United States Bowling Congress

PLAYING RULES

2023-2024

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A Future FOR THE Sport

A Future FOR THE Sport

USBC VISION

Our vision is to continue to be the leading authority to the sport, servicing the needs of bowling.

USBC MISSION

The USBC is the National Governing Body for Bowling.

Our mission is to provide services, resources and the standards for the sport.

USBC PROMISE

Our promise is to celebrate the past, be mindful of the present and ensure bowling's future through thoughtful research, planning and delivery.

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USBC Masters/Queens/Senior Queens/ Senior Championships/Super Senior Classic/ Senior Masters/Bowlers Journal Team Championship Series	tournaments@bowl.com	385-8412
USBC Junior Gold Championships	tournaments@ibcyouth.com	385-8412
USBC Youth Open	tournaments@ibcyouth.com	385-8412
Pepsi/Youth Championships	tournaments@ibcyouth.com	385-8412
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Changes effective August 1, 2023

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

Rule 4f – Two-Handed Techniques (New Rule)
Rule clarifies the difference between a two-handed delivery and a two-handed approach

Rule 6a – Legal Pinfall
Definition of Legal Pinfall expanded to reflect string pinsetters

Rule 7c – Replacement
Definition of Broken Pin expanded to reflect string pinsetters

Rule 19 - String Pin Bowling (New Rule)
New rule adopted to reflect USBC certification of String Pin Bowling

TOURNAMENT RULES

Rule 306
Removed the limitations on the entry fees for All-Events in YOUTH competition only

RULE CHANGES

Chapter 1: Introduction

Membership

Membership in USBC is composed of adults and youth who have paid the appropriate USBC, and if applicable, state and local association dues. Valid membership entitles the bowler to participate in all USBC competition for which they are otherwise qualified.

Upon obtaining membership in USBC, each member agrees to be bound by USBC's final decisions involving the interpretation, application, and/or enforcement of the USBC Bylaws, USBC Playing Rules, and comply with the U.S. Center for SafeSport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Polices and all matters concerning bowling as governed by USBC, and each member further agrees that such final decisions of USBC shall be conclusive.

How Obtained
USBC Adult membership may be obtained through a league, tournament, chartered local association, or via BOWL.com.

USBC Youth membership may be obtained through a bowling center, league, tournament, or by contacting USBC Headquarters.

When Paid
Annual USBC membership dues, currently known, shall be paid before:

a. **Adult:** Completion of the bowler's first series in league competition. (See Rule 101.)
b. **Youth:** The bowler's third session of league competition. (See Rule 101.)
c. Participation in a tournament. (See Effective Date below and Rule 300c.)

Effective Date
Upon receipt of a membership application and the appropriate dues, membership will be valid:

a. For the season starting August 1 through July 31.
b. Through October 1 of the following season for summer leagues and tournaments. Youth who turn 18 during the season are not granted the October 1 extension for tournament play; youth membership expires July 31 of the season in which they turn 18 years old. If a youth member bowling in a summer league turns 18 during the season and the league continues beyond July 31, the bowler may complete the league as a youth bowler.

For membership to be effective as of the date purchased in a league, the league secretary/bowling center must forward the league membership dues, application cards and league application to the local association/league processor (youth) within 30 days. Otherwise, membership benefits are not effective until the date received at the local association office/league processor (youth).

Types of Membership

Youth Standard
USBC Youth membership is available to individuals who have not reached their 18th birthday prior to August 1 of the current bowling season. USBC Youth membership dues may only be changed by the USBC Board based on recommendations from the IBC Youth Committee.

USBC Youth members are required to pay Standard $4 dues annually. Associations and centers may charge a service fee in addition to the membership for those bowling in a USBC youth league.

Adult Standard
The maximum Standard National and State membership dues structure for adults may only be changed by the USBC delegation. Standard local membership dues are established by the local membership at the local annual meeting.

Standard membership dues paid annually are $15.00 National dues plus State dues up to a maximum of $5.00 and Local dues as determined by the local membership at the local association annual meeting.

An adult bowler must pay dues in each local association in which he/she applies for membership and/or bowls, except as provided in Rule 100e-3, Traveling leagues, or Rule 100d-2, Mail-o-Graphic leagues, or if the associations have a reciprocal agreement to waive dues. When a bowler joins a local association, he/she shall join the applicable state association. Regardless of the number of state and local associations in which an individual holds membership, he/she shall pay current USBC national membership dues only one time.

Adult Basic
Basic membership is available to leagues that bowl 16 sessions or less. Basic membership is $10.00 for each short season league joined. A member may pay additional membership fees to become:

a. A member of the State Association.
b. A USBC Standard member.

Special Olympics - Adult/Youth
Special Olympics membership is available for youth and adults with intellectual disabilities. Membership dues paid annually are $10.00. Associations and centers may charge a service fee in addition to the membership for those bowling in a USBC Youth League. The bowler must pay local and state membership when bowling in an adult league.

A bowler with intellectual disabilities who is no longer eligible for USBC Youth membership must hold a Special Olympics membership in order to bowl in USBC Youth competitions and must remain compliant with Rule 400.

For information on how to start a Special Olympics League or Tournament, contact the USBC Membership Department.

Collegiate – Adult/Youth
USBC Collegiate membership is available to student-athletes participating on an intercollegiate team. Each intercollegiate team must complete an application for membership and submit the required dues for each student-athlete.

By purchasing a membership through USBC Collegiate, collegiate members receive USBC National membership. USBC Collegiate membership entitles student-athletes to participate in certified USBC Collegiate competition. To participate in adult USBC Standard competition, the applicable adult state/local membership dues must be paid.

Collegiate Bowling averages are not recognized for USBC competition.

USBC Lifetime
Former ABC Lifetime and WIBC Permanent Membership will be recognized by USBC Headquarters. Membership dues will be credited by USBC to the appropriate state and local association(s) upon submission of a membership application each season. In addition, USBC will reimburse membership dues for one local association and one state association per season.

USBC does not offer Lifetime Membership purchases at this time.

USBC Hall of Fame
USBC shall provide one national, one state association, and one local association per season to all USBC National Hall of Fame Members upon submission of a membership application each season. USBC will credit membership dues to the state and local association(s) indicated on the membership application. When state and/or local dues are waived for USBC National Hall of Fame Members, USBC will credit the next association in which the person submits a membership application.

Membership Upgrades

The following are membership upgrades to USBC Standard membership. A bowler who applies for the upgrades below must have current USBC Standard membership.

Junior Gold - Youth
The USBC Junior Gold membership will be available to all youth who have a current season Standard membership and maintain compliance with Rule 400. An individual with a Standard membership can purchase an upgrade to the Junior Gold membership by paying an additional fee of:

1. U15/U18 membership for an additional $30.
2. U12 membership for an additional $10. (Available only to those whose birthdate is 8-1-2011 or later.)

Junior Gold membership is valid:

1. For the season starting August 1 through July 31.
2. Through October 1 of the following season for summer leagues.

Junior Gold membership must be purchased prior to entry into a qualifying event for the Junior Gold Championships.

Optional Benefits

USBC National:

a. May offer optional benefits for members at dues reflective of the value of services provided by USBC, state and/or local associations.
b. May offer optional benefits for men, women and youth bowlers who choose to be identified with USBC. Dues will reflect the level of membership privileges, services and benefits provided.
c. Determines dues for USBC and establishes the maximum amount of state and local dues only for optional benefits.

The association must offer all levels of membership as established by USBC.

USBC is authorized to test optional benefits prior to offering them, and to waive those specific bylaws, rules and regulations required for testing and implementation.

State/Local Associations:

a. May offer optional benefits for members at dues reflective of the value of services/products provided by the association.
b. The association may only increase/decrease their own dues, and cannot waive or change national dues or state/local, as applicable.

Each member would decide if he/she wants to purchase Standard Membership, or one of the Association's Optional Memberships.

Youth Membership Eligibility - Rule 400

USBC Youth membership is available to individuals who have not reached their 18th birthday prior to August 1 of the current bowling season and have maintained compliance with Item a below. Individuals who purchase Youth membership in a summer league and turn 18 prior to August 1 will be allowed to complete the summer league.

a. Except as provided in Item b, a youth may not bowl, substitute or pace in any bowling activity which offers any of the following as prizes:
    1. Cash or bonds.
    2. Merchandise exceeding $500 in value.
b. Youth may bowl in singles competitions (including side competitions/brackets) offering such prizes, provided, prior to bowling:
    1. The youth and parent/legal guardian sign the Consent Form (See BOWL.com/Rules)
    2. The competition agrees to award the youth's prize in the form of a scholarship; or
    3. The youth waives his/her right to any prize in violation of this rule.

In youth competition, youth members may participate in side competitions/brackets provided all entries are returned 100% in the form of scholarships only and awards comply with Item a.

Buying or selling of earned prizes is prohibited.

Any youth bowler deemed in violation of this rule is subject to disciplinary action including the potential loss of youth membership.

NOTE: USBC has no limits on:

1. Scholarship amounts
2. Entry fees (must be paid directly to the tournament director/manager)
3. Reimbursements of actual travel expenses into the next higher level of competition or any tournament or event (receipts must be provided upon request)
4. Prizes authorized by a grade/state high school athletic association or a collegiate athletic association recognized by USBC and USBC Collegiate.

    It is the responsibility of the student-athlete participating in high school sports to know what prizes/awards could violate amateur status rules established by their high school athletic association.

    The prizes authorized by a state high school athletic association or a collegiate athletic association recognized by USBC and USBC Collegiate are not subject to the limitations of this rule.

Commonly Asked Questions - Rule 400.

400/1 Can an 18 year old purchase a USBC Youth Standard membership?
USBC Youth Standard membership is only available to those who have not reached their 18th birthday prior to August 1 of the current season. If the individual turns 18 on or after August 1st, they would be eligible to purchase a Youth Standard membership and compete during that season.

400/2 My 18-year-old daughter is still a USBC Youth member, but wishes to join our Adult/Youth league with her younger brother. May she join the league as the adult, or would it affect her eligibility as a USBC Youth member?
The league rules and/or board determine if she can join as the adult. Since the league must follow USBC Rule 400, it would have no effect on her USBC Youth membership.

400/3 What awards can now be given in USBC Youth competition?
In addition to scholarships and USBC Awards, bowling equipment, apparel, gift certificates and other merchandise prizes are allowed providing they are not redeemable for cash. The total value of prizes a youth could receive in any one event cannot exceed $500. Scholarships do not fall under this limitation.

400/4 Can a youth member bowl for cash or bonds?
No. Bowling for cash or bonds is a violation of Rule 400.

400/5 Can a youth member bowl in an adult doubles or team event where cash or bonds are offered if the Consent Form is signed or the competition agrees to offer scholarships through SMART?
No. Rule 400 only allows youth to participate in adult singles competitions with cash or bond prizes and/or merchandise prizes valued in excess of $500 provided they submit the Consent Form prior to participating in such a competition.

400/6 Can bowling centers award items such as free soft drinks, food and free games for bowling accomplishments?
Yes. However, the total value of the awards an individual can earn in any one event, with the exception of scholarships, cannot exceed $500.

400/7 Can a parent or legal guardian purchase a ring to commemorate a youth's 11 in a row, 300 game or, 800 series?
Yes. USBC policy only allows USBC Youth members, their parents or legal guardians to purchase a commemorative high score ring. Bowling centers, USBC associations or other parties cannot purchase the rings as awards for youth bowlers. This policy is a proactive approach to prevent offering awards that could jeopardize a USBC Youth member's amateur status and eligibility to compete in high school sports.

400/8 What is the maximum amount a youth bowler can earn in scholarships?
There is no limitation on the value of scholarships that can be awarded.

400/9 Some of the teams in my daughter's league have sponsors who give them bowling shirts and help with other expenses. Is this acceptable?
Yes, however, USBC prefers the entire league be sponsored so each team is treated the same. Sponsors can cover normal expenses, such as providing team shirts, travel expenses to tournaments, etc.

400/10 Are bowlers with intellectual disabilities who are past the age requirement eligible for youth competition?
Yes, competition officials can allow a bowler(s) with intellectual disabilities to compete in youth competitions (unless competition rules state otherwise). The bowler(s) must purchase a USBC Special Olympic membership.

Amendment Procedures

Rules
Amendments submitted by a member or chartered association to the USBC Adult League and Tournament Rules must be in writing to USBC Headquarters by September 1 prior to the date of the next USBC Annual Meeting for action by the delegates.

The USBC Board amends the USBC General Playing Rules, Adult Award Rules and Youth Award, League, and Tournament Rules. The USBC Board also has authority to adopt Resolutions.

Specifications
The Equipment Specifications and Certification Committee, acting for and on behalf of the USBC Board, are authorized to have final authority to alter or change specifications. All proposed amendments to certification regulations or measurement specifications must be submitted in writing to USBC Headquarters.

Dues
The maximum Standard National and State membership dues structure for adults may only be changed by the USBC delegation. Standard Local dues are established by the local membership at the local annual meeting. The dues structure for youth may only be changed by the USBC Board based on recommendations from the Youth Committee.

Local Membership Meetings

With the exception of affiliate status associations, the local association is required to hold at least one membership meeting each season.

At a membership meeting, elective positions are filled according to the provisions of Article V of the local association bylaws.

The meeting is open to the entire membership of the association and is under the direction of the board. All regular business is considered at the meeting.

The president may call other membership meetings as considered necessary, but shall call a meeting of the association upon written request of at least three board members or at least 25 members of the association.

The association manager forwards a written notice of all membership meetings to each league secretary and the association board. All notices should be forwarded to the league secretaries and association board at least 15 days in advance of the meeting. The league secretary shall notify the members of the league.

Chapter 2: General Playing Rules

Rule 1 – USBC Certification

Leagues and tournaments must be organized and bowled in accordance with USBC Bylaws, rules and regulations. These events must be scheduled on lanes that currently are USBC certified and only USBC approved equipment may be used.

Rule 2 – The Game

2a. Definition
A game of American Tenpins consists of ten (10) frames. A player delivers two balls in each of the first nine frames unless a strike is scored. In the 10th frame, a player delivers three balls if a strike or spare is scored. Every frame must be completed by each player bowling in regular order.

2b. How Scored
Except when a strike is scored, the number of pins knocked down by the player's first delivery is to be marked next to the small square in the upper right-hand corner of that frame, and the number of pins knocked down by the player's second delivery is to be marked inside the small square. If none of the standing pins are knocked down by the second delivery in a frame, the score sheet shall be marked with a (-). The count for the two deliveries in the frame shall be recorded immediately.

A frame-by-frame account on scoring and calculating can be found on the Rules page of BOWL.com.

2c. Strike
A strike is made when the full setup of ten (10) pins is knocked down with the first delivery in a frame. It is marked by an (x) in the small square in the upper right-hand corner of the frame where it was made. The count for one strike is 10 plus the number of pins knocked down on the player's next two deliveries.

2d. Double
Two consecutive strikes is a double. The count for the first strike is 20 plus the number of pins knocked down with the first delivery following the second strike.

2e. Triple or Turkey
Three successive strikes is a triple or turkey. The count for the first strike is 30. To bowl the maximum score of 300, the player must bowl 12 strikes in succession.

2f. Spare
A spare is scored when pins left standing after the first delivery are knocked down with the second delivery in that frame. It is marked by a (/) in the small square in the upper right-hand corner of the frame. The count for a spare is 10 plus the number of pins knocked down by the player's next delivery.

2g. Open
An open is recorded when a player fails to knock down all 10 pins after two deliveries in a frame.

2h. Split
A split is a setup of pins left standing after the first delivery, provided the head pin is down and at least one pin is down:

1. Between two or more standing pins; e.g., 7-9 or 3-10.
2. Immediately ahead of two or more standing pins; e.g., 5-6.

NOTE: A split is usually designated by a (0), but any other symbol may be used.

Rule 3 – Modified Formats

Competition in which a modified game of American Tenpins is played or bumpers are used may be certified by USBC. With the exception of bumpers, all USBC equipment specifications shall apply to such competition and all USBC rules shall apply insofar as practical, in addition to the following:

a. Games bowled using the modified format shall not be included in averages established in league play for entry in standard American Tenpin competition.
b. Only award scores bowled using the standard American Tenpin scoring system as described in Rule 2a and meeting USBC equipment specifications qualify for USBC awards.

USBC may permit modifications or variations in team play formats for the purposes of exhibition events, television bowling or playoff matches resulting from USBC tournament competition in the qualifying rounds. The results of such events should be included in the tournament's prize or awards programs.

NOTE: For types and descriptions of modified formats including Baker System, see the *USBC League Operations Handbook* or BOWL.com.

Rule 4 – Delivering the Ball

4a. Legal Delivery
A delivery is made when the ball leaves the player's possession and crosses the foul line into playing territory. Every delivery counts unless a dead ball is declared. (See Rule 8.) A delivery must be made entirely by manual means. No device may be incorporated in or affixed to the ball that detaches on delivery or is a moving part during delivery except as provided in Rule 4b and Rule 4c.

4b. Special Equipment to Grip the Ball
A player may use special equipment to aid in grasping and delivering the ball if it is in place of a hand, or major portion thereof, lost by amputation or otherwise.

4c. Mechanical Aids to Grip the Ball - Alternating Delivery
A player may, if granted permission by USBC Headquarters and each league or tournament in which the player participates, alternate right/left-handed delivery and/or use special equipment to aid in grasping and delivering the ball.

Permission may be granted if the following is submitted to USBC Headquarters:

1. **Alternating Delivery:** A doctor's certificate describing the disability and the reason to alternate right/left-handed delivery.
2. **Mechanical Aid:** A description, drawing or model of the aid. Unless the individual is unable to impart force or impetus to a ball, the aid cannot incorporate a mechanical device with moving parts that would impart force or impetus to the ball. USBC reserves the right to request a doctor's certificate.

When authorization is given, USBC Headquarters will provide the player with a special card stating that alternating right/left-handed delivery and/or the use of the specified mechanical aid has been approved. If permission is denied, the player has the right of appeal to the USBC Legal Committee.

Permission may be withdrawn for cause.

4d. Special Considerations to Deliver the Ball
A player unable to execute a delivery in accordance with any of the foregoing procedures may bowl in USBC competition provided the league's board of directors or tournament management:

1. Authorizes such participation.
2. Establishes specific provisions to govern such participation.

The average established by the player is not acceptable in another league or tournament unless allowed by the rules of that league or tournament. The bowler is eligible for all USBC awards.

4e. Tournament Average Relief
Relief of a member's tournament entering average must be approved by USBC Headquarters prior to participation.

1. A player who has become injured or disabled may request relief of his/her USBC average by providing the following information, which should be submitted at least one week prior to participation, to USBC Headquarters:
   a. A doctor's certificate describing the:
      1) Disability or injury.
      2) Length of disability or injury.
      3) Reason for a downward average adjustment.
   b. Bowler's weekly game-by-game bowling record and current standing sheet from each USBC league in which the player is participating.
2. If authorization is granted, USBC will notify the player:
   a. The minimum average a tournament may assign the player.
   b. The time limit for the relief.
3. Tournament management may, prior to participation:
   a. Accept the bowler's highest current USBC league average, provided it meets or exceeds the minimum established by USBC.
   b. Assign the bowler an average that meets or exceeds the minimum established by USBC.
   c. Deny the relief and require the bowler to use the average as stated in tournament rules.

Permission may be withdrawn for cause.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 4e.

4e/1 **Last year I averaged 190 right-handed, but due to an injury I am bowling left-handed and have a 127 average. I want to participate in tournaments bowling left-handed. Can I apply for tournament average relief? If so, how?**
Yes. Prior to bowling in any tournament you must submit documentation to USBC Headquarters. (See Rule 4e for details.) Tournament Management cannot give average relief without USBC first making the decision to grant relief.

4e/2 **If USBC grants average relief does the tournament manager have to accept the relief?**
If authorization is granted by USBC Headquarters, the player will be notified in writing of the minimum average a tournament may assign and the time limit for the relief. The bowler then must request tournament management's permission to use the assigned average. However, tournament management still has the authority to deny the relief and require the bowler to use the average as stated in tournament rules or assign the bowler an average that meets or exceeds the minimum established by USBC.

4f. Two-Handed Techniques
When utilizing a two-handed technique, holes or indentations for gripping purposes must be used by the same hand.

1. **Two-handed Delivery:** Utilizes both hands to impart force on the ball to propel it down the lane; normally done by swinging the ball between one's legs. This style is most commonly used when youth start to learn how to bowl. Individuals who deliver the ball from the chest using both hands would be using a two-handed delivery.
2. **Two-handed Approach:** Both hands are on the ball throughout the swing until the release with a dominant hand imparting force, determined by the side of the body by which the ball swings.

Rule 5 – Fouls

5a. Definition
A foul occurs when a part of the player's body encroaches on or goes beyond the foul line and touches any part of the lane, equipment or building during or after a delivery. A ball is in play after a delivery until the same or another player is on the approach in position to make a succeeding delivery.

USBC can require that the foul line be plainly marked on the walls, posts, division boards or any other structure in a bowling center on a line with the regular foul line.

When a foul is recorded the delivery counts, but the player is not credited with any pins knocked down by that delivery. (See Rule 6b.)

NOTE: The foul line is of infinite length including walls, floors, posts and ball returns. A foul is not committed when foreign objects such as pens, jewelry, coins, cigarettes, etc., drop from a bowler's pocket or fall from a person's body or clothing. (Footwear and clothing are considered part of the body.) A player should request permission to cross the foul line to retrieve any items that have fallen beyond the foul line.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 5a.

5a/1 **What happens when there is a dispute over a foul call?**
According to Rule 10, a provisional ball should be thrown when there is a controversy. A provisional ball or frame shall be bowled when a protest involving a foul cannot be resolved by the two team captains.

When a dispute over a foul occurs, the player shall complete the frame and then bowl one provisional ball. The score sheet or printout and a record of both scores for the frame in which the provisional delivery is made shall be kept. The protest must be referred to the league board of directors for a decision.

5a/2 **A player goes over the foul line while retaining possession of the ball. Is this considered a foul?**
No. A legal delivery must be executed for a foul to be committed. A legal delivery is made when the ball leaves the player's possession and crosses the foul line into playing territory.

5a/3 **A member of a team crosses onto an adjacent approach when making a delivery. Is this considered a foul?**
A foul is not called when a bowler crosses onto an adjoining approach area. However, if the bowler steps over the foul line on that lane, it is considered a foul.

5a/4 **Is a foul called when the ball rolls over the foul line during delivery and the foul detector is activated?**
The bowling ball is not considered a part of the bowler's body. If the bowler did not step on or go beyond the foul line, a foul is not recorded.

5a/5 **If a wheelchair, walker or other mechanical aide goes over the foul line during or after delivery is it considered a foul?**
Yes, if the wheelchair crosses the foul line and touches any part of the lane, equipment or building during or after delivery. Likewise, a bowler holding onto a walker or another mechanical aide while delivering the ball must keep these items from crossing the foul line and touching any surface beyond the foul line.

5b. Deliberate
When a player deliberately fouls to benefit by the calling of a foul, the player shall be credited with zero pinfall for that delivery and not allowed further deliveries in that frame. If questions arise, Rule 10, Provisional Ball, should be followed.

5c. Foul Detection
A USBC approved automatic foul detecting device must be used, if available. When not available or temporarily inoperative, the following procedures shall be used to call fouls:

1. In tournament play, management shall assign a foul judge or have the official scorers call fouls.
2. In league play, the opposing team captains shall call fouls or a foul judge shall be appointed.

Failure to provide for the calling of fouls as specified shall disqualify scores bowled for USBC High Score Award consideration.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 5c.

5c/1 **What happens if our foul lights are not available?**
If not available, members of the league should be advised the captains are responsible for the calling of fouls or someone can be designated to act as a foul judge.

5d. Apparent
A foul shall be declared and recorded if the automatic foul detecting device or foul judge fails to call a foul that is apparent to:

1. Both captains, or one or more members of each of the opposing teams, or
2. The official scorer, or
3. A tournament official.

If there is a dispute, refer to Rule 10, Provisional Ball.

Rule 6 – Pinfall

6a. Legal Pinfall
Pins to be credited to a player following a legal delivery shall include:

1. Pins knocked down or off the lane surface by the ball or another pin.
2. Pins knocked down or off the lane surface by a pin rebounding from a side partition or rear cushion.
3. Pins knocked down or off the lane surface by a pin rebounding from the sweep bar when it is at rest on the pin deck before sweeping dead wood from the pin deck.
4. Pins that lean and touch the kickback or side partition. All such pins are termed dead wood and must be removed before the next delivery.
5. For string pinsetters, pins knocked over by the string from another pin.

No pins may be conceded, and only pins actually knocked down or moved entirely off the playing area of the lane surface as a result of a legal delivery may be counted.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 6

6a/1 **With free-fall bowling, when a pin moves off spot and stands up, the machine re-spots the pin where it stands. Will this be the same for string pinsetter machines?**
This is one area where free fall and string pinsetter machines differ. Free-fall machines pick up the pin where it stands and then replaces it in the same location. String pinsetter machines only detect if a pin is standing or has fallen. If standing, the machine lifts the pin back into the stabilizing ring and replaces it on spot. It has no mechanism to place a pin back to its final standing location.

6a/2 **If a string is seen to interfere and aid during a pin falling, does it need to be re- spotted?**
No. The pin is counted as legal pinfall if the string aids in the process of the pin falling.

6a/3 **If a pin slides off the pindeck and stands in the gutter, is it legal pinfall or not?**
This is the same as with free-fall machines. If a pin leaves the pin deck, it is legal pinfall if it is still standing in the flat gutter. If the automatic scorer registers it as standing, a score correction is needed.

6a/4 **If a pin is in the act of falling and is at some angle to the normal vertical, upright direction of a standing pin, how is it scored?**
With free-fall machines, the pin is counted as fallen if the pinsetter does not touch it. If the pinsetter touches the pin, it is counted as standing. Score corrections are made if it is scored incorrectly. With string pinsetter machines there is no pinsetter to contact the pin. The string just pulls the pin back up. If the string moves a certain distance, the string pinsetter machine will detect this and register the pin as fallen. If a pin is in the act of tilting, bowlers cannot definitively determine if it will fall or stand back up. So, for string pinsetter bowling, the automatic scoring will determine if the pin has fallen or should be re-spotted.

6a/5 **A pin slides off spot and remains in the upright position. The string pinsetter considered it legal because it detects pinfall by the movement of the string. Is the pin re-spotted or is it legal pinfall?**
Just like with free-fall machines, standing pins on the pin deck are scored as standing. If this occurs on the first ball, the pin must be re-spotted. If this occurs on the second ball, the pinfall does not count. Score corrections must be made if necessary.

6a/6 **If a pin does not move, but is registered as falling, what happens?**
Sometimes one string or pin might move the string of another pin far enough to register the pin as fallen, but it might not even move the pin. Once again, a standing pin is counted as standing. A score correction must be made if necessary.

6a/7 **If a pin rebounds out of the pit and knocks standing pins down, does that count as legal pinfall?**
This is consistent with how it's scored with free-fall machines. Pins rebounding out of the pit and knocking standing pins over count as legal pinfall. While string machines must be designed to minimize pins bouncing out of the pit and back onto the pin deck, it can happen occasionally and counts as legal pinfall.

6b. Illegal Pinfall

When any of the following occur, the delivery counts but the resulting pinfall does not:

1. A ball leaves the lane before reaching the pins.
2. A ball rebounds from the rear cushion.
3. A pin rebounds after coming in contact with the body, arms or legs of a human pinsetter.
4. A pin is touched by mechanical pinsetting equipment.
5. Any pin knocked down when dead wood is being removed.
6. Any pin knocked down by a human pinsetter.
7. The player commits a foul.
8. A delivery is made with dead wood on the lane or in the gutter and the ball contacts such dead wood before leaving the lane surface.
9. A delivery is made with dead wood on the lane or in the gutter, and a pin, after coming into contact with the dead wood, knocks down one or more pins.

If an illegal pinfall occurs and the player is entitled to additional deliveries in the frame, the pin(s) illegally knocked down must be respotted where it (they) originally stood before delivery of the ball.

Rule 7 – Pins

7a. Improperly Set

It is each player's responsibility to determine if a setup is correct. The player shall insist that any pin(s) incorrectly set be respotted before delivering the ball, otherwise the setup is deemed to be acceptable.

When bowling at a full setup or to make a spare, if it is discovered immediately after the delivery that one or more pins are set improperly, but not missing, the delivery and resulting pinfall count.

No change can be made in the position of any pin(s) left standing after the bowler's first delivery, unless:

1. The pinsetter moved or misplaced any pin(s), or
2. Any standing pin(s) is (are) outside the range of the sweep bar.

Any such pin(s) will be respotted where it (they) originally stood before the delivery.

7b. Rebounding

Pins that rebound and stand on the lane must be counted as standing pins.

7c. Replacement

Should a pin be broken or otherwise badly damaged during the game, it shall be replaced at once by another pin as nearly uniform in weight and condition with the set in use. The league or tournament officials shall determine whether pins shall be replaced.

A broken pin does not change the score made by the bowler. The pin(s) knocked down are counted, after which the broken pin is replaced.

NOTE: A broken pin is described as, but not limited to, the following:

1. Any pin with the core exposed where it was originally manufactured with a plastic coating.
2. The plastic base broken, loose or cracked.
3. Any breakage of the core.
4. For string machines, the string breaks or detaches from the pin.

Rule 8 – Dead Ball

When a dead ball is called, the delivery does not count and the correct pins must be respotted. The player is allowed to rebowl that delivery.

