

Tuesday October 30, 2024

Spare Change

By Johnny Campos

Potter's Alley team jumps from third to first with second straight dominate performance to win first third of Bill Mastronardi Masters League

The Potter's Alley team completed a near-perfect performance – including a pair of perfect games – for the second straight week on Monday night to claim the first third of the Bill Mastronardi Masters League.

The team of Bob Baker, Chris Feger, Jason Jones (of Peoria) and Brian Davis was in third place going into position round at Potter's Alley in Morton, 12 points behind second-place Sunset Lanes and 21 behind the leader, Wingstop.

Sunset Lanes took care of business, knocking off Wingstop, 30-20, to go around them in the standings.

But Potter's beat Tunyuck Solutions, going 46-4 for the second straight week, to leapfrog both of those teams to win the first third of the league.

Potter's Alley ended the first third of the season with a 327-323 record, Sunset finished second at 323-227 and Wingstop third with 322-228.

"We knew they had to come to a split over there, but we just needed to win big," said Baker, who opened the night with a 300 game – his second in the league this season. "We really got lucky the last two weeks, going 46-4 both times.

"Tonight, Chris came up big the last game (with a 300) and we had a big first game with a 1,062."

In addition to Baker's trey, Jones added 279, David 246 and Feger 237 for an opening 1,062 – currently the third high four-man team game in the nation. Wingstop had held the third spot after a 1,059-team game the previous week at Linn Lanes.

And none of the games was close against Tunyuck. Potter's won the first game 1,062-872, Game 2, 877-819, and Game 3, 973-767, winning the match by 454 pins.

Feger led the team with a 775 set, Davis added 733, Baker 716 and Jones 688.

The previous week, the team defeated Morton Industries 46-4, getting a 773 from Baker, 772 from Davis, 716 from Jones and 677 from Feger.

The team has averaged a combined 243.75 for the final two weeks of the first third, jelling the way Baker thought it would when he put together the team in the draft.

"Brian has shot 700 four of the last five weeks, and Jason Jones is a hell of a bowler in the No. 2 spot," Baker said. "And Chris has been great in the leadoff spot. We've got two past champions in the lineup, and it's unreal how everybody is coming through."

Through the first 11 weeks, Baker is pacing the team with a 226 average, Feger is at 225.5, Davis at 223.3 and Jones at 216.7. Davis leads the team in individual points with 54, Feger has 51, Jones 44 and Baker 42.

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Jason Jones of Bloomington was high man for the Sunset Lanes team with a 722. Team captain Steve Taylor added a 711 (with pretty consistent games of 237, 236 and 238), Ryan Walker 707 and Joe Robards 637.

Tony DeVita swept Robards, 8-0, and Travis Anderson beat Taylor, 6-2 for Wingstop. But Jones swept Josh Barnwell and Walker beat Jason Hester, 6-2, for Sunset to keep the match close.

Wingstop got off to a fast start with a 1,004-team game, getting 278 from Anderson, 268 from Hester, 237 from DeVita and 221 from Barnwell.

But Sunset won the next two games and ended up with a pinfall total of 2,777 – just five pins more than Wingstop – to earn the six points for total pins. That was just enough to go around them by a point.

But they could see what Potter's was doing on the pair to their right, and Taylor knew that his team was going to fall short in the standings.

The league starts the second third next Monday at Plaza Lanes in Washington.



Potter's Alley team of (left to right) Brian Davis, Chris Feger, Bob Baker and Jason Jones went 92-8 for the last two weeks to win the first third of Masters League.