.I., 2,127. 78, Ric McCormick, Cincinnati, Ohio, 2,126.

79, (TIE) Richard Allen, Chapin, S.C., and Mykel Holliman, Denham Springs, La., 2,125. 81, Matt Russo, Fairview Hgts., Ill., 2,122. 82, (TIE) Anthony Bonnell, Baltimore, Md., and Darin Bloomquist, Rhinelander, Wis., and Patrick Hanrahan, Wichita, Kan., 2,120.

85, (TIE) Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., and Ryan VanHecke, Chesterfield, Mich., 2,116. 87, (TIE) Jesse Kallio, Finland, and Dominic Barrett, England, 2,115. 89, Ryan Graywacz, Canastota, N.Y., 2,111. 90, Justin Neiman, Macomb, Mich., 2,110.

91, Maverick Wagner, Mt. Vernon, Ill., 2,109. 92, Brandon Novak, Chillicothe, Ohio,

2,108. 93, (TIE) Adam Morse, Ankeny, Iowa, and Ryan Ciminelli, Monroe, N.C., 2,107. 95, Brad Miller, Lees Summit, Mo., 2,106. 96, Ramsey Basurto, Verdes, Calif., 2,104. 97, Spencer Robarge, Springfield, Mo., 2,103. 98, (TIE) Jace Meyer, Monticello, Iowa, and Kyle Bigelow, Troy, Ohio, 2,101. 100, Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 2,100.

## **BELMONTE LEADS QUALIFYING AT 2023 USBC MASTERS; MATCH PLAY BEGINS THURSDAY**

**ALLEN PARK, Michigan** – Jason Belmonte of Australia has earned the top seed for the 64-player double-elimination bracket at the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Masters, a tournament that he has already won a record four times.

The 39-year-old two-hander rolled games of 279, 238, 225, 221 and 202 on Wednesday at Thunderbowl Lanes for an 1,165 set to lead qualifying with a 15-game total of 3,552, a 236.8 average.

Jakob Butturff of Tempe, Arizona, had a chance to go around Belmonte for the overall lead after starting Round 3 with games of 257, 254, 257 and 276.

It wasn't meant to be, however, as a tricky pair of lanes slowed Butturff's pace during the final game, forcing the 2019 Masters champion to settle for second place with a 3,531 total.

Marshall Kent of Yakima, Washington (3,414), Thomas Smallwood of Saginaw, Michigan (3,366), and Russ Oviatt of Sioux Falls, South Dakota (3,349), rounded out the top five.

Although Butturff would have liked to have taken over the lead, he was more than satisfied with Wednesday's performance and the position it puts him in heading into match play.

"Today was kind of like Monday where I got into cruise control and just sort of did my thing, and that allowed me to throw some really good games," Butturff said. "Obviously, you always want to be up at the top of the leaderboard, but in this format, all that really matters is getting into that bracket."

Butturff easily accomplished that goal as he didn't just qualify for the match-play bracket; he claimed the No. 2 seed.

Now, he hopes he can get on a roll and make a run at winning his second Masters title.

"I was struggling for a couple of weeks there, but now I'm feeling like I finally have my feet back underneath me," Butturff said. "This is a major that I've really had a lot of

success in, so that should give me confidence going into match play. Hopefully, that leads to another Masters title for me.”

All competitors in the 390-player field bowled 15 games of qualifying over three days, which included two blocks on the fresh 46-foot lane condition and one squad on the burn.

The top 63 players, based on total pinfall, advanced to match play, while Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas was guaranteed a spot in the bracket as the defending champion.

As defending champion, Simonsen was guaranteed no worse than the 64th seed for match play. He improved his seeding through qualifying, however, finishing Wednesday’s final round in 29th place with a 3,265 total. He will be the No. 29 seed heading into match play starting Thursday at 10 a.m. Eastern and face No. 36-seed Matt Russo of Fairview Heights, Illinois, in the opening round.

The final spot from qualifying went to Santtu Tahvanainen of Finland. Tahvanainen finished in 64th place with a 3,167 total (211.13 average) and will face Belmonte in Thursday’s opening round.

Belmonte is the Professional Bowlers Association’s all-time leader in major titles with 15, the most recent of which came last Sunday when he defeated E.J. Tackett of Bluffton, Indiana, (246-179) to win the 2023 PBA Tournament of Champions at AMF Riviera Lanes in Fairlawn, Ohio.

The bracket at the 2023 Masters will feature six past champions, including Belmonte, Butturff and Simonsen.

The other previous winners to advance were Parker Bohn III of Jackson, New Jersey (2001), Tom Hess of Granger, Iowa (2011), and Sean Rash of Montgomery, Illinois (2007).

Qualifying and match play at the 2023 Masters remained consistent with previous editions of the event prior to the introduction of TV on March 31. The double-elimination bracket was retained, and all matches leading up to the final eight competitors will feature three-game total-pinfall contests.

However, once the Elimination Bracket is down to the final eight, television matches will start with four single-game matches replacing the final three-game head-to-head round and four-player shootout to determine the finalists for the stepladder. These matches will be broadcast live on FS1.

These TV matches will implement a knockout-style format with the winners of the first two games advancing to the finals of the Elimination Bracket. The advancers then will

take on players who lost in the semifinals of the Winners Bracket with each winner earning a spot in the opening match of the stepladder on April 2.

The two players who emerge victorious from the semifinals of the Winners Bracket will earn automatic spots on the April 2 broadcast with a three-game total-pinfall match determining the top seed. This match will be broadcast at BowlTV.com.

With only four players advancing to the stepladder, the top seed will need to be defeated twice on FOX to be denied the title.

The stepladder at the 2023 event will be April 2 at 1 p.m. Eastern on FOX, with the champion taking home a spot in the tournament's storied history, a major title on the PBA Tour and the \$100,000 top prize.

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## **2023 USBC MASTERS**

### **At Thunderbowl Lanes**

### **Allen Park, Michigan**

### **Wednesday's Results**

#### **QUALIFYING - ROUND 3**

#### **(15 games - top 100)**

1, Jason Belmonte, Australia, 3,552. 2, Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., 3,531. 3, Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 3,414. 4, Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., 3,366. 5, Russ Oviatt, Sioux Falls, S.D., 3,349. 6, Ryan Ciminelli, Monroe, N.C., 3,335.

7, John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 3,329. 8, Deo Benard, Keller, Texas, 3,328. 9, Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, 3,326. 10, (TIE) Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, and Jeff Austreng, Waterford, Mich., 3,325. 12, Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 3,323.

13, Chris Loschetter, Avon, Ohio, 3,319. 14, Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., 3,318. 15, Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y., 3,312. 16, Alexander Hoskins, Brigham City, Utah, 3,311. 17, Justin Veitch, Kenner, La., 3,306. 18, Michael Martell, W. Babylon, N.Y., 3,298.

19, Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 3,297. 20, Wesley Low, Palmdale, Calif., 3,293. 21, Kyle Sherman, O'Fallon, Mo., 3,291. 22, Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 3,286. 23, Perry Crowell IV, St. Clair Shores, Mich., 3,284. 24, Jeffrey Campbell, Sioux Falls, S.D., 3,281.

25, Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., 3,280. 26, Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., 3,278. 27, Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, 3,269. 28, EJ Tackett, Ossian, Ind., 3,267. 29, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, Nev., 3,265. 30, Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 3,264.

31, (TIE) Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., and Dominic Barrett, England, 3,257. 33, Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 3,253. 34, Zach Wilkins, Canada, 3,252. 35, Sam Cooley,



Australia, 3,251. 36, Matt Russo, Fairview Hgts., Ill., 3,250.

37, AJ Johnson, Oswego, Ill., 3,248. 38, Darren Tang, Las Vegas, Nev., 3,241. 39, Jalen Mosley, Indianapolis, Ind., 3,240. 40, Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 3,238. 41, Graham Fach, Canada, 3,237. 42, Mitch Hupe, Canada, 3,235.

43, Bryan Hahlen, Goodyear, Ariz., 3,228. 44, (TIE) Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., and Nathan Ruest-Lajoie, Canada, 3,225. 46, Jesper Svensson, Sweden, 3,223. 47, Brandon Novak, Chillicothe, Ohio, 3,220. 48, Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., 3,212.

49, Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., 3,211. 50, Nicholas Pate, Inver Grove Heights, Minn., 3,209. 51, Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., 3,206. 52, Samuel DeWitt, Coraopolis, Pa., 3,201. 53, Jake Rollins, Glen Rock, N.J., 3,200. 54, Brandon Bohn, Jackson, N.J., 3,199.

55, John Furey, Howell, N.J., 3,197. 56, Bill Rowe, Canada, 3,194. 57, (TIE) Ric McCormick, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, 3,190. 59, Jesse Kallio, Finland, 3,188. 60, DJ Archer, Louisville, Ky., 3,184.

61, Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, Nev., 3,181. 62, (TIE) Patrick Hanrahan, Wichita, Kan., and Matt Ogle, Louisville, Ky., 3,170. 64, Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland, 3,167.

## **DID NOT ADVANCE**

65, Ronnie Russell, Marion, Ind., 3,166, \$1,900. 66, Timothy Gruendler, St. Louis, Mo., 3,164, \$1,800.

67, Dwight Adams, Greensboro, N.C., 3,161, \$1,775. 68, Zac Tackett, Huntington, Ind., 3,159, \$1,750. 69, David Northouse, Byron Center, Mich., 3,155, \$1,725. 70, John Kelley, Clinton Twp., Mich., 3,154, \$1,700. 71, Mykel Holliman, Denham Springs, La., 3,152, \$1,675. 72, Cristian Azcona, Clermont, Fla., 3,150, \$1,650.

73, Spencer Robarge, Springfield, Mo., 3,147, \$1,625. 74, Tomas Kayhko, Finland, 3,146, \$1,600. 75, JR Raymond, Clinton Twp, Mich., 3,143, \$1,575. 76, Karl Wahlgren, Sweden, 3,142, \$1,550. 77, Kai Yamada, Kaneohe, Hawaii, 3,140, \$1,525. 78, Maverick Wagner, Mt. Vernon, Ill., 3,134, \$1,500.

79, (TIE) Darin Bloomquist, Rhinelander, Wis., and Allan Smith, Killeen, Texas, 3,132, \$1,462. 81, (TIE) T.J. Schmidt, Granger, Ind., and Anthony Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, and Bill O'Neill, Langhorne, Pa., 3,130, \$1,405. 84, Richard Teece, England, 3,129, \$1,380.

85, Richard Allen, Chapin, S.C., 3,125, \$1,370. 86, Chris Martinez, Fort Collins, Colo., 3,124, \$1,360. 87, Tim Pfeifer, Oak Dale, Pa., 3,123, \$1,350. 88, Anthony Scaccia, Voorheesville, N.Y., 3,119, \$1,340. 89, Ildemaro Ruiz, Venezuela, 3,116, \$1,330. 90, Benjamin Sobel, Columbus, Ohio, 3,113, \$1,320.

91, Alan Runkel, Cincinnati, Ohio, 3,109, \$1,310. 92, (TIE) Matthew Sanders, Evansville, Ind., and Peter Fox, West Hartford, Conn., and Robert Leser, Grand Blanc, Mich., 3,107, \$1,290. 95, Ryan Barnes, Denton, Texas, 3,105, \$1,270. 96, Dan MacLelland, Canada, 3,103, \$1,260.

97, (TIE) Nicholas Blagojevic, Canada, and Matthew Taylor, Youngsville, N.C., and Bryan Bourget, Woonsocket, R.I., 3,102, \$417. 100, Wes Malott, Ft. Wayne, Ind., 3,096. 101, AJ Chapman, Double Oak, Texas, 3,094. 102, Tommy Jones, Simpsonville, S.C., 3,093.

## **DEFENDING CHAMP SIMONSEN GOES UNDEFEATED ON DAY 1 OF MATCH PLAY AT 2023 USBC MASTERS**

**ALLEN PARK, Michigan** – Experience is never a bad thing when it comes to trying to win a major championship.

Despite being just 26 years old, Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas doesn't just have experience competing for major titles; he has experience winning them.

Simonsen's resume currently lists four major victories, the first of which came at the 2016 United States Bowling Congress Masters.

The two-hander was just 19 years and 39 days old at the time of that victory, which made him the youngest bowler to ever claim a major title.

He's captured three more since then, collecting victories at the 2019 Professional Bowlers Association Players Championship, The 2022 U.S. Open and last year's Masters in Las Vegas.

Now, Simonsen has positioned himself for a run at a third Masters title as he went 2-0 during Thursday's opening round of match play at the 2023 Masters, which is being contested at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Michigan.

Simonsen, who began match play as the No. 29 seed in the 64-player double-elimination bracket, won matches over No. 36 Matt Russo of Fairview Heights, Illinois (766-699), and No. 61 Dallas Leong of Las Vegas (705-637), to remain one of just 16 players who are still undefeated in this year's tournament.

Having won the event twice before, Simonsen knows better than most how important it is to still be in the Winners Bracket at the end of the first day of match play at the Masters.

"It's important to get out of the first day of matches undefeated because it makes your road to the show a lot shorter," Simonsen said. "Plus, even if you do lose, you don't have to go through nearly as many matches as the guys who lose in the first or second round."

The fear of losing never really crept in on Simonsen during his opening-round match as the talented two-hander struck at will, averaging 255.3 during the three-game match to easily move into the second round of Winners Bracket play.

Things didn't go as smoothly during the early stages of Match 2, however, as Simonsen fell behind Leong by 56 pins after Game 1 (280-224).

The defending champion refused to be rattled, however, and by the time Game 2 was completed, Simonsen had not only erased the deficit; he had taken the lead.

He would never trail again as he continued making quality shots and filling frames while Leong struggled with spotty ball reaction. When all was said and done, Simonsen had easily finished off the comeback and moved his record to 2-0.

"The thing about these three-game matches is that they can swing back and forth quite a bit; you can get back 30 or 40 pins really quickly with some good shots," Simonsen said. "It's important to stay in it mentally, and I was able to do that by bowling a really good second game. I'm pretty happy so far, but I have to just keep taking it one match at a time."

Simonsen's next match will come Friday morning when Winners Bracket action resumes with Round 3 starting at 8 a.m. Eastern. His opponent for that match will be No. 45 seed Keven Williams of Battlefield, Missouri.

A total of 32 players remain in the double-elimination bracket at the 2023 event, including six past champions. Simonsen is joined in the Winners Bracket by Tom Hess of Granger, Iowa (2011) and Sean Rash of Montgomery, Illinois (2011), while Jason Belmonte of Australia (2013, 2014, 2015 and 2017), Jakob Butturff of Tempe, Arizona (2019), and Parker Bohn III of Jackson, New Jersey (2001), are in the Elimination Bracket.

Competition in the three-game total-pinfall matches will continue Friday until the Elimination Bracket is down to the final eight players.

At that point, television matches will start with four single-game matches replacing the final three-game head-to-head round and a four-player shootout to determine the finalists for the stepladder. These matches will be broadcast live on FS1.

These TV matches will implement a knockout-style format with the winners of the first two games advancing to the finals of the Elimination Bracket. The advancers then will take on players who lost in the semifinals of the Winners Bracket with each winner earning a spot in the opening match of the stepladder on April 2.

The two players who emerge victorious from the semifinals of the Winners Bracket will earn automatic spots on the April 2 broadcast with a three-game total-pinfall match determining the top seed. This match will be broadcast at [BowITV.com](http://BowITV.com).

With only four players advancing to the stepladder, the top seed will need to be defeated twice on FOX to be denied the title.

The stepladder at the 2023 event will be April 2 at 1 p.m. Eastern on FOX, with the champion taking home a spot in the tournament's storied history, a major title on the PBA Tour and the \$100,000 top prize.

**2023 USBC MASTERS**  
**At Thunderbowl Lanes**  
**Allen Park, Michigan**

**Friday's Results**

**MATCH PLAY**

**Double-elimination, three-game matches decided by total pinfall**

**ROUND 1**

**(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).**

- (1) Jason Belmonte, Australia, def. (64) Santtu Tahvanainen, Finland, 659-621.
- (33) Kim Bolleby, Sweden, def. (32) Dominic Barrett, England, 667-633.
- (48) Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., def. (17) Justin Veitch, Kenner, La., 703-578.
- (49) Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., def. (16) Alexander Hoskins, Brigham City, Utah, 655-563.
  
- (9) Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, def. (56) Bill Rowe, Canada, 669-582.
- (24) Jeffrey Campbell, Sioux Falls, S.D., def. (41) Graham Fach, Canada, 643-619.
- (40) Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., def. (25) Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., 649-647.
- (8) Deo Benard, Keller, Texas, def. (57) Ric McCormick, Cincinnati, 603-592.
  
- (5) Russ Oviatt, Sioux Falls, S.D., def. (60) D.J. Archer, Louisville, Ky., 604-592.
- (37) A.J. Johnson, Oswego, Ill., def. (28) E.J. Tackett, Ossian, Ind., 769-731.
- (21) Kyle Sherman, O'Fallon, Mo., def. (44) Nathan Ruest-Lajoie, Canada, 681-671.
- (12) Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, def. (53) Jake Rollins, Glen Rock, N.J., 636-627.
  
- (13) Chris Loschetter, Avon, Ohio, def. (52) Samuel DeWitt, Coraopolis, Pa., 640-577.
- (45) Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., def. (20) Wesley Low, Palmdale, Calif., 763-752.
- (29) Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, def. (36) Matt Russo, Fairview Heights, Ill., 766-699.
- (61) Dallas Leong, Las Vegas, def. (61) Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., 732-644.
  
- (62) Matt Ogle, Louisville, Ky., def. (3) Marshall Kent, Yakima, Wash., 662-659.
- (35) Sam Cooley, Australia, def. (30) Jake Peters, Henderson, Nev., 769-647.
- (46) Jesper Svensson, Sweden, def. (19) Anthony Neuer, Milton, Pa., 748-611.
- (51) Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., def. (14) Cody Shoemaker, Hanover, Pa., 679-593.

(54) Brandon Bohn, Jackson, N.J., def. (11) Jeff Austreng, Waterford, Mich., 652-614.  
(22) Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., def. (43) Bryan Hahlen, Goodyear, Ariz., 643-607.

(27) Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, def. (38) Darren Tang, Las Vegas, 678-515.  
(6) Ryan Ciminelli, Monroe, N.C., def. (59) Jesse Kallio, Finland, 722-687.

(58) Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, def. (7) John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 725-701.

(26) Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., def. (39) Jalen Mosley, Indianapolis, 755-665.  
(42) Mitch Hupe, Canada, def. (23) Perry Crowell IV, St. Clair Shores, Mich., 599-530.  
(10) Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, def. (55) John Furey, Howell, N.J., 703-695.

(50) Nicholas Pate, Inver Grove Heights, Minn., def. (15) Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y., 718-673.

(18) Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., def. (47) Brandon Novak, Chillicothe, Ohio, 694-645.

(34) Zach Wilkins, Canada, def. (31) Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 698-661.

(2) Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., def. (63) Patrick Hanrahan, Wichita, Kan., 794-628.

## **ROUND 2 – WINNERS BRACKET**

Bolleby def. Belmonte, 646-621.

Rash def. P. Bohn III, 676-595.

Via def. Campbell, 674-626.

Benard def. Knowles, 682-662.

Oviatt def. Johnson, 747-657.

Sherman def. Barnes, 629-628.

Williams def. Loschetter, 695-628.

Simonsen def. Leong, 705-637.

Cooley def. Ogle, 746-683.

Daugherty def. Svensson, 666-600.

Prather def. B. Bohn, 739-731.

Dombrowski def. Ciminelli, 733-709.

Bonta def. S. Lavery-Spahr, 618-608.

Hess def. Hupe, 758-715.

Martell def. Pate, 676-596.

Wilkins def. Butturff, 649-595.

## **ROUND 1 – ELIMINATION BRACKET (Losers eliminated, earn \$2,100)**

Barrett def. Tahvanainen, 676-599.

McCormick def. Jurek, 652-651.

Hoskins def. Veitch, 736-578.  
Fach def. Rowe, 754-554.

Tackett def. Archer, 688-537.  
Smallwood def. Russo, 689-602.  
Rollins def. Ruest-Lajoie, 660-619.  
Low def. DeWitt, 695-474.

Kent def. Peters, 636-565.  
Kallio def. Tang, 684-634.  
Neuer def. Shoemaker, 593-559.  
Hahlen def. Austreng, 605-529.

Janawicz def. Mosley, 634-529.  
Troup def. Hanrahan, 644-550.  
Crowell IV def. Furey, 580-563.  
Sternner def. Novak, 608-506.

## **ROUND 2 – ELIMINATION BRACKET** **(Losers eliminated, earn \$2,250)**

Barrett def. Svensson, 762-576.  
B. Bohn def. McCormick, 672-628.  
Ogle def. Hoskins, 677-549.  
Fach def. Ciminelli, 651-530.

Tackett def. Hupe, 706-637.  
Smallwood def. Pate, 681-576.  
S. Lavery-Spahr def. Rollins, 612-556.  
Butturff, def. Low, 714-611.

P. Bohn III def. Kent, 652-644  
Kallio def. Campbell, 673-554.  
Belmonte def. Neuer, 700-650.  
Knowles def. Hahlen, 604-580.

Janawicz def. Barnes, 702-678.  
Troup def. Loschetter, 578-577.  
Johnson def. Crowell IV, 621-530.  
Sternner def. Leong, 684-630.

**SIMONSEN, MARTELL EARN TOP SEEDS**

**FOR TV FINALS AT 2023 USBC MASTERS**

ALLEN PARK, Michigan – The 2023 United States Bowling Congress Masters began Monday morning when a sold-out field of 390 competitors took to the lanes for the opening round of qualifying at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Michigan.

After the completion of Friday night's live FS1 televised Elimination Bracket finals, just four players remain. Those four have moved on to Sunday's stepladder finals on FOX beginning at 1 p.m. Eastern.

Defending Masters champion Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas will have to win just one match on Sunday in order to complete a successful title defense.

Simonsen earned the top seed by going a perfect 6-0 on Thursday and Friday, setting a new Masters match-play scoring record in the process.

Over the course of 18 games, Simonsen averaged 250.4, breaking the previous mark of 245.6, which was set by Professional Bowlers Association Hall of Famer Norm Duke during the 1993 Masters in Edmond, Oklahoma.

Simonsen finished bracket play in style Friday afternoon by shooting a 300 game to close out an 845 series during his battle for the top seed against West Babylon New York's Michael Martell.

Martell, who will be vying for his first PBA Tour title, will be the No. 2 seed on Sunday's telecast.

Simonsen and Martell will be joined on the show by No. 4 seed Sean Rash of Montgomery, Illinois, and No. 3 Kyle Sherman of O'Fallon, Missouri, who punched their tickets to the stepladder by surviving Friday night's Elimination Bracket finals telecast on FS1.

Sherman kicked off Friday night's show in fine fashion, striking 11 times during a relatively comfortable 279-209 victory over local favorite Tom Smallwood of Saginaw, Michigan.

The second match of the night pitted Rash – the 2007 Masters champion – against 2001 winner and PBA Tour legend Parker Bohn III of Jackson, New Jersey, who, at 59 years old, was hoping to keep his magical 2023 Masters run alive.

It wasn't meant to be, however, as Rash began the match with seven strikes in a row to grab the lead and never look. When the final balls had been thrown, Rash had eliminated Bohn by a final score of 264-169.

That brought Sherman back to the lanes, this time to face Chris Via of Blacklick, Ohio, with a spot in Sunday's stepladder finals on the line.

Just as he had during Match 1, Sherman jumped out to a lead, establishing a 30 pin advantage through three frames and still leading by 24 at the end of eight.

Things would change in dramatic fashion during the 10th frame, however, as, just needing a mark to win, Sherman left a 4-7-10 split.

He was unable to convert, but by taking two pins, he was able to salvage a tie at 194 and force a one-ball roll off.

As the higher seed, Via chose to start the extra session, and he immediately stepped up and delivered a flush strike, which meant that Sherman would have to do the same or else lose the match.

In the span of two or three minutes, Sherman had gone from almost certain victory to having to deliver a strike to stave off elimination.

As such, it would've been understandable if Sherman was unable to calm himself down and make a quality shot, but that's just what he did, throwing a no-doubt strike that tied the roll off and forced the two competitors to move to a second round of sudden death.

Via stepped up and delivered another solid shot, but that one would only net him nine pins, giving Sherman another opportunity to close out the match.

This time he would make good, throwing another picture-perfect strike to win the second roll off 10-9 and officially secure his spot in Sunday's stepladder finals

The opportunity to compete for a major title is not something that Sherman takes lightly, and he's thankful to be doing it in a city and bowling center that brings back fond memories.

"I love this place; I love bowling here," Sherman said. "I made my first singles show here, and that was the first time I had a really awesome week on tour. Now, I have another one, so I'll remember Thunderbowl Lanes forever."

He'll remember it even more clearly if he is able to run Sunday's stepladder and collect his first major title. That task won't be easy, however, as he'll have to get past Rash just to survive the first match.

Rash earned his stepladder finals berth by topping Patrick Dombrowski of Parma, Ohio, 256-237 during Friday night's final match on FS1.

The closing contest was entertaining throughout with both bowlers staying locked in on the 1-3 pocket from the very first ball.

However, Dombrowski just couldn't find a way to consistently topple the 10 pin, and that allowed Rash to jump out front and maintain an 11 pin lead heading into the final frame.

Just as Sherman had during the match before, Rash stepped up in the tenth needing a mark to win.

There would be no drama or roll off needed this time around, however, as Rash struck on his first ball to eliminate Dombrowski 256-237 and collect the fourth and final spot on Sunday's TV show.

Immediately after securing the win, Rash was able to share celebratory kisses and hugs with his wife and daughters, who had been cheering him on from the crowd all night long.

It was a moment that Rash didn't take for granted.

"It's pretty special to get to have an experience like that with my family because you never know when it's going to happen again," Rash said. "This could be the last show I ever make."



That's because Rash has been battling serious back problems for quite some time, and, unfortunately, relief doesn't look to be coming anytime soon.

With that in mind, he is thankful for the opportunity to compete at all let alone for another major title.

"I really shouldn't be bowling at all; I should be rehabbing and doing things to try to get better, but I feel like I owe it to my sponsors, my fans and my family to be out here," Rash said. "I never thought I'd make the Masters show again, but here I am. I have a chance, and at the end of the day, that's all you can really ask for."

If Rash can get past Sherman in Sunday's opener, he'll earn a bout with No. 2 seed Martell, who started match play 5-0 before falling to Simonsen in the top-seed match.

Although he would have liked to have earned the top seed for the stepladder, Martell was more than pleased with his performance on Friday. He was so pleased, in fact, that, in the moments immediately following his final match of the day, he was having a hard time coming to grips with what he had just accomplished.

"I don't even have words for this; I don't think it's really hit me yet," Martell said. "I started to get a little emotional earlier today when I realized that I had made a show regardless of what happened in those last couple of matches. I think I'm going to leave, and that's when it will hit me that I'm a finalist at the Masters."

Thankfully for Martell, he'll get a day off on Saturday to get his emotions in check before returning to the Thunderbowl Lanes Arena Sunday afternoon for the TV finals.

Nevertheless, Martell made it clear that once the lights come on, he won't just be happy to be there; he'll be playing to win.

"I'm going to try to go in and be aggressive just like I've been all week," Martell said. "If I can stick to my guns and keep going through the process, I think that can take me pretty far."

Martell won't have to go too far as one win will earn him a title tilt against Simonsen, who will have quite a bit on the line during the championship match.

A victory would make 26-year-old Simonsen the youngest bowler ever to win five major titles, complete a successful Masters title defense and give him his third victory overall at the tournament.

He'll definitely enter Sunday's telecast with the advantage as with only four players bowling in this year's stepladder, Simonsen will need to be defeated twice on FOX in order to be denied the title.

The stepladder finals will be contested Sunday at 1 p.m. Eastern on FOX, with the champion taking home a spot in the tournament's storied history, a major title on the PBA Tour and the \$100,000 top prize.

For more information on the USBC Masters, visit [BOWL.com/Masters](http://BOWL.com/Masters).

## 2023 USBC MASTERS

At Thunderbowl Lanes

Allen Park, Michigan

### Friday's Results

#### MATCH PLAY

Double-elimination, three-game matches decided by total pinfall

#### ROUND 3 – WINNERS BRACKET

(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).

(48) Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., def. (33) Kim Bolleby, Sweden, 730-576.

(9) Chris Via, Blacklick, Ohio, def. (8) Deo Benard, Keller, Texas, 727-631.

(5) Russ Oviatt, Sioux Falls, S.D., def. (21) Kyle Sherman, O'Fallon, Mo., 659-607.

(29) Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, def. (45) Keven Williams, Battlefield, Mo., def. 731-722.

(35) Sam Cooley, Australia, def. (51) Tom Daugherty, Riverview, Fla., 603-590.

(27) Patrick Dombrowski, Parma, Ohio, def. (22) Kristopher Prather, Romeoville, Ill., 683-671.

(26) Brandon Bonta, Wichita, Kan., def. (10) Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 636-606.

(18) Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., def. (34) Zach Wilkins, Canada, 701-598.

#### ROUND 3 – ELIMINATION BRACKET

(Losers eliminated, earn \$2,500)

(54) Brandon Bohn, Jackson, N.J., def. (32) Dominic Barrett, England, 657-462.

(62) Matt Ogle, Louisville, Ky., def. (41) Graham Fach, Canada, 760-616.

(4) Thomas Smallwood, Saginaw, Mich., def. (28) E.J. Tackett, Ossian, Ind., 708-701.

(58) Sean Lavery-Spahr, Pasadena, Texas, def. (2) Jakob Butturff, Tempe, Ariz., 734-665.

(37) Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., def. (59) Jess Kallio, Finland, 720-704.

(1) Jason Belmonte, Australia, def. (40) Justin Knowles, Okemos, Mich., 657-608.

(7) John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., def. (31) Kyle Troup, Taylorsville, N.C., 679-578.

(37) A.J. Johnson, Oswego, Ill., def. (15) Jason Sterner, Rochester, N.Y., 734-624.

#### ROUND 4 – WINNERS BRACKET

(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).

Via def. Rash, 716-674.

Simonsen def. Oviatt, 692-632.

Dombrowski def. Cooley, 618-540.

Martell def. Bonta, 717-667.

#### ROUND 4 – ELIMINATION BRACKET

(Losers eliminated, earn \$3,250)

Sherman def. B. Bohn, 622-621.

Williams def. Ogle, 713-613.

Smallwood def. Bolleby, 656-639.

S. Lavery-Spahr def. Benard, 673-661.

P. Bohn III def. Wilkins, 716-651.

Belmonte def. Hess, 718-593.

Prather def. Janawicz, 711-614.

Daugherty def. Johnson, 652-648.

#### ROUND 5 – WINNERS BRACKET

(Winners earn automatic berth for Sunday's FOX finals; losers move to Elimination Bracket finals).

Simonsen def. Via, 769-694.

Martell def. Dombrowski, 717-623.

#### ROUND 5 – ELIMINATION BRACKET

(Losers eliminated, earn \$4,000)

Sherman def. Williams, 698-690.

Smallwood def. S. Lavery-Spahr, 767-671

P. Bohn III def. Belmonte, 647-566.

Prather def. Daugherty, 604-533.

#### ROUND 6 – WINNERS BRACKET

(Winner earns No. 1 seed for Sunday's FOX finals; loser is No. 2 seed).

Simonsen def. Martell, 845-690.

#### ROUND 6 – ELIMINATION BRACKET

(Winners advance to Elimination Bracket semifinals; losers eliminated, earn \$5,000)

Sherman def. Bonta, 655-634.

Smallwood def. Cooley, 699-661.

P. Bohn III def. Oviatt, 546-521.

Prather def. Rash, 697-683.

#### ELIMINATION BRACKET SEMIFINALS

One-game match

(Winners advance to Elimination Bracket finals; losers eliminated, earn \$6,000)

Sherman def. Smallwood, 279-209.

Rash def. P. Bohn III, 264-169.

#### ELIMINATION BRACKET FINALS

One-game match

(Winners advance to Sunday's FOX finals; losers eliminated, earn \$8,750)

Sherman def. Via, 194-194 (10-10; 10-9).

Rash def. Dombrowski, 256-237.

## **SIMONSEN SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDS USBC MASTERS TITLE, BECOMES YOUNGEST TO WIN FIVE MAJORS**

**ALLEN PARK, Michigan** – Anthony Simonsen of Las Vegas has been rewriting the bowling record book since he was 19 years old. The now 26-year-old two-hander added another chapter on Sunday by repeating as United States Bowling Congress Masters champion, giving him his fifth major championship and third Masters title.

Simonsen secured the win at the 2023 event with a strike on his first ball in the tenth frame, which allowed him to defeat Michael Martell of West Babylon, New York, 243-222.

The win Sunday inside The Arena at Thunderbowl Lanes gave Simonsen his second Professional Bowlers Association title of the season – he also won the 2023 PBA Wichita Classic – and earned him the \$100,000 top prize, pushing his current season earnings up to \$204,500.

The championship round of the 2023 USBC Masters was broadcast live on FOX.

Simonsen's first win at the Masters came in 2016 and helped him become the youngest bowler in history to win a major at 19 years and 39 days old.

His wins at the 2019 PBA Players Championship, 2022 U.S. Open and 2022 Masters also set the mark for youngest to win two, three and four majors, respectively.

By completing a successful defense of the Masters title on Sunday, he added another record by becoming the youngest to get to five major championships at 26 years and 86 days old.

Simonsen is now just the third player to win the Masters at least three times, tying him with USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Mike Aulby.

Australia's Jason Belmonte holds the all-time record with four Masters titles; Belmonte finished tied for 13th at this year's tournament in Allen Park.

The day and week belonged to Simonsen, however, and, as expected, he was in high spirits when discussing his latest Masters triumph.

"This feels incredible. This is the first event that I've been able to defend and probably the best finish that I've had at a tournament that I've won the previous year," Simonsen said. "Winning a tournament on the PBA Tour is never easy, so doing it back to back is pretty incredible."

Martell did his best to make life anything but easy for Simonsen during the title match, using a pair of early doubles to stay within 10 pins of the defending champ at the halfway point.

Simonsen simply wouldn't let up, however, and when Martell left a 2-4-6-10 split and opened in the seventh frame, it was clear that Simonsen's dominant week would indeed end with another Masters title.

That left Martell, who was making his first TV appearance in a major and was seeking his first PBA Tour title, to settle for second place and \$50,000.

Due to the true double-elimination format of the 2023 Masters, Martell would have had to beat Simonsen twice on Sunday in order to take the title since Simonsen was the only finalist who had yet to lose a match at this year's tournament.

Nevertheless, Simonsen was more than happy to avoid the drama and secure the title after one game.

"It absolutely helped to know that I had that extra game in my pocket if I needed it because it sort of put his back against the wall from the beginning instead of mine," Simonsen said. "Still, I wanted to get it done in one game, and I'm glad that it went that way."

Simonsen has bowled at such an incredible level, that it seems genuinely surprising when things don't go his way.

Even if Simonsen's career were to end tomorrow, he would already have established a resume that would equal or surpass those authored by several of bowling's all-time greats.

Nevertheless, Simonsen isn't concerned about his place in history at this point in time; he's too busy riding the wave.

"Honestly, what I've accomplished or where that ranks in history really hasn't sunk in yet," Simonsen said. "At some point down the road, I'll probably let my mind go there, but for now, as cliché as it sounds, I just try to take one event at a time."

Whatever approach Simonsen has been taking, clearly, it's been working, and there doesn't seem to be any indication that his name will be leaving the top of tournament leaderboards anytime soon.

Before Simonsen took to the lanes, Sunday's semifinal match saw Martell take down No. 3 seed Kyle Sherman of O'Fallon, Missouri, by a final score of 208-187.

Martell got off to a shaky start, starting spare-open to give Sherman the early lead.

Martell quickly recovered, however, throwing a double in the third and fourth frames. Those strikes, coupled with Sherman opens in the fourth and sixth, allowed the telecast's lone left-hander to take his first lead of the match.

He would never trail again, staying locked in on the 1-2 pocket and striking on four of his last seven shots to secure the victory and earn the opportunity to bowl Simonsen for the title.

Sherman, meanwhile, finished in third place and took home \$25,000.

One match earlier, Sherman defeated No. 4 seed Sean Rash of Montgomery, Illinois, the 2011 Masters champion, 258-199, to start Sunday's telecast.

Sherman jumped ahead of Rash quickly, striking on seven of his first eight shots with only a third-frame 10 pin keeping him from making a run at perfection.

Rash hung tough though, using a double in the third and fourth frames and a turkey in the sixth, seventh and eighth to keep Sherman within reach.

That all changed in the ninth frame, however, as Rash's bid for a four-bagger missed inside, leaving a 4-9 split. He was unable to convert, which all but decided the match in favor of Sherman.

For his efforts this week, Rash finished in fourth place and earned \$15,000.

The 2023 Masters started Monday with the first of three qualifying rounds for the 390-player field. After 15 games over three days, the top 64 athletes, based on total pinfall, advanced to match play.

As defending champion, Simonsen was guaranteed no worse than the 64th seed for match play. He improved his seeding through qualifying, however, finishing in 29th place after 15 games on the event's 46-foot oil pattern.

Simonsen only heated up from there, setting a new Masters record by averaging 250.4 during 18 games of match play enroute to a 6-0 record and the top seed for Sunday's TV finals.

USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Norm Duke of Clermont, Florida, held the previous Masters match play average record at 245.6, which he set at the 1993 event in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

All bracket matches leading up to the Elimination Bracket semifinals were three-game total-pinfall contests.

The Elimination Bracket semifinals and finals, which were broadcast live on FS1 Friday night, featured four one-game matches to determine the No. 3 and No. 4 seeds for Sunday's stepladder finals.

Sherman earned the No. 3 seed by defeating Chris Via of Blacklick, Ohio, 10-9 during the second round of a roll off after the two finished their match tied at 194.

Rash secured the No. 4 seed by defeating Patrick Dombrowski of Parma, Ohio, 256-237.

BowlTV.com provided livestream coverage of the 2023 Masters during qualifying and match play.

For more information on the USBC Masters, visit [BOWL.com/Masters](https://BOWL.com/Masters).

**2023 USBC MASTERS**  
**At Thunderbowl Lanes**  
**Allen Park, Michigan**

**Sunday's Results**

**Final standings**

- 1, Anthony Simonsen, Las Vegas, 243 (one game), \$100,000.
- 2, Michael Martell, West Babylon, N.Y., 430 (two games), \$50,000.
- 3, Kyle Sherman, O'Fallon, Mo., 445 (two games), \$25,000.
- 4, Sean Rash, Montgomery, Ill., 199 (one game), \$15,000.

## **Stepladder results**

Match 1 – Sherman def. Rash, 258-199.

Semifinal – Martell def. Sherman, 208-187.

Championship – Simonsen def. Martell, 243-222.

## **WORLD SERIES OF BOWLING XIV PREVIEW**

### **APRIL 6, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The World Series of Bowling began in 2009, ushering in a new era of the PBA.

The event brings bowlers from around the globe together, testing versatility and perseverance to crown a world champion. Along the way, dozens of additional champions have been born.

This year, the WSOB returns to Bowlero Wauwatosa outside of Milwaukee for the second consecutive year. The return of the USA vs. The World event and the PBA World Championship, the fourth major of the season, headline the 14th edition of the WSOB.

With 12 hours of television coverage and countless hours of qualifying covered by BowlTV, the WSOB is jam-packed with action. Here's what you need to know:

### **STORYLINES**

Tommy Jones and Jason Belmonte will travel back in time to commence this year's WSOB.

The captains of the USA and World teams, respectively, will compete in a one-game match at Milwaukee's Holler House on Saturday, April 8. The match will be livestreamed on the PBA's YouTube channel, starting at 5 p.m. ET.

The Holler House is renowned for its tradition, having two wood lanes oiled by spray gun and a pin boy to set the pins.

On paper, Jones has the stronger team with the frontrunners for PBA Player of the Year Anthony Simonsen and EJ Tackett, plus Kyle Troup, in his corner. Belmonte isn't lacking for star power, nor actual power, with Jesper Svensson, Dom Barrett and fellow Aussie Sam Cooley by his side.

Furthermore, the PBA World Championship is the event Jones circles to start every season. Should he claim the major title this month, the former Tournament of Champions and U.S. Open champion would complete the Triple Crown. Jones finished third at the World Championship last season.



François Lavoie, a three-time major champion, faces the same opportunity. The two seek to become the 10th player to achieve the Triple Crown.

“It would be more than I ever thought I would achieve in this sport,” Lavoie said last December.

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

Eyes have to be on Tackett and Simonsen, who have won five of the season’s eight events. The two are liable to fire 300 at any waking moment and have out-averaged their competition by nearly five pins per game on the season.

Kyle Sherman and Keven Williams have to be feeling confident returning to Wauwatosa. The two champions at last year’s WSOB found traction at the USBC Masters and are primed to chase another title.

Sherman, who claimed his second career title at the PBA Cheetah Championship in 2022, made his first-ever major championship round last week. He missed the first three tournaments of the season recovering from an offseason torn labrum surgery, but rounded into form physically and mentally in Detroit.

Williams took home a T-13th place finish last week, falling to Simonsen and Sherman in match play. However, his 226.6 average between qualifying and match play was the third-highest of any competitor, according to Lanetalk.

Williams’ three-strike 10th frame in the 2022 PBA Shark Championship, which secured his first career PBA title, was one of last season’s finest moments.

Of all the international countries represented at the WSOB, Sweden brings the most players. James Blomgren, Pontus Andersson and William Svensson, who led qualifying at last year’s Cheetah Championship, headline the international influx.

Non-full-time PBA players from Venezuela, Denmark, Japan, the Czech Republic, Germany, Canada and Malaysia will also be in action.

Last year's World Series of Bowling had a little bit of everything!

From a first time champion, to a long time duo winning the Roth Holman Doubles, to crowing a first time World Champion!

What does this year's WSOB have in store? [pic.twitter.com/ww3qcmdZsC](https://pic.twitter.com/ww3qcmdZsC)

— PBA Tour (@PBATour) April 5, 2023

#### FORMAT

The beauty of the World Series of Bowling XIV lies in its simplicity.

Players will bowl 20 games on the Cheetah pattern, 20 games on Scorpion and 20 games on Shark. The top five players on each pattern will advance to its respective championship round, airing April 17-19 live on FS1.

The top 12 players with all 60 games combined advance to match play for the PBA World Championship. After 12 games of round-robin match play, the five finalists will be set for the championship round on Sunday, April 23.

The Captains' Match of the USA vs. The World event will determine seeding and lane choice for the televised final rounds. The loser of the match will then set their lineups for the singles competition on April 15, while the winner can strategically build their lineup afterwards.

The four singles matches will be contested live April 15 on FOX. The following day, doubles and baker matches cap off what PBA commissioner Tom Clark calls "the ultimate international team event."

#### WSOB XIV SCHEDULE

All times listed in Eastern.

Friday, April 7

10 a.m. — Pre-Tournament Qualifier Round 1 (five games on Viper)

4 p.m. — Pre-Tournament Qualifier Round 2 (five games on Dragon)

Saturday, April 8

9:30 a.m. — Practice session

1 p.m. — Pro-Am

5 p.m. — USA vs. The World: Captain's Match at Holler House

Sunday, April 9

Noon — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 1 (five games)

7 p.m. — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 2 (five games)

Monday, April 10

Noon — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 3 (five games)

7 p.m. — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 4 (five games)

Tuesday, April 11

Noon — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 1 (five games)

7 p.m. — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 2 (five games)

Wednesday, April 12

Noon — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 3 (five games)

7 p.m. — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 4 (five games)

Thursday, April 13

Noon — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 1 (five games)

7 p.m. — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 2 (five games)

Friday, April 14

Noon — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 3 (five games)

7 p.m. — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 4 (five games)

Saturday, April 15

2:30 p.m. on FOX — USA vs. The World Day 1

Sunday, April 16

Noon on FS1 — USA vs. The World Finals

Monday, April 17

7 p.m. on FS1 — PBA Cheetah Championship Finals

Tuesday, April 18

7 p.m. on FS1 — PBA Scorpion Championship Finals

Wednesday, April 19

7 p.m. on FS1 — PBA Shark Championship Finals

Thursday, April 20

10 a.m. — PBA World Championship Match Play Round 1 (six games)

2:30 p.m. — PBA World Championship Match Play Round 2 (six games)

Sunday, April 23

Noon on FOX — PBA World Championship Finals

## BELMONTE DEFEATS JONES IN USA VS. THE WORLD CAPTAINS' ROUND

APRIL 8, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

The World Series of Bowling XIV got underway at the iconic Holler House near Milwaukee on Saturday afternoon. Jason Belmonte, the Australian star representing the World Team, defeated the United States' Tommy Jones in the Captains' Round.

Tom Haefke, one of the owners of Holler House, hand-oiled the lanes. The lane conditions are among the traditions that Holler House seeks to preserve; the ball return and pinsetter were operated by hand as well.

"It's an incredible place to be, because of how old it is and all of the little nuances that you don't get anywhere else in the world," Belmonte said. "It feels underground. It feels like you're in a cage match where no one's supposed to know what's going on."

Belmonte struck in five of his first six frames, which powered him to a 231-185 victory. Jones couldn't keep up with Belmonte, but was content with his score on the unique lane conditions.

"If you would've told me that I was going to shoot 185, I would have taken it," Jones said. "I would sit right there and let him bowl. But he's the best in the world for a reason."

The match determined lane choice and lineup selection order for the televised rounds of the USA vs. The World event.

Earlier in the season, Jones selected Anthony Simonsen to join the U.S. team as his captain's selection; Belmonte chose Sweden's Jesper Svensson.

EJ Tackett and Kyle Troup later joined the U.S. team as the two highest Americans in points following the PBA Tournament of Champions, while England's Dom Barrett and Australia's Sam Cooley were the highest international players in points.

Jones selected himself to start the first day of televised competition, airing next Saturday, April 15 at 2:30 p.m. ET on FOX.

"I like to play a little straighter than those guys, so I felt like we'd be able to follow the transition a bit better," Jones said.

When The World team met to discuss strategy, Cooley told Belmonte: "I want Tommy." Cooley said he grew up watching and trying to emulate Jones' game.

Jones elected to Kyle Troup bowl second and Belmonte paired him with Svensson, Troup's Tour roommate, who boasts a strong track record against Troup.

“My game has been decent (this season), obviously not the best but normally it doesn’t take my best to beat Kyle,” Svensson said.

Jones saved his best for last, calling Simonsen and Tackett the two hottest bowlers on Tour. He chose to have Simonsen bowl third and Tackett close.

Belmonte decided he would face Simonsen and Barrett would take on Tackett, setting up a pair of rematches from earlier telecasts this season. Belmonte defeated Simonsen in the Tournament of Champions semifinal, while Tackett beat Barrett in the PBA Shawnee Classic title match.

“I have a strong record against both, but ultimately I think Anthony probably would rather not play me and we wanted to make him feel uncomfortable,” Belmonte said.

The WSOB XIV kicks into high gear on Sunday with the start of PBA Cheetah Championship qualifying. Players will bowl five games at noon ET and another five-game round at 7 p.m. ET. All qualifying rounds will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

#### USA VS. THE WORLD SINGLES MATCHES

Match One: Tommy Jones vs. Sam Cooley

Match Two: Kyle Troup vs. Jesper Svensson

Match Three: Anthony Simonsen vs. Jason Belmonte

Match Four: EJ Tackett vs. Dom Barrett

#### WSOB XIV SCHEDULE

All times listed in Eastern.

Sunday, April 9

Noon — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 1 (five games)

7 p.m. — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 2 (five games)

Monday, April 10

Noon — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 3 (five games)

7 p.m. — Cheetah Championship Qualifying Round 4 (five games)

Tuesday, April 11

Noon — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 1 (five games)

7 p.m. — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 2 (five games)

Wednesday, April 12

Noon — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 3 (five games)

7 p.m. — Scorpion Championship Qualifying Round 4 (five games)

Thursday, April 13

Noon — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 1 (five games)

7 p.m. — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 2 (five games)

Friday, April 14

Noon — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 3 (five games)

7 p.m. — Shark Championship Qualifying Round 4 (five games)

Saturday, April 15

2:30 p.m. on FOX — USA vs. The World Day 1

Sunday, April 16

Noon on FS1 — USA vs. The World Finals

Monday, April 17

7 p.m. on FS1 — PBA Cheetah Championship Finals

Tuesday, April 18

7 p.m. on FS1 — PBA Scorpion Championship Finals

Wednesday, April 19

7 p.m. on FS1 — PBA Shark Championship Finals

Thursday, April 20

10 a.m. — PBA World Championship Match Play Round 1 (six games)

2:30 p.m. — PBA World Championship Match Play Round 2 (six games)

Sunday, April 23

Noon on FOX — PBA World Championship Finals

## **GRONDIN, MALDONADO OFF TO HOT STARTS AT PBA CHEETAH CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **APRIL 10, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The individual portion of the World Series of Bowling XIV commenced on Easter Sunday. Through two rounds of PBA Cheetah Championship qualifying, Joseph Grondin leads the field at Bowlero Wauwatosa.

Grondin, who made his championship round debut at the PBA Shawnee Classic earlier this season, leads the field with a 10-game total pinfall of 2,415 (+415). He averaged over 241 across two five-game rounds on the 35-foot pattern. He threw a combination of urethane and reactive equipment.

“The thing that best matched up for me was really just revving it into the floor early,” Grondin said. “I’m feeling pretty neutral. There’s really nothing else to say other than I need to continue to make one shot at a time.”

Santtu Tahvanainen, Shawn Maldonado, Packy Hanrahan and Pontus Andersson round out the top five. AJ Johnson, aided by a 300 in Game 9, sits in sixth place.

Maldonado led the first round of qualifying, averaging over 251. He opened the second round with 300, but his scoring pace slowed down as the pattern transitioned.

“The fresh has been pretty good to me,” Maldonado said. “Between moving pairs in this building and transition, it can get tough. The first block, I was able to figure it out. The second was a little more tricky for me. Maybe one of the new balls will match up a little bit better (because) I’m just not setting the shape right now.”

Players said the high-scoring Cheetah pattern has traditionally put them in prime position for the World Championship — which combines scores from the Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark qualifying rounds — but Maldonado is focused on one frame at a time.

“Man, I’m not even looking ahead,” Maldonado said. “There’s so many games left, to look ahead is going to mentally drain me out. We’ve got 40 more games — shoot, we’ve got 50 more games!”

The third round of Cheetah Championship qualifying begins at noon ET on Monday, April 10. The top five players after Rounds 3-4 (20 games) will advance to the championship round, airing live Monday, April 17 on FS1.

#### **ROUND 2 LEADERS**

1. Joseph Grondin, 2,415 (+415)
2. Santtu Tahvanainen, 2,408 (+408)
3. Shawn Maldonado, 2,400 (+400)
4. Packy Hanrahan, 2,396 (+396)
5. Pontus Andersson, 2,370 (+370)
6. AJ Johnson, 2,365 (+365)
7. BJ Moore, 2,357 (+357)
8. Kevin McCune, 2,348 (+348)
9. Darren Tang, 2,345 (+345)
10. Matt Kuba, 2,337 (+337)

Full standings are available [here](#).

#### **AJ JOHNSON SNAGS FINAL SPOT, BJ MOORE EARNS TOP SEED AT PBA CHEETAH CHAMPIONSHIP**

##### **APRIL 11, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The first five finalists at the Guaranteed Rate PBA World Series of Bowling XIV needed more than 20 games to separate themselves, as qualifying at the PBA Cheetah Championship went into overtime at Bowlero Wauwatosa.

BJ Moore, EJ Tackett, Joseph Grondin and Jakob Butturff clinched berths in the finals, but a roll-off was needed to determine the fifth finalist.

After Sweden's James Blomgren fired 269 in his final game, AJ Johnson needed all three strikes in the 10th frame to match Blomgren's 4,638 total.

In the roll-off, Johnson left a pair of weak 10-pins in the seventh and ninth frames, which gave Blomgren, working on a potential 290 game, the lead entering his final frames. However, Blomgren left a high pocket 6-8 split and a weak 7-pin in his ninth and 10th frames, giving Johnson an opportunity to win the roll-off with a double and eight pins.

Once again, Johnson delivered.

"I just kept telling myself to execute and keep throwing better shots because you never know what will happen," Johnson said. "That second one that I needed was pretty dang good."



The 30-year-old, still seeking his first career PBA Tour title, will have an opportunity to end that clause for good. The championship round will take place Monday, April 17 at 7 p.m. ET live on FS1.

Moore earned the top seed, achieving a 4,734 (+734) total pinfall for his 20 games. The part-time player has only competed in four events this season before the WSOB, but he said he remains in competitive shape.

"I've always thought it's more of mind over matter," Moore said. "You bowl so many games and you can practice so many shots that your body naturally has its own muscle memory. I feel like as long as you are remotely in time, then you can make yourself get to a point where you just have to be comfortable. You just have to see that right shape and then once you see the right shape, your body takes over."

Moore won his first PBA Tour title at the 2019 PBA Wilmington Open, but seeks to win his first televised event in Milwaukee. The Pennsylvania product averaged more than 236 to eclipse Tackett.

Tackett, making his sixth championship round appearance of the season, described his final five-game round as the quintessential roller coaster: "That was the craziest five games I've ever bowled in my life."

Grondin, who earned the No. 3 seed, will make his second championship round appearance of the season and of his career. This will mark his PBA Tour television debut.

Butturff sat in 76th place after Round 2 at +160, more than 210 pins behind fifth. He averaged north of 250 for the final 10 games of qualifying, which included a 300 game, to advance to the championship round.

"The first 10 games, I got frustrated and I kind of talked myself out. I let every single bad break get in my head," Butturff said. "Today, I went in with a strategy: Just go up and throw the shot. If you leave a split, if you leave a spare, just shoot the shot, and then come back and treat it like a new frame."

"I didn't have to shoot too many second second balls today."

The WSOB XIV continues on Tuesday with PBA Scorpion Championship qualifying, beginning at noon ET on BowITV.

Combined scores from the Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships make up the World Championship qualifying.

"We're only through 20 games out of 60," Tackett said. "I think that really helped me with my mental state, that we still have 40 more games to bowl. The ultimate goal is the World Championship, obviously making the show here is a great added bonus and a great start to the week."

More information is available on the [PBA Cheetah Championship](#) and [WSOB XIV](#).

## **TACKETT, SIMONSEN LEAD AT PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP**

**APRIL 12, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

As the Guaranteed Rate World Series of Bowling XIV rolled onto PBA Scorpion Championship qualifying, the two leading candidates for PBA Player of the Year rose to the top.

At Bowlero Wauwatosa outside of Milwaukee, EJ Tackett and Anthony Simonsen occupy the top two positions through 10 games on the 42-foot Scorpion pattern. Tackett leads with a total pinfall of 2,274 (+274), eclipsing Simonsen by nine pins.

Fittingly at the WSOB, England's Stu Williams, Sweden's Jesper Svensson and Finland's Santtu Tahvanainen round out the top five, each averaging over 225.

PBA World Championship qualifying consists of scores from the PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships. After all 60 games of qualifying, the top 12 players will advance to a round-robin match play round.

Through 30 games, Tackett (+993) leads BJ Moore by 100 pins for the pole position. Nathan Bohr (+738) sits in 12th place through six rounds.

Competition resumes Wednesday at noon ET. The finalists of the PBA Scorpion Championship will be determined following the third and fourth rounds of qualifying on Wednesday.

PBA Shark Championship qualifying begins on Thursday.

#### **PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 2 LEADERS**

1. EJ Tackett, 2,274 (+274)
2. Anthony Simonsen, 2,265 (+265)
3. Stu Williams, 2,258 (+258)
4. Jesper Svensson, 2,257 (+257)
5. Santtu Tahvanainen, 2,252 (+252)
6. Matt Russo, 2,250 (+250)
7. Marshall Kent, 2,244 (+244)
8. Bill O'Neill, 2,239 (+239)
9. Shawn Maldonado, 2,233 (+233)
10. Brian Robinson, 2,229 (+229)

Full PBA Scorpion Championship standings are available [here](#).

#### **PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 6 LEADERS**

1. EJ Tackett, 6,993 (+993)
2. BJ Moore, 6,893 (+893)
3. Anthony Simonsen, 6,888 (+888)
4. Santtu Tahvanainen, 6,863 (+863)

5. Jakob Butturff, 6,482 (+842)
6. Jesper Svensson, 6,816 (+816)
7. James Blomgren, 6,816 (+816)
8. Bill O'Neill, 6,782 (+782)
9. Shawn Maldonado, 6,748 (+748)
10. Chris Via , 6,747 (+747)
11. Jake Peters, 6,746 (+746)
12. Nathan Bohr, 6,738 (+738)

Full PBA World Championship standings are available [here](#).

## **BUTTURFF, TACKETT MAKE CONSECUTIVE SHOWS AT PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP**

**APRIL 13, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The five finalists at the PBA Scorpion Championship, the second of four PBA Tour title events at the Guaranteed Rate PBA World Series of Bowling XIV, include four future Hall of Famers and the reigning Harry Golden PBA Rookie of the Year.

Jakob Butturff surpassed EJ Tackett in the final of 20 games of qualifying at Bowlero Wauwatosa to earn the No. 1 seed. Santtu Tahvanainen, Anthony Simonsen and Jesper Svensson will join them in the championship round on Tuesday, April 18 at 7 p.m. ET on FS1.

Butturff, who along with Tackett also advanced to the finals at the [PBA Cheetah Championship](#) on Tuesday, made a similar climb up the leaderboard during Scorpion qualifying.

"With two days of two five-game blocks, the first day for me is (about) seeing the picture," Butturff said. "I saw the picture going into today, trying to adjust with my speed more consistently. I feel like I was a little bit off tempo with that yesterday, but I was a little bit more consistent with my ball speed and I think that was what paid off for me today."

