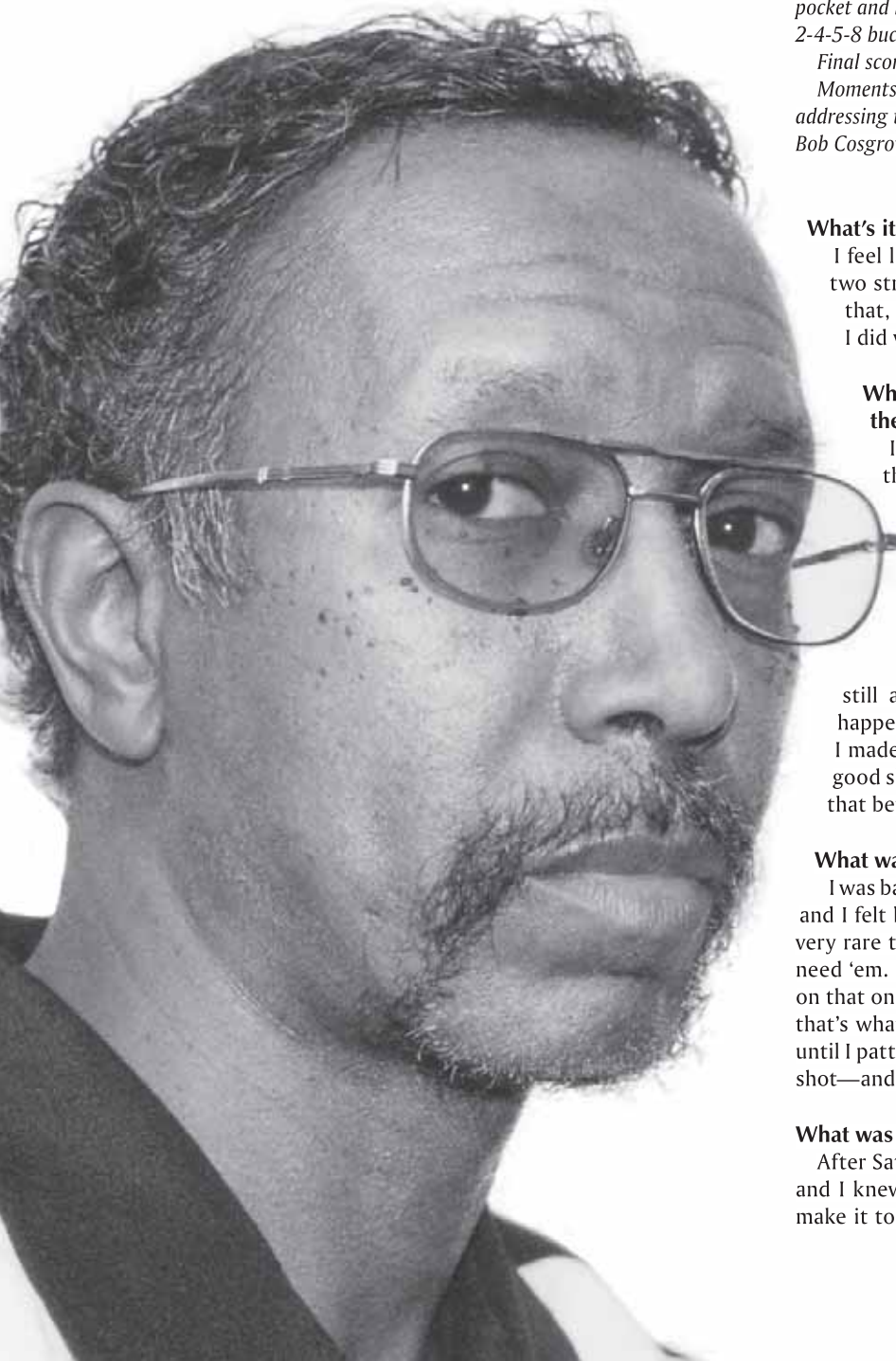


15 QUESTIONS

Donny Carr



Donny Carr will never forget his first PBA Senior Tour regional victory on November 27 at U.S. Bowling.

After defeating NCABA Hall of Famer Larry Wallace in a one-game semifinal contest of the PBA South Region Senior Alexandria Open, he began the championship match miserably against Richard Casey of Roanoke, Va., with three opens in four frames and trailed by 21 pins after six. Carr, a 54-year-old District right-hander who is a graphic designer with the National Security Agency, fought back with two strikes, only to appear as toast after leaving a solid 10-pin on a shot he desperately needed in the ninth frame. However, after the spare, he maintained his focus and again tossed two strikes and a 10-pin to close with 182.

Meanwhile, with a score of 145 in the eighth and a strike up in the ninth, Casey could shut the door with another strike or simply coast to the win with a spare and eight. He came in a tad high and left the 4-pin, which he calmly converted. He then stepped up on the approach to roll the ball that would earn him his second regional title.

The direction of his shot actually looked good—it was good, Casey claimed afterwards. There was just one problem: His timing was a bit off, and he “suitcased” the shot, thus delaying the hook by the smallest amount—but an amount nonetheless that would keep the ball out of the heart of the 1-3 pocket and leave Casey, Carr, and the spectators momentarily stunned as the 2-4-5-8 bucket stared back from 60 feet away.

Final score: 182-181. Donny Carr is a PBA Senior Tour regional champion.

Moments after accepting his eagle trophy and \$1,600 check and addressing the crowd, Carr sat down and answered 15 questions from editor Bob Cosgrove.

What’s it like to win your first PBA Senior regional title?

I feel like it was almost a gift in a way, but I had to throw those two strikes in the tenth frame to have a chance at winning. After that, it’s out of my hands. Even though it feels like a gift in a way, I did what I had to do.

