

Pettyjohn rolls his first 300

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By Jocelyn Sheets Newton Daily News

MONROE — Seven years ago Andy Pettyjohn was asked to bowl on a men's league team in Pella. He admits he was horrible when he started.

On Oct. 10 on lanes No. 5 and No. 6 at Monroe's Mustang Lanes, Pettyjohn wasn't so horrible. He bowled his first 300 game on to his way to a 734 series.

“Halfway through the second game, I didn’t even know. I looked up and I had a six-pack (six strikes in a row) but didn’t think much about it,” Pettyjohn said. “When it got to eight in a row, I knew it was getting real.”

Pettyjohn, 32, has a bit of a unique bowling style — he bowls two-handed. He said three years into his bowling career he hurt his pinky and couldn’t hold his bowling ball with just one hand. Pettyjohn said he watched YouTube video of professional bowler Jason Belmonte on two-handed technique to handle the ball instead of a traditional one-handed technique.

“My average had been 156 when I started bowling. After I made the switch, my average went up to 200. I stuck with the two-hand process. I’m the only one who bowls two-handed here,” Pettyjohn said.

“On that night, I was a little shaky when I threw my 10th ball but nothing on the 11th ball. When it came to the 12th ball, no one else in the bowling alley was bowling. They were watching me. I just decided to throw it like I had been, and, sure enough, it went where it needed to go.”

Pettyjohn said a friend of his had a video of him on the final ball to send to his wife. He said he jumped so high, he almost hit the bowling alley ceiling.

“I didn’t even care what I threw on my third game that night. I kept it together and finished a the 734 series. I actually threw 17 strikes in a row that night — the final four in my first game, the 12 in the 300 game and the first one in my third game,” Pettyjohn said.

Pettyjohn bowls on the H&R Block team in the Monroe Men’s City League on Monday nights at Mustang Lanes. He said on the night he rolled his 300, the whole team bowled well with a combined score of 3,445.

He bowls on a team in Pella in a Thursday night league.

“We’ve been bowling here in Monroe for three years now. We like the people here,” Pettyjohn said. “Bowling for me is about hanging out with the guys and having fun. Throwing a 300 is pretty fun.”

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