

YOUTH BOWLING

# HIGH SCHOOLER SHINES IN FRESHMAN SEASON

**A SEASON** when everything falls into place for an athlete usually ends up being described as a "career season."

While it's way too early to put that label on an athlete who just completed his freshman year in high school, it would be fair to say Brandon Bonta, 15, of Wichita, Kansas, has had a pretty tremendous year.

In his freshman year at Wichita Northwest High School,

he helped his team to the Kansas State 6A High School Bowling

Championships team title. As an individual, he took second. His performance earned him selection to the All-Kansas first team.

"Starting the high school season, I really didn't know what to expect," Bonta said. "Most of the other teams in the past have been really good, but they never pulled out a state championship. For us to pull out one, it was really cool."

His performance earned him selection to the Dexter High School All-American Team, with the team honored during the Opening Ceremony at the 2018 Junior Gold Championships. He is only the third freshman to make the team



**Brandon Bonta**

in its 13-year history, joining Gregory Pizl II (2005-2006), the first freshman to earn the honor, and Sydney Brummett, who matched the feat in 2010-2011.

"That was crazy, because I forgot about it," Bonta said about being nominated to the team. "Everyone always talks about seniors, juniors always winning that award. It was re-

ally exciting and a good reward to start off Junior Gold."

Bonta also receives a little assistance from USBC Hall of Fame member Rick Steelsmith, who Brandon's father, Kelly, has been friends with for about 30 years.

"He's been my coach for five years now," Bonta said of Steelsmith. "He's helped me with a lot of things since I was

like 10 years old, from knowing how to shoot spares to now different hand positions. He's taught me a lot and has got me to this point"

Steelsmith has nothing but praise for his young pupil.

"He's just super talented, and he's a hard worker," Steelsmith said. "He practices with a purpose and a plan, he's out there trying to learn and trying to get better every day. He loves the game and puts everything into it."

Steelsmith said Bonta has that special "it or whatever you call it" that helps an athlete to excel.

"He's not afraid, he loves doing it, it's just a passion for the sport," Steelsmith said. "Over the years, even with the lessons we do, I have to remind myself that he's 15 and I can't believe some of the stuff we are working on. But, again, he just wants to keep getting better."

Bonta's success continued this past July in the Dallas area, where he competed in the Junior Gold Championships and sought to defend the USA Bowling National Championships U15 title he won last year with the team 3 Rights Make A Left.

The team was second in qualifying at the USA Bowling National Championships,

producing the first Baker 300 game in the event's history, but was able to capture its second national title with a 3-2 victory in the best-of-five title match, which aired on CBS Sports Network.

His teammate on 3 Rights Make a Left, Spencer Robarge, who won the U12 title at the 2015 Junior Gold Championships, said Bonta's consistency is the most impressive part of his game.

"The way he gets his hand behind it and around it, is really good," Robarge said. "He's always able to save himself with just his ball roll. He could have a 170 look on a pair and shoot 220 just because of the way he gets out of it. He's able to control the pocket."

After making the television show for USA Bowling, Bonta still had the Junior Gold



**Bonta teamed with Silas Limes, Spencer Robarge and Piper Reams to win the USA Bowling U15 national title.**

Championships to finish. In eighth place after the advancers round, he would win four consecutive matches to earn the

No. 1 seed for the Junior Gold Championships U15 TV show.

While he lost to Silas Lira of Tampa, Florida, 197-181, in a tightly contested title match, Bonta enjoyed the opportunity to bowl for a national title.

"I've made match play twice (at Junior Gold), but never won a match," Bonta said. "I always went loss, loss. Getting to win four matches this year, getting on TV and to have one shot at the Junior Gold title was pretty cool. Sometimes, the breaks don't go your way, so you just live through it and go on to the next mountain."

The next mountain, though, won't have to do with bowling, at least for a few weeks.

"I'll probably take a week or two off from bowling, get my mind off bowling, and get

## MAKING THE TEAM

Several of the Junior Team USA and U15 Development members for the 2019 team are determined at Junior Gold. A look at the teams:

### Junior Team Girls

- Kaitlyn Eder, Lithia, Fla.
- Olivia Farwell, Elizabethtown, Pa.
- Addison Herzberg, Wichita, Kan.
- Julia Huren, Westland, Mich.
- Kamerin Peters, Toms River, N.J.
- Adel Wahner, Las Cruces, N.M.

