

AMERICAN WHEELCHAIR BOWLING ASSOCIATION

National/Regional Sanctioned Tournament Rules

Tournament Operation:

The USBC oversees all bowling disciplines in the USA. The AWBA is the associate governing body of all wheelchair bowling and wheelchair bowling tournaments sanctioned by the USBC in the United States. The AWBA is recognized by the USBC as the purveyor of Wheelchair Bowling in the USA. All tournament participants, except international competitors should they participate, must be current members of the AWBA and the USBC concurrently.

AWBA National and Regional Sanctioned Tournament Rules will govern all AWBA bowling tournaments. The USBC or IBF Para Bowling Rules will apply where no specific AWBA rule exists. Should no rule exist in any current document, the question shall be referred to the AWBA Rules Chairman for review/adjudication.

Each bowler participating in Singles and in Doubles shall be assessed a sanctioning fee of \$5 per event. The Tournament Director is responsible for remitting these fees to the AWBA upon conclusion of the event when the final reporting is submitted to the AWBA. For example, 40 bowlers bowl in singles, and 30 bowl in doubles. \$350.00 is due in sanctioning fees to the AWBA with the final After Action Report.

The Tournament Director shall be responsible for the auditing of the tournament monies received and paid during the tournament and reporting the Tournament Final Results to the AWBA Secretary no later than 20 DAYS from the conclusion of the event.

This shall include:

1. Photos of the top five (5) qualifiers in each division.
2. A separate photo of each winner of each division.
3. Final tally of all scores of all bowlers in each division prior to the roll-offs and following the roll-offs.
4. Sanctioning fees of \$5 per bowler for singles and doubles.
5. Write up of the event and any photos you would like placed upon the AWBA website highlighting your event.

Tournament Committee:

The management and operation of an AWBA Sanctioned Tournaments shall be vested in the Tournament Director of the specific event and the AWBA. The AWBA shall give oversight and enforcement concerning tournament rules and regulations. This oversight can be carried out by an assigned AWBA BOD member present, or assigned to the Tournament Director, to assist the TD and his/her tournament committee.

The Tournament Director(s) shall form a Tournament Committee consisting of the current AWBA board members present at the event, two (2) AWBA members living in proximity to the tournament site, who shall serve as associate Tournament Directors, plus any other individuals of his/her choosing. The Tournament Director and his/her committee shall be responsible for all record keeping, official scoring and certification of the final position standings.

The AWBA Executive Committee shall decide any questions as to the operation of the National Tournament that cannot be resolved by the Tournament Committee.

Eligibility:

Only bona-fide members of the AWBA, in good standing, shall be eligible to compete in an AWBA National or Regional Tournament. All disabled bowlers applying for membership in the AWBA must also belong to the USBC. Individuals who have been suspended by the AWBA or USBC are ineligible to compete in an AWBA sanctioned tournament. Should a member register that has not paid their current AWBA or USBC dues, such will be collected prior to competition. The Tournament Director shall remit these fees collected to the associated organization.

All bowlers must bowl from a wheelchair and enter under his/her name. Bowlers unattached to a USBC certified league yet have an AWBA tournament average, may bowl in the division in which they are assigned. A person not possessing a certified USBC average or an AWBA tournament average, must bowl scratch. The AWBA does not allow multiple entries.

Closing Date:

All entries must be postmarked no later than the first Post Office business day following the closing date set by the Tournament Director. Entries postmarked after that date may be deemed ineligible and returned. All entries must be completely filled out, and all applicable fees included with the entry, as well as documentation required to verify the stipulated average information. Incomplete entries may be deemed ineligible and returned. If an entrant is unable to compete, regardless of reason and withdraws within the 2 weeks prior to the start of an event will receive no refund. For individuals withdrawing prior to the two weeks prior will receive a refund minus any set expenses that have already be paid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director may use his/her discretion in making a refund due to special circumstances.

