

IHSAA Bowling Memo – December 11, 2025

Hello IHSAA Bowling Schools,

We are reaching out as the season is in full swing. Just a reminder, we are seeking host schools/facilities for the IHSAA SQMs – please fill out your availability on the IHSAA BOUND dashboard. Make sure you have discussed the hosting option with your bowling facility.

As we head toward the winter break, it is a good time to review non-school participation for high school bowlers. There are several factors to keep in mind:

- It is a local decision on whether to allow in-season non-school participation. The local school board will, by policy, determine whether or not participation in non-school athletic events during the same season is permitted. ([IHSAA Handbook page 38](#))
- Any participation needs to adhere to IHSAA award rules—bowlers may never receive cash.
- Any amateur bowler who participates in youth tournaments should adhere to United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Bowling Rules: Youth cannot bowl in a youth/adult event that is double, trios, or team-style formats if the adult prize fund includes the adults getting cash. They can ONLY participate in a youth/adult event that is SINGLES and the youth "payout" must be in the form of SMART scholarships.

The specific rule is Rule 400 and is included below:

Youth Membership Eligibility - Rule 400 USBC Youth membership is available to individuals who have not reached their 18th birthday prior to August 1 of the current bowling season and have maintained compliance with Item (a) below. Individuals who purchase Youth membership in a summer league and turn 18 prior to August 1 will be allowed to complete the summer league. a. Except as provided in Item b, a youth may not bowl, substitute or pace in any bowling activity which offers any of the following as prizes: 1. Cash or bonds. 2. Merchandise exceeding \$500 in value. b. Youth may bowl in singles competitions (including side competitions/brackets) offering such prizes, provided, prior to bowling: 1. The youth and parent/legal guardian sign the Consent Form (See BOWL.com/Rules) 2. The competition agrees to award the youth prize in the form of a scholarship; or 3. The youth waives his/her right to any prize in violation of this rule.

Also, from the FAQ section of USBC Rules: 400/7 Can a youth member bowl in an adult/youth doubles or team event (3, 4 or 5 person) where cash or bonds are offered if the Consent Form is signed or the competition agrees to offer scholarships through SMART? No. Rule 400 only allows youth to participate in adult singles competitions with cash or bond prizes and/or merchandise prizes valued in

excess of \$500 provided they submit the Consent Form prior to participating in such a competition.

Have a strong finish to the end of the calendar year as we look toward January.

Thanks,
Chad