

DAVID OZIO: Rising PBA Star

Part III

(Conducted by Editor Bob Cosgrove)

What has the birth of your daughter (Heather, age 1) meant to you/your game?

Ozio: When I look back there, it makes me feel a lot better. It just seems to tide over. Before she was around, all we'd do is go back to the trailer and fight—why this happened, why this, this, this, this happened...with her, you play with her, and she just changes the mood of everything and makes it a lot easier. She's definitely been a benefit to my game, more so than a detriment. You know, we've had a lot of hard times with her travelling, but she's definitely been a bonus as far as putting money in the bank.

Do you feel any extra drive—especially a financial one—because of her?

Ozio: It's a subconscious thing. You think about taking care of her in the future and always being able to provide for her. It just gives you a feeling of trying a little bit harder. No one human being can stand up on the approach and say, 'Well, I'm going to do this or this, and nothing's gonna stop me!' because you don't know if something is going to stop you. And if it does stop you and you're just crushed, it may affect you for three or four weeks.

Who's been the most influential person in your life?

Ozio: All of my bowling success has been because of John Jowdy, but my dad has given me the incentive to want to go out and really win. I owe him a large amount of money, and I wanted to win—I wanted to pay him back the money before he dies just so that he could see that I've made something out of myself. That's the goal I've had.

Are you spending much of your winnings?

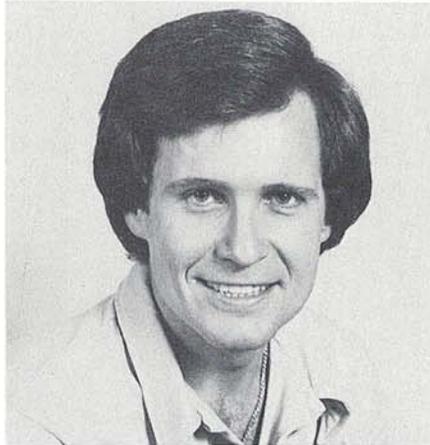
Ozio: I think for the necessities, yes. I don't want to be stupid and go out and blow everything like a lot of guys have done. What's going to make it easier on my family is the key thing and that's involved in my mind.

Just the security of having money in the bank to pay the bills is the main thing. I have a large amount of money in there to pay them because I have some astronomical bills. I've got a pretty good size house to take care of, utilities, phone bills...

There's other players out here who bowl without any bills, period. It's ten times harder on me to provide—if I had no bills at home and I didn't owe one single person a dime, God only knows how good I could do out here with no pressure. It's hard enough to bowl out here with the subconscious pressure that you have because that's all that it is, subconscious pressure. You can't think of it consciously. It doesn't haunt you while you bowl, but it's deep down inside where the whole nervous center keys to making shots and it's eating at you.

What are your goals in life?

Ozio: My goals are to take care of my family and to get into a business because the tour can't last forever. Everyone knows that you get older and there's the health factor involved in it. The mental stability—this is so tough out here that you can actually turn into a basket case overnight. I'm telling you, the brain does short-cir-



cuit. I had a couple of times last year when I went to the hospital because the stress got over me so much that I got deathly ill.

Did you simply relax in the hospital?

Ozio: No, I got migraine headaches—real severe headaches. They were from just getting over-keyed and having a million things on my mind. I had two last year and one when I was a freshman in college. Three migraine headaches that were all stress-oriented. I take a lot of vitamins and that helps relieve the stress because good nutrition is very important—to keep it in the brain.

How about your bowling goals?

Ozio: The goals in bowling are just to get better. My goal really is to learn to not beat myself—whether I don't ever cash or if I make the show every week. All my life I've not only had to bowl against a competitor, I've had to bowl against myself.

I guess my goal is to get in the click to whip that and to achieve more confidence in myself. That's the main thing.

Which person in the world do you admire the most?

Ozio: I'd have to say somebody like Jimmy Swaggart or Oral Roberts. I think there's more to life than just this—material goods. When it all boils down, material goods are just a trap. They breed greed, contempt. It definitely stirs selfishness to have all the good things in life, to have it where you look at somebody else and compare what you've got versus what they've got. That is menial stuff.

A guy made a statement to me on the golf course one time, a guy who was very well off. He looked around at me and said, 'I wonder what the poor people are doing today.' That hit me kinda bad, you know, because that to me is just a sin of sins. To be that well off and not be thankful for it is bad because it can leave you in the breath of a wind and you can be with those poor people just as easily as where you are at. And don't think it won't happen because I've seen it too many times where it has happened.

To get the full meaning out of what life is and where we're going to go after this means a lot more to me now than accumulating personal treasures because they can't do you any good once you die. The biggest thing in life that you can probably do now is to do for others—to help somebody who's just barely making it or can't make it versus going out and buying something for a buddy who's already rich. That to me is no good. You can take out that same money and help out a poor family somewhere to help them get through life just a little bit easier. I think you're going to be a lot better off.

I've been taught a lot about the Bible and done a lot of reading in it and did a

lot of study on it. It more or less scares me to know that there is such a place as hell and there is such a place as heaven, and the Bible does say that hell is a million times worse than the worst experience you've ever had in your life. You take the worst experience you've ever had and times it by a million—that's horrible! I couldn't even think about going through that—for an eternity, no less!

First of all, in order to be able to understand the reason why I feel like this, you have to believe, first of all, where the Bible came from. If you believe where the Bible came from, you know that it's not just a fictitious book that was made up by a bunch of dummies here on earth. Then you can put it into a believable experience—that there is something to it.

For all the people who just wail on through life and don't have any consideration for others and who just blow and go, who knows what their fate's gonna be? I guess our job is to try to reستر the people who are in the bad trouble because you don't know when you're gonna die. You could die walking outta that door: a car hits you — wham!

Have people treated you differently since you've started winning?

Ozio: I've noticed an air of jealousy in a lot of people—people who haven't done as well. Especially with me coming from a bad year and all of a sudden having a great year this year. People kinda get used to seeing you as what you are: you don't do bad, but you don't do good—you're a mediocre player. Whenever you have instant success, it affects them in a way where they're kinda stand-offish: they don't speak to you as much or they find it hard to come up and congratulate you because everybody has built-in jealousy. I don't care who you are as far as bowling goes: you can't stand to see the other guy do better than you. It takes true dear friends to pull for somebody.

A good example is when I won in St. Louis. Steve Wunderlich had made the past two shows, and he wanted to see me win so badly on the show he couldn't stand it—it was his hometown, too. I imagine it had to hurt his heart to know that I won before he did. I felt bad about it—I felt really bad—that I won before he did.

Another friend of ours, Pete McCordic, he's the same way. He's been out here for a long time and he's never won, but yet me and Mark Williams, we bum around with Pete all the time—we grew up in Houston—we both win before Pete does. It's got to be hurtin' him, too, and I don't like to see that happen. I wish everybody could win at least once.

But yes, people do not offer you the thoughtfulness or the pleasures of being a true friend as much—the people you don't know quite as well. And then, the people who are already there—the big winners, the big money holders—they treat you like, now you're in the click, now you're a good buddy. 'Hey, all right, hey, how about doing this and this...' But before? 'Psst...hit the door!' They wouldn't talk to you. That I can't stand. And there's too many people out here just like that.