



## 2026 USBC Senior Championships Rules

(All rules for the 2026 USBC Senior Championships are subject to change)

All athlete services shall be conducted electronically whenever possible. Participants will be required to submit a waiver/release prior to competition.

The USBC Senior Championships is a handicap singles tournament consisting of two separate divisions. Handicap for each division is 90% of 220.

- Open Division - men and women
- Women's Division - women only

The tournament consists of six age classifications within each division:

Divisions	Youngest	Oldest
50-54	7/1/1976	6/30/1971
55-59	7/1/1971	6/30/1966
60-64	7/1/1966	6/30/1961
65-69	7/1/1961	6/30/1956
70-74	7/1/1956	6/30/1951
75+	7/1/1951	

50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75+

- Each USBC state and Canadian Tenpin Federation provincial association will be permitted to send a maximum of six Open Division participants and six Women's Division participants, one in each age classification.
- Female participants will have to determine which division they want to enter at the state level. They may qualify only in that division.
- If a USBC state and CTF provincial senior tournament is not set up to include the six age classifications but would like to send six representatives to the USBC Senior Championships, they must compile a separate record of the standings in each of the six age classifications in order to qualify the top bowler in each age category.

### AGE / ELIGIBILITY

- **Age classification for the USBC Senior Championships will be based on their age as of July 1, 2026.** States may NOT send more than one entrant per age classification at the national event.
- Bowlers will not be permitted to bowl down in an age classification regardless of how they qualified in their state qualifier.
- All participants must have a current USBC adult membership.
- If current membership cannot be verified, a USBC associate membership must be purchased at the tournament site at a cost of \$25.
- Competitors must have bowled a minimum of six games at their state/provincial senior tournament.



- Competitors must be the handicap all-events winner in their respective age classification and division (Open or Women's). Exception to this requirement is as follows: If the winner is unable to attend, the state/provincial association can contact the next-highest finisher, and go down as far as necessary in order of finish, to find a participant in the age classification. The entry fee from the original bowler is transferable to the replacement.

Each USBC state and CTF provincial association should have a tournament rule regarding ties for a championship. For example, "If a tie exists for first place within an age classification, co-champions will be declared. For purposes of determining who will be eligible for the USBC Senior Championships, the bowler with the highest game, with handicap, will advance. If a tie still exists, the second-highest game, with handicap, will be used, etc."

### **AVERAGE REQUIREMENTS**

The average to be used will be determined in the following order:

A. Highest book average from 2023-2024 or 2024-2025 USBC/CTF winter, summer or composite based on 21 or more games.

B. If no 2023-2024 or 2024-2025 USBC/CTF winter, summer or composite average, the highest USBC/CTF winter season and/or composite average as of July 29, 2026, based on 21 or more games.

C. When a bowler's current 21-game average and/or composite as of July 29, 2026, is 10 or more pins higher than the previous season's average, that average must be used (USBC Rule 319a - 2).

- Bowlers who have both a USBC SPORT OR CHALLENGE LEAGUE average and STANDARD average from the same season shall use the higher of their Sport or Challenge average (unadjusted) and standard league average.
- Any bowler who has only a USBC SPORT OR CHALLENGE average must use the adjusted Sport or Challenge average utilizing the USBC Average Adjustment Scale.

D. Bowlers who do not meet any of the above requirements will be entered with a 220 average.

- Failure to use the correct average shall disqualify the score if the submitted average is lower than the correct average, thereby resulting in a higher handicap. Prize winnings shall be based on the submitted average if it is higher than the correct average. However, corrections in averages may be permitted up to the completion of the first game of a series.
- All entrants who have qualified for \$300 or more in any tournament event; \$500 or more in any one tournament; or \$1,000 or more in all tournaments during the 12 months prior to participation, must attach a report with the entry form showing actual score bowled and the amount of money won in each case (USBC Rule 319d).
- Bowlers shall adjust their entering averages and shall submit the adjusted average to the tournament manager if, during the 12-month period immediately preceding the date and time of bowling, the bowler's accumulated average for all, but not less than 21 tournament games, exceeds such entering average by 15 or more pins (USBC Rule 319e).



