

PWBA TOUR

CENTER OF ATTENTION

IT'S a new season for the Professional Women's Bowling Association, and 2018 will provide a different experience, not only for the world's best women bowlers, but also for the fans.

The PWBA Tour kicked off the 2018 season with the PWBA Las Vegas Open the last weekend of April, and this year's tour will have some very notable changes. It starts with the fact that seven of the PWBA Tour events will conclude with live television coverage on CBS Sports Network.



Now, televised finals are not new to the PWBA, which has had a regular presence on network television. But, during the past two seasons, the championship rounds of standard events were televised on a delayed basis as the shows were taped in conjunction with one of the major events on the PWBA Tour schedule.

This season, the stepladder finals of every event will be shown live, either on network television or livestreamed on Xtra Frame, the Professional Bowlers Association's online bowling channel.

The CBS Sports Network schedule will have seven live events starting May 22 with the stepladder finals of the USBC Queens from the National Bowling Stadium in Reno,

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Nevada. The schedule also includes five Saturday shows before the season concludes with the PWBA Tour Championship in September.

The finals of the seven PWBA events not on national TV will be livestreamed on Xtra Frame.

The finals of each PWBA event in 2018 taking place in the host centers is a significant change, as the week's top players no longer will have an interruption or change in venue for the stepladder finals.

It also means a player such as Liz Johnson, who made nine – yes, NINE! – television shows in 2017, won't be required to bowl several stepladder finals in one day. After winning the PWBA Players Championship

last season, Johnson had two more shows to tape. As the No. 3 seed in both stepladders, she lost in the opening match with scores in the mid-150s.

Then again, after a runner-up finish in the USBC Queens, Johnson did capture the PWBA Storm Sacramento Open as the top seed.

"I think this is definitely a benefit to be able to finish the tournament for that week in that same bowling center," said Johnson, the three-time reigning PWBA Player of the Year. "As I was very fortunate to make the shows I did, it was also such a guessing game, knowing you are going into a different center. The lanes usually played a bit different, though you are playing the

same pattern."

While it provided a different obstacle for competitors, of the nine events where the finals were held at a different center from the competition, the top seed won six times.

The bigger impact in 2018, however, will be for the fans because they will get the chance to watch a champion get crowned in their center.

Another element in 2018 will be the structure of three events for the second half of the season.

After the first eight tournaments, the top 24 players on the 2018 PWBA points list will earn automatic spots into three Tour stops designated as elite-field events – the PWBA St. Petersburg-Clearwater Open,



PWBA Twin Cities Open and PWBA Columbus Open.

The elite-field events will have 32-player fields – the top 24 players from the points list, with remaining spots filled through an on-site eight-game qualifier each week. Competitors will bowl 16 games of qualifying, the top 12 will bowl six additional games and the top five after 22 total games will advance to the TV finals.

The six standard events in 2018 will feature 16 games of qualifying, before the field is cut to the top 32. After eight more games, another cut will be made to the top 12, who will bowl six more games. The top four after 30 games will advance to the livestream stepladder finals.

It all adds up to what should be another outstanding season of competition on the PWBA Tour.

“The return of the PWBA Tour for the fourth year since the ‘reboot’ has been a great blessing for me,” Johnson said. “I have been able to continue to do what I love and have been fortunate to make a living at it. Also, I am hoping I can continue to pave a way for others, hopefully to be able to pursue their dreams of bowling on the ladies’ tour or just to be able to bowl at a higher level.”



Visit PWBA.com for players biographies, the complete schedule, news from all events and more.



Players to Watch



A look at five players to watch this PWBA Tour season:

Liz Johnson – She made nine TV appearances and won three titles, including the Go Bowling PWBA Players Championship and her fourth consecutive U.S. Women’s Open. She can become the seventh player with 20 or more PWBA titles and the first to win player of the year in four consecutive seasons. Only Wendy Macpherson has won player of the year four times (1996-97, 1999-2000).

Shannon O’Keefe – One of only three players to win a title in each season since 2015, she won three titles in 2016 and captured her first major in dramatic fashion at the 2017 PWBA Tour Championship. Can she challenge Johnson for PWBA Player of the Year in 2018? We’ll soon find out.

Verity Crawley – A rookie in 2017, the England native was second in the PWBA Rookie of the Year race, and had runner-up finishes at the PWBA Fountain Valley Open and PWBA Greater Detroit Open. Crawley, 23, was 11th on the PWBA points list, signaling her rookie campaign was a solid building block. Look for her to win her first title in 2018.

