



**TENPIN
IRELAND**

Notice: Regulation of Slow Oil- Absorbing High-Performance Equipment (2026)

February 2026

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Tenpin Ireland as the National Governing Body for Tenpin Bowling in Ireland, is committed to upholding the highest standards of competitive integrity, fairness, and sportsmanship. Our mandate is to foster an environment that rewards athletic skill, strategic adaptability, and technical excellence, ensuring a sustainable and fair pathway for all Irish athletes.

Following an extensive review of global technical trends, consultation with International federations and careful consideration of the research conducted by the United States Bowling Congress (USBC), Tenpin Ireland has determined that new restrictions on **slow oil-absorbing high-performance bowling balls** (commonly referred to as urethane) will be implemented to protect the future of our sport.

Key Regulatory Changes

Effective **May 1, 2026**, the following regulations will apply to all National Championship events and National Ranking Events (NREs) sanctioned by Tenpin Ireland:

78D Hardness Minimum: All slow-absorbing high-performance balls used in national competition must be manufactured at a minimum hardness of 78D.

Manufacturing Cut-off: Any slow-absorbing ball manufactured before August 1, 2022, is strictly prohibited from national tournament use, regardless of its current hardness.

Definition: These regulations apply specifically to equipment with a high-performance core that takes more than 90 minutes to absorb lane oil. Entry-level polyester (plastic) or reactive resin balls are not affected.

The Foundation of this Decision

This policy is founded upon two fundamental principles:

1. Safeguarding Athlete Development: Over-reliance on urethane-style equipment can limit a bowler's versatility. Tenpin Ireland aims to encourage the comprehensive skill development essential for long-term growth, ensuring our athletes remain competitive on the international stage where varied lane play is required.

2. Governance and Competitive Fairness: Urethane-style balls are known to soften over time and with use. To eliminate disputes regarding equipment legality and to ensure a level playing field, Tenpin Ireland will adopt the 78D standard. This prevents the use of "soft" equipment that provides an unfair performance advantage.

Scope of Enforcement

National Events: These rules apply to all **Tenpin Ireland National Events, Sport Development Leagues** and **Ranking Events**.

Local Leagues: These restrictions ***do not apply*** to local league play or casual bowling unless specifically adopted by the league secretary or local center management.

Tenpin Ireland will continue to monitor global equipment standards and may implement further reviews as necessary to protect the integrity of the game on the island of Ireland.

Executive Committee Tenpin Ireland February 2026