- All entrants must report any re-rate or adjustments to averages from any other tournament or event prior to participation.
- Failure to report prize winnings (Rule 319d), submit adjusted average under USBC Rule 319e or report any re-rates shall be cause for disqualification. Nothing in USBC Rule 319e will be deemed to supersede the authority of tournament management to adjust a bowler's average upward prior to bowling. For purposes of average adjustment, tournament management will use guidelines including, but not limited to, USBC averages, previous tournament winnings and any records of bowler performance from league(s) and/or tournament(s).
- A bowler's average 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 (Rule 319c).
- Bowlers are responsible for seeing that their averages are verified before competition begins.

## **BOWLING EQUIPMENT**

Every bowler must have his/her own bowling ball and bowling shoes.

### Bowling Balls

- All bowling balls must meet USBC specifications. It is the player's responsibility to ensure all equipment is eligible for competition.
- All bowling balls must be on the USBC-approved list on BOWL.com prior to being introduced into play.
- The following bowling balls are prohibited for use: 900 Global Altered Reality, 900 Global Wolverine, Roto Grip UFO Alert, Storm Electrify Solid, Storm Phaze 4, Storm Trend 2
- Plugged bowling balls are allowed.
- Random bowling ball checks may be done as deemed necessary by tournament management.
- Bowlers may request to have their bowling balls checked prior to competition.
- If a competitor uses a bowling ball not on the USBC-approved list, or one that does not meet USBC specifications, the bowler will be disqualified from the tournament.

### Use of Abrasives on Ball Surface or Other Modification

- Once the competition begins, no abrasives, cleaners or polishes may be used on equipment. The use of abrasives, cleaners or polishes is permitted during practice and warmup, but never during competition. In addition, all sanding products must be removed from the competition area (i.e., Abralon, sandpaper, etc.).
  - If an abrasive, cleaner or polish is used, the ball is removed from play for the remainder of the round.
  - If an abrasive, cleaner or polish is used, and the ball is thrown in competition, the player is disqualified.
- **NOTE: The tournament director may allow a player to remove foreign substances from the bowling ball surface with authorized cleaners on a case-by-case basis.**

### Ball Checks

- Bowling ball checks may be done as deemed necessary by the tournament director. A competitor is subject to disqualification and forfeiture of all points and prize money



earned from the tournament if any bowling ball recorded on the competitor's scoring recap:

1. Cannot be produced within 30 minutes of being requested by the tournament director.
  2. Does not meet specifications as stated in Chapter 8 of the USBC Playing Rules or the USBC Equipment Specifications and Certifications Manual.
  3. Is knowingly tampered with to no longer meet USBC Specifications as stated in the USBC Equipment Specifications and Certifications Manual (USBC Rule 17a-1).
- The tournament director will notify the competitor and inspect the bowling ball in question at a time of the tournament director's choosing. A decision will be rendered as soon as the appropriate measurements or USBC field tests can be completed.
  - If the ball fails inspection, the ball shall be removed from competition and confiscated to prevent further use. Competitor shall only be subject to disqualification if there is a Rule 17 violation.

#### Powder

- No substance, including, but not limited to, talcum powder and EZ Slide, can be applied to the bottom of a player's shoes.

#### **DEAD BALL SITUATIONS**

The tournament director must be called and will make all decisions regarding dead ball situations.

#### Bowling on the Wrong Lane

- USBC Rule 9 will apply when bowling on the wrong lane

#### Bowling Out of Turn

- Bowling out of turn is a dead ball situation (USBC Rule 8).

#### Dead Wood

- If a pin is in the channel, the pin should be removed before the next delivery. If any other competitor feels the pin is in play, it must be removed before a shot is thrown.
- If the competitor attempts a spare conversion while a pin is in play and the ball contacts the dead wood before leaving the lane surface, he or she shall receive zero for the shot.
- If the competitor attempts a spare conversion while a pin is in play and any pin after coming in contact with the dead wood knocks down one or more pins, he or she shall receive zero for the shot.

#### Missing Pins

- If it is determined that any pins were missing from the rack at which a competitor shot, he or she must redo that shot.



## DEADLINES

June 15, 2026 (shirt deadline)

- Tournament participant jerseys will be ordered on June 15, 2026. Once an order is placed for a participant, it is final. In the event a replacement is made after the order is placed and a new jersey can be ordered for the replacement, the cost of the replacement jersey will be paid by the state or the bowler. USBC will attempt to have the jersey at the tournament location but cannot guarantee when orders are placed after June 15.

July 15, 2026 (entry deadline)

- State associations submit their "State's Official Entry Form," entry fees and register the bowler in Tournament registration by July 15, 2026.
- No replacements will be allowed after July 15, 2026.

