



Kelly Ray

North Central Texas Hall of Fame

Kelly grew up idolizing his father and brother bowling, but didn't realize how well respected they both were until later on and he wanted to be the same.

Kelly was 8 when his dad let him start bowling in a league. He had a pretty bad hot temper because he just wanted to bowl so good, so badly and it was frustrating when he couldn't perform the way he thought he should at that time. He told his mother when he was 14 that if he didn't start bowling better or getting better that he

would quit. Soon after, Kelly shot his first 300 game and that changed everything. He began to understand the game more and ate, slept and breathed bowling. He started working at the bowling center right after school and practiced after work at midnight almost every night. When he shot his second 300 six months later, it was on. Kelly felt like he could possibly be a star like his father and brother. He began bowling in several scratch tournaments out of town that he saved up for from working at the bowling center. Kelly had moments of victories, but some agony of defeats as well.

After having several tournament wins as an adult, he really wanted to try the PBA tour. Kelly soon found out his father had cancer and that deterred his decision to tour, but he insisted that Kelly go chase his dream as he had just started chemo for about 4 months. Kelly had a few injuries in his lower back, so he had very little success on his only winter tour swing. At that time, it was very hard to get out of all of the PTQs (pre-tournament qualifiers) to try to show his abilities. After flying home twice because his father had spells and a heart attack, Kelly decided to stay home with family. He is so glad he did, because his father passed 6 months later.

Soon after that in '94, Kelly won his first PBA regional in Las Cruces, NM and dedicated it to his father. He was fortunate to win a few more regionals following.

As for bowling in adult tournaments, he was very honored to bowl with some great people and win several bowling tournaments with these great partners. When he and Terry Taylor won the Red River Doubles in '95, this was very sentimental since his father had won several times. They won again together in '98 and made it even more rewarding since it was so tough to win.

Kelly bowled a Thanksgiving PBA doubles regional with Brad Hunter in '98 and came away with the title! Another very special win with another very special friend! Since they always traveled together and traveled with their fathers for their tournaments as kids, this was a great moment in Kelly's life to share with Brad as well. Kelly is proud to know the people and friends in the bowling world and very honored to be in this select few!!