A ball shall be declared dead if any of the following occur:

a. After a delivery, attention is immediately called to the fact that one or more pins were missing from the setup.
b. A human pinsetter interferes with any standing pin before the ball reaches the pins.
c. A human pinsetter removes or interferes with any downed pin before it stops rolling.
d. A player bowls on the wrong lane or out of turn, or one player from each team on the pair of lanes bowls on the wrong lane. (See Rule 9.)
e. A player has physical contact with another person or moving object as the ball is being delivered and before delivery is completed. In such case, the player has the option to accept the resulting pinfall or have a dead ball called.
f. Any pin is moved or knocked down as a player delivers the ball but before the ball reaches the pins.
g. A delivered ball comes in contact with a foreign obstacle.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 8.

8/1 If an individual bowls out of turn does the delivery count?
No, according to Rule 8, Item d, a dead ball would be declared and the correct bowler is then required to continue play.

8/2 A player made the first delivery when the pinsetting machine was set on the second cycle. Seven pins were knocked down and the remaining pins were swept away as the machine reverted to cycle one. Should a dead ball be declared and the pins reset?
Since the bowler made a legal delivery and the pins were properly set, there would be no basis for declaring the first delivery a dead ball. The three pins left standing would be reset for a second delivery in accordance with Rule 6b.

8/3 On the second delivery, the sweep bar comes down and deflects the ball before it can make contact with the remaining pins. When this happens, what should we do?
According to Rule 8, Item g, a dead ball is declared when a player's ball comes in contact with any foreign obstacle. The sweep bar is considered a foreign obstacle, and the player is required to have the pin(s) remaining respotted and rebowl the second ball.

Rule 9 – Bowling on the Wrong Lane

In league or tournament play, a dead ball shall be called and the player or players required to rebowl on the correct lane when:

a. One player bowls on the wrong lane.
b. One player from each team on the pair of lanes bowls on the wrong lane.

If more than one player on the same team bowls on the wrong lane in turn, all deliveries stand as bowled. Upon discovery, bowlers shall complete subsequent frames on the correct lanes.

If a player bowls on the wrong lane in a singles tournament where a change of lanes is made, a tournament may by rule require the delivery to stand and the player to finish the frame on the incorrect lane when a strike is not recorded. When a strike is made, a dead ball shall be called and the player required to re-bowl on the correct lane.

In singles match-play competition, where a player normally bowls two frames each time it is the player's turn to bowl, the foregoing shall also apply provided the error was discovered before the opposing player has made a delivery. Otherwise, the score stands as bowled, with all subsequent frames in the game bowled on the correct lanes.

Rule 10 – Provisional Ball

A provisional ball or frame shall be bowled when a protest involving a foul, legal pinfall or a dead ball is made and cannot be resolved by the two team captains or a tournament official.

The following procedures apply when a dispute occurs:

a. For the first ball of any frame, or after the second ball in the 10th frame if the first ball was a strike:
    1. **Foul:** The player shall complete the frame and then bowl one provisional ball at a full setup of pins.
    2. **Illegal Pinfall:** The player shall complete the frame and then bowl one provisional ball at the same setup which would have remained standing had the disputed pin(s) not have fallen.
    3. **Dead Ball:** The player shall complete the frame and then bowl a complete provisional frame.

b. On a spare attempt or the third ball of the 10th frame:
    1. **Foul and Illegal Pinfall:** No provisional ball is necessary.
    2. **Dead Ball:** A provisional ball shall be bowled at the same setup which was standing when the disputed ball was bowled.

The score sheet and a record of both scores for the frame in which the provisional delivery was made shall be kept. The protest must be referred to the league board of directors or tournament management for a decision. If they are unable to make a decision, the local association or USBC Headquarters/Rules can be asked for a decision on submission of the facts relating to the protest.

Rule 11 – Forfeit - Delay of Game

No unreasonable delay in the progress of any game is permitted. If a player or team in a league or tournament refuses to proceed with a game after being directed to do so by a league or tournament official, the game or series shall be declared forfeited.

Rule 12 – Approaches Must Not Be Defaced

Detracting from the possibility of other players having normal conditions is prohibited. This includes:

a. The application of any foreign substance on any part of the approach.
b. Improperly applying talcum powder, pumice, soap stone, rosin or any other foreign substance on the shoes causing the substance to be transferred to the approach.
c. Soft rubber soles or heels that rub off on the approach.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 12.

12/1 Does the use of Easy Slide on the bottom of my shoe violate Rule 12?
Commercial products like Easy Slide, soap stone, talcum powder or any other substance applied to the sole of a shoe could be in violation of Rule 12. If a participant uses a product improperly causing residue to be left on the approach and the normal sliding conditions of another participant to change, the bowler must discontinue the use of the product. If applied properly, residue should not be transferred, and the bowler can continue using the product.

12/2 A bowler is using a sliding product and others are finding the approach too slippery. What should be done?
Any bowler who finds the approach too slippery due to another bowler using a sliding product have the right to ask the bowler to stop using the product. If the bowler refuses, a league officer must inform the bowler to stop using the product because it is changing the approaches for others.

Rule 13 - Youth bowling in adult competition, Parent/Guardian Consent

The USBC Consent Form notifies individuals 18 years of age or younger who are eligible for USBC Youth membership, of a potential violation of USBC Rule 400.

The Consent Form:

a. Must be submitted by:
    1. An 18-year-old when the competition violates Rule 400.
    2. All Youth members who bowl in an Adult/Youth competition where prizes other than scholarships/trophies are awarded.
b. Must be signed by a parent/legal guardian if the participant is under 18.
c. Must be given to the league secretary or tournament manager prior to participation.
d. Is only good for the duration of that specific event.

Failure to file the Consent Form will cause the player to be ineligible and subject games bowled to forfeiture or disqualification. (See USBC Rules 120 for leagues and 329 for tournaments.)

(Consent Form can be found on BOWL.com/rules)

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 13.

13/1 **What competitions require an individual eligible for Youth membership to provide a signed Consent Form?**
All competitions, both league and tournament, which may violate Rule 400 or make the youth ineligible for scholastic or collegiate competition. This includes any competition which awards anything other than scholarships or trophies.

13/2 **If an Adult/Youth league or tournament has prizes that do not violate Rule 400, do I still need to sign a Consent Form?**
If the competition only awards scholarships or trophies , no. If the competition awards cash, bonds, gift certificates or merchandise prizes, yes, the Consent Form must be signed.

13/3 **What is the purpose of the Consent Form?**
A Consent Form must be submitted by individuals who are eligible for USBC Youth membership before participating in USBC competition which may violate Rule 400 and helps create awareness of USBC's Athlete Safety Program.

13/4 **Where can we find a copy of the Consent Form?**
The Consent Form can be found on BOWL.com/Rules or by contacting Rules at (800)514-2695.

13/5 **Can a league or tournament make up its own prize form?**
No, only the official Consent Form can be used.

13/6 **What competitions can a USBC Youth member compete in by signing the Consent Form?**
The Consent Form is acceptable for use in the following Adult/Youth competitions:

Singles competition which offer cash or bonds and/or any merchandise prizes valued greater than $500.

Team Competitions, including doubles, where no prizes available to any competitors violate Rule 400.

The Consent Form is **NOT ACCEPTABLE** for use in team competitions where teams consist of two or more players which offers prizes that violate Rule 400. For example: An Adult/Youth team competition with cash or bond prizes.

13/7 **Must the bowler complete the Consent Form before they start the competition or can the bowler wait until the prize list is finalized before signing the Consent Form?**
Prior to competing, the members must complete and sign the Consent Form designating their intent to receive scholarships or decline any cash prizes they may qualify for.

13/8 **When a bowler signs the Consent Form and earns a prize they have waived claim to, what happens to these prizes?**
Any waived prizes shall be returned to the prize fund for redistribution to the other eligible participants.

Rule 14 - Emergency Authorization

USBC may authorize temporary modifications to the General Playing Rules, Award, League and Tournament Rules in the event of government declared emergencies or disasters, pandemic, attack on the United States, or any nuclear or atomic disasters. Such authorizations will be for a specified period and may apply only to designated geographic areas.

Information regarding any active authorizations can be found on BOWL.com.

Rule 15 – Gambling

A member of USBC, while bowling in USBC competition, shall not participate or be involved in the operation of any gambling scheme which is in violation of any applicable law, where all or part of a score bowled in USBC play determines the winner.

Contests or schemes which threaten the integrity of the game and/or entice a player to bowl beneath his/her ability are strictly prohibited.

Penalty: Membership may be suspended or denied to anyone who is a participant or involved in the violation of this rule.

NOTE: Side competitions/brackets in leagues/tournaments where the participating bowlers pay a fee, optional or otherwise, and receive prizes for high game and/or series, with or without handicap, do not violate the rule because these involve merit pinfall based solely on the skill of the participant.

Rule 16 – Member

16a. Age Requirements
Adult Membership - USBC Adult membership is available to individuals 18 years of age or older.

Youth Membership - USBC Youth membership is available to individuals who have not reached their 18th birthday prior to August 1 of the current bowling season and have maintained compliance with Rule 400.

NOTE: An individual with a USBC Youth membership who turns 18 during the season:

1. Will be allowed to compete in youth competition for the balance of the season with the youth membership and completion of SafeSport Training.
2. And chooses to compete in adult competition must:
   a. Pay all required fees
   b. Stop bowling in youth competition if the adult competition violates Rule 400.

16b. Responsibility
An individual bowling in USBC leagues and tournaments is responsible for but not limited to:

1. Ensuring they have the correct membership to participate.
2. Abiding by USBC rules.
3. Abiding by league or tournament rules.
4. Ensuring their average is correct, prior to participation.
5. Reporting prize winnings as stated in the tournament rules and/or Rule 319d.
6. Reporting any tournament average adjustment/rerate in accordance with Rule 319c.
7. Using a national average rerate.

NOTE: Average adjustment/rerate is the average a tournament manager may give a bowler to use in their tournament. This average must be reported to any future tournaments, for all handicapped or classified competition, unless the tournament rules state otherwise.

National average rerate is issued. The bowler must report and use the rerated average or established higher average, for all handicapped or classified competition.

16c. Suspended Bowler Ineligible
A suspended bowler or a bowler who has been denied USBC or CTF membership is ineligible to bowl, pace or hold office in any USBC league or tournament until reinstated.

PENALTY: When a team:

1. Unknowingly uses a suspended bowler, games are subject to forfeiture in accordance with Rule 120.
2. Knowingly uses a suspended bowler, it shall forfeit all games in which the suspended player was used and all involved are subject to suspension.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 16c.

16/1 Can a league deny a suspended bowler prize money?
Yes. Rule 106b states the league board of directors decides all issues regarding distribution of team prize money and individual prize money when a bowler cannot be a member of the league at the end of the season. Therefore, by majority vote of the board present and voting, a suspended bowler could forfeit any prize money.

Rule 17 – Grounds for Disciplinary Action

17a. Unfair Tactics
An individual can be charged with attempting to gain an unfair advantage in league or tournament play for the following reasons:

1. Directly or indirectly tampering with lanes, pins or bowling balls so they no longer meet USBC specifications.
2. Misrepresenting an average to gain a greater handicap, or qualify for a lower classification in an event.
3. Establishing an average below the player's ability to gain an unfair advantage in handicap or classified competition.

Penalty: Loss of games, any and all monetary or non-monetary awards/winnings, league removal (see Rule 122a or 122c), tournament disqualification (see Rule 319a-319e),national re-rate and subject to suspension from or denial of USBC membership.

NOTE: Grievances against a USBC member for a violation of the above rule are to be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the USBC Bylaws Disciplinary Procedures Supplement which can be found on BOWL.com.

17b. Improper Conduct
An individual can also be charged with the following violation(s):

1. Engaging in improper tactics or conduct in connection with the game of bowling including, but not limited to:
    a. Physical and verbal abuse toward other persons.
    b. Failing to adhere to:
        1) Rules, policies, and procedures of USBC and United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee.
        2) Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions.
        3) State or County laws as applicable.
2. Failing to distribute prize money to team members consistent with verbal or written agreements.
3. Failing to pay fees due for participation in a USBC league or tournament. (See Rule 122b for league procedures to suspend an individual for nonpayment of league fees.)
4. Misusing/mishandling/misappropriation of any funds collected or held in trust for USBC, a league or tournament or a chartered local or state association.
5. Misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance of office.

    Misfeasance - The performance of a lawful action in an illegal manner.
    Malfeasance - Wrong doing or misconduct.
    Nonfeasance - Failure to act, especially failure to do what should be done.

Penalty: Membership may be suspended or denied to anyone who is involved in a violation of this rule. Leagues may also remove the individual following the provisions in Rule 122a or 122c.

NOTE: Grievances against a USBC member for a violation of the above rule are to be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the USBC Bylaws Disciplinary Procedures Supplement which can be found on BOWL.com.

17c. Improper Conduct by an Adult Leader
A Registered Volunteer, while involved in youth activities, can be charged with improper conduct which is not in the best interest of youth bowling including, but not limited to the following:

1. Using tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages.
2. Using foul language or gestures.
3. Wearing clothing depicting foul language or gestures.
4. Violation of RVP Code of Conduct or RVP Policies.

A Registered Volunteer includes any individual acting in an official capacity during a youth activity including, but not limited to, the following: league supervisors, league officials, tournament managers, league coordinators, in-state instructors, certified coaches, youth directors or designated coaches having leadership in prescribed areas of youth involvement.

Penalty: Membership may be suspended or denied to anyone who is involved in a violation of this rule.

NOTE: Grievances against a USBC member for a violation of the above rule are to be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the USBC Bylaws Disciplinary Procedures Supplement which can be found on BOWL.com.

17d. Youth Conduct
Individuals holding youth membership can be removed from competition/functions and/or suspended/denied membership for the following:

1. Conduct derogatory to the best interest of youth bowling including, but not limited to, the following in conjunction with youth competition and functions:
    a. Using tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages.
    b. Using foul language or gestures.
    c. Wearing clothing depicting foul language or gestures.
2. Prior adjudication of delinquency or conviction of a crime including, but not limited to, crimes involving physical or mental abuse or sexual assault.

NOTE: Grievances against a USBC member for a violation of the above rule are to be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the USBC Bylaws Disciplinary Procedures Supplement which can be found on BOWL.com.

17e. Infractions of Rule 400 - Youth Membership Eligibility
Upon witnessing, or being informed of an infraction, the adult leader shall do the following:

1. Explain to the youth bowler:
    a. How they violated Rule 400 and that youth membership could be suspended or denied because of the violation.
    b. They must stop bowling in the activity immediately.

c. Any cash or awards received in violation of Rule 400 must be returned.
d. The violation will be documented with USBC Headquarters.

2. File a written report to USBC Headquarters. The report should be filed within seven days of contacting the youth bowler and include:
   a. Bowler's name, address and birthdate.
   b. Date and location of activity.
   c. How they violated Rule 400.
   d. List any cash or awards received in violation of Rule 400 and/or returned.

The individual's membership status remains unchanged until a decision is made by USBC Headquarters.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 17e.

17e/1 **My son quit bowling in a youth league a year ago and is currently bowling in an adult league. Now he would like to bowl with the school in a USBC Youth league. How can he get USBC Youth membership?**
He can apply by sending a letter requesting youth membership to USBC Headquarters, Attn: Rules. After review of the information, USBC decides whether or not to grant USBC Youth membership.

17f. Using Assumed Name
No person shall bowl under an assumed name or under the name of another person scheduled to bowl in a USBC league or tournament.

Penalty: Forfeiture of games in which the player was used and all found to be involved are subject to suspension.

NOTE: Grievances against a USBC member for a violation of the above rule are to be filed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the USBC Bylaws Disciplinary Procedures Supplement which can be found on BOWL.com.

17g. USBC SafeSport Code Violations
An individual can charge a USBC member who is a Covered Individual with violating USBC's SafeSport Code by following the procedures outlined on BOWL.com. Matters involving allegations or reports of sexual abuse or misconduct or other violations of USBC SafeSport Code will be processed in accordance with USBC's SafeSport Procedures.

Rule 18 – Bowling Ball - Altering Surface

While bowling in USBC competition, a bowling ball cannot:

a. Have the surface altered by the use of an abrasive.
b. Be cleaned with any liquid substance or cleaning agent.
c. Have any foreign material on it including, but not limited to, powder, rosin, marker or paint.

All bowling balls so altered or cleaned must be removed from the competition.

NOTE: Should a foreign substance appear on the outer surface of a bowling ball which cannot be removed with a dry towel, an approved cleaner may be used with consent from a league or tournament officer.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 18.

18/1 **When may I alter the surface of my bowling ball?**
You are permitted to sand, polish, or clean the surface of your bowling ball prior to the start of competition. However, once tournament or league play begins, altering the surface of a bowling ball is strictly prohibited. This includes balls that have not yet been introduced into play.

18/2 **When does competition start?**
Competition starts once any bowler throws a ball for score in a league or tournament.

18/3 **Can I pat my ball with rosin or powder if I wipe the ball before it is delivered?**
No. Wiping the ball with a towel does not make the ball compliant to the rule. Patting a ball with a product is adding a foreign substance to the ball and cannot be done during competition. A product can only be applied to a bowler's hand and not leave residue on the surface of the ball.

18/4 **Can I clean my ball with an approved cleaner during practice?**
You can clean your ball with an approved cleaner during practice, unless otherwise specified by league or tournament rules.

18/5 **If I take a ball out of my bag that I have not bowled with, can I clean it with an approved cleaner?**
No, approved cleaners cannot be used once competition has begun. This rule applies to balls from a bowler's bowling bag, locker or car, etc. We suggest you clean all your bowling balls prior to the start of competition.

18/6 **A tournament consists of doubles and singles events. The singles event is bowled first immediately followed by the doubles. Can I "alter the surface of" my bowling ball between events?**
No. Rule 18 does not allow the outer surface of any bowling ball to be altered after the start of competition. Since the tournament is conducting singles and doubles concurrently, you cannot alter the surface of the bowling ball between events.

18/7 **Can a bowler use an abrasive, cleaner or polish on just the track or only just a portion of the track of the ball?**
No. USBC specifications require that the entire surface of the ball be prepared in a uniform manner. Preparing the surface of a ball in any other manner would be a violation of Rule 17a, Item 1. The penalty for a violation of this rule can include disqualification, forfeiture, removal from the league, and/or suspension of USBC membership.

18/8 **What happens if a bowler uses a cleaner, abrasive, or puts a foreign substance on the ball?**
If the bowler was not aware of the rule, the ball is removed from competition. The bowler also should be given an explanation of the rule. Conversely, if the bowler knows a ball cannot be cleaned, patted with rosin or powder or use an abrasive, the ball must be removed from competition and the games are subject to forfeiture. If there is a question as to whether a bowler knew the rule or not, the league board of directors make the determination. If the bowler refuses to remove the ball from competition, the games are subject to forfeiture.

18/9 **If my ball comes back with residue on it and I cannot clean it with my dry towel, rag or shammy, can I use an approved cleaner?**
Yes, provided you get permission from a league officer or tournament official. If you clean your ball without prior permission, you may be asked to remove the ball from competition, and/or the games may be subject to forfeiture.

18/10 **When I have permission to clean my ball, may I clean the entire ball?**
Yes, you may clean the entire surface of a bowling ball.

Rule 19 – String Pin Bowling

1. USBC will certify standard American Tenpins competition on lanes using string machines provided the equipment complies with USBC specifications for string machines.
2. All USBC rules shall apply to all competitions utilizing String machines insofar as practical. See rules 6a and 7c for specific applications when using string machines.
3. The following conditions apply to averages:
   a. Averages established using string machines cannot be used in competitions using freefall machines.
   b. Unless competition rules state otherwise, a competition utilizing string machines must require a bowler to enter the competition with the previous season's highest average of 21 games or more established on string machines.

Chapter 3: Awards

The Awards page of BOWL.com has pictures, certificates and applications along with FAQs on damaged, broken or lost awards.

USBC offers a selection of USBC Youth Special Achievement awards for purchase by associations or centers with USBC certified youth leagues. For order forms and/or more information, please see the Awards page of BOWL.com.

Rule 50. Eligibility
USBC will recognize the achievements listed in this chapter bowled by USBC members participating in USBC leagues and tournaments. To qualify for recognition, all provisions of the USBC Bylaws, specifications and rules must have been complied with at the time the score was bowled. (See Rule 100a and Rule 300b.) USBC High Score Awards cannot be earned while pre- or post-bowling unopposed. Scores are determined on a scratch basis.

NOTE: A frame-by-frame printout of the score sheet must be provided with all Award Applications submitted from a modified format.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 50.

50/1 Can a Youth 11 in a row, 300 game or 800 series be processed through the Youth Processing system?
No, these awards must be processed through the local association or sent to USBC Headquarters for processing.

Rule 51a. Single Game Awards

1. **Youth Awards.**
   USBC Youth Standard members participating in USBC Standard youth competition will be recognized for the following single-game accomplishments:
   a. 300*
   b. Eleven (11) strikes in a row when the score is 299 or less*

USBC High Score achievements should be reported to USBC. Once submitted and approved, the member will be eligible to purchase a commemorative award for each High Score achievement. Available award options can be found at BOWL.com/awards.

All USBC Youth members are eligible for USBC High Score recognition in USBC competition.

NOTE: USBC offers a program of individual game and series awards for purchase by USBC Youth leagues. For more information on this program, and to order products, please go to BOWL.com/awards.

2. **Adult Awards.**
   A USBC Adult Standard member is eligible for one lifetime 300* game award. Additional 300* game score(s) will be officially recognized by USBC, but will not qualify for an award.

NOTE: Individual game and series awards may be purchased for multiple achievements. For more information, or to order awards, please visit Keepsakebowling.com or USBCBowlingAwards.com.

*Cannot be earned while pre- or post-bowling unopposed. (See CAQs in Chapter 4: 117a/1 and 117e/7.)

Rule 51b. Series Awards

1. **Youth Awards.**
   USBC Youth Standard members participating in USBC Standard youth competition will be recognized for the following accomplishments:
   a. 900*
   b. 800-899*

USBC High Score achievements should be reported to USBC. Once submitted and approved, the member will be eligible to purchase a commemorative award for each High Score achievement. Available award options can be found at BOWL.com/awards.

All USBC Youth members are eligible for USBC High Score recognition in USBC competition.

NOTE: USBC offers a program of individual game and series awards for purchase by certified leagues. For more information on this program, and to order products, please go to BOWL.com/awards.

2. **Adult Awards.**
   A USBC Adult Standard member is eligible for one lifetime award in each of the following three-game series categories. Additional scores will be officially recognized by USBC, but will not qualify for an award.
   a. 900*
   b. 800 to 899*
3. **Series Qualifications.**
   Three consecutive games must be bowled in USBC league or tournament play to qualify for series awards.
   a. A series shall be figured as follows:
      1) If more than three but less than six games are bowled, use the first three games.
      2) If six or more games are bowled, use each succeeding set of three games following the first three games.
   b. In tournament play, each three-game series must be bowled in the same block.
   c. A series of games can be bowled consecutively against one or more opponents.
   d. Games must be bowled on the same date.
   e. Any additional score in the same category will be officially recognized by USBC, but will not qualify for an award.

NOTE: Individual game and series awards may be purchased for multiple achievements. For more information, or to order awards, please visit Keepsakebowling.com or USBCBowlingAwards.com.

*Cannot be earned while pre- or post-bowling unopposed. (See CAQs in Chapter 4: 117a/1 and 117e/7.)

Rule 51c. National Team High Game and Series*

During each fiscal year, USBC will issue an award to each member of the team who bowls the nation's highest scratch score in each of the following classifications. Submit only scores that exceed those listed below.

Men Only Teams	Game	Series
5-player	1325	3700
4-player	1050	2900
3-player	825	2250
2-player	550	1550

Mixed Teams	Game	Series
5-player	1250	3600
4-player	1000	2800
3-player	750	2200
2-player	525	1500

Women Only Teams	Game	Series
5-player	1175	3425
4-player	950	2750
3-player	725	2075
2-player	500	1350

Youth Teams:
To determine which age group, use the age of the oldest bowler at the time the score is bowled.

Age	2-Player		3-Player		4-Player		5-Player	
	Game	Series	Game	Series	Game	Series	Game	Series
U10	150	450	225	675	300	900	375	1125
U12	250	750	375	1125	500	1500	625	1875
U15	350	1050	525	1575	700	1900	875	2625
U18	450	1350	675	2025	900	2300	1125	3375

NOTE: USBC Headquarters must receive applications for team score awards by September 1 to receive recognition.

*Cannot be earned while pre- or post-bowling unopposed. (See CAQs in Chapter 4: 117a/1 and 117e/7.)

Rule 51d. Baker 300 Game Award*
All teams utilizing the Baker System that bowl a game of 300 are eligible to receive a sponsor's award. Each team is eligible for one award during the bowling season (August 1–July 31).

*Cannot be earned while pre- or post-bowling unopposed. (See CAQs in Chapter 4: 117a/1 and 117e/7.)

Rule 51e. Reporting Procedures
Scores of 300 game; 800 series or better by an individual in a three-game series; a Baker team game of 300; or a qualifying National Team High Game or Series, should be reported.

1. The following procedures apply for reporting such scores:
   a. The league or tournament secretary shall notify the local association/league processor within 48 hours and submit a completed high score award application within 20 days.
   b. The association manager/league processor shall submit a completed high score application to USBC Headquarters within seven (7) days after receipt of application.
   c. 900 Series, 300 Baker team game and National Team High Game and Series applications are submitted directly to USBC Headquarters.
   d. 300 game and 800 series award applications are submitted to USBC Headquarters via Win LABS/ league processor.
2. If an award is not approved administratively, the applicant will be notified in writing explaining the reason(s) for denial. If within 10 days of notification the applicant files a written appeal, the claim will be submitted for final decision to USBC Headquarters.

Rule 52a. National High Average
Each fiscal year, recognition will be given to the USBC male, female, youth male and youth female member having the highest USBC average based on 66 or more games bowled as a USBC member in a USBC league.

1. Qualifying averages are reported to the local association on the final average sheet submitted to the association by the league secretary.
2. The association is to forward information concerning those members who have attained a qualifying average to USBC Headquarters.
3. To be eligible for recognition, all qualifying averages must be received by USBC Headquarters on or before October 1 of the next fiscal year.

Rule 52b. National High Series*
Each fiscal year, recognition will be given to the USBC male, female, youth male and youth female member having the highest USBC series bowled as a USBC member in a USBC league or tournament. To be eligible for recognition, all qualifying scores must be received by USBC Headquarters on or before October 1 of the next fiscal year.

*Cannot be earned while pre- or post-bowling unopposed. (See CAQs in Chapter 4: 117a/1 and 117e/7.)

Chapter 4: League Rules

Rule 100 – Leagues

100a. Qualifications

1. USBC will certify leagues participating in the game of American Tenpins provided they meet the following requirements:
   a. Apply for USBC certification.
      1) A league is temporarily certified at the start of its current schedule for 30 days counting the first day of competition.
      2) The league will be eligible for all membership services while temporarily certified provided its league application and membership fees are submitted on or before the end of the grace period.
   b. Consist of four or more teams with the playing strength of one or more players per team as determined by league rule.
   c. Bowl in accordance with a prearranged schedule based on the number of teams in the league.
   d. Adopt rules and prize list (if any). (See Rule 106a and Rule 102.) (Suggested adult and youth league rules can be found on BOWL.com.)
   e. All players seeking membership must be qualified under the bylaws and policies of USBC. (See the USBC Playing Rules, Rule 16.)
   f. Provide for the designation of a team champion by the games bowled in scheduled competition.
   g. All games must be bowled and conducted in strict compliance with the playing rules.
   h. Govern themselves by USBC rules. Other rules may be added but must not conflict with USBC rules.
2. Every time the league is scheduled to bowl, three consecutive games are to be bowled by each team, unless another number of games has been established by league rule.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 100a.

100a/1 **Is the bowling center required to provide an open lane(s) on either side of a league during league play?**
USBC does not have a rule requiring open lanes be provided on either side of a league during league play. Whenever leagues have concerns regarding this issue, it is recommended the league officers, or a committee appointed by the league president, address the matter with center management.

100a/2 **Can a 16-year-old bowl in a USBC adult league?**
No. USBC Adult membership is available to individuals 18 years or older. Any league which allows youth to bowl must be certified as an Adult/Youth league. In any Adult/Youth league, all members 18 years of age or older must have completed a U.S. Center for SafeSport training within a year **prior to** the time the member joins the league **or immediately thereafter**. In addition, all league officers must be a Registered Volunteer.

100a/3 **Can a league limit participation to men only or women only?**
Leagues determine their own eligibility requirements. There are leagues that are male only, female only, exclusive to postal workers, firefighters, police, union, church, etc. Any league intending to limit participation to specific individuals should specify this requirement in the rules and in the title.

100a/4 **How is the length of the league schedule determined?**
The length of the schedule and other commercial aspects of the game (such as price of bowling, time, number of teams, etc.) are matters to be negotiated by the league and the proprietor. Because a proprietor has specific rights as an independent business person, USBC has no jurisdiction over these commercial aspects, but does have a vital concern on how leagues are conducted. USBC rules enable a league to decide on the length of the league schedule based on any agreement with the proprietor. It is important to come to an agreement on these matters before the season begins.

When there is no written contract between the league and the proprietor, verbal commitments are just as binding. We urge all USBC leagues to honor their contracts, whether verbal or written. If questions arise about commercial matters, the president, secretary or committee appointed by the president should meet with the proprietor to discuss the matter.

100a/5 **May a league adopt a rule prohibiting league members from coming early to practice on the lanes they are scheduled to bowl on in league play?**
USBC does not have a rule prohibiting practice games before league play. Because the league has no jurisdiction until play has commenced, this type of rule may be an infringement on the proprietor's rights as an independent business person. Therefore, if the league wanted to adopt a rule, the proprietor would have to be consulted first and agree to this type of restriction.

