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BOWLING

Is Donnantuono's wait over?

■ It's been 17 years since Lucy won the SIWBA all-events title, but now she's the hot bowler and in her own house

When Lucy Donnantuono captured her only Staten Island Women's Bowling Association all-events net title 17 years ago, many suspected she'd be visiting the winner's circle again.

After all, Donnantuono, a 20-year-old at the time, became the youngest all-events victor in SIWBA history and her best years were still to come.

As we all know, though, a lot of stories in life don't always go as planned. And such was the case with Donnantuono, whose career has been hampered by tendinitis in her throwing arm ever since she won that prestigious crown.

Despite that, the right-hander still has managed to hold her own on the lanes all these years, consistently averaging in the high 190s and low 200s.

This season, however, Donnantuono seems to be doing her best bowling in years. She currently possesses the highest average among the ladies at Bowling on the Green and appears primed to make another run at an all-events title in the 49th annual SIWBA championship tournament, which begins Saturday at the Green.

"I would say Lucy is the hot bowler right now," said SIWBA secretary Pat Schnur. "She's high lady in the house and has the entering average in the tournament."

Her 201 average is currently 26 pins higher than what she finished with a year ago. The former Stapleton resident, who now lives in Monmouth Junction, N.J., says her arm-ache is simple.

"I'm having fun this year. I'm enjoying the game," she said.



Lucy Donnantuono is zeroed in on another title.

"Last year, my sister lost her husband and a lot of my time and energy went into that. Bowling didn't really matter that much."

This year, though, her outlook has changed and she's much more focused on the things at hand.

It helps, too, that her arm is stronger than ever, allowing her the luxury of throwing a heavier ball.

"I'm using a 15-pound ball, which is actually heavier than the balls I have used in the past," said Donnantuono, who is a member of the Monday Night Ladies Classic and Saturday Fill-Am loops, both at the Green. "I feel that 15 pounds gets me a few more strikes a game."

A switch to a resin bowling ball has also added more striking power to her game, although Donnantuono admitted it took her some time "to learn how to use (resin equipment) because it's different."

She's also tried simplifying the game by showing up at the center with only one bowling ball, unlike many other keggers who are accustomed to using two, three and four different balls per outing.

"I decided to keep the game very simple, so I throw one ball for spares and strikes," she said with a laugh. "No matter what the condition is like to use one ball. If I have to make an adjustment I'll make a move on the lanes. I'm not bowling enough to start switching balls."

The above has all added up to new-found success for Donnantuono. It's also done wonders for her confidence — something she'll need a lot of if she plans on wearing a SIWBA all-events crown again.

The fact that the tournament is being held at the Green — which Donnantuono calls home — might give her somewhat of an edge over the others.

"It's the house I've bowled in for many years now," she said. "But do I have an advantage because I bowl there? I don't know. Bowlers like (defending all-events net champion) Naz (Laursen) and (other top-notch keggers) bowl well at the Green, so I'm sure they'll put on a good show."

Donnantuono says consistency is the key to winning the all-events net crown. "Doing as many frames as possible with spares and strikes and keeping out of trouble," she said. "I think you need to shoot eight good games (out of nine). You might be able to get away with one bad one."

Although a second all-events title has eluded her all these years, Donnantuono has still managed to nail down some top prizes in the prestigious event.

"I have a singles title, and two years ago, my team won a title," she said. "So a doubles title might be nice this year. This way I'll have one in each category."

But deep down, Donnantuono would like nothing more than to win another all-events crown.

"It would probably be more satisfying this time since I'm getting older," she said. "But, by winning that title in 1980, I will always be known as an all-events champion and that makes me happy."

SI Singles Classic set to roll

The 26th annual Staten Island Singles Classic will commence next weekend at Colonial Lanes.

Squads are slated for Saturday at 1, 2:30 and 4 p.m. and Sunday at 1:30, 3 and 4:30 p.m.

Those keggers who enter the tourney's first squad get a second entry for the price of one only.

Entry fee is \$30. First place is \$1,200, a new bowling ball, a videotape of the finals, and a jacket.

To reserve a spot, contact tournament director Donny Walters at 727-2528 or Colonial at 678-6300.



JOE D'AMODIO
SPARE TIME

HS hockey

notebook

Cacace gets a reprieve

Monsignor Farrell hockey assistant Phil Barbara was pleased to report recently that the Lions' star forward, Michael Cacace, who currently leads the team and the NYIHA East division in scoring (12 goals, 16 assists for 28 points) and is fourth on the team in CHSAA scoring (4-6-10), is not leaving for Indiana following this season, as was reported in the Advance earlier this season.

Cacace, whose family was moving to Indiana, recently got a reprieve when his father, Nick Cacace, announced that they would, indeed, be staying on Staten Island. The change of plans is a relief for Cacace, who has already carved his own niche in MF's hockey history. Remember, Cacace was the freshman who scored the clinching goal in the Lions' 3-1 victory over the Eagles in the NYIHA championship last season. That's even bigger when you consider that Cacace was one of only two freshmen to play on the Lions last season.

"I would've been very disappointed," Cacace said of the move that was almost made. "Leaving all of my friends and the hockey team — that wouldn't have been fun."

Still, Cacace did have a few offers to stay on Staten Island, not the least of which came from Barbara himself.

"I was offering him free room and board, a free school pass and a Nintendo 94," smiled Barbara. "Plus I told him, 'I'll give you all the games.'"