Tackett has now reached seven of 10 championship rounds this season, finishing no lower than third in any of those appearances. The only championship round of 2023 that has not featured Butturff or Tackett came last week at the USBC Masters.

At every tournament predominantly featuring a medium-length pattern this season, Tackett has reached the finals.

"I think over my career, I've really excelled on the 40-ish foot patterns," Tackett said. "I don't know what it is about my game, how I bowl and how I see the lane but I tend to match up on those patterns quite often. This year has been no exception."

With three wins already under his belt, Tackett's confidence is nearing an all-time high.

"My confidence is probably one of the highest it's ever been in my career," Tackett said. "I've never really lost confidence in myself, even through the years where I hadn't won or not won as much, but it is definitely very high up there right now."

Tahvanainen, the 26-year-old from Finland, has bowled for a PBA title and has bowled on TV — but never at the same time. He made his PBA debut in Wauwatosa last season, unsure of whether or not he could compete at the game's highest level.

"I feel like my confidence has been building up all the time during the season because, well, I've done well," Tahvanainen said. "I have proved, especially for myself, that I can do it. My aim since the first day (of this week) was to make the World Championship cut and maybe the show."

"After the PBA League, I realized that I love being on TV. Especially on this pattern, I feel like I have a possibility (to win) if I just execute well, so I'm really looking forward to that."

After Chris Via and Matt Russo struggled in their ultimate game, shooting 174 and 166 respectively, Simonsen and Svensson seized the opportunity.

Because transition made the 42-foot Scorpion pattern challenging on certain pairs, Simonsen opted to throw his plastic ball straight at the pocket the last game. He said realized plastic could be an option when he threw it and struck on the fill ball of the final game of Round 1.

Needing at least 201 to usurp Via and Russo, Simonsen delivered a 236.

"To me, the track just hooks a whole lot, even on the fresh," Simonsen said. "I feel like if I could just kind of throw it at the head pin, it's going down there pretty firm so it's got a chance to at least catch a double. I was fortunate enough to get a couple of doubles and get extra bonus pins for the World Championship and get into the show for the Scorpion pattern."

Svensson thought he would need to shoot over 250, but realized midway through the game he would make the show with anything over 223. That meant he needed to strike in the eighth through 11th frames.

"At that point, I just tried to dig deep and throw good shots," Svensson said. "You're tired, you're in here all day pretty much and it was a pretty long block of bowling. You just try to find that last energy you've got and make a quality shot."

This marks Svensson's first championship round appearance of the season and first since the PBA Playoffs in 2022.

"I didn't really have the show in mind coming into this pattern because I didn't feel very comfortable," he said. "I've been feeling pretty good all season, made a couple of match plays and a few cuts here and there but I haven't really been able to get it done. It feels good to actually be able to keep it together here."

In the PBA World Championship standings — a compilation of qualifying scores from the PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and upcoming Shark Championships — Butturff and Tackett are tied for the lead through 40 games.

Tahvanainen, Simonsen and Svensson all sit within the top six. Via is in fifth place, while PBA Cheetah Championship top seed BJ Moore sits ninth.

Matt Kuba holds the 12th position at +880, but eight players sit less than 100 pins behind him, including Bill O'Neill, Jason Belmonte and AJ Johnson.

Qualifying for the PBA Shark Championship begins Thursday at noon ET. After 20 games on the 48-foot Shark pattern, the five finalists for the PBA Shark Championship and 12 match play finalists at the PBA World Championship will be determined.

More information is available on the [PBA Scorpion Championship](#) and [WSOB XIV](#).

#### **PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP LEADERS**

1. Jakob Butturff, 4,663 (+663)
2. EJ Tackett, 4,623 (+623)
3. Santtu Tahvanainen, 4,594 (+594)
4. Anthony Simonsen, 4,484 (+484)
5. Jesper Svensson, 4,458 (+458)
6. Chris Via, 4,448 (+448)
7. Matt Russo, 4,446 (+446)
8. Stu Williams, 4,421 (+421)
9. Graham Fach, 4,396 (+396)
10. Nathan Bohr, 4,369 (+369)

Full PBA Scorpion Championship standings are available [here](#).

#### **PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP LEADERS**

*Cumulative scores from PBA Cheetah and Scorpion Championships*

1. Jakob Butturff, 9,342 (+1,342)
2. EJ Tackett, 9,342 (+1,342)
3. Santtu Tahvanainen, 9,205 (+1,205)
4. Anthony Simonsen, 9,107 (+1,107)
5. Chris Via, 9,025 (+1,025)
6. Jesper Svensson, 9,017 (+1,017)
7. Nathan Bohr, 8,965 (+965)
8. James Blomgren, 8,955 (+955)

9. BJ Moore, 8,948 (+948)
10. Packy Hanrahan, 8,900 (+900)
11. Jake Peters, 8,886 (+886)
12. Matt Kuba, 8,880 (+880)

## **PACKY HANRAHAN, MATT OGLE SHARE LEAD AT PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP**

APRIL 14, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Fifty games of qualifying are in the books at the Guaranteed Rate PBA World Series of Bowling XIV. Just 10 games remain at Bowlero Wauwatosa outside of Milwaukee.

On Thursday, players began qualifying for the PBA Shark Championship. Through 10 games, Packy Hanrahan and Matt Ogle share the lead with a total pinfall of 2,307 (+307).

Jason Belmonte and Anthony Simonsen sit in third and fourth place, respectively, while Dom Barrett and Shawn Maldonado are tied for fifth at +240.

Hanrahan made a massive surge up the standings during the evening round. The two-handed southpaw shot 1,242, averaging over 248 for those five games.

"The second block, I just tried to keep it simple," Hanrahan said. "If I saw a hook, move right; if I didn't see hook, move left. I managed my speed, (throwing it slower) to get it to pick up earlier, and throwing a little harder to get it to go a little further downlane."

After Friday's final 10 games of qualifying, the top five players will advance to the PBA Shark Championship finals to be held Wednesday, April 20 at 7 p.m. ET on FS1.

Additionally, the top 12 players in the PBA World Championship standings — which combines qualifying scores from the PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships — will advance to match play, taking place Thursday, April 20.

Hanrahan, who finished seventh in the PBA Cheetah Championship at +624 and 29th at the PBA Scorpion Championship at +276, climbed into fifth in the PBA World Championship standings. In an attempt to make both remaining cuts, Hanrahan said he needs to execute the same gameplan as he has all week.

"I can't worry about the score," Hanrahan said. "Scores either come or they don't. I've just got to have fun and make as many good shots as possible. When the scoreboard is all finished, if I'm up there, I'm up there and if I'm not, I did all I could."

Jakob Butturff, who reached the championship round at the PBA Cheetah and Scorpion Championships, maintained his lead in the PBA World Championship. Finland's Santtu Tahvanainen moved into second place, while Anthony Simonsen, EJ Tackett and Hanrahan round out the top five.

Belmonte, Bill O'Neill and moved Maldonado into the top 12 during Thursday's competition. Jesper Svensson is in 12th place at +954, though a dozen players are within 100 pins of the Swedish star. Stu Williams, Marshall Kent and Kyle Troup are less than 30 pins behind Svensson.

Players resume competition at noon ET on Friday at Bowlero Wauwatosa.

Tickets for all six televised rounds at the WSOB XIV are available [here](#).

#### PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 2 LEADERS

Packy Hanrahan, 2,307 (+307)

Matt Ogle, 2,307 (+307)

Jason Belmonte, 2,275 (+275)

Anthony Simonsen, 2,253 (+253)

Dom Barrett, 2,240 (+240)

Shawn Maldonado, 2,240 (+240)

Richie Teece, 2,231 (+231)

Bill O'Neill, 2,223 (+223)

Pete Vergos, 2,205 (+205)

Kevin McCune, 2,200 (+200)

Pontus Andersson, 2,200 (+200)

Full PBA Shark Championship standings are available [here](#).

#### PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 10 LEADERS

Jakob Butturff, 11,432 (+1,432)

Santtu Tahvanainen, 11,389 (+1,389)

Anthony Simonsen, 11,360 (+1,360)

EJ Tackett, 11,309 (+1,309)

Packy Hanrahan, 11,207 (+1,207)

Chris Via, 11,167 (+1,167)

Bill O'Neill, 11,098 (+1,098)

Jason Belmonte, 11,095 (+1,095)

Shawn Maldonado, 11,086 (+1,086)

Nathan Bohr, 11,027 (+1,027)

BJ Moore, 10,997 (+997)

Jesper Svensson, 10,954 (+954)

Full PBA World Championship standings are available [here](#).

## **PACKY HANRAHAN, MATT OGLE SHARE LEAD AT PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP**

**APRIL 14, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Fifty games of qualifying are in the books at the Guaranteed Rate PBA World Series of Bowling XIV. Just 10 games remain at Bowlero Wauwatosa outside of Milwaukee.

On Thursday, players began qualifying for the PBA Shark Championship. Through 10 games, Packy Hanrahan and Matt Ogle share the lead with a total pinfall of 2,307 (+307).

Jason Belmonte and Anthony Simonsen sit in third and fourth place, respectively, while Dom Barrett and Shawn Maldonado are tied for fifth at +240.

Hanrahan made a massive surge up the standings during the evening round. The two-handed southpaw shot 1,242, averaging over 248 for those five games.

"The second block, I just tried to keep it simple," Hanrahan said. "If I saw a hook, move right; if I didn't see hook, move left. I managed my speed, (throwing it slower) to get it to pick up earlier, and throwing a little harder to get it to go a little further downlane."

After Friday's final 10 games of qualifying, the top five players will advance to the PBA Shark Championship finals to be held Wednesday, April 20 at 7 p.m. ET on FS1.

Additionally, the top 12 players in the PBA World Championship standings — which combines qualifying scores from the PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships — will advance to match play, taking place Thursday, April 20.

Hanrahan, who finished seventh in the PBA Cheetah Championship at +624 and 29th at the PBA Scorpion Championship at +276, climbed into fifth in the PBA World Championship standings. In an attempt to make both remaining cuts, Hanrahan said he needs to execute the same gameplan as he has all week.



"I can't worry about the score," Hanrahan said. "Scores either come or they don't. I've just got to have fun and make as many good shots as possible. When the scoreboard is all finished, if I'm up there, I'm up there and if I'm not, I did all I could."

Jakob Butturff, who reached the championship round at the PBA Cheetah and Scorpion Championships, maintained his lead in the PBA World Championship. Finland's Santtu Tahvanainen moved into second place, while Anthony Simonsen, EJ Tackett and Hanrahan round out the top five.

Belmonte, Bill O'Neill and moved Maldonado into the top 12 during Thursday's competition. Jesper Svensson is in 12th place at +954, though a dozen players are within 100 pins of the Swedish star. Stu Williams, Marshall Kent and Kyle Troup are less than 30 pins behind Svensson.

Players resume competition at noon ET on Friday at Bowlero Wauwatosa.

Tickets for all six televised rounds at the WSOB XIV are available [here](#).

#### PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 2 LEADERS

Packy Hanrahan, 2,307 (+307)

Matt Ogle, 2,307 (+307)

Jason Belmonte, 2,275 (+275)

Anthony Simonsen, 2,253 (+253)

Dom Barrett, 2,240 (+240)

Shawn Maldonado, 2,240 (+240)

Richie Teece, 2,231 (+231)

Bill O'Neill, 2,223 (+223)

Pete Vergos, 2,205 (+205)

Kevin McCune, 2,200 (+200)

Pontus Andersson, 2,200 (+200)

Full PBA Shark Championship standings are available [here](#).

#### PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 10 LEADERS

Jakob Butturff, 11,432 (+1,432)

Santtu Tahvanainen, 11,389 (+1,389)

Anthony Simonsen, 11,360 (+1,360)

EJ Tackett, 11,309 (+1,309)

Packy Hanrahan, 11,207 (+1,207)

Chris Via, 11,167 (+1,167)

Bill O'Neill, 11,098 (+1,098)

Jason Belmonte, 11,095 (+1,095)

Shawn Maldonado, 11,086 (+1,086)

Nathan Bohr, 11,027 (+1,027)

BJ Moore, 10,997 (+997)

Jesper Svensson, 10,954 (+954)

## **OGLE EARNS TOP SEED AT PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP, SIMONSEN AND TAHVANAINEN MAKE SECOND STRAIGHT SHOW**

APRIL 14, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Matt Ogle shot 300 in the opening game of PBA Shark Championship qualifying and parlayed his perfect start into the No. 1 seed.

Ogle will be joined by Packy Hanrahan, Anthony Simonsen, Santtu Tahvanainen and Sam Cooley in the PBA Shark Championship finals on Wednesday, April 19 at 7 p.m. ET on FS1.

The top 12 players across the PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships advanced to match play for the PBA World Championship, which will take place Thursday, April 20.

Jakob Butturff edged EJ Tackett by six pins for the top spot, followed by Tahvanainen, Simonsen, Hanrahan, Chris Via, Bill O'Neill, Ogle, Marshall Kent, Nathan Bohr, Jesper Svensson and Jason Belmonte.

The PBA World Championship is the fourth major of the 2023 season and will close out the Guaranteed Rate World Series of Bowling XIV on Sunday, April 23 at noon ET on FOX.

Ogle averaged nearly 232 for his 20 games at Bowlero Wauwatosa, totaling 4,639 (+639). He said the first 40 games of the WSOB helped sharpen his game and joked that as his body wore down, it made it easier to throw the ball slowly.

This marks Ogle's third championship round in the last six events and he entered the WSOB fourth in points on Tour, behind only Simonsen, Tackett and Belmonte.

"I feel like I've arrived," Ogle said. "Dominating the Shark pattern against the greatest players in the world means something. And then to be eighth in the World Championship as well definitely gives me confidence going into the show."

While Ogle slowly separated himself from Hanrahan, the two-handed southpaw put some distance between the rest of the field as well. Hanrahan eclipsed Simonsen by 100 pins and Jakob Butturff, the next-highest lefty, by nearly 200.

"I think being the only lefty on the show is really going to be the key for me, trying to set (the lanes) up and make them as nice as possible for myself," Hanrahan said.

Maintaining perspective was pivotal for Hanrahan throughout the tournament. He said reminding himself how cool it is to bowl for a living helped to keep focused.

"The only reason I make a bad shot is either lack of focus or not believing in what I'm trying to accomplish," Hanrahan said. "When I'm trying to throw a certain ball on a certain line, if I think it's gonna strike and I stay focused, I'm not gonna make a bad shot. It's just a matter of believing and focusing on top of it."

Simonsen, the No. 3 seed, earned his second consecutive championship round appearance and seventh of the season. With his eighth place finish at the PBA Cheetah Championship, he has finished inside the top 10 in all 11 events this season.

Similar to how he won the PBA Wichita Classic, Simonsen threw a urethane ball the opening game of Round 4 on the 48-foot Shark pattern. He shot 278 to climb from 11th place into fourth, then fired 258 and 246 his final two games to move into third.

"It was an adventure to say the least today," Simonsen said. "A lot of up and down games, a lot of not really understanding what I was supposed to do. They felt drastically different today than they were yesterday."

Tahvanainen, the reigning PBA Rookie of the Year, also earned back-to-back championship round appearances.

The 26-year-old from Finland has excelled on the Scorpion and Shark patterns as players were forced farther left. He said he learned how to be better playing farther left last season on Tour.

"I always like to hook the ball," Tahvanainen said. "It's definitely my strength to be more left than anyone else because then I can see a clear picture on the ball. So it's not hooking too early, it's hooking on a spot I want the ball to."

With two games left in the PBA Shark Championship, Tahvanainen sat in 10th place. He said he saw Chris Via, who was bowling on his pair, shoot 279 earlier in the day by lofting the ball while maintaining higher ball speed.

Tahvanainen tried that himself during the final round, and that adjustment helped him shoot 290 in Game 19 and leap into the top five.

Cooley saved his surge into the top five for the final game.

Knowing he needed a strong finish, Cooley started with the front-six. He said he heard a few whispers that his magic number was around 232, which he said may have caused a little complacency. But Cooley stayed clean and fired 247 to sneak past his World teammate, Dom Barrett.

Cooley said part of his motivation this season is to bowl his way back into the PBA League after not being selected last season.

"After bowling pretty well in 2021 and that not being any kind of factor going into the 2022 draft, it was very frustrating," he said. "That gave me a lot of fire and, funny enough, after saying that I started bowling a lot better."

Cooley returns to the lanes with Barrett on Saturday afternoon for the first day of the televised USA vs. The World event. Saturday's competition will feature singles matches between the American and international stars.

Cooley will face Tommy Jones, the U.S. captain, in the opening match at 2:30 p.m. ET on FOX. The subsequent matches will be Kyle Troup vs. Jesper Svensson, Simonsen vs. Jason Belmonte and EJ Tackett vs. Barrett.

#### PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP LEADERS

Matt Ogle, 4,639 (+639)

Packy Hanrahan, 4,559 (+559)

Anthony Simonsen, 4,459 (+459)

Sanntu Tahvanainen, 4,440 (+440)

Sam Cooley, 4,416 (+416)

Dom Barrett, 4,404 (+404)

Marshall Kent, 4,400 (+400)

Jakob Butturff, 4,365 (+365)

EJ Tackett, 4,359 (+359)

Kyle Troup, 4,359 (+359)

Full PBA Shark Championship standings are available [here](#).

#### PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP LEADERS

Cumulative scores from PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships

Jakob Butturff, 13,707 (+1,707)

EJ Tackett, 13,701 (+1,701)

Sanntu Tahvanainen, 13,645 (+1,645)

Anthony Simonsen, 13,566 (+1,566)

Packy Hanrahan, 13,459 (+1,459)

Chris Via, 13,277 (+1,277)

Bill O'Neill, 13,221 (+1,221)

Matt Ogle, 13,211 (+1,211)

Marshall Kent, 13,203 (+1,203)

Nathan Bohr, 13,145 (+1,145)

Jesper Svensson, 13,137 (+1,137)

Jason Belmonte, 13,135 (+1,135)

## **WORLD TEAM SWEEPS FIRST DAY OF USA VS. THE WORLD**

**APRIL 15, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The first day of the USA vs. The World belonged to the international stars. The event returned to the Guaranteed Rate World Series of Bowling XIV for the first time since 2019.

Jason Belmonte's squad, featuring Sam Cooley, Jesper Svensson and Dom Barrett, swept the Americans at Bowlero Wauwatosa outside of Milwaukee. The World team won all four singles matches and racked up the higher total pinfall to take a commanding 5-0 lead heading into Sunday's championship round.

Facing Anthony Simonsen, EJ Tackett, Kyle Troup and U.S. captain Tommy Jones, Belmonte felt his collection of international talents were the underdogs before the match. Even after Saturday's stellar performance, the Australian doubled down.

"I still feel we're the underdogs," Belmonte said. "Whilst we did have a great day today, on paper, look at the team we're playing against. They're absolute superstars. What we saw today is no reflection on how they can compete on TV."

Jones said losing last week's Captains' Round at the Holler House, which awarded lane choice for every match to the World team, put the U.S. behind the eight-ball. He said the right lane played differently than the left and solving that difference will be key to their comeback efforts tomorrow.

"There's no remote to change what happened today," Jones said. "We just have to dig in and get the U.S. chants going. We'll do our job."

Competing on the 44-foot Salvino pattern, Cooley defeated Jones in the opening match of the afternoon. Before any matchups were set, Cooley told Belmonte he wanted to face Jones. The one-handed Australian, who also advanced to the PBA Shark Championship finals at the WSOB, proved himself to be right.

Cooley led from the opening frame, but he left a 2-4-10 split in the ninth frame to open the door for Jones. The U.S. captain needed all three strikes in the 10th frame to steal the point, but left a super bucket on the first shot.

In the second match, Tour roommates and close friends Troup and Svensson became opponents for the first time on TV. Despite enough raw power to fuel a sports car, the two-handed battle sputtered into a in a spare shooting contest.

Through nine frames, the two spared a combined 11 single pins. Svensson's hambone sandwiched between his five single-pin spares proved to be the difference.

The strikes came in bunches during the third match between Belmonte and Simonsen. In the 15th televised matchup of their career, Belmonte improved his head-to-head record to 10-5 with a 255-244 victory.

The two-handed titans showcased their versatility, as Simonsen's ball crossed the arrows nearly 10 boards farther left than Belmonte's. Simonsen started with a hambone to take the early lead, but Belmonte kept pace.

Simonsen needed a double in the 10th frame to usurp Belmonte, but a 3-6-10 leave handed the World team a 3-0 lead.

The final match represented a rematch of the PBA Shawnee Classic title match. Tackett took home the trophy in February, but Barrett got his revenge on Saturday. The back-and-forth match all but ended after Tackett's Greek Church leave in the ninth frame.

Though the World holds a five-point advantage, Belmonte said the competition is far from over.

"There's still going to be pressure, we haven't won the championship just yet," Belmonte said after the match. "It definitely allows us to feel a little more free on the lanes. I'm really proud of the boys. They stepped up each and every game, especially when it was getting a little bit tight. We managed to throw some pretty clutch strikes at the end."

The champion of the Hall of Fame Cup will be determined Sunday at noon ET on FOX. The U.S. can still take home the Hall of Fame Cup as doubles and Baker matches await.

#### MATCH SCORES

Sam Cooley def. Tommy Jones, 214-200

Jesper Svensson def. Kyle Troup, 220-210

Jason Belmonte def. Anthony Simonsen, 255-244

Dom Barrett def. EJ Tackett, 239-202

World def. USA, 928-856

## **WORLD DOMINATION IN RETURN OF USA VS. THE WORLD EVENT**

**APRIL 16, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

After a three-year hiatus, the USA vs. The World event returned to the Guaranteed Rate World Series of Bowling XIV at Bowlero Wauwatosa outside of Milwaukee.

The World's Jason Belmonte, Jesper Svensson, Sam Cooley and Dom Barrett dominated the two-day match to seize the title on the Americans' home soil.

After sweeping Saturday's singles matches to take a 5-0 lead, Belmonte and Svensson prevailed in a baker doubles match against Anthony Simonsen and EJ Tackett. While Belmonte had a pair of open frames, Svensson struck on all seven of his attempts to clinch the match against the PBA's top two players of the 2023 season.

"The three of these boys performed really well," Belmonte said. "I definitely underperformed, but that's one of the things that you can afford to do in a team environment. If one of the boys at any stage throughout the day isn't performing great, you can rally behind that person and lift them up. That's exactly what these guys did for me today."

U.S. captain Tommy Jones and Kyle Troup, with their backs against the wall, defeated Cooley and Barrett in the alternate-shot doubles match. The American duo doubled in the 10th frame to stave off elimination.

The U.S. needed to win the team baker match, which featured a Race To Two format, to force a roll-off. In Game 1, the teams were tied through eight frames.

Belmonte's strike followed by Simonsen's 2-pin conversion in the ninth frame gave the World the advantage. Though Tackett threw a double in the 10th, Svensson's strike clinched the game.

In the second game, Belmonte missed a 3-6-10 spare in the fifth frame, reducing the World's lead to just two pins at the halfway point.

"As soon as I missed it, we made a comment as a group that no matter how the beginning of the game went, whoever threw the best shots down the stretch was going to win," Belmonte said. "We knew with one good shot each, the game was over."

The World came out of the break firing on all cylinders. Svensson and Cooley struck, then Barrett converted a 4-pin. Meanwhile, the Americans opened twice: Tackett chopped a 6-10 and Jones failed to convert a 4-7-10 split.

Belmonte's strike in the ninth frame ostensibly sealed the win, then Svensson packed home yet another strike for good measure.

"The young guys and girls that bowl and come out on Tour, they're not scared of winning or mixing up with us," Barrett said. "They throw it so good and they bowl so well, and that really does go around the whole world now. It's fantastic to see and I'm very proud to represent them."

For two members of the World team, the victory had a more personal touch. Svensson continued his unassailable dominance over Troup, his Tour roommate and close friend.

"It's really nothing new that I have bragging rights," Svensson said. "I have that 52 weeks a year. He hasn't ever beat me."

When the World team discussed their lineup strategy, Cooley said he wanted to bowl someone he looked up to. That person was Jones, who Cooley defeated in Saturday's singles match and in today's doubles and baker matches.

"To share that moment with someone who essentially is the reason I'm sitting here, it's a very surreal feeling," Cooley said. "Not many people in any kind of sport can say that they've managed to beat someone they've looked up to their entire life."

Two moments before the event proved pivotal to the World team's victory: Belmonte's selection of Svensson and his Captains' Round win at the Holler House.

"When it's TV time, I want someone on the left side of the lane on my team," Belmonte said. "There's only one guy that I want on that team, and that's always gonna be this kid. He could have been sitting last in the rankings, legitimately last, I would have said to him, 'I need you to step up one more time on TV for the World Team.'"

Competing on the 44-foot Salvino pattern, Svensson excelled throughout the weekend.

"For me, especially now when I was only lefty on the team, my job is to just step on the gas and try to call it as many strikes as I can," Svensson said.

Jones said the World team not having to finish on the right lane proved to be an advantage for the World team in the singles matches. But when it came to the baker team matches this afternoon, where each team would bowl the entire game on their respective lane, the international stars saved the right lane for the deciding game.

"Straight out of the heat of the battle, we were ready to bowl on the right lane (first)," Barrett said. "Belmo slowed us down. He said, 'Let's bowl on the good lane that's gonna get worse and then the other lane will get better' and that's exactly what happened."

The World team clinched the Hall of Fame Cup, the inaugural trophy that will live at the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame in Arlington, Texas.

The victorious World team members each took home \$10,000, while the Americans earned a \$5,000 prize.

The WSOB continues with singles championships each of the next three nights. The PBA Cheetah Championship, featuring Tackett as the No. 2 seed, will take place Monday night at 7 p.m. ET on FS1.



Tackett, Simonsen and Svensson advanced to Tuesday night's PBA Scorpion Championship, while Cooley and Simonsen will compete on Wednesday's PBA Shark Championship finals as well.

The PBA World Championship finalists will be determined on Thursday as the 12 advancers compete in round-robin match play. The finals of the season's fourth major championship will be held next Sunday at noon ET on FOX.

#### DAY 1 SCORES

Match 1: Sam Cooley def. Tommy Jones, 214-200 (one point)

Match 2: Jesper Svensson def. Kyle Troup, 220-210 (one point)

Match 3: Jason Belmonte def. Anthony Simonsen, 255-244 (one point)

Match 4: Dom Barrett def. EJ Tackett, 239-202 (one point)

Total Pinfall: World def. USA, 928-856 (one point)

World led USA, 5-0

#### CHAMPIONSHIP DAY SCORES

Baker Doubles: Jason Belmonte and Jesper Svensson def. Anthony Simonsen and EJ Tackett, 215-205 (two points)

Alternate Shot Doubles: Kyle Troup and Tommy Jones def. Sam Cooley and Dom Barrett, 220-217 (two points)

Baker Team (Race to Two): World def. USA, 209-188; 212-175 (five points)

World def. USA, 12-2

#### EJ TACKETT WINS 20TH CAREER TITLE AT 2023 PBA CHEETAH CHAMPIONSHIP

APRIL 17, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Tackett defeats BJ Moore to claim his fourth title of the season.

Ten years ago in Milwaukee, EJ Tackett made his PBA Tour television debut. Tonight, on the same pair of lanes at Bowlero Wauwatosa, he claimed the 20th title of his career and fourth of the season at the PBA Cheetah Championship.

Tackett defeated top seed BJ Moore, 259-178, in the first title match of the Guaranteed Rate World Series of Bowling XIV.

With four titles in nine events this season, plus a runner-up finish at the PBA Tournament of Champions, Tackett has bowled in more than half of 2023 title matches.

"I've just bowled well," Tackett said. "I've given myself a lot of opportunities and I've been able to capitalize on them, where in the past I really haven't done a great job of doing that. This year, for some reason, has been a little bit different. Everything is coming together and things are full steam ahead."

Tackett said confidence has been a driving force behind his dominance this season. Winning the season opener at the U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!, the title he coveted more than any other, kick-started one of the more dominant seasons in recent memory.

With a 20th career title, Tackett surpassed Chris Barnes and tied Amleto Monacelli, Dick Ritger, Wayne Webb and Tommy Jones — all PBA Hall of Famers.

"It's crazy to etch your name next to guys that are iconic in the sport, people that I grew up watching," Tackett said. "Tommy's definitely one. I watched him from the first time he came on tour. It's an incredible feeling."

Tackett's decisiveness in the title match proved too much for Moore, who sought to win a second career title. After averaging more than 236 throughout 20 games of gutter-free qualifying, Moore threw the first shot in the gutter and rallied to finish with 178.

"BJ was seeing a lot of over-under and a lot of times — and I've been through it 100 times myself — where there's a little bit of nerves and you just roll it a little bit differently than we did all week," Tackett said. "I did that a couple of times in the first game and got away with them. I think being able to bowl that game and go into that title match with a little confidence in what my ball was doing on the lane really, really helped in the shot making."

In the semifinal, Tackett defeated Joseph Grondin, 233-225. Grondin, a 24-year-old graduate of Wichita State University, kept pace with Tackett through five frames despite battling immense lane transition.

However, Grondin's missed 3-6-10 conversion in the sixth frame created what proved to be an insurmountable deficit.

"It was a change in the lanes," Grondin said. "I didn't think to move because I went flush the last shot, and then obviously it went high."

In the previous match, Grondin won his first career match on television against AJ Johnson. Grondin took an early lead when Johnson missed the 2-8 in the second frame, but the veteran quickly retook the lead.

Johnson needed all three strikes in the 10th frame to shut out Grondin, but missed the 2-8 yet again.

"I was trying to be a little nicer to (the ball) and let it do its thing. I didn't expect it to (leave a) 2-8," Johnson said. "It hurts. I had ball in hand and could've wrapped it up there, but it is what it is. We're going to learn from it and keep getting better."

The opening match between Johnson and Jakob Butturff was one of the strangest in PBA history. The 35-foot Cheetah pattern forces players to throw the ball near the gutter, often to the very last board, and does not leave much margin for error.

Johnson kicked the match off with a gutter, then guttered again in the fourth and fifth frames; Butturff fouled in the second frame — which he said was only the second of his entire career — then fouled again in the 10th frame.

“I tried out new shoes for the show,” Butturff said. “That’s my mistake, a rookie mistake, and I made it. I was very fortunate to even be in this position. I’m just going to take my lumps with this one.”

Johnson, who delivered in the clutch during the final game of qualifying and a roll-off to make tonight's show, bounced back from the gutter balls with a five-bagger to steal the match.

“I knew if it stayed on the lane, it would do the right thing,” joked Johnson, adding he adjusted his depth of target to help keep the ball on line.”

Tackett, who did not advance to the PBA Shark Championship finals on Wednesday night, can theoretically win seven of the remaining eight titles on the 2023 PBA docket — which means Mark Roth’s 1978 single-season record of eight titles is within reach.

“It’s incredible to win that many times in a season,” Tackett said. “In 2017, I won four times and finished second three times. That’s one of the best seasons I’ve ever had in my career, up to this year.

“So is it possible? Yes. Probable? Probably not. But I’m going to give it my all and give it my best and try to catch it.”

Tackett will have yet another title opportunity tomorrow night as the No. 2 seed for the PBA Scorpion Championship.

Butturff will return as well, this time as the top seed, while No. 4 seed Anthony Simonsen looks to keep up with Tackett in a heated PBA Player of the Year race.

#### CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES

Match 1: AJ Johnson def. Jakob Butturff, 208-203

Match 2: Joseph Grondin def. AJ Johnson, 205-194

Match 3: EJ Tackett def. Joseph Grondin, 233-225

Championship: EJ Tackett def. BJ Moore, 259-178

#### PBA CHEETAH CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL STANDINGS

EJ Tackett, \$20,000

BJ Moore, \$12,000

Joseph Grondin, \$11,000

AJ Johnson, \$8,500

Jakob Butturff, \$7,500

## JAKOB BUTTURFF ENDS TITLE DROUGHT AT 2023 PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP

APRIL 18, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

*Butturff dedicates first title since 2019 to his late mother.*

On Tuesday night at Bowlero Wauwatosa, Jakob Butturff put an end to his near-four-year title drought.

The 28-year-old defeated EJ Tackett, who won the [PBA Cheetah Championship](#) on Monday, in the title match to claim his eighth career title.

“It’s my first Tour win since my mom passed away back in November 2020,” Butturff said. “I know she was looking down on me and made sure I made my 7-pins in that match.”

“She’s the reason I am where I’m at in my life right now,” Butturff continued. “She motivated me. She took me to every event in juniors. Without her, I wouldn’t be where I’m at in life.”

Tackett struggled to project the ball to the right throughout his two matches. He said that if he missed to the right, the ball was not going to hook, which caused him to miss left several times.

Tackett appeared to have overcome that issue in the title match, firing strikes on seven of the first eight frames. But he missed left again in the ninth frame, leaving a 3-4-6-7-10 split.

The open frame gave Butturff a chance to shut out the Player of the Year frontrunner. After tripping the 6-pin forward in the 10th frame, Butturff needed just nine pins on the next shot to clinch the win.

The left-hander made a slight adjustment to the right, but said he threw the ball fast and left the bucket. The missed opportunity cracked the door back open for Tackett, and Butturff said he fully expected him to seize it.

Needing a double and nine pins to secure his fifth title of the season, Tackett said he threw an okay shot — “close enough it could have struck” — but left a 10-pin, ending his bid for back-to-back titles.

Butturff also competed in the PBA Cheetah Championship finals last night, fouling twice while wearing new shoes to lose the opening match. He brought back his old shoes and tested the approaches tonight, but said the mistake from yesterday lingered as a demon in his mind.

“The best way to overcome the past is to focus on the present,” he said.

Jesper Svensson, the No. 5 seed, defeated Anthony Simonsen in the opening match. Lane transition hit Simonsen early in the match, but he fought back with a hambone in the seventh through 10th frames. But a split on Simonsen’s 11th shot ended the 26-year-old’s bid for a third title of the season.

The next match pitted Svensson against Finland’s Santtu Tahvanainen, the reigning PBA Rookie of the Year. The intense hockey rivalry between Swedes and Finns did not translate to this match as Svensson routed Tahvanainen, 228-186.

Tahvanainen, known for his effortless power and rev rate, played almost three arrows farther left than Simonsen. He said that strategy worked throughout qualifying and even in practice before the show, but it did not work tonight.

"It was my comfort zone," Tahvanainen said. "It was a little bit tighter (on the TV pair), but I felt like it's still manageable. I don't see myself doing any better if I was more right."

"It's definitely a good experience," he said of his first career singles telecast. "But at the same time, I hope this concludes my bad bowling and tomorrow we can see my good bowling."

Svensson's ascent of the stepladder came to a screeching halt against Tackett in the semifinal. The two-hander's look with urethane started to fade, leaving two buckets in the first four frames, and his attempts to switch to reactive led to disastrous splits.

"I knew (transition) was coming," Svensson said. "I was just hoping that the look I had after wasn't as bad as it was."

Svensson exhausted his option to no avail, falling to Tackett 184-158.

"You feel like the tiniest little thing in the world standing on that approach when things are not going too hot," Svensson said. "If I would have known that EJ would've shot 180, I probably would've done what I did the first few frames (throwing urethane) and just tried to hit the pocket and make whatever spares are left. But I figured that he's probably going to have a very good game so I had to be aggressive."

"With a little bit of time, I think I'm going to be pretty proud about the performance," Svensson added. "But obviously, that last game stings a little bit."

Simonsen and Tahvanainen also advanced to the [PBA Shark Championship finals](#), which will be held Wednesday night at 7 p.m. ET on FS1.

Butturff and Tackett narrowly missed the championship round on the 48-foot Shark pattern, but hold the top two positions in the PBA World Championship. Match play for the fourth major championship of the season will take place Thursday.

Butturff said while he is disappointed about missing tomorrow's show — he shot 175 the final game, needing 226 to make the show — he is glad to take a day off and enjoy tonight's victory.

"This was an all star, future Hall of Famer lineup of a TV show," Butturff said. "I definitely had to think that I was the top seed for a reason. I had to feel like the best bowler in the building. Thankfully enough, I was able to come out on top."

### **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES**

Match 1: Jesper Svensson def. Anthony Simonsen, 248-225

Match 2: Jesper Svensson def. Santtu Tahvanainen, 228-186

Match 3: EJ Tackett def. Jesper Svensson, 184-158

Championship: Jakob Butturff def. EJ Tackett, 225-217

### **PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Jakob Butturff, \$20,000

2. EJ Tackett, \$13,000
3. Anthony Simonsen, \$10,000
4. Santtu Tahvanainen, \$8,500
5. Anthony Simonsen, \$7,500

Full PBA Scorpion Championship standings are available [here](#).

## **MATT OGLE ACHIEVES LIFELONG DREAM AT 2023 PBA SHARK CHAMPIONSHIP**

**APRIL 19, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

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On Wednesday night, Matt Ogle's lifelong dream came to fruition. The 38-year-old Louisville native captured his first career PBA Tour singles title at the PBA Shark Championship.

Top-seeded Ogle defeated Sam Cooley, 204-191, in the title match at Bowlero Wauwatosa to win his second career title.

"This was a dream," Ogle said. "This is what I wanted. This is it. I did it."

Ogle's victory was reminiscent of Kyle Sherman's title at the [2022 PBA Cheetah Championship](#). Both players boasted a doubles title — Ogle won the 2019 Roth-Holman PBA Doubles Championship with Sean Rash — but a singles title fulfills the dream every kid grows up having.

"It's totally two different things," Ogle said. "(Rash) was there for me, set me up, made it all about me. But this — this is totally different. It's amazing. This is something I wanted my whole life."

After years of grinding on Tour, mostly as a part-time player, Ogle developed a newfound confidence following last season's PBA League — between being drafted to the Dallas Strikers by Norm Duke, leading qualifying and anchoring the team. That conviction and the help of two sponsors helped him commit to competing full-time this season.

After posting top-20 finishes in each of his first three tournaments this season, Ogle has tallied three championship round appearances in the past six events. He ranks fifth on Tour in points, behind only EJ Tackett, Anthony Simonsen, Jason Belmonte and Jakob Butturff.

"That's crazy," Ogle said. "The dream was to be with those guys and I'm finally there. It hasn't really sunk in yet, that part hasn't gotten to me."

In the title match, Ogle ended Cooley's climb of the stepladder. Cooley snuck into the show with a 247 [to close qualifying last week](#), then tallied wins over Santtu Tahvanainen, Simonsen and Packy Hanrahan to reach the title match.

Cooley sought to win his second title of the season on the season's longest pattern used for a full tournament: 48-foot Shark. His first win came on the season's shortest pattern — 32-foot Wolf — at the PBA Springfield Classic.

Cooley said his work in the offseason has started to pay dividends, but a more recent change in his mindset led to this performance.

"I'm standing here now dumbfounded at just how powerful a couple of words you tell yourself — 'wait on it' — can be," Cooley said. "If you told me I was going to be here, I would've laughed. Obviously you want to come away with a win, but even though that didn't happen, it feels like a win."

In the opening match, Cooley downed Tahvanainen, 247-212. The Finnish star performed much better than he did during the [PBA Scorpion Championship](#) on Tuesday, but a 3-6-10 spare in the second frame and a pocket 7-10 in the 10th cost him the match.

Cooley faced a tighter match against Simonsen, also seeking to redeem himself after a rough go on Scorpion. After acing a strike in the ninth frame, Cooley needed a double and nine pins to shut out the two-handed virtuoso. He made an adjustment left and aced all three shots to advance.

Hanrahan's poor ball reaction made the semifinal the least competitive match of the night. The lone left-hander said he executed well and his ball reaction reminded him of qualifying.

"I had two really good blocks and two blocks where I bowled very well for like +50. A lot of those games looked like (tonight)," Hanrahan said. "It was one of those nights with a lot of good shots and trying to figure out a way to get the 7-pin down. That isn't always the best when you're watching Sam Cooley and his ball is *striking*."

For a moment early in the title match, however, the striking stopped for Cooley. After averaging over 242 in his three wins, he opened twice in the first three frames against Ogle.

"I was a bit hesitant and stubborn on making the move, and it cost me those couple of frames," Cooley said. "Once I saw the ball hook too much, that was like my cue: 'You have to move, you can't make this work.' I made a 2-2 move left and I found my ball reaction again to make it a lot closer down the stretch."

Ogle capitalized on Cooley's error, striking on each of his next two shots, which he said gave him a lot of relief. However, Ogle made a gaffe of his own two frames later. He missed a 10-pin in the sixth frame, which combined with Cooley's own double, drew the match to a near tie.

Both players could max out at 225 as Cooley stepped up for his ninth frame. He missed left and slow, leaving a 3-6-9-10 that cost him significant pin count as well.

"I could not have grabbed that anymore with any slower ball speed if I wanted to," Cooley said.

Ogle responded with a strike in the ninth frame and left another 10-pin in the 10th frame. After an initial balk, Ogle reset and made the spare.

The emotions began to pour out, though Ogle still needed seven pins on his fill ball. He recollected just enough to knock over nine pins and clinch the victory.

He could not hold back the tears any longer.

“I feel like I belong for sure,” Ogle said. “I got my first singles title. I’m here. I’m not gonna look back.”

#### **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES**

Match 1: Sam Cooley def. Santtu Tahvanainen, 247-212

Match 2: Sam Cooley def. Anthony Simonsen, 238-221

Match 3: Sam Cooley def. Packy Hanrahan, 242-203

Championship: Matt Ogle def. Sam Cooley, 204-191

#### **PBA SCORPION CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Matt Ogle, \$20,000
2. Sam Cooley, \$12,000
3. Packy Hanrahan, \$10,000
4. Anthony Simonsen, \$8,500
5. Santtu Tahvanainen, \$7,500

Full PBA Shark Championship standings are available [here](#).

#### **TACKETT HEADLINES LOADED FINALS AT 2023 PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY PABST BLUE RIBBON**

##### **APRIL 20, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

*Tackett earns third No. 1 seed in four majors this season, while Simonsen, Butturff, Belmonte and Tahvanainen also advance to the championship round.*

EJ Tackett’s brilliant 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour continued at the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon. The four-time champion earned the No. 1 seed, marking his third No. 1 seed in four majors this season.

Despite posting a 4-8 match play record, Tackett usurped Jakob Butturff in the position round to earn the top seed with a total pinfall of 16,732.

Tackett averaged over 230 across the 72 total games of qualifying, which included 20 games from the PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships, plus a dozen games of round-robin match play with the 12 finalists.

The 20-time PBA Tour titleist will seek his fifth title and second major of the season on Sunday at noon ET on FOX.

Anthony Simonsen, who earned the No. 1 seed at the USBC Masters and later took home the title, secured the No. 2 seed win over Butturff in a roll-off. Butturff earned the No. 3 seed.



Tackett, Simonsen and Butturff each advance to their third championship round of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate World Series of Bowling XIV.

Tackett and Butturff made the PBA Cheetah and Scorpion finals; Tackett won the former and Butturff defeated Tackett for the latter title. Simonsen finished fifth at the PBA Scorpion Championship and fourth at the PBA Shark Championship.

Jason Belmonte, a PBA record 15-time major champion, began the match play round in 12th place, 324 pins from fifth place. He compiled an 11-1 record while averaging 250 to surge all the way to the No. 4 seed.

Belmonte, who defeated Simonsen and Tackett en route to winning the PBA Tournament of Champions earlier this season, won the PBA World Championship in 2017, 2019 and 2020. This marks his first telecast of the WSOB XIV.

In the opening match on Sunday, Belmonte will face the lone player in the finals without a major title to his credit. Santtu Tahvanainen, the 2022 Harry Golden PBA Rookie of the Year, advanced to the PBA Scorpion and PBA Shark Championship finals, but lost his first match each time.

Chris Via and Nathan Bohr finished in a tie for sixth place, trailing Tahvanainen by 58 pins. Packy Hanrahan, who began the day in fifth place, dropped to ninth place. Matt Ogle, who [won the PBA Shark Championship](#) on Wednesday night, finished 11th.

By virtue of their major titles this season, Tackett, Simonsen and Belmonte have clinched berths in the PBA Super Slam Cup to be held in May. The highest finisher between Butturff and Tahvanainen will join the trio in Jupiter.

The winner of the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon will earn \$100,000.

#### **MATCH PLAY STANDINGS**

1. EJ Tackett, 16,732 (+2,332)
2. Anthony Simonsen, 16,704 (2,304)
3. Jakob Butturff, 16,704 (+2,304)
4. Jason Belmonte, 16,465 (+2,065)
5. Santtu Tahvanainen, 16,456 (+2,056)
6. Chris Via, 16,398 (+1,998)
7. Nathan Bohr, 16,398 (+1,998)
8. Bill O'Neill, 16,207 (+1,807)
9. Packy Hanrahan, 16,166 (+1,766)
10. Marshall Kent, 16,161 (+1,761)
11. Matt Ogle, 15,990 (+1,590)

12. Jesper Svensson, 15,910 (+1,510)

## **EJ TACKETT WINS FIFTH TITLE OF SEASON AT 2023 PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY PABST BLUE RIBBON**

**APRIL 23, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

In a title match that bore a cursory resemblance to not one, but two 2023 major championships, EJ Tackett claimed the 2023 PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon title.

Tackett stepped onto the approach of Bowlero Wauwatosa needing two strikes to win. Just as he did at the U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! in February, he delivered.

The 30-year-old defeated Jason Belmonte, 254-247, to win his second major championship and fifth title of the season at the finale of the Guaranteed Rate PBA World Series of Bowling XIV.

"It feels really good to have the opportunity to have to get up to double in the 10th against the greatest of all time and get it done," Tackett said. "That is what dreams are made of. It's so rewarding because you know that all the hard work you've put in is actually worth it."

With the win, his fourth career major title, Tackett became the youngest player to win 21 PBA Tour titles, though he joked he would have rather been the first to 20.

"Twenty would have been a lot cooler because it's that nice, round number," Tackett said. "I feel like 20 is a number that puts you in very elite status in the history of the PBA Tour."

If not for the man opposite him in the title match, Tackett likely would have reached 20 titles long ago. Belmonte defeated Tackett in last month's Tournament of Champions title match, moving to 3-0 in major championship finals and 6-2 on television against Tackett.

Belmonte's ascent to the World Championship title match this week also eerily resembled his monumental comeback at the TOC.

After finishing 10th, 34th, and 14th, respectively, in the PBA Cheetah, Scorpion and Shark Championships, Belmonte entered the 12-game match play round in 12th place, more than 300 pins outside of the top five. He averaged 250 and compiled an 11-1 record to charge all the way to the No. 4 seed.

Boasting a career record of 32-18 and average of nearly 220 in televised major championship matches, Belmonte won three consecutive matches against players who made three of four championship rounds at the WSOB XIV.

In the opening match, Belmonte defeated reigning PBA Rookie of the Year Santtu Tahvanainen. The 26-year-old made two poor shots early that gave Belmonte the lead, but Tahvanainen said he remained confident.

"I was like, 'Now we're gonna look to strike out, shoot 250 and put pressure on Belmo,'" Tahvanainen said. "It was a good shot (in the fifth frame) but I left the 4-pin. I felt like 230 wouldn't be enough anymore."

Belmonte then took down Jakob Butturff, the 2019 and 2021 PBA World Championship runner-up. Butturff had an opportunity to shut out Belmonte with three strikes in the 10th frame, but the southpaw's errant shot allowed Belmonte to advance with a mark.

"Honestly, I was very inconsistent with my ball speed," Butturff said. "You've gotta get those breaks and you've gotta make better shots when you're bowling against the best bowlers on the planet."

Once again, the three finalists of a major championship were Belmonte, Tackett and No. 2 seed Anthony Simonsen. It marks the third time over the past two seasons all three have made a major championship round and the sixth time overall since 2016.

With Belmonte, Tackett and Anthony Simonsen all recording major titles earlier in the season, Butturff clinched a berth in May's PBA Super Slam Cup as the highest finisher without a major title this season.

Transition hit during the semifinal as Belmonte and Simonsen, who each started with urethane equipment, navigated the treacherous situation. On the high-scoring pattern, one error or poor decision could be detrimental.

Belmonte opted to move incrementally left and, later, loft the urethane ball over the front part of the lane; Simonsen switched to reactive on the right lane in the fifth frame, then on the left lane for the 10th.

After leaving a 10-pin on the left lane in the eighth frame, Simonsen made the ball change needing a massive 10th frame to put pressure on Belmonte. Instead, he left a 2-8 and allowed Belmonte to continue climbing with a mere mark.

Belmonte, typically stoic until all is said and done, demonstrated a great deal of emotion after clinching wins over Butturff and Simonsen.

"A few days ago I was 400 pins behind fourth, and then here I am bowling for the title," Belmonte said. "I just felt like this story would have been pretty epic."

The person least surprised by Belmonte's assault on the stepladder: Tackett.

"When the show started, I told (my ball rep), 'I assume I'm gonna bowl Belmo today.' So I was mentally prepared better than maybe I have been in the past to bowl him," Tackett said. "Your preparation for him may be a little bit different than maybe for playing another player. Although it shouldn't be — it should be full focus all the time — you just know that little bit extra you have to do to be able to at least have a match with him."

The heavyweight battle exceeded all expectations: Belmonte fired a five-bagger mid-game to take the lead, while Tackett struck on six of seven shots heading into the 10th frame to keep pace.

The use of urethane throughout the show played into Tackett's hands, he said.

"I wanted those guys to throw urethane, that gave me the best chance," Tackett said. "I think it benefited me a little bit that Santtu lost early. Had he bowled more and beat Belmo, I don't know how the lanes would have played."

Belmonte stepped up in the ninth frame, needing strikes in the ninth and 10th frames to secure a 16th career major title and extend his record. Instead, his ball hooked early and left a 3-6-10.

"I knew it was going to hook, I was hoping it was going to last one more frame for me," Belmonte said. "The story was right there. One more shot on that right lane. If the pattern held up just one more shot, it would have been a pretty good story to tell later on."

After converting the spare — which Belmonte said he would die not knowing how to make after the USA vs. The World event last weekend — Belmonte threw all three strikes in the 10th frame.

If Tackett wanted to beat Belmonte for a major, he needed to double.

"I think there were a lot of things that happened today that benefited me," Tackett said. "The lanes got to where I thought they would and where I wanted them to be. At that point, it was just all about execution."

With his wife, dad, uncle, and cousin (all the way from Germany) sitting in the front row, the Indiana native delivered two strikes.

"It's my time!" he exclaimed, before hugging his father, Ed — just as he did after winning his first career major at the 2016 PBA World Championship.

With the win, Tackett's grasps the pole position of the Player of the Year race. He owns a Tour-high five titles and over \$350,000 in earnings entering the final major of the season at the PBA Players Championship.

### **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES**

Match 1: Jason Belmonte def. Santtu Tahvanainen, 234-230

Match 2: Jason Belmonte def. Jakob Butturff, 223-204

Match 3: Jason Belmonte def. Anthony Simonsen, 236-204

Championship: EJ Tackett def. Jason Belmonte, 254-247

### **PBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL STANDINGS**

1. EJ Tackett, \$101,000
2. Jason Belmonte, \$55,000
3. Anthony Simonsen, \$40,000
4. Jakob Butturff, \$30,000
5. Santtu Tahvanainen, \$25,000

### **THUNDERBOWL'S TOM STROBL DIES AT 81**

**APRIL 25, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

*Strobl, proprietor of Detroit's Thunderbowl Lanes, helped launch the inaugural World Series of Bowling and hosted this year's USBC Masters.*

Tom Strobl, simply put, was a legend. The Detroit attorney, athlete and, of course, proprietor of the iconic Thunderbowl Lanes died last week at 81.

Strobl was instrumental in the launching of the inaugural World Series of Bowling in 2009.

"WSOB I, in 2009, was an experiment, a bet, a movement, to grow the game globally while saving the PBA during a national economic recession," [wrote Tom Clark, PBA commissioner](#). "Because of Strobl, the WSOB went on to reach its goals. Bowling grew as a global sport at the highest level."

Over the years, Thunderbowl hosted the PBA Tour Finals twice, 2016 PBA Fall Swing, 2014 PBA Tournament of Champions, 2013 Earl Anthony PBA Players Championship and PBA League. Thunderbowl most recently hosted the USBC Masters earlier this month.

Strobl also brought the World Bowling Youth Championships, Teen Masters and Junior Gold Championships to his beloved Detroit and cemented Thunderbowl as the Mecca of Michigan high school bowling.

Strobl's contributions left a mark on the bowling world that will stand the test of time. Tributes for Strobl poured in from the bowling community.

"This is a giant loss to bowling and I lost a friend," wrote Tim Mack. "Tom Strobl was a great man and a giant in bowling in the Detroit area. His impact on the sport and the PBA will be forever."

"Great ambassadors for the game!" wrote Lynda Barnes. "Kathy and Tom were beyond kind to our family on and off the lanes! He will be missed and never forgotten!"

"He was an amazing man who did so much for our sport," wrote Sean Rash.

"Tom Strobl; always ready, willing and able to support our great sport of bowling at all levels of competition," wrote Kirk von Krueger, the PBA national tournament director from 1996-2020.

"When the PBA needed a friend, you were always there."

Funeral services will be held Wednesday, April 26 at 10 a.m. at Holy Name Catholic Church in Birmingham, Mich. More information is available [here](#).

## **PBA REGIONAL RECAP: QUINTERO, FACH EARN REGIONAL TITLES IN APRIL**

### **APRIL 27, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN**

As the PBA50 National Tour season approaches, bowlers from all over are getting in much-needed competition. Not only that, but a handful of PBA Tour bowlers are also staying sharp by competing on the PBA Regional Tour.

Read more about who took home hardware in this week's Regional Recap.

### **PBA50 C ADAM TONEY TIRE PROS CENTRAL/SOUTH OPEN**

The field split into two squads at Galaxy Lanes in West Virginia, and through eight games, Dan Knowlton was the lone guy to average over 240. He stayed on top after the advancer round, but still had to endure bracket play as the one-seed. Knowlton won his first game, but lost the next two, opening the door for Jay Davis Jr., Jeff Keller, David Show and Larry DeNoon Jr.

Davis Jr. defeated Keller in a tight one, 205-196, while Show also advanced by just nine pins, 198-189, over DeNoon Jr. In the end, Davis Jr. got the win, 228-205, for his third career regional title.

#### **PBA50 C Adam Toney Tire Pros Central/South Open Final Standings**

1. Jay Davis Jr., 2,500 points, \$2,500
2. David Show, 1,500, \$1,250
3. Larry DeNoon Jr., 1,150, \$1,000
4. Jeff Keller, 950, \$1,000

#### [PBA50 C Adam Toney Tire Pros Central/South Open Full Results](#)

#### **PBA BOWLERO/EVANSVILLE CENTRAL/MIDWEST OPEN**

The following weekend, a handful of PBA Tour players entered the one-day event in Evansville, Ind., about 400 miles south of the Guaranteed Rate World Series of Bowling XIV in Wisconsin. Graham Fach qualified first and eventually made it to the semifinals with three other PBA Tour competitors.

Fach took down Matt Sanders in the one-game semifinal, while Kim Bolleby moved past Tomas Käyhkö in the other battle. The two lefties battled it out, but Fach grabbed his 12th career regional title, winning 225-215.

#### **PBA Bowlero/Evansville Central/Midwest Open Final Standings**

1. Graham Fach, 2,500 points, \$2,400
2. Kim Bolleby, 1,500, \$1,300
3. Tomas Käyhkö, 1,150, \$1,000
4. Matt Sanders, 950, \$1,000

#### [PBA Bowlero/Evansville Central/Midwest Open Full Results](#)

#### **PBA BOWLERS DISCOUNT PRO SHOP OPEN**

AMF Towson Lanes also hosted a regional event in Maryland on April 21-23, where frequent PBA Tour pre-tournament qualifier competitor Andrew Hall qualified first by 71 pins and maintained that lead through the advancer round to claim the one seed. Hall advanced to the semifinals, but he was dispatched by Arturo Quintero, 222-184.

Jason Stadler took the last spot in the finals after he defeated Matt Zweig in the other semifinal match, 189-182. Stadler was one win away from his first title in 13 years, but Quintero got the best of him, 215-187, for his first career regional title.

### **PBA Bowlers Discount Pro Shop Open Final Standings**

1. Arturo Quintero, 2,500 points, \$3,000
2. Jason Stadtler, 1,500, \$1,600
3. Andrew Hall, 1,150, \$1,125
4. Matt Zweig, 950, \$1,125

### [PBA Bowlers Discount Pro Shop Open Full Results](#)

### **PBA BOULDER FALLS OPEN**

The folks in Lebanon, Ore., received a double dose of regional action over the weekend, with the young guns and the seniors competing simultaneously. In the under-50 division, Gary Lenox averaged 243 for seven games to earn a bye and the top spot for the bracket.

Lenox defeated Richie Teece in his first match to set up a battle with Payden Stumpf. Lenox easily handled Stumpf and advanced to the finals. Evan Nash defeated Nick Borgaro in the other semifinal to move into the finals, but the one-seeded Lenox was on fire and continued his dominance, shooting 751 for three games to take the title.

### **PBA Boulder Falls Open Final Standings**

1. Gary Lenox, 2,500 points, \$2,500
2. Evan Nash, 1,500, \$1,250
3. Nick Borgaro, 1,150, \$950
4. Payden Stumpf, 950, \$950

### [PBA Boulder Falls Open Full Results](#)

### **PBA50 BOULDER FALLS CLASSIC**

Michael Kennedy earned the top seed on the senior side, going +322 for his eight games. He averaged 240 to earn a bye as they entered bracket play featuring three-game total pinfall.

Kennedy won his first match but was immediately dropped by Blaine Weninger, 740-641. Jeff Polson, who earned his first and only regional title in 2022, defeated Hugh Miller in the semifinals. Polson took advantage of his chance for title No. 2, topping Weninger, 674-630.

