

# Windsor-Essex Chatham-Kent Bowling Association



**WECKBA** would like to congratulate Gary Hooper Jr for winning the Molson Masters OPEN Division and Marc Pouget for winning the Molson Masters SENIORS Division. This year's tournament was the 63rd and was completed on Sat. Feb. 17, 2018.

This Molson Masters is a tournament with a very long rich history. It has been hosted at Palace Recreation, Crescent Lanes, Revs Bowlero, and now at Revs Rose Bowl. This year's tournament was dedicated to the memory of June Stollar, the 1970 Ladies Champion who recently passed away.

Gary Hooper Jr led the Open Finalists. Hooper Jr., the defending champion, was seeking his 3rd title and needed to win only one match as the number one seed. Joining Hooper Jr. in the finals were three former champions and a newcomer to the TV finals from Sarnia. Todd Sim (1993, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2011) was the number two seed.

Rob Ladanchuk, a newcomer to TV finals, was seeded third, with Darren Alexander (2015) seeded fourth and Joseph Pettinato (2014), needing to win four matches as the fifth seed to claim the Open title.

The Senior finalists featured three former champs and a former Open runner-up as the number one seed. Mike Snow came in as an alternate then advanced to the Senior Finalists as number one seed. Rounding out the top four were Marc Pouget (2014) second seed, Jim Hussey (1983, 1984, 1991) third seed, and Charlie Yott (2016) fourth seed.

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 while the Open Division participants complete 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 he earns a 30 pin bonus added to their score. They 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.

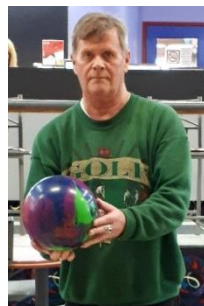
## Senior Division – Match Play – Final Results

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
1 MIKE SNOW 971	1 JIM HUSSEY 922	1 MARC POUGET 941	1 CHARLIE YOTT 913
2 RICK GOYEAU 874	2 WAYNE DUBS 807	2 RICK VITTONI 932	2 NORM WILSON 863
3 RANDY ROBILIARD 850	3 MIKE JEFFREY 761	3 MARK MORAND 838	3 DON OWCHAR 796
4 RICH MCCLOSKEY 793	4 JAMIE MORAND 751	4 AL ACCIONE 762	4 DENNIS DUNNING 704

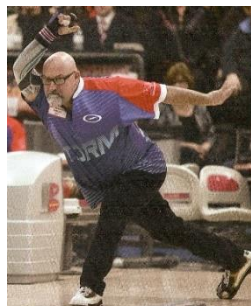
## Senior Division – Step-Ladder - TV Finals



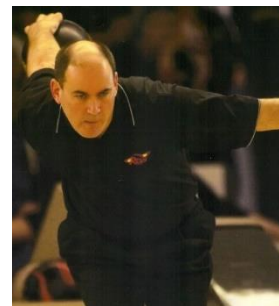
Charlie Yott



Jim Hussey



Marc Pouget



Mike Snow

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

Charlie Yott vs Jim Hussey - Charlie Yott advanced

Charlie Yott vs Marc Pouget - Marc Pouget advanced

Marc Pouget vs Mike Snow - Marc Pouget is **2018 Senior Molson Masters Champion**

**Charlie Yott** had to defeat defending champ Norm Wilson in the final game of match play the prior week to advance to the TV finals. He is a Hall of Famer and the 2016 Molson Seniors Champ. Charlie indicated that the Molson Masters is an enjoyable tournament. Yott revealed that in qualifying, match-play and in TV finals he did not feel very confident. He said he bowled four times to qualify and bowled a lower score each time. To his surprise he qualified with his first score. Charlie tried different angles to the pocket but nothing seemed to work. Charlie indicated that the step-ladder final teaches you to be a good sport. Yott found a 3-4 board difference between the two lanes, so it was hard making the transition between the two lanes. Charlie said next time around he needs to focus more. He might throw two different balls between the two lanes. Charlie found the tougher shot challenging but fair. Everyone had to work to figure it out. Yott felt that all bowlers who were eligible should be allowed to bowl in both senior and open divisions. Should be able to qualify in both divisions and not have to choose between the two.

