

Talking Points & Background Information for Indiana High School Bowling

Updated: May 6, 2011

- The 1999-2000 season was the first season for Indiana High School Bowling (IHSB). The season culminated with the Indiana High School Bowling Finals at Western Bowl in Indianapolis on March 18. This program was developed by the Indiana Bowling Centers Association to provide competition for student bowling enthusiasts throughout Indiana.
- Competition is open to both boys and girls teams. A 'Varsity' program is running throughout the state and many conferences have added 'Jr Varsity' competition as well. The current season begins in October and finishes in February.
- Individual and team events are offered.
- Each conference has its own constitution and copies of the Indiana High School Bowling rules, which are available for review. Indiana High School Bowling rules and Rules Committee meeting minutes are available online at www.ihsb.org. All high school bowling matches are non-smoking events and IHSB does not allow the use of tobacco or alcohol by students, coaches, or anyone affiliated with the team during meets or practices.
- The cost of the program is covered in a number of different ways. The bowling centers and the Indiana Bowling Centers Association are ultimately responsible for the finances. They host the clubs & teams and work with the schools and bowlers to underwrite the program. Some schools are active in the funding. The source of income for many teams is fundraisers. Some costs include: trophies/awards/scholarships, uniform shirts, coaching, program materials, lineage and awards for the state finals tournament series.

Seasons	Conferences	Bowling Centers	High Schools	Teams
2010-2011	23	102	194	342
2009-2010	24	106	198	352
2008-2009	24	106	193	349
2007-2008	22	101	184	336
2006-2007	20	99	170	319
2005-2006	18	95	167	319
2004-2005	20	94	163	316
2003-2004	18	92	152	295
2002-2003	18	90	149	286

2001-2002	21	87	143	274
2000-2001	16	82	132	250
1999-2000	10	60	94	173

Locally: Indianapolis has three conferences North (9), West (6) and South (10) with 25 Boys Teams and 22 Girls Teams

Regarding IHSAA:

Currently we are at 194 Schools participating in our program.

The IHSAA By-Laws suggests that when 50 percent of the member schools have a sport, the Association will consider sanctioning that sport. At that point in time a member school principal would have to recommend that the sport be added and the Board of Directors would have to approve the request.

Currently IHSAA has 409 member schools; we are currently 15 schools away from that goal. However, the IHSAA commissioner has asked if we would like to petition for IHSAA endorsement based on the number of teams, boys and girls.

There are other factors that have to be considered before seeking that endorsement. Several member schools are reluctant to adding the financial impact of another sport. The IHSAA would have to change their by-laws to accept the SMART scholarships that a number of our athletes have accumulated. Our conferences would most likely be dissolved in favor of the already established athletic conferences. This would add travel time and scheduling issues in many cases. Finally, if bowling would become an official IHSAA sport, participating bowlers would be limited to bowling in only high school matches during the season. This would eliminate them from any other organized competition and take away from their opportunity to compete, improve and win scholarships. At the present time the IHSB is comfortable in growing the sport as a club while seeking continued and improved support from the schools. If the school accepts and supports the club, it gives the student the best of both worlds. Schools can award letters even though it's not an IHSAA sport. In 2010-2011 there were at least 11 schools that did award sport letters.

Benefits of a Varsity Bowling Program

- No age, size, strength or gender limitations
- Won't tax school budget or facilities – even coaches will be provided if needed
- Doesn't compete for the same athletes as other varsity sports (90% of high school athletes who compete in bowling don't participate in any other sport)

- Offers another winter sport for schools to add to their programs
- Costs a school nothing to start
- Offers students a safe, clean, supervised, alcohol and tobacco-free environment
- Gives youth additional opportunities to compete and in some cases earn high school varsity letters

National High School Bowling Background:

- History

From humble beginnings more than 60 years ago to recent explosive growth across the country, high school bowling has come a long way.

The first officially recorded competition occurred in 1937 when Chicago's Milt Raymer, an American Bowling Congress Hall of Famer, organized a four-team boys' league at Tilden Technical High School in Chicago. Word of Raymer's program quickly spread to other schools, and soon the Chicago High School Bowling Club was developed to govern high school bowling activities.

Other areas of the country became interested and Raymer began operating the American High School Bowling Congress from his basement in 1941. The program was temporarily discontinued when Raymer entered the military in 1942, but reinstated upon his discharge in 1946.

The National Bowling Council, organized in 1946, took over sponsorship of Raymer's group later that year and renamed it the "American Junior Bowling Congress" in 1947, with the focus changing to include youth of all ages, rather than just high school students. The sport gradually grew in popularity over the years and reached a milestone when New Jersey became one of the first states to recognize high school bowling in 1958.

In 1964, the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America and AJBC began separate youth programs due to philosophical differences. The BPAA created its own Youth Bowling Association in conjunction with the National Federation of State High School Associations, which brought bowling to schools in the form of intramural programs and physical education classes. The AJBC continued under the auspices of the ABC and the Women's International Bowling Congress, and moved its office to Milwaukee. After years of discussions between the groups, the Young American Bowling Alliance was created in 1982, combining AJBC and YBA.

During this time, high school varsity bowling flourished in different parts of the country. While states like New York and New Jersey had recognized varsity bowling for quite

some time, major cities such as Miami and Chicago granted varsity status to bowling in the 1960s and '70s.

More recently, the Northern Illinois Bowling Proprietors Association and the Bowling Centers Association of Michigan underscored the importance of high school bowling with their strong programs in the Rockford, Ill., area and statewide in Michigan.

That model was followed in southern Illinois, where the first Illinois High School Boys Club Championship Tournament was started in 1998. Many other states used the framework of the Illinois program to implement their own.

In 1998, The Billiard Bowling Institute of America partnered with the BPAA and the YABA to produce two marketing videos—one each for proprietors and athletic directors—that were an integral part of the newly created "Give Me a B for Varsity Bowling" program. During the 1998-99 school year, four states recognized bowling as a high school sport and about 18,000 students took to the lanes to compete at 1,633 schools.

In January 2001, the BPAA appointed a task force to promote high school bowling throughout the United States. The group rewrote the "Give Me a B" Varsity Bowling Manual as well as recommendations for the duties of the National Director of High School Bowling, a position created to oversee this program. The executive directors of ABC, WIBC and YABA approved a BPAA proposal to create a national program and funded the industry-wide initiative. Today high school bowling continues to enjoy industry support as the United States Bowling Congress High School program, renamed after the 2005 merger of the ABC, WIBC, ABC and USA Bowling to form the USBC.

In the last decade, participation in high school bowling has nearly tripled. Under the guidance of the USBC High School program, varsity high school bowling currently exists in 19 states and at the club level in another 28 states. During the 2007-08 season, more than 52,000 students competed at 4,656 schools that offered high school varsity bowling competition. In fact, bowling was the largest-growing high school sport in the 2007-08 school year, continuing a decade-long trend, according to the most recent National Federation of State High School Associations participation survey.

Each year high school bowling grows as schools elevate club programs to varsity status and new states start programs.

Today:

- Currently, 25 states have high school bowling club programs. Indiana is one of them.
- Currently, 21 states have some kind of varsity high school bowling program.
- The other 4 states are currently in the process of forming programs.