

Monday September 26, 2022

Spare Change

By Johnny Campos

Bowler takes scenic route to 269 triplicate, first 800 series

While there are a few different ways to bowl a 269 game, Vinny Napolitano found three different ones on the same night recently at Mt. Hawley Bowl.

The 27-year-old was more worried about rolling his first career 800 than he was at realizing he was also going for a triplicate. That turned out to be a good thing.

Napolitano took the scenic route on his way to the triplicate, rolling three straight 269s for an 807 series. The only thing identical about the three games was the final score of each.

The series consisted of 28 strikes, five 9-counts – and a gutter ball!

“I showed up in the second frame of the first game,” he recalled. “I was running a little late coming from work (as an apprentice/lineman for Ameren), so I missed practice. I was subbing on my dad’s team.

“I struck on my first three shots, but they all were kind of wide. And then I threw the fourth one in the gutter. I kept telling myself that I needed to tighten up my line, but my body was not cooperating.”

Napolitano, who uses a two-handed delivery, spared after the gutter, and then threw seven straight strikes before leaving a 10-pin on his fill ball.

“Then after that one, I just had to focus up and just kept going,” he said. “After that I felt dialed in.”

He started Game 2 with eight straight strikes before leaving a 9-pin in the ninth. He spared, struck in the 10th, and then left a 10-pin, which he also spared for a second 269 game.

“The last game I was on pace for a 280,” Napolitano said. “I went strike, 10-pin spare and then went out until the 10th. I had not even thought about the triplicate at the time. I was just thinking about 800, because I had never gotten one. So, I was super focused on that.”

He was so focused on it, that he had trouble figuring out what he needed in the 10th frame to break the 800 barrier.

“I’m bad at bowling math, so I thought I needed two strikes,” Napolitano said. “Then I thought I needed a strike and a 9-count.”

He got the first strike in the 10th, but then almost messed up the triplicate on his 11th shot.

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“I got a little nervous and pulled that one, and it came up high,” he said. “I left the 3-9, and then the 9 got tripped out. After I left it, I saw that all I need to do was pick up the pin and I’d have the triplicate!”

He successfully converted the 3-pin to complete the unusual triplicate score.

“It was kind of funny how it worked out, because I wasn’t even thinking about it,” Napolitano said. “Last year I shot a 790, and I’ve had a few 750s, so I’ve come close to 800. I was due for one.”

He has rolled a 300 game, but it was in unsanctioned play when he was a senior bowling for the East Meadow (New York) High School team.

“I grew up in Long Island and was there for the first 18 or 19 years of my life before coming out here,” Napolitano said. “My dad (Dan) got a different job, so I moved here with him.”

He rolled the 300 using a one-handed delivery, but the Trey was not well documented.


“One person recorded it, from about 10 lanes away,” Napolitano said. “It was 2013, so there weren’t like a million iPhones around.”

He switched to the two-handed delivery after moving to Peoria, mostly out of necessity.

“I kind of hated it at first, because I was just feeling like I was getting better one-handed,” Napolitano said. “But it was getting to the point where I was bowling so much and got these pinched nerves, and I just couldn’t finish three games without it hurting like crazy. So, I switched over.”

And that eventually resulted in his 269 triplicate and first 800 series.

“I wasn’t even thinking about the triplicate until the last frame,” he said. “I don’t think that’s ever going to happen again. Everything just fell into place.”



MT HAWLEY BOWL														
8200 NORTH HALE AVENUE - PEORIA														
(309) 692-7555														
2022/09/17														
Score by player														
8:29:41PM														
VINNY NAPOLITANO	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total			
O														
Lane 5	Game 1										2022/09/17	18.01	18.47	
Hdcp	27	X	X	X	-	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	9	
		30	50	70	90	120	150	180	210	240	269	296		
Lane 5	Game 2										2022/09/17	18.50	19.37	
Hdcp	27	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9	/	X	9	/
		30	60	90	120	150	180	209	229	249	269	296		
Lane 5	Game 3										2022/09/17	19.41	20.26	
Hdcp	27	X	9	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9	/
		20	40	70	100	130	160	190	220	249	269	296		

Vinny Napolitano