**Jim Hussey** is a former champ who won his last title 35 years ago in 1983 and he followed that up with titles in 1984 and 1991. After a long layoff, due to back injuries he qualified as the #3 seed for the finals. Jim thinks the Molson Masters tournament is a fantastic tournament. Hussey indicated that he has not bowled in 15 years due to injury. He has had two back surgeries, and four knee surgeries with the last being a knee replacement. Jim has just been back to bowling four months prior to Molson Masters qualifying. Jim said his goal in match play the previous week was just to bowl well. Hussey said he was comfortable in the TV final, but his timing and footing were off. Next year he plans to have new equipment and a whole year of bowling instead of four months. He indicated the tougher shot was good. To throw this tougher pattern you need to throw the right way, you need better equipment and you need to learn to adjust. Hussey was very happy how he finished considering he has not been able to bowl for 15 years.

**Marc Pouget** is making his unprecedented 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive time to the TV finals. He is a Hall of Famer and the 2014 Molson Masters Senior Champion. Marc said the Molson's Masters is a great tournament. He liked the tough shot they introduced this year. Marc said that in the prior week in match play he was in a very tough group. He bowled against two of the best bowlers, Rick Vittone and Mark Morand. He lost his first two matches in match play but bowled the best he could. He just made it to the finals in his group beating Vittone by 9 pins. The TV step ladder final experience went very well for him and was very exciting. Marc found a one board difference between the two lanes which was challenging. In his final game of the step ladder finals he nearly rolled a perfect game. Marc joked that he would not change anything except maybe to become a lefty like Hooper. Pouget liked the tougher shot. He found the oil pattern similar to Reno and Vegas, but challenging, so it took time to master the shot. Marc wished to thank Storm and Danny Aqwa for helping with his bowling equipment. Marc pointed out that this tournament was a little more special for him and his wife and a friend of hers who is battling cancer in Florida and he dedicated the tournament to both as well as to some friends who were seeing him compete for the first time.

**Mike Snow** got to the match play the prior week as an alternate, but that did not stop this Hall of Famer from making the TV finals. He was runner-up in the Open Division in 2014 and this was his 4<sup>th</sup> TV appearance. Mike found this year's Molson Masters a disappointing experience. In match play the prior week Mike said he bowled just like normal, he did not do anything special. In TV step ladder final Mike was throwing a good ball but it was just not carrying the shot. Snow said he did everything he wanted to do, he had all the balls he needed for the tournament. Snow found the tougher shot very challenging. Even though his final score was not close, Mike should be proud of the accomplishment, progressing from 1<sup>st</sup> alternate, to the final match.

**OPEN DIVISION** - For Match Play - the top 39 Open bowlers, plus last year's Open Champion, are divided into five groups of eight 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.

