

Mermaid Classic 2026 Tournament Rules

Sanctioning

1. Mermaid Classic is an International Gay Bowling Organization (IGBO) tournament and is a mixed handicap competition open to all genders by invitation only. The Mermaid Classic Executive Committee reserves the right to refuse any application.
2. Mermaid Classic will not be sanctioned with USBC. While Mermaid Classic will not be sanctioned, the current USBC rules will be used as guidance for the tournament. Exceptions will be noted.
3. All bowlers must be members of IGBO during the 2025 calendar year in any of the IGBO membership categories. Associate Membership of IGBO will be available with registration.

Event Participation

4. The tournament events are handicapped and are as follows: Singles, Doubles, Team, and Individual All Events. Optional Scratch event(s) will be offered.
5. Individuals will bowl three (3) games per Singles, Doubles and Team event. The Individual All Events will be the combined total of all nine (9) games plus handicap. Teams will consist of four (4) members. Doubles partners must come from the same team.
6. A professional bowler, defined as a "card-carrying member of a professional bowling organization", may participate provided they are already an IGBO member in any of its classes at the start of the Mermaid Classic tournament. Only one professional bowler is allowed per team.
7. Employees of the bowling center may participate if they are IGBO members.
8. Bowlers will be allowed ten (10) minutes of practice per event.

Optional Scratch Events

9. Bowlers will have the opportunity to participate in an Optional Scratch event for an additional fee. Participants will compete in one of five (5) divisions determined by their entering average. Those divisions are as follows.
 - Division A: Averages 200 and above
 - Division B: Averages 185 to 199
 - Division C: Averages 170 to 184
 - Division D: Averages 145 to 169
 - Division E: Averages 144 and below
10. The entry fee for Optional Scratch is \$20. Scratch scores (without handicap) from the handicap portion of the tournament will be used to determine the winners. Optional scratch prizes will be awarded for high game, high series and high all events in each division.

Awards and Prizes

11. All cash awards are based on total pins plus assigned handicap for each event (except for Option Scratch).

12. Awards will be given in the Handicap Division for highest Singles, Doubles, Team and Individual All Events and will be paid at a minimum ratio of 1:10.
13. Awards for the Optional Scratch will be awarded by division, are limited to those bowlers who paid to enter the optional event, are scratch scores only, and are High Game, High Series and Best All Events. The payout ratio will be a minimum of 1:20 per division.
14. Prizes will be distributed by check payable in US currency within thirty (30) days of the completion of the tournament barring any protests. A tie in any position will result in the sum of prizes for the tied positions being aggregated and divided equally by the number of individuals tied.
15. One hundred percent (100%) of the entry fee from each Optional Scratch division will be returned to that division.

Entering Average and Handicap

16. Bowlers entering the competition must use a ten-pin average acceptable to USBC.
 - A. The following rules will be used, in order of listing, to determine the entering average. All averages must be based on a minimum of 21 games. If the bowler has a 21 game IGBOW Tournament average as of November 30, 2025, then this average will be used without consideration to higher or lower league averages.
 - B. If the above is not available, then the 2024-25 composite book average (minimum 21 games) will be used. If the bowler competed in more than one league, then the bowler will use the composite average of all leagues bowled even if the league has fewer than 21 games bowled.
 - a. Composite average is the total pinfall from all leagues bowled (including as a substitute) divided by the total number of games bowled. USBC, www.bowl.com, has composite averages for all seasons.
 - b. Example: bowler bowled in 2 leagues and subbed in 1. League 1 pinfall is 10,250 across 60 games. League 2 pinfall is 12,581 across 75 games. League 3 pinfall is 750 across 6 games. Composite average is $(10,250 + 12,581 + 750) \div (60 + 75 + 6)$ for a 167 composite average $(23,581/141 = 167)$.
 - C. If none of the above is available, then use the composite 2023-24 season final average, minimum of 21 games.
 - D. If none of the above is available, then use the highest current league average as of November 30, 2025, minimum 21 games. If a bowler participated in more than one league in the applicable period, they must report all leagues bowled and will use the highest league average for the period. Averages of Sport and Challenge Condition leagues must be noted as such and will be converted using the published USBC conversion chart.
 - E. If none of the above is available, then the entering average shall be 250.
17. The above averages must be verified in one of the following ways.
 - a. Online league standing sheet.

- b. Scanned or mailed copy of the league standing sheet signed and dated by a league officer with the name, email and phone number for the officer clearly provided.
- 18. The tournament management has the authority to adjust the entering average of any bowler. Average adjustments will be applied as set forth under USBC rules. All average adjustments will be completed prior to the start of each event, and a bowler unwilling to accept an average adjustment is entitled to a full refund for that event.
- 19. It is the bowler's responsibility to report all tournament scores that are relevant in calculating their tournament average. Failure to report may result in automatic disqualification and/or loss of all prize winnings.
- 20. The handicap will be 90% of the difference of the bowler's entering average and the tournament scratch score of 250.

Attendance and substitutes

- 21. It is the bowler's responsibility to be present at the assigned lanes at the time of bowling. Mechanical failures, transportation irregularities, improper directions and related reasons do not alter the application of Rule 22 below.
- 22. Late bowlers will begin bowling in the frame in which they are ready with prior frames being scored as zero. No practice balls will be allowed for late bowlers.
- 23. Substitutes may bowl at the discretion of tournament management and must complete an entry form. Their entering average must comply with rules previously stated. Substitutes need to register by the December 31, 2025 deadline. The entry deadline may be waived at the Executive Board's discretion if a last-minute substitution is approved.
- 24. Complete Doubles and Teams must be present to bowl each event. If a team member is not present, the team may use an authorized substitute. If a substitute is not available, a zero score will be used for the missing bowler(s).

Entry requirements

- 25. The tournament is to be held January 16-18, 2026.
- 26. Registration is only available online. Registration will close at 11:59 pm on December 31, 2025, or when the tournament sells out, whichever comes first.
- 27. The entry fee is \$125. The breakdown of the entry is as follows.

Lineage	\$36.00
Prize Fund	\$40.00
Banquet	\$40.00
Trophies	\$2.00
IGBO Dues	\$2.00
PayPal Processing	\$5.00
- 28. Entries are limited to 160 and are accepted in the order in which they are received. Fully registered and paid teams will be given preference in the event of a sell out. An entry is incomplete until payment is received and confirmed. Once an entry has been accepted,

refunds will only be issued at the discretion of tournament management. A Wait List will be maintained after registration has closed.

Protests and other miscellaneous items.

29. Protests and appeals must be made in writing stating the grounds for said protest or appeal. All protests must be filed within 48 hours of the event or before the prizes are paid, whichever comes first. Protests may only be submitted by a registered bowling participant of Mermaid Classic 2026.
30. All other USBC rules will apply.
31. Any person attending and requiring special needs must notify tournament management in writing.
32. The team captain must sign the entry form acknowledging she/he has read the rules. In the case of online registration, the timestamp will be considered the team captain's acknowledgement.
33. PayPal transaction fee is passed on to the purchaser for online and in-person debit/credit purchases.