### **PBA50 Boulder Falls Classic Final Standings**

1. Jeffrey Polson, 2,500 points, \$1,600
2. Blaine Weninger, 1,500, \$1,200
3. Michael Kennedy, 1,150, \$850
4. Hugh Miller, 950, \$850

## **PBA SKILL BALL CHALLENGE ROSTER FINALIZED**

**APRIL 28, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The field for the 2023 PBA SKILL Ball Challenge has been set.

The event will be held July 22-23 at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Mich., commencing festivities of the 2023 Teen Masters Championships, the premier teen competition featuring hundreds of North America's best talent.

The PBA SKILL Ball Challenge features a \$50,000 prize fund and will award \$16,000 to its victor. BowlTV will provide livestreaming coverage of the event.

PBA players were invited based on their points across the five PBA Classic Series tournaments. Here are the players competing in the PBA SKILL Ball Challenge:

1. EJ Tackett
2. Sam Cooley
3. Dom Barrett
4. Tommy Jones
5. Jakob Butturff
6. Packy Hanrahan
7. Sean Lavery-Spahr
8. Matt Ogle

The non-title event features a Race-to-Two match-play bracket on a level playing field, with all players using a single PBA SKILL 3.02 on dual, low-volume oil patterns, just like the competitors in Teen Masters.

The PBA SKILL 3.02 is a non-flaring pearl urethane ball with a differential of 0.010" and hardness of 80-82D.

## **BILLY OATMAN, THE FIRST BLACK PLAYER TO WIN ROOKIE OF THE YEAR, DIES AT 57**

**APRIL 28, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Billy Oatman, a former PBA Exempt Tour player who started his professional career at age 40, passed away earlier this week due to complications of a stroke. He was 57.

Oatman is survived by his daughter, Taylor Imani Haynes, and his father, William H Oatman III.

The Chicago native won the Harry Golden PBA Rookie of the Year award in 2006-07, becoming the first Black player to win the award. At 41, Oatman was also the oldest recipient of the award.



Though he never captured a PBA Tour title, Oatman's impact on bowling transcended far beyond his résumé.

"Billy was one of those guys, he was just infectious, man," said George Wooten, a bowling writer of more than 25 years. "He's got that 1000-watt smile. He enjoyed being a professional, shaking hands and signing autographs. He enjoyed everything about it."

Leroy Johnson, a fellow Chicago bowler nine years Oatman's senior, said he first met Oatman when Oatman was 15 or 16.

"His mother was bringing him around and talking as if he was going to be the next biggest thing," Johnson said. "We had our doubts, but we soon learned."

Oatman bowled collegiately at Vincennes and Wichita State, but decided not to make the leap to the PBA Tour. In 2006, Oatman was bowling amateur events around the country when he met his wife Annette, she said.

Annette said she asked Oatman, 40 at the time, why he hadn't gone on Tour.

"Do you want to spend your life saying I woulda-coulda-shoulda or do you want to go out and see if you can make it?" she asked him.

Around this time, the PBA had adopted an Exempt Tour format. Players who could earn a spot on the exempt players list would be guaranteed entry into each event that season.

"When that Exempt Tour came around, he was like, 'This is my last chance to live my dream and to really do it at the level that I know I can do it,'" Wooten said.

Oatman competed in the Denny's PBA Tour Trials that June, needing a top-10 finish to earn an exemption. He finished 11th, 34 pins behind 10th-place Del Ballard Jr.

Oatman was so distraught and frustrated that he went outside to decompress, Wooten said. As he lugged his equipment to his van, his fortune began to turn.

"A bird pooped on him," Wooten said. "When that happens, that's a sign of good luck."

Oatman later learned that Ritchie (now Dick) Allen deferred his exemption due to an injury. That's how Oatman became the first Black player to earn a full-season Tour exemption.

"I'm just glad I got the chance," Oatman said [at the time](#). "This is something I have always dreamed about. I feel like an NBA player who just got drafted."

Oatman seized the opportunity, leading all rookies in points, earnings and match play appearances and was second among rookies in average.

The southpaw came within one shot of a title, finishing as runner-up to Jason Couch at the 2007 Motel 6 Classic. Oatman needed two strikes in the 10th frame to surpass the Hall of Famer, but left a 10-pin on his second shot.

"He was just so deflated," Wooten said. "He knew what that win would have done to not only him personally, but to the community, to the culture."

As the lone Black player with an exemption, Oatman became a hero in the Black community.

“All of us lived vicariously through Billy,” Johnson said. “We were riding on his every shot. We felt empowered that we were being recognized by the fact that he was there and was competitive.”

When Oatman bowled on TV, Johnson said leagues back in Chicago would come to a halt. Everyone would run back and forth to the bar to see his next shot, Johnson said.

But along with that honor came an enormous burden.

“He was the Great Black Hope,” Wooten said. “He knew that every Black bowler in the country was going to be rooting for him. He had the charisma and all of that, but he was carrying the hopes and dreams of every little Black kid who ever wanted to bowl on his shoulders.

“He was up to the task.”

Oatman welcomed the publicity, driving all across the country in a decked-out van. The van featured a massive illustration of himself and his favorite quote: *You can make money or you can make excuses, but you can't do both.*

*Because of his iconic van, everyone knew when Billy Oatman was in town.*

Even in what turned out to be his final weeks, Oatman continued doing what he loved.

“He loved people and he loved to bowl,” Annette said. “The last three games he bowled, which was three weeks ago, he won the jackpot in his men’s league in Chicago.”

Oatman’s legacy extends far beyond his Rookie of the Year award. He inspired a generation of Black bowlers not only to chase their dreams, but that it was never too late to do so.

PBA Jr. ambassador Jos Weems, a 13-year-old from Chicago, aspires to compete on the PBA Tour.

“I’ve been blessed to have met many bowling legends. Billy O was one of them,” Weems [wrote on Facebook](#). “He invested time and words of wisdom in me. So much so that he asked for my autograph. He told Dad that he was passing the torch to me. He believed in me. He was a giant to many and because of his belief and investment in me, I carry him with me.”

George Branham III was the first Black player to win a PBA Tour title, capturing five titles between 1986 and 1996. In 2015, Gary Faulkner Jr. became the second with his Rolltech PBA World Championship title.

While Oatman, on paper, could not bridge the gap between Branham and Faulkner, Wooten said Oatman represented the PBA and opened doors.

“He did a lot for the culture. He did a lot for the game,” Wooten said. “For Black bowlers, that was our guy. He wore that with honor and pride.

“Quite frankly, he made us proud, man.”

**EJ TACKETT KNOWS WHO HE IS**

**APRIL 29, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

In many ways, EJ Tackett’s brilliance this season is nothing new.

This marks his third career season winning at least four titles and a major (2016, 2017). Even last season, Tackett led the Tour with a 225.27 average, 15 cashes and 15 top-25 finishes (in 16 events). His 12 top-10 finishes ranked second, one behind Player of the Year Jason Belmonte.

But the Tackett of today is not the Tackett of yesterday. The steady confidence behind each shot. The unflinching conviction behind each decision.

He could match his 2016-17 accomplishments (eight titles and two majors) in 2023 alone. Through 12 events in 2023, he's again leading the Tour in average (227.17) to go along with five titles and a pair of major championships.

When asked about what spurred this torrid season, Tackett doesn't elaborate much beyond "I'm bowling really well."

To him, this is what he's worked his entire life for. This is what he's always believed he's been capable of.

Although, the green jacket in his closet and Triple Crown on his résumé helped fortify his confidence tremendously.

After last season's gut-wrenching loss in the title match, prevailing this year in the season-opening U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling! — [the title he coveted more than any other](#) — erased any apprehension that may have built last season as he went 0-7 in televised singles matches.

Brett Spangler, Motiv's ball rep and Tackett's friend, said that Tackett's galvanized self-belief is also a product of how well he has been reading the lane.

"It's a lot easier to have confidence in the shot you're going to make because for this entire season, 99% of the time, you've made the right call," Spangler said. "The confidence is not manufactured. It's based on what he's seeing every time he shows up."

"That's how you lead a tournament across 72 games. That's how you lead more than half of the events for a season."

But the evolution of Tackett runs deeper than conquering the U.S. Open. It's how he did it — doubling in the 10th frame and silencing any doubters once and for all.

"I've done it in the past, winning regular events, but I'd never done it in a major championship," Tackett said. "There was a lot of emotion that went along with finally doing that on such a huge stage."

Two months later, the Indiana native did it again.

On Sunday afternoon, he threw two strikes in the final frame to defeat Jason Belmonte and win the 2023 PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon.

"I think (the U.S. Open) impacted that a lot," Tackett said. "I've been in this situation and performed, reflecting back on that saying *I did it then, I can do it again.*"

"It's not 'Oh man, I *have* to strike here,'" Spangler said. "It's 'I *get* to strike for the win.' That's a massively different perspective. And it's a perspective that's valid to have when you've done it before."

At the World Championship, Tackett rose to the No. 1 seed in match play despite posting a 4-8 match play record. While he said it felt “impossible” at times, he added that great champions never give up.

“You’ve got to remind yourself that all those little moments add up to a bigger picture,” Tackett said.

That mindset has powered Tackett to the top seed in three of four major championships this season.

Since 2014, no player has been the No. 1 seed at majors more often than Tackett. He’s earned the coveted spot atop the stepladder nine times — one more than Belmonte over that span.

He’s been the top seed in 60% of his major championship final appearances, compared to Belmonte’s career mark of 35.3% (12 of 34) and Anthony Simonsen’s 23.5% (four of 17).

Whether Tackett needs to press on the gas pedal during qualifying or deliver a win-or-go-home strike on TV, enhanced self-assurance has taken the 30-year-old to new heights.

“He knows who he is, and what that gets him,” Spangler said.

Perhaps no one has witnessed Tackett’s career more closely than Spangler. He said this version of Tackett is the best he’s ever seen.

“This is a more skilled EJ than the years he won four titles,” Spangler said. “He’s not just doing what he likes to do when he wins. He’s being creative. He’s using tools that he’s had, but probably hadn’t developed to a point that he could win a tournament using them.”

In 2016, the first of his consecutive four-title seasons, Tackett earned Chris Schenkel PBA Player of the Year honors. The following season, he did not; Belmonte also won four times, three of which were majors, and set the single-season average record of 229.39.

While Tackett said the Player of the Year race is always on his mind when he throws the first shot of the season and that a second major and fifth title propels him forward in the race, he insists there is more work to do.

“We still have one more major to bowl,” Tackett said. “Simo has won one. Belmo has won one. If they win another one and win a couple more times, I could get passed very easily.”

Simonsen trails Tackett in titles 5-2, but the 26-year-old’s consistency surpasses even Tackett’s; Simonsen has finished no lower than 10th at any event this season.

Belmonte, who defeated Tackett for the PBA Tournament of Champions title in March, nearly completed another inconceivable-for-anyone-else comeback at the World Championship.

With five more PBA titles to be awarded and three non-title events to go this season, Tackett has more at stake than a second career Player of the Year award.

Tackett could tie or eclipse Mark Roth’s single-season record of eight titles, run down Kyle Troup’s single-season earnings record of \$496,900, and even catch Belmonte’s average record of 229.39.

[When asked](#) about the possibility of surpassing Roth and Troup’s record, Tackett responded with a question of his own — three short words that spoke volumes about his psyche and the superfluous confidence coursing through his veins.

*Why not both?*

## THE 2023 PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP MARKS PBA'S RETURN TO HISTORIC BOWLERO NORTH BRUNSWICK

APRIL 30, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

There may be no more romantic venue in bowling than Bowlero North Brunswick, formerly known as Carolier Lanes. From an unforgettable whiffed 10-pin to the game's most transcendent quote, its 82 lanes have been the setting to many of the PBA's most spectacular moments.

The center hosted the Johnny Petraglia Open from 1991-2001, a standard PBA Tour event named in honor of the New Jersey icon. After a brief hiatus, New Jersey returned to the PBA Tour schedule, hosting seven of eight U.S. Opens between 2005 and 2012 and the USBC Masters in 2013 and 2014.

Legend upon legend captured victories in the Garden State center. Chris Barnes, Tommy Jones and Jason Belmonte celebrated their first career majors. Norm Duke, Pete Weber and Mike Scroggins added to their Hall of Fame careers.

The 2014 Elias Cup Finals was the last PBA event contested on the hallowed lanes — until now. The 2023 Players Championship presented by Snickers marks the PBA's long awaited return to North Brunswick, N.J.

Jason Belmonte searches for a fan to award with a ball at the 2012 U.S. Open.

They say time makes the heart grow fonder. That adage rings true in regards to Bowlero North Brunswick.

"Oh my goodness, I think all of us players are excited to get back to Carolier," Belmonte said, "In my memory, the events that we've played there had some of the greatest atmosphere from the crowd that I've ever experienced."

When it comes to selecting a favorite memory from Carolier, Belmonte struggles to distinguish between his two USBC Masters wins.

His win in 2013 was the first major title of his career. (Belmonte's 2011 Players Championship was retroactively changed to a major title in 2016.) After defeating Wes Malott, he leapt with elation after finally prevailing in his then-fifth major telecast.

Belmonte made history with his victory at the 2014 Masters. He climbed the ladder as the No. 5 seed — no five-seed had ever reached the title match, let alone won the title — and defeated top-seeded, 21-year-old EJ Tackett.

“To put my name on that trophy two times in a row, which hadn't been done in 50 years, was pretty special,” Belmonte said. “Both in the same place.”

Mika Koivuniemi lies in disbelief after losing the 2011 U.S. Open title.

In 2011, top-seeded Duke aimed for a second U.S. Open crown against Mika Koivuniemi, the leading candidate for Player of the Year. Duke struck on his final four shots, forcing Koivuniemi to mark in the 10th. Koivuniemi wrapped a 10-pin on his opening shot.

Belmonte said he remembers himself skipping ahead to Koivuniemi's fill ball, calculating how the Finnish star would secure eight pins and the title.

“Alright, so what's he going to do? Is he just going to throw it the same? Is he gonna gas on it?” Belmonte asked himself. “And then I'm watching and the ball just falls off into the gutter.”

The image of a despondent Koivuniemi crumbling to the floor as an astonished Duke grasps the reality of a seventh career major title has been etched in PBA lore.

But if we're talking about PBA history at 1 Carolier Lane, there's one moment that stands above the rest...

Weber's strike and inimitable celebration at the 2012 U.S. Open, the fifth green jacket of his storied career, was named the fifth most memorable moment in PBA history in 2018.

The reaction was inspired by a fan's actions during the match, which encapsulates everything about what makes Bowlero North Brunswick exceptional.

“New Jersey always brought a lot of great fans and created a hostile environment so to say with the East Coast bowling community,” Sean Rash said. “They bring the noise. They bring the excitement. They bring the energy. You've got the love-hate relationships, whether it's one-handed or two-handed bowling, East Coast or West Coast bowlers, international or national players. People pick a side and really go after it.”

Bill O'Neill, who lives less than an hour away in eastern Pennsylvania, has a close connection to the local fanbase. After winning the 2010 U.S. Open in Indianapolis, coming home for the 2011 event was supposed to be extra special.

But about a month before the tournament, he said his grandfather died. O'Neill said when his family came to watch, his grandmother was overcome with emotion seeing his face on all the banners as defending champion.

Aided by the hometown crowd, O'Neill led the tournament into match play and advanced to the championship round.

“There's just nothing like having that fan support, family and friends and everybody cheering for you,” he said. “It's a totally different feeling.”

The 2023 Players Championship will be another emotional homecoming for the O'Neill family, as the 41-year-old said this will be the first time his kids will be old enough to be able to watch and appreciate him compete.

Bill O'Neill finished sixth at the 2011 U.S. Open in North Brunswick, N.J.

While Weber experienced the signature animosity of the New Jerseyites, or at least the perception of it, several players noted the fan base's seasoned understanding of the game.

Belmonte said when players make ball changes and aggressive moves across the lane, fans understand the method behind the madness.

"There's an element of appreciation to the craft," he said.

Chris Barnes won his first career title in front of those very fans at the 2005 U.S. Open and made another run with a third place finish in 2009. The Triple Crown winner said Bowlero North Brunswick is one of the game's great traditional venues.

"It's the people that make the places," Barnes said. "It's a knowledgeable fan base that always comes out in droves. The atmosphere is hard to replace."

Bowlero North Brunswick hosts the 2023 PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers, the final major of the season, beginning on April 30, 2023.

#### PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS PREVIEW

MAY 1, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

The PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers marks the PBA's grand return to Bowlero North Brunswick, formerly known as Carolier Lanes. This will be the final major of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour.

The iconic venue returns as host for the first time in nine years. It's where a crestfallen Mika Koivuniemi crumbled to the lanes after losing the U.S. Open, Jason Belmonte won back-to-back USBC Masters titles and Pete Weber uttered the most famous eight words in bowling history.

Over the next two weeks, 128 players will compose their own stories in pursuit of the \$100,000 top prize. Here's what you need to know:

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

The fifth and final berth in the PBA Super Slam Cup is up for grabs. EJ Tackett, Jason Belmonte and Anthony Simonsen secured their spots with major titles in 2023, while Jakob Butturff earned his position as the highest finishing non-champion at the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon.

As the season's ultimate major championship, this also represents players' best opportunity to bolster their Chris Schenkel PBA Player of the Year award case.

A title for Tackett, which would be his third major and sixth overall title of the season, ostensibly wraps up the race. However, as Tackett noted himself, a Simonsen or Belmonte victory could change the tide entering the final few events of the season.

In the Harry Golden PBA Rookie of the Year race, Cortez Schenck tops the freshman in points. A handful of rookies lie within about 1,000 points of the 24-year-old, meaning one player could separate themselves from the pack with a stellar performance at the Players Championship.

## STORYLINES

Much has changed since the last time the PBA Tour visited the Garden State in February 2014.

Jimmy Fallon began hosting The Tonight Show that month, while the series finale of How I Met Your Mother aired one month later. Apple released the iPhone 6 and announced plans for the Apple Watch that fall.

Bowling-wise, dozens of the game's most accomplished and popular players had yet to reach the Tour.

AJ Johnson, Chris Via, Marshall Kent, Kyle Sherman, Darren Tang, François Lavoie, Andrew Anderson and Graham Fach excelled at the college ranks, each finishing with a top-11 average in the nation in 2013-14. Jakob Butturff, Michael Tang, Nick Pate and Matt Sanders, among other future PBA players, were also chasing the Helmer Cup as student-athletes.

And yet, much has remained the same over the past nine years.

The title match of the 2014 USBC Masters, the last title awarded at Bowlero North Brunswick, featured the same two players as last week's PBA World Championship. Belmonte, then 30, climbed the stepladder to defeat 21-year-old Tackett.

This week, Bill O'Neill competes close to his eastern Pennsylvania home, as will New Jersey legend Parker Bohn III. His protégé, Matt Russo, was in high school in 2014; this marks Russo's first PBA Tour competition in his native state.

## FORMAT

The 128-player field will bowl 24 games of qualifying (four six-game rounds) before a cut to the top third of the field. Players will compete on two patterns: 39-foot Carter for the first two rounds of qualifying and 45-foot Weber for the final two.

The remainder of the tournament will feature a dual-pattern format. Following the first cut, the field will be whittled down to 12 TV finalists across four additional six-game advancer rounds.

The top four players after all 48 games of qualifying earn byes in the televised bracket, while top 12 players advance to the televised bracket. The No. 5-12 seeds compete on Saturday, May 7.

The first round of the bracket features single-game matches, while the Round of Eight and Round of Four will be Race-to-Two matches. The championship, airing live Sunday, May 14 on FOX, will be a best-of-five match.

## TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

All times are listed in Eastern time. The full schedule is available [here](#).

Tuesday, May 2 | BowITV



11 a.m. — Qualifying Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. — Qualifying Round 2 (six games)

Wednesday, May 3 | BowlTV

11 a.m. — Qualifying Round 3 (six games)

5 p.m. — Qualifying Round 4 (six games)

Thursday, May 4 | BowlTV

11 a.m. — Advancers Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. — Advancers Round 2 (six games)

Friday, May 5 | BowlTV

11 a.m. — Top-24 Round (six games)

5:30 p.m. — Top-18 Round (six games)

Saturday, May 6 | FS1

10 p.m. — Round of 12 (single-game matches)

Tickets for the 4 p.m. taping are available [here](#).

Sunday, May 7 | FS1

Noon — Round of Eight (Race-to-Two matches)

4 p.m. — Round of Eight (Race-to-Two matches)

Tickets for the shows are available [here](#).

Saturday, May 13 | FS1

12:30 p.m. — Round of Four (Race-to-Two matches)

Sold out.

Sunday, May 14 | FOX

1 p.m. — Championship Round (Best-of-Five match)

Sold out.

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

RUSSO, O'NEILL LEAD FIRST DAY OF PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS

MAY 2, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

In the PBA Tour's return to Bowlero North Brunswick in New Jersey, a Garden State native leads the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers through two rounds of qualifying.

Matt Russo, born and raised in nearby Millstone Township, N.J., led the 128-player field with a total pinfall of 2,904 (+504). This marks Russo's first PBA Tour stop in his home state, but the southpaw said he bowled at the center many times during his youth bowling career.

"This place has a lot of history for me, growing up in the area and bowling here as a kid," Russo said. "This is really cool to bowl in front of some hometown fans and my family. I think that's driving me to be a little better this week."

As a high schooler, Russo watched the PBA stars, including his idol Parker Bohn III, compete at the iconic center. Today, the 26-year-old beat them all.

"It hasn't really clicked that I'm leading after the first day," Russo said. "The last half of the season, I've focused on myself and doing what I want to do (versus what other lefties are doing). It's worked out pretty well and I'm going to keep riding the wave."

Bill O'Neill, a native of Langhorne, Pa., sits in second place after leading the first round. He made the 2011 U.S. Open telecast at what was then Carolier Lanes. This week, competing just 45 minutes from home, he aims to return to the show.

"When I'm bowling well here and I turn around, there's people that I've known my whole life back there rooting for me," O'Neill said.

O'Neill led the first round of qualifying when he bowled on the low end of the center, firing 815 his final three games with reactive equipment. He said the high end of the center, where he bowled the second round, is much tighter down-lane and more difficult.

"I ended up using urethane all six games, that certainly wasn't the plan," O'Neill said. "I was fearful of bowling a 150 or 160 game and that was out there with a reactive ball."

Jakob Butturff, EJ Tackett and Kevin McCune round out the top five, while another New Jersey product closes out the top 10 in Kenny Ryan.

For the third and fourth rounds of qualifying, the players shift to competing on the 45-foot Weber pattern. After 24 games, the field will be trimmed to the top 42 players.

Competition resumes at 11 a.m. ET on Wednesday.

#### LEADERS THROUGH ROUND 2

Matt Russo, 2,904 (+504)

Bill O'Neill, 2,859 (+459)

Jakob Butturff, 2,799 (+399)

EJ Tackett, 2,788 (+388)

Kevin McCune, 2,785 (+385)

Zac Tackett, 2,755 (+355)

Keven Williams, 2,752 (+352)

Marshall Kent, 2,745 (+345)

Killian Kilpatrick, 2,742 (+342)

Kenny Ryan, 2,723 (+328)

## **EJ TACKETT MOVES IN FRONT AT PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS**

MAY 3, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

EJ Tackett, who has earned the top seed in three of four majors, has moved into the lead of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers.

Tackett averaged 231.71 across 24 games of qualifying, including 12 games on the 39-foot Carter pattern on Tuesday. The 30-year-old overtook the lead during Wednesday's competition on the 45-foot Weber pattern.

Jakob Butturff, who defeated Tackett at the PBA Scorpion Championship two weeks ago, also held the lead at times throughout Wednesday's competition. He trails Tackett by 33 pins entering Thursday's advancer rounds.

Chris Via, Matt Russo and Anthony Simonsen round out the top five players through 24 games. Simonsen sat in 47th place following Tuesday's qualifying, but averaged over 231 to climb into the top five.

Bill O'Neill, who led the first round of qualifying, sits in seventh place. Defending champion Jason Belmonte is in 16th place, averaging 218.42.

Ramsey Basurto entered the final round of qualifying as the cut in 42nd place. While he had advanced to the main field in five of nine pre-tournament qualifiers this season, he had yet to finish better than 45th.

With a final six-game block of 1,354, Basurto climbed into 20th place to make his first career cut on the PBA Tour.

"This was a blessing today," Basurto said. "It feels good to finally get like a monkey off my back, first cash ever in a national event and it's nice to be at a major."

Basurto said he has stuck to a predetermined gameplan too often this season, which has contributed to his poor performances late in tournaments. Today, he listened to what his ball motion told him to do.

"I literally grabbed my urethane as the last ball out of the paddock and just smashed it with some surface," Basurto said. "I was trying it on the outside to break the lanes down. It actually had a good shape on this bay and I stuck with it."

Players said the newer lane surfaces on the high end of Bowlero North Brunswick, lanes 49-82, have played more difficult throughout the week. Basurto was too busy striking to notice.

Wesley Low Jr. and Samuel DeWitt III earned the final two spots inside the cut at +307.

The top 42 players will return to the lanes for two six-game advancer rounds at 11 a.m. ET on Thursday. After those dozen games, the field will be trimmed to the top 24 players. Players will face a dual-pattern format — Weber on the left lane and Carter on the right lane — for the duration of the tournament.

After 12 more games on Friday, the top 12 players advance to the televised bracket finals.

Tackett's younger brother, Zac, sits in 12th place through four rounds. The brothers are competing with heavy hearts this week as their grandfather, Gomer Tackett, passed away on Monday morning.

#### LEADERS THROUGH ROUND 2

EJ Tackett, 5,585 (+785)

Jakob Butturff, 5,552 (+752)

Chris Via, 5,402 (+602)

Matt Russo, 5,362 (+562)

Anthony Simonsen, 5,361 (+561)

Keven Williams, 5,357 (+557)

Bill O'Neill, 5,349 (+549)

Dom Barrett, 5,331 (+531)

Tom Daugherty, 5,258 (+458)

Jesper Svensson, 5,257 (+457)

#### TACKETT, RUSSO, VIA AND BUTTURFF LEAD PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS

MAY 4, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

After 12 more games at the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers, the top four players remain the same.

EJ Tackett, Matt Russo, Chris Via and Jakob Butturff remain in position to earn a bye for the 12-player televised bracket with a dozen games remaining in the tournament.

Tackett leads the field with a total pinfall of 8,290 (+1,090) for 36 games, while Russo fired games of 277 and 300 this evening to move into second place.

Tomas Käyhkö, who led the second advancer round with a 1,477 six-game series, moved into fifth place. He trails fourth-place Butturff by 72 pins as the field trimmed from 42 players to 24 following Thursday's two advancer rounds.

Anthony Simonsen, who seeks to make the championship round of all five major championships, sits in sixth place, while defending champion Jason Belmonte is in 14th.

Tackett increased his lead to 159 pins during Thursday's dual-pattern competition. With the 45-foot Weber pattern on the left lane and 39-foot Carter on the right, Tackett opted to throw a Carbine Tank on the fresh.

"I describe that ball as if it's made out of maple syrup and gummy bears," Tackett said. "The cover likes to stick to the lane.

Tackett said he started off both advancer rounds well, but said he has struggled with transition, particularly on the left lane.

"I'm having a really tough time seeing the lane the right way," he said. "I've gotta get better at the end of blocks here."

If he continues to bowl well on the fresh and solves his issues later in rounds, Tackett could earn the No. 1 seed at a fourth major this season. However, he said the top seed is irrelevant this week.

"At this tournament, it doesn't matter because it doesn't guarantee you the title match," Tackett said. "The top four is all that matters."

Cody Shoemaker struck on his final eight shots to usurp Ramsey Basurto by nine pins for the final berth in Friday's top-24 round. With two games to go, Shoemaker had fallen to 34th place.

"It was one of those moments where you're like, 'Let's leave it all out there. You never know what's going to happen,'" Shoemaker said. "I would have to find a lot (of pins) tomorrow to get the 12th, but we'll take the first step of trying to get to 18th first."

The top-24 round begins at 11 a.m. ET on Friday, with those six games determining the advancers to the top-18 round on Friday evening. The top 12 players after 48 games of qualifying will advance to the televised bracket finals.

#### LEADERS THROUGH ADVANCER ROUND 2

EJ Tackett, 8,290 (+1,090)

Matt Russo, 8,131 (+931)

Chris Via, 8,102 (+902)

Jakob Butturff, 8,076 (+876)

Tomas Käyhkö, 8,004 (+804)

Anthony Simonsen, 7,975 (+775)

Dom Barrett, 7,971 (+771)

Bill O'Neill, 7,952 (+752)

Trevor Roberts, 7,945 (+743)

Keven Williams, 7,943 (+743)

## **TACKETT EARNS HISTORIC FOURTH TOP SEED, 12 FINALISTS ADVANCE AT PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS**

**MAY 5, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

*EJ Tackett, Jakob Butturff, Matt Russo and Tomas Käyhkö earn byes; Chris Via, Bill O'Neill, Jesper Svensson, Zac Tackett, Kevin McCune, Keven Williams, Dom Barrett and Anthony Simonsen advance to finals of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers.*

The PBA Tour's grand return to Bowlero North Brunswick in New Jersey could only have resulted in a final field rife with poetic storylines and magical homecomings.

After 48 games of qualifying, plus a one-game roll-off, the 12 finalists of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers have been determined.

EJ Tackett earned the No. 1 seed, shooting 10,832 (+1,232) for his 48 games on the 39-foot Carter and 45-foot Weber patterns. Though this No. 1 seed does not guarantee him a spot in the title match, he earns an unprecedented fourth major championship top seed.

Earlier this season, Tackett earned the No. 1 seed at the U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!, PBA Tournament of Champions and PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon. He won the U.S. Open and World Championship to double his career major titles tally from two to four.

Jakob Butturff, Matt Russo and Tomas Käyhkö earned the No. 2-4 seeds and will also receive a one-round bye. Butturff and Käyhkö each advance to their second major telecast of the season, while Russo returns to TV at a major for the first time since last season's PBA Players Championship.

Russo said win or lose, this will likely be the best telecast of his career.

He grew up in Millstone Township, N.J., less than 25 miles from the site of this week's Players Championship. Russo grew up bowling youth and high school tournaments at Bowlero North Brunswick and is sure to have family and friends pack the house on Sunday afternoon.

The bracket begins Saturday, May 6 at 10 p.m. on FS1 with the No. 5-12 seeds. The opening match features two players making their PBA television debut, though two players have plenty of familiarity with bowling on TV.

No. 8 Zac Tackett — EJ Tackett's younger brother — will face No. 9 Kevin McCune, the son of three-time PBA Tour champion Eugene McCune and grandson of former PBA Player of the Year Don McCune.

On Saturday, Zac will bowl on his first career PBA major telecast in the very same building EJ made his own major telecast debut at the 2014 USBC Masters. And if Zac defeats McCune, the brothers will go head to head on Sunday.

The second match pits No. 5 Chris Via against No. 12 Anthony Simonsen. Via left a 4-9 split in his final frame, which proved to be the difference as Käyhkö earned the final bye by just 10 pins.

Simonsen earned the final spot on Saturday's telecast by defeating Jason Belmonte in a one-game roll-off. Belmonte doubled in his 10th frame, but left a 4-pin on his fill ball and opened the door for Simonsen.

The 26-year-old converted a 3-6-7-10 split, then struck on his fill ball to tie Belmonte. In the roll-off, Simonsen solved a tricky pair to win, 267-159.

A pair of lefties go head-to-head in the third match between No. 7 Jesper Svensson and No. 10 Keven Williams. The winner advances to bowl Butturff, the highest-scoring lefty of the week.

The ultimate match on Saturday pits the veterans No. 6 Bill O'Neill and No. 11 Dom Barrett. A potential battle between eastern Pennsylvania's O'Neill and New Jersey native Russo could be in store for the following round.

The first round on Saturday will be single-game matches, while the Round of Eight and Round of Four matches will be a Race to Two. The championship match on Sunday, May 14 will be a best-of-five match.

The four advancers from Sunday's telecasts return to Bowlero North Brunswick for the final rounds on May 13-14.

#### **FIRST-ROUND MATCHES**

No. 8 Zac Tackett vs. No. 9 Kevin McCune  
*winner faces No. 1 EJ Tackett on Sunday, May 7 at noon ET.*

No. 5 Chris Via vs. No. 12 Anthony Simonsen  
*winner faces No. 4 Tomas Käyhkö on Sunday, May 7 at noon ET.*

No. 7 Jesper Svensson vs. No. 10 Keven Williams  
*winner faces No. 2 Jakob Butturff on Sunday, May 7 at 9:30 p.m. ET.*

No. 6 Bill O'Neill vs. No. 11 Dom Barrett  
*winner faces No. 3 Matt Russo on Sunday, May 7 at 9:30 p.m. ET.*

#### **QUALIFYING FINAL SCORES**

1. EJ Tackett, 10,832 (+1,232)
2. Jakob Butturff, 10,806 (+1,206)
3. Matt Russo, 10,731 (+1,131)
4. Tomas Käyhkö, 10,594 (+994)
5. Chris Via, 10,584 (+984)

6. Bill O'Neill, 10,571 (+971)
7. Jesper Svensson, 10,547 (+947)
8. Zac Tackett, 10,493 (+893)
9. Kevin McCune, 10,479 (+879)
10. Keven Williams, 10,439 (+839)
11. Dom Barrett, 10,403 (+803)
12. Anthony Simonsen, 10,399 (+799)
13. Jason Belmonte, 10,399 (+799)
14. Trevor Roberts, 10,360 (+760)
15. Justin Knowles, 10,346 (+746)
16. Packy Hanrahan, 10,273 (+673)
17. AJ Chapman, 10,251 (+651)
18. Sean Lavery-Spahr, 10,243 (+643)

*Simonsen def. Belmonte, 267-159, in a one-game roll-off.*

## SIMONSEN'S CLUTCH VICTORY HEADLINES PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS ROUND OF 12

MAY 6, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Six titleholders, including five major champions, and two newcomers were represented in the Round of 12 of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers on Saturday night.

The four matches kicked off the bracket finals of the season's final major as the top four seeds earned a bye.

Kevin McCune and Zac Tackett, who competed against each other on the Indiana high school circuit, made their PBA Tour television debuts in the evening's opening match. The young right-handers sought to advance and face Indiana's finest in top seeded EJ Tackett, Zac's older brother.

Zac's two errors in the seventh and eighth frames resulted in splits and open frames, which gave McCune a sizable advantage. But the younger Tackett stayed patient, heeding advice from his older brother and calculating how he could reinsert himself into the match.

"I knew if I struck out that he would at least have the spare to beat me," Zac said. "I put myself in a really good state of mind. I told myself, 'If you want to move on, you have to strike out.'"



Zac delivered all four strikes in his first televised opportunity to write his own legacy.

The images of a disheveled Mika Koivuniemi crept into the collective mind of the New Jersey fans as McCune left a flat 10-pin. Before the thought could funnel into McCune's brain, he converted the spare and clinched the win.

One brother down; one more to go. McCune will face the elder Tackett in the opening match of Sunday's Round of Eight at noon ET on FS1

After 48 games of qualifying, Chris Via nearly secured a top four seed and a bye; instead, the No. 5 seed received a date with the winner of an Anthony Simonsen and Jason Belmonte roll-off. Simonsen routed Belmonte's in the one-game on Friday night to earn the No. 12 seed.

On Saturday, Via started off with the first five strikes but the strike train derailed with a pocket 7-10 in the sixth frame. He left two more splits out of the commercial break, converting the 3-6-7-10 in the seventh frame.

As Simonsen recovered from a slow start, Via reapplied pressure late in the match with strikes in the ninth through 11th frames.

Simonsen countered with the double he needed to win the match, 237-231.

"You can't give that guy a chance," Via said. "I bowled a great game and I forced him to double in the 10th, but he's one of the best bowlers of all time. He stepped up and got the job done."

Via's 7-10 splits were reminiscent of the 2019 Players Championship title match: Belmonte left the devastating split in the 10th frame, then Simonsen struck to win his then-second career major title.

With a guaranteed top-eight finish this week, Simonsen notches his 13th top-10 finish in 13 events this season.

Simonsen's quest for a second major this season — and sixth of his young career — continues on Sunday with a quarterfinal match against Tomas Käyhkö. Simonsen also seeks to become the first player to make all five major championship final rounds in a single season.

After a quick re-oil of the lanes, the all-lefty portion of the bracket began with Keven Williams knocking off Jesper Svensson.

Williams enjoyed a stress-free victory as poor carry plagued Svensson; the Swede left four 7-pins and a pocket 7-10 in the first seven frames.

But Williams said win or lose, he was going to enjoy the moment.

"I look at this a lot differently than some guys might when it comes to TV," Williams said. "I like to be an entertainer, and it's a perfect platform when you're on TV to show who you are as a person. I think the sport needs more of that."

The Springfield native's career-best season continues with another all-southpaw match against Jakob Butturff at 9:30 p.m. ET Sunday night on FS1.

"I'm finally to the point in my career where I'm understanding the game out here on Tour," Williams said. "This is the first year where even when I'm not feeling great, I feel I'm closer. I'm learning and I understand the mindset a lot better."

With his wife and two children in the crowd, Bill O'Neill, an eastern Pennsylvania native and a local favorite, rode the front-seven strikes to victory over Dom Barrett.

"It's hard to describe (what it means) to have my family here. They don't get a chance to watch me bowl too often," O'Neill said.

O'Neill closed out the Round of 12 with a resounding 253-208 win, setting up a battle with the New Jersey-born Matt Russo.

The quarterfinal and semifinal matches will be Race-To-Two format. If a player wins both games, they will clinch the match; if they split the two games, a roll-off will determine the advancer.

The victors of Sunday's quarterfinal matches will advance to the semifinals, which will take place next Saturday May 13. The best-of-five championship match will be Sunday, May 14 on FOX.

#### ROUND OF 12 SCORES

Match One: No. 9 Kevin McCune def. No. 8 Zac Tackett, 200-189

Match Two: No. 12 Anthony Simonsen def. No. 5 Chris Via, 237-231

Match Three: No. 10 Keven Williams def. No. 7 Jesper Svensson, 232-167

Match Four: No. 6 Bill O'Neill def. No. 11 Dom Barrett, 253-208

The 9th-12th finishers each earn \$8,000.

#### ROUND OF EIGHT MATCHES

Sunday, May 7 at noon ET

No. 1 EJ Tackett vs. No. 9 Kevin McCune

No. 4 Tomas Käyhkö vs. No. 12 Anthony Simonsen

Sunday, May 7 at 9:30 p.m. ET

No. 2 Jakob Butturff vs. No. 10 Keven Williams

No. 3 Matt Russo vs. No. 6 Bill O'Neill

SIMONSEN, MCCUNE ADVANCE TO SEMIFINALS OF PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS

MAY 7, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

In the first of two quarterfinal rounds of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers, Anthony Simonsen and Kevin McCune prevailed. The young right-handers punched their tickets to the semifinals of the season's final major.

Though Simonsen boasts nearly a decade's worth of additional experience, the 26-year-old is only two years older than McCune. Neither player was old enough to vote — and Simonsen was barely old enough to drive — the last time the PBA Tour competed at Bowlero North Brunswick in New Jersey in 2014.

In the afternoon's opening match, McCune dethroned EJ Tackett, the frontrunner for PBA Player of the Year. Tackett, the No. 1 seed, earned his fourth top seed in five majors this season and set a new PBA record.

McCune took Game 1 of the Race-to-Two match after Tackett left a 7-10 split in the 10th frame. Tackett needed one of the pins to force McCune to double, but missed both. McCune struck and converted a 6-pin to secure the first point.

In Game 2, Tackett could not figure out the 39-foot Carter pattern on the right lane. He tallied a Brooklyn strike, two open frames and a single-pin conversion in his four attempts leading into the final frame, where he would need to double to force a roll-off.

As he did to win both of his major titles, Tackett stepped up and delivered both strikes.

"Not dead yet!" he said.

In the roll-off, Tackett struck again on the right lane but split on the left lane, which featured the 45-foot Weber pattern. McCune, who defeated EJ's younger brother Zac Tackett in Saturday's Round of 12, seized the opportunity against another Indiana native.

"I wasn't thinking of him as the hottest player on Tour," McCune said. "I thought of him as a friend because I've known him since I was little. I just came out here to beat my friend in a very high intensity match."

Though Simonsen came into the afternoon's second match as the lowest remaining seed (No. 12), he carried the momentum entering his match against No. 4 Tomas Käyhkö.

Simonsen, perhaps sensing an opening with the Player of the Year favorite bowing out early, started off on fire. As Käyhkö struggled to knock over all 10 pins, much like he did at the U.S. Open earlier this season, Simonsen cruised to a Game 1 victory, 213-190.

Käyhkö switched to urethane on the right lane and flipped the script in Game 2, starting with the first five strikes. The two-handers each split in the ninth frame then aced all three strikes in the 10th, but Käyhkö won the game and forced the second roll-off of the afternoon.

After Simonsen tallied 40 for his two-frame pinfall, Käyhkö needed to double in his second frame to advance.

During his fill ball on the right lane, Käyhkö moved one board to the left and struck. It proved to be an adjustment he said he regretted as he left a ringing 10-pin to lose.

With the win, Simonsen clinched an unprecedented top-four finish in all five of this season's majors.

The remaining semifinalists will be determined tonight at 9:30 p.m. ET on FS1.

The lefties Jakob Butturff and Keven Williams will compete in the opening match, while New Jersey's Matt Russo squares off with eastern Pennsylvania's Bill O'Neill in the second.

#### QUARTERFINAL SCORES

Match One: No. 9 Kevin McCune def. No. 1 EJ Tackett

Game 1: McCune def. Tackett, 193-192

Game 2: Tackett def. McCune, 211-208

Roll-Off: McCune def. Tackett, 49-24

Match Two: No. 12 Anthony Simonsen def. No. 4 Tomas Käyhkö

Game 1: Simonsen def. Käyhkö, 213-190

Game 2: Käyhkö def. Simonsen, 232-211

Roll-Off: Simonsen def. Käyhkö, 40-38

Match Three: No. 2 Jakob Butturff vs. No. 10 Keven Williams

Match Four: No. 6 Bill O'Neill vs. No. 3 Matt Russo

Tackett and Käyhkö, plus the losers of Match Three and Match Four, each earn \$13,000.

#### REMAINING MATCHES

Sunday, May 7 at 9:30 p.m. ET on FS1

No. 2 Jakob Butturff vs. No. 10 Keven Williams (Race-to-Two match)

No. 3 Matt Russo vs. No. 6 Bill O'Neill (Race-to-Two match)

Saturday, May 13 at 12:30 p.m. ET on FS1

No. 9 Kevin McCune vs. No. 12 Anthony Simonsen (Race-to-Two match)

No. 2 Jakob Butturff | No. 10 Keven Williams vs. No. 3 Matt Russo | No. 6 Bill O'Neill (Race-to-Two match)

Sunday, May 14 at 1 p.m. ET on FOX

Championship match (Best-of-five match)

## **BUTTURFF, O'NEILL DOMINATE TO REACH SEMIFINALS OF THE PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS**

**MAY 7, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Jakob Butturff and Bill O'Neill collected decisive victories in the quarterfinals of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers next weekend.

Butturff and O'Neill will join Anthony Simonsen and Kevin McCune in the semifinals next weekend at Bowlero North Brunswick. Simonsen and McCune won their quarterfinal matches in a pair of thrilling roll-offs earlier on Sunday afternoon.

The eight-time PBA champion Butturff dismantled Keven Williams in the third quarterfinal match. He converted a pair of difficult six-count spares to open the match, but those would be his only shots to miss the pocket all match.

Holding a 13-pin advantage, Butturff packed all three strikes in the 10th frame to claim the first point in the Race-to-Two match.

Butturff didn't stop there, recording a 10-strike 278 in Game 2 — the highest of all three televised rounds this weekend — to eliminate Williams.

"I think the biggest thing that I had, and I know the majority of lefties don't have, is that I love to get in and out-hook them," Butturff said. "I just had to find a way to get deeper than him on the lane and I think that's what paid off in this two-game match."

Williams said his poor ball reaction reminded him of what he saw towards the end of qualifying, where he struggled to bowl games over 210 consistently.

"That's part of bowling," Williams said. "Jakob matched up; he's bowling sick, like he always does. He's one of the best lefties on Tour for the last eight years or however long he's been on Tour, so I can't be mad about getting whooped like that."

The final match of the night pitted New Jersey-raised Matt Russo against the lifelong eastern Pennsylvanian in O'Neill. The two [jawed back and forth](#) over the past couple days.

In a unique twist, O'Neill reaped the benefits often enjoyed by the southpaws as the lone right-hander on the show. That proved to be a deciding factor in the match as the exacerbated transition puzzled Russo, who shot 160 in Game 1 without striking on the right lane's 39-foot Carter pattern until the ninth frame.

"I honestly had no clue on the right lane," Russo said. "(Butturff and Williams) both threw urethane on that lane and they were both far enough to the right there was really nothing to throw at. But then when you threw it at something, it just kept hooking. If it was too hard, it kept going. I don't know if I've ever seen anything like that, truthfully."

Despite a slow start, Russo kept Game 2 closer as he struck on four of five shots late in the match. But O'Neill stayed clean to defeat the southpaw and advance to the semifinals.

O'Neill said if they had bowled the first match, before Butturff and Williams beat up the left side of the lane, the outcome may have been different.

"We see it all the time and the lefties don't, so when they see those kinds of things, instinctually they just don't know the moves," O'Neill said. "On the flip side for me, on that left lane, I had nobody helping me break them down to the right and so the pattern played pretty flat. That was a mistake on my part, not to have a little more surface and play a little further right to create a little better ball reaction."

If O'Neill wants to win a second career Players Championship, he'll need to devise a better gameplan as he'll face the highest-scoring player of the weekend in Butturff.

Simonsen, who became the first player to earn top-four finishes in all five majors in a single season, will face McCune in the other semifinal. Both matches will be held Saturday, May 13 at 12:30 p.m. ET on FS1.

With Simonsen and Butturff having secured spots in the PBA Super Slam Cup, the highest finisher between O'Neill and McCune will join them, EJ Tackett and Jason Belmonte in Florida the following weekend.

In the meantime, players will make the short trek to Delaware as qualifying for the [Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort](#) gets underway on Tuesday.

But first, O'Neill will celebrate Sunday's triumph near his hometown and his 13th wedding anniversary with his wife, Christi.

## **QUARTERFINAL SCORES**

### **Match One: No. 9 Kevin McCune def. No. 1 EJ Tackett**

Game 1: McCune def. Tackett, 193-192

Game 2: Tackett def. McCune, 211-208

Roll-Off: McCune def. Tackett, 49-24

### **Match Two: No. 12 Anthony Simonsen def. No. 4 Tomas Käyhkö**

Game 1: Simonsen def. Käyhkö, 213-190

Game 2: Käyhkö def. Simonsen, 232-211

Roll-Off: Simonsen def. Käyhkö, 40-38

### **Match Three: No. 2 Jakob Butturff def. No. 10 Keven Williams**

Game 1: Butturff def. Williams, 224-188

Game 2: Butturff def. Williams, 278-203

**Match Four: No. 6 Bill O'Neill def. No. 3 Matt Russo**

Game 1: O'Neill def. Russo, 218-160

Game 2: O'Neill def. Russo, 196-180

The fifth- through eighth-place finishers each earn \$13,000.

**2023 ROTH/HOLMAN PBA DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW**

MAY 8, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Following the quarterfinals of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers, the PBA Tour stars made the two-hour trek south to Delaware for one of the season's most captivating tournaments.

The Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort begins on Tuesday at Mid County Lanes & Entertainment Center in Middletown, Del.

The tournament is named in honor of PBA Hall of Famers Mark Roth and Marshall Holman, who won a combined 56 titles, including three PBA Tour doubles titles together. Roth, who passed away in November 2021, won 34 titles on the PBA Tour, sixth-most in PBA history.

Not only is the tournament named in honor of the bowling legends, but players will be competing on eponymous oil patterns this week.

The first round will be contested on the 38-foot Holman pattern, while the 42-foot Roth pattern will be used for the second round. Match play and the stepladder finals will feature a dual-pattern format.

The top 12 teams after two six-game rounds of qualifying will advance to round-robin match play. The top four teams after Thursday's match play rounds will advance to the stepladder finals, airing at 6 p.m. ET. All rounds will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

This year's champions will split the \$20,000 top prize.

**STORYLINES**

Defending champions EJ Tackett and Marshall Kent seek to continue their mastery of the event, having made the championship round in five of the past six years.

Kent said he doesn't feel any added pressure to bowl well and help sustain Tackett's tremendous season. Beyond their extensive experience bowling together, Kent said his own history at Mid County Lanes gives him even more confidence.

"I know a couple tricks that work in this place that have worked pretty well in the past," Kent said. "If that trick is there, then I really like our chances. If not, then that guy (pointing to Tackett) is going to have to bowl pretty good."

If the duo is able to repeat this week, Tackett would tie Holman himself with 22 career titles. Tackett beamed when he realized that potential.

“That would be pretty cool,” said Tackett, smiling ear to ear.

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

The past six teams to win the event are all competing together this week, including Kris Prather and Andrew Anderson (2021), Jesper Svensson and Kyle Troup (2017 and 2020), Sean Rash and Matt Ogle (2019) and Bill O’Neill and Jason Belmonte (2018).

DJ Archer and Shawn Maldonado will pursue redemption this year. They earned the top seed in last year’s event, but fell to Tackett and Kent in the championship match.

This marks Mid County Lanes sixth PBA Tour title event as the host venue. Ryan Ciminelli captured the last title awarded at the 32-lane Delaware center at the 2019 PBA Gene Carter's Pro Shop Classic. In 2018, Anthony Simonsen won throwing a back-up ball during the later stages of the event.

#### Notable A-squad Teams

Andrew Anderson and Kris Prather

Dom Barrett and Anthony Simonsen

AJ Johnson and Tommy Jones

Jason Sterner and Tom Smallwood

Darren Tang and Michael Tang

#### Notable B-squad Teams

Jason Belmonte and Bill O’Neill

Marshall Kent and EJ Tackett

Brad Miller and Kyle Sherman

Jesper Svensson and Kyle Troup

Matt Ogle and Sean Rash

#### **HANRAHAN, HUPÉ LEAD ROUND 1 OF ROTH/HOLMAN PBA DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP**

**MAY 9, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**



Packy Hanrahan and Mitch Hupé dominated the first round of qualifying at the Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort.

The former Wichita State Shocker teammates shot 3,027 (+627) for their 12 combined games, averaging over 252 on the 38-foot Holman pattern.

"The best doubles teams have a good mixture between really good chemistry and talent," Hanrahan said. "We've been bowling together for so long that it's easy to help him make a move, or have him help me make a move just because I've watched his ball go down the lane so many times."

Hanrahan led all individual players, firing 1,577 (+377) for his six-games at Mid County Lanes & Entertainment Center in Middletown, Del.

The duo, who started bowling doubles tournaments while attending Wichita State University, both said they believe that a right-lefty tandem is the optimal strategy for a doubles tournament.

Dom Barrett and Anthony Simonsen, boasting a combined eight major titles, sit in second overall at +499, while the 2021 champions Andrew Anderson and Kris Prather sit in third.

The defending champions, EJ Tackett and Marshall Kent, led B-squad with a 2,844 (+444) total and sit in fourth place overall. Tackett finished two pins behind Hanrahan, containing his sensational season.

Matt Zweig's 300 helped power him and Jakob Butturff to fifth overall.

Matt Ogle finished eighth among individual players, firing games of 299 and 300, to lift him and Sean Rash to sixth place. Rash, who has battled a back injury all season, joked that Ogle is the one with the sore back today.

"We just get along," Rash said. "We feed off each other really well. We know our games pretty well and can make suggestions. It's not one of those things where we get defensive. We know the other knows they're talking about."

After Wednesday's six games per player on the 42-foot Roth pattern, the field will be cut to the top 12 teams. Sam Cooley and Andres Gomez hold the 12th position at +390.

B-squad will begin competition on Wednesday at 11 a.m. ET, while A-squad returns to the lanes at 4:30 p.m.

#### **ROUND 1 LEADERS**

1. Packy Hanrahan and Mitch Hupé, 3,027 (+627)
2. Dom Barrett and Anthony Simonsen, 2,899 (+499)
3. Andrew Anderson and Kris Prather, 2,891 (+491)
4. EJ Tackett and Marshall Kent, 2,844 (+444)
5. Jakob Butturff and Matt Zweig, 2,833 (+433)
6. Sean Rash and Matt Ogle, 2,830 (+430)
7. Cristian Azcona and Fero Williams, 2,823 (+423)

8. Arturo Quintero and Ildemaro Ruiz Jr., 2,814 (+414)
9. Matt Kuba and Michael Davidson, 2,814 (+414)
10. Sean Lavery-Spahr and Santtu Tahvanainen, 2,812 (+412)
11. Cortez Schenck and Michael Fitzgerald, 2,797 (+397)
12. Sam Cooley and Andres Gomez, 2,790 (+390)

Full standings are available [here](#).

## HANRAHAN'S NEAR-HISTORIC PERFORMANCE HELPS LEAD HIM AND HUPÉ INTO MATCH PLAY ROTH/HOLMAN PBA DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP

MAY 10, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

During the second round of qualifying at the Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort, Packy Hanrahan and Mitch Hupé continued their stellar bowling to lead the field into match play.

The former Wichita State Shocker teammates paced the 64-team field with a total pinfall of 5,947 (+1,147) for their 24 combined games on the 38-foot Holman and 42-foot Roth patterns.

Sean Rash and Matt Ogle briefly took the lead following B-squad's second round of qualifying at 5,740 (+940) at Mid County Lanes & Entertainment Center in Middletown, Del. They sit in second place as match play begins on Thursday.

Matt Kuba and Michael Davidson qualified in third place at +865, while Cortez Schenck and Michael Fitzgerald took fourth. The top four teams after tomorrow's round-robin match play will advance to the stepladder finals.

Also advancing to match play: Sean Lavery-Spahr and Santtu Tahvanainen, Dom Barrett and Anthony Simonsen, Benjy Martinez and Nate Stubler, Brad Miller and Kyle Sherman, Jakob Butturff and Matt Zweig, Andrew Anderson and Kris Prather, Kyle Troup and Jesper Svensson, and Jason Belmonte and Bill O'Neill.

Four former Roth/Holman PBA Doubles champions advanced to match play: Rash/Ogle (2019), Anderson/Prather (2021), Troup/Svensson (2017 and 2020) and Belmonte/O'Neill (2018).

Hanrahan and Hupé led the first round of qualifying at +627. It took them just two games on A-squad this evening to surpass Rash and Ogle's +940.

"We didn't think we could take it easy by any means," Hupé said. "Coming out the gates with 300 and Packy at 279, and then the next game we both had 268, it made it a little easier to go from there since we kind of already did the job in the first two.

"Our whole pair really was scoring so high that even bowling like 300 or 260 just felt like I was keeping pace with them," added Hupé, who bowled with Lavery-Spahr and Tahvanainen during both qualifying

rounds. "For the most part, I didn't feel like I was bowling amazing, just keeping pace with my pair, not even the field."

While Hupé finished ninth overall among individuals, firing 2,865, Hanrahan's performance approached history.

Hanrahan shot 3,082 — one pin shy of Mike Aulby's 12-game record set in 1996.

The two-handed lefty needed 225 in his final game to usurp Aulby; he remained in striking distance of the record until he left a bucket in the eight frame, then struck out for 224. He averaged 256.83 for his dozen games across the 38-foot Holman and 42-foot Roth patterns.

"Because everybody was scoring around us, I knew I was bowling well, but I never was like, 'Oh, yeah I'm gonna get the 12-game scoring record. No one's touched this,'" Hanrahan said. "I thought it'd be cool, but there are a lot more important things than setting a scoring record. There are titles on the line."

Thursday's match play rounds will feature baker doubles and a dual-pattern format, which means each player will bowl on one pattern (barring lineup changes). With fewer teams in the field and the baker format, less transition is expected during match play than qualifying as well.

For Rash and Ogle, the decision was simple. Ogle posted the ninth-best block on the Holman pattern, while Rash excelled on the Roth pattern.

"We're both confident in each other's game," Ogle said. "We're both lined up on our pattern that we want to go on and that's what we're gonna pick tomorrow."

Hanrahan and Hupé, by virtue of each player's dominance on the fresh, remain undecided and will make their decision after practice. For the first three games of each round, Hanrahan shot 815 and 802, respectively, while Hupé shot 736 and 785.

The first round of round robin match play begins at 10 a.m. ET on Thursday.

## ROUND 2 LEADERS

Packy Hanrahan and Mitch Hupé, 5,947 (+1,147)

Sean Rash and Matt Ogle, 5,740 (+940)

Matt Kuba and Michael Davidson, 5,665 (+865)

Cortez Schenck and Michael Fitzgerald, 5,640 (+840)

Sean Lavery-Spahr and Santtu Tahvanainen, 5,633 (+833)

Dom Barrett and Anthony Simonsen, 5,622 (+822)

Benjy Martinez and Nate Stubler, 5,595 (+795)

Brad Miller and Kyle Sherman, 5,569 (+769)

Jakob Butturff and Matt Zweig, 5,561 (+761)

Andrew Anderson and Kris Prather, 5,552 (+752)

Kyle Troup and Jesper Svensson, 5,546 (+746)

Jason Belmonte and Bill O'Neill, 5,527 (+727)

## **HANRAHAN, HUPÉ CAPTURE 2023 ROTH/HOLMAN PBA DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP**

**MAY 11, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Packy Hanrahan and Mitch Hupé completed their wire-to-wire dominance at the Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort.

On Thursday afternoon at Mid County Lanes and Entertainment in Middletown, Del., the longtime doubles teammates maintained their lead through 12 games of round-robin match play to earn the No. 1 seed. In the title match of the stepladder finals, Hanrahan and Hupé defeated Sean Rash and Matt Ogle, 223-210.

