



Bianca Völkl-Brandt, Hermann Wimmer start 2016 ISBT with victory in Osnabrück

Bianca Völkl-Brandt and **Hermann Wimmer** swept the women's and men's title for Germany in **Arthur's 11th Senior Open** as the International Seniors Bowling Tour kicked off its 2016 season in Osnabrück, Germany.

The first stop on the 2016 ISBT tour returned to Vegas Bowling in Osnabrück in Germany for the 11th running of Arthur's Senior Open, organized by proprietor Arthur Dähn. This year, a total of 81 men and 18 women took part, almost the same number as the previous year.

The format for the tournament was two blocks of 6 games qualifying, with re-entries allowed. Age bonus started at age 51 (1 pin per game), then increased by one pin for every additional year of age with no limit.

There were additional opportunities to qualify for the finals through **Early Bird** and **Turbo** rankings, and for the men a **scratch ranking**. As with all ISBT events, there was a separate division for ladies.

The tournament was due to be played on the Brunswick version of the Kegel Middle Road pattern, which generally provides a reasonable scoring condition.

The tournament started on Wednesday, with three squads bowled. At the end of the day, **Robert Vallons** of Belgium had established a good position with blocks of 1336 and 1424. In the ladies section, both **Liliane Vintens** of Belgium and Ulla Caspari of Germany had scored well, averaging well over 200 with bonus.

Before the start of the Thursday qualification squads, it was realized that the Brunswick lane machine had broken, and was not able to lay the oil pattern on the lane. The organizers searched the local area to find a replacement machine, the nearest center which was prepared to loan a machine was located in Bremen, some 120km away.

After a few hours delay, the replacement machine arrived, and play could restart. Unfortunately, the replacement Kegel Kustodian did not have the Middle Road pattern available, so the tournament continued on the pattern already installed in the machine.

This proved to be quite challenging for some of the competitors, and was quite a different condition to that for the first three squads. It was reported there was now much more oil on the right hand side of the lane, and the condition was fairly flat.

Hermann Wimmer of Germany had no problem with the condition, shooting 1506 in squad 4. In squad 5, there were several good blocks, including 1444 for **Roger Pieters** of Belgium and 1180 for Caspari, giving her a good position in the overall standings.

Although there were some good individual performances over the remaining squads, many of the competitors struggled to find consistent carry throughout their block. English players **Lol Ellis** and **Mo Singleton** both had good blocks, scoring over 1400 during Saturday qualifying.

The final qualification rankings saw Wimmer at the top with 2806, some distance ahead of Ellis (2790) and Pieters (2765). Seventh qualifier, and the last to miss the first finals round, was **Ralf Gräwe** of Germany with 2681.

The cut for the final 25th place was **Klaus Hinney** of Germany with 2559. These qualifiers would be joined by six Early Bird, four Turbo and seven Scratch qualifiers in the final stages.

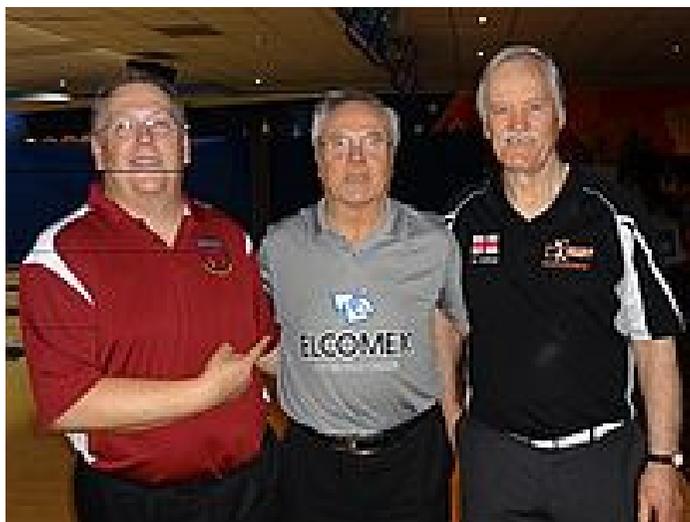
In the women's qualification, **Liliane Vintens** of Belgium had a significant lead on 2564 from her entries in the first three squads. Some distance behind her were **Martina Beckel** (2485) of Germany and her fellow countrywoman Caspari (2450). Bozena Pajak of Poland was the sixth place cut on 2374. These six plus two Turbo and two Early Birds would start the finals on Sunday.



Pictured above are the men's and women's finalists.

The men ranked 8 to 42 had an early start on Sunday for the first finals round. **Uwe Tschärke** comfortably won this four game round with 941, ahead of **Klaus-Uwe Lischka** and **Erich Caspari**, with German competitors holding the top four places. Only the top eleven would go forward to the next round, this place was taken by **Helmut Ulber** of Germany with 839.

The second final round saw the top eleven from the previous round being joined by the top seven qualifiers for a further four games. **Carlo Greulich** of Germany, the two-time men's titlist in 2015, came out on top with 963, ahead of his compatriots Ulber and Tschärke. Only the top ten bowlers would make the final round, last man in was **Berny Stöckl** of Germany with 849.



The final round for the men was a further four game block, with pinfall from the previous round being carried through. **Hermann Wimmer** (center) and **Ron Oldfield** (right) of England both improved greatly in this second block of four games to overtake the previous leaders.

In the end, Wimmer emerged the winner having bowled a few pins more than Ron Oldfield who finished in second place. **Uwe Tscharke** (left) matched the leading two on scratch pinfall, but the additional 20 pins a game age bonus for the leaders was too much to overcome, leaving him in third place.



The ten qualifying ladies also bowled an initial four game block, and last Turbo qualifier **Bianca Völkl-Brandt** of Germany suddenly found her form starting with games of 269 and 234 to finish way ahead of the field with 888.

Top 4 women in the Arthur's 11th Senior Open: L-R Bianca Völkl-Brandt, Martina Beckel, Ulla Caspari and Liliane Vintens.

Ulla Caspari, Martina Beckel and **Liliane Vintens** made up the four who would bowl the final four games. Over the final four games, Bianca Völkl-Brandt maintained her excellent form to finish a clear winner by almost 100 pins from Beckel and Caspari.

The next stop on the 2016 International Seniors Bowling Tour is the **Euro Bowling 50+** tournament to be held at Euro Bowling in Deurne, Belgium, from the 30th March to the 2nd April. Full details are available at the [ISBT website](#).

Story and Results courtesy of Tony Brown.