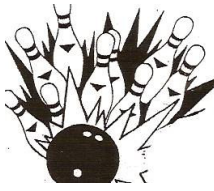


MONTANA STRIKE ZONE

Issue XXV111

September 2009



GONE WITH THE WIND

Two Well Established Bowling Centers Close in Great Falls

By Curt Backa

(Editor's note: Curt Backa is the bowling sports writer for the Great Falls Tribune, who also pens articles on occasions for the Montana Strike Zone. This article is mostly a reprint of one he wrote that appeared in the Tribune the first week of September. This appropriate headline was chosen by editor, Tom Brendgord, a former Great Falls resident, who is totally familiar with the relationship between Great Falls and the wind.)

For the first time in more than 50 years, the Murphy family will not be operating any bowling centers in Great Falls. According to Dennis Murphy, Pin & Cue, the westside establishment that opened in 1963, has ceased operations and will no longer be open.

"We are closing down," said Murphy, who owns the lanes with his mother Elsie. "It wasn't an easy decision, and it is pretty heartbreaking right now."

The lanes were home to three major leagues, the Monday Night 535 Classified, the Wednesday Night Mixed and the Friday Night Mixed leagues. With the season coming up in the fall, bowlers in those leagues likely will try to find openings at the city's other four establishments, Little's Lanes, the Elks, Black Eagle Lanes and Aces High on Malmstrom Air Force Base.

"I have not heard where any of those leagues may go," Murphy said. He did not elaborate on why the lanes closed, other than to say finances were a part of it, along with other factors. "When my father (Jack) died, it crippled us," Murphy said. "We were hoping to sell the lanes to someone who would keep the bowling operation going."

Rumors surfaced earlier in the summer that the lanes had been sold and would be open in the fall under new management. "We've had some ongoing sales talk to keep it in operation as a bowling center," Murphy said. "But, nothing has come through. "We are also selling the liquor license," he added.

The bowling center closed its doors on June 3. Employees were let go at that time, with the understanding the lanes may reopen in the fall.

"It was a business decision which I think was very unfair by not letting the secretaries know at the end of last year that they were closing," said Floyd Bruner, who was a league secretary and bowled in a number of leagues at Pin & Cue. "I hope that all the bowlers will find a way to keep on bowling."

Earlier this year, Murph's Party Bowl, located on the East Side of Great Falls, ended its bowling operation at the completion of the league season. Skyway Bowl, another Murphy property, closed in the 1990s.

The latest closings leave Great Falls, which once had more than seven bowling centers, totaling more than 100 lanes, with just 48 lanes.

"This news was kind of expected," said Don Jordan, president of the Great Falls USBC. "This is going to kill us from getting any state tournaments in the future. "Right now, all that we

would qualify for are the seniors and the state mixed, if they still have that tourney."

The state association stipulates that a city must have two centers that total at least 30 lanes. In Great Falls, Little's Lanes has 16 lanes, the Elks has 12 lanes, Black Eagle has eight lanes and the base has a 12-lane house.

State tournaments are a boon to the local economy, with six to eight straight weekends of bowlers filling hotels and frequenting local restaurants.

STATE ASSOCIATION TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE TO MEET AT JAMBOREE

A full agenda is on tap when the Montana USBC tournament committee meets on Friday, September 25th in Helena during the Montana Bowling Jamboree. A lively discussion is expected regarding the state's lane requirements to host the open and women's state tournaments. The current requirement for a city to host such an event is two centers totaling 30 lanes or more.

In the past few years Capital City Bowl in Helena, Country Lanes in Bozeman, Skyline Bowl in Kalispell, and Pin & Cue Lanes & Murph's Party Bowl in Great Falls have all ceased business for one reason or another. The loss of those centers now renders Helena, Bozeman, Kalispell and Great Falls ineligible to host an open or women's state tournament according to the current eligibility standard.

The Montana USBC board of directors will meet the next day and will hear whatever recommendations the tournament committee has regarding this dilemma of declining eligibility among host cities. Since there is no delegate meeting scheduled for this Jamboree, in all likelihood there will be no final action taken until the spring delegate's meeting.

Montana Bowlers Place High at National Tournament

By Curt Backa

The doubles team of Bruce Steffani, Great Falls and Helena's John Brodersen shook things up at the 2009 USBC Open Championships, held at the Cashman Center in Las Vegas. The duo fired a 1,444 to finish eighth in the regular division. In the classified team event, Montana Connection I, with Kyle Grossman, Mike Feller, Jim Watkins, Sean Engum and Les Comer turned in a ninth-place finish. The fivesome totaled 2,689. They are from Great Falls and Dillon.

