

The USBC Board of Directors, based on recommendations by the USBC Youth Committee, approved several major changes to the structure of current USBC Youth programs. As participation in youth sports is on the rise in America, the changes set forth for USBC Youth programs will attract more youth bowlers to participate in certified league play. The changes will affect how memberships are processed, offer a new short-season membership product, restructure the awards program and lower the maximum age for youth bowlers. Below are some Frequently asked questions, if you don't see your question, please contact the Youth department and we will be happy to help you out.

FAQ's

Standard membership

Q: What benefits come as part of the USBC Youth Standard membership?

A: The membership will cost \$17 and be available to all youth who bowl in USBC certified leagues or tournaments. Benefits include:

- USBC Youth Membership Card
- Four (4) issues of US Youth Bowler
- USBC recognized average
- USBC Youth Awards Program
- League award emblems
- Access to the USBC Youth Purchasable Awards program
- The ability to participate in USBC certified tournaments

Q: Can a USBC Youth Standard member bowl in a USBC Youth Basic league without paying the \$5 USBC Youth Basic membership fee?

A: Yes. USBC Youth Standard members can participate in USBC Youth Basic leagues with no additional membership charge. However, only awards listed as benefits for USBC Youth Basic leagues will be provided for accomplishments in that league.

Q: Can a USBC Youth Standard member bowling in a USBC Youth Basic league earn high score award emblems/honor score rings?

A: No. The USBC Youth Basic membership/league is a distinct league program. Only the limited awards program provided to USBC Youth Basic leagues will be available for any scores bowled during USBC Youth Basic competition.

Basic membership

Q: What benefits come as part of a USBC Youth Basic membership?

A: USBC Youth Basic Membership will cost \$5 and be available to all youth who bowl in a league that meets for 12 sessions or less. Benefits include:

- USBC Youth Membership Card
- One issue of US Youth Bowler
- USBC recognized average
- The ability to participate in USBC certified tournaments
- USBC Basic League award emblems (high game, series, average, champion and most improved average)
- Access to the USBC Youth Purchasable Awards program

Q: Can a USBC Youth Basic league participate in the Pepsi Tournament?

A: If a USBC Youth Basic league competes during one of the league-level qualifying windows for the Pepsi tournament, the league members are eligible to conduct qualifying competition. In states that do not hold league level qualifying, ALL USBC Youth members, Standard and Basic, will be eligible for these direct entry events.

Q: Will USBC Youth Basic averages be "official"?

A: Yes. Averages established based on nine or more games in USBC Youth Basic leagues will be acceptable for entry into USBC Youth tournaments in accordance with Rule 318. However, only averages based on 21 or more games will be recognized as official as stated in the USBC Association Policy Manual.

Q: Will USBC Youth Basic averages be posted on bowl.com?

A: Yes. The youth bowler average information will be available on bowl.com.

Q: Does the USBC Youth Basic member pay the \$5 USBC Youth Basic membership fee for each league in which they participate?

A: Yes. The USBC Youth Basic membership is paid for each USBC Youth Basic league in which the bowler competes. For example, if the player would compete in two USBC Youth Basic leagues at the same time or during the same season, the \$5 USBC Youth Basic fees would be paid by the bowler in each league.

Q: When does the USBC Youth Basic membership expire?

A: The USBC Youth Basic membership is valid for the duration of the specific league. In addition, the USBC Youth Basic membership will be recognized for tournament competition for the entire season in which it was purchased.

Q: Can a bowler purchase a USBC Youth Standard membership through a USBC Youth Basic league?

A: Yes. While the bowler who purchases a USBC Youth Standard membership would receive the USBC Youth Jersey and additional issues of the USBC Youth Bowler magazine, the awards available to participants in the Basic league would be limited to those available in USBC Youth Basic League Awards program.

Q: Can a 16-session league certify as a USBC Youth Basic league?

A: No. The USBC Youth Basic membership program is limited to league competitions that are 12 or fewer sessions.

Q: Will a bowler in a Basic League be able to receive score award emblems?

A: Only the limited award program provided to USBC Youth Basic leagues will be available for any scores bowled during the competition. However, USBC Youth Basic leagues have the ability to provide a supplemental awards program by utilizing the USBC Youth Purchasable Awards program.

Awards

Q: How does the processing agent order award inventories?

A: The Processing Agent will order award inventories through the Youth Membership Processing Program. Initial start-up inventory orders will be determined based on league size. Additional award inventories will then be available for ordering in incremental packages.

Q: Will the new High Score Awards cause high school eligibility issues?

A: USBC Youth members have the obligation to be aware of any restrictions that might be in place by his/her high school athletic associations and might affect any outside competitions they could compete in or limitations on awards that they may earn. USBC has taken this issue into consideration and, by working with our vendors, can now provide youth awards that meet the eligibility limits of most states. In those limited instances where there might be a conflict, bowlers will have the option to decline the provided USBC Youth award for a given accomplishment to prevent an eligibility issue.

