

Using BLS-2020 under Social Distancing Conditions

With the COVID-19 pandemic closures, it has created social distancing concerns for bowling leagues as centers around the country are able to reopen. There are currently unknown or changing requirements from each state, which does not accommodate a single solution.

State and Local Government Social Distancing Requirements

When looking at what was being discussed by states on how bowling centers can reopen, the potential for state and local governments requiring there be a dark lane between an active lane was considered. Also being considered by government is requiring there be a dark pair between an active pair, which would allow traditional league and tournament bowling, alternating lanes, however, create a situation that may have limitations depending on the center size. Another consideration by government is requiring a level of persons in a distance that may allow traditional pair bowling, however only one team may be on a pair, which again creates a situation that may have center size limitation.

Because of the different requirements that may be established for a period, it is important to work with the center as well as be informed of the social distancing requirements that your local and state government where the center have. In many cases, these laws or guidelines may not have been established yet.

USBC's Accommodation of State and Local Government Requirements

In early May, USBC instilled an emergency rule that allows sanctioned leagues to bowl on a single lane without alternating lanes on the pair, which is not traditional for bowling. It is important to understand that this rule was meant to allow, not require, the option for sanctioned leagues and tournaments. From various public forums, discussions from bowlers seemed to appear that the impression was that USBC was requiring single lane bowling, yet it was simply a temporary rule change to accommodate the ability, should it be necessary by the local and state government.

USBC currently has a rule that accommodates this when there is a breakdown of a lane on a pair, allowing the teams to use the single functioning lane, should the center be unable to move the teams affected to a different pair.

Managing Social Distancing in League Play with BLS-2020

There are two concerns from users of BLS-2020 regarding handling social distancing rules:

1. How does the league secretary manage BLS from a manual entry point of view?
2. How does the bowling center league processor manage BLS from an Automatic Scoring System point of view?

This article will address these options and how to use BLS-2020 to accommodate, when possible. There may be situations or results that may not be optimal or may be confusing for the league processor or bowlers.

For the purposes of this article, a ten-team league with 4 bowlers on a team will be used as the example in a 24-lane center and that the league rules state the league starts on lane 1.

Dark Pair Social Distancing Option

This option is for centers where the local or state requirements accommodate leagues bowling in tradition pair mode, but require a dark pair be between pairs with bowlers. Under this example, teams 1-10 would bowl on 1-2, 5-6, 9-10, 13-14, 17-18.

The advantage of this option is that centers can support this option and BLS-2020 can support this currently. The disadvantage is that smaller centers, such as a 12-lane center, would need to split this league into 2 shifts (Early/Late or Day 1/Day2).

Configuration Instructions

The following instructions are for configuring BLS-2020 for this rule using the example league mentioned above. Your league may differ, and it is assumed that the league has already been created with the basic rules.

1. Open BLS-2020
2. Open the league
3. From the main menu, click **Setup > League > Lane Assignments**.
4. At the top of the Lane Assignments grid is a row showing the lane numbers used. Using the example, it should be showing 1 through 10.
Click on the 2nd pair of lanes in the top row of the grid so that the Lane Reassignment window appears. Change the pair to be 5-6 so that 3-4 are skipped and click OK. If prompted if this will affect just this week or the entire season, select entire season.
5. The Lane Assignments should adjust the remaining pairings to be 1-2, 5-6, 9-10, 13-14, 17-18. If not, repeat the previous step until there is spacing between each pair.
6. Close the lane assignments.

Configuration has now been completed. The lane assignments on the standings, lane assignments printout and recaps should be correct with the spacing.

Note for Automatic Scoring Centers:

Each scoring system has their own nuances with how they will handle the export of this league where there are gaps between pairs. We suggest testing this with your system and if needed, contact your scoring system support team for additional guidance.

Single Lane, Split Shift Social Distancing Option

This option is for centers where the local or state requirements accommodate leagues, but require a dark lane be between each team. Under this example, teams 1-10 would bowl on 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-

10, but would be split into 2 shifts (Early/Late) where odd teams would bowl, then even teams would bowl.

The advantage of this option is that USBC now has an emergency rule that will allow sanctioned leagues to use this method and BLS-2020 can support this currently and that size of center does not factor in this rule. It also allows all teams, regardless of left or right lane, to bowl on fresh lane conditions.

The disadvantage is that centers with Automatic Scoring editions of BLS would need to make sure their scoring system supports the ability to floor the odd lanes, then floor the even lanes, then report back all the scores, so there may be a potential for requiring manual score entry. BLS-2020 does not support sending two shifts where the odd lanes are used in the first shift and even lanes are used in the second shift.

Configuration Instructions

If you are using the Standard or Professional edition of BLS-2020, nothing needs to be adjusted.

The following instructions are for configuring BLS-2020 Automatic Scoring Edition for this rule using the example league mentioned above. Your league may differ, and it is assumed that the league has already been created with the basic rules.

1. Open BLS-2020 AutoScoring
2. Open the league
3. Go to **Weekly > Prepare > Export to Scoring System**
4. Select the **Options** tab.
5. Uncheck **Bowl on a Pair of Lanes** option, which should then enable only the **Bowl all frames on same Lane** option. This gives instructions to the scoring system that lanes are not to alternate between frames or games. Configuration has now been completed.

Each scoring system has their own nuances with how they will handle the export of this league regarding the instructions that indicates to bowl on the same lane and to not alternate between frames and games. Depending of the scoring system, options in the scoring system front desk software may need to be adjusted to which you would need to contact your scoring system manufacturer support team for guidance.

