

Monday, October 31, 2022

Spare Change

By Johnny Campos

Late substitute turns out to be key addition for winning team in Halloween Handicap Trios event

A late substitute turned out to be a scary good addition for the winning team of the Halloween Handicap Trios Tournament at Landmark Lanes on Sunday.

Andy Stone agreed to bowl with Tony DeVita and Brad Moore just a couple of days prior to the event, and ended up as high man on the team, throwing some clutch strikes in key situations along the way to help them claim the title.

"Brad and Tony already had a spot together and saw that I wasn't on the roster with anybody yet," Stone said. "Brad got hold of me and asked if I wanted to bowl.

"Everybody else had gotten matched up together and I hadn't gone out to try and put a team together. Nobody had asked me at that point yet, so I said sure. It worked out really well."

Stone finished the six games of qualifying with a 1,452 total (242 average), DeVita 1,353 and Moore 1,293. But they barely qualified for the eight-team bracket finals, grabbing the seventh spot by just five pins over the formidable team of Larry Larsen, Jason Queen, and Tom Adcock.

"We crossed with Adcock's team, and our goal was that if we stay close to them, we're probably going to have at least a good day," DeVita said. "After three games we were smoking them, but they just started clawing back."

Stone struck out in the 10th frame of the final qualifying game, giving his team a 643 to finish qualifying with 4,098. Adcock put together a late string of strikes to shoot a closing 268. That gave his team a final team game of 667 to grab the eighth spot in the finals with 4,093.

The qualifying leaders were Tommy Barnwell (1,416), Travis Anderson (1,419) and Steve Taylor (1,444), who totaled 4,279 – a 237.7 average per bowler. But they finished just 20 pins ahead of Scott Rains (1,446), Bobby Werthmann (1,476) and Josh Cantrill (1,337), who made a late charge at the leaders.

Rains' team was in 10th place with two games to go when they bowled an 853 to vault into second place. Cantrill rolled a 296, Rains a 290 and Werthmann 267, giving them the second highest three-man game rolled in the nation this season.

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Stone, Moore and DeVita ended up beating the top two qualifiers in bracket play on their way to the title.

They beat the team of Irvin Johnson III, Josh Grove, and Chad Barnes in their opening match, and then survived in the next round by three pins over Evan Haile, Dawn Guerrero and David Knowles.

In the semifinals, Stone, Moore and DeVita beat Barnwell's team, 456-439, in a two-game Baker match, while Rains' team beat the trio of Dan Lee (1,328), Mark Walker (1,411) and Mark Stoner (a tournament-high 1,513).

In the title match, Rains' team took a 244-227 lead after Game 1. Midway through Game 2, Stone and Moore left back-to-back pocket 7-10 splits and the team had 75 through five frames. Rains' team was clean and at 99 through five.

"After those two 7-10s, when Tony got up the next frame, he had the 7-10 standing, and those were the last two pins to fall," Stone said. "Everybody on our team jumped up and looked at each other. I just looked at them and said, 'Let's just get every pin we can get. You never know what can happen.'"

DeVita's strike started a six-bagger for his team, but Rains' team was on a 239 pace until the ninth frame.

Werthmann left a 4-7-9 split and did not convert the spare. Stone's double in the 10th frame and an eight-count fill ball clinched the title, 450-446, and the \$1,515 top prize.

"After Werthmann left the 4-7-9, I was looking at the score and saw that if I doubled, I could go up and throw the fill ball and lock them out," Stone said. "I figured Scott was also going to strike out because he's pretty clutch like that. Luckily, I was able to throw the first two really good, and a shot that was good enough on the fill ball."

Stone said he was happy with his performance because he was coming off a mixed doubles tournament on Saturday night with his wife Laura when things didn't go as well as they did on Sunday.

"I did not bowl well at all at Striketown," he said. "My first three games today (269, 239, 268 for a 776) were 25 pins better than my four games yesterday (750). My wife bowled great! I wish I had shown up a little bit yesterday and helped her. She had 850 to beat me by right at 100 pins."

It was the second tournament win for DeVita this month. He won a five-game sweeper at Potter's Alley in Morton three weeks ago, when he averaged 266.4 for the day, including closing games of 289, 288 and 279.

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"I threw the ball decent today, but at Potter's I carried the world," DeVita said. "Today I didn't really carry that well. But fortunately, I made a lot of spares. I missed two corner pins in match play, and fortunately that didn't cost us."

For Moore, it had been a while since he had won a tournament. And midway through qualifying, things were not looking good for him.

"After 269, 255 start, I shot a 149," he said. "I was literally disconnected from my body on spares, and I didn't know what to do to fix that."

Moore missed four 10-pins and a 7-10 in that game and followed with a 182.

"I just kind of settled in toward the end of it and got the feel back and went on from there," he said. "In bracket play and in the finals, I was able to clean it up and not miss any."

"It felt good to get a win again. After the 140 it was looking a little bit scary towards the end, for sure."

It helped that the late addition of Andy Stone turned out to be a scary good decision for the team.



Winners of the Halloween Holiday Trios Tournament (left to right) Andy Stone, Brad Moore, Tony DeVita