

COACHING

A TALK WITH TEAM USA COACHES

THROUGH COMPETITION and selection, the best bowlers in the country are brought together to form Team USA. Getting the perfect mix of bowlers/personalities ready for major international competitions is imperative if Team USA wants to bring home the gold.

Just like basketball's Dream Team, talented athletes still need a coach who can prepare them, both physically and mentally, for the challenges they will face. Coaches also are there to support and to help the athletes make any needed adjustments during



competition.

Team USA expanded its cache of coaches earlier this year and those coaches recently went through their own training camp. While they might coach the same sport, that doesn't mean these coaches have the same methods when it comes to training bowlers.

So, we decided to ask each Team USA coach a handful of questions to learn a little more about how they think.

The coaches are Team USA head coach Rod Ross, Junior Team USA head coach Bryan O'Keefe, along with assistant coaches Mark Baker, Carolyn Dorin-Ballard, Andy Diercks, Kelly Kulick, Mike Shady, Bill Spigner and Del Warren. The seven assistant coaches joined the Team



USA staff earlier this year.

1. What does it mean to you to be a part of the Team USA program?

Spigner: It is the highlight of my coaching career. Being asked to coach Senior Team USA at the World Senior Championships in Munich (in August) was very humbling. Listening to our national anthem played nine times while our athletes received their gold medals was very emotional, and I had a great sense of pride every time it was played.

Kulick: I have competed for my country for over 13 years. Being one of 14 women representing a country of over 320 million truly puts things in perspective. I have been on both sides — as a player and a coach. I am honored to be part of an elite group of coaches influencing the future of our sport.

Diercks: It is the greatest honor in my life to date. I began bowling in a four-lane center in a town of 1,800

people in northwest Iowa. My first ball was drilled at Kmart. To imagine this as a major accomplishment in my career is an understatement.

2. What's the most important thing a coach ever taught you?

Diercks: Dr. Dean Hinitz taught me that observation without judgment is the highest form of human intelligence. It made me a better coach, a better parent and husband, as well as a better player.

Dorin-Ballard: I always was told to practice, practice, practice, and that spares will win games. It was always about the fundamentals and working hard.

Baker: Learn to say the same thing many different ways. Everyone learns and hears things differently.

Shady: Only focus on the controllables (attitude, process, self-control, mental toughness, effort, resiliency, etc.) and never spend a second wasting energy on uncontrollables (outcomes/results, lane conditions,

competitors, etc.). The second lesson: Always give back and respect the sport.

Ross: To listen, observe and trust.

O'Keefe: Always be learning. If you feel you have all the answers, you are losing a chance to grow into something better.

3. What is the first thing you'd tell someone who's interested in becoming a coach?

Spigner: You never know enough. Study every style by watching and recording every bowling show you can. Also, learn from everyone you work with; it should never be your way or the highway.

Kulick: First, seek out certification. Take the proper courses to become a certified coach. Second, find coaches



you trust and ASK as many questions as possible. I work with many coaches and each one has their own technique or language when coaching.

Baker: Being willing to coach all levels. You will learn as much from the bowlers as they will learn from you.

Shady: Develop a growth mindset. Seek out coaches



in all sports and study their strategies and philosophies on what makes them and their programs successful.

O'Keefe: First, become certified. Then, keep an open mind and ask a lot of questions ... and be prepared to watch a heck of a lot of bowling balls go down the lane.

4. What do you feel are the most important tools currently available to coaches?

Dorin-Ballard: Anything video oriented is a must. Giving immediate feedback helps to show the student what's occurring. Video never lies. I also believe there are many more opportunities to attend seminars/clinics around the country with different coaches who have their own style, which allows you to learn different ways to enhance your coaching skills.

Baker: Video. It is much easier to help someone when they see the exact same thing as you.

Shady: We have incredible technologies available today that acquire data and provide video analysis in high definition. Anytime I can acquire data on a bowler and provide instant feedback on their physical game, it's a huge benefit for

the player and coach.

O'Keefe: Well, I would like to say the internet, but YouTube also can be the bearer of lots of misinformation. The USBC Bowling Academy is a great resource for those looking to improve their craft.

5. What's the most important thing you want to convey to those you coach?

Spigner: Every shot is a play, just like a down in football, a pitch in baseball and a shot in golf. After you have done it, you need to decide if you will do the same thing the next shot or if an adjustment is in order. Learn what you are seeing the ball do and understand what the ball is doing relative to how you felt you rolled it. Between the two, you can start to learn more about what you are seeing and feeling, which will help you make better shots or adjustments.

Kulick: I can't really say one sentence fits all. Like anything in life, you have to work at it to get better. I think Norm Duke said, "You get out of it what you put into it." Powerful words. But what I have found in recent years, bowling against the women and the men, is that you have to do what you do best. Know your strengths

and rely on them.

Diercks: You can dream all you want, but few ever realize the work required and number of steps it really takes to achieve a dream. You must set goals, but goals mean nothing without a path and steps to achieve them.

