

Wiseman Rolling In the Fast Lane

BOWLING SEASON'S OVER - TIME TO GO RACING!

In May, pro bowler Danny Wiseman attended one of the biggest sporting events in the world, the Indianapolis 500. He was there to cheer for his friend Sam Hornish Jr., who drives for the Penske Marlboro Race Team on the Indy Racing League circuit.

At Indy, Wiseman got to ride in one of the two seater race cars at 180 mph around the most famous race track in the world. It was the thrill of a lifetime, perhaps second only to his new #1 bowling thrill of winning the ABC Masters at

Miller Park in Milwaukee to kick-off the 2004-05 PBA season. The unique finals, staged at the baseball stadium, were spectacular.

Wiseman now owns 11 professional titles, and the Masters was his first major. The \$100,000 top prize was his biggest paycheck as a pro. The big week was the start of what became his best year on tour.

Wiseman turned pro in 1988, and won his first title in 1990 in his hometown of Baltimore, Maryland. Since then, he's

been one of the best journeyman players, and in recent years one of the most flamboyant and popular with the fans, especially the youngsters. His flaming shirts have become his trademark.

At 38, he thinks he still has a few more good years ahead, and he's hoping that getting his first major title is a sign of even bigger years before he stops touring.

After Indy, Sam called his friend, Danny, to ask if he would come to Dallas for a charity bowling event before the

big Texas race in early June. Wiseman was glad to do it, and together with the other IRL drivers and corporate sponsors, they raised over \$50,000 for Speedway Children's Charities.

We caught up with Danny at the Dallas event, and it was terrific to see the respect some of the best race car drivers in the world have for one of the best bowlers in the world. We had a chat about bowling and racing. Here's what he had to say:

What do you consider your greatest achievement as a pro bowler, and why?

My greatest achievement as a pro bowler is 2 things. One is knowing all the people that I have met through the years and how supportive they have been of my career. I have met so many wonderful people and friends throughout the world. The second, of course, is winning a major after 15yrs. I had had some opportunities to win a few majors over the years, but would either get crushed, or I made some major mistakes. So winning the ABC Miller High life Masters was fantastic.

Has living the life of a pro been what you expected? In what ways?

I knew there would be a boatload of travel from the beginning. It was a lot of fun at first, but after being out here for 15 yrs it's tiresome. It's part of the gig though. The emotional roller coaster rides you go through out here are incredible. One day you're king, the next, a fly on a wall getting smashed. It's tough mentally but only the strong survive. I have seen them come and go and the players who have been around are the tough ones mentally.

Was the 2004-05 PBA season good for you? Did winning the Masters make the season easier or harder?

In what way?

Starting off the year winning was great! I never created expectations of POY just because of one tournament. It's always been one tournament at a time. These guys are great and one tournament does not make a year. The 100,000 helped, but I never bowl for the money, always the titles. The cash is bonus! Now speaking of my year I consider it a good one. It could have been much better with a few more TV shows but I failed to capitalize on a lot of the round of 8's I made. That eventually hurt my chances for POY. But all-in-all a good consistent year!

You have created an 'image' that appeals to younger people. Did you do that for bowling or are you just 'young at heart'?

Yes I have and yes I am! Come on heavy metal music, singing on stage, a killer mustang cobra and an aggressive bowling style, clothes and all!!!! It's me being me! Honestly what the bowling people do not know is that I wore similar clothing when I would go out and see bands play before the new owners took over. I incorporated my "look" into bowling, yes, for marketing myself to stand out but also because the rules had changed and I could let loose finally so to speak. My name always comes up when some-



In Dallas, IRL champion Sam Hornish Jr. took a bowling lesson from PBA champion Danny Wiseman

one wears a wild shirt to bowl in. I branded the image but there is no way of patenting it so financially it didn't help! As for the kids, if it helps get them interested and participating in our sport then in a small part I did what I am supposed to do as a professional athlete.

Is the hand injury you suffered last year fully healed?

Kind of...It happened the 4th tourney of the 04-05 season so I don't think it will ever go away. There are certain movements I have to be aware of. I still have to keep my index finger closed in while bowling. When I first start up bowling I have to keep the thumbholes loose or it can damage the tendon again. My ultimate fear is throwing a shot, hanging in a thumbhole and having that happen again. It was the utmost intense feeling of pain that I have ever experienced. It makes getting my tattoo's a

piece of cake!

When did you first become interested in IRL racing? Do you see any ties between IRL and bowling in the future beyond the charity events like the one you did with Sam Hornish Jr.?

I have always watched it when I could. I have Indy 500's taped from the 1980's. I would have been involved as a kid but in my area there was nothing of the sort, so it was baseball and bowling. There could be some possibilities down the road. I hope my impression to the people at the event has some influence for the future. It could be beneficial for bowling and the Professionals in both leagues in some way.

