

Freshman Sensation Jillian Dwiggins Moves Ahead To State Bowling Meet, Is An Auto Butler Female Athlete Of Month

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Alton High School freshman Jillian Dwiggins has done something incredible - she has advanced to the IHSA State Girls Bowling Meet in her first year on varsity. Jillian put together games of 212, 160, 204, 202, 162, and 202 for a total of 1142 in the sectional this past weekend. She finished 10th overall, earning her a trip to Rockford next weekend for the state finals.

Jillian is the daughter of AHS head girls bowling coach Jamie, and has been the Redbirds' top bowler all year.

Her coach said: "She is our hardest worker, putting in additional time practicing and spending a lot of her own time working on various aspects of her game. While we would have loved to see the team advance to the state finals, this is the next best scenario. We are beyond proud of Jillian for making it to state. She is an excellent student as well."

Jillian Dwiggins is an Auto Butler Female Athlete of the Month for the Redbirds.

Jillian played volleyball in the fall for the Redbirds but cut her season short to focus on her bowling and begin ramping up her bowling activities.

As soon as bowling is done next weekend, she will then transition into soccer mode for the spring, hoping to earn a spot on the AHS soccer team. However, she will continue to work on her bowling skills as she will be participating in the Junior Gold bowling tournament this July in Detroit.

This is the premier bowling tournament for youth in the country. Dwiggins earned her spot in this tournament last August. She is a very active kid, excelling in most things she puts her mind to in her athletic goals.

"Going into the last game Jillian knew she was probably close, and coming off of a bad game 5, she knew she needed a good game to close out the day, to have any hope of making it to Rockford," her coach and mother said. "She was planning to make a ball change on her fill ball in the fifth game, but after leaving the 10th-frame open, she didn't get that opportunity. So for game six, she made the ball change, at the suggestion from her coach. Starting the game off with a pair of nine spares she then put together four strikes in a row before missing a 10-pin in the seventh frame, then responded with another strike in the eighth before leaving a split in the ninth. She closed out the game with a spare in the 10th securing her 202 game and punching her ticket to Rockford. Jillian never looked nervous, just very business-like, as she was still trying to help the team be successful."

Coach Dwiggins said when the announcement was made that Jillian had indeed advanced, "you finally could see a smile come across her face, a sense of relief and excitement that her high school season has one more week left."

Again, congrats to Jillian Dwiggins on her deserved recognition as an Auto Butler Female Athlete of the Month for the Redbirds.