

2019 USBC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS RULES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Q: What revisions will take place for the 2019 USBC Open Championships?

A: While there are several revisions, a major element is that a bowler’s entering average for the 2019 Open Championships will be their Open Championships tournament average (unadjusted) from the most recent 27 games since 2010.

A quick comparison of previous events and what will take place in 2019:

| 2017 and 2018 Tournaments | 2019 Tournament |
|--|--|
| Three Divisions (standard average): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular: 210 and above average • Standard: 181-209 average • Classified: 180 and below average | Three Divisions (tournament average): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular: 176 and above average • Standard: 156-175 average • Classified: 155 and below average |
| Entering averages are based on the bowler’s standard or “house shot” averages. In determining the highest average that will be used, tournament averages or Sport/Challenge averages must be adjusted up, allowing all bowlers to be measured on the same scale. | Entering averages are based on the bowler’s USBC Open Championships tournament average (last 27 games). Any averages not established at the Open Championships or on Sport conditions will be adjusted down to Sport, allowing all bowlers to be measured on the same scale. |
| All professional bowlers eligible, with team and divisional restrictions. | Team and divisional restrictions are added for collegiate bowlers and current/former members of Junior Team USA, Team USA and other national teams. |
| Teams can include just one bowler from the division above, regardless of the team’s combined average. | Teams can include two bowlers from the division above if the team meets the average requirements for that division. |

2. Q: What prompted the revisions to the USBC Open Championships starting in 2019?

A: The ideas came directly from bowler and captain feedback and were formalized by a task force of tournament participants, volunteer leaders and staff. Each year, USBC sends a survey to all Open Championships participants who have provided USBC an email address.

3. Q: Why the decision to use the Open Championships tournament average and adjust those who don’t have an average to a Sport average in 2019?

A: USBC believes using the Open Championships average is the most accurate way to place bowlers in a division. In 2017, USBC rules and the average adjustment chart could only convert averages from Sport up to Standard. Now, the rules and adjustment chart also can convert from Standard down to Sport. Of course, using tournament average also decreases the risk of average manipulation.

4. Q: How is an entering average determined?

A: This is outlined in tournament Rule No. 1 (Average – Reporting Requirements):

The entering average for bowlers is their Open Championships average (unadjusted) from the most recent 27 games since 2010.

Bowlers who do not have a qualifying Open Championships average will enter with the highest average from the following:

- 1) Highest USBC-certified league average (winter, summer or composite), based on 21 or more games converted to Sport (if not already Sport) from:
 - a) 2017/2018 season or
 - b) 2016/2017 season or
 - c) 2015/2016 season

Averages NOT established on a Sport condition will be converted downward using the appropriate Sport or Challenge conversion chart.

Bowlers who do not meet either of the average requirements above will enter with the highest of the following:

- 1) Current certified average at the time of bowling of 21 or more games, converted downward using the appropriate Sport or Challenge conversion chart (if not already Sport).
- 2) Current composite average of 21 or more games in all current USBC leagues, converted downward using the appropriate Sport or Challenge conversion chart (if not already Sport).

League standings sheets or a letter of verification from association secretary must be presented upon check-in.

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

5. Q: How were the divisions determined?

A: The average data indicates the revisions would place approximately 40 percent of the bowlers in the Regular Division, 40 percent in the Standard Division and 20 percent in the Classified Division. This is based on the research that led to the divisions in 2017 and 2018, which was supported by on-lane data at the 2017 event.

6. Q: Why did the average breakdown for divisions change?

A: Changing to the Open Championships tournament average and adjusting the entering averages of those without a tournament average to Sport also meant looking at how the divisional breakdown would be affected.

The three-division structure was based on league and tournament average data that would put approximately 20 percent of the competitors in the Classified Division and 40 percent in the Standard and Regular Divisions.

With the move to Sport averages, and adjusting down non-Sport averages, the divisional breakdown needed to shift to maintain the 20-40-40 participation breakdown and allow bowlers to compete against peers of similar skill.

