



## Florida bowler excels in new high school league

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## Today's Latest News HEADLINES

### "Meet Nathan Ricks"

As a youth bowler, Nathan Ricks has competed in many local tournaments and national events such as the USBC Junior Gold Championships, but it wasn't until this year that he had the opportunity to bowl for his high school.

Ricks is a junior at Stranahan High School in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and is in the science and engineering program of the magnet school. Last month, he took part in the first season of The Broward County (Fla.) High School Bowling League.



To coordinate the 13 schools in the new league, the teams met at Brunswick Margate Lanes and bowled two two-game matches each day over three separate weeks for a total of six matches. Ricks had a great first week with a 959 four-game total (239 average) and proceeded to do better each week. He had 994 the second week, which included a 299 game, and a 999 the final week.

For the season, he finished with a total pinfall of 2,952 for the 12 games, a 246 average. His key to success is to find one element of his game on which to focus.

"It's holding the ball a different way in the starting position or turning my shoulders a certain way," Ricks said. "Another great key that I use is keeping a positive mindset. Not only does this help keep negative thoughts away, I feel it helps me stay relaxed to make the highest quality shot. This also allows me to make the proper adjustments and stay ahead of the changes in lane conditions."

Success on the lanes is nothing new to Ricks. He finished 12th at the 2010 Junior Gold Championships in Indianapolis and was the recipient of the David Dahms Sportsmanship Award at the event. He is the 2010 Florida Pepsi Singles champion.

This past weekend at the Broward County Bowling Association's County Youth Tournament, Ricks set a county all-events record with a 2,207 nine-game total. In the team event, he had a 795 series that included his 10th perfect game.

But for Ricks, the chance to bowl for his high school was a special opportunity. He started bowling at age 5 and has been hooked on the sport since.

"Once I found out that high school bowling was a possibility, I couldn't get it off of my mind," Ricks said. "The chance to bowl with others in a high school competition was great. I've met some new people, and I really enjoy the competition of the high school matches."

He's hopeful that next year, he will have the opportunity to compete in the Florida High School Athletic Association state tournament.

"I know bowlers from neighboring counties who talk about how exciting the state finals are," Ricks said. "I hope to have a chance next year to experience that excitement for myself."