

## Windsor-Essex Chatham-Kent Bowling Association



Bowling leagues should always review rules so they do not restrict bowlers. The rules you set or the way you run your league can create a positive or a negative impact on the league as a whole. It is always better to have someone outside your league review your rules because they may see something you don't. In our Saturday Mixed League, a question is always asked of new members and teams what they think of our league rules.

There was a rule in a Saturday Mixed league restricting the number of pre-bowls. This was looked at to becoming a detriment to league. Saturday is a busy time due to outside family functions, weddings, shift work, vacations, and special events.

Restricting the number of pre-bowls was not helpful. A Saturday League had to allow entire teams to pre-bowl due to upcoming events or commitments. The opposing team is notified in advance whenever possible. In a mixed league you can have many related members bowling in the same league, so you need to try and accommodate bowlers in the event of outside events that occur that might interfere with your league. If this might be a problem, then you need a rule that takes care of the problem.

Restricting when a regular bowler can pre-bowl is not helpful either. A number of leagues did not allow a bowler to pre-bowl the last night of either half, some still do not allow any pre-bowling at all. Leagues need to realize that restricting pre-bowls means that you better have a host of spares or you may need to include a league rule that allows extra bowlers on a team the ability to spare for another team, as long as they do not bowl against their own team.

Some leagues restrict the number of bowlers that can be on a team roster. Most leagues have now dropped to 4 bowlers that are scheduled to bowl per week. We can assume in most cases this might have to do with the legal lineup for tournaments. There are leagues that restrict the roster to just 6 on a team and then specify a league rule indicating how these bowlers are going to rotate. Other leagues may allow up to 8+ per team roster with no specifications on how these bowlers rotate. Leagues need to realize that it is the team captain's responsibility to run the team. These different teams use these additional bowlers differently depending on how these bowlers best fit the schedule of other members of the team. We need to really look at bowlers and bowling today. Some just cannot commit to these long league schedules due to other commitments. Since bowling is decreasing somewhat it is better to bring in more bowlers to a team roster to allow them to have their own people rotate on the team how they want that team to operate. As long as the treasurer receives the specified amount per team per week there should be no problem on how these teams use their bowlers. Some people for whatever reason cannot commit on a weekly basis or may go away for a period of time during the winter months. Your league rules should accommodate these bowlers.

Some leagues have bowlers pay the last week or last two weeks in advance. What is the reason for this rule? Some bowlers see this as quite a bit of money to pay up front when it is not technically owed until the night you bowl those last few weeks.

Some leagues have jackpots as part of some of their fees. The two leagues I bowl in all league jackpots including 50-50 is optional. Bowling is going up in price, so some bowlers just have enough to pay bowling. Some weeks they have extra so they may go in these optional pots.

Some leagues pay partial or full sanction fees out of their bowling fees. With lineage increasing this may become more difficult in view of its effect on prize money.

Leagues use the league 50-50 draw for a wide range of items. Most leagues use the 50-50 within their leagues to help reduce the cost of some league fees. Some leagues use the 50-50 as a raffle. Some leagues pay their banquet with the raffle ticket money. It is always a better recommendation for the league if the 50-50 is used to help the league as a whole. If the 50-50 money goes into the league bank account, then that money belongs to the league. It is best practice to explain in your rules how your 50-50 works and how the league is going to use that money.

Look at your rules covering play-offs and money you pay out for individual bowlers. You want to be more inclusive to your league – you want to keep your teams and your bowlers. Did not talk about this since each league handles this area very differently depending on the league.

Many leagues discuss problem issues. In our experience in WECKBA we have found that the majority of league issues arise from league rules that are outdated and restrictive or that haven't been reviewed annually. You may want to revisit your league rules asking yourself: How do your rules help or impede your league members? Hopefully this can start conversations within leagues.

Catherine Wilbur