Hanrahan collected his second title of the season and his career, while Hupé picked up his first career PBA Tour title.

"I felt like it was due," Hupé said. "I felt like it was going to happen."

"It was time for the boys to get one," Hanrahan added.

After a week in which strikes came early and often — Hanrahan came within one pin of the PBA's [12-game scoring record](#) — the title match turned into a grind.

Competing on dual patterns — 42-foot Roth on the left lane and 38-foot Holman on the right — Rash and Ogle opened with the first five strikes. Transition had been blowing open the left lane, and Rash felt his look starting to go away.

Rash converted a 1-2-7 spare after an errant shot in the sixth frame, but Hanrahan failed to capitalize on the opportunity to take the lead. He left a 4-6-10 in his own sixth frame, ceding control of the match to Ogle and Rash.

After Ogle converted a stone-9, Rash missed a 2-4-5 in the eighth frame. Rash needed a mark in the 10th frame to force Hanrahan to at least double, but missed a 10-pin.

Hanrahan delivered a match-sealing strike to claim the win. He said he has been bowling doubles tournaments with Hupé for at least eight years, dating back to their college days at Wichita State University.

"To share that moment with a guy who I've bowled 50, 60, 70 doubles tournaments with, just being able to share that on the biggest stage, it just kind of all pours out of you at once," Hanrahan said. "You try not to think about winning as much as you can until it actually happens. Being able to step up in the 10th, not only for me but also for one of my best friends — you saw the explosion."

The opening match of the stepladder finals gifted fans in attendance and watching at home on BowlTV an all-time classic.

Jason Belmonte and Bill O'Neill, who earned the No. 4 seed after entering match play in 12th place, fired 11 combined strikes in the opening match; their only blemish was an O'Neill 2-pin conversion in the third frame.

However, Simonsen threw all three strikes in the 10th frame to defeat the 2018 champs, 280-279.

In the semifinal, Simonsen and Barrett kept pace with Rash and Ogle, with each teams capable of shooting in the 250s entering the final frames. However, Simonsen left a 2-4-8 in the ninth frame and Barrett split in the 10th.

Rash and Ogle moved onto the championship match, their first since winning the Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship in 2019, with a 258-208 victory.

Rash has battled a back injury all season, but rehabbed and prepared the last few weeks specifically to be ready for this tournament.

"This was the one that I focused on, to try to be as healthy as I could to get here," Rash said. "My adrenaline took over for the last couple of games here where I didn't feel anything, then I'm heartbroken. To help Matt try to get to a third title, to try to get another one to add to both of our résumés, literally heartbroken."

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Belmonte and O'Neill snuck into the stepladder finals following a chaotic conclusion to the position round.

Three teams, separated by just 18 pins, vied for the final spot on the show: Jakob Butturff and Matt Zweig, Sean Lavery-Spahr and Santtu Tahvanainen, and Belmonte and O'Neill, who sat in sixth place entering the position round.

After a strong start, Lavery-Spahr and Tahvanainen fell behind in the match with Belmonte and O'Neill, turning the battle into a two-horse race. Though the teams were not bowling head-to-head, they matched each other strike for strike — and then split for split.

Zweig left and did not convert a 3-4-6-7-10 split in their ninth frame, opening the door for Belmonte to secure the fourth seed.

Moments later, Belmonte left a 2-8-10 split in their 10th frame to finish with 241. But the 2018 Roth/Holman Doubles champions beat Lavery-Spahr and Tahvanainen to win their match and the 30 bonus pins.

In the other match, Butturff doubled in the 10th frame to shoot 239. However, Ogle won the match with a strike in his 10th frame, costing the Arizona natives the 30 bonus pins they needed to stay ahead of Belmonte and O'Neill.

Meanwhile, Hanrahan and Hupé had long locked up the top seed.

The two dominated in qualifying, posting the best and ninth-best individual scores for the 12 games. They maintained their lead of more than 200 pins through an additional 12 games of match play, then polished off the championship match with a title-clinching strike.

"I didn't want anyone else throwing that shot in the whole field," Hupé said. "I knew he was going to do it."

"Could you write a better ending than that?"

### **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES**

**Match One:** Barrett/Simonsen def. Belmonte/O'Neill, 280-279

**Match Two:** Rash/Ogle def. Barrett/Simonsen, 258-208

**Match Three:** Hanrahan/Hupé def. Rash/Ogle, 223-210

### **FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Packy Hanrahan and Mitch Hupé, \$20,000
2. Sean Rash and Matt Ogle, \$11,000
3. Dom Barrett and Anthony Simonsen, \$8,000
4. Jason Belmonte and Bill O'Neill, \$7,000
5. Jakob Butturff and Matt Zweig, \$5,500
6. Sean Lavery-Spahr and Santtu Tahvanainen, \$5,100
7. Matt Kuba and Michael Davidson, \$4,800
8. Benjy Martinez and Nate Stubler, \$4,500
9. Andrew Anderson and Kris Prather, \$4,200
10. Cortez Schenck and Michael Fitzgerald, \$3,900
11. Brad Miller and Kyle Sherman, \$3,700
12. Kyle Troup and Jesper Svensson, \$3,500

Full standings are available [here](#).

Full standings are available here.

PBA REGIONAL RECAP: WELCOME TO THE PBA, JOHN JANAWICZ

MAY 12, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN

He's won all over the globe, including 15 gold medals for the red, white and blue as a 10-time Team USA member.

And now — John Janawicz is an official PBA Regional Tour champion.

Janawicz previously won two PBA regionals in 2010 and 2019 as a non-member, but now the Florida native can and will bowl in PBA50 regional and national events this season as a member. Unsurprisingly, he started with a bang, winning the first tournament he entered this year.

#### PBA50 EARL ANTHONY CLASSIC

Beginning out West, the region hosted three groups of competitors, all battling for a title in Dublin, Calif. Bryan Alpert kicked things off on the senior tour sitting at the top of the leaderboard through eight games, but Janawicz took over the lead after the cashers round.

After eight rounds of match play, Noel Vazquez held a four-pin lead over Janawicz, but with bonus pins, whoever won the position round would be deemed the champion. With a crucial turkey in the middle of the game, "JJ" delivered a 239 to the 214 of Vazquez to claim his first career PBA title as a member.

#### PBA50 Earl Anthony Classic Final Standings

John Janawicz, 2,500 points, \$2,100

Noel Vazquez, 1,500, \$1,500

Bryan Alpert, 1,150, \$1,200

Steven Smith, 950, \$950

#### PBA WOMEN'S EARL ANTHONY CLASSIC

Just like the PBA50 Tour, the ladies also got the early call time at Earl Anthony's Dublin Bowl. Frequent contestant Karen Rosprim claimed the lead after eight games of qualifying, going +43. She was one of five players to go plus for the block.

Although she got off to a slow start according to her standards, Avery Domaguin dominated match play, going from sixth at -16 to first at +312. The 15-year-old went 6-1 in match play and held a 62-pin lead with position round to go. There, she improved her record to 7-1 with another 200 game to capture her third PBA Women's Regional title.

Avery Domaguin, \$1,000

Brittany Hillman, \$700

Missy Parkin, \$500

Karen Rosprim, \$400

#### PBA EARL ANTHONY OPEN

The standard division took on the afternoon slate, where the field maxed out at 80 bowlers, and the top 20% moved on. Hunter Mayes qualified first after Round 1, with Buddy Lucas in second, but the two flip-flopped following the advancer round.

Through match play, the two remained on top with one game remaining, but Tim Cagle II also joined the pack, sitting just 57 pins out of first. Cagle made a run in the final match, winning 215-186 and grabbing the bonus pins, but Buddy Lucas got just enough pins in the first-second place matchup, defeating Mayes 194-174. The win gave Lucas \$2,500 and his first title in 11 years.

Buddy Lucas, 2,500 points, \$2,500

Tim Cagle II, 1,500, \$1,700

Hunter Mayes, 1,150, \$1,400

Nicholas Freiberg, 950, \$1,100

#### PBA FIRELAKE SOUTHWEST OPEN

The field at the FireLake Southwest Open in Shawnee, Okla., maxed out at 110 bowlers for two squads and Mykel Holliman snagged the lead after the first eight games, but there was plenty of time for others to make their mark. Holliman eventually earned the No. 1 seed for the stepladder. Dylan Macon, Ryan Barnes, and David Krol rounded out the rest of the stepladder, all eagerly gawking at the \$5,000 top prize.

In the first match, Krol started with the front three. Barnes tried making a run but could not get there as Krol won 213-197. In the semifinal, Krol started strong again, while Macon could not catch back up as Krol won 235-203 and moved on to the finals. Waiting on top was Holliman, who had dominated the event. Holliman started with a turkey, but Krol continued to spare, keeping himself in the match until he threw three in a row late in the game to take the lead. Holliman doubled in the tenth, but Krol spared to win \$5,000 and his first career title.

David Krol, 2,500 points, \$5,000

Mykel Holliman, 1,500, \$3,000

Dylan Macon, 1,150, \$2,300

Ryan Barnes, \$1,500

#### PBA50 THE PLAZA BOWL MIDWEST OPEN

In Clinton, Iowa, Plaza Bowl hosted 36 bowlers looking to add to their resume. About 200 miles from his hometown, Tom Adcock made the three-hour drive from Forsyth, Ill., and led through qualifying while averaging 229. He still had plenty of work to do as match play was on the docket, where players can move positions faster than a toupee in a tornado. Adcock started strong in the morning with a 709 series



and three wins to hold on for the top seed, while Pete Weber, Mitch Beasley, and Gary Alstott rounded out a strong stepladder final.

In the first match between Beasley and Alstott, both players struck a ton, but Beasley struck just a couple extra times to win 257-235. Beasley moved on to face Weber, where again, strikes were plentiful. It came down to the 10th in the back-and-forth match, but Weber got the first two strikes to shut out Beasley and win 257-247. The final match was close between Adcock and Weber through four frames, but Weber opened in the 6th and 7th while Adcock struck all but once in frames three through 10. Adcock won 245-203 and took home his seventh career title.

Tom Adcock, 2,500 points, \$2,000

Pete Weber, 1,500, \$1,100

Mitch Beasley, 1,150, \$850

Gary Alstott, 950, \$750

#### PBA GRANVILLE FINANCIAL SANDHILLS OPEN

This past weekend, over 100 entrants vied for a title in Aberdeen, N.C., on the 44-foot Carmen Salvino pattern. The top four varied throughout the 17 games of qualifying, but in the end, Jack Ness, Carlos Granados, Nick Christy, and Zulmazran Zulkifli took the stepladder positions.

In the beginning match, both players lived around the pocket, but a five-count in the ninth frame from Christy allowed Zulkifli to win 226-222. In the next match, both players had an early four-bagger, but Granados missed a single-pin in the 10th frame, meaning Zulkifli needed a 17-pin fill which he got. The final was not as drama-filled as Ness split twice without a double, as Zulkifli clinched his first PBA Regional Tour title with a 215-183 win.

Zulmazran Zulkifli, 2,500 points, \$2,500

Jack Ness 1,500, \$1,235

Carlos Granados, 1,150, \$1,100

Nick Christy, 950, \$1,000

#### PBA50 EASTOWN RECREATION CENTRAL/MIDWEST OPEN

Back in the PBA50 division on the Johnny Petraglia pattern, 12 of the 46 bowlers moved onto match play, specifically the 12 who went +57 or better for the eight games of qualifying. Ron Hurt led the way on the first day, but Day 2 was the day of the Marsala. John Marsala qualified fourth, but when match play came around, he never lost a game, shooting just one sub-200. He ended up losing his position round match, but it was irrelevant. Marsala won by over 160 pins to pick up title No. 5.

John Marsala, 2,500, \$1,600

Eugene McCune, 1,500, \$1,150

Ron Hurt, 1,150, \$950

Tom Adcock, 950, \$800

## **MCCUNE, BUTTURFF ADVANCE TO FINALS OF PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS MAY 13, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

With dramatic victories in the semifinals of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers, Kevin McCune and Jakob Butturff advanced to the finals of the season's final major at Bowlero North Brunswick.

Butturff looks to become Hall of Fame eligible, while McCune, the runner-up for PBA Rookie of the Year in 2022, aims to stamp his family's name into bowling lore as the first three-generation champions.

The best-of-five games championship match will be held Sunday afternoon at 1 p.m. ET on FOX.

Last weekend, McCune began his ascent of the 12-player bracket finals with a first-round victory over Zac Tackett. In the quarterfinals, he took down the No. 1 seed and frontrunner for PBA Player of the Year, EJ Tackett.

Today, McCune swept the other POY contender, Anthony Simonsen, in the Race-to-Two match. He excelled on both patterns, the 45-foot Weber and 39-foot Carter.

Simonsen, who achieved top-four finishes in all five majors this season with a quarterfinal win over No. 4 Tomas Käyhkö, sought to make a late push for Player of the Year with a second major title of the season.

Simonsen appeared out of sorts all afternoon. He trailed early in the first game, then fell out of contention with a gutter and open frame in the seventh.

McCune sealed the first game with a strike on the right lane, which was the lane that gave him problems last weekend. He deployed a new strategy on the 39-foot Carter pattern — the same strategy that powered his father, Eugene, to three PBA Tour titles.

But the younger McCune claimed he didn't know where the idea to throw rockets up the first arrow came from.

"I couldn't tell you, doesn't ring a bell," McCune said laughing.

Simonsen battled back in the second game, but a pair of open frames cost him. McCune fired strikes in the eighth through 10th frames to lock up the sweep.

Making his first PBA Tour telecasts, McCune took down Tackett and Simonsen — two players in the midst of historic seasons.

“They’re having two years that anybody would ever dream of,” McCune said. “I knew (Simonsen) was a little bit lost. But it’s Simonsen — he could throw an eight or nine-bagger when he’s lost. You can’t count him out.”

In the second match, Butturff completed an unfathomable comeback after losing the first game by 68 pins.

Bill O’Neill, competing in front of dozens of family and friends less than 35 miles from his hometown, trounced the lone lefty in the opening game, 239-171.

Butturff changed his mindset, both literally and figuratively, heading into the second game.

He said the lack of a fellow southpaw on this show caused the lanes to transition differently, but he found the same dominant ball reaction after changing to the Mindset, a reactive ball, in the second game.

After O’Neill threw four strikes in the ninth and 10th frames, Butturff struck in his final frame to force a roll-off with a 264-258 win.

In the two-frame roll-off, O’Neill began with a 3-6 spare conversion. In the tournament’s highest-scoring match, that proved to be a disastrous mistake.

Butturff struck on his first three shots, tripping out the 6-7-10 on the final strike to clinch the victory.

With a victory in tomorrow’s championship match, Butturff would earn his ninth career title and second major, which means he would become Hall of Fame eligible when he reaches the 20-year member threshold.

The Mother’s Day match will be an emotional roller coaster for the 29-year-old, who lost his mother in November 2020.

“I think the biggest factor is that I have to put everything aside and realize that I’ve gotten to this point,” Butturff said. “Now that everything else is on the line, it’s a nerve wracking situation. The jitters can get the best of you, but at the same time you have to put them aside and be relaxed and focus on how good you did to get here.”

For O’Neill, the loss in front of a raucous hometown crowd cuts his 2023 season a little bit shorter.

With the loss, McCune clinches the final berth in next weekend’s [PBA Super Slam Cup](#) in Jupiter, Fla., which features a \$100,000 top prize.

Today’s loss also cost O’Neill a spot in the PBA Tour Finals next month in Arlington, Wash. Kyle Troup hangs onto the eighth position, joining EJ Tackett, Simonsen, Jason Belmonte, Dom Barrett, Butturff, Kris Prather and Packy Hanrahan.

“I’m disappointed,” O’Neill said. “I threw two bad shots in two games and a roll-off. I bowled about as well as I can bowl. I think 250 is going to win most of those games.”

“Sometimes you’re on the wrong end of the breaks and that’s just what it was today.”

With their semifinal losses, O’Neill and Simonsen each receive \$25,000.

### **SEMIFINAL SCORES**

#### **Match One: No. 9 Kevin McCune def. No. 12 Anthony Simonsen, 2-0**

Game 1: McCune def. Simonsen, 227-171

Game 2: McCune def. Simonsen, 225-196

#### **Match Two: No. 2 Jakob Butturff def. No. 6 Bill O’Neill, 2-1**

Game 1: O’Neill def. Butturff, 239-175

Game 2: Butturff def. O’Neill, 264-256

Roll-off: Butturff def. O’Neill, 59-24

## **KEVIN MCCUNE WRITES OWN LEGACY, WINS PBA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY SNICKERS**

### **MAY 14, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Sunday afternoon’s title match at Bowlero North Brunswick bestowed a championship more than five decades in the making. Kevin McCune swept Jakob Butturff in three games to capture the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers.

Notching his first career title in the season’s final major, McCune etched his own chapter to his family’s illustrious legacy.

Fifty years ago, his grandfather Don won six of his eight titles en route to capturing PBA Player of the Year honors. Eugene, his father, won three titles between 2002 and 2012.

With today’s victory, Kevin certifies the McCunes as the first three-generation family of PBA Tour champions.

“I’m out here because I know I’m able to compete with these guys,” McCune said before the match. “It’s in my blood with my dad and grandpa, so I feel like I was born to be out here.”

Though the elder McCunes won a combined 11 titles, Kevin became the first McCune to win a major championship.

“It sounds good because I one-upped my dad,” Kevin said.

The opening game of the best-of-five championship match resembled the semifinals.

McCune cruised to 206, while Butturff stumbled to an open-frame infused 178. The win was emblematic of McCune’s road to the championship match.

McCune eliminated the Tackett brothers, Zac and top-seeded EJ, in his first two matches, then took down Anthony Simonsen in the semifinals. Butturff earned a first-round bye as the No. 2 seed, then defeated Keven Williams in the quarterfinals and Bill O’Neill [in last night’s semifinals](#).

Despite the gargantuan talents dispatched by McCune, Butturff out-averaged McCune by nearly 25 pins per game, 235.25-210.60, through the previous televised rounds.

The 24-year-old pushed his lead to 2-0 with a 247-204 victory in Game 2, posting his highest game of the televised rounds.

Though McCune held a commanding lead, he knew he could not give Butturff an opening.

"Jakob is just like EJ and Simo. He can strike at will once he figures it out," McCune said. "All I had to do was maintain composure and make sure I hit the pocket. If I hit the pocket, I liked my chances of striking."

However, Butturff never managed to get comfortable on either lane. Butturff said he kept his same routine during practice, but the lanes hooked way more today.

"It just didn't even play close to the same," Butturff said. "I feel like it got to me mentally toward the end of our match and that's why it ended the way it did."

McCune did not afford Butturff a chance to creep back into the match, though Butturff didn't help his cause by missing two spares in the first four frames.

With the win, McCune became the first player to win their first career title at a major championship since Chris Via at the 2020 U.S. Open. Via also defeated Butturff in that title match.

The 29-year-old Arizona native sought to become Hall of Fame eligible with a second major and ninth career title.

The stakes were even greater for Butturff competing on Mother's Day. He was very close with his mother, Bridget Miller, and wore his cherry blossom jersey to honor her Japanese heritage.

Two years ago, on [the first Mother's Day](#) since his mom passed away, Butturff won his 27th PBA Regional Tour title. He aspired to make this year's holiday even more memorable with a legacy-altering major title.

While Sunday afternoon didn't go the way Butturff envisioned, he said the day would be a win no matter what.

"A lot of people don't know, but I was born sick. It was to the point where I didn't know if I was going to survive when I was a baby," Butturff said. "That's why I'm so thankful for these opportunities, because the first two weeks of my life I didn't know if I was going to be here in this world."

"I'm so thankful that my mom brought me into this world and (she's) why a day like this is so memorable."

Both McCune and Butturff will head to Jupiter, Fla. next weekend for the [PBA Super Slam Cup](#), a non-title event. They'll join EJ Tackett, Simonsen and Jason Belmonte, who won the first four majors of the season.

Butturff clinched his spot at the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon as the highest finisher without a 2023 major championship.

The preliminary round will air at 2 p.m. ET on Saturday, May 20 on FS1. The finals, featuring a \$100,000 top prize, will be held at 2 p.m. ET on Sunday, May 21 on FOX.

## CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

### *Best-of-Five Match*

#### **Match One: No. 9 Kevin McCune def. No. 2 Jakob Butturff, 3-0**

Game 1: McCune def. Butturff, 206-178

Game 2: McCune def. Butturff, 247-204

Game 3: McCune def. Butturff, 220-175

## FINAL STANDINGS

1. Kevin McCune, \$100,000
2. Jakob Butturff, \$50,000
3. Bill O'Neill, \$25,000
4. Anthony Simonsen, \$25,000
5. EJ Tackett, \$13,000
6. Matt Russo, \$13,000
7. Tomas Käyhkö, \$13,000
8. Keven Williams, \$13,000
9. Chris Via, \$8,000
10. Jesper Svensson, \$8,000
11. Zac Tackett, \$8,000
12. Dom Barrett, \$8,000

## IT'S IN KEVIN MCCUNE'S BLOOD

### **MAY 17, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Kevin McCune is a PBA Tour champion. A PBA Tour *major* champion, to be specific.

But before Sunday afternoon, the 24-year-old was generally known as the son of Eugene McCune and grandson of Don McCune — one of four father-son duos to win on the PBA Tour.

With Kevin's PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers [victory](#), the McCunes became the [first family](#) with three generations of PBA Tour champions.

“The whole reason I came out here (on Tour) was so we could be the only family,” Kevin said. “We’re going to be the only family for 60, 70 or 80 years, and even then — because people have to win. It’s not easy to win out here.”

*Even as he advanced through the bracket, Kevin McCune refused to write anything except "Not Eugene."*

Fresh off securing his first career PBA Tour telecast appearance, Kevin McCune sat down for [his press conference](#) on May 5.

But before he answered any questions, he asked one himself.

“Can I write *Not Eugene* on the bracket?” said Kevin.

Zac Tackett, sitting down next to Kevin, echoed Kevin’s sentiment.

“Can I write *Not EJ*?” Zac chimed in.

The first-round opponents shared more than a childhood in Indiana, spending the better part of their lives in the shadows of PBA royalty.

Growing up with an accomplished parent or sibling can be difficult.

Everyone always wonders where dad (or brother) is and how he’s doing. They always have a story you have to hear about dad. They always ask when you’re going to win like your old man.

Nobody knows that better than Eugene himself. His father, a PBA and USBC Hall of Famer, won eight times on the PBA Tour, including a six-title, Player of the Year campaign in 1973 known as “[the year of the soaker](#).”

Sure, the benefits of learning from such talent outweigh the drawbacks, which are often inconveniences more so than problems. But still, the weight often brings about an enormous pressure to live up to, or even exceed, your father’s accomplishments.

“I felt it,” Eugene said. “But I guess that pressure comes from yourself.”

After 15 years on Tour, Eugene captured his first career title in 2002. He hoisted the long-awaited trophy [with young Kevin in his arms](#). A decade later, he won a pair of titles on Cheetah, cementing his status as the PBA’s premier fireballer.

As Kevin grew up and his athletic acumen began to materialize, Eugene found himself with his shoe on the other foot: The kid with the famous bowler for a dad became the famous bowler dad.

“I’m the middle child,” Eugene joked. “I get *How’s Don doing?* and *How’s Kevin doing?* Nobody says *How’s Gene doing?*”

Being raised by two generations of PBA champions could have placed an even larger burden on Kevin, the Bronny James of Munster, Ind. But, as Eugene said himself, Kevin is a different animal.

“I never put bowling first when I was little. It was always baseball first, so I never really thought about it,” Kevin said. “I never really thought about (the pressure) until I started bowling in college. I thought, ‘Well, I better not make a fool of myself because everybody knows who I am’ — without knowing who I am.”

*Baseball will always be a part of Kevin McCune, even moments after winning his first career PBA Tour title.*

Throughout his two-year professional career, the spotlight has yet to faze Kevin. He credits his poise in pressure situations to his baseball career.

"If you don't think of it as the highest pressure situation, you're going to stay cool, calm and collected," said Kevin, wearing a Wrigley Field-inspired jersey.

"Every time the bases got loaded and they brought him in to pitch, I don't think he ever walked anybody," Eugene said. "You have to throw strikes. If you walk somebody, you lose the game. And that's pretty much like throwing strikes (in bowling)."

You're supposed to look nervous when making your first PBA telecast. Even when you're making your 100th telecast, it's okay to be anxious — just ask Walter Ray Williams Jr.

Kevin didn't get the memo. His poise across the four telecasts was perhaps his only trait more impressive than the routine 29 mile-per-hour spare shots.

His road to the title — the first major championship won by a McCune, as Kevin will be the first to tell you — involved defeating three future Hall of Famers. His opponents resembled the stature of competition Eugene went through to win his own titles.

In his three championship match victories, Eugene defeated Walter Ray Williams Jr., Norm Duke and Pete Weber — three of the four winningest players of all time.

"I did notice the similarities," Eugene said. "You have to beat the best to win."

In the 12-player bracket at the Players Championship, Kevin took down Zac Tackett in the first round, then beat Zac's older brother and Player of the Year favorite, EJ Tackett, in the quarterfinal.

"I don't think it gives me bragging rights, but I think it gives me a little more status that I'm not going to crumble out here, no matter who I'm bowling," Kevin said [after his quarterfinal win over EJ](#).

Following the narrow victory over the elder Tackett, McCune stepped up his game. He adjusted on the right lane, featuring the 39-foot Carter pattern, to play his A-game — the same one exemplified by his father, which earned Kevin the nickname "Nuke."

In the semifinal, Kevin vanquished Anthony Simonsen, the five-time major champion in the midst of a historic season himself. Finally, he swept Jakob Butturff 3-0 in the best-of-five championship match.

"I'm out here because I know I'm able to compete with these guys," Kevin said before the match. "It's in my blood with my dad and grandpa, so I feel like I was born to be out here."

Fifty years after Don's legendary Player of the Year season, his grandson carved his own place in the history books and etched the McCune name into sports royalty.

"We put our heart and soul into bowling for a century," Eugene said. "My dad started it and I just carried that over. It's a proud moment to see our family brought to light more."



Don and Eugene were late bloomers at the professional level, but not Kevin. The 24-year-old is still in the learning phase of his pro career — and he knows it.

“It’s only Year 2,” Kevin said. “I have a lot left to learn. It’s definitely a transition period out here. I found something this week, stuck with it and it worked.”

This weekend, he’s set to take on Tackett, Simonsen, Butturff and Jason Belmonte — arguably the four greatest talents of the modern era — in the PBA Super Slam Cup.

McCune arrives in Florida on Friday morning. He said he wanted to get there earlier, but flights were \$200 cheaper on Friday.

“I don’t have the \$100,000 yet!” Kevin said.

## **EIGHT SUPER REGIONALS ADDED TO PBA REGIONAL TOUR THIS SUMMER**

### **MAY 18, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

While the bulk of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour is in the books, the PBA Regional Tour schedule will soon kick into high gear. Eight super regionals between June and September, ranging from coast to coast, have been added to the summer schedule.

All super regionals will pay a minimum first-place prize of \$4,000, while the events in Chesapeake, Va. and the PBA50 super regional in Jonesboro, Ark. will award \$10,000 to its champions.

The super regional schedule begins at the end of June with two events in Middletown, Del. at Mid County Lanes & Entertainment Center — the host of this year’s Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship presented by Bally’s Dover Casino Resort.

Ohio and Virginia will each host multiple events in August, before the PBA Tony Reyes/Terry Leong Memorial Doubles begins in San Jose, Calif. at the end of the month.

Finally, Hijinx Family Entertainment Center in Jonesboro hosts the PBA50 super regional in mid-September.

### **2023 PBA SUPER REGIONAL SCHEDULE**

#### **[PBA First State Doubles Classic presented by Anchor Buick/GMC](#)**

Mid County Lanes & Entertainment Center (Middletown, DE)

June 28-30

First place - \$4,000 (\$5,000 added to prize fund)

#### **[PBA Rita Justice Classic presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort](#)**

Mid County Lanes & Entertainment Center (Middletown, DE)

June 30-July 2

First place - \$6,000 (\$10,000 added to the prize fund)

#### **[PBA Kremer Roofing Central Classic](#)**

Community Lanes (Minster, OH)

August 8-10

First place - \$4,000

[PBA Bowlerstore.com Classic presented by Moxy's Xtra Pair](#)

Pla Mor Lanes (Coldwater, OH)

August 11-13

First place - \$10,000

[PBA Century Lanes/PBA Booster Club of Hampton Roads Open](#)

Century Lanes (Hampton, VA)

August 15-17

First Place - \$4,000

[PBA Booster Club of Hampton Roads Open](#)

AMF Western Branch Lanes (Chesapeake, VA)

August 18-20

First place - \$8,000

[PBA Tony Reyes/Terry Leong Memorial Doubles](#)

4th St Bowl (San Jose, CA)

August 25-27

First place - projected \$6,000 (\$8,000 Added to prize fund)

[PBA50 Jonesboro Southwest Super Open](#)

Hijinx Family Entertainment Center (Jonesboro, AR)

September 15-17

First place - \$10,000

**PBA SUPER SLAM CUP PRESENTED BY BOWLERO PREVIEW**

**MAY 19, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

This weekend, five of the season's premier talents convene on Bowlero Jupiter in Florida.

EJ Tackett, Jason Belmonte, Anthony Simonsen, Jakob Butturff and Kevin McCune will compete in the PBA Super Slam Cup presented by Bowlero to crown a champion among champions and award a \$100,000 top prize.

The five superstars earned their spot in this non-title event through their excellence in major championships this season.

Tackett, Belmonte, Simonsen and McCune each won a major title this season; Tackett, in fact, won two.

At the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon, the top three finishers were Tackett, Belmonte and Simonsen — who had each already secured their spots in the Super Slam Cup. Therefore, Butturff earned the nomination as the fourth-place finisher.

Here's what you need to know:

## PLAYERS TO WATCH

### ***EJ TACKETT***

**Season stats:** 15 events, 41,200 points, \$372,450 in earnings, 227.12 average, 446 games, 5 titles, nine top-five finishes, 10 top-10 finishes, 11 top-25 finishes

**How he got here:** Tackett won the 2023 U.S. Open presented by Go Bowling!

Tackett earned the No. 1 seed in four of five majors this season — each of his top seeds requiring at least 42 games of qualifying — a feat that has never been accomplished before.

In the season's opening event, the 30-year-old [doubled in the 10th frame](#) to defeat Kyle Troup. The victory just 90 miles from his hometown [fulfilled his childhood dream](#), completed the Triple Crown and [instilled the confidence](#) that catapulted a season for the ages.

Two months and change later, Tackett [doubled in the 10th](#) to win another major, marking a career-high fifth title of the season so far. His near-\$375,000 in earnings put Troup's record of \$496,900 in jeopardy — especially if Tackett can add \$100,000 to his total this weekend.

### ***JASON BELMONTE***

**Season stats:** 15 events, 23,180 points, \$204,625 in earnings, 220.63 average, 437 games, 1 title, three top-five finishes, seven top-10 finishes, 11 top-25 finishes

**How he got here:** Belmonte won the 2023 PBA Tournament of Champions.

Belmonte hasn't commanded the Tour like he has throughout most of the last decade-plus, but has showcased a flair for the dramatic in 2023. At [the TOC](#), he completed a remarkable comeback after sitting in 58th place after the first round of qualifying — a comeback he [spoke into existence](#).

The 39-year-old almost polished off another near-impossible comeback at the PBA World Championship. He surged from 12th place to fourth during match play, then winning three matches to reach the championship where Tackett ended his run.

Belmonte's 220.63 average ranks fifth on Tour (behind Tackett, Simonsen, Butturff and Santtu Tahvanainen) and he's the only player other than Tackett to bowl for two major titles.

### ***ANTHONY SIMONSEN***

**Season stats:** 15 events, 36,265 points, \$298,700 in earnings, 225.08 average, 488 games, 2 titles, 11 top-five finishes, 14 top-10 finishes, 14 top-25 finishes

**How he got here:** Simonsen won the USBC Masters.

Simonsen finished in the top four at all five majors this season, a PBA record, but his [superb title defense at the Masters](#) was his finest performance. After cruising through qualifying, Simonsen won five consecutive three-game matches to reach the championship round. He then fired a 34-strike, 845 series to lock up the No. 1 seed.

In the title match, Simonsen fired 243 without putting up a sweat to win his second consecutive Masters title and third of his career. The win made Simonsen, who turned 26 in January, the first player [to win five major championships](#) before the age of 30.

Beyond his top-four finishes in each major, Simonsen has not finished worse than 10th in a single tournament. His 11 top-five finishes (78.5% of singles events) are the most on Tour. His 488 games are the most on Tour by 42 games — the entirety of TOC qualifying.

Simonsen's consistency is perhaps encapsulated by the PBA Cheetah Championship at the Guaranteed Rate PBA World Series of Bowling XIV: Tackett won the title, his then-fourth of the season, while Simonsen posted his second-worst finish of the season... eighth place.

### **JAKOB BUTTURFF**

**Season stats:** 14 events, 20,450 points, \$146,050 in earnings, 223.92 average, 404 games, 1 title, seven top-five finishes, eight top-10 finishes, 11 top-25 finishes

**How he got here:** Butturff finished fourth at the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon. Since the top three finishers (Tackett, Belmonte and Simonsen) had already secured spots in the PBA Super Slam Cup, Butturff earned the PBA Super Slam Cup berth.

The southpaw may be the only player among the five without a major title in 2023, but the 29-year-old has been near the top of his game this season. Butturff ranks third on Tour in average and fourth in points.

Since the Masters in early April, Butturff has not finished lower than eighth place, racking up four of six championship round appearances. He beat Tackett for the [PBA Scorpion Championship](#) crown, but fell to McCune in the finals of the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers.

### **KEVIN MCCUNE**

**Season stats:** 14 events, 14,357 points, \$116,200 in earnings, 213.22 average, 377 games, 1 title, one top-five finish, one top-10 finish, six top-25 finishes

**How he got here:** McCune won the 2023 PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers.

McCune's Players Championship win made the McCunes the first three-generation family of PBA Tour champions. Moreover, he beat three of his four upcoming opponents (Tackett, Simonsen and Butturff) on television en route to claiming [the historic title](#).

The 24-year-old's [nonchalance](#) played a large role in his ability to dethrone the game's best. He'll look to continue slaying dragons this weekend in Jupiter.

### **FORMAT**

On Saturday, a pair of seeding rounds will determine the lineup for Sunday's stepladder finals. The players will first bowl a single game together on the TV pair, though the game will not be televised.

In the afternoon, players will bowl a single game by themselves, airing live on FS1 at 2 p.m. The unique setup provides an opportunity for greater insight and storytelling. Parts of the first preliminary game may be aired during the show.

Sunday's finals (2 p.m. on FOX) will feature a traditional five-player stepladder format.

## **TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

### **Saturday, May 20 | FS1**

2 p.m. ET — Preliminary round

### **Sunday, May 21 | FOX**

2 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

## **BELMONTE EARNS TOP SEED AT PBA SUPER SLAM CUP PRESENTED BY BOWLERO**

**MAY 20, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**—During the seeding round of the PBA Super Slam Cup presented by Bowlero, featuring the preeminent players from 2023's major championships, the PBA's all-time major king ruled the day.

Jason Belmonte earned the No. 1 seed for Sunday's stepladder finals (2 p.m. ET on FOX), firing 505 during Saturday's two-game seeding round. He won the 2023 PBA Tournament of Champions, the [15th major title](#) of his storied career, to secure his spot in this event.

Belmonte struck on his final four shots to surpass EJ Tackett's 501 pinfall and, ultimately, secure the No. 1 seed.

"It all came down to striking out in the ninth and 10th frames," Belmonte said. "Knowing that could have been the difference between potentially fourth or first, those two frames, that's a huge difference in guaranteed profit."

The winner of this non-title event will earn \$100,000, while second through fifth place take \$40,000, \$18,000, \$12,000 and \$10,000, respectively.

Tackett, who made PBA history by earning the No. 1 seed in four of five majors this season, seized the pole position after cruising to a 10-strike 276 in his first seeding game.

After shooting the highest first game, Tackett earned the right to select when he'd bowl his final seeding game. He chose to bowl first and set the bar for the remaining four stars.

The pins didn't fall as easily for the likely Player of the Year in the second game at Bowlero Jupiter in Florida. He converted a pair of seven-count spares on the right lane, finishing with 225 and 501 for his two games on dual patterns: 46-foot Petraglia on the left lane and 36-foot Ballard on the right lane.

Belmonte, bowling second and needing a 243 to surpass Tackett, started slow, converting spares in the second and third frames.

"The second and third frames felt ridiculously fast for me," said Belmonte, who compared the initial rhythm to a Strike Derby. "I muttered to myself, 'You need to find your tempo.' Then I was able to pause, use my reracks, sit in my chair, and just slow everything down. To get the last eight out of nine, I think that change in tempo was a huge component to that."

The only active player to complete the Super Slam — winning all five major championships — packed all three in the 10th frame to surpass Tackett by four pins.

Of the three remaining players, Kevin McCune came the closest to toppling the Australian. The [PBA's latest major champion](#) needed the first strike in the 10th frame to eclipse Belmonte.

Hailing from the illustrious McCune family tree, the aptly nicknamed “Nuke” put a little too much heat on the shot. After converting the 4-8 and striking on his fill, McCune shot 257 to tie Tackett with a 501 total.

Tackett won the tiebreaker by virtue of his point total across all five major championships, to take the No. 2 seed, while McCune settled for the No. 3 seed.

Jakob Butturff, who earned his spot to the event as the highest finisher at the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon who had not already qualified, finished with a total pinfall of 436. He struggled during his second seeding game, trudging to a 190.

Anthony Simonsen, a five-time major champion, bowled in the anchor position after posting a field-low 236 in the first seeding game. He struggled during his second seeding game as well, and by knocking over just six pins on his fill ball, awarded the No. 4 seed and lane choice in the opening match to Butturff.

Though the lanes were re-oiled before each game during today’s telecast, transition will return as a major variable for the stepladder finals on Sunday — and Belmonte will be prepared.

Belmonte bowled the duration of each of the practice sessions on Friday evening to see how the lanes would transition, testing different bowling balls, changing releases, and assessing lane topography.

“I didn't think I was going to see a whole lot of transition as you would on a regular TV show,” Belmonte said. “I made mental notes on what I was doing for the last five minutes of each session. It was really just reconnaissance for what I might potentially have to go through, no matter what position I was in on the ladder.”

The finals of the PBA Super Slam Cup presented by Bowlero begin Sunday at 2 p.m. ET on FOX.

## **FINAL MATCHES**

No. 4 Jakob Butturff vs. No. 5 Anthony Simonsen

Winner vs. No. 3 Kevin McCune

Winner vs. No. 2 EJ Tackett

Winner vs. No. 1 Jason Belmonte

## **SEEDING ROUND SCORES**

1. Jason Belmonte, 505 (258-248)

2. EJ Tackett, 501 (276-225)

3. Kevin McCune, 501 (244-257) — Tackett won tiebreaker via points earned during 2023 major championships

4. Jakob Butturff, 436 (246-190)

5. Anthony Simonsen, 435 (236-199)

## **TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

**Sunday, May 21 | FOX**

2 p.m. ET — Stepladder finals

## **BELMONTE WINS ELECTRIC PBA SUPER SLAM CUP PRESENTED BY BOWLERO**

**MAY 21, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The strikes came in bunches on Sunday afternoon at the PBA Super Slam Cup presented by Bowlero, but Jason Belmonte left Bowlero Jupiter with the championship cup, WWE belt and \$100,000 first-place check.

The top-seeded Belmonte prevailed in the finals, defeating EJ Tackett 286-246 in their 2023 rubber match.

"Anytime you're on television, in front of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people, you want to put on a good performance," Belmonte said. "Whilst it isn't for a title, walking into this match, I wanted to win this."

"I want the ability to finish my career looking at all the events that we've had and say that I've won every one of them that I possibly can."

The Australian defeated Tackett at the PBA Tournament of Champions in March, then Tackett took down Belmonte at the PBA World Championship presented by Pabst Blue Ribbon last month.

"It definitely feels like between Anthony, EJ and myself, one of us is always there. And then it's a flip of the coin on who the other guy is," Belmonte said.

"It's always a lot of fun. You know that nothing's going to be given. You're gonna have to earn every bit of it," Tackett said of bowling against Belmonte. "It's obviously not a title at the end of the day, but I think this one felt a little bit different than maybe any other events like this. To me, it felt more like a major championship because all the best players from this year are here."

In order to take down Tackett, the prohibitive favorite for Player of the Year, Belmonte needed to bring his A-game. Before earning the No. 1 seed during [Saturday's seeding round](#), Belmonte practiced extensively on Friday to prepare for the transition on Sunday afternoon.

Competing on dual patterns — 46-foot Petraglia on the left lane and 36-foot Ballard on the right lane — Belmonte saw something he liked in practice and decided to finish on the right lane.

"I feel like the right lane was exactly how it was transitioning for me (during previous rounds), but the ball choice was different," Belmonte said. "I threw (the Phaze II) one time in practice, and it looked unbelievable."

To raise the stakes, Tackett fired the first televised 300 of his career in his semifinal win over Kevin McCune.

"I felt so comfortable on that right lane and my ball reaction on those (shorter) patterns this year has been really, really good," Tackett said. "It's cool to finally have that on my résumé. I feel like every great player in history has that on their resume, so it was cool to finally check that box."

But Belmonte, who boasts two televised perfections, wasn't fazed.

"I've had some experience bowling 300 and then needing to back it up," Belmonte said. "The one thing that I know for certain is if you keep being too accurate, well, you will have to make an adjustment. When you see that transition happen for him, then you've got to jump on it.

"(Tackett) caught a fortuitous break in the third, which was the crossover, and then he rung-10 and I felt like, 'Alright, well that's my moment.' Then my next six shots were dead-set pure."

Belmonte earns \$100,000 for his win and Tackett nets \$40,000. While the one-hander also brings home over \$10,000 for his 300 game, it will be difficult for Tackett to catch Kyle Troup's single-season earning's record of \$496,900 set in 2021.

With the win over McCune, Tackett earned some revenge after falling to McCune at the PBA Players Championship presented by Snickers. In fact, McCune also beat Tackett's younger brother, Zac, in the televised bracket.

"I don't know if I'd say (it was personal), but I definitely wanted to beat him because of that," Tackett said with a laugh.

Though McCune defeated three of today's other four finalists during last week's Players Championship victory, this marked his first time competing in a televised stepladder finals. He said his inexperience facing the unique transition cost him against Tackett.

"I moved 10 boards left on the left lane and it looked the same," McCune said. "I didn't move deep enough quick enough."

McCune handled Anthony Simonsen in the second match, firing 279 to Simonsen's 268. Simonsen also shot 268 in his opening match win over Jakob Butturff.

After a few weeks off, the PBA Tour returns next month on the opposite side of the country. Belmonte, Tackett, Simonsen and Butturff will be joined by Kyle Troup, Dom Barrett, Packy Hanrahan and Kris Prather for the [PBA Tour Finals](#) in Arlington, Wash.

#### **FINAL ROUND SCORES**

Match 1: No. 5 Anthony Simonsen def. No. 4 Jakob Butturff, 268-258

Match 2: No. 3 Kevin McCune def. No. 5 Anthony Simonsen, 279-268

Match 3: No. 2 EJ Tackett def. No. 3 Kevin McCune, 300-212

Final match: No. 1 Jason Belmonte def. No. 2 EJ Tackett, 286-246

#### **FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Jason Belmonte, \$100,000
2. EJ Tackett, \$40,000
3. Kevin McCune, \$18,000
4. Anthony Simonsen, \$12,000
5. Jakob Butturff, \$10,000

#### **THE PBA LAUNCHES THE LBC AWARDS PROGRAM WITH DIGITAL FEATURES POWERED BY AVALANCHE**



## MAY 22, 2023 PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION

*An innovative program awarding bowlers for achievements on the lanes*

**RICHMOND, VA** – The Professional Bowlers Association (PBA), announced today the launch of PBA LBC Awards, the fourth pillar of their new PBA League Bowler Certification program. PBA LBC Awards are designed to recognize and celebrate league bowlers' achievements on the lanes. The PBA worked in tandem with Layer 3 Labs, a software company specializing in the creation of digital marketplaces through Web3 applications, LeaguePals, a cloud-based league management platform, and AVA Labs, the leading developer of the [Avalanche](#) blockchain, on the execution of the program. Built on Avalanche, the innovative program will offer modern rewards and features, including blockchain-backed bowler certification and a marketplace for digital collectibles.

"We are pleased to announce the launch of PBA LBC Awards," stated Lev Ekster, Chief Strategy Officer of Bowlero Corp. "This awards program is revolutionary for the hundreds of thousands of league bowlers around the country, utilizing technology to award bowlers for their achievements. With this launch, we are demonstrating our commitment to optimizing the league bowler experience through innovative technology."

The first phase of PBA LBC Awards includes the ability for bowlers to earn digital awards for achieving certain defined milestones. To earn these digital awards, bowlers must be an active PBA LBC member with a LeaguePals account and achieve one of the following: bowl your first 200 game, bowl a 300 game, 700 series, 800 series, 50 pins over average, and 100 pins over average. For each achievement unlocked, bowlers will earn a digital award that can be viewed and shared on their social channels through the new digital marketplace, which will be built with the speed and power of Avalanche. In fact, the PBA LBC Award program will be powered by an Avalanche Subnet – a custom, application-specific blockchain tailored to the program's needs.

"The digital marketplace we developed features blockchain based digital awards, elevating the program with an interactive marketing tool that offers a unique and unprecedented opportunity for bowlers to record moments in their scoring history," stated Jonathan Teplitsky, CEO of Layer 3 Labs. "It is exciting to be at the starting line of an industry that has untapped potential, and even more inspiring to have partners that share in our vision for the future."

In the second phase of PBA LBC Awards, the PBA will introduce a new points-based system, where in addition to earning digital awards, bowlers will earn points for each of their achievements. The points will be redeemable for exclusive offers and prizes. League bowlers will once again realize exciting tangible benefits to commemorate their achievements on the lanes.

"We're excited for Avalanche to power the new certification and digital collectibles rewards programs being pioneered by the PBA LBC Awards," said John Nahas, Vice President of Business Development at Ava Labs. "Our collaboration brings a new dimension to bowling, and we look forward to seeing how Avalanche-supported digital rewards help to keep the competition between league bowlers great."

Avalanche launched in September 2020, ushering in a new era for blockchains with near-instant transaction finality. Today, Avalanche supports 500+ applications and secures billions of dollars in value, all while having minimal climate impact.

In closing, Bill Savastano, Co-Founder and CEO of LeaguePals stated, “the integration we have developed with the PBA and Layer 3 Labs is a transformative step in the right direction for bowlers. We are thrilled to be part of this launch and look forward to future success with the PBA.”

Learn more about how to earn PBA LBC Awards [here](#).

The PBA League Bowler Certification program launched in 2022, with over 200,000 league bowlers in Bowlero Corp. owned centers automatically enrolled. As part of the ground-breaking program, bowlers of all skill levels were invited to participate in the inaugural 2023 PBA LBC National Championships. This tournament will take place at Bowlero Wauwatosa in Wisconsin from June 3rd to July 16. Learn more about how you can participate and stay informed about the PBA League Bowler Certification by visiting [pbalbc.com](https://pbalbc.com) or following @PBATour.

### **PBA REGIONAL RECAP: HAHLEN, BOHO, KUHLMANN, MAYES PICK UP FIRST CAREER REGIONAL TITLES MAY 25, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN**

Hundreds of bowlers have etched their names in the PBA history books and now a few more have engraved their own into the titleholder list. During the 10 tournaments held over the previous two weeks, four keggers earned the first regional title of their careers. Meanwhile, six other bowlers picked up a win to add to their résumés.

Read about their exploits in this week’s Regional Recap:

#### **PBA BRIGHTON CONSTRUCTION MYRTLE BEACH OPEN**

At the Myrtle Beach Open, tournament director Steve Taylor brought in 148 bowlers for the three-squad, two-day competition. Through seven games on Saturday, CJ Petrin had the lead; after nine more games in the advancers rounds, Petrin grabbed the top seed for the stepladder, followed by Bryan Hahlen, Sean Connolly, and Cristian Azcona.

In the opening match, Azcona took an early lead after Connolly missed a single pin in the second frame, but Connolly fought back to force Azcona to double in the tenth, where Azcona got nine and lost 236-224. In the second match, the story reversed against Hahlen, who stepped up and doubled in the 10th to force Connolly to get the first strike in the final frame. Connolly, like his previous opponent, got nine, and Hahlen moved on to the finals after a 225-212 win.

The winner-take-all match was close for six frames, but in the seventh and eighth frames Hahlen doubled while Petrin split twice. Hahlen won 202-184 for his first PBA regional title and a cool \$2,500.

#### **PBA Brighton Construction Myrtle Beach Open Final Standings**

1. Bryan Hahlen, 2,500 points, \$2,500
2. CJ Petrin, \$1,900
3. Sean Connolly, 1,150, \$1,600
4. Cristian Azcona, 950, \$1,300

[PBA Brighton Construction Myrtle Beach Open Full Results](#)

### **PBA50 OHIO LOTTERY/BALDO CAMPANA & DAVE D'ENTREMONT MEMORIAL CENTRAL OPEN**

Bobby Jakel held a pair of tournaments in Ohio, one being a senior event. Dale Csuhta assumed the lead role after eight games on Saturday and earned the No. 1 seed on Sunday for his efforts. Csuhta fell in his first match to Chuck Lupica, who then secured a spot in the semifinals against Charles Ferrell. Ferrell moved on to the finals to face Michael Haggitt, who recently defeated John Shreve Jr. In the final bout, Haggitt picked up his fifth regional title by taking down Ferrell 249-193.

#### **PBA50 Ohio Lottery/Baldo Campana & Dave D'Entremont Memorial Final Standings**

1. Michael Haggitt, 2,500 points, \$1,600
2. Charles Ferrell, 1,500, \$1,100
3. John Shreve Jr. 1,150, \$900
4. Chuck Lupica, \$900

[PBA50 Ohio Lottery/Baldo Campana & Dave D'Entremont Memorial Full Results](#)

### **PBA OHIO LOTTERY/BALDO CAMPANA & DAVE D'ENTREMONT MEMORIAL CENTRAL OPEN**

Meanwhile, the under-50 division also competed on Saturday in a one-day event on the Don Johnson pattern. PBA Tour titleholder Sam Cooley qualified first on the day, averaging 229, while Frank Snodgrass, Cody Reed, and Nate Purches followed behind.

Cooley fell in the second round to open the door for the rest, as Sam DeWitt III, Brent Boho, Reed, and Ryan Liederbach advanced into the semis. Boho demolished Dewitt, 279-202, and Reed beat Liederbach 204-188. The final match came down to two bowlers, both looking for their first regional title, but Boho took the win 200-173 to earn \$2,700 and a banner.

#### **PBA Ohio Lottery/Baldo Campana & Dave D'Entremont Memorial Central Open Final Standings**

1. Brent Boho, 2,500 points, \$2,700
2. Cody Reed, \$1,400
3. Samuel DeWitt III, 1,150, \$1,100
4. Ryan Liederbach, 950, \$1,100

[PBA Ohio Lottery/Baldo Campana & Dave D'Entremont Memorial Central Open Full Results](#)

### **PBA NORTHROCK SOUTHWEST OPEN**

Transitioning out West, host of a 2023 PBA Tour stop, Northrock Lanes in Wichita, Kan., hosted a regional event for 95 bowlers this month. David 'Boog' Krol, who accumulated 31 straight strikes here in February, stayed on the strike train, qualifying first at +283. The strike train chugged along in the advancers round as Krol had now developed more than a 200-pin lead over second place. He claimed the top seed and as the strike train conductor, Krol's final stop came at Titledown, USA, after defeating Alec Keplinger in the finals, 225-206, for his second title.

#### **PBA Northrock Southwest Open Final Standings**

1. David Krol 2,500 points, \$2,800
2. Alec Keplinger, \$1,800
3. Spencer Robarge, \$1,250
4. Dylan Burns, 950, \$1,250

#### [PBA Northrock Southwest Open Full Results](#)

#### **PBA50 THE BOWLER MIDWEST OPEN**

In the Peace Garden State, 34 senior bowlers came out to the aptly-named center “The Bowler” in Fargo, N.D. Only five players went plus on the demanding Mike Aulby pattern, while Rick Woloszyn led at +80. The top eight moved onto match play on Sunday, and Lyle Kuhlmann stole the top spot from Woloszyn. Heading into the title-deciding position round, Bryan Schmidt sat just 44 pins behind while Woloszyn had an outside shot trailing by 62 pins. All three bowlers struggled in the final game, but Kuhlmann’s 178 was good enough to hold onto the win for his first career PBA Regional Tour title.

#### **PBA50 The Bowler Midwest Open Final Standings**

1. Lyle Kuhlmann, 5,000 points, \$2,000
2. Tom Adcock, 3,000, \$1,300
3. Bryan Schmidt, 2,300, \$1,000
4. Rick Woloszyn, 1,900, \$850

#### [PBA50 The Bowler Midwest Open Full Results](#)

#### **PBA50 FITNESS QUEST CLASSIC**

To kill a scorpion, make sure you are wearing protective clothing, then stab it with a sharp object. Do not simply crush it, as many scorpions have the ability to completely flatten themselves. That’s a weak segue into qualifying, where Brad Angelo indeed stabbed the Scorpion pattern going +103 for eight games.

After match play, Angelo dropped into the No. 2 seed for the stepladder and took on Greg Thomas, who had just defeated Jeffrey Knapp. The scorpion stung back in Angelo’s match as Thomas won 215-167. In the finals, Hohlbein put together a four-bagger in the middle of the game to seal his win 232-185 for his seventh title and first since 2016.

#### **PBA50 Fitness Quest Classic Final Standings**

1. Erik Hohlbein, 2,500 points, \$1,500
2. Greg Thomas, 1,500, \$1,100
3. Brad Angelo 1,150, \$1,000
4. Jeffrey Knapp, 950, \$900

#### [PBA50 Fitness Quest Classic Full Results](#)

## **PBA DAFFODIL BOWL OPEN**

Same place, same pattern, same sting. The top 12 of the 48 entrants moved onto match play, all competing for a spot in the four-person stepladder. Even after 15 games, the position round still left much up in the air, but in the end, Duke Knudsen, Christopher Tuholski, Clay Rees, and Michael Fitzgerald earned the stepladder positions in that order.

Rees won the first match over Fitzgerald, 175-166, but then lost to Tuholski, 211-191. 211 was the magic number for Tuholski once again as he took down Knudsen 211-174. This marks title No. 4 for Tuholski, a special one for sure, as it took place in front of his newborn and his girlfriend on Mother's day.

### **PBA Daffodil Bowl Open Final Standings**

1. Christopher Tuholski, 2,500 points, \$2,000
2. Duke Knudsen, 1,500, \$1,400
3. Clay Rees, 1,150, \$1,100
4. Michael Fitzgerald, 950, \$900

[PBA Daffodil Bowl Open Full Results](#)

## **PBA MEMBER/NON MEMBER DOUBLES PRESENTED BY CASINO MORONGO**

Staying out West, this time in Cabazon, Calif., a member/non-member doubles format brought 43 duos right outside of Los Angeles. Member Cortez Schenck and non-member Robbie Patterson narrowly earned the top seed by a pin, but even with that bye, they fell in their first match.

In the first semifinal, Aaron Yamamoto and titleholder Tim Cagle II fell to Mike Villarreal and Kevin Valmonte 2-0 in the best-of-three match. Cerell Cardines and Christopher Mayes also won their semifinal match over DJ Kneifel and Hunter Mayes 2-0. In the one-game final, Cardines and Mayes started with an early four-bagger and sealed it with the first strike in the 10th to win, 233-191.

### **PBA Member/Non Member Doubles presented by Casino Morongo Final Standings**

1. Christopher Mayes and Cerell Cardines, 2,500 points, \$4,000
2. Mike Villarreal and Kevin Valmonte, \$2,600
3. Hunter Mayes and DJ Kneifel, 1,150, \$1,900
4. Tim Cagle II and Aaron Yamamoto, 950, \$1,900

[PBA Member/Non Member Doubles presented by Casino Morongo Full Results](#)

## **PBA WAXAHACHIE SOUTHWEST MEMBERS ONLY EVENT**

Next up, in a members-only event at Hilltop Lanes just south of Dallas, we had a wire-to-wire tournament win from one of the newest PBA Tour champions. Packy Hanrahan opened qualifying with a 64-pin lead, and that margin would only increase from there.

Sixty-four pins eventually turned into 132 and then into 176. Deo Bernard competed for a while in match play, putting up five games over 240, but he couldn't quite get there. Hanrahan picked up his third career regional title and first of 2023.

#### **PBA Waxahachie Southwest Members Only Event Final Standings**

1. Patrick Hanrahan, 2,500 points, \$2,800
2. Deo Bernard, 1,500, \$1,800
3. Beau Peterson, 1,150, \$1,350
4. Sean Lavery-Spahr, 950, \$1,100

#### [PBA Waxahachie Southwest Members Only Event Full Results](#)

#### **PBA50 JORDAN LANES OPEN**

It may have been Packy's time to shine in Waxahachie, but in Whitehall, Pa., Troy Lint had his own day to remember. Lint topped the field of 70 on the Steelsmith pattern, averaging 232 for his eight-game block. Most impressively, Lint ran through the field as the No. 1 seed in the bracket, something that seems nearly impossible to do. Lint defeated John Neral, Richard Strath, and two-time titleist Andrew Rettig on his way to picking up his ninth career title and third of the season.

