

SEPTEMBER 2020

BCM

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF BPAA

THE
LIST
ISSUE II

Commemorating a
quarter-century
of bowling's best
business coverage.



THE WORLD'S FIRST TOURNAMENT BOWLED ON STRING AND FREE-FALL PINSPOTTERS

The Some Strings Attached Tournament was held at HeadPinz in Naples, Florida on July 25th and 26th 2020. 65 bowlers, with 20 years competitive bowling experience on average, bowled 670 games.

Half of the games were bowled on EDGE String and half on free-fall pinspotting machines.

**EDGE
STRING** VS **FREE
FALL**

**THE WINNER IS
BOWLING!**

**EDGE
STRING**

65 Bowlers
222 Participant bowling average
20 Years competitive experience on average

97%

**WOULD BOWL IN ANOTHER TOURNAMENT
WITH EDGE STRING PINSPOTTERS**



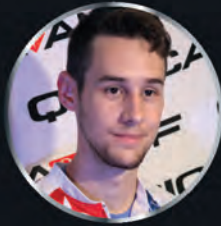
I enjoyed it. It was fun

Kenny Ryan, Winner of the Invitational



I would absolutely bowl another tournament on EDGE String

Jason Couch, Winner of the Open



Great tournament, very fun, very impressed

Nate Garcia



It was my first time, I would do it again

Sean Wilcox



It is still bowling and I love to do it

Verity Crawley



It was a lot of fun

Ashly Galante

Strings in the Spotlight

A report from Florida, plus the top 3 reasons owners like string machines.

By Bob Johnson

There have been tournaments that consisted partially of bowling and partially of golf.

There have been tournaments that featured two different bowling games — such as 5-pins and tenpins at centers in Canada that offered both options.

But on the weekend of July 25-26, there was a bowling tournament like no other. In this case, there was only one game — tenpin bowling — but there were two types of pinsetting machines utilized: traditional free-fall machines, and EDGE String Pinspotters from QubicaAMF.

An invitational tournament, featuring a number of hall of famers and other high-caliber bowlers, took place on Saturday, followed by a separate “open” tournament on Sunday.

HeadPinz Entertainment Center in Naples, Fla., was the host, and the format for each event called for entrants to bowl across 16 lanes — eight equipped with free-fall machines, and eight equipped with strings. The top 12 qualifiers advanced to a second round of three games, followed by a top-five stepladder finals bowled on lanes equipped with the EDGE String pinspotters.

The name of the tournament? The QubicaAMF “Some Strings Attached” Invitational.

The field each day was limited to 48 players, and no spectators were allowed in the bowlers’ area in order to accommodate social distancing. To further help prevent the spread



Proprietor Pat Ciniello and Tournament Director John Hough (left and right, respectively, in each photo) congratulate the champions of the first-ever QubicaAMF “Some Strings Attached” tournament. Kenny Ryan won the Saturday Invitational event for \$5,000, while Jason Couch finished second on Saturday and won the Sunday Open event’s \$1,500 top prize.

of the coronavirus, everyone was required to wear a face covering unless they were bowling.

Yes, it was a tournament like no other in more ways than one. And it was conducted not just to provide bowlers with some coveted competition after going weeks or months (depending on where they lived) without any, but also to gather data on the scoring pace of string machines compared to the scoring pace of traditional free-fall machines —

using the very same bowlers on both.

So how did the numbers shake out? BCM Senior Editor Gianmarc Manzi-one was there, and filed this report:

“With 383 total qualifying games bowled on July 25, the difference in score between string and free-fall came to a mere 1.8 pins per game. The

field averaged 201.65 on free-fall and 203.45 on string. In the following day’s ‘Open’ event, that gap narrowed further to .82 pins per game as the field averaged 205.68 on free-fall and 206.5 on string with a more forgiving lane pattern cushioning scores a bit.

“Across the 671 combined qualifying games bowled over two days, the difference between string and free-fall averages came to 1.33 pins per game. The field averaged 203.43 over two days on free-fall and 204.76 on string.”

Although one weekend of bowling does not a completely comprehensive sampling make, it did seem to put to rest the long-standing presumption that string machines — which can make picking up certain splits less difficult and occasionally accommodate a phenomenon that has been called “ghost carry” — provide a much easier scoring environment compared to free-fall machines.

From a strictly business perspective, more and more proprietors — especially those entering the industry for the first time — are embracing the reality that the shortage of qualified mechanics for traditional free-fall



QUBICAAMF
"SOME STRINGS ATTACHED"
TOURNAMENT

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TOURNAMENT WINNERS!



KENNY RYAN

Winner of the Invitational



JASON COUCH

Winner of the Open

“ I was very impressed with EDGE String. I think these machines are a step in the right direction for bowling.

Jason Couch

16 Time PBA Tour Champion, PBA Hall of Fame, USBC Hall of Fame



machines probably is not going to get better. String machines require far less training and time to maintain, and those have been big selling points.

While they presently are allowed for sanctioned competition in Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada, string machines are not yet certified in the world's largest bowling country, the United States.

"Everyone should understand this was a data collection and observation endeavor on strings versus free-fall," said Pat Ciniello, proprietor of Headpinz and Chairman of the Board of QubicaAMF. "We learned a lot... which was always our goal.

"I have been thinking about this a lot lately," Ciniello added, "and would like to go back and see how the bowlers and industry reacted when the first automatic pinsetters and pinspotters were introduced

many years ago. I'm sure many of the pinboys, proprietors and pro bowlers didn't embrace change at that time, and maybe the resistance to change is similar today."

Ciniello acknowledged that he witnessed what might be considered some unusual pinfall over the "Some Strings Attached" weekend. But as he bowled in a league at a center equipped with free-fall machines a few days later, he noted the "messenger" strikes made possible by today's kickbacks, cushions and high-performance bowling balls — something that was never seen during the 1960s and '70s.

"It makes you think about what has happened to our game over the decades," he said.

And it just might make people think differently about string pinsetting machines.

Top 3 Reasons Owners Prefer String Machines

BCM POLLED a number of operators who utilize string pinsetting machines at their centers. Here are the top three reasons they selected strings over free-fall machines:

1. Personnel savings. There is no need for a full-time mechanic or mechanics. Machine upkeep can be handled by an arcade game technician or someone with similar skills.

2. Maintenance savings. String machines require far fewer spare parts to buy and stock.

3. Up-front cost. String machines cost less than free-fall machines, making it easier to deal with lending institutions and/or purchase more machines.



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"Clicking on parts in the diagram is awesome, and helps me get the correct part the first time."