

3 REGULATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

3.1 SCOPE OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS

3.1.1 Types of Competition

- 3.1.1.1 An *international competition* is one that may include the players of more than one Association.
- 3.1.1.2 An *international match* is a match between teams representing Associations.
- 3.1.1.3 An *open tournament* is one that is open to the players of all Associations.
- 3.1.1.4 A *restricted tournament* is one that is restricted to specified groups of players other than age groups.
- 3.1.1.5 An *invitation tournament* is one that is restricted to specified Associations or players, individually invited.

3.1.2 Applicability

- 3.1.2.1 Except as provided in 3.1.2.2, the Laws (Chapter 2) shall apply to World, Continental, Olympic and Paralympic title competitions, open tournaments and, unless otherwise agreed by the participating Associations, to international matches.
- 3.1.2.2 The Board of Directors shall have power to authorise the organiser of an open tournament to adopt experimental law variations specified by the Executive Committee.
- 3.1.2.3 The Regulations for International Competitions shall apply to:
 - 3.1.2.3.1 World, Olympic and Paralympic title competitions, unless otherwise authorised by the Board of Directors and notified in advance to the participating Associations;
 - 3.1.2.3.2 Continental title competitions, unless otherwise authorised by the appropriate Continental Federation and notified in advance to the participating Associations;
 - 3.1.2.3.3 Open International Championships (3.7.1.2), unless otherwise authorised by the Executive Committee and notified in advance to the participants in accordance with 3.1.2.4;
 - 3.1.2.3.4 open tournaments, except as provided in 3.1.2.4.
- 3.1.2.4 Where an open tournament does not comply with any of these regulations the nature and extent of the variation shall be specified in the entry form; completion and submission of an entry form shall be regarded as signifying acceptance of the conditions of the competition, including such variations.

- 3.1.2.5 The Laws and Regulations are recommended for all international competitions but, provided that the Constitution is observed, international restricted and invitation tournaments and recognised international competitions organised by unaffiliated bodies may be held under rules laid down by the organising authority.
- 3.1.2.6 The Laws and the Regulations for International Competitions shall be presumed to apply unless variations have been agreed in advance or are made clear in the published rules of the competition.
- 3.1.2.7 Detailed explanations and interpretations of Rules, including equipment specifications for International Competitions, shall be published as Technical or Administrative Leaflets by the Board of Directors; practical instructions and implementation procedures may be issued as Handbooks or Guides by the Executive Committee. These publications may include mandatory parts as well as recommendations or guidance.

3.2 EQUIPMENT AND PLAYING CONDITIONS

3.2.1 Approved and Authorised Equipment

- 3.2.1.1 The approval and authorisation of playing equipment shall be conducted on behalf of the Board of Directors by the Equipment Committee; an approval or authorisation may be suspended by the Executive Committee at any time and subsequently the approval or authorisation may be withdrawn by the Board of Directors.
- 3.2.1.2 The entry form or prospectus for an open tournament shall specify the brands and colours of table, net assembly and ball to be used; the choice of equipment shall be as laid down by the Association in whose territory the competition is held, selected from brands and types currently approved by the ITTF.
- 3.2.1.3 The covering material on a side of the blade used for striking the ball shall be currently authorised by the ITTF and shall be attached to the blade so that the ITTF logo, the ITTF number (when present), the supplier and brand names are clearly visible nearest the handle.

Lists of all approved and authorised equipment and materials are maintained by the ITTF Office and details are available on the ITTF website.
- 3.2.1.4 Table legs shall be at least 40cm from the end line of the table for wheelchair players.

3.2.2 Playing Clothing

- 3.2.2.1 Playing clothing shall consist of a short-sleeved or sleeveless shirt and shorts or skirt or one-part sports outfits, socks and playing shoes; other garments,

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such as part or all of a track suit, shall not be worn during play except with the permission of the referee.

- 3.2.2.2 The main colour of a shirt, skirt or shorts, other than sleeves and collar of a shirt shall be clearly different from that of the ball in use.
- 3.2.2.3 Clothing may bear numbers or lettering on the back of the shirt to identify a player, his or her Association or, in club matches, his or her club, and advertisements in accordance with the provisions of 3.2.5.10; if the back of a shirt bears the player's name, this shall be situated just below the collar.
- 3.2.2.4 Any numbers required by organisers to identify a player shall have priority over advertisements on the centre part of the back of a shirt; such numbers shall be contained within a panel having an area not greater than 600cm².
- 3.2.2.5 Any markings or trimming on the front or side of a playing garment and any objects such as jewellery worn by a player shall not be so conspicuous or brightly reflecting as to unsight an opponent.
- 3.2.2.6 Clothing shall not carry designs or lettering which might cause offence or bring the game into disrepute.
- 3.2.2.7 The players of a team taking part in a team match, and players of the same Association forming a doubles pair in a World, Olympic or Paralympic Title Competition, shall be dressed uniformly, with the possible exception of socks, shoes and the number, size, colour and design of advertisements on clothing. Players of the same Association forming a doubles pair in other international competitions may wear clothes of different manufacturers, if the basic colours are the same and their National Association authorises this procedure.
- 3.2.2.8 Opposing players and pairs shall wear shirts that are of sufficiently different colours to enable them to be easily distinguished by spectators.
- 3.2.2.9 Where opposing players or teams have a similar shirt and cannot agree which of them will change, the decision shall be made by the umpire by lot.
- 3.2.2.10 Players competing in a World, Olympic or Paralympic title competition or Open International Championships shall wear shirt and shorts or skirt of types authorised by their Association.

