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SYRACUSE, N.Y. - In the last three years, Emma Hendrickson of Morris Plains, N.J., has become a worldwide bowling sensation, and she returned to the USBC Women's Championships this weekend for another record-breaking appearance on the tournament lanes.

At 102 years old, Hendrickson is the oldest participant in the 92-year history of the Women's Championships. She took sole possession of the record at age 100 when she competed at the 2009 Women's Championships, while her 2011 appearance marked her 52nd consecutive trip to the annual event.

Hendrickson arrived at the Oncenter Convention Center by white stretch limo, from which she exited to a red carpet and applause from an Oncenter crowd as well as camera flashes from media and bowling fans.

As she moved toward the squad room to prepare for her team event, she was showered by congratulatory greetings from her fellow bowlers.

"I've found that the best thing you can do is be happy with what you are doing, and bowling is what I do," Hendrickson said. "As I always say, 'once a bowler, always a bowler.' That's my own saying, you know, and it's a true statement about the dedication and love that bowlers have for their sport."

Although she occasionally is frustrated with her results in her Friday league at Plaza

Lanes in Madison, N.J., she says she always is ready to roll again within the next week. Part of that optimism comes from analyzing her weekly performances and taking the blame for the details that are her fault.

It's all part of Hendrickson's life philosophy that has kept her going.

"Overall in life, I've found that you need to be kind and alert and helpful to others," said Hendrickson, who made her tournament debut at the 1960 event in Denver. "It's especially important to be of help to those who are just coming up in the world, and the bowling world."

Even with her return to bowling's biggest stage coming just six weeks after major surgery, Hendrickson seemed re-energized by her surroundings and the sound of rattling pins, and she had the tournament on her agenda all along, according to her family.

"She was absolutely not going to miss this event," said her granddaughter Cindy Romaine. "For years and years, her entire schedule has centered on making plans to be here, despite the birth of great-grandkids and everything else in her life."

Hendrickson thanked USBC and all of her fellow bowlers for the warm reception she received during a brief ceremony on the lanes. She received a special Syracuse University basketball jersey bearing her name in addition to other gifts, and says she hopes to be able to make it to Reno for the 2012 event.

"I first met Emma in Reno when she turned 100 and celebrated her 50th consecutive appearance," said Women's Championships Tournament Manager Eric Pierson. "I have promised her that if she agrees to continue to come each year, I will meet her at every tournament - and that is our firm agreement."

To cement that arrangement, Pierson and Hendrickson shook hands during her ceremony, to the wild applause of onlookers, many of whom just happened to hail from New Jersey and New York themselves.

And, with her typical aplomb, Hendrickson wished everyone good luck in their bowling and asked USBC to not count any of the evening's gutter balls.

Her team, The Five Bowling Bags, competed in the Ruby Division and posted a 1,910 total with games of 619, 635 and 656. Their division includes teams with a combined average of 750-899.