



# 2025-26 ILLINOIS USBC YOUTH SCRATCH CHAMPIONSHIPS STATE RULES and FORMAT

**1.** This tournament is certified by the USBC and shall be governed by the rules of the USBC. Tournament Certification number is 05037.

**2. DIVISIONS:** Competition will be held in the following divisions. ALL competition will be on a scratch basis. **Bowlers MUST compete at the state tournament in the same division they qualified through at the league and zone level.**

- U8 Division – Boys/Girls – Birth date is 8/1/2017 or later
- U10 Division – Boys/Girls – Birth date is 8/1/2015 through 7/31/2017
- U12 Division – Boys/Girls – Birth date is 8/1/2013 through 7/31/2015
- U14 Division – Boys/Girls – Birth date is 8/1/2011 through 7/31/2013
- U16 Division – Boys/Girls – Birth date is 8/1/2009 through 7/31/2011
- U18 Division – Boys/Girls – Birth date is 8/1/2007 through 7/31/2009

**3. Participation** in the State Finals is a one-time entry. If an individual qualified and cannot participate in the State competition, replacements will be eligible based on order of finish in the previous Zone competition.

Advancers out of the league level must remain in the division they qualified during all subsequent levels. If a bowler advances out of league level in more than one state/zone, the bowler must declare one state/zone to continue competing before the next competition level. Participation in any level of competition past the league level in more than one state/zone will result in automatic disqualification from both tournaments.

**4. ADVANCEMENT RATIO:** The advancement ratio from **Zone** competition to **State** competition is **one (1) for every five (5)** entries per division, or major fraction thereof, including last place ties. In all cases, **at least six persons per division shall advance** to the State Finals from each division in each zone tournament. The advancement ratio shall be applied uniformly to all divisions.

**5. STATE COMPETITION** will take place at

- **U8, U10 and U12 Divisions – March 27-29, 2026 at The Cherry Bowl, Rockford, IL**
- **U14, U16 and U18 Divisions – April 10-12, 2026 at Bel-Air Bowl, Belleville, IL**
- Squad times at the State Tournament will be assigned by the State Director.
- Competition shall be conducted in twelve (12) divisions as listed in Rule 2.

**6. ENTRY FEE** for all divisions is:

<b>U8 and U10 Divisions</b>	<b>U12 Division</b>	<b>U14, U16 and U18 Divisions</b>
<b>Expense \$25.00</b>	<b>Expense \$35.00</b>	<b>Expense \$45.00</b>
TOTAL: \$25.00	TOTAL - \$35.00	TOTAL: \$45.00

**7. ENTRY CLOSING DATE:** **MARCH 5, 2026** for U8, U10 and U12 divisions and **March 19, 2026** for U14, U16 and U18 Divisions.

**8.** Paperwork will be emailed to each bowler who, in turn, then must do the following:

- Verify and/or supply all personal information requested on the personal information form
- Return verification form and entry fees to the State Director by the deadlines indicated in Rule 7.

## 9. **TOURNAMENT FORMAT**

**U8 and U10 Divisions** will bowl either March 27, 28 or 29, 2026 at Lakeside Rec Center in Mundelein. All bowlers will bowl three (3) games, staying on the same pair of lanes. Position in standings will be determined by total scratch pinfall. Scholarships for tied positions will be added and divided equally.

### **U12 Division**

- Qualifying rounds will bowl March 27 or 28, 2026. All bowling will be at Lakeside Rec Center in Mundelein.
- Qualifying round will consist of four games, moving after two (2) games.
- The field will be cut and advancers will bowl at 8:30 AM on Sunday based on qualifying round scores. The exact number of advancers in each division will be based on participation in each division with a minimum 1:4 ratio. All ties for the final spot(s) will advance.
- Semi Final round will consist of four (4) games on March 29, 2026 at 8:30 AM. Position in standings will be determined by total scratch pins. **QUALIFYING PINFALL WILL BE CARRIED FORWARD TO SEMI FINALS.**
- Upon the completion of four semi final games, total score (8 games) will determine the top 4 bowlers in each division that will qualify for the match play final bracket round. **PIN COUNT WILL NOT CARRY FORWARD FOR THE MATCH PLAY BRACKET FINALS.** In case of a tie for 4<sup>th</sup> place, those tied will bowl a 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> frame roll-off. The roll-off will take place on a pair of lanes decided by the tournament director. Should a tie still exist, a one ball roll-off will be bowled on the same pair of lanes to break the tie. The bowler with the highest game in the tournament shall determine starting lane and order for the roll-off. Both competitors will begin the roll-off on the same lane. The competitors will alternate lanes in the same bowling order until the tie is broken.
- The top 4 bowlers in each division will then bowl a single-elimination bracket format. In case of a tie for any position, seeding for position in the match play bracket will be determined by the highest game bowled for the tournament. If there is a tie for a high game, each subsequent high game will be used until the tie is broken. Each match will consist of two games, with total pinfall determining the winner. The higher seed will have starting lane choice for the first game. The player starting on the left lane will start the match. If a tie exists at the conclusion of a two-game match, a one ball roll-off will be bowled on the same pair of lanes to break the tie. The higher seed will determine lane and order. Both bowlers will bowl on the same lane and if still tied, will alternate lanes until tie is broken.

