

Monday July 3, 2023

Spare Change

By Johnny Campos

Accidental lineup for Refty's Ringers still good enough to win Firecracker Tournament in Springfield

An accidental lineup turned out to be the winning combination in this year's recent Firecracker team tournament at King Pin Lanes in Springfield.

In the title match, which went well into the night in the Springfield version of the Midnight Bowlers Society, Refty's Ringers disposed of Snaggle Tooth, another group of Peoria-area bowlers, 1,002-802, to claim the top prize.

The winning team was put together by Kevin Tockes (a.k.a. Refty) in a foursome that included Andre Campos, AJ Fair (from the St. Louis area) and Brad Moore.

In the title match, Tockes and Campos both started with seven straight strikes and finished with 279 games. Fair added 224 and Moore 220.

Snaggle Tooth, which qualified in fourth place just 15 pins behind Refty's, got a 257 from Mark Walker in the final match. Mark Stenger added 189, Kenny Combs 181 and Mike Boogren 170.

In qualifying, Boogren was high man with 1,031 (second highest score among the bowlers on the eight teams who advanced to bracket play), Walker added 893, Stenger 888 and Combs 822.

Tockes originally wanted the lineup to be himself at leadoff followed by Fair, Moore, and then Campos at anchor.

"But I told my dad the lineup, and I guess he didn't send in what I said," Tockes said.

Tockes believed that the team had to bowl in the order that it was sent in on the entry form to tournament director Craig Rhodes. But that was not the case.

"The line-ups could be whatever they desired, as players were listed as A-B-C-D or 1-2-3-4," Rhodes said. "It mattered not what was listed on the entry form."

It turned out to be a moot point, since all of the bowlers on the winning team came up with clutch strikes when called upon, including Moore.

Monday July 3, 2023

“Brad came up clutch multiple times when we needed him,” Tockes said. “I had faith in Brad for my fourth bowler in this tourney. I knew he could show up and do what he does – being clutch when we needed him.”

Moore said he wasn’t nervous when he saw that he was listed as the team anchor bowler on the sheet.

“I haven’t had my ball speed like I used to, so I struggled pretty much in all four qualifying games,” he said. “But I came up clutch in the ninth and 10th frames. We all did.

“When match play started, it was a lot better. As a team we pulled through and talked out the right moves and what balls to use – and we succeeded! It was probably one of the best communications I’ve had in a long time with a team.”

Refty’s Ringers qualified for the eight-team bracket finals in third place with a pinfall total of 3,700. Tockes led the way with 977 for his four games, Campos added 947, Fair 904 and Moore 844.

Viva La Vida, another Peoria-area team, led the 33-team field by 100 pins with 3,909. Chad Barnes was high man with 1,004. Tommy Barnwell was close behind with 994, followed by Brian Davis at 962 and Tony Recsnik with 949.

But the qualifying leaders lost a tight match against Team Storm (Bryan Paoli, Jim Grigg, Tim Geist and Gary Robinson) and finished tied for fifth place.

Refty’s Ringers also had a close first match, beating Solid 9 Pro shop 2, 1,003-972. They won the next match 885-823, and then beat Snaggle Tooth in the finale.

“AJ and I have always wanted to bowl together, and it took us two years to finally do it,” said Tockes, who averaged 251 for his seven games in the event, including two 279s in bracket play. “And bowling with Andre is always a great time. It’s been too long since he last time, and I’m glad we finally did it.

“In the championship match, the shot played out in our favor, and we came up clutch when needed. The day of the tournament, I sent them all a message about let’s get this win and have fun! We’re already planning to bowl another tournament later this season.”

Campos, who averaged better than 236 on the night, was happy with the final match-up because it involved mostly Peoria-area bowlers.

“When I saw that we were bowling Boogren, Walker, Combs and Stenger for the title, I knew Peoria was taking the title home,” he said.

And as it turned out, the team lineup did not matter at all.

Monday July 3, 2023

More superior performances

In a couple of women's tournaments, the team named FTLOB #10 claimed the scratch title in the Women's Central Illinois Tournament in Springfield, while Bowling Barnwells #17 finished second in the scratch team division of the Midwest Women's Tournament in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The common denominator on both teams was Dawn Guerrero, who has won the past three Senior Women's Bowler of the Year honors in the Peoria River City USBC Association.

