

# 2025-2026 Guidelines for the NIBC

(Northern Illinois Bowling Conference)

## 1) Officers:

- a. **Commissioner (NIBPA - Appointed Position): Kim Jensen**
- b. **Treasurer/Historian (NIBPA – Appointed Position): Ann Buja.**
- c. **Board of Directors**
  1. The board of directors shall consist of 1 representative from each team (boy's team 1 rep – girl's team 1 rep) – not per school
  2. The responsibility of the board of directors shall be to resolve all matters concerning the conference under the guidelines provided (the voting system will be used and majority rules)

## 2) School Classification

Competition in bowling will be held for all participating high schools.

## 3) Eligibility and Entry Fees:

Where applicable, the conference shall abide by Illinois High School Association (IHSA) and United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Youth eligibility rules. Individuals will be certified under the USBC through the conference compliments of the NIBPA. The NIBC Treasurer shall receive, before the first conference meet, the names of all individuals from each school. Student entry fee will be \$155.00 per student with an additional \$20.00 tryout fee (\$175 total). All money must be turned into the NIBC Treasurer before 12/15 and checks to be made out to NIBPA Foundation (NIBPAF), unless alternative arrangements have been made between the school and their home bowling center. Failure to pay the fee may exclude a team from participating in all conference tournaments and matches.

## 4) League Membership:

Schools may petition to become members of the conference by submitting a formal request to any conference officer. Schools will be accepted by a majority vote of the board of directors. To be included in a given season's conference championship schools must make their petition to the board of directors by April 1<sup>st</sup> and meet rule 6.b.

## 5) League Structure:

The goal of each individual school shall be to field one varsity and one junior varsity team.

## 6) League Playing Rules:

### a. **Team Structure**

1. Six bowlers will bowl each game.
2. A legal lineup will consist of at least four bowlers (see forfeits).

### b. **Schedule**

Every team shall bowl each team **ONCE** per season. All non-conference matches & tournaments will be scheduled by each individual school, including cross-conference matches with NIC-10, NIBC or other schools. See master schedule.

### c. **Point System**

All bowlers will be done on a scratch basis. Each team will bowl six bowlers. No new game of bowling shall be started until all bowlers at both levels have completed their games, unless both coaches agree. Each match will consist of three (3) games. For conference championship purposes the winner of **each GAME will receive ONE standings point** and the team with the **greatest Series pin fall shall receive TWO standings points**. Place positions within the conference will be determined by these standings points. To determine overall season match records (wins / losses), the team which has the greatest series pin fall will be declared the match "winner". This record will have no bearing on the individual conference standings – except as a tie breaker.

#### d. Playing format

1. A team is expected to present a legal lineup on the lanes at the scheduled starting time for the match.
2. Practice: 10 minutes is allowed (5 minutes on each lane). A team cannot start to practice until both teams have arrived on the LANES. Bowlers are not allowed to bowl on the same day prior to a competition in bowling center the competition is to be bowled (an exception would be if you have your gym class in the bowling center on that day).
3. Eligibility: It is the responsibility of the school's coach to ensure all bowlers meet academic eligibility. Schools that bowl ineligible bowlers will lose all matches that the ineligible student competed in. Students that become ineligible will not be allowed to bowl until they become eligible by their school. Refer to IHSA rules.
4. Substitutes – A substitute bowler may be used during a match at the start of any FRAME. The substitute may NOT be currently bowling at any level (Varsity or JV) in the match (must be on the bench). A substitute must be declared by the head coach to the opposing team's head coach. Once a bowler has been removed from a game, he/she cannot return during that same game. ***The person who bowls the first frame of that game shall receive credit for that game. Record score under starting person and CIRCLE Score.*** Substitutions from JV to Varsity will be allowed at the completion of each game. The replaced Varsity player may not participate at the JV level for the remainder of the contest; however, may be re-inserted into the Varsity line-up at any time.
5. Injury Substitutes: If an injury occurs during a match and an individual must be removed from the line-up the coach may either replace that individual with someone who is not currently participating in the match (at any level) OR they may take 10% of the applicable Vacancy score (see rule 6.c.6) per frame for the remainder of the game. At the end of the game a coach may take someone from another level to fill the spot for the remainder of the match.
6. Vacancy scores: Teams that have a legal, but less than full lineup, may use up to 2 vacancy scores. The vacancy score shall be the **LOWER** of 150 for Varsity Boys, 130 for Varsity Girls, 120 for JV Boys, and 100 for JV Girls OR the lowest score of the opposing team - when one vacancy score is used or the 2 lowest scores if 2 vacancy scores are used.
7. Home team: The home team is the second team listed on the schedule and is responsible to email the scores to the official statistician and media.
8. Forfeits: Every attempt will be made to bowl all conference matches at all levels. Two types of forfeits will exist, minimum legal line-up and failure to show for a contest.
  - A. If teams are unable to show at a contest, communication must occur promptly that day and the match rescheduled prior to the end of the conference season. Only as a last resort will a match be declared a forfeit. The declaration of a forfeit will be made by the conference officers after exhausting all reasonable attempts to reschedule. Coaches may appeal the officers decision to the entire conference Board of Directors, if they so see fit. If a match is declared forfeited no bowling will occur and the winning team will receive 5 standings points.
  - B. Minimum Line-up: A game or a match will be forfeited if a team fails to field at least four team members.