Payout as Advertised

Once a tournament is announced and posted by the AWBA for entry by the membership, there can be no change in the prize money payout. Payouts must be paid as advertised. Thus, a Tournament Entry Form cannot list a tournament payout based upon so many entries, (i.e., "Payout subject to 25 entries"). This was determined by the BOD as disingenuous and unfair to our members that travel, rent cars, pay hotel fees, food, etc. to be potentially shortchanged in their prizes after arrival.

Registration:

Bowlers shall show membership cards to confirm their membership in both the AWBA and USBC. If the bowler cannot produce proof of membership, he/she must purchase the necessary membership(s). All bowlers shall register at the Official Tournament Table at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the time his/her first squad of the day is scheduled, where they will receive lane assignments and scheduling information.

Entering Averages:

The designated individual appointed by the AWBA Chairman will be responsible for the calculations of entering averages for all bowlers. This individual will provide all Tournament Directors entering averages for bowlers entered into a given tournament. The Tournament Director must use the Adjusted Tournament averages provided. A Tournament's failure to comply with this rule may be subject to having the sanction voided by action of the AWBA Board members present and no awards will be recognized for said tournament. Book averages older than 2 years will not be considered in the calculation of an entering average to an event. If none of the above applies, and no existing average can be determined, a bowler must bowl scratch.

For the AWBA National Tournament, where an AWBA Adjusted Tournament Average does not exist, the final entering average will be determined using the most current USBC book average posted on bowl.com as of June 1st of the given year. Any change in book average after that date will not be used to establish entering average.

Penalties: If a bowler does not submit his/her highest average to the Tournament Director, he/she will be subject to disciplinary action. That action will cause him/her to forfeit all money and prizes won and face possible suspension from all AWBA tournaments for up to one (1) year.

Adjusted Tournament Average:

Whereas the AWBA has adopted the Adjusted Tournament Average Rule for all events conducted at a Regional or National Tournament only, within the following parameters, a competitor must use the following method to determine Adjusted Tournament Average. This rule applies to all AWBA sanctioned events.

Adjusted Tournament Average con.

The Calculation of an Adjusted Tournament Average (ATA) will be determined in the following fashion:

1. Adjusted Tournament Average (ATA) is based on a minimum of one tournament event of a minimum of 12 games.
2. In the case of multiple tournament appearances and a USBC Book average, one's ATA will be calculated by combining the most current USBC Book average, added together with all AWBA ending tournament averages within the last 12 months. They are divided by the number of tournaments bowled plus the **Highest** USBC Book average in the current year (i.e., 4 tournament(s) added together equals 400, plus USBC book of 100 giving a total of 500 divided by 5 (4 Tournaments plus 1 book) giving the individual an Adjusted Tournament Average of 100. Averages are rounded down to the nearest whole number.
3. For a new bowler*, a league sheet from a sanctioned league will be accepted for the first tournament entered as long as 12 games have been bowled.

Note: USBC rule 319 will not apply; money won has no bearing on potential tournament average adjustments of any individual competitor.

The AWBA Secretary, or Chairman appointed designee, shall be responsible for tracking Adjusted Tournament Averages and national rankings. ATAs will be provided to the Tournament Director by the AWBA, two (2) weeks prior to the event.

All individuals affected by the Adjusted Tournament Average will be mailed or emailed a confirmation with the adjusted average listed of that event. It remains the individual bowler's responsibility to maintain his/her own record, including scores if a challenge is offered to the accuracy of the designee's calculations.

A bowler that has not bowled an AWBA event for a period of 2 years or longer may enter a tournament under the same conditions as a new bowler.

Should a bowler not possess an AWBA tournament average, a USBC Book average, or a USBC sanctioned league sheet, they must bowl Scratch.

**A new bowler will be defined as an individual which has never participated in an AWBA Sanctioned tournament or one that has not participated in an AWBA event for a period of more than 2 years.*

Division Placement:

Entrants must designate on his/her entry form whether he/she will enter the Scratch Division or the handicap division. Those opting to bowl in the handicap divisions will be placed in either the "A" or the "B" division according to the tournament rules. Those with an ATA of 125 or lower shall be placed in the "B" Division. Those with an ATA of 126 or higher shall be placed in the "A" Division. They will be eligible for awards in their corresponding division.

