

# NCAUSBCA Hall of Fame to welcome Johnson, Manolis, and Michaelson

## Inductions set for October 8 at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling

Chris M. Johnson started bowling duckpins at the age of 3 with his mother at Fair Lanes Capital Plaza. He found an early love of the game, and his mother allowed him to join a youth duckpin league three years later. His ultimate goal at that time was to win a trophy, and by the end of the season, he accomplished that goal and received his first trophy. He



continued to bowl duckpins until the age of 10 when Capital Plaza converted its duckpin lanes to tenpins, so he decided to make the change and bowl with the “big pins.”

Chris was one of the top bowlers during his youth career. In his high school years, he played football and other sports, but bowling was always his main priority. During this time, he won several championships, including the Maryland State Games, Virginia State Scratch Singles, two Mid-Atlantic Scratch Bowlers Association titles, the 1993 Vir-Mar District Invitational Tournament, and he was a member of the TNBA Eastern Regional Junior Team Champions—a team that went on to win the TNBA National Team Roll-off in Cincinnati, Ohio.

When Chris moved to adult competition, he had some early success bowling in local pot games and tournaments. With the encouragement of a friend, he decided to try a PBA regional tournament in Richmond, Va., as an amateur, and he cashed.

Over the next two years, he bowled three more PBA regional tournaments as an amateur, cashing in two and making the Top 16 match play finals in the other.

Around that time, he got laid off from his job,

so after having a talk with his father, and with the support of his family, he realized his childhood dream: He decided to get his PBA card and give the tour a chance. He failed to cash in his first two national PBA tournaments and realized he had a lot to learn, so he came home to practice.

Chris bowled a few more national events over the years but didn't have much success. He was still a force at the regional level, however, and it showed as he won a PBA Southern Regional title in Raleigh, N.C., and he also had two other Top 5 appearances.

After living that life for a few years, he decided to drop his PBA card in 1998 and focus on bowling high-dollar amateur tournaments. Chris found success on the amateur scene, as it was the perfect balance of bowling high-profit tournaments while maintaining a home life.

Some of the major tournaments he has won include the John Vargo Scratch Classic in Lumberton, N.J., the New Year's Day Open in Staunton, Va., the TNBA Eastern Rhodman Classic (twice), and the 2006 TNBA National Bill Rhodman Classic Roll-off in Chicago. His biggest prize was a second-place finish at the True Amateur Tournament in Las Vegas that earned him \$15,000.

Other accomplishments include:

- Six appearances in the NCAUSBCA Top 10 rankings, including four times as No. 1.
- Three-time NCAUSBCA 600-700 Mixed Doubles champion.
- Member of the Storm amateur staff since 2003.
- Two-time Lebanon Dutchman Scratch Doubles titlist.
- TNBA Eastern Region Mixed Doubles champion.
- Seven-time Virginia-Maryland Scratch Bowlers Tour champion.
- First-place finish at Storm's Opposite Attract Mixed Doubles Tournament.
- Three Over/Under Doubles titles.
- Three-time ABC World Team Challenge champion.

- Five Top 10 finishes (including second and third) at TNBA Reed-Hawthorne Classic.
- 30 perfect games and over 20 800 series, with a high of 847.

When not bowling, he often can be found at a bowling center helping his kids and others learn more about the game he loves.

Chris M. Johnson's record of sustained excellence on the lanes—and class off of them—has earned him an honored position in the Nation's Capital Area United States Bowling Congress Association Hall of Fame.

**Michael J. Manolis** began his bowling career as an 11-year-old when he bowled in an adult/youth league with his mother at Bowl America Falls Church. The next year, he bowled in a duckpin league but returned to tenpins the following season when he became a regular in the Saturday morning youth leagues at Bowl America Falls Church. From the outset, Mike was a “natural” at bowling and had the kind of free-and-easy, yet powerful, delivery that would attract a crowd of onlookers when he was on the lanes.