Montana Women's Results at U.S. Women's Open

By Curt Backa and Tom Brendgord

At the recent U.S. Open Women's Championships, held Aug. 3-9, at the Sunset Station Hotel and Casino, Montana was represented well by Great Falls' Doris Kimmerle and Billings' Julie Redfern. Also present was Shawna Lane, formerly of Great Falls, who now resides in Tucson, Arizona. Kimmerle averaged a respectable 193.13 over the 16 games of qualifying to finish 106th. Redfern finished 139th and averaged 183.75. Lane finished in 136th place. Of particular note, Kimmerle finished two places ahead of the highly regarded professional, Stefanie Nation.

SPARE NOTES

By Laurel Walker

What is it about us bowlers? After we carry those bowling balls all year long, clear through state and national tournaments, we are sort of relieved to give the season a rest. Then fall leagues begin, and all our enthusiasm returns for yet another go with bowling friends and fun!

You may want to put this fall's Jamboree in Helena on your calendar for a chance to renew acquaintances and hear what the USBC guest speaker, Bob Schoneman, has to tell us about the changes taking place on the national bowling level. He will have a presentation for everyone on Saturday morning, just after the memorial service and opening at 11:15 a.m. He will offer even more on Sunday morning from 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. His remarks will be extra helpful for all association managers, league secretaries, and other officers. This year's Jamboree gathering will honor the Dunbar family of Billings as the Family of the Year, and Youth awards will be presented. Don't forget to take part in the Adult Blind Doubles tournament on Saturday afternoon, as well.

I feel very fortunate to have been one of your delegates to the USBC annual meeting in Reno last April. I was lucky to get to bowl with a team of women from Indiana, one of whom was a WIBC Director and a guest to Montana a few years ago, Ann Prather. Several Montana associations sent delegates to Reno, including Billings, Rudyard, Thompson Falls, and Bozeman. Now would be a good time for your local associations to make certain you have elected your state and national delegates for next spring's meetings. USBC will again meet in Reno, and it would be wonderful if we had lots more Montana representation there.

Montana USBC will hold the next annual delegate meeting and Hall of Fame banquet in Billings in April. Half of the state officers and directors will be up for election, and if you would like to serve, you can download nominations forms from the web site. Check the website for details on any of this year's tournaments, too. Go to www.BowlMontana.com Contact Don Warner, Director of District IV, if you would like to include something on that site.

I look forward to hearing from you, and I hope you have a rewarding 2009-2010 season. Thank you for all you do for Montana bowling.

Laurel Walker, MUSBC President

2010 USBC ESPN2 TELEVISION SCHEDULE

April 28 - USBC Queens

May 5 - USBC Intercollegiate Team Championships

May 8 - Bowling's Clash of Champions

May 12 - U.S. Women's Open

Montana Strike Zone

The official newspaper of the Montana USBC Association

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\$ 75	1/4 page	\$ 90
\$ 40	1/8 page	\$ 50

This publication is distributed quarterly in March, June, September and December. Ads need to be submitted to Tom Brendgord ten days prior to the month of distribution .

Want tournament information?
Download entry forms? Results?

GO TO
www.BowlMontana.com

MAIL-A-GRAPHIC TOURNAMENTS IN 2010

By: Ruth Sprankel

The annual Montana State 600 Club mail-a-graphic tournament will be held in February, 2010. Exact dates will be forthcoming along with a "new twist" to the tournament. In addition to the 3 game singles, we will be adding a blind doubles event. Watch for more details and entry blanks to be mailed in December.

In addition, the newly formed Montana State 500 Club will be launching their first annual mail-a-graphic tournament in 2010. The 500 Club will have a one time \$5.00 Membership Fee and will conduct their tournament in a mail-a-graphic format similar to the 600 Club - a 3 game singles and a blind doubles. Watch for club application forms, entry blanks and details to be released soon.

The 600 Club tournament continues to grow each year and we feel that the 500 Club tournament will be as popular. Living in Montana, we all know the challenges and expenses of traveling our vast state in order to compete in tournament action. The mail-a-graphic format is a perfect match for the logistics of our state!

State tournaments coming soon

State Seniors: Oct. 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 2009

All American Bar, Grill & Bowl - Dillon, Montana

State Mixed: Oct. 24, 25, 31, Nov. 1, 7, 8, 2009

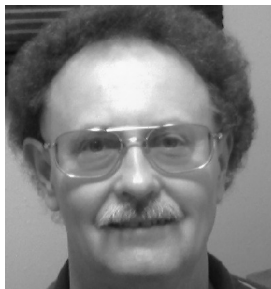
Pick's Bowling Center - Bigfork, Montana

On My Mind.....

Tidbits of changes & the Family Tourney

By Tom Brendgord

I have mentioned on numerous occasions the BPAA International Family Tournament and how at one time it was the best kept secret in Montana. This is a doubles event in which parents bowl with their children, but there is much more to it than that. The prize (other than being able to do things as a family) is scholarship dollars and a lot of them.