Scratch Division:

By total pin fall, the top eight (8) qualifying scratch scores bowled through the qualifying rounds will advance into match play competition. If a tie exists for 8th place, a full game will be bowled to determine the match play field. All other scratch bowlers will be placed accordingly as to pin fall for final position standings.

The bowler entered into the Scratch Division, achieving the highest pin total after 12 qualifying games will be declared the High Qualifier in the Scratch Division. All qualifying pins will be carried forward into match play for the head-to-head competition. Each game won in match play will be awarded 30 bonus pins. The top five (5) qualifiers after match play will compete in a stepladder roll off to determine the winner of the Scratch Division who will be declared the AWBA National/Regional Scratch Champion, along with all other awards as appropriate. Where no "match play" is conducted in a Regional Tournament, Scratch Division bowlers will bowl the same number of qualifying games as all other divisions to determine the top "5" qualifiers.

“A” Division:

Anyone possessing an Adjusted Tournament Average or USBC Book average of 126 or above is automatically placed in the “A” Division. The top five (5) qualifiers of the “A” after qualifying, will compete in a stepladder roll off to determine the winner of the “A” division who will be declared the AWBA National/Regional “A” Division Handicap Champion and shall receive all other awards as appropriate.

“B” Division:

The “B” division shall be comprised of those bowlers with a Adjusted Tournament Average or USBC Book Average of 125 and below. The top five (5) qualifiers of the “B” after qualifying, will compete in a stepladder roll off to determine the winner of the “B” division who will be declared the AWBA National/Regional “B” Division Handicap Champion and shall receive all other awards as appropriate.

Note: A “B” division bowler may choose to step up to the higher “A” division if they so choose. However, they must bowl with an average of 126 or above, along with the commensurate handicap of the higher average. They may not use their ATA and the handicap afforded them in the B division when they move up.

Tie Scores:

Should the score be tied at the end of 10 frames, a 9th and 10th frame roll off will be held to calculate a winner. In the case of the tie being in the handicap divisions, the appropriate handicap will be given for each frame, to each bowler.

Handicap percentage:

The percentage of handicap used for sanctioned AWBA tournaments shall be the difference as calculated from 100% of 200 scratch pins. No calculations should be “hand figured” and any calculated value may not be rounded up.

Individual Awards National Tour Basis:

Awards will be based on the first twelve (12) games of qualifying in the Scratch Division and the fifteen (15) qualifying games in the “A” and “B” divisions. Bowlers will only be allowed to receive awards eligible in his/her respective division and the prize money will be split accordingly.

Special Equipment:

Aid, devices, or mechanism may be used in the delivery of the ball (i.e.) ramp/chute. All other aids must have been previously submitted and approved by the AWBA New Equipment Committee. Each non-ramp bowler must impart his/her own force or impetus to deliver the ball. Stick and Ramp bowlers may use a helper to position the bowler at the foul line and/or assist in placing the ball prior to delivery.

The use/need of a helper must be reported on the Entry Form or made known to the Tournament Director prior to the event.

Stick / Ramp Helpers/Ramps:

Once the ball has been positioned, the helper must move him/herself away from the bowler before the ball is delivered. The helper may not hold or touch the bowler after the ball has been put in place. Helpers will be required to adhere to the AWBA dress code. A power chair using an IKAN bowling device may roll to the foul line. All other power chair bowlers must be stationary at the foul line.

Basic Wheelchair - Disability Rules:

No aid, device, mechanism, or person shall be allowed to steady the wheelchair. It has to have been previously submitted and approved by the AWBA New Equipment Committee. In an emergency (wheelchair breakdown: a helper may steady or hold a wheelchair in position if approved by the Board of Director members attending the tournament. No part of the wheelchair (except the wheels) may touch the approach.

Basic Wheelchair - Disability Rules con.

No feet, hands, brace supports can contact the floor during a bowlers throw.

Any additional device or weights attached to a manual wheelchair, or to the wheels of a manual wheelchair. (i.e., power assist wheels,) for the expressed purpose of stabilizing the wheelchair or assisting the mobility of the user, shall not be prohibited.

