

MICHIANA CUP TO BECOME PART OF LAKE MICHIGAN CUP

Popular All-Star Event to now include Illinois and Wisconsin's premier Tours



On June 29-30, 2019 in Grand Rapids, Michigan the inaugural "Lake Michigan Cup" will take place at Spectrum Lanes. Top level youth bowlers from Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin will face off in what promises to be a fresh, competitive and exciting two days of high-level team and individual bowling. The Lake Michigan Cup will be an expansion of the current Michiana Cup All Star challenge that has become a signature event for both the Michigan Junior Masters Association and the Northwest Indiana Tournament Players Association. The popular and successful Indiana-Michigan series that has spanned five years will now become an event within the larger four state (tour) challenge. Lake Michigan Cup participants will be selected from their state's elite youth scholarship organizations, which are home to many of the most talented youth players in the Great Lakes region. Members of the Indiana All

Star team will be selected from the Northwest Indiana Junior Tournament Players Association (NIJTTPA), the Michigan stars will be comprised of players from the Michigan Junior Masters Association (MJMA), the Illinois contingent will be made up of competitors from the Illinois State Scholarship Tour (ISST) and the Wisconsin squad will be formed from players competing on the Junior Bowlers Scholarship Tour (JBST).

"We are excited to expand the Michiana Cup field and provide this competitive and fun opportunity to additional youth players," NIJTTPA Director Mike Kraushaar stated.

MJMA Executive Director Jerry Tarabek added, "The Michiana Cup has evolved into everything we had hoped it would when formed in 2014. After Mike was approached by Patti Mauerman from the ISST, we both felt that growing this to include additional states was the next logical step in our efforts to continue providing our tour members with unique and highly competitive experiences."

"Patti's request to be part of the state challenge series set everything in motion," Kraushaar added, "but to continue the popular format of the Michiana Cup, we needed a fourth tour to participate."

That task was accomplished rather quickly as Chris Tuskowski of the Wisconsin based JBST didn't hesitate at the opportunity to include his tour in the Cup challenge. "Our bowlers are very excited and honored to be competing in the Lake Michigan Cup against other elite level Midwest region bowlers," Tuskowski said. "The event will provide our members with valuable experience that they can use in upcoming events like Junior Gold. And equally as important, they will be able to also create some new long-lasting friendships with players from other tours."

ISST leader Patti Mauerman echoed Chris' sentiments: "I see this as another great opportunity to not only prepare for Junior Gold, but also, gain team bowling experience, college exposure, and new friendships."



The event will feature 20 of the top players from each state's junior tour (10 Boys, 10 Girls) competing in a "Ryder Cup" style scoring system employing multiple formats. Teams will be awarded points for winning matches. The teams with the top two overall point totals will then battle for the Lake Michigan Cup in the championship round where the format is baker best of 7. The event will include 5-person team matches, 3-person team baker matches, doubles and mixed doubles, both of which will use traditional and baker formats, and quad singles matches.

Singles matches will effectively be three matches in one as each player will be competing against a member from another state head to head while the traditional team matches will include points for head to head player competition as well as team total. Pinfall will be tracked, but it will be the points won that determines standings. The format has proven to be a favorite of bowlers, providing a more diversified, exciting and challenging experience that keeps the players battling to the end.



Players who have earned the right to represent their tour through season long competition will arrive in Grand Rapids on Friday evening where Spectrum Lanes will host a practice session for the bowlers. In addition, plans are underway to include major manufacturers equipment demos prior to and following the official practice session. Saturday's competition will start at 8am with a round of singles competition. Saturday competition should conclude around 5 pm with the final round of Trios. Players will compete in two singles rounds, three doubles, and three trios rounds on Saturday. Sunday competition will begin at 9am and be comprised of three traditional team rounds. The championship team baker round will conclude Sunday's competitive portion of the Cup and will be followed by the awards buffet and banquet. Each all-star will bowl eight individual games (in addition to multiple team baker games) that will be used to determine the all-tournament team selections and scholarship recipients. The event is expected to award in excess of \$2,000 in scholarships to the top performers. Three WTBA sport compliant patterns will be used that will test the players ability and versatility.

In addition to the coveted Lake Michigan Cup, interstate battles will keep the players intensity at a high level throughout the competition. The Michiana Cup, currently residing with the NWIJTPA, will be contested for the 6th time, while the Illiana (Indiana vs Illinois), Willinois (Wisconsin vs Illinois) and Cross Lake Cup (Michigan vs Wisconsin) will be awarded for the first time. Interest from collegiate programs is expected to be high with 40 of the top boys and 40 of the top girls in the Great Lakes region competing. Coupled with the proven track record each of these tours brings regarding success at the collegiate and international level, competition on the concourse should be as intense as that on the lanes. A special area will be set aside for coaches to set up and meet with prospects following competition.



"Having collegiate programs in attendance is a valued benefit to the participants," said Patti Mauerman, whose Illinois based ISST has seen hundreds of members over it's nearly 15 years move on and excel at the collegiate level.

"Many of these players will find themselves advancing well into the late rounds of the national junior gold event taking place in Detroit in mid-July. The Lake Michigan Cup will provide coaches with a very intimate environment to get a leg up on recruiting these top kids," Tarabek added.

Coaches interested in attending or seeking further information can contact NWIJTPA Director Mike Kraushaar. The Lake Michigan Cup will be free to all spectators.

Note about the Host, participating tours

Spectrum Lanes is considered one of the midwest's premier bowling venues and has hosted numerous national PBA tour events and is set to host the 2020 Intercollegiate Team and Singles national championships in April. It has hosted three previous Michiana Cup events with excellence. With its recent expansion and renovation activities completed, the environment for both spectators and participants will be first class.

The NWIJTPA was established in 2011 and has quickly become Indiana's premier scratch scholarship tour. In only its 8th season, already 90 members have signed collegiate scholarships. The tour has awarded over \$200,000 in scholarships, and it is one of only a few tours nationwide that provide a 100%+ scholarship to entry fee payback at its events. What began as a localized tour has evolved into a tour averaging nearly 90 players from four states per event. Tour website is www.ihsbsuburban.com and Facebook page NWIJTPA.

The MJMA was established in 1986 and is commonly referred to as "the standard of junior scratch competition." The MJMA hosts 13 tournaments per year averaging well over 100 players per event. MJMA members have gone on to win National Professional Titles both on the PBA and PWBA tours, Collegiate National titles, Junior National titles, and represent both Team USA and Junior Team USA in international competition. The tour has awarded in excess of \$1,000,000 in its 32 years. Tour website is www.mjma.net and facebook page is Michigan Junior Masters Association.

The JBST was established in 2006. Having awarded over \$400,000 in scholarships, the tour offers both scratch and handicap divisions to bowlers in eastern Wisconsin and the northern region of Illinois. With 13-16 events each year averaging 100+ entries per event, the JBST is one of the largest junior gold tours in the country, with over 100 junior gold national spots awarded annually to its tour players. Tour website is www.jbst.org and facebook page is Junior Bowlers Scholarship Tour.

The ISST was established in 2005 and has since been honored as one of the largest tours in the country. The organization has awarded over \$600,000, advanced over 100 players annually to the Junior Gold National Championships, while 28 bowlers have earned Junior Team USA status. The tour currently boasts over 400 members competing in three divisions – Handicap, Boys Scratch, and Girls Scratch. The tour hosts events monthly attracting upwards to 150 each event. Tour website is www.isyl.org and facebook page is Illinois State Scholarship Tour.