

## **CHRIS SLAGTER—SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE**



Chris Slagter of Jenison started bowling at age six because his friends joined a league. If he wanted to remain part of the gang, he had to join too. Little did Chris know then, but bowling would play a big part in his life story. His first league would be three games a week at Fairlanes in Grandville. A few years later you could find Chris bowling all day on Saturday in three different leagues. At 9:00 am he bowled at Michigan Lanes, then at 11 am at Miracle, then to cap the afternoon off he bowled in a Grand Rapids youth travel league. Once he acquired his license, Chris began to really get serious about his game. He joined the Michigan Junior Masters Association and started practicing more. He also met a fellow competitor, who would become a friend then a teammate and finally his wife. Meeting Jennifer according to Chris is the best gift bowling ever gave him.

When Chris and Jennifer married, they stayed very involved in bowling. During those early days, Jennifer would win the 2004 Michigan State WBA Queens Tournament. Chris would win the all-events title in the Michigan State BA Tournament. As a bonus to that title the BA paid the entry for the bowler to the USBC Masters. Chris took a chance and went to Milwaukee to compete. Chris would make it to the top 64 and would draw Norm Duke in the first round. Chris put up a great fight, he was ahead in the beginning but he would come up around 20 pins short. He did have a great time and was complimented by Del Ballard who told Chris he watched him and used his line in competition. After this period of time, the Slater's would become parents and like all good parents their kids became their world. Life revolved around their four kids and their activities. The couple would continue to bowl together on Thurs-day nights. Bowling in tournaments with the extended family especially at the state and local level. Family means everything to Chris and if bowling just happens to be involved it is a bonus.

Chris keeps bowling in the forefront as the coach of not one but two teams. He is the coach of the Jenison High School boys and girls bowling teams. Chris also coaches at the collegiate level. He is the bowling coach for his alma mater, Cornerstone University. On the high school, Chris has been able to coach three of his children and looks forward to welcoming his youngest son to the team next season. At Jenison, he was named co-coach of the year for the girl's team in 2019. He shared the honor with his sister-in-law Kim. In 2023, Chris would receive the same named award for his Division 1 boys' team at Jenison. At Cornerstone, a NAIA school, Chris has had the opportunity to coach his eldest two children, Nick and Lauren. Coaching the college team, Chris has found it helps his game too. As he uses his coach's eye to analyze his players, he picks up little adjustments here and there he can make to his game too. Chris loves giving back to youth bowling by coaching, he has been at his position at Jenison for 11 years and in this capacity at Cornerstone for 8 years. Coaching is a labor of love for Chris.

Little more than a year ago, something happened to Chris to make his life and his career as a bowler even sweeter. Chris landed a dream job with Brunswick. He goes to work every day with a smile on his face as he gets to talk and work in the world of bowling. He has access to the latest technology, great bowling minds, and a wonderful working atmosphere. When he accumulates some vacation time down the road, Chris would like to try his hand at the PBA 50 Tour.

This family man who just rolled a 878 series this season, has one more bucket list entry about bowling. The Michigan State USBC and Greater Grand Rapids tournaments have always been a family event. This 5-time state titlists would love for the tradition to continue with the next generation. Chris cannot wait to bowl with all of his kids, nieces, nephews, and the rest of family in these tournaments. This is what is important to him, family and spending time together. If it is on the lanes, it is a bonus.