

USBC proposed rule changes

To our friends in the bowling community:

The USBC has recently proposed a number of rule changes that could impact many of you. There are a wide range of opinions, some which reflect very negatively on Brunswick. To reduce confusion and let everyone know why Brunswick opposes most of the proposed rule changes our thoughts and comments are included below.

- A survey of internet forums indicates that there is a segment of the bowling community that feels the proposed USBC rule changes are a conspiracy between the USBC and the ball manufactures to force bowlers to buy new bowling balls.

Brunswick is not part of a conspiracy that could force bowlers to purchase new bowling balls.

Proposed USBC rule changes will ban the use of balls that have an x-hole starting January 1, 2008. This rule change could force thousands of bowlers to discard and replace balls that currently have x-holes. Brunswick's philosophy is to cultivate customer loyalty by designing and selling a high quality and customer friendly product line, with the emphasis on friendly. To that end, Brunswick has consistently recommended procedures such as resurfacing, and warming to remove oil that maximize product longevity.

- For years Brunswick has taught the use of x-holes to increase or decrease track flare to fine-tune ball reactions. Brunswick understands that the purchase of a bowling ball is an expensive undertaking and believes that bowlers should be able to fine-tune their ball reactions with x-holes. In our opinion the proposed USBC rule change would force bowlers to completely plug/redrill their bowling ball, or purchase another bowling ball, to get the same change in ball reaction, they could achieve by adding a track flare increasing or decreasing x-hole.
- Proposed USBC rule changes would require the manufactures CG marking to be within one inch of the bowler grip centers for all balls drilled after January 1, 2006. This proposed rule change has many potential problems.
 - Having the marked CG within 1" of grip center in no way guarantees that the ball will pass USBC static weight specifications. For example a high top weight ball could have the marked CG at 1" from grip center and have over one ounce of side or finger/thumb weight.
 - A low top weight ball could have the marked CG anywhere on the ball, up to 13 ½ inches from grip center, and pass static weight specifications. The ball would be declared illegal under the proposed rule, even though the static weights are legal.

- Once a ball is plugged the actual CG can change position on the ball rendering the original marked CG inaccurate. If the original marked CG of a plugged ball is positioned within 1” of grip center the actual plugged CG could be many inches from grip center resulting in illegal amounts of side or finger/thumb weight. If the actual CG after plugging is placed near the grip center, so the ball has legal amounts of side or finger/thumb weight, the original marked CG could be many inches from grip center and the ball would be declared illegal under the proposed rule, even though the static weights are legal.
 - The CG-distance rule would place extreme limits on the drilling options of asymmetric core balls. Most asymmetric layouts require an x-hole to conform to static weight specifications. Brunswick sells both symmetric and asymmetric core balls. While we view the scoring potential of both types of cores systems as being equal, asymmetric core systems have found favor with some bowlers but just the opposite with other bowlers. The CG-distance rule would effectively ban the future use of asymmetric cores and layouts that are used by thousands of bowlers.
 - Brunswick uses a shallow punch mark to indicate CG positions. One resurfacing is usually enough to remove the CG mark from the surface of the ball, rendering most Brunswick balls illegal after one resurfacing.
- In our opinion the proposed CG & X-hole rule changes will result in little or no change to the range of available ball reactions. Bowlers will have to plug/redrill and/or buy more balls with the x-hole option removed, but the current range of hook potentials and arc shapes will still be available. Changes to the scoring level will be minimal but bowler inconvenience and expense will go up.
 - For the above stated reasons Brunswick does not support the proposed USBC rule changes regarding CG & X-holes.
 - Brunswick will publish research on our web site later in May to backup our claim that the proposed CG & X-hole rule changes will result in minimal change to the range of available ball reactions.
 - Brunswick does not support the addition of a 2” minimum diameter USBC logo added to all bowling balls. Additional engraving reduces throughput and increases cost. Brunswick estimates that the additional engraving will result in a \$5 to \$10 increase in the retail price of our bowling balls. Additionally we judge the extra engraving to be cosmetically undesirable.
 - The proposed Moh’s hardness rule is currently under study.
 - USBC members can e-mail their comments and concerns to the USBC at TechComments@bowl.com

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