3.2.3 Playing Conditions

- 3.2.3.1 The playing space shall be rectangular and not less than 14m long, 7m wide and 5m high, but the 4 corners may be covered by surrounds of not more than 1.5m length; for wheelchair events, the playing space may be reduced, but shall not be less than 8m long and 6m wide.
- 3.2.3.2 The following equipment and fittings are to be considered as part of each playing area: The table including the net assembly, umpires tables and chairs, score indicators, towel and ball boxes, printed numbers identifying the table,

surrounds, floor mats, boards on the surrounds indicating the names of players or Associations.

- 3.2.3.3 The playing area shall be enclosed by surrounds about 75cm high, all of the same dark background colour, separating it from adjacent playing areas and from spectators.
- 3.2.3.4 In World, Olympic and Paralympic title competitions the light intensity, measured at the height of the playing surface, shall be at least 1000 lux uniformly over the whole of the playing surface and at least 500 lux elsewhere in the playing area; in other competitions the intensity shall be at least 600 lux uniformly over the playing surface and at least 400 lux elsewhere in the playing area.
- 3.2.3.5 Where several tables are in use, the lighting level shall be the same for all of them, and the level of background lighting in the playing hall shall not be greater than the lowest level in the playing area.
- 3.2.3.6 The light source shall not be less than 5m above the floor.
- 3.2.3.7 The background shall be generally dark and shall not contain bright light sources or daylight through uncovered windows or other apertures.
- 3.2.3.8 The flooring shall not be light-coloured, brightly reflecting or slippery and its surface shall not be of brick, ceramics, concrete or stone; but the flooring may be of concrete for wheelchair events.
- 3.2.3.8.1 In World, Olympic and Paralympic title competitions the flooring shall be of wood or of a brand and type of rollable synthetic material authorised by the ITTF.

3.2.4 Racket Control

- 3.2.4.1 It is the responsibility of each player to ensure that racket coverings are attached to their racket blade with adhesives that do not contain harmful volatile solvents.
- 3.2.4.2 A racket control centre shall be established at all ITTF World Title, Olympic and Paralympic competitions as well as at a select number of ITTF World Tour and Junior Circuit competitions and may be established at Continental and Regional competitions.
 - 3.2.4.2.1 The racket control centre shall test rackets, according to the policy and procedure established by the Executive Committee on recommendation of the Equipment Committee and Umpires and Referees Committee, to ensure that rackets abide by all ITTF regulations including, but not limited to, racket covering thickness, flatness and presence of harmful volatile substances.
 - 3.2.4.2.2 The racket control test shall be carried out after the match at random only where the player does not submit the racket for a before match test.

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- 3.2.4.2.3 Rackets that do not pass the racket control test before the match cannot be used but may be replaced by a second racket which which may be tested immediately if time permits, but if not, will be tested after the match; in the case where rackets do not pass a random racket control test after the match, the offending player will be liable to penalties.
- 3.2.4.2.4 All players are entitled to have their rackets tested voluntarily without any penalties before the match.
- 3.2.4.3 Following 4 accumulated failures on any aspect of racket testing in a period of four years, the player may complete the event, but subsequently the Executive Committee will suspend the offending player for 12 months.
 - 3.2.4.3.1 The ITTF shall inform the suspended player in writing of such suspension.
 - 3.2.4.3.2 The suspended player may appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport within 21 days of the receiving of the letter of suspension; should such an appeal be submitted, the player's suspension would remain in force.
- 3.2.4.4 The ITTF shall maintain a register of all racket control failures with effect from 1 September 2010.
- 3.2.4.5 A properly ventilated area shall be provided for the attachment of racket coverings to rackets, and liquid adhesives shall not be used anywhere else at the playing venue.

“Playing venue” means that part of the building used for table tennis and its related activities, facilities and public area.

3.2.5 Advertisements and Markings

- 3.2.5.1 Inside the playing area, advertisements shall be displayed only on equipment or fittings listed in 3.2.3.2 and there shall be no special additional displays.
 - 3.2.5.1.1 Advertisements or markings in or next to the playing area shall not be for tobacco goods, alcoholic drinks, harmful drugs or illegal products and they shall be without negative discrimination or connotation on the grounds of race, xenophobia, gender, religion, disabilities or other forms of discrimination.
- 3.2.5.2 At Olympic and Paralympic Games advertisements on playing equipment, on playing clothing and on umpires' clothing shall be according to IOC and IPC regulations respectively.
- 3.2.5.3 With the exception of LED (light-emitting diode) and similar devices advertisements on the surrounds of the sides of the playing area, fluorescent, luminescent or glossy colours shall not be used anywhere in the playing area and the background colour of the surrounds shall remain dark.
 - 3.2.5.3.1 Advertisements on surrounds shall not change during a match from dark to light and vice versa.

