

COVER STORY

A CENTURY IN THE MAKING

THE USBC WOMEN'S Championships will take place for the 100th time this year, and while the magnitude of this milestone might be difficult to comprehend, simply look at what was



happening when eight teams got together at Washington Recreation Parlor in St. Louis in 1916 for that first event.

The United States had not yet entered World War I, Woodrow Wilson had just been elected to his second term as president and Babe Ruth had led the Boston Red Sox to its second consecutive World Series title. It would be another four years before the National Football League even was formed.

Fast forward to 2019 when Northrock Lanes in Wichita, Kansas, serves as the host of this year's event, which runs from April 20 through June 30.

Ask participants about their favorite part of the Women's Championships, and most won't discuss the competition on the lanes. Instead, they will focus on the opportunity to bowl with friends or visit dif-

ferent parts of the country.

Linda Prattini of the Zodiacs said it is an honor to participate in the event. In one of her first appearances, the Zodiacs wore full-length formal dresses, to make a statement about not being allowed to wear slacks, and have returned each year with elaborate outfits. The team has earned the distinction as the World's Best-Dressed Bowling Team.

"No two annual tournaments are alike, and each trip gives the bowler new opportunities to not only strive for high scores but to make new friends and see different cities,

scenic locations and cultures of each state and their people," Prattini said.

Fran Smith, 81, of Marshalltown, Iowa, will join the 50-year club at the 2019 Women's Championships. She made her first appearance in San Antonio in 1968 and has visited 32 cities and 23 states since. After participating with her bowling friends early on, she now mostly bowls with family members.

"There have been so many



great memories over the years," Smith said. "We would generally drive to each tournament and make a vacation of it.

I've been lucky enough to bowl with my daughter, daughter-in-law, granddaughter, sister-in-law and niece at the national championships. Fun always has been had by all!"

Smith still has a few years to catch the tournament's all-time participation leader, Mini Tvaska of St. Petersburg,

Florida. Tvaska began her tournament career at the 1947 event in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and attended every event through 2013 — 67 tournaments!

"I just love bowling," said Tvaska at the 2013 event. "I remember bowling with stocking feet and just having a blast. I don't remember my scores, but I know that we went many times. Then, I started bowling in a league."

Tvaska was 95 years old during her last tournament appearance. But, proving that bowling is a lifetime sport,





The Zodiacs have worn elaborate outfits since the late 1960s to earn the distinction as the World's Best-Dressed Bowling Team.

she doesn't hold the record for oldest participant at the Women's Championships.

That distinction belongs to Emma Hendrickson of Morris Plains, New Jersey, who was 102 when she participated in 2011. What is more remarkable is that she didn't make her tournament debut until the 1960 event in Denver, when she was 51.

"I've found that the best thing you can do is be happy with what you are doing, and bowling is what I do," Hendrickson said during her 2011 appearance. "As I always say, 'once a bowler, always a bowler.' That's my own saying, you know, and it's a true statement about the dedication and love that bowlers have for their sport."

Her tournament appearance at age 100 in 2009 made her a worldwide sensation. She bowled against Regis Philbin on the Live with Regis & Kelly show, appeared on the Martha

Stewart Show in 2010 and was featured on ESPN's Top 10 Plays.

Though the fun and camaraderie, both on and off the lanes, is a major draw for many of the participants, titles also are on the line at each event. Agnes Koester set a pretty high bar at the inaugural event by capturing the singles,



Emma Hendrickson, at age 100, took part in the 2009 event and became a world-wide sensation, including an appearance on Live with Regis and Kelly.

all-events and team titles.

Koester's three titles in a single event has been matched just five times, and only USBC Hall of Fame member Dorothy Fothergill exactly matched Koester's team, singles and all-events trifecta.

Many of the scoring records at the tournament have been established in the last 20 years.

Jodi Woessner of Oregon, Ohio, and Michelle Feldman of Auburn, New York, share the record for highest series at 816. Feldman's set was accomplished in singles in 2009

and was matched by Woessner a year later during doubles. Woessner also would set the all-events record in 2010, winning a pair of titles with a 2,330 nine-game total.

Lori Gensch of Milwaukee, however, always will hold the distinction of rolling the first perfect game at the event. Her 300 game in 1979 has since been matched 26 times.

So, who will take home a title? Who can navigate the lanes for a perfect game? And, what will the famed Zodiacs wear at the 2019 Women's Championships?

