

FAMILY TIES

WITH THE 2016-2017 season underway, collegiate bowlers now are spending their weekends at centers across the country as they battle for scholarship prizes, first-place trophies and ranking points. But there is one overriding purpose: to win a national championship in April.

Most families also are excited to watch their student-athletes perform at college bowling's highest levels. Some families have



more than one athlete to cheer on and, in the case of the Pate family, there are three student-athletes bowling at three universities.

Debbie and Mike Pate of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, have two sons and one daughter who all bowl collegiately. Nick is completing his senior season at Midland in Fremont, Nebraska. Lauren is a sophomore at McKendree in Lebanon, Illinois, while her twin brother, Josh, is a sophomore at Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Nick led the Midland men's team to a runner-up finish at the 2015 Intercollegiate Team Championships. His performance earned him the tournament's most valuable player award.

Lauren is fresh off a season where she helped the McKendree women earn third-place finishes in two national championship events. The Bearcats reached the semifinals at both the NCAA Bowling Championship and ITCs, and Lauren claimed the National Tenpin Coaches Association Division II/III Rookie of the Year award.

After competing last season on the junior varsity squad, Josh has worked his way up to varsity this season and will be looked upon to make an immediate contribution after Wis.-Whitewater lost six seniors, including National Collegiate Bowling Coaches Association First-Team All-American Nick

Kruml, from last season's team.

So where did it all begin for the young Pates?

The story, of course, begins with Debbie and Mike, who met at a bowling tournament 25 years ago and married the following year. According to Debbie, Mike always has been more of

the bowler between the two of them, with Debbie bowling once a week, and it was Mike who started the kids in the sport when each turned 3.

"We just started taking them every Saturday morning to league," Debbie said. "It started with bumpers and they moved on from there. It was something to do on a Saturday morning and that's how it got started. In fact, when Nick was younger, he had a bowling set and, I'm not kidding, he'd play for hours and hours."

As time went on, each sibling realized bowling was a sport they would pursue, although each participated in other sports before turning their complete focus to bowling. Both Nick and Josh played baseball in high school, and Lauren dabbled in basketball in eighth grade.

One would expect a high level of competition between the three siblings. Lauren and Nick were perhaps the most competitive and it often showed. Neither was shy about trying to one up the other, with Lauren always wanting to beat her brothers, and, conversely, Nick would get slightly upset if Lauren did come away with a victory.

The trio also had opportunities to com-



Josh, Lauren and Nick Pate

pete together in city and state tournaments, and as part of a co-ed high school team, they garnered a third-place finish in the state tournament.

After years of competing with and against his siblings, Nick's biggest challenge was choosing which college to attend. "I think it was 2013 and I was at the Team USA Trials," Nick said. "My mind was set on a different school at the time, but there were several people from Minnesota that went to Midland and they kind of persuaded me to go to Midland. It definitely wasn't a bad idea. It's been good."

It's been good indeed. In three seasons with Midland, Nick has averaged no less than 205 in any season and was named a NCBCA First-Team All-American in 2015.

Prior to graduating high school, Nick began to notice a change in his relationship with Lauren. It went from an extremely competitive relationship to more of a supportive one. At the end of the day, family is family and the bond that siblings share is like no other.

"At first, we used to fight and argue a lot," Nick said. "Our relationship really started to change when I was getting close

to graduating high school, and going off to college where her big brother couldn't be there to help her. Then we became really close. We're close, but we're competitive. I realized I'm not going to see my sister every day so might as well join her. We can do this together and I can help her as much as my knowledge allows me."

Nick's guidance and support became an important part of Lauren's growth process, and that almost led her to Midland. But, a conversation with McKendree women's coach and four-time Professional Women's Bowlers Association champion Shannon

O'Keefe, after the 2014 Junior Gold Championships, changed Lauren's mind.



"Well, I was going to go to Midland," Lauren said. "I visited Midland, loved the campus. After Junior Gold in 2014, Shannon O'Keefe reached out and we talked a little bit. I scheduled a visit and I fell in love with the campus, and, of course, the coaching, and

that's how I ended up there."

Before finalizing her decision, Lauren spoke with her older brother to get his thoughts on the matter, further signaling the change in their relationship as they continued to mature.

"When he went to college, he really began to show moral support because he wasn't bowling with me and he wasn't bowling against me at all," Lauren said. "He was able to give me the support that I wanted. I asked him what he thought about me going to McKendree and he gave me the support I needed. He helps, he pushes me and to this day he supports me with everything."

With the competitive and then supportive relationship between Nick and Lauren, it's easy to think Josh would be left out. But that wasn't the case. He is the self-described "quiet one" among the three, but enjoys their support and they enjoy his in return.

Josh was undecided about whether to bowl or play baseball in college. Despite bowling since the age of three, it would not have been a surprise to see him on the diamond in college. But that was before Josh was seen on the lanes by Shawn Wochner, the head coach of the Wis.-Whitewater men's bowling program.

