

Windsor Essex Chatham-Kent Bowling Association



WECKBA would like to congratulate 2020 Molson Masters Champions, Darren Alexander (OPEN Division) and Rick Vittone (SENIORS Division). This year's tournament was the 65th and was completed on Sat. Feb. 15, 2020.

The 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. It is important that the local bowling community thank Nick Stein (Tournament Director), Wendy Aqwa (Tournament Coordinator), and Tournament Sponsors (Molson's, Revs Rose Bowl, Storm Bowling) for all their hard work in hosting this tournament.

Darren Alexander led the Open Finalists. Alexander, who was the 2015 champ, was the high qualifier this year where he shot a perfect 300 game in qualifying. Smooth bowling lefty, Marty Sanders, was the fourth seed seeking his 1st title. Defending champ, Dylin Hunter was the third seed. Steve Walls Jr, who throws a powerhouse ball, was still looking for his first title as the fourth seed. Former champ (2016) Dan Aqwa would need to run the table to secure his second championship.

The Senior finalists featured two former champs, one veteran seeking his initial title and a first time TV finalist. Rick Vittone (1990-Open) was number one seed, Mark Labord (2004-Open) was the second, Mike Snow, a veteran in the TV finals, was the third and Steve Martineau, making his first debut to the TV finals, was the fourth seed.

The Molson Masters runs over 4 weekends. It features a Senior Division (55+) and an Open Division. The tournament starts with two weeks of qualifying, followed by one week of Match Play, and 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.

This is the second year that the Senior Division and the Open Division alternated the bowling match-play in the stepladder finals.

SENIOR DIVISION - For Match Play - the top 15 Senior bowlers, plus last year's 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	MARK LABORD 993	1	STEVE MARTINEAU 897	1	RICK VITTORE 1003	1	MIKE SNOW 933
2	MARK MORAND 850	2	CHARLIE YOTT 896	2	RICK GOYEAU 866	2	KEVIN BAKER 902
3	MARC HALL 777	3	BRUCE COCKBURN 825	3	NORM WILSON 771	3	GARY LEE 864
4	PAUL LEFRANCOIS 753	4	MARIO FORMOSA 781	4	MIKE VOLIGNY 746	4	SCOTT SALMONS 784

Senior Division – Step-Ladder - TV Finals

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

Steve Martineau (163) vs Mike Snow (236)

Mike Snow (196) vs Mark Labord (237)

Mark Labord (163) vs Rick Vittone (213) - Rick Vittone is **2020 Senior Molson Masters Champion**

Steve Martineau bowls in the Sunday Morning Sinners League with an average of 193. This was Steve's debut in the Molson Masters tournament. He said he just decided to come out and give it a try. Competing in the tournament gave him a totally different outlook to the game of bowling. He found the Molson Masters to be a great learning experience. Steve indicated that the tournament did not really bother him until he reached the TV finals. His match play record was 2-2. He qualified 9th with a series of 827 and this was his 1st time in the TV Finals. He averaged 187 in Match Play.

Mike Snow is a past youth bowling coach. Mike bowled in three leagues last year including the Walkerville Industrial League where he carried a season high average of 221. I have known Mike for many years and if you ever watch him bowl you would marvel at how smooth a ball he throws. Mike was the runner-up in 2014 (Open) and runner-up in 2018 (Senior). Mike has been in the TV finals many times and always seemed to be knocking on the door. I am sure that he will break through very soon. His match play record was 3-1. He qualified 3rd with a series of 872. He averaged 210 in Match Play. This was his 5th time to the TV finals.

Mark Labord used to bowl in Windsor for many years until he moved to London. Mark is another very accomplished longtime bowler who has been a competitor in this event for many years. Mark bowled in two leagues last season where he carried a season high average of 207 in the Sunday Sociable Shooters League. Mark was runner-up in 2000 (Open) then won in 2004 (Open). Labord was also high qualifier for years 2000 (Open) and 2004 (Open). He came so close knocking on the door in the final match of TV finals. His match play record was 4-0. He qualified 8th with a series of 828. He averaged 218 in Match Play. This was his 4th time to the TV finals.

Rick Vittone said he prepares himself for bowling competition with diet, practice, vitamins, and prayer. Vittone indicated the aspect of his game that is the most difficult to master is ball selection. His greatest strength is his mental game. He thinks that the Molson's is the longest running tournament in Canada. Rick bowled in one league last year where he carried a season high average of 210 in the Walkerville Industrial league. Rick won 1990 (Open) then was runner-up in 2017 (Senior). Vittone was also high qualifier for years 1989 (Open) and 2018 (Senior). His match play record was 3-1. He qualified 14th with 802 series. He averaged 228 in Match Play. . This was his 4th time to the TV finals. Vittone just had to bowl one game to win this year's TV match-play Senior Division final as the number one seed

OPEN DIVISION - For Match Play - the top 39 Open bowlers, plus last year's 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 – Final Results



The image shows a scoreboard for the Molson Masters Matchplay tournament. At the top, there are logos for 'REVS', 'MOLSON MASTERS MATCHPLAY', and 'Coors LIGHT'. The scoreboard is divided into five columns representing different groups: GROUP "A", GROUP "B", GROUP "C", GROUP "D", and GROUP "E". Each group lists eight bowlers with their names and scores. The scores are handwritten in blue ink.