#### **PBA50 Jordan Lanes Open Final Standings**

1. Troy Lint, 2,500 points, \$3,000
2. Andrew Rettig, 1,500, \$1,700
3. Ryan Shafer, 1,150, \$1,200
4. Richard Strath, 950, \$1,200

#### **2023 PBA50 TOUR SEASON PREVIEW**

MAY 31, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

In a matter of days, the world's finest gray-haired players embark on Las Vegas for the 2023 PBA50 Tour. Players aged 50 and over will be able to compete in 12 PBA50 title events, including five major championships, and pursue over \$1 million in total prize money this summer.

Two PBA60 events, including the USBC Super Senior Classic beginning June 1, round out the schedule.

The PBA50 Tour begins in Sin City with a pair of major championships: the Super Senior Classic and the USBC Senior Masters.

The second PBA50 Tour stop near Denver, Colo. marks the second major of the season, the Senior U.S. Open.

The Tour then begins its midwest circuit in July, highlighted by the PBA50 World Series of Bowling at JAX60 in Jackson, Mich. Three standard titles named in honor of three PBA legends — Del Ballard Jr., Amleto Monacelli and Johnny Petraglia — will be awarded, along with the third major of the season at the PBA50 World Championship.

Following a pitstop in West Virginia, the PBA50 Tour heads to Sterling, Va. for the fourth major championship and an exclusive championship venue. The lanes installed at Bill Moore's home will be used for the stepladder finals of the Bud Moore PBA50 Players Championship, where a record \$20,000 top prize will be awarded.

Finally, the Tour heads south as Florida will host the final three events of the season, including the season finale PBA50 Tournament of Champions in Lakeland, Fla.

Fans can watch every PBA50 tournament on BowlTV.

## PLAYERS TO WATCH

### Parker Bohn III

Parker Bohn III won one-third of the events he bowled last season, capturing four titles with two majors in 12 events en route to PBA50 Player of the Year honors. He led all players in titles, earnings and points.

The Father Time-defying lefty reached the television finals at the USBC Masters earlier this year and will look to take home the Senior Masters title to kickstart another POY campaign.

### Dino Castillo

Can a soon-to-be 52-year-old have a sophomore slump? Last season's PBA50 Rookie of the Year, Dino Castillo, will put that to the test.

Castillo finished fifth overall in points last season, racking up nine top-10 finishes in 12 events. His season begins with a title defense at the USBC Senior Masters.

### Chris Barnes

Despite Bohn's four titles, there is an argument to be made that Chris Barnes, who won three titles, engineered a superior PBA50 season.

Barnes produced 2023 Anthony Simonsen-levels of consistency — or perhaps Simonsen produced 2022 PBA50 Chris Barnes levels of consistency — with 12 top-10 finishes in 13 events; Barnes finished 11th in the other tournament, which happened to be Bohn's second major title.

Among players who competed in multiple events, Barnes led the senior Tour with a 229.31 average in 2022.

### John Janawicz

Fresh off representing Team USA at the 2023 PANAM Bowling Male Championships and winning a pair of gold medals with Parker Bohn III's protégés (Brandon Bohn and Matt Russo), John Janawicz seeks to dethrone the elder Bohn in Janawicz's freshman campaign on the PBA50 Tour.

Janawicz won his first senior regional back in earlier this month, which made him eligible for the season-ending Tournament of Champions. But he just might add a national title to his résumé by August.

Tom Hess

After a historic 2021 campaign, in which he captured Player and Rookie of the Year honors, Tom Hess sustained his excellence into 2022. He earned 10 top-11 finishes in the first 10 events, compiling a win and two runner-up finishes as well. His season ended on an injury-plagued sour note, but the big teddy bear is aiming to return to 2021 form for the duration of 2023.

Additional PBA50 stalwarts scheduled to compete this season include Brad Angelo, Lennie Boresch Jr., Jason Couch, Bob Learn Jr., Johnny Petraglia, Ryan Shafer, Pete Weber and, of course, Walter Ray Williams Jr.

#### PBA50 TOUR SCHEDULE

PBA50 majors are bolded

PBA60 majors are italicized

May 31-June 4: USBC Super Senior Classic, Sam's Town, Las Vegas (PBA60)

June 5-11: USBC Senior Masters, Sam's Town, Las Vegas

June 14-19: PBA Senior U.S. Open, Highland Park Lanes, Greeley, Colo.

July 2-5: PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial Tournament, Wayne Webb's Columbus Bowl, Columbus, Ohio (PBA60)

July 10-13: PBA50 South Shore Classic, Olympia Lanes, Hammond, Ind.

July 15-23: PBA50 World Series of Bowling, JAX60, Jackson, Mich.

July 16, 19: PBA50 Ballard Championship

July 17, 20: PBA50 Monacelli Championship

July 18, 21: PBA50 Petraglia Championship

July 16-23: PBA50 World Championship

July 31-August 3: PBA50 Morgantown Classic, Suburban Lanes, Morgantown, W.Va.

Aug. 6-10: Bud Moore PBA50 Players Championship, Bowl America Dranesville, Sterling, Va.

Aug. 14-18: PBA50 The Villages Classic, Spanish Springs Lanes, The Villages, Fla.

Aug. 20-23: PBA50 Fort Myers Lightning Strikes Lanes Classic, Lightning Strikes Bowling Lanes, Fort Myers, Fla.

Aug. 26-30: PBA50 Johnny Petraglia BVL Tournament of Champions, Orange Bowl Lanes, Lakeland, Fla.



## PAST CHAMPION DIAS LEADS FIRST ROUND AT 2023 SUPER SENIOR CLASSIC

JUNE 2, 2023 GUEST

LAS VEGAS – Mike Dias of Lafayette, Colorado, averaged more than 238 on Thursday at the Sam's Town Bowling Center to pace the 206-player field at the 2023 Super Senior Classic.

Dias, the 2018 champion, fired games of 244, 200, 226, 257, 269 and 235 to finish the day with a 1,431 total. The 66-year-old left-hander competed on B Squad, facing the second shift on this week's 39-foot oil pattern.

Darryl Bower of Middletown, Pennsylvania, is second with 1,411, while United States Bowling Congress and Professional Bowlers Association Hall of Famer Lennie Boresch Jr. of Kenosha, Wisconsin, is third with 1,408.

Boresch finished as the runner-up at the 2022 Super Senior Classic to two-time winner and fellow USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Ron Mohr of Las Vegas, who finished Thursday's first round tied for 38th place with 1,278.

Jack Jurek of Lackawanna, New York, rolled the only 300 at the event Thursday and sits in fourth place with 1,405. Herman Ferguson of Los Angeles rounds out the top five with 1,397.

Competition will resume Friday at noon Eastern as B Squad takes to the lanes for their six-game block on the fresh oil pattern. The bowlers on A Squad will bowl their final round of qualifying at 5 p.m. Eastern on the burn.

After 12 games of qualifying, the top 52 players will advance to a six-game cashers' round Saturday. At the conclusion of 18 games, the top 12 will make their way to a split match-play round, which also will take place Saturday starting at 6 p.m. Eastern.

The competitors will be split based on the final qualifying position, with the six odd seeds (1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11) being placed in one group and six even seeds (2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12) being placed in another group.

The advancers will compete in round-robin match play, with the top finisher in each group earning an automatic spot in Sunday's championship stepladder based on their 24-game pinfall total, including bonus pins. The final seeding for the top finishers will be determined by total pinfall.

The second, third and fourth seeds from each group will face off in simultaneous group stepladders starting Sunday at noon Eastern, before the field is set for the championship stepladder at 2 p.m. Eastern. The winners of each group stepladder will claim the No. 3 and No. 4 spots for the stepladder and have their seeding determined for the opening match based on their average.

The champion of the 2023 Super Senior Classic will earn \$8,000 for the victory.

The Super Senior Classic features the top players age 60 and older.

The excitement will continue at Sam's Town with the USBC Senior Masters from June 5-11. The event is a major on the PBA50 Tour schedule and is open to bowlers age 50 and older.

The winner of the 2023 Senior Masters will take home \$20,000 for the win.

## BORESCH FINISHES AS QUALIFYING LEADER AT 2023 SUPER SENIOR CLASSIC

JUNE 3, 2023 GUEST

LAS VEGAS – United States Bowling Congress and Professional Bowlers Association Hall of Famer Lennie Boresch Jr. of Kenosha, Wisconsin, paced the field through two rounds of qualifying at the 2023 Super Senior Classic and leads the top 52 players to the next round at the Sam's Town Bowling Center.

Boresch was in third place after Thursday's opening round with a 1,408 total for his six games on the fresh 39-foot oil pattern, and he posted games of 225, 269, 186, 201, 225 and 257 on the burn Friday for a 1,363 score to finish qualifying with 2,771 (230.9 average).

Boresch, a 61-year-old right-hander who was the runner-up at the 2022 Super Senior Classic, held off a late charge for the top spot by fellow USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Walter Ray Williams Jr. of Oxford, Florida, who fired 300 in his final game to get to 2,764.

Jack Jurek of Lackawanna, New York, is third with 2,737, and Gary Reh of Jasper, Indiana, is fourth with 2,713. Skip Pavone of San Jose, California, finished fifth with 2,698.

Mike Dias of Lafayette, Colorado, led Thursday's opening round of qualifying and advanced in seventh place with 2,679. Dias is the 2018 Super Senior Classic champion.

The defending champion – USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Ron Mohr of Las Vegas – will continue his quest for a third win at the tournament after finishing 31st at 2,568. Mohr also won the Super Senior Classic in 2017.

Other past winners advancing to the next round include the 2021 champion – USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Amleto Monacelli of Venezuela – and Kerry Painter of Henderson, Nevada, who won the first edition of the Super Senior Classic in 2013.

The final advancer in 52nd place was New York's Glenn Smith, who finished with a 2,512 total (209.3 average).

Competitors at the 2023 Super Senior Classic bowled 12 games of qualifying over two days to determine the bowlers making their way to Saturday's cashers' round, which begins at noon Eastern. All advancers will bowl an additional six games, and at the conclusion of 18 games, the top 12 will make their way to a split match-play round. Match play will begin Saturday at 6 p.m. Eastern.

The competitors will be split based on the final qualifying position, with the six odd seeds (1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11) being placed in one group and six even seeds (2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12) being placed in another group.

The advancers will compete in round-robin match play, with the top finisher in each group earning an automatic spot in Sunday's championship stepladder based on their 24-game pinfall total, including bonus pins. The final seeding for the top finishers will be determined by total pinfall.

The second, third and fourth seeds from each group will face off in simultaneous group stepladders starting Sunday at noon Eastern, before the field is set for the championship stepladder at 2 p.m. Eastern. The winners of each group stepladder will claim the No. 3 and No. 4 spots for the stepladder and have their seeding determined for the opening match based on their average.

The champion of the 2023 Super Senior Classic will earn \$8,000 for the victory.

The Super Senior Classic features the top players age 60 and older.

The excitement will continue at Sam's Town with the USBC Senior Masters from June 5-11. The event is a major on the PBA50 Tour schedule and is open to bowlers age 50 and older.

The winner of the 2023 Senior Masters will take home \$20,000 for the win.

#### JUREK EARNS TOP SEED FOR STEPLADDER AT 2023 SUPER SENIOR CLASSIC

JUNE 4, 2023 GUEST

Pictured above (from left): Bryan Goebel, Skip Pavone, Gary Reh, Jack Jurek, Lennie Boresch Jr., John Marsala, Kerry Painter, Kevin Croucher

#### RESULTS: Cashers' Round | Match Play

LAS VEGAS – Jack Jurek of Lackawanna, New York, will be bowling for the title at the 2023 Super Senior Classic after posting a 4-2 record in match play and averaging more than 232 across 24 games to earn the top seed in the stepladder finals.

Jurek held on to the top spot in Group A after taking over the lead in the cashers' round Saturday at the Sam's Town Bowling Center. He finished with a pinfall total of 5,697, including 30 bonus pins for each win in match play.

United States Bowling Congress and Professional Bowlers Association Hall of Famer Lennie Boresch Jr. of Kenosha, Wisconsin, also advanced to the championship stepladder by going 5-1 in match play to lead the way in Group B. Boresch, the runner-up at the 2022 Super Senior Classic, finished with 5,645.

Competitors at the 2023 Super Senior Classic bowled 12 games of qualifying Thursday and Friday to determine the top 52 players for Saturday's cashers' round. The advancers bowled an additional six games, and at the conclusion of 18 games, the top 12 made their way to Saturday's split match-play round.

The bowlers were split into two groups based on their final qualifying position. The six odd seeds (1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11) were Group A, and the six even finishers (2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12) made up Group B.

Jurek was the top qualifier after 18 games with a 4,239 total to earn his spot in Group A, while Boresch paced Group B with a 4,155 score.

The match-play finalists competed in a six-game round robin, with the top finisher in each group earning their spot in Sunday's championship stepladder. Jurek took the top seed based on total pinfall.

The second, third and fourth seeds from each group will face off in simultaneous group stepladders starting Sunday at noon Eastern, before the field is set for the championship stepladder at 2 p.m. Eastern. The winners of each group stepladder will claim the No. 3 and No. 4 spots for the stepladder and have their seeding determined for the opening match based on their average.

In Group A, Gary Reh of Jasper, Indiana (5,671), Skip Pavone of San Jose, California (5,567), and PBA Hall of Famer Bryan Goebel of Shawnee, Kansas (5,444), advanced to their group stepladder. Hugh Miller of Mercer Island, Washington (5,217), and Tom Adcock of Forsyth, Illinois (5,198), were eliminated.

Pavone will bowl Goebel in the opening match, with the winner taking on Reh.

In Group B, John Marsala of University City, Missouri (5,487), 2013 Super Senior Classic champion Kerry Painter of Henderson, Nevada (5,417), and Kevin Croucher of Grants Pass, Oregon (5,396), advanced to Sunday. USBC and PBA Hall of Famers Pete Weber of St. Ann, Missouri (5,374), and Walter Ray Williams Jr. of Oxford, Florida (5,302), were knocked out in a tie for ninth place overall at the event.

Painter and Croucher will compete in the first match for Group B, with the winner facing Marsala.

The champion of the 2023 Super Senior Classic will earn \$8,000 for the victory

The Super Senior Classic features the top players age 60 and older.

The excitement will continue at Sam's Town with the USBC Senior Masters from June 5-11. The event is a major on the PBA50 Tour schedule and is open to bowlers age 50 and older.

The winner of the 2023 Senior Masters will take home \$20,000 for the win.

## JOHN MARSALA WINS 2023 SUPER SENIOR CLASSIC (PBA60 TITLE) IN LAS VEGAS

JUNE 4, 2023 GUEST

John Marsala claims PBA60 title at USBC Super Senior Masters

RESULTS: Group Stepladder | Championship Stepladder

LAS VEGAS – John Marsala of University City, Missouri, averaged more than 249 during the championship stepladder at the 2023 Super Senior Classic to claim the victory Sunday at Sam's Town Bowling Center.

The 60-year-old left-hander fired nine strikes in the title match for a 244-168 win over Jack Jurek of Lackawanna, New York, to take home the \$8,000 top prize. Jurek, the top seed, earned \$6,550 for the runner-up finish.

The 2023 Super Senior Classic was broadcast live at BowlTV.com.

The momentum during the finals switched in Marsala's favor during the fifth and sixth frames, and he never looked back.

Jurek had delivered a double in the third and fourth frames, but he was unable to convert the 3-6-10 combination in the fifth. Marsala followed with a pair of light-pocket strikes in his fifth and sixth frames, while Jurek opened again in the sixth after leaving a 3-4-6-7 split.

Marsala added two more strikes in the seventh and eighth frame, while a Greek Church in the eighth from Jurek allowed Marsala to coast to the winner's circle.

The win was the first Professional Bowlers Association 60 Tour title for Marsala, to go along with two victories on the PBA50 Tour.

Jurek, who had earned the top seed by leading Group A during the split match-play round Saturday at Sam's Town, was looking for his first PBA60 Tour title as well. He's the owner of two PBA Tour titles and two PBA50 Tour wins.

Marsala had some struggles during the 2022 PBA50 Tour season, so he stayed busy in the offseason working on a few parts of his game. He couldn't have asked for a better outcome in the first event of the 2023 season.

"For me, speed is everything," Marsala said on the BowlTV broadcast. "I don't have a lot of rev rate, so I really have to be focused on my speed control. That's one of the things I worked on – moving back and forth on the approach, slowing the ball down and really trying to stay more solid at the line and keep my balance. That's what I worked on all winter.

"It's very special. I'm a (Super Senior Classic) champion, and not many people get to do that. Every time you go out here against all these guys, whether it's 50 or 60, it doesn't matter. They're all great competitors."

Marsala advanced to the finals with a 247-233 win over United States Bowling Congress and PBA Hall of Famer Lennie Boresch Jr. of Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Through eight frames, Boresch held a one-pin lead but found trouble in the ninth after leaving the 4-7-10 split. The open frame gave Marsala the opportunity to secure the victory with marks in the ninth and 10th frames. He covered a 7 pin in the ninth and struck out in his final frame.

Boresch now has two top-three finishes at the Super Senior Classic. He finished as the runner-up in 2022 to USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Ron Mohr of Las Vegas. Mohr is the tournament's only two-time winner (2017 and 2022).

In the opening match of the championship stepladder, Marsala was able to defeat fellow southpaw Gary Reh of Jasper, Indiana, 257-207.

Marsala had a brief hiccup early in the game, leaving a 4-6 split and open frame in the third. He bounced back with nine consecutive strikes to finish the match. Reh started with a double and stayed clean, but he was only able to add three more strikes for the rest of the game.

Marsala felt comfortable on Lanes 19-20 throughout the week at Sam's Town, and he also noted how his match against Reh helped to create a little more space for him to work with against Boresch and Jurek.

"Every time I hit these pairs, I scored very well on them," Marsala said. "That kind of helped. Gary Reh throwing urethane definitely helped. It kind of set the lane up for me and gave me a little bit of shim that I wouldn't normally have, and that was a really big help, too."

Sunday's action started earlier with a pair of group stepladders at Sam's Town, with Marsala advancing out of Group B to earn his spot in the championship round as the No. 4 seed. Reh was victorious in Group A to take the No. 3 seed.

The 206-player field at the 2023 Super Senior Classic bowled 12 games of qualifying Thursday and Friday to determine the top 52 competitors for Saturday's cashers' round. The advancers bowled six more games, and at the conclusion of 18 games, the top 12 made their way to Saturday's split match-play round.

The bowlers were split into two groups based on their final qualifying position. The six odd seeds (1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11) were Group A, and the six even finishers (2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12) made up Group B.

The match-play finalists competed in a six-game round robin, with the top finisher in each group earning their spot in Sunday's championship stepladder. Jurek took the top seed over Boresch based on total pinfall.

The second, third and fourth seeds from each group faced off in simultaneous group stepladders Sunday before the main event to determine the final two spots in the championship stepladder.

In Group A, Skip Pavone of San Jose, California, won the opening match, defeating PBA Hall of Famer Bryan Goebel of Shawnee, Kansas, 217-155. Reh defeated Pavone, 202-183, to advance to the championship stepladder.

In Group B, 2013 Super Senior Classic champion Kerry Painter of Henderson, Nevada, recorded a two-pin victory (206-204) over Kevin Croucher of Grants Pass, Oregon. Marsala started his striking Sunday with a 267-193 win over Painter to earn his spot in the main stepladder.

The Super Senior Classic featured the top players age 60 and older.

The excitement will continue at Sam's Town with the USBC Senior Masters from June 5-11. The event is a major on the PBA50 Tour schedule and is open to bowlers age 50 and older.

The winner of the 2023 Senior Masters will take home \$20,000 for the win.

## **DEFENDING CHAMPION CASTILLO LEADS AFTER FIRST ROUND AT 2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS**

**LAS VEGAS** – Defending champion Dino Castillo of Highland Village, Texas, used a quick start to take the lead after the first day of competition at the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Senior Masters.

Castillo shot 788 for the first three games of his five-game qualifying round en route to a 43-pin lead at Sam's Town Bowling Center Tuesday. Castillo posted games of 249, 277, 262, 240 and 237 for a 1,265 total and 253.0 average.

"During practice yesterday I didn't really have a great look," said Castillo, whose victory in this event last year was his first on the Professional Bowlers Association 50 Tour. "I talked to my guys and they talked to me about slowing my feet down and then we drilled up a couple balls after practice that allowed me to see the lane a lot quicker today than I thought I would."

USBC Hall of Famer Lennie Boresch Jr. of Kenosha, Wisconsin, who was third at last week's Super Senior Classic at Sam's Town, is second with 1,222. Boresch's best finish in this event came in 2013 when he was runner-up to Pete Weber.

Holding down the third spot is Blaine Weninger of Clackamas, Oregon. Weninger started his block a little slowly with a 204 game, but finished strong with games of 256, 248, 237 and 246 for a total of 1,191.

Rounding out the top five are PBA champion Brad Angelo of Lockport, New York, with 1,190 and Walt Blackston of Hawthorne, California, who started his block with a 799 set (278, 243, 278) and finished with 1,189.

For Castillo, coming back to Sam's Town as defending champion has both advantages and challenges.

"I've always loved bowling here and have always felt comfortable coming to this center," Castillo said. "But it is harder coming in as defending champ because now I've got a target on my back. My anxiety was a little high even during practice, but once I got in motion everything smoothed out."

Castillo is bowling on A squad, which means he will bowl the last of three squads on Wednesday.

"I'll relax a little during the day," Castillo said. "Then I'll come in during the squad before ours to get an idea of how they're playing and get myself mentally prepared."

All 309 competitors at the 2023 USBC Senior Masters will bowl three five-game blocks over three days, and the top 63 will join Castillo in the tournament's double-elimination bracket after 15 games.

Castillo is guaranteed a spot in the bracket as the defending champion and can improve his seeding through qualifying. If he qualifies outside of the top 63, he will enter the bracket as the No. 64 seed.

Bracket matches will be contested in a three-game total-pinfall format, until the field is cut to the top five for the stepladder finals June 11 at 1 p.m. Eastern on BowlTV.

Since the stepladder will be broadcast on BowlTV, the top seed will have to be defeated twice in the true double-elimination format. The winner of the 2023 USBC Senior Masters will take home a major championship on the PBA50 schedule and the first-place prize of \$20,000.

For scores and information about the 2023 USBC Senior Masters, visit [BOWL.com/SeniorMasters](https://www.bowl.com/seniormasters).

## **2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS At Sam's Town Bowling Center Las Vegas**

### **Tuesday's Results QUALIFYING - ROUND 1 (Five games - top 100)**

1, Dino Castillo, Highland Village, Texas, 1,265. 2, Lennie Boresch, Kenosha, Wis., 1,222. 3, Blaine Weninger, Clackamas, Ore., 1,191. 4, Brad Angelo, Lockport, N.Y., 1,190. 5, Walt Blackston, Hawthorne, Calif., 1,189. 6, John Verbich, Griffith, Ind., 1,188.

7, George Aboud, San Jose, Calif., 1,174. 8, Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 1,170. 9, Gary Reh, Jasper, Ind., 1,163. 10, James Storts, Westfield, Ind., 1,159. 11, Ross Krumland, Henderson, Nev., 1,152. 12, (tie) Andrew Rettig, Hamburg, N.Y., and Mika Koivuniemi, Traverse City, Mich., 1,146.

14, Troy Lint, Blandon, Pa., 1,145. 15, David Show, Smock, Pa., 1,144. 16, Michael Calvin, Warren, Mich., 1,143. 17, Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 1,142. 18, Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., 1,141.

19, David Scardaville, Houston, 1,138. 20, Eric Schultz, Nolensville, Tenn., 1,136. 21, Eddie Given, Glenmoore, Pa., 1,132. 22, Jeff Johnson, Freeport, Ill., 1,129. 23, Michael Hartter, Henderson, Nev., 1,128. 24, Amleto Monacelli, Venezuela, 1,125.

25, Bryan Alpert, Newhall, Calif., 1,114. 26, (tie) Mike Hanson, Spokane, Wash., and Dennis Horan Jr, Oakley, Calif., 1,113. 28, Jason Couch, Clermont, Fla., 1,109. 29, Christopher Keane, Cape Coral, Fla., 1,108. 30, John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 1,107.



31, Robert Wiley, Sun City West, Ariz., 1,106. 32, (tie) Chris Preble, Clovis, Calif., and Jon Rakoski, Estero, Fla., 1,105. 34, Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., 1,099. 35, (tie) Don Hogue, Akron, Ohio, and Pete Weber, St Ann, Mo., 1,096.

37, Terry Taylor, Bedford, Texas, 1,095. 38, (tie) Michael Hudson, Enid, Okla., and Joe Petrovich, Tracy, Calif., 1,094. 40, Andy Neuer, Lewisburg, Pa., 1,093. 41, Don Smith, Fontana, Calif., 1,092. 42, (tie) Skip Pavone, San Jose, Calif., and Chris Skillings, Shawnee, Okla., 1,090.

44, (tie) Lyle Kuhlmann, Woodruff, Wis., and Michael Lukosius, Wimauma, Fla., 1,089. 46, (tie) Anthony Franklin, Frisco, Texas, and Herman Ferguson, Los Angeles, 1,088. 48, (tie) Robert Lawrence, Del Valle, Texas, and Walter Ray Williams Jr, Oxford, Fla., 1,087.

50, Pete Dohan Jr., Tampa, Fla., 1,086. 51, Paul McCordic, Sugar Land, Texas, 1,085. 52, (tie) Michael Snow, Canada, and Dennis Rakauskas, Apopka, Fla., 1,084. 54, Michael Klosin, Windham, N.H., 1,080.

55, Jeffery Atkins, Hot Springs Village, Ark., 1,079. 56, (tie) Mike Keough, Stockton, Calif., Steve Smith, San Diego, and Leonard Ruiz, Cypress, Calif., 1,077. 59, Michael Kennedy, Bonney Lake, Wash., 1,076.

60, (tie) Jimmy Jean, Kathleen, Ga., Dan Knowlton, Dade City, Fla., Gary Faulkner, The Villages, Fla., Tony Rodriguez Jr, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., and Chris Curry, Indianapolis, Ind., 1,075. 65, (tie) Bryan Pogor, Round Rock, Texas, and Robert Reed, Weed, Calif., 1,074.

67, (tie) David Taylor, Seminole, Fla., and Michael Reale, Providence, R.I., 1,070. 69, Steve Ludwig, Breese, Ill., 1,069. 70, Carl West, San Jose, Calif., 1,068. 71, Wayne Garber, Modesto, Calif., 1,067. 72, Ron Mohr, Las Vegas, 1,064.

73, David Cummings, St. Louis, 1,063. 74, (tie) Todd Kjell, Roscoe, Ill., and Robert Manning, Marion, Ohio, 1,062. 76, Charles Richey Jr., Concord, N.C., 1,061. 77, Jim Gordin, Modesto, Calif., 1,060. 78, (tie) Paul Fleming, Fort Worth, Texas, Chad Nelson, Owatonna, Minn., and Hugh Miller, Mercer Island, Wash., 1,059.

81, Gary Alstott, Washington, Ill., 1,058. 82, Ricky Schissler, Brighton, Colo., 1,055. 83, (tie) Ron Hurt, Greenwood, Ind., and Keith Dommer, Tucson, Ariz., 1,054.

85, Darryl Bower, Middletown, Pa., 1,053. 86, (tie) Dan Peters, Henderson, Nev., Rob Rice, Sunnyside, Wash., and Michael Haggitt, Springfield, Ohio, 1,051. 89, Kevin Anderson, Shepherdsville, Ky., 1,050. 90, Keith Lesko, Prosper, Texas, 1,049.

91, Daniel Long, Bakersfield, Calif., 1,046. 92, (tie) Stoney Baker, Canton, Ga., Patrick Young, Chico, Calif., Jerry Gentry, Auburn, Kan., and James Krafft, Anchorage, Alaska, 1,044. 96, (tie) Derek Gregory, North Las Vegas, Nev., and Tom Carter, Columbus, Ohio, 1,040.

98, (tie) John Caldwell, Austin, Texas, and Vernon Peterson, Lake Wales, Fla., 1,039. 100, James Hansen, Anchorage, Alaska, 1,038.

## **CASTILLO CONTINUES TO SET THE PACE AFTER TWO ROUNDS OF THE 2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS**

**LAS VEGAS** – Defending champion Dino Castillo of Highland Village, Texas, remains at the top of the leaderboard after two rounds of qualifying at the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Senior Masters.

Bowling on the last of three qualifying squads Wednesday at Sam's Town Bowling Center, Castillo put together games of 258, 225, 190, 265 and 176. He has 2,379 for his 10 games of qualifying, good for a 237.9 average. Castillo will take a 58-pin lead into Thursday's final round of qualifying.

"The double-burn is usually the squad that I feel is my strength," said Castillo, referring to the term used for the final squad of the day since the lanes are not reoiled in between squads. "I use a lot of power and I have a lot of loft, so the double-burn is usually good for me. I started off pretty good, then I caught a tricky pair and shot 190. The last game was just a bad pair for me, but I felt the squad went about as I expected it would."

Castillo defeated Chris Warren in the championship match of last year's event to earn his first title on the Professional Bowlers Association 50 Tour. So far, his title defense is going well and he feels he's in a good spot, but he understands this event is a grind.

"Physically I feel fine, even though I wasn't able to bowl a lot coming into this event," said Castillo. "Mentally I feel good as well. The difference is this year, as I mentioned previously, I've got a target on my back and everyone is after me. So, I just have to remember that."

Holding down second place for the second consecutive round is USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Lennie Boresch Jr. of Kenosha, Wisconsin. Boresch, bowling on the same squad as Castillo, had a high game of 279 Wednesday night and checks in with 2,321.

Chris Barnes of Denton, Texas, moved into third place with 2,316. Barnes, also a USBC and PBA Hall of Famer, was 17th after Tuesday's first round. He averaged 234.8 over his second round of qualifying to move up 14 spots. Barnes is seeking his fifth PBA50 Tour title and his first win in this event.

Rounding out the top five are John Verbich of Griffith, Indiana, and Walt Blackston of Hawthorne, California. Verbich, who was sixth after the first round, has 2,307. Blackston had a 300 game, the only one of the event so far, during his second round to help him claim fifth place with 2,297.

All 309 competitors at the 2023 USBC Senior Masters will bowl three five-game blocks over three days, culminating on Thursday, and the top 63 will join Castillo in the tournament's double-elimination bracket after 15 games.

Castillo is guaranteed a spot in the bracket as the defending champion and can improve his seeding through qualifying. If he qualifies outside of the top 63, he will enter the bracket as the No. 64 seed.

Bracket matches will be contested on Friday and Saturday in a three-game total-pinfall format, until the field is cut to the top five for the stepladder finals June 11 at 1 p.m. Eastern on BowlTV.

Since the stepladder will be broadcast on BowlTV, the top seed will have to be defeated twice in the true double-elimination format. The winner of the 2023 USBC Senior Masters will take home a major championship on the PBA50 schedule and the first-place prize of \$20,000.

For scores and information about the 2023 USBC Senior Masters, visit [BOWL.com/SeniorMasters](https://www.bowl.com/seniormasters).

## **2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS At Sam's Town Bowling Center Las Vegas**

### **Wednesday's Results QUALIFYING - ROUND 2 (10 games - top 100)**

1, Dino Castillo, Highland Village, Texas, 2,379. 2, Lennie Boresch, Kenosha, Wis., 2,321. 3, Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 2,316. 4, John Verbich, Griffith, Ind., 2,307. 5, Walt Blackston, Hawthorne, Calif., 2,297. 6, Michael Calvin, Warren, Mich., 2,295.

7, Gary Reh, Jasper, Ind., 2,291. 8, Troy Lint, Blandon, Pa., 2,276. 9, Bryan Alpert, Newhall, Calif., 2,266. 10, Terry Taylor, Bedford, Texas, 2,260. 11, Christopher Keane, Cape Coral, Fla., 2,257. 12, Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 2,255.

13, (tie) Jason Couch, Clermont, Fla., and Blaine Weninger, Clackamas, Ore., 2,248. 15, Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., 2,247. 16, John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 2,240. 17, Darryl Bower, Middletown, Pa., 2,239. 18, John Austin Jr., League City, Texas, 2,224.

19, Paul McCordic, Sugar Land, Texas, 2,214. 20, Kevin Anderson, Shepherdsville, Ky., 2,213. 21, Dennis Horan Jr, Oakley, Calif., 2,212. 22, Don Smith, Fontana, Calif., 2,205. 23, Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., 2,203. 24, Andrew Rettig, Hamburg, N.Y., 2,202.

25, Mika Koivuniemi, Traverse City, Mich., 2,200. 26, Brad Angelo, Lockport, N.Y., 2,195. 27, Marv Sargent, Temecula, Calif., 2,188. 28, (tie) Randy Peterson, Carrington, N.D., and Ross Krumland, Henderson, Nev., 2,187. 30, Tony Lanning, Yukon, Okla., 2,185.

31, Jon Rakoski, Estero, Fla., 2,184. 32, John Marsala, University City, Mo., 2,182. 33, Robert Lawrence, Del Valle, Texas, 2,178. 34, George Aboud, San Jose, Calif., 2,169. 35, Pete McCordic, Katy, Texas, 2,167. 36, (tie) Tony Manna Jr, Papillion, Neb., and Pete Weber, St Ann, Mo., 2,159.

38, James Fugitt, Grapevine, Texas, 2,157. 39, Andy Neuer, Lewisburg, Pa., 2,152. 40, Amleto Monacelli, Venezuela, 2,151. 41, Ron Mohr, Las Vegas, 2,150. 42, Skip Pavone, San Jose, Calif., 2,148.

43, Derek Gregory, North Las Vegas, Nev., 2,147. 44, Kimmo Lehtonen, Finland, 2,143. 45, (tie) Brad Snell, Mount Prospect, Ill., and Jeff Johnson, Freeport, Ill., 2,139. 47, Eddie Given, Glenmoore, Pa., 2,138. 48, (tie) Dan Peters, Henderson, Nev., and David Show, Smock, Pa., 2,137.

50, Rick Meneley, Santa Maria, Calif., 2,136. 51, Charles Richey Jr., Concord, N.C., 2,132. 52, (tie) Anthony Franklin, Frisco, Texas, and Eric Schultz, Nolensville, Tenn., 2,131. 54, Don Hogue, Akron, Ohio, 2,127.

55, Ron Hurt, Greenwood, Ind., 2,123. 56, Carl West, San Jose, Calif., 2,120. 57, Herman Ferguson, Los Angeles, 2,118. 58, David Taylor, Seminole, Fla., 2,115. 59, Vernon Peterson, Lake Wales, Fla., 2,114. 60, Mike Hanson, Spokane, Wash., 2,112.

61, Dan Knowlton, Dade City, Fla., 2,111. 62, Bryan Pogor, Round Rock, Texas, 2,109. 63, Chris Curry, Indianapolis, 2,107. 64, (tie) Michael Haggitt, Springfield, Ohio, and Robert Reed, Weed, Calif., 2,106. 66, Brian LeClair, Delmar, N.Y., 2,105.

67, (tie) Michael Hartter, Henderson, Nev., and James Storts, Westfield, Ind., 2,102. 69, Chad Nelson, Owatonna, Minn., 2,100. 70, Walter Ray Williams Jr, Oxford, Fla., 2,098. 71, Michael Lukosius, Wimauma, Fla., 2,094. 72, (tie) Andrew Lomuscio, Gilbert, Ariz., and Dan Nadeau, Las Vegas, 2,093.

74, Mark Mazzulla, Brentwood, Calif., 2,090. 75, Daniel Long, Bakersfield, Calif., 2,087. 76, Charlie Tapp, Portage, Mich., 2,085. 77, Michael Austin, Conroe, Texas, 2,083. 78, Stoney Baker, Canton, Ga., 2,082.

79, Michael Snow, Canada, 2,081. 80, (tie) James Campbell, Vonore, Tenn., and Robert Wiley, Sun City West, Ariz., 2,080. 82, Bryan Goebel, Shawnee, Kan., 2,077. 83, (tie) Mike Dias, Lafayette, Colo., and Ricky Schissler, Brighton, Colo., 2,074.

85, James Krafft, Anchorage, Alaska, 2,073. 86, Chris Skillings, Shawnee, Okla., 2,072. 87, (tie) Paul Fleming, Fort Worth, Texas, and Mike Keough, Stockton, Calif., 2,070. 89, (tie) Steve Ludwig, Breese, Ill., Leonard Ruiz, Cypress, Calif., and Michael Hudson, Enid, Okla., 2,069.

92, (tie) Bruce Hall, Southborough, Mass., and Keith Lesko, Prosper, Texas, 2,065. 94, Gary Faulkner, The Villages, Fla., 2,064. 95, Hugh Miller, Mercer Island, Wash., 2,063. 96, (tie) Michael Anderson, Las Vegas, and Jimmie Pritts, Methuen, Mass., 2,059.

98, (tie) Dave Cirigliano, Cave Creek, Ariz., and Joe Petrovich, Tracy, Calif., 2,058. 100, Brian Menini, St Joseph, Mo., 2,053.

# # #

## **CASTILLO HEADS INTO MATCH PLAY AS NO. 1 SEED AT 2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS**

**LAS VEGAS** – It was a new day Thursday at the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Senior Masters, but all that seemed to change for defending champion Dino Castillo was the color of his Dallas Cowboys-themed bowling jersey.

Castillo, of Highland Village, Texas, led for the third consecutive round in the major championship and first event of the season on the Professional Bowlers Association 50 Tour. Castillo put together a 15-game total of 3,621, good for a 241.4 average. He finished strong by averaging 248.4 over his final five-game block with games of 269, 258, 233, 258 and 224.

Castillo finished 129 pins ahead of second place, but understands things will change as the event shifts into the double-elimination three-game total-pinfall match play format.

"Today was as comfortable as I've felt all week," Castillo said. "I had a good game plan and I stuck with it. I was able to use one ball for all five games and just made minor adjustments. But now I know I have to start from zero. It doesn't matter how good or bad I've bowled, now it's head-to-head competition. So, whoever I bowl I know I've got to beat that guy. I know they're going to throw everything at me, so I've got to be ready for it."

USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Parker Bohn III of Jackson, New Jersey, had the best block in the third round of qualifying and moved from 15th to second with 3,492. Bohn was three pins better than Castillo in Round 3 (1,245 to 1,242), averaging 249.0 for the block.

"I actually had pretty good control of the lanes the first two days," Bohn said. "Today, I came out with a new ball that I hadn't used yet just to see what it might do. Well, my goodness, 250 over for five games, I think it was seeing the lane pretty good. It gave me a little bit more than what I had before, and what I had before was pretty decent. But now I feel like I've got even a notch better than that."

In third place is Walt Blackston of Hawthorne, California. Blackston had a 799 series in the first round of qualifying and a 300 game in the second round, but managed to have an even better third round with 1,190 for his five games. Blackston posted games of 236, 289, 248, 212 and 205 to get to 3,487 overall.

After a lackluster performance in the USBC Super Senior Classic, the event that immediately preceded the USBC Senior Masters at Sam's Town, Blackston decided to make a radical change that is now paying dividends.

"After the Super Senior event, my ball rep, Tony Johnson, changed my whole hand and that changed everything," said Blackston. "He changed all my pitches, my span, just everything. Once he did that, it made a world of difference. I didn't even get a chance to practice with the changes during practice session; I just started with it during the first block on Tuesday."

Rounding out the top five are Gary Reh of Jasper, Indiana, and another USBC and PBA Hall of Famer, Jason Couch of Clermont, Florida. Reh finished at 3,456 with Couch 10 pins behind him.

With the entire field having completed 15 games of qualifying, the top 64 now advance to double-elimination bracket match play beginning Friday morning. At the end of qualifying, Andrew Lomuscio of Gilbert, Arizona, and Mike Hanson of Spokane, Washington, were tied for 64th at 3,154. Lomuscio doubled in the 10th frame to win the one-game roll-off, 212-207, and claim the final spot in match play.

Bracket matches will be contested on Friday and Saturday in a three-game total-pinfall format, until the field is cut to the top five for the stepladder finals June 11 at 1 p.m. Eastern on [BowlingTV](#).

Since the stepladder will be broadcast on BowlingTV, the top seed will have to be defeated twice in the true double-elimination format. The winner of the 2023 USBC Senior Masters will take home a major championship on the PBA50 schedule and the first-place prize of \$20,000.

For scores and information about the 2023 USBC Senior Masters, visit [BOWL.com/SeniorMasters](https://www.bowl.com/seniormasters).

## TROY LINT LEADS PBA SENIOR U.S. OPEN INTO MATCH PLAY

**JUNE 17, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

After 18 games of qualifying at the PBA Senior U.S. Open, Troy Lint sits in first place at the PBA Senior U.S. Open. The 55-year-old from Blandon, Pa. finished in second place after each of the first two squads, trailing Tom Adcock, but overtook the lead on Saturday.

Lint amassed a 4,183 pinfall (+583) through 18 games of qualifying at Highland Park Lanes in Greeley, Colo. The left-hander holds the pole position as 24 games of round-robin match play begins on Sunday.

While battling a knee injury, Lint has averaged more than 232 across fresh, burn and double-burn squads.

"I'm not really trying to overpower lanes," he said. "I'm just letting the ball do more work because it seemed like if I could not be as violent as normal, I could get it to make a smooth, easy transition to the lane."

The powerful southpaw, who only joined the PBA just over three years ago, said his game has been progressing for a few years. He said winning the 2022 PBA50 Regional Players Invitational title [back in January](#) sparked a new conviction inside him.

"After the RPI, I said it's time to get moving," he said. "I decided to bowl every stop this year and go from there."

Lint set a goal for the season: to not be eligible for the 2023 RPI. That would require a top-10 season on the [PBA50 points list](#).

After finishing third at the season-opening USBC Senior Masters, a major, and leading the season's second major through qualifying, Lint could be well on his way to achieving that goal.

Tom Hess, the 2021 PBA50 Player and Rookie of the Year, surged from 10th place to second with a 1,444 series in the third round of qualifying.

Hess has championship experience in Greeley, winning the [2022 PBA50 Highland Park Lanes Open](#).

His confidence, however, wasn't quite up to his typical standards entering this event. He said he struggled to bounce back after a disappointing exit at the Senior Masters last week.

“I bowled really well and qualified seventh last week — and then I went 0-2 in match play,” Hess said. “That made for a long week. It wears on you. You’ve got days and days and days of thinking about, ‘Man, I went 0-2.’”

Hess credited his roommates, Parker Bohn III and Lennie Boresch Jr., for helping him regain a positive mindset. A refreshed mentality — plus a quick trip to his car for the two balls he won the title with last year — helped the 53-year-old put together a 228 average through 18 games.

Adcock, Brad Angelo and Bohn, who are within seven pins on each other, round out the top five. Chris Barnes and Pete Weber bookend the back half of the top 10.

Boresch, the defending champion, sits in 14th place.

Bill Watson (+210), competing on the final squad of the night, edged out Brian Kretzer by a single pin for the final spot in match play. Kretzer fired 276 in his final game earlier in the day.

Round-robin match play begins Sunday at noon ET. The 24 advancing players will bowl six games on the fresh 39-foot Aulby pattern before returning for another six-game round at 5 p.m. ET. The lanes will not be re-oiled between rounds.

After two more match play rounds on Monday (noon/5 p.m. ET), the top five players will advance to the stepladder finals at 9 p.m. ET.

All rounds of the Senior U.S. Open will be livestreamed on [BowTV](#).

### **LEADERS THROUGH ROUND 3**

1. Troy Lint, 4,183 (+583)
2. Tom Hess, 4,108 (+508)
3. Tom Adcock, 4,047 (+447)
4. Brad Angelo, 4,046 (+446)
5. Parker Bohn III, 4,040 (+440)
6. Chris Barnes, 3,996 (+396)
7. Steven Badovinac, 3,989 (+389)
8. Amleto Monacelli, 3,949 (+349)
9. Steve Kloempken, 3,947 (+347)
10. Pete Weber, 3,944 (+344)

[Complete Senior U.S. Open Standings](#)

### **REMAINING SENIOR U.S. OPEN SCHEDULE**

Highland Park Lanes | Greeley, Colorado



**Sunday, June 18**

Noon — Match play Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. — Match play Round 2 (six games)

**Monday, June 19**

Noon — Match play Round 3 (six games)

5 p.m. — Match play Round 4 (six games)

*Top five players advance to stepladder finals*

9 p.m. — Stepladder finals

**2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS  
At Sam's Town Bowling Center  
Las Vegas****Thursday's Results****QUALIFYING - ROUND 3**

**(15 games - top 100. Top 64 advance to match play)**

1, Dino Castillo, Highland Village, Texas, 3,621. 2, Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., 3,492. 3, Walt Blackston, Hawthorne, Calif., 3,487. 4, Gary Reh, Jasper, Ind., 3,456. 5, Jason Couch, Clermont, Fla., 3,446. 6, John Austin Jr., League City, Texas, 3,444.

7, Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 3,406. 8, Lennie Boresch, Kenosha, Wis., 3,378. 9, Darryl Bower, Middletown, Pa., 3,376. 10, Blaine Weninger, Clackamas, Ore., 3,369. 11, Tony Manna Jr, Papillion, Neb., 3,365. 12, Don Smith, Fontana, Calif., 3,357.

13, Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 3,355. 14, Brad Angelo, Lockport, N.Y., 3,354. 15, Pete McCordic, Katy, Texas, 3,349. 16, Kevin Anderson, Shepherdsville, Ky., 3,339. 17, Troy Lint, Blandon, Pa., 3,337. 18, John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 3,332.

19, Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., 3,319. 20, George Aboud, San Jose, Calif., 3,312. 21, John Verbich, Griffith, Ind., 3,304. 22, John Marsala, University City, Mo., 3,302. 23, Mika Koivuniemi, Traverse City, Mich., 3,301. 24, Pete Weber, St Ann, Mo., 3,288.

25, Steve Ludwig, Breese, Ill., 3,282. 26, (tie) Robert Lawrence, Del Valle, Texas, and Bryan Alpert, Newhall, Calif., 3,271. 28, Michael Hartter, Henderson, Nev., 3,264. 29, Tony Lanning, Yukon, Okla., 3,259. 30, Paul McCordic, Sugar Land, Texas, 3,249.

31, Jeff Johnson, Freeport, Ill., 3,248. 32, Dan Peters, Henderson, Nev., 3,245. 33, David Show, Smock, Pa., 3,243. 34, Andy Neuer, Lewisburg, Pa., 3,235. 35, Brian LeClair, Delmar, N.Y., 3,231. 36, Ron Mohr, Las Vegas, 3,230.

37, Michael Calvin, Warren, Mich., 3,227. 38, Brad Snell, Mount Prospect, Ill., 3,225. 39, Ron Hurt, Greenwood, Ind., 3,221. 40, Andrew Rettig, Hamburg, N.Y., 3,218. 41, Jon Rakoski, Estero, Fla., 3,216. 42, (tie) Paul Fleming, Fort Worth, Texas, Anthony Franklin, Frisco, Texas, and Rick Meneley, Santa Maria, Calif., 3,207.

45, James Campbell, Vonore, Tenn., 3,205. 46, Herman Ferguson, Los Angeles, 3,202. 47, Dennis Horan Jr, Oakley, Calif., 3,199. 48, Eric Schultz, Nolensville, Tenn., 3,194.

49, Christopher Keane, Cape Coral, Fla., 3,193. 50, Hugh Miller, Mercer Island, Wash., 3,192. 51, Michael Haggitt, Springfield, Ohio, 3,190. 52, Bryan Goebel, Shawnee, Kan., 3,187. 53, Joe Petrovich, Tracy, Calif., 3,186. 54, Ross Krumland, Henderson, Nev., 3,184.

55, Walter Ray Williams Jr, Oxford, Fla., 3,177. 56, Chris Curry, Indianapolis, 3,176. 57, (tie) Kimmo Lehtonen, Finland, and Marv Sargent, Temecula, Calif., 3,172. 59, Charles Richey Jr., Concord, N.C., 3,171. 60, Randy Peterson, Carrington, N.D., 3,167.

61, Leonard Ruiz, Cypress, Calif., 3,164. 62, Don Hogue, Akron, Ohio, 3,162. 63, Carl West, San Jose, Calif., 3,158. \*64, (tie) Andrew Lomuscio, Gilbert, Ariz., 3,154, and Mike Hanson, Spokane, Wash., 3,154, \$1,130. 66, (tie) Brian Menini, St Joseph, Mo., and Michael Austin, Conroe, Texas, 3,152, \$1,115.

68, Amleto Monacelli, Venezuela, 3,151, \$1,100. 69, Terry Taylor, Bedford, Texas, 3,150, \$1,090. 70, John Gould, Yuba City, Calif., 3,148, \$1,080. 71, Vernon Peterson, Lake Wales, Fla., 3,146, \$1,070. 72, Dave Cirigliano, Cave Creek, Ariz., 3,145, \$1,060.

73, (tie) Pete Dohan Jr., Tampa, Fla., and Scott Critchfield, Canyon Country, Calif., 3,141, \$1,045. 75, Stephen Slocum, Liberty, Mo., 3,136, \$1,030. 76, David Taylor, Seminole, Fla., 3,135, \$1,020. 77, (tie) Bruce Hall, Southborough, Mass., and Charlie Tapp, Portage, Mich., 3,132, \$1,005.

79, (tie) Tony Rodriguez Jr, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., and Michael Anderson, Las Vegas, 3,130. 81, Ben Hoefs, Mobile, Ala., 3,129. 82, Daniel Long, Bakersfield, Calif., 3,125. 83, James Fugitt, Grapevine, Texas, 3,124. 84, Dave Han, Alabaster, Ala., 3,122.

85, (tie) Bo Goergen, Sanford, Mich., and Dan Knowlton, Dade City, Fla., 3,120. 87, Steve DiMartino, Upper Saddle River, N.J., 3,119. 88, Robert Reed, Weed, Calif., 3,118.

89, Robert Wiley, Sun City West, Ariz., 3,116. 90, (tie) Gerald Sikora, Ecorse, Mich., and Bob Learn Jr, Spring Hill, Tenn., 3,114.

92, (tie) Gary Faulkner, The Villages, Fla., and Skip Pavone, San Jose, Calif., 3,113. 94, (tie) Steve Kloempken, Pleasant View, Utah, and Eddie Given, Glenmoore, Pa., 3,108. 96, (tie) Clay Rees, Lehi, Utah, and Steve Gagnon, Canada, 3,107.

98, Dan Nadeau, Las Vegas, 3,099. 99, Michael Hudson, Enid, Okla., 3,098. 100, Steve Smith, San Diego, Calif., 3,097.

\*Andrew Lomuscio, Gilbert, Ariz., defeated Mike Hanson, Spokane, Wash., 212-207, in a one-game roll-off for 64th place, 3,154.

## **LEGENDARY PAST CHAMPIONS WEBER AND WILLIAMS STILL IN WINNERS BRACKET AT 2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS**

**LAS VEGAS** – The Winners Bracket at the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Senior Masters was whittled down to 16 players Friday, and included in that number are a pair of legendary past champions, Pete Weber and Walter Ray Williams Jr.

Weber, of St. Ann, Missouri, and Williams, of Oxford, Florida, are the only past champions left in the field and each is seeking to become the first three-time winner of the event.

While neither player qualified particularly high for the double-elimination match play bracket - Weber was 24th and Williams was 55th - they each won both of their three-game total pinfall matches at Sam's Town Bowling Center Friday to remain in the Winners Bracket.

For Williams, the second of those victories didn't come easily. He trailed Paul Fleming of Fort Worth, Texas, by 25 pins heading into the final game of the match. Williams worked his way back into the match and finished with a three-game total of 625. Fleming got up in the 10th frame needing to strike out to force a tie and a one-shot roll-off. His first two shots struck, but a stubborn 10 pin on his last shot gave Williams the win.

"I'm very fortunate to be in the Winners Bracket right now," said Williams. "I shot 640 and 625 today. I won the last match by one pin and got a little lucky there. My opponent (Fleming) was looking good, then had a couple bad shots and I managed to get just enough."

Both Williams and Weber are USBC and Professional Bowlers Association Hall of Famers. Unlike Williams, Weber didn't have any close calls in his first two matches. He defeated Jon Rakoski, 677-614, and Darryl Bower, 745-617.

"I'm throwing the ball probably as good as I've thrown it in a long time," Weber said. "So, the physical game is good. Mental game, well, I've been very calm these last two weeks. I've made a little lifestyle change and I'm feeling a lot better about myself. I'm just glad we're bowling again because I was getting bored at home with nothing to do."

Other familiar names in the Winners Bracket include USBC and PBA Hall of Famers Lennie Boresch of Kenosha, Wisconsin, and Ron Mohr of Las Vegas. Team USA member and USBC Hall of Famer John Janawicz of Winter Haven, Florida, bowling in his first Senior Masters, is also in the Winners Bracket, along with PBA Tour champion Brad Angelo. Angelo of Lockport, New York, won a "battle of Buffalo" match with fellow PBA Tour champion Jack Jurek of Lackawanna, New York, in the opening round of match play.

Jurek and Fleming, who recovered from his tough loss to Williams, are two of the 16 players still alive in the Elimination Bracket. Joining them are USBC and PBA Hall of Famers Parker Bohn III of Jackson, New Jersey, and Jason Couch of Clermont, Florida. Bohn and Couch qualified second and fifth respectively for match play, but each lost their second match in the bracket and now must fight through the Elimination Bracket in order to reach the stepladder finals.

"I've bowled very well here at Sam's Town and had a lot of success on the lanes," Bohn said. "Unfortunately, the only thing that hasn't come with that success is winning a title. I finished third here in this event last year and I really, really want to get into the winner's circle here."

While Bohn will continue his quest to win his first Senior Masters title, a handful of name players had their title hopes come to an end Friday.

Defending champion Dino Castillo of Highland Village, Texas, qualified first for match play and won his first match, but then lost his next two and was eliminated. Also eliminated were USBC and PBA Hall of Famers Chris Barnes of Denton, Texas, and Mike Koivuniemi of Traverse City, Michigan.

Past champion Tom Hess of Granger, Iowa, and No. 3 seed Walt Blackston of Hawthorne, California, are also heading home. Blackston had a 799 series and a 300 game during qualifying.

For Weber and Williams, the title quest continues.

Williams, who won this event in 2017 and 2014, continues to battle arthritis in his bowling hand.

"Physically, I'm semi-ok," Williams said. "I've got arthritis in my right hand and it's pretty bad in my index and pinky fingers. I don't even shake hands with people anymore because it hurts too much; I fist bump them. Fortunately, the two fingers I use for bowling are decent. It hurts a little bit when I bowl, but it's not so bad that I can't bowl."

Despite the pain in his bowling hand, Williams still has the drive to win.

"I still enjoy the competition and competing in tournaments," Williams said. "You always want to win another tournament. That's just the way I am. I'm still decent and I've still got a chance to win tournaments. It's almost like the stars have to align these days for that to happen, but I'm not giving up; I'm still competitive."

For Weber, who won this event in 2016 and 2013, bowling in match play at Sam's Town brings a certain confidence.

"I've always bowled good at Sam's Town," Weber said. "I've always had a good reaction and my ball roll seems to fit this house. It's just a matter of finding the ball that strikes. I've been making ball changes quick and often when I need to. For me, I just need to make sure I feel good and that I'm not babying the ball, but throwing it."

Bracket matches continue Saturday until the field is cut to the top five for the stepladder finals Sunday at 1 p.m. Eastern. All competition in the USBC Senior Masters is live on [BowlTV](#).

Since the stepladder will be broadcast on BowlTV, the top seed will have to be defeated twice in the true double-elimination format. The winner of the 2023 USBC Senior Masters will take home a major championship on the PBA50 schedule and the first-place prize of \$20,000.

For scores and information about the 2023 USBC Senior Masters, visit [BOWL.com/SeniorMasters](https://www.bowl.com/seniormasters).

## **2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS**

### **At Sam's Town Bowling Center**

### **Las Vegas**

#### **Friday's Results**

#### **MATCH PLAY**

**Double elimination, three-game matches decided by total pinfall**

#### **ROUND 1**

**(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).**

(1) Dino Castillo, Highland Village, Texas, def. (64) Andrew Lomuscio, Gilbert, Ariz., 692-566.

(32) Dan Peters, Henderson, Nev., def. (33) David Show, Smock, Pa., 610-551.  
(17) Troy Lint, Blandon, Pa., def. (48) Eric Schultz, Nolensville, Tenn., 768-554.  
(49) Christopher Keane, Cape Coral, Fla., def. (16) Kevin Anderson, Shepherdsville, Ky., 632-526.

(9) Darryl Bower, Middletown, Pa., def. (56) Chris Curry, Indianapolis, 636-586.  
(24) Pete Weber, St Ann, Mo., (41) Jon Rakoski, Estero, Fla., 677-614.  
(40) Andrew Rettig, Hamburg, N.Y., def. (25) Steve Ludwig, Breese, Ill., 669-619.  
(8) Lennie Boresch, Kenosha, Wis., def. (57) Marv Sargent, Temecula, Calif., 711-555.

(5) Jason Couch, Clermont, Fla., def. (60) Randy Peterson, Carrington, N.D., 762-531.  
(37) Michael Calvin, Warren, Mich., def. (28) Michael Hartter, Henderson, Nev., 647-525.  
(44) Anthony Franklin, Frisco, Texas, def. (21) John Verbich, Griffith, Ind., 658-655.  
(53) Joe Petrovich, Tracy, Calif., def. (12) Don Smith, Fontana, Calif., 638-621.

(52) Bryan Goebel, Shawnee, Kan., def. (13) Chris Barnes, Denton, Texas, 709-620.  
(45) James Campbell, Vonore, Tenn., def. (20) George Aboud, San Jose, Calif., 729-598.  
(36) Ron Mohr, Las Vegas, def. (29) Tony Lanning, Yukon, Okla., 676-628.  
(4) Gary Reh, Jasper, Ind., def. (61) Leonard Ruiz, Cypress, Calif., 670-623.

