

Windsor-Essex Chatham-Kent Bowling Association



The local association would like to congratulate Dan Aqwa for winning the Molson Masters OPEN Division and Charlie Yott for winning the Molson Masters SENIORS Division.

The Molson Masters Bowling Classic 61st Tournament just completed on Saturday Feb. 13, 2016. This tournament has a very long rich history over the years. The Molson Masters was hosted at Palace Recreation, Crescent Lanes, Revs Bowlero, and Revs Rosebowl. Nick Stein has been the long time tournament director for the Molson's Masters Tournament for many years.

Each of the TV finalists was asked what this tournament meant to each of them and why each thought it was so prestigious. **Rob Girimonte** suggested that the tournament provides great competition from many good bowlers. **Gary Hooper Jr.** described the tournament as the pinnacle of bowling in Essex County and the most prestigious in the Province and the Country. **Dan Aqwa** said it is the largest tournament around this area for a very long time. **Darren Alexander** recalled that he watched this tournament since he was very little and he wanted to hopefully win it one day. **Brad Walton** expressed the view he has been involved in helping host many prior Molson Masters events at Bowlero so he knows all the work involved behind the scenes to make the tournament run smoothly. **Rick Goyeau** indicated that this tournament provides Canadian Championship Level competition. **Marc Pouget** believes the Molson Masters is what you bowl the whole year to prepare for because it is like a step ladder to the Hall of Fame. **Garry Dunn** thinks the best of the best bowl in this tournament not just from Windsor but from all over Ontario. **Charlie Yott** feels that all the best bowlers ever known in this area have participated in this tournament. The tournament has been around so long through generations of different types of bowlers.

The Molson Masters runs over 4 weekends. There is a Senior Division (55+) and an Open Division. The tournament starts with 2 weeks of qualifying, followed by one week of Match Play, then the fourth week is the TV Step Ladder Finals. To qualify in the Senior Division bowlers bowl 4 games over 4 pairs of lanes. To qualify for the Open Division bowlers bowl 5 games over 5 pairs of lanes.

SENIOR DIVISION - For Match Play - the top 15 Senior bowlers, plus last year's Senior Champion, are divided into 4 groups of 4 bowlers each. They bowl each bowler once in their division. Then they bowl a final position round within their own group. Each time a bowler wins their match they get a 30 pin bonus added to their score. You move over to a new pair of lanes for each new game bowled. The top Senior bowler from each of the 4 Senior Division groups advance to the TV step ladder finals.

In the Senior step ladder finals, the results were as follows:

Garry Dunn	188	
Charlie Yott	207	
Charlie Yott	191	
Marc Pouget	162	
Charlie Yott	211	(2016 Senior Molson Masters Champion)
Rick Goyeau	172	

Garry Dunn was excited to finally qualify for the TV finals. Gary was pleased that he has bowled many years against his buddies in tournament competition. His downfall in the TV finals was the 10 pin.

Marc Pouget has been in the TV finals 3 years in a row so he has enjoyed the competition. Marc admitted that he used a less reactive ball but later changed to a better reacting ball, more inside, but it was too late to catch up to Charlie. Marc won this Senior division in 2014 so he will be back.

Rick Goyeau claimed that his goal in match play was to win every match so you can get the 30+ pins to be the top qualifier. He met his goal but in the step ladder TV final the left lane was very slippery so it was very difficult to adjust to the slippery conditions. This is Rick's first time as a runner up since he won back in 2012.

Charlie Yott said he was in a really tough match play group against Dave Forfitt, Mike Voligny and Tony Girimonte. Charlie was more comfortable this time than 2 years ago. He said he bowled at a different centre to try out different equipment. Charlie revealed that the ball he used to qualify he used in the finals until the 4th frame of the last game. It was actually nice to see Charlie come through each of his matches and eventually win the Seniors Division Molson Masters Championship. He came from behind in the very first match then he never looked back.

OPEN DIVISION - For Match Play - the top 39 Open bowlers, plus last year's Open Champion, are divided into 5 groups of 8 bowlers each. They bowl each bowler once in their division. Then they bowl a final position round within their own group. Each time a bowler wins their match they get a 30 pin bonus added to their score. You move over to a new pair of lanes for each new game bowled. The top Open bowler from each of the 5 Open Division groups advance to the TV step ladder finals.

In the Open step ladder finals, the results were as follows:

Brad Walton	195	
Rob Girimonte	233	
Rob Girimonte	207	
Gary Hooper Jr.	216	
Gary Hooper Jr.	212	
Darren Alexander	278	
Darren Alexander	209	
Dan Aqwa	269	(2016 Open Molson Masters Champion)

Brad Walton recalled that he started bowling at 16 but he did not come up through any Junior bowling program. His mentor, Wayne Weatherbie, coached him. Brad said when looking at his match play group many of the guys in his group were much better bowlers. He just let his mind go blank, played his own game, found a line and stuck with it. He said you need to do what the lane conditions tell you to do – make adjustments and move with conviction. Brad did not advance but it was his first time in the TV finals so he will be back.

Rob Girimonte conceded that in match play competition he just stayed calm and focused. He said you need to keep your concentration and forget about bad shots because you are bowling 8 games. This was Rob's first time to the TV finals. He was disappointed in his TV finals performance; he found it very nerve wracking but he had the support of his family and friends so he will practice more on technique and will be back next year.

Gary Hooper Jr. also submitted that his match play goal was to keep cool; take one shot at a time and not think too far ahead. Gary indicated that the TV final shot was a little different. He got a break against Rob by throwing a Brooklyn shot in the 10th frame to move on. He found that in his next match he should have been more aggressive from the start because he was throwing a soft shot. Gary Hooper Jr. won the Open division in 2012 so he will definitely be back for many years to come.

Darren Alexander expected that in match play he would get an idea of what the pattern was playing then throw one shot at a time. In the TV finals it was a bit more nerve wracking but he likes to perform being a little nervous. The last game in the TV finals there was too much carry down on the right lane so he was unable to adjust. Darren won the Open division in 2015, and he is young so he will definitely be around for many years to come.

Dan Aqwa confessed that this win meant so much to him because he wanted it to happen while his parents were still around to watch him bowl. Dan indicated in match play he just bowled one frame and one game at a time to stay focused. He did not watch the competition or the scoreboard he just focused on his own game. Dan feels that he is an old guy who can still compete with the young guys. Dan said he goes into this tournament with the same game plan every year. You need to get the breaks – you cannot get upset at bad shots. Dan is talking from experience. After 7 years in the TV step ladder finals and 3 times as a runner up Dan finally broke through as a Molson Masters Open Division Champion.

Catherine Wilbur