



## PAN AMERICAN GAMES

# THE OLYMPIC SPIRIT

**EVERY FOUR YEARS**, a major sporting event brings together the best athletes to compete for their countries – and one of the sports being contested is bowling.

While the push to have bowling included in the Olympic Games is ongoing, the sport already is part of the Pan American Games, an Americas version of the Olympic Games.



The Pan American Games includes all sports in the Olympic program plus additional sports. It is the second-largest multi-sport event after the Olympics and is

held every four years in the year before the Summer Olympic Games.

The Pan American Games will take place this month in Toronto and four USBC Team USA members will represent the United States in the two medal events - doubles and singles. The Pan American Sports Organization (PASO), which is affiliated with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and oversees the games, made bowling a medal sport in 1991.

"The Pan American Games give our bowlers the opportunity to take part in the closest thing they can have to the Olympic experience," said Neil Stremmel, USBC Managing Director National Governing Body. "As part of the Team USA contingent, they get to stay in the athletes' village and, because we are competing at the end of the event, for the first time our team will have the opportunity to walk alongside other athletes at the



Closing Ceremony. It will truly give us that Olympic feeling – it'll be great to see."

USBC, as the national governing body for the sport, worked with the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) to establish the qualifying process to determine the athletes that will represent the United States in bowling. Two men and two women qualified for the Pan American Games based on their performances at the USBC Team USA Trials, the USBC Masters (men) and the USBC Queens (women).

"The USOC requires the NGB to have a qualifying process for the selection of members for the Pan American Games," Stremmel said. "Of course, we first had to qualify for the Pan American Games as a country."

The United States men earned the United States' spot in the Pan American Games with a top finish at the Pan American Sports Festival in Puebla, Mexico, last summer. The Team USA women qualified at the Pan American Bowling Confederation Women's

Championships in Cali, Colombia, in September.

Representing Team USA in Toronto will be 2015 USBC Queens champion Liz Johnson of Cheektowaga, New York, 2015 Team USA Trials winner Shannon Pluhowsky of Dayton, Ohio, Devin Bidwell of Wichita, Kansas, and Tommy Jones of Simpsonville, South Carolina.

Johnson, making her third Pan American Games appearance, is the defending champion in singles and doubles. Pluhowsky won gold in singles and silver in doubles at the 2003 games.

Bidwell will be making his first international appearance for Team USA as an adult; he competed in the 2010 World Bowling Youth Championships. This will be the first Pan American Games for Jones, an eight-time Team USA member.

Team USA has won 20 of a possible 28 gold medals, six silver medals and four bronze medals at the Pan American Games.

Go to [Toronto2015.org](http://Toronto2015.org) to learn more about the Pan American Games and [BOWL.com](http://BOWL.com) for coverage of Team USA.

PWBA TOUR

# NEW BEGINNINGS

As a youth bowler, Erin McCarthy of Omaha, Nebraska, watched the top women bowlers compete on television and hoped someday to compete against them, though she wasn't sure how to get there. By the time it started to seem possible, it was too late.

Liz Kuhlkin of Rotterdam, New York, never had the opportunity to dream about a pro bowling career. The 21-year-old was about to turn 10 when the Professional

Women's Bowling Association closed its doors in 2003, and she was years away from turning her focus



strictly to bowling.

The end of the PWBA Tour nearly a dozen years ago abruptly stopped careers and ended dreams. Today, many youth bowlers can't remember a time when a professional women's bowling tour existed, though YouTube videos have given them a glimpse.

Which meant bowlers such as McCarthy and Kuhlkin didn't envision bowling as a career; they simply strived to excel at every level in a sport they love. They had successful youth and collegiate careers. Kuhlkin made Junior Team USA in 2014, while McCarthy made Team USA in 2015.

"I bowled for fun when I was younger but didn't really know what the options were after high school," McCarthy said. "I'd watched bowling on TV, but I wasn't sure how to even get there. I was just very focused on getting better, so I could compete with the top players, and then I got involved in college bowling."

Both players went to the University of Ne-



Erin McCarthy

braska, one of the premier NCAA women's bowling programs. They honed their bowling skills and worked toward degrees and careers.

"When I started my senior year at Nebraska, I had aspirations of being a professional bowler and competing in events like (Professional Bowlers Association) regionals and the World Series of Bowling, but I knew I couldn't rely on just those financially," Kuhlkin said. "I planned to go to graduate school and focus on my criminology background and bowl in whatever events I could."

