

# **NATIONAL BOWLING LEAGUE BY-LAWS**

## **2023-2024 (Scratch)**

### **RULE-1: LEAGUE ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

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The NATIONAL BOWLING LEAGUE (The League) shall be sanctioned with the UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS (USBC) through the BETHLEHEM AREA USBC (BA-USBC). The League abides by USBC rules and regulations unless otherwise stated herein.

The League's membership will elect the Officers at the annual membership meeting held in August. The League Secretary/Treasurer shall publish the anticipated date of the annual membership meeting in the year-end banquet brochure. The League Secretary/Treasurer may make other notifications regarding the annual membership meeting as the season start date approaches.

The management of the League shall be vested in the Board of Directors (Board), which shall consist of the four (4) elected Officers (President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer) and the six Team Captains for the current season and any active member with 20 or more years membership in the league (the "League Elders").

The Board favors meeting in person, however may conduct business using electronic mail or conference call, if deemed appropriate.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of the Board must be present to constitute a quorum. All actions taken by the Board require a majority vote of the quorum.

The Board will review the by-laws at least annually and revise where necessary based on a majority vote of the quorum.

The Board has sole responsibility for interpretation and application of the by-laws. At any time, a League member in good standing may request an interpretation of the by-laws by the Board. The Board must respond to the request within two weeks of receipt. The response of the Board will be final - - there will be no appeals allowed.

### **RULE-2: SCHEDULE**

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The League shall consist of six (6) teams with a playing strength of four (4) men. A League match consists of three games of head-to-head competition between two teams. The team on the odd numbered lanes is considered the "Visitors" and will put their lineup down first for each match. The team on the even numbered lanes is considered the "Home Team" and will put their lineup down after the Visitors team.

The League will bowl on Monday for thirty (30) weeks, commencing on a Monday in September as determined at the annual membership meeting. Practice begins at 6:30 and match play begins at 6:40 PM. Competition begins on the first night of the regular season.

The League schedule will be divided into thirds with each third consisting of ten (10) regular matches. Each team will play every other team twice in each third with both teams being the Visitors and Home Team once each third.

### **RULE-3: FEES**

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The amount to be paid by each bowler during the season shall be determined at the annual membership meeting and will include:

- Annual USBC and BA-USBC dues (set independent of the League);
- Annual SOKOLS dues (set independent of the League);
- Weekly fees established by the League to cover lineage and other league costs
- Other League fees as determined by the Board.

Weekly fees are established at the annual membership meeting. For the 2022-2023 season, the weekly fees are set at \$20.00. All active bowlers are responsible for paying their weekly dues in full each week.

In addition to the weekly fees, each active bowler is required to pay the following within the first 3 weeks of the season:

- Annual USBC and BA-USBC dues (\$13.00 and \$5.00 respectively);
- Annual SOKOLS dues (\$10.00 per returning member, \$20.00 per new member);
- A pre-payment for the last two weeks of bowling (\$40.00). If a bowler is in good financial standing prior to the next-to-the last week, this payment will be used to pay for the last two weeks of the regular season. If a bowler is dismissed prior to that time for lack of payment, this advanced payment will be used to offset any bowler's arrears.

All bowlers are required to pay their annual dues and weekly fees as set forth above. The Board reserves the right to take action against any bowler who fails to pay the annual dues and pre-payment within the first three weeks or, at any time during the season, is three weeks in arrears for weekly fees. This may include:

- Non-refund of the two-week prepayment;
- Retention of any accumulated pin money at the end of the season;
- Dismissal from the League;
- Notification to USBC under USBC Rule 115b, which may result in suspension of membership in USBC until League arrears are paid in full, and;
- Refusal to allow the bowler to return to the league.

### **RULE-4: RESPONSIBILITIES OF SECRETARY/TREASURER**

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The League Secretary/Treasurer shall be responsible for:

- Updating and providing individual and team standing sheets on a weekly basis;
- Preparing minutes for the annual membership meeting;
- Revising League by-laws, as directed by the Board;
- Maintaining the League's website with all relevant and important information;
- The deposit and disbursement of funds, as necessary. Keeping a record of same (League account handbook);
- Reconcile monthly bank statements with the League account handbook;

- Presenting a year-end income and expense report at the annual membership meeting;
- Preparing a proposed budget for the upcoming season.

In return for these services, the Secretary/Treasurer shall not be required to pay weekly fees for the season. The Secretary/Treasurer is still required to pay any USBC, BA-USBC or SOKOL dues.

## **RULE-5: LEAGUE FUNDS**

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The Secretary/Treasurer shall maintain a bank account in the name of The League at a bank (currently EMBASSY BANK) in which all fees, dues and other funds are to be deposited.

The President must make periodic reviews of the bank statements and the Secretary/Treasurer's account handbook (currently done monthly with the arrival of bank statements).