On July 31 & August 1 this summer, Montanans once again ventured to the international championships. This year it was held at the Main Event in Grapevine, Texas (a Dallas suburb). Our representatives were SheaLynn Hardacre-Stiles and her mother Kerry Hardacre in the parent/teen division and Matt Riesinger and his father Jay in the parent/youth division. Both teams are from Billings.

So how did they do? Admirably, to say the least. SheaLynn and Kerry finished in 12th place and earned a \$700 scholarship. There were 33 entries in her division. Matt & Jay finished in 16th place good for a \$600 scholarship. There were 34 entries.

For the last two years Montana entries have garnered 1st place finishes including Tana and Jake Lambert from Missoula and Heather and Keilei Kohlman from Billings last year and Melinda and Daniel Kagarise of Billings from the year before. But this year's representatives have no reason to hang their heads. When you finish in the upper half of the field in this format, you are usually only one or two bad breaks away from making the stepladder.

A year ago I mentioned two welcome improvements to our website, BowlMontana.com. We made the Tournament Tab easier to navigate, but unfortunately many people still don't realize how easy navigation on that tab can be. Just click on Go To Search Page and you can specify exactly what tournament you are seeking. We also added advertisement spots that will appear on every tab on the site. Those spots sell for the ridiculously low price of \$60 per year. If interested, please call me at (406) 252-3220. This could be the fastest growing website in Montana, for a year ago we had 160,000 hits and this last year we had 346,000 hits. Not bad!

I have sad news to report out of Great Falls. My good friend of many years and Great Falls Tribune sportswriter, Curt Backa, recently was diagnosed with cancer in four different areas. This is a reoccurrence of an earlier cancer that he beat over a year ago. Curt has been and still is the bowling industry's best friend. For years he has penned a bowling article that appears Tuesdays in the Tribune during the bowling season. It is a wonderful article that encompasses all levels of bowling news in all locales. Curt also wrote the articles on the front page of this issue. He was deservedly inducted into the Great Falls Bowling Hall of Fame last May and it is my understanding that he is being considered for the Montana USBC Hall of Fame next spring. My prayers go out to him as I am sure from all who know him as well. He beat this dreaded disease once. Hopefully, he can do it again.

Finally, I am in the news too - sort of! This summer I moved to Billings for a number of reasons. I have a great deal of family there, my daughter is going to Rocky Mountain College there to play on the basketball team, and my wife and I have entered into a business partnership there. I lived there once before and am looking forward to doing it again.

BPAA International Family Doubles Tournament

Format: Handicap Doubles; handicap at 100% of 440 team average
Divisions: Parent/Youth (12 yrs or younger); Parent/Teen (13-18 yrs); Adult/Youth & Adult/Teen (contested at the local & regional levels only)
Parent definition: Parent, Step-parent, Grandparent, Step-grandparent, Great grandparent, Step-great grandparent, court appointed legal guardian
Levels of Competition:

Local qual: 3 games + hdcp. Score 1200 or more to advance
Regional Finals: 3 games + hdcp. 1:2 advance to state finals
State Finals: 3 games + hdcp. Parent/Youth & Parent/Teen winners awarded mostly-paid trip to international finals
International Finals: Every youth awarded a scholarship regardless of finish. \$70,000 total scholarships. \$5,000 1st.

Cost: Local qual (cost of lineage + \$2 per team), Regional (parent/child divisions \$45 per team, adult/child divisions \$32 per team), State (\$18 per team)

Eligible Centers: Must be BPAA member. Current members in Anaconda, Billings, Browning, Butte, Choteau, Cut Bank, Eureka, Fort Benton, Great Falls, Hardin, Helena, Lewistown, Libby, Missoula, Polson, Red Lodge, Ronan, Rudyard, Troy, Whitefish.

2008-09: Local qual. (October 1 thru Feb. 15), West Regional (Msla - Feb 21-22), East Regional (Blgs - Mar 7-8), State Finals (Helena - March 21-22).

Attention Montana Strike Zone recipients. Please go online to Bowl-Montana.com, click on the Montana USBC tab, and view page 4 of this newspaper to read an article about changes to the USBC awards program. Mailing requirements would not allow its inclusion in this paper