### **U14, U16 and U18 Divisions**

- Qualifying rounds will bowl April 10 or 11, 2026. All bowling will be at Bel-Air Bowl in Belleville.
- Qualifying round will consist of six games, moving after every game.
- The field will be cut and advancers will bowl at 8:30 AM on Sunday based on qualifying round scores. The exact number of advancers in each division will be based on participation in each division with a minimum 1:4 ratio. All ties for the final spot(s) will advance.
- Semi Final round will consist of five (5) games, moving after every game, on April 12, 2026 at 8:30 AM. Position in standings will be determined by total scratch pins. **QUALIFYING PINFALL WILL BE CARRIED FORWARD TO SEMI FINALS.**
- Upon the completion of five semi final games, total score (11 games) will determine the top 8 bowlers in each division that will qualify for the match play final bracket round. **PIN COUNT WILL NOT CARRY FORWARD FOR THE MATCH PLAY BRACKET FINALS.** In case of a tie for 8<sup>th</sup> place, those tied will bowl a 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> frame roll-off. The roll-off will take place on a pair of lanes decided by the tournament director. Should a tie still exist, a one ball roll-off will be bowled on the same pair of lanes to break the tie. The bowler with the highest game in the tournament shall determine starting lane and order for the roll-off. Both competitors will begin the roll-off on the same lane. The competitors will alternate lanes in the same bowling order until the tie is broken.
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will start the match. If a tie exists at the conclusion of a two-game match, a one ball roll-off will be bowled on the same pair of lanes to break the tie. The higher seed will determine lane and order. Both bowlers will bowl on the same lane and if still tied, will alternate lanes until tie is broken.

10. No substitutes will be permitted once the athletes have started tournament play; however, replacements may be used for bowlers not present 30 minutes prior to squad time. Replacements may only be used in the order of finish from the zone reports for 2025-26. Replacements in order must be called and decline before continuing down the list. Replacements must be from the same Zone as the "no-show" bowler. **Once a replacement has been made, the original bowler cannot be placed back into the tournament.**
11. The State Tournaments will be contested on a non 'house shot' condition as determined by the State YSC Director. The conditions will not be disclosed until after the tournament is completed.
12. No tobacco products or consumption of alcoholic beverages by guests or athletes shall be allowed on the concourse or in the settee area. No alcohol or tobacco products may be used by competitors while competition is in progress. No smoking will be allowed within the bowling center (Illinois State Law) or within 15 feet of any entrances.
13. **DRESS CODE:** Bowlers are required to wear suitable attire in good repair (i.e. no holes) while bowling in IL Youth Scratch Championship Tournaments. Bowling shoes must be worn. Participants in the IL Youth Scratch Championship Tournaments must be neat in both clothing and personal grooming and meet the following dress code rules:

#### What You CAN Wear

- All competitors must wear a shirt with a "butterfly" collar or mock collar. Mock collar must be a minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of one inch. All shirts must have finished sleeves for all competition. Females may wear a sleeveless shirt with a butterfly collar only if the sleeves are finished.
- T-shirts will be allowed provided they are those that have the bowling center logo, a USBC provided jersey or one purchased at our sales table (in zone or at the state tournament). T-Shirts as described earlier in this rule may be worn ONLY during qualifying rounds for the U12, U14, U16 and U18 Divisions.
- During the Sunday Semi Finals and Finals bowlers in the U12, U14, U16 and U18 Divisions **must** wear a shirt with a "butterfly" or mock or collar or a USBC Youth Jersey as stated above or bowling 'jersey'.
- Boys may wear slacks, jeans or "walking/golf style shorts. Slacks/shorts must not contain drawstring waists or elastic bottoms.
- Female participants may wear slacks, jeans, skirts, capris, skorts or walking shorts. All skirts, capris, skorts, or walking shorts must be below the competitor's fingertips when they are standing and their arms are hanging loosely at their side.

#### What You CANNOT Wear or Use

- Clothing depicting sex, gambling, tobacco products or alcoholic beverages. Bowling Manufacturers official shirts are acceptable.
- Hats/caps/headgear.
- Spandex, Yoga Pants, sweatpants, pants with draw strings, pants with holes in them and those made out of parachute-like or fleece material.
- Chains on clothing.
- Leather clothing including jackets while bowling.
- No electronic devices of any sort will be allowed in the bowling area.
- Gym Shorts, Athletic Shorts, Bicycle Shorts and other shorts that would not fit into a category that would be classified as 'walking' or 'golf' style. Any shorts/skorts/skirts/cullottes shorter than the fingertips when the arms are hanging naturally at the sides while standing.