(62) Don Hogue, Akron, Ohio, def. (3) Walt Blackston, Hawthorne, Calif., 605-557.  
(35) Brian LeClair, Delmar, N.Y., def. (30) Paul McCordic, Sugar Land, Texas, 629-584.  
(19) Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., def. (46) Herman Ferguson, Los Angeles, def. 649-624.  
(14) Brad Angelo, Lockport, N.Y., def. (51) Michael Haggitt, Springfield, Ohio, 663-592.

(54) Ross Krumland, Henderson, Nev., def. (11) Tony Manna Jr., Papillion, Neb., 593-574.  
(43) Rick Meneley, Santa Maria, Calif., def. (22) John Marsala, University City, Mo., 684-662.  
(38) Brad Snell, Mount Prospect, Ill., def. (27) Robert Lawrence, Del Valle, Texas, 629-597.  
(6) John Austin Jr., League City, Texas, def. (59) Charles Richey Jr., Concord, N.C., 639-571.

(58) Kimmo Lehtonen, Finland, def. (7) Tom Hess, Granger, Iowa, 717-640.  
(26) Bryan Alpert, Newhall, Calif., def. (39) Ron Hurt, Greenwood, Ind., 623-616.  
(42) Paul Fleming, Fort Worth, Texas, def. (23) Mika Koivuniemi, Traverse City, Mich., 584-548.  
(55) Walter Ray Williams Jr., Oxford, Fla., def. (10) Blaine Weninger, Clackamas, Ore., 640-619.

(15) Pete McCordic, Katy, Texas, def. (50) Hugh Miller, Mercer Island, Wash., 700-630.  
(18) John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., def. (47) Dennis Horan Jr, Oakley, Calif., 680-624.  
(34) Andy Neuer, Lewisburg, Pa., def. (31) Jeff Johnson, Freeport, Ill., Phoenix, 690-670.  
(2) Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., def. (63) Carl West, San Jose, Calif., 695-596.

## **ROUND 2 - WINNERS BRACKET**

**(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).**

(32) Peters def. (1) Castillo, 606-537.  
(17) Lint def. (49) Keane, 835-648.  
(24) Weber def. (9) Bower, 745-617.  
(8) Boresch def. (40) Retting, 649-605.

(37) Calvin def. (5) Couch, 694-649.  
(44) Franklin def. (53) Petrovich, 576-565.  
(45) Campbell def. (52) Goebel, 664-640.  
(36) Mohr def. (4) Reh, 712-673.

(35) LeClair def. (62) Hogue, 720-664.  
(14) Angelo def. (19) Jurek, 762-593.  
(43) Meneley def. (54) Krumland, 636-606.  
(38) Snell def. (6) Austin Jr., 681-583.

(58) Lehtonen def. (26) Alpert, 662-544.  
(55) Williams Jr. def. (42) Fleming, 625-624.  
(18) Janawicz def. (15) Pete McCordic, 705-561.  
(34) Neuer def. (2) Bohn, 755-606.

## **ROUND 1 - ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Losers eliminated, finish tied for 49th, earn \$1,350)**

(33) Show def. (64) Lomuscio, 615-553.  
(57) Sargent def. (25) Ludwig, 572-560.  
(48) Schultz def. (16) Anderson, 611-608.  
(56) Curry def. (41) Rakoski, 594-534.

(28) Hartter def. (60) Peterson, 667-590.  
(29) Lanning def. (61) Ruiz, 755-646.  
(12) Smith def. (21) Verbich, 676-666.  
(20) Aboud def. (13) Barnes, 592-560.

(30) Paul McCordic def. (3) Blackson, 679-541.  
(27) Lawrence def. (59) Richey Jr., 741-574.  
(51) Haggitt def. (46) Ferguson, 664-527.  
(22) Marsala def. (11) Manna Jr., 585-549.

(39) Hurt def. (7) Hess, 610-535.  
(31) Johnson def. (63) West, 569-567.  
(10) Weninger def. (23) Koivuniemi, 662-636.  
(50) Miller def. (47) Horan Jr., 697-672.

## **ROUND 2 - ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Losers eliminated, finish tied for 33rd, earn \$1,500)**

(19) Jurek def. (33) Show, 682-618.  
(57) Sargent def. (54) Krumland, 665-607.

(48) Schultz def. (62) Hogue, 668-615.  
(6) Austin Jr. def. (56) Curry, 632-565.

(42) Fleming def. (28) Hartter, 729-597.  
(29) Lanning def. (15) Pete McCordic, 609-576.  
(12) Smith def. (26) Alpert, 701-558.  
(2) Bohn def. (20) Aboud, 773-742.

(49) Keane def. (30) Paul McCordic, 619-613.  
(27) Lawrence def. (9) Bower, 652-580.  
(51) Haggitt def. (1) Castillo, 720-547.  
(22) Marsala def. (40) Rettig, 632-606.

(39) Hurt def. (53) Petrovich, 674-637.  
(31) Johnson def. (52) Goebel, 726-594.  
(5) Couch def. (10) Weninger, 693-631.  
(4) Reh def. (50) Miller, 682-639.

## **JANAWICZ CLAIMS TOP SEED FOR STEPLADDER FINALS AT 2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS**

**LAS VEGAS** – John Janawicz of Winter Haven, Florida, went undefeated in match play and earned the No. 1 seed for the stepladder finals of the 2023 United States Bowling Congress Senior Masters at Sam's Town Bowling Center Saturday.

Janawicz, who turned 50 in September, is a rookie on the Professional Bowlers Association 50 Tour and competing in this event for the first time. He defeated Lennie Boresch of Kenosha, Wisconsin, in the match to decide the No. 1 seed for Sunday's stepladder finals, 648-524 (three-game total pinfall). Boresch will be the No. 2 seed.

Joining Janawicz and Boresch in the finals are No. 3 seed Troy Lint of Blandon, Pennsylvania, No. 4 seed Brad Angelo of Lockport, New York, and No. 5 seed Brian LeClair of Delmar, New York.

After winning both of his matches on Friday, Janawicz kept things on the right track Saturday by opening with a narrow win over Andy Neuer of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Janawicz doubled in the 10th frame to secure a 708-702 victory.

"I was up early in that match and then Andy started striking and made a heck of a run at me," Janawicz said. "After he struck in the ninth in that last game, I thought I was gonna be done. But then he got around one a little bit in the 10th and left the 4-10 to give me a chance. I managed to throw a double in the 10th to get the win. That was huge."

He picked up the pace in his next match, rolling a 300 game en route to a 790-678 win over Kimmo Lehtonen of Finland. A win over Angelo (699-698) preceded his win against Boresch that put him in the top spot for the finals.



Janawicz, a USBC Hall of Famer and 10-time and current Team USA member, talked about his expectations entering his first event on the senior circuit.

"When it comes to expectations, honestly all I'm trying to do out here is learn and try to continue to get better," Janawicz said. "Fortunately, this week I made some good decisions when it came to lane play and it all worked out pretty well."

As the No. 1 seed and only undefeated player in the double-elimination format, Janawicz will have to lose two games in the stepladder finals for someone else to claim the title.

"Of course that's an advantage, but it's one I hope I don't need," Janawicz said. "I'll need to pay attention to how the lanes are being played in the matches in front of me and how the lanes are breaking down. I don't want to relax because I have to be beaten twice. I want to put it away with one game."

Boresch, a five-time PBA50 Tour champion and owner of two PBA50 majors, is seeking to improve on his second-place finish in this event in 2013 when he lost to Pete Weber.

"It would be nice to win this one," Boresch said. "That one I lost to Pete kind of left a bad taste in my mouth. If I had struck out in the 10th, I could've shut him out. But I left a split. So, hopefully I can make up for that tomorrow."

Lint came into Saturday's match play as the hottest player in the field after winning with scores of 768 and 835 on Friday. He lost his first match on Saturday, but never looked back after that.

After that opening match loss, Lint shot 791 to beat Paul Fleming of Fort Worth, Texas, then proceeded to take out USBC and PBA Hall of Famer Parker Bohn III of Jackson, New Jersey, 684-604. He then shot 726 to beat Rick Meneley of Santa Maria, California, before dispatching Lehtonen, 736-716, to put himself into the final match of the day, where four players battled for the final three spots in the stepladder.

In that last match, Lint's 760 total was best among Angelo (727), LeClair (703) and James Campbell of Vonore, Tennessee (586), who finished sixth.

Lint, the lone lefthander in the stepladder finals, has put together a memorable performance despite battling an extremely sore knee.

"I won a regional two weeks ago and the next day my knee was killing me," Lint said. "I was perfectly fine bowling that regional, but now it's just blown up. I'm using Aleve . . . Tylenol . . . ibuprofen . . . everything."

Lint, who is seeking his first PBA50 Tour win, is willing to work through the pain in pursuit of a title.

"It would mean everything," Lint said, when asked what a win in this event would represent. "It's the goal, it's why I'm out here. These are the guys I've watched since I was a kid and now they're friends of mine, so that makes it even better."

The opening match will feature a pair of New Yorkers as Angelo and LeClair will face each other. Angelo is after his second PBA50 win after capturing his first title last year. LeClair, who was the 2017 PBA50 Player of the Year, is seeking his sixth PBA50 title, but first since 2019.

The top five will compete in Sunday's stepladder finals live on [BowlTV](#) at 1 p.m. Eastern (10 a.m. Pacific).

Since the stepladder will be broadcast on BowlTV, the top seed will have to be defeated twice in the true double-elimination format. The winner of the 2023 USBC Senior Masters will take home a major championship on the PBA50 schedule and the first-place prize of \$20,000.

For scores and information about the 2023 USBC Senior Masters, visit [BOWL.com/SeniorMasters](https://www.bowl.com/seniormasters).

## **2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS At Sam's Town Bowling Center Las Vegas**

### **Saturday's Results**

#### **MATCH PLAY**

**Double elimination, three-game matches decided by total pinfall**

#### **ROUND 3 – WINNERS BRACKET**

**(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).**

- (32) Dan Peters, Henderson, Nev., def. (17) Troy Lint, Blandon, Pa., 644-612.
- (8) Lennie Boresch, Kenosha, Wis., def. (24) Pete Weber, St. Ann, Mo., 709-592.
- (44) Anthony Franklin, Frisco, Texas, def. (37) Michael Calvin, Warren, Mich., 751-604.
- (45) James Campbell, Vonore, Tenn., def. (36) Ron Mohr, Las Vegas, 682-660.
  
- (14) Brad Angelo, Lockport, N.Y., def. (35) Brian LeClair, Delmar, N.Y., 685-661.
- (43) Rick Meneley, Santa Maria, Calif., def. (38) Brad Snell, Mount Prospect, Ill., 629-612.
- (58) Kimmo Lehtonen, Finland, def. (55) Walter Ray Williams Jr., Oxford, Fla., 724-600.
- (18) John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., def. (34) Andy Neuer, Lewisburg, Pa., 708-702.

#### **ROUND 3 – ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Losers eliminated, finish tied for 25th, earn \$1,700)**

- (19) Jack Jurek, Lackawanna, N.Y., def. (57) Marv Sargent, Temecula, Calif., 631-553.

(48) Eric Schultz, Nolensville, Tenn., def. (6) John Austin Jr., League City, Texas, 672-495.

(42) Paul Fleming, Fort Worth, Texas, def. (29) Tony Lanning, Yukon, Okla., 724-674.

(2) Parker Bohn III, Jackson, N.J., def. (12) Don Smith, Fontana, Calif., 750-681.

(27) Robert Lawrence, Del Valle, Texas, def. (49) Christopher Keane, Cape Coral, Fla., 658-629.

(22) John Marsala, University City, Mo., def. (51) Michael Haggitt, Springfield, Ohio, 697-610.

(31) Jeff Johnson, Freeport, Ill., Phoenix, def. (39) Ron Hurt, Greenwood, Ind., 619-583.

(4) Gary Reh, Jasper, Ind., def. (5) Jason Couch, Clermont, Fla., 704-581.

#### **ROUND 4 – WINNERS BRACKET**

**(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).**

(8) Boresch def. (32) Peters, 656-607.

(45) Campbell def. (44) Franklin, 721-683.

(14) Angelo def. (43) Meneley, 713-601.

(18) Janawicz def. (58) Lehtonen, 790-678.

#### **ROUND 4 – ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Losers eliminated, finish tied for 17th, earn \$2,000)**

(19) Jurek def. (37) Calvin, 627-601.

(36) Mohr def. (48) Schultz, 686-551

(17) Lint def. (42) Fleming, 791-677.

(2) Bohn def. (24) Weber, 721-681.

(34) Neuer def. (27) Lawrence, 683-521.

(22) Marsala def. (55) Williams Jr., 677-643.

(31) Johnson def. (38) Snell, 700-586.

(35) LeClair def. (4) Reh, 687-659.

#### **ROUND 5 – WINNERS BRACKET**

**(Winners remain in Winners Bracket. Losers move to Elimination Bracket).**

(8) Boresh def. (45) Campbell, 740-575.

(18) Janawicz def. (14) Angelo, 699-598.

#### **ROUND 5 – ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Losers eliminated, finish tied for 13th, earn \$2,400)**

(19) Jurek def. (36) Mohr, 663-582.

(17) Lint def. (2) Bohn, 684-604.

(34) Neuer def. (22) Marsala, 728-692.

(35) LeClair def. (31) Johnson, 707-700.

#### **ROUND 6 – WINNERS BRACKET**

**(Winner earns No. 1 seed for Sunday's BowlTV finals; loser is No. 2 seed)**

(18) Janawicz def. (8) Boresch, 648-524.

#### **ROUND 6 – ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Losers eliminated, finish tied for ninth, earn \$3,000)**

(58) Lehtonen def. (19) Jurek, 699-679.  
(17) Lint def. (43) Meneley, 726-698.  
(44) Franklin def. (34) Neuer, 686-664.  
(35) LeClair def. (32) Peters, 639-615.

#### **ROUND 7 – ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Losers eliminated, finish tied for seventh, earn \$3,700)**

(17) Lint def. (58) Lehtonen, 736-716.  
(35) LeClair def. (44) Franklin, 680-640.

#### **ROUND 8 – ELIMINATION BRACKET**

**(Three highest scores advance to Sunday's BowlTV finals, high score is No. 3 seed, second high is No. 4, third high is No. 5. Lowest score is eliminated and finishes sixth, earns \$4,700).**

(17) Lint 760, (14) Angelo 727, (35) LeClair 703, (45) Campbell 586.

### **JANAWICZ WINS 2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS; COLLECTS FIRST MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIP**

**LAS VEGAS** – John Janawicz of Winter Haven, Florida, capped an impressive week at the United States Bowling Congress Senior Masters by winning the title in the major championship Sunday at Sam's Town Bowling Center.

Janawicz defeated Lennie Boresch of Kenosha, Wisconsin, 204-200, in the title match to claim his first victory on the Professional Bowlers Association 50 Tour. Janawicz, who turned 50 in September, is a rookie on the PBA50 Tour and was competing in his first event on the senior circuit.

"I never bowled the regular tour," Janawicz said. "So, to be able to come back out here now is pretty special to me. A lot of the greats on tour that won majors have also won senior majors; they've won the Senior Masters. Guys like Pete (Weber), who has won it twice. Walter Ray (Williams Jr.) has won it twice. The list goes on and on. So, to put your name alongside of guys like that is pretty unreal."

All rounds of the 2023 USBC Senior Masters were covered live on [BowlTV](#).

Janawicz went undefeated through the double-elimination match play portion of the event to qualify as the No. 1 seed for the stepladder finals. As such, he had to be

beaten twice in the stepladder finals in order for someone else to claim the title. And, about halfway through his match against Boresch, it looked like a second game was going to take place.

Boresch, a five-time champion and two-time major winner on the PBA50 Tour, started the title match with strikes in the first five frames. Meanwhile, Janawicz's first six frames went like this: spare (3-10 split conversion), strike, pocket 7-10 split for an open frame, strike, and then two single-pin spare conversions (7 pin and 10 pin).

Just when it seemed a certainty that Boresch would force a second game, the wheels fell off. Three consecutive open frames by Boresch turned the match around. He left the 4-10 split in the sixth frame and couldn't convert, missed a single-pin (8 pin) conversion in the seventh, and was unable to convert the 4-6-7-10 split in the eighth. He left the 3-6-9-10 in the ninth but managed to convert the spare.

"I got one in a little bit on that first split," said Boresch. "I moved in a little bit on the one where I left the stone 8. I thought I made the spare, but I didn't. Then I started thinking 'What hell are you doing here?' Then I moved a little bit more in the eighth and I got it in again and I got the Big Four (4-6-7-10 split)."

Janawicz, having not struck on his first three attempts on the right lane (lane 20), made an adjustment in the seventh frame that paid immediate dividends.

"I knew I had to do something on that right lane," Janawicz said. "I felt like I needed to switch to a ball that rolled just a little bit earlier and was a little bit smoother. So I switched to a Phaze II and was able to use that ball on both lanes the rest of the way."

The ball change worked as Janawicz struck in frames seven through nine. The strike in the ninth frame gave him the lead in the match for the first time. Janawicz, finishing the match first, needed the first strike in the 10th frame to shut out Boresch. But he left a 4 pin, which he converted for a spare, and then got eight pins on his final shot to finish at 204.

Now it was Boresch who needed the first strike in the 10th to force another game, but he left the 4-7, giving the title and the \$20,000 first-place check to Janawicz.

"I just didn't bowl good at the end," Boresch said. "Just kinda got the yips a little bit. The most disappointing thing is I got a second chance and could've still won it in 10th and just didn't make a good shot."

It marked the second time Boresch, a 61-year-old right-hander who was the only "Super Senior" (60 or older) in the stepladder finals, has finished second in this event. He was also runner-up in 2013 when he lost to Weber.

Janawicz is a USBC Hall of Famer and 10-time and current member of Team USA. He noted the experience he's gained being a Team USA member was something that helped prepare him for a moment like today.

"I've gotten a lot of good coaching through Team USA," Janawicz said. "The experiences that I've had; the great teammates that I've had. You learn from those guys; you observe them and take different things from them. All of that had a part in what happened today."

The stepladder finals started with a battle of New Yorkers as No. 4 seed Brad Angelo of Lockport, New York, defeated No. 5 seed Brian LeClair of Delmar, New York, 238-189. A 4-7-10 split in the fourth frame and a 1-2-4-6-10 "washout" in the sixth frame by LeClair, along with a closing four-bagger by Angelo, spelled the end for LeClair.

No. 3 seed Troy Lint of Blandon, Pennsylvania, made a run at 300 in Match 2. Lint started with the first 10 strikes before an 8-pin ended his bid at perfection. The result was a 289-238 win over Angelo.

Lint, the lone left-hander in the stepladder finals, was seeking his first win on the PBA50 Tour. His semifinal match against Boresch came down to the final frame. Boresch, finishing first, struck on his last four shots of the match to post a score of 239. Lint got up in his 10th frame needing all three strikes to tie the match and force a one-shot roll-off. But he left a 7 pin on his first shot in the 10th and finished with 228.

Boresch received \$12,000 for finishing second and Lint collected \$9,000 for third. Angelo, who won his first PBA50 Tour title last year, earned \$7,500 for fourth. LeClair, who was seeking his sixth career PBA50 Tour title and first senior major, took home \$6,000 for fifth.

The 2023 Senior Masters started with 309 players competing in three five-game qualifying blocks to determine the top 64 players in the double-elimination bracket. All bracket matches leading up to the stepladder featured a three-game total-pinfall format.

Defending champion Dino Castillo of Highland Village, Texas, led the field after qualifying, but lost his first two matches and finished tied for 33rd.

For more information about the USBC Senior Masters, visit [BOWL.com/SeniorMasters](https://www.bowl.com/seniormasters).

## **2023 USBC SENIOR MASTERS**

### **At Sam's Town Bowling Center**

### **Las Vegas**

#### **Sunday's Results**

#### **Final standings**

- 1, John Janawicz, Winter Haven, Fla., 204 (one game), \$20,000.
- 2, Lennie Boresch, Kenosha, Wis., 439 (two games), \$12,000.
- 3, Troy Lint, Blandon, Pa., 517 (two games), \$9,000.
- 4, Brad Angelo, Lockport, N.Y., 447 (two games), \$7,500.
- 5, Brian LeClair, Delmar, N.Y., 189 (one game), \$6,000.

**Stepladder results**

**Match 1** - Angelo def. LeClair, 238-189.

**Match 2** - Lint def. Angelo, 289-208.

**Semifinal** - Boresch def. Lint, 239-228.

**Championship** - Janawicz def. Boresch, 204-200.

## **2023 PBA REGIONAL PLAYERS INVITATIONAL TO**

### **RETURN TO SOUTH POINT IN LAS VEGAS**

**JUNE 13, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The 2023 PBA Regional Players Invitational, including 118 of the nation's finest regional talents, will be held Jan. 2-4, 2024 at South Point Bowling Plaza in Las Vegas. The tournament will include PBA and PBA50 divisions and a \$115,000 prize fund.

Players can earn an entry to the tournament via the season-long Regional Tour points list or through each region's RPI qualifier.

First place will earn \$15,000 in the PBA division and \$10,000 in the PBA50 division. The top 24 PBA players and the top 16 PBA50 players will cash, each earning at least \$1,000.

Seventy PBA players will compete at the RPI, including the top seven players in each region's points list and the top three players in each region's RPI qualifier.

In the senior division, the top four PBA50 players in each region will earn an entry into the RPI, plus the top three finishers in each region's RPI qualifier. However, only the top two players from the PBA50 Northwest Region RPI qualifier will earn a spot, totaling 48 PBA50 players.

To showcase the country's elite regional talent, the top 50 players during the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour will be ineligible for the RPI. The top 10 players from the PBA50 Tour points list will also be ineligible for the PBA50 division at the RPI. However, a top-10 PBA50 Tour player who finished outside the top 50 on the PBA Tour would be eligible in the PBA division.

In a slight change from last year's schedule, the PBA and PBA50 divisions will compete on the same days. Both divisions will bowl 18 games of qualifying spread across three six-game blocks.

Following qualifying, the PBA field will be trimmed to the top 16 players for match play. The top four qualifiers will earn a two-round bye in the bracket and the fifth- through eighth-place qualifiers will receive a one-round bye.

The first three rounds of match play (Rounds of 16, 12 and Eight) will feature best-of-three-games matches, while the semifinals and finals will be single-game matches.

The format is similar in the senior division, cutting to the top 12 players for match play with the top four players earning a one-round bye. The Rounds of 12 and Eight will be best-of-three-games matches, while the semifinals and finals will be single-game matches.

The defending RPI champions are [Patrick Dombrowski](#) (PBA) and [Troy Lint](#) (PBA50).

The upcoming PBA Regional Tour schedule is available [here](#). An overview of the 2023 PBA Regional Players Invitational is available below.

[2023PBARPIFormat.pdf](#)

## **PBA SENIOR U.S. OPEN PREVIEW**

### **JUNE 14, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Email](#)

The 2023 PBA50 Tour heads just north of the Mile High City for the second tournament and major of the season. The Senior U.S. Open begins on Thursday at Highland Park Lanes in Greeley, Colo.

Emotions may run high this week for defending champion Lennie Boresch Jr. The Wisconsin native captured his fifth career PBA50 title and second major at this event last season, which made him eligible for the PBA Hall of Fame.



Five months later, PBA Commissioner Tom Clark welcomed Boresch [into the PBA's royal family](#).

Boresch, who finished as the runner-up in the 2023 season-opening [USBC Senior Masters](#), will begin his title defense on the 39-foot Aulby pattern on A-squad Thursday morning.

The 137-player field will bowl 18 games of qualifying between Thursday and Saturday. Pinfall will carry over as the top 24 players advance to round-robin match play.

Four six-game match play rounds on Sunday and Monday will determine the five finalists for the stepladder finals, beginning at 9 p.m. ET on Monday night.

As Tom Hess returns to northern Colorado, his confidence should be as high as the Rocky Mountain altitude.

Hess won the [PBA50 Highland Park Lanes Open](#) last season. He averaged 233 — five pins per game more than the next-best player — en route to winning his third career PBA50 title.

Runner-up Tom Adcock, Michael Haugen Jr., Chris Barnes and Carlos Denot also made the stepladder finals in Greeley last year.

All rounds of the Senior U.S. Open will be livestreamed on [BowlTV](#). The champion will receive \$15,000.

## **PLAYERS TO WATCH**

A-squad: Brad Angelo, Mitch Beasley, Parker Bohn III, Lennie Boresch Jr., Dino Castillo, Jason Couch, Tom Hess

B-squad: Michael Haugen Jr., John Janawicz, Tish Johnson, Jack Jurek, Chris Warren, Pete Weber, Walter Ray Williams Jr.

C-squad: Tom Adcock, Chris Barnes, Bryan Goebel, Brian Kretzer, Brian LeClair, Troy Lint, Amletto Monacelli

The full roster is available [here](#).

## **2023 SENIOR U.S. OPEN SCHEDULE**

Highland Park Lanes | Greeley, Colorado  
*All times listed in Eastern*

### **Thursday, June 15**

11 a.m. — A-squad qualifying (six games)  
2:30 p.m. — B-squad qualifying (six games)  
6 p.m. — C-squad qualifying (six games)

**Friday, June 16**

11 a.m. — B-squad qualifying (six games)  
2:30 p.m. — C-squad qualifying (six games)  
6 p.m. — A-squad qualifying (six games)

**Saturday, June 17**

11 a.m. — C-squad qualifying (six games)  
2:30 p.m. — A-squad qualifying (six games)  
6 p.m. — B-squad qualifying (six games)  
*Top 24 players advance; pinfall carries over*

**Sunday, June 18**

Noon — Match play Round 1 (six games)  
5 p.m. — Match play Round 2 (six games)

**Monday, June 19**

Noon — Match play Round 3 (six games)  
5 p.m. — Match play Round 4 (six games)  
*Top five players advance to stepladder finals*  
9 p.m. — Stepladder finals

More information on the Senior U.S. Open is available [here](#).

TOM ADCOCK LEADS DAY 1 OF PBA SENIOR U.S. OPEN

JUNE 15, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

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Email

Tom Adcock of Forsyth, Ill., paced the field on the first day of qualifying at the PBA Senior U.S. Open.

The 61-year-old posted a 1,459 (+259) six-game series at Highland Park Lanes in Greeley, Colo. Players competed on the 39-foot Aulby pattern.

Adcock bowled on the double-burn during C-squad, meaning the lanes were not re-oiled following each of the two previous squads. Adcock will bowl on the burn tomorrow, then fresh oil for Saturday's final round of qualifying.

Troy Lint carried over his strong performance in the season-opening USBC Senior Masters. He finished the first round in second place at +219.

Bill Watson led B-squad at +216 and sits in third overall, while Steve Kloempken and Jack Jurek round out the top five.

Colorado native Steven Badovinac (+187) led A-squad on the fresh. He sits in sixth place overall, followed closely by 2022 PBA50 Player of the Year runner-up Chris Barnes.

Defending champion Lennie Boresch Jr. is in 10th place at +143.

Players will bowl one six-game round on fresh, burn and double-burn lane conditions. After the 18 games are complete on Saturday evening, the top 24 players will advance to round-robin match play.

The match play rounds will take place on Sunday and Monday, leading up to the stepladder finals at 9 p.m. ET on Monday night. The top five players after all 42 games will advance to the finals.

John Janawicz, who captured the title in his first career PBA50 event earlier in the week, is the current cut number in 24th place at +108.

Competition resumes at 11 a.m. ET on Friday. B-squad hits the lanes first on the fresh, followed by C-squad at 2:30 p.m. ET. A-squad closes the day at 6 p.m. ET.

All rounds of the Senior U.S. Open will be livestreamed on BowITV.

#### LEADERS THROUGH ROUND 1

Tom Adcock, 1,459 (+259)

Troy Lint, 1,419 (+219)

Bill Watson, 1,416 (+216)

Steve Kloempken, 1,405 (+205)

Jack Jurek, 1,388 (+188)

Steven Badovinac, 1,387 (+187)

Chris Barnes, 1,374 (+174)

Michael Haggitt, 1,369 (+169)

Bill Nichols, 1,360 (+160)

Lennie Boresch Jr., 1,343 (+143)

Complete Senior U.S. Open Standings

#### REMAINING SENIOR U.S. OPEN SCHEDULE

Highland Park Lanes | Greeley, Colorado

Friday, June 16

11 a.m. — B-squad qualifying (six games)

2:30 p.m. — C-squad qualifying (six games)

6 p.m. — A-squad qualifying (six games)

Saturday, June 17

11 a.m. — C-squad qualifying (six games)

2:30 p.m. — A-squad qualifying (six games)

6 p.m. — B-squad qualifying (six games)

Top 24 players advance; pinfall carries over

Sunday, June 18

Noon — Match play Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. — Match play Round 2 (six games)

Monday, June 19

Noon — Match play Round 3 (six games)

5 p.m. — Match play Round 4 (six games)

Top five players advance to stepladder finals

9 p.m. — Stepladder finals

More information on the Senior U.S. Open is available [here](#).

ADCOCK, LINT LEAD THROUGH DAY 2 OF PBA SENIOR U.S. OPEN

JUNE 16, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

[Facebook](#)

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[Email](#)

After six more games of qualifying at the PBA Senior U.S. Open, the top of the leaderboard remains unchanged.

Tom Adcock of Forsyth, Ill. and Troy Lint of Blandon, Pa. maintained their positions in first and second place during the second round of qualifying at Highland Park Lanes in Greeley, Colo.

Adcock led Round 1 with a 1,459 (+259) six-game series and moved to 2,860 (+460) through 12 games. Lint sits just seven pins behind the pole position.

Both players are on C-squad and have bowled on the double-burn and burn squads so far. They will compete on the fresh 39-foot Aulby pattern for the final round of qualifying on Saturday morning.

Steven Badovinac, who lives about 75 miles south in Parker, Colo., sits in third overall and atop A-squad at +359.

Steve Kloempken (+316) and defending champion Lennie Boresch Jr. (+295) round out the top five.

Parker Bohn III, the reigning PBA50 Player of the Year, averaged 241 to jump from 48th place to sixth on Friday.

Bohn is trailed by a trio of fellow Hall of Famers in Pete Weber (+286), Chris Barnes (+285), Amletto Monacelli (+267). Former PBA50 Player and Rookie of the Year Tom Hess (+264) rounds out the top 10.

After tomorrow's six games, the field will be trimmed to the top 24 players for round-robin match play. Tennessee's Kevin Anderson occupies 24th place through 12 games at +165 — a 213.75 per game pace.

Match play will begin on Sunday and conclude on Monday evening. The top five players after all 42 games will advance to the stepladder finals at 9 p.m. ET on Monday night.

Competition resumes at 11 a.m. ET on Saturday with Adcock and Lint's C-squad, followed by A-squad at 2:30 p.m. ET. B-squad will begin the final qualifying round at 6 p.m. ET.

#### LEADERS THROUGH ROUND 2

Tom Adcock, 2,860 (+460)

Troy Lint, 2,853 (+453)

Steven Badovinac, 2,759 (+359)

Steve Kloempken, 2,716 (+316)

Lennie Boresch Jr., 2,695 (+295)

Parker Bohn III, 2,687 (+287)

Pete Weber, 2,686 (+286)

Chris Barnes, 2,685 (+285)

Amleto Monacelli, 2,667 (+267)

Tom Hess, 2,664 (+264)

Complete Senior U.S. Open Standings

#### REMAINING SENIOR U.S. OPEN SCHEDULE

Highland Park Lanes | Greeley, Colorado

Saturday, June 17

11 a.m. — C-squad qualifying (six games)

2:30 p.m. — A-squad qualifying (six games)

6 p.m. — B-squad qualifying (six games)

Top 24 players advance; pinfall carries over

Sunday, June 18

Noon — Match play Round 1 (six games)

5 p.m. — Match play Round 2 (six games)

Monday, June 19

Noon — Match play Round 3 (six games)

5 p.m. — Match play Round 4 (six games)

Top five players advance to stepladder finals

9 p.m. — Stepladder finals

More information on the Senior U.S. Open is available [here](#).

## **LINT LEADS, BARNES CLOSES GAP AT PBA SENIOR U.S. OPEN**

### **JUNE 18, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Troy Lint continues to lead the PBA Senior U.S. Open through the first two rounds of match play, but the superstars of 2022 have closed the gap.

Chris Barnes and Parker Bohn III charged into second and third place, respectively, on Sunday at Highland Park Lanes in Greeley, Colo.

Through 30 games, including 12 of round-robin match play, Lint paces the field with a 7,183 (+1,183) total pinfall and 9-3 match play record on the 39-foot Aulby oil pattern.

Barnes, aided by a 298 in his fifth game of the afternoon block, now sits within 36 pins of the left-hander.

Though Barnes said today was as good as he's bowled in a while, he had no idea how much he'd closed the gap on Lint.

"The last time I looked I was 250 pins behind him, so I didn't really check anymore. I figured he had to miss a game for me to get somewhere close to him," Barnes said. "He's bowled fantastic, (but) I can't say it's fun to watch where you're chasing him."



Barnes credited his two key ball changes to his coach for the week: his son, Ryan.

"I love having him out here with me. When he's out here, most of the time I bowl pretty well," the elder Barnes said on Father's Day. "We started doing this as a way where I would just talk through things that are going through my mind as he was seeing it so we could kind of help shorten the process. He caught on pretty quick.

"He's one of the people that can talk about my physical game and I'll actually listen to him," Barnes said laughing.

Tom Hess and Brad Angelo currently hold the final positions for the stepladder finals, but Colorado's own Steven Badovinac made a massive charge late Sunday evening.

Badovinac closed the second round of match play with 246, 220, 255 and 263, winning all four of his matches. He sits just eight pins behind Angelo for the final berth in the stepladder finals.

Bowling has been a part of Badovinac's life for over 30 years, though the sport's ranking on his personal hierarchy has evolved over time. He said he chose to be a Hall of Fame dad instead of pursuing a career on Tour.

However, the dream of winning a PBA50 title continues to radiate inside the 55-year-old.

"There are things that I don't see on the lane that these guys do," Badovinac said. "But I don't think anybody has more heart, passion or desire than I do."

Match play continues on Monday with the final rounds beginning at noon and 5 p.m. ET.

The top five players after tomorrow's match play rounds will advance to the stepladder finals, which begin at 9 p.m. ET.

The field will have their work cut out for them as there is a near-150 pin gap between Badovinac and seventh-placed David Leverage.

All rounds of the Senior U.S. Open will be livestreamed on [Bow!TV](#).

## **LEADERS THROUGH MATCH PLAY ROUND 2**

1. Troy Lint, 7,183 (+1,183)
2. Chris Barnes, 7,147 (+1,147)
3. Parker Bohn III, 7,073 (+1,073)
4. Tom Hess, 6,949 (+949)
5. Brad Angelo, 6,870 (+870)
6. Steven Badovinac, 6,862 (+862)
7. David Leverage, 6,718 (+718)
8. Tom Adcock, 6,662 (+662)
9. Lennie Boresch Jr., 6,627 (+627)
10. Rolando Sebelen, 6,578 (+578)

## **TROY LINT WINS FIRST CAREER PBA50 TITLE AT PBA SENIOR U.S. OPEN**

**JUNE 20, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The cream rose to the top of the PBA Senior U.S. Open at Highland Park Lanes in Greeley, Colo. as the top four players from the 2022 PBA50 season all made the stepladder finals.

But all week, none of those stars were able to beat the 55-year-old from Blandon, Pa.

Top-seeded Troy Lint defeated his idol and close friend Parker Bohn III in the title match 211-195 to win the season's second major championship, marking his first career PBA50 Tour title.

Lint dealt with various injuries throughout the week, particularly to his right knee. In fact, during one shot earlier on Monday, his knee pain flared up and almost forced him to withdraw. But he wasn't going to withdraw — not as the top seed.

"Pain will go away," Lint said. "I'm going to bowl no matter what. I'll bowl one-legged if I have to. I'll one-step it."

Though Bohn and Chris Barnes stayed within striking distance of Lint throughout match play, they never managed to catch him. He averaged over 230 to clinch the top seed for the five-player stepladder finals with a 42-game pinfall of 10,189 (+1,789).

"It means a lot, more than you can even imagine," Lint said after earning the top seed earlier on Monday. "Leading the U.S. Open is just... it's right there at the top of my accomplishments."

The championship round featured Lint, followed by the top four players from the 2022 PBA50 Tour: Barnes, Bohn, Tom Hess and Brad Angelo.

Both Angelo and Hess started slow in the opening match, each opening in the second frame. However, the struggles continued for Hess while Angelo caught fire. The Western New York native threw nine straight strikes en route to a decisive 266-145 win.

Angelo's flames petered out in the second match against Bohn. He left a five-count spare and a 2-8-10 split on the right lane, which proved detrimental. Bohn stayed clean and fired the back-five for a 247-217 victory, setting up a semifinal match featuring the two leading PBA50 Player of the Year candidates from last season.

Barnes started off the semifinal with two consecutive splits, sparing the 4-7-10 in the second frame. The righty then made a quick ball change in the fourth frame; after splitting again, he rallied with a hambone to essentially even the match.

After a messenger failed to finish the job in Barnes' ninth frame, Bohn stepped up in his 10th frame with a chance to seal the match. He got the first strike he needed, but he split on the second shot and opened the door for Barnes.

However, the match ended the same as the 2022 Player of the Year race last year with Bohn earning a narrow victory.

Bohn's semifinal win set up an all-southpaw title match. Despite Lint's clear advantage in rev rate and ball speed, he continued to play farther left than the Hall of Famer — that was by design.

"My goal coming into this season was to be left of Parker," Lint said. "Even with all my hand, I want to be left of Parker. Because if he's (to my left), I'm going to build his hold and he's going to run me over. He's the standard. He's the guy on the left and, let's be honest, we all want to beat him.

"So wherever he's at, I want to be left of him or on top of him. And that took a lot of work because I like to hook the whole lane," Lint said laughing.

The title match was an old-fashioned grind. The two exchanged nine-count spares frame after frame. Because of a tricky right lane, the first double of the match came from Lint in the sixth and seventh frames.

Lint capitalized on the double and fired the lone three-bagger of the match. After Bohn converted a spare in the ninth frame, Lint just needed to stay clean to win his first title.

The eastern Pennsylvania native spared the 2-5 in the ninth and the 4-7 in the 10th to secure the win, 211-195.

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Lint committed to bowling the PBA50 Tour full-time back in January. After he captured the [PBA50 Regional Players Invitational title](#), which featured the best regional talents in the country, he wanted to prove he could be the best in the nation.

He set a goal to not be eligible for next year's RPI, which would require finishing top 10 on the national tour in points. Through two tournaments, he's been the [best player in the nation](#).

The 55-year-old has racked up nine PBA50 Regional Tour titles, including the RPI, since joining the PBA less than three years ago. On Monday, he added a PBA50 major title to his résumé.

None of this would have happened without the influence of Michael Markis, his close friend, who passed away in April 2021.

"If it wasn't for Mike, I wouldn't be bowling in the PBA," Lint said. "Now it's all I care about."

"You think you know how good you are, until you come out and bowl against the best in the world," Lint said. "Then you figure out you're a little better than you thought you were."

Executing his gameplan to perfection this week speaks to Lint's growth as a player. He said he thought his first win would have come last week at the USBC Senior Masters, when he could play his A-game and felt nobody else could replicate it.

Lint said the third-place finish motivated him even more coming into this week. After winning a major title while playing his B- or C-game, he doesn't have the words to describe his mile-high confidence.

"These are the best in the world. I'm just doing the best I can against them," he said. "I think I'm doing alright."

The PBA50 Tour continues next month in the Eastern time zone. The [PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial Tournament](#) begins July 2 in Columbus, Ohio, then the [PBA50 South Shore Classic](#) starts July 10 in Hammond, Ind.

## **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND SCORES**

**Match 1:** No.5 Brad Angelo def. No. 4 Tom Hess, 266-145

**Match 2:** No. 3 Parker Bohn III def. No. 5 Brad Angelo, 247-217

**Match 3:** No. 3 Parker Bohn III def. No. 2 Chris Barnes, 206-182

**Championship:** No. 1 Troy Lint def. No. 3 Parker Bohn III, 211-195

## **FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Troy Lint, \$15,000
2. Parker Bohn III, \$8,000
3. Chris Barnes, \$6,000
4. Brad Angelo, \$5,000
5. Tom Hess, \$4,000
6. David Leverage, \$3,000
7. Steven Badovinac, \$2,800
8. Pete Weber, \$2,600
9. Amletto Monacelli, \$2,400
10. Jon Rakoski, \$2,200

## **LEAF TRADING CARDS ANNOUNCES AN EXCITING PARTNERSHIP WITH PBA**

### **JUNE 20, 2023 PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION**

*Bringing the thrill of professional bowling to collectors*

**DALLAS, TX** – Leaf Trading Cards, a leading manufacturer and distributor of sports trading cards, is thrilled to announce its groundbreaking partnership with the Professional Bowlers Association (PBA). This unprecedented collaboration will bring the excitement and allure of professional bowling to collectors worldwide.

As part of this exciting venture, Leaf Trading Cards will have exclusive rights to produce officially licensed PBA trading cards, featuring the most talented and beloved professional bowlers in the world. With a rich heritage spanning over six decades, the PBA has captivated audiences with its thrilling competitions and outstanding athletes. Now, collectors will have the opportunity to own a piece of this dynamic sport through the beautifully designed trading cards offered by Leaf.

"We are absolutely thrilled to partner with the Professional Bowlers Association," said Brian Gray, CEO of Leaf Trading Cards. "The PBA has a dedicated and passionate fan base, and we are excited to bring them an authentic and engaging collecting experience. Our trading cards will showcase the incredible talent and achievements of PBA players, capturing the essence of the sport in every pack."

Leaf Trading Cards has built a reputation for crafting high-quality, innovative trading card products across various sports, including baseball, basketball, football, and soccer. With their expertise in creating unique and visually stunning collectibles, Leaf is well-positioned to showcase the excitement and skill of professional bowling.

"This collaboration opens up new avenues for fans to connect with their favorite players on a deeper level," said CJ Breen, Director of Social Media Marketing and Athlete Relations. "Trading cards have always been a cherished medium for capturing the essence of sports, and I am excited to see how this partnership will bring joy and excitement to fans across the globe."

This partnership will enable collectors to uncover exclusive PBA trading cards featuring a wide range of designs, including autographed cards, rare inserts, and limited-edition releases. These cards will provide fans with an opportunity to connect with their favorite bowlers in a new and intimate way, immortalizing their greatest achievements and moments on the lanes.

"This partnership with Leaf allows the PBA to break into an industry that has seen tremendous growth in recent years," said Lev Ekster, the Chief Strategy Officer at Bowlero Corp. "We are excited about the entertainment and promotional opportunities for our athletes in the burgeoning sports trading card market."

EJ Tackett and Kyle Troup's cards are specially released today in celebration of the partnership. You can purchase their cards as part of Leaf's Web Exclusives collection [here](#).

More official PBA trading cards will launch this fall on [LeafTradingCards.com](https://LeafTradingCards.com).

Stay up to date on all the exclusive launches by following @Leaf\_Cards on Twitter, @LeafTradingCards on Instagram, and @PBATour on all social platforms.

## **PBA TOUR FINALS RETURNS TO WASHINGTON'S ANGEL OF THE WINDS**

**JUNE 22, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

This weekend, the PBA's top eight players over the past two seasons convene at the PBA Tour Finals. The stars will return to Strikerz Bowling in the Angel of the Winds Casino Resort in Arlington, Wash. for the second consecutive year. The Tour Finals represents the 15th title event of the 2023 season.

All five rounds of the PBA Tour Finals will be aired live on CBS Sports Network, featuring nine hours of PBA action on June 24-25.

Seven of the eight finalists are returners from last season's PBA Tour Finals: EJ Tackett, Anthony Simonsen, defending champion Jason Belmonte, Dom Barrett, Jakob Butturff, Kris Prather and Kyle Troup.

Meanwhile, Packy Hanrahan will make his PBA Tour Finals debut. The two-handed southpaw charged into seventh on the 2022-23 points list following his win at the Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship with Mitch Hupé and 16th place showing at the PBA Players Championship.

Bill O'Neill could have usurped Troup by winning the season's final major title, but his semifinal loss to Butturff at the PBA Players Championship allowed Troup to hang onto the ultimate spot in the field.

Though players will be competing on different oil patterns this year, fans should be prepared for a torrid scoring pace. Last season, players averaged over 228 across 20 combined games during the stepladder finals.

Not to mention both Troup and Belmonte shot a perfect game as they became the first players to bowl a PBA televised 300 on the same day.

All previous PBA Tour Finals champions will be represented in the event's seventh iteration. Tackett and defending champion Belmonte have each won the event twice, while Troup and Simonsen have also taken home the trophy.

Tackett, the 2017 and 2019 Tour Finals victor, has a chance to tie the single-season titles record this season. With five titles already under his belt, Mark Roth's 1978 record of eight titles lies within reach if Tackett can win all three remaining title events.

The PBA/PWBA Striking Against Breast Cancer Mixed Doubles in July and Storm Lucky Larsen Masters in September are the final two title events of the 2023 season.

While supplies last, tickets are available for the Tour Finals [here](#).

## FORMAT

The format for the PBA Tour Finals will be the same as last season: Players will be split into two groups based on their point totals over the past two seasons.

Group 1 comprises Tackett, Barrett, Butturff and Troup, while Simonsen, Belmonte, Prather and Hanrahan make up Group 2.

For Saturday's positioning round, each player will bowl two games on the 38-foot Webb pattern and two games on the 43-foot Anthony pattern to determine seeding for Sunday's stepladders. Group 1 competes on CBS Sports Network at 3 p.m. ET, while Group 2 hits the lanes at 5 p.m. ET.

On Sunday, competition shifts to a dual-pattern format for the group stepladders beginning at 2:30 p.m. ET. The final match of each group stepladder will feature a Race-to-Two format; if the players split the two games, a ninth and 10th frame roll-off will decide the winner.

Advancers from each group stepladder will meet in Sunday evening's championship, another Race-to-Two match (6:30 p.m. ET on CBSSN).

## PBA TOUR FINALS COMPETITORS

Stats based on 2023 season through PBA Players Championship and entire 2022 season

EJ Tackett

65,860 points, \$573,125 in earnings, 7 titles, 15 top-five finishes, 22 top-10 finishes

Anthony Simonsen

62,460 points, \$585,675 in earnings, 4 titles, 17 top-five finishes, 23 top-10 finishes

Jason Belmonte

57,410 points, \$607,150 in earnings, 6 titles, 11 top-five finishes, 20 top-10 finishes

Dom Barrett

37,020 points, \$270,695 in earnings, 2 titles, 8 top-five finishes, 12 top-10 finishes

Jakob Butturff

34,946 points, \$247,625 in earnings, 1 title, 10 top-five finishes, 14 top-10 finishes

Kris Prather

33,437.50 points, \$254,150 in earnings, 1 title, 3 top-five finishes, 5 top-10 finishes

Packy Hanrahan

28,445 points, \$158,035 in earnings, 2 titles, 5 top-five finishes, 9 top-19 finishes

Kyle Troup

27,212.50 points, \$302,300 in earnings, 1 title, 4 top-five finishes, 10 top-10 finishes

## 2023 PBA TOUR FINALS TV SCHEDULE

All times are listed in Eastern.

Saturday, June 24 | CBS Sports Network

3-5 p.m. — Group 1 Positioning Round

5-7 p.m. — Group 2 Positioning Round

Sunday, June 24 | CBS Sports Network

2:30-4:30 p.m. — Group 1 Stepladder finals

4:30-6:30 p.m. — Group 2 Stepladder finals

6:30-7:30 p.m. — Championship

## PAST PBA TOUR FINALS WINNERS

2017 — EJ Tackett

2018 — Jason Belmonte

2019 — EJ Tackett

2020 — Kyle Troup

2021 — Anthony Simonsen

2022 — Jason Belmonte

.



## **PBA REGIONAL RECAP: TACKETT, KENT PICK UP MIDWEST REGIONAL TITLES**

### **JUNE 22, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN**

With the details of the PBA Regional Players Invitational releasing earlier this month, there's now a bit of added focus in regional action. The PBA division will award \$15,000 to the winner at the event in January, while the champ of the PBA50 division will earn \$10,000. Along with the top point-getters in each division, a qualifier will be held in each region for a handful of direct spots to the RPI throughout the year.

Let's check out who added a few points to their names in this week's Regional Recap. Read more about the RPI [here](#).

#### **PBA JAX-60 NON-CHAMPS CENTRAL/MIDWEST CHALLENGE**

Once again, the only guarantee in a non-champs event is that someone will soon become a champ. The top 16 players advanced into bracket play at the one-day event, and with nobody earning a bye, anybody above the +80 mark sat on a level playing field for the next round. The one-seeded Charlie Brown Jr. won his first couple of matches to set up a meeting with five-seeded Nicholas Graveel, where Graveel won 201-176.

Bailey Mavrick also earned a spot in the finals after defeating Daniel Farish 278-201 and continued his strong run by defeating Graveel 268-223 in the championship for his first career title.

#### **PBA JAX-60 Central/Midwest Challenge Final Standings**

Bailey Mavrick, 2,500 points, \$1,500

Nicholas Graveel, 1,500, \$1,100

Charlie Brown Jr. 1,150, \$900

Daniel Farish, 950, \$900

#### **PBA JAX-60 Central/Midwest Challenge Full Results**

#### **PBA FORT MEADE OPEN PRESENTED BY AUTO SPA EXPRESS**

In Maryland, The Lanes Fort Meade hosted 51 bowlers for a two-day event with match play taking place on Sunday. The top four spots were of utmost importance, giving those players guaranteed first-round victories against the formidable 'bye' opponent.

However, in the upper half of the bracket, Jake Rollins and Nate Trentler defeated the one- and four-seeds, respectively, to meet in the semifinals. Trentler snuck past Rollins in the semis 227-222 to move into the finals.

Tim Foy Jr. and John Furey had byes and made use of it by winning their first matches, but Foy later beat Furey 258-253 in the semifinal. Trentler, looking to defend his title, had just one game to go, but Foy's run was too hot to catch. Foy won 244-186 for his fourth career title.

PBA Fort Meade Open presented by Auto Spa Express Final Standings

Tim Foy Jr., 2,500 points, \$2,500

Nate Trentler, \$1,325

John Furey, 1,150, \$950

Jake Rollins, 950, \$950

PBA Fort Meade Open presented by Auto Spa Express Full Results

#### PBA FARMERS UNION INSURANCE SUNSET LANES MIDWEST OPEN

What's better than a regional event in the middle of the week? Nothing.

With multiple touring pros in the field, spectators had a ball watching the greats and getting autographs. Kris Prather led qualifying, but EJ Tackett took the one-seed after the advancer round. Brady Stearns, Prather, and Russ Oviatt grabbed the following three seeds for the stepladder finals.

Prather started with two wins, taking down Oviatt 223-186 and then Stearns 207-189. But in the finals, EJ used a bit of National Tour energy to win the title 227-213 for regional title No. 11.

PBA Farmers Union Insurance Sunset Lanes Midwest Open Final Standings

EJ Tackett, 2,500 points, \$2,500

Kris Prather, 1,500, \$1,700

Brady Stearns, 1,150, \$1,300

Russ Oviatt, 950, \$1,100

PBA Farmers Union Insurance Sunset Lanes Midwest Open Full Results

## PBA FARMERS UNION INSURANCE MIDWAY LANES MIDWEST OPEN

How's about we move on over in the Midwest from Minnesota to North Dakota, eh?

Just a few miles from Bismarck, Midway Lanes in Mandan, N.D. hosted the next event on the PBA Regional Tour. After qualifying and match play, Marshall Kent, Brady Stearns and Zach Andresen earned the top three seeds in the stepladder finals. Lucas Hersrud took the final spot in an exciting position round by defeating Prather to earn the four seed.

Hersrud then defeated Andresen 257-188, but fell to Stearns 207-199 in the stepladder. In the end, Kent found the podium with a 214-195 win for regional title No. 5.

### PBA Farmers Union Insurance Midway Lanes Midwest Open Final Standings

Marshall Kent, 2,500 points, \$2,500

Brady Stearns, 1,500, \$1,700

Lucas Hersrud, \$1,300

Zach Andresen, \$1,100

### PBA Farmers Union Insurance Midway Lanes Midwest Open Full Results

## PBA VICTORY LANES MOORESVILLE OPEN

In the South for another event, again amassing over 100 entries, Nate Garcia smoked the field in qualifying. He averaged 228, almost 10 pins higher than Kyle Troup in second. Garcia still led after the first two advancer rounds, but after the third Mathew Woodall took the lead by 10 pins.

In an exciting winner-take-all final match, both players proved their worth for the title. Through seven frames, both players missed just once. Garcia held a one-pin lead, but left a 2-10 in the eighth frame to foil his championship hopes. Woodall struck out in the 10th to put a cap on the match and earned his first career title.

### PBA Victory Lanes Mooresville Open Final Standings

Mathew Woodall, 2,500 points, \$2,500

Nate Garcia, 1,500, \$1,660

Connor Pickford, 1,150, \$1,100

Trevor Roberts, 950, \$1,100

## **TACKETT, BELMONTE LEAD PBA TOUR FINALS POSITIONING ROUNDS**

### **JUNE 24, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

No players have achieved more success at the PBA Tour Finals than EJ Tackett and Jason Belmonte, the only two-time champions of the event.

On Saturday, the two continued their brilliance. Tackett and Belmonte each led their group's four-game positioning round at Strikerz Bowling at Angel of the Winds in Arlington, Wash.

Players bowled two games on the 38-foot Webb pattern, then two games on the 43-foot Anthony pattern to determine seeding for tomorrow's group stepladder finals. The competitors earned their spots in this event as the top eight point earners across the 2022 and 2023 seasons.

Tackett bested Kyle Troup, Dom Barrett and Jakob Butturff to lead Group 1, while Belmonte eclipsed Packy Hanrahan, Anthony Simonsen and Kris Prather in Group 2.

Group 1 featured what turned into a two-horse race between Troup and Tackett. Troup excelled the first game on each pattern, but Tackett responded to take the second each time.

Troup's Greek Church leave in the ninth frame of Game 4 opened the door for Tackett, who doubled in his final frame to lock up the No. 1 seed.

"I knew all I had to do was get up there one strike pretty much and then get good count after that," Tackett said. "I was very lucky to be in the position that I was. I threw several shots that weren't good that struck. I was fortunate to be in that position and it was nice to be able to take advantage of it."

"It was a pretty good shot, I just over hit it," Troup said of his ninth frame. "Switching to grips a month and a half ago, that tends to happen a few shots. But I feel really sharp. My ball reaction is solid and I didn't miss a spare. EJ used his breaks today so hopefully I get some tomorrow."

"I bowled really good here last year," Troup added. "I shot 300, then left like five 9-pins to lose to Belmo. I've got a lot of confidence in this building. The crowds are great and I just vibe off of them as early as I can."

Troup earned the No. 2 seed with a 900 total pinfall, followed by Dom Barrett (866) and Jakob Butturff (806).

Butturff, who shot the lowest series of any player on Saturday, struggled to string strikes and missed a pair of single pins.

"There were a couple of games where I would start off strong and then kind of just lose my ball reaction," Butturff said. "I think I just didn't stay ahead of the move. With how dry the lanes are, I've gotta be quicker with my adjustments and find a way to get comfortable, especially with these approaches because it's so tacky."

Group 2 offered a more contested battle as all four players remained in contention for the top seed heading into the final game. Belmonte held a 24-pin lead, but fourth-placed Simonsen sat just 33 pins back.

However, the defending Tour Finals champ would not be denied. While Hanrahan and Simonsen fired the front-five, Belmonte fired six in a row to maintain his position. Belmonte never shot below 230 en route to a 969 series, the highest of the day.

Hanrahan staved off Simonsen's late charge to earn the second seed with a 941 total pinfall. Simonsen (933) finished third.

Prather crushed the Webb pattern with games of 238 and 239, but the longer Anthony pattern left him puzzled as he tallied games of 209 and 201 to finish fourth.

"My rev rate is not around 500 and I really struggled with the urethane on the longer pattern," Prather said. "I tried to make reactive work, obviously that wasn't a good idea. Moving forward to tomorrow, I do think that the urethane balls are just going to be what wins the early matches, so I've got to figure out how to make that work tomorrow."

Group 1's stepladder finals begins Sunday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. ET on CBS Sports Network, kicking off five hours of live coverage.

The championship match (6:30 p.m. ET) will award the 15th title of the 2023 Guaranteed Rate PBA Tour.

## GROUP 1 SCORES

EJ Tackett 916 (213, 255, 234, 214)

Kyle Troup 902 (229, 224, 221, 202)

Dom Barrett 866 (195, 216, 245, 234)

Jakob Butturff 806 (190, 204, 215, 197)

Group 1 Stepladder

No. 3 Dom Barrett vs. No. 4 Jakob Butturff

winner vs. No. 2 Kyle Troup

winner vs. No. 1 EJ Tackett (Best-of-2)

## GROUP 2 SCORES

Jason Belmonte 969 (234, 246, 230, 259)

Packy Hanrahan 941 (212, 246, 226, 257)

Anthony Simonsen 933 (215, 224, 238, 256)

Kris Prather 887 (238, 239, 209, 201)

Group 2 Stepladder

No. 3 Anthony Simonsen vs. No. 4 Kris Prather

winner vs. No. 2 Packy Hanrahan

winner vs. No. 1 Jason Belmonte (Best-of-2)

Championship Match

Group 1 winner vs. Group 2 winner (Best-of-2)

## **KYLE TROUP WINS 10TH CAREER TITLE AT PBA TOUR FINALS**

### **JUNE 25, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

At 16 years old, Kyle Troup followed in his father Guppy's footsteps and joined the PBA Tour. Sixteen years later, the two-handed North Carolinian celebrated the very moment he always dreamed of.