What went through your mind when you left that 10-pin in the ninth frame?

I thought it was just about over then. I knew if I had carried that strike that I had a much better chance of winning.

When I left that 10-pin, all the air went out of my sails.

I figured, *This is over; he’s got me.* But you have to make quality shots at all times.

What were your thoughts as you finished your game with a score of 182?

I said to myself, *It doesn’t look good.* But I knew there was still a chance. And whenever there’s a chance, anything can happen. I felt pretty bad, but he just didn’t make a good shot. I made two good shots in the tenth frame, and he didn’t make a good shot on the last ball, and that’s just the way it goes. I’ve done that before; we all do it. It went my way this time.

What was your reaction when Casey left that bucket?

I was basically in shock. I didn’t think that I won. I was just in shock, and I felt bad for Richard because of the shot. Most of the time, it’s very rare that professionals don’t make really good shots when they need ‘em. I was very shocked that he didn’t make a very quality shot on that one. As we talked, he said he had balance troubles, so maybe that’s what happened. I didn’t think that I had won the tournament until I patted him on the back and told him how sorry I was about that shot—and then I thought about it!

What was your outlook coming into today?

After Saturday, I felt I had a good chance to win. I had a good shot, and I knew that if I kept making quality shots that I would at least make it to the qualifying rounds. And once I got there, it was just a

matter of carrying the corner pins and making quality shots, and I made quality shots just about the entire weekend.

You left a solid 8-pin when you had a good chance to put away your opponent in an earlier contest, and you had several other tough breaks and odd leaves. How did you maintain your composure?

I wasn't frustrated because these guys are pros; they're gonna throw good games. You can't ever count them out at any time. I never do that. They're *professionals*, and that's what that means. You've gotta do exactly what you're supposed to do.

I noticed on Saturday that the left lane would hook more than the right. Someone asked me why that is, and I think it's because when they have open play bowling, they usually give the lanes out every other lane so that everyone doesn't have to bowl right next to each other. And it's usually the left lane, so the left lane usually has a little more wear than the right. I discovered that on Saturday, and every pair I went to, I automatically adjusted for the left lane to hook more. I think that helped me out a lot in this tournament—to figure that out.

These are wood lanes, so the transition from one lane to another is a lot different from the urethane lanes. With all the bowlers bowling on different areas on the lane, we didn't have much time to try to find an area where to shoot at. You had to really focus.

Towards the end, several bowlers missed 4-pins and 7-pins. Were you concerned about carrydown with some of the spares?

The oil really carried down the lane, and you couldn't really read the back-ends well, especially going across the lane. If you went inside your mark to shoot at the 7[-pin], it would go into the gutter; if you went outside of your mark at the 7, you would slide past it. So you had to be right on your mark, and, you know, we're all human—sometimes we just don't hit that mark all the time. I know I don't. I wasn't overly concerned; I was confident in the shots I was making.

What bowling balls did you use?

When I came in for practice on Friday, I tried all five of my bowling balls. The one that reacted the best was the Roto Grip Top Fuel. I figured I would stick with that the entire tournament because it gave me the best read on the lanes. I never used any other ball except for one game—I did use a MoRich Total Annihilation. But after that, I saw it was hooking too much, so I went back to the Roto Grip.

And for your spare ball?

It's embarrassing to say it, but it was also a Roto Grip, the Oracle Vision, because I really don't have a spare ball, so I had to use the hardest ball I had with me. It was kind of embarrassing that some guys were using an Oracle Vision for their first ball!

Do you have a spare ball at home or are you now in the market for one?

I really don't have a spare ball. I usually just use different hand positions. But I think I'm going to purchase a spare ball—not a plastic ball because I like a little bit of movement in my spare ball because if you throw a plastic ball and you miss a little bit to the right or left, it's gone. So I like a little bit of movement in case I miss in one direction or the other. So I'll probably get something very hard that still has a little movement.

Who services your bowling equipment?

Dean Ryan at Fort Meade Bowling Center normally does my equipment and is very good. Mike Warboy and Lee Hosgood in Crofton are pretty good friends of mine, and they will do it if Dean is unable.

Also, Billy Slater in Hyattsville is pretty good, too. I've got to stick him in there. He did a couple of balls for me, and, as a matter of fact, I was making my spares with a ball that Billy did, so I've got to give him his props.

What do you think the reaction will be when area bowlers hear that you won?

I think a lot of people will be very happy for me. They'll probably talk about it a while. We don't get many guys around here who win regional tournaments—especially from Washington, D.C. It will be the talk of the town for a while, I think.

How does this win rank among your bowling moments?

Probably second to my first 300 game at Fair Lanes University in ... 1972 maybe—that is exciting for everyone. It was a little more exciting than this because this is very tough—*very* tough—and it's draining. I'm just glad to get it over with; I need some rest!

How does your victory affect your thinking about yourself as a bowler?

It tells me that I can play with the pros and that I don't have to wonder if I can play with them. I always felt like I could because it's all about making quality shots and repeating your shot over and over, and I've always been able to do that. I've never, ever doubted myself about being able to play with the pros, but this is proof now to me that I can play with them, and I'll be doing a lot of that.

I've got like 13 months until I can retire—this will be my part-time job. Well, actually, it will be my *full*-time job, along with doing the design work that I now do outside of my regular job, where I get calls to create logos, fix up old pictures, and do album covers and designs for tee shirts—it's never ending.

Are you planning to celebrate your success?

Actually, no. I'm going to buy a couple of new bowling shirts. I like the ones that button down [the side] instead of having to tuck them in my shirt. I feel more comfortable with them hanging out. I'll purchase a couple of those and maybe have a nice dinner tonight. ●
