

Monday, October 3, 2022

Spare Change

By Johnny Campos

Kyle Anderson continues mastery of Around the Town Tournaments, winning third straight

Using his familiar unorthodox approach, Kyle Anderson continued to dominate the Around the Town tournaments over the weekend.

The left-hander from Lockport made it three-for-three on Sunday, claiming the event in the Peoria area over a field of 33 entries.



Kyle Anderson

Anderson, who just turned 30, averaged better than 244 for 20 games, bowling five games in four different centers over the weekend.

He finished with a pinfall total of 4,881, 90 ahead of runner-up Darren Dunning of Belleville.

Anderson successfully defended his title in the Peoria-area Around the Town, and also claimed the event held in four centers in the Chicago area three months ago.

“I’ve always enjoyed long formats, and I try to keep my mindset as clean as possible,” said Anderson, who earned \$1,300 for the win. “You’re going to get bad breaks and you’re going to get good breaks. I try to stay as focused as possible.

“Being able to just grind things out is one of my specialties. And I take a lot of pride in my spare game. I missed zero makeables on the weekend, which helped out a lot.”

On Saturday, Anderson averaged 244.6 at Mt. Hawley Bowl and 251.8 at Landmark Lanes. On Sunday, he averaged 239.2 at Plaza Lanes in Washington and 240.6 at Potter’s Alley in Morton.

He was able to repeat so many good shots using a unique approach that he developed when he was just learning how to bowl.

Anderson starts his approach in front of the ball return, takes five short, choppy steps and then unleashes the ball down the lane – one-handed.

“I started bowling when I was just 4 years old, and actually started out as a two-hander,” he said. “One of my buddy’s dad, who was a recreational bowler, suggested that I take one hand off the ball, and that I needed to be bowling with one hand. Two-handed bowling wasn’t really anything at the time.

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“So, I kept the same approach and simply took one hand off the ball. So, I’m kind of like a two-hander who throws with one hand, kind of like Anthony Simonsen. He creeps up at the line and really gets a lot of torque at the bottom through just his body weight.”

Anderson’s game has evolved over the years, going through several different versions.

“It’s now developed into this goofy five-step approach, and it’s not something that you necessarily want to watch,” he joked. “But if it’s not broke, why fix it?”

The approach has served Anderson well over the years. He was the first back-to-back individual state champion in Illinois (in 2010 and 2011) and was a standout for four years at St. Ambrose University.

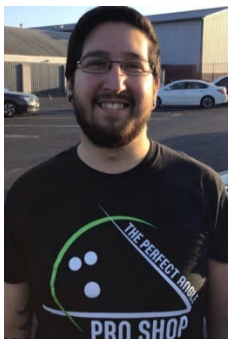
“Throughout my career there, I had nine all-tournament teams individually and was the conference player of the year my senior year,” he said.

After graduating from St. Ambrose with a degree in accounting in 2015, Anderson concentrated more on his job with a Chicago accounting firm than on taking his bowling to the next level.

“I’ve never had a PBA card, and have always focused on my accounting career,” he said. “I’ve dabbled in regionals and cashed in a couple of them (two fourth-place finishes).

“But I want to keep the sport fun. Sometimes I think I would stress the money aspect of things if I were to really try and pursue it. These guys on tour are so, so good. I think if I got in a little slump, I would get aggravated. And I always want to keep this fun because bowling is my escape.”

All of the top six spots went to out-of-town bowlers in the Around the Town event. Three bowlers from the Perfect Angle Pro Shop/Bill Mastronardi Masters League claimed the last three checks in the tournament.



Andre Campos

Andre Campos was the high area finisher, placing seventh with a pinfall total of 4,516 (225.8 average). Mike Boogren was eighth with 4,507 and Tim Blanch ninth at 4,472.

“I felt I could compete with these guys from out of town, but I had a lot to come back from for yesterday,” Campos said. “I didn’t do so hot.”

He was in 12th place after Day 1, when he averaged 219.3 for his first 10 games. Campos averaged 232.3 on Sunday.

“Potters was a good house to finish in for me, because I bowl league here,” he said. “All of the top five bowled great today. Yesterday I just couldn’t carry very well.”

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Blanch had a big finish to grab the last check. He rolled the high five-game block of the tournament at Potter's, including his 22nd career 300 game.

He had games of 239, 243, 258, 300 and 278 for a 1,318 set – a 263.6 average. Going into his final five games, Blanch was averaging 210.26.

"I was throwing pearl balls all weekend and wasn't getting any carry," he said. "So, when I went to Potter's, I decided to throw solid, and that's what made the difference today!"

There was not much local support for this tournament, with only about a quarter of the entries from the Peoria area. So, this probably will be the last Around the Town event held at area centers.

Tournament Director Jennifer Mauerman said that she has another Around the Town scheduled for the first weekend in June next year at Bowlero Deer Park, Arlington Lanes, Town & Country Joliet and Strikes N Spare II in Lockport.

"It'll be my last push for that style of event," Mauerman said. "I know it's a huge commitment from the bowlers, but everyone who does bowl seems to love it."

Especially Kyle Anderson.