McCarthy, the 2008 North Pointe Insur-

ance High School Open Singles champion, was a member of the Cornhuskers' 2009 NCAA title team before going to Midland University, where she helped the Warriors to a runner-up finish at the 2012 XBowling Intercollegiate Team Championships. She pursued a career in nursing that luckily was flexible enough to let her bowl in most events.

And while there were many bowling tournaments out there for competitors, only the annual United States Bowling Congress Queens and Bowling's U.S. Women's Open were strictly for women.

But a three-year commitment by USBC



Liz Kuhlkin

and the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America has brought back the PWBA Tour.

"I always wanted to go into a science field, but I also wanted to be able to do something that would allow me to work and bowl when I needed to," McCarthy said. "But now, I can say I have two jobs – nursing and full-time bowling."

The PWBA Tour made its return with the 2015 Queens in Green Bay, Wisconsin, the first of 10 events on the regular 2015 schedule, leading up to the PWBA Tour Championship presented by GoBowling.com, the season-ending event.

For Kuhlkin, the timing couldn't be better.

The young right-hander just finished her successful career at Nebraska, where she helped claim two national championships (2013, 2015) and multiple All-America honors.

The conclusion of her collegiate eligibility led right into the Queens, where she and McCarthy proved how strong and prepared the 20-somethings are for the PWBA Tour.

"I really had a feeling I was headed to grad school, but all of that came to a halt when we found out about the PWBA coming back," said Kuhlkin, who earned a bachelor's degree in criminology and a minor in sociology. "I don't think I processed just how legitimate the PWBA stuff was at first, and after the schedule and all the details came out, I had to sit down and list some pros and cons and make an educated decision. I knew this was an opportunity a lot of people didn't have, so I couldn't pass it up."

At the Queens, Kuhlkin earned the No. 5 seed for the stepladder finals, broadcast live on ESPN2, while McCarthy entered as the top seed before falling to USBC Hall of Famer Liz Johnson in the title match.

For both, it was affirmation that they belong among the best and will be motivation as they prepare for the next PWBA stop in Sacramento, July 9-11.

"This is all almost surreal, and it's a dream come true to be able to bowl for a living, even against some of my idols," McCarthy said. "I know we all hoped for this, but we never planned on it. It's an amazing opportunity, and it was nice to get off to a good start."

The latest edition of the PWBA now has nearly 100 members – a mix of PWBA Hall of Famers, those who were in college when the bowling landscape changed in 2003

## THREE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE PWBA

**1.** The PWBA Tour will visit eight states and will have an event each week, most held Friday through Sunday, starting July 9 in Sacramento, California.

**2.** PWBA.com has the schedule, player profiles and all information you need to follow the PWBA Tour. You can also keep tabs on Facebook (Facebook.com/PWBATour) and Twitter (Twitter.com/PWBATour).

**3.** All events will be shown live on Xtra Frame, the exclusive online bowling channel of the PBA. Go to <http://xtraframe.tv/> to see the schedule and to subscribe.



PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S BOWLING ASSOCIATION

and bowlers who can spend the summer living a dream they never thought they would have.

"I definitely look forward to traveling and competing and getting to interact with all of the hometown fans and young players," McCarthy said. "It will be great to show them what's out there. It's really about us being able to help build a future for the sport."

# USBC QUICK STRIKES

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS

## Wilkinson elected president; DeSocio is vice president

Frank Wilkinson of Staten Island, New York, was elected USBC President by the USBC Board of Directors following the USBC Convention; Cathy DeSocio of Wichita, Kansas, will serve as vice president. Wilkinson and DeSocio will assume their roles for the 2015-2016 season on August 1.

Wilkinson, 28, the owner of Rab's Country Lanes, has served as USBC vice president the last two seasons. He joined the USBC board as a youth committee representative in 2010 and will be the youngest president in USBC history.

USBC delegates elected three members to the USBC national board during the USBC Annual Meeting. Current board members Karen Jost of Olympia, Washington, and Steve O'Brien of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, were re-elected and will be joined by newcomer Jay Daryman of York, Pennsylvania.



Frank Wilkinson

national tournament in 2016. The USA Bowling Regional events were introduced two years ago to provide additional opportunities for competition.