100b. Type

1. **Adult** - An adult league is comprised of participants who are 18 years of age or older and have USBC Standard or Basic Membership. Adult leagues may further classify themselves as:
   a. Senior League: A senior league is one in which all participants are 55 years of age or over. The following also applies to senior leagues:
      1) Senior league bowlers are eligible for all USBC awards and services.
      2) A senior league may, by rule, allow bowlers 50 years of age and older, and members' spouses under the age of 55 to compete in the league.
   b. Mixed League: A mixed league is one in which both females and males participate. Teams may be composed of all females, all males or both females and males.
   c. Closed: A closed league is one in which membership is drawn exclusively from religious, fraternal, civic, employment, military or similar local organizations having a common interest. The following applies to closed leagues:
      1) Membership is shared within the league. Bowlers from a closed USBC league bowling in other USBC leagues must hold individual membership.
      2) All questions of eligibility shall be decided by USBC.
2. **Youth** - A youth league is one in which all participants hold USBC Youth membership or Special Olympics membership. The following requirements also apply to youth leagues:
   a. Awards must comply with the youth membership eligibility requirements of Rule 400.
   b. Leagues are comprised of males and females, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
   c. U.S. Center for SafeSport training must be completed in the current season by:
      1) All members 18 years of age at the time the league starts must complete the training prior to competing in the league.
      2) Any member 17 years of age who will turn 18 during the league session must complete the training prior to turning 18 or before competing in the league once the member turns 18.
   d. All scholarships are submitted to SMART to manage. (See BOWL.com/SMART for instructions on how to enter lists and send funds.)
   e. Leagues are managed by league supervisor and league official, unless the league votes to have a board comprised of youth league members. (See Rule 103a.)
   f. All league officers 18 years of age and older, must be Registered Volunteers.
3. **Adult/Youth** - An adult/youth league is one in which youth members 18 years of age or younger bowl with adult members 18 years of age or older.
   a. The following apply to all adult/youth leagues:
      1) All awards must conform to the provisions stated in Rule 400. (See Chapter 1: Introduction.) If Scholarships are offered, all scholarships are submitted to SMART to manage. (See BOWL.com/SMART for instructions on how to enter lists and send funds.)
      2) Leagues are comprised of males and females, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
      3) U.S. Center for SafeSport training must be completed in the current season by:
         a) All members 18 years of age or older at the time the league starts must complete the training prior to competing in the league.
         b) Any member 17 years of age who will turn 18 during the league session must complete the training prior to turning 18 or before competing in the league once the member turns 18.
      4) All league officers 18 years of age or older, must be Registered Volunteers.
   b. Adult/Youth leagues will not be certified until all members 18 years of age or older have U.S. Center for SafeSport training for the current season.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 100b.

100b/1 May the adults in the league smoke or drink alcohol?
Although USBC prefers that other adults participating in the league refrain from smoking or drinking, only the officers must abide by Rule 17c, Item 1, which prohibits the use of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages while involved in youth activities. For other adults, it is up to the center to set a more comprehensive rule or policy.

100b/2 **In an adult/youth league, must there be the same amount of youths and adults on each team?**
No. An adult/youth league is one in which both adults and youths compete. There is no specific requirement that each team include both adults and youths on the roster. However, the league rules should specify any adult/youth roster requirements.

100c. Summer

1. A league that starts after March 15 and before August 1 is a summer league.
2. The following applies to summer leagues:
   a. Members who have a valid current season membership are eligible to bowl in USBC summer leagues.
   b. If the league schedule extends beyond October 1, every member of the league must be in possession of or provide proof of payment of the current season membership fees on or before October 1. Any team using a player who has not paid appropriate membership dues subjects games in which the bowler participated to forfeiture. (See Rule 120.)

100d. Scoring

1. **Scratch** - A scratch league is one in which actual scores are used to determine wins and losses.
2. **Handicap** - A handicap league is one in which handicap is added to a bowler's score to place bowlers and teams with varying degrees of skill on as equitable a basis as possible for scheduled competition. The following applies to handicap leagues:
   a. The percentage shall be 100 percent, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
   b. When the rules are adopted, each handicap league shall decide whether the individual or team method of handicapping will be used.
   c. Handicap shall be figured according to the following:
      1) **Adult leagues:** From the average of each bowler as provided by league rule.
      2) **Youth leagues:** Unless otherwise provided by league rule, for the first session handicap shall be figured after the current average has been established. Thereafter, handicap will be figured on the current average.
   d. Handicap shall not be limited, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
   e. A handicap game or series shall not be capped unless otherwise provided by league rule. If a league adopts such a rule, a game or series cannot be capped below the highest possible scratch score.
   f. The combined current average of each of the players bowling on a team shall be the team average.
   g. When figuring handicap or averages, fractions are to be dropped. (Download a handicap chart on BOWL.com.)

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 100d.

100d/1 **What is a good handicap percentage for a league with members who have a wide range of averages?**
One hundred percent of the difference between a bowler's average and a base higher than any average within the league is a good percentage to balance the disparity in averages. One hundred percent handicap basically makes the competition a "pins over average" competition, because if the two teams bowl average they will be tied.

100d/2 **What is the most effective system of handicapping?**
The individual method is most effective. A scratch figure should be set higher than any bowler's average in the league and all bowlers are handicapped from that figure.

For example, if the highest individual average is 222, the base figure for handicapping could be set at 230 allowing for average improvement, and 100 percent of 230 could be adopted by the league. The players' individual handicaps are added together for the team handicap. With this method, each bowler as well as each team has the benefit of handicap. When the league awards individuals for high handicap game and high handicap series, it is simple for the secretary to determine which league member is in contention because individual handicap is already included.

100d/3 **What handicapping system does USBC not recommend using?**
Some leagues handicap the difference between the opposing teams' averages. This method is not recommended because not all teams receive handicap each session and it poses problems if the league wishes to provide its members with individual awards. In leagues using this type of handicap method, the league secretary must make many additional calculations to determine individual handicaps for award purposes.

100d/4 **Some of the higher-average teams want us to adopt a rule to limit handicap. Can we set a limit of a 60-pin handicap for any one bowler?**
According to Rule 100d, Item 2(d), to limit handicap, a league must adopt its own rule. However, USBC advises against leagues adopting rules to limit handicap. Although higher-average teams believe they cannot be competitive each week while giving the full handicap allowance, they should keep in mind, unless the league is using at least 100 percent handicap, the higher-average team still has the advantage.

For example, at 85 percent handicap, the higher-average team has a 15 percent advantage. With unlimited handicap, the higher-average teams may be challenged, but our experience indicates more competitive bowling is stimulating to all teams in the league.

100d/5 **Must all players in a league be handicapped equally?**
No, the league may adopt a separate handicap for males and females or, in an adult/youth league, may choose to adopt a separate handicap for the adults and youths. When a league chooses to adopt separate handicaps, its rules must specify how the handicap will be applied to all participants.

100e. Formats

1. **Match Point** - A match point league is one in which team position standings include individual match points. Match point leagues must follow these rules, unless the league has adopted a different procedure:
   a. The team scheduled on the odd lane enters its lineup first.
   b. No change may be made in the order of players in the lineup during a series. A substitute must take the replaced bowler's position in the lineup.
   c. When bowling against an absentee or vacancy, to win the individual points the bowler must bowl at least his/her average less ten (10) pins, unless the league rules have stated another number.
   d. If each team has the same number of absentees and/or vacancies, the players present must be placed in opposition to each other for individual matches and the winning team credited with the points for the absentees/vacancies.

If one of two teams has an absentee or vacancy and a player on the opposing team is unable to complete the series, any game in progress shall be completed with no change in the competing team's lineup. However, the lineup of the team that lost its player must be changed if necessary, to comply with the provision of Item d above for any subsequent game(s) in the series.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 100e.

100e/1 **If two opposing teams have an absent member, and one absent member shows up to bowl games 2 and 3, does the captain change the lineup by placing the bowler in a position where the player would have bowled if present for the first game?**
No, the lineup stays the same. The player bowling games 2 and 3 bowls in the position the absentee score was used for game 1. According to the rule, no change may be made in the order of players in the lineup during a series, unless league rules state differently.

100e/2 **If a bowler scheduled against an absent player does not win the point, where does the point go?**
The point is awarded to the absent bowler, unless the league rules state otherwise. (See Rule 109d for information regarding a team bowling a nonexistent team.)

100e/3 **If a bowler scheduled against a vacancy does not win the point, where does the point go?**
The point goes to the opposing team. (See Rule 109d for information regarding a team bowling a nonexistent team.)

2. **Mail-o-Graphic** – A mail-o-graphic league is one in which scores are submitted from separate or the same competition, bowling establishment or association and are compared to qualify for prizes in one common prize list. The following provisions apply to all USBC mail-o-graphic leagues:
   a. All scores are submitted to the league secretary who enters the scores and determines team and/or individual standings.
   b. All scores used must be from certified competition.
   c. USBC will certify such leagues provided:
      1) All USBC equipment specifications apply.
      2) All rules for USBC leagues shall apply insofar as applicable.
      3) Application must designate the league as a mail-o-graphic league.
   d. Adults are not required to join the association through which the league is certified if already a member through another association.
   e. As the scores used in mail-o-graphic competition are already recognized in the certified competition in which they are actually bowled, they are not eligible for USBC national awards or average recognition.
3. **Traveling** – A league scheduled to bowl in more than one bowling center is a traveling league. Traveling leagues shall be governed by the following:
   a. In traveling leagues bowling in more than one association, the league application shall be filed through the association decided upon by:
      1) Adult leagues: A majority vote of the team captains.
      2) Youth leagues: The league supervisor.

b. Adult players in a traveling league are required to join the association through which the league is certified if they have not already applied for a current season membership through another association.
c. Final averages shall be submitted to the association through which the league is affiliated.
d. A traveling league that includes international competition and bowls a portion of its schedule in certified centers as well as centers outside the jurisdiction of USBC shall be eligible to apply for certification subject to the following:

1) Govern themselves by all USBC general playing and league rules.
2) High score award and average recognition shall be provided for scores bowled in USBC certified centers.
3) Only players whose home lanes are within USBC jurisdiction would be required to obtain USBC membership.

100f. Managed

1. A managed league is one in which an individual, designated as the league manager, oversees the operation of the league. Any USBC member may be a league manager.
2. The following provisions apply to all USBC managed leagues:

a. A league is organized and designated as a managed league prior to the start of the league schedule. An existing league, not specified as a managed league the previous season, may designate itself as a managed league prior to the start of the league schedule by a two-thirds vote of the board of directors, unless the league elects to have its rules adopted by the membership.
b. The league manager is considered an officer of the league and is bonded.
c. After the league schedule begins, a change in the league rules, schedule and/or prize list can only be made with the written consent of every team captain or designated representative.
d. The membership must elect a president and vice president who are responsible for his/her respective duties as outlined in Rule 104b, Item 1(d)(2), 1(e) and Rule 104c.
e. Rule 103b, Item 1(a) and Rule 105 do not apply to managed leagues.

NOTE: Youth and adult/youth officers, 18 years of age and older, must be Registered Volunteers. (For information on USBC Registered Volunteer Program go to BOWL.com/RVP.)

Youth bowling in adult competition (not an adult/youth event), regardless of prizes, must have a Consent Form on file with each event. The form is only good through the end of that specific event. (See Rule 13.)

Rule 101 – Membership Fee Payment Requirements

To be eligible to bowl in a USBC league, a bowler must:

a. Complete an individual membership application in each league the bowler participates in.
b. Pay or show proof of payment of USBC dues and the required association membership fees in effect for the current season before:

1. **Adult membership:** Completion of the bowler's first series.
2. **Youth membership:** The bowler's third session of competition.

Any team using a player who has not paid appropriate membership dues subjects the games in which the bowler participated to forfeiture.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 101.

101/1 A USBC youth member 17 years of age or younger wants to join an adult league that has no cash prizes. Does the youth have to purchase an adult membership card?
Adult membership is available to individuals 18 years of age or older and adult leagues are only open to adult members. An adult league that accepts a youth member 17 years of age or younger must certify as an Adult/Youth league, must require all members 18 years of age or older to complete U.S. Center for SafeSport training and all league officers must be a Registered Volunteer.

Rule 102 – Meetings

102a. Requirements
League meetings are conducted under the following requirements:

1. The secretary shall notify the members or team captains of all league meetings.
2. To conduct business, a quorum must be in attendance.

a. Board of Directors

1) A majority of the members of the board constitutes a quorum, unless otherwise stated in the league rules.
2) A captain may name another team member to act as the team representative.

b. Membership – A majority of the members of the league constitutes a quorum, unless otherwise stated in the league rules.
c. Youth leagues, the league supervisor or official must also be in attendance.

3. Each member of the board is entitled to one vote whether an officer of the league, a team representative or both.
4. Absentee and proxy votes are not acceptable. Only members present are eligible to vote.

102b. Election of Officers

1. The elections shall be conducted at a meeting held before the distribution of league awards, unless the league board of directors decides that they are to be held prior to the start of the league schedule.
2. The Board of Directors elects the officers unless the league rules vest this authority in the general league membership.
3. All league officers are subject to the following:

   a. Must be members of USBC.
   b. Only the offices of secretary and treasurer may be combined.
   c. Two members of an immediate family cannot serve as the following officers in the same league or co-sign for withdrawals from a league account:

      1) President and treasurer or secretary-treasurer
      2) Vice president and treasurer or secretary-treasurer

   d. Either league members or non-league members may hold league office. When the league requires an officer to be a league member, the board of directors shall decide whether the officer will be allowed to complete the term of office if no longer a league member.
   e. Officers 18 years of age and older in youth and adult/youth leagues, must be a Registered Volunteer. (For information on USBC's Registered Volunteer Program go to BOWL.com/RVP.)

4. Officers elected each season are:

   a. President
   b. Vice president
   c. Secretary
   d. Treasurer
   e. Sergeant-at-arms - optional

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 102b.

102b/1 **I was at our league's organizational meeting and the league elected the treasurer's husband as their president. Is this legal?**
No, two immediate family members cannot hold the offices of president or vice-president and secretary-treasurer or treasurer in the same league. Therefore, one of these officers must resign and the league board (officers and team captains) proceeds in voting in a new officer.

102b/2 **Who is considered immediate family? What if they are no longer in the same household?**
Members of an immediate family include mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, husbands, sons, brothers, fathers, stepsisters, stepbrothers, stepmothers, stepfathers and in-laws. Same gender spouses are considered immediate family.

Two members of an immediate family cannot serve as president or vice-president and secretary-treasurer or treasurer of the same league or co-sign for withdrawals from a league account, even if they do not reside in the same household.

102c. Adoption of Rules

1. Rules shall be adopted at a meeting prior to the start of the league schedule by the board of directors, unless the league elects to have its rules adopted by the membership.
2. After the league schedule begins, a change in the league rules and approved prize list can be made only with the written consent of every team captain or designated representative.

(For more information on conducting meetings, see BOWL.com/Rules.)

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 102c.

102c/1 **If a rule is adopted or changed after the league schedule starts, when does it become effective?**
When a league adopts new or changes existing rules, the rule revisions become effective immediately upon adoption and cannot be made retroactive.

102c/2 **Can league rules adopted at the end of the season be changed before the schedule starts?**
Yes. According to Rule 102c, rules must be adopted at a meeting prior to the start of the league schedule. Therefore, a league may discuss and vote on their rules at the end of the season or during the off-season. However, rules adopted before the start of the season may be changed prior to the start of the league schedule by majority vote.

102c/3 **Can center management attend a league meeting?**
Yes. Center management has a vested interest in the leagues within the center. Many choose to attend meetings to answer questions related to the center and its policies and advise leagues when adopting rules. However, unless the center personnel present is a member of the league, they do not have voting privileges on motions before the league.

Rule 103 – Board of Directors

103a. Composition

1. **Adult leagues:** The adult board consists of the officers and team captains.
2. **Youth leagues:** In youth leagues where a majority of the membership votes to have a board comprised of youth league members, the league board consists of youth officers, league supervisor and league official, and team captains.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 103a.

103a/1 **If the team captain is also an officer, can they vote as a captain and as an officer?**
No. Each member of the board is entitled to one vote, whether a league officer, team representative or both. The rule also states a captain may designate another team member to act as the team representative at board meetings. Therefore, if as captain the officer designates another member, the captain is entitled to vote by virtue of the office held, with the other member voting as team representative.

103b. Duties

1. The board of directors or the youth league supervisor and official shall be responsible for:
   a. Making decisions on all matters arising in the league.
   b. Deciding all protests involving USBC or league rules. The decision of the league board is final unless an appeal is made under the provisions of Rule 120. (Guidelines on how to handle a protest can be found on BOWL.com/Rules.)
2. In youth leagues that have a board, the board would adopt:
   a. League rules.
   b. Prize list.

NOTE: When a team and/or individual is found to be ineligible under league or USBC rules, the game shall be forfeited unless there is a decision to declare the game null and void. In the latter case, a decision shall also be made as to whether the game shall be rebowled.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 103b.

103b/1 **When games bowled are protested, what decisions may the board make?**
The board should first determine if the protest was filed within the time limits prescribed in Rule 120. If the protest is timely, the board can by majority vote declare game(s):

a. Forfeited: If a rule was violated.
b. Null and void and rebowled: If a rule was violated, but was not complied with due to misinformation or mitigating circumstances. If games are declared null and void, the board should make another decision as to whether the games should be rebowled.
c. Stand as bowled: If it is found there is no cause for action.

103b/2 **The board decides to null and void the games of two teams involved in a protest. What happens to the original games bowled?**
Both team and individual records are eliminated. This includes wins and losses, averages, prize consideration, etc. In other words, a null and void game no longer exists, except for USBC award recognition. (See the note below.) The series scores are deleted from the bowlers' average records as of the date of the decision.

For example, if an individual bowled a 498 series December 3 and the board ruled the match null and void January 7, the 498 series is subtracted from the total pins in the average record and total number of games as of January 7. A new average is computed. The same holds true for all other bowlers with games declared null and void. When the match is rescheduled, the current average is used for handicapping purposes and lineup changes may be made.

103b/3 **What if fees are never paid and the prize fund is short? What course of action can the league follow?**
This would be a matter for referral to the board under Rule 103b. Generally, when a shortage occurs because a team member did not pay fees, the shortage is deducted from the individual's share of the team prize money at the end of the season. If the shorted amount is excessive and not covered by the individual's prize money, the loss could be prorated and a small amount would be taken from the prize money of each team in the league. The league has the option to file charges against the member under Rule 122b.

103b/4 **At the organizational meeting there was discussion and a vote taken regarding an adoption of a rule, but the rule did not appear in the printed rules. What can be done to correct this?**
It is not unusual for a league to adopt a rule and then have the rule inadvertently omitted when the rules are prepared for distribution. Under these circumstances, it is permissible for the board to meet to review the organizational meeting minutes in accordance with Rule 103b. The board members can also be asked to ratify what happened at the organizational meeting by majority vote.

If a majority of the board determines the rule was actually discussed and voted on at the organizational meeting, and it was inadvertently omitted when the rules were typed, the rule is binding and added to the existing rules. In this situation, the league is not adding, deleting or changing the existing rules, only clarifying what is adopted, so written consent from every team captain is not needed.

103c. Vacancies in Office
A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the board of directors.

Rule 104 – League Officers Duties

NOTE: Failure to perform any of the officer duties is cause for removal from office and/or suspension of membership.

104a. League Officers
All league officers have the authority to enforce rules no later than 15 days of the series being bowled except when the series is bowled during the:

1. Final two weeks of a league schedule rules must be enforced no later than 72 hours of the final date of the league schedule or the end of a segment if the league bowls a split season.
2. League roll-off or playoff, rules must be enforced no later than 72 hours.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 104a.

104a/1 **How should a league handle complaints regarding problems occurring within the bowling center?**
When the league has concerns regarding lanes, equipment, loud music, etc., the league officers, or a committee appointed by the league president, may discuss the problem with center management in an effort to resolve the matter.

104b. President/League Supervisor
1. The president/league supervisor shall perform the following duties:
   a. Preside at all league meetings.
   b. Enforce all rules and regulations of the league.
   c. Arrange to have an account set up in a recognized banking institution in the name of the league with the bank statements being sent to the president and the signatures of at least two officers required for all withdrawals.
   d. Appoint the following committees:
      1) A prize committee. The president must arrange to have the prize committee submit one or more prize lists for consideration by the fifth week. (See Rule 106a.)
      2) An audit committee. Audit committee responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:
         a) Audit: Perform at least one audit no earlier than one month prior to distribution of prize fund. (Audit Procedures and Worksheet can be found on BOWL.com)
         b) Receipts: Verify the amount and date of deposits.
         c) Disbursements:
            I) Review canceled checks and supporting documents to determine that expenditures are proper.
               i) All checks must bear the signatures of two authorized co-signers.
               ii) The checkbook should be reviewed to verify entries made and to reconcile the appropriate bank statements

II) Review the financial statement prepared by the treasurer to ensure it is a fair representation of the league's finances.

3) Any other committees needed during the season.

e. Personally verify* the league's bank balance monthly. (A Monthly President Verification Worksheet can be found on BOWL.com.)

NOTE: *"Verify" means the president must not only determine the amount on deposit, but also do the arithmetic necessary to determine how much should be on deposit. If the account is found to be short, the president must report the shortage immediately to USBC Headquarters for possible action under the bonding insurance policy.

2. **Youth Leagues:** The league supervisor is the adult president and is also responsible for:

a. Co-signing for withdrawal of funds from the league account(s).
b. Working with the league official (secretary-treasurer) to:

1) Create and distribute league rules and schedule prior to the start of the season.
2) Enforce league and USBC rules.
3) Create and distribute a prize list by the fifth week of competition.
4) Make decisions on all disputes, complaints or protests involving any USBC or league rule.
5) Make decisions on the operation of the league when not in conflict with the league and/or USBC rules.
6) Grant pre-/post-bowling.

c. When the league has a board comprised of youth league members, the league supervisor:

1) Teaches and trains the elected youth president.
2) Is an officer in the league.

NOTE: For more information on committees and managing league funds, see BOWL.com/Rules.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 104b.

104b/1 **Our league president and treasurer are best friends. Due to their relationship, is the president still required to verify the league's bank balance on a monthly basis?**
Yes, the friendship or relationship does not excuse the president from his/her responsibility of personally verifying the league account each month. Failure to verify this information monthly could affect the league's bonding coverage.

104b/2 **As president, I receive our league account bank statement each month and verify the league's bank balance. Do I have to do anything else?**
Yes, you must also look at the treasurer's records to determine if all funds paid are accounted for. For example, some individuals may be behind in fees, while others may have paid for the entire season. The amount on deposit must be the amount received by the league. Also, you need to appoint an audit committee. The audit committee should check the treasurer's records at specified times during the season to verify that incomes, expenditures, balances and records have been accurately kept.

104b/3 **Who has the right to request an audit?**
Any member of the league has the right to request an audit. The request should be done in writing to the league president along with information to support or justify the audit.

104b/4 **Can a league conduct more than one audit?**
Yes, the minimum requirement for audits is one audit must be completed no earlier than one month prior to the league payout. A league may conduct an earlier audit(s) but still must have the end of season audit within one month of the league payout.

104b/5 **Must a youth league supervisor be a USBC member?**
Yes, the league supervisor is considered a league officer and therefore must be a USBC member per Rule 104a.

104b/6 **Who is considered immediate family? What if they are no longer in the same household?**
Members of an immediate family include mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, husbands, sons, brothers, fathers, stepsisters, stepbrothers, stepmothers, stepfathers and in-laws. Same gender spouses are considered immediate family.

Two members of an immediate family cannot serve as league supervisor and league official of the same league or co-sign for withdrawals from a league account, even if they do not reside in the same household.

104c. Vice President

In the absence of the president, the vice president shall perform the duties of the president.

104d. Secretary/League Official

1. The secretary/league official shall perform the following duties:
   a. Have every participant complete a membership card application and collect appropriate membership dues. (See Rule 101 for time constraints to purchase membership.)
   b. Forward the annual membership dues with completed league application and membership card applications to the local association manager(s) within 30 days after the league begins to bowl. Membership card applications and applicable fees for additional members shall also be forwarded to the local association manager(s) within 30 days of receipt.
   c. Keep minutes of all league meetings, handle all league correspondence and notify the members or team captains of all league meetings.
   d. Have a current standing sheet available for the members to see at each league session. The standing sheet shall contain the average, number of games and total pins for each member, and any scores eligible for special prizes the league issues. (For more information about standing sheets, see the *USBC League Operations Handbook* on BOWL.com.)
   e. Be responsible for a record of the scores bowled by all team members and substitutes, and report scores that are eligible for USBC, state and local association awards.
      1) Submit a completed award application within 20 days.
      2) Notify the local association manager or authorized representative within 48 hours of scores that are eligible for USBC honor score recognition.
   f. Give each member of the board a copy of the league rules and prize list and see that the league schedule is either posted in the bowling center or given to each team captain.
   g. Give a copy of the final standing sheet to the league treasurer so the awards can be distributed.
   h. Turn over to the newly-elected officer all league records, such as minutes of meetings, copies of rules and prize lists, league property, etc.
   i. Furnish a list of individual averages to the local association manager, when requested, and within 15 days of the end of the league. The list must show the full names and ID numbers of all bowlers who competed in the league, the number of games bowled, total pinfall and average for each bowler.
   j. On request of the local association or USBC, provide a list of names and addresses of the league officers; and the names of captains and members in the league.
   k. Notify league members of all local association meetings and any proposed changes in local association dues.
   l. Other duties as specified by the board of directors.
2. **Youth leagues:** The league official is the adult secretary and is also responsible for:
   a. Working with the league supervisor (president) to:
      1) Create and distribute league rules and schedule prior to the start of the season.
      2) Enforce league and USBC rules.
      3) Create and distribute a prize list by the fifth week of competition.
      4) Make decisions on all disputes, complaints or protests involving any USBC or league rule.
      5) Make decisions on the operation of the league when not in conflict with the league and/or USBC rules.
      6) Grant pre/post bowling.
   b. Filing a written report of all Rule 400 violations to USBC: Attention Rules for possible disciplinary action. (See Rule 17e.)
   c. Co-signing for withdrawal of funds from the league account(s).
   d. Within 30 days after the end of the league, submitting to SMART through the SMART Portal at smart.bowl.com:
      1) Scholarship money.
      2) Name, USBC member ID and the amount of scholarship, or points issued.
   e. Distributing all prizes within 21 days after the end of the league schedule unless:
      1) The board has set another time for distributing prizes, or
      2) USBC has authorized holding payment pending settlement of a claim or protest affecting prize distribution.
   f. When the league has a board comprised of youth league members:
      1) The official:
         a) Teaches and trains the elected youth secretary.
         b) Is an officer in the league.
      2) The youth secretary shall assist the league official in the responsibilities of the league secretary.

NOTE: In leagues using a computer and/or average service, the elected secretary remains responsible for all the duties specified in Rule 104d.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 104d.

104d/1 **Who has the right to see the league records?**
Although the secretary and treasurer are responsible for maintaining an accurate and complete account of scores and finances, the records are league property. Therefore, all league members have the right to see the records. However, so as not to disrupt bowling, arrangements should be made to view the records either before or after bowling, or at some other time agreeable to the officer(s).

104d/2 **Can a proprietor require our league to use and pay for the secretarial services provided by the center?**
Yes. This and other proprietor provided services are issues negotiated between the league and the center. Although a proprietor can provide the service, it is up to the board of directors to determine if the league will utilize it. However, whether the league uses the service or not, the proprietor may still require payment. In cases where the league utilizes a secretarial service provided by the bowling center, the league is still required to elect a secretary and treasurer. These officials are required to ensure that all duties as specified in Rule 104d and Rule 104e are fulfilled.

104d/3 **Our bowling league utilizes the center's secretarial service. Do we still need to elect a league secretary?**
Yes, Rule 104a requires each league to elect a secretary. Since the league utilizes the center's secretarial service, the league secretary should work together with the bowling center and is responsible for ensuring that all duties listed under Rule 104d are being properly fulfilled.

104d/4 **How long must league records be maintained?**
USBC does not have any rule regarding how long the secretary's records (i.e., minutes, prize lists, copies of recaps and standings sheets, league rules, etc.) should be kept. This is an issue to be determined by each league. Recap sheets can be destroyed after the season has been completed and all records have been finalized. However, 104e, Item 1(g), requires this information to be turned over to the newly elected officer when there is a change in league officers.

As to the treasurer's records, 104e, Item 1(g), requires all financial records, whether in the possession of the former officer or newly elected officer, be retained for at least one year following the completion of the schedule.

104d/5 **Since our youth league has such low award fees, we can't open a bank account as required. What can we do about this situation?**
When a league's funds are too small to meet banking requirements, we suggest they request the center to set up in-house banking. If this is done, the funds must be deposited in a separate account, and the center must provide monthly accounting to the league.

104d/6 **Must a youth league official be a USBC member?**
Yes, the league official is considered a league officer and therefore must be a USBC member per Rule 104a.

104e. Treasurer

1. The treasurer shall perform the following duties:
   a. Establish a bank account in the name of the league with the signatures of at least two officers needed for withdrawals. Ensure the statement is sent to the league president.
   b. Arrange to have all league funds deposited within one week of receipt.
   c. Be responsible for a complete accounting of all receipts and disbursements. On the request of the president or board, furnish a current financial statement to each team captain and officer.
   d. Distribute all prizes within 21 days after the end of the league schedule unless:
      1) The board has set another time for distributing prizes, or
      2) USBC has authorized holding up payment pending settlement of a claim or protest affecting prize distribution.
   e. When the prizes are distributed, give each team captain, officer and/or member a detailed financial statement, showing all income received on behalf of the league and an accounting of all money disbursed. The financial statement must also show the prizes distributed and list to whom they were awarded.
   f. Turn over all financial records to the newly-elected officer upon election.
   g. All financial records, whether in possession of the former officer or newly-elected officer, shall be retained for at least one year from the completion of the season.
2. **Youth leagues:** In youth leagues that do have a board, the treasurer shall assist the league official in the duties of the treasurer.