- 3.2.5.3.2 LEDs and similar devices on surrounds shall not be so bright as to disturb players during the match and shall not change when the ball is in play.
- 3.2.5.3.3 Advertisements on LED and similar devices shall not be used without prior approval from ITTF.
- 3.2.5.4 Lettering or symbols on the inside of surrounds shall be clearly different from the colour of the ball in use, not more than two colours and shall be contained within a height of 40cm.
- 3.2.5.5 There may be up to 4 advertisements on the floor of the playing area, 1 at each end, each contained within an area of 5m², and 1 at each side of the table, each contained within an area of 2.5m²; they shall not be less than 1m from the surrounds and those at the ends shall not be more than 2m from the surrounds.
- 3.2.5.6 There may be 1 permanent advertisement of the manufacturer's or supplier's name or logo and 1 temporary advertisement on each half of each side of the tabletop and 1 on each end, and each contained within a total length of 60cm. The temporary advertisements shall be clearly separated from any permanent advertisements; they shall not be for other table tennis equipment suppliers and there shall be no advertisement, logo, name of table or name of the manufacturer or supplier of the table on the undercarriage, except if the table manufacturer or supplier is the title sponsor of the tournament.
- 3.2.5.7 Advertisements on nets shall be clearly different from the colour of the ball in use, shall not be within 3cm of the tape along the top edge and shall not obscure visibility through the mesh.
- 3.2.5.8 Advertisements on umpires' tables or other furniture inside the playing area shall be contained within a total area on any face of 750cm².
- 3.2.5.9 Advertisements on playing clothing shall be limited to
 - 3.2.5.9.1 the maker's normal trademark, symbol or name contained within a total area of 24cm²;
 - 3.2.5.9.2 not more than 6 clearly separated advertisements, contained within a combined total area of 600cm², on the front, side or shoulder of a shirt, with not more than 4 advertisements on the front;
 - 3.2.5.9.3 not more than 2 advertisements, contained within a total area of 400cm², on the back of a shirt;
 - 3.2.5.9.4 not more than 2 advertisements, contained within a combined total area of 120cm², only on the front and the sides of shorts or skirt.
- 3.2.5.10 Advertisements on players' numbers shall be contained within a total area of 100cm².
- 3.2.5.11 Advertisements on umpires' clothing shall be contained within a total area of 40cm².

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3.2.5.12 There shall be no advertisements on players' clothing or numbers for tobacco goods, alcoholic drinks or harmful drugs.

3.2.6 Doping Control

3.2.6.1 All players participating in international competitions, including Junior competitions, shall be subject to in-competition testing by the ITTF, the player's National Association and any other Anti-Doping Organisation responsible for testing at a competition in which they participate.

3.3 MATCH OFFICIALS

3.3.1 Referee

3.3.1.1 For each competition as a whole a referee shall be appointed and his or her identity and location shall be made known to the participants and, where appropriate, to the team captains.

3.3.1.2 The referee shall be responsible for

3.3.1.2.1 the conduct of the draw;

3.3.1.2.2 the scheduling of the matches by time and table;

3.3.1.2.3 the appointment of match officials;

3.3.1.2.4 conducting a pre-tournament briefing for match officials;

3.3.1.2.5 checking the eligibility of players;

3.3.1.2.6 deciding whether play may be suspended in an emergency;

3.3.1.2.7 deciding whether players may leave the playing area during a match;

3.3.1.2.8 deciding whether statutory practice periods may be extended;

3.3.1.2.9 deciding whether players may wear track suits during a match;

3.3.1.2.10 deciding any question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations, including the acceptability of clothing, playing equipment and playing conditions;

3.3.1.2.11 deciding whether, and where, players may practise during an emergency suspension of play;

3.3.1.2.12 taking disciplinary action for misbehaviour or other breaches of regulations.

3.3.1.3 Where, with the agreement of the competition management committee, any of the duties of the referee are delegated to other persons, the specific responsibilities and locations of each of these persons shall be made known to the participants and, where appropriate, to the team captains.

3.3.1.4 The referee, or a responsible deputy appointed to exercise authority in his or her absence, shall be present at all times during play.

3.3.1.5 Where the referee is satisfied that it is necessary to do so he or she may replace a match official with another at any time, but he or she may not alter a decision

already made by the replaced official on a question of fact within his or her jurisdiction.

- 3.3.1.6 Players shall be under the jurisdiction of the referee from the time at which they arrive at the playing venue until they leave it.

3.3.2 Umpire, Assistant Umpire and Stroke Counter

- 3.3.2.1 An umpire and an assistant umpire shall be appointed for each match.

- 3.3.2.2 The umpire shall sit or stand in line with the net and the assistant umpire shall sit directly facing him or her, at the other side of the table.

- 3.3.2.3 The umpire shall be responsible for:

- 3.3.2.3.1 checking the acceptability of equipment and playing conditions and reporting any deficiency to the referee;

- 3.3.2.3.2 taking a ball at random as provided in 3.4.2.1.1-2;

- 3.3.2.3.3 conducting the draw for the choice of serving, receiving and ends;

- 3.3.2.3.4 deciding whether the requirements of the service law may be relaxed for a player with physical disability;

- 3.3.2.3.5 controlling the order of serving, receiving and ends and correcting any errors therein;

- 3.3.2.3.6 deciding each rally as a point or a let;

- 3.3.2.3.7 calling the score, in accordance with specified procedure;

- 3.3.2.3.8 introducing the expedite system at the appropriate time;

- 3.3.2.3.9 maintaining the continuity of play;

- 3.3.2.3.10 taking action for breaches of the advice or behaviour regulations;

- 3.3.2.3.11 drawing by lot which player, pair or team shall change their shirt, should opposing players or teams have a similar shirt and cannot agree which of them will change.

- 3.3.2.3.12 ensuring that only authorised persons are at the playing area.

- 3.3.2.4 The assistant umpire shall:

- 3.3.2.4.1 decide whether or not the ball in play touches the edge of the playing surface at the side of the table nearest him or her;

- 3.3.2.4.2 inform the umpire for breaches of the advice or behaviour regulations.

- 3.3.2.5 Either the umpire or the assistant umpire may:

- 3.3.2.5.1 decide that a player's service action is illegal;

- 3.3.2.5.2 decide that, in an otherwise correct service, the ball touches the net assembly;

- 3.3.2.5.3 decide that a player obstructs the ball;

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- 3.3.2.5.4 decide that the conditions of play are disturbed in a way that may affect the outcome of the rally;
- 3.3.2.5.5 time the duration of the practice period, of play and of intervals.
- 3.3.2.6 Either the assistant umpire or a separate official may act as stroke counter, to count the strokes of the receiving player or pair when the expedite system is in operation.
- 3.3.2.7 A decision made by the assistant umpire in accordance with the provisions of 3.3.2.5 may not be overruled by the umpire.
- 3.3.2.8 Players shall be under the jurisdiction of the umpire from the time at which they arrive at the playing area until they leave it.