Q: Can my child win two 50-game awards during the same season?

A: No. USBC Youth awards are limited to once per season for the same accomplishment.

Q: If my child earns a 200 series award, can they later earn a 150 series award?

A: No. Once a player has earned a USBC Youth Award for a specific accomplishment, they are only eligible to receive the next highest, or the highest award, for future accomplishments. Using the example above, once the player has earned a 200 series award, the next award they could earn would be the 250 or higher series.

Q: Can my 13-year-old who just started bowling earn the 50-game award?

A: No. USBC Youth awards for bowlers 13 and older begin with a 125 game and a 300 series. Under the USBC Youth Awards program, the 13 year old bowler would not be eligible for a 50-game award.

Q: What is a "Qualifying Average"?

A. The established averages that determine eligibility for USBC Youth Awards are listed in Rule 53 which states:

The following applies to any award earned based on average:

League:

- a. If 12 or more games have been bowled in the league in the current season, use the current average.
- b. If less than 12 games in the current season, use last season's final average for 21 games or more from the same league.
- c. For a new bowler in the league with less than 12 games, use last season's highest USBC average for 21 games or more in any USBC league.
- d. For a bowler who has not established an average in the preceding season, the highest USBC average of 21 or more games from the summer league just completed shall be used.
- e. In a summer league, when a bowler has not established an average in the preceding season, the highest USBC average of 21 or more games from the regular season just completed shall be used.
- f. A new bowler in a league who has not bowled 12 games in the current season can use a current USBC average of 12 or more games from another league.
- g. A bowler who does not have an acceptable USBC average for comparison is not eligible for recognition.

Tournament:

- a. In handicap or classified tournaments, compare the score with the USBC average used in the tournament.
- b. In scratch tournaments:
 - i. Compare the score with the bowler's highest current USBC average of 12 or more games.
 - ii. If less than 12 games in the current season, compare the score with the preceding season's highest USBC average for 21 or more games.
 - iii. A bowler who does not have an acceptable USBC average for comparison is not eligible for recognition.

By determining which situation applies to the bowler, you are able to determine what standard is used to determine the bowlers "qualifying average."

Q: My child averages 50. Can he/she earn the 50-game award?

A: No. The USBC Youth Awards Program requires the player to have a Qualifying Average that is less than the accomplishment. For example, in order to earn a 75 game award, the player must have a qualifying average of 74 or less. In order to earn a 250 series award, the player must have an average of 83 or less.

Q: My child averages 49. Can he/she earn the 100-series award in a 2-game league?

A: Yes. The USBC Youth Awards Program requires the player to have a Qualifying Average that is less than the accomplishment. To determine the maximum Qualifying Average for an accomplishment, simply divide the series award by the number of games bowled in the series.

Q: Can my 8-year old earn the 150 game award, even though it is not Bowlopolis-themed?

A: The USBC Youth Bowlopolis themed awards stop with the 125 game award. When a player earns an award that exceeds the available award limitation of the Bowlopolis themed awards, the standard USBC Youth award will be issued.

Dues

Q: How can USBC approve a dues increase on the youth without a convention vote, but the adult increase must be approved by the delegates?

A: Youth dues, along with youth awards, league and tournament rules are under the authority of the USBC Board in accordance with Article VIII of the USBC National Bylaws.

Q: Why is USBC proposing a delay for any dues increase for the adults due to the economy, but establishing a dues increase this year for the youth?

A: The decision making process that is in place for youth matters through the USBC Bylaws allows for an efficient and expedited process to address significant issues. Without the immediate implementation of these programs and the dues increase to support them, USBC believes the continued slide of USBC Youth membership will continue at an unacceptable drastic rate.

Age limit

Q: Why not announce the change to begin a few years from now so bowlers can prepare for the change?

A: Delaying the change in the maximum age for USBC Youth eligibility only puts off addressing the key issue of adults bowling as USBC Youth members. Whether it is this year or in the future, the change will at some point be implemented and affect a group of bowlers. USBC's goal is to create a more comfortable environment for youth bowlers and their parents. Allowing 21 and 22 year olds to participate in youth leagues and tournaments, winning scholarship money at the expense of the youth bowlers, does not promote a kid-friendly environment. By adopting a standard of 20 as the maximum age for USBC Youth eligibility, USBC is able to offer enough flexibility to provide USBC Youth opportunities for our members through their high school years.

Q: If a bowler is 20 years old at the start of a season, are they eligible for the entire season?

A: An individual who turns 20 on or after August 2 of the current bowling season will be eligible for USBC Youth membership for the entire season. As long as the individual is 19 on August 1, he or she will be eligible for USBC Youth membership for that bowling season.

Q: Is USBC aware that it could be hurting junior tournament organizations which get many 21- and 22-year-old entrants?