### Junior Team Boys

- Ryan Burton, Los Altos, Calif.
- Jacob Mullen, Bellingham, Wash.
- Anthony Neuer, Lewisburg, Pa.
- Justin O'Shaughnessy, Canton, Mich.
- Cortez Schenck, Phoenix
- Chad Stephen, Flint, Mich.

### U15 Developmental Team

- Jaelle Hamman, Jerrell, Texas
- Annalise OBryant, Ball Ground, Ga.
- Deo Benard, Rio Rancho, N.M.
- Silas Lira, Tampa, Fla.

ready for school," Bonta said. "Basically, the next thing is just to do well in school. School comes before bowling all the time."

TECHNOLOGY

# SEASON OF CHANGE

**THE START** of the 2018-2019 bowling season on Aug. 1 is significant because it marks the start of new standards in the sport of bowling related to equipment specifications.

The evolution of the balls we use, the lanes on which we bowl and the oil patterns used on those lanes has led to many discussions about where the sport is headed in terms of technology. After three years of research to determine the impact of technology on the

sport, USBC released the work of the USBC Equipment and Specifications team earlier this year.

The research showed ongoing technology advancements and the interaction of those factors – the balls, lanes and oil patterns – created an integrity risk for the sport. The Bowling Technology Study compiled the research that included an examination of the bowling ball, looking at Radius of Gyration (RG) and Differential RG, and how coverstocks absorb lane oil. It also had results from independent surveys, focus groups and other information.

The Equipment and Specifications Committee determined specification adjustments to bowling balls were needed and implemented dates for the specifications to take place over the course of the next two



seasons, starting this season.

The key change bowlers must understand is that effective Aug. 1, 2020, bowling balls no longer can have a balance hole. In the simplest of terms, if you have a hole in your bowling ball as of that date, it must be used on every delivery. If you have any finger holes or a

thumb hole not used on the delivery, it is classified as a weight hole, and, therefore, the ball would be illegal.

While the specification eliminating the use of balance holes goes into effect Aug. 1, 2020, starting this season bowlers can begin the transition.

With the start of the 2018-

2019 season on Aug. 1, bowling balls weighing more than 10 pounds will be allowed to have up to three ounces of static side, thumb or finger weight and up to three ounces of top or bottom weight, provided the ball does not have a balance hole.

Balance holes, or weight holes, are used to correct static imbalance in bowling balls. Modern use of balance holes not only corrects static imbalance but also can increase Differential RG by as much as 0.021 inches, over one-third of the manufacturing specification range. By allowing up to three ounces of static side, thumb and finger weight – which is up from one ounce – and up to three ounces of top weight, there no longer will be the need for a balance hole to correct static imbalance in the typical ball layout.

So, anyone purchasing a new bowling ball for the season should talk with their pro shop professionals about how the ball should be drilled. You can opt to stay within the current static weight specification (one ounce for finger, thumb or side weight) with a balance hole, or go with the new specification and not have to plug a balance hole by Aug. 1, 2020.

Visit [BOWL.com/BowlingTechnologyStudy](http://BOWL.com/BowlingTechnologyStudy) for USBC's research and more about the specification changes.

## BOWLING BALL OPTIONS

Starting this season, bowlers can begin to adjust their bowling balls, so they can be ready when balance holes are eliminated starting Aug. 1, 2020. The two options when drilling a new ball (for balls weighing more than 10 pounds):

### New Specification

- Finger, thumb, side weight – Up to 3 ounces
- Top/bottom weight – Up to 3 ounces
- Weight hole is not allowed
- No changes needed by Aug. 1, 2020

### Current Specification

- Finger, thumb, side weight – Up to 1 ounce
- Top/bottom weight – Up to 3 ounces
- Weight hole is allowed
- Must eliminate weight hole by Aug. 1, 2020

# USBC QUICK STRIKES

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS

## U.S. Open to feature several lane patterns

The 2018 U.S. Open, set for Oct. 24-31 at Northrock Lanes in Wichita, Kansas, will use four lane patterns and competitors will compete on fresh lane conditions each squad. Each of the three qualifying rounds will have a different lane pattern (three rounds, three patterns), and the final pattern will be used for the Cashers' Round, match play and the live stepladder finals on CBS Sports Network.

The U.S. Open, a collaborative effort of the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America and USBC and a major on the Professional Bowlers Association Tour, is one of the most challenging events in the sport of bowling. In 2018, Rhino Page of Orlando, Florida, will seek to defend his first career major title.

