

IHSA Boys and Girls Bowling Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

The IHSA Boys and Girls Bowling Advisory Committee met virtually on Wednesday, April 9, 2025. Members present were Todd Rubin, Brian Howell, Mike Mailloux, Scott Jones, and Eugene Neighbors. Guests present were state final managers, Ann Buja and Mike Imes. Assistant Executive Director, Stacey Lambert was also present.

Terms and Conditions Recommendations:

1) VII.ADVANCEMENT OF WINNERS E) Sectional Individual Advancement

Recommendation: At each sectional competition, the top **ten (10) individuals** who are not a part of a qualifying team shall advance to the state meet.

Rationale: Right now, advancing as an individual from sectionals is significantly harder than at other levels of competition. At sectionals, approximately 50 bowlers are competing for just 5 spots—meaning only 10% move on. For comparison: At regionals, about 40 bowlers compete for 10 individual spots—25% advance. At state, around 90 bowlers compete for 30 spots on day two—33% advance. The drop from 25% at regionals and 33% at state to just 10% at sectionals seems out of balance. A simple solution is to increase individual advancement from 5 to 10 per sectional. This would bring the percentage up to 20%—still less than regionals and state, but much fairer. To accommodate these extra bowlers at state, the number of lanes needed would increase from 30 to 36. This could be easily managed by adjusting the lane assignments: Move from 5 to 6 lane blocks at state. Each block would have 4 lanes for advancing teams and 2 lanes for individuals. This would actually improve the lane rotations, making them more balanced. The only minor concession would be having just one open lane pair between each block. But overall, this change fixes a fixable issue, makes individual advancement fairer, and improves the flow of competition at state.

The Committee feels this doesn't have to do with "unfair" advancement, or more teams advancing, just seems unbalanced between number of regional individual advancement and day 2 state final advancement. This would cause an increase in the lineage fees to be paid to the state final center. The Cherry Bowl does not have enough lanes to accommodate this adjustment.

Recommendations 2 and 3 go together in order to keep the number of lanes used balanced

2) VII.ADVANCEMENT OF WINNERS J: State Final Team Advancement

Recommendation: State Final Team Advancement to Saturday: All teams at the State Final shall bowl round one (1) and round two (2), six (6) games, on the first day of competition. The **sixteen (16) teams** with the highest total pin count for two (2) rounds (round 1 score added to round 2 score) shall advance to the third (3rd) round and fourth (4th) rounds. Ties for the last qualifying team spot will use the same tie breaker used in the sectionals.

Rationale: Currently, half of the teams competing at the State Final are eliminated after just one day, forcing them to pack up and head home after only six games. Many of these teams travel long distances to compete, and having their season end so abruptly creates

logistical challenges. In other cases, teams with an advancing individual must stay for Day 2 anyway, leaving the rest of the team sitting around for an entire day rather than actively competing. By increasing the number of teams advancing to the second day from 12 to 16, more teams will get to experience the full State Final event. This change aligns with the IHSA's mission to provide meaningful championship experiences while maintaining the integrity of the tournament. Additionally, this adjustment pairs seamlessly with the proposed increase in individual qualifiers from 30 to 40. With 16 advancing teams and 8 lanes of individuals, the format cleanly divides into four blocks of six lanes (24 total lanes), ensuring a balanced and well-structured competition. This change enhances the championship experience without diminishing the prestige of qualifying for the final day, making the tournament more inclusive while preserving its competitive integrity.

This keeps the number of participants advancing the same percentage (33%)

3) VII. ADVANCEMENT OF WINNERS K. State Final Individual Advancement

Recommendation: All individuals competing in the state tournament shall be eligible for individual honors. All individual qualifiers will bowl round one (1) and round two (2) on the first day of competition. The forty (40) individuals that are not a part of a team with the highest total pin count for two (2) rounds (round 1 score added to round 2 score) shall advance to the third (3rd) round and fourth (4th) round. Ties for the last qualifying spot shall be broken using the sectional tiebreaker on neutral lanes. A neutral pair of lanes is defined as any lanes the competition did not bowl on for game 6 or round 2.

Rationale: The rationale for increasing the number of individuals advancing to the second day of the State Finals follows the same logic as increasing the number of advancing teams—allowing more athletes to fully experience the state championship while maintaining fairness and competitive balance. If the number of individuals advancing from sectionals to state increases from 30 to 60 (as proposed in a separate change), it makes sense to also adjust the number of individuals advancing from Day 1 to Day 2 accordingly. Currently, approximately 90 bowlers compete for 30 spots on the second day, meaning 33% advance. Under the proposed change, 120 bowlers (12 non-advancing teams + 60 individuals) would be competing for advancement and increasing the number of individual qualifiers to 40 keeps the advancement percentage at 33%, consistent with the current structure. However, if the number of advancing teams is also increased to 16, that would mean only 100 players (4 fewer teams, so 20 fewer bowlers) would be competing for those 40 spots—effectively increasing the advancement percentage slightly. That said, if the "worst" outcome is that more bowlers get the opportunity to have an outstanding second day at the State Finals, that's something we can all live with. This change continues to align with the IHSA's mission of creating meaningful and memorable experiences for student-athletes while maintaining a fair and balanced competition structure.

