

PONTINS NORTH WALES BOWLING FESTIVAL

1st – 7th SEPTEMBER 2007

PRESS RELEASE

If ever there was a reckoning of Bowling Holidays, the North Wales Festival would probably never figure in the results when judged by prize monies, by numbers of competitors etc! But, if it was evaluated purely on enjoyment, then it would be up there with the best of them, because for the majority of those attending Pontins 17th North Wales Festival, this is the main event of the year!

One of the benefits of not being as big as the Blackpool events, mean that organisers Esselle Sports can cherry pick the best locations and by using greens at Abergele, Grove Park, Sunny Rhyl (Botanical Gardens) and East Parade Bowling Clubs, are able to offer a perfect mixture of excellent and challenging greens with wonderful Welsh hospitality.

Although guests in 2007 were all staying at Pontins on a self-catering basis, with bacon and sausage barm cakes being offered for 60p – 70p, and full lunches available later on in the day, not a lot of self-catering was being done! With all the greens having had considerable investment in the last 12 months (indeed Abergele officials rated their green as the best ever at their club), and with Grove Park having put up a new shelter, there was no reason why a great competition should not take place, and indeed that is what we got!

With the top two in each group progressing into the Main Competition, and with 3rd and 4th places into the Consolation Event, there was a lot to play for and those new to the Festival soon made an impact amongst 'the regulars'. Indeed, after the first stage the Mens Section in particular looked as strong as it had ever done with five previous champions still involved. After two days of singles and a very tight day of Mixed Pairs, and only a short period of rain, Wednesday saw the latter stages of the Main and Consolation events and the start of the Plate Singles, leaving the Finals Day programme with the Quarter-Finals of the Mens and Ladies Plate, and Semi-Finals of the Mixed Pairs, Consolation and Main events onwards to be played at a gloriously sunny (and not breezy!) East Parade Club attracting a well-satisfied crowd with the fare on offer.

A superb fightback from 14 – 12 down saw the immaculately suited and 'Russian-hatted' Brian Gee steal the Consolation event, and a terrific last wood from Ron Reynolds convert a match-losing position to a two-chalk and Mixed pairs winning wood for partner Rita Jones and himself. Sam Nelson won the

Ladies Singles without anyone really coming close to her, and John Hamer pipping fellow past champion Steve Walker in the Mens Final, after Steve had knocked out the 2006 champion John Thompson in the Semis. Great drama and a fitting end to a marvellous week's bowling!

Photographs from the event are available on Esselle's website under 'Gallery' and 'Bowling Holidays' at www.essellesports.com

LADIES PLATE

Emily Byrom (Bolton)	15
Pam Campbell (Heckmondwike)	8

MENS PLATE

Brian Gee (Rotherham)	15
Keith Herrington (Chesterfield)	14

MIXED PAIRS

Ron Reynolds (Mexborough) & Rita Jones (Barnsley)	15
John Thompson & Denise Freeman(Manchester)	13

LADIES SINGLES

Samantha Nelson (Rochdale)	21
Maureen Little (Stockport)	7

MENS SINGLES

John Hamer (Halifax)	21
Steve Walker (Oldham)	18