## DELAYS AND MECHANICAL BREAKDOWNS

- If a delay or mechanical breakdown of 10 minutes or longer occurs during competition, tournament management will authorize two (2) warm-up shots prior to the restarting of competition. **Timing will begin the moment the tournament director is notified of the breakdown.**
- An alternate pair shall be used whenever possible when awarding warm-up shots in the event of a breakdown.
- If an alternate pair is not available, two (2) shots will be awarded on the lane opposite of where the competitor will throw his or her next shot for score.
- If a breakdown requires competitors to move to an alternate pair not previously used in the tournament, each competitor required to move will receive two (2) warm-up shots on each lane. Subsequent incoming bowlers may receive warm-up shots at the discretion of tournament management.
- If pair is repaired, it will remain out of play for all squads unless a re-oil occurs. Pair may be brought back in to play if needed due to additional breakdowns.
- Bowlers are responsible to pace themselves accordingly with the pairs in front of them. No warm-up shots will be awarded for slow bowling.

## DRESS CODE

Entrants are expected to wear suitable attire. Examples of prohibited attire include, but are not limited to:

- Hats (medical reasons only)
- Tank tops, halter tops, bare midriffs, spaghetti strap tops, etc.
- Workout attire, short skirts, jeans that are not neat, clean or in good condition
- Shorts are allowed during competition. Athletic, jean or cargo shorts are not allowed.

Bowlers will be required to change if attire is deemed inappropriate by tournament management or designee. Tournament management or designee decision will be final.

## FOOD, DRINK & SMOKING



Outside food will NOT be permitted in the bowling center. Hard candy, mints and gum are allowed. This includes from the start of practice to the last ball thrown for score on each squad.

- Bowlers with a medical condition who must eat more than what is mentioned above during competition should notify the tournament office prior to bowling.
- Failure to comply may result in disqualification.

### **ENTRY FEES**

- \$180 per participant.
- If the state/provincial association is unable to pay the entry fees, participants must be advised that they are still eligible to participate in the Senior Championships at their own expense.
- All prize fees collected in each age classification in each division will be returned 100% to participants in those divisions.
- Additional fees will be added 100% to the prize fund for those respective divisions.

Entry fee breakdown: At least one for every three entries, per division and age classification, will cash.

Prize fee: \$100

Expense fee: \$40

Shirt fee: \$40

- Additional fees will be added 100% to the prize fund for those respective divisions.

### **Refund Policy**

- a. A refund will be given:
  - i. less \$50 cancellation fee, if written notice is received before July 15
  - ii. less a \$100 cancellation fee, if written notice is received after July 15
- b. No refund will be given:
  - i. if written notice is received after August 2.
  - ii. If no notice is provided and the participant is a no-show

### **FOULS**

- USBC rules regarding fouls will be followed. Should at any time during a shot the foul light flash, it must be scored as a foul. If the player wishes to protest the foul, a ruling by tournament management must be called for by the end of the game. Tournament management's decision shall be final.
- In the event of an intentional foul, tournament management should be immediately notified. The player shall receive no pinfall for that delivery and shall receive no additional deliveries in that frame.
  - An intentional foul is a foul caused by anything unnatural to a normal delivery and intentionally done, such as kicking at the foul line. If in the act of intentionally fouling the player's action is deemed conduct unbecoming, he/she will be subject to the penalties provided for this offense.

### **FORMAT**

- Participants only compete with those in their own age division.
- All participants will bowl two three-game qualifying blocks.
- If a tie exists for sixth place after six games of qualifying, there will be a ninth- and 10th-frame roll-off to determine who advances to the Advancers Round. Should a tie



still exist, an additional ninth and 10th frame will be bowled. This procedure will continue until the tie is broken.

- The top six scores with handicap in each division/age category will advance to the Advancers Round and bowl three more games to determine the champions. Qualifying scores will not be carried into the Advancers Round.
- Bonus pins will be awarded to the six qualifiers based on qualifying position: 50 pins for first, 40 pins for second, 30 pins for third, 20 pins for fourth, 10 pins for fifth and 0 pins for sixth. Bonus pins will be added to the three-game total during the advancers round. In the event there is a tie for position, the points will be split equally.
- If a tie exists after the Advancers Round for first, second or third place, there will be a ninth- and 10th-frame roll-off to determine that position. Should a tie still exist, an additional ninth and 10th frame will be bowled. This procedure will continue until the tie is broken.
- Twelve champions will be declared, one in each of the six age classifications in the Open Division and Women's Division.