4) VIII. Tournament Rules F) Lane Assignments and Conditions 7) Lane Breakdown

Recommendation: In the event of a lane breakdown that takes more than 15 minutes, the bowlers shall move to an open pair of lanes to the right of their block. In the event of a hard break, pins should be reset at the time of the break on the new lanes. One practice ball on

each new lane will be allowed for each bowler as a warmup. The remainder of the competition must be finished using the new lanes regardless of the original pair being repaired, unless there is a situation where other lanes breakdown and that is the only remaining pair available.

Rationale: The previous wording said the round must be finished on the new pair, but adjusting back to the old pair, if repaired, for round 2 could give an advantage as the previously broken-down pair would have fresher oil. Once a pair goes out of the even with a breakdown it should be out of use for the remainder of the day, unless there is a situation where other lanes breakdown and that is the only remaining pair available.

5) VIII. TOURNAMENT RULES C) The Competition Area 2) Coaches in Competition Area c

Recommendation: c. Penalties will accumulate for the tournament. Penalties for violation of coaches in competition area are: first offense - 50 team pin deduction/ 10 individual pin deduction, second offense - 100 team pin deduction/ 20 individual pin deductions, third team offense - 200 team pin deduction/ 40 individual pin deductions, and fourth team or individual offense- disqualification.

Rationale: The penalty section only talks about team penalties, but nothing about individuals. This updated wording provides clarification on what to do with infractions for individual participants.

Administrative Recommendations:

1) The Committee discussed if parents should be allowed to talk to coaches and provide tips for the coach to help the bowler during the round?

The Committee felt that coaches should know the bowlers after working with them through practices and competitions so coaches should not be getting advice from outside entities either. This quickly becomes a way for parents to circumvent the rules of not coaching their child. It also opens the door for professional coaches to coach from the stands. Coaches are paid by the school to be the coach; parents have the opportunity to talk to the bowlers between rounds. The only time a coach should need a parent is during an emergency. Stacey will put information in the rules video to provide clarity on this decision.

General items of discussion:

- 1) The Committee reviewed the Advisory Committee process.
- 2) The Committee reviewed 2024 Minutes
- 3) The Committee reviewed the 2025 IHSA post season/ state finals

We had a pinfall record set by our chair class at girls' state

On the boys' side adjusting the post season setup seemed to go well, the center's running those seemed to appreciate the change.

The Committee asked that the IHSA keep an eye on which center is being used between regionals and sectionals to try to avoid using the same center twice.

In some areas this will be impossible, but the IHSA will work to prevent it when possible.

Lineage costs are still going up, is there anything the IHSA can do to help that? It seems like around \$30 is the average cost. The IHSA will add a location on the host request form to keep track of the lineage

The Committee asked if the date of competition can be posted with sites are posted so schools can plan for Friday regionals.

The Committee asked when the state final contracts end, the IHSA just finished year 3 of 5 at both The Cherry Bowl and St. Clair Bowl.

The Committee talked about looking into seeding. A lot of factors that would have to be taken into consideration in order to complete seeding. This could cause increase in travel. It would be difficult to figure out individual entries.

The Committee discussed a two-class system. It was reported that both boys and girls need about 100 more schools before they meet the requirements of IHSA Board Policy 19.

The Committee discussed if a school would get adjusted to a different sectional if they did/did not host? Grouping isn't done that way, so the simple answer is no.

4) The Committee discussed a recommendation to allow a player substitution for the "fill" ball of the 10th frame. The "fill" ball defined as the shot after a spare or after a double in the 10th frame. The substitution would only be for the third ball of the 10th frame.

The Committee felt that a bowler should bowl a full frame and bowling less than that could get hard to monitor. Any sub would not be eligible for individual honors per the terms and conditions. No further action was taken.

5) The Committee discussed a recommendation to adjust day 2 of the State Finals, when re-seeding teams/players, keep individual bowlers from the same school on the same pair or in the same block.

The Committee felt that the set up that is currently in place works. Adopting this would allow teammates together but could move a higher seeded player to a lower seeded block and vice versa. The Committee felt this would be unfair to the bowlers who would get adjusted. The coaches on the committee who had bowlers said their bowlers would rather stay in the correct seeded block without a coach than be adjusted. At the state tournaments schools in these situations are given additional passes so that a coach, if available, can be with each bowler. No further action was taken.

6) The Committee discussed adjustments to the state final practice day: two practice squads Noon and 3 PM with half the teams on each squad and half the individuals. 30-45 minutes or so are on your assigned practice pair and then open it up to move anywhere across the house. Individuals would get the full 2 hours and would have 8 lanes to spread across to start.

The Committee felt this would be difficult to implement. The current set up allows all coaches to be met with prior to the start of competition. It also allows schools to practice first thing in the morning, then have the day for team activities. The Committee felt that this adjustment could be unfair to the teams as they would get less time than the individual entries. The only complaint that was noted with the current set up was from new coaches

who didn't review the pretournament paperwork and didn't reserve practice lanes early enough. No further action was taken.

7) The Committee asked if SMART fund money can be awarded at high school events? Stacey will look into this further.

8) The Committee asked how bowlers can make requests for accommodations. Stacey shared the [Request for Accommodation Form.pdf](#)

9) The Committee asked if bowlers in the chair class could also participate as a member of the high school team. A bowler must select one class to participate in, they would not be able to participate twice, similarly a school could not enter a team and 1 individual bowler in the same competition. No further action was taken.

10) The Committee thanked the outgoing member, Mike Mailloux.