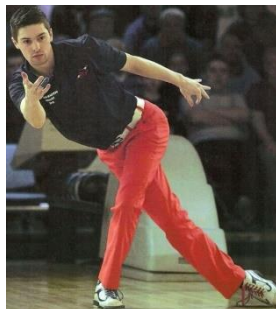
Open Division – Match Play – Finals

GROUP "A"	GROUP "B"	GROUP "C"	GROUP "D"	GROUP "E"
GARY HOOPER 2029	DARREN ALEXANDER 1904	ROB LADANCHUK 1947	TODD SIM 1960	JOSEPH PETTINATO 1793
MARC REHAUD 1931	RYAN TRUSSLER 1903	MARTY SANDERS 1933	RYAN MILLER 1931	MARK DUFOUR 1769
JAMIE CHARLES 1841	BRAD CLARKE 1836	MARC DECMAN 1808	BOB GIRIMONTE 1868	ERIC JANSSEN 1756
FRED PHILLIPS 1754	JASON GREENING 1737	DAN AQWA 1799	JORDAN CROSKERY 1788	STEPHEN TENO 1688
STEVE WALLS 1752	CHAD MATCHETT 1712	TIM JOHNSTON 1742	DANIEL REID 1776	RYAN BOISMILER 1686
MATT GRIMMELL 1653	STEVEN BAS 1696	JASON HERON 1736	RICK GATT 1645	BRIAN CINAT 1651
KYLE WALTON 1633	BRAD WALTON 1520	JOHN BATSON 1696	BARRY CHARLTON 1637	ION MYRONYK 1562
JAMES GENDREAU 1522	STEVE HUNTER 1476	EDDIE BUJAK 1505	JORDAN GERRARD 1375	CARY LUCIER 1350

Open Division – Step-Ladder - TV Finals



Joseph Pettinato



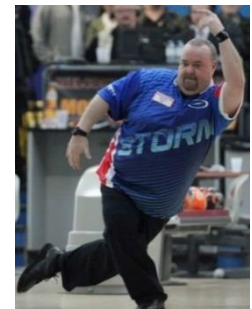
Darren Alexander



Rob Ladanchuk



Todd Sim



Gary Hooper Jr

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

- Joseph Pettinato vs Darren Alexander - Darren Alexander advanced
- Darren Alexander vs Rob Ladanchuk - Rob Ladanchuk advanced
- Rob Ladanchuk vs Todd Sim - Rob Ladanchuk advanced
- Rob Ladanchuk vs Gary Hooper Jr - Gary Hooper Jr is **2018 Open Molson Masters Champion**

**Joseph Pettinato** knows what it's like to run the table and win 4 matches to win a title. He won the 2014 Open. Pettinato indicated that this is one of the bigger tournaments in the City of Windsor. Many good bowlers come to bowl, so the Molson Masters shows the true talent of some of the best bowlers. In match-play Joseph's mindset was just to make good shots to win matches. In the step-ladder final Joseph ran into Darren Alexander, one of the best young bowlers in the city. Alexander made good shots, but Pettinato did not. Joseph started with two opens then with splits, so it was hard to catch Darren. Pettinato liked the idea of the more difficult shot. He felt it brought out the best in the bowlers who were able to adjust to the challenging conditions. Match was not close, but it is sometimes very difficult to find the line on tough conditions in a one game match.

**Darren Alexander** came from 3<sup>rd</sup> place, the prior week in match-play, by throwing 5 strikes in his final game to pass Ryan Trussler and Brad Clarke to win his group by one pin and advance to TV finals. He won the John Pavicic Memorial Award as High Qualifier. He was the 2015 Open Division Champion. Darren felt that he bowled well the entire tournament and had played the pattern the way he was supposed to play the shot. When he reached the TV finals, the pattern broke down in an unexpected way. In match-play, Alexander said he bowled fantastic. He was over 200 and never missed a single pin until the TV finals. Darren said he got a few breaks in match-play even though he went 4-4 in his matches the prior week. In the TV step-ladder final the first game really went well. In the second game the first five frames went well then after the 6<sup>th</sup> frame the pattern changed, and he was slow to move. Darren concluded he would not change much next time he bowls in this tournament. But he thinks the single miss was crucial. Alexander said he should have moved faster but did not see the change in the oil pattern. He did like the harder shot which allows the better bowlers to rise to the top. He indicated you learn more bowling on a challenging shot. He feels every scratch tournament should be on a sports shot.