Have you invested your PBA winnings? What will you do when you no longer tour?

Yes I have. I have 2 brokers and every year for the last 10 I have put the



Indianapolis 500 Champion Dan Wheldon chats with Wiseman

WISEMAN continued

allowed amount into a retirement account. It's getting up there! Along with my regular investment accounts. Everything I win goes into the kitty. I actually don't want to have to work after bowling . . . I am not sure what I will do after bowling, but it will either have something to do with cars or real estate. As far as bowling goes if anything at all it would be a business partner in a center or another kind of business venture.

What is the most important life lesson you've learned as a professional bowler?

WOW - Tons actually! Patience comes to mind. Whether it be on the lanes or setting up travel plans to preparing for competition. I am not a very patient person and never have been but in this game you have to be. A lot of what bowling has taught me has carried over into general life as well. That's it I could be a travel agent after bowling!!!

Any plans for marriage/family in the near future?

Well, not for now . . . I was married when I first started out on tour until 1994. That's all I'll say about that . . . I wouldn't mind starting a family but for now there are no possibilities except my career. I figure I have about 5-6 yrs left of doing this or until the desire isn't there anymore.

Do you think the new PBA owners and managers have done a good job, and what would you like to see happen to PBA in the next 5 years?

If it wasn't for our new owners step-

ping up, I wouldn't be here doing this interview! I think our Upper management personal from Mr. Miller to Mr. Schreyer and all the others who manage their divisions at the PBA have given all of us in the bowling in world a chance. The PBA trickles down to all of bowling. Without us the entire industry would be in a bigger bind than it is today. We all know that its hurting but what would it be like if there wasn't a PBA? I believe they have done a lot of good things for the players and for bowling like giving us a chance to perform as athletes and the opportunity to make a living throwing a bowling ball. There are always going to be issues and concerns in other aspects. I for one would like to see the corporate sponsors utilize the Players more for appearances, marketing, and promotions much more than they do along with possible salaries. I think to how and what I have seen with the IRL and the sponsors involved with the drivers and how they manage themselves. This would be something that could happen with our corporate people working with the sponsors and players to set up contracts individually for those purposes. Right now, or we did last year bowl for a prize fund for wearing a logo for 21 weeks. I wasn't included because I didn't agree with this but that was my option at the time. Bigger and better things are going to happen. It's all in place from the ratings, to sponsors to good people involved with the PBA along with some very marketable players and a marketable product!

Penke's Sam Hornish Jr. and USBC Masters Champ Danny Wiseman Kick Off Race Week with Charity Bowling Event

The Indy Racing League rolled into the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex this week, and the Danica Mania momentum from the Indianapolis 500 is stronger than ever. Fans stood in lines more than seven hours to get an autograph

ties. "We could have sold many more lanes, but this is the first one, so next time we'll pick a bigger bowling center."

Wiseman and Hornish Jr., who drives for the Penske Race Team, became



Danny Wiseman signing autographs at the Charity Bowling Event

from sensational new racing superstar Danica Patrick, who finished fourth in the Indianapolis 500.

While Danica was surrounded by fans and media in the parking lot of AMF Fun Fest Lanes in Arlington, Sam Hornish Jr. and his 'coach' and bowling buddy USBC Masters Champion Danny Wiseman, were inside preparing to kick off the activities with the inaugural Sam Hornish Jr. Celebrity Bowling Tournament.

The event, sponsored by ESPN Radio and many others, featured top IRL drivers and celebrities like PBA Champion Wiseman teamed with corporate sponsors for the two-game tournament. Each sponsor, all associated in some way with the race, paid \$2500 to participate, with all proceeds going to the Texas Chapter of Speedway Children's Charities. All of Fun Fest's 24 lanes were sold. More than \$50,000 was raised in the event.

"I wish we had a bigger place," said Brittnee Henry, who coordinated the event for Speedway Children's Char-

ities when Sam bowled in a PBA pro-am with Danny a couple of years ago. They renewed that friendship at another charity event during the Indianapolis 500 race in May.

"When we talked about doing this they were lining up celebrities, and I said I know a celebrity bowler," said Hornish Jr. "This has turned out even better than I expected and I'm glad Danny came down here to help us out. There's a lot of people here, so it should be good."

Wiseman's trying to work out a deal with Hornish Jr. to trade driving lessons for bowling lessons. He got to ride around the Indy track in a 2-seater during Indy week. "After going 180 mph, it was amazing. It was incredible," said Wiseman. "We talked about bowling in Indy, and I told Sam I'd help him with his game. He asked me to come here, and this is a terrific event. I'm glad I can help raise some money for the kids. I'm just going to hang out and enjoy myself, and watch Sam beat everybody's butt this week."