7. Q: What will the breakdowns for each event be in 2019?

A: A look at the entering averages for each division:

| Division | Team | Doubles | Singles/All-Events |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Regular | 876 and above | 351 and above | 176 and above |
| Standard | 776-875 | 311-350 | 156-175 |
| Classified | 775 and below | 310 and below | 155 and below |

8. Q: Why aren't the revisions being instituted for 2018?

A: USBC is aware the revisions to the average breakdown of divisions and restrictions of national team members means some teams will need to revise their lineups. Teams started registering for the 2018 event more than a year ago, so it was not an option to begin the revisions until 2019.

9. Q: Why change the restriction concerning how many bowlers from the division above can participate on a team?

A: USBC needed more data to see if division integrity could be achieved equally as well by allowing two bowlers from the division above, which it did. Allowing this change also provides added flexibility for captains to construct teams.

10. Q: If USBC knows allowing two bowlers accomplishes the desired goals, why not institute the change for 2018?

A: It goes back to the fact teams started registering for the 2018 event more than a year ago. Some teams could make the adjustment for this year, but others possibly could not, so it was decided all revisions should start in 2019.

11. Q: Why limit collegiate bowlers by restricting what division they can bowl in or how many can be on a team?

A: Bowlers who compete at the collegiate level have demonstrated they have the skills to compete at the highest levels in our sport. Their abilities and experience certainly put them on par with those in the Regular Division at the Open Championships.

12. Q: Why are past/present members of Junior Team USA, Team USA and members of other national teams restricted to Regular Division and restricted in the number of such members on one team?

A: National team members are considered the top athletes in their sport. Their skill puts them in the same category as professionals and they should have the same standards at the Open Championships.

13. Q: With 60 lanes at the South Point Bowling Plaza in Las Vegas, why not return to the squad schedule used in 2017?

A: Instituting the five-squad schedule being used in 2018 maximizes capacity. It allows more

teams to choose their preferred dates and minimizes the potential for bowlers to be turned away.

14. Q: What are the additional parameters for determining team composition, and what is the rationale for them?

A: Please carefully review Rule 23 to become familiar with any additional parameters regarding team composition. These parameters are in place because average manipulation always is a concern in tournament bowling. While there is no perfect solution, USBC is committed to taking steps to level the playing field. Limiting the ability for groups of participants to “bowl down” a division will help.

15. Q: If I average 176 or above, does that mean I can't bowl with my friends and family who have lower averages?

A: A bowler can move to a lower division for team competition, provided the team meets the combined average requirements. In 2019, a Classified Team can include up to two Standard bowlers, and a Standard team can have up to two bowlers who individually qualify for the Regular Division, if they meet the combined average requirements. A bowler in the Regular Division, however, may not compete on a Classified team.

16. Q: What are the prize ratios for 2019?

A: The prize ratio will be 1:5 for every event in all divisions.

17. Q: Will the lane conditions for the Open Championships be revealed during the event?

A: As in 2017 and 2018, we will not reveal, post or discuss the oil patterns until the conclusion of the event. By not revealing the pattern, the focus of the event is about skill and shot making, rather than pattern analysis and manipulation strategy.

18. Q: Will the Open Championships team pattern still be used for practice sessions and the doubles/singles pattern used for the Bowlers Journal Championships?

A: Yes, but the number of entries is limited. Team practice and the Bowlers Journal are an important part of the Open Championships experience, and both are options available to everyone. Bowlers Journal entries will continue to be limited to eight in each event they are eligible.

19. Q: How will USBC protect the pattern information and address the conspiracy fears that someone bowling the event will have the information?

A: Only USBC executive staff and those directly responsible for the development of the lane conditions will know the oil patterns. This will be limited to Executive Director Chad Murphy, Senior Director of Tournament Programming Greg Moore, Open Championships Tournament Director Duane Hagen, and USBC's pattern development consultant Nicholas Hoagland. Those running the lanes in the venue will not know the patterns.

20. Q: Where will the patterns be posted?

A: The patterns will be available on BOWL.com after the event. We welcome use of previous patterns for leagues, tournaments and practice.

21. Q: Will the tournament video policy change in 2019?

A: No. For details, visit BOWL.com/OpenChamp.

22. Q: Will the tournament entry fees increase in 2019?

A: No, entry fees will not increase in 2019. USBC has not increased entry fees since the 2013 event, and last year eliminated fees for premium squad times.

23. How can I provide feedback to USBC?

A: We are open to your ideas. Please send comments and suggestions to:
usbcopenchampionships@bowl.com.