## Junior Team USA wins gold at World Youth Championships

The Junior Team USA girls won the coveted team gold medal at the 2018 World Bowling Youth Championships at Thunderbolt Lanes



**Junior Team USA girls: Caitlyn Johnson, Mabel Cummins, Taylor Bailey, Breanna Clemmer**

in Allen Park, Michigan, for the first time since 2012. After losing the first game in the title match, 205-180, Junior Team USA responded by winning the next two games, 214-181 and 230-175, in the modified Baker format.

All four team members – Taylor Bailey, Breanna Clemmer, Mabel Cummins, Caitlyn

## Combine a sellout for eighth consecutive year

The Bowling Combine for College Prospects, which provides student-athletes an opportunity for evaluation and education, was held last month and had a sold-out field for the eighth consecutive year. Held at the International Training and Research Center in Arlington, Texas, it provides attendees with an objective analysis of their abilities after evaluation of sport-specific skills.

College coaches in attendance had the chance to meet with prospective bowlers and receive evaluation data on student-athletes. Coaches who could not attend are able to access video coverage and receive certain data for a nominal fee. Visit [BOWL.com/Combine](http://BOWL.com/Combine) for details on the program.



Johnson – were competing in the World Youth Championships for the first time.

Cortez Schenck of Phoenix won the Masters in the only medal-round appearance for the week for the Junior Team USA boys.

## USBC Board has three new members

The USBC Board of Directors for the 2018-2019 season, which started Aug. 1, has three new directors.

Josie Barnes of Nashville, Tennessee, was elected by Team USA athletes earlier this year, while Dennis Hacker of Longtown, Missouri, is in his first year after his election by the delegates at the 2018 USBC Convention. Randy Thompson of Des Moines, Iowa, is the president of the Bowling Pro-

prietors' Association of America and takes over for previous BPAA president Nancy Schenk.

Karl Kielich of El Paso, Texas, and Karen Jost of Tumwater, Washington, started their first seasons as USBC president and vice president, respectively, for the 2018-2019 season.

## Team USA women at international events

Members of Team USA will have a busy schedule late in the year. On the heels of the Professional Women's Bowling Association Tour season, Sydney Brummett, Liz Kuhlkin, Shannon O'Keefe, Missy Parkin, Shannon Pluhowsky, and Jordan Richard will represent the United States at the 2018 Pan American Bowling Confederation Women's Championships, Sept. 22-29, in the Dominican Republic.

O'Keefe will be joined by Kyle Troup, in Las Vegas on Nov. 4-11 for the 2018 QubicaAMF Bowling World Cup. O'Keefe and Troup earned selection as the U.S. representatives for the event by winning

## CALENDAR

**Sept. 16-19, 2018**

**PWBA Tour Championship**  
Richmond Raceway Complex  
Richmond, Va.

**Sept. 22-29, 2018**

**PABCON Women's Championships**  
Dominican Republic

**Oct. 18-26, 2018**

**PABCON Champion of Champions**  
Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

**Oct. 24-31, 2018**

**U.S. Open**  
Northrock Lanes  
Wichita, Kan.

**Nov. 4-11, 2018**

**QubicaAMF World Cup**  
Sam's Town Bowling Center  
Las Vegas

**Nov. 23-Dec. 5, 2018**

**World Bowling Men's Championships**  
South China Athletic Association  
Bowling Centre  
Hong Kong

**Jan. 2-7, 2019**

**USBC Team USA Trials**  
Gold Coast Bowling Center  
Las Vegas

**March 8-10, 2019**

**Intercollegiate Team and Singles Sectionals**  
Addison, Ill.; Dallas; Smyrna, Tenn.; Stratford, N.J.

**March 9-June 29, 2019**

**USBC Open Championships**  
South Point Bowling Plaza  
Las Vegas

**March 15-19, 2019**

**USBC Senior Queens**  
Gold Coast Hotel and Casino  
Las Vegas

**March 26-April 1, 2019**

**USBC Masters**  
Gold Coast Bowling Center  
Las Vegas

**April 15-20, 2019**

**Intercollegiate Team and Singles Championships**  
Poelking Lanes South  
Dayton, Ohio

**April 20-June 29, 2019**

**USBC Women's Championships**  
Northrock Lanes  
Wichita, Kan.

Go to [BOWL.com/Tournaments](http://BOWL.com/Tournaments) for complete information.

the USBC Team USA Trials.

Longtime Team USA members Kelly Kulick and Danielle McEwan will be in Rio De Janeiro from Oct. 18-26 for the PABCON Champion of Champions.