Troup swept Kris Prather in the championship match to win the PBA Tour Finals at Strikerz Bowling in Angel of the Winds in Arlington, Wash.

With the win, the 10th of his career, Troup becomes eligible to be voted into the PBA Hall of Fame when he crosses the 20-year service threshold.

"I had to not think about the Hall of Fame the last few frames," said an emotional Troup. "With the season that I've had, making the switch to grips... that's number 10. It's special, man."

Though Troup achieved both of his preseason goals — winning title No. 10 and making match play at the U.S. Open — his season was filled with struggles. Following his U.S. Open runner-up performance, he earned just two more top-10 finishes before the Tour Finals.

In many ways, he replicated his 2022 season when he won the PBA Playoff following a disappointing regular season.

"It goes to show the fight that I have, sticking to the process during the tough times," Troup said.

"We normally always have the ball reps, and to get this win done without one... obviously I want to have my team here at all times, but that just gives me all the confidence in the world moving forward for the next month," Troup said. "A lot of the hard work has really paid off. I've got to credit Eric Krauss and his buddy Andy. They gave me a tip to think about — and that was it."

The Group 1 positioning round on Saturday featured a heavyweight battle between Troup and EJ Tackett, one the latter earned a narrow victory to secure the top seed today. However, Troup flipped the script on Sunday afternoon as competition shifted to dual patterns (38-foot Webb on the left lane and 43-foot Anthony on the right lane).

Tackett, who sought to become the first player to win six titles in a season since 1993, won the opening game in the Best-of-Two match. However, Tackett squandered his opportunity to clinch the match by whiffing a 10-pin in the 10th frame.

"I did remember once yesterday he left a 10-pin that he kind of stuck (on the approach) a little bit, so maybe there was a chance. But I still didn't expect him to do it," Troup said.

Troup answered with a game-stealing triple in the 10th and forced a two-frame roll-off.

Another 10-pin leave from Tackett in the roll-off opened the door again for Troup, who slammed it shut with a match-clinching strike.

"I've always said I'm a fan of those ninth and 10th frame roll-offs," Troup said. "I started talking to Mr. K — a stuffed animal from Aubrey, his girlfriend Breanna's daughter — and just told him I was gonna make some good shots."

"I bowled really well last year and felt like I should have won my match and got to go further in the tournament," Troup added. "My ball reads the lanes well here so I'm just fueling off a lot of confidence."

Following the Group 1 finals, Prather climbed Group 2's stepladder to reach the championship. He defeated Anthony Simonsen, Packy Hanrahan and defending champion Jason Belmonte.

Belmonte missed two makeable spares in the first game of the Best-of-Two match, which afforded Prather all the room he needed.

But Belmonte said he envisioned this year's Tour Finals going exactly the way last year's did. In Game 2, he did all he could to ensure that would be the case.

Belmonte fired 300 to stave off elimination, becoming the first player in PBA history to throw three televised perfect games.

Prather didn't flinch. He took advantage of Belmonte's 10-pin leave in the two-frame roll-off, doubling in his final frame to advance to the championship.

With the win over Belmonte, Prather moved to 4-0 on television against the 31-time champion and 15-time major champion.

In the championship match, not even a literal shark could have stopped the Troup.

The two-handed superstar fired games of 268 and 266 to sweep Prather and clinch the title he so desperately coveted.

"Guppy better start working on his speech to induct me into the Hall of Fame," a beaming Troup said.

#### GROUP 1 STEPLADDER SCORES

Match 1: No. 3 Dom Barrett def. No. 4 Jakob Butturff, 254-202

Match 2: No. 2 Kyle Troup def. No. 3 Dom Barrett, 278-215

Match 3: No. 2 Kyle Troup def. No. 1 EJ Tackett, 2-1

Game 1: Tackett def. Troup, 257-247

Game 2: Troup def. Tackett, 205-196

Roll-off: Troup def. Tackett, 48-40

#### GROUP 2 STEPLADDER SCORES

Match 1: No. 4 Kris Prather def. No. 3 Anthony Simonsen, 233-226

Match 2: No. 4 Kris Prather def. No. 2 Packy Hanrahan, 268-217



Match 3: No. 4 Kris Prather def. No. 1 Jason Belmonte, 2-1

Game 1: Prather def. Belmonte, 228-215

Game 2: Belmonte def. Prather, 300-202

Roll-off: Prather def. Belmonte, 47-40

#### CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH

Kyle Troup def. Kris Prather, 2-0

Game 1: Troup def. Prather, 268-225

Game 2: Troup def. Prather, 266-236

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Kyle Troup, \$30,000

Kris Prather, \$15,000

Jason Belmonte, \$8,000

EJ Tackett, \$8,000

Packy Hanrahan, \$6,000

Dom Barrett, \$6,000

Anthony Simonsen, \$5,000

Jakob Butturff, \$5,000

## 2023 PBA HARDNESS REPORT

### JUNE 27, 2023 PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION

Neil Stremmel, the Director of Rules and Equipment for the PBA, has conducted extensive equipment testing during the 2023 PBA season. Testing has primarily focused on the hardness level of urethane equipment.

Based on these findings, the PBA has decided to raise the minimum manufacturing hardness of traditional urethane and urethane-like equipment from 73.0HD to 78.0HD for all tour levels.

Stremmel wrote a detailed breakdown of the decision-making process in the following letter:

Anyone who has been involved in PBA Tour competition or other championship events over the past several years knows of the urethane hardness issues that have had an impact on the industry. In fact, just earlier last year in March of 2022 the PBA banned any traditional urethane balls older than 2 years old. Then in November of 2022, the USBC published its 3rd Hardness Research Report. This led to the PBA committing to a study of their own. The first step of this new study required a new lab to be built – quite the commitment. At the start of 2023, the PBA announced the latest rule, all traditional urethane balls must be made on or after August 1, 2022. This rule ensured that these balls were made recently (less than a year ago) and must meet the new minimum hardness of 73.0HD. This was all due to a new discovery that certain balls (specifically some traditional urethane balls) were measuring softer over time.

The PBA also stated it would continue to conduct tests in 2023 in order to learn the trends of the newly made balls. Do they continue to get softer, at what rate, how low do they get, do all balls get softer and most importantly does the PBA think that it matters for our level of competition?

### **Why softness matters**

The minimum hardness rule was put in place by the American Bowling Congress (ABC) in the early 1970's. The reason it was implemented was certain balls had been soaked in Methyl Ethyl Ketone (MEK) and/or other softening chemicals. Soaking a ball made it softer and thereby created an obvious amount of additional hook (it was obvious to bowlers at the time). ABC spent time looking at the situation and determined a soaked ball hooked more. During the early days of my time at ABC and USBC, I asked some people about this situation – and again reconnected with key testing personnel over the past couple of years. What ABC ultimately did was look at footprint (the part of the ball that touches the lane) and then correlate it to hardness via the Rex durometer. They saw at a hardness above 72HD, the footprint had negligible/minimal change, but once the hardness dropped between 72-70HD the footprint began to increase. Then, as the hardness dropped below 70HD, the footprint began to measurably increase. Therefore, that is where they drew the line. Additionally, based on the gauge accuracy of the durometer, publicized by Rex as +/-2.0HD, the limit of 72HD makes sense to ensure the readings truly stayed above 70HD. Historically, bowling balls didn't get softer with use. This current situation is a new phenomenon. Setting the minimum hardness

specification at 72 in the early 1970's made perfect sense. If anything, modern balls typically get slightly harder as they continued to cure over time. Nevertheless, for a few years now, we have been seeing traditional urethane balls measure softer with use. That is why we need to understand this situation, determine if it matters to the PBA and if so, fix it.

## **Data**

The data from the field and lab testing during the PBA 2023 season are included in Appendix B. However, the view on the data is very simple – there have been multiple urethane bowling balls from more than one manufacturer that have dropped into the 68's on the Hardness D scale while in use. Therefore, the answer to the above question of "does it matter to the PBA," is yes and an adjustment to these types of balls must be made. Let me be clear that in all of my tests, these balls all started above 73.0HD out of the box. The data shows that these balls get softer with use. It only takes 10 shots out of the box for the ball to drop 2-3HD points. You can see this in Appendix B under both the Lab Data and specifically in the "Dry Lane Tests" section of the data. In addition, with continued use they can continue to drop to 68.xHD. So, in simple terms, if a ball starts at 73HD and drops to 68HD it has dropped approximately 5 points of hardness.

There is also a lesson to learn from this scenario. Any type of bowling ball that gets softer with use could become an issue with how much it hooks, where it hooks and how it affects the playing environment. Based on this revelation, the PBA will also consider another rule that if a ball, any type of ball, gets more than 3.0HD points softer with use it will not be allowed in PBA National Tour competition. The ball will be removed from play, researched and addressed accordingly. This will be listed as one of the options below.

## **List of Options**

Now that we have determined the affects, what the data shows and that it matters to the PBA, we need to evaluate options for those change(s) along with the pros and cons of each. Not all options can be implemented on their own and may need to be added to another option.

1. Ban all urethane balls completely. This would certainly solve a lot of issues and eliminate some questions still on the table. So, is this a legitimate option? Is this "fair" to all of the PBA National Tour Players? This style of play has developed and evolved to exist with the reactive balls and some players have learned how to utilize it as a portion of their arsenal – or even as a main part of their arsenal. So is it fair to remove this from them at this point? Is this "fair" to all of the manufacturers? Don't get me wrong, we need to do what is best for our level of competition first, but it is also important to be fair to our partners as well. As part of the decision making process – in the end, since it is known that some of these balls ultimately get below the set minimum hardness specification (through no fault of the bowler) something must be done to eliminate that situation. Therefore, it is the position of the PBA that one of these options be put in place for the 2024 PBA Tour season.

2. Ban any ball that gets softer with use. Any ball that is tested over time and is found to get more than 3.0HD softer is not allowed in any competition. This would require a continual (and new) testing program to evaluate ball hardness over a given time. The current balls that fall into this category get 2.0+HD softer in 10 shots (as noted in Appendix B). At that rate, the testing would not be overly lengthy. Yet, it may be overly laborious since hundreds of new balls are released each year. The other question is, what if it takes more than 10 shots for a ball to drop more than 3.0 points? Some of the traditional urethane balls tested dropped 5 points over hundreds of shots. This may require continual field testing to find if certain balls that are getting more than 3.0HD softer over time.

3. Raise the hardness of traditional urethane to 78.0HD. The data would indicate that a new minimum of 78.0HD would be the appropriate number if you wanted to be reasonably sure that, even after getting softer due to prolonged use, a ball would not go below the actual 73.0 hardness minimum. The difficulty here is what balls need to start above 78.0? Traditional urethane means something to me as a bowler. However, as a chemist, terms like urethane, resin, plastic, polyurethane, polyethylene and polyester all have different meanings. Different than what bowlers think. If a new ball came out I think we would need a clear-cut way to make sure it is, or isn't, what we consider "Traditional Urethane" or "Urethane-Like." If this is the option that we end up deciding on, this will have to be laid out and define in greater detail such that the ball manufacturers and probably the whole industry understands. Our hypothesis/assumption with this rule is; 1. If it starts at a minimum of 78.0 it will stay above the minimum of 73 for the life of the ball. And, 2. It will have less impact on the playing environment.

4. Change the hardness of all balls to 78.0HD. This keeps all balls under the same specifications while still allowing traditional urethane balls to get softer over time. Again, is this "fair" to players and manufacturers? Virtually all balls would be eliminated in a short period of time. Ball manufacturers would need to create and test new equipment while players would need the new equipment soon enough to prepare for next season. While this would keep all balls under one specification, it seems far too drastic to implement all at once at this time.

5. Leave the rule as is and test extensively. This is what we have done the past 2 years. The feedback from the players was pretty clear that they did not like this situation, but if we kicked out every ball that tested below 71.0HD and fined the player, they would need to buy into the process. A negative is it would make it seem as if the player was trying to cheat when they don't really have much control what their ball ultimately tests at once they complete their squad – other than not using it. In addition, the rule that allows the ball to be tested the next day would need to be removed. To me it doesn't matter what the ball tests at the next day, it matters what it is on the lane while it is being used. I researched the ASTM Standard and the Rex manual and there is nothing in there about allowing a material to recover overnight. I have concluded that in the past both the PBA and the USBC included this rule to give the bowler one last chance to pass the specification because balls didn't used to get softer with use then recover over time. Therefore, the removal of this rule would be logical and that would lead to a lot of traditional urethane balls failing the 71.0HD minimum (73.0HD minimum spec minus the +/- 2.0HD gauge discrimination). So many would

ultimately fail in my opinion that it would essentially eliminate the usage of the ball. Essentially putting us in the same category as option #1 above.

6. Do nothing. Leave the rule as is, allow balls to get softer over time with no testing or repercussions. As discussed above, this option/conclusion does not fit the data for this level of competition. Therefore, for "fairness" as discussed above, the PBA position is that another option to address this situation needs to be implemented.

7. No balls manufactured under the 73HD minimum rule may get softer with use. Through spot-checking in the field at PBA events, any balls, of any style, that are found below 71.0HD (via Field test) will be removed and/or banned. Individual balls will be removed, entire ball lines will be tested and investigated to determine if they are softening over time, with use. Note, if after appropriate testing, research and evaluation, they can fall under the "urethane-like" category, it/they may be moved under that rule. It may include additional tests depending on the specific situation for that ball(s).

8. All balls must be made since 8/1/22. This will ensure all balls are made to current standards and verify all balls have been manufactured above the 73HD minimum rule. This would not solve the urethane situation on its own and would have to be implemented along with one of the other options. Initially, this would most likely be done on the National Tour only. It could follow on the other PBA tours at a later date. This would not be required as part of PBA LBC leagues or tournaments.

9. What should be done for the PBA Regional, PBA50, PBA50 Regional and PBA Youth tours as well as the PBA LBC program? For fairness and consistency across the board, these changes may be needed to cover all tours, immediately or eventually. This would not affect the PBA LBC leagues or tournaments.

"Urethane-like"

Whether we create a separate specification for urethane-like balls or ban them altogether, we will have to have a way in the future to determine what a urethane ball is. A chemistry definition cannot easily be determined or verified in the lab. After discussing a few options, I believe the best way to describe and test for the category is very slow or no oil absorption rate. If a ball absorbs oil fairly quickly, it would be considered a reactive ball. If it takes much longer, it is considered a urethane-like ball.

We have a current list of traditional urethane balls which would be the initial "Urethane-Like" balls. If any of these are greater than 78.0HD and made since 8/1/22 they would be legal for PBA National Tour competition after 1/1/2024 (all balls on the list made after 8/1/22 are legal for the rest of this 2023 PBA season). For the future, we would test any new ball for oil absorption and anything greater than 45 minutes would be considered "Urethane-Like." Any ball in the urethane-like category would then need to be a minimum of 78.0HD. New polyester/plastic balls will mostly likely fall into this category as well, but should have no issue being above the 78.0HD minimum. Any new ball with an oil absorption of less than 45 minutes would then fall into the standard category and be allowed to utilize the 73.0HD minimum. New balls in this category will need a unique identifier, like a pin or marking on the ball.

## Decision

The PBA decision is to raise the minimum manufacturing hardness of traditional urethane and urethane-like equipment to 78.0HD for all tour levels effective 1/6/2024. Data from testing as shown in Appendix B highlights multiple traditional urethane balls for more than one manufacturer testing in the 68's for hardness. This drop of 5 points would simply be added to the current minimum hardness of 73.0HD to get 78.0HD as the new minimum. The data indicates that 78.0HD would be the appropriate number if you wanted to be reasonably sure that, even after getting softer due to prolonged use, a ball would not go below the actual 73.0 hardness minimum. The category of "Traditional Urethane" and "Urethane-Like" would have a new minimum hardness of 78.0HD. Anything in that current category (list attached in Appendix C) would need to be verified as meeting that minimum hardness before it would be allowed in PBA Tours. I acknowledge that we did not want to create an additional, separate level of specifications. Nevertheless, among all the options, this has been determined to make the most sense and has the most support. Note: The date of 1/6/2024 is being used to allow an in-progress RPI event to conclude by 1/5/2024. Also note: this has no impact on the current urethane balls and their eligibility to be used in all other competitions.

Additionally, no balls manufactured under the 73.0HD minimum rule (reactive balls) may get significantly softer with use. Through spot-checking in the field at PBA events, any balls, of any style, that are found below 71.0HD (via Field test) will be removed and/or banned. Individual balls will be removed, entire ball lines will be tested and investigated to determine if they are softening over time and/or with use. Note, if after appropriate testing, research and evaluation, they can fall under the "urethane-like" category, it/they may be moved under that rule. Additional tests may be required depending on the specific situation for that ball(s).

Lastly, starting 1/6/2024, we will implement that all balls to be used on the PBA National Tour must be manufactured on or after 8/1/2022. This will ensure that all balls on the National Tour will all be made at a minimum of 73.0HD. This will only be on the PBA National Tour.

The updated Rules and Specifications that will take effect on 1/6/2024 due to these changes are listed below in Appendix A.

## **DATES ANNOUNCED FOR 2024 PBA JR. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP REGIONAL QUALIFIERS; GAZMINE MASON FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP OPENS FOR APPLICATIONS**

**JUNE 29, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

For youth bowlers across the country, the road to becoming the next PBA Jr. national champion begins this summer.

Five regional qualifiers will determine the 20 finalists for the PBA Jr. National Championship Finals, which will be held at five locations across the U.S. on the weekend of Aug. 11-13, 2023.

Twenty BIPOC youth bowlers will earn a guaranteed entry into the regional qualifiers through the PBA Jr. and Gazmine Mason Foundation Scholarship, which returns for the third consecutive year.

The scholarship aims to increase inclusivity and create opportunities for youth bowlers of color. Applications for the Gazmine Mason Foundation Scholarship are open through July 25.

[Apply here.](#)

The top two boys and girls in each regional qualifier will advance to the PBA Jr. National Championship Finals.

After five games of qualifying on each pattern, the top 16 players in each division will advance to the best-of-three-games match play bracket. Players will compete on all-new oil patterns named after EJ Tackett, Bill O'Neill and Danielle McEwan.

All regional qualifiers will be held August 11-13, 2023. The full schedule for the PBA Jr. National Championships will be announced at a later date.

### **REGIONAL QUALIFIER SCHEDULE**

East Region

Bowlero North Brunswick

North Brunswick, N.J.

[More info](#)

South Region

Bowlero Austell

Marietta, Ga.

Midwest Region

AMF West Lanes

Milwaukee, Wis.

Southwest Region

Northrock Lanes

Wichita, Kan.

West Region

Forest Lanes

Lake Forest, Calif.

Past Champions

2023 — Kaitlyn Stull and Jacob Robertson

2022 — Jillian Martin and Landin Jordan

2021 — Jillian Martin and Spencer Robarge

## PBA60 TRISTAN'S T.A.P.S. MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT PREVIEW

JULY 1, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

The PBA60 Tour heads to Wayne Webb's Columbus Bowl, the host of several PBA Tour major championships, for the PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial Tournament this week in Columbus, Ohio. This marks the second PBA60 event of the season.

John Marsala averaged over 253 in his four matches to take home the Super Senior Classic title last month. The left-hander and each of his opponents in the championship round — Jack Jurek, Lennie Boresch Jr. and Gary Reh — will be among the 60-year-old-plus competitors this week in Ohio.

Amleto Monacelli, Johnny Petraglia, Pete Weber and Walter Ray Williams Jr. and Wayne Webb himself headline the 113-player field.



All players will bowl 16 games of qualifying across two eight-game qualifying rounds. After Tuesday's competition, the field will be trimmed to the top 24 players for match play. The top eight qualifiers earn a one-round bye.

Three-game total pinfall matches make up the first three match play rounds, leading to a five-player stepladder finals at 5 p.m. ET on Wednesday evening.

All rounds will be contested on the 44-foot Carmen Salvino pattern and livestreamed on BowITV.

#### TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

All times listed in Eastern.

Sunday, July 2

2 p.m. — Practice

7 p.m. — Pro-am

Monday, July 3

10 a.m. — A-squad Qualifying Round 1 (eight games)

4 p.m. — B-squad Qualifying Round 1 (eight games)

Tuesday, July 4

10 a.m. — B-squad Qualifying Round 2 (eight games)

4 p.m. — A-squad Qualifying Round 2 (eight games)

Top 24 players advance to match play

Wednesday, July 5

10 a.m. — Round of 24 (seeds No. 9-24)

Noon — Round of 16 (winners and seeds No. 1-8)

Re-oil

3 p.m. — Round of 8

Four winners and highest losing seed advance to stepladder finals

5 p.m. — Stepladder finals

## AMLETO MONACELLI LEADS PBA60 TRISTAN'S T.A.P.S. MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

JULY 3, 2023 JILL WINTERS

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Columbus, Ohio – PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial Tournament defending champion Amleto Monacelli's comfort level on the lanes Monday should worry the rest of the field after his blistering start.

Inside Wayne Webb's Columbus Bowl, Monacelli shot 258, 300, 214, 243, 227, 276, 269 and 275 for 2,062, an average of 257.75.

"I think it was my best block ever on Tour, I'm pretty sure," said the 61-year-old. "I love wood approaches and I feel really comfortable here."

The smooth right-hander was focused on keeping his angles a lot straighter and in front of him, while also focusing on making sure his body was doing the right thing as well. And it just so happens it was one bowling ball in particular that led to a whole lot of strikes during his opening eight game block.

"Envy Tour from Hammer is an unbelievable ball and it matched up perfectly," he said. "I had to keep throwing it until something strange happened but that never happened."

Monacelli admits his only errors were a missed 4 pin and a couple of 10 pins where he rushed his shot and threw it too hard. That is one thing he plans to work on cleaning up. Otherwise, he plans to get his body into the same feel, watch his ball motion to see what ball he needs to use moving forward, and as the game changes make the right decisions.

Behind Monacelli is fellow B squad bowlers Pete Weber at 1,967 and Lyle Zikes at 1,943. Mike Dias is in fourth, leading the A squad followed by Matt Ballard in fifth.

Dias, a left-hander, averaged 242.38. He is very familiar with the Carmen Salvino 44-foot oil pattern using it when he gives lessons back home in Lafayette, Colorado. After a 192 in his first game, he got his feet far enough in on the lane and threw only his Storm Infinite PhysiX, making a few tweaks from pair-to-pair.

"All the 6's tripped and the 7's kicked out, so it was a good day," he said. "I've been doing a little work on my game over the winter and some things are starting to come together."

The field will bowl eight more games of qualifying starting with the B squad 10 a.m. ET Tuesday followed by the A squad at 4 p.m. ET. The top 24 will advance to match play on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, qualifiers 9-24 will bowl three-game sets starting at 10 a.m. ET. The winners of those matches and qualifiers 1-8 will bowl starting at noon. The round of eight will then take to the lanes at 3 p.m. to determine the final five players for the stepladder finals. The finals will begin at 5 p.m. Wednesday. All rounds will be livestreamed on BowlTV.com.

#### Top 10 PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial

Amleto Monacelli	2,062 (+462)
Pete Weber	1,967 (+367)
Lyle Zikes	1,943 (+343)
Mike Dias	1,939 (+339)
Matt Ballard	1,905 (+305)
Walt Blackston	1,899 (+299)
John Dudak	1,894 (+294)

Robert Lawrence	1,891 (+291)
Bill Essman	1,862 (+262)
Walter Ray Williams Jr.	1,858 (+258)

## AMLETO MONACELLI LEADS AFTER QUALIFYING AT PBA60 TRISTAN'S T.A.P.S. MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

JULY 4, 2023 JILL WINTERS

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Columbus, Ohio – After the completion of 16 games of qualifying, Amleto Monacelli's name remains at the top of the leaderboard at the PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial Tournament.

The Venezuelan followed up his huge block Monday with 244, 203, 214, 256, 223, 258, 240 and 257 giving him a two-day total of 3,957. After using just one ball over his first eight games, the USBC and PBA Hall of Famer noticed the lanes were hooking earlier than the previous day, so he relied on three balls in his second block.

"The ball that I used yesterday (Envy Tour) didn't skid as much in the front, so when that happens the ball doesn't recover in the backend," he said. "In the third game, I changed to the (Brunswick) Infinity, I had a really good shot. The last pair I started with it then changed to the (Ebonite Game Breaker 4) GB4 Hybrid with a little more response in the backend."

With all qualifying pins dropping after the field was cut to the top 24, Monacelli will get a first-round bye Wednesday into the round of 16. He plans to keep his same thought process that has worked so far, and just worry about himself and the lanes, not who he is bowling against as he looks to win this tournament in back-to-back years.

In addition to Monacelli, Pete Weber, Walter Ray Williams Jr., Mike Dias, Matt Ballard, Lyle Zikes, Lennie Boresch Jr. and Robert Lawrence will have first round byes. Adcock was in 39th coming into Tuesday and shot 1,909 to get to ninth place.

In the final game, Dave Johnson shot a 299 game to go from 43rd place to 18th. And the final player to make the top 24 was John DiSantis at +295.

Three game total pinfall matches for qualifiers 9-24 will begin at 10 a.m. ET Wednesday. Those winners and the top eight qualifiers will bowl their matches starting at noon, before the round of eight will start at 3 p.m.

Positions one through four will be determined based on their bracket seed number, and the highest seed that loses in the round of eight will be the fifth player to make the finals. The stepladder will begin 5 p.m. Wednesday. You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.com.

#### Top 10 PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial

Amleto Monacelli	3,957 (+757)
Pete Weber	3,794 (+594)
Walter Ray Williams Jr.	3,721 (+521)
Mike Dias	3,675 (+475)
Matt Ballard	3,662 (+462)
Lyle Zikes	3,654 (+454)
Lennie Boresch Jr.	3,652 (+452)
Robert Lawrence	3,635 (+435)
Tom Adcock	3,623 (+423)

Dale Csuhta

3,612 (+412)

## WALTER RAY WILLIAMS JR. WINS FIRST PBA60 TITLE AT TRISTAN'S T.A.P.S. MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

JULY 5, 2023 JILL WINTERS

Columbus, Ohio – The all-time winningest bowler in the history of the PBA just did something he had yet to accomplish, he won his first PBA60 title at the PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial Tournament.

The Oxford, Florida resident was the No. 5 seed to begin the stepladder finals Wednesday night and all he did was strike 68 percent of the time over four games to win the tournament throwing the new Brunswick Teal Rhino Pro.

Before his first match play round of the day, Williams Jr. told Tom Carter, who owns Tom Carter's Pro Shop inside Wayne Webb's Columbus Bowl, that he had a few new bowling balls from Brunswick, so he decided to drill the Teal Rhino Pro. That ball was used in the first game of his three-game match against Ron Mohr leading to a 257. Since Williams Jr. was already down 49 pins early, he decided to try something different, which didn't work. He lost that match which resulted in the No. 5 seed. After that, Carter made a key adjustment to Williams Jr.'s ball that turned out to be a winning combination.

"Tom put some surface on it and when I saw it hook, I liked that," Williams Jr. said. "It turned out to be a nice move. I also threw some decent shots, and my opponents didn't strike as much as I did, which made it better for me."

In Williams Jr.'s title match against Lennie Boresch Jr., he decided to slow down and moved in several boards on the lanes.

"I managed to strike the first shot of the left lane and that was a total guess," he admits. "Next shot on the right lane, I left a weak 10 then managed to get some strikes after that."

Boresch Jr. started with a double before converting the 2-8 sleeper and then he left the Greek church for an open frame in the fourth. Williams Jr. capitalized throwing five straight strikes in frames three thru seven for a 21-pin lead. Boresch Jr. struck four straight times after the open frame before opening again in the ninth with a 4-6-7 split. Williams Jr. struck seven times out of his 11 shots in the match for the 238-206 win.

"Unfortunately, my PBA60 career has been less than super stellar, so it was nice to get that good finish there," Williams Jr. said.

He celebrated the win with his daughter who was in the crowd all week.

In the opening match, Williams Jr. threw his ball hard and direct as he cruised past John DiSantis, who was making his first stepladder finals appearance, 254-196. DiSantis was the final player to make it into the round of 24. Williams Jr. continued to stay clean and strike in match two, defeating Bo Goergen, 246-193.

And then in the semifinal match, Williams Jr. found himself behind early to Ron Mohr. Mohr started off with five out of six strikes before a 3-6-7-10 split led to an open frame. Williams Jr. doubled and converted the 4-9 split in the third frame, before reeling off four straight strikes to take the lead in the seventh frame. Williams Jr. went on to win 242-217.

View the full PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial results at [PBA60 Tristan's T.A.P.S. Memorial | PBA](#)

#### 2023 PBA60 TRISTAN'S T.A.P.S. MEMORIAL FINAL STANDINGS:

1. Walter Ray Williams Jr. \$7,500
2. Lennie Boresch Jr. \$4,000
3. Ron Mohr \$3,000
4. Bo Goergen \$2,500
5. John DiSantis \$2,000

#### MATCH SCORES

Match 1 – Williams Jr. def. DiSantis 254-196

Match 2 – Williams Jr. def. Goergen 246-193

Match 3 – Williams Jr. def. Mohr 242-217

Championship match – Williams Jr. def. Boresch Jr. 238-206

## PBA REGIONAL RECAP: KEVEN WILLIAMS WINS FIRST REGIONAL TITLE

JULY 6, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN

There were points aplenty to be had over the past two weeks, but more specifically, in the last week of June. Seven of the latest nine events transpired between June 23 and June 30, including a triple-header in Norfolk, Virginia. Players desiring to qualify for the RPI took their chance at the thousands of points awarded in the previous handful of days, along with the opportunity to bring home some cash and a regional title.

## PBA NORFOLK PBA BOOSTER CLUB OF HAMPTON ROADS OPEN

Beginning with the triple-header in the South Region, it felt like a PBA PTQ with the players that emerged in the single-elimination bracket. The likes of Trevor Roberts, Dwight Adams, Pete Vergos, Ryan Lane, and Nate Garcia headlined the final hopefuls, so it was sure to be an exceptional remaining 16. But in the end, Zachary Tackett of Virginia Beach stood tall above them all. After losing with a 199 in his very first game, Tackett won his next eight straight contests. He defeated Colin Champion, Adams, Roberts, Lance Morris, and finally Connor Pickford, 267-192, to claim his second career regional title.

## PBA Norfolk PBA Booster Club Of Hampton Roads Open Final Standings

Zachary Tackett, 2,500 Points, \$3,000

Connor Pickford, 1,500, \$1,610

Lance Morris, 1,150, \$900

Matt Taylor, 950, \$900

## PBA Norfolk PBA Booster Club Of Hampton Roads Open Full Results

## PBA50 ED TENAN MEMORIAL NORFOLK PBA BOOSTER CLUB OF HAMPTON



Next up in the PBA50 division, Darryl Bower, Peter Dohan Jr., Jeff Campbell, and James Winterfield all bowled well enough to earn themselves a double-bye for the bracket play, including the top 16 from qualifying. But double-bye or not, nothing was powerful enough to stop Darryl Bower over the weekend. After qualifying first, Bower ate an extra scoop of Wheaties and a Flintstones Vitamin and powered through the bracket. Bower shot a 236 and 244 to defeat Rob Kuntz, beat Steve Hollandsworth 258-232, and wrapped up the tournament by taking down Joe Scarborough 278-184.

#### PBA50 Ed Tenan Memorial Norfolk PBA Booster Club of Hampton Final Standings

Darryl Bower, 2,500 Points, \$2,000

Joe Scarborough, 1,500, \$1,400

Jeffrey Campbell, 1,150, \$805

Steve Hollandsworth, 950, \$805

#### PBA50 Ed Tenan Memorial Norfolk PBA Booster Club of Hampton Full Results

#### PBA WOMEN'S PBA BOOSTER CLUB OF HAMPTON ROADS OPEN

Twenty-one ladies entered the regional event in Norfolk, and the top six advanced to bracket play. Elise Bolton dominated qualifying to earn the one-seed and a first-round bye, but she fell in the semifinals to Ashley Scott, 221-168. Jenna Williams, the two-seed who also possessed a bye, dropped in the semis to Kaylene Bishop 224-170. In the final battle between Bishop and Scott, Bishop couldn't get anything to fall her way as Scott cruised to a 207-144 victory to earn a cool \$1,000.

#### PBA Women's PBA Booster Club of Hampton Roads Open Final Standings

Ashley Scott, \$1,000

Kaylene Bishop, \$800

Elise Bolton, \$700

Jenna Williams, \$700

#### PBA Women's PBA Booster Club of Hampton Roads Open Full Results

#### PBA EDMOND SOUTHWEST OPEN

Moving over to Oklahoma, precisely 100 bowlers entered the Edmond Southwest Open and 1 in 3 moved into advancer's round number one. After advancer's rounds one, two, and three, François Lavoie, Sean Lavery-Spahr, Trey Ford III, and Kris Koeltzow settled into the top four for the stepladder. Koeltzow produced a 257 in game one against Ford's 216 but fell to Lavery-Spahr 245-244 in the second match after needing nine on his fill and getting just seven. In another rousing match, Lavoie needed strike, strike, nine, and aced each of the three shots for his eighth regional title and first since 2019.

#### PBA Edmond Southwest Open Final Standings

Francois Lavoie, 2,500 Points, \$2,800

Sean Lavery-Spahr, 1,500, \$1,900

Kris Koeltzow, 1,150, \$1,500

Trey Ford III, 950, \$1,175

#### PBA Edmond Southwest Open Full Results

#### PBA BEEHIVE OPEN

The plan was to compose a terrible segue here on how to remove a beehive, but everything online says to call a professional, so off we go. Ryan Burton led qualifying in Lehi, Utah, at the Beehive Open by over 70 pins on the Del Ballard pattern. Burton held onto the lead to claim the one seed in the stepladder, while Brody Chatterton, Tim Ursillo, and Ramsey Basurto earned the following three seeds. After Ursillo beat Basurto, Chatterton squeaked past Ursillo to set up a sensational final. After a tie at 257, the two faced each other in a roll-off that took five shots apiece to determine the winner. Burton struck on shot five while Chatterton rocked a glued seven-pin to give Burton the win.

#### PBA Beehive Open Final Standings

Ryan Burton, \$2,400

Brody Chatterton, \$1,600

Tim Ursillo, 1,150 Points, \$1,350

Ramsey Basurto, 950, \$1,100

#### PBA Beehive Open Full Results

## PBA BUFFALO WILD WINGS CENTRAL OPEN

Boneless or bone-in is the ultimate question (and I won't accept any boneless slander, bone-in is just too much work), but the ultimate question here is how high can scores be on the Viper pattern? The answer: very high. It took +191 for eight games to make the cut, which led to some intriguing bracket matches. In the first semifinal matchup, Brendan Salo put away a first-game loss to Zac Tackett, and came back to win 2-1 to move onto the finals. His opponent was a scorching Chris Via, who just went 300-279 against Tom Sorce. Salo claimed the hot hand in the finals, winning 2-0 for his first career title.

### PBA Buffalo Wild Wings Central Open Final Standings

Brendan Salo, 2,500 Points, \$2,700

Chris Via, 1,500, \$1,375

Zac Tackett, 1,150, \$1,100

Tom Sorce, 950, \$1,100

### PBA Buffalo Wild Wings Central Open Full Results

## PBA FIRST STATE DOUBLES CLASSIC PRESENTED BY ANCHOR BUICK/GM

In a matinee event if you will, 36 teams fought to the end in Middletown, Delaware, on the Cheetah pattern. Anthony Pepe and Alex Cavagnaro led at +691, but with a single-elimination bracket in the wings, nobody was guaranteed a spot at the top of the mountain yet. Ethan McDonald and Jonathan Kleer made a run to the finals, defeating Zach Gentile and Sam DeWitt in the semifinals. They would face Joe Paluszek and John Furey in the finals, who just wrapped up their match against Jake Rollins and Jason Sterner. In the last bout, a pair of 236 games would be enough for Paluszek and Furey to take down McDonald and Kleer to claim the title.

### PBA First State Doubles Classic presented by Anchor Buick/GM Final Standings

Joe Paluszek/John Furey, 2,500 Points, \$4,000

Ethan McDonald/Jonathan Kleer, 1,500, \$2,000

Zach Gentile/Sam DeWitt, 1,150, \$1,600

Jake Rollins/Jason Sterner, 950, \$1,600

### PBA First State Doubles Classic presented by Anchor Buick/GM Full Results

## PBA RITA JUSTICE CLASSIC PRESENTED BY BALLY'S DOVER CASINO RESORT

Continuing in The First State, after a dominant individual performance in the doubles tournament averaging just a shade under 260, Tim Foy Jr. continued his prominence in the singles portion, qualifying in first place at +262. He made it out of the advancer's round but fell in his quarter of the bracket to Tom Sorce. In the stepladder featuring each quarter's winners, Ryan Galli took down Malik Grove in match one, 209-202, but Sorce then crept past Galli 211-210. Jason Sterner owned the one-seed after a dominant 4-0 bracket performance, but the winner-take-all final match went the way of Sorce as he claimed his first regional title in over 15 years.

## PBA Rita Justice Classic presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort Final Standings

Tom Sorce, 2,500 Points, \$6,000

Jason Sterner, 1,500, \$3,200

Ryan Galli, 1,150, \$2,300

Malik Grove, 950, \$1,500

## PBA Rita Justice Classic presented by Bally's Dover Casino Resort Full Results

## PBA CONTRA COSTA COUNTY OPEN

### PBA Regional Recap: Keven Williams Wins First Regional Title

For the final contest of the fortnight, a full field entered the Contra Costa County Open, where Keven Williams qualified in the top spot with seven games over 230. It's not always the case that the chalk holds throughout the tournament, especially in a bracket setting, but in this tournament, it did. Williams, the one-seed, and Nickolas Freiberg, the two-seed in the running for Rookie of the Year, faced off in the final match. Williams struck out for a 216 to force Freiberg to strike to win or spare, strike to tie. Freiberg first converted a ten-pin but left another ten on the fill to lose by one as Williams picked up his first career regional title.

## PBA Contra Costa County Open Final Standings

Keven Williams, 2,500 Points, \$2,400

Nickolas Freiberg, 1,500, \$1,600

Brandon Kring, \$1,350

Chad Uyehara, 950, \$1,100

## **2023 PBA League Draft Live on BowlTV July 18**

The 2023 PBA League Draft will be held July 18 at 2 p.m. ET, streamed live on BowlTV.

The draft will begin with each of the 10 team managers, in reverse order of their finish last year, announcing up to three protected players on their rosters. Unprotected players will move to the list of draft-eligible players, which is made up of the top 75 players in 2023 PBA Tour points who aren't already on PBA League rosters.

After all 10 teams announce their protected players, the two-round snake draft begins and the teams will fill out their five-player rosters. If any team chooses to protect fewer than three players, additional rounds will be added to the snake draft until all teams have five eligible players on their rosters.

Teams will be able to trade players until the trade deadline of July 28, after which the rosters will be final for competition in September.

Following a seeding round on September 23, the 2023 PBA League Elias Cup Playoffs will be held at Bayside Bowl in Portland, Maine September 24-27, live on Fox Sports' FS1.

### **PBA League Draft Order**

#### **Round 1 (Manager Saves)**

NYC KingPins (manager Carolyn Dorin-Ballard)

Silver Lake Atom Splitters (Mark Baker)

L.A. X (Andrew Cain)

Chicago Breeze (Jason Couch)

Motown Muscle (Del Ballard Jr.)

Waco Wonders (Johnny Petraglia)  
Milwaukee Pounders (Marshall Holman)  
Las Vegas High Rollers (Amleto Monacelli)  
Dallas Strikers (Norm Duke)  
Portland Lumberjacks (Tim Mack)

### **Round 2 (First Selections)**

NYC KingPins  
Silver Lake Atom Splitters  
L.A. X  
Chicago Breeze  
Motown Muscle  
Waco Wonders  
Milwaukee Pounders  
Las Vegas High Rollers  
Dallas Strikers  
Portland Lumberjacks

### **Current Rosters**

Managers may protect up to three players

#### **NYC Kingpins (manager Carolyn Dorin-Ballard)**

Pete Weber  
Marshall Kent  
Darren Tang  
Kyle Sherman  
Michael Tang  
Matt Sanders (replaced Sherman, who was out due to injury)

#### **Silver Lake Atom Splitters (Mark Baker)**

Jesper Svensson  
Tom Daugherty  
Chris Via  
DJ Archer  
Brandon Novak

#### **L.A. X (Andrew Cain)**

Jason Belmonte  
Jakob Butturff  
Stu Williams  
Chris Barnes  
Martin Larsen

#### **Chicago Breeze (Jason Couch)**

Dom Barrett  
Tom Smallwood  
Shawn Maldonado  
Nick Pate  
Jake Peters

**Motown Muscle (Del Ballard)**

EJ Tackett  
Anthony Simonsen  
Brad Miller  
Mitch Hupé  
Keven Williams

**Waco Wonders (Johnny Petraglia)**

Walter Ray Williams Jr.  
BJ Moore  
Thomas Larsen  
Jason Sterner  
Parker Bohn III

**Milwaukee Pounders (Marshall Holman)**

Sean Rash  
Ryan Ciminelli  
Dick Allen  
AJ Chapman  
Anthony Lavery-Spahr

**Las Vegas High Rollers (Amleto Monacelli)**

François Lavoie  
Andrew Anderson  
AJ Johnson  
Matt Russo  
Ildemaro Ruiz Jr.

**Dallas Strikers (Norm Duke)**

Norm Duke  
Tommy Jones  
Bill O'Neill  
Santtu Tahvanainen  
Matt Ogle

**Portland Lumberjacks (Tim Mack)**

Wes Malott  
Kyle Troup

Kris Prather  
Packy Hanrahan  
Arturo Quintero

### **Current Eligible Players**

Players in the top 75 in 2023 points, who are not already on League rosters, and will be joined by the players who are left unprotected during the Manager Saves round

Kevin McCune  
Sam Cooley  
Tomas Kayhko  
Sean Lavery-Spahr  
Justin Knowles  
Richie Teece  
Michael Martell  
Nathan Bohr  
Graham Fach  
Tom Hess  
Kim Bolleby  
Zac Tackett  
Zach Wilkins  
Osku Palermaa  
Frank Snodgrass  
Cody Shoemaker  
Brandon Runk  
Cristian Azcona  
Wesley Low Jr  
Joseph Grondin  
Ronnie Russell  
Anthony Neuer  
Matt Kuba  
Cortez Schenck  
Trevor Roberts  
Michael Davidson  
Bryan Hahlen  
David Krol  
Patrick Dombrowski



## MICHAEL HAGGITT CLAIMS FIRST PBA50 TITLE AT SOUTH SHORE CLASSIC

JULY 13, 2023 JILL WINTERS

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Hammond, Indiana – Michael Haggitt had himself a memorable day on Thursday at the PBA50 South Shore Classic. He rolled a perfect game during the advancers round to start off his day. He then added another 300 in his first game of match play, and he ended the day by winning his first PBA50 title.

“There are so many guys out here that have been trying to get there, so to have this within three years is awesome,” the 53-year-old said. “I spent a lot of time in the offseason on my spares because last year I missed a couple of cuts because I wasn’t making a lot of 7-pins, so I had to work on that a lot.”

The tall left-hander came into the day thinking he should throw a new Hammer Vibe, but his ball rep Jeff Johnson recommended going with a Hammer Ocean Vibe instead.

“I am glad I listened to him because it worked out well,” he said. “This was my third time on a show, and I’ve had a lot of people around me give me great advice.”

After earning the top seed for the stepladder finals inside Olympia Lanes, Haggitt used his Ocean Vibe in the championship match against one of the hottest bowlers on tour, USBC Senior Masters champion John Janawicz. The two matched one another through the first three frames. Janawicz gained a two-pin advantage in the fourth frame, and in the fifth frame he converted the 2-4-8-10 to keep his lead. He maintained the small lead through seven frames.

Knowing he would finish on the left lane that he felt was hooking more than the right lane, Haggitt “moved my target away from me and smoothed it out a little bit.” That seemed to be the right decision as he ended the game with five straight strikes, four on the left lane alone, for the 237-219 win. He averaged 257.33 for his 12 games of bowling on Thursday.

“Getting a (champions) banner is everyone’s goal and I can’t really explain this feeling,” the Springfield, Ohio native said.

In the opening match, lefty Jason Couch needed a double in the 10th frame against Ryan Shafer to advance. He got the first strike then left the 7-9 on his second shot to lose by three, 249-246. Shafer, who used the new Teal Rhino Pro on the right lane and Trouble Maker on the left lane, put together four straight strikes in frames seven through the first shot in the tenth to defeat Glenn Smith, who was making his first stepladder finals appearance, 215-207.

In the semifinal match, Janawicz struck on his first six shots, while Shafer didn’t strike until the sixth and seventh frames. Janawicz finished that match off 247-210.

View the full results here: [PBA50 South Shore Classic | PBA](#)

#### 2023 PBA50 SOUTH SHORE CLASSIC FINAL STANDINGS:

Michael Haggitt, \$8,000

John Janawicz, \$4,000

Ryan Shafer, \$3,000

Glenn Smith, \$2,500

Jason Couch, \$2,000

#### MATCH SCORES

Match 1 – Shafer def. Couch 249-246

Match 2 – Shafer def. Smith 215-207

Match 3 – Janawicz def. Shafer 247-210

Championship match – Haggitt def. Janawicz 237-219

#### PBA50 WORLD SERIES OF BOWLING PREVIEW

JULY 15, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

This year, for the first time, the PBA50 Tour will have its own World Series of Bowling. The landmark event will be held at JAX 60 in Jackson, Mich., about an hour west of Detroit, where the PBA's WSOB was born in 2009.

Since its inception, the WSOB has been an annual staple on the PBA Tour. With multiple titles on the line each year, culminating with a major title in the World Championship, the WSOB has become one of the PBA's signature events.

The PBA50 WSOB will comprise four title events: the PBA50 Ballard Championship, PBA50 Monacelli Championship, PBA50 Petraglia Championship, and PBA50 World Championship.

The first three events will award standard titles and \$5,000 first-place prizes. The World Championship will be a major championship and feature a historic \$25,000 top prize.

"We are excited to bring the WSOB concept to the PBA50 Tour," PBA Tour commissioner Tom Clark said. "With a spectacular host center, the highest senior first-place prize in two decades in the main event World Championship, and over 190 players in the field given multiple opportunities with four titles on the line, the PBA50 WSOB has the potential to quickly grow into the premier senior pro bowling event destination in the world."

The standard events will be contested on 36-foot, 40-foot and 46-foot oil patterns, each named after their respective Hall of Famers. Eight-game qualifying blocks will determine the 16 advancers to bracket match play for each event.

The Ballard, Monacelli and Petraglia Championships will feature best-of-five-game matches in the Round of 16, then best-of-three-game matches in all subsequent rounds.

After the cumulative 24 games of qualifying, the top third of the field will compete in a six-game advancers round in the PBA50 World Championship, which will determine the 18 round-robin match play finalists. Players will compete on the 45-foot Weber pattern during World Championship advancer and match play rounds.

The action gets underway Sunday morning with PBA50 Ballard Championship qualifying. A-squad takes the lanes at 9 a.m. ET, while B-squad begins at 4 p.m ET.

All rounds will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

#### PBA50 WSOB SCHEDULE

JAX 60 | Jackson, Mich.

All times listed in Eastern.

Sunday, July 16 | PBA50 Ballard Championship Qualifying

9 a.m. — A-squad Qualifying Round (eight games)

4 p.m. — B-squad Qualifying Round (eight games)

- Top 16 players advance to PBA50 Ballard Championship match play

Monday, July 17 | PBA50 Monacelli Championship Qualifying

9 a.m. — B-squad Qualifying Round (eight games)

4 p.m. — A-squad Qualifying Round (eight games)

- Top 16 players advance to PBA50 Monacelli Championship match play

Tuesday, July 18 | PBA50 Petraglia Championship Qualifying

9 a.m. — A-squad Qualifying Round (eight games)

4 p.m. — B-squad Qualifying Round (eight games)

- Top 16 players advance to PBA50 Petraglia Championship match play

- Top one-third of players after all 24 games advance to PBA50 World Championship advancers round

Wednesday, July 19 | PBA50 Ballard Championship Bracket Match Play

Noon — Round of 16 (best-of-five games)

3 p.m. — Round of Eight (best-of-three games)

5 p.m. — Semifinals (best-of-three games)

6 p.m. — Finals (best-of-three games)

Thursday, July 20 | PBA50 Monacelli Championship Bracket Match Play

Noon — Round of 16 (best-of-five games)

3 p.m. — Round of Eight (best-of-three games)

5 p.m. — Semifinals (best-of-three games)

6 p.m. — Finals (best-of-three games)

Friday, July 21 | PBA50 Petraglia Championship Bracket Match Play

Noon — Round of 16 (best-of-five games)

3 p.m. — Round of Eight (best-of-three games)

5 p.m. — Semifinals (best-of-three games)

6 p.m. — Finals (best-of-three games)

Saturday, July 22 | PBA50 World Championship

9 a.m. — Advancers Round (six games)

- Top 18 players advance

2 p.m. — Match Play Round 1 (six games)

Saturday, July 23 | PBA50 World Championship

9 a.m. — Match Play Round 2 (six games)

2 p.m. — Match Play Round 3 (six games)

- Top five players advance

6 p.m. — Stepladder finals

## **BARNES SHOOT 300 TO LEAD QUALIFYING AT PBA50 BALLARD CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **JULY 16, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan – Two players with perfect games during qualifying at the 2023 PBA50 Ballard Championship finished first and second after eight games on Sunday.

Chris Barnes has a flair for the dramatic. He rolled a 300 in his last game to pass his roommate, John Janawicz, this week at the kickoff to the inaugural PBA50 World Series of Bowling. Janawicz led A-squad with 1,894.

"I joked to Jon DeLaney on my pair that I had to shoot 300, as low man got the cot," Barnes said of his mindset heading into the last game.

Barnes admits he watched Janawicz earlier in the day and made note of the transition he and others were going through. He took that information and how his roommate chose to attack the lanes into consideration when it was his turn to go through it.

"I felt the same thing he was feeling, and I started to go that way but remembered what happened when he did," Barnes said. "I just balled down and copied his lead. Certainly, he gets an assist as he added more pins to my score than I did to his."

Barnes, who won the last PBA50 tournament at JAX 60 on the same Del Ballard 36-foot oil pattern, added scores of 221, 230, 240, 247, 181, 279 and 203 to go with his 300 for 1,901. He is comfortable inside this center as he has family friends there cheering him on. Plus, he is extra motivated by the format of this first-time event for the senior bowlers.

"This is the biggest prize fund that we bowl for," he said. "It's a new challenge tomorrow. Today was a nice start to the overall event, but tomorrow should be higher scoring, so you have to come out firing."

As for Janawicz, he shot 247, 177, 264, 300, 175, 228, 266 and 237, a 236.75 average. He found the lanes to be tight on the low end when he got started so he used a Storm Pitch Black urethane. Things didn't quite match up on the next pair, getting into some trouble early, but then he made a bigger move to the left and switched to a Storm Super Nova, which resulted in games of 264 and 300.

After getting lined up in Game 6, he was happy with the way he finished on the Ballard oil pattern. Janawicz remembers watching Ballard ball rep on the PBA Tour back in the day when he was doing the lane maintenance working for Kegel.

"I always tried to pick his brain a lot and I still continue to," Janawicz said. "Not just one of the great bowlers of all-time but he definitely understands the game, the technical part. One of the most well-rounded people in all of bowling."

When Janawicz first saw the PBA50 Tour schedule he was excited about the World Series of Bowling.

"I think it is absolutely awesome," he said. "I was looking forward to it especially when Kegel gave me the green light to bowl more of the tournaments. David Small has done a really nice renovation and this is a fantastic facility to be able to hold the first WSOB for the seniors."

The top 16 players advance to bracket match play at Noon on Wednesday, featuring best-of-five-game matches in the Round of 16 followed by best-of-three-game matches after that. The final player to advance in the PBA50 Ballard Championship was Tom Hess at 1,723.

The PBA50 WSOB field will now bowl eight games of qualifying in the PBA50 Monacelli Championship starting with B-squad at 9 a.m. ET Monday and A-squad set to begin at 4 p.m. ET.

The PBA50 Petraglia Championship will also include eight games of qualifying starting with A-squad 9 a.m. Tuesday and B-squad at 4 p.m.

Cumulative scores across the Ballard, Monacelli and Petraglia Championships count towards PBA50 World Championship qualifying totals.

You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.

PBA50 Ballard Championship Match Play Advancers

Chris Barnes, 1,901 (+301)

John Janawicz, 1,894 (+294)

Dan Knowlton, 1,890 (+290)

Lennie Boresch Jr., 1,861 (+261)

Troy Lint, 1,813 (+213)

Pete Weber, 1,809 (+209)

Jason Couch, 1,775 (+175)

Pete McCordic, 1,761 (+161)

Walter Ray Williams Jr., 1,753 (+153)

Christopher Viale, 1,753 (+153)

Brad Angelo, 1,753 (+153)

Skip Pavone, 1,749 (+149)

John Gould, 1,742 (+142)

Paul Fleming, 1,742 (+142)

Larry Achten Jr., 1,738 (+138)

Tom Hess, 1,723 (+123)

Full standings - PBA50 Ballard Championship

## **TOM ADCOCK LED QUALIFYING AT PBA50 MONACELLI CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **JULY 17, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan – After watching PBA Tour players compete over the years at the World Series of Bowling, Tom Adcock was hoping he would get the chance to face a similar challenge on the PBA50 Tour. His opportunity is here, and all he did on Monday was lead the field of more than 190 bowlers after qualifying at the 2023 PBA50 Monacelli Championship.

Adcock found success inside JAX 60 by standing farther left than the other players around him and throwing past the 3 pin, letting his ball fall back to the pocket and saw it match up really well for him.

He led the way with 211, 279, 216, 254, 209, 226, 245 and 235 for 1,875, an average of 234.38.

The tall right-hander is feeling pain free this week thanks to a cortisone shot he got last week in his shoulder. He hurt his shoulder back in Las Vegas during the Super Senior Classic, causing him to withdraw from the USBC Senior Masters. He led two rounds at the Senior U.S. Open and then learned he had no structural damage. As long as he can throw shots and not hurt, he is confident about his chances.

"The shorter pattern you had to throw it that much harder," the 61-year-old said. "Tomorrow because of the length of the pattern, I don't have to throw it as hard, so that is definitely a lot less stress on my shoulder, no doubt."

The Forsyth, Illinois native is thrilled to be competing in this unique tournament format.

"I wouldn't mind having this once or twice a year," he said. "Having this kind of challenge and picking four completely different patterns each time and just letting us go after it. I like what we are doing; it's fun."

Rounding out the top five behind Adcock is Brad Angelo, Ron Mohr, Tom Hess and Chuck Richey Jr. The final player to advance in the PBA50 Monacelli Championship was Rick Graham at 1,749.

The top 16 advance to bracket match play at Noon on Thursday with best-of-five matches in the Round of 16 followed by best-of-three-game matches after that. The finals are scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. with a best-of-three match.

The field will now bowl eight games of qualifying for the PBA50 Petraglia Championship. A-squad takes the lanes starting at 9 a.m. ET Tuesday and then B-squad at 4 p.m.

You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.

PBA50 Monacelli Championship Match Play Advancers:

Tom Adcock, 1,875 (+275)

Brad Angelo, 1,845 (+245)

Ron Mohr, 1,843 (+243)

Tom Hess, 1,842 (+242)

Chuck Richey Jr., 1,837 (+237)

Jon Rakoski, 1,824 (+224)

Chris Barnes, 1,823 (+223)

Paul Fleming, 1,783 (+183)

Carlos Denot, 1,778 (+178)

Larry Achten Jr., 1,773 (+173)

Dave Johnson, 1,766 (+166)

John Burkett, 1,761 (+161)

Bruce Falcon, 1,757 (+157)

Pete Weber, 1,757 (+157)



Vince Biondo III, 1,751 (+151)

Rick Graham, 1,749 (+149)

## **PACKY HANRAHAN SELECTED FIRST OVERALL IN 2023 PBA LEAGUE DRAFT**

### **JULY 18, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

The Portland Lumberjacks, three-time defending Elias Cup champions, ultimately retained four of five members from their 2022 championship roster, but Packy Hanrahan slipped away and became the top overall selection in the 2023 PBA League Draft.

This year's draft began with a twist as team managers announced their keeper selections live during the first round on BowlTV. Managers could save up to three players from their 2022 roster.

Rosters were then filled out through a two-round snake draft from a pool of the top 75 players in points during the 2023 season and unprotected players from Round 1.

To close the first round, Lumberjack manager Tim Mack announced Portland would retain Kyle Troup, Kris Prather, and Wes Malott — aka "The Franchise."

Mack opted to keep Malott, a two-time Mark Roth PBA League MVP and three-time Elias Cup champion with Portland, over Hanrahan, who won two titles and finished sixth on Tour in 2023 points.

In a similar vein, Norm Duke protected Matt Ogle as his successor on the Dallas Strikers, rejoining Tommy Jones and Bill O'Neill and leaving Santtu Tahvanainen as the odd man out.

Hanrahan would not spend long in the draft pool as Carolyn Dorin-Ballard, manager of the NYC KingPins, made Hanrahan the first overall selection to start the second round.

In quick succession, Mark Baker of the Silver Lake Atom Splitters scooped up the 2022 Rookie of the Year in Tahvanainen.

L.A. X welcomed the year's first PBA League newcomer in Kevin McCune, the latest first-time PBA Tour champion, to the team with the third overall selection.

The remaining players selected in the second round of the draft were Keven Williams (Chicago), Sam Cooley (Motown), Ryan Ciminelli (Waco), Sean Lavery-Spah (Milwaukee), Matt Russo (Las Vegas), Shawn Maldonado (Dallas), and Graham Fach (Portland).