9. Protest: The coach, as representative of the bowling team, must file any protest within 24 hours after the league series in which the infraction occurred. If the protest is not filed within 24 hours, scores shall stand as bowled. All protests will be filed with the Commissioner along with a copy of the score sheets and an explanation of the infraction. The Board of Directors will review the protest and their decision will be final.
10. Conduct of Coaches and Player:
  - A. No coach, player or other person officially connected with the team shall be permitted to use any tobacco or alcohol products on the bench or in the playing area during a match.
  - B. Bowlers will respect the unique rules of each host center in regards to seating / standing or beverages in the settee area.
  - C. Bowlers will be expected to follow the previous bowler promptly and will be required to bowl as soon as the one lane to their right is clear.
  - D. Unsportsmanlike conduct, including but not restricted to: deliberate foot fouls, vulgar language, or abuse of equipment or facilities, is not permitted.
  - E. Unsportsmanlike Conduct Enforcement Policy: It shall be the two head coaches' responsibility to handle unsportsmanlike conduct issues as they arise.
    - a. Step 1 - When an issue arises, both coaches will meet to discuss the issue as soon as it is observed. If the coaches agree on the infraction, the penalty will be assessed immediately.
    - b. Step 2 - If the coaches do not agree and supporting documentation can be provided, an appeal can be made to the conference board of directors to have the policy enforced through the protest process (see rule 6.c.9). In such case, a detailed frame-by-frame scoring of the game must be submitted with the appeal.
      - i. 1<sup>st</sup> incident-Zero for the frame that was just bowled and zero for the next frame (zeros can be carried over to the next game or next match).
      - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> incident-all of the first incident penalties plus the bowler will be taken out of the match. The coach may bring in a sub for that bowler, (in accordance with the injury substitution rule). If the bowler is in the third game when the violation occurs, the bowler will be prevented from bowling in the next match also. Depending on the severity of the conduct violation, the bowler may be subject to the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of punishment immediately.
  - F. The coach(s), league officials and the bowlers in a match are the only persons authorized to be in the bowler's area during a match. Substitutes or any other interested parties must remain behind the area defined as the bowler's area.
11. Scorekeeping: Scorekeeping will be performed by the players, coaches, or other designated individuals. It will be the responsibility of the team head coach to verify that scores are complete and accurate. The score sheets must be signed by the coach or captain. Scoresheet must be emailed to the Statistician same days as match (no Fax available).

## **7) Bowling Practice**

- a. In a meet or tournament host center:
  1. None of the bowling lanes within the bowling establishment may be used for practice by any team member or sub on the day of any match or tournament. A bowler that violates this provision will not be allowed to compete in the given event.
- b. Prior to start of match & tournament:
  1. Five minutes of practice is allowed on each lane. (Exception: when a team is late for the match). Tournament practice will be defined for each individual tournament.
- c. Required practice sessions:

1. It is the responsibility of each head coach to conduct formal practice sessions each week during the bowling league season. These sessions must be prearranged with the participation bowling centers to ensure lanes are reserved and available.
- d. Practice Scheduling:
  1. Schools will be responsible for scheduling practice sessions with their own home center(s).
  2. The conference will have available a practice session “contract” that member schools may use when scheduling the entire season’s practices.

## **8) Uniforms**

Conference dress code will follow IHSA guidelines with the exception of the bottoms, NO JEANS allowed. The coach will be responsible for the appropriate appearance of their bowlers. If both coaches agree, under special circumstances, bowlers may participate in non-team uniform bottoms, but must have the appropriate team shirt.

## **9) Transportation**

Transportation to and from practices, matches and tournaments will fall under individual school policies.

## **10) Awards**

One plaque or trophy will be awarded to the schools which finish first, second or third at the Varsity level and for first and second at the JV level for the defined divisions of competition at the conclusion of the league bowling season. Eight individual awards will be given to the individual team members of each first and second place team (Varsity only). Awards for high average, high series and high game for the league season also will be presented in each division.

All Conference/Coach of the Year/MVP:

- a. All conference teams, Coach of the Year and MVP will be determined at the post-season meeting.
- b. Top 10 averages will be Team All Conference. Minimum of 2/3 of the season must be bowled on Varsity.
- c. The Coach of the Year will be determined by ballot of all head coaches or their representatives who are present at the meeting. There should be two rounds of voting. In the first round, coaches should vote for two head coaches, on the second round they shall vote for one of the top two vote getters. Splitting a vote shall not be counted.
- d. MVP will be selected from the Team All Conference. MVP bowler will be based on the highest average. Coaches shall vote for MVP from top bowlers if there is a 2 pin or less difference. Note: Sportsmanship will also be taken into consideration.

## **11) Contingencies**

Any situation arising which is not covered by the IHSA Official Handbook, the USBC High School Rule Book or the NIBC Guidelines shall be covered by the NIBC Board of Directors.

## **12) Changes to By-Laws**

Changes to these by-laws shall require a 2/3 vote of the current members of the Board of Directors. Voting may take place at a meeting or via e-mail / fax and must be in writing. Members do not have to present at a meeting to vote and required number of votes to pass does not change based upon meeting attendance.