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**NEW LEAGUE DESIGNATION TO BRIDGE GAP BETWEEN STANDARD, SPORT**

**ARINGTON, Texas** – As the United States Bowling Congress continues to seek ways to ensure reported averages are a true reflection of a bowler's abilities, USBC has established a new designation for leagues competing on lane conditions that fall between Standard and Sport conditions. A new Challenge lane condition designation and conversion chart was determined based on research of leagues conducted under a Sport/Challenge designation, as well as leagues competing on Blue lane conditions.

Recent research showed a discrepancy for leagues competing on more difficult, though not Sport, lane conditions. Because these leagues were not conducting their full league season on Sport conditions, or were using a variety of lane conditions, the leagues were designating as Standard, as currently there is no other option. The Challenge designation provides the solution.

“A thorough examination of bowlers who have competed in both Standard and Challenge leagues showed a discrepancy that needed to be addressed,” USBC Executive Director Chad Murphy said. “The data showed us that using a Sport conversion for some leagues might not be appropriate, but the averages of bowlers competing on certain conditions did warrant a conversion to ensure they are not gaining an unfair advantage when they compete on Standard conditions. This is part of our ongoing commitment to ensure the averages of all bowlers accurately reflect a bowler's ability.”

Starting with the 2017-2018 season, when a league submits its certification, the league secretary must choose one, and only one, of three lane condition options – Standard, Challenge or Sport.

Standard will be for leagues conducted on traditional house conditions, Sport will be for true Sport leagues, while Challenge will be for leagues that use a variety of difficult patterns but are not classified as Sport-only leagues.

Data will also be used to determine a league's lane condition designation. Leagues with an average difference of 20 or more pins still will be considered Sport. Leagues with an average difference between 10-19 pins will fall into the new Challenge condition. Leagues from the 2016-2017 season will be moved into the appropriate lane condition designation based upon final averages and an analysis, and those leagues will be notified they have been moved into a new classification.

USBC also has developed a new average conversion charts, for both Sport and Challenge leagues, so tournament and league managers can convert Sport and Challenge averages to Standard averages, and vice versa. The bowlers in a Challenge league will receive a new designation in Find A Member, so tournament and other league managers are aware the bowler's average was determined in a league bowled on tougher lane conditions. Averages are to automatically be converted using the conversion charts.

The changes are based on USBC Membership's research of leagues that were marked as Standard but were reported, or discovered, to be competing on Sport or Challenge lane conditions. A check of the bowlers' averages in those leagues, compared to the bowlers' highest averages for the same season in a Standard league (min. 21 games), showed the discrepancy.

For more information, including a look at the differences between Standard, Challenge and Sport leagues, the average conversion charts that includes the Sport and Challenge conversions, and the research data, please visit [BOWL.com/SportBowling](http://BOWL.com/SportBowling).

### **United States Bowling Congress**

The United States Bowling Congress serves as the national governing body of bowling as recognized by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). USBC conducts championship events nationwide including the largest participation sporting events in the world – the USBC Open and Women's Championships – and professional events such as the USBC Masters and USBC Queens.

Founded in 1895, today USBC and its 2,500 state and local associations proudly serve more than a million members. USBC is headquartered in Arlington, Texas, working toward a future for the sport. The online home for USBC is [BOWL.com](http://BOWL.com).

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# SPORT/CHALLENGE LANE CONDITION STUDY

Starting with the 2015-2016 season, all leagues that used a condition other than a Standard "house" lane conditions should have designated the league as using a Sport/Challenge lane condition. Standard/House leagues typically have a ratio of 8:1 or higher oil dispersion, while more challenging leagues would use oil patterns typically 4:1 or lower.

After a season and a half of research, we discovered there may be a place for a new designation of leagues which would provide a fairer representation of league averages for USBC members.

## RESEARCHED LEAGUES

After the completion of the 2015-2016 season, USBC started to hear about leagues that were not competing on what would be considered a Standard/House condition. Despite an announcement to leagues, centers, associations, and members, many leagues were not self-reporting as Sport/Challenge leagues, though the league was not being conducted on a house shot. This led to bowlers utilizing an average that gave them advantage over other bowlers, especially in tournaments.