Jenny Wegner – A native of Sweden, she has built an incredible resume in her young career, marked by wins such as the 2018 Brunswick Euro Challenge and 2016 QubicaAMF World Cup. One of the bright young international stars, Wegner is expected to compete in a limited number of events but has the talent to win her first career PWBA title.

Shannon Pluhowsky – Since 2015, Pluhowsky has finished no worse than sixth on the PWBA Tour points list and has 10 championship-round appearances, but still seeks a PWBA title. She’s one of the best bowlers on tour, and, until someone dethrones her, the best left-hander. It is not a stretch to expect her to win not only her first title, but challenge for PWBA Player of the Year.

YOUTH BOWLING

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



YOUTH BOWLING always has provided a great avenue of competition for individuals and teams through programs such as USA Bowling, the Junior Gold and Youth Open Championships, the Pepsi USBC Youth Championships, along with high school and collegiate programs.

One of the great benefits of becoming a USBC Youth member is the opportunity to earn college scholarships. While youth bowlers can earn scholarships through competition, each year the International



Bowling Campus Youth Committee awards several scholar-

ships to youth bowlers not only for their skills on the lanes, but also for their commitment to academic achievement and for becoming involved in their communities.

This year's recipients submitted their applications through BOWL.com/Scholarships, and five of the winners attended USBC Convention to receive their awards. Each showed how bowling has made an impact on their lives and how they have made an impact on others.

Trace Nuss, the Annual Zeb Scholarship winner, said in his application how an enthusiastic group of bowlers cheered him on as he looked to roll a perfect game. He learned those

fans were The Superstars, bowlers with developmental differences who were at the center for their league.

Nuss explained how their excitement and support of him, a total stranger, led him to ask about the group. He soon became part of their journey and now not only works with the group in bowling, but year-round in sports such as football



and basketball.

Alberta E. Crowe Star of Tomorrow Award winner Crystal Singh started her bowling journey in Singapore and Germany, where her family lived for about seven years, before returning to the United States her sophomore year of high school. She says her focus never has been solely on winning – though she did win the Florida High School State Singles title and helped her team to a runner-up finish at state. She said the award allows her to share “how im-

portant it is to find who you are and define your goals around the things that push you to be your best.”

Alex Olendorff, the Chuck Hall Star of Tomorrow, talked about how experiences such as failing his first test in analytical geometry, or when he shot 10 for a practice game in bowling, showed him the need to practice. And, yes, much like bowling, you do need to practice math.

USBC Youth Ambassador Ian Ridgway bowled as an independent for his high school, which did not have a boys' bowling team. He said it showed the possibilities to other students and the administration. He practiced and helped with the girls' team and, his senior year, became the school's first boys' bowler



to qualify for the state tournament as an individual, where he finished sixth.

Sara Howell also was selected as a Youth Ambassador, though it was not her first stint in such a role. She was a junior ambassador for the Arthritis Foundation and went to Capitol Hill as part of a national campaign to push for additional healthcare options for children with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis. There, she asked senators and congressmen to join the arthritis caucus, to advocate for children to have access to the Specialty Care Act and called on them to support a study on arthritis effects on service members.

These five award winners, along with more than 500 USBC Youth bowlers who submitted applications, are great examples of A Future for the Sport, connected by the sport of bowling.

Visit BOWL.com/Youth to learn more about the great programs and scholarships available for youth bowlers.

Youth Scholarships

A look at the youth scholarships awarded each year by IBC Youth. Visit BOWL.com/Scholarships to learn more:

Awards	No.	Scholarship
Dexter All-American Team	10	\$1,000
Gift for Life	up to 12	\$1,000
Youth Ambassador of the Year	2	\$1,500
Annual Zeb Scholarship	1	\$2,500
Earl Anthony Scholarships	5	\$5,000
Alberta E. Crowe		
Star of Tomorrow	1	\$6,000
Chuck Hall Star of Tomorrow	1	\$6,000

USBC QUICK STRIKES

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS



U.S. Open heads to North Carolina in 2019

The U.S. Open, a major event and one of the toughest tests in the sport of bowling, will take place at Victory Lanes in Mooresville, North Carolina, in 2019.

The 2019 U.S. Open will run from Oct. 23-30, and the stepladder finals will be televised on CBS Sports Network. A 40-lane center located just north of Charlotte, North Carolina, Victory Lanes has been an annual stop on the Professional Bowlers Association 50 Tour for the last decade. It also has served as the host center of several PBA regional events.