Notable Moments

A look at some of the notable moments in Women's Championships history:

- 1916** – Eight teams, a total of 40 bowlers, compete in the first event in St. Louis
- 1928** – Chicago's Dorothy Miller wins the first of her record 10 career titles
- 1940** – In Syracuse, N.Y., the event surpasses the 1,000-team mark (1,185)
- 1947** – Mini Tvaska makes debut in Grand Rapids, Mich., the first of a record 67 consecutive events
- 1957** – Automatic pinsetting equipment is used for the first time in Dayton, Ohio
- 1977** – Japan's Akiko Yamaga wins singles and all-events to become the first foreign-born champion
- 1979** – Milwaukee's Lori Gensch rolls the first perfect game, getting a 300 in doubles in Tucson, Ariz.
- 1997** – A record 16,704 teams compete at the National Bowling Stadium in Reno, Nev.
- 2000** – Kendra Cameron posts the first 800 series, an 812 during team competition
- 2014** – The tournament moves to four-player teams

Visit BOWL.com/WomensChamp and Facebook.com/USBCWomensChamp to keep up with all the news.

EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

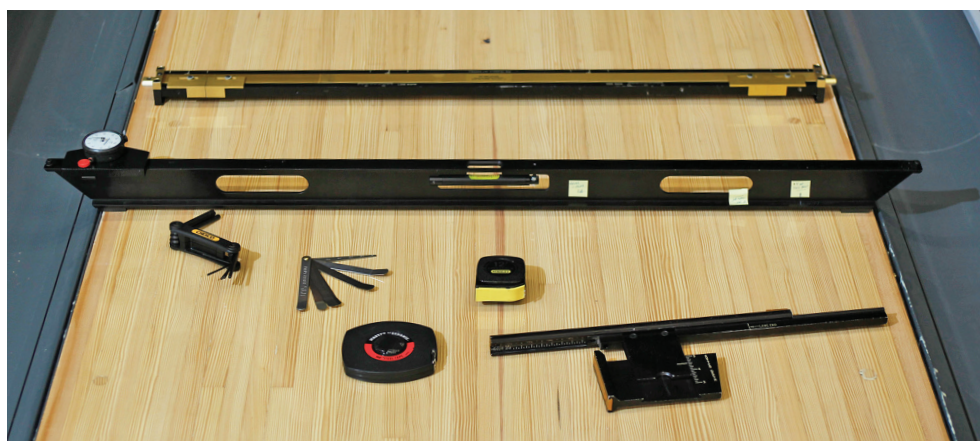
CENTER OF ATTENTION

FOCUSING ON ITS role as the National Governing Body, USBC has spent the last several years examining factors that affect the sport of bowling.

While the certification of bowling centers is an annual process, this past season marked the first time USBC has taken the data collected during the lane inspection process and developed a database, so it can have an overview of the playing fields USBC members compete on each night.

The compilation of data continues the work of improving center certifications, which started more than five years ago when USBC looked at 64 centers and 1,000 lanes in 20 states throughout the United States. That led to new requirements for the lane inspections and adjustments for new lane installations, which were announced in April 2017.

A major part of the new lane inspection process was allowing a one-year grace period for cen-



A variety of tools are used to check the lanes, kickbacks, and gutters.

ters that perform and submit all data from a center certification. Having the inspector, association manager, and bowling center sign the inspection report and submit the data to USBC meant a center would be certified for the 2018-2019 season.

The inspection process, performed by the local association for centers in its jurisdiction, requires each synthetic lane to have 29 measurements (21 for

wood lanes).

The USBC's report, released late last year, pulled together the data from more than 3,300 centers covering nearly 73,000 lanes. With the process ongoing, USBC expects to have data from about 4,200 centers.

So, what did the data show?

The good news is that approximately 91 percent of centers had less than 10 percent of items measured out of specification and approximately 72 percent had less than 5 percent of items out of spec. For crowns and depressions, wood lanes were found to be slightly flatter than synthetic lanes, likely because they are resurfaced every few years.

Of course, one of the most common myths in a bowling center is that the end pairs of lanes play significantly different from the rest of a center's lanes. The data, however, shows the

topography variance was not significant, which means if the lanes do not play the same, topography is not the reason.

The data collected this past season, while extremely helpful, shows more work needs to be done. The Equipment Specifications and Certifications Committee determined another season of data collection is needed and the grace period for centers that have a proper inspection, with the three required signatures, will extend to the 2019-2020 season.

USBC also will continue to educate all stakeholders about the center certification process, as more than 1,400 volunteers attended the 32 Lane Inspection Workshops last season. USBC also will increase the certification fee, allowing local associations to charge up to \$10 per lane bed. It is the first fee increase since the 1995-1996 season.

Survey Says...

A look at some of the interesting data results from the lane inspections:

Total centers: 3,306 **Total lanes:** 72,805

Lane composition: 85% synthetic, 15% wood

100% passing topography measurements: 43% of centers

Lane head (first) panels: 93% within specification

Backend (last 3) panels: 98% within specification

Gutter depths: 93% compliant

Visit BOWL.com/EquipAndSpecs for the full Center Certification Research Report.