Any strapping systems used for the express purpose of securing or stabilizing the bowler with their chair shall be allowed.

Bowlers must remain fully seated on the wheelchair cushion during delivery of the ball. No part of the bowler's buttocks can be elevated above the seat by using the wheel/tire to sit upon.

A wheelchair seat rail cannot be higher than 21 inches (53.34 centimeters) from the frame to the floor. An elevating power chair must be at its lowest normal seat height during competition, it cannot be elevated to allow the bowler to stand during competition.

The cushion on the wheelchair cannot exceed 5 inches (12.7 centimeters).

Each non-ramp bowler must impart his/her own force or impetus to deliver the ball.

For participants in an AWBA Sanctioned Bowling Tournament using an IKAN or any device attached to the wheelchair, such participants will adhere to USBC Rule 5a. So long as the ramp device utilized does not touch the lane beyond the foul line it is not considered a foul. It is considered an extension of the bowlers throw. This is commensurate to an able bowler or wheelchair bowler lofting the ball onto the lane.

The IKAN ramp may be of any length as long as it does not extend more than three (3) feet past the front of the chair's leg rest and does not exceed the height of the bowler's chin when the chair is at its lowest normal height. For safety reasons, elevator chairs may not be elevated during competition. Ramp may be made of any materials as long as construction and attachment are safe for all. The ramp may extend past the foul line as long as no parts of the ramp or its components touch any part of the alley before, during, or after release of the ball.

It is up to the IKAN bowler to ensure/prove that the IKAN is not touching should a challenge be levied. The IKAN ramp is a USBC certified device and is legal during all competitions.

Service Animals:

The bowling center is responsible for allowing service animals in their facility. If allowed, service animals are to be kept in the back of the pit and bowling area, away from bowlers. There will be absolutely no food or water for any animal in the pit area. It is recommended that service animals be kept behind the pit area with a wife, partner, or friend. Should a service animal become disruptive, they will be required to leave the bowling area completely.

Order of Bowling:

Lane assignments shall change with each scheduled shift. Each bowler shall successively and in regular order bowl on the lanes as assigned. Bowlers in the same division shall not be scheduled to bowl with only members in their own division (i.e., assignments shall include a mix of divisional bowlers). When it is required to bowl split shifts due to lack of sufficient lanes, the Tournament Director may schedule such shifts to be bowled consecutively.

Delay of Game:

A bowler that has to leave the lanes (personal emergencies) after the commencement of bowling, shall have thirty (30) minutes make-up time in order to finish the frames/games missed. In cases of wheelchair breakdowns, the Tournament Director shall be advised of the delay. If, in his/her judgment the repairs shall be lengthy, he/she shall instruct the remaining bowlers to bowl 'out of turn'. After completion of the repairs, the bowler shall start bowling at the beginning of the next full game. He/she will be allowed to make up the missed frames or games after the completion of the scheduled shift. (A pacer may be used, but is not mandatory, when making up games.)

Fouls:

Foul lights will be used for the entire competition. A slow rolling ball shall not constitute a foul. No part of the body shall contact the floor beyond the foul line during the delivery of the ball. No objects shall be placed on the approach, or near the foul line, except the wheels of the wheelchair. The wheelchair may not come in contact with any foreign object (i.e., the foul light housings) during the delivery of the ball.

Scorekeepers:

An AWBA Board approved scoring system shall be the official scorer of the National/Regional Tournaments and it shall be the responsibility of each bowler to verify the accuracy of his/her score before signing his/her score sheet. Should a signed score sheet be submitted with incorrect scores, the Tournament Director will perform an investigation to determine whether the scores were submitted with the intention of deceiving the Scorekeeper and Tournament Director. A comparison will be made to compare scores submitted by the bowler with the scores recorded by the host center. Should it be determined that the incorrect scores were submitted by the bowler with the intention of deceiving the Tournament Director, the bowler will be disqualified from the tournament and suspended from the AWBA for a period of one year. The bowler in question must request after serving the period of one year, his/her return to the AWBA. The request must be made to the Board of Directors of the AWBA. Their decision will be final.

