



[ZIKIS STRIKES IT BIG WITH SECOND TITLE ON PRO DUCKPIN TOUR](#)

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John Zikis has been involved with duckpin bowling since he was 3 years old at Johnson's Duckpin Lanes in Hamden. So when the 23-year old won the Duckpin Olympics in Hagerstown, Pa., in front of friends and family, it was only natural for his parents to be emotional.

"My parents couldn't stop crying, I was trying not to with everybody there. It was tough not to," Zikis said. "The weekend was crazy, I bowled really well, but there was a lot of sitting around and waiting. A lot of family members and people I've known forever came to watch."

The tournament at Southside Bowl in Hagerstown was held on May 30. It was Zikis' second career win on the Duckpin Professional Bowlers Association Tour. Zikis earned the top seed during the eight-game qualifier. The top 42 bowlers were broken into seven rounds of six, where Zikis bowled a total of 860 (an average of 172) during his five games.

As the No. 1 seed Zikis had to wait for the rest of the field to decide a challenger in the final. The No. 3 seed Mike Herbert could not deny Zikis in his 148-112 victory. A strike in the ninth frame clinched the tournament championship for Zikis, and gave him a \$12,000 payday.

Zikis began his pro career in 2006 after graduating from Hamden High School, however he has been around bowling for as long as he can remember.

"I started when I was three in the youth leagues," Zikis said. "When I was younger I remember watching guys on the pro tour and think that I wanted to be like them. It's something special to actually be one of those guys and have the younger kids there to watch me."

Zikis may be on the pro tour, but that doesn't mean he practices every day.

Zikis helps his aunt, Sandi Thomas, who owns Johnson's Lanes. He not only practices there, but also works at the alley where he grew up.

"Whenever I can fit it in," Zikis said. "There is no real set practice schedule for me. I work at Johnson's two days a week and whenever an extra person is needed. I bowl in a league there on Monday nights during the winter and try to practice at least two other days per week."

His practice schedule was put on hold for a couple of weeks due to a well-deserved vacation. Although

Zikis made a trip to Las Vegas, don't expect Zikis to squander any of the \$12,000 he won at the Duckpin Olympics.

"All of the winnings are in the bank," Zikis said. "The money for the trip was already set aside.

"The trip was planned long before the tournament. The vacation is great. It's nice to get away from everything for a week."

He can't relax too much, as there are still six more tournaments to go on the tour's season. Zikis knows it will be tough to bring home another title, but he remains confident.

"It doesn't happen very often that someone wins more than one, There's a lot of really good competition but it can happen," Zikis said. "I'm going to try to make the rest of the tournaments. Right now I don't see any reason why I won't."

Zikis sits in second place in the DBPA's Bowler of the Year standings, 10 points behind Jason Smith. He leads the ranks with a 154.15 average. Although Zikis had the opportunity to celebrate his tournament win in Las Vegas, his quest to overtake Smith for the points lead continues this weekend in Warwick, R.I.

"The next tournament is this coming weekend so I'll have to get in a good practice on Thursday," Zikis said. "As long as I'm ready physically, I'm always ready mentally."