

## **NORTH FLORIDA SPORT SHOT SERIES 2025-2026 TOURNAMENT RULES**

### **Mission**

The mission of the North Florida Sport Shot Series (NFSSS) is to provide all eligible bowlers under age 22 the opportunity to gain invaluable experience bowling on sport oil pattern conditions in a sanctioned tournament setting, as well as provide an opportunity for bowlers to qualify for the 2026 Junior Gold National Championship and/or a year-end Scholarship Invitational tournament – awarding scholarships through the USBC SMART program (Account #13285).

### **Format**

Bowlers will bowl five (5) games for total pinfall (scratch; no handicap included). Each game is bowled on a pair of lanes, moving lanes after each game. At the end of five (5) games, any ties for 1<sup>st</sup> place in a division or for Junior Gold entries are broken by the highest game bowled in the block. Lane conditions will be certified Sport patterns, disclosed within 1 hour of tournament conclusion.

### **Age Divisions**

Bowlers compete in one of three (3) divisions – Under 12 Mixed, Open, and Ladies – during the qualifying round. Bowlers under age 12 may elect to move up to the Open or Ladies divisions prior to the start of each competition. Ladies may elect to compete in the Open division prior to competition. 2025-2026 divisions are as follows:

<b>Division</b>	<b>Birthdays between</b>
U12 Mixed	08/01/2013 or later
Ladies	08/01/2003 or later
Open	08/01/2003 or later

### **Eligibility**

Bowler must be a current USBC Youth Membership holder or USBC Adult Membership holder under the age of 22 (as of 8/1/2025) to participate in any NFSSS tournament. Junior Gold membership is only required if competing in the optional Junior Gold qualifier.

### **Bowler and Spectator Conduct**

The use of profanity (verbal or non-verbal), alcohol or tobacco products by any participant will not be permitted from the time they check in to the time they turn in their score sheet. The first violation of this rule will be a warning; the second violation will be disqualification without a refund. Any rules not specifically listed will be governed by the USBC. We also ask that all adults refrain from the use of profanity, alcohol or tobacco products until all youth bowlers have completed their bowling. Any bowlers or spectators who do not conduct themselves in an appropriate sportsmanship-like manner will be disqualified (bowler) or directed to leave the center (spectator).

### **Pre-registration**

Online pre-registration for each event is highly encouraged as the total entries and spectators may be limited in smaller centers. Pre-registration links will be posted on our Facebook page and website page (see below) and pre-registration will close at **3pm** on the day prior to the event. You may also pre-register by contacting us through Facebook Messenger from our page or emailing us; however, “liking”, commenting, or clicking “going” on a Facebook event post will not secure a spot in an event. Contacting the host bowling center is not a form of pre-registration. If withdrawing from an event, we ask for at least 24 hours’ advance notice via email or Facebook Messenger.

[nfsssbowling@gmail.com](mailto:nfsssbowling@gmail.com)   [www.facebook.com/NFSSS/](http://www.facebook.com/NFSSS/)   [www.fcusbcyouth.com/tournaments/nfsss/](http://www.fcusbcyouth.com/tournaments/nfsss/)  
Tournament Director: Ryan Waters

## **Entry / Check-in**

The check-in time is 9:00am-9:45am. Those who pre-registered online will be given their lane assignment and scoresheet at check-in. Walk-in entries are welcome to check-in between 9:00am-9:45am, but may not receive their lane assignment until after the check-in closes at 9:45am.

### **Breakdown of fees:**

NFSSS entry fee is **\$50** (Lineage/Expenses \$20, Event Division Scholarships \$10, Event Side Scholarship Contests [Most Marks/Spares/Strikes & Knockout] \$10, and Year-End Scholarships \$10)

### **Optional add-on fees are as follows:**

- Junior Gold Qualifier Add-On: **\$40** for U12; **\$50** for U14/U16/U18
- USBC Junior Gold Annual Membership: **\$25** for U12; **\$40** for U14; **\$50** for U16/U18

The jackpots are awarded at each monthly tournament, 100% of collected funds, towards the winners' SMART accounts. Any unused expense funds will be added to the year-end scholarship pool.

## **Dress Code**

Our tournament follows the Junior Gold Dress Code. Tournament management will determine if the attire worn by the participant is acceptable. If the attire is deemed unacceptable, the participant will be required to change immediately. If the participant is unable to change into compliant attire, they will be removed from the competition for that day with no refund of entry fees.