In Springfield, Guerrero and teammates Mollie Malone, Jade Frost and Amanda Warwick rolled a 2,708 to win the team title by five pins and finished third in handicap with 2,864.

Frost, last season's Women's Bowler of the Year in Peoria, led the way with a 734 set on games of 257, 255 and 222. Warwick added a 706, closing with 237 and 267, while Malone, the tournament's handicap all-events champ, rolled a 686 and Guerrero a 582.

At the Midwest event, Courtney Johnston led the winning effort with a 730 set, including a closing 289 game. Guerrero was next with a season-high 718 series on games of 224, 257 and 236. Leigh Scott added a 672 and Mary Dana a 615.

Their 2,735 total was 33 pins shy of the winning score, and they finished fourth in handicap with 3,143.

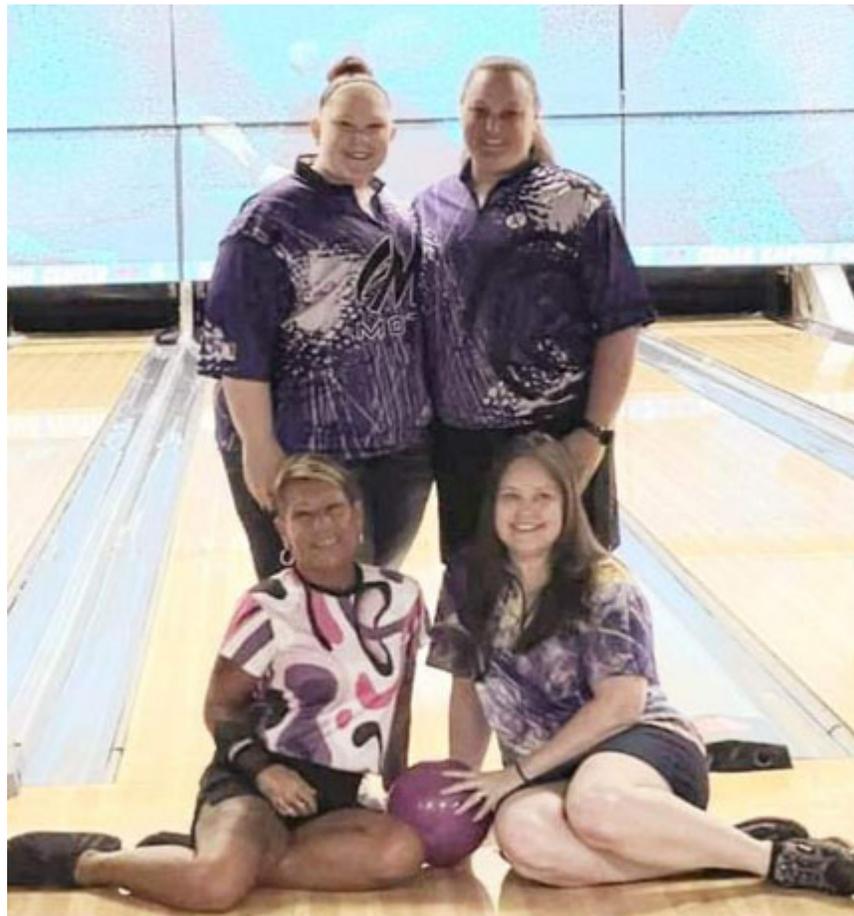
"I feel truly blessed to have been part of both teams," Guerrero said. "It's definitely been an exciting year for me tournament-wise."

Also in the Iowa tournament, Rhea Wolf placed third in handicap singles with 878 and Lisa Feger tied for 19th place in handicap all-events with 2,401.



Refty's Ringers (left to right) Brad Moore, Kevin Tockes, AJ Fair and Andre Campos

Monday July 3, 2023



**Bowling Barnwells #17 team members
(top row, left to right) Courtney Johnston, Mary Dana,
(bottom row, left to right) Dawn Guerrero and Leigh Scott**