

Understanding the USBC Equipment Specifications and Certification approval process

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USBC Equipment Specifications and Certification



The United States Bowling Congress Equipment Specifications and Certification department protects the integrity of the sport of bowling by diligently studying and field testing all bowling lane equipment, including but not limited to bowling pins, lane kickbacks and flat gutters, to ensure that their implementation does not influence scoring, positively or negatively, at unreasonable levels.

In order for a piece of bowling lane equipment to earn USBC approval, it must meet all established USBC standards concerning size, shape, weight, physical makeup and chemical composition. Products that meet those standards then are subjected to a minimum one year of field testing.

These field tests closely monitor how the test equipment's performance compares to that of an already-approved USBC product. In regard to scoring, in order to be considered for USBC approval, a test product cannot yield a scoring increase greater than two pins or a scoring decrease greater than three pins.

"USBC regulates the many different components of our playing field, including the lanes, pins and flat gutters, to make sure that new products are not allowed to have an unreasonable influence on scoring," USBC Technical Director Steve Kloempken said.

"In doing so, we protect the integrity of the sport by making sure scoring ability stays with the bowler rather than the equipment manufacturers."