3.3.3 Appeals

- 3.3.3.1 No agreement between players, in an individual event, or between team captains, in a team event, can alter a decision on a question of fact by the responsible match official, on a question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations by the responsible referee or on any other question of tournament or match conduct by the responsible management committee.
- 3.3.3.2 No appeal may be made to the referee against a decision on a question of fact by the responsible match official or to the management committee on a question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations by the referee.
- 3.3.3.3 An appeal may be made to the referee against a decision of a match official on a question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations, and the decision of the referee shall be final.
- 3.3.3.4 An appeal may be made to the competition management committee against a decision of the referee on a question of tournament or match conduct not covered by the Laws or Regulations, and the decision of the management committee shall be final.
- 3.3.3.5 In an individual event an appeal may be made only by a player participating in the match in which the question has arisen; in a team event an appeal may be made only by the captain of a team participating in the match in which the question has arisen.
- 3.3.3.6 A question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations arising from the decision of a referee, or a question of tournament or match conduct arising from the decision of a competition management committee, may be submitted by the player or team captain eligible to make an appeal, through his or her parent Association, for consideration by the ITTF Rules Committee.
- 3.3.3.7 The Rules Committee shall give a ruling as a guide for future decisions, and this ruling may also be made the subject of a protest by an Association to the

Board of Directors or a General Meeting, but it shall not affect the finality of any decision already made by the responsible referee or management committee.

3.4 MATCH CONDUCT

3.4.1 Score Indication

3.4.1.1 The umpire shall call the score as soon as the ball is out of play at the completion of a rally, or as soon as is practicable thereafter.

3.4.1.1.1 In calling the score during a game the umpire shall call first the number of points scored by the player or pair due to serve in the next rally of the game and then the number of points scored by the opposing player or pair.

3.4.1.1.2 At the beginning of a game and when a change of server is due, the umpire shall point to the next server, and may also follow the score call with the next server's name.

3.4.1.1.3 At the end of a game the umpire shall call the number of points scored by the winning player or pair followed by the number of points scored by the losing player or pair and may then name the winning player or pair.

3.4.1.2 In addition to calling the score the umpire may use hand signals to indicate his or her decisions.

3.4.1.2.1 When a point has been scored, he or she may raise his or her arm nearer to the player or pair who won the point so that the upper arm is horizontal and the forearm is vertical with the closed hand upward.

3.4.1.2.2 When for any reason the rally is a let, he or she may raise his or her hand above his or her head to show that the rally has ended.

3.4.1.3 The score and, under the expedite system, the number of strokes shall be called in English or in any other language acceptable to both players or pairs and to the umpire.

3.4.1.4 The score shall be displayed on mechanical or electronic indicators so that it is clearly visible to the players and the spectators.

3.4.1.5 When a player is formally warned for bad behaviour, a yellow marker shall be placed on or near the score indicator.

3.4.2 Equipment

3.4.2.1 Players shall not choose balls in the playing area.

3.4.2.1.1 Wherever possible players shall be given the opportunity to choose one or more balls before coming to the playing area and the match shall be played with the ball chosen by the players.

3.4.2.1.2 If a ball has not been chosen before players come to the playing area, or the players cannot agree on the ball to be used, the match shall be played with a

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ball taken at random by the umpire from a box of those specified for the competition.

- 3.4.2.1.3 If a ball is damaged during a match, it shall be replaced by another of those chosen before the match or, if such a ball is not available, by one taken at random by the umpire from a box of those specified for the competition.
- 3.4.2.2 The racket covering shall be used as it has been authorised by the ITTF without any physical, chemical or other treatment, changing or modifying playing properties, friction, outlook, colour, structure, surface, etc.; in particular, no additives shall be used.
- 3.4.2.3 A racket shall successfully pass all parameters of the racket control tests.
- 3.4.2.4 A racket shall not be replaced during an individual match unless it is accidentally damaged so badly that it cannot be used; if this happens the damaged racket shall be replaced immediately by another which the player has brought with him or her to the playing area or one which is handed to him or her in the playing area.
- 3.4.2.5 Unless otherwise authorised by the umpire, players shall leave their rackets on the table during intervals; but if the racket is strapped to the hand, the umpire shall allow the player to retain his or her racket strapped to the hand during intervals.

3.4.3 Practice

- 3.4.3.1 Players are entitled to practise on the match table for up to 2 minutes immediately before the start of a match but not during normal intervals; the specified practice period may be extended only with the permission of the referee.
- 3.4.3.2 During an emergency suspension of play the referee may allow players to practise on any table, including the match table.
- 3.4.3.3 Players shall be given reasonable opportunity to check and to familiarise themselves with any equipment which they are to use, but this shall not automatically entitle them to more than a few practice rallies before resuming play after the replacement of a damaged ball or racket.

3.4.4 Intervals

- 3.4.4.1 Play shall be continuous throughout an individual match except that any player is entitled to:
 - 3.4.4.1.1 an interval of up to 1 minute between successive games of an individual match;
 - 3.4.4.1.2 brief intervals for towelling after every 6 points from the start of each game and at the change of ends in the last possible game of an individual match.