 <h2 style="font-family: cursive;">Little's Lanes</h2> <p>Great Falls, MT Presents</p>	
<p>JOHN WILLEY MEMORIAL OPEN October 3-4, 2009</p>	<p>LADIES SCRATCH CLASSIC Nov. 14-15, 2009</p>
<p>\$3000.00 Added Money</p>	<p>\$1500 Estimated Added Money</p>
<p>Top 32 Qualify for Match Play At Least top 32 cash Limited to 144 entries Entry Fee \$160.00</p>	<p>Entry Fee \$90.00 No lineage fees on Sunday for qualifiers</p>
<p>Shift Times: 8AM-1PM-7PM Multiple re-entry allowed \$50-Hi Qualifier-8AM Shift</p>	<p>Qual. Shifts: Sat. 1PM & 4 PM Re-entry allowed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 8 games qualifying on Sat. ◆ 8 rounds match play Sun. ◆ Cut top 16-4 more rounds match play ◆ Top 5 bowl stepladder final ◆ Free practice session Fri. 3-5 ◆ No lineage fees on Sunday ◆ Optional Side Pots & Brackets 	<p>First 24 paid entries will go into a drawing for a brand new reactive bowling ball donated by Little's Lanes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 games qualifying on Sat. • All Sunday qualifiers will cash • Round Robin Match Play on Sunday with stepladder final • Optional Side Pots & Brackets • Calcutta & Feed Saturday night
<p>Phone entries to (406) 452-4116</p>	

NEW LOOKS FOR 300, 800, 11 STRAIGHT STRIKES PART OF USBC RECOGNITION PROGRAM FOR 2009-10

(Editor's note: This article is a reprint of a recent USBC media release)

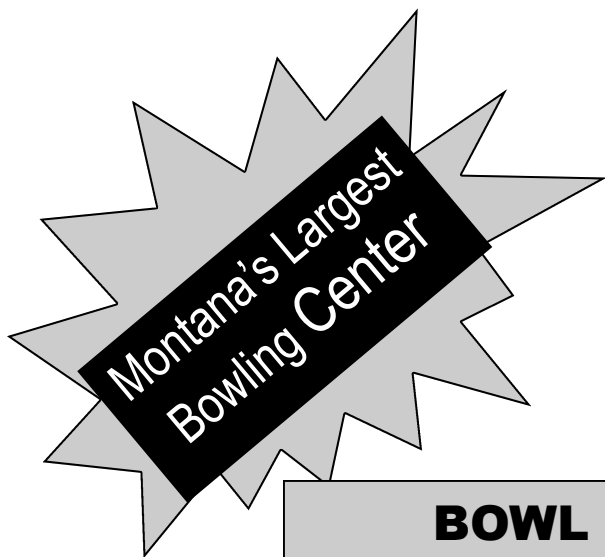
Redesigned 300 and 800 rings and a new 11-strikes-in-a-row trophy are among the many changes being made to the United States Bowling Congress recognition program for the 2009-10 season that begins Aug. 1. The rings have been redesigned to take on a completely new and modern look. The design change has put the accomplishment front and center on the top of the ring while also showing off the season in which the feat was accomplished. A new 11-in-a-row USBC-branded resin trophy replaces the old plaque. This eye-catching piece can be displayed proudly with a personalized name plate that shows off the bowler's name, score and date bowled. "Our recognition program now rewards our members for their performances based on an average that now matches their accomplishment," said USBC Membership Development Director Steve Wunderlich. "We're confident that the program upholds the credibility of the USBC while enhancing the league and tournament experiences for the member."

There's also a completely redesigned awards application to show off the numerous upgrade possibilities that are available. Among the many new and affordable upgrade options is the ability to personalize a side panel of the rings for just \$20. However, upgrades are no longer limited to rings alone. Pendants and jackets now will be made available to bowlers wishing to commemorate their award scores in a new and unique fashion.

Another major change is replacing emblems for adult special achievements with unique magnets. In addition, the requirements to acquire these awards have changed to reflect the challenge. **Special achievement awards now will be given out for games and series only.** "We found that fewer people were utilizing the patches by sewing them on their bowling apparel and that more often than not they're discarded rather than displayed," said Bugsy Kelly of USBC's membership development group. "Our goal is for members to proudly display their achievements on their refrigerators at home or cubicles at work."

"Pins over average and series, all-spares games, Dutch 200, triplicate series, 7-10 and Big Four split conversions have been eliminated from the special achievement program. However, certificates and a purchasable award program will be available on bowl.com for members who wish to print out or purchase items to commemorate the eliminated accomplishments. The certificate program will be available online when the new bowl.com launches Aug. 3.

Westside Lanes & Fun Center



STAR WARS
October 11, 2009
\$40.00 per person

- Handicap: 90% of 210
- One shift: starting at 10am, ck in 9:45
- **Object is to not receive 3 stars.**
- Everyone bowls one game with bottom 1/2 receiving 1 star.
- All remaining games are position rds with losers receiving a star.
- After 3 stars, you are eliminated.

Tournament Schedule
2009-10

Star Wars Oct. 11, 2009

26th Annual Mixed Dbls Calcutta
January 9-10, 2010

Swiss Trio February 7, 2010

Ladies Young & Youngest
February 13-14, 2010

BOWL DOG LOUNGE

- Happy Hour Monday - Sunday 4:30-6 PM
Two drinks for the price of one
- Karaoke Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays
- Live Music most Fridays



1615 Wyoming - Missoula, MT

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