NOTE: In leagues using in-house banking services, the elected treasurer remains responsible for all the duties specified in Rule 104e.

The treasurer must be eligible under the bonding requirements.

For more information on managing league funds, see the *USBC League Operations Handbook* on BOWL.com.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 104e.

104e. Who is responsible for the collection of pay envelopes when the treasurer is absent?
Only officers of the league are permitted to handle league funds if the treasurer cannot be in attendance. Allowing someone who is not an officer of the league to collect the envelopes could jeopardize the league's bonding.

104f. Sergeant-at-Arms
The sergeant-at-arms shall perform such duties as may be required by the president or the board of directors.

104g. League Manager

1. The league manager, in a league designated as a managed league, shall perform the following duties:
   a. Secretary and treasurer duties as described in Rule 104d and Rule 104e.
   b. The manager has supervisory control of the technical operation of the league consistent with USBC rules, to include:
      1) Creation and distribution of the league rules and schedule prior to the start of the season.
      2) Enforcement of league and USBC rules.
      3) Creation and distribution of the prize list by the fifth week of competition.
      4) Decisions on all disputes, complaints or protest involving any USBC or league rules.
      5) Decisions on the operation of the league when not in conflict with the league and/or USBC rules.
2. Decisions made by the league manager shall be final unless a protest or appeal is made within the provisions of Rule 120.
3. The league manager shall notify the members or team captains of all league meetings and the following shall apply:
   a. Absentee and proxy votes are not acceptable, and only members present are eligible to vote.
   b. A quorum must be in attendance.

104h. Team Captain

1. The captain is the team representative and shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:
   a. Organize and enter a team in league play.
   b. Determine the members of the roster.
   c. Determine eligibility of the team and its members under the rules of the league and USBC.
   d. Collect USBC dues (See Rule 101) from each member of the team and give to the league secretary.
   e. Collect league fees from each member of the team for remittance to the league treasurer.
   f. Be responsible for the conduct and attendance of the team in league play.
   g. Permanently remove any player from the team. If requested, good and sufficient reason for the removal must be furnished to the board.
   h. Enter the lineup in the computer and/or on the recap sheet before the start of each scheduled series.
   i. Sign the recap sheets and have the scores verified by the opposing captain. (See Rule 114a, Item 6 regarding obvious errors.)
   j. Pay each member of the team within 15 days after receiving prize money in accordance with verbal or written agreements. The league board shall decide a dispute over prize money distribution.
2. **Youth leagues:** The captain is elected by the team and only responsible for Items e and i.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 104h.

104h/1 What is the difference between a regular member and an additional member of a team?
A regular member and an additional member are interchangeable; they are members of the team. They are equal and have all rights and privileges in the league. If a membership meeting is called, all members of a team could attend and vote. When a league adopts a rule to have a specific number of regular members for a legal lineup, both regular members and additional members can be used for a legal lineup.

104h/2 May a captain change the lineup from game to game?
Yes. Unless it is a match point league or there is a league rule to the contrary, a captain may change the lineup from one game to the next. Rule 113b, Item 1, states that once a game has started, no changes to the order can be made after the start of a game. The rule does not place a restriction on making changes during a series. A captain may change the order of the players, replace a substitute with a regular member or make any other lineup change from one game to the next.

104h/3 **Can a captain remove a member of the team during the season?**
Rule 104h, Item 1(g) states, it is within the captain's authority to remove any bowler permanently from a team. However, the captain must furnish good and sufficient reason upon protest to the league board.

If bowlers are removed, and are not dismissed under Rule 122a, they are eligible to receive a prorated share of the team prize money at the end of the season, based on the number of games bowled and the amount of prize money won by the team. In addition, the bowlers receive any special prizes for which they have qualified.

104h/4 **If a team member resigns or is replaced during the season, are they entitled to share the team's prize money?**
Regardless of how long bowlers compete with a team, they qualify for a prorated share of the team's prize money provided they resigned in accordance with Rule 121a or were replaced by the team captain.

Rule 104h, Item 1(j), requires the team captain to pay each member of the team within 15 days after receiving prize money in accordance with any verbal or written agreements. USBC holds that prize distribution among team members is a team matter. When a member has bowled part of the season and is unable to be a member at the end of the schedule, it is common practice for teams to prorate prize money between the member who resigned and the replacement based on the number of games each bowled and paid for during the season.

104h/5 **Can an error on a score sheet or recap sheet be corrected after the team captains have signed the recap sheet?**
Yes. Although Rule 104h, Item 1(j), and Rule 114a, Item 5, require the captains to sign the recap sheet and verify the scores bowled, their signatures do not prevent a score from being corrected. An officer is required by Rule 114a, Item 6, to correct errors in scoring or calculation if they are found after the captains have signed the recap sheets. Both captains should be notified of the corrections. However, if a score sheet is removed from the center and an error is found, the matter needs to be referred to the board for a decision.

104h/6 **Is a substitute (designated or roving) listed on a team roster?**
No, only members of the team are listed on the team roster. The roster includes individuals named by the captain as a regular member, additional member or replacement during the season.

Rule 105 – League Fees

League fees consist of the total paid for bowling, the prize fund and any other amount voted by the league.

All league fees, including any entry or sponsor fee, shall be decided by the league.

Youth leagues: When an awards fee is collected as part of the league fees, it must be returned 100 percent to the league members in the form of trophies or other acceptable awards.

NOTE: Failure to pay league fees could result in suspension of USBC membership. (See Rule 122b.)

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 105.

105/1 **Who is responsible for the league fees when a team is unable to find a bowler to fill a vacancy?**
When there is a vacancy on a team for a prolonged period, and the team has made a serious effort to obtain a member but is not successful, it becomes a league problem and not just a team problem. In this situation, the board should agree to absorb the shortage caused by the vacancy. All league members should be encouraged to help recruit bowlers to fill vacancies.

105/2 **I have been told my son must pay league fees each week even if he is absent. Is this permitted in a youth league?**
The league may have this requirement; however, if a league wishes to do this we recommend the league's rules clearly indicate the specific amount of fees that must be paid on a weekly basis. If a league member is behind in paying league fees, the league has the authority to prohibit them from bowling in the league until the arrearage is paid.

Rule 106 – Prizes

106a. Prize List
The prize committee shall submit one or more prize lists for consideration within five weeks after the start of the season. The prize list shall:

1. Comply with any rules that have been adopted by the league.
2. Be approved by the board of directors unless the league rules provide for its adoption by the membership. After approval, the prize list may be changed only with the written consent of every team captain or designated representative.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 106a.

106a/1 What voting procedures are used when the prize committee submits multiple prize lists?
The league prize list must be adopted by a majority of those present and voting. Therefore, if three or more prize lists are considered and none of the prize lists submitted receives a majority vote, the league board of directors should approve one of the following options:

a. The prize list receiving the lowest vote total is dropped and the remaining prize lists are voted upon. Until one prize list receives a majority vote, the prize list receiving the lowest vote would continue to be dropped.
b. All prize lists with the exception of the two receiving the most votes are dropped and another vote is taken. The prize list adopted is decided by a majority vote.

106a/2 How is prize money paid out under a split season format?
Many leagues bowling a split season find it more satisfactory to approve a prize list for each segment. The payments are based on team position standings in each segment, although the prize money is not usually paid out at the end of each segment.

106a/3 What happens if the league did not adopt a prize list by the fifth week of the season?
According to USBC Rule 104b, Item 1(d)(1) the league president arranges to have the prize committee submit one or more prize lists for consideration by the fifth week after the start of the season. If a prize committee was not appointed, the president should appoint one immediately and one or more prize lists should be submitted to the league board for approval as soon as possible.

106b. Qualification
The following procedure applies to prize distribution:

1. Team: Team prizes shall be distributed according to verbal or written agreements.
   a. If there is a dispute on the division of team prizes, it shall be decided by the board of directors.
   b. Unless otherwise provided by league rules:
      1) No team can win more than one prize in any group of prizes.
      2) A team using a substitute is eligible for all high team prizes.
      3) When substitutes are made during a game, the score counts only for team score.
2. Individual: To qualify for individual league prizes, a player must bowl the required number of games.
   a. The following provisions also apply, unless otherwise provided by league rules.
      1) A member shall have bowled at least two-thirds of the games of the league schedule.
      2) If a substitute later becomes a regular member, the games bowled as a substitute shall be included in the required number of games. (This does not apply to the league high average award.)
      3) Scores bowled as a substitute shall not qualify for individual league prizes.
      4) No individual can win more than one prize in any group of prizes.
   b. If a bowler has competed in two-thirds of the league schedule or the number of required games, and cannot be a member at the end of the season because of physical disability or other reasons beyond his/her control, the board of directors shall decide his/her eligibility for individual prizes.
   c. A member, who withdraws during the season without proper notice and sufficient cause or is dismissed or suspended, shall forfeit any money paid into the league, unless the league board determines otherwise.
3. Handicap leagues: All special prizes for team and/or individual high series or high game shall be awarded on a handicap basis, unless otherwise adopted by the league.

NOTE: The following are considered groups of prizes: 1st, 2nd, 3rd high individual scratch game; 1st, 2nd, 3rd high individual handicap game; 1st, 2nd, 3rd high individual scratch series; and 1st, 2nd, 3rd high individual handicap series. The same groups apply to team awards.

Since scratch and handicap scores are considered separate groups, a team or individual would be eligible for both scratch and handicap prizes, unless the league rules state otherwise. If a league rule limits teams or individuals to one award, the rule should also state which prize a member or team will win if a score qualifies for more than one.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 106b.

106b/1 **Two league members are in contention for the high average award, but one of them bowled half of the season as a substitute. Are they both eligible for prize consideration?**
According to Rule 106b, scores bowled as a substitute are not eligible for prize consideration for any award based on average. Thus, the substitute who later became a regular member is not eligible for the award as they did not bowl two-thirds of the season as a regular member.

106b/2 **We limit our members to just one individual award. Would the high average award be included in the prize limitation for members?**
Many leagues regard high average as a special achievement or accomplishment, thereby exempting a member earning that award from the league's provision limiting members to one award. However, a league can adopt a rule to limit the number of awards an individual would be eligible for, and can include the high average award in that limitation.

106b/3 **If members qualify for both a handicap and scratch award, and the league rule limits a member to one award but does not state which one takes precedence, how is award distribution determined?**
In accordance with Rule 103b, the league board should make the decision. Some bowlers believe scratch scores are more meaningful, while others believe handicap awards should take precedence in a handicap league. The board will make the decision and a league rule should be adopted for the next season.

106b/4 **Can scratch awards be issued in a handicap league?**
Yes, as long as scratch awards are provided by league rules or the adopted prize list.

106b/5 **A member is in contention for the high game award, but the member bowled as a substitute during the early part of the season. The player bowled the game as a regular member and not as a substitute. Is the member eligible for the league prize?**
Yes, provided the individual bowled the required number of games (such as two-thirds) to qualify for an individual award. According to Rule 106b, Item 2(a)(2), the games bowled as a substitute and as a regular member are combined to determine the required number of games, unless the league rules state otherwise. Therefore, since the member bowled the game as a regular league member, they would be eligible for the award.

106b/6 **Our league gives out an award for the high average bowler in the league. The league has a rule requiring participants to bowl two-thirds of the scheduled league games or 60 games to be eligible for a league award. The bowler who has high average bowled 84 games in the league but their first 12 games in the league were bowled as a substitute. Is the bowler still eligible for the high average award?**
Yes. The league secretary subtracts the 12 games bowled as a substitute from the 84 game total and resulting pinfall bowled from the bowler's total pinfall. If the bowler still has high average based on the 72 games and the adjusted total pinfall bowled as a regular member, they would be entitled to the award.

106b/7 **If a member's average exceeds the base figure for handicapping, is the member eligible for handicap awards?**
The member is eligible for handicap awards unless the league has adopted a rule limiting awards to those with averages under the base figure.

106b/8 **If a team member resigns or is replaced during the season, are they entitled to a share of the team's prize money?**
Regardless of how long bowlers compete with a team, they qualify for a prorated share of the team's prize money provided they resigned in accordance with Rule 121a or were replaced by the team captain.

Rule 104h, Item 1(j), requires the team captain to pay each member of the team within 15 days after receiving prize money in accordance with any verbal or written agreements. USBC holds that prize distribution among team members is a team matter. When a member has bowled part of the season and is unable to be a member at the end of the schedule, it is common practice for teams to prorate prize money between the member who resigned and the replacement based on the number of games each bowled and paid for during the season.

Rule 107 – Position Matches

A rule may be adopted to include position matches in the schedule subject to the following:

a. Teams shall be paired according to its league position standings and games bowled count as won and lost.
b. Ties for position pairings shall be determined as follows, unless otherwise provided by league rule:
   1. Scratch leagues: By total scratch pinfall.
   2. Handicap leagues: By total pinfall with handicap.

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Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 107.

107/1 If teams bowl against the wrong opponents during the position round or regular schedule, can the games be bowled over, or can the scores be compared with the proper opponents?
USBC holds the games stand as bowled and are entered in the record for games won or lost as well as for individual averages. The league continues with the regular schedule after discovering the error. Comparing scores with the proper opponents changes the competitive circumstances under which the match was bowled.

107/2 The league bowls a position round the last week and after bowling, there is a tie for first place. Do the teams involved bowl another complete 10th frame to determine the champion?
No. According to Rule 118a, a roll-off would be bowled to determine the champion. In accordance with Rule 118b, Item 1(a), if the league does not have rules to govern the roll-off, it would be conducted under the same rules that apply during the regular season. For instance, if the league bowls three games each session using the seven-point system (two points awarded for each game, plus one point for total pins), the roll-off would consist of three games using the seven-point system. Another complete 10th frame is bowled only if a tie still exists at the end of the roll-off.

107/3 How are lanes assigned for position matches?
There are several possibilities, and a league can adopt the format its members prefer. The most common method is to schedule the first and second place teams on the first pair of lanes; the third and fourth place teams on the next pair, etc. Another possibility is to have one team captain for each match draw for a pair of lanes. The only basic requirement is teams be scheduled against opponents according to league standings. If the league does not have a rule on assigning lanes, the board makes the decision. (See Rule 103b.)

107/4 Can a substitute be used in a position round?
Yes, a substitute may be used provided the league has not adopted a rule stating otherwise.

107/5 Should position matches be determined when the schedule is adopted before the season begins or during the season?
According to Rule 107, the league should decide on position matches when rules are adopted before the season begins. When the schedule is prepared, position matches are inserted as directed by the league rule. If a rule for position matches is not adopted before the season begins, unanimous written consent of all team captains or representatives is required to allow for position matches in the schedule.

107/6 How are position match pairings determined when teams fail to make up postponement(s) or all teams in the league have not bowled the same number of games?
When postponed games have not been completed before a position match or all teams have not bowled the same number of games to date, the secretary determines team pairings on a percentage of wins and losses when scheduling the position match.

107/7 Can you explain how to figure position standings on a percentage basis?
A league determines position standings on a percentage basis when it has an uneven number of teams and the league votes to use the bye system, or when all teams in the league do not bowl the same number of games (games ruled null and void or a team is added and is not allowed to make up missed games).

Percentages are based on the number of points a team has the opportunity to win as compared to the number of points actually won. Team standings are determined by dividing the total number of points a team competed for into the number of points actually won.

The following is an example of how to figure percentages:

Place	Team	Won	Lost	Total Points	Percentage
1	C	38	10	48	.792
2	D	40	12	52	.769
3	B	35	13	48	.729
4	A	35	17	52	.673
5	E	26	26	52	.500

a. Add total points won and lost (plus unearned points when applicable).
b. Divide points won by total points.

The chart indicates standings of a league with four points in contention for each match. If a team (Team D) bowled 13 weeks and drew a bye for one week, it has the opportunity to win 52 points. If the team won 40

points out of the possible 52, it has a percentage of .769 in the standings after the 14th scheduled week. For match point leagues, there are more points in contention each week, but the method for figuring the percentage is the same as a four-point league.

107/8 When there are an uneven number of teams in the league at the time of a position round, which team is paired against the non-existent team or is given a bye?
Since pairings for matches start with the first-place team, the last-place team ends up with the nonexistent team as its opponent, unless league rules state otherwise. That team bowls to earn the points or is given a bye.

Rule 108 – Averages

108a. How Determined
A bowling average, including all substitute games, is determined by dividing the total number of pins credited to a bowler in one USBC league, by the number of games bowled in that league in a season. A substitute who later becomes a regular member (or vice versa) his/her average shall be continued.

Extra pins or fractions must be disregarded in using averages for handicapping or classification purposes and shall be reduced to a percentage of a pin only for the purpose of deciding individual position standings in a league.

Partial games and games bowled through the efforts of more than one player:

1. Cannot be used in determining a bowler's average, unless league rules require the secretary to maintain averages based on the actual frames bowled by each player.
2. Shall not qualify for league or USBC individual awards.
(Team & Individual Average Record sheets can be found on BOWL.com.)

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 108a.

108a/1 Two bowlers are tied for high average at the end of the season. Should their averages be carried out to fractions of a pin or do they both get trophies?
Extra pins must be carried out to a fraction of a pin to determine who has the higher average. Divide each bowler's total pins for the season by the number of games bowled and carry it out several decimal places. However, two bowlers could be tied in averages, including the fraction of a pin. If they are tied, they should each receive an award.

108a/2 In a split-season league, we know standings are started over at the half, but how about averages?
A rule may be adopted to start averages over again at the split in the schedule for handicapping purposes only, although it is not recommended. Rule 108a states, in part, a bowling average is determined by dividing the total number of pins credited to a bowler by the number of games bowled in one league in a season. If a member needs average verification, the average has to be computed on the basis of all games bowled by the member, and not just those games bowled in the first or second segment. When final averages are reported, each must be based on all games bowled and on total pins for the entire season.

108a/3 Our league rules allow both individuals and teams to pre-bowl. Can the league secretary hold the pre-bowled scores and apply them to individual average records on the date the pre-bowled games are bowled for?
No. Scores are not held until the date games are pre-bowled for when individuals or teams are granted permission to pre-bowl for a later league session. The scores pre-bowled are entered into the bowler's average record at the time bowled and before the next regular scheduled session to calculate the current average.

108a/4 Our center converted over to string pin machines. Can we use last year's ending average in our league for an entering average this season?
Yes. Using everyone's average established on free-fall machines for entering purposes is allowed.

108a/5 Should leagues bowling in a center that recently converted to string pinsetter machines establish their averages the first night instead of using last season's average?
The league should discuss this option at the organizational meeting. With the averages now being established using string pinsetter machines, the league could decide to start everyone out with an average established on the new machines.

108a/6 Our center is converting to string pinsetter machines during our league season. What must we do in order to stay a certified league?
In short, the league would need to recertify as a string pinsetter league and re-establish averages. To help leagues and associations with this transition, we will be publishing a document to be available prior to the 2023-2024 season.

108b. How Established
Each league shall adopt a rule to determine the number of games required to establish an average in that league. The following applies when establishing an average:

1. A right-handed bowler must always bowl right-handed. Similarly, a left-handed bowler must always bowl left-handed. **Penalty:** Forfeiture of game.
2. No combination of scores bowled both right- and left-handed can be used to compute an average, except as stipulated in Rule 4c.
3. The league's board of directors may, by majority vote, adjust a player's average before the player bowls in the league or during the season due to injury or disability. Separate averages must be maintained.
4. **Adult leagues:** The league's board of directors may, with two-thirds vote, adjust a player's average upward during the season. Separate averages must be maintained. The bowler must use the adjusted average or established league average (whichever is higher) for the remainder of the season.
5. **Youth leagues:** A bowler using a two-handed delivery will establish an average with two hands. When the bowler changes to a one-handed delivery, they must establish a new average using that hand.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 108b.

108b/1 **If a bowler uses his/her opposite hand to make a delivery during a game, what happens?**
If an individual does not have permission from the league board of directors, a league officer or the league board would then have the following options within the timelines as stated in Rule 120.

Option 1: Declare the individual's game forfeited: The bowler would receive zero for the game.

NOTE: Scores bowled by the other team members not in violation stand as bowled.

Option 2: Declare the team's game forfeited: The team would receive zero for the game.

NOTE: The individual in violation would receive zero. However, scores bowled by the other team members count toward their individual averages and league awards unless the league rules state otherwise.

108b/2 **A bowler decides to throw at a spare by delivering their bowling ball between their legs. Would this be considered a change in delivery and a violation of Rule 108b?**
The bowler has changed or deviated from their normal delivery which is a violation of Rule 108b. This rule provides a penalty of forfeiture of the individual's/team's game in which this action occurred.

108b/3 **A bowler is using the two-handed approach. The bowler's dominant hand is the right hand. Can the bowler use the right hand for spares?**
Yes, since both deliveries are with the same dominate hand, the bowler did not change delivery and, therefore, is not in violation of any USBC rules.

108b/4 **A player started league bowling right-handed, but later decided to use a two-handed approach. Is this a change of delivery and in violation of Rule 108b?**
No, as long as all deliveries are made with the right hand, this would not be a violation of Rule 108b.

108b/5 **What are the requirements of a delivery for a two-handed approach?**
A two-handed bowler is required to use the same dominant hand during their delivery on both their first and second shots (this refers to the hand in which the bowling ball rests). All drilled holes must be used in every delivery. If the ball has a thumb hole drilled it must be used in every delivery. If no thumb hole is drilled, a mark such as a plus sign (+) must be engraved in the palm area to show proper orientation to grip the ball.

108c. League Entering Average
Entering averages are determined by league rules. A bowler who does not have an entering average, or until they meet the requirement(s) defined by league rule(s), the average is determined by dividing the total number of pins by the total number of games bowled the first league session. (See Rule 100d for handicap.) When a bowler fails to complete his/her first game in order to establish an average, the frames bowled will be declared null and void and a vacancy score used.

NOTE: The following are options for entering averages:

1. Highest Average: The highest average in any USBC league in which a player competes in one season.
2. Composite Average: The average of a bowler who bowls in two or more USBC leagues in a season. The average is determined by adding the total pins for all of the leagues and dividing the result by the total number of games bowled in those leagues.

NOTE: If a bowler is unable to finish a game after at least one complete game has been bowled, the provisions of Rule 116a or 116b must be followed using the average established for the complete game.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 108c.

108c/1 The league rule requires three games be bowled to establish an average. A member bowls a 120 for game one and a 150 for game two and cannot bowl game three. What score is used for the missed game? How are average and handicap figured?
If a bowler does not have an entering average, handicap is based on the average of all games bowled. In the example given, the score for game three would be calculated by adding games 1 and 2 together (120 + 150 = 270 actual pinfall), then dividing by total games bowled (270 ÷ 2 = 135 average). This will give you the bowler's average which is used to handicap all games of the series. To determine the absentee score for game three, the bowler would use the established average less ten pins (135 - 10 = 125 absentee score) unless league rules state otherwise.

108d. League Entering Average Cap

When a league institutes a team/individual cap, the league will use the entering averages to determine the cap. The following shall also apply:

1. The team shall not have a combined entering average that exceeds the league cap rule, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
2. If a member on a team is replaced or a substitute is used, the combined entering average of those players will constitute the team average for the purposes of meeting the league cap.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 108d.

108d/1 Do team members use their current average or entering average to determine compliance with a league average cap rule?
Entering averages must always be used. Regardless if:

- It is the first night of a league or during the season, playoffs or roll-offs.
- Using a regular team player, substitute, or a new member to the team.

The combined entering averages of the players bowling will determine compliance of a league cap rule.

108d/2 Our team has additional players and one of the scheduled players cannot make it. The entering average of the absent player with the most games puts the team over the league cap. What should the captain do?
The captain must change players to meet the league cap eligibility rule. If it is not possible to change player, a postponement should be requested.

108e. Establish New Average due to Change in Delivery

If because of injury or disability a bowler finds it necessary to change delivery from right- to left-handed or vice-versa, the league board of directors, by majority vote, may permit the bowler to change delivery. If approval is obtained, the bowler must establish a new average.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 108e.

108e/1 I hurt my bowling hand and was granted permission to use the other hand. Once my bowling hand is better, what do I have to do before I can go back to using my regular bowling hand?
You must get permission from the board to return to the original hand you started the league with.

Rule 109 – Teams

109a. Roster

1. The league determines the number of players that make up a roster.
2. A team captain must be allowed to add a replacement when its roster is less than the playing strength of the league.
3. The rosters of all teams shall automatically disband at the end of the season.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 109a.

109a/1 Can a captain choose not to ask the same team members back next season?
Yes. Rule 109a states all team rosters are automatically disbanded at the end of the league schedule. A team captain is not obligated to invite the same individuals back to be team members next season.

109a/2 **May a league adopt a rule stating no new members be allowed for the last few weeks of the season, the position round, a roll-off or for the playoff?**
Yes, however, according to Rule 109a, Item 2, a team must be allowed to add players when its roster is less than the playing strength of the league. For example, if the playing strength is five, teams must be allowed to have at least five members if the team has four or fewer players on the roster. A rule limiting additions or replacements to a team after a certain date may not be enforced if the team does not have the full playing strength on the roster. After the playing strength is reached, the league rule should be enforced, and a team is not allowed to add members to the team. This rule does not apply to absent players.

109a/3 **We have a seven-man roster with five bowling every week. Our additional members only bowl as needed. Our league rules require a regular bowler to have 21 games to be eligible to bowl in the position round. One of our regular five members and both additional members do not have 21 games. According to USBC Rule 109a, Item 2, does the league have to allow us to have a full complement of players?**
No, USBC Rule 109a, Item 2 does not apply in this instance. USBC holds that if an individual on the team had the opportunity to bowl 21 games and did not, then the team would have to use another eligible player (substitute if it is allowed) or an absentee score.

109a/4 **In my league, there are five members on each team. We would like to carry six members so we can rotate each week. We were told that another bowler would be considered a substitute. Can we add another member who bowls only for us and is a full-fledged member?**
Rule 100a, Item 1(b) indicates the league decides the team playing strength, but each team is allowed to determine if there will be additional members, unless league rules limit the roster. If your league did not adopt a rule limiting each team to five members, additional member(s) could be added to the team roster.

109b. Franchise

A team franchise (team spot) in the league shall be held by the team captain provided the captain:

1. Is acceptable to the majority of the full membership of the board of directors.
2. Notifies the league secretary of his/her intention to retain the franchise on or before a date set by the league. Failure to do so will result in the franchise returning to the control of the board of directors.

A franchise cannot be recalled during the season without sufficient cause.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 109b.

109b/1 **To whom does the team spot in a league belong - the captain, team members, league or sponsor?**
Captains hold the team franchise, as provided in Rule 109b. The spot remains with the captain from season to season unless recalled by majority vote of the full league board. A franchise cannot be recalled during the season without sufficient cause. The team sponsor does not have control over the team franchise.

109b/2 **What happens to the franchise or "spot" in the league if a team captain does not want it anymore?**
Most leagues set a date and require team captains to notify the officers of their intention to return the following season. According to Rule 109b, Item 2, if a captain does not wish to retain the franchise, or does not plan to return, the franchise reverts to the control of the board. The board may offer the franchise to another team member or someone who has requested to enter a team in the league.

109c. Replacement During Season

When a team is replaced, the new team shall assume the position standings of the replaced team, unless the league ruled otherwise. A new team:

1. Cannot be charged for fees prior to joining the league.
2. Is entitled to prize money for the number of weeks they paid.

109d. Uneven Number

When a league has an uneven number of teams, the team scheduled against the nonexistent team cannot be credited with the points by forfeit. The Earn the Points system is used unless the league board of directors, by majority vote, decides to use the Bye or Draw System. The following procedures apply for each system:

1. Earn the Points:
    a. Unless the league board states another number, to earn the points:
        1) An individual must bowl at least his/her average less ten (10) pins and/or
        2) Teams must bowl at least the team average less ten (10) pins per player, based on the playing strength of the league.

b. Points not won by the team for failing to bowl the target score should be recorded on the standing sheet as "unearned" points.

2. Draw System:
   a. Teams bowling the vacant team will draw a team or be scheduled against another team from the league to earn points.
   b. Points not won by the team for failing to bowl the target score, should be recorded on the standing sheet as "unearned" points.
   c. The scores bowled will be used as if bowling in direct competition with the drawn/scheduled team.
3. Bye System:
   a. Team scheduled against the vacant team does not bowl.
   b. Position standings shall be determined on a percentage basis.

In all cases, the games bowled by the team that withdrew or was dismissed must stand.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 109d.

109d/1 **How are points awarded when a team ties the target score?**
When a team meets or exceeds the target score, the points are earned.

109d/2 **What is a target score?**
The target score is the score calculated to earn points when a league has an uneven number of teams or bowls in a known forfeit (Rule 119c) situation. The target score is calculated by taking the team average and subtracting ten (10) pins times the playing strength of the league. Example: If the playing strength of the league is four (4), forty (40) pins are subtracted from the team average.

109d/3 **What is playing strength?**
Playing strength is the maximum number of players allowed in the lineup for competition. In league play, this includes actual players and vacancies.

109d/4 **What is team average?**
Team Average is the total of all players averages and vacancy scores (if any) in the lineup for a specific match.

109d/5 **Is the full vacancy score used for the team average?**
Yes, the full vacancy score, without any deduction is included in the team average.

109d/6 **If a bowler is absent is the bowler's full average or average less ten (10) pins used for the team average?**
The bowler's full average is used to calculate a team average. No penalty is taken for the team average calculation.