**Dress Code at the State Finals will be strictly enforced. Any exceptions to the above must be approved by the tournament management prior to check-in. Coaches/Parents are asked to review the dress code for State Finals with bowlers.**

14. Competitors shall be allowed ten (10) minutes of practice on their starting pair. Practice will begin 10 minutes prior to the scheduled squad starting time. No practice will be allowed when moving lanes. Extreme

exceptions shall be determined by the tournament manager if a breakdown lasts more than 15 minutes in accordance with USBC Rules.

15. Bowlers arriving late shall begin play and the score shall count beginning with the frame being bowled once player is ready to bowl. Frames missed shall be credited with a zero. Frames may not be made-up. A bowler not present to bowl when it is his/her turn will be credited with a zero for that frame.
16. Only bowlers and tournament officials shall be permitted in the settee area.
17. Bowling balls must meet all USBC specifications as defined in the latest edition of the Equipment Specifications and Certification Manual. It is the player's responsibility to ensure all equipment is eligible for competition. Only balls that are on the USBC approved list and are product registered are allowed in competition. Tournament Staff reserves the right to check equipment for compliance at any time. Bowlers must use the bowling balls in such a manner that they comply with the Equipment Specifications. No balance holes are permitted. All holes drilled must be used for gripping purposes on every delivery. No more than three (3) ounces of weight on any halves of the ball. Failure to properly use the equipment will be ball removal from competition for 1<sup>st</sup> violation, forfeiture of game for 2<sup>nd</sup> violation and disqualification for 3<sup>rd</sup> violation.
18. Altering the surface of a bowling ball by the use of abrasives, cleaners or polish is prohibited during competition (**defined as when the first ball is thrown for score in the whole squad**). In addition, no substance may be placed on the outer surface of the bowling ball. The outer surface of the bowling ball may only be cleaned with a dry towel once the bowler has begun competition. Penalty for any infraction of this rule or any USBC Rule 18 infraction will be the immediate removal of that bowling ball for the duration of competition. Repeat offenses may be cause for forfeiture of the game (i.e. zero for the game).
19. Claims for errors in scoring or general playing rules must be made to the tournament manager no later than the start of the next block. Questionable errors shall be decided upon by the tournament manager and any committee members present. All other protests must be confirmed in writing to the tournament manager within 72 hours. Each protest under this rule must be specific in itself.
20. Symbolic awards will be given as follows: Lapel pins will be given to all State participants. Pennants will be presented to the winner of each division.
21. There is NO guaranteed first prize. Prizes will be based on a percentage basis in a ratio of one scholarship for every five paid entrants or major fraction thereof. At a minimum, in the divisions that bring bowlers back on Sunday, we will award a scholarship to every bowler that comes back on Sunday. Total prize funds for each division will be proportional to the number of participants in each division including any excess over expenses collected for the state tournament in that division. Any SMART unassigned funds used to supplement the prize fund will also be based on the proportional number of entries in each division. ALL prizes will be deposited into the USBC SMART fund in accordance with their rules.
22. The first-place winners of the U12, U14, U16 and U18 divisions for both Girls and Boys will advance to the 2026 Junior Gold Championships on July 11-18 in Minneapolis, MN, provided they have not already qualified for the 2026 USBC Junior Gold Championships through another tournament. If this is the case the highest finishing bowler in that division who has not already earned a spot in the 2026 Junior Gold Championships will be awarded the spot. In the event that a qualifier needs to be replaced and there is a tie, to determine who will advance to the Junior Gold Championships, the high game from the qualifying scores will determine who will advance. If the high score for each is the same, the next subsequent high score will be used until the tie is broken.  
They must be USBC Junior Gold members to advance to the Junior Gold Championships. Bowlers without a current Junior Gold membership must purchase one. IBC Youth will waive the \$250 (U16 & U18), \$200 (U14), and \$150 (U12) entry fee for these athletes. These athletes will compete for additional scholarships available to all athletes at the Junior Gold Championships, as well as other prizes and awards. All U.S. citizens are vying for a spot on USBC Junior Team USA 2027 to represent the United States in national and international competition. If the U12, U14, U16 or U18 Division Champion is unwilling to become a Junior Gold member, they will not advance to the Junior Gold Championships. However, the athlete will still retain the state/zone scholarship, but the berth to the Junior Gold Championships will be awarded to the next eligible athlete.

*The Illinois Youth Scratch Championships will also provide up to \$500.00 toward travel expenses for the 2026 USBC Junior Gold Championships to the first place finisher in each division. To receive this stipend the bowler/parents must submit receipts totaling at least \$500 in expenses incurred for the tournament trip for the bowler. If this bowler does not attend the 2026 Junior Gold Championships the stipend will be awarded to the highest finisher that does attend.*

23. All matters not covered by these rules and regulations shall be determined by the Illinois Youth Scratch Championships Tournament Committee. Failure to abide by any rules and regulations may lead to

disqualification from this event.

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All Results will be posted on the IL USBC Youth website: [www.ilusbcyouth.org](http://www.ilusbcyouth.org)