

Rochester tourney settled

Pro bowlers battle pressure

By MARTY BUDNER

Pam Buckner and Betty Morris agreed. Pressure was their biggest foe during the four-day 1979 Bonanza Classic held last week at Rochester's North Hill Lanes.

The richest women's bowling tournament in professional history culminated Saturday afternoon before gliding CBS television lights and cameras, and a jam-packed, enthusiastic audience.

When it was over, Buckner pocketed \$11,000 as she successfully defended her North Hill title. Last year she took the \$4,000 top prize.

Buckner, who topped all bowlers after 48 rounds of qualifying, rolled a sizzling 377 in the step-ladder finals against Morris' 215. The left-handed pro from Las Vegas tallied nine consecutive strikes before sparing in the 10th frame.

The win earned her a first-place jackpot of \$5,000. Immediately afterwards, Buckner would have earned an additional \$100,000 by bowling six straight strikes. She missed her first toss (an eight count with the 4-7 standing), then rolled a strike and a spare before ending with three straight 10-pin knock-downs.

She was awarded \$1,000 for each strike, and \$500 for the two spares. "I rolled 14 strikes in a row during practice, and I just kept telling myself to relax and find the mark," said Buckner, the head professional at the elegant MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas. "I felt really good, but maybe I just overrelaxed a bit."

"I knew I had to score strikes, and that's all I thought about. I had my concentration out there, and I found my mark. I just missed that first shot."

BUCKNER AVERAGED AN incredible 235.3 for her week's work. It was a personal high for the two-time All-American and former national champion (1975) bowler.

After 24 games of qualifying — where the field of 108 stars was trimmed to 24 semifinalists — Buckner finished in second place (total pinfall) to Ohio left-hander Toni Gillard (5575 to 5544).

After match play, where she won 18 of 24 games with one tie, Buckner leaped ahead of Gillard into the top-seeded position for the televised finals. All she had to do was wait for a challenger.

"This was such a big tournament that I had psyched myself up for two weeks," said Buckner. "There was so much more at stake this year than there was last year. And being defending champion even added more pressure."

"I had bowled in a men's tournament a couple weeks ago which was really super practice for me, and that helped a lot," she said. "But, with the number of quality bowlers that we had in this

tournament, I had to keep my concentration all week."

Morris, a peppery right-hander from California, put on quite a show.

The tour's career-leading money winner, Morris was only 18th after the first qualifying rounds. She bounced back to average 223 in the match-play competition, and earned the fourth-seeded position.

Morris won her opener in the finals against fifth-seeded Donna Adamek, 247-228. She then disposed of 19-year-old rookie Nikki Gianullas (227-205) and Gillard (256-215) to reach the finals.

In her four championship games — including the finals against Buckner — she averaged a sensational 236. Morris rolled 30 strikes in four games, and had a three-game series of 730.

"I bowled my heart out and I was very happy with my finish," said Morris, who earned \$2,000 in the tourney. "I felt really good, and I threw the ball better today than I have in my whole life."

"It was a great tournament for me because I had no confidence coming in. I've had some problems recently. I've been up and down — so there was a lot more pressure on me this week."

"But it was a great tournament, and I think it was fantastic for women's bowling," she said.

Buckner, Gillard and Gianullas kept their top three positions throughout match play. But, the fourth and fifth qualifiers were always in doubt.

Bev Ortner, who had the week's only 300 game, Kottie Kemp, Patty Costello, Adamek and Morris constantly jockeyed for the final two positions. At one point Morris was in eighth place behind all four of them before she began her tremendous charge to the finals.

Part of the money made from the tournament will be turned over to the Rochester Elks Club. Last year the tourney netted \$3,000 for the Handicapped Children's Fund.

Indiana squad eliminates OCC

Kurt James scored 25 points, and Walker D. Russell added 20 last Sunday in Oakland Community College's 66-61 loss to Vincennes (Ind.) in the semifinals of the Region 12 Junior College Championships at Bay City.

Coach Tom McPhillips' OCC team finished with a 24-5 overall record. OCC and Schoolcraft shared the Eastern Conference championship in the Michigan Community College Athletic Association.

In the Vincennes-OCC game, Warrell Simmons, Vincennes' 6-foot-8 center

scored 14 points and pulled down 16 rebounds. Eric Duhart and Virgil Kennedy each scored 16 points for the winners.

OCC advanced to the tourney semifinals by beating Lake Michigan (90-80), Macomb (72-63) and Jackson (77-71).

VINCENNES 66 — OCC 61

VINCENNES (66) — Eric Duhart 8, 0-0, 16; Virgil Kennedy 8, 0-0, 16; Warrell Simmons 8, 2-3, 14; Reggie Payne 6, 2-14, 14; Tom Smith 3, 2-2, 6; TOTAL 66, 6-0, 46.

OCC (61) — Walker D. Russell 9, 2-2, 20; Kurt James 12, 1-4, 24; Anthony Bernard 3, 2-2, 8; Johnny Kiel 4, 0-4, 8; TOTAL 61, 28, 57, 41.

HALFTIME SCORE — OCC 28, Vincennes 28.

Mercy grad lifts Western

Sophomore co-captain Carol Kolon of Southfield placed in four events and swam on two record-setting relays to help Western Michigan University's women's swimming team to a fourth-place finish at the Michigan College Championships held recently at Central Michigan.

Kolon, who attended Our Lady of Mercy High School in Farmington Hills, placed second in the 1,650-yard freestyle, fourth in the 400 individual

medley, fifth in the 200 backstroke, and fifth in the 500 freestyle.

Her times in the individual medley and the backstroke of 5:01.65 and 2:23.68, respectively, were both school records. She also swam on the 400 medley and the 800 freestyle relays, which finished third and fourth, respectively, with school-record times of 4:25.47 and 8:47.8.

Kolon closes the season holding seven varsity records for coach Dave Diget's Broncos.

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