Dorin-Ballard: Have fun and don't put too much pressure on yourself to get it right immediately.

Baker: I'm a feedback coach. I want to know what the bowler thinks. I'm not the one throwing the ball!

Shady: I am an optimist. I truly believe this one thing about bowling and share it with all my students: If you work hard at both your physical and mental game, and focus on the process of getting just a bit better each and every day, you will be extremely satisfied with your bowling career.

Ross: It all is cause and effect. Trace the effect back to the cause. And believe in your players.

O'Keefe: Control what you can control, and just keep coming.

Team USA Coaching Staff



From left: Mike Shady, Bryan O'Keefe, Mark Baker, Kelly Kulick, Del Warren, Andy Diercks, Rod Ross. Not Pictured: Carolyn Dorin-Ballard, Bill Spigner

A quick look at the coaches on the Team USA staff (USBC coaching certification level in parentheses):

Rod Ross (Gold) – Team USA head coach

Bryan O'Keefe (Gold) – Junior Team USA head coach, Director of Bowling for McKendree University

Mark Baker (Silver) – Founder of Camp Bakes bowling camp

Carolyn Dorin-Ballard (Silver) – USBC Hall of Famer, former USBC Director of Coaching

Andy Diercks (Silver) – Head coach at Mount Mercy University

Kelly Kulick (Silver) – Lead instructor at Dick Ritger bowling camps, PWBA Tour spokesperson

Mike Shady (Silver) – USBC Hall of Famer, owner of Peak Performance Bowling which develops educational programs

Bill Spigner (Gold) – USBC Hall of Famer, author of more than 300 instructional articles

Del Warren (Gold) – Vice president of Kegel Training Center, Director of Bowling for Webber International

COLLEGE BOWLING

LOOKING TO MAKE THE GRADE



THE 2017-2018 college bowling season has kicked off, though the next few months will be the time for teams to separate themselves from the field and earn a spot in the Intercollegiate Team Championships (ITC) sectional tournaments.

When teams compete in regular-season events in college bowling, they earn Team Ranking Points based on their finishes. The goal is to garner enough points to earn an invitation to the ITC Sectionals, from where teams can earn a spot at the ITC at Sun Valley Lanes in Lincoln, Nebraska, in April.

But sectionals are a few

months away, so let's look at what college bowling fans can watch from now until the sectional assignments are announced Feb. 21, 2018:

Players to watch: The National Collegiate Bowling Coaches Association (NCBCA) women's most valuable player, Sydney Brummett, returns for her senior season at Wichita State along with her teammate, Hollyann Johansen, the only other returning NCBCA first-team All-American. Stephen F. Austin's Stephanie Schwartz led the nation in average (212.35) and made her second consecutive appear-

ance on the Intercollegiate Singles Championships (ISC) television show. St. Ambrose's Kayla Crawford had four top-five finishes and was second in the nation in average at Tier I events last season. Rookie of the Year Abby Ragsdale of St. Francis-Illinois was named MVP in leading the Saints to the NAIA National Invitational Championship title.

For the men, McKendree's Greg Young, who had three top-five finishes, including a victory, in Tier I events last season, and Chase Nadeau of Arizona State were NCBCA first-team All-Americans. Pikeville's Andrew Letscher had three top-five finishes last season to earn NCBCA Rookie of the Year honors. Wichita State's Wesley Low, who won the Las Vegas Invitational, had the top average (219.43) in Tier I events for bowlers with 30 or more games.

Looking to repeat: The Webber International men and McKendree women hoisted the Helmer Cup at the 2017 ITC in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and both teams return several of the talented student-athletes who helped them to the title.

Webber welcomes back five players – Giorgio Clinaz, David Lance, Matt Russo, Anthony Veney and Aaron Yuratovich – from the group that won in Baton Rouge. McKendree returns all eight players from its

2017 ITC roster, including three Junior Team USA members – Breanna Clemmer, Jessica Mellott and Lauren Pate.

The big events: Every tournament is important to a program's overall season, but teams want to shine at Tier I events.

A total of 10 events are designated as Tier 1 events each season, offering a greater challenge (student-athletes are limited to a maximum of five bowling balls and lane conditions must comply with all current USBC Sport regulations) and the opportunity to gain extra points toward advancing to the postseason.

The Midwest Collegiate in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, already is in the books, but nine Tier 1s remain this season, including the season-ending Hoosier Classic, which will celebrate its 49th edition Feb. 17-18, 2018.

And it's getting bigger every year: USBC Collegiate continues to see growth each season. During the 2007-2008 season, bowling programs were on 149 campuses with 2,430 student-athletes competing. Five years later, the number of schools with programs had grown to 196 and the number of student-athletes was just over 3,400.

The 2016-2017 season saw a record 213 schools with bowling programs.

Key Dates

Feb. 18 – Regular season ends

Feb. 21 – ITC sectional assignments announced

March 9 – ISC sectionals, four sites

March 10-11 – ITC sectionals, four sites

April 17-21 – ISC and ITC, Sun Valley Lanes, Lincoln, Neb.