Certainly the thought of losing possibly their best all-around forward struck fear into the hearts of the Lions.

"Now, with this change of plans, he's back on track," Barbara said. "This is just the beginning. He's going to be one of the premier players on Staten Island."

Some would say that he already is.

Just the facts

■ Lions III's 11-1 victory over the Sea Gulls last Monday was only the second mercy-rule contest — Lions II's 10-0 whitewash of the Falcons last month was the first — in the NYIHA and the first in the West division this season.

■ This weekend marks the one-year anniversary of Mike Dawson's guarantee. On February 21, 1996, the scrappy Eagles' forward guaranteed a win over the Lions, and then backed up his bravado with two goals in his squad's first win over its chief rivals in over a year, a 4-2 NYIHA East win at the S.I. Skating Pavilion, Charleston.

■ That was probably my greatest moment," Dawson said earlier this week at the Pavilion, as he watched his former team drop a 2-0 decision to the Lions I. "That will probably be what I'm last remembered for."

■ The Eagles II will take a one-point lead in the standings into their NYIHA West contest against the Sea Gulls Thursday night at 10 at the Pavilion. Should the Eagles II win, they'll clinch the final playoff spot in the West. If the Gulls win, they'll lead a one-point lead in the standings and the final playoff spot will be decided in the season's final week, when the Eagles II will play the Lions III, and the Sea Gulls take on the Centrals.

Either way, it's a million miles away from where the Eagles II were just a few months ago.

■ After going 0-5 in a dreadful December and January," Eagles II coach Mike Dawson Sr. said, "we felt we had to win six of our last seven (to have a shot). Right now, we've gone 5-1-1 with two to go. And our one loss — 4-2 to the West division — leading Lions II — was actually a positive game."

■ There recently have been three more suspensions handed out by the NYIHA:

Anthony Jackson of Eagles I was penalized three games for fighting on Feb. 13; the Vikings' Tommy Hunt received one-game suspension for fighting on Feb. 13; and Joe Tepedino of Lions I received a game off for a stick infraction (butt-end major) on Feb. 17.

Lions I defense practically impenetrable

Winning starts with defense, as proven by undefeated Lions I. The NYIHA East runaway leaders have allowed 22 goals, an average of 1.375 per game. The rest of the East defense, in order: Centrals (2.33), Eagles I (3.25), Vikings (3.29), Pirates (3.36), and Falcons I (4.73).

In the West, the Centrals, known for their high-powered offense, are also tops in defense (1.95), followed by Lions II (2.06), Lions III (2.50), Vikings II (4.94), Eagles II (5.06), Falcons II (5.47), and Sea Gulls (6.44).

The Lions organization obviously stresses defense, as its three teams combined are allowing a stingy 2.00 goals per game.

A night at the races

The St. Peter's Eagles Parents Club Association will host "A Night at the Races," March 15 at the school's New Brighton gym. The doors will open at 7 p.m. and post time is 7:30. There will also be raffles and wheels of chance. All are welcome for a donation of \$10 per person, which will benefit the Eagles' hockey program. A four-foot hero, salads, soda, beer, dessert, coffee and tea are all included in the price of admission. Call 983-0906 or 317-7835.

— SAM BOROWSKI and BILL SPURGE

GOLF

Allin takes American Express to lead

■ Jim Allin is three strokes back in a 3-way tie for second

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SARASOTA, Fla. — If Bud Allin's streak continues, he might offer a piece of the winner's purse to Gibby Gilbert.

Allin, who didn't have a spot in this week's American Express Invitational until five minutes before the entry deadline, now has a chance at his first Senior PGA Tour career victory.

Yesterday, the 52-year-old Allin shot a 4-under-par 68 at the wind-

blown Tournament Players Club at Prestancia to take a three-shot lead into today's final round of the \$1.2 million tournament.

On Tuesday, Allin was packing his suitcase to head to the airport for a trip home when he received a call confirming his spot in the field after Gilbert withdrew.

Gilbert's withdrawal can't be sitting too well with Oakwood native Jim Allin, one of seven players three strokes back of Allin's 36-hole total of 8-under 136.

Albus (70) was joined by Bob Eastwood (66), Graham Marsh (67), Mike Hill (69), Isao Aoki (69), Jim Colbert (71), and Butch Baird (72).

Seven more golfers — including Lee Trevino, Hubert Green and

Bob Charles — were 4-under.

Allin's performance was even more impressive considering that after Hale Irwin shot a 19-under total to win last year's championship, the course was set up this year with some extra bite. With wind gusting to 25 mph, only 13 players were able to break 70 yesterday.

"For me, that was a real good round," Allin said. "Saturday rounds have always been tough on me on the Senior Tour. It always seems to be a high round."

While he won five times on the PGA Tour after returning from 18 months of service in Vietnam as an artillery officer, he has man-

aged one second and three thirds in a three-season senior career.

"I won five times on the regular tour, but that was 20 years ago," he said. "To create confidence, you have got to get in a routine of winning or being near the top. So, no, I have no confidence."

But I got some good swing thoughts today and I hit a lot of good shots. Hopefully I can build on that and my nerves will stay in check. I just want to see what happens."

Allin missed only two greens during a five-birdie, one-bogey round. And one of the greens he missed was No. 18, where he dropped a 12-footer from the fringe for a birdie.

LEADBETTER'S GOLF

by David Leadbetter



LEG ACTION: Feel the benefit of a firm left side.