109d/7 **How is the target score calculated if a team has a vacancy or an absent bowler?**
The target score is always calculated using the team average less ten (10) pins per player, based on the playing strength of the league. When a team has a vacancy or an absent bowler, multiply the playing strength of the league times ten (10) and subtract the number from the team average.

109d/8 **Can a league adopt a rule using a percentage of a bowler's and/or team average to calculate the target score?**
No. The rule requires the same number of pins be deducted from each player to calculate the target score. Using a percentage of a player's average or vacancy score will calculate different amounts to be deducted from each average/score.

109d/9 **What do we do if our league starts the season with an uneven number of teams and a team is added during the season?**
USBC recommends the league board meet and choose one of the following options:

Option 1: Allow the new team to make up the games unopposed and match the scores with teams that previously bowled what was considered a nonexistent team.

Option 2: The entering team is not allowed to make up games and the position standings are figured using a percentage basis.

109d/10 **What do we do if our league starts the season with an even number of teams and a team is added during the season?**
If the league adds a new team during the season giving it an uneven amount of teams, the league board has the following options:

Option 1: The entering team is not allowed to make up missed games and the position standings are figured on a percentage basis.

Option 2: The league allows the new team to bowl against their averages in making up any missed games.

Option 3: The league utilizes the draw system whereby the team bowling the nonexistent team draws another team in the league and their scores are compared with that team to earn points.

No matter which option the league chooses, the league schedule must be changed to reflect the new number of teams now bowling in the league.

109d/11 **Can you explain how to figure position standings on a percentage basis?**
Position standings are determined using a percentage basis when it has an uneven number of teams and the league votes to use the bye system, or when all teams in the league do not bowl the same number of games (games ruled null and void or a team is added and is not allowed to make up missed games). The following is an example of how to figure percentages:

Place	Team	Won	Lost	Total Points	Percentage
1	C	38	10	48	.792
2	D	40	12	52	.769
3	B	35	13	48	.729
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5	E	26	26	52	.500

a. Add total points won and lost (plus unearned points when applicable).
b. Divide points won by total points.

The chart indicates standings of a league with four points in contention for each match. If a team (Team D) bowled 13 weeks and drew a bye for one week, it has the opportunity to win 52 points. If the team won 40 points out of the possible 52, it has a percentage of .769 in the standings after the 14th scheduled week. For match point leagues, there are more points in contention each week, but the method for figuring the percentage is the same as a four-point league.

Percentages are based on the number of points a team has the opportunity to win as compared to the number of points actually won. Team standings are determined by dividing the total number of points a team competed for into the number of points actually won.

109d/12 **Will the team opposing the non-existent team be eligible to earn USBC High Score awards?**
Yes, when the games are bowled during the regularly scheduled time. If the team pre- or post- bowls the match at a time other than the regularly scheduled time, it is considered bowling unopposed and the games would not be eligible for USBC High Score awards. (See Rule 117e, Item 8.)

Rule 110 – Team Composition

Rule 110a. Competition Limited to One Team
Under no conditions may a player bowl on more than one team in the same scheduled game. In addition, the following shall apply:

1. A player may not compete on more than one team in the same league for each of the regularly scheduled games in a series, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
2. When a team's roster is equal to or less than the playing strength of the league, a member of that team cannot substitute on another team in the same league.
3. A player on a team whose roster exceeds the playing strength of the league may bowl with other teams as substitutes provided there are no openings in their team lineup, unless the league rules state a roster member cannot bowl as a substitute on other teams.

NOTE: Once a player records scores, whether pre-bowled, post-bowled or at the regularly scheduled time, the player's eligibility for that series has been exhausted. The posted scores must be utilized in figuring team and individual standings, unless declared null and void by the league board of directors.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 110a.

110a/1 **We had an individual/team pre-bowl because they had to work. Later, they found out that they would not have to work on that date so they appeared at the lanes to bowl. Can the league secretary throw out their scores and allow them to bowl?**
No. When an individual or team receives permission from the league and completes their pre-bowl, they have exhausted their eligibility for that league session. The league board of directors has the authority to declare the pre-bowled scores null and void only if a rule was violated or due to mitigating circumstances. However, the change in the individual's work schedule does not fall into either of these categories, therefore, the scores would stand.

110a/2 **The league had a team pre-bowl for a specific league session. The team pre-bowled and then, due to severe weather, the league cancelled bowling on that date and resumed the following week. What happens to the pre-bowled scores?**
If the team pre-bowled and the league session was subsequently cancelled, USBC recommends the board meet and choose one of the following options:

Option 1: The pre-bowled scores are applied to the rescheduled league session. The team would not be permitted to rebowl that week as their scores have already been recorded and their eligibility exhausted.

Option 2: The league board null and voids the pre-bowled scores and the team is allowed to bowl the rescheduled league session.

110a/3 **May a substitute bowl one game with one team and bowl the remaining two games with another team?**
If a league did not adopt a rule to allow a substitute to bowl with more than one team in a match, a substitute cannot compete on more than one team in the same scheduled time and then again with another team.

110a/4 **May a substitute pre-bowl with one team and then bowl with a different team at the regularly scheduled time?**
No, the substitute's eligibility is exhausted.

110a/5 **If playing strength of the league is five players and the team roster only has five players, can a member of the roster ever bowl on another team?**
Under no circumstance may a bowler on a team where its roster is the same size as the playing strength of the league bowl on another team. A bowler listed on a roster is obligated to bowl with their own team.

110a/6 **Our team has six members on its roster, but only five members bowl each week. Can the additional member on our roster bowl with another team on league night?**
Yes, additional roster members may bowl with other teams as substitutes when they are not scheduled to bowl with their team, unless league rules state otherwise or the league has a past precedent of not allowing these substitutions. If there is a question on the past precedent of the league, the league board of directors must meet and make a decision by majority vote.

110b. Transferring Team Membership

Unless otherwise provided by league rule, a bowler listed on a team's roster and whose scores have counted, may transfer to another team in the league during the season provided:

1. Adult leagues: Two-thirds of the league's team captains agree to the transfer. This provision does not apply to USBC closed leagues, or to any league which adopts its own rule to govern transfers.
2. Youth leagues: The league official/supervisor consents to the transfer.

110c. Substitutes

A substitute is a bowler who bowls in place of a regular member, another substitute or bowls for a team with an incomplete roster.

The following shall apply:

1. Scores shall count for the games bowled.
2. Must be a USBC member. (See Rule 101 for dues.)
3. The average shall be kept. Should a substitute later be added to a team's roster, his/her average shall be continued.
4. Are not entitled to attend league meetings.
5. Unless otherwise provided by league rules:
   a. Not required to pay league fees.
   b. May be of either gender in a mixed league.

6. **Youth leagues:** May allow substitutes present and not needed on a team to bowl for average and USBC awards.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 110c.

110c/1 Can a league adopt a rule that limits each team to naming two substitutes who bowl only for a particular team during the season?
Yes. There are two types of substitutes: designated and roving. A designated substitute generally bowls for one team as needed. A roving substitute is allowed to bowl with any team. Although USBC recommends roving substitutes be used, league rules may be adopted for using designated substitutes, and for setting a substitute limit. However, without a league rule, a team could have any number of designated or roving substitutes. Substitutes should not be on the roster. Designated substitutes should be noted as a substitute if on the roster.

110c/2 What is the difference between a roster member and a substitute?
Roster members generally pay league fees when they bowl and receive a prorated share of the team prize money. They have the same status in the league as other regular members and are eligible for individual awards offered by the league if they bowl the required number of games. A substitute usually does not pay league fees. Some leagues require the sub to pay bowling fees, but the regular members pay the prize portion. A substitute is not eligible for individual league prizes unless the league rules state otherwise. A league may by rule designate additional roster members as substitutes.

110c/3 May a league adopt a rule that substitutes not be allowed?
Yes, however it is not recommended as it can place undue hardship on a team when members are absent due to illness or other reasons beyond their control. If a league believes a team might bring in high-average bowlers as substitutes, the league may set eligibility requirements. For example, leagues may adopt a rule stating a substitute's average cannot exceed the absent member's average, or the substitute's average must be within a specified number of pins of the absent member's average.

110d. Pacers

A pacer is a bowler who fills in to balance the rotation of the teams. The following shall apply to all pacers:

1. Scores bowled do not count toward team totals nor are they included in the average records.
2. Pacers are allowed, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
3. Pacers who are USBC members are eligible for all USBC individual awards.

Rule 111 – Lineup

111a. Legal Lineup

A minimum legal lineup must be present to complete the first frame of any game of a series unless the league rules state another frame. A frame shall be considered completed when all bowlers present on each team have made his/her last deliveries in that frame. The following also shall apply:

1. A legal lineup is:
   a. Three or more eligible players in five-player team leagues, unless league rules state one or more.
   b. Two or more eligible players in either three- or four-player team leagues, unless league rules state one or more.
   c. One eligible player in two-player team leagues.
2. Substitutes count to determine a legal lineup, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
3. Leagues may include in its rules the number of players from a team's roster who must be present to count toward a legal lineup.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 111a.

111a/1 If a league does not adopt a rule designating the number of regular members for a legal lineup, is it acceptable to have just one regular member plus substitutes?
Substitutes are considered eligible players for a minimum legal lineup unless the league adopts a rule requiring a specific number of regular members to be present. If such a rule is not adopted, any number of substitutes could count toward a legal lineup.

111a/2 Can a league adopt a rule stating a legal lineup must be present at the start of a game or at a designated time?
A team has until the completion of the first frame, or a select frame other than the first, to field a legal lineup. Therefore, it is not permissible to require a team to have a legal lineup present at the start of a game or at a designated time.

111a/3 **When a league allows for individual pre-bowls, do the scores count toward the legal lineup requirement?**
Yes, the scores count toward the legal lineup requirement unless the league rules require a legal lineup present at the regular league session.

111a/4 **Can a vacancy or an absentee score count toward the legal lineup?**
No. If a team does not have the minimum legal lineup present by the end of the specified frame, the vacancy and absentee scores cannot be used. (See Rule 112.)

111b. Lack of Legal Lineup

When one or both teams scheduled against each other fail to present a minimum legal lineup and a postponement was not requested, the game(s) is (are) forfeited unless an emergency existed. The postponement committee or board of directors shall decide whether an emergency existed and, if so, the match shall be rescheduled under the postponement rules. Decisions made by the postponement committee can be appealed to the league board of directors.

111c. Tardy Players

Unless otherwise provided by league rule, a player who arrives late may be permitted to bowl after a game has started under these conditions:

1. The player shall begin play, with the score to count, beginning with the frame then being bowled by the team.
2. The player shall receive one-tenth of the absentee score for each frame not bowled.
3. Partial games shall not be used in determining a bowler's average, unless league rules require the secretary to maintain averages based on the actual frames bowled by each player.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 111c.

111c/1 **If a legal lineup is not present by the end of the first frame but a tardy player arrives before the designated tardy player frame, can the late bowler make up missed frames to avoid a team forfeit?**
No, a league rule setting a specific frame for tardy players is separate from the legal lineup rule. First, a team must have enough eligible players present for a legal lineup. Tardy players could enter the game if they arrived before completion of the designated tardy frame, but the game would still be forfeited. However, games two and three would not be forfeited since the team would have a legal lineup present.

111d. Replacement in lineup

The team captain may replace any player at any time during a game with another eligible player, unless otherwise provided by league rules. A player removed from a game cannot return to bowl in the same game.

NOTE: When a player is replaced during a game in a handicap league, each player receives 1/10 of his/her single-game handicap for each frame bowled. For example, an original player with a single-game handicap of 19 pins completes six frames and a substitute with a single-game handicap of 22 pins completes the remaining four frames:

Original player 1/10 of 19 = 1.9 pins x 6 frames = 11.4 or 11 pins. Substitute player 1/10 of 22 = 2.2 pins x 4 frames = 8.8 pins or 8 pins. The fraction is dropped from each individual's handicap, not from each frame.

In leagues using the team method of handicapping, the same procedure is used. Determine the team handicap with the original player and with the substitute in the lineup. Then apply the handicap based on the number of frames completed by each player.

Rule 112 – Absentee and Vacancy Scores

Leagues may adopt rules for absentee or vacancy scores and handicaps to decide league games, subject to the following:

a. Absentee or vacancy scores may be used only when a legal lineup is present.
b. Absentee or vacancy scores may not replace scores bowled by an ineligible player.
c. In a singles league, no vacancy scores shall be used. Absentee scores will not be permitted, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
d. A vacancy score is to be used when a team has an incomplete roster. Vacancy scores are subject to the following, unless otherwise provided by league rule:

1. **Adult leagues:**

a) The vacancy score shall be 120.
b) In handicap leagues, the handicap must be based on the vacancy score used. Handicap shall not be limited.

2. **Youth leagues:**

   a) The vacancy score shall be the average of the lowest average bowler on the opposing team's roster.
   b) If two or more vacancy scores are required, the average of the next-to-the-lowest bowler on the opposing team's roster shall be used for the second vacancy score.
   c) In handicap leagues, the handicap must be based on the vacancy score used. Handicap shall not be limited.
   d) The vacancy score is used until an individual bowls and establishes a current average.

e. An absentee score is to be used when a member is absent and a substitute is not obtained. The following provisions apply unless otherwise provided by league rule:

   1. The absentee score for each game shall be the absent member's current average less 10 pins. In handicap leagues, the handicap shall be based on the absent member's current average.
   2. Teams with additional players on the roster shall use the absentee score of the absent player with the:

      a) Most games bowled.
      b) Lowest absentee score when the absentees have the same number of games bowled.
      c) Next highest number of games bowled when two scores are needed.

   3. When a team has an absent member without an established average, according to league rules or USBC Rule 108c, a score of 120 will be used. In handicap leagues, the handicap shall be based on the score of 120.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 112.

112/1 What is the difference between absentee and vacancy?
As defined in Rule 112, Item e, an absentee score is used when a regular member is absent and a substitute is not available. Unless otherwise provided by league rule, the absentee score for each game shall be the member's current average less 10 pins and, in handicap leagues, the handicap is based on the member's current average.

According to Rule 112, Item d, a vacancy score is used when the team's roster is less than the playing strength of the league. The vacancy score shall be 120 unless otherwise provided by the league rules. In handicap leagues, handicap for vacancy scores is calculated using the same handicap percentage the league utilizes for its regular members unless the league rules state otherwise. For example, if the league's regular handicap is 100% of 220, vacancy scores must be calculated on the same basis unless the league rules state otherwise.

112/2 If a rostered bowler is absent the first night of bowling, is an absentee or vacancy score used?
An absentee score is used unless otherwise provided by league rules or past precedent established in the league. If there is a question as to whether the absent individual is a member of the team's roster, the league board of directors decides the matter.

112/3 If two members are absent and only one substitute is obtained, which absentee score is used?
According to Rule 104h, Item c, the team captain is responsible for the eligibility of the team and determines whom the substitute will replace. First, the captain determines whom the substitute will replace and then the absentee score is determined.

When the team has a limited roster, the process is easy. The captain selects the player the substitute replaces, and the absentee score of the other player is used.

When a team has additional players on its roster, the captain decides whom the substitute is replacing. Whoever the substitute is replacing, the absentee score for that absent member cannot be used. According to Rule 112, Item e(2), the absentee score of the player with the most games is used for the other player. If two absentee scores are needed after the substitute is in place, the absentee score of the absentee with the next highest number of games is used and when two absent members have the same number of games, the lower absentee score is used. (See CAQ 108d/1 for cap information.)

112/4 Can a substitute's absentee score be used?
No. When a substitute completed frames and withdrew from play or did not bowl all games in a series, the absentee score for the remaining frames (see Rule 116)/games must be based on the average of the absent bowler. If there are additional players on the roster, see Rule 112, Item e(2).

112/5 If a member resigns from the league and the spot is not filled within two weeks (fees were paid, but there is no substitute), what score should be used... absentee or vacancy?
The absentee score should be used. In the situation described, the member resigned, but was not replaced immediately. Therefore, the player is still a member for those two weeks. Once the two weeks expire and a replacement has not been obtained, the vacancy score provided for in the league rules is used.

112/6 **Can a league adopt a rule stating there will be no handicap given for a vacancy score?**
Yes, the league can adopt a rule restricting handicap for a vacancy score. While USBC recommends that the vacancy score receive the same handicap percentage the league utilizes for its regular members, Rule 112, Item b allows the league by rule to determine the percentage of handicap the vacancy score will receive.

112/7 **When it is discovered players were not eligible to bowl, can their scores be replaced by an absentee score?**
No, Rule 112, Item b states, under no circumstances may an absentee or vacancy score replace scores bowled by an ineligible player. According to Rule 103b, the league board is authorized to rule on protested games and declare them forfeited or null and void. When an ineligible player is used, games are generally forfeited. However, the board has the authority to declare the games null and void and have them rebowled. If a complaint or protest is not filed in accordance with Rule 120, the games would stand as bowled.

112/8 **We have a six-man roster with five bowling every week. Our sixth man only bowls when needed and does not pay the weekly fees. One of our regular five members resigned; can we use a vacancy score until we fill that spot?**
No, since the sixth man is considered a regular member of the team and not a substitute, the team has a full complement of players and cannot use a vacancy score. If he/she cannot attend, then his/her absentee score would be used and, since the team has five regular bowlers, the team would be required to pay league fees for five. A vacancy score cannot be used unless the team has four or less players on the team roster.

Rule 113 – League Game/Series

113a. Series - How Bowled
Two lanes immediately adjoining each other shall be used in each game of league play. The first game of a series shall start on the lane where the team is scheduled with each succeeding game starting on the lane where the team finished its previous game. At the option of the league, each game or frame may be bowled on a different pair of lanes.

113b. Order of Bowling
Unless the league rules allow each game or frame to be bowled on a different pair of lanes, members of competing teams shall successively, and in regular order, bowl one frame on one lane, and for the next frame alternate and use the other lane until five frames are bowled on each lane of the pair.

1. No changes can be made in the order of players after the start of a game.
2. When a team bowls against another team or alone, the next frame may be started prior to completion of the previous frame, unless the league rules state otherwise.

113c. Interrupted Game/Series
If equipment failure on a pair of lanes would delay the progress of a series, league officers can:

1. Authorize the game and series to be completed on another pair of certified lanes; or
2. Authorize the game and/or series to be bowled on one lane when another pair of certified lanes is not available. However, when the original pair or another pair of certified lanes becomes available, the team(s) may resume play on a pair of lanes.

An interrupted game and series shall be resumed from the point of interruption. A league official may authorize participants on the pair to practice prior to resuming the games/series. When authorized, the requirements of Rule 113a and Rule 113b do not apply.

NOTE: Scores bowled while using one lane shall qualify for USBC award recognition.

113d. Bowling Out
Unless the league rules state otherwise:

1. Adult leagues: A bowler may finish any one game of a series before teammates or opponents.
2. Youth leagues: A league member may finish any game of a series before his/her teammates or opponents, with approval of the league official or league supervisor.

Scores recorded while bowling out count in deciding the game and bowler's average, and qualify for USBC awards and league awards.

NOTE: A player bowling out should do so while the others continue to bowl. The player should bowl on each lane immediately after the previous bowler completes the frame, so that the progress of the game is not delayed.

Rule 114 – Scores

114a. Scoring Process
In league play:

1. Scores must be recorded on a score sheet in plain view of opposing players.
2. Every frame bowled by each player shall be recorded.
3. Each team shall record the scores of each game on a recap sheet kept by the team captain or someone appointed by the captain for this purpose.
4. The score sheet is the official record, and the team recap sheet must agree with the score sheet at the end of each game.
5. After the recap sheets are verified and signed by the opposing team captains, they are the league's official record for the season.
6. Errors in scoring or calculation must be corrected by a league officer immediately upon discovery.

Any questionable errors in scoring or calculation shall be decided by the league board.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 114a.

114a/1 **Does the league board have to meet before an error can be corrected?**
When an obvious error is to be corrected, a directive from the board is not necessary; a league officer is authorized to make changes. However, Rule 114a, Item 6 states, the board of directors decides on questionable errors in scoring or calculation.

114a/2 **Is there a time limit for correcting errors in scoring or calculation?**
Corrections may be made until the prizes are distributed. The 15-day time limit of Rule 120 does not apply.

114a/3 **Can an error on a score sheet or recap sheet be corrected after the team captains have signed the recap sheet?**
Yes. Although Rule 114a, Item 5 and Rule 114a, Item 6, require the captains to sign the recap sheet and verify the scores bowled, their signatures do not prevent a score from being corrected. An officer is required by Rule 114a, Item 6, to correct errors if they are found after the captains have signed the recap sheets. Both captains should be notified of the corrections.

114a/4 **We have a discrepancy between the results provided by the center record-keeping service and the records produced by our league secretary for last week's competition. How should the league determine which records are correct?**
A league officer should gather whatever records are available from that competition (recaps and score printouts if available) and review these to determine where the error(s) occurred. The findings should then be presented to the league board for a review decision.

114a/5 **We are having an issue with differences between the league records provided by the center and the records our secretary keeps. How should we resolve this and correct our league records?**
The president should appoint a committee to gather whatever record documents are available (recaps and score printouts if available) and review these to determine where the error(s) occurred. Their findings should then be presented to the league board for a review and decision.

114b. Scores Lost
When game(s) or frame(s) within a game are irretrievably lost in the scoring process, the following procedures shall apply:

1. Scores that can be documented or agreed upon by the opposing team captains stand and the game shall resume from the point of interruption in regular order.
2. Scores that cannot be documented or agreed upon by the opposing team captains shall be rebowled, unless the board of directors rules them null and void.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 114b.

114b/1 **We use automatic scoring, and one night a team's scores were accidentally erased in the eighth frame of the first game. A printout was not available, so the league secretary allowed the team to reconstruct the scores. Was this procedure correct?**
If the teams in question are able to agree, the scores could be reconstructed and, if necessary, the games continued from the point of interruption. If the official record is mutilated, lost, defaced, or the captains cannot agree on the scores, USBC holds games in question should be rebowled.

Rule 115 – Tie Game

When a tie occurs, each of the teams shall be credited with one-half the value of the point(s) normally awarded. There shall be no playoff or roll-off of such ties.

Rule 116 – Failure to Complete Game

116a. With Cause

When a player is unable to complete a game because of disability, injury or emergency, and another eligible player is not available, the team shall count the actual score for the frames bowled plus one- tenth of the league's absentee score for each frame missed. (See Rule 108a for average information.)

NOTE: For computing score: Take actual score for frames bowled; for a strike or spare in last frame bowled credit 10 pins. Add 1/10 of league's absentee score for each of the remaining frames. For example, if absentee score is bowler's average less 10: Absentee score, 145; 1/10 of 145 = 14.5 x 3 frames = 43.5. Drop fraction and add 43 to actual score for 7 frames bowled. The fraction is dropped after the total amount is figured, and not from each frame.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 116a.

116a/1 **When a team member must leave during a game due to injury, how is the remainder of their game scored? What if they must leave in the middle of a frame after making only their first delivery?**
Rule 116a provides that if a team member is unable to complete a game due to disability, injury or emergency and another team member is not available, the team shall count the actual score for the frames bowled plus one-tenth of the league's absentee score for each of the remaining frames in the game.

When a team member only makes their first delivery in a frame and is unable to complete the game, they can only be credited with the number of pins knocked down on that delivery for the frame. The team member gets credit for all completed and partial frames bowled plus one-tenth of their absentee score for additional frames missed.

116a/2 **If a player has to leave any game because of an emergency and the team loses its legal lineup, is the team required to forfeit?**
No. Rule 111b does not require a team to forfeit if it loses its legal lineup during a game. The team could finish the game using one-tenth of the bowler's absentee score for the frames not completed. If the team could not field a legal lineup for the next game, the team is entitled to an emergency postponement. Rule 117b states, leagues shall grant postponements for emergencies when a team fails to appear due to reasons beyond its control. The same would apply when a team loses its legal lineup during a series.

116b. Without Cause

When a player does not complete a game for reasons other than disability, injury or emergency, the player's team shall count zero for each remaining frame in the game. (See Rule 108a for average information.)

If there is any doubt of a player's reason for not being able to continue a game, the league board of directors shall decide. A player who leaves a game without cause cannot return to bowl in the same game.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 116b.

116b/1 **After missing a spare in the fifth frame of the second game, the player gets upset and stops bowling. How do you score the bowler's second and third game?**
The team is credited with the actual score for the first five frames bowled and zero for each remaining frames in the second game. For the third game, the team uses the player's absentee score. In calculating the bowler's average, only the first game is included in the bowler's average record.

116c. Missed Frames

A player who starts a game and then misses frames due to an emergency may return to bowl before completion of the same game and make up the frames missed, unless the league rules:

1. Require a player to enter the game at the frame being bowled by the team.
2. Do not allow a player to return to bowl.

Rule 116a must be applied for missed frames that are not made up in the same game.

NOTE: Refer to Rule 108a for average information.

Rule 117 – Pre-bowl/Postponements

117a. Types

Types of pre-bowls and postponements:

1. Bowling in direct opposition.
2. Team unopposed bowling: Permitted, unless the league adopts a rule prohibiting this type of competition.
3. Individual unopposed bowling:
   a. **Adult leagues:** Prohibited, unless the league rules state otherwise.
   b. **Youth leagues:** Permitted, unless the league rules state otherwise.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 117a.

117a/1 **What is bowling unopposed?**
Bowling unopposed is when one team or an individual requests and is granted permission to bowl without its scheduled opponent at a time other than the regularly scheduled league time. The team or individual with permission may bowl prior to the scheduled date (pre-bowling) or after the scheduled date (a postponement).

117a/2 **What is direct opposition?**
Direct opposition is when the two opposing teams scheduled for a specific date pre-bowl or post-bowl for that date at the same time on the same pair of lanes.

117b. Reason

A league cannot adopt a rule that would have the effect of not permitting any pre-bowling/ postponements. The league must grant a pre-bowl/postponement when the team is unable to field a legal lineup for the following reasons:

1. Some of its bowlers are participating in the USBC Championship events, state or local association championship tournaments or attending an annual meeting.
2. There is sufficient cause.
3. An emergency situation.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 117b.

117b/1 **What is considered sufficient cause for an emergency postponement?**
An emergency is defined as an unforeseen combination of circumstances, making it impossible for a team to field a legal lineup. The reasons for not being able to bowl would not have to be catastrophic; just beyond the control of the team members. Although each reason by itself might not be considered an emergency, the combination of circumstances happening at the same time is considered an emergency. For example, if a five-person team knew a player was to be out of town and thought they could field a legal lineup, but prior to bowling, another bowler fell ill and the next had to work late, the team could request an emergency postponement.

117b/2 **Due to a bad storm, all but two teams were able to field legal lineups. Are these two teams entitled to emergency postponements when all the other teams in the league were able to get to the lanes?**
Yes, weather conditions which prevent a team from fielding a legal lineup are classified as emergencies. Leagues must grant postponements for emergencies when a team fails to appear for its scheduled match due to reasons beyond its control. Adverse weather conditions are sufficient reason to grant a postponement without advance notice. Members must realize all bowlers do not face the same driving conditions or circumstances, so the ability of an individual to drive under adverse conditions cannot be used as a basis for declaring games forfeited.

117c. Request

Games must be bowled as scheduled, unless a request is made prior to the scheduled time, except for emergencies, and approval is granted.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 117c.

117c/1 **What happens when a team cannot field a legal lineup or does not appear and no pre-bowl or postponement is requested?**
A forfeit is issued. However, the forfeiting team has up to 15 days to file a written protest of the forfeiture and request an emergency postponement according to Rule 120. If the match is within the final two weeks of the schedule, the team must file the written protest within 72 hours of the final date of that schedule.

117c/2 **Does a postponement have to be requested 48 hours prior to the scheduled night?**
No. A request for a postponement can be made any time prior to the scheduled match. If an emergency exists, the request should be made as soon as possible. However, the request must be made within the timelines of Rule 120.

117c/3 **Can a league adopt a rule allowing individuals/teams to pre-bowl for an undetermined date and have the scores held by the league secretary until needed?**
No, all league games are to be bowled as scheduled unless they are postponed or pre-bowled by committee or board authorization. For a postponement to take place, a request must be made and permission granted. Requests are made for a specific date and are made up at a time agreed upon by the committee or board.

117d. Granting

Pre-bowl/postponement requests are reviewed and decided by:

1. Adult leagues: A committee appointed for this purpose or the board of directors.
2. Youth leagues: The league supervisor or league official, unless the authority is given to a committee appointed for this purpose.

Decisions made by the committee or league supervisor/official may be protested to the board of directors under the provisions of Rule 120. (See Rule 120 for protest/appeal procedures.)

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 117d.

117d/1 **Who has the authority to call off bowling for the entire league because of bad weather?**
While there is no specific rule giving the authority to cancel bowling because of inclement weather, decisions made by league officers have been consistently upheld. The officers should be acting in the league's best interest. To be assured they are making the correct decision to cancel bowling, the officers should conduct a telephone poll of board members. If a majority vote supporting the decision is obtained, it is in line with Rule 103b and Rule 117d, Item 1, which authorize the board to decide on postponements.

117d/2 **How is a postponement for the entire league rescheduled?**
To reschedule a postponed league session, the proprietor should be consulted and the decision is made with agreement of the league board under Rule 103b. The season could be extended with the missed session bowled the following week and each succeeding week advanced. If arrangements can be made with the proprietor, the postponed games could be bowled any time lanes are available. Most importantly, ensure that everyone concerned understands how the rescheduling will be done.

117d/3 **Can a league allow an officer to grant postponements?**
A committee consists of one or more individuals. Although we recommend a postponement committee of three, including the league secretary, it is acceptable for the president to appoint an officer to make the decision. All protests or challenges regarding postponements or pre-bowls are decided by the board.

