

Alton, Edwardsville, Granite City bowlers compete in Kahok Challenge

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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COLLINSVILLE – While the 2015-16 high school bowling season is under way, Riverbender-area girls teams hadn't had the opportunity to compete thus far this year.

That changed Saturday when the area girls' bowling season started with the **Kahok Challenge tournament at Camelot Bowl**, which attracted a field of 18 schools.

O'Fallon came away with the team title on the day, which consisted of three morning games, with the field being divided into two divisions after the morning session; the top 10 teams were placed in the Gold Division, while the remaining 12 teams (several teams entered two squads) competed in the Silver Division. Gold Division teams continued to add to their pinfall totals, while Silver Division teams counted only their pinfalls from the afternoon session. Freeburg won the Silver Division championship.

Alton was the highest area team finisher, taking fourth place with a pinfall of 5,530; **Granite City** finished ninth in the Silver Division with a three-game pinfall of 1,960, while **Edwardsville** finished behind the Warriors with a pinfall of 1,936.

“Overall we did well,” said **Redbird coach Jeff Woszczynski**. “We've got a couple of new players this year that haven't had any varsity experience, but we were third after the first three games. We just had slow starts in the first and second block of games, but overall we got better as the day went on.

“We had a 1,032 the last game of the first block and a 975 (in the final game of the day); we got better each time. We're learning, but it's going to be a fun year this year, I think.”

Woszczynski thinks the Redbirds should have a good team this season. “Overall, I think we should average around the low 900s; that's very good for girls,” Woszczynski said. “We're going to get better; we know what we've got now. We've got an excellent squad and we're very deep, so we will be getting better. Hopefully we'll improve that and hopefully we'll make it all the way to the state tournament (which will be held in mid-February in Rockford).”

As for **Edwardsville's team**, **Tiger coach Craig Ohlau** said “we came out pretty well today. We really didn't know what to expect at first with the new girls in this group, but we shot well, we were picking up our spares pretty early. We sensed a little tiredness there in the second half, but we gritted it out there in the end, in the ninth and 10th frames of the sixth game.

“We've got a little bit ways to go, but we like where we're at right now and we'll keep working and hopefully keep improving and have a good season.”

O'Fallon won the overall team title with a six-game pinfall of 5,786, followed by Herrin with 5,584, Salem's A team at 5,543, the Redbirds at 5,530 and Cahokia at 5,412 to round out the top five. Freeburg won the Silver Division with a three-game count of 2,489, followed by Belleville West at 2,443, Centralia at 2,406, Triad A at 2,374 and Decatur Eisenhower at 2,264.

Cahokia's Cassie Martin won the individual competition with a six-game total of 1,368, followed by Salem A's Karissa Kantner at 1,325, O'Fallon's Madison Kasza at 1,289, O'Fallon's Maddi Thornton at 1,242 and Heistand at 1,227. The Redbirds also had two other bowlers in the top 20, Eryka Graham (11th with 1,176) and Elizabeth Hanke (19th at 1,124).

Kasza turned in the day's high game with an opening-game 269, followed by Hanke and Kantner with 255s each, O'Fallon's Hayleigh Williams at 253 and Martin at 249.