Some leagues were found through online forums, league promotional flyers, private Facebook messages, or phone calls to report bowler leagues.

In total, 38 leagues have been evaluated for average discrepancies and 16 of these have been re-classified to Sport. Of the other 22, some were inconclusive due to not enough of the bowlers having other averages, or the average differences did not exceed 10 pins.

## METHODOLOGY

After a league was reported or discovered, the USBC Membership team listed all members of the league with an average of 21 or more games. Then, each member was cross-checked against their highest average for the same season in a standard league, with 21 or more games. The difference between the averages served as the metric to determine if the league should be labeled as Sport/Challenge and, therefore, member averages be adjusted to the Sport conversion.

## EXAMPLE

The chart shows samples of leagues checked. It shows the average of the league and the Standard average of bowlers in the league. Leagues in light blue were re-rated Sport; green ones were left as Standard.

League	League Average	Avg. in Standard league	Difference
League 1	187.015	211.621	24.606
League 2	188.35	196.03	7.682
League 3	189.89	210.00	20.111
League 4	166.97	182.49	16.189
League 5	162.39	187.61	25.214
League 6	190.779	207.324	16.544
League 7	199.317	205.048	5.73

## APPEALS

The conversations and emails following the re-classifications has led to learning why such a large difference exists. A few examples are:

- League bowled on Sport for the first half of the year, house shot the second half
- League was using a 5:1 oil pattern ("blue")
- The condition of the center was old wood, usually lower scoring, and bowling on a 6:1 oil pattern
- Changing patterns each month, some Sport, some Challenge, some closer to Standard

## RESEARCH

The next step was to research previous league data to determine if leagues that have historically been labeled something other than Sport or Red had any identifiers that would lead us to a possible middle classification.

This chart looks at all leagues from 2013-2016 which identified themselves as Blue, and we then analyzed the other league averages that bowlers in these leagues had on a Red/House condition.

		2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Blue</b>	<b>Total Leagues</b>	57	91	45	8
	<b>Total Records</b>	1217	1998	1304	143
	<b>Blue Average</b>	181	182	185	185
	<b>Other Average</b>	196	201	202	194
	<b>Average Difference</b>	15	19	17	9

The data shows previous Blue leagues had an average difference of between 9 and 19 pins versus Standard averages. The data for 2016 is much fewer because leagues should have been choosing House or Sport only in this year, but with the series of lane condition changes over the years, the saturation of the correct change will take a few years. It also should be noted, some of the leagues marked Blue will be analyzed, as some of them, in fact, have a dispersion of averages that more reflects a Sport condition. This will bring the overall average down slightly.

Next, we looked at leagues designated as White over the last few years. The below data indicates there is not a significant enough change in averages for us to provide another series of average adjustments.

		2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>White</b>	<b>Total Leagues</b>	165	155	109	37
	<b>Total Records</b>	2397	2455	1965	743
	<b>White Average</b>	184	183	183	183
	<b>Other Average</b>	187	187	187	186
	<b>Average Difference</b>	3	4	4	3

## CONCLUSION

Having strictly a Sport or Standard average conversion does not allow for a true representation of averages to be given to leagues competing on something "in between" these conditions.

A new adjustment has been developed to allow for the middle average to reflect a closer representation. We now have Standard, Challenge, and Sport lane condition designations for leagues and conversion charts so averages for bowlers in Sport and Challenge leagues can be easily converted to Standard.

For the Sport to Standard conversion chart, please click [here](#).

For the Challenge to Standard conversion chart, please click [here](#).

# NEW LANE CONDITION CLASSIFICATION

USBC wants to ensure reported averages are a true reflection of a bowler's abilities and has established three designations for leagues starting with the 2017-2018 season. These oil pattern parameters provide an estimate on how to designate your league on the USBC league application. For more information regarding lane condition classification, visit [BOWL.com/laneconditions](http://BOWL.com/laneconditions)

## SPORT PATTERN

4:1 OR LESS

Are the bowlers in the league, on average, scoring 20 pins or lower than when on Standard House conditions? If so, your league is a Sport classification.

## CHALLENGE PATTERN

4:1-8:1

Are the bowlers in the league, on average, scoring 10 to 19 pins lower than when on Standard House conditions? If so, your league is a Challenge classification.