## **RULE-6: LEAGUE PRIZES**

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To qualify for high league/flight average awards, a bowler must bowl more than two-thirds (66.7%) of the season's games (currently at least 60 games).

The following major individual prizes shall be awarded; however due to the "equity act", only one major prize can be won per bowler:

- High League Average: \$50.00
- 2nd High League Average: \$20.00
- High League Triple: \$25.00
- 2nd High League Triple: \$15.00
- High League Single: \$20.00
- 2nd High League Single: \$10.00

Other individual prizes awarded are:

- High Flight Average: \$20.00 (\*)
- High Flight Triple: \$10.00
- 2nd High Flight Triple: \$5.00
- High Flight Single: \$10.00
- 2nd High Flight Single: \$5.00

(\*) - Flight of bowler achieving high league average receives no high flight average prize.

The following prizes shall be awarded as follows to any team fielding a legal line-up:

- Team High Triple: \$7.00 per team member

- 2nd Team High Triple: \$3.00 per team member
- Team High Single: \$4.00 per team member
- 2nd Team High Single: \$3.00 per team member
- Team Thirds Champion: \$8.00 per team member
- League Champion: \$10.00 and plaque per team member

The League may pay individual point money (a.k.a. pin money) at the end of the season after all League bills are paid. The amount of individual point money will be determined annually by the Secretary/Treasurer who will ensure that there is enough money remaining in the League's bank account to pay the next season's USBC, BA-USBC and SOKOL dues.

The Treasurer/Secretary shall have discretion to conduct a jackpot night on the last night of the season in accordance with past practices.

## **RULE-7: LEAGUE AVERAGES**

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**Entry Average** - The Entry Average for a bowler returning from the previous season will be their previous season's final Current Average. The Entry Average for all other bowlers will be established at the discretion of the Board prior to or during the annual membership meeting using all reasonably-available information.

**Vacancy Average** - If, after all reasonable efforts have been made, the Secretary determines at the time of the annual membership meeting that there will be less than 24 players available for the current season, the Secretary shall determine the Vacancy Average for any vacancy in the league for the purpose of team drafting. This Vacancy Average shall be equal to the bowling average of the bottom six (6) returning bowler averages from the previous season.

If, for any reason, a bowler's position on a team becomes vacant during the season, his Vacancy Average shall be his Current Average at the time his position becomes vacant.

**Current Average** - Until nine (9) games have been completed, the bowler's Current Average is his Entry Average. After nine (9) games are bowled in the current season and for the rest of the season, the Secretary will compute the bowler's Current Average on a weekly basis.

## **RULE-8: LEAGUE ROSTER AND TEAM DRAFTING PROCEDURE**

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Each year, the Board must approve the twenty-four (24) man roster for the upcoming season. The Secretary/Treasurer shall endeavor to receive the names of all new prospective bowlers no later than two weeks before the scheduled annual membership meeting. At that time, the Secretary/Treasurer shall distribute to the league members (via electronic mail) a preliminary League roster. The preliminary League roster will include each bowler's Entry Average and, if necessary, a League Vacancy Average, as set forth in Rule 7, above.

League teams are created using a drafting procedure. The Board shall have the ultimate discretion to make any adjustments to finalize the preliminary League roster prior to the drafting of League teams. The Board must approve the League roster before team drafting can begin.

Teams will be drafted by Team Captains. Team Captains will be those bowlers with the top six averages from the prior season, provided each has bowled more than two-thirds (66.7%) of the prior season's games. If not, the next highest average bowler who bowled more than two-thirds (66.7%) of last season's games will be a Team Captain. To remain in the league, a bowler cannot refuse to be a Team Captain.

The drafting of teams will begin by each Captain choosing their team name. Team names must be from the team names from the current Major League Baseball's National League. The Captain with the highest average shall choose his team name first, followed by the other Captains in order of decreasing Entry Average.

After all team names are chosen, the Captains will begin the draft using a "snake" or "ladder" drafting method. After all team names are chosen, the Captain with the lowest Entry Average will draft his first team member. The Captain's Entry Average is then added to the Entry Average of his selected player to create the "cross-add". The Captain with the next highest Entry Average then selects his first player and the "cross-add" determined. This process continues until the first round of drafting is completed. The second round of player selection begins with the Captain who has the lowest "cross-add" from the first round and proceeds to the Captain with the next highest "cross-add" from the first round. Each successive drafting round continues in this manner until all teams have a complete roster.

If a tie exists on a "cross-add" at the end of a round, the Captain of the team which had the earlier selection in the previous drafting round gets the later pick in the current round.

## **RULE-9: SUBSTITUTES AND PACERS**

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The League does not allow non-permanent substitute bowlers for competition. Bowlers are invited to participate as a Pacer and scores will be used to calculate a Current Average in the event the pacing bowler would become a replacement bowler.

