

Thursday December 21, 2023

# Spare Change

By Johnny Campos

## Fur Curtain making big comeback on the lanes after 10-year absence

When Todd Swadinsky stopped bowling leagues and tournaments about 10 years ago, it wasn't the final curtain for him on the lanes.

Swadinsky, better known as "Fur Curtain," to his bowling buddies, used to be a regular high pick in the traveling Masters league draft in his younger days.

"I think I averaged 230 once, but was usually in the mid-220s," he said. "I only bowled once a week, in the Masters. So I mainly missed the guys and the hooting and hollering."

Swadinsky came back to bowling this season, at the behest of Pete Burdette and a few other bowling friends.

"Pete and a lot of other people have been bugging me to come back," Swadinsky said. "So, I bowl on Thursdays, which will work out because I'm close to home (in Mackinaw).

"My daughter Addi plays basketball at ICC. They're off on Thursdays, so I can go and watch her play. And my youngest boy is a sophomore, and he plays football and baseball. Once they're done, I'll bowl Masters again and bowl tournaments."

Swadinsky, now 45, stopped bowling because of Crohn's Diseases. He was diagnosed with the illness when he was still in high school. The disease can have some pretty bad symptoms, including severe abdominal pain and fatigue. He stopped bowling because of severe complications from Crohn's.

"I have had several major surgeries, and I pretty much didn't leave the house for about three years," Swadinsky said. "And you never get over it. You will always have it. I go to the hospital every eight weeks and get infused with medications."

Swadinsky's kids also started getting involved with sports, which occupied much of his free time and kept him away from the lanes.

"My kids had something just about every night, so I just stayed and watched them," he said. "But now they're getting old enough, so I started bowling again."

Swadinsky joined Burdette, Don Sweet, Corey Gray and Andre Campos on the Businessmen's League team on Thursday nights at Potter's Alley in Morton.

It didn't take long for Swadinsky to put up some big numbers.

Midway through the season, he is averaging 226. On December 7, he rolled his 13<sup>th</sup> career 300 and added games of 234 and 275 for an 809 series at Potter's. The were his first honor scores in about 11 years.

"I'm kind of surprised my game came back to quickly," Swadinsky said. "And I'm really glad my back is holding up more than anything."

He enjoyed his big night but was a little more mellow than he was a few years ago when he got his nickname.

"In my younger days, when we got done with the Masters, we'd bowl pot games afterwards," Swadinsky recalled. "We'd run strikes out and if something big would happen I'd rip my shirt off."

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That would expose a massive amount of chest hair underneath his jersey.

“They would say, ‘Too much fur,’ so I became the Fur Curtain,” he said. “And it’s been that way for about 20 years.”

While Swadinsky is no longer ripping up his bowling shirt after big shots, the chest hair is still there.

“It’s just getting a little gray,” he said.

## **Team Tucker, Team Baker claim trios titles**

A pair of trios took completely different paths to the winner's circle. Team Tucker used its tournament-high handicap total for a big win at Landmark Lanes, while Team Baker won a recent trios event at Mt. Hawley Bowl with some big scratch scores.

The team of Chad Tucker, Paige Anderson and Chris Pounds put their 1,040 total pins of handicap for eight games to good use on Sunday.

They outlasted a field of 31 teams to claim the title in the Handicap Swiss Trios tournament at Landmark.

In the tournament, teams earned two points for each individual win and four points for team victories – a total of 10 points available each match. The tournament also featured a position round every game.

Team Tucker went into the final match tied with Team Harp (Justin Harp, Will Deters and Vinnie Vinyard) with 50 points.

Team Tucker won the match, 8-2 and finished two points ahead of Team Crowe (Cam Crowe, Nate Stubler and Dakota Solonka).

Pounds, bowling in his first tournament, led the way for the winners with a handicap total of 1,830. Anderson added 1,795 and Tucker, her brother, 1,749.

PBA champion and 2021 PBA Rookie of the Year Matt Russo had one of the four 300 games rolled in the tournament. He added 258 and 258 for an 816 set.

Curtis Welch, who also rolled a trey, opened the tournament with an 801 set. The other two 300 games were by Stubler and Kevin Tockes.

At the Holiday Winter Trios tournament at Mt. Hawley Bowl, the strong team of Tommy Barnwell, Bob Baker and Tony Recsnik claimed the title.

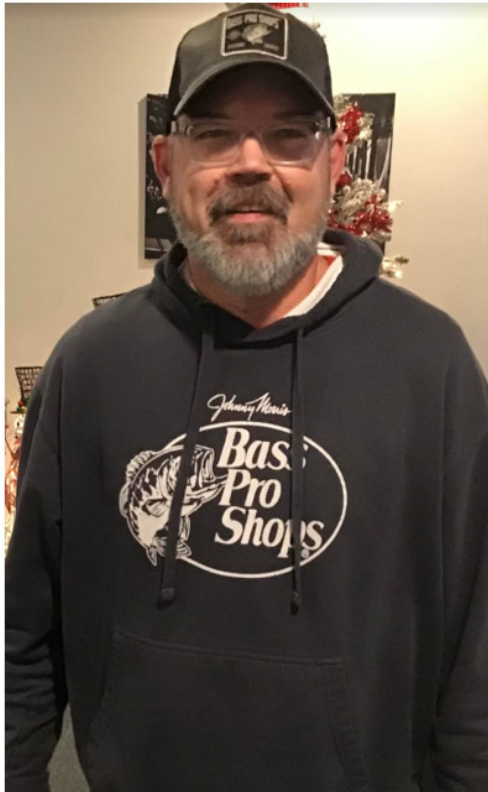
They beat the team of Andy Jason, Alex Stauthammer and Michael Degrave in the title match.

Team Baker opened with a big 786 game, getting 286 from Baker, 256 from Recsnik and 244 from Barnwell. They added games of 642, 698 and 699 for a four-game pinfall total of 2,825 – edging Team Jason (getting 272 pins of handicap) by just 25 pins.

In the opening match of the stepladder finals, Team Hopwood (Jason Hopwood, Tony Hnilicka and Clint McCombs) advanced by defeating Team Zueck (Eric Zueck, Rich Landrith and Brian McDaniel). Team Jason then beat Team Hopwood in the semifinals.

Barnwell also won the Scratch Eliminator at Linn Lanes in Canton, averaging 250 for his seven games.

Tony DeVita was the runner-up, averaging better than 240 on the night, followed by Tim Blanch, Sammy Taylor, TJ Lewis, Josh Barnwell and Dave Mcvey.



Todd "Fur Curtain" Swadinsky



Handicap Swiss Trios winners (left-to-right) Chad Tucker, Chris Pounds, and Paige Anderson

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**Holiday Winter Trios champs (left-to-right) Tony Recsnik, Tommy Barnwell, and Bob Baker**

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