- 3.4.4.2 A player or pair may claim one time-out period of up to 1 minute during an individual match.
- 3.4.4.2.1 In an individual event the request for a time-out may be made by the player or pair or by the designated adviser; in a team event it may be made by the player or pair or by the team captain.
- 3.4.4.2.2 If a player or pair and an adviser or captain disagree whether a time-out is to be taken, the final decision shall be made by the player or pair in an individual event and by the captain in a team event.
- 3.4.4.2.3 The request for a time-out, which can be made only between rallies in a game, shall be indicated by making a "T" sign with the hands.
- 3.4.4.2.4 On receiving a valid request for a time-out the umpire shall suspend play and shall hold up a white card with the hand on the side of the player or pair who requested it; the white card or another appropriate marker shall be placed on the court of that player or pair.
- 3.4.4.2.5 The white card or marker shall be removed and play resumed as soon as the player or pair making the request is ready to continue or at the end of 1 minute, whichever is the sooner.
- 3.4.4.2.6 If a valid request for a time-out is made simultaneously by or on behalf of both players or pairs, play will resume when both players or pairs are ready or at the end of 1 minute, whichever is the sooner, and neither player or pair shall be entitled to another time-out during that individual match.
- 3.4.4.3 There shall be no intervals between successive individual matches of a team match except that a player who is required to play in successive matches may claim an interval of up to 5 minutes between those matches.
- 3.4.4.4 The referee may allow a suspension of play, of the shortest practical duration, and in no circumstances more than 10 minutes, if a player is temporarily incapacitated by an accident, provided that in the opinion of the referee the suspension is not likely to be unduly disadvantageous to the opposing player or pair.
- 3.4.4.5 A suspension shall not be allowed for a disability which was present or was reasonably to be expected at the beginning of the match, or where it is due to the normal stress of play; disability such as cramp or exhaustion, caused by the player's current state of fitness or by the manner in which play has proceeded, does not justify such an emergency suspension, which may be allowed only for incapacity resulting from an accident, such as injury caused by a fall.
- 3.4.4.6 If anyone in the playing area is bleeding, play shall be suspended immediately and shall not resume until that person has received medical treatment and all traces of blood have been removed from the playing area.
- 3.4.4.7 Players shall remain in or near the playing area throughout an individual match, except with the permission of the referee; during intervals between games and

time-outs they shall remain within 3 metres of the playing area, under the supervision of the umpire.

3.5 DISCIPLINE

3.5.1 Advice

3.5.1.1 In a team event, players may receive advice from anyone authorised to be at the playing area.

3.5.1.2 In an individual event, a player or pair may receive advice only from one person, designated beforehand to the umpire, except that where the players of a doubles pair are from different Associations each may designate an adviser, but with regard to 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 these two advisors shall be treated as a unit; if an unauthorised person gives advice the umpire shall hold up a red card and send him or her away from the playing area.

3.5.1.3 Players may receive advice only during the intervals between games or during other authorised suspension of play, and not between the end of practice and the start of a match; if any authorised person gives advice at other times the umpire shall hold up a yellow card to warn him or her that any further such offence will result in his or her dismissal from the playing area (*in effect until 30th September 2016*).

Players may receive advice at any time except during rallies and between the end of practice and the start of a match; if any authorised person gives advice illegally the umpire shall hold up a yellow card to warn him or her that any further such offence will result in his or her dismissal from the playing area (*in effect as of 1st October 2016*).

3.5.1.4 After a warning has been given, if in the same team match or the same match of an individual event anyone again gives advice illegally, the umpire shall hold up a red card and send him or her away from the playing area, whether or not he or she was the person warned.

3.5.1.5 In a team match the dismissed adviser shall not be allowed to return, except when required to play, and he or she shall not be replaced by another adviser until the team match has ended; in an individual event he or she shall not be allowed to return until the individual match has ended.

3.5.1.6 If the dismissed adviser refuses to leave, or returns before the end of the match, the umpire shall suspend play and report to the referee.

3.5.1.7 These regulations shall apply only to advice on play and shall not prevent a player or captain, as appropriate, from making a legitimate appeal nor hinder a consultation with an interpreter or Association representative on the explanation of a juridical decision.

3.5.2 Misbehaviour

- 3.5.2.1 Players and coaches or other advisers shall refrain from behaviour that may unfairly affect an opponent, offend spectators or bring the sport into disrepute, such as abusive language, deliberately breaking the ball or hitting it out of the playing area, kicking the table or surrounds and disrespect of match officials.
- 3.5.2.2 If at any time a player, a coach or another adviser commits a serious offence the umpire shall suspend play and report immediately to the referee; for less serious offences the umpire may, on the first occasion, hold up a yellow card and warn the offender that any further offence is liable to incur penalties.
- 3.5.2.3 Except as provided in 3.5.2.2 and 3.5.2.5, if a player who has been warned commits a second offence in the same individual match or team match, the umpire shall award 1 point to the offender's opponent and for a further offence he or she shall award 2 points, each time holding up a yellow and a red card together.
- 3.5.2.4 If a player against whom 3 penalty points have been awarded in the same individual match or team match continues to misbehave, the umpire shall suspend play and report immediately to the referee.
- 3.5.2.5 If a player changes his or her racket during an individual match when it has not been damaged, the umpire shall suspend play and report to the referee.
- 3.5.2.6 A warning or penalty incurred by either player of a doubles pair shall apply to the pair, but not to the non-offending player in a subsequent individual match of the same team match; at the start of a doubles match the pair shall be regarded as having incurred the higher of any warnings or penalties incurred by either player in the same team match.
- 3.5.2.7 Except as provided in 3.5.2.2, if a coach or another adviser who has been warned commits a further offence in the same individual match or team match, the umpire shall hold up a red card and send him or her away from the playing area until the end of the team match or, in an individual event, of the individual match.
- 3.5.2.8 The referee shall have power to disqualify a player from a match, an event or a competition for seriously unfair or offensive behaviour, whether reported by the umpire or not; as he or she does so he or she shall hold up a red card; for less serious offenses which do not justify disqualification, the referee may decide to report such an offense to a Disciplinary Panel (3.5.2.13).
- 3.5.2.9 If a player is disqualified from 2 matches of a team or individual event he or she shall automatically be disqualified from that team event or individual competition.
- 3.5.2.10 The referee may disqualify for the remainder of a competition anyone who has twice been sent away from the playing area during that competition.