Note: Player statistics provided by collegebowling.com

USBC QUICK STRIKES

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS

U.S. Open introduces direct qualifiers for 2018



Through a special direct-qualifier program, 10 bowling centers throughout the country will have the opportunity to conduct U.S. Open qualifying tournaments with the winners earning a spot in the field for the 2018 U.S. Open.

The centers will determine the format, provided it includes at least nine games and is contested on a Sport Bowling-compliant lane condition. Direct qualifiers must be held between Nov. 1, 2017 and May 1, 2018.

Host centers include: Lucky Strike Lanes in Malone, New York; Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Michigan; Buffalo Lanes Mebane in Mebane, North Carolina; Gaudé Lanes Bowling Center in Biloxi, Mississippi; Sparetime Lanes in Decatur, Illinois; May City Bowl in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; ITRC in Arlington, Texas, and Golden Pin Lanes, Tucson, Arizona. Two additional centers will be added.

Visit BOWL.com/USOpen for more information about the U.S. Open.

USA Bowling sets regional schedule

USA Bowling's regional schedule kicked off with the Southeast Regional in October and will continue until the South Regional takes place April 7-8, 2018. The 16 regional events determine the 32 teams – 16 teams in the 15-and-under division and 16 teams in the 12-and-under division – that will advance to the 2018 USA Bowling National Championships.

Sixlets® Brand Chocolatey Candies also will return as presenting sponsor of the USA Bowling National Championships in 2018. The Sixlets® Brand became a sponsor in 2017. Go to BOWL.com/USABowling for the regional schedule and to learn more about the USA Bowling program.

2018 U.S. Women's Open to have select field

The 2018 U.S. Women's Open will mirror enhancements introduced for the U.S. Open, as it will feature an

invitation-only field of 108 competitors who will be selected based on their on-lane performances during the 2017 calendar year.

The 2018 U.S. Women's Open will be held June 23-30 at Boardwalk Bowl in Orlando, Florida, and feature a prize fund of more than \$143,000, with the winner taking home \$20,000 and the coveted green jacket. It will be the second of four majors on the 2018 Professional Women's Bowling Association Tour schedule.

Go to BOWL.com/USWomensOpen for more information about the event, including an explanation of the invitation prioritization and tournament rules.

Brands of Ebonite extend Junior Gold sponsorship

The Brands of Ebonite International have extended their sponsorship agreement with International Bowling Campus Youth Development to remain the presenting sponsor of the

Junior Gold Championships through 2020.



A two-year sponsorship deal with the Brands of Ebonite – Ebonite, Track, Hammer and Columbia 300 – started in 2017. Following this year's Junior Gold Championships, the Brands of Ebonite International made the decision to exercise its two-year option so it will remain the sponsor for the 2018 event in Dallas, Detroit in 2019 and Indianapolis in 2020.



Bowler's Ed awards 14 kits to organizations

Fourteen schools and organizations were selected to receive a Bowler's Ed grant, which features mobile bowling equipment and curriculum kit. International Bowling Campus Youth Development awards the grants for the in-school bowling program kits designed to teach children the sport of bowling.

By providing schools and organizations with the Bowler's Ed equipment kits, educators can teach the lifelong sport of bowling to their students in a bowling-center atmosphere inside a school or gymnasium. Besides providing a true bowling experience, the kits feature

CALENDAR

Nov. 4-12, 2017
QubicaAMF World Cup
Bol 300
Hermosillo, Mexico

Nov. 24-Dec. 4, 2017
World Bowling World Championships – Combined
South Point Bowling Plaza
Las Vegas

Jan. 2-7, 2018
Team USA Trials/U.S. Amateur
Orleans Bowling Center
Las Vegas

March 9-11, 2018
Intercollegiate Team and Singles Sectionals
Dallas; Fairview Heights, Ill.; Smyrna, Tenn.; Stratford N.J.

March 15-18, 2018
USBC Senior Queens
Gold Coast Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas

March 24-July 8, 2018
USBC Open Championships
OnCenter Convention Center
Syracuse, N.Y.

April 8-15, 2018
USBC Masters
OnCenter Convention Center
Syracuse, N.Y.

April 17-21, 2018
Intercollegiate Team and Singles Championships
Sun Valley Lanes
Lincoln, Neb.

April 19-July 1, 2018
USBC Women's Championships
National Bowling Stadium
Reno, Nev.

April 23-26, 2018
USBC Convention
Grand Sierra Resort
Reno, Nev.

April 26-28, 2018
PWBA Las Vegas Open
South Point Bowling Plaza
Las Vegas

May 3-5, 2018
PWBA Sonoma County Open
Double Decker Lanes
Rohnert Park, Calif.

Go to BOWL.com/Tournaments for complete information.

activities to enhance cardiovascular health, coordination and endurance while showing the children how much fun they can have bowling.

Go to BOWL.com/BowlersEd to learn how schools and organizations can benefit by partnering with Bowler's Ed.