117d/4 **Can a league adopt a rule allowing the opposing team captain to grant postponements?**
No. When a request for a postponement is made, it is up to the league board of directors or postponement committee to decide what is sufficient cause to grant the postponement. The requirement is to assure that a team's right to request a postponement is protected and to be certain a team is not required to forfeit points because the opposing team might not grant a postponement.

117d/5 **How is the decision made to grant a pre-bowl or postponement?**
The committee and/or board should carefully consider the reasons for each request and be consistent when granting or denying a postponement or pre-bowl. Although reasons for requests do not have to be catastrophic or an emergency, it is the committee or board's decision whether or not to grant the pre-bowl or postponement. When a committee consists of more than one person or the board makes the decision, a majority vote is required. The decision can be made at a meeting or via a telephone poll of all committee/board members.

117d/6 **If a team cannot bowl at the regularly scheduled time, can they call the bowling center, bowl and turn the scores into the desk or league secretary?**
No. A team cannot pre- or post-bowl without permission. Contacting the center does not fulfill the requirement to receive permission to pre- or post-bowl. Only a committee or the board of directors can grant a pre-bowl or postponement.

117e. Procedure
Following is the procedure to be used for pre-bowling or postponements:

1. When teams are bowling in direct opposition, the captains of the teams involved shall agree to a date for bowling the pre-bowl/postponed match. If within one week from the date originally scheduled, the captains cannot agree on a date, the league secretary shall set a date and notify both team captains of the date and time. This notification should be given at least three days prior to the date.
2. The league secretary or designated representative shall notify the bowling center of the change in schedule and arrange to have a pair of lanes available.
3. Games must be bowled under the same regulations and rules governing league play.
4. Handicap is figured as of the date/time the games are bowled. All games bowled prior to the pre-bowled or postponed match shall be included in determining handicap.
5. Pre-bowled or postponed games shall be included in the average record as of the date bowled.
6. Games can be made up on any certified pair of lanes.
7. Scores qualify for league awards, unless otherwise provided by league rule.
8. Unopposed pre- or post-bowled scores will not be eligible for USBC Awards.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 117e.

117e/1 If a team is granted a pre-bowl or postponement and the opposing team is not notified, are the games forfeited?
No. When bowling unopposed, the opposing team does not have to be notified (or agree to a date) prior to the time of bowling, unless otherwise provided by league rule. Notification of the opposing team is a courtesy and games cannot be forfeited. If the league adopted a rule requiring notification and the opposing team was not notified and filed a written protest stating they want to bowl with the team, the league board would have the following options:

a. Games stand as bowled.
b. Null and void both teams' scores and require both teams to re-bowl in direct opposition.

117e/2 What average and handicap is used for a pre-bowl and/or postponement?
The averages and handicaps as of the date the games are bowled must be used in both postponed and pre-bowled games. All games bowled prior to the postponed or pre-bowled games are used to determine average and handicap.

117e/3 When teams pre-bowl or post-bowl unopposed, can the opposing team see the scores bowled by the team bowling first?
There is no USBC rule to prevent the opposing team from seeing the scores. When a league allows teams to bowl unopposed, rules can be adopted to govern this situation.

117e/4 We had an individual/team pre-bowl because they had to work. Later they found out that they would not have to work on that date so they appeared at the lanes to bowl. Can the league secretary throw out their scores and allow them to bowl?
No. When an individual or team receives permission from the league and completes their pre-bowl, they have exhausted their eligibility for that league session.

117e/5 The league had a team pre-bowl for a specific league session. The team pre-bowled and then, due to severe weather, the league cancelled bowling on that date and resumed the following week. What happens to the pre-bowled scores?
If the team pre-bowled and the league session was subsequently cancelled, USBC recommends the board meet and choose one of the following options:

Option 1: The pre-bowled scores are applied to the rescheduled league session. The team would not be permitted to rebowl that week as their scores have already been recorded and their eligibility exhausted.

Option 2: The league board null and voids the pre-bowled scores and the team is allowed to bowl the rescheduled league session.

117e/6 **Can the league secretary hold the pre-bowled scores and apply them to individual average records on the date the pre-bowled games are bowled for?**
No. Pre-bowled scores must be added to a bowler's average record immediately upon being bowled.

Example: After week 1, the bowler pre-bowled for week 4. The games are entered into the bowler's record on the second line and average is recalculated and used for week two of the schedule. The bowler will have six games bowled going into week two.

Date		Games			Total	Grand Total	No. Games	Average
		1	2	3				
01/01/12		150	175	160	485	485	3	161
01/05/12	**Pre-bowl week 4**	**160**	**158**	**159**	**477**	**962**	**6**	**160**
01/08/12		168	165	170	503	1465	9	162

117e/7 **Can you explain when High Scores will or will not be recognized by USBC?**
USBC will recognize High Scores bowled when:

1. Two scheduled opponents pre-bowl or post-bowl together. (Direct Opposition.)
2. The entire league is rescheduled.
3. A team is bowling alone during league play because the opposing team has pre- or post-bowled.
4. A team bowling alone because the league has uneven number of teams.

High Scores will not be recognized by USBC when:

1. An individual or team bowls unopposed.
2. Games are bowled unopposed before or after a league session.
3. League has uneven number of teams and the team without an opponent does not bowl with the league.
4. Two teams from the same league that are not scheduled against each other bowl together.
5. Two teams from different leagues bowl together.

117f. Time Limit for Bowling

Pre-bowled/postponed games must be bowled as follows:

1. Prior to the date of scheduled competition for final team standings for the season or each segment of a split season; or
2. Within seven days when the postponement is granted for the last day of a segment (split-season leagues); or
3. Within seven days when the postponement is granted for the last day of the schedule.

The foregoing applies to teams bowling in direct opposition. A league may adopt different time frames for individual and/or team unopposed bowling.

The foregoing does not apply when a protest or appeal is pending finalization under Rule 120.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 117f.

117f/1 **What if a team granted a postponement does not make up the games within the league's time limit?**
A team can request an extension if they do not make up games within the time limit set by league rule. The committee or board considers the reason the games were not made up and decides whether to grant additional time to make the games up.

117f/2 **Can a league adopt a rule placing a time limit on postponed games?**
Leagues can adopt rules placing a time limit to make up games bowled unopposed. However, they cannot adopt a rule for makeup games bowled in direct competition. Rule 117f states postponements must be made up before the date of the scheduled competition for final team standings or each segment of a split season or seven days of the final date of the schedule or segment. The only exception is when a protest or appeal is pending finalization under Rule 120. Therefore, a league wanting to place time limits on direct competition makeup game(s), can adopt a rule indicating the game(s) "should" be made up within a specified time period.

117f/3 What happens if a postponement is not made up before the end of the season?
If games are not made up before the end of the season (end of the half, quarter, etc.) as required by Rule 117f, the games are subject to forfeiture, unless the board rules otherwise. The board considers the reason why the games were never made up, and determines whether forfeiture is in order or if the games should be declared null and void, and the final position standings for all teams computed on percentages.

Rule 118 – Roll-offs/Playoffs/Special Contests

118a. Definition

1. **Roll-off** - A roll-off is a separate competition conducted to break ties. A roll-off must be conducted:
   a. To determine the champion when a tie exists for first place at the end of the league schedule, unless the league allows for co-champions.
   b. To determine first place when a tie occurs in any segment of a split season.
   c. When the league decides to break a tie for any other position.
2. **Playoff** - A playoff is a scheduled competition conducted by leagues. The playoff may be conducted in one session to determine a champion when the league bowls a split season, or across multiple sessions such as a bracketed playoff system.

   Scores bowled which qualify for USBC awards will be recognized.

NOTE: Total pins for the season, segment or team average cannot break position standing ties at the conclusion of the season, or at the end of any segment of a split-season schedule.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 118a.

118a/1 If the league rules state no substitutes will be permitted the final two weeks of the schedule, can a substitute be used in the playoffs?
A playoff is not considered part of the last two weeks of the schedule. If substitutes are permitted during the regular season, they would be acceptable as eligible players unless a league rule specifically states that substitutes are not permitted in the playoff.

118a/2 When there is a tie for the league championship, can a league adopt a rule stating total pins for the season will break the tie?
No, according to the NOTE in Rule 118a, total pins for the season cannot be used to break a tie for any place in the position standings. A league may adopt a rule to allow for co-champions, thus eliminating the need for a roll-off, but not one that would use total pins. See Rule 118b for roll-off procedures.

118a/3 The two teams tied for the first half championship don't want to have a special roll-off. They would like to use the games from the next time they are paired against each other for the roll-off and the regular match. Can they do this?
No, there is no provision in USBC rules to allow scores to be used for more than one league session.

118a/4 Can total pins break a tie when three teams are tied?
No. The ties in standings cannot be broken by total pins. The only way the ties can be broken is to hold a roll-off, this is not commonly used to break standing ties other than first place. We recommend prize money for the tied places be added together and distributed equally to the teams tied. For example: If the prize money for three teams tied for 4th place and is $200 for 4th, $175 for 5th and $125 for 6th place. Add the prize money and divide by three. (200+175+125 = 500/3 = $166.66 per team)

118b. Procedures

Competition may not consist of less than one frame, scored like a 10th frame.

1. The following procedures apply, unless the league rules state otherwise:
   a. Competition(s) are conducted under the same rules governing league play during the regular season.
   b. Handicap is figured as of the date/time the games are bowled. All games bowled prior to the competition(s) are included in determining handicap.
   c. When more than two teams are involved in a playoff/roll-off, total pins from the competition shall decide the winner.
   d. If a tie exists at the end of a playoff/roll-off, each team bowls an additional frame until the tie is broken.
   e. Games do not count toward special league prizes.
2. Games are counted toward individual averages.
3. The league secretary arranges to have lanes available.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 118b.

118b/1 What average and handicap are used in a playoff or roll-off?
Unless otherwise provided by league rules, the players involved use their average and handicap as of the date the competition is bowled. For example, if a league bowls a split season and there is a tie for first place, and the roll-off for the first half is not bowled until after three weeks into the second half, the average and handicap for the roll-off includes all the games already bowled in the second half.

118b/2 What happens if there is a three-way tie for first place or a trophy position?
A roll-off must be bowled. Total pins from the roll-off will determine the winner unless otherwise provided in league rules. Four adjoining lanes would be used, starting lanes would be selected by draw, and teams would rotate after each game as follows:

Lane	A	B	C
First Game	Team 3	Team 1	Team 2
Second Game	Team 2	Team 3	Team 1
Third Game	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3

118b/3 If a tie still exists after a roll-off series is completed, how is the tie broken?
In the absence of a league rule each team will bowl an additional frame. This frame is to be bowled by each team on the lane where it bowled the final frame of the last game and is scored like the 10th frame. If the tie is still unbroken, the teams involved alternate lanes for additional 10th frames needed to break the tie. This frame stands alone to determine the winner and is not added to the previous roll-off game total. In a handicap league, one-tenth of the handicap is added to the 10th-frame score.

118b/4 When there is a tie for the winner of the first half in a split season when should the roll-off be conducted?
The roll-off should be bowled as soon as possible. It is not necessary or recommended that teams wait until the end of the season to break a tie for first place in the first half.

118b/5 If a league wants to adopt another league playoff format, what is acceptable?
The league could adopt one of the following formats to determine the winner of the playoff. According to Rule 118b, under no circumstances may the playoff consist of less than one frame.

a. Bowl one or more frames or games.
b. Best two out of three games.
c. Total pins of a three-game playoff series.
d. A point for each game, but none for the series.
e. Stepladder finals.

118c. Special Contests

A special contest is competition for prize money scheduled by the league where the scores do not count towards regular league standings; such as a tournament. The following apply to such competition:

1. Participation must be limited to league members or substitutes.
2. USBC league or tournament rules govern play.
3. Scores bowled which qualify for USBC awards will be recognized.
4. Games are counted toward individual averages.

Rule 119 – Forfeits

119a. League Fee Arrearages

A league can adopt a rule to declare games forfeited if participants in a team's lineup are not current in league fee payments. (See Rule 122b, Nonpayment of League Fees for dismissal procedures.)

A league that does not adopt a rule is responsible for any loss incurred by such arrearage.

NOTE: A team cannot be required to forfeit if fees are not paid for an absent member or a vacancy.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 119a.

119a/1 **Our league rule states members cannot be more than a week behind in paying their league fees. If any member comes the second week in a row and can't pay, can a league officer tell them they can't bowl?**
Yes. If more leagues had such a rule and enforced it, there would be fewer instances of nonpayment of league fees and fewer suspended members. Just be sure to explain this rule to every member. You may have a few disgruntled members early in the season, but the word will spread that the league is serious about everyone keeping their fees current. A league should not allow debts to accumulate for more than two weeks without taking action.

119a/2 **Can a league adopt a rule to curtail late or nonpayment of league fees?**
According to Rule 119a, a league could adopt a rule stating games will be forfeited if participants in a team's lineup are not current in their fees. With such a rule, if the members present do not submit their own fees, the games are subject to forfeiture.

However, games cannot be forfeited if fees are not paid when a member is absent or the team has a vacancy. If the absent member does not pay in full upon return, then all games the member bowls while in arrears would be subject to forfeiture.

The league officers should not hesitate to enforce the rule when there is a violation and should be consistent in the application of its rules.

119b. Refusal to Bowl
A team that refuses to bowl with less than a full lineup forfeits any games it declines to bowl.

119c. Procedure for Bowling
When a team is bowling in a known forfeit situation, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The forfeiting team is not to receive any point(s).
2. Unless the league rules have stated another number, to earn the point(s):
   a. An individual must bowl at least his/her average less ten (10) pins.
   b. Teams must bowl at least the team average less ten (10) pins per player.
3. Points not won by the individual and/or team for failing to bowl the target score should be recorded on the standing sheet as "unearned" points.
4. The following applies to players on the forfeiting team:
   a. Those who are present may bowl, but the scores shall not be included in the team's total pins.
   b. Scores bowled in accordance with this procedure shall be counted toward averages and qualify for league prizes, unless the league rules state otherwise.
   c. Scores shall qualify for USBC awards.

NOTE: When leagues include series totals in points won and a team forfeits one or more games in a series, that team shall receive a zero for the games it forfeits in deciding the winner of the series point. When a league determines position standings on a percentage basis, the percentage is calculated by dividing the number of points won by the total number of points available to the team. (The total number of points available includes points won, lost and unearned through forfeit situations.)

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 119c.

119c/1 **What is a known forfeit?**
The team bowls knowing the opposing team is not eligible to receive any points due to an apparent rule violation. For example, an opposing team lacks a legal lineup or the opposing team is over the average cap. To promote a competitive atmosphere, the non-forfeiting team must earn the points.

119c/2 **What is an unknown forfeit?**
The team bowls unaware that a forfeit will be declared. For example, it was found out immediately after bowling the opposing team used an ineligible player. The forfeiture would have to be acted upon within the specified timelines of Rule 120. The forfeiting team does not receive any points and the non-forfeiting team is automatically credited with all of the points.

119c/3 **If a team does not show up and a postponement was not requested, does the team present get all the points?**
In instances where the reason for absence is unknown, the team present must earn the points and should be advised that the absence may be due to an emergency. A league officer should call the captain to determine

whether something unforeseen occurred. If an emergency exists, advise the absent team they have the right to request an emergency postponement within the time constraints of Rule 120. See Rule 117c for information on emergency postponements.

119c/4 **When a team loses a game by forfeit, how do you determine who wins the point for total pins?**
When a team forfeits a game, the team score for that game is zero. Add zero to the scores bowled in the other games in the series and compare that total to the opposing team's series total.

119c/5 **A team meets the target score (team average less 10 pins per player) in a known forfeit situation. Do they split the point?**
No. When a team meets the target score, the point(s) is (are) earned. There are no ties in this situation.

119c/6 **If a team has to forfeit because an ineligible player is used, what happens to the scores bowled?**
An ineligible player's score becomes zero, and the game(s) is (are) not included in their average. The team's score for the forfeited game(s) is (are) also zero. However, the scores bowled by the eligible players are counted toward their averages and any individual prizes.

119c/7 **In our league, we figure team and individual averages after bowling three games. On the first night, if a team is bowling in a forfeit situation, how would you determine whether the team "earned" points for the three games since averages are not established until the series completion?**
The team would have to wait until the end of the series to figure individual and team averages. After the team average is computed, deduct 10 pins per player to determine the score the team had to bowl, or exceed, to be credited with "earned" points. If the team does not earn points, they are listed on the standing sheet as "unearned."

119c/8 **Can a league adopt a no-forfeit rule?**
No, USBC rules provide for a forfeit as a possible penalty when rules are violated.

119c/9 **If the opposing team does not show up to bowl, does USBC recognize High Scores bowled by the team present?**
Yes, because the games are bowled during the regularly scheduled time, USBC will recognize High Scores.

119c/10 **What is a target score?**
The target score is the score calculated to earn points when a league has an uneven number of teams or bowls in a known forfeit (Rule 119c) situation. The target score is calculated by taking the team average and subtracting ten (10) pins times the playing strength of the league. Example: If the playing strength of the league is four (4), forty (40) pins subtracted from the team average.

119c/11 **What is playing strength?**
Playing strength is the maximum number of players allowed in the lineup for competition. In league play, this includes actual players and vacancies.

119c/12 **What is team average?**
Team Average is the total of all players averages and vacancy scores (if any) in the lineup for a specific match.

119c/13 **Is the full vacancy score used for the team average?**
Yes, the full vacancy score, without any deduction is included in the team average.

119c/14 **If a bowler is absent is the bowler's full average or average less ten (10) pins used for the team average?**
The bowler's full average is used to calculate a team average. No penalty is taken for the team average calculation.

119c/15 **How is the target score calculated if a team has a vacancy or an absent bowler?**
The target score is always calculated using the team average less ten (10) pins per player, based on the playing strength of the league. When a team has a vacancy or an absent bowler, multiply the playing strength of the league times ten (10) and subtract the number from the team average.

119c/16 **Can a league adopt a rule using a percentage of a bowler's and/or team average to calculate the target score?**
No. The rule requires the same number of pins be deducted from each player to calculate the target score. Using a percentage of a player's average or vacancy score will calculate different amounts to be deducted from each average/score.

Rule 120 – Protest/Appeal Procedures

The league board of directors shall first decide on all protests as stated in Rule 103b. Protests are decided by the league official/supervisor in Youth leagues that do not have a board.

a. Protests:

1. Written protests are filed with a league officer and shall be filed within 15 days of the series being bowled except:
   a) A protest resulting from competition in the final two weeks of a league schedule shall be filed within 72 hours of the final date of the league schedule or the end of a segment if the league bowls a split season.
   b) A protest involving league roll-off or playoff games shall be filed within 72 hours.
2. Unless a protest is confirmed in writing, the series or decision stands.
3. The board's decision shall stand, unless a timely written appeal is filed with the local association or USBC Headquarters. The local association's decision can be appealed to USBC Headquarters.

NOTE: League protests received by local associations or USBC Headquarters that have not initially been decided by the league board of directors will be returned to the league for a decision.

b. Appeals shall be filed in writing with the local association or USBC Headquarters:

1. 15 days of notification during the regular schedule.
2. 72 hours when notification occurs:
   a) In the final two weeks of the league schedule.
   b) At the end of a segment if the league bowls a split season.
   c) After the league schedule has ended.
   d) As a result of roll-off or playoff competition.

Prizes for positions involved cannot be distributed until the protest or appeal is resolved.

NOTE: A copy of the appeal should be filed with a league officer.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 120.

120/1 Does the board have to make a decision on a verbal protest?
No. However, the president may call a meeting to address a verbal protest. USBC Rule 120 requires the board to act on all written protests filed within specific timelines. (Guidelines on how to file a proper protest can be found on BOWL.com.)

120/2 When a team uses an ineligible player, can a league officer declare games forfeited?
Yes, league officers have authority to take action regarding games bowled by an ineligible player if detected within the time frames stated in Rule 120. If action is not taken within the time period, the games stand. League officials have the power to enforce league rules and to declare game(s) forfeited. If an officer fails to act, or a league member decides to challenge the officer's decision, a written protest would have to be filed in accordance with Rule 120.

Rule 121 - Withdrawals/Resignations

121a. Procedure for Withdrawing
Members of a league may withdraw from a league during a season.

1. If a team or individual must withdraw, the following procedure is to be followed:
   a. Two weeks notice must be given along with sufficient cause for resigning.
      1) A team shall give notice to the league secretary.
      2) A member resigning from a team shall give notice to the captain and the league secretary.
   b. The resigning member(s) must pay league fees for two weeks if the bowler is not replaced within that period.
2. If proper notice and sufficient cause is not given, all franchise, prize and any other money for which the team or individual may have been eligible will be forfeited, unless the league board determines otherwise. In addition, the member(s) shall be subject to suspension of USBC membership.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 121a.

121a/1 Can the league adopt a rule requiring a league member's resignation to be in writing?
No, Rule 121a does not require written resignation, so a league requirement would not be enforced by USBC. If the captain was aware a bowler did not plan to return and the secretary was notified, then the

notification requirement would be fulfilled, even though the league rule has not been complied with. When a resignation is challenged, the question to be answered is whether those involved were aware the individual had actually resigned.

121a/2 **If management has banned a league member from the center, do they qualify for prize money through the league?**
When a league member has been banned from the center, it is considered a forced action. The member removed qualifies for a portion of the team prize money prorated on the number of weeks the individual contributed to the prize fund.

121a/3 **When a league member has been banned from the center, is the member required to provide a two-week notice?**
No. A member banned from the center is considered a forced action. Therefore, the individual is not required to provide a two-week notice.

121a/4 **If a team member resigns or is replaced during the season, are they entitled to share the team prize money?**
Regardless of how long bowlers compete with a team, they qualify for a prorated share of the team's prize money provided they resigned in accordance with Rule 121a or were replaced by the team captain. (See Rule 104h.)

Rule 104h, Item 1(j), requires the team captain to pay each member of the team within 15 days after receiving prize money in accordance with any verbal or written agreements. USBC holds that prize distribution among team members is a team matter. When a member has bowled part of the season and is unable to be a member at the end of the schedule, it is common practice for teams to prorate prize money between the member who resigned and the replacement based on the number of games each bowled and paid for during the season.

121a/5 **A bowler, current in league fees, gave a two-week notice to withdraw from the league. The bowler pre-paid for the last two weeks of the season. Is the bowler obligated to pay the two-week notice fees?**
The pre-paid fees are credited to the two week notice fees required. If the bowler is replaced in the two-week time period, the pre-paid fees are refunded to the bowler.

121b. Procedure for Returning after Withdrawing
A bowler who has resigned may bowl in the same league later that season provided:

1. Proper notice and sufficient cause was given, and the individual bowls on the same team from which the bowler resigned. No vote of the team captains is required; or
2. Two-thirds written consent of the team captains is obtained when the bowler did not give proper notice and sufficient cause, or wants to bowl on a team other than the one the bowler resigned from.

The average of any bowler permitted to return to the league shall be continued.

Rule 122 - Disciplinary Procedures

122a. Dismissal of a League Officer or Player
A league member can file a written charge asking for removal of a league officer or dismissal of a player.

1. A player may be dismissed from the league or an officer removed from league office only for any of the following reasons:
   a. Conduct derogatory to the best interest of the league.
   b. Any deliberate action which can be proven to be detrimental to the best interest of the team.
   c. Violation of any USBC or league rule.

A player who continues to pay the league fees cannot be dismissed or replaced because of absence from league play unless one of the foregoing reasons is applicable.

2. If written charges are filed, the following procedures must be followed:
   a. Within one week after receipt of the written complaint, the league president should schedule a meeting of the league board of directors, and members of the board shall be notified. The meeting should be held at the earliest possible date.
   b. Written notice and a copy of the complaint shall be provided to the individual(s) charged. Such notice:
      1) Should be sent by first class mail, hand delivered, or emailed.
      2) Shall notify the individual of the date, time and place of the meeting, as well as his/her right to attend and offer a defense.

c. A roster shall be prepared listing those present and absent. A quorum of the board of directors must be present at the meeting. Minutes of the meeting and all documents and material relating to the charges must be maintained.
d. A two-thirds vote of board members present and voting shall be required for dismissal and/or removal from office.
e. The individual(s) involved shall be notified in writing of the board's decision and of the right to appeal that decision to the respective USBC local association, or to USBC Headquarters.

An appeal under this rule must be filed in accordance with Rule 120.

3. A player dismissed from the league:
   a. Forfeits all franchise, prize and any other money for which they may have been eligible, unless the league board determines otherwise.
   b. May rejoin the league with the written consent of two-thirds of the full membership of the board. If permitted to rejoin, the average shall be continued.

NOTE: Leagues have the authority to act on verbal complaints.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 122a.

122a/1 **A player or team in the league continually uses foul language during league play. What can be done?**
The league officers should privately discuss the problem with the player(s) in question and the team captain informing them that foul language is not acceptable in the league. If the player(s) continue(s), a written complaint may be filed with a league officer asking for dismissal from the league. The procedures outlined in Rule 122a must be followed.

122a/2 **When a league receives a written complaint asking for removal of an officer or dismissal of another player or a team, what must be done?**
The procedure outlined in Rule 122a must be followed. The president should schedule a meeting of the board of directors within one week of receiving a written complaint. A written notice stating the date, time and place of the meeting and a copy of the complaint must be provided to each individual charged. The board allows each person involved to be heard and ask questions before making a decision. To dismiss a player or remove an officer, a two-thirds vote of the board members present is required. In the case of an entire team, the board must vote on each team member separately. After the meeting, a written notice of the board's decision and the right to appeal must be given to the individuals involved.

122a/3 **Can the league simplify things and adopt a rule to require automatic dismissal when a bowler misses two weeks in a row without an explanation?**
No. A member cannot be dismissed without following Rule 122a or Rule 122b. The rule could state that a bowler who owes league fees will be subject to dismissal, but not automatically. Written charges should be filed with the board, and the member must be notified of the meeting and be given the opportunity to defend themselves.

122b. Nonpayment of Fees and/or Improper Withdrawal

In Youth leagues that do not have a board of directors, the league supervisor/official is responsible for the duties of the board.

When a league member is accused of failing to pay league fees and/or withdrawing without sufficient cause, the league must try to resolve the matter. If the matter is not resolved, the following procedure shall apply:

1. A complaint shall be submitted, in writing, to a league officer or supervisor/official. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the league proceeds as follows:
   a. Within one week after receipt, the president/supervisor should schedule a meeting of the league board of directors, and the board shall be notified. The meeting should be held at the earliest possible date.
   b. Provides written notice and a copy of the complaint to the individual(s) charged. Such notice:
      1) Should be sent by first class mail, hand delivered, or emailed.
      2) Shall notify the individual of the date, time and place of the meeting, as well as his/her right to attend and offer a defense. If the accused is a youth member, the parent or guardian also must be invited to the meeting. (A sample letter can be found on BOWL.com.)
   c. Prepares a roster listing those present and absent. A quorum of the board of directors must be present at the meeting.
   d. Maintains minutes of the meeting and all documents relating to the charges. The minutes shall include:
      1) An accounting of arrearages, including dates and amounts. The bowler may not be charged for more than six (6) sessions.
      2) Whether the accused was present or absent when the arrearage occurred.
      3) The date of replacement (if applicable).

e. Votes to determine if the accused is guilty. A two-thirds vote of the board members present and voting shall be required. After voting:

1) If found not guilty (two-thirds vote not achieved), the charges are dismissed.
2) If found guilty, the local association or USBC Headquarters is to be furnished with a copy of Items a-g indicated below and should be submitted within 30 days after the league meeting. (A checklist can be found on BOWL.com.)

a) The meeting notices.
b) The meeting minutes.
c) List of board members, officers and team captains present or absent.
d) The vote count for the recommendation of the league board.
e) Amount charged to defendant(s) and all supporting documents and material. (See Rule 122b, Item 1-d.)
f) Exact date(s) each defendant is being charged for. The bowler may not be charged for more than six (6) sessions.
g) The league rules.

2. Upon receipt of the file, the local association manager shall verify that complete information was provided and submit a copy of the file to USBC Headquarters.
3. A youth has the right to appeal any removal from league competition.

a. The appeal must be filed in writing with the local association or USBC Headquarters within:

1) 48 hours of a limited removal.
2) 15 days from the date of permanent removal.

b. A removal from one to three league session(s) is held in abeyance until a decision is made by USBC.
c. The local association should forward appeals they receive to USBC Headquarters within seven days of receipt.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 122b.

122b/1 **A 14- year old boy quit my son's team owing fees for several weeks. Now he has joined a league in another center. Can anything be done to prevent such incidents?**
He can be charged with nonpayment of league fees, which violates Rule 17b-3. If the league cannot collect the money, the procedures as outlined in Rule 122b must be followed.

122b/2 **How should the league handle a member whose checks are constantly being returned because of insufficient funds?**
When a member's check is returned because of insufficient funds, the treasurer should contact the member and insist on cash payment for the amount of the check plus any service charges incurred. If payment is not received, the member could be charged with nonpayment of league fees under Rule 122b. We also suggest that no further checks be accepted and the player notified that league fees can only be paid in cash. If checks are a problem, the league may adopt a rule stating checks will not be accepted for payment of league fees. In instances where a league has an arrearage rule, the member issuing the check is considered in arrears. Games bowled by the member are subject to forfeiture if payment is not received.

122b/3 **If a member leaves the league without notice and still owes fees, what should an officer do?**
When a member is accused of leaving the league without notice and owing fees, the league should try to collect the owed fees prior to taking disciplinary action. Many bowlers are not aware they may be suspended from USBC membership for nonpayment of league fees. If payment is not received, a written complaint should be filed immediately with the board and copied to the delinquent member. The provisions of Rule 122b must be followed.