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- 3.5.2.11 If a player is disqualified from an event or competition for any reason, he or she shall automatically forfeit any associated title, medal, prize money or ranking points.
- 3.5.2.12 Cases of very serious misbehaviour shall be reported to the offender's Association.
- 3.5.2.13 A Disciplinary Panel appointed by the Executive Committee, consisting of 4 members and a chair, shall decide on appropriate sanctions for offences reported by the referee of an event within 14 days of the end of the event. The Disciplinary Panel shall decide according to directives given by the Executive Committee.
- 3.5.2.14 An appeal against the Disciplinary Panel's decision may be made by the disciplined player, adviser or official within 15 days to the ITTF Executive Committee, whose decision on the matter shall be final.

3.5.3 Good Presentation

- 3.5.3.1 Players, coaches and officials shall uphold the object of good presentation of the sport and safeguard its integrity by refraining from any attempt to influence the elements of a competition in a manner contrary to sporting ethics:
 - 3.5.3.1.1 Players have to do their utmost to win a match and shall not withdraw except for reasons of illness or injury.
 - 3.5.3.1.2 Players, coaches and officials shall not participate in any form of or support betting or gambling related to their own matches and competitions.
- 3.5.3.2 Any player who deliberately fails to comply with these principles shall be disciplined by total or partial loss of prize money in prize events and/or by suspension from ITTF events.
- 3.5.3.3 In the event of complicity proven against any adviser or official the relevant national Association is also expected to discipline this person.
- 3.5.3.4 A Disciplinary Panel appointed by the Executive Committee, consisting of 4 members and a chair, shall decide on whether an infringement committed and if necessary on appropriate sanctions; this Disciplinary Panel shall decide according to directives given by the Executive Committee.
- 3.5.3.5 An appeal against the Disciplinary Panel's decision may be made by the disciplined player, adviser or official within 15 days to the ITTF Executive Committee whose decision on the matter shall be final.

3.6 DRAW FOR KNOCK-OUT COMPETITIONS

3.6.1 Byes and Qualifiers

- 3.6.1.1 The number of places in the first round proper of a knockout event shall be a power of 2.

- 3.6.1.1.1 If there are fewer entries than places, the first round shall include enough byes to make up the required number.
- 3.6.1.1.2 If there are more entries than places, a qualifying competition shall be held such that the number of qualifiers and the number of direct entries together make up the required number.
- 3.6.1.2 Byes shall be distributed as evenly as possible throughout the first round, being placed first against seeded places, in seeding order.
- 3.6.1.3 Qualifiers shall be drawn as evenly as possible among the halves, quarters, eighths or sixteenths of the draw, as appropriate.

3.6.2 Seeding by Ranking

- 3.6.2.1 The highest ranked entries in an event shall be seeded so that they cannot meet before the closing rounds.
- 3.6.2.2 The number of entries to be seeded shall not exceed the number of entries in the 1st round proper of the event.
- 3.6.2.3 The entry ranked 1 shall be placed at the top of the first half of the draw and the entry ranked 2 at the bottom of the second half, but all other seeded entries shall be drawn among specified places in the draw, as follows:
 - 3.6.2.3.1 the entries ranked 3 and 4 shall be drawn between the bottom of the first half of the draw and the top of the second half;
 - 3.6.2.3.2 the entries ranked 5-8 shall be drawn among the bottom places of the odd-numbered quarters of the draw and the top places of the even-numbered quarters;
 - 3.6.2.3.3 the entries ranked 9-16 shall be drawn among the bottom places of the odd-numbered eighths of the draw and the top places of the even-numbered eighths;
 - 3.6.2.3.4 the entries ranked 17-32 shall be drawn among the bottom places of the odd-numbered sixteenths of the draw and the top places of the even-numbered sixteenths.
- 3.6.2.4 In a team knockout event only the highest ranked team from an Association shall be eligible for seeding by ranking.
- 3.6.2.5 Seeding by ranking shall follow the order of the latest ranking list published by the ITTF except that:
 - 3.6.2.5.1 where all the entries eligible for seeding are from Associations belonging to the same Continental Federation the latest list published by that Federation shall take precedence;
 - 3.6.2.5.2 where all the entries eligible for seeding are from the same Association the latest list published by that Association shall take precedence.

3.6.3 Seeding by Association Nomination

- 3.6.3.1 Nominated players and pairs of the same Association shall, as far as possible, be separated so that they cannot meet before the closing rounds of an event.
- 3.6.3.2 Associations shall list their nominated players and pairs in descending order of playing strength, starting with any players included in the ranking list used for seeding, in the order of that list.
- 3.6.3.3 The entries ranked 1 and 2 shall be drawn into different halves and those ranked 3 and 4 into quarters other than those occupied by the first two.
- 3.6.3.4 The entries ranked 5-8 shall be drawn as evenly as possible into eighths other than those occupied by the first four.
- 3.6.3.5 The entries ranked 9-16 shall be drawn as evenly as possible into sixteenths other than those occupied by higher ranked players or pairs and so on, until all the entries have been allocated.
- 3.6.3.6 A men's or women's doubles pair consisting of players from different Associations shall be considered a pair of the Association of the player ranked higher in the World Ranking List, or, if neither player is in this list, in the appropriate Continental Ranking List; if neither player is included in a World or Continental Ranking List, the pair shall be considered a member of the Association whose team is ranked higher in the appropriate World Team Ranking List.
- 3.6.3.7 A mixed doubles pair consisting of players from different Associations shall be considered a pair of the Association to which the man belongs.
- 3.6.3.8 Alternatively, any doubles pair consisting of players from different Associations may be considered a pair of both of these Associations.
- 3.6.3.9 In a qualifying competition, entries from the same Association, up to the number of qualifying groups, shall be drawn into separate groups in such a way that qualifiers are, as far as possible, separated in accordance with the principles of 3.6.3.3-5.