Tardy Bowlers:

Unexcused tardy bowlers arriving after the beginning of the scheduled shift in progress shall receive 'zero' for each frame missed and shall be allowed to commence bowling in the next frame after the one in progress.

Tie Scores:

In the event of a tie for 6th place or higher, a 9th and 10th frame roll off will be bowled to break the tie. If the tie remains, additional 9th and 10th frames SINGLE BALL ROLLOFF will be bowled until the tie is broken. Any other ties below 6th place will remain, and the prize money split accordingly. Ties in the handicap divisions will be allowed the appropriate handicap for each frame (10% per frame.)

Misconduct/Unfair Tactics:

Any bowler who, in the judgment of the Tournament Director, conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, uses profanity, profane gestures, throws, bangs, hits fixtures, or who engages in improper tactics or conduct, including, but not limited to physical, verbal, or taunting abuse toward other individuals, or becomes drunk, disorderly will be removed from the competition and disqualified. He/she shall forfeit his/her entry fee and rights to all tournament awards and prizes. There will be no drinking of alcoholic beverages during any portion of the tournament, unless otherwise stipulated by the Tournament Director.

Resetting Pins:

Bowlers shall be allowed one (1) re-rack per game during the tournament play. All other re-racking must be approved by a member of the Tournament committee. All re-racks during roll-off competitions may be requested from the Tournament Director, or his/her lane monitor.

Dress Code:

The AWBA dress code shall be neat, clean and in good taste. The following standards shall be enforced in all AWBA tournaments. Unless cleared by Tournament Director and AWBA Tournament Committee.

1. No headgear, hats, caps, headbands, bandannas, scarves, visors, sunglasses, or earphones.
2. No shorts, tee shirts or tank tops.
3. All shirts must have a butterfly or ribbed collar and be of plain design or may display bowling company logos or approved AWBA logos. Jerseys with sash collars are permitted.
4. Women's blouses must be sleeved. Halter tops, and spaghetti strap blouses exposing the back are prohibited.
5. Shirts shall not display inappropriate or profane pictures or phrasing.
6. No exposed leg bag or other urine receptacle shall be visible during bowling.

Blind Scores:

“Blind scores” shall not be permitted in a National Sanctioned Tournament.

Appeals or Protests:

All appeals or any protest must be made in writing and signed by the individual making such protests or appeal. After reviewing the appeal or protest the Tournament Director shall decide and rule accordingly. If the Tournament Director cannot resolve the dispute, the Tournament Committee shall meet and render their decision, which shall be final. The appeal may be presented to the USBC under rule 329 for USBC certified tournaments.

Ratio of Prize Money:

The Tournament Director at AWBA Nationals is required to pay the top five (5) places in all Division's in equal amounts. The minimum amount paid for 1st place in all divisions at the AWBA Nationals will be set at \$1500 minimum. The balance of the payouts for all others will be determined by the Tournament Committee and the Board of Directors. The minimum payout for all Regional Events shall be a minimum for 1st place of \$800.00 minimum. The balance of the top 5 will be determined by the Tournament Director. The remainder of each division will be paid using a ratio of one (1) in five (5) entries (20%) per division as a minimum payout for singles competitions. Other associated events (Welker Doubles, Ramus Triples Team, or future events yet to be named) will be paid out as determined by the Tournament Director and by the total number of entries, paying a minimum of 25% of the total entries.

Side Pots / Brackets:

No scratch bowler shall be allowed to enter the Handicap ‘Side Pots’. “A” and “B” divisional bowlers may enter the scratch side pots, however, they must use their scratch score in competition for those pots. It is the discretion of the Tournament Director whether they wish to host side pots, or brackets. It may be placed upon the Entry Form or collected at the event.

Distribution of Prizes:

The prize money and that portion of the entry fee designated solely for the prize fund shall be returned at a ratio of 100% to the bowlers in accordance with the best interest of the bowlers as determined by the AWBA National Tournament Rules Committee and the AWBA Board of Directors.