Non-Permanent bowlers are ineligible to compete in the roll-offs or championship matches.

The weekly fees for a pacing bowler will be set at the annual board meeting. For the current season the pacing fee has been set at \$12.00/week.

At the discretion of the Board, the pacing fee for a prospective bowler may be waived until he has a Current Average for the current season (9 games).

## **RULE-10: PERMANENT SUBSTITUTE BOWLER – "Buz Rule"**

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The "Permanent Substitute" bowler is a designated bowler of the league with an approved established average who will actively bowl weekly in place of an absent bowler. The Permanent Substitute will be handicapped to 100% of the absent bowler's average. The Permanent Substitute bowler will be responsible to pay annual dues and the full weekly lineage fees.

Lineage fee is waived when the Substitute Bowler is absent. The Substitute Bowler retains seniority rights, individual award eligibility, such as, flight prizes, season high game & high series and entitlement to pin money. If the Substitute Bowler rolls a minimum of 60 games in the season, he is eligible for season high average.

Permanent Substitute bowlers are ineligible to compete in the roll-offs or championship matches.

Eligible Substitute Bowlers for the 2022-2023 season are undetermined. Any other substitute bowler eligibility for prize money will be determined by the Board.

### **RULE-11: ABSENT BOWLER/ TARDY BOWLER – (A.K.A. THE “SHUTTE/RENALDI RULE”)**

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A bowler is considered absent if not present by the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) frame of any game. A bowler who arrives by the fifth frame shall be considered a Tardy Bowler and be allowed to enter the game. In this case, his Absent Bowler Average will be removed and he will be “cycled” into the game as the computerized scoring system allows.

All absent bowlers are responsible for their weekly lineage dues for the week(s) missed and must pay the outstanding amount immediately upon return.

### **RULE-12: LEGAL LINE-UP**

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A legal line-up will require one bowler to be present, excluding any vacant position. Unless the Captains have agreed to postpone the match (See Rule 13 for postponing a match), a team that does not have a legal lineup forfeits all points. If both teams do not have a legal lineup, the points will be split between the two teams.

- If only one (1) bowler is present on one or both teams, both teams will put their line-up down in ascending average (low to high) with no exceptions. The point for an absent bowler against another absent bowler will be awarded to the absent bowler with the higher average. The point for a vacant bowler against another vacant bowler will be split.
- If two (2) or more bowlers are present on one team, absent bowlers cannot compete against each other. The Captain setting his team’s lineup second (home team) must make lineup adjustments to avoid this situation. A vacant bowler may be opposite an absent bowler in a legal lineup at any time. A vacant bowler should not be opposite another vacant bowler.
- If the Secretary subsequently discovers that Captains did not adhere to this Legal Lineup Rule, the Secretary will adjust the team line-ups and award points correctly. The adjusted scores will be shown to all Captains by the Secretary at the next night of league play.

### **RULE-13: POSTPONEMENTS AND FORFEITS**

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A Captain desiring a non-emergency postponement of a match shall notify all Board members and request a postponement from the opposing team’s Captain as soon as reasonably possible, but at least thirty six (36) hours prior to the scheduled match. No match will be allowed to be

postponed if it cannot be rescheduled during the current third of the season. If the opposing Captain cannot reschedule the match, the team requesting the postponement will forfeit the points.

The opposing Captain shall make every effort to reschedule the match. If the Captain making the request believes the opposing Captain is being unreasonable, he may request a review by the Board. The Board's decision on the matter shall be final.

Only one postponement of a match is allowed. If both Captains agree to postpone a match and cannot subsequently complete the match, the team that cannot field a legal lineup on the date of the rescheduled match will forfeit the points.

If a Captain notifies the Board of an emergency situation where the team will be unable to present a legal lineup, the Board will determine whether the Captains should attempt to reschedule the match or if the match will be forfeited by that Captain. If so determined to reschedule, the Captains will follow the guidelines above.

## **RULE-14: POSITION STANDINGS**

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League standings are determined by the following point system:

- A total of twenty-one (21) points shall be awarded per match;
- Each match allows for twelve (12) individual points. One (1) point is awarded per game to each team member whose total pin-fall outscored the bowler in the same lineup position on the opposing team. One (1) point is awarded to the bowler who wins the 3 game series against the opposing bowler. Ties award a half point (0.5) per man;
- Each match allows for three (3) team points. One (1) point is awarded to the team with the highest pin count at the end of each game. Ties result in a half point (0.5) per team;
- Each match allows for two (2) points awarded to the team with the highest pin count for the 3-game match. Ties result in one (1) point awarded per team;

The team with the most points at the end of each third qualifies for the championship playoffs (See Rule 16). In case of ties, one game (total pins) will determine the winner of that third.

