



# **Mitchell Finishes Fifth For Redbirds, Redbirds Finish Seventh In Gold Division, Jersey Third, CM Fifth, Tigers Seventh, In Bowling Invite**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
November 13 2022 6:10 AM

COLLINSVILLE - Alton senior Ben Mitchell had the best performance for the area, bowling a 1,301 six-game series to finish fifth as the Redbirds came in seventh in the Gold Division, while Triad was second in the Silver Division and Highland Black was second in the Bronze Division at the Zack LeCuyer Invitational boys bowling tournament Saturday morning and afternoon at Camelot Bowl in Collinsville.



O'Fallon Blue won the Gold Division with a total score of 6,232, with Collinsville Purple coming in second with a 6,185, Mascoutah Purple was third with a 6,012, in fourth place was Salem Green with a 5,999, fifth place went to Waterloo with a score of 5,878, Belleville East Blue was sixth with a 5,831, the Redbirds came in seventh with a

5,807, eighth place went to Belleville West at 5,771, in ninth place was Salem White with a score of 5,751 and rounding out the top ten was Belleville East White with a 5,415.

The Silver Division went to Harrisburg, who had a three-game total of 2,866, with the Knights coming in second at 2,801, in third place was Jersey, with a score of 2,744, fourth place went to Herrin with a 2,735, Civic Memorial was fifth with a 2,715, Centralia came in sixth with a score of 2,682, Carterville was seventh at 2,666, eighth place went to Mascoutah Black with a 2,629, in ninth place was Highland Red at 2,556 and in tenth place was Collinsville White at 2,552.

Columbia won the Bronze Division with a three-game total of 2,705, with Highland Black placing second with a 2,545, Mt. Vernon was third with a 2,528, O'Fallon Gold was fourth with a 2,491, in fifth place was Taylorville with a 2,435, Cahokia was sixth with a 2,353, Edwardsville was seventh with a 2,321, in eighth place was Carbondale with a 2,314, Freeburg was ninth with a 2,033 and Granite City finished 10th with a 1,665.

The Redbirds performed well as a team and bowled well throughout the six games of the tournament and it's a team that could make noise when the postseason starts in January.

"We did OK, we had a good day," said Alton head coach Dave Meyer. "We finished strong, had the best game of our day the last game as tight as the pattern was, the way it finished and everything. But we finished strong, I'm thinking that we will finish, I'm hoping sixth or seventh. So, not bad, out of 30 teams, Not bad. I'm happy, proud of them."

The performance by the Redbird bowlers wasn't a bad way to get the season underway.

"Yes, it is," Meyer said. "We had the conference tournament this week, we finished good there, third place. So in our conference, did good, very positive. Today's lane conditions just even proved to be tighter."

Meyer has high hopes for the Redbirds in the 2022-23 season.

"Hoping for the team is that we'll go to state," Meyer said, which will be held Jan. 27-28 at St. Clair Bowl in O'Fallon, the only state finals series held in southern Illinois. It's been a while and even make second day. I think these boys, bowling-wise, athletic-wise, they're good enough to do that. We just have to coach them a little bit better to get them mentally ready and everything."

Meyer cited three bowlers to watch out for as the Redbirds start their campaign.

"Best bowlers will be probably Ben Mitchell, Sam Ottwell and Brayden Buchanan, who's a freshman," Meyer said.

Meyer feels that the Redbirds have the opportunity to do good things throughout the season and feels good about their chances.

"Yes, hoping good things are really going to happen," Meyer said. "I'm very happy with the team. It feels a lot more comfortable this year."

The Edwardsville team is a young team, with things turning out to be a bit challenging for the Tigers, but the team hung in and bowled well.

"The boys battled hard today," said Edwardsville head coach Craig Ohlau. "The afternoon was challenging. The dried lanes created conditions which made it hard to find our lines and forced us into shots we weren't comfortable making."

The Tigers, for their youth, are a team of competitors who will scrap and try hard throughout the matches and will keep on going, no matter what.