**Rob Ladanchuk** made his 1<sup>st</sup> TV appearance and was attempting to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Molson Open Champ from Sarnia. This was Rob's 3<sup>rd</sup> time bowling in the Molson Masters. Overall Rob conceded that it was exciting to bowl against the best bowlers in Windsor. He said he learned quite a bit from all the bowlers. His mindset in match-play was to continue to make great shots one frame at a time. The step-ladder final experience he found to be exciting, exhausting, and challenging as he competed against Windsor's best bowlers. Rob indicated next time he bowls in this tournament he will bring different gear to handle different lane conditions. He enjoyed the more challenging lane conditions. When scores are lower people think they have a better shot, so you have a better turnout in the tournament. Rob remarked that he had quit bowling for 8 years due to work and travel and had only returned to competition three years ago. In the step-ladder finals, because of the tough lane condition, competitors had problems themselves so on numerous occasions they let him back into the match but he had to concentrate on playing his own game as conditions were tough. What let him down was the right lane and some very difficult spare conversions. Rob was generally pleased with his finish and never expected to beat Darren Alexander or Todd Sim but in a one game match anything can happen.

**Todd Sim** won his first title 25 years ago. After that he added 6 more championships and is the all-time Molson champion. He is also a Hall of Famer. Todd seemed to be having issues with the right lane. He could not seem to handle to the difficult lane conditions. Todd and Rob both had 5<sup>th</sup> frame splits. At that point the match was just 14 pins apart. Todd doubled to go ahead after 7 frames, but Rob answered with two strikes himself. Todd buried his ball in 6<sup>th</sup> frame leaving 10 pin, but misses the spare. In the 10<sup>th</sup> frame Rob threw a bad count then missed the spare opening it up for a possible tie. Todd had a spare in 9<sup>th</sup> frame so he needed a strike then a spare for a tie game. Todd ended with a nine-pin count, a spare then a strike to lose the match by a pin.

**Gary Hooper Jr** Sitting as the top seed worked well for this defending champion. He has already won 2 titles from the #1 seed position and was vying for his third title. Gary thinks the Molson's Masters is a great tournament. In match-play a week earlier Hooper's goal was to keep a cool head and see what happened at the end. In the TV step-ladder final experience he felt it was rocky at best. Gary felt very lucky to have won his match. Hooper said even though the shot was difficult he loved the shot and considered it a great tournament shot. He felt the shot should be a little harder in scratch tournaments. Had he rolled two strikes plus a good count Rob could have won the match but a familiar split that he left on numerous occasions was his undoing in the final.

Some bowlers did complain about the shot. This year the shot was made quite a bit tougher than in previous year's tournament play. This was the consensus of those of us who watched the competition and many of us nevertheless found ourselves defending the use of a tougher oil pattern. However, the more difficult shot during qualifying, match play, and the TV finals made for lower scores than usual. In TV final there were only two 200 games in the Seniors division and just one in the Open division. Even though scores were lower, competitors felt a tougher shot was needed for these scratch tournaments. Better bowlers have the equipment, the talent and the experience, so they should be able to adjust to any bowling pattern presented to them. This allows the best of the bowlers to rise to the top. Some competitors felt it gives more bowlers a chance to compete and be successful if the shot is tough. Ordinary bowlers watching the TV finals find the event to be more appealing to the regular bowler because that elite bowler is struggling just like average bowlers, scores are not high, so it resonates more with the regular bowler.

This year's tournament did not disappoint as we had some interesting story lines in addition to the actual competition. We had Jim Hussey returning to bowling after a 15-year absence due to many surgeries. We had a bowler Rob Ladanchuk, from Sarnia, who had to juggle his work schedule after being away from the game for many years. We also had a bowler dedicate his bowling TV finals to his wife and her friend fighting cancer. There was also a bowler who stepped in as an alternate in match-play who ended up being the #1 seed in his group. This #1 seed did not win his match, but these scenarios gave ordinary bowlers the belief that they can compete at this level.

In conclusion, the tougher shot made for an exciting Molson's Masters TV finals. Many bowlers expressed the hope that tournament organizers would leave it the same for next year.

Catherine Wilbur