

Talking Points & Background Information for Indiana High School Bowling

Updated: February 15, 2009

- 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 November 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 Advisory Board 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 sponsor 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 the state finals tournament series.

Season	Conferences	Bowling Centers	High Schools	Teams
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 20 Girls Teams

Regarding IHSAA:

Currently we are at 193 Schools participating in our program.

The IHSAA By-Laws state that when 50 percent of the member schools have a sport, that 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 407 member schools; we are currently 11 schools away from that goal.

Other than our need to grow by 11 schools participating in the program, primary reluctance heard from member schools is the financial impact of adding another sport.

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, earn high school varsity letters

National High School Bowling Background:

High School Bowling has actually been an operating entity for a very long time. Chicago's Milt Raymer, an American Bowling Congress Hall of Famer and founder of the American Junior Bowling Congress (AJBC) in 1946, initiated one of the nation's first high school bowling programs more than 50 years ago. Varsity bowling has been recognized in New York and New Jersey for nearly as long, with New Jersey's varsity bowling status dating back to the 1960s.

Illinois' girls' bowling began nearly 30 years ago, with the schools participating mostly concentrated in the suburbs of Chicago.

In 1989, NIBPA made its first overture to Rockford area high schools to create the "NIC-9 Bowling Conference." The overture was flatly rejected.

In 1990, after a full year of research into issues such as Illinois High School Association rules, school board rules and policies, school administration requirements and numerous other tedious details, the newly-formed non-profit Northern Illinois Bowling Proprietors Foundation made a new, comprehensive, no-cost proposal to area high school athletic directors. The program received unanimous support by the school athletic directors, but was rejected by school principals. NIBPF thus prepared to launch the program as a "club sport," outside of the school system's jurisdiction, to demonstrate its feasibility.

In 1991, still battling reluctant public school principals, the NIBPF presented its comprehensive long-term plan to the Rockford School Board where it again was rejected on the basis of seven key concerns. However, the Rockford Public Schools' Curriculum Committee agreed to a two-year evaluation of the "club program" and more

than 300 student-athletes, boys and girls, representing all 10 Rockford area high schools - public and private - participated in the Northern Illinois Bowling League.

In the fall of 1992, girls' bowling was accorded high school letter status in the Rockford area. The renamed Northern Illinois Bowling-10 (NIB-10) Conference began its first full season of operation under the full blessing of school administrators. The boys' program continued to operate as a "club sport."

Phil Kammann, proprietor of St. Clair Bowl in downstate Fairview Heights, used the NIBPF model to develop a nine-school conference in Southern Illinois. In cooperation with Sommer and the NIBPF, the two orchestrated the first Illinois High School Boys' Club Championship Tournament in 1998.

More recently the Northern Illinois Bowling Proprietors Association under the guidance of Rockford, IL, proprietor John R. Sommer Jr and enhanced by Ron Tomassoni of Iron Mountain, Mi, in cooperation with Scott Bennett and the Bowling Centers Association of Michigan, put the importance of bowling back into the spotlight.

From the seeds Sommer planted, Tomassoni held an organizational meeting in Michigan's Upper Peninsula in May 1996 and had a seven-school program underway by December. From that humble start and with the extraordinary support by BCAM Executive Director Scott Bennett, Michigan enrolled 250 proprietors to begin work on high school bowling programs as of March 1998.

In 1998, the BBIA partnered with the BPAA and the YABA to produce two videos, one for Proprietors and one for Athletic Directors, to be used for marketing purposes that were an integral part of the newly created "Give Me a B for Varsity Bowling" program.

In January 2001, BPAA President Michael Ducat appointed a Task Force to organize the effort to promote High School Bowling throughout the United States. Chaired by Peppe Smith of Ohio, this group began rewriting the "Give Me a B" Varsity Bowling Manual and writing the recommendations for the duties of the National Director of High School Bowling, a position that was to be created to oversee this program.

In the spring of 2001, a proposal was presented to the executive directors of ABC, WIBC and YABA by the BPAA to create a national program. It was approved and funding from all the groups now supports this industry-wide initiative.

On August 1 2001, Christine E. Zahn "reported for duty" and opened the door for High School Bowling USA.

Today:

- Currently, 25 states have high school bowling club programs. Indiana is one of them.
- Currently, 20 states have a varsity high school bowling program: Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee & Washington.
- The other states are currently in the process of forming programs.