"We are a young team," Ohlau said. "The kids understand where we are currently at and the goals we are wanting to accomplish. They also know how much work, time and dedication it's going to take to reach those goals."

The Tigers' main goal is to be competitive and have fun while representing the school and themselves very well.

"Ultimately, we are out here to have fun, get better, compete and represent ourselves, our families and our school in a respectable manner," Ohlau said. "I think we did that today."

Junior Thomas Rice is perhaps the best bowler for the Tigers, but Ohlau also mentioned other players who could make an impact this year.

"Well, Thomas performed well today," Ohlau said, "him and Nevin (Guetterman) are going to be at the top, along with Carter McFarland. We've got a newcomer in Tristan Arianna, who had a lot of potential as a freshman, and then, we've got Ben Molina, this is his first year coming out as a sophomore, who also has a lot of potential."

The goals for the Tigers remain the same throughout the season.

"You know, our goals are the same every year," Ohlau said. "it's just to get better each day, compete in the conference, which is an extremely tough conference, one of the

toughest conferences in the state. And then, do as well as we can in regionals and hopefully advance out of the regional."

In the individual standings, Evan Flath of Carterville was the champion with a six game set of 1,440, with Nathan Bassford of O'Fallon Blue second at 1,430, Mason Foley of Collinsville Purple came in third with a series of 1,324, in fourth place was Trevor Pense of Mascoutah Purple, with a 1,303, Mitchell finished fifth at 1,301, sixth place went to Peyton Mercer of Belleville West with a 1,293, in seventh place was Bradon West of the Indians Purple team with a 1,287, eighth place went to A.J. Evrley of Taylorville, who bowled a 1,281, Cole Buckman of the Kahoks' Purple team was ninth with a 1,272 set and rounding out the top ten was Dominick Winkler of Salem Green, with a score of 1,271.

The 30 teams played three games in the morning session, then were divided into the Gold, Silver and Bronze divisions, based upon the team standings at the end of the first round. In the final round of the tournament for the Redbirds, Roman Cross led the Redbirds with a 666 series, with Mitchell having a 646 set, Buchanan had a 549 series, Ottwell had a two-game set of 346, Gavin Goeway threw a two-game set of 323, Gabe Futhey had a single game of 171 and Eric Spond threw a single game of 150.

In the Silver Division, Brock Lynch led the Knights with a 621 series in the final round, while Andrew Neumann had a 610 set, Brice Riggart rolled a 558, Jordan Young threw a 536, Justin Spencer had a two-game series of 337 and Joshua Raffaele had a single game of 139.

Danny Towell was the top bowler for Jersey in the final round, throwing a 592, while Joey Kiel had a 560 set, Heath Groppe bowled a 550 series, Tyler Ayers had a 524 set and Pete Barton tossed a 518 series.

Brady Geisler led the Eagles with a final round series of 627, with Eric Harkey having a set of 571, Brayden Prott threw a 537 series, Hunter Kremke had a two-game set of 345, Jordan Teems had a two-game series of 303, Ben Morris had a single game of 206 and Jerrod Main had a single game of 126.

Highland Red was led by Dalton Geiger's 571 series in the final round, while Blake Ernst had a 545 set, Josh Athmer tossed a 522 series, Cole Korte had a two-game series of 325, Talon Vrell threw two games for 308 and Travis Geiseking had a two-game series of 285.

In the Bronze Division, the Bulldogs' black team was led by Jaden Offerman's 652 series in the final round, with Garret Pryor tossing a 513 set, Dakota Case threw a 503 series, Trent Hediger had a 480 series, Cole Nicken had a two-game series of 256 and Abel Lentz had a single game of 141.

Rice led the way for the Tigers with a 557 set in the final round, while Ben Molina tossed a 491 series, McFarland had a 486 series, Guetterman tossed a 445 set, Arianna had a two-game series of 256 and Robert Molina had a single game of 86.

The Warriors' top bowler was Brendan Hard, who had a 586 series in the final round, while Mason Scarborough threw a 305 set, Jacob McCrory had a 284 series, Caleb Schaefer had a 277 set and Henry Mink had a 213 set.