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Steel City Bowling League Votes to Leave USBC Sanctioning

PITTSBURGH, PA — The Steel City Bowling League (SCBL), Pittsburgh's LGBTQIA+ bowling league, has voted to discontinue its sanctioning relationship with the United States Bowling Congress (USBC) beginning with the upcoming season.

League officials say the decision followed extensive member discussion and a formal league-wide vote regarding the future of SCBL's affiliation with the national governing body for bowling. The league will continue operating independently while maintaining its connection to the International Gay Bowling Organization (IGBO).

SCBL President John Dury said the move reflects the league's desire to prioritize inclusion and community values while preserving the competitive bowling environment members expect.

"Steel City Bowling League has always been about creating a welcoming space for everyone," said Dury. "After listening to our members and reviewing the direction of national policies, we felt this was the best path forward for our league."

League leadership says most playing and competition rules traditionally used under USBC sanctioning will remain in place to ensure continuity and fair play.

Dury emphasized that the league's weekly operations and atmosphere are not expected to change significantly.

"Our bowlers come here for friendship, competition, and community," he said. "That part of SCBL is not changing. We are still committed to running a fun, organized, and competitive league for LGBTQIA+ bowlers and allies throughout the Pittsburgh area."

League officials acknowledged that leaving USBC means that members may lose eligibility for certain USBC awards, records, and certified tournament participation. However, organizers say many members felt the benefits of maintaining an inclusive and affirming environment outweighed those concerns.

The decision comes amid broader national conversations involving LGBTQIA+ bowling organizations and recent USBC policy debates surrounding transgender participation in sanctioned competition.

Founded in Pittsburgh in 1980, SCBL has served as a social and competitive outlet for LGBTQIA+ bowlers and allies for over three decades and remains affiliated with IGBO, an international organization supporting LGBTQIA+ bowling leagues and tournaments worldwide.

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