### **Shirts**

Competitors shall provide their own bowling shirt with a collared, V-neck, rib-lined or banded necklines. Mock collar must be a minimum of three-quarters of one inch. It is recommended that participants have their names on their shirts, but it is not required.

### **Pants**

Male participants are required to wear slacks. Slacks must not contain drawstring waists or elastic bottoms. Slacks must have a zipper and a button to be eligible. Jeans and yoga pants are not permitted. Female participants are required to wear slacks, skirts, culottes, skorts or walking shorts. All skirts, culottes, skorts, or walking shorts must be no shorter than the fingertips when the arms are at their sides while standing.

### **Headgear**

No covering or sunglasses can be worn while practicing or competing (hats, caps, or bandannas, etc.). Male participants cannot wear any headgear while practicing or competing, unless a request is made in writing and approved prior to the event.

### **Facial coverings**

It is up to the host center to determine if facial coverings are required or optional, for health and safety reasons. We ask any bowler feeling ill not to attend our tournament that day.

## **Electronics**

ABSOLUTELY NO CELL PHONES OR MUSIC DEVICES allowed in the bowling circle during the competition. This includes texting, checking messages, live-streaming, or talking on a cell phone. Listening to music while bowling is prohibited due to safety concerns. The 1<sup>st</sup> offense is a verbal warning, 2<sup>nd</sup> offense could lead to disqualification. Requests for medical exemptions must be made in advance, in writing.

## **Warm-Ups**

Centers will not allow open play on lanes prior to the competition. All bowlers will be given eight (8) to ten (10) minutes of warm up on their starting pair of lanes prior to the start of competition, at the Tournament Director's discretion based on number of bowlers on each pair of lanes. All bowlers should be prepared to begin the warm-up session as early as 9:50am or as late at 10:05am.

### **Equipment**

Bowlers are limited to using 5 bowling balls during competition, and equipment must follow current allowed specifications (e.g. no balance holes, "X" etched to identify where palm is for balls without a thumb hole). A bowling ball surface may not be altered, or cleaned, after the start of competition. Only a dry towel may be used to wipe or contact the ball. Powders such as rosin may not be applied to the ball surface or in finger holes and are not allowed in the bowler's circle or on electronic consoles.

### **Lane Maintenance (Patterns)**

A fair, equitable, sport-compliant lane condition for all event lanes is the primary objective of the Junior Gold lane conditioning program. The NFSSS will not disclose any of the oil pattern information until after the event has concluded. Discussing lane maintenance procedures with any bowling center personnel is prohibited at any time prior to or during a NFSSS event. Bowlers risk disqualification if they, or spectators on their behalf, attempt to obtain pattern information prior to the tournament conclusion.

### **Scoring**

All bowlers are responsible for recording their own scores throughout the tournament. At end of each game, bowlers will tally their scores and turn in their scoresheet to their area's assigned tournament official prior to moving to the next pair of lanes. Any bowler who does not turn in their Score Sheet before starting the next game may receive a score of zero for each game they failed to turn in their score card (a maximum of one warning may be issued). After all scores are turned in and verified, the tournament results will be announced and displayed. Unofficial standings may be made available beginning after game 3, via projector and/or web link.

### **Most Strikes, Most Spares, and Most Marks Scholarship Contests**

Tournament entrants compete in several performance-based side scholarship contests, which are included in the entry fees. Participants will be given a designated score sheet to track their scores (including total number of strikes and spares), which is to be turned in after every game. In the U12 Mixed division, the bowler with the most marks (combined strikes and spares) wins that jackpot. In the Open and Ladies divisions, there is a Most Strikes and Most Spares contest in each division. Ties will be broken by total marks, then highest game score, then highest series. Funds will be deposited into the USBC SMART program. Falsifying the number of spares, failure to record all scores on the score sheet, or failure to turn in the score sheet after each game will result in disqualification from these side contest. No refunds will be given to entrants that opt out of participating in these side contests.