122b/4 **If a member leaves the league and is delinquent in their league fees, how many sessions can they be charged for in accordance with Rule 122b?**
According to Rule 122b, Item 1(d)(1), the bowler may not be charged for more than six (6) sessions. Immediate action should be taken by the league upon discovering an individual is not returning and still owes league fees.

122c. Limited Removals (Youth Leagues)
The following applies to youth leagues only:

1. The removal processes only applies to leagues under the supervision of the league supervisor or official and does not restrict the member from participation in other USBC leagues or tournaments.
2. The league supervisor or league official may impose the following penalties for rule violations and/or improper conduct:

a. Limited removal of not more than three league sessions.
b. Permanent removal.

Chapter 5: Lane Condition Designation

Introduction

Leagues and tournaments will be required to certify using one lane condition designation based on the definition of each condition as stated in Rule 200a.

More information on lane conditions can be found on BOWL.com

Rule 200 – Certification Designation

200a. Types
Each competition must choose one of the following designations when certifying the competition:

1. **Sport**
   a. Lane condition ratio is generally 4:1 or less; or
   b. Averages established in a league are generally 20 pins or lower than those bowled on a standard/house condition.
   c. All such leagues will be marked on BOWL.com with the following icon:

2. **Challenge**
   a. Lane condition ratio is generally between Sport and standard/house; or
   b. Competition chooses to utilize a condition other than the center's standard/house condition; or
   c. Competition utilizes both a Sport and the center's standard/house condition during the season; or
   d. Competition uses a variety of patterns through the season which vary in difficulty from Challenge to standard/house; or
   e. Averages established in league are generally 10 pins or lower than those bowled on a standard/house condition.
   f. All such leagues will be marked on BOWL.com with the following icon:

3. **Standard/House** – Condition applied by center which promotes high scores and averages.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 200a.

200a/1 **Our league will be using the center's house condition during the first half of the season and a Sport condition for the second half. Do I certify the league with both standard/house and Sport?**
A league may only be certified as one lane condition. A full season league using both standard/house and/or Sport or Challenge conditions must choose Challenge on the league certification application. Bowlers in this league will have a Challenge average, which must be converted using the Conversion Chart on BOWL.com when entering events requiring a standard average.

However, a league using standard/house condition for one half of the league and a Sport or Challenge condition for the other half may certify as two separate leagues. Should a league choose this option two separate league applications must be filed and the corresponding lane condition for each half checked. The bowlers will have both a standard and a Sport or Challenge average when this option is chosen.

200b. Change of Designation

1. The USBC reserves the right to change a designation when data received reflects the competition was designated incorrectly.
2. The league president and secretary will be informed of the change in designation in writing. A league officer may appeal the change in designation within 15 days of the date of notice by submitting a written appeal to USBC Headquarters, attention: Rules.

Rule 201 – Entering Averages

201a. Average Conversion
A competition may convert averages when a bowler does not have an established average on the lane condition required by competition rule. When converting averages, the competition cannot adjust it lower than the corresponding conversion chart.

Nothing in Rule 201 supersedes the competitions authority to raise the bowler's converted average prior to bowling.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 201a.

201a/1 **Can the conversion charts be used to convert averages from standard to Sport or standard to Challenge or are they only accurate when converting averages to standard?**
Yes, the charts can be used to convert averages up to standard or down to Sport or Challenge. USBC has done immense research to determine if the conversion charts are accurate converting both ways and the data shows the charts can be used to convert up or down.

201b. Standard/House averages
A bowler with an average established on a standard/house condition bowling in a competition which requires:

1. A standard/house average, no conversion by the bowler is required.
2. A Sport average, the competition may convert the bowler's average downward prior to participation utilizing the conversion chart.

201c. Sport and Challenge averages

1. In competition requiring a standard/house average:
   a. A bowler with only averages established on a Sport and/or Challenge condition must convert their Sport and/or Challenge average to a standard average using the appropriate conversion chart and enter with the highest converted average.
   b. A bowler with averages established on a standard/house condition and on Sport and/or Challenge conditions, no conversion of averages is required and the bowler would enter with the highest average.
2. In competitions requiring Sport averages, a bowler must enter with their highest Sport or Challenge average.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 201c.

201c/1 **If a bowler only bowls in a league which utilizes a Sport or Challenge compliant condition, how does he/she convert the average for standard league or tournament competition?**
In an effort to equalize competition, average conversion charts have been formulated for bowlers who ONLY have an average established on Sport or Challenge compliant condition. These charts can be found on BOWL.com. To convert the average, the bowler locates the average bowled in the Sport or Challenge league on the corresponding chart to determine the equivalent standard average. This is the average that is to be submitted for standard competitions.

201c/2 **If a bowler has two averages, one bowled in a league utilizing Sport compliant conditions and one utilizing Challenge compliant conditions and wants to bowl in a competition that requires a standard average, what average does the bowler use?**
The bowler is required to convert his/her average bowled on Sport conditions to a standard condition utilizing the Sport to standard conversion chart. The bowler must also convert the average bowled on a Challenge condition utilizing the Challenge to standard conversion chart. Once both averages have been converted, the bowler would choose the higher of the two converted averages and enter the competition with that average.

201c/3 **If I have both a Sport or Challenge average and a standard average, do I need to convert the average to standard to determine which average I should use?**
No, to determine what average is used, you take the highest of the two averages without converting the Sport or Challenge average. When a bowler has a standard average, there is no need to convert a Sport or Challenge average.

Chapter 6: Tournament Rules

Rule 300 – Tournaments

300a. Definition
A tournament is a competition, other than a league, in which the game of American Tenpins is played. Competition can include one or more events.

Total pins will decide the champions and other prize winners in each of the events unless another system, based on merit pinfall, is stated in the tournament rules.

300b. Qualifications
USBC will issue a tournament certificate provided:

1. Application is made prior to the start of the tournament using the Tournament Certification Program on BOWL.com. USBC will determine the amount of coverage, if any, for tournament applications received after the tournament begins.
2. The tournament consists of two or more teams or a singles tournament of two or more individual entrants.
3. The lanes used are USBC certified for the current season.
4. Competition among entrants in an event, except all-events, is held in the same establishment, except as provided in Rule 302, Mail-o-Graphic Tournament. When an event is divided into two or more divisions, competition in each division is held in the same establishment, except as provided in Rule 302, Mail-o-Graphic Tournament.

A tournament certificate may be refused if the tournament does not comply with the USBC rules, and/or the number or value of the prizes offered or guaranteed are misrepresented.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 300b.

300b/1 **My tournament starts tomorrow. Can I still certify my tournament with USBC?**
Yes. You may apply for certification until the starting date of the tournament on BOWL.com.

300b/2 **Is there a cost to certify a tournament with USBC?**
No, there is no fee charged to certify your tournament with USBC.

300b/3 **I want to hold a tournament each month; do I have to certify each tournament separately?**
You may certify each tournament separately or you can apply for a comprehensive tournament certification to cover all tournaments. To apply for a comprehensive certification, all dates and centers are entered.

300c. Eligibility
All entrants in a tournament must qualify under the rules of the tournament.

1. **Adult tournaments.** With the exception of the following, all adult participants must hold USBC membership or purchase associate membership prior to participation. An adult may apply for associate membership by paying National dues ($15) plus state and local dues.
   a. A moral support tournament (See Rule 301a).
   b. Tournaments that allow a participation fee of $5. Payment of the fee prior to participation entitles the entrant to participate in that specific tournament only and subjects the bowler to the USBC rules and jurisdiction for that tournament. Participants who pay the participation fee are not eligible for USBC awards.
2. **Youth tournaments.** Prior to bowling, all youth must have a current USBC Youth Membership.
   a. A youth may apply for Standard membership by paying National dues ($4).
   b. Scholastic or Collegiate competitions may allow non-USBC members to participate.

Only entrants who are USBC members before participation in the tournament are eligible for USBC awards.

Rule 301 – Types of Tournaments

301a. Moral Support
A moral support tournament is one in which the tournament is conducted by a single civic, fraternal, benevolent, military service, union or religious organization. At the discretion of USBC, a tournament may be granted moral support status when:

1. It meets all of the requirements of Rule 300b.
2. Participation is restricted to those affiliated with the organization conducting the tournament.
3. Anyone under suspension from, or who has been refused membership in USBC or CTF, will not be allowed to participate.

4. International competition is provided for the bowlers not served by USBC, as long as the equipment conforms to USBC equipment specifications.
5. **Youth:** Prior to bowling, all youth must have a current USBC Youth Membership.

USBC members may participate in a moral support tournament with award recognition automatically extended. Eligible nonmembers may qualify for USBC award recognition by paying USBC membership dues before participation.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 301a.

301a/1 **I am conducting a house tournament for bowlers who only participate in leagues at our center. Would this qualify for a moral support certification?**
No, a moral support tournament is one in which the tournament is conducted by a single civic, fraternal, benevolent, military service, union or religious organization. This would include groups such as firefighters, Elks, Eagles, Lions, Moose and military. Guests cannot participate; all participants must be affiliated with the organization.

301b. Youth

A youth tournament is one in which youth members or Special Olympics members participate where no cash or bonds are offered nor merchandise prizes exceeding $500 in value.

Youth participants shall not wear apparel or use bowling equipment depicting alcohol, tobacco, gambling, an illegal substance or inappropriate language/gestures during competition.

This rule also applies to youth bowling in adult/youth tournaments.

Penalty: First offense will result in a verbal warning and apparel change or removal of equipment. Failure to comply will cause the bowler's score to be disqualified and the bowler to be removed from the competition.

NOTE: Tournament managers in youth and adult/youth tournaments must be Registered Volunteers. (For information on USBC's Registered Volunteer Program, go to BOWL.com/RVP.)

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 301b.

301b/1 **I plan on conducting a youth tournament and want to award scholarship prizes. Is this okay?**
Yes, all youth tournaments that pay out scholarship prizes must use the SMART (Scholarship Management and Accounting Reports for Tenpins) program for all scholarship awards. All scholarship funds must be forwarded to SMART at USBC Headquarters within 30 days of the completion of the tournament with a list of scholarship winners.

301c. Adult/Youth

An adult/youth tournament is one in which youth members bowl with adults and awards to both adult and youth bowlers conform with USBC Youth Eligibility Rule 400. An adult/youth tournament may:

1. Adopt a rule to allow an adult's score to be matched to several youths' scores for the purpose of determining doubles totals. When allowed, all entries must be submitted with the corresponding fees, prior to the adult's participation. Handicap will be added if applicable.
2. Certify only the youth portion of the tournament and not require the adults to be members of USBC or pay the participation fee.
3. **Youth:** Prior to bowling all youth must have a current USBC Youth Membership.

NOTE: Tournament managers in youth and adult/youth tournaments must be Registered Volunteers. (For information on USBC's Registered Volunteer Program, go to BOWL.com/RVP.)

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 301c.

301c/1 **I plan on conducting an adult/youth doubles tournament and want to award scholarship prizes for the youth participants. Is this okay?**
Yes. All the scholarship prizes awarded to the youth participants must be forwarded to the SMART (Scholarship Management and Accounting Reports for Tenpins) program within 30 days of the completion of the tournament with a list of scholarship winners. The adult prizes, if any, must be merchandise valued at $500 or less.

301d. Scholarship
All scholarship tournaments must deposit scholarship prize awards with the SMART program within 30 days after the end of the tournament.

301e. Pro-Am
Pro-am style tournaments conducted for a charitable organization, or in conjunction with a USBC tournament, may be granted a certificate under the following conditions:

1. Participants who are identified as professionals by tournament management may not share in the amateur prize distribution.
2. The score of the professional or organization member counts with the score of each designated amateur.
3. All other USBC rules apply to the competition, including tournament reporting requirements.

A pro-am style format in which pin count is conceded either to the amateur or professional can be certified by USBC as a modified format.

Rule 302 – Mail-o-Graphic Tournament

A mail-o-graphic tournament is one in which scores are submitted from separate or the same competition, bowling establishment or association and are compared to qualify for prizes in one common prize list. The following provisions apply to all USBC mail-o-graphic tournaments:

a. All scores are submitted to the tournament manager who enters the scores and determines team and/or individual standings.
b. All scores used are from certified competition.
c. USBC will certify such tournaments provided:
    1. All USBC equipment specifications apply.
    2. All rules for USBC tournaments shall apply insofar as applicable.
    3. Application must designate tournament as a mail-o-graphic tournament.
d. As the scores used in mail-o-graphic competition are already recognized in the certified competition in which they are actually bowled, they are not eligible for USBC national awards.

Rule 303 - Management

Rule 303a – Tournament Manager
A tournament manager is the person listed on the tournament certification with USBC. The manager must be a member of USBC.

Youth and Adult/Youth Tournaments. Tournament managers in youth and adult/youth tournaments, 18 years of age and older, must be a Registered Volunteer. (For information on USBC's Registered Volunteer Program, go to BOWL.com/RVP.)

NOTE: An 18-year-old eligible for youth membership bowling in adult competition (not an adult/youth event), regardless of prizes, must have a Consent Form on file for that event. The form is only good through the end of that specific event, and a new form must be presented for each event fitting the above criteria. (See USBC Rule 13.)

Rule 303b - Management
Tournament management has supervisory control of all technical parts of the operation of the tournament including the following:

1. Drafting the schedule and prize list
2. Adopting and enforcing the tournament rules, provided they are not in conflict with any USBC rules.
3. Deciding all disputes, complaints or protest involving any USBC or tournament rules, or appeals from the decision of tournament personnel.
4. Deciding any matter about the operation of the tournament, when not inconsistent with the tournament rules or USBC rules.
5. Accepting or rejecting any entrant.

The decision of tournament management shall be final except where an appeal is made to USBC Headquarters. (See Rule 329 for appeal procedures.)

NOTE: Disqualification procedures and sample letters can be found on BOWL.com.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 303b.

303b/1 **After receiving my tournament certification, I found the need to make a change to my printed rules. What should I do?**
If it becomes necessary to make changes to the rules, you may edit your tournament rules any time prior to the start of competition. The change(s) should be posted in a prominent manner in the registration/check-in area and also included in announcements made prior to each scheduled squad.

303b/2 **After reviewing my tournament certification, a conflict arose regarding the scheduled dates for the tournament. What should I do if either the tournament dates and/or the center at which the tournament is scheduled must be changed?**
As long as the tournament has not yet started, the changes can be made online or you may contact the Rules Team at USBC Headquarters.

303b/3 **I need to disqualify a bowler for a rule infraction from the tournament. What do I do?**
When a violation occurs that requires disqualification of an individual or team, the following procedure should be followed:

a. The individual(s) or team captain should be notified in writing of the disqualification.
b. The letter should state the reason(s) for disqualification.
c. The letter should inform the individual(s) that they have the right to appeal in writing to USBC. (See sample letters for Rule 319a-2, Rule 319a-3, Rule 319d and/or Rule 319e on BOWL.com.)

Payment of prizes affected must be withheld until USBC has:

a. Notified the tournament that a timely appeal has not been filed; or
b. Resolved a timely appeal that was filed.

Rule 304 – Authority of Team Captain

The acceptance of an entry by tournament management constitutes an agreement by the captain on behalf of the team to abide by all rules of USBC and the tournament. The captain:

a. Is the team representative and is responsible for:
    1. The lineup and conduct of the team in tournament play.
    2. Paying each member of the team within 30 days after receiving prize money in accordance with verbal or written agreements.
    3. Determining who bowls on the team in the team event. If the captain replaces a player originally entered in the team event, ample notice must be given to the player being replaced. If that player paid the entry fee, it must be returned minus any fees owed.
b. Or an authorized representative may replace any team member who is unable to attend or compete at the scheduled time.
c. Can, prior to bowling, request a replacement in the doubles and/or singles event, if the bowler originally entered agrees to being replaced.
d. Cannot be removed except for a rules violation or for failure to appear to bowl when scheduled.
e. **Youth tournaments:** The adult leader who submitted the application is responsible for the above duties unless they have given this responsibility to the team captain.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 304.

304/1 **When a team member has been replaced and the team qualifies for a tournament prize, who is entitled to the prize?**
The prize money goes to the individual that bowled unless other prior arrangements were made.

Rule 305 – Fees

The management of a USBC tournament must publicize fees separately per event on the entry form and advertising material as follows:

a. Prize/Awards Fee.
b. Expense Fee.
c. Total, per entrant, per event.

Prize and expense fees for all-events and special features may be charged, but must be listed separately. These and other collections to qualify for participation, such as donations, subscriptions or banquet fees must be stated on the entry form and advertising material.

Youth tournaments: Where an "Awards Fee" is charged, all such fees collected must be returned 100 percent to the participants in the form of awards that comply with youth eligibility requirements.

USBC may authorize the use of a scholarship points system to comply with state high school athletic requirements. In tournaments that issue points in connection with Rule 309b, the points awarded value or a combination of the points and scholarships awarded must equal 100 percent of the awards fee.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 305.

305/1 I have a problem with the bowlers getting their entries in on time. Can I charge a late fee?
Yes, a late fee can be charged. However, the amount of the fee and deadline must be stated in the rules.

Rule 306 – All-Events

Participants in a tournament may be charged an optional fee for an all-events contest when two or more events are scheduled or when two or more tournaments are conducted under the same management. When an all-events fee is charged, the following apply:

a. Expense fees may be charged for participation in an optional all-events contest when in accordance with the requirements in Rule 305.
b. The all-events fee must be paid before the advertised closing date for entries or before the participant bowls any of the events, whichever comes first.
c. An all-events entry can be transferred if the transfer is made before either of the bowlers involved have participated in any event of the tournament.
d. Distribution of prizes shall comply with the formula prescribed for payment of regular position prizes and the ratio of return shall be at least one to 20 or major fraction thereof, unless the tournament rules state another prize ratio. Where a trophy or award, other than cash awards, is offered for the all-events championship, the bowler who places first in all-events is entitled to the award even if the bowler did not pay the optional fee. In such instances, the trophy or award cannot be considered as part of the all-events prize fund, and must be purchased from other funds.

Rule 307 – Special Features

Prize fees may be charged for one or more optional special feature events, subject to the following:

a. These events are open to all eligible entrants who qualify in accordance with tournament rules.
b. Expense fees may be charged for participation in an optional special feature contest when published in accordance with the requirements of Rule 305.
c. Distribution of special feature prizes shall comply with the formula prescribed for payment of regular position prizes, unless otherwise stated in tournament rules.

Rule 308 – Distribution of Prize Funds

The sponsor and management of a USBC tournament undertake a fiduciary obligation that all funds provided by that part of the entry fee designated as prize fee, but not including interest thereon, shall be held in trust for the exclusive benefit of tournament participants. Such funds cannot be used for any other purpose.

All prize money collected in an event or division of an event must be returned to the participants in that event or division of that event, except where replacements or correction of averages require a change of classification. In that case, prizes will be distributed to reflect the actual number of participants in the event or division of the event.

USBC may, at its discretion, require a bond, or in lieu thereof, a satisfactory assurance that the prize fund obligations will be met.

The following prize fund requirements apply, unless otherwise provided by tournament rule:

a. The last-place prize, including those paid for each last place tie, must be equal to at least the amount of the prize fee in the event.
b. In team, doubles and singles events there shall be at least one prize for each 10 entries or major fraction thereof.
c. When there are 100 or more entries in an event or division of an event, first place or the amount spent from the prize fund for a first-place prize, shall not exceed 40 percent of the total prize fund. Second place must be equal to at least one-half of first place or the amount spent from the prize fund for first place.
d. When special prizes are offered, no more than 25% of the entire prize fund can be used toward special prizes.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 308.

308/1 I am starting a new tournament and would like to guarantee payment of the first-place prize money. The only problem is that I am not confident that there will be enough entries to cover what I plan to pay out. What recommendations can USBC provide to me?
Any advertised guaranteed prize(s) must be paid regardless of the number of entries received. Therefore, USBC recommends that prizes be estimated based on a specific number of entries instead of offering guaranteed prizes. Then, if the anticipated number of entries is not received, you can pay your prizes on a direct percentage to the number of entries received.

Rule 309 – Reports/Prizes/Scholarships

309a. Cash, Bonds or Merchandise Prizes
The following requirements must be met by tournament management within 30 days after the end of the tournament:

1. Distribute all prizes except when USBC Headquarters has authorized delay in payment.
2. Submit the following to USBC Headquarters:
   a. A prize list with the name and score of each prize winner and the prize issued.
   b. A financial statement listing all prize receipts and prize disbursements.
   c. Adult Associate membership and participation fees and USBC Youth membership fees received and a list of those paying such fees.

Tournament Management must make available a copy of the final prize list and financial statement to any participant who request it within one year of the end of the tournament.

309b. Scholarship Tournaments
Scholarship tournaments may issue prizes in either scholarship dollars, scholarship points or a combination. The following must be submitted by tournament management to USBC within 30 days after the end of the tournament:

1. All scholarship money deposited with the SMART program.
2. A prize list with the name and score of each prize winner and the scholarship amount or points issued.
3. A financial statement listing all prize receipts and disbursements.
4. Adult Associate membership and participation fees and USBC Youth membership fees received and a list of those paying such fees.

309c. Claiming Earned Scholarships
Upon graduation from high school, scholarships can be claimed according to USBC's SMART Policy by submission of documentation as required by SMART.

Rule 310 – Entries Close

310a. In Advance
If the date for closing entries is before the opening day of the tournament, the following shall apply:

1. Advance notification of time and date of participation must be given to team captains and individual entrants.
2. All entries postmarked the first post office business day after the entry closing date shall be accepted. Additional entries for any event shall not be accepted after that date.
3. If a schedule is not published, a complete list of entrants must be available for review upon request.
4. Tournament management cannot show in the schedule "partner," "reserved" or similar term instead of a team or individual entry.

(See CAQs in Rule 312 for additional information.)

310b. Prior to Last Squad
When the date for closing of entries is set prior to the time the last squad is scheduled, the tournament management shall:

1. Include in the rules the following:
   a. Exact time the last squad is scheduled to start.
   b. Exact time for closing of entries.
2. Have the following information available upon request:
   a. Number of entries to date.
   b. The high score in each event or division of each event.

Tournament management shall not accept additional entries after the closing of entries.

(See CAQs in Rule 312 for additional information.)

Rule 311 – Submitting Entries

Submission of a written entry by a team captain notifies tournament management of the intent to enter the bowlers into one or more events. The entry form must contain the names of the players entered. The required fees must be received by tournament management by the closing date or the time entrants are scheduled to bowl, whichever occurs first.

Rule 312 – Conditions Cannot Change

The conditions under which entries are accepted cannot be changed or modified after the tournament starts, unless otherwise directed by USBC Headquarters. This includes entry fee charges and the rules governing the competition.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 312.

312/1 Can a tournament change rules once published?
Rule changes may be made any time prior to the start of competition. Tournament management should post change(s) in a prominent manner in the registration/check-in area and also included in announcements made prior to each scheduled squad.

312/2 Can a tournament add additional squads?
Yes, additional squads can be added if the rules or advertising material include a statement such as "Additional squads may be added during the tournament prior to the last scheduled squad." However, no additional squads may be added after the last advertised squad.

312/3 Squads were cancelled because of a bad snow storm. Can tournament management reschedule the squads?
If the complete operation of the tournament is shut down for an entire day or weekend, tournament management may request an extension by contacting the USBC Rules team. Only those individuals originally entered to bowl on the cancelled squad(s) are permitted to bowl on the rescheduled date.

312/4 Can tournament dates and/or the center at which the tournament is scheduled be changed?
As long as the tournament has not yet started, the changes can be made online or by contacting the USBC Rules Team at USBC Headquarters.

Rule 313 – Free or Reduced Entries

Free Entry. When a free entry is given, an amount equal to the prize fee for such entry must be paid into the tournament prize fund by management.

Reduced Entry. When a reduced entry is given, an amount equal to the prize fee for such entry must be paid into the tournament prize fund by management, unless tournament rules state a different prize fee amount for the reduced entry.

Rule 314 – No Fees Returned

After an entry has been received, and the dates assigned by tournament management are not refused before preparation of the schedule, the entry fee cannot be refunded.

Rule 315 – Multiple Participation

Unless the tournament rules state otherwise:

a. Participation in each event shall be limited to one time.
b. In order to place more than once in the prize list for positions standings:
    1. Five- and four-player team event. At least two players in the lineup must be different.
    2. Three-player team and doubles event. At least one player in the lineup must be different.
c. In a singles event, the same individual may not place more than once.
d. The bowler's first appearance in each event counts toward the all-events total.

Rule 316 – Singles Event Squad

In singles tournaments, a minimum of two entries constitutes a squad and these entries must bowl on the same pair of lanes. If a bowler competes alone as a squad, the score shall be disqualified.

Rule 317 – Handicap - Youth Competition

When tournament winners are determined by using a handicap system, the following requirements must be met:

a. Handicap must be based on a known average prior to the start of competition.
b. Handicap may not be limited and the full handicap allowance must be given.
c. When handicap is assigned on a game basis, fractions must be dropped prior to determining the handicap.
d. When handicap is assigned on a series basis, the handicap shall be calculated on the difference of the player's series average and the scratch series handicap basis. Rounding up is prohibited.

Rule 318 – Averages - Youth Competition

The following applies to all youth competitors unless tournament rules state otherwise, except that only USBC league averages shall be accepted:

a. Individual averages must be based on a minimum of 12 games in a USBC league. Averages established in USBC leagues which start its schedules after March 15 for the summer season shall be accepted as official.
b. If an error occurs in the classification of an individual or team, which is detected prior to the awards distribution, correction to proper placement must be made and the score recalculated, with no penalty, unless the tournament rules indicate disqualification.
c. Rule 319a, Rule 319d and Rule 319e do not apply.

Rule 319 – Averages

319a. Conditions that Apply

The following conditions apply to averages in handicap or classified tournaments, unless the tournament rules state otherwise, except that only USBC league averages shall be accepted. (See Rule 319c for average adjustment.)

1. The bowler is required to submit the previous season's highest average of:
   a) A single USBC league average based on a minimum of 21 games; or
   b) A composite average of all USBC leagues, including leagues with less than 21 games bowled.
2. When the previous season's average is used, and at the time of bowling an entrant has a current average for 21 or more games that is 10 pins or more higher than the prior season's average, the current average must be used.
3. Bowlers are responsible for verifying his/her own average, whether submitted by the bowler, the team captain or others. If the submitted average is lower than required and results in a lower classification or more handicap, the bowler's score is disqualified. If the submitted average is higher than required, prize winnings will be based on the submitted average. In the case of a team of two or more bowlers, the averages will be combined to determine if the correct total is higher or lower than the submitted total.
4. Average corrections can be made up to the end of the bowler's first game of a series. Or, if an extension of time has been granted in writing by tournament management before the end of the first game of a series, the correction can be made within 48 hours after the end of the series.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 319a.

319a/1 **The tournament rules require bowlers to use their highest average from the previous season. A bowler has an established previous season left-handed average of 150 and a 175 right-handed average. He plans to bowl with his left hand in the tournament. Which average would he use?**
The tournament rules require all bowlers to use their highest average. Therefore, he would have to use his 175 average, regardless of whether he bowled with his right or left hand.

319a/2 **Last year I averaged 190 right-handed, but due to an injury I am bowling left-handed and have a 127 average. I want to participate in tournaments bowling left-handed. Can I apply for tournament average relief? If so, how?**
Yes, you may apply for average relief prior to bowling in any tournament by submitting documentation to USBC Headquarters. (See Rule 4e for details.) Tournament Management cannot give average relief without USBC first making the decision to grant relief.

319a/3 **According to the tournament rules, entrants must enter with their highest previous season league average. A bowler enters with a 170 previous season average. The tournament rules also require the reporting of a 10 pin increase in league average at time of bowling. In league play the evening before the tournament, the bowler shoots a big series raising his/her average to 180. Must the bowler enter and use the higher 180 average?**
Yes, bowlers are responsible for verifying the accuracy of their average. In accordance with Rule 319a, Item 2, the bowler needs to calculate his/her league average up to and including the last time he/she bowled in a league prior to competing in the tournament.

319a/4 **Is a bowler responsible for verification of their average even though the entry blanks are completed and submitted by the team captain, squad sponsor, etc.?**
Yes. In accordance with Rule 319a, Item 3, and 16b, it is the bowler's responsibility to verify the accuracy of their entering average in handicap or classified tournaments whether originally submitted by the bowler or some other individual. The bowler should verify his/her average on the recap sheet to determine if it was correctly submitted. If necessary, an average correction can be made up to the end of the bowler's first game of the series or, if an extension of time has been granted in writing by tournament management before the end of the first game of a series, the correction can be made within 48 hours after the end of the series.

319a/5 **What average would a member use in a tournament conducted on string pinsetter machines?**
For members who have established an average on string pinsetter machines and on free-fall machines, the member would enter the tournament with the highest string pinsetter machine average. We would suggest you use either all string pinsetter averages or all free-fall averages and those who do not have such an average would bowl scratch.

319a/6 **In a tournament conducted on string pinsetters, can we allow those who have string pinsetter averages to use those averages, and those who do not to use averages established on free-fall machines?**
USBC rules do allow a tournament to utilize such an entering average rule. However, we would caution against this since USBC is still collecting data to determine how these averages compare to each other. We would suggest you use either all string pinsetter averages or all free-fall averages and those who do not have such an average would bowl scratch.

319a/7 **Can a tournament conducted on free-fall machines use averages established on string pinsetter machines?**
No. USBC is certifying the competition on string pinsetter machines and allowing averages to be established for use in other competitions utilizing string pinsetter machines. USBC is still collecting data to determine how these averages compare to those established with free-fall machines.

319b. Assigned Averages
A bowler who does not have an acceptable average under tournament rules will bowl scratch, unless the rules specify a minimum average that will be assigned by tournament management prior to participation.