"I was looking into Mount Mercy," Josh said. "Back home in Minnesota, there is an annual collegiate showcase that we bowl in and a bunch of colleges go up and Shawn Wochner was there. He saw me bowl and the next day he mentioned he really wanted me to attend. I began to focus more on that."

Debbie and Mike are thankful to all of the coaches their children spend time with daily. Wochner especially struck a chord with Debbie and she is thankful he took an interest in Josh.

"As Lauren continued to get better, there was a lot of competition between Lauren and Nick," Debbie said. "And because there was so much competition between them,



Lauren Pate

Joshua kind of went, 'eh' And it was Shawn that saw him at a combine and said, 'If you're thinking you want to bowl, you let me know.' He was the first coach that actually went up to Joshua and said that. It was really nice to have somebody come seek Josh out."

Last season, the Pates were limited as to how many times they were able to see their children compete because of their varied tournament schedules. The ITC was the only event in which both Lauren and Nick competed. Josh also was present, though not

bowling with Wis.-Whitewater.

"Through high school, we didn't have to worry about it," Debbie said about the different schedules. "Last year was the first year where we had to figure out which event we could go to where they all would be there. And with Lauren bowling NCAA, it's a lot harder because last year was the first time

McKendree didn't go to any USBC tournaments. So, it was tough trying to split up that time, but up until they were in high school we really didn't have to worry about it."

This season, all eyes will be on the Leatherneck Classic, a major Tier II event hosted by Wochner. He won a national title with West-ern Illinois and named the event after his alma mater's mascot. The tournament will bring together the McKendree women, Midland men and Wis.-Whitewater men, which will allow Debbie and Mike to see



Nick Pate

all three of their children compete at a collegiate event for the first time.

It will be here where Debbie and Mike will have to choose whether to wear the Midland, Whitewater or McKendree school colors – or maybe all three. Some tough decisions to be made, but one they'll be happy to make.

And as for who's the best bowler in the family, Josh might have a little something to say about that this season.

"A lot of people say my twin sister is (the best in the family)," Josh said. "But I'll have to show them."

COLLEGE BOWL GAMES

USBC Collegiate and the Intercollegiate Team Championships started in 1975, when there were programs on 74 campuses and the Wisconsin-La Crosse men and Wichita State women captured team titles. Last season, USBC Collegiate passed the 200-team barrier for the first time. A look at collegiate growth in the last decade:

Season	Teams
2006-2007	150
2007-2008	149
2008-2009	152
2009-2010	177
2010-2011	192
2011-2012	192
2012-2013	196
2013-2014	199
2014-2015	199
2015-2016	203

USA BOWLING STARTS ROLLING TOWARD 2017 NATIONAL EVENT

THE FIRST USA Bowling National Championships, held during the summer in Indianapolis, featured 32 teams that had the support of coaches, parents and family members. The tournament also drew the interest of many youth bowlers.

With the tournament taking place alongside the Junior Gold Championships, more than a few Junior Gold competitors wandered by to inquire about the team competition. A common response upon learning it was the USA Bowling National Championships was that they also wanted to bowl in the event.

For those wanting to compete in the 2017 USA Bowling National Championships, now is the opportunity. Regional events, which determine the teams that will compete at the national tournament in Cleveland in July, now are underway.

One team planning to take part in a USA Bowling Regional is the Indiana U12 All-Stars. After capturing the 12-and-under title at the first USA Bowling National Championships, the team will bowl in the 15-and-under division when they take part in the Lafayette, Indiana, regional.

The members of the Indiana team all were high finishers at last season's state middle school championships, and coach Chris Toyias pulled together the team for the USA



USA Bowling U12 national champions

Bowling Regionals.

"The regional qualifier was a great experience," Toyias said. "We didn't know each other that well, but became very comfortable with each other during the qualifier. The friendships we've experienced and the connections that we've made together have been very memorable."

USA Bowling Regionals started in 2013 and the number of regional events grew each season, leading up to the inaugural USA Bowling National Championships held this past summer. The finals of the event were televised on CBS Sports Network.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to expose younger bowlers to the experience of team competition that they would only get to see at the high school and collegiate level," Toyias said. "Also, the chance at a national championship is, indeed, a reality for a group of hard working, dedicated bowlers at a very young age."

Ellen and Bill Johnson, who coach the Strikers program in Atlanta area, had teams bowl in a regional event each of the last



USA Bowling U15 national champions

two years. The team finished second in their first regional event, but last season the Strikers won the South Region title to advance to the 15-and-under national tournament. The team then took home the national title by winning the best-three-of-five Baker finals.

"Having a tournament like this is good for the kids," Ellen Johnson said during the event. "It's a unique tournament because it's Baker (format) and for the kids that want to go on and bowl in college, this is the first experience. They get to see what it's like and it's a good experience for them."

Teams consist of four players

and the tournaments use the Baker format, where team members alternate frames. The regionals take place over two days and start with eight round-robin Baker matches to determine seeding for tiered brackets. On the second day of competition,

teams compete in a double-elimination match play bracket, also using the Baker format, with each match a best-of-three games.