## STANDARD PATTERN

8:1 & up

Are your lane conditions set up to provide a high-scoring environment? If so your league is a Standard House classification.

■ Oil volume at front of the pattern

■ Volume of oil by the end of the pattern

**\* Note:** Patterns shown are just examples of pattern graphs showing the volume of oil for the level of difficulty that may be present in your league conditions. | If an association is aware of a league that is bowling on conditions other than a Standard House shot, the association can re-classify the league. | Leagues can be re-classified if end-of-season averages show an improper classification, including 2016-17 season leagues. | If a league believes its classification is incorrect, it can be appeal by contacting [Rules@bowl.com](mailto:Rules@bowl.com)

## Sport Conversion Chart

The Sport Conversion Chart is for converting a bowler's average from Sport to Standard, and vice versa, for leagues and tournaments. The conversion chart is not considered a "re-rate" of the bowler. Its purpose is to allow for a fair adjustment so the bowler's entering average is what would be expected of the bowler on the lane conditions of the league or tournament.

Sport Average	Standard Average
110	110
111	112
112	114
113	116
114	117
115	119
116	121
117	122
118	124
119	126
120	127
121	129
122	130
123	132
124	134
125	135
126	137
127	138
128	140
129	141
130	143
131	144
132	146
133	147
134	149
135	150
136	152
137	153
138	155
139	156
140	158

Sport Average	Standard Average
141	159
142	161
143	162
144	164
145	165
146	166
147	168
148	169
149	170
150	172
151	173
152	175
153	176
154	177
155	178
156	180
157	181
158	182
159	184
160	185
161	186
162	187
163	189
164	190
165	191
166	192
167	194
168	195
169	196
170	197

Sport Average	Standard Average
171	198
172	199
173	201
174	202
175	203
176	204
177	205
178	206
179	207
180	208
181	210
182	211
183	212
184	213
185	214
186	215
187	216
188	217
189	218
190	219
191	220
192	221
193	222
194	223
195	224
196	225
197	226
198	227
199	227
200	228

Sport Average	Standard Average
201	229
202	230
203	231
204	232
205	233
206	234
207	235
208	235
209	236
210	237
211	238
212	239
213	239
214	240
215	241
216	242
217	243
218	243
219	244
220	245
221	246
222	246
223	247
224	248
225	248
226	249
227	250
228	250
229	251
230+	.+22 pins



## Challenge Conversion Chart

The Challenge Conversion Chart is for converting a bowler's average from Challenge to Standard, and vice versa, for leagues and tournaments. The conversion chart is not considered a "re-rate" of the bowler. Its purpose is to allow for a fair adjustment so the bowler's entering average is what would be expected of the bowler on the lane conditions of the league or tournament.

Challenge Average	Standard Average	Challenge Average	Standard Average	Challenge Average	Standard Average	Challenge Average	Standard Average
110	110	141	150	171	185	201	215
111	112	142	152	172	186	202	216
112	113	143	153	173	187	203	217
113	115	144	154	174	188	204	218
114	116	145	155	175	189	205	219
115	117	146	156	176	190	206	220
116	119	147	158	177	191	207	221
117	120	148	159	178	192	208	222
118	121	149	160	179	193	209	223
119	123	150	161	180	194	210	224
120	124	151	162	181	196	211	225
121	125	152	164	182	197	212	226
122	126	153	165	183	198	213	226
123	128	154	166	184	199	214	227
124	129	155	167	185	200	215	228
125	130	156	168	186	201	216	229
126	132	157	169	187	202	217	230
127	133	158	170	188	203	218	231
128	134	159	172	189	204	219	232
129	135	160	173	190	205	220	233
130	137	161	174	191	206	221	234
131	138	162	175	192	207	222	234
132	139	163	176	193	208	223	235
133	140	164	177	194	209	224	236
134	142	165	178	195	210	225	237
135	143	166	179	196	211	226	238
136	144	167	181	197	212	227	239
137	145	168	182	198	212	228	239
138	147	169	183	199	213	229	240
139	148	170	184	200	214	230+	.+ 11 pins
140	149						