Tournament management has the authority to assign an average higher than the minimum average prior to participation.

319c. Average Adjustments (Rerating)
The average of a bowler may be adjusted upward before participation in any event. If the assigned average is not accepted by the bowler, the entry fee shall be refunded.

Unless the tournament rules state otherwise, in a handicap or classified tournament, a bowler who has had his/her average adjusted/rerated in accordance with this rule is required to report all previous assigned average adjustments/rerates, whether the bowler accepted the adjustment/rerate or not, at the time of bowling.

The following information must be submitted prior to participation for possible average adjustment/rerate:

1. The name of each tournament in which an average adjustment/rerate was assigned(including date assigned).
2. The adjusted/rerated average.

Failure to comply with these provisions is cause for disqualification and forfeiture of entry fees and prize winnings.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 319c.

319c/1 **I entered a house tournament with my 175 league average. Prior to bowling, they adjusted my average to 190. Can I appeal this adjustment to USBC?**
No, USBC is not in a position to substitute our judgment for that of tournament management in that they have first-hand knowledge of the situation.

319c/2 **I entered an association championship tournament with my 175 league average. Prior to bowling, the tournament manager adjusted my average to 190. Can I appeal this adjustment to USBC?**
Yes, an association championship tournament is a right of membership and, as such, adjustments may be appealed to USBC in writing, within 10 days of the date of bowling or prior to the payment of prizes, whichever occurs first.

319d. Reporting Prior Prize Winnings

1. Within the last 12-month period, anyone who has qualified* for a cash and/or merchandise prize in the position standings prize list in a tournament, including all-events, special features, special prizes and donated prizes, must give tournament management the following information prior to participation for possible average adjustment:
   a. The name of each tournament in which they have been paid the following prizes, or if not yet paid, in which they have qualified for the prize:
      1) $300 or more in any event;
      2) Total combined prize winnings of $500 or more in any one tournament;
      3) Total combined prize winnings of $1000 or more in all tournaments within the last 12 months.
   b. The amount of the prize.
   c. The actual score bowled to qualify for the prize.
   d. The prize position.
2. Failure to comply with these provisions is cause for a forfeiture of entry fees and prize winnings.

NOTE: *Qualified is defined as the date and time the tournament officially ended (completion of the last squad or round of competition), or payment of prizes, whichever comes first.

All bowlers regardless of average must comply with the provision of Rule 319d.

Prize winnings from certified and non-certified tournaments, including those using a modified format of American Tenpins (example: 9 pin tap), must be used in the application of this rule.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 319d.

319d/1 **A tournament requires bowlers to report tournament prize winnings of $300 or more in the past 12 months. Recently I won $1,000 in the doubles event of a non-certified tournament. Do I have to report these winnings?**
Yes, all bowlers are required to report prize winnings of $300 or more in any event of a certified and non-certified tournament, including those using a modified format of American Tenpins.

319d/2 **Does a scratch bowler participating in a house tournament have to report prize winnings of $300 or more in accordance with Rule 319d?**
Yes, anyone who has qualified for a prize of $300 or more in any event of a certified and non-certified tournament must report this information regardless of what their average is. By not reporting this information, tournament management is not afforded the opportunity to review the information for possible rejection of the entry.

319d/3 **Tournament rules require the reporting of prize winnings in accordance with Rule 319d. Is a bowler required to report a $300 or more prize earned in another tournament that is over even though the bowler has not received his/her prize check?**
Yes, Rule 319d requires anyone who has qualified for a cash and/or merchandise prize of $300 or more in any event of a certified and/or non-certified tournament to report this information as a condition of entry. Therefore, it is the bowler's responsibility to verify the amount won and report the prize.

319e. Average Adjustment for Entry

NOTE: All certified and non-certified scores from the game of American Tenpins must be used in the application of this rule.

Unless the tournament rules state otherwise, the following applies in a handicap or classified tournament:

1. The bowler is responsible for keeping a record of the names, dates, scores, and prize winnings in all tournaments entered in the previous 12 months, including those still running. These include all tournament scores bowled in accordance with the game of American Tenpins.

2. A bowler shall adjust his/her entering average if, during the 12-month period immediately preceding the time and date of bowling, the bowler's accumulated average for all, but not less than 21 tournament games, exceeds the average to be used for entry by 15 or more pins. In that case, the accumulated average must be used for handicapping or classification purposes.
    a. A bowler whose tournament scores require an adjustment must submit the adjusted average in writing before the end of the first game in a tournament, unless tournament rules allow for such adjustment to be made within a specified time after bowling.
    b. Failure to use the adjusted average in accordance with the foregoing is cause for forfeiture of entry fees and prize winnings, and the bowler is subject to suspension of membership in USBC.

On appeal or protest, the bowler must promptly supply the record of the names, dates, scores and prizes won — or scores that qualify to win — in all tournaments in which the bowler competed within the previous 12 months.

Nothing in this rule supersedes tournament management's authority to adjust the bowler's average higher prior to bowling.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 319e.

319e/1 A 150-average bowler enters a handicap tournament that uses Rule 319e. After bowling a 650 series in singles, the tournament manager provides the bowler with an affidavit that must be filled out and returned within 15 days. The form requires the bowler to provide his scores, prize winnings and dates of all other tournaments he has bowled in over the past 12 months. Upon receipt of the requested information, it is determined that the bowler's tournament average for 36 games is 180. Should the bowler's score be disqualified?
Yes. In accordance with Rule 319e, it is the bowler's responsibility to adjust their entering average if their tournament average for 21 or more games exceeds their entering average by 15 or more pins. The bowler's score is disqualified from the prize list and all other positions moved up one spot.

319f. Canadian Tenpin Federation Averages
USBC will recognize averages established in leagues under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Tenpin Federation (CTF) for entry purposes in USBC tournaments provided:

1. Adult averages are based on a minimum of 21 games and youth averages are based on a minimum of 12 games, unless tournament rules state another number.
2. All USBC equipment and certification specifications apply to the bowling centers in which averages are established.
3. All USBC general playing rules apply to the league(s) in which the averages are established.
4. Tournament rules do not exclude CTF averages.

Rule 320 – Tournament Game/Series

320a. Two Lanes Required
Bowling shall begin in accordance with a previously arranged schedule. Two lanes immediately adjoining each other shall be used in each game of tournament play.

The first game of a series starts on the lane where the team or individual is scheduled. Succeeding games start on the lane on which the team or individual finished the preceding game, unless each complete game is bowled on a different pair of lanes.

A tournament may have a rule allowing game/frames to be bowled on different lanes.

320b. Order of Bowling
Members of competing teams, doubles and individual entrants shall successively and in regular order bowl one frame on one lane, and for the next frame alternate and use the other lane until five frames are bowled on each lane of the pair, unless the tournament rules allow game/frames to be bowled on different lanes.

Rule 321 – Interrupted Game/Series

If equipment failure on a pair of lanes delays the progress of the game/series, tournament officials can authorize the completion of a game/series on another pair of certified lanes. The interrupted game/series must be resumed from the point of interruption. A tournament official may authorize participants on the pair to practice prior to resuming the game/series.

Rule 322 – Players

322a. Tardy Players

1. Unless the tournament rules allow missed frames to be made up, a player or team missing one or more frames by not being present and ready to bowl in turn shall:
   a. Begin play with the score to count from the frame then being bowled.
   b. Not be credited with any pins for the frames missed.
2. If a team refuses to start because a full lineup is not present, tournament management, at its discretion, can declare the game forfeited.
3. A bowler must bowl on the same lanes and at the same time his/her team bowls.

322b. Absentee/Vacancy Scores

Adult tournaments: No absentee or vacancy scores shall be permitted.
Youth tournaments: Unless otherwise stated in the tournament rules:

1. An absentee score must be accepted in a prepaid four- or five-player team tournament if an individual does not show.
2. Only one absentee score per team may be used.
3. The absentee score for each game shall be the absent member's entering average less 10 pins, plus handicap.

Commonly Asked Question – Rule 322b.

322/1 A team had a bowler who failed to show up and a substitute was not available. Can they use the bowler's average minus 10 pins?
In adult tournaments, the team would receive a zero for the missing player. In USBC youth tournaments, an absentee score must be accepted for a prepaid four- or five-player team unless otherwise stated in the tournament rules. Only one absentee score per team may be used and the score will be the absent member's entering average less 10 pins plus handicap.

Rule 323 – Pacers

Unless otherwise provided by tournament rules, pacers are permitted subject to the following:

a. Scores bowled as a pacer shall not count in determining prize winners.
b. A pacer cannot later enter or compete in the tournament, unless the tournament rules permit multiple participation.
c. If a pacer is a USBC member, any scores bowled as a pacer are eligible for USBC individual awards.

Rule 324 – Lineup Changes

324a. Prior to Squad

If a change in a team or doubles lineup is desired, it must be requested at least 30 minutes before the time the entrants are scheduled to bowl, unless otherwise stated in the tournament rules.

Thereafter, no player shall change position in any team or doubles lineup after the player has been checked onto the lanes to bowl, unless authorized by the tournament official in charge. Violation may be cause for disqualification.

If a replacement is needed on each of two teams, the entrants present may be paired together.

324b. Substitution During Game or Series

After a series has started, substitutions can only be made using the following guidelines:

1. **Team or doubles series:**
   a. The captain can replace any player with a qualified substitute at any time but no changes can be made in the order of the players.
   b. A player removed during a game cannot return to bowl in that game.
   c. The score of the game is credited to the starting player.
2. **Singles event:**
   a. No substitutions can be made except in tournaments where two or more series or blocks of games are bowled. In such events, substitutes may be permitted at the discretion of tournament management.
   b. A player removed cannot return for the remainder of the competition.

Scores bowled through the efforts of more than one individual player do not qualify for USBC awards, tournament individual awards, other than position standings prizes, nor can the scores be included in the all-events total.

Rule 325 – Team Bowling Alone

Unless tournament rules state otherwise, the following applies when a team or individual is scheduled alone on a pair of lanes except team tournaments which, by rule, schedule each team alone and permits the members to follow each other immediately in order on the alternate lane:

a. Games must be bowled as though they were contested.
b. Each player must complete a frame on one lane before the player bowling lead off starts the next frame on the adjoining lane.
c. Match-play tournaments may establish target scores, for purposes of determining whether teams qualify for bonus points, when there is less than a full complement of teams.

Rule 326 – Tie for Championship

326a. Playoff/Co-champions
When there is a tie for any championship in a tournament, it is optional with tournament management to have a playoff or declare co-champions. However, if there is a duplication of bowler on the tied teams, Rule 326b applies.

1. **Co-champions:**
   a. The cash prizes for the positions affected are to be equally divided.
   b. Tournament management is required to supply additional medals or awards it provides to champions, which are emblematic of co-championships, from a fund other than the prize fund.
2. **Playoff:**
   a. In match game or elimination tournaments, the number of games or frames played in deciding ties shall be determined by tournament management.
   b. In other tournaments, one game shall be played in deciding all ties, unless otherwise specified in the tournament rules, but under no conditions may the playoff consist of less than one delivery.
   c. In playing off a first-place tie, the team or individual scoring the highest is entitled to all first place prizes, except the optional all-events cash prize is dependent on whether the winner is eligible. The team or individual with the next highest score is entitled to second prize, etc.
3. Ties for other than first prize and position shall be decided by tournament management.

326b. Multiple Participation Tournaments
When multiple participation is permitted in a tournament and one or more bowlers are members of the teams tied for the championship, the following procedure applies in deciding the championship.

1. When two or more teams are tied, and the same bowlers are duplicated on all of the tied teams, co-champions may be declared. If a playoff is conducted, only those members not duplicated on the teams shall bowl in the playoff series.
2. If three or more teams are tied, and the same bowlers are not duplicated on all of the tied teams, co-champions must be declared.

Rule 327 – Scoring Process

327a. Scorers
A tournament is required to have official scorers to record all games bowled in the tournament or use an automatic scoring device that meets USBC specifications.

If a full complement of scorers is not available and the bowlers affected cannot be rescheduled, they may be allowed to record his/her own scores under supervision of tournament management.

In match-game tournaments where the pin count is not carried forward, tournament management may authorize the competing players to keep score.

327b. Scoring Errors
After a score has been recorded, it cannot be changed unless there is an obvious error in scoring or calculation. Obvious errors must be corrected by a tournament official immediately upon discovery. Questionable errors shall be decided by tournament management.

Tournament management may, by rule, set a time limit for the correction of errors.

327c. Loss of Scores
A tournament game or frame(s) within a game that is irretrievably lost in the scoring process may be rebowled with approval of tournament management, unless prohibited by rule. The decision of tournament management shall be final, except where an appeal is made in accordance with Rule 329, Item b.

327d. Handicap
A handicap game or series shall not be capped unless otherwise stated in tournament rules. A game or series cannot be capped below the highest possible scratch score.

Rule 328 – Changing Delivery

In handicap and classified tournaments, once the bowler has taken his/her first shot, he/she shall continue to use that hand throughout the tournament unless, due to injury, the bowler finds it impossible to continue bowling with the same hand. The bowler may seek approval of the tournament director to continue with the opposite hand.

Penalty: Disqualification in the event in which the violation occurs and loss of entry fee for that event.

Rule 329 – Protests and Appeals

Protests and appeals must be in writing stating the grounds for the protest or appeal.

a. A protest involving eligibility or playing rules must be filed with tournament management and:
   1. **Adult tournaments:** Within 72 hours of the infraction, or prior to tournament prizes being paid, whichever occurs first.
   2. **Youth tournaments:** Within 72 hours of the infraction.

NOTE: Tournament protests received by local associations or USBC Headquarters that have not initially been decided by tournament management will be forwarded to tournament management for a decision.

b. The decision of the tournament management shall be final, unless a written appeal is filed with the local association or USBC Headquarters and:
   1. **Adult tournaments:** Within 10 days of notification of tournament management's decision.
   2. **Youth tournaments:** Within 72 hours of notice of the decision.

Upon notification of a protest or appeal, tournament management must withhold all affected prizes until the protest or appeal is resolved.

The decision of the local association may also be appealed to USBC Headquarters. The decision of USBC Headquarters is final and binding on all involved parties.

Commonly Asked Questions – Rule 329.

329/1 What is the deadline to file a protest?
In USBC adult tournaments, a protest regarding eligibility or playing rules must be confirmed in writing and filed with tournament management within 72 hours of the infraction or prior to the payment of tournament prizes, whichever occurs first. In USBC youth tournaments, a protest regarding eligibility or playing rules must be confirmed in writing and filed with tournament management within 72 hours of the infraction.

329/2 Does the tournament manager have to make a decision on a verbal protest?
No. However, the tournament manager may act upon the verbal inquiry and consider the inquiry as a protest. USBC Rule 329 requires the tournament manager to act on all written protests filed within specific timelines. (Guidelines on how to file a proper protest can be found on BOWL.com.)

329/3 What happens when a bowler is disqualified from the tournament for a rule infraction?
When a violation occurs that requires disqualification of an individual or team, the following procedure should be followed:

a. The individual(s) or team captain should be notified in writing of the disqualification.
b. The letter should state the reason(s) for disqualification.
c. The letter should inform the individual that they have the right to appeal in writing to USBC

Payment of prizes affected must be withheld until USBC has:

a. Notified the tournament that a timely appeal has not been filed; or
b. Resolved a timely appeal that was filed.

Chapter 7: League Bonding, Burglary and Holdup Insurance

Introduction

The USBC maintains a policy of bonding, burglary and holdup insurance for all officers of certified leagues. The bonding, burglary and holdup insurance coverage described in this chapter is available through a policy of insurance issued to USBC by an independent licensed insurance company. The policy covers:

a. Misuse of Funds. A shortage attributable to dishonesty by a league officer.
b. The taking of funds from an officer, or the center's messenger, by violence or threat of violence.
c. Funds taken through the forcible entry into the premises or locked receptacle, where the funds are kept, of an officer or the center's messenger. There must be visible evidence of forcible entry. An on-site police report is required.

Any officer authorized by the league to sign contracts and act as a signatory on any account must be a minimum of 18 years of age.

No insurance coverage is available except as specifically set forth in the policies of insurance purchased by USBC.

The surety company shall not be held liable for any loss which, on investigation in a given case, may have existed prior to the time the bond or insurance became effective. Likewise, the surety company will not extend coverage to any individual who misused funds in the past or has been convicted of a felony due to a financial crime.

Commonly Asked Question – Convicted Felon.

We have recently found out that our treasurer was convicted of a felony 20 years ago. Can this individual continue as a treasurer in our league?
No, the bond policy does not extend coverage to any individual who has been convicted of a felony due to a financial crime.

The policies of insurance do not cover funds frozen through insolvency or liquidation of any financial institution. Further, the policies of insurance do not cover loss of funds due to bowling center insolvency or liquidation.

Dishonest Act of Officer

League officers are automatically bonded for up to $10,000. Leagues with prize funds in excess of $10,000 receive full coverage, provided the full amount of the prize fund is indicated on the league certification application when submitted to the local association.

The following conditions govern the method by which leagues must handle funds to qualify for 100 percent protection of any loss caused by the dishonest act of a league officer:

a. The league certification application and membership dues must be received within 42 days of the start of the schedule (30 days for summer leagues), counting the first day of competition.
b. Funds must be deposited within seven (7) days in an insured bank, credit institution or an in-center banking service in the name of the league. The banking or credit institution must be a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or its equivalent.
c. **Adult leagues:** The two officers who are at least 18 years old, authorized by the league, must co-sign for all withdrawals. Two members of an immediate family cannot co-sign for withdrawals. If the president is not the co-signer for withdrawals, his/her name must be identified with the account to enable the president to personally verify the amount on deposit.
d. **Youth leagues:** The league supervisor and league official who are at least 18 years old, co-sign for all withdrawals and cannot be immediate family members.
e. Officers must be USBC members.
f. Signature stamps should not be used nor should checks be pre-signed.
g. The league president or youth league supervisor must personally verify the bank account each month. (See Rule 104b.)

A Monthly President Verification Worksheet can be found on BOWL.com.

NOTE: "Verify" means the president/youth league supervisor must not only determine the amount on deposit, but also do the arithmetic necessary to determine how much should be on deposit. If the account is found to be short, the president/youth league supervisor must report the shortage immediately to USBC Headquarters for possible action under the bonding insurance policy.

Failure to meet the provisions of the policies of insurance will result in a 50-percent reduction of any documented loss.

The bond and insurance shall remain in force for continuing leagues not only to the end of the season, but for the so-called off-season until a new season begins.

If the league application is not received by the association within the 42- (winter) or 30- (summer) day grace period, the bonding and burglary/holdup insurance become effective when the application and dues are received by the association, and only for such funds as on deposit at that time, plus funds deposited thereafter. Failure to submit the league application within the stated time voids protection for all money collected prior to the date the league application was received.

Commonly Asked Questions – Dishonest Act of Officer.

Is it really that important to list our total prize fund on the league certification application if it exceeds $10,000?
Yes, unless the total prize fund amount has been listed, the maximum amount of league prize money covered under the USBC bonding policy will be $10,000.

Who is considered immediate family? What if they are no longer in the same household?
Members of an immediate family include mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, husbands, sons, brothers, fathers, stepsisters, stepbrothers, stepmothers, stepfathers and in-laws. Same gender spouses are considered immediate family.

Two members of an immediate family cannot serve as president or vice-president and secretary-treasurer or treasurer of the same league or co-sign for withdrawals from a league account, even if they do not reside in the same household.

In-Center Banking Service

The coverage afforded in the policies of insurance is extended to leagues utilizing in-center deposit services provided:

a. All USBC Rules regarding the handling of league funds are observed.
b. The center deposits the league funds within seven days of receipt in a special trust account in an accredited, insured banking institution and NOT combined with the center or corporate accounts.

NOTE: The center may maintain a single account for all leagues; however, a separate accounting must be maintained for each league.

c. Two co-signers (league officers) from the league (league official and league supervisor for youth) are registered with the center in order for the league to withdraw its funds.
d. Requests for withdrawals must have the joint signatures of the two co-signers.
e. The center provides the league president or youth league supervisor with a current statement of the account verifying the amount on deposit so the president can personally verify the league balance monthly as required by Rule 104b.

Failure to meet any of the conditions of the policies of insurance will result in a 50-percent reduction of any documented loss.

Burglary and Holdup Insurance

The funds of each USBC league are insured against loss by burglary and holdup as follows:

a. The taking of funds from an officer, or the center's messenger, by violence or threat of violence.
b. Funds taken through the forcible entry into the premises or locked receptacle, where the funds are kept, of an officer or the center's messenger. There must be visible evidence of forcible entry. An on-site police report is required.

NOTE: A messenger is considered the person from the center depositing league funds using an in-center banking service.

c. **Receipts:** Not to exceed one week's receipts at any one time, with a limit of $2,000.
d. **Disbursements:** Not to exceed an amount of $10,000 at any one time for a period of seven days. (Leagues with large prize funds should only pay out a maximum of $10,000 in cash with the balance paid in checks.)

In the event the league fails to deposit the funds in a recognized banking or credit institution in the name of the organization as specified, the insurance company will be liable for only one week's receipts when a loss occurs due to burglary or holdup.

The policies of insurance DO NOT cover loss by fire, mysterious disappearance or funds left unattended.

Commonly Asked Question – Mysterious Disappearance.

The league treasurer collected the envelopes and had them on the table. The treasurer went to bowl and when he got back the envelopes were gone. Can a bond claim be filed for the loss of money?
No. The bonding policy does not cover losses due to mysterious disappearances or funds left unattended.

Losses and Claims

Any loss should be reported to USBC Headquarters for guidance within 15 days.

Any attempt to regain funds through an agreement between the principal and offended parties without authorization from USBC Headquarters creates a legal situation which places the league's right of recovery under the bond in jeopardy.

Any officer who misuses the funds of a league shall be subject to suspension from USBC membership.

The president also may be liable for suspension from USBC membership for failing to make the monthly verification.

Chapter 8: Equipment Specifications

Bowling Balls

1. **Approved.** Bowling balls must be identifiable as a ball listed on the Approved Ball List. Since all bowling balls manufactured prior to January 1991 have been previously approved, their acceptance is at the discretion of the tournament or league official.
2. **House Balls.** As a courtesy to league and tournament participants, House Balls may be used even though they are not specifically posted on the Approved Ball List. Please see the USBC Equipment Specifications Manual for House Ball specifics.
3. **Identification.** Each ball must have the original brand name/logo, original ball name and some form of serial number (the serial number may be re-engraved).
4. **Bowling Ball Surface.**
   a. Shall be free of all depressions or grooves of specific pattern, except for holes or indentations used for gripping the ball, identification lettering and numbers, and incidental chipping or marking caused by wear.
   b. No foreign material may be placed on the outer surface of the ball including but not limited to powder, rosin, marker or paint.
   c. If a crack is located within the bowler's track area, or if a fissure is present anywhere, the ball is not permitted for use during USBC certified competition. A crack is defined as a partial break or split that appears on the surface of the ball, which is no more than 3" long and no more than 1/8" wide. A fissure is defined as a break or split 3" long or greater and/or 1/8" wide or greater, usually occurring from some breaking or parting.
5. **Ball Plugs, Inserts and Slugs.**
   a. Removable devices must be approved and on the Approved Removable Bowling Ball Devices list.
   b. Ball plug or slugs may be used for the purpose of re-drilling a ball. When a slug is used, there must be a hole drilled completely through the slug leaving no void at the base.
   c. Plugs, inserts, tape and slugs may not extend beyond the surface of the ball.
6. **Weight.** The weight of the ball shall not exceed 16.00 pounds. There is no minimum weight.
7. **Drilling Requirements**. All balls used in USBC certified competition must meet the following requirements:
   1) **Holes.**
      a) Holes or indentations for gripping purposes
         i) Shall not exceed five and shall be limited to one for each finger and one for the thumb, all for the same hand.
         ii) Shall not exceed 1-9/16" diameter and 4-1/2" deep, including holes required to install removeable devices.
         iii) Must be used on every delivery.
      b) Any secondary hole drilled inside of a gripping hole that is not intended for gripping purpose is considered a void and not allowed.
      c) No balance holes are allowed.
      d) Balls without a thumbhole must have a scribed or engraved cross-hair lines ("+") near the center of the palm to indicate the grip orientation. The ball must be delivered in the marked orientation (i.e. palm must cover the "+").
      e) One vent hole for each finger and/or thumb hole, not to exceed 1/4 inch in diameter is permitted.
      f) One mill hole for inspection purposes not to exceed 5/8 inch in diameter and 1/8 inch in depth is permitted.
   2) **Balance.** For balls weighing more than 10.00 pounds (all measurements are to be taken with respect to the center of grip):
      a) No more than 3 ounces of top/bottom weight, left/right weight and finger/thumb weight.
      b) A ball used without any holes or indentations may not have more than three-ounce difference between any two halves of the ball.

For center of grip determination and balls weighing 10.00 pounds or less see the USBC Equipment Specifications Manual.

Commonly Asked Questions – Bowling Ball – Holes

Is a bowling ball with a thumb hole thrown by a no-thumb or two-handed bowler legal?
A bowler who doesn't use the thumb during a delivery cannot have a thumb or a balance hole. If the ball does, it is illegal and games are subject to forfeiture. All holes drilled must be used for gripping purposes on every delivery.

What if a bowler does not use their thumb for a strike ball but does use their thumb for a spare shot?
A bowler who doesn't use the thumb during a delivery cannot have a thumb or a balance hole. If the ball does, it is illegal and games are subject to forfeiture. All holes drilled must be used for gripping purposes on every delivery.

If the bowler covers the thumb hole with their palm, would that count as gripping?
No, the bowler is not gripping the ball if they are just covering the hole with their palm.

8. **House Balls.** Balls are exempt from item 7. House balls are defined as:
   a. Being supplied by the center in which the certified competition is being used.
   b. Having a polyester or basic urethane coverstock.
   c. Having a differential RG less than 0.025 inches.
   d. The ball is not drilled to fit the bowler specifically.

NOTE: A ball left in a bowling center by a bowler to be used as a house ball is not considered a house ball.

9. **Out of Specification.** If it is found that a bowling ball is or is suspected of being out of specification, the bowler must be told by the tournament or league official to remove the ball from competition until it can be measured. If the ball is not removed or the bowler had prior knowledge of such, games are subject to forfeiture or disqualification. If the bowler had no prior knowledge, the games would not be subject to forfeiture, but the ball would not be able to be used until it meets specifications.

Commonly Asked Question – Bowling Ball - Out of Specification

How is this rule enforceable and what is the penalty for those who don't comply?
Once it is discovered that a bowler is using equipment which is not within specifications, the ball must be removed from competition and corrected before it can be used during certified competition. If the bowler uses a ball that is non-conforming with knowledge that it is out of specification, the scores are subject to forfeiture.

Chapter 9: American Wheelchair

Bowling Association Rules

Founded in 1962 by Richard Carlson, the American Wheelchair Bowling Association (AWBA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to growth, encouragement, promotion and regulation of the sport of wheelchair bowling throughout the world. The AWBA will provide, through its tournament events and website access, a competitive, challenging, and informative environment for those individuals with disabilities requiring the use of a wheelchair while bowling to participate in bowling events no matter their individual skill level. Their overall objective will always be, as it was in the beginning, to promote the sport itself and the camaraderie amongst its members.

These rules are in effect for AWBA competition in addition to all USBC rules where applicable. Any rules adopted through AWBA competition are not to be in conflict with these or USBC rules.

Stick Helpers

Once the ball has been positioned, the helper must move him/herself away from the bowler before the ball is delivered. The helper may not hold or touch the bowler after the ball has been put in place. Helpers will be required to adhere to the AWBA dress code.

Delay of Game

A bowler that has to leave the lanes (personal emergencies) after the commencement of bowling, shall have thirty (30) minutes make-up time in order to finish the frames/games missed. In cases of wheelchair breakdowns, the tournament director shall be advised of the delay. If, in his/her judgment the repairs shall be lengthy, he/she shall instruct the remaining bowlers to bowl 'out of turn'. After completion of the repairs, the bowler shall start bowling at the beginning of the next full game. He/she will be allowed to make up the missed frames or games after the completion of the scheduled shift. (A pacer may be used but is not mandatory when making up games.)

Steadying a Wheelchair

No aid, device, mechanism or person shall be allowed to steady the wheelchair unless it has been previously submitted and approved by the AWBA New Equipment Committee. In an emergency (wheelchair breakdown) a helper may steady or hold a wheelchair in position if approved by the Board of Director members attending the tournament. No part of the wheelchair (except the wheels) may touch the approach. No feet, hands, brace supports, counterweights or additional wheels can make contact with the floor.

Each bowler must impart his/her own force or impetus to deliver the ball. Electric chair users cannot use the force or impetus of the motor to aid in the delivery of the ball.

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Etiquette Information

A few simple guidelines to help make your bowling experience more pleasurable:

- Be ready to bowl when the pins are set, but wait until the pinsetting machine has completed its cycle and the sweepbar is raised to make your delivery. Throwing a ball before the machine is ready may damage the ball or equipment.
- Observe one-lane courtesy. The bowler on the right should bowl if both reach the approach at the same time. Stay off the approach while you wait.
- Taking too long to aim or get set up when you are on the approach delays the game.
- Try to remain in your approach area while delivering the ball.
- Step off the approach once you have delivered the ball.
- Good bowling requires concentration. Have fun, but keep in mind excessive movement or noise could be distracting when others are up to bowl.
- Excessive "lofting" hurts your game and damages the lane.
- Get permission to use another player's ball.
- Refrain from using abusive language or obscene gestures.
- Play the game to win, but be a gracious loser. Good sportsmanship is always the key to a successful game.
- Wet shoes are a safety hazard. Watch where you are walking.

ETIQUETTE

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