Mike has compiled an impressive list of bowling achievements within the Nation's Capital Area. As a 16-year-old youth bowler, he won the 1990 Vir-Mar District YABA Invitational A Division title. As an adult, Mike has won our association's Open Championship Scratch All-Events title on two different occasions—in 2004 and 2014. He also was a member of the Scratch Team champions in the 2014 event. Other local victories include three Falls Church Scratch Tournament titles (1998-2000); two wins of the Falls Church Roger Tarr Scratch Shoot Out (1999, 2001); and the Bowl America Shirley Quick and Cheap Tournament (2003). Mike also has successfully participated in numerous Virginia State tournaments, winning the

Scratch All-Events title in 2006 and the Scratch Doubles event with partner Chhoeun To in 2012. Mike, who has bowled in 16 USBC Open Championships, has a high league average of 237, which he booked for 102 games in the 2012-2013 Falls Church Commercial league. He had a great all-around year that same season, rolling nine perfect games and six 800 series. To date, Mike has a total of 30 certified 300 games, which includes a Sport league 300 game, and 12 certified 800 series. In addition to bowling in multiple leagues each season, Mike has assisted with coaching the youth league bowlers at Bowl America Falls Church. Whether bowling in leagues, participating in tournaments, or helping his fellow bowlers, Mike possesses the ability to maintain an even-keeled, positive mental outlook. His love for the sport of bowling is readily apparent. In recognition of the superior bowling achievements that he has accomplished, and in light of the positive image that he portrays, Michael J. Manolis is a most worthy addition to the NCA-USBCA Hall of Fame.

Local bowling historians looking back at the bowling scene in the 1970s and early 1980s will no doubt talk about one of the brightest stars that seemingly left as abruptly as he arrived. **Bobby Michaelson** grew bored with life as a suburban teenager and turned to bowling as his escape. By his senior year, he was competing in the best men's leagues in Northern Virginia. Rolling in the legendary Virginia Masters at Fair Lanes Springfield, Bobby was among the greatest to have ever bowled in this area. Nearly all of the top local bowlers of the day bowled in the Virginia Masters in the 1970s, and at one point fairly late in the 1978-1979 season, the only bowler averaging 200 was Bobby. Skipping his graduation from Oakton High School

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in 1974, the young prodigy bowled in the 22nd Annual Virginia State Bowling Association Championship Tournament at Bowl America Shirley. He and partner Dave Hudson won the scratch doubles event, with Bobby scoring a 700 series.

That season, the 18-year-old left-hander was the No. 3-ranked bowler in the association. Bobby was recognized not only as one of the top bowlers in this area but also throughout Virginia, receiving several Virginia State Bowling Association "All Star Team" awards that annually honored the bowlers with the five highest league averages in the state.

He was a threat in pot games throughout the area—most notably the weekday afternoon sessions at Bowl America Silver Hill, which was "the place" for action in the area. Many of the area's best bowlers, including professionals like Patty Costello and PA Anderson, were known to frequent the Silver Hill afternoon competition.

He tried his hand in the Professional Bowlers Association, finishing fourth in a PBA Eastern Region tournament in York, Pa., in the late 1970s, later cashing on the national tour in the 1980 PBA Long Island Open in Garden City, New York. Disenchanted with the outlook as a professional bowler on the PBA Tour, he turned his sights to college. He left the area to attend Radford University and later the University of Virginia, where he graduated with a B.A. degree in psychology in 1984. When he returned to the area, he resumed bowling with friends until a freak injury that damaged both wrists sidelined him for good.

Bobby appeared in the association's Top 10 rankings four times, including the No. 1 position (202.02 average) for the 1978-1979 season. The following season, he ranked No. 2 (201.85). He also finished third in 1973-1974 (197.48) and ninth in 1977-1978 (190.51).

In 1980, Bobby won the area's most prestigious event for top bowlers, the MWBPA (Metropolitan Washington Bowling Proprietors' Association) Invitational Tournament. He entered the stepladder finals as the top seed after leading the field wire-to-wire, defeating Hall of Famer Jim Robinette 193-174 for the title.

He recorded a perfect game at Bowl America Falls Church in 1986 and tossed numerous 700 series, including highs of 774 and 772 at McLean Bowling Center in the 1979-1980 season.

In 1973-1974, while only 17 years old, Bobby's 211 average for 79 games in the Monday Night Mixed 5 league at Bowl America Fairfax was believed to be at that time the highest seasonal average ever held by a bowler in this association.

The history of bowling in the Nation's Capital Area in the 1970s to early 1980s cannot be written without including the name of Bobby Michaelson on the first page. For what seemed far too short a period, he was one of the best bowlers ever in this area and is, without question, an outstanding addition to the NCAUSBCA Hall of Fame.