### **Knockout Scholarship Contest**

Tournament entrants may participate in the "Knockout" contest, which is included in the entry fees and takes place immediately following the five (5) game block of competition. There are two (2) divisions for this event --- Ladies and Open. Participants may use only one (1) bowling ball for this contest. Each participant will make one throw on their assigned lane per round, trying to knock down the required number of pins, or more, for each round (Practice round, then 7 pins in the 1<sup>st</sup> round, 8 pins in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, 9 pins in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, and 10 pins in all subsequent rounds) to advance. Advancers will move to a new pair of lanes between rounds, while non-advancers are eliminated. Should all remaining participants fail to knock down the required number of pins in a round, the round is replayed. The remaining player in each division is the winner and is awarded their division's Scholarship Jackpot in SMART scholarship funds. No refunds will be given to tournament entrants that opt out of the Knockout.

### **Junior Gold Qualifier**

To be eligible for the optional Junior Gold Qualifying Events, the participant must be a current USBC Membership holder (Youth) AND have a current USBC Junior Gold membership prior to the start of competition. Memberships may be purchased at check-in or purchased online --- cost of annual membership is \$25 for U12 bowlers, \$40 for U14 bowlers, and \$50 for U16/U18 bowlers.

The cost for a reserved spot from a U12 only qualifier is \$150, a U14 only qualifier is \$200, and a U16/U18 only qualifier is \$250. A combined event will cost the amount of the oldest competitor in the combined division. **The qualifying ratios will be a 1:4 ratio for the U12 and U14 divisions, and a 1:5 ratio for U16 & U18 divisions.** The bowler(s) with the highest five (5) game scratch total in each age/gender division will qualify for the 2026 Junior Gold National Championships in Minneapolis, MN. Ties for Gold spots are broken by the highest game score within the 5-game block; if still tied, a 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> frame roll-off will determine the advancer.

Each event will have up to 8 Junior Gold qualifier divisions (U12B, U12G, U14B, U14G, U16B, U16G, U18B, and U18G). Should there be an insufficient number of Gold qualifier entrants in any age division, the Tournament Director may combine divisions by age and/or gender. If any Gold divisions are combined, a short meeting with all Junior Gold entrants will take place upon closure of check-in. Affected entrants (ladies first, youngest to oldest) will first be given the opportunity to decide if they wish to bowl under the proposed combined divisions or withdraw from the Junior Gold qualifier (with full refund of the add-on fee).

If the ratio is met in a division and additional funds are left over, the bowler with the next-highest score has the option to fund (“make up”) the difference and accept an additional spot. If “make up” funds are not received within 7 days, or the option is refused, the additional funds will be held by tournament officials for use towards a future Junior Gold qualifier event or awarded out as SMART funds.

It is the responsibility of the qualified bowlers to promptly notify the tournament committee if they will not be able to attend the 2026 Junior Gold National Championships. Failure to do so could result in the bowler being disqualified from entering future North Florida Sport Shot Series events. If any advancer fails to select their squad by 4/15/2026, their spot is considered vacated and will be re-awarded to the next alternate according to USBC.

### **\*\*\*Scholarship Finale\*\*\***

The Scholarship Finale in May 2026 is open to all eligible bowlers. In addition, those who competed in at least four of the regular monthly NFSSS tournaments during the season are guaranteed to receive SMART scholarship funds in the finale from the year-end scholarship pool, even if they do not compete in the finale. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to determine how those funds will be dispersed once the number of scholarship pool qualifiers has been determined, including bowler performance at the Invitational / throughout the year.

### **Tournament Committee**

The Tournament Committee will handle all disputes and rule violations; the Tournament Committee’s decision is final unless an appeal is made in accordance with Rule 329. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to change the format etc. – this includes the length of warmups prior to competition, canceling a tournament without prior notice, or delay the start of an event up to ten minutes. Any objections, concerns, or disputes must come from the bowlers. Objections from the parents or spectators will not be heard. The Tournament Director has the right to update or change any part of these rules in accordance with USBC’s playing rules, provided sufficient notification has been made.

### **Photography and Video Taping**

NFSSS officials may capture images during events to post on our website and Social Media pages. Bowlers entering any NFSSS event expressly understand that they may be photographed or videotaped by tournament officials, with their likeness used for promotional activities. All bowlers competing in a NFSSS event are not entitled to any compensation or reimbursement from NFSSS or USBC for pictures or video. NFSSS and USBC are not entitled to sell or charge a fee for reproduction of any pictures or video. Spectators may capture images of tournament play, but only of their relatives in the act of competition.

The USBC tournament playing rules will apply to any rules not listed herein.