



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

1. This tournament is certified by the USBC and shall be governed by the rules of the USBC Youth Division - Certification number is 05038.
2. **DIVISIONS**: Competition will be held in the following divisions. Boys and Girls will be in separate divisions for each age group. ALL competition will be on a scratch basis

**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 Zone competition is a one-time entry. Any individual who attempts to bowl twice in the Zone competition **will** be disqualified from both competitions.
  - Bowlers will attempt to qualify at League Level based strictly on age. A bowler may opt to bowl in a higher age division as long as he/she declares this prior to the first league session and a “YOUTH SCRATCH CHAMPIONSHIPS WAIVER FORM” is completed prior to bowling. Once league level qualifying has started a bowler must stay in the division he/she is in based on age or opted to move to a higher division. In the event a bowler qualifies in more than one league in the same division, the bowler must advance from the league in which the highest series was bowled. For identical qualifying scores, the bowler will advance from the league where the first score was bowled. An individual advancing from leagues in more than one division must use the division they specified in the league they are advancing from using the highest score bowled as the division they will advance in. In the event of a tie the FIRST score bowled will determine the division advance. Bowlers who are not eligible for USBC Youth Membership cannot bowl.
  - If a bowler advances out of league competition 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 competition in more than one state/zone will result in automatic disqualification from all competition.
  - Replacements for zone will be eligible only based on order of finish in league level of competition. League coordinators must contact bowlers in the order of finish and receive a statement from all bowlers that do not want to advance prior to going on to the next bowler. **Once a replacement has been made, the original bowler cannot be placed back into the tournament.**

4. **LEAGUE COMPETITION** for the State of Illinois will take place on the following dates:

**OCTOBER 6 through OCTOBER 19, 2025**

If needed, the STATE DIRECTOR may grant changes in the qualifying dates to individual bowling centers, if dates for zone tournament cannot be met. ALL bowlers advancing to the zone tournament MUST have bowled in REGULAR league during the qualifying window. No pre-bowling or post-bowling allowed! Dates may not be moved such that some bowlers cannot bowl due to IHSA bowling.

5. **ADVANCEMENT RATIO**: The advancement ratio from **league** competition to **Zone** competition is **one (1) for every two (2)** entries per division, per league, or major fraction thereof, including last place ties. The base number for each division in league level is the number of league members that would have participated in that division (those that have bowled at least once prior to and including the window). In all cases **at least ten bowlers per division** shall be allowed to advance. The advancement ratio shall be applied uniformly to all divisions.
6. **ZONE COMPETITION**: Zone competition will take place at a bowling center chosen by the Illinois USBC Youth Scratch Championships Committee, in the State of Illinois. ***The Zone Tournament Manager for your area will advise you as to the location, squad dates and times for your area. Zone tournaments will typically be run in the following timeframe, however, check with your zone Tournament Manager for your exact dates.***
  - U8, U10 and U12 DIVISIONS: Weekends in January or early February, 2026**
  - U14, U16 and U18 DIVISIONS Weekends in late February or early March, 2026**

7. Zone tournaments will be conducted on a non 'house shot' pattern as determined by the State YSC Director. The Zone tournament condition will not be disclosed until all zone tournaments are completed.
8. **ENTRY CLOSING DATES:** The entry closing dates for the Zone tournament are as follows:

U8, U10 and U12 Divisions -- **NOVEMBER 14, 2025**

U14, U16 and U18 Divisions -- **DECEMBER 12, 2025**

League coaches must have the completed signed entries, worksheets and money to their Zone Tournament Manager by **NOVEMBER 14, 2025 for the U8, U10 and U12 Divisions and DECEMBER 12, 2025 for the U14, U16 and U18 Divisions. Bowlers cannot bowl in the Zone Tournament without the entry and fees being remitted to the Zone Tournament Manager prior to the tournament date. Entries received after these dates will be accepted space permitting.**

9. **ZONE TOURNAMENT FORMAT:**

**U8, U10 and U12 Divisions** will bowl three (3) games on one pair of lanes. Total scratch pinfall for three (3) games will determine advancers in each division.

**U14, U16 and U18 Divisions** will bowl four (4) games, changing lanes after two (2) games. Total scratch pinfall for four (4) games will determine advancers in each division.

10. **ENTRY FEE:** Entry fee for all divisions is \$20.00, plus lineage for the zone games bowled. Any checks returned from the bank for any reason will be subject to a \$25 service charge in addition to repaying the amount of the check in guaranteed funds prior to the bowler participating if this is discovered prior to bowling. Any repayment not made promptly will be turned over to USBC for collection and possible USBC penalties.