Merchandise Contributions:

Merchandise donations or other monetary contributions to the Tournament will be disbursed in the best interest of the participants as determined by the Tournament Committee. Per current AWBA exclusivity agreements, all announced ball give-a-ways at AWBA sanctioned tournaments shall be either Storm, Roto Grip, or 900 Global. Other competing brands donated shall only be referred to as “a bowling ball”. Also, per the current AWBA clothing exclusivity agreement, shirts from Logo Infusion and any other shirts that you have gotten from an AWBA Tournament are allowed, no other manufacture's logo apparel “bowling shirt company” is allowed. Silent auctions must be conducted with transparency. All monies collected shall be properly accounted for and mentioned on the After Action Report and final Financial Report provided to the AWBA Board of Directors.

Special Events / Awards – *For the National Championships Only*

The AWBA holds several special events and offers certain awards in conjunction with the National Championship Tournament. The following guidelines pertain to each of these events. Specifically, all of these events will conform to previously stated AWBA national/sanctioned tournament rules. Handicap and average caps have been instituted to maintain fairness for these special events.

Nelson Welker Doubles:

Doubles competition at the AWBA National Championships will be contested utilizing the USBC Format. Two team members will bowl a three-game set, using their respective handicaps. Upon completion of the contested 3 game set, winners will be determined by the highest team series with handicap respectively.

There will be no cut based upon pins over average. Bowlers entering the competition without a partner will be paired to the best ability of the Tournament Director. Regardless of entering average, a maximum handicap in the Doubles competition at Nationals is 100 per bowler.

Gene Ramus Handicap Team:

In addition to the rules governing AWBA tournaments, the following rules will be in effect for the handicap team. Teams may be composed of any three (3) individuals. Total pins for three (3) games, plus the appropriate handicap (100% of 200) will determine the championship. Bowlers entering the competition without one or more partners will be paired to the best ability of the Tournament Director. The prize fund will be set accordingly as outlined previously. The maximum average for the 3 bowlers combined shall not exceed 500.

Al Uttecht Tournament of Champions:

The Tournament of Champions shall be open to any past singles divisional champion. The Tournament Director shall set the field from those qualified entries received for this tournament, who will participate in a three (3) game exhibition round. A bowler having won titles in more than one division may select which division he/she will compete within. The champions will be awarded plaques to the scratch and handicap winners of such competitions.

Seniors Classic:

All bowlers of a minimum age of sixty (60) before the commencement of the tournament shall be eligible to compete for the Seniors Classic Champion honors. The total pin fall after fifteen qualifying games shall determine the winner, who will be awarded an appropriate plaque.

Richard Carlson - All Events:

Scratch competitors achieving the highest pin fall resulting from the three (3) games of scratch doubles, three (3) game scratch scores of the handicap triples and the first twelve (12) games of singles qualifying shall be declared the Scratch All Events Champion and receive an appropriate plaque. Handicap competitors will use the same format except the award will be based on 21 games with appropriate handicap applied. This is the Carlson award.

Buddy Cole Most Improved Award:

Only bowlers who have bowled in the previous year shall be eligible for the Most Improved Award. The award will be based on improvement in the scratch score from the first twelve (12) qualifying games as compared to his/her scores bowled in the previous year's event.

Alma Ladwig Memorial Award:

The Alma Ladwig Memorial Award is presented to the woman achieving the highest total pin fall through fifteen (15) qualifying games, including handicap entered in the National Tournament; supported each year by the Wisconsin Wheelchair Sports Association in memory of Ms. Ladwig.

Bill Hart "Sportsmanship" Award:

The Bill Hart Memorial Award is presented to that individual who best exemplifies the spirit of sportsmanship.

AWBA national/sanctioned tournament rules apply to all AWBA sanctioned tournaments!

RULES AS AMENDED AND APPROVED BY THE BOARD, January 2023

Mark E. Shepherd Sr. MBA, PLY
AWBA Vice Chairman
AWBA Rules and Rankings Committee Chairman