

BRITISH TENPIN BOWLING ASSOCIATION



2026 BTBA Championship Tour

Presented by: Paul Loberman, BTBA Tournaments Officer
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1. Introduction :

It is my pleasure to announce that the British Tenpin Bowling Association Championship Tour (“the BTBA Tour”) is back again in 2026.

The BTBA Championship Tour’s purpose continues to be to provide competitive tournaments to bowlers who are looking to bridge the gap from league to a tournament player.

The Tour offers a series of events throughout the year at bowling centres around the country that appeal to bowlers of all abilities. In 2026, we will continue to include some established and popular events on to the Tour schedule together with a couple of new ones too. This year, we welcome the addition of the BTBA Tour Matchplay and the County Durham Open.

The Tour will be open to all bowlers. We will endeavour to make sure Tournaments have something for both scratch and handicap players or average based divisions/prize funds.

In 2025, I received some feedback regarding the way tournaments calculate handicaps and agreed to take a look at this for 2026, including reviewing the introduction of a maximum handicap in some events. I have analysed data across last season’s tournaments and have decided at this time to *not* make any sweeping changes to the handicapping system for 2026. The aim of the Tour is to provide competitive events for *all* bowlers. However, now that I have even more data across tournaments, I have tightened up the average criteria rules and will continue to review this in future.

As in 2025, I will help all individual bowlers find other bowlers to form teams, if you cannot find a team yourself for a particular event.

The Tour will try to set entry fees as low as possible. However, game/lineage costs continue to rise for tournaments, and we’re grateful to the centres we continue to use year in, year out, for welcoming us back, and to new centre hosts like Riverside Bowling in Sunderland that we are excited to visit in 2026. Please support our host centres by not bringing your own food into the bowling centre, and ordering food and drink from within the bowl. The more we can spend in these host centres, the more we can continue to work with them on keeping costs down.

There will again be an end of season ranking which will pay out the Top 10 Men and Top 6 women who play the required number of events – last year’s payout was a total of over £3,200. Ranking lists and BTBA Tour averages will be published online on the BTBA Hub as soon as possible after each event.

Online entry forms continue to work well and this year for BTBA members, they should be even easier to enter.

Sponsors are again invited to support the 2026 Tour via advertising on entry forms, clickable banners on the Tour website, mentions on social media, and included in communications before, during and after events. We are happy to tailor sponsor packages to fit all budgets, so we encourage anyone that is interested to get in touch. We look forward to promoting your companies throughout the year.

2. Dates and locations:

The BTBA Championship Tour will consist of 9 tournaments in 2026 consisting of various formats. Additional Tournaments may also be added, but end of season rankings will be based on Best 5 events (see [section 6](#) below).

We have tried to spread the tournaments around the country to give people an equal opportunity to play in their own region or travel, as well as spread throughout the year

Date	Tournament	Location	Format
05 April	Lancashire Open	Atlantic Bowl Altrincham	Singles
19 April	*NEW* BTBA Tour Matchplay (hosted by Hertfordshire)	GOBowling Dunstable	Singles
16/17 May	Bedfordshire Trios	GOBowling Dunstable	Trios
13-28 June	64th BTBA Nationals	Mansfield Superbowl	Singles, Doubles, Teams of 4
12 July	Nottinghamshire Open	Mansfield Superbowl	Singles
02 August	*NEW* County Durham Open	Riverside Bowling sunderland	Singles
30 August	Lincolnshire Open	Ashby Bowl Lincoln	Singles
26/27 September	Generation Trios	Stroud Bowl	Trios
14/15 November	Generation Doubles	Stroud Bowl	Doubles
28/29 November	BTBA Fives	Go Bowling Shipley	Teams of 5

3. Format:

Working closely with tournament managers, we will ensure that formats are interesting and enticing for all. While there will be a mixture of oil patterns, we do not intend to use Sports patterns for these events, and will mostly use Challenge patterns. Whenever it is practical, details of the patterns to be played will be made available on the BTBA Tournament Website.

Handicaps may apply within individual events but there will always be a scratch element too – e.g. separate prize funds or (optional) scratch game pots. Please refer to the Tournament entry forms for details. Bonuses and handicaps will not be used when determining points awarded towards the BTBA Tour End of Season Ranking. All Tour points will be awarded based on scratch scores over a minimum of 6 games per tournament (see Section 6 below).

Averages

BTBA Championship Tour averages will be rolling on a yearly basis from 2025 into 2026. Your rolling year Tour average can be viewed online after your first 12 games have been played on the Tour.