Women's Championships heading to Cincinnati in 2024

Western Bowl Strike and Spare will be the host center when the 2024 USBC Women's Championships takes place in Cincinnati. The Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau



teamed with Western Bowl for the winning proposal to bring the annual tournament to Cincinnati for third time. Western Bowl has 68 lanes for competition.

The USBC Women's Championships is the world's largest annual participatory sporting event for women. More than 16,000 bowlers compete each year, and along with family and friends provide a major economic boost to the host community.

Bowling.com extends Youth Open sponsorship

Bowling.com, which began its sponsorship of the Youth Open Championships in 2014, has extended its sponsorship for the next two years. It will continue to reward outstanding performances by providing a \$100 scholarship to any competitor who has a 300 game or 800

series during the Youth Open Championships.

The 2018 Bowling.com Youth Open Championships will take place July 12-13, 20-22 and 28-29 at Cityview Lanes in Fort Worth, Texas. The annual tournament, which started in 2007, is held in conjunction with the Junior Gold Championships.

Woman hits milestone at Open Championships

Susan Martin, a 61-year-old right-hander from Reno, Nevada, recorded a special milestone recently by becoming the first female to have 25 appearances at the USBC



Open Championships.

The event previously was operated by the American Bowling Congress (ABC), which opened its membership and the tournament to women in 1994. Martin made her tournament debut that year in Mobile, Alabama, as a substitute. She made sure she was on the first squad of the year and she helped kick off the 2018 event at the Oncenter Convention Center.

Martin was among a handful of women to compete in the 1994 event. Mary Hammack

of Grand Bay, Alabama, had the distinction of being the first female competitor.

Visit BOWL.com/Open-Champ to follow this year's tournament action from Syracuse, New York.

Youth Volunteer, Dahms Coach of the Year selections determined

Mike Bonzek of Suwanee, Georgia, was named USBC Youth Volunteer of the Year, and Chris Floyd of Slidell, Louisiana, was selected as the David Dahms Coach of the Year by the International Bowling Campus Youth Committee.

Bonzek helped start the Georgia Youth Bowlers Tour (GYBT) and the program has continued to grow. It helped 140 athletes earn spots in the 2017 Junior Gold Championships.

Floyd, a USBC Silver coach, serves as president of the Southeast Louisiana Travel League, coordinating 100 youth bowlers who compete in eight different centers, and started a bowling program at Salmen High School and has helped two other high schools launch bowling programs.

Visit BOWL.com/ScholarshipsAwards to learn more about awards for youth leaders.

Bowling Combine deadline is May 19

The deadline for student-athletes who want to attend the 2018 Bowling Combine for College Prospects is May 19. The event has sold out each of its seven years.

The 2018 Bowling Combine will take place July 31-Aug. 4 at the International Training and Research Center in Arlington, Texas. At the Combine, youth

CALENDAR

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

May 10-12, 2018
PWBA Fountain Valley Open
Fountain Bowl
Fountain Valley, Calif.

May 16-22, 2018
USBC Queens
National Bowling Stadium
Reno, Nev.

May 31-June 2, 2018
PWBA East Hartford Open
Silver Lanes
East Hartford, Conn.

May 31-June 3, 2018
Super Senior Classic
Sam's Town Bowling Center
Las Vegas

June 4-10, 2018
USBC Senior Masters
Sam's Town Bowling Center
Las Vegas

June 7-9, 2018
PWBA Louisville Open
Fern Valley Strike and Spares
Louisville, Ky.

June 14-16, 2018
PWBA Greater Harrisburg Open
ABC West
Mechanicsburg, Pa.

June 23-30, 2018
U.S. Women's Open
Boardwalk Bowl
Orlando, Fla.

July 12-13, 20-22, 28-29, 2018
Bowling.com Youth Open Championships
Cityview Lanes
Fort Worth, Texas

July 14-21, 2018
Junior Gold Championships presented by the Brand of Ebonite International
AMF Garland, Cityview Lanes, Forum Bowling Lanes, USA Bowl, AMF DeSoto, AMF Richardson, AMF Sparetime, Brunswick Westcreek Dallas

Go to BOWL.com/Tournaments for complete information.

bowlers are evaluated by the ITRC staff using state-of-the-art technology. This is not a coaching clinic, but an evaluation of bowlers so they can learn their strengths and weaknesses.

College coaches also can attend, at no cost, to meet potential student-athletes.

Go to BOWL.com/Combine for additional details.