A: Tournaments have the ability to adopt rules defining who is eligible to participate in competitions. Tournaments can limit participation to youth only, adults only or adopt eligibility rules allowing USBC Youth members and USBC Adult members to participate. For example, a tournament could allow 21-year-old USBC Adult members and adopt a rule as follows: "This tournament is open to all USBC Youth members and USBC Adult members age 21 and younger." Such a rule would have the effect of allowing those that are no longer eligible for USBC Youth membership to participate, provided they were USBC Adult members and under the age of 22.

Q: Can someone run a tournament in which 21- and 22-year-olds can still win scholarship money?

A: There has never been a USBC rule that limited competition for scholarships to USBC Youth members only. Any tournament, youth or adult, has the ability to offer scholarships as the prizes. Historically, there have been few tournaments run exclusively for adults that offered scholarships as prizes. This could be an untapped market for tournament managers.

Membership delivery and services

Q: Who determines how memberships will be processed?

A: As the host of youth activities, the bowling center proprietor will have the first option to be the Processing Agent. If the proprietor declines this option or prefers to work through a local association, then the local association would have the option to perform those duties. If the local association chooses not to perform those duties, USBC will utilize the Alliance At Large program for the completion of duties listed in the Processing Agreement.

Q: If a proprietor decides to process memberships, who will handle all the other association-based responsibilities for those bowlers once those memberships have been processed?

A: The Processing Agreement consists of three (3) components:

- 1) Membership Processing. This will consist of the input of data into the Youth Membership Processing Program and the submission of membership dues to USBC.
- 2) Youth Awards Processing. This will consist of the input of data for all scores eligible for recognition under the USBC Youth Awards program into the Youth Membership Processing Program.
- 3) Final Average Submission. This will consist of the input of final average information for all participants in USBC Youth certified competitions into the Youth Membership Processing Program.

These three (3) responsibilities are the only duties that would be removed from the associations list of responsibilities for centers that choose to process directly with USBC. All other duties listed in the USBC Association Policy Manual remain.

Q: Who does the proprietor call if a bowler has questions about services?

A: Support questions will go through the USBC Call Center at 1-800-514-2695 ext 3431.

Q: If most/all proprietors in an association process their own memberships and the local youth association shuts down, who will service the remaining bowlers?

A: In the past, if a local youth association chooses to discontinue operations, USBC would seek to transfer the responsibilities of the local association to another association within the area. This policy remains the same.

Q: What happens when the proprietors change their mind the following year after the youth association has disbanded?

A: USBC would work with the local adult associations to provide these services.

Q: How can the local association be expected to run a tournament if most or all of its dues are being collected by the proprietor?

A: USBC tournaments are designed to be self-sustaining through the funds generated by the entry fees. Many associations subsidize their local events through their fund-raising efforts. The importance of being able to raise funds through other means will increase and associations will be encouraged to be innovative in their efforts to raise funds to support the programs they seek to offer.

Q: What will happen to extra youth program benefits such as travel leagues that were previously funded out of local dues?

A: Our research indicates the vast majority of travel leagues are funded by the bowling centers and not a subsidy of the local association. The importance of being able to raise funds through other means will increase and associations will be encouraged to be innovative in their efforts to generate revenue to support the programs they seek to offer.

Q: How does USBC explain reducing the processing fee for locals, when national dues are going up?

A: USBC records show that most local association currently charge \$2 or less in local association dues to youth members. These associations have determined this amount is sufficient to fund their entire operations. The increase in dues for the USBC Youth standard membership will go directly to providing new additional member benefits. Some of these new elements are ready to be rolled out immediately. This includes a new awards program that provides 300 game and 800 series rings, as well as special awards for children ages 12 and under. Additional components of the new youth program are still being finalized that will create significant value for parents, kids, associations and proprietors making USBC certification a more attractive option for everyone. We will be announcing these additional components soon.

Q: How will the locals receive member information if a portion of membership in their association is processed by proprietors?

A: Local associations will have the ability to access the membership processing records of all the bowlers within their jurisdiction and create reports of this information as needed.

Q: Who runs the local tournament if most or all of the proprietors in an association are processing membership?

A: The requirement of the local associations to conduct an annual championship competition for its members remains as it is stated in Chapter 4 of the USBC Association Policy Manual.

Q: Will the proprietor use WinLABS to process membership?

A: As part of the overall changes to the youth program, USBC is developing a Web-based system (not WinLABS) that will allow USBC Youth membership, awards and averages to be processed. This system will be available to make it easier for the bowling centers and the local associations to handle the required processing duties.

Q: Why would USBC take away the membership processing from local associations that are doing a good job with their bowlers?

A: There are many successfully-functioning local associations across the nation, but the data indicates in some pockets of the country USBC Youth membership is not being serviced well. For that reason, the USBC board voted to develop a program that gives youth bowling leagues a way to certify directly through the bowling center. We anticipate this option will generally be utilized in areas where the local association has had trouble or is disinterested or ineffective in managing youth programs.