

The Rerate Committee is now in session

Q&A on rerate procedures and related topics

The United States Bowling Congress states that an association should review the records of any bowler where there is evidence to suggest that his/her book average does not adequately reflect the individual's true ability. If the review by a rerate committee provides evidence that there is a discrepancy between the book average and the bowler's ability, the committee will hold a hearing to review the evidence, and it may rerate the individual's book average.

NCAUSBCA recently established its Rerate Committee and conducted its first hearings. What follows are responses from the committee to questions posed in an effort to help members understand some of the issues related to the rerating process. Additional information will be forthcoming.

What exactly brings a bowler to the attention of this committee?

When the committee first met, it was provided with the materials that had been forwarded to us by the USBC, including the letter that an individual member of the association had provided to us and a list of average adjustments by the Greater Washington Bowling Senate, Hannover, and other tournaments. At the first meeting, the committee looked at the tournament average adjustments and compared these values with the individual's book averages, and decided to look more closely at a number of these individuals.

The committee prepared letters to a number of these individuals who seemed to be able to score significantly better than would have been predicted by their book averages. We reviewed their records as listed on *bowl.com* to see what level of performance they might have achieved in leagues in which they did not bowl

the 21 games needed to become a book average. We also reviewed the results of various tournaments and looked to see what series the individuals might have bowled while winning significant amounts of money.

If there was concern about any individual, the committee prepared a letter requesting the information required to be kept by any individual USBC member under Rule 319; i.e., the prize money won and the scores for all tournament games bowled over the past three years. This information would be used to determine if a rerating of the 2008-2009 book average would be considered by the committee.

No individual bowler provided the requested information within the three-week period given for response. One individual asked for additional time, but he never did provide the information.

An informal meeting of committee members looked at the information that we had on each individual and agreed upon a suggested rerate average.

A letter then was prepared for each individual to be considered for rerating. The letter stated that a rerate of a certain level was being considered at the next meeting of the Rerate Committee.

All of the individuals were offered the opportunity to address the committee to present reasons why such an action should not be taken. They had the right to present any materials that might be pertinent to our discussions, including letters from their personal physicians or other individuals who might have evidence important for the committee's consideration.

They were informed that they

could bring witnesses that might substantiate their view that the action was unfair, and they were afforded the opportunity to bring counsel to the meeting and to be represented by that counsel. They needed only to call the office and schedule a specific time to appear before the committee or request attendance at a more convenient time.

What's been the biggest challenge for the committee?

The biggest challenge is to get any individual bowler to provide the information he/she is required to collect as a tournament bowler. Only one bowler provided us with a fairly complete listing. Another provided us with a very partial list. Both these submissions only were provided after the individuals appeared before the committee.

How is information gathered about bowlers?

We gathered information from the tournaments that we contacted and that provided us with scores and prize winnings. Some tournaments such as the Dutchman in Lebanon, Pa., and the TNBA publish their results on the internet. These results only provide the winning scores, and that is why we asked for submission of *all* scores bowled during these tournaments.

We reviewed all published league averages, even if there were less than 21 games bowled. These averages are now published on *bowl.com* and are a matter of public record.

Again, the role of the committee was to determine whether or not the book average represented the bowler's true ability.

How does the committee determine a particular rerate average for a bowler?

The committee determines a rerate average for a bowler by looking at all the information that is available to us. If we only have the scores bowled

that resulted in cash rewards, then those scores are likely to be fairly high. This is why we asked each individual bowler to provide us with additional tournament scores so we could be balanced in our view of their abilities.

If no information was provided, then we were limited in our deliberations and would tend to select a higher average for a rerate.

How long does a rerate average last?

The rerate is for a particular year's book average and will be published on *bowling.com* by USBC once the period for appeal has passed. (All rerated individuals have 10 days from the receipt of the committee's rerate letter to file an appeal with the USBC Rules Committee).

After one year, the individual bowler may ask for a review of the rerate decision by USBC.

What happens if the bowler does not attend his/her scheduled rerate hearing?

If the bowler does not appear, then the case is decided on the information submitted in writing by the bowler and the information gathered by the committee.

How did the bowlers attending these first hearings attempt to make a case for themselves beyond merely presenting alternative tournament scores?

Poorly! Most of them were not even aware that they have an obligation to keep a tournament average under the USBC rules. Very few presented any tournament scores, and even when that information was provided at a later date, usually important other scores or winnings were omitted.

One individual had a doctor's statement saying he had various physical ailments. However, in the weeks before the meeting, he had

averaged around 220 while winning a tournament in Baltimore.

What recommendations does the committee have for bowlers who appear before the committee?

Review the USBC rules regarding tournament averages and your obligation under those rules to track and record all tournament scores and winnings. These records often will be needed when registering to bowl in any handicap tournament.

What is the difference between a "rerate" and an "average adjustment"?

An association rerate basically becomes an official average. The only difference between a rerate and an official average is that a rerate is permanent until the bowler either averages higher than that number or applies for relief of the rerate and is granted by USBC.

Until that time, bowlers must report this average during all certified competition that have any entering average stipulation, tournaments, and leagues.

An average adjustment is an average that is assigned to a bowler for a specific league or tournament. This is not "official." However, if a bowler receives an adjustment, future tournament managers may ask if the bowler has ever been adjusted in league or tournament competition.

Some area youth officials have suggested that, with scholarship money now available, the committee should look into the records of some youth bowlers. What's the committee's view?

The committee has not addressed this issue. With the limited number of competitions available to our youth bowlers, this issue probably should be addressed by the tournaments themselves by asking participants to provide records of winnings and scores bowled in other tournaments.

How will the committee go about publicizing rerated averages to tournament directors and other interested parties?

Once the appeal period has passed, the averages will be published by USBC on *bowling.com*. Our association will publish the rerated averages in *BOWLING Magazine* and on the *ncausbca.org* Web site, and they will be recorded in our files and will replace the former book average for the specific year.

The tournaments that have provided the committee with materials for our review during committee deliberations will be provided with a listing of the rerated averages and any other individuals requesting information on a rerated individual will be provided with documentation of the rerate action.

What is the committee's expectations regarding members bringing forth information regarding other bowlers to the committee's attention?

We welcome any information from association members regarding individuals whose book average does not seem to reflect their true ability. Anyone can simply send an eMail to NCAUSBCA President Robert Ashley (*president@ncausbca.org*) or Association Manager Ronald McGregor (*manager@ncausbca.org*).

The committee will review any available materials, and if there is merit to the referral, additional information will be sought from various sources such as tournaments, *bowling.com*, and the individual bowler.