## **RULE-15: CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS AND FINALS**

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The League may need to conduct post-season competition to determine the season's League Champion. The following describes the scenarios that may occur which will dictate the duration and format of post-season competition.

### **Scenario 1**

In this scenario, a different team wins one of the three thirds. Of the three teams that did not win a third, the team with the most wins becomes the Wildcard Team. For the purpose of describing the playoff procedure, Team 1 will be the team that won a third and had the highest number of season wins. Teams 2 and 3 will be the other third winners with the next highest total season

wins. On the night of the first round of playoffs, the Wildcard Team will compete against Team 1, while Teams 2 and 3 will compete.

The two teams winning their playoff matches will bowl the following week in the championship match.

### **Scenario 2**

If one team wins two thirds, of the remaining teams that did not win a third, the team with the most number of wins becomes the Wildcard Team. In week 1 of the playoffs, the Wildcard team will compete against the team that won one third and the team having won two thirds will be awarded a bye week. The winning team from week 1 will face the team that won two thirds in a championship match.

### **Scenario 3**

If one team wins all three thirds, that team will be declared the League Champion and there will be no playoffs.

In each post-season pairing, the Captain with the highest number of season wins has the choice of lanes or line-up, regardless of whether that team won a third or not.

Teams will rotate across lane pairs during the playoffs and the Championship match. Teams will rotate lanes to the right. Both teams will receive a 10 minute warm-up on each pair.

All playoff and championship matches will use the twenty-one (21) point system followed during the regular season, except in a tie situation, as mentioned below.

If a playoff or Championship match ends in an 10.5-10.5 tie, the teams will complete in a single elimination game, with the winner having the highest total pin-fall for that game. In the unlikely event of a tie for that tie-breaker game, another single elimination game will be played.

Bowler Averages do not change through the playoffs and finals. They are locked at the end of the regular season.

## **RULE-16: BOWLER NOT COMPLETING THE SEASON**

There are many circumstances that might result in a bowler being unable to complete the season and the Board will review each situation individually in an effort to minimize the impact to the League and the bowler. It is also incumbent upon each member of the League to notify his team's Captain if circumstances dictate that he cannot complete the season. Captains should provide their phone numbers to their teammates and the Secretary/Treasurer's number is always on the weekly standing sheets.

Nonetheless, a bowler who is absent for three consecutive weeks without notifying his Captain or another member of the Board of his intent to return will be determined to have declared that he is not finishing the season.



A bowler that is declared or determined unable to complete the season will be responsible for weekly dues through the date of declaration/determination, not to exceed 6 weeks. The Board may take action as stated in Rule 3, above.

The Board reserves the right to review the circumstances surrounding a bowler being unable to complete the season as it relates to the bowler potentially returning to the League the following season, including payment of outstanding dues/fees.

### **RULE-17: REPLACEMENT BOWLER**

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This rule applies to a replacement bowler for a vacancy position, whether the vacancy was created prior to the start of the season or during the season. Preference for selection as a replacement bowler will be given to those bowlers who have substituted in the League during the current season or are interested in returning to the League.

If the replacement bowler does not have a League Current Average, the Vacancy Average will be used until the replacement bowler has established a Current Average (based on nine (9) games).

It is the League's intent that the team requiring a replacement bowler not be penalized or gain an advantage due to the different skill level of the replacement bowler. Therefore, the replacement bowler will carry a handicap. The replacement bowler's handicap will be the difference (plus or minus) between the Vacancy Average and the replacement bowler's Current Average. If at any time the replacement bowler's Current Average is within 5 pins of the Vacancy Average, handicap will no longer be applied to the replacement bowler's scores for the balance of the season.

Vacancy positions will be filled in the order in which they occurred, unless by majority vote of all current Captains. More specifically, a vacancy that was created to the League roster at the beginning of the season (Drafting Vacancy) would be replaced first, followed by vacancies that occurred during the year, in order of their occurrence. However, if a team with a vacancy bowler enlists a new bowler, that team will have the choice of adding the new bowler to its roster or allowing that bowler to be rostered to the team with the first or next in line vacancy.

### **RULE-18: BEER ON DRAFT DAY**

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Subject to available League funds and approval by the Board, and for the purpose of encouraging greater attendance at the annual membership meeting, the League will pay the bar tab during the annual membership meeting (beer only).

The newly elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President is the official "Beer Schlepper" at the annual membership meeting, as well as at any other official meetings of the League or Board (excluding the year-end banquet).

### **RULE-19: PROCLAMATION OF SOCIAL NIGHTS & OPEN BAR NIGHTS**

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The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President is required to announce prior to the start of league play all Social Nights or any Open Bar Nights at least one week in advance of each such event. The

Secretary/Treasurer will post these dates on the league's website and in the weekly standing sheets.