

USBC INSIDER

REPORTS FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS  ISSUE No. 28

TEAM USA TRIALS

A NEW ROUTE TO TEAM USA

AT THE 2007 U.S. Amateur Bowling Championships, Lynda Barnes went into the final game of the competition trailing Shannon Pluhowsky, a three-time U.S. Amateur champion, by three pins.

Barnes' 227 final game not only allowed her to slip past

Pluhowsky but Barnes also tied Pluhowsky's record with



TEAM USA TRIALS/ U.S. AMATEUR

Competition dates:

Jan. 3-7

Where: Gold Coast Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas

Format: Five days of qualifying, six games each day. Top three amateurs advance to stepladder finals.

Defending champions:

Shannon Pluhowsky and Kamron Doyle

Live

coverage: BOWL.com's BowlTV



Kamron Doyle and Shannon Pluhowsky

a third U.S. Amateur title. And, shortly thereafter, decisions were made that would make it a record that could not be broken.

The World Tenpin Bowling Association, now World Bowling, had decided that starting in 2008 it would follow other Olympic sports by allowing professionals to compete in international competitions. To make certain the United States put together the best teams possible, USBC opened the Team USA Trials to professionals and, thus, the U.S. Amateur came to an end.

But the U.S. National Amateur Bowling Championships

David O'Sullivan and Lynda Barnes



are back and will be part of the 2016 Team USA Trials. While amateurs have competed in recent Team USA Trials, creating a separation of amateur and pro bowlers was important, particularly so collegiate and top youth bowlers could try to earn a spot on Team USA.

"Many outstanding bowlers are in programs such as Junior Gold and collegiate, and we're excited to provide an opportunity for amateurs to compete for a position on Team USA," said Neil Stremmel, USBC Managing Director National Governing Body.

The Team USA Trials/U.S. Amateur will be held at the Gold Coast Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Competition starts Jan. 3 with the first of five six-game qualifying blocks and competitors will earn ranking points based on their finish position in each block – the top bowler of the block earns

one point, second place in the block earns two points, etc. – with total ranking points after the five blocks determining the top qualifiers.

The top three amateur men and top three amateur women after qualifying will advance to

the stepladder finals to determine the U.S. Amateur champions and a spot on Team

USA. All rounds of qualifying and the stepladder finals will be shown live on BOWL.com's BowlTV.

To be eligible for the U.S. Amateur title, a bowler must not currently hold or have held a professional membership (PBA or PWBA) in the preceding year. Also, anyone who has ever won a professional title (regional, national or senior) as a professional is not eligible to compete as an amateur.

So while Barnes and Pluhowsky always will have three U.S. Amateur titles, it is a record that one day might be broken.



USBC HALL OF FAME

ANOTHER ROMEO TO JOIN HALL OF FAME

JOAN ROMEO MIGHT not have the authority to officially settle the age-old debate about whether it's sauce or gravy you pour over your spaghetti, but she sure does know an awful lot about the sport of bowling.

The longtime bowler from Van Nuys, California, enjoyed some time in the public eye a couple of years ago as the star of a TV commercial for

A Future FOR THE Sport Bongiovi Brand Pasta Sauce, and she's back

in the national spotlight as one of three people recently selected to the 2016 United States Bowling Congress Hall of Fame class.

For the TV commercial, Romeo was cast as the perfect Italian mother, which wasn't a stretch because it's a role she's served in real life five times over.

Her brood includes three daughters and two sons, and she'll join daughter, Robin, a 1995 inductee, in the USBC Hall of Fame. They'll become just the second mother-daughter, and fifth parent-child combination, to be enshrined.

"When Fran (Deken) contacted me and we started this process, I thought about how cool it could be for her to be selected,

and when it was announced, it was very emotional," said Robin Romeo, who recently became the first woman to win back-to-back USBC Senior Queens titles. "We're in for two different reasons, and to see her recognized

for her hard work and dedication and love for bowling is incredibly special."

Robin earned her place in the hall of fame for continued success on the lanes, including 17 Professional Women's Bowling Association titles. Her mother is being recognized for decades of service off the lanes, as she will add her name to the list of hard-working folks in the Meritorious Service category.

Already a bowler, Joan Romeo passed her passion to her



Tori. Joan and Robin Romeo



YouTube/BongioviBrand

children, coaching them in their youth leagues. She then stayed active by proudly organizing a league for mothers, which allowed them to meet and compete once a week after sending the kids off to school.

Off the lanes, Romeo has worked in various roles supporting the International Bowling Media Association, World Bowling, International Bowling Hall of Fame and Museum, California Bowling Writers and the Team USA program.

She has served as president (2012-2015) and vice president (2010-2012) of the IBMA, president of the California Bowling Writers, an executive coordinator role for World Bowling and as a trustee to the IBM/HOF.

Past awards include the California Women's Bowling Association Distinguished Service Award, Columbia 300 Humanitarian Award, Bowling Writers Association of America Meritorious Service Award and BWAA President's Award, but little can compare to sharing the sport's highest honor with her daughter.

"If anyone would've asked me if I thought I'd be in the hall of fame someday, I would've said there's no way in the world," Joan Romeo said. "I'm so appreciative of this honor and all of the congratulations from so many amazing bowl-

ers and friends. It's nice to be remembered and recognized. Robin always says it was the greatest thrill of her life, and she's had a few, so to be able to join her is really special."

One of Romeo's other daughters, Tori, also competed professionally and is a member of the California Bowling Hall of Fame.

Family is very important to the Romeos, and they'll all be present for their matriarch's induction ceremony in April. Robin will have a unique perspective of the event, as she'll be seated on the stage with her fellow hall of famers.

