

ILSA Tournament of Champions

Updated Jan 16, 2026

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The Illinois Shuffleboard Association hosts a Tournament of Champions (ToC) every year to reward and celebrate top ILSA point earners and valued members of the community.

Here's how it works:

Player Selection

16 players will be invited to participate in the Tournament of Champions. There are three ways to be selected:

1. ILSA Points

- The top 10 players from the previous year's point standings will be invited
 - At least 10 players will be invited based on the number of points they earned.
 - If there are 2 people tied for 10th place, meaning there are 11 people in the "top 10" then we would include all 11.
 - Ties earlier in the standings will be taken into account to reach 10 players. For example, if player A has 10 points, players B and C have 9 points, player D has 8 points then player A is in 1st, B and C are tied for 2nd, and D is in 4th.
 - In the event that someone from the top 10 cannot participate, we will invite the next player(s) down the rankings list until we have at least 10 players.

2. ILSA Select Tournament & League Champions - Automatic Bids

- The previous year's ToC winner will be invited if they do not receive an invitation based on the number of points they earned in the previous year.
- The winner of each of the Winter and Fall Singles Challenge leagues will be invited if they do not receive an invitation based on the number of points they earned in the previous year.

3. ILSA Board & ToC Commission Selection Process - At Large Bids

- The remaining invitations to bring the total player count up to 16 will be given to community members based on merit.
 - All ILSA members will be sent a form to nominate individuals to be considered participation, based on accomplishments, participation, or overall contribution to the community within the calendar year.
 - All ILSA members can nominate multiple players with a maximum consistent with the count of seats available (in most cases 4)
 - Every board member will vote on the community-nominated players
 - Board members who were invited via either of the two previous criteria may nominate players but may not vote in the election
 - If a board member is nominated, that person may choose either to accept the nomination to be on the ballot or to vote.

- The players with the most votes will be invited to fill the remaining spots.
- The number of nomination seats is not to exceed 4. In the scenario that the top ILSA point earners (ToC Selection 1) and the ILSA Select Tournament & League Champions (ToC Selection 2) are the same/overlap, we will invite the next player(s) down the rankings list until we have no more than 4 nomination seats.

This player selection process will be effective for the tournament to be held in 2027.

Tournament Format

This year, the commission wanted to be mindful of the length and pace of play while continuing to put our champions to the test. Outlined in detail below, the 2025 ToC will challenge competitors to adapt as they advance through the tournament.

For all games, [ILSA's Rules of Play](#) are in effect.

The ToC Commission members for the event to honor the 2025 players are: Rebecca Mendoza, Emily Power (tournament director), and Matt Nakano (commission lead). They can be reached at toc@illinoisshuffleboard.org if there are any problems or questions.

Overview

- This tournament will be held on **Sunday, April 12th, 2026**.
 - The tournament will begin with non-walking singles pool play, followed by an 8-person, single-elimination bracket of non-walking singles, with the finals switching to a 16-frame walking singles match to determine a champion.
 - Every player is guaranteed 3 matches.
 - There is NO coaching for this tournament. Players may not ask observers for shot advice.

Pool Play

- The 16 qualified players will be divided into four pools of four players.
- Players will be ranked based on the ILSA point standings and sorted across the pools. Ties will be broken using ELO where necessary.
- Seeding within each group will be determined by a 16-biscuit (down and back) speed shuffle to be held at the conclusion of the participant practice session held the day before the event.
- Each player will complete a match against each of the opponents in their pool.
- The top 2 finishers in each group will advance.
- Matches are a single non-walking, 8-frame game.
 - The higher seed chooses color.
 - Shooting order is YBYB
 - Switch colors before frame 5.
 - If the score is tied at the end of 8 frames, players will play an additional 2 frames until the tie is broken.

- Practice:
 - Practice begins when both players are ready at the court.
 - One round (**2 biscuits per player**) of practice is allowed before frames 1 and 5.
- Ties within pools will be broken in the following order:
 - Head-to-head match result
 - Point differential (capped at 24 points per game)
 - Original speed shuffle score

Quarter-Finals/Semi-Finals:

- The top two finishers in each group will advance to an 8-player, single elimination bracket.
- Each match is a non-walking, 8-frame game.
 - Lag to determine starting color (See Section 2.3.2 of ILSA's Rules of Play).
 - Shooting order is YBYB
 - Change colors before frame 5.
 - If the score is tied at the end of 8 frames, players will play an additional 2 frames until tie is broken.
- Practice:
 - Practice begins when both players are ready at the court.
 - One round (**4 biscuits per player**) of practice is allowed before frames 1 and 5.

Finals

- Players who won their semi-final match will advance to the finals.
- Players who lost their semi-final match will play for 3rd/4th place.
- Both these games will follow a new format:
 - Each match is a walking, 16-frame game.
 - Lag to determine starting color (See Section 2.3.2 of ILSA's Rules of Play).
 - Shooting order is YBBY
 - Change colors before frame 9.
 - If the score is tied at the end of 16 frames, players will play an additional 2 frames until tie is broken.
 - Practice:
 - Practice begins when both players are ready at the court.
 - Two rounds of practice (**4 biscuits per player** from the head, **4 biscuits** from the foot) are allowed before frames 1 and 9.

Day-of Schedule

- 12:00p - Doors open at Royal Palms Shuffleboard Club Chicago.
- 12:05p - Players, find your court and take a few warm-up shots.
- 12:25p - Opening remarks
- 12:30p - Play begins: lag for color then start your matches.
- 4:00p - Quarter-Finals Begin (approximately)
- 4:30 - Semi-finals begin (approximately).
- 5:00p - 3rd place game begins (approximately).

- 5:15p - Finals begin (approximately).
- 6:30p - Awards and closing remarks (approximately).

Awards

- 1st Place - ToC Trophy
- All players - 2025 TOC Pin
- Cash prizes to be determined

ILSA points are NOT awarded in the Tournament of Champions as it is not open to all ILSA Members.