

## Debbie Ponis Kuhn Superior Performance



Debbie Kuhn, formerly Debbie Ponis, began her bowling career at the ripe old age of 5. "My dad would take me to Fair Lanes Dundalk where he would bowl for 5 minutes and I would bowl for 2 hours" she confesses. Little did they realize that these Saturday morning father and daughter outings would blossom into a love for the sport and would one day send Debbie around the world representing the United States in international competition.

Coming up through the youth program in the Saturday morning leagues and later the Sunday morning travel league, Debbie collected her share of patches, league championships and individual awards. During these early years it was not apparent of the achievements that lay ahead. One trait the youth program brought out in Debbie was her competitive spirit "I remember that after our leagues were over, Danny Wiseman and I would bowl matches for sodas", she says. I think I was 14 or 15 and he was 11 or 12. "He would be throwing his Columbia Yellow Dot and I had a Marvin's Sport City Blue Gem". My dad would take me down on Mondays' to watch the First Niters and I really liked the way the men hooked the ball and decided that I didn't want to throw the ball like a girl "I wanted to Hook it" She began to accomplish this by only inserting her thumb halfway into her conventional grip. "It did not hook a lot, but I was not backing it up like the other girls", she says.

After Debbie graduated from high school, she entered Essex Community College and the adult leagues. While in College Debbie won the Region XX doubles, with her partner and friend Judy West, and

won the All Events. She finished 2nd in doubles, again with Judy West, and 3rd in All Events at the NJCAA National Tournament in 1982 and was named to the NJCAA All American Team. During this time Debbie was being coached local standout Don Connors. Don was like a second father to me she admits. He made me feel comfortable. Don was the first of only a few coaches that I have had, but he was the one who started me. I worked with Don until about 1985 and accomplished quite a bit

Debbie took a break from bowling for about 3 years. She came back in 1988 with a mission. That mission was to be the best she could possibly be. In steps Mike Lastowski. Debbie had been working with Don and he suggested that Mike take her to the next level. Don of course was right. Debbie has worked with Mike since 1988 and most recently Team USA coach Shawn Klug. With their help she has accomplished more than he imagined

Debbie has been a member of the BWBA and MSWBA for 16 years. During those 16 years she has won 38 local city, state, regional, national, and international association titles. She has been named to 3 All American Teams and been featured in various bowling magazines. She has a high average of 209, high set of 774 and (1) 300 game. She has averaged 200 or better 10 of those years. Debbie established 3 WIBC Tournament records in 1991. She was the FIRST Woman ever to bowl 2000 or better for the 9 game All Events at the WIBC Tournament. Her 2036 for 9 games included a series of 773 in the singles Event. The 773 series is THE highest 3 game series EVER bowled at the WIBC Tournament as well as the highest series in singles.

Listed below are Debbie's Titles....

### **Women's International Bowling Congress Tournament Titles**

Open Division Singles Champion 1991

Open Division All Events Champion 1991

In the 1991 Championship Tournament Debbie set 3 scoring records. The first was the A 3 game series of 773. Her 773 also set a record for the highest 3 game series in the sing became the FIRST WOMAN in the 75 year WIBC TOURNAMENT HISTORY to bowl 2000 o All Events when she bowled 2036.

### **TEAM USA Bowling Tournament Titles**

United States Female National Amateur Champion 1998 Team USA National Member 1998,1999, 2000

### **International Tournament Medals**

FIQ World Tenpin Team Cup- Silver Medal 1998

FIQ World Championships - Bronze Medal Team event 1999 Pan American Games - Gold Medal Team event 1999

FIQ World Tenpin Team Cup- Gold Medal 2000

### **Maryland State Women's Bowling Association Tournament Titles**

Team Scratch- 1983, 1996,2000, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010,2011

Doubles Scratch- 1982,1990, 1992, 2001,2002, 2003, 2004, 2006,2010

Doubles Handicap- 1990, 1992, 2002, 2003, 2004

Singles Scratch- 1990, 2001

All Events Scratch- 1990, 1991,2000, 2001,2004,2010

Debbie was the First woman in state history to bowl 1900 scratch All Events score. Debbie was the First woman in state history to bowl 2000 scratch All Events score. Debbie was the First woman in state history to win consecutive All Events titles.

Debbie was the First woman in state history to win 10 scratch titles. Debbie is the only woman in state history to win 20 scratch titles.

Debbie is the only woman in state history to win All Events scratch Titles in 3 different de

Debbie is the only woman in state history to win scratch titles in 4 consecutive decades.

### **Other Maryland Bowling Titles**

Maryland Queens Champion 1983

Maryland 600 Club Champion 1983- She became the first woman to bowl a 700 in this to when she bowled 723 for her 3-game set.

Maryland 700 Club Champion 1987 Maryland Mixed Doubles Champion 1999

Maryland Team USA Champion 1997,2001,2002

WASA Tournament Titles

WASA Hammer Open 1991 WASA Perry Hall Open 1995

## **Baltimore Women's Bowling Association Tournament Titles**

Tea m Scratch- 1982, 1983, 1990, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2011

Tea m Handicap- 1982, 1998, 2000

Doubles Scratch- 1983, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2008, 2009

Doubles Handicap- 1995

Singles Scratch- 1984, 1992, 1997, 1999

All Events Scratch- 1992, 1995, 1998, 2009

## **Cecil Harford USBC Titles**

Team Scratch – 20078

Team handicap - 2005

Mixed Tea m Scratch- 2007, 2010, 2012

Mixed Tea m Handicap- 2012

## **Harford County Women's Bowling Association**

Tea m Scratch- 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012

Doubles Scratch- 2006, 2009, 2012 Doubles Handicap- 2009

Singles Scratch- 2006, 2010 Singles Handicap- 2010

## **Other Bowling Titles**

Severna Park WBA All Events Scratch Champion 1996

Cecil Harford Counties 700 Club Mixed Doubles Champion 2004, 2009

Cecil Harford Counties Valentine's Day Scotch Doubles Scratch Champion 2008

## **Honors and Awards**

1982 National Junior College Athletic Association All American First Team

1991 WIBC All American Second Team

1991 Bowlers Journal Magazine Amateur All American

1999 Bowlers Journal Magazine Amateur All American

1999 Bowling Digest Magazine Amateur Woman Bowler of the Year

1996 Elected to Maryland State WBA Hall of Fame

1999 Elected to the Baltimore WBA Hall of Fame

2000 Elected to the National Junior College Athletic Association Hall of Fame

National Junior College Athletic Association First Team.

1982 Bowlers Journal Amateur All American 1991

Women's Bowling Magazine All American 2nd Team 1991

Bowlers Digest Female Amateur Bowler of the Year - 1999