



photos by MINDY SAUNDERS/Staff photographer

Pam Buckner, a Nevada native, awed spectators last year by bowling 30 consecutive strikes.

## Faces the same, but bowlers have new logo



Redheaded Betty Morris jumps for joy at the thought of another strike.

By Marty Budnar  
staff writer

The faces will be familiar. . . . Professional bowler-of-the-decade Betty Morris will be there, as will bowler-of-the-year Donna Adamek, defending champion Vesma Grinfelds and former two-time champion Pam Buckner.

However, they are now members of the Ladies Professional Bowler Tour (LPBT) rather than the Women's Professional Bowling Association (WPBA) that folded last winter. No matter what organization they are affiliated with, bowling fans around the Detroit area will get a chance to see the country's best women bowlers when they compete in the Strub Light Classic at Rochester's North Hill Lanes next month.

The \$25,000 tournament is slated to get underway with a pro-am tournament on Aug. 16. The championship rounds are scheduled Aug. 17, and the finals are tentatively set for the evening of Aug. 19.

It will mark the fourth straight year that the top women professional bowlers have competed on proprietor Bill Srock's well-oiled, high-scoring lanes. "We're looking forward to bowling at Bill Srock's house," said LPBT commissioner John Falzone from his administrative offices Thursday in Rockford, Ill. "Bill Srock has really helped us. He pretty much had to make a decision on which way to go (whether on not to recognize the new tour), and we're glad he came with us."

**THE WOMEN PROS** were basically unhappy with WPBA's prize purses and its administration, according to Falzone, and that's why the split occurred. He said the ladies are receptive to the LPBT.

"The main difference (between the two organizations) is that now we come in and conduct the events ourselves," said Falzone, a proprietor who has hosted previous women's bowling tournaments.

"We know what the girls' needs are. We (the LPBT) conduct the events, and they (the bowlers) don't have much of a say as to what's going on. And, it's worked so far.

"The girls don't have to worry about administrative problems now like they've had to in the past. I could give the example that it would be difficult for the Detroit Tigers to play baseball if they had to run the team.

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# Baseball and Burns: A rekindled story

By M.B. Dillon  
staff writer

The Detroit Tigers' newest acquisition recently discovered that once baseball enters your bloodstream, you're just plain hooked. There's no escaping something you love.

Righthanded pitcher Mike Burns, 26, is convinced. He's tried it. Signed four years ago by Tiger scout Bill Lajoie after graduating from Alma College, Burns spent two seasons in the Tiger organization and the next two (1978-79) with the Boston Red Sox' Pawtucket, R.I. farm club in the Triple A International League. In four seasons, Burns compiled a 37-29 overall record and a 3.5 E.R.A. He then took a voluntary retirement.

Why? "I didn't receive what I felt I deserved — a big-league contract, enough money or even a little encouragement," said Burns.

"I didn't think I was treated fairly. Boston has preconceived ideas about people." The Jackson native settled in Detroit's northern suburbs, found financial security as an accountant with an automotive-supply company, and kept busy pitching for Lynch & Sons of the Pontiac League.

But the pangs of withdrawal grew too painful to ignore.

"I've always regretted quitting," said the 6-foot-1, 185-pound Burns in a telephone interview from his room at the Evansville Holiday Inn.

"Last year I even went down to Toledo just to see the guys play a few games.

"After sitting around for a year and a half watching big-league games and knowing that I throw as good as hell of them, I felt I still had the talent that it took, so I called up Lajoie."

"I asked him as a favor to come out and see me pitch and give me a straight yes or no."

Days later, Lajoie watched Burns hurl a five-hitter for a 6-1 victory. He struck out seven and walked none.

**NOT THAT** it was anything unusual. Two weeks ago, Burns was 6-0 with a 1.91 E.R.A. when Lajoie signed him for the second time around, and shipped him to Evansville to join the Triplets, Detroit's Triple A team.

**'I think Burns will make an excellent relief pitcher because of his temperament, control and assortment of pitches. He's got a style of his own. He's a very intense, hard-working guy.'**

— Floyd Lasser  
baseball coach

"Mike was a player with major-league potential pitching in the Pontiac League," said Lajoie.

"He was throwing about the same as he had been (when the Tigers originally signed him) — with the same velocity and the same break on his slider."

"I believe he's similar to a player like Fred Holdsworth (a former Tiger) or Marty Patin (formerly of Kansas City). He's a control-type pitcher with a good breaking ball."

"He's very calm, collected and in control of himself," Lajoie added. "He knows what he's doing and he's very knowledgeable."

Floyd Lasser, Lynch and Sons' coach, has all kinds of confidence in his former ace.

"I think Burns will make an excellent relief pitcher," he said, "because of his temperament, control and assortment of pitches."

"He's got a style of his own. He's a very intense, hardworking guy. He's a quiet, calm, steady influence in the dugout and on the field."

During Burns' seemingly endless, nine-hour solo drive to Evansville, there were miles and miles to meditate.

"I decided that the best that can happen is to be playing in Tiger Stadium next year and staying there for awhile," said the bearded (but not for long — too much facial hair is taboo with the Triplets) Burns. "The worst that could happen isn't as bad as it seems — going back to Detroit, getting another job and playing for Lynch and Sons."

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## Hills buries Lake Orion

Bloomfield Hills American Legion team knocked Lake Orion out of first place in the 18th-District standings with this five-inning, mercy-rule-shortened game last week.

Bill Rankin and Chad Switzer were the big guns for Bloomfield, which raised its record to 17-6. Rankin clouted two homers and knocked in four runs. Switzer went three for three, including a home run and a double, with three RBIs.

E.J. Cameron went three for four, and Mike Nealon went two for three. Winning pitcher Eric Girdler scattered four hits to net his fourth win. He struck out one and walked one.

In another recent game, Bloomfield Hills dropped a 7-6 decision to Rochester. Vaughan took his first pitching loss of the Legion season as his record dipped to 4-1. Brad Remer and Brian Hefelee each had two RBIs for the losers. Remer and Tim Jones each collected two hits.

**AUBURN HEIGHTS 4  
TROY-CLAWSON 3**

Auburn Heights sent Troy-Clawson to the depths

of despair in American Legion 18th-District baseball action last week.

Auburn Heights, using an outstanding relief stint by Tim McClure and a sixth-inning rally to stop Troy-Clawson, 4-3. The winners pushed their record to 6-15; the losers slipped to 18-6.

Auburn Heights scored the winning run in the top of the sixth. With one out, Kevin Lybecker reached first on an error by T-C's first baseman. The next batter popped out, but then McClure doubled to send home the run.

McClure faced only five batters in 1½ innings of relief. Losing pitcher Gordie Hershiser suffered his first loss of the Legion season against five victories. He went the distance, giving up seven hits, striking out seven and walking seven.

"He struggled," said T-C manager Hugh Dugan. "He wasn't as sharp as he usually is."

T-C had five hits and scored a run in the fourth and two more in the sixth.

Ron Yatomas drove in two runs with a pair of singles, and teammate Scott Dugan knocked in another run with a single, marker with a single.



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