## **GAMBLING**

All forms of gambling are prohibited while bowling. This includes, but is not limited to, card playing, pushing coins, etc.

## **LANE ASSIGNMENTS**

- Lane assignments will be posted in the tournament venue no later than one hour prior to each squad.

## **LANE OIL PATTERN**

- The pattern will be posted at the tournament venue no later than the start of the first official practice session.

## **LATE ARRIVAL**

Any participant arriving late for the qualifying blocks will begin play in the frame then being bowled. A bowler will not be credited with any pins for frames missed.

## **PERSONNEL IN THE COMPETITION AREA**

- The tournament director will define the competition area prior to the start of competition.

### **Authorized Personnel**

- Only tournament competitors, USBC staff and tournament volunteers are permitted in the competition area during competition. Media personnel covering the event may be permitted into the competition area on a case-by-case basis.

### **Incoming Squads**

- Competitors on incoming squads may not enter the competition area until both their starting and adjacent pairs are finished.

## **PRACTICE SESSIONS**

- Official practice sessions will be available to all bowlers. Dates and times of the practice sessions will be posted on the official tournament webpage.



- Competitors may only practice during their squad's assigned practice session.
- There are no lane assignments for the practice sessions. Bowlers are free to move around the venue.
- 10 minutes of warmup will be available to each bowler prior to each round of qualifying and match play.

### **PRIZE CHECKS AND AWARDS**

- The IRS requires USBC to furnish 1099 forms to individuals who accumulate winnings of \$600 or more annually in any USBC events in which they participate.
- Failure to furnish a Social Security number (U.S. citizens) or ITIN (non-U.S. citizens) to USBC at check-in will result in a 30% tax reduction of the prize check.
- Prize checks will be direct deposited within 30 days after the conclusion of the tournament (USBC Rule 309) unless permission is granted to extend by USBC tournament certification.
- In the event of a tie in any division, prize money will be equally divided.
- All averages for winners are subject to further verification by USBC tournament management.
- Awards will be presented for the top six places in each division.

### **PROTESTS**

- Protests concerning scoring accuracy must be filed with tournament management immediately.
- Complaints concerning approach conditions or other equipment must be brought to the attention of the tournament director. An inspection will be made and, if needed, corrections will be made. If a complaint is determined to be unwarranted, the contestant must proceed to bowl, or the games will be declared forfeited.

### **SQUADS**

- Tournament management reserves the right to change the number of qualifying squads in the tournament as late as seven days prior to the first day of qualifying, based on entries.

### **START OF COMPETITION**

- The definition of the "start of competition" is when any participant's first ball is thrown for score during competition. This includes qualifying and the Advancers Round.

### **TOURNAMENT MANAGEMENT**

- Tournament management has the final authority to make interpretations of any tournament rules and make decisions regarding anything not covered in the rules.

### **WITHDRAWING AFTER THE TOURNAMENT HAS STARTED**

- In order to withdraw before the start of the tournament, the competitor must notify the tournament director.
- Any competitor who wishes to withdraw while the tournament is in progress must notify the bowlers on his or her pair and then receive permission from the tournament director.

### **TERMINATION CLAUSE**

To the executive director of the United States Bowling Congress: I hereby make application to participate in this USBC Championship event listed and tender the entry fees required,

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therefore. I warrant that I am a USBC member. I agree to abide by all tournament playing rules and regulations prescribed by USBC, including all provisions set forth on this form. I specifically agree for myself and any replacement chosen by me or for me that if I am not eligible for participation and/or cannot bowl in the event, then my prize, bowling, and expense fees shall be forfeited and all sums tendered by me as prize, bowling and expense fee may be retained by USBC as liquidated damages. The entrant whose name appears hereon or my authorized replacement hereby agrees that the USBC, its officers and agents shall be liable only to the extent of returning entry fees, less expenses, if and when that entrant shall be prevented from bowling any event in the tournament through premature termination of the tournament, which may be brought about by war, national emergency or emergencies or causes relating thereto resulting therefrom, fires, labor difficulties, terrorism or threats of terrorism, or other causes beyond the control of USBC. I further agree that USBC may use my name and likenesses (including video) for promotional purposes at no cost to me and with no fees being paid to me. The entrant whose name appears on this application and/or authorized replacement hereby agrees that the USBC, and its officers and agents, shall not be liable for any injury resulting from participation in bowling in the event, absent willful or gross negligence on the part of USBC.