Sean Lavery-Spahr and Fach will make their PBA League debuts this year.

To begin the final round, Portland brought back Arturo Quintero — more accurately, Quintero never left. After he delivered an MVP-caliber performance in last summer's PBA League, the 45-year-old moved with his family to Portland.

The next three second-round selections proved how much managers value chemistry: Duke tabbed fellow PBA Hall of Famer Chris Barnes to Dallas; Las Vegas' Amletto Moncelli preserved his 2022 roster with Ildemaro Ruiz Jr.; and Milwaukee not only regained Anthony Lavery-Spahr, but paired him with his brother.

The final selections in the third round were Frank Snodgrass (Waco), Nathan Bohr (Motown), Tomas Käyhkö (Chicago), Thomas Larsen (L.A. X), Richie Teece (Silver Lake) and Michael Tang (NYC).

Snodgrass and Käyhkö will make their PBA League debuts. Bohr, who often wears jerseys with the No. 10 on the back, will make his first PBA League appearance in 10 years.

PBA Hall of Famers Pete Weber and Walter Ray Williams Jr. were not selected to a team for the first time since the PBA League began in 2013.

The 2023 PBA League will begin with qualifying on Sept. 23 at Bayside Bowl in Portland, Maine. The quarterfinals will air Sept. 24-25, followed by the semifinals on Sept. 26 and finals on Sept. 27. All telecasts will be on Fox Sports' FS1.

More information on the PBA League is available [here](#).

## PBA LEAGUE DRAFT RECAP

### Round 1 - Manager Saves

1.01 — Marshall Kent, Kyle Sherman and Darren Tang, NYC

1.02 — Jesper Svensson, Tom Daugherty and Chris Via, Silver Lake

1.03 — Jason Belmonte, Jakob Butturff and Stu Williams, L.A.

1.04 — Dom Barrett, Tom Smallwood and Jake Peters, Chicago

1.05 — EJ Tackett, Anthony Simonsen and Mitch Hupé, Motown

1.06 — Parker Bohn III, BJ Moore and Jason Sterner, Waco

1.07 — Sean Rash, Dick Allen and AJ Chapman, Milwaukee

1.08 — Andrew Anderson, François Lavoie and AJ Johnson, Las Vegas

1.09 — Tommy Jones, Bill O'Neill and Matt Ogle, Dallas

1.10 — Wes Malott, Kyle Troup and Kris Prather, Portland

## Round 2 - First Selections

2.01 — Packy Hanrahan, NYC

2.02 — Santtu Tahvanainen, Silver Lake

2.03 — Kevin McCune, L.A.

2.04 — Keven Williams, Chicago

2.05 — Sam Cooley, Motown

2.06 — Ryan Ciminelli, Waco

2.07 — Sean Lavery-Spahr, Milwaukee

2.08 — Matt Russo, Las Vegas

2.09 — Shawn Maldonado, Dallas

2.10 — Graham Fach, Portland

## Round 3 - Second Selections

3.01 — Arturo Quintero, Portland

3.02 — Chris Barnes, Dallas

3.03 — Ildemaro Ruiz Jr., Las Vegas

3.04 — Anthony Lavery-Spahr, Milwaukee

3.05 — Frank Snodgrass, Waco

3.06 — Nathan Bohr, Motown

3.07 — Tomas Käyhkö, Chicago

3.08 — Thomas Larsen, L.A.

3.09 — Richie Teece, Silver Lake

3.10 — Michael Tang, NYC

## TEAM ROSTERS

Portland Lumberjacks

Wes Malott

Kyle Troup

Kris Prather

Graham Fach

Arturo Quintero

Go Bowling! Dallas Strikers

Tommy Jones

Bill O'Neill

Matt Ogle

Shawn Maldonado

Chris Barnes

Las Vegas High Rollers

Andrew Anderson

François Lavoie

AJ Johnson

Matt Russo

Ildemaro Ruiz Jr.

Pabst Blue Ribbon Milwaukee Pounders

Sean Rash

Dick Allen

AJ Chapman

Sean Lavery-Spahr

Anthony Lavery-Spahr

Snickers Waco Wonders

Parker Bohn III

BJ Moore

Jason Sterner

Ryan Ciminelli

Frank Snodgrass

Motown Muscle

EJ Tackett

Anthony Simonsen

Mitch Hupé

Sam Cooley

Nathan Bohr

Guaranteed Rate Chicago Breeze

Dom Barrett

Tom Smallwood

Jake Peters

Keven Williams

Tomas Käyhkö

Bowlero L.A. X

Jason Belmonte

Jakob Butturff

Stu Williams

Kevin McCune

Thomas Larsen

Silver Lake Atom Splitters

Jesper Svensson

Tom Daugherty

Chris Via

Santtu Tahvanainen

Richie Teece

NYC Kingpins

Marshall Kent

Kyle Sherman

Darren Tang

Packy Hanrahan

Michael Tang

## PBA LEAGUE TV SCHEDULE

All times listed in Eastern.

Sunday, Sept. 24 at 5 p.m. — Quarterfinals

Monday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. — Quarterfinals

Tuesday, Sept. 26 at 8 p.m. — Semifinals

Wednesday, Sept. 27 at 8 p.m. — Finals

## **WILLIAM GATES LED QUALIFYING AT PBA50 PETRAGLIA CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **JULY 18, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan – William “Bill” Gates of Saginaw, Michigan experienced an out-of-body, full-circle moment during qualifying at the PBA50 Petraglia Championship.

The last time he competed at a PBA tournament was the 2003 World Championship in Taylor, Michigan. His sixth-month-old daughter, Skye was in attendance, and he knew after that event he “had to get a real job, if you will, and take care of the family.” Fast forward to this week, while competing in his first PBA50 tournament, Gates averaged 244.50 Tuesday over eight-games to move into first place. He shot 194, 245, 257, 267, 239, 248, 261 and 245 for 1,956. And he just happened to have his biggest fan cheering him on.

“Fortunately, I have my almost 20-year-old daughter with me,” the 50-year-old said. “Honestly, I couldn’t have done it without her being here.”

Skye helped carry his equipment, she kept him calm and provided lots of encouragement along the way. And after each day of the World Series of Bowling, they

enjoyed daddy-daughter bonding time eating Oreo Blizzards at Dairy Queen. As soon as Gates learned he had led the Petraglia Championship it was a moment they will always remember.

"We had a nice big hug and she told me she was proud of me," he said. "Honestly, that made my year right there. Whatever happens now after that it's all gravy. I am pretty excited."

Gates was able to stay calm throughout his round as he was able to play his 'A' game while surrounded by professional bowlers he has admired for years.

"To do it in this setting with people around me that I have watched for the last 30 years on television, I can't explain it," he said. "I had a lot of those folks come up to me and say nice bowling. It means a lot."

Two fellow B-squad bowlers were just behind Gates, Terrence McKinney and Kevin Anderson. Dino Castillo, who led A-squad with 1,933, is sitting in fourth place and John Janawicz is in fifth.

Castillo came into Tuesday with a clear mindset ready to erase how he felt on Monday.

"Yesterday I bowled absolutely horrible for the first six games and then I bowled really well the last two," he said. "Today I used a ball that had been sitting in my bag that I drilled for a reason, and it felt like I had the world today."

Castillo admits the mindset while competing in the World Series of Bowling has to be on the bigger picture of making the top 64 to qualify for the World Championship, but it's difficult not to worry about your results each day, which is what he did.

"For the first time in a very long time I was panicking and shaking," he said. "Game 4, I was looking at flights to go home. I was out of the World Championship number. But now, here I am."

The top 16 players in the Petraglia Championship advance to bracket match play at Noon on Friday with best-of-five matches in the Round of 16 followed by best-of-three-game matches after that. The finals are scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. in best-of-three matches. The final player to advance in the PBA50 Petraglia Championship was Dana Wright at 1,850.

Total pinfall from the 24 games of qualifying in the Ballard, Monacelli and Petraglia Championships determined the top 64 players for the PBA50 World Championship.

The top five for that tournament are Chris Barnes, Pete Weber, John Janawicz, Brad Angelo and Tom Hess. Angelo, Barnes, Hess and Weber each finished in the top 16 on all three legend oil patterns.

The final player to make the cut for the World Championship is Robert Mockenhaupt at 4,938.



Coming up on Wednesday, this tournament continues with the PBA50 Ballard Championship bracket match play rounds starting with the Round of 16 at Noon. The Round of 8 will start at 3 p.m. and the semifinals at 5 p.m. The Ballard Championship Finals are scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. ET. You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.

PBA50 Petraglia Championship Match Play Advancers:

William Gates, 1,956 (+356)

Terrence McKinney, 1,943 (+343)

Kevin Anderson, 1,935 (+335)

Dino Castillo, 1,933 (+333)

John Janawicz, 1,928 (+328)

Pete Weber, 1,917 (+317)

Rick Benard, 1,906 (+306)

Jon Rakoski, 1,906 (+306)

Russell Hunt, 1,905 (+305)

Kevin Duncan, 1,886 (+286)

Ryan Shafer, 1,877 (+277)

Tom Hess, 1,875 (+275)

Brad Angelo, 1,873 (+273)

Chris Barnes, 1,866 (+266)

Vince Biondo III, 1,857 (+257)

Dana Wright, 1,850 (+250)

## **DAN KNOWLTON WINS FIRST CAREER PBA50 TITLE AT PBA50 BALLARD CHAMPIONSHIP**

**JULY 19, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan – In his third season on the PBA50 Tour, Dan Knowlton achieved something he didn't even expect. He won his first PBA50 title at the PBA50 Ballard Championship.

"It's a dream I didn't know I had," the Florida native said. "I turned professional when I was 50. I am 52, and I never thought I would have a chance at a title."

After qualifying third, Knowlton defeated Paul Fleming, Walter Ray Williams Jr. and John Janawicz to put himself in the best-of-three championship finals on Wednesday against lefty Troy Lint, who won his first title at the PBA Senior U.S. Open.

In the first game, Knowlton started with four strikes and kept the momentum throughout to earn the win, 228-201. In the second game, as both players continued to use urethane, Knowlton chopped a 2-4-5-8 in the third frame followed by a pocket 7-9 split for back-to-back open frames, but he wasn't rattled.

"I felt really confident I was going to win that game even when I was down 30 early," he said. "I just felt like I could get on a run, and I knew his look wasn't very good. So, I tried to brush it off and get back to business."

Lint was able to post strikes in the fourth thru seventh frames. Knowlton responded with five straight strikes after his open frames. With the lead in the eighth, Lint's shot was wide resulting in the 3-7-9 split and an opening. Lint finished with 224 and Knowlton stepped up and delivered in fashion.

"I've gotten a bunch of top fives, but I just keep shooting myself in the foot. This time I didn't," he said. "I am just so glad I had the opportunity to double to win and did it."

With his hands straight up in the air he celebrated the title along with his wife, Michelle, his parents, and his son who was on FaceTime.

"My parents have been my biggest supporters outside of my wife," he said fighting back tears. "It's awesome to have family here. It means everything."

Knowlton is the fourth first-time PBA50 winner so far this season. His close friend Michael Haggitt got his first title at last week's PBA50 South Shore Open.

"It's really surreal," Knowlton said. "We are pretty close to each other in standings and in total points. Just seems like we are neck-and-neck on just about everything, so I think it is pretty fitting we got titles back-to-back."

Knowing the PBA50 Johnny Petraglia BVL Tournament of Champions will be taking place only 30 minutes from his home in Florida, Knowlton has been competing in lots of tournaments this summer trying to get a title to qualify. Now that he will be getting a banner with his name on it, he also will get to sleep in his own bed when the final event of the season takes place at Orange Bowl Lanes in Lakeland, Florida.

The PBA50 World Series of Bowling will award another title Thursday. The PBA50 Monacelli Championship bracket match play will start at Noon ET with the Round of 16 and best-of-five matches followed by the Round of 8 and best-of-three-game matches. The two semifinals are scheduled to start at 5 p.m. with the championship to follow at 6 p.m.

You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.com.

#### BALLARD CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

Game 1: Knowlton def. Lint, 228-201

Game 2: Knowlton def. Lint, 233-224

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Dan Knowlton, \$5,000

Troy Lint, \$3,000

Tom Hess, \$2,500

John Janawicz, \$2,500

### **JON RAKOSKI WINS FIRST CAREER PBA50 TITLE AT PBA50 MONACELLI CHAMPIONSHIP**

#### **JULY 20, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan – After a fifth-place finish at his first PBA50 tournament last year, Jon Rakoski decided he would bowl full-time on tour in 2023. On Thursday night, he became a PBA50 champion.

The always-focused-looking right-hander flashed one of the biggest grins of his life after delivering his fifth straight strike in the ninth frame to win the PBA50 Monacelli Championship over Tom Hess.

“I’m not a very emotional person,” he said smiling. “This is pretty amazing.”

In the opening game of the best-of-three title match, the two players matched each other strike-for-strike until Hess got a spare in the sixth frame. Rakoski kept striking

until the ninth when he converted back-to-back spares followed by a strike for the 265-218 win.

In Game 2, Rakoski kept striking with eight strikes through the first nine frames on the way to a 256-215 victory and championship trophy presentation.

"When I committed myself to bowling on tour full-time, I practiced a lot and it's paying off," the Florida native said. "My friend, Donnie Schwartz, flew in today to surprise me. It was great to have him here. My wife gets in tomorrow."

The Florida native has cashed in four of his five tournaments this season and sits in the top 10 on the points list. He has rolled two perfect games so far this week, and he will be back on the lanes at JAX 60 on Friday. He will face Kevin Duncan in best-of-five bracket match play at the PBA50 Petraglia Championship.

And then on Saturday, he is seeded sixth for the start of the advancers round at the PBA50 World Championships.

"It's been an amazing season and there is still a lot more to go," he said.

Rakoski is the fifth overall and third straight first-time winner on the PBA50 Tour in 2023.

The PBA50 Petraglia Championship Round of 16, starting at Noon ET on Friday, will feature best-of-five matches, followed by the Round of 8 and best-of-three game matches at 3 p.m. ET. The two semifinals are scheduled to start at 5 p.m. with the championship to follow at 6 p.m.

You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.com.

#### MONACELLI CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

Game 1: Rakoski def. Hess 265-218

Game 2: Rakoski def. Hess 256-215

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Jon Rakoski \$5,000

Tom Hess \$3,000

Tom Adcock \$2,500

Brad Angelo \$2,500

## **TOM HESS WINS FOURTH CAREER TITLE AT PBA50 PETRAGLIA CHAMPIONSHIP**

**JULY 21, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan — Tom Hess is a bit tired after completing 57 games over six days at the inaugural PBA50 World Series of Bowling, and he is ready for even more.

He tied for third place at the Ballard Championship, took second at the Monacelli Championship, and then on Friday, he won the Petraglia Championship for his fourth career PBA50 title.

"I am one win away from being Hall of Fame eligible," the Iowa native said. "That was my goal. To now finally be out here, this is all I am focusing on, and the results are showing."

His path to the championship match against Chris Barnes began with wins against John Janawicz, Dino Castillo, and William Gates, who was the No. 1 seed.

"Today was probably the toughest day that a guy could have out here just the way my bracket broke down," he said.

His match with Janawicz went the full five games and he just told himself to "keep digging." Against Castillo, he lost the first game before he admits he got really focused and battled his way back. Gates presented a different challenge as the surface on his equipment affected Hess's game, but his ball rep Jim Callahan got him lined up after a 163 game, rebounding with a 259 to take the match.

"I really stayed in the process," the 53-year-old said. "I really wish I could do that more often. A couple of years ago, when I went on the run (in 2021 winning PBA50 Player of the Year and PBA50 Rookie of the Year), I was able to stay in the process, but it's hard to stay there. This week, what a week to get in it."

In the best-of-three championship match, Hess started the first game with a strike then a washout for an open frame. After that, he struck nine straight times finishing with a 263. Barnes started with a four-bagger, converted the 2-10 in the seventh and stayed clean for 248.

Game 2 saw Hess open in the third frame and strike only five times, while Barnes was once again clean and finished with seven strikes for the 258-203 win to even the match.

In the final game, Hess closed the door early on Barnes starting with seven strikes as Barnes opened three times. Hess took the victory lap with a 268-164 win.

"It has been a really good week making the semifinals and bowling for a title last night," Hess said. "I was able to be patient, stay focused and get it done today."

After three titles have already been awarded at the WSOB, it all comes down to the PBA50 World Championship. Barnes is in first through 24 games of qualifying, followed by Pete Weber, John Janawicz, Brad Angelo and Hess.

"The guys in front of me are not going to lay down," Hess said. "I am going to have to run down, chase them and catch them. Hopefully, I can stay in the same momentum and get things done."

There is still a lot of bowling left for the remaining 64 bowlers. The top 64 will bowl six games in the advancers round on the 45-foot Dick Weber oil pattern starting at 9 a.m. ET Saturday. The top 18 will move on to the first of three rounds of match play starting at 2 p.m.

They will return to JAX 60 at 9 a.m. on Sunday for the final 12 games of match play. The top five players will be in the stepladder finals set to start at 6 p.m. You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.

#### PETRAGLIA CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

Game 1: Hess def. Barnes, 263-248

Game 2: Barnes def. Hess, 258-203

Game 3: Hess def. Barnes, 268-164

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Tom Hess, \$5,000

Chris Barnes, \$3,000

William Gates, \$2,500

Jon Rakoski, \$2,500

## **TACKETT HEADLINES FIELD FOR SUNDAY'S PBA SKILL BALL CHALLENGE**

### **JULY 22, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

EJ Tackett, who captured wins at the PBA Shawnee Classic and PBA Jackson Classic, headlines the field for the 2023 PBA SKILL Ball Challenge, which takes place Sunday night at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Mich.

The 2023 PBA SKILL Ball Challenge features the top performers during this season's five PBA Classic Series tournaments.

Sam Cooley, the PBA Springfield Classic champion, is the No. 2 seed, while PBA Kokomo Classic champion Packy Hanrahan earned the No. 6 seed.

Rounding out the field are Dom Barrett, Tommy Jones, Jakob Butturff, Sean Lavery-Spahr and Matt Ogle.

The non-title event features a Race-to-Two match-play bracket. All players will use a single PBA SKILL 3.02 ball on dual, low-volume oil patterns, just like the competitors in Teen Masters.

The PBA SKILL 3.02 is a non-flaring pearl urethane ball with a differential of 0.010" and hardness of 80-82D.

The event is run in conjunction with the 2023 Teen Masters Championships, the premier teen competition featuring hundreds of North America's best talent. The unique playing conditions are the signature of Teen Masters.

The PBA SKILL Ball Challenge features a \$50,000 prize fund and will award \$16,000 to its victor. BowITV will provide livestreaming coverage of the event.

Matches will begin at 7 p.m. ET on Sunday, July 23.

First-Round Matches (Race-to-Two format)

No. 1 EJ Tackett vs. No. 8 Matt Ogle

No. 4 Tommy Jones vs. No. 5 Jakob Butturff

No. 3 Dom Barrett vs. No. 6 Packy Hanrahan

No. 2 Sam Cooley vs. No. 7 Sean Lavery-Spahr

## **CHRIS BARNES MAINTAINS LEAD AT PBA50 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP**

**JULY 22, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan – Chris Barnes is no stranger to the mental and physical challenge of competing in a World Series of Bowling having done so on the PBA Tour. He sees that as an advantage, and he is relying on that experience to keep his name at the top of the leaderboard at the first-ever PBA50 World Series of Bowling.

On Saturday morning in the advancers round, he crossed with Pete Weber and John Janawicz as they got their first look at the 45-foot Dick Weber oil pattern.

"Through practice they felt like they were going to be pretty soft and high scoring, and when we started, one lane kind of changed," Barnes said. "The three of us combined for about 600 even. They changed pretty significantly toward the end of practice and through Game 2."

Barnes was able to maintain his lead averaging 226.5. Going into the first round of round-robin match play he came in with a different game plan and averaged 225.5, posting a 4-2 match-play record. In his last game, he converted the 6-7-10 and the 7-10 followed by a five-bagger for 234.

"There are a lot of ups and downs," the four-time PBA50 titleist said. "You have to win matches but if you score 225 to 230 on this pattern, you're going to win more on this pattern than you lose for sure."

He is focused on having a better game plan for the final 12 games of round-robin match play. And if he can execute when the transition hits, he likes his chances of making back-to-back championship match appearances.

Barnes has a 47-pin lead over Janawicz. Brad Angelo is in third followed by Ryan Shafer and Tom Hess, who won the PBA50 Petraglia Championship on Friday. Each player receives 30 bonus pins for a match-play win.

Jack Jurek was the final player to make the cut after the advancers round, and he rolled a 300 in the first game of match play. Jon Rakoski, who has bowled two other perfect games during the WSOB, had a 300 in the second game.

The remaining 18 bowlers will begin their second round of match play at 9 a.m. ET on Sunday and the final six games in Round 3 will start at 2 p.m.



The top five will advance to the stepladder finals scheduled to start at 6 p.m. The winner will receive \$25,000 and a major title to add to their career achievements. You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.

PBA50 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (with bonus pins):

Chris Barnes, 8,422 (+1,222)

John Janawicz, 8,375 (+1,175)

Brad Angelo, 8,297 (+1,097)

Ryan Shafer, 8,269 (+1,069)

Tom Hess, 8,264 (+1,064)

Troy Lint, 8,202 (+1,002)

Pete Weber, 8,196 (+ 996)

Jon Rakoski, 8,177 (+977)

Dino Castillo, 8,004 (+804)

Tony Lanning, 7,936 (+736)

Jack Jurek, 7,886 (+686)

Tom Adcock, 7,884 (+684)

Paul Fleming, 7,830 (+630)

Chuck Richey Jr., 7,829 (+629)

Lennie Boresch Jr., 7,785 (+585)

Walter Ray Williams Jr., 7,710 (+510)

Ron Mohr, 7,696 (+496)

Dan Knowlton, 7,664 (+464)

## **CHRIS BARNES GETS A MAJOR WIN AT PBA50 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP**

**JULY 23, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Jackson, Michigan – Chris Barnes was experiencing a little bit of déjà vu on Sunday. The last time he won a PBA50 tournament was at the 2022 PBA50 David Small's JAX 60 Open when he climbed the stepladder from the fourth seed to earn the victory.

When he won that event, it was his fourth PBA50 title and he collected \$7,500. Today, in the same bowling center, it was for a major title and \$25,000.

After leading the majority of the PBA50 World Championship during the inaugural PBA50 World Series of Bowling, Barnes fell out of the lead for the first time during match play on Sunday, but he was able to take what he learned on the 45-foot Dick Weber oil pattern to help him regroup and get the win.

"It was a culmination of a lot of mistakes over the last four blocks on this pattern," Barnes admitted. "When you make that many mistakes hopefully you learn a lot. We cycled through what I knew wouldn't work, caught some good breaks, and I am certainly going to enjoy this one."

The opening match presented Barnes with the chance to get past Tom Hess, who defeated him in the PBA50 Petraglia Championship on Friday. Barnes threw four out of five strikes to end the game for the 245-236 win.

In match two, Barnes only missed once and that was the 3-4-6-7-9-10 split in the third frame. His opponent John Janawicz opened the match with five of six strikes. Janawicz failed to strike in the 10th frame, and Barnes, who was working on six strikes after his open frame, struck out for the 258-244 win.

Game 3 saw Barnes take on Brad Angelo, who was the first player to jump him in the overall standings on Sunday. After Angelo failed to convert the 2-10 in the fourth frame, Barnes made a ball change in the fourth frame after two single-pin spares and threw seven out of eight strikes to get the 248-211 victory.

After noticing the friction starting to get to his ball toward the end of the semifinals match, Barnes and ball rep Jim Callahan decided he should switch to a 900 Global Xponent for the championship match, based on how it had reacted on the 46-foot Petraglia pattern Friday.

"I went +200 the last four when they broke down before using that ball, so we took a swing for the fences, assuming Troy was going to shoot a big game," Barnes said. "Every once in a while, the stars align."

Barnes and Callahan hit a home run as Barnes slammed home six straight to start the match giving him a 41-pin lead. With Lint not having quite the same look on this pair that he had to power his way to the No. 1 seed, Barnes finished his impressive

stepladder run with the dominant 278-193 win. Barnes averaged 257.25 during his four-game title climb.

"At this point, this would be the most special of the five titles I have out here," Barnes said. "Tom (Hess) probably had the best overall week. But winning this one was my biggest goal, and this worked out as good as I could hope."

Barnes, who bowled 72 games at the World Series of Bowling this week, joked that his \$25,000 first-place pay day will help pay for his family's trip to Lima, Peru starting July 30 to cheer on his son, Ryan, who is representing Junior Team USA at the PANAM Bowling Youth Championship 2023.

In addition to Barnes winning the PBA50 World Championship, and Tom Hess winning the PBA50 Petraglia Championship, Dan Knowlton won the PBA50 Ballard Championship for his first PBA50 title, and Jon Rakoski won his first title at the PBA50 Monacelli Championship to conclude the PBA50 World Series of Bowling.

#### WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

Match 1: Barnes def. Hess, 245-236

Match 2: Barnes def. Janawicz, 258-244

Match 3: Barnes def. Angelo, 248-211

Championship match: Barnes def. Lint. 278-193

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Chris Barnes, \$25,000

Troy Lint, \$13,000

Brad Angelo, \$8,000

John Janawicz, \$6,000

Tom Hess, \$5,000

## **CREATIVITY POWERS DOM BARRETT TO VICTORY AT PBA SKILL BALL CHALLENGE**

**JULY 23, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

Dom Barrett looked out of sorts in the opening game of the PBA SKILL Ball Challenge championship match against Matt Ogle. He guttered in the second frame and sputtered to a 150, falling to Ogle's 193.

But in the second game of the Race-to-Two match, Barrett made a pair of bold moves that changed the tides. On the right lane, he moved right of the first arrow with added ball speed; on the left lane, he abandoned a jump left and began throwing the ball hard and straight up the second arrow.

Those creative solutions turned open frames into clean ones, helped him double twice, and extend the match with a win. In the roll-off, Barrett converted a pair of 4-pins to prevail over Ogle and claim the championship.

"Bowling throughout my career, I've never been afraid of committing to making big moves and quick decisions," Barrett said. "Even though maybe nine-spares is a good frame bowling on this right now, you still can't help but try to catch a double, catch a triple, and strike the right way."

Though Barrett does not add a PBA Tour title to his résumé, he does earn \$16,000 in a triumph over many of the PBA's best from this season. The eight-player field at Thunderbowl Lanes featured the top performers from this season's PBA Classic Series, which included five PBA Tour title events.

The PBA SKILL Ball Challenge offered a rare experience for the eight players, which also included EJ Tackett, Sam Cooley, Tommy Jones, Jakob Butturff, Packy Hanrahan and Sean Lavery-Spahr.

Players competed with a single bowling ball: the PBA SKILL 3.02, a non-flaring pearl urethane ball. Several players likened the ball's reaction to that of a traditional plastic ball.

Additionally, players competed on a pair of oil patterns which utilized one-third the oil volume of a typical PBA pattern. The 35-foot and 46-foot oil patterns had only 8.5 mLs of oil, compared to the 31mL Webb and Anthony patterns used at last month's PBA Tour Finals.

"What I did there was just try and be as creative as possible," Barrett said. "I've never bowled the plastic ball tournament or with a plastic ball (on a pattern with) so little volume. I attacked lanes very differently very often, just trying to rack my brain for ideas, but it was pretty cool to do that."

The evening began with a ceremony to honor Tom Strobl, the longtime proprietor of Thunderbowl Lanes who passed away in April.

Thunderbowl's arena bay hosted some of the most iconic moments in PBA history, including the inaugural World Series of Bowling in 2009, Jason Belmonte's record-breaking 11th career major title in 2019, and Anthony Simonsen's third USBC Masters and fifth career major title earlier this year.

The arena bay will now bear the name of the man who worked tirelessly to help make those moments possible.

"It's really an honor to be the first winner here in the Strobl Arena," Barrett said.

#### FINAL SCORES

##### Round of 8

No. 8 Matt Ogle def. No. 1 EJ Tackett, 2-0 — 223-212, 217-201

No. 5 Jakob Butturff def. No. 4 Tommy Jones, 2-0 — 213-163, 224-205

No. 7 Sean Lavery-Spahr def. No. 2 Sam Cooley, 2-0 — 192-173, 176-163

No. 3 Dom Barrett def. No. 6 Packy Hanrahan, 2-0 — 200-162, 209-181

##### Semifinals

Ogle def. Butturff, 2-0 — 170-170 (9-7), 187-159

Barrett def. Lavery-Spahr, 2-1 — 175-201, 222-148, 37-25

##### Championship Round

Barrett def. Ogle, 2-1 — 150-193, 213-172, 37-24

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Dom Barrett, \$16,000

Matt Ogle, \$10,000

Jakob Butturff, \$6,000

Sean Lavery-Spahr, \$6,000

EJ Tackett, \$3,000

Tommy Jones, \$3,000

Sam Cooley, \$3,000

Packy Hanrahan, \$3,000

## **2023 STORM PBA/PWBA STRIKING AGAINST BREAST CANCER MIXED DOUBLES TOURNAMENT PREVIEW**

### **JULY 27, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

For the past few years, the Striking Against Breast Cancer Mixed Doubles tournament, much like the 2023 PBA Tour, has been defined by a certain player from Huntington, Ind.

EJ Tackett has won three of the past four mixed doubles events, better known as the Luci. While he partnered with a different PWBA star for each victory, he and Diandra Asbaty will aim to defend their 2022 title this year.

Last year's victory came down to the wire as four other teams finished within 50 pins of Tackett and Asbaty.

Jakob Butturff and Stefanie Johnson finished as the runners-up, while Chris Via and Bryanna Coté took third place. Ryan Ciminelli and Dasha Kovalova brought home a fourth-place finish just ahead of Wes Malott and Shannon Sellens.

Each of those teams are back in 2023, but a few new pairings could be major factors: Anthony Simonsen and Danielle McEwan, Jason Belmonte and Sandra Gongora, and Kyle Troup and Liz Johnson.

A pair of Michigan natives, Andrew Anderson and Jordan Richard, hope to channel the state pride that Tackett and Asbaty found last year. After they took home an eighth-place finish last year, Richard elevated her game in 2023 by winning three of the PWBA Tour's first seven events this season.

While PBA and PWBA titles are up for grabs, the true calling card of the Luci is its charity. Donna Conners founded the tournament in 2000 to honor her late friend Luci Bonneau, a veteran PWBA player. Conners and the Striking Against Breast Cancer Foundation have raised over \$1 million in the fight against breast cancer.

This year's festivities begin with a practice session on Thursday, before the top five men and women from last year's qualifying compete in the Beauties vs. Beasts match. Five mixed doubles teams, listed below, will bowl five baker games as part of the annual pre-tournament exhibition.

Wes Malott and Karsyn Lukosius

Matt Russo and Juliana Botero

Ryan Ciminelli and Stephanie Zavala

Jakob Butturff and Felicia Wong

Justin Veitch and Sarah Gill

Qualifying for the main event takes place across four squads, two on Friday and two on Saturday. Each team will bowl seven games of qualifying on a 41-foot oil pattern.

The top fourth of the field will advance to Sunday morning's semifinals, an additional five-game block. Then the top eight teams will bowl round-robin match play on Sunday afternoon with the highest scoring team after match play claiming the title.

All rounds of the tournament will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

The full tournament roster, including squad pairings, is available [here](#).

Scores will be added throughout the weekend [here](#).

## TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Copperfield Bowl | Houston, Texas

All times listed in Eastern.

Thursday, July 27

5 pm. — Beauties vs. Beasts baker match

Friday, July 28

9 a.m. — A-squad qualifying (seven games)

3 p.m. — B-squad qualifying (seven games)

Saturday, July 29

9 a.m. — C-squad qualifying (seven games)

3 p.m. — D-squad qualifying (seven games)

Top-fourth of field advances

Sunday, July 30

9:30 a.m. — Semifinals (five games)

1:30 p.m. — Finals (eight games of round-robin match play)

## STU WILLIAMS AND JOSIE BARNES LEAD FIRST DAY OF STORM PBA/PWBA SABC MIXED DOUBLES TOURNAMENT

JULY 28, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES

Stars from the PBA and PWBA Tours have teamed up in Houston for the Storm PBA/PWBA SABC Mixed Doubles tournament.

On Friday, Stu Williams and Josie Barnes' steadiness propelled them to the pole position through two of four squads. Williams shot 1,581 for his seven games on the 41-foot oil pattern, while Barnes added 1,496 to bring their total to a field-high 3,077.

Of the duo's 14 combined games, they bowled just one below 200 — a 197 from Williams.

"We weren't trying to have home-run ball reaction," Williams said.

"At least for me, my game plan ended up being a little bit different than I anticipated," Barnes said. "We stayed in strong balls the entire time and I expected to have to ball down more than I did. The strong stuff just blended (the pattern) well for us and didn't get us into trouble."

Barnes, who bowled with Chris Barnes last year, joked she's coming for the PBA Hall of Famer's gig as co-host of the Beef and Barnzy Show.

"I've already texted Chris and asked if I could have his half of the website," she said.

Sitting just two pins behind Williams and Barnes are Sean Rash and Stephanie Zavala, who said the continuity and trust they developed bowling together last year and running clinics overseas helped them bowl well today.

"We really know each other's dynamics — when we can joke, when we need to be serious — and I think we just build off of that established friendship," Zavala said.

With Rash liking to play straighter and Zavala preferring to play steeper angles, Rash said their team dynamic can create a lethal combination at this event.

"In this format with how the lanes transition, you have to have a female who is not afraid to move their feet and open the lanes up," Rash said. "That's why if you look at the history of this tournament, anybody with a rev rate over about 350 has won. There are a few exceptions, but you better be able to move left and not be afraid of throwing it to the right."



Zavala is among the best on the PWBA Tour at opening the lanes. The 27-year-old owns five PWBA titles, including a three-title Rookie of the Year campaign in 2021.

Though Rash would love to add an 18th career title to his résumé, he said this event is about more than a trophy or a check.

"We're here for the cause more than anything," Rash said. "We bowl this tournament to support Donna Conners and the fight against breast cancer."

Another team building off their 2022 performance is Ryan Ciminelli and Dasha Kovalova, who currently sit in third place after finishing fourth a year ago.

Tommy Jones and Shannon Pluhowsky are in fourth, while PBA50 Rookie of the Year front-runner John Janawicz and Missy Parkin round out the top five from A- and B-squads.

The cut to Sunday's semifinals will be made following C- and D-squad competition on Saturday. C-squad begins at 9 a.m. ET, then D-squad takes the lanes at 3 p.m. ET.

The semifinals, a five-game block featuring the top fourth of the qualifying field, will take place Sunday at 9:30 a.m. ET. Following that round, the top eight teams will compete in round-robin match play to determine the champion.

All rounds will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

#### A- AND B-SQUAD LEADERS

Stu Williams and Josie Barnes, 3,077 (+277)

Sean Rash and Stephanie Zavala, 3,075 (+275)

Ryan Ciminelli and Dasha Kovalova, 3,060 (+260)

Tommy Jones and Shannon Pluhowsky, 3,060 (+260)

John Janawicz and Missy Parkin, 3,019 (+219)

Chris Via and Bryanna Côté, 2,989 (+189)

Nathan Bohr and Maria José Rodriguez, 2,976 (+176)

Nick Pate and Lauren Pate, 2,953 (+153)

Matt Kuba and Ashly Galante, 2,953 (+153)

Matt Russo and Sydney Brummett, 2,926 (+126)

Full standings are available [here](#).

## TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Copperfield Bowl | Houston, Texas

All times listed in Eastern.

Saturday, July 29

9 a.m. — C-squad qualifying (seven games)

3 p.m. — D-squad qualifying (seven games)

Top fourth of field advances

Sunday, July 30

9:30 a.m. — Semifinals (five games)

1:30 p.m. — Finals (eight games of round-robin match play)

## **NATE STUBLER AND BREANNA CLEMMER LEAD QUALIFYING OF STORM PBA/PWBA SABC MIXED DOUBLES**

### **JULY 29, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

After all four squads completed their seven games of qualifying at the Storm PBA/PWBA SABC Mixed Doubles tournament, Nate Stubler and Breanna Clemmer stood above the pack.

Stubler, a rookie on the PBA Tour shot 1,620 for his seven games, while the one-time PWBA Tour champion Clemmer added 1,484, totalling 3,104 (+304) combined.

The tournament features the best of the PBA and PWBA Tours competing in a mixed doubles format while raising money to support the fight against breast cancer.

Stu Williams and Josie Barnes, who led A- and B-squads on Friday, sit in second place at +277.

They are followed by Sean Rash and Stephanie Zavala, defending champions EJ Tackett and Diandra Asbaty, Ryan Ciminelli and Dasha Kovalova, and Tommy Jones and Shannon Pluhowsky.

Stubler and Clemmer said their recent experience at the college ranks allowed them to work well together as a team.

"When I was in college, I tried to learn the right side a little bit more," said Stubler, a left-hander who competed at St. Ambrose University from 2017-2022. "I felt like that made me better as a teammate. At the PBA/PWBA level, every move is so crucial, so I just tried to make sure I could help and be the best support system possible."

"Being able to trust each other, that's a big thing for me," said Clemmer, a four-time All-American at McKendree University. "No matter what happens, he's got my back and vice versa. There were many times today where we just looked at each other like 'I've got you; it's my turn.'"

Clemmer, 25, won her first career title last season at the PWBA St. Petersburg-Clearwater Open. During qualifying for that event, she threw consecutive games of 289, 300, 300 and 279 and nearly broke the PWBA six-game scoring record.

With his highest finish of eighth coming in May at the Roth/Holman PBA Doubles Championship with Benjamin Martinez, Stubler said his rookie season has been a struggle. He said his two best performances coming in doubles competition is no coincidence.

"When I'm bowling by myself on tour, I feel like every shot has to strike," he said. "But when it's doubles and I'm back in that team setting, I can relax a bit. Then for me it's just about making good shots and stringing strikes when I can."

"She's got a title, so I feel a lot less pressure knowing that," Stubler added.

Kendle Miles and Mary Orf earned the final berth in Sunday's semifinal field. Orf's 267 helped them defeat Marissa Allison and Casey Cohagan in a one-game roll-off to break the tie for 40th place at +17.

Competing on a 41-foot oil pattern, the top five individuals on the men's side were EJ Tackett (1,637), Tommy Jones (1,633), Austin Boulds (1,625), Matt Kuba (1,624) and Dom Barrett (1,624).

Verity Crawley paced the women's field with 1,619, followed by Dasha Kovalova (1,597), Stephanie Zavala (1,537), Bryanna Coté (1,523) and Carlene Beyer (1,500).

Those individuals will compete in next year's Beauties vs. Beasts pre-tournament exhibition match.

The semifinals will begin at 9:30 a.m. ET on Sunday. Following the five-game round, the top eight teams will advance to a round-robin match play finals to crown the champions.

All rounds will be livestreamed on BowlTV.

## QUALIFYING LEADERS

Nate Stubler and Breanna Clemmer, 3,104 (+304)

Stu Williams and Josie Barnes, 3,077 (+277)

Sean Rash and Stephanie Zavala, 3,075 (+275)

EJ Tackett and Diandra Asbaty, 3,063 (+263)

Ryan Ciminelli and Dasha Kovalova, 3,060 (+260)

Tommy Jones and Shannon Pluhowsky, 3,060 (+260)

John Janawicz and Missy Parkin, 3,019 (+219)

Chris Via and Bryanna Côté, 2,989 (+189)

Nathan Bohr and Maria José Rodriguez, 2,976 (+176)

Kristis Sergejevas and Verity Crawley, 2,970 (+170)

Jake Rollins and Jacqueline Evans, 2,970 (+170)

Full standings are available [here](#).

## TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Copperfield Bowl | Houston, Texas

All times listed in Eastern.

Sunday, July 30

9:30 a.m. — Semifinals (five games)

1:30 p.m. — Finals (eight games of round-robin match play)

## **ANTHONY SIMONSEN AND DANIELLE MCEWAN COMPLETE COMEBACK TO WIN STORM PBA/PWBA SABC MIXED DOUBLES TITLE**

**JULY 30, 2023 NOLAN HUGHES**

When qualifying concluded on Saturday evening at Copperfield Bowl in Houston, Anthony Simonsen and Danielle McEwan sat in 30th place, more than 250 pins behind the tournament leaders.

But rather than run from the massive deficit, they ran straight at it.

"Hey, I get it was a rough day, but tomorrow's a new day," Simonsen said he texted McEwan on Saturday night. "And it's more enjoyable to run the lead down than it is to lead and try to hold on."

Simonsen and McEwan embraced the challenge and emerged with the 2023 Storm PBA/PWBA Striking Against Breast Cancer Mixed Doubles tournament title.

This marks Simonsen's 13th career PBA Tour title and third of the season. McEwan earns her eighth career PWBA Tour title and first of 2023; she also won the last time she competed in this event in 2021 with EJ Tackett.

"We have heart," McEwan said. "That's what we kept saying all day."

Simonsen led all match play advancers by averaging 243.15 for his 12 games during the semifinals and finals, while McEwan paced the women with a 208.46 Sunday average. That's how they turned a 252-pin deficit into a 118-pin victory.

Despite the final margin, two teams were within striking distance heading into the position round. The defending champions, EJ Tackett and Diandra Asbaty, trailed by 82 pins in third place; Tommy Jones and Shannon Pluhowsky sat just 61 pins back with a head-to-head matchup and 30 bonus pins in front of them.

Moreover, Jones and Pluhowsky had just defeated Simonsen and McEwan by 20 pins on the same pair where the position round would be held. And McEwan's ball reaction had disappeared — she clawed out a 186 that game while never knocking down more than eight pins on any of her final four first-balls.

The 11-time Team USA member remained resilient, starting the final game with a spare and three consecutive strikes.

"I definitely thrive off bowling with a team and having a teammate," McEwan said. "Especially in today's situation, even when I was lost, I had somebody to pick me up and to talk to when I wasn't seeing it clearly instead of having to listen to your own thoughts. I was able to have a conversation with somebody and figure it out and that helped me tremendously."

"I felt like I had a really good ball reaction, so as long as she can keep us close, I can keep us moving up," Simonsen said.

Simonsen's ball reaction was illustrative of how the 26-year-old has rewritten the PBA record books over the past 10 years.

While other players chased the lane transition on the 41-foot pattern left of the sixth arrow, Simonsen did the opposite. He moved nearly 20 boards right and fired his fill ball about four miles per hour faster up the 8-board to close the fifth game of match play. He told McEwan he was going to commit to that move the next game.

"I had full trust in him," McEwan said. "It goes back to our familiarity bowling around the world with each other for at least six years. When he knows what he's doing, he knows how to make it work."

Simonsen shot 298, which propelled them into the lead for good.

With the first-place finish, Simonsen earned his 16th top-10 finish in 16 PBA Tour title events in 2023. He'll have one final test at the Storm Lucky Larsen Masters in September.

McEwan closes out the 2023 PWBA Tour next month in Iowa.

#### FINAL STANDINGS

Anthony Simonsen and Danielle McEwan, 8,873

Tommy Jones and Shannon Pluhowsky, 8,755

EJ Tackett and Diandra Asbaty, 8,664

Packy Hanrahan and Madison Janack, 8,639

Nate Stubler and Breanna Clemmer, 8,607

Sean Rash and Stephanie Zavala, 8,595

John Janawicz and Missy Parkin, 8,536

Ildemaro Ruiz Jr. and Caitlyn Johnson, 8,371

#### PRIZE FUND

Anthony Simonsen and Danielle McEwan, \$25,000

Tommy Jones and Shannon Pluhowsky, \$12,500

EJ Tackett and Diandra Asbaty, \$8,000

Packy Hanrahan and Madison Janack, \$6,500

Nate Stubler and Breanna Clemmer, \$5,500

Sean Rash and Stephanie Zavala, \$5,000

John Janawicz and Missy Parkin, \$4,750

Ildemaro Ruiz Jr. and Caitlyn Johnson, \$4,500

## **BILL ROWE TAKES EARLY LEAD AT PBA50 MORGANTOWN CLASSIC**

### **AUGUST 1, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Morgantown, West Virginia – While the inaugural PBA50 World Series of Bowling was playing out in Michigan last month, Bill Rowe was sitting at home nursing an injury. He is feeling great now and that showed Tuesday after the first day of qualifying at the PBA50 Morgantown Classic.

Rowe started off a bit slow inside Suburban Lanes with 213, 193 and 214 before deciding it was time for some big changes.

"I moved about 10 boards left with my feet and started to really hook it a lot," the right-handed Canadian said. "I also made a ball change and just followed my instincts."

Those moves jumped him into the lead over lefty Troy Lint after shooting 278, 279, 254 and 264 for a seven-game total of 1,695, an average of 242.14.

"I'm just trying to keep pace with him (Lint)," Rowe said. "He has been bowling great all year. I can't really do too much other than try to strike more. Trying to stay with him was hard."

"Early on, I didn't really feel any momentum," Rowe said. "But then I said to one guy, 'I just feel like I am going to break loose sooner or later, I just don't know when.' I knew something was coming and fortunately it did."

Just behind Rowe is Lint with 1,685, who also bowled on A-squad. Amleto Monacelli shot a 300 in Game 5 as he led the way for B-squad with 1,651 to move into third place. He is followed by Parker Bohn III and Ron Hurt.

B-squad will be on the lanes first for seven more games of qualifying starting at 8:30 a.m. ET on Wednesday, followed by A-squad scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m. ET. After those games are completed, the top 32 players will advance with all qualifying pins carrying over to Thursday.

You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.

#### PBA50 Morgantown Classic Leaders

Bill Rowe, 1,695 (+295)

Troy Lint, 1,685 (+285)

Amleto Monacelli, 1,651 (+251)

Parker Bohn III, 1,580 (+180)

Ron Hurt, 1,577 (+177)

Tom Hess, 1,575 (+175)

Jon Rakoski, 1,569 (+169)

Jeff Johnson, 1,562 (+162)

Dan Knowlton, 1,555 (+155)

Bobby Hall II, 1,551 (+151)

#### **TOM HESS GOES +313 ON THE DAY TO LEAD QUALIFYING AT PBA50 MORGANTOWN CLASSIC**

#### **AUGUST 2, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Morgantown, West Virginia – A focused Tom Hess continues to ride his current hot streak to the top of the leaderboard after qualifying at the PBA50 Morgantown Classic.



Since his 17th place finish and some raw emotion came out at the PBA50 South Shore Classic last month, Hess has finished in the top five at the next four events during the PBA50 World Series of Bowling, which included his fourth title at the PBA50 Petraglia Championship.

"It just got me fired up and got me lined up and I have been 100% focused since then," Hess said. "Using that energy that people are watching me is keeping me focused and it has paid dividends."

His intense focus was tested in Game 1 on Wednesday as he shot 200 and kept thinking he just needed to throw it better. Instead, Hess realized it was time for a ball change and from there he went +313. He posted scores of 257, 269, 268, 234, 237 and 248, for a 14-game total of 3,288, moving him into first place.

"I am seeing the lane really well and it's a lot of fun bowling right now," Hess admits. "Trying to keep riding that positive momentum as long as I can."

His plan heading into Thursday is to see the lane, trust himself and his process. If he can do that, he believes the results will come. Hess is one title away from being eligible for the PBA Hall of Fame.

Jay Davis Jr. posted the second perfect game of the tournament Wednesday in Game 13. He is in 11th place.

The field was cut to the top 32 players with Sammy Ventura and Timothy Banks getting in at +110. Those 32 players will each bowl five games in the advancers round starting at 9 a.m. ET on Thursday and the top 24 will go on to bracket match play. Each match is three games and the player with the highest total pinfall will keep bowling.

The Round of 24 will feature players in ninth through 24th place beginning at 12:30 p.m. The Round of 16 will include the previous rounds winners and qualifiers in first through eighth place who got a first-round bye. They will bowl at 2:30 p.m. with the Round of Eight set to start at 5 p.m.

For the stepladder finals, positions one through four will be determined according to bracket seed number, and the highest seed that lost in the Round of Eight will be the fifth seed. The finals are scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday.

You can watch all of the action on BowlTV.

#### PBA50 Morgantown Classic Leaders

Tom Hess, 3,288 (+488)

Jason Couch, 3,225 (+425)

Bill Rowe, 3,217 (+417)

Troy Lint, 3,205 (+405)

Parker Bohn III, 3,160 (+360)

Michael Haggitt, 3,151 (+351)

Dan Knowlton, 3,133 (+333)

Amleto Monacelli, 3,102 (+302)

Tom Adcock, 3,101 (+301)

Jon Rakoski, 3,100 (+300)

## **PBA REGIONAL RECAP: CHRIS BARNES CELEBRATES PBA50 WSOB WIN WITH VICTORY LAP AT SPECTRUM LANES**

### **AUGUST 3, 2023 CHASE KAUFMAN**

Chris Barnes, who endured nearly a full calendar year without a win on the PBA50 Tour, ended his title drought at last month's inaugural PBA50 World Series of Bowling in Jackson, Mich. He led PBA50 World Championship qualifying through 24 games, but bowed out in the first round of the Ballard and Monacelli Championship brackets and fell just short of a title in the Petraglia Championship. All the while, Barnes had his eyes on the World Championship, which he eventually captured.

### **PBA50 MIKE EATON SR. MEMORIAL CENTRAL/MIDWEST OPEN**

Barnes apparently never got tired of winning (or bowling) because he immediately traveled an hour and a half to continue his busy itinerary. For Barnes, this event wasn't just about bowling — it was about honoring Mike Eaton Sr., the proprietor of Spectrum Lanes who recently passed away following a battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Barnes said as soon as he saw this event on the regional schedule, he knew it would also be a part of his schedule.

In a post-WSOB PBA50 event, a handful of touring pros made the trek from Jackson to Wyoming, Mich. In a field with multiple national-level players, local Gordon Kaufman grabbed the final qualifying spot at +66 for eight games. On day two, Barnes made a run to cap off his week in Michigan, needing a position-round win against Peter Dohan Jr. to clinch the title. In that round Barnes rattled off a 246 to Dohan's 214 to claim his 34th regional title after winning the first-ever PBA50 World Championship.

### **PBA50 Mike Eaton Sr. Memorial Central/Midwest Open Final Standings**

Chris Barnes, 2,500 points, \$2,000

Peter Dohan Jr., 1,500, \$1,200

Parker Bohn III, 1,150, \$1,000

Ryan Shafer, 950, \$900

PBA50 Mike Eaton Sr. Memorial Central/Midwest Open Full Results

PBA VANESSA BROWN HOMES OPEN

In a double-dose of bowling, Yosemite Lanes in Modesto, Calif., hosted a PBA and PBA50 event during the late July weekend. Hunter Mayes qualified first at +176 for eight games to claim the one seed, but drew a demanding opponent in the 16-seed PJ Haggerty. The first match was close, but Haggerty squeaked out Games 4-5 to move on. From there, the field stood no chance against the 19-time titleist. Haggerty eventually defeated Lanndyn Carnate in the finals, 234-197, to earn his 20th career title.

PBA Vanessa Brown Homes Open Final Standings

PJ Haggerty, 2,500 points, \$2,200

Lanndyn Carnate, 1,500, \$1,500

Nickolas Freiberg, 1,150, \$1,100

Allex Zieg, \$1,100

PBA Vanessa Brown Homes Open Full Results

PBA50 VANESSA BROWN HOMES CLASSIC

The PBA50 Tour also took on the 38-foot Wayne Webb pattern in Yosemite, where Rich Corwin smoked the conditions, going +226, higher than anyone in the PBA division. Unfortunately, he fell as the one seed in the first round, leaving the door open for everyone else. Gerald Vertigan knocked out David Leverage in the first semifinal, while Rick Meneley defeated Anthony Braga in the other semi. In the finals, Vertigan shot a 201 to Braga's 188 to pick up his second career title.

PBA50 Vanessa Brown Homes Classic Final Standings

Gerald Vertigan, 2,500 points, \$2,000

Rick Meneley, 1,500, \$1,400

Anthony Braga, \$1,100

David Leverage, 950, \$1,100

#### PBA50 Vanessa Brown Homes Classic Full Results

#### PBA WWW.GOOdBOWLER.COM OPEN

After the performance Anthony Neuer put on at this event, Anthony Neuer is indeed a good bowler. Neuer smashed the Mark Roth pattern, averaging over 254 for his eight games; through two advancers rounds and six more games, he dropped his average from an astounding 254.63 to just a measly 253.71.

It wasn't over yet, as Neuer still had one game to win as the top seed in the stepladder. Alex Cavagnaro defeated Eric Cornog 249-212 in the first match, then defeated Peter Fox 258-204. But in the finals, Neuer continued his astonishing performance, winning 278-193 for his fourth regional title.

#### PBA www.GoodBowler.com Open Final Standings

Anthony Neuer, 2,500 points, \$2,500

Alex Cavagnaro, 1,500, \$1,300

Peter Fox, 1,150, \$1,100

Eric Cornog, 950, \$1,000

#### PBA www.GoodBowler.com Open Full Results

#### PBA50 U.E.I. CHRIS LINDQUIST/PROGRESSIVE/GERDEMAN INSURANCE AGENCY CENTRAL/MIDWEST CLASSIC

In a post-post-PBA50 WSOB event, Bowling Green, Ohio, hosted 96 bowlers. The PBA League's Chicago Breeze manager Jason Couch led the eight-game qualifying round at +323, but with plenty of games to go and plenty of bowlers behind him, he had plenty of work to do. But through the three advancers rounds, Couch, much like Neuer, still led and took the one-seed for the stepladder.

In the opening match, Brian LeClair defeated Dan Knowlton 245-178, but LeClair was then defeated by Brad Angelo 211-169. The lefty couldn't be beaten in the end, as Couch won 216-189 for his 27th regional title and first in the PBA50 division.

#### PBA50 U.E.I. Chris Lindquist/PROGRESSIVE/Gerdeman Insurance Agency Central/Midwest Classic Final Standings

Jason Couch, 2,500 points, \$5,000

Brad Angelo, 1,500, \$2,600

Brian LeClair, 1,150, \$2,000

Dan Knowlton, 950, \$1,500

## **TROY LINT STAYS HOT, WINS PBA50 MORGANTOWN CLASSIC**

**AUGUST 3, 2023 JILL WINTERS**

Morgantown, West Virginia – Troy Lint is betting on himself this year for the first time and his commitment to the PBA50 Tour is clearly paying off.

After quitting his job to pursue his dream, the lefty with the unbelievable backswing, averaged 246 over four games in the stepladder finals at the PBA50 Morgantown Classic on Thursday, to win his second title of the year. And to do so, he had to defeat two other first-time PBA50 Tour winners this season, a PBA Hall of Famer and one of the other hottest senior bowlers right now, Tom Hess.

"You always hear the value of putting skin in the game," he said. "I never really invested the time because I had a full-time job. These guys are so good and if you are not invested, you can't really compete."

Since dedicating himself completely to being on tour full-time, the Pennsylvania native has shined. He leads the way in points having made five shows. He has done it all despite dealing with a knee injury that he believes will likely result in surgery. He recently received a cortisone shot with hopes he can make it through the rest of the season.

"I was in so much pain," he said. "They were screaming my name and I was doubled over in pain. I couldn't even look up."

"As soon as I get my knee healthy, I am going to be better next year," Lint said confidently.

During the title match, Lint threw one of his worst shots in the first frame leaving the 3-5-6 and covered it. He made a move off of that shot and never looked back. He responded with a double falling behind Hess by 10 pins early.

Both players had single-pin spares in the fourth frame before Lint went off the sheet with eight straight strikes for 269. It was heartbreak for Hess, working on a double in the seventh, he had a pocket 7-9 for a few seconds before the 7-pin went down. Hess's next shot on the right lane was a brutal stone-8 as Hess went down on all fours in

disbelief. Those inside Suburban Lanes were shocked. He gathered himself and got the spare in the foundation frame.

"I put a lot of pressure on him by striking (in the eighth)," Lint said. "He threw the ball great. He stoned a 9 then an 8 (on the right lane)."

Lint got the win 269-227 and the two players shared a friendly embrace. Lint earned a unique Mountaineer trophy and a check for \$7,500.

"That was pretty amazing especially to bowl four of my friends too," Lint said about his stepladder run. "It's so tough to win out here. Everybody is brutal."

Lint has been focused on setting goals for himself this year. The PBA50 Player of the Year frontrunner has one to check off his list.

"It's been a really good season, but I still have one more goal and that is to win another major," Lint said.

Three first-time PBA50 winners faced off in the first two matches. In the opening match, it was a battle of two lefties between Lint and Michael Haggitt. After two single-pin spares to start, Lint put together a five-bagger while Haggitt had just two strikes through seven frames. Lint went on to win 246-183.

Next up, Lint went head-to-head with Dan Knowlton. Knowlton missed two 10-pins in the first five frames and left a pocket 7-10 to fall behind Lint by 33 pins. After Lint's only open of the show in the seventh frame, he responded with four straight strikes for the 225-173 win.

Match three was another battle of the left-handers. Jason Couch and Lint were all even through four frames. A 4-7-10 split in the eighth frame proved costly for Couch. Lint threw three out of four final strikes for the 244-195 win.

Lint will get his chance at another major title starting Monday as the PBA50 Tour heads to Virginia for the Bud Moore PBA50 Players Championship. The winner of that event will receive \$20,000.

#### MATCH SCORES:

Match 1: Lint def. Haggitt 246-183

Match 2: Lint def. Knowlton 225-173

Match 3: Lint def. Couch 244-195

Championship match: Lint def. Hess 269-227

## 2023 PBA50 MORGANTOWN CLASSIC FINAL STANDINGS:

Troy Lint \$7,500

Tom Hess \$4,000

Jason Couch \$3,000

Dan Knowlton \$2,500

Michael Haggitt \$2,000

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