"I've already pictured that day and the induction ceremony, and I know it's going to be pretty hard for me," Robin Romeo said. "I can't wait to be up on that stage with her, but we're an emotional family. I have no idea how I'm going to sit up there and not ball my eyes out."

While it was Romeo's children who initially kept her involved in the sport as they grew up in New York, it was when Robin began to make a name for herself that Joan had the chance to meet some people who would become her best friends, and it led to a lot

of opportunities.

Along the way, Romeo became friends with USBC Hall of Famer Elaine Hagin, who introduced her to some of the sport's top international leaders, including industry executive Jerry Koenig at the National

Doubles and she has been working with John Losito on the upcoming World Bowling Youth Championships, which will be held at his Sun Valley Lanes in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 2016.

There's no arguing the role bowling has played in Romeo's life or the incredible impact she's had on the sport, but with more years at the stove than in the bowling industry, she does have her own opinion on the sauce vs. gravy debate.

"Where I come from in the east, we call it sauce,"

Romeo said. "I have

friends from Chicago and other places who called it gravy, but I don't know where that came from. It's a funny conversation, though."

The 2016 USBC Hall of Fame induction ceremony will take place April 28 in Las Vegas and will include Steve Kloempken of Pleasant View, Utah, Harry Sullins of Chesterfield Township, Michigan, and those elected for Superior Performance.

The other parent-sibling combinations in the USBC Hall of Fame include:

- Cindy Coburn-Carroll and her mother Doris Coburn
- David, Mort Sr. and Mort Luby Jr.
- Nelson Burton Jr. and Nelson Burton Sr.
- Pete Weber and Dick Weber



David, Robin, Tori, Debbie and Bill Romeo



USBC QUICK STRIKES

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS

Bowling.com extends Youth Open sponsorship

Bowling.com will continue as the title sponsor of the Youth Open Championships. In addition to its title sponsorship,

Bowling.com also will provide a \$100 scholarship to participants who roll a 300 game or 800 series at the event.

The Bowling.com Youth Open Championships also will have slight enhancements to its divisional structure in 2016. The Under 20, Under 15 and Under 12 divisions remain, but the Under 8 division has been replaced by an Under 10 division. The adjustment is expected to increase participation in the lower divisions by making it more competitive for younger bowlers.

The 2016 Bowling.com Youth Open will take place over nine days starting July 14 at Expo Bowl in Indianapolis and registration is now open. The national non-qualifying tournament is open to all USBC Youth members. Go to BOWL.com/YouthOpen to learn more.



Intercollegiate Singles registration is open

The Intercollegiate Singles Sectionals will take place March 11 at four sites – Stratford, New Jersey; Las Vegas; Addison, Illinois, and Smyrna, Tennessee. A total of 16 women (top four at each regional) and 24 men (top four plus eight wild cards) automatically qualify for the national event in April.

Entries are limited and several of the locations have sold out each of the last few years. Online registration is available at BOWL.com/ISC and an entry must be paid in full to be accepted.

USA Bowling regionals in home stretch

The teams for the first USA Bowling National event have almost been determined as only a handful of USA Bowling regional youth events remain.



The first USA Bowling National tournament will take place in Indianapolis in July 2016 and the regional events that began in October are deciding the U12 and U15 teams that will advance to the national event.

The regionals are two-day events that begin with eight round-robin Baker matches to determine seeding for tiered brackets. The second day of competition features double-elimination match play, with each match a best-of-three games format, and competition continues until each tiered bracket has a winner.

Go to BOWL.com/USABowling for information on the remaining regionals and results of the completed regionals.

USBC Masters set for Feb. 7-14

The 2016 USBC Masters will take place Feb. 7-14 at Woodland Bowl in Indianapolis. A major event on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour, the 2015 event saw Australia's Jason Belmonte become the first bowler in the 64-year history of the USBC Masters to win three consecutive times.

Woodland Bowl has been the site of more than 30 PBA Tour events but the USBC Masters will make only its second trip to Indianapolis. The event took place at the Indiana Convention Center, alongside the USBC Open

Championships, in 1974.

The USBC Masters finals will be televised live on Sunday, Feb. 14, at 1 p.m. Eastern on ESPN. Go to BOWL.com/Masters for more information and to register.



CALENDAR

Jan. 2-7, 2016

Team USA Trials and U.S. Amateur
Gold Coast Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas

February 7-14, 2016

USBC Masters
Woodland Bowl
Indianapolis

March 5-July 11, 2016

USBC Open Championships
National Bowling Stadium
Reno, Nev.

March 11-13, 2016

Intercollegiate Team and Singles Sectionals
Addison, Ill.; Las Vegas; Smyrna, Tenn.; Stratford, N.J.

April 9-July 11, 2016

USBC Women's Championships
South Point Bowling Plaza
Las Vegas

April 10-July 11, 2016

USBC Mixed Championships
South Point Bowling Plaza
Las Vegas

April 19-23, 2016

Intercollegiate Team and Singles Championships
Northrock Lanes
Wichita, Kan.

May 16-20, 2016

USBC Senior Queens
The Orleans Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas

May 20-26, 2016

USBC Queens
The Orleans Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas

June 16-19, 2016

ITRC Super Senior Classic
Sam's Town Bowling Center
Las Vegas

June 19-25, 2016

USBC Senior Masters
Sam's Town Bowling Center
Las Vegas

July 14-15, 22-25, 29-31, 2016

Bowling.com Youth Open
Expo Bowl
Indianapolis

July 16-23, 2016

Junior Gold Championships presented by Storm, Roto Grip and Master
All Star Bowl, Expo Bowl, Southern Bowl, Western Bowl, Woodland Bowl
Indianapolis

Aug. 9-11, 2016

USBC Senior Championships
Sunset Station
Las Vegas

Go to BOWL.com/Tournaments for complete information.