EBF EUROPEAN BOWLING FEDERATION

European Bowling Federation (EBF)

Further to the recent announcement by the International Bowling Federation (IBF) concerning bowling ball specifications, the European Bowling Federation (EBF) wishes to inform all Member Federations, athletes, coaches, and stakeholders of the following:

The IBF has ruled that, effective immediately for IBF events, only urethane bowling balls manufactured with a minimum hardness of 78D and approved by USBC are permitted for use in competition.

In addition, all bowling balls used in competition, regardless of material type, may be subject to random hardness checks during IBF events. Any ball measuring below the permitted hardness threshold of 72D will be declared non-compliant and removed from competition.

Accordingly, the new urethane ball hardness requirement will come into effect for EBF European Championships starting from April 2026.

The EBF will also conduct random hardness checks during its European Championships on all bowling balls used in competition. Any ball found to be below the permitted hardness level will be declared non-compliant and removed from competition.

All Member Federations are requested to inform their athletes accordingly and ensure full compliance ahead of future championships.

The official USBC list of non-eligible bowling balls is available here: “USBC National Tournament Ineligible Ball List – 78D Slow Oil Only” (please be aware of updates).

EBT Tour 2026: No changes will be applied to the ongoing EBT Tour for 2026. All current events will continue under the existing rules and equipment regulations. This means that athletes participating in the 2026 tour are not required to make any immediate adjustments to their bowling balls or equipment. Any new rules, testing procedures, or compliance requirements will only come into effect for the 2027 tour.

1. **Testing Equipment**
   EBF Championships will be equipped with:
   • Two Type D Digital Durometers (DD-4)
   • An Operating Stand (OS-1)
   • Calibration Test Blocks (TBK-D)
   • Ball Cups for secure and consistent positioning

Note: all devices calibration will be verified before use

Step-by-Step Inspection Process
Testing of all bowling balls used in competition will be conducted for hardness and temperature as follows:

Pre-Inspection Preparation
The ball will first be cleaned with alcohol (90% or more) and allowed to dry completely.

A. Temperature Check
The ball's temperature will be checked simultaneously using an infrared thermometer. The acceptable temperature range for testing shall be between 20°C and 25.5°C.

B. Primary Hardness Testing
The ball will then be placed in the testing device, and hardness will be measured at five (5) points around the equator of the ball. The first three (3) measurements will be taken along the track area (for research purposes).

C. Data Recording
The following data will be recorded during testing:
• Name of the ball
• Serial number of the ball
• Ball temperature
• Durometer reading for each of the five (5) measurements

D. Phase 1 – Initial Evaluation (5 Measurements)
The five (5) durometer readings are averaged to determine the initial hardness value.

$$\text{Average Hardness} = \frac{H_1 + H_2 + H_3 + H_4 + H_5}{5}$$

• If the average is ≥ 72D → PASS Phase 1
• If the average is < 72D → proceed to Phase 1 Retest

E. Phase 1 Retest (Additional 5 Measurements – Total 10)
If the Phase 1 average is below 72D, five (5) additional measurements will be taken (total of 10 readings).

$$\text{Average Hardness} = \frac{H_1 + H_2 + \ldots + H_{10}}{10}$$

A new average will be calculated using all ten (10) readings.
• If the average is ≥ 72D → PASS Phase 1 Retest
• If the average is < 72D → proceed to Phase 2

7. Phase 2 – Advanced Testing and Final Outcome
If the ball fails Phase 1 Retest, it will be subject to ten (10) additional hardness measurements using a different durometer device.
If the ball passes Phase 2 testing, it will remain eligible for use but will be placed under automatic re-inspection status and may be retested at any time during the

competition.
If the ball fails Phase 2 testing, it will be declared non-compliant and permanently banned from competition use, and the inspection process is concluded.

8. Timing of Inspections (Mandatory and Random Checks)
   In addition to random hardness checks conducted during competition, the EBF will apply mandatory inspection procedures at defined competition stages to ensure full compliance.

• Medal Round Qualifiers (Post-Qualification)
At the end of each squad, athletes who have qualified within the top four positions for the event will be subject to mandatory inspection. Although the competition is not yet completed, these athletes are considered potential medal round qualifiers.
Any non-compliant ball identified at this stage will be subject to the "After Play" penalty as defined in Section 10 (Zero score for the block).

• Medal Round Qualifiers (Pre-Finals)
Prior to the start of the medal round, the top four ranked athletes must present all equipment for mandatory inspection.
Any non-compliant ball identified at this stage will result in immediate disqualification from the medal round, and the ball must be removed from the bowling center.

9. Re-Inspection Condition (Competition Monitoring Rule)
   If a ball passes Phase 2 testing, it will remain under automatic re-inspection status and may be retested at any time during the competition.
   This condition remains active throughout the event.
   Exception: If the athlete voluntarily removes the ball from their equipment list, the re-inspection status is cancelled.

10. Compliance Outcome
    • Compliant bowling balls will be returned to the competitor for use.
    • All non-compliant balls must be removed from the bowling center by the competitor.

11. Penalties
    • Before use: Ball cannot be used; no score penalty.
    • During play: Zero score for that game.
    • After play: Zero score for the block.
    • Medal round violation: Athlete is immediately disqualified from the medal round.
    • Repeated violation (same athlete): One-year disqualification from EBF championships.
    • Repeated violation (same federation in multiple championships): Euros 2,000 fine payable to EBF.
    • All non-compliant balls must be removed from the bowling center by the competitor; if this requirement is not fulfilled, a zero score for the block will be applied.