

Amara Smith-Speights wins Va. State Pepsi title by huge margin in “perfect” season

A 330-pin divisional victory earlier this year in the state finals of the Virginia State Pepsi USBC Youth Championships is among the latest bowling accomplishments of Amara Smith-Speights, 12, a sixth-grader at Rippon Middle School in Woodbridge, Va., where she has been a straight “A” student the past three years and a player on the junior varsity basketball team.

She entered the competition at AMF Hanover in Mechanicsville, Va., with a

193 average and began with a 603 three-game total, then ran away from the field with games of 246-238-205 (689) to secure her title and \$425 in scholarship funds.

This occurred shortly after Amara scored her first career perfect game at Bowl America Woodbridge on March 23, 2013, a day she called the greatest of her life. The perfecto helped her earn the NCAUSBCA Triple Crown Award in the Strike Force League, in which she averaged 201 and also recorded her highest of four 700 series during the season, 791.

Having earlier qualified for her first North Pointe Junior Gold Championships that recently took place in Detroit, she competed in the “Under 15 Girls” category and tied for 72nd place in a field of 169, averaging 163.4 for 15 qualifying games on the demanding lane conditions.

Amara, who started bowling at age 5 under the tutelage of her grandfather, Bruce Smith, is always striving

to improve—even watching bowling on YouTube—and her record demonstrates success in her endeavors. In successive youth league seasons

at Bowl America Woodbridge beginning in 2008-2009, her average has advanced from 110 to 142 to 164 to 174 to 201 this past season, when she also averaged 200 in the Sunday Youth Adult League at Bowl America Woodbridge and 161 in the Youth Travel Scholarship (Sport) League.

Amara, whose favorite pro bowlers are Pete Weber, Scott Norton, and Kelly Kulick, appreciates the support she receives from her favorite bowler—her mother, Teri Smith—and from Barry Clark, manager of Bowl America Woodbridge.

There’s sure to be more written about this youngster’s bowling efforts in the days ahead.



Amara Smith-Speights