GROUP "A"	GROUP "B"	GROUP "C"	GROUP "D"	GROUP "E"
DYLAN HUNTER 1932	DARREN ALEXANDER 1980	STEVE WALLS 1850	DAN AQWA 1784	MARTY SANDERS 1959
DJ ROSE 1811	SHANE COURTNEY 1852	SHAWN LEGGE 1804	JIM LAPOINTE 1732	JORDAN SMITH 1769
MARK DECMAN 1793	RYAN BOISMIER 1715	BRAD WALTON 1703	TOM BREEN 1709	STEVE HUNTER 1746
JOSEPH PETTINATO 1789	FRED PHILLIPS 1689	JORDAN CROSKERY 1702	GARY HOOPER 1682	RICK GATT 1703
JUSTIN PARKKILA 1785	STEVEN BAS 1667	TYLER DUPOIS 1663	JAY BELLIVEAU 1652	ALEX FORMOSA 1684
ROB GIRIMONTE 1651	DEVAN DECMAN 1550	RYAN TRUSSLER 1643	BRIAN CINAT 1632	RYAN MILLER 1651
MYKAELA MITCHELL 1649	TRAVIS BONDY 1518	TREVOR MARTIN 1608	CORI VALLEE 1614	JAMIE CHARLES 1589
STEVE KUBIS 1517	HALEY LUNDY 1474	TIM JOHNSTON 1367	BEN LAPOINTE 1514	JESSICA CAMPBELL 1473

Open Division – Step-Ladder - TV Finals

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

Steve Walls (193) vs Dan Aqwa (192)

Steve Walls (227) vs Dylin Hunter (205)

Steve Walls (213) vs Marty Sanders (150)

Steve Walls (201) vs Darren Alexander (214) - Darren Alexander is **2020 Open Molson Masters Champion**

Dan Aqwa is a long-time prominent Windsor bowler who won this event back in 2016 after being runner up in 1992, 2010 and 2013. He was also high qualifier in 1990, 1991, 2008, 2009 and 2011. Aqwa bowls in three leagues this season with his highest average 225. Dan said he prepares for this tournament by focusing on one frame at a time and trying not to overthink. The aspect of his game that he finds the most difficult to master is being consistent. His greatest strength is his ability to read lane conditions and to quickly determine how and when to make moves on lane. Dan revealed that the Molson Masters is his favorite tournament, and that he looks forward to competing in each year. His match play record was 5-3. He qualified 3rd with a 1134 series. He averaged 204 in Match Play. This was his 9th time to the TV finals

Steve Walls is a young bowler with a very strong ball. When you watch Steve in the TV finals, you may think he is down and out but he always seems to find a way to bounce back. The only exception was in the final match. Walls made the TV finals Open division exciting from start to finish. He made a virtually impossible 7-10 split in his first match which enabled him to advance after his opponent chopped a makeable spare. Walls bowled in two leagues last year where he carried a season high average of 222 in the Saturday Night Mixed-RB league. Steve has been in the TV finals a number of times and has come close to winning. With his explosive ball he will eventually win the Molson Masters, in the near future. His match play record was 4-4. He qualified 22nd with a 1028 series. He averaged 216 in Match Play. This was his 4th time to the TV finals

Dylin Hunter is still a very young bowler who won the Open division in 2019 in his first try. Dylin competes in four leagues this season with his highest average a lofty 246. Hunter prepares himself for tournament competition by listening to music, stretching and talking with family. Dylin claims playing straight up the lane is the toughest part of his game. His greatest strength he feels is being able to hook the lane. For Dylin the “Molson Masters is a very prestigious event in Windsor so to make the TV finals is a really big opportunity.” His match play record was 7-1. He was the top seed in the Open division as last year’s winner of the Open division. He averaged 215 in Match Play. This was his 2nd time to the TV finals

Marty Sanders was the only left-hander bowling in the open division. He bowls in three leagues currently with his highest average a steady 221. Sanders said he practises to mentally prepare for tournaments. Marty finds the mental portion of the game most difficult. He feels being left-handed is his greatest strength. Marty believes that “the Molson Masters tournament is a long process of 2 weekends of qualifying, then 8 games of match play which is a physical and mental grind, and then the TV Finals which goes by so quick that you don’t realize it.” Sanders has been to the TV finals on more than one occasion, he is a very exceptional bowler who is likely to be a future winner in the Open division. His match play record was 5-2-1. He qualified 4th with a 1122 series. He averaged 224 in Match Play. This was his 4th time to the TV finals

Darren Alexander was the Open Champion in 2015, was runner up in 2016, and was high qualifier in 2014, 2018, and 2020. He bowls in three leagues this season with his highest average 240. Alexander confessed that “because I bowl so many tournaments it is part of my normal practice routine. I just try to stay in the present, stick to the process and control the things I can. I try to really take it one shot at a time. There are so many subtle changes that happen in bowling, that it takes a lot of skills that are difficult to master.” He maintains “that there are skills that constantly need to be worked on and may never be fully mastered.” He likes the Molson’s and for him it is a very good tournament, but it is a really long format so to be able to bowl well for 3 weekends in a row (qualifying, match-play, TV Finals) is somewhat difficult. Despite the stress and fatigue he was happy to be able to get through it. Darren took time to thank Wendy Aqwa and her staff for hosting this tournament and for making it run smoothly. He also asked bowlers to check out DH Bowling on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram for great bowling content. His match play record was 7-1. He qualified 1st with a 1175 series. He averaged 221 in Match Play. This was his 5th time to the TV finals. Alexander just had to bowl one game to win this year’s TV match-play Open Division final as the number one seed.

This year's tournament did not disappoint as we had a mix of some prior defending champions and some relatively new bowlers to the stepladder final. We had a few matches where momentum kept going back and forth between competitors right to the final ball in the 10th frame.

It is important that we congratulate each of the step-ladder final tournament participants. Each of them considers it an honour to make it to the finals. They all experienced nervousness and had trouble reading the lanes just like the rest of us. Each of these competitors reached a major milestone. It was fun to watch the TV finals as each of these competitors made it interesting.

Catherine Wilbur