USBC QUICK STRIKES

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS



Houston to host 2022 Open Championships

The 2022 USBC Open Championships, the 119th edition of the event, will be held in Houston for the first time at a new mixed-use, state-of-the-art sports facility being developed in North Houston. This will mark the tournament's fifth trip to Texas, joining Fort Worth (1957), Corpus Christi (1992, 2006) and El Paso (2015).

Initial plans for the 2022 event include enough lanes for the Open Championships, plus the tournament's premier side event, the Bowlers Journal Championships presented by USBC, and team practice sessions.

Four candidates slated for USBC Board election

The USBC Nominating Committee slated four candidates for the three open positions on the USBC Board of Directors. Delegates to the 2019 USBC Convention and Annual Meeting, set for April 29-May 2 in Las Vegas, will vote on the candidates and on eight legislative proposals.

The slated four candidates



are Anthony Colangelo of Meridian, Idaho; Rich Foran of Billings, Montana; Bo Goergen of Sanford, Michigan; and Lowell Lovgren of Kelso,

Washington. Additional candidates may run from the floor. Visit BOWL.com/Convention for more information.

National Recognition Awards Recipients selected

Patty Patterson of El Paso, Texas, Kay Smith of Bryan, Texas, and Joseph Poelking of Springboro, Ohio, were selected to receive USBC National Recognition Awards by the USBC Board of Directors.

Patterson is the Joyce Deitch Unity Award winner, Smith will receive the Helen Baker Award for Outstanding Association Service and Poelking was selected as the USBC Proprietor of the Year. The annual awards honor outstanding bowling leaders for their contributions to the sport.

Selections were made from submitted applications, and the recipients will receive their awards at the 2019 USBC Convention in Las Vegas.

Four high schools receive grants

Adams Central High School of Monroe, Indiana, Pulaski High School of Milwaukee, Washington (Indiana) High School and Whitehall (Michigan) High School were awarded \$2,500 grants through the High School Grant Program.

A product of the Youth Education Services (YES) Fund, the program annually provides up to four grants to high schools requiring funds to start a new bowling program or to assist existing programs that show financial need because of budget cuts or other changes.

Visit BOWL.com/HighSchool to learn more about the program and other initiatives to support high school programs.



Masters, U.S. Open join FOX Sports schedule

The PBA, USBC and BPAA announced a multi-year agreement to include the USBC Masters and U.S. Open as major events on the Go Bowling! PBA Tour television package on FOX Sports.

FOX Sports will televise the U.S. Open live on FOX from 2020 through 2022, and the USBC Masters live on FS1 from 2019 through 2022. As a result of the agreement, the 2020 U.S. Open will move up in the calendar with the televised finals set for Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020.

The USBC Masters will continue to be conducted in its traditional time window in conjunction with the USBC Open Championships.

Kulick, Barnes, Koivuniemi elected to USBC Hall of Fame

Kelly Kulick, Chris Barnes and Mika Koivuniemi will be part of the 2019 USBC Hall of Fame class after their election in the Superior Performance category. The 2019 USBC Hall of Fame induction ceremony will take place May 1 in Las Vegas as part of the USBC Convention at The Orleans Hotel and Casino.

Kulick, Barnes and Koivuniemi join the late John Davis (Meritorious Service), Bob Johnson (Meritorious Service), Larry Lichstein (Pioneer) and the late Jim St. John (Veterans), who were elected by the USBC Hall of Fame Committee in October 2018.

CALENDAR

March 8-10

Intercollegiate Team and Singles Sectionals

Addison, Ill.; Dallas; Smyrna, Tenn.; Stratford, N.J.

March 9-July 8

USBC Open Championships

South Point Bowling Plaza
Las Vegas

March 15-18

USBC Senior Queens

Gold Coast Bowling Center
Las Vegas

March 17-23

World Bowling Junior Championships

Plaza Bowling Saint Maximin
Paris

March 26-April 1

USBC Masters

Gold Coast Bowling Center
Las Vegas

April 15-20

Intercollegiate Team and Singles Championships

Poelking Lanes South
Dayton, Ohio

April 20-June 30

USBC Women's Championships

Northrock Lanes
Wichita, Kan.

April 22-29

PABCON Men's Championships

Lima, Peru

April 25-27

PWBA Greater Cleveland Open

Yorktown Lanes
Parma Heights, Ohio

April 29-May 2

USBC Convention

The Orleans
Las Vegas

May 2-4

PWBA Twin Cities Open

Cedarvale Lanes
Eagan, Minn.

May 9-11

PWBA Lincoln Open

Sun Valley Lanes
Lincoln, Neb.

May 15-21

USBC Queens

Northrock Lanes
Wichita, Kan.

May 29-June 2

Super Senior Classic

Sam's Town Bowling Center
Las Vegas

May 30-June 1

PWBA Sonoma County Open

Double Decker Lanes
Rohnert Park, Calif.

June 2-9

USBC Senior Masters

Sam's Town Bowling Center
Las Vegas

Go to BOWL.com/Tournaments for complete information.