3.6.4 Alterations

- 3.6.4.1 A completed draw may be altered only with the permission of the responsible management committee and, where appropriate, the agreement of the representatives of Associations directly concerned.
- 3.6.4.2 The draw may be altered only to correct errors and genuine misunderstandings in the notification and acceptance of entry, to correct serious imbalance, as provided in 3.6.5, or to include additional players or pairs, as provided in 3.6.6.

- 3.6.4.3 No alterations other than necessary deletions shall be made to the draw of an event after it has started; for the purpose of this regulation a qualifying competition may be regarded as a separate event.
- 3.6.4.4 A player shall not be deleted from the draw without his or her permission, unless he or she is disqualified; such permission must be given either by the player if he or she is present or, if he or she is absent, by his or her authorised representative.
- 3.6.4.5 A doubles pair shall not be altered if both players are present and fit to play, but injury, illness or absence of one player may be accepted as justification for an alteration.

3.6.5 Re-draw

- 3.6.5.1 Except as provided in 3.6.4.2, 3.6.4.5 and 3.6.5.2, a player shall not be moved from one place in the draw to another and if for any reason the draw becomes seriously unbalanced the event shall, wherever possible, be completely re-drawn.
- 3.6.5.2 Exceptionally, where the imbalance is due to the absence of several seeded players or pairs from the same section of the draw, the remaining seeded players or pairs only may be re-numbered in ranking order and re-drawn to the extent possible among the seeded places, taking account as far as is practicable of the requirements for seeding by Association nomination.

3.6.6 Additions

- 3.6.6.1 Players not included in the original draw may be added later, at the discretion of the responsible management committee and with the agreement of the referee.
- 3.6.6.2 Any vacancies in seeded places shall first be filled, in ranking order, by drawing into them the strongest new players or pairs; any further players or pairs shall be drawn into vacancies due to absence or disqualification and then into byes other than those against seeded players or pairs.
- 3.6.6.3 Any players or pairs who would have been seeded by ranking if they had been included in the original draw may be drawn only into vacancies in seeded places.

3.7 ORGANISATION OF COMPETITIONS

3.7.1 Authority

- 3.7.1.1 Provided the Constitution is observed, any Association may organise or authorise open, restricted or invitation tournaments within its territory or may arrange international matches.

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- 3.7.1.2 Players from affiliated ITTF member Associations, when competing internationally, can only participate in ITTF events, ITTF approved events and ITTF registered events entered through their national Association, as well as in ITTF recognised events entered through their National Olympic Committee or National Paralympic Committee respectively. Participation in any other type of event can only be allowed with the express written permission of the national Association of the player or the ITTF; permission to players will be considered given unless a specific or general notification is made by the national Association of the player or the ITTF withholding the permission to participate in an event or series of events.
- 3.7.1.3 A player or team may not take part in an international competition if he or she or it is suspended by his or her or its Association or Continental Federation.
- 3.7.1.4 No event may use a World title without the permission of the ITTF, or a Continental title without the permission of the appropriate Continental Federation.

3.7.2 Representation

- 3.7.2.1 Representatives of all Associations whose players are taking part in an Open International Championships event shall be entitled to attend the draw and shall be consulted on any alterations to the draw or any decisions of appeal that may directly affect their players.

3.7.3 Entries

- 3.7.3.1 Entry forms for Open International Championships shall be sent to all Associations not later than 2 calendar months before the start of the competition and not later than 1 calendar month before the date for the close of entries.
- 3.7.3.2 All entries nominated by Associations for open tournaments shall be accepted but the organisers shall have power to allocate entries to a qualifying competition; in deciding this allocation they shall take account of the relevant ITTF and Continental ranking lists and of any ranking order of entries specified by the nominating Association.

3.7.4 Events

- 3.7.4.1 Open International Championships shall include men's singles, women's singles, men's doubles and women's doubles and may include mixed doubles and international team events for teams representing Associations.
- 3.7.4.2 In world title competitions, players in youth, junior and cadet events must be under 21, under 18 and under 15 respectively on 31st December immediately before the calendar year in which the competition takes place; these age limits are recommended for corresponding events in other competitions.

3.7.4.3 It is recommended that team matches at Open International Championships be played according to one of the systems specified in 3.7.6; the entry form or prospectus shall show which system has been chosen.

3.7.4.4 Individual events proper shall be played on a knockout basis, but team events and qualifying rounds of individual events may be played on either a knockout or a group basis.

3.7.5 Group Competitions

3.7.5.1 In a group, or "round robin", competition, all members of the group shall compete against each other and shall gain 2 match points for a win, 1 for a loss in a played match and 0 for a loss in an unplayed or unfinished match; the ranking order shall be determined primarily by the number of match points gained. If a player is defaulted after the completion of a match for any reason, he or she shall be deemed to have lost the match, which shall subsequently be recorded as a loss in an unplayed match.

3.7.5.2 If two or more members of the group have gained the same number of match points their relative positions shall be determined only by the results of the matches between them, by considering successively the numbers of match points, the ratios of wins to losses first in individual matches (for a team event), games and points, as far as is necessary to resolve the order.

3.7.5.3 If at any step in the calculations the positions of one or more members of the group have been determined while the others are still equal, the results of matches in which those members took part shall be excluded from any further calculations needed to resolve the equalities in accordance with the procedure of 3.7.5.1 and 3.7.5.2.