The 16 USA Bowling Regional events that start this fall will determine teams that will compete in the first USA Bowling National event to be held in Indianapolis in the summer of 2016. Plans also include acquiring a TV partner for the new national event.

Go to [BOWL.com/USABowling](http://BOWL.com/USABowling) for the sites and to register.

## Sport Bowling program undergoes changes

To encourage more bowlers and leagues to take advantage of challenging lane conditions and to improve certified tournament average integrity, USBC will

make several enhancements to the Sport Bowling program for the 2015-2016 season, which starts Aug. 1.

Leagues choosing to compete on Sport lane patterns now will have the opportunity to report as a Sport/Challenge league without submitting lane tapes or requiring bowlers to purchase membership upgrades. The USBC Sport membership, including the awards program, will be discontinued.



Removing the barriers is expected to improve the average integrity for all certified tournaments, a key reason for the program's adjustment to the program. Go to [BOWL.com/SportBowling](http://BOWL.com/SportBowling) to learn more.

## Junior Gold program breaks membership mark

The Junior Gold program has shattered its all-time membership mark with more than 6,200 members having joined the program for the 2014-2015 season.

The 2015 Junior Gold Championships presented by Storm, Roto Grip and Master also will eclipse last year's record for number of participants. The tournament, which will take place July 11-17 in DuPage County, Illinois, (Chicago area), already has sold more than 3,400 spots.

## USA Bowling to hold 16 regional events

This fall, USA Bowling will hold 16 regional youth events to determine teams that will advance to the first USA Bowling



## CBS Sports Network to televise major events

CBS Sports Network will televise 10 major championship bowling events in 2015, highlighted by the Bowlmor AMF U.S. Women's Open finals on Sept. 6 and the Bowlmor AMF



U.S. Open finals on Nov. 8. Live coverage

on CBS Sports Network also includes the Professional Women's Bowling Association (PWBA) Tour Championship presented by GoBowling.com scheduled for Sept. 13. The rapidly growing Junior Gold Championships presented by Storm, Roto Grip and Master will be televised nationally for the first time as a three-telecast series on Tuesdays in August.

The 10-event package started in May with the four-telecast series of the XBowling Intercollegiate Championships.

## CALENDAR

**Now-July 3, 2015**  
**PABCON Youth Championships**  
Bolera Sede  
Panama City, Panama

**Now-July 12, 2015**  
**USBC Open Championships**  
El Paso Convention Center  
El Paso, Texas

**July 8-10, 2015**  
**BPAA's All American Family Tournament**  
Stardust Bowl  
Addison, Ill.

**July 9-11, 2015**  
**PWBA Storm Sacramento Open**  
Steve Cook's Fireside Lanes  
Sacramento, Calif.

**July 9-26, 2015**  
**Bowling.Com Youth Open**  
Orland Bowl  
Orland Park, Ill.

**July 11-17, 2015**  
**Junior Gold Championships presented by Storm, Roto Grip and Master**  
Stardust Bowl, Hillside Bowl, Classic Bowl, Orland Bowl, Brunswick River Grove  
DuPage County, Ill.

**July 16-18, 2015**  
**PWBA Lubbock Sports Open**  
South Plains Lanes  
Lubbock, Texas

**July 21-26, 2015**  
**Pan American Games**  
Toronto

**July 23-25, 2015**  
**PWBA Wichita Open**  
Northrock Lanes  
Wichita, Kan.

**July 27-Aug. 2, 2015**  
**USBC Senior Masters**  
Ashwaubenon Bowl  
Green Bay, Wis.

**Aug. 2-4, 2015**  
**USBC Super Senior Classic**  
Ashwaubenon Bowl  
Green Bay, Wis.

**Aug. 5-7, 2015**  
**USBC Senior Championships**  
Ashwaubenon Bowl  
Green Bay, Wis.

**Aug. 6-8, 2015**  
**PWBA Topeka Open**  
West Ridge Lanes  
Topeka, Kan.

**Aug. 13-15, 2015**  
**PWBA Lincoln Open**  
Sun Valley Lanes  
Lincoln, Neb.

**Aug. 20-23, 2015**  
**PWBA Minnesota Open**  
Island Xtreme Bowl  
Welch, Minn.

Go to [BOWL.com/Tournaments](http://BOWL.com/Tournaments) for complete information.