Interested bowlers can go to BOWL.com/USABowling to see when a regional will take place in their area of the country.

USA Bowling is a product of the Youth Education Services (YES) Fund, a joint initiative of the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America and United States Bowling Congress supported by top bowling brands including Bowling.com, Brunswick, Columbia 300, Ebonite, Hammer, QubicaAMF, Roto Grip, Storm and Track.

2017 USA BOWLING NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

When: July 2017

Where: Cleveland

Qualifying: Regional events are underway to determine the 32 teams that will compete at the national event.

Information: Go to BOWL.com/USABowling to find an event in your area.



USBC QUICK STRIKES

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS

U.S. Open features \$100,000 added to prize fund

Competitors at the 2016 U.S. Open will compete for one of the most lucrative prize funds in the sport today. The tournament will take place at the South Point Bowling Plaza in Las Vegas, a premier facility for tournament bowling, from Nov.



3-9, and competitors will bowl for a prize fund expected

to exceed \$226,000, which includes \$100,000 in added money.

Based on 252 entries, the top prize will be \$30,000. The 24 bowlers who advance to match play will receive a minimum of \$3,200, while the last cash spot in the tournament will earn a minimum of \$1,000.

The stepladder finals of the event will be televised live on CBS Sports Network on Nov. 9 at 8 p.m. Eastern. Left-hander Ryan Ciminelli of Cheektowaga, New York, is the defending champion.



The National Bowling Association's Youth Weekend

TNBA Youth Weekend held for seventh time at ITRC

Eight youth bowlers experienced a Team USA atmosphere after being selected to take part in The National Bowling Association's Youth Weekend at the International Training and Research Center.

The TNBA Youth Weekend, now in its seventh year of existence, allows youth bowlers the chance to experience training sessions, drills, exercises and classroom instruction led by the

Team USA coaching staff. The program is under the guidance of TNBA/ITRC Weekend Project Coordinator Barbara Council-Armstead, and other TNBA officials in attendance were USBC Silver coach Donald Armstead II, the Philadelphia High School Bowling Program Chair, and Veronica Green, the TNBA National Junior Program Director.

The bowlers who attended the TNBA Youth Weekend were: Jesse Brown, Philadelphia; Tristan Leyen, Baltimore; Mason Moore, Denver; Lanasia Neal and Alize Stevenson, Newark, New Jersey; Reginald Petty, Chicago; Pamela Warr and Jasmin Whitaker, Chesapeake, Virginia.

USBC Convention in Reno in 2018

The 2018 USBC Convention and Annual Meeting will take place at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada, from April 23-26.

The USBC Board of Directors approved the 2018 convention site, which will keep the annual convention in the same host city as a



CALENDAR

Nov. 3-9, 2016

U.S. Open

South Point Bowling Plaza
Las Vegas

Dec. 3-11, 2016

World Singles Championships

Qatar Bowling Center
Doha, Qatar

Jan. 3-8, 2017

Team USA Trials/U.S. Amateur

Sunset Station
Las Vegas

Feb. 18-July 10, 2017

USBC Open Championships

South Point Bowling Plaza
Las Vegas

Feb. 19-26, 2017

USBC Masters

The Orleans
Las Vegas

March 11-12, 2017

Intercollegiate Team and Singles Sectionals

AMF Parkway Lanes, Allentown, Pa.
Smyrna Bowl, Smyrna, Tenn.
Stardust Bowl, Addison, Ill.
USA Bowl, Dallas

April 16-22, 2017

Intercollegiate Team and Singles Championships

Baton Rouge River Center
Baton Rouge, La.

April 23-July 10, 2017

USBC Women's Championships

Baton Rouge River Center
Baton Rouge, La.

April 24-27, 2017

USBC Convention

The Orleans
Las Vegas

May 17-23, 2017

USBC Queens and Senior Queens

Baton Rouge River Center
Baton Rouge, La.

Go to BOWL.com/Tournaments for complete information.

USBC Championships event. The 2018 USBC Women's Championships will be held at the National Bowling Stadium in Reno.

The convention is scheduled to end on a Thursday, as feedback from delegates showed having the convention run on a Monday-through-Thursday schedule

was preferred. The 2017 USBC Convention will take place in Las Vegas, site of the 2017 USBC Open Championships.

Dexter Bowling extends sponsorship of All-American Team

Dexter Bowling extended its partnership agreement with International Bowling Congress Youth Development and will remain title sponsor of the annual Dexter/United States Bowling Congress High School All-American Team through the 2019 season.

The team has been selected annually since the 2005-2006 season. Dexter Bowling and IBC Youth will continue to work together to determine the five male and five female USBC High School members for the team. Each high school bowler selected receives a \$1,000 scholarship and the team is honored at the Junior Gold Championships in July.

Dexter Bowling also will continue to sponsor the coach and player luncheon at the Intercollegiate Team Championships.

