



#### **Press Release 04: Ballmaster shines Platinum**

The European Bowling Tour 2010 is not yet composed, but the composition period is in progress until 19 June and a number of applications for tournaments to be adopted in the EBT 2010 are received by ETBF in these weeks.

Today we received yet another application and what a fantastic kind of an application it was.

Brunswick Ballmaster Open, the longest lasting international tournament in Europe with an unbroken number of annual conductions, and the only tournament in the tour programme every year since the very beginning of the European Bowling Tour in 2000, celebrates its 40 years jubilee in 2010 and has decided to do the celebration with an extraordinary firework over bowling Helsinki.

The organization of Ballmaster was taken over by the well known business man and excellent bowler, Kimmo Lehtonen, for some years ago, and his entrance on the scene brought new vitality, power and not least life back to this tournament, which is so rich of traditions.

Since 2004, where the prize fund of the tournament jumped to modern heights, the prize pool has constantly increased from 50.000 € to the 75.000 €, which was awarded this year. Despite this development, the prize pool increases to historical 105.000 € in 2010 and at the same moment Lehtonen announces a return to the roots for the final of the tournament, which will present a hyper classic 16 players Round Robin followed by a stepladder final.

We "caught" Kimmo Lehtonen in Helsinki for a few remarks to this fantastic jubilee issue of Ballmaster, and we asked him, among other things, about the reason for this initiative:

"I do not really know, I just am like this and I have always been like this", said Kimmo Lehtonen (41), while he was considering the reasons for this enormous level of prize money in the tournament.

"I think that Ballmaster Open deserves this, and time is right when the tournament reaches its 40 years jubilee. Furthermore, when the situation in the World is as it is right now, we just have to have courage to do something big and to do it together", said Lehtonen.

The winner of Brunswick Ballmaster Open 2010 will cash not less than 15.000 €. That is important to Kimmo Lehtonen, but even more important is that the lowest prizes, for the last positioned players in the 48 players final field, will be as high as 1.500 €. "It means a lot to me that also the last positioned finalists will get a good prize. I wish that many players from many different countries will come to Tali and together with us built and share the atmosphere of the 40<sup>th</sup> Ballmaster Open. We welcome bowlers from all levels to the 40<sup>th</sup> Brunswick Ballmaster Open", said Lehtonen



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Finally Lehtonen ended with the following important view for our sport: "All of us, bowlers, organizers and people working with bowling, must work for the sport of bowling. Let's try to make tournaments, which are re-establishing respect for our sport!"

The 105.000 € prize pool brings the tournament to the highest of the four categories in the European Bowling Tour, the EBT Platinum, which, among other characteristics, will ensure that all ranking points awarded in the tournament will be multiplied by a factor 5.

Ballmaster is only the second tournament with an EBT Platinum status in the history of the European Bowling Tour, where Ankara Open was the first tournament in this high category both in 2008 and again in September 2009.

The Presidium of ETBF is very grateful to initiatives like the one in Ankara and now in January 2010 in Helsinki, because it increases the credibility of our sport and takes us to higher levels.

One thing is for sure; it will be a great firework of a tournament when Brunswick Ballmaster Open turns 40 in January 2010, more vital than ever!

Kim Thorsgaard Jensen  
EBT Director