



The History of the JTBA

The Junior Tournament Bowlers Association was formed in August of 1980, by 16-year old Kyle Wilson, of Mount Vernon, Ohio with the help of many area bowling enthusiasts. Our first event was held in Mansfield, Ohio in September of 1980. There were 33 bowlers. Due to compelling interest in junior scratch bowling, the organization then boomed to average 75 participants per event in the inaugural first season. We continued to grow every year with tournament attendance now averaging about 110 bowlers per event.

From 1980 through the end of the 1985-1986 season the girls competed against the guys. The only award for girls was the "Girls High Qualifier" award given to the highest finishing female in a tournament. In August, of 1986, the JTBA formed 2 separate divisions, boys and girls. Since then, the girls division has grown to where it today averages about 1/3 of the field.

In August of 1987, the JTBA expanded its horizons and started offering scholarship awards. Though scholarships were not awarded at every event, money was collected at each event and put towards the end of year championship tournament. A few years later the JTBA started offering scholarships at every event. Today, the JTBA is stronger than ever, attracting the top junior bowlers ages 12-19, in the United States. Though most of the competitors come from Ohio, Michigan, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Indiana, there have been competitors from across the nation as well as Canada.

In July of 2001, the JTBA took on a new look, switching to a new format and new rules in an effort to make the organization more appealing to the better junior bowlers as well as to expand the girls division. In addition to the changes, a new Tournament Director came on board Greg Coules, of Centerville, Ohio with Kyle Wilson becoming the Executive Director of the JTBA.

In June of 2005, the JTBA Executive Director responsibilities were assumed by Carl Pfeifer, of Cranberry Twp., PA. Kyle Wilson continued to assist the JTBA as a member of the JTBA Board of Directors during a transitional period, before dedicating his attention to the head coaching position to then Pikeville College and now The University of Pikeville.

In June of 2012, Carl Pfeifer stepped down as JTBA Executive Director and the organization was taken over by founder Kyle Wilson and Greg Coules. In addition to Wilson serving as JTBA tournament manager and Coules serving as JTBA operations manager, Wilson and Coules serve as the tournament managers of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) State Bowling Championships. Coules also serves on the OHSAA bowling rules committee and as Director of the Ohio High School Bowling program.

Beginning with the 2013-2014 season, the JTBA was successful in attracting collegiate & corporate sponsors to add SMART scholarship awards to JTBA tournaments increasing the scholarship payouts for deserving participants.

Beginning with the 2014-2015 season, the JTBA expanded to U20 boys and U20 girls divisions (up from U19 divisions) and added a U15 mixed gender division to encourage younger bowlers to participate in an age-appropriate competitive bowling environment. In September, 2015, U15 division was separated into a Boys & Girls division!

On July 1, 2016, Kyle Wilson regained full control of the JTBA when partner Greg Coules stepped down. Wilson will serve as Operations & Tournament manager for all JTBA events.

At the beginning of the JTBA's 41st season, in 2020, the JTBA restructured its age divisions to fall in line with the USBC's youth age divisions, by adding a U12 division, giving the JTBA 4 divisions, U12, U15, U18, & U20, Boys & Girls.

The JTBA continues its commitment to provide quality bowling events for young bowlers. SMART scholarships and our participation in the USBC Junior Gold Program remain constant. We embrace "sport" bowling as the best test of young bowler skills and the best preparation for young bowlers to prepare for collegiate bowling and beyond. Today's JTBA is committed to remain the home of the best junior bowlers!