ALL DIVISIONS	
Expenses	\$5.00
State Scholarships	6.00
Zone Scholarships	9.00
Total:	\$20.00 plus applicable bowling fees for that zone

**The complete entry fee MUST be paid by all bowlers at the zone level – NO EXCEPTIONS.** The zone and state scholarship fees will be returned 100% to the bowlers. Once the entry fee has been paid and bowlers scheduled no refunds will be given.

11. Any bowler arriving late shall begin play once player is ready to bowl and the score shall count beginning with the frame then bowled. Frames missed shall be credited with a zero. A bowler not present to bowl when it is his/her turn may be credited with a zero for that frame.
12. Competitors shall be allowed ten (10) minutes of practice on their starting pair PRIOR to the scheduled squad starting time. No practice will be allowed when moving lanes. Extreme exceptions shall be determined by the tournament manager such as in the case of a breakdown that lasts over 15 minutes in accordance with USBC Rules.
13. Tobacco products or consumption of alcoholic beverages shall not be allowed by guests or athletes in the concourse or the settee area where the youth are bowling. Athletes may not use any alcohol or tobacco products during the course of the competition
14. Only bowlers and tournament officials shall be permitted in the settee area. Violations of this could result in the removal of the offending party from the bowling center for the duration of the tournament.
15. 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 use the equipment properly 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.
16. 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).

17. **DRESS CODE**: All bowlers must wear suitable attire in good repair (i.e. no holes). **Zone Tournament Managers will have the final say on Zone Tournament dress code enforcement.**

Male participants may wear slacks, jeans or "walking/golf style" shorts. Slacks must not contain drawstring waists or elastic bottoms. Jeans are permitted.

Female participants may wear slacks, jeans, skirts, culottes, skorts or walking shorts. All skirts, culottes, skorts, or walking shorts must extend past the fingertips when they are standing with their arms are loosely hanging at their side.

**What NOT to Wear or Use !!**

- Clothing depicting sex, tobacco products, gambling or alcoholic beverages
- Hats/caps/headgear
- Fleece, parachute material, or spandex
- Warm-up suits or clothes with drawstrings at the waist or elastic/Velcro at the ankles
- 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.
- No electronics of any sort will be allowed in the bowling area

**Coaches are asked to review the dress code with bowlers who advance to the Zone Finals**

18. **SUBSTITUTIONS**: No substitutes will be permitted once athletes have started tournament play. Replacements may be used for bowlers not present 30 minutes prior to squad time. Replacements must be from the same league and division as the "no show" bowler and must follow the order of advancement within that league. Bowlers unable to bowl in the Zone must notify the Zone Tournament Manager and your league coordinator at least 48 hours in advance so a replacement can be called. All schedule changes are made at the discretion of the Zone Tournament Manager. **Once a replacement has been made, the original bowler cannot be placed back into the tournament.**
19. Symbolic awards will be given as follows: First, Second and Third place medallions in each division. Lapel pins will be given to all Zone participants.
20. Zone Scholarships will be given as follows: One (1) out of five (5) bowlers (or greater fraction) with a minimum of two (2) in each division will be awarded scholarships based on the number of entrants in each division in each zone. Scholarships in each division at the zone level will be directly proportional to the division's participation total relative to the total zone entries in that zone. Funds for zone scholarships may come from entry fees and other fund raising ventures at the zone level. Any moneys collected in a given zone from fund raising and that specified as zone scholarship portion of the entry fee will stay in that zone and be added to that zone's scholarship fund.
21. Claims for errors in scoring or general playing rules must be made to the Tournament Manager as soon as noticed. Standings will stand as posted on the website if no needed corrections are indicated within 72 hours of posting. The Tournament Manager and State Director shall decide upon questionable situations. All other protests must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Manager within 72 hours of the conclusion of bowling. Each protest under this rule must be specific in itself.
22. Advancement ratio from Zone competition to the State Finals is **at least one (1) for every five (5) entries** per division, or major fraction thereof, including last place ties. **In all cases at least 6 persons per division shall advance to State Finals.** The advancement ratio shall be applied uniformly to all divisions.
23. The next level of competition (State Finals) will take place as follows:
- **U8, U10 and U12 Divisions The Cherry Bowl, Rockford March 27-29, 2026**
  - **U14, U16 and U18 Divisions – Bel-Air Bowl, Belleville April 10-12, 2026**
24. All matters not covered by these rules and regulations shall be determined by the Illinois USBC Youth Scratch Championships Tournament Committee. The IL USBC Youth Scratch Championships Tournament Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any participant.

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