



The International Table Tennis Federation

Handbook

2020

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The International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF), founded in 1926, is the world-governing body of the sport of table tennis with 226 member Associations in the world.

The ITTF supervises the staging of World Championships annually, and several other world title events. Around 120 international tournaments are sanctioned by the ITTF yearly. Its main function is to govern and develop the sport for the benefit of over thirty million competitive players in all parts of the world.

Table Tennis is an Olympic and Paralympic sport and is in the programme of the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games as well as of all Multisport Games.

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2 THE LAWS OF TABLE TENNIS

2.1 THE TABLE

- 2.1.1 The upper surface of the table, known as the playing surface, shall be rectangular, 2.74m long and 1.525m wide, and shall lie in a horizontal plane 76cm above the floor.
- 2.1.2 The playing surface shall not include the vertical sides of the tabletop.
- 2.1.3 The playing surface may be of any material and shall yield a uniform bounce of about 23cm when a standard ball is dropped on to it from a height of 30cm.
- 2.1.4 The playing surface shall be uniformly dark coloured and matt, but with a white side line, 2cm wide, along each 2.74m edge and a white end line, 2cm wide, along each 1.525m edge.
- 2.1.5 The playing surface shall be divided into 2 equal courts by a vertical net running parallel with the end lines, and shall be continuous over the whole area of each court.
- 2.1.6 For doubles, each court shall be divided into 2 equal half-courts by a white centre line, 3mm wide, running parallel with the side lines; the centre line shall be regarded as part of each right half-court.

2.2 THE NET ASSEMBLY

- 2.2.1 The net assembly shall consist of the net, its suspension and the supporting posts, including the clamps attaching them to the table.
- 2.2.2 The net shall be suspended by a cord attached at each end to an upright post 15.25cm high, the outside limits of the post being 15.25cm outside the side line.
- 2.2.3 The top of the net, along its whole length, shall be 15.25cm above the playing surface.
- 2.2.4 The bottom of the net, along its whole length, shall be as close as possible to the playing surface and the ends of the net shall be attached to the supporting posts from top to bottom.

2.3 THE BALL

- 2.3.1 The ball shall be spherical, with a diameter of 40mm.
- 2.3.2 The ball shall weigh 2.7g.
- 2.3.3 The ball shall be made of celluloid or similar plastics material and shall be white or orange, and matt.

2.4 THE RACKET

- 2.4.1 The racket may be of any size, shape or weight but the blade shall be flat and rigid.
- 2.4.2 At least 85% of the blade by thickness shall be of natural wood; an adhesive layer within the blade may be reinforced with fibrous material such as carbon fibre, glass fibre or compressed paper, but shall not be thicker than 7.5% of the total thickness or 0.35mm, whichever is the smaller.
- 2.4.3 A side of the blade used for striking the ball shall be covered with either ordinary pimped rubber, with pimples outwards having a total thickness including adhesive of not more than 2.0mm, or sandwich rubber, with pimples inwards or outwards, having a total thickness including adhesive of not more than 4.0mm.
- 2.4.3.1 *Ordinary pimped rubber* is a single layer of non-cellular rubber, natural or synthetic, with pimples evenly distributed over its surface at a density of not less than 10 per cm² and not more than 30 per cm².
- 2.4.3.2 *Sandwich rubber* is a single layer of cellular rubber covered with a single outer layer of ordinary pimped rubber, the thickness of the pimped rubber not being more than 2.0mm.
- 2.4.4 The covering material shall extend up to but not beyond the limits of the blade, except that the part nearest the handle and gripped by the fingers may be left uncovered or covered with any material.
- 2.4.5 The blade, any layer within the blade and any layer of covering material or adhesive on a side used for striking the ball shall be continuous and of even thickness.
- 2.4.6 The surface of the covering material on a side of the blade, or of a side of the blade if it is left uncovered, shall be matt, bright red on one side and black on the other.
 With effect 1st October 2021¹, the surface of the covering material on a side of the blade, or of a side of the blade if it is left uncovered, shall be matt, black on one side, and of a bright colour clearly distinguishable from black and from the colour of the ball on the other.
- 2.4.7 The racket covering shall be used without any physical, chemical or other treatment.
- 2.4.7.1 Slight deviations from continuity of surface or uniformity of colour due to accidental damage or wear may be allowed provided that they do not significantly change the characteristics of the surface.
- 2.4.8 Before the start of a match and whenever he or she changes his or her racket during a match a player shall show his or her opponent and the umpire the racket he or she is about to use and shall allow them to examine it.

¹ Effective after Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games

2.5 DEFINITIONS

- 2.5.1 A *rally* is the period during which the ball is in play.
- 2.5.2 The ball is *in play* from the last moment at which it is stationary on the palm of the free hand before being intentionally projected in service until the rally is decided as a let or a point.
- 2.5.3 A *let* is a rally of which the result is not scored.
- 2.5.4 A *point* is a rally of which the result is scored.
- 2.5.5 The *racket hand* is the hand carrying the racket.
- 2.5.6 The *free hand* is the hand not carrying the racket; the *free arm* is the arm of the free hand.
- 2.5.7 A player *strikes* the ball if he or she touches it in play with his or her racket, held in the hand, or with his or her racket hand below the wrist.
- 2.5.8 A player *obstructs* the ball if he or she, or anything he or she wears or carries, touches it in play when it is above or travelling towards the playing surface, not having touched his or her court since last being struck by his or her opponent.
- 2.5.9 The *server* is the player due to strike the ball first in a rally.
- 2.5.10 The *receiver* is the player due to strike the ball second in a rally.
- 2.5.11 The *umpire* is the person appointed to control a match.
- 2.5.12 The *assistant umpire* is the person appointed to assist the umpire with certain decisions.
- 2.5.13 Anything that a player *wears or carries* includes anything that he or she was wearing or carrying, other than the ball, at the start of the rally.
- 2.5.14 The *end line* shall be regarded as extending indefinitely in both directions.

2.6 THE SERVICE

- 2.6.1 Service shall start with the ball resting freely on the open palm of the server's stationary free hand.
- 2.6.2 The server shall then project the ball near vertically upwards, without imparting spin, so that it rises at least 16cm after leaving the palm of the free hand and then falls without touching anything before being struck.
- 2.6.3 As the ball is falling the server shall strike it so that it touches first his or her court and then touches directly the receiver's court; in doubles, the ball shall touch successively the right half court of server and receiver.
- 2.6.4 From the start of service until it is struck, the ball shall be above the level of the playing surface and behind the server's end line, and it shall not be hidden from the receiver by the server or his or her doubles partner or by anything they wear or carry.

- 2.6.5 As soon as the ball has been projected, the server's free arm and hand shall be removed from the space between the ball and the net.

The space between the ball and the net is defined by the ball, the net and its indefinite upward extension.

- 2.6.6 It is the responsibility of the player to serve so that the umpire or the assistant umpire can be satisfied that he or she complies with the requirements of the Laws, and either may decide that a service is incorrect.

- 2.6.6.1 If either the umpire or the assistant umpire is not sure about the legality of a service he or she may, on the first occasion in a match, interrupt play and