Pair Bowling, Split Shift Social Distancing Option

This option is for centers where the local or state requirements accommodate leagues, but require fewer bowlers in the center and/or lanes. Under this example, teams 1-10 would bowl on 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, but would be split into 2 shifts (Early/Late) where odd teams would bowl first, in traditional pair mode, then even teams would bowl during the second shift in tradition pair mode.

The advantage of this option is that USBC now has an emergency rule that will allow sanctioned leagues to use this method and BLS-2020 can support this currently and that size of center does not factor in this rule. It also allows all teams to bowl in traditional pair mode.

The disadvantage is that the second shift would have more challenging lane conditions, unless the center redressed the lanes. Also, centers with Automatic Scoring editions of BLS would need to make sure their scoring system supports the ability to floor the teams that start on the odd lanes, then floor the teams that start on the even lanes, then report back all the scores, so there may be a potential for

requiring manual score entry. BLS-2020 does not currently support sending two shifts where the odd lanes are used in the first shift and even lanes are used in the second shift.

Configuration Instructions

If you are using the Standard or Professional edition of BLS-2020, nothing needs to be adjusted.

For those using the BLS-2020 Automatic Scoring Edition, you would treat this as a normal lane, however the front desk software would need to accommodate flooring the teams in this manner.

Single Lane, Single Shift Social Distancing Option

This option is for centers where the local or state requirements accommodate leagues, but require a dark lane be between each team. Under this example teams 1 would bowl on 1, team 2 on 3, team 3 on 5, team 4 on 7, team 5 on 9, team 6 on 11, team 7 on 13, team 8 on 15, team 9 on 17 and team 10 on 19 (Note – This could also be everyone on the even lanes instead of the odd lanes).

The advantage of this option is that USBC now has an emergency rule that will allow sanctioned leagues to use this method and BLS-2020 can support this currently and that size of center does not factor in this rule.

The disadvantage is that it requires centers to be large enough to accommodate. BLS also does not support extending the teams across just the odd (or even) lanes, for recaps, lane assignments, standings, and Automatic Scoring purposes. For secretaries using the Standard or Professional edition, you will need to cross out and update the lane numbers bowled. When manually entering scores, however, the matchups would be the same, just the lane numbers would appear off. For Automatic Scoring Systems, while BLS can accommodate instructing the scoring system to not alternate lanes between frames and games, the scoring system would need to be able to manage moving the even lanes to different lanes, such as when a lane breaks down. Depending on the scoring system, scores may not be able to be returned for all teams, requiring manual score entry.

Configuration Instructions

If you are using the Standard or Professional edition of BLS-2020, nothing needs to be adjusted.

The following instructions are for configuring BLS-2020 Automatic Scoring Edition for this rule using the example league mentioned above. Your league may differ, and it is assumed that the league has already been created with the basic rules.

1. Open BLS-2020 AutoScoring
2. Open the league
3. Go to **Weekly > Prepare > Export to Scoring System**
4. Select the **Options** tab.
5. Uncheck **Bowl on a Pair of Lanes** option, which should then enable only the **Bowl all frames on same Lane** option. This gives instructions to the scoring system that lanes are not to alternate between frames or games. Configuration has now been completed.

Each scoring system has their own nuances with how they will handle the export of this league regarding the instructions that indicates to bowl on the same lane and to not alternate between frames and games. The teams bowling on the even lanes would need to be moved to odd lanes from the front desk. Depending on the scoring system, options in the scoring system front desk software may need to be

adjusted to which you would need to contact your scoring system manufacturer support team for guidance.

Extended Pair Mode Social Distancing Option

This option is for centers where the local or state requirements accommodate leagues, but require fewer people within a distance, requiring a maximum of one team on a pair of lanes. Under this example, teams 1 would bowl on 1-2, team 2 on 3-4, team 3 on 5-6, team 4 on 7-8, team 5 on 9-10, team 6 on 11-12, team 7 on 13-14, team 8 on 15-16, team 9 on 17-18 and team 10 on 19-20.

The advantage of this option is that teams can bowl in tradition alternating lanes.

The disadvantage is that center size can be an issue, requiring the league to be split into multiple shifts. Also, a disadvantage is that BLS does not support extending the teams across the pairs, for recaps, lane assignments, standings, and Automatic Scoring purposes. For secretaries using the Standard or Professional edition, you will need to cross out and update the lane numbers bowled. When manually entering scores, however, the matchups would be the same, just the lane numbers would appear off.

For centers with the Automatic Scoring edition, BLS-2020 does not support splitting the teams across the pairs for exporting.

We currently do not recommend this method for use and suggest using the other options if the local or state government allows.

Split Team / Split Shift Option

This option is for centers where the local or state requirements accommodate leagues but require fewer people within a distance. Under this example, teams 1 through 10 would bowl on their traditional lanes and bowl in traditional alternating lane fashion. The difference is that the league would have each team's first two players bowl the first shift and the remaining players play the second shift.

The advantage of this option is that teams can bowl in tradition alternating lanes and allow a semblance of competition as both partial teams are on the pair under the same conditions and the mental state of the game from a sports perspective is kept.

The disadvantage is that BLS does not support splitting the teams in half to bowl two shifts currently. For secretaries using the Standard or Professional edition, everything is normal, except scores would be written down on the recaps at different times. When manually entering scores, however, there would not be any difference.

For centers with the Automatic Scoring edition, BLS-2020 does not support splitting the teams into shifts.

We currently do not recommend this method for use and suggest using the other options if the local or state government allows.

Contacting Support

If you have further questions with BLS-2020 and social distancing options, please contact CDE Software by visiting <https://support.cdesoftware.com>