3.7.5.4 If it is not possible to resolve equalities by means of the procedure specified in 3.7.5.1-3 the relative positions shall be decided by lot.

3.7.5.5 Unless otherwise authorised by the Jury, if 1 player or team is to qualify the final match in the group shall be between the players or teams numbered 1 and 2, if 2 are to qualify the final match shall be between the players or teams numbered 2 and 3 and so on.

3.7.6 Team Match Systems

3.7.6.1 Best of 5 matches (New Swaythling Cup system, 5 singles)

3.7.6.1.1 A team shall consist of 3 players.

3.7.6.1.2 The order of play shall be

1) A v X

2) B v Y

3) C v Z

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- 4) A v Y
- 5) B v X
- 3.7.6.2 Best of 5 matches (Corbillon Cup system, 4 singles and 1 doubles)
 - 3.7.6.2.1 A team shall consist of 2, 3 or 4 players.
 - 3.7.6.2.2 The order of play shall be
 - 1) A v X
 - 2) B v Y
 - 3) doubles
 - 4) A v Y
 - 5) B v X
 - 3.7.6.2.3 In Para TT events, the order of play may be as in 3.7.6.2.2 except that the doubles match may be played last.
- 3.7.6.3 Best of 5 matches (Olympic system, 4 singles and 1 doubles).
 - 3.7.6.3.1 A team shall consist of 3 players; each player shall compete in a maximum of 2 individual matches.
 - 3.7.6.3.2 The order of play shall be
 - 1) A v X
 - 2) B v Y
 - 3) doubles C & A or B v Z & X or Y
 - 4) B or A v Z
 - 5) C v Y or X
- 3.7.6.4 Best of 7 matches (6 singles and 1 doubles)
 - 3.7.6.4.1 A team shall consist of 3, 4 or 5 players.
 - 3.7.6.4.2 The order of play shall be
 - 1) A v Y
 - 2) B v X
 - 3) C v Z
 - 4) doubles
 - 5) A v X
 - 6) C v Y
 - 7) B v Z
- 3.7.6.5 Best of 9 matches (9 singles)
 - 3.7.6.5.1 A team shall consist of 3 players.
 - 3.7.6.5.2 The order of play shall be
 - 1) A v X

- 2) B v Y
- 3) C v Z
- 4) B v X
- 5) A v Z
- 6) C v Y
- 7) B v Z
- 8) C v X
- 9) A v Y

3.7.7 Team Match Procedure

- 3.7.7.1 All players shall be selected from those nominated for the event.
- 3.7.7.2 The name of the team captain, playing or non-playing, shall be designated beforehand to the umpire.
- 3.7.7.3 Before a team match the right to choose A, B, C or X, Y, Z shall be decided by lot and the captains shall name their teams to the referee or his or her representative, assigning a letter to each singles player.
- 3.7.7.4 The pairs for a doubles match need not be nominated until the end of the immediately preceding singles match.
- 3.7.7.5 A team match shall end when one team has won a majority of the possible individual matches.

3.7.8 Results

- 3.7.8.1 As soon as possible after the end of a competition and not later than 7 days thereafter the organising Association shall send to the ITTF Secretariat and to the Secretary of the appropriate Continental Federation details of the results, including points scores, of international matches, of all rounds of Continental and Open International Championships and of the closing rounds of national championships.

3.7.9 Television and Streaming

- 3.7.9.1 An event other than World, Continental, Olympic or Paralympic title competitions may be broadcast by television only with the permission of the Association from whose territory the broadcast is made.
- 3.7.9.2 Participation in an international event presumes the consent of the Association controlling the visiting players to the televising of that event; in World, Continental, Olympic or Paralympic title competitions such consent is presumed for the showing anywhere of live or recorded television during the period of the event and within 1 calendar month afterwards.

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3.7.9.3 All streaming of ITTF events (all categories) shall be subject to compliance with the ITTF streaming certification process and a Streaming Certification Fee (SCF) shall be charged to the rights holder of the event.

3.8 INTERNATIONAL ELIGIBILITY

3.8.1 Eligibility in Olympic title competitions is regulated separately by 4.5.1 and eligibility in Paralympic title competitions is regulated separately by the IPC and 4.6.1; additional eligibility regulations apply to World title events (4.1.3, 4.2.3, 4.3.6, 4.4.3).

3.8.2 A player shall be regarded as representing an Association if he or she accepted to be nominated by this Association and subsequently participates in a competition listed in 3.1.2.3 or in regional championships other than individual events at Open International Championships.

3.8.3 A player is eligible to represent an Association only if he or she is a national of the country in which that Association has jurisdiction, except that a player who has already represented an Association of which he or she was not a national in accordance with previous rules may retain that eligibility.

3.8.3.1 Where the players of more than one Association have the same nationality, a player may represent one of these Associations only, if he or she is born in or has his or her main residence in the territory controlled by that Association.

3.8.3.2 A player who is eligible to represent more than 1 Association shall have the right to choose which of the relevant Associations he or she will represent.

3.8.4 A player is eligible to represent a Continental Federation (1.18.1) in an event of continental teams only if he or she is eligible to represent a member Association of this Continental Federation according to 3.8.3.

3.8.5 A player shall not represent different Associations within a period of 3 years.

3.8.6 An Association may nominate a player under its jurisdiction (1.21) to enter any individual events of Open International Championships; such nomination may be indicated in results lists and ITTF publications but does not affect the eligibility of this player according to 3.8.2.

3.8.7 A player or his or her Association shall, if so requested by the referee, provide documentary evidence of his or her eligibility and his or her passport.

3.8.8 Any appeal on a question of eligibility shall be referred to an Eligibility Commission, consisting of the Executive Committee, the chair of the Rules Committee and the chair of the Athletes' Commission, whose decision shall be final.