Unless stated otherwise on the entry form:

1. Once you have a rolling BTBA Tour average, this will be used for all BTBA Tour events as at the start date of the 2026 event in which you are playing.
2. Bowlers without a BTBA Tour average will use their composite rolling 12 month BTBA sanctioned tournament average on Challenge oil patterns over a minimum of 18 games (which the BTBA Tour Manager will provide if it is not published on the BTBA Bowler's Hub)
3. Bowlers without a composite BTBA sanctioned tournament average over 18 games on Challenge oil patterns will use their composite BTBA sanctioned tournament average over 18 games across all oil patterns (which the BTBA Tour Manager will provide if it is not published on the BTBA Bowler's Hub)
4. Bowlers without a BTBA Tour average or composite tournament average will use their BTBA sanctioned league average over 18 games
5. Bowlers without any average from the categories above can request the tournament manager to review an average from another source, otherwise will receive 0 handicap until they have established a BTBA Tour average after 2 events.

All bowlers will be required to confirm they have read the rules of the tournament when entering an event. Tournament managers will have the right to rerate any entry, and there will be zero tolerance for falsifying averages. Anyone who wishes to query another bowler's average can do so discreetly and in confidence by emailing tournamententries@btba.org.uk

4. Who can play?

- Tour events will be open to BTBA members with Competitive Membership Status.
- You must be a BTBA member at the time of entering an event, as well as on the first day of the event. You will need to join or renew your BTBA membership prior to entering and/or participating.
- All participants must be prepared to act in accordance with the rules of the tournament, and any instructions from the tournament manager and/or other tournament officials.

5. What is the cost and how/when do I apply?

The cost of participating in each event will be appropriate to the event and will be determined by the BTBA Tour Manager in conjunction with the local Tournament Manager. We are aiming to provide a reasonable prize fund while at the same time keeping general costs down, but we recognize that centre hosting costs have increased across the board too.

Included within the tournament fee will be:

- Lineage costs
- Prize fund for the event
- A BTBA Sanction Fee of £2.00 per bowler per event.
- A £5.00 Tour contribution towards the cost of the end of season "Tour Standings" award. This will be awarded to players who place in the Tour Standings at the end of the year. Full details in [section 6](#)
- Any tournament expenses (for any printing, advertising costs, etc)
- In addition, local associations running events may add a contribution towards the Local Association or local Youth Bowling Club

All entry forms will be made available on the BTBA website and the [BTBA Tour Facebook page](#). Details of how to enter will be contained within the individual entry forms.

6. End of season Tour Standings awards

A minimum of 5 events are required for qualification for the End of Season Tour rankings prize fund and the top positions will be based on points awarded at each player's best 5 events.

Ranking "majors" will continue in 2026 with extra points available for both the BTBA National Championships in June and the BTBA Fives in November.

Event	When points are awarded
Singles, Doubles, Trios, Teams, (incl. Mixed format) Events	If there is no qualifying round or everyone plays an equal number of games in the tournament, points will be awarded based on individual scratch scores at end of tournament. If there is a qualifying round in a handicap tournament, points will be awarded based on Individual scores at end of the qualifying round.
National Championships	Individual scores based on All Events totals for 9 games

NB: Exceptions to the above points awards may be allowed, e.g. where an event is mainly handicap only. Confirmation of how points will be awarded will be stated in the entry forms for the specific tournaments.

Points will only be awarded to BTBA members who hold the correct level of membership on the first day they bowl in each event. Temporary members who may pay a day membership shall not be eligible for ranking points, awards or high score recognition, in line with standard BTBA rules and regulations.

Points will be awarded using the following formula:

Place	Points Awarded	
	Non-Major	Major
1 st	120	200
2 nd	110	180
3 rd	100	160
4 th	95	150
5 th	90	140
6 th	85	130
7 th	80	120
8 th	75	110
9 th	70	100
10 th	65	90

Place	Points Awarded	
	Non-Major	Major
11 th	64	89
12 th	63	88
13 th	62	87
14 th	61	86
15 th	60	85
16 th	59	84
17 th to final place	Decreases by 1 point per place until final place	

After the final event of 2026, the money in the Tour pot (made up of the bowlers £5 contributions throughout the year) is expected to be distributed as follows.

Place	Prize Fund	
	Men	Women
1 st	31%	32%
2 nd	18%	24%
3 rd	14%	16%
4 th	10%	12%
5 th	7%	10%
6 th	6%	6%
7 th	5%	N/A
8 th	4%	
9 th	3%	
10 th	2%	

A running total of the money that is in the “Tour pot” will be confirmed on the official Tour Facebook page after every tournament.

End of season Tour cash prizes will only be awarded to bowlers who have played the required number of tournaments. If less than the stated number of bowlers (in the table above) played the required number of events, the distribution of the Tour pot will be increased amongst only those bowlers who did.

In the event two or more bowlers have the same points totals in the Tour standings for their best 5 events, then the bowler with the higher Tour average will be awarded the higher place.