

Bowling brilliance by Special Olympian

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Hawke's Bay athlete Michael Donovan didn't let a disability get in the way of taking out the men's singles category at the Hawke's Bay Open ten pin bowling tournament this month.

Michael, who has Down syndrome, has been playing ten pin bowling since 2011.

The 23-year-old, who has received tremendous support from Barbara Nonu at Superstrike Tenpin Bowling, came second over all and took out a bronze in the pairs division.

Michael's mum, Anne Donovan, says he was overwhelmed with his performance at the tournament.

"He bowled brilliantly — four out of his six games were over 150," Anne says.

"Michael had been asked to bowl in the pairs competition with Ian Baldwin and Special Olympics entered a team with Michael, Scott Wilson and two others. I entered him in the singles division for the experience.

"After coming second overall and qualifying for the masters final, he earned himself a master's shirt — I'm very proud of him."

Disability Resource Centre support services manager Ali Chapland says the sport has given Michael a lot of confidence.

"Michael has won a tonne of



LUCKY STRIKE: Ten pin bowling medallist Micheal Donovan took out the men's singles category at the Hawke's Bay Open.

medals against many New Zealand ten pin bowling representatives — he's played in a lot of tournaments around the country," Ali says.

"When he first started he recieved scores between 50-60, but after a bit of practice Michael was soon scoring a lot higher than that.

Ali says anyone can achieve anything if they put their mind to it.

"For us it's about getting people

back out into the community, and for them to be contributing members of society," she says.

"What's great about this is that Michael's not stuck in his own league, he's out there playing against the nation's best."

From November 26 to December 1 Michael will represent Hawke's Bay, along with 45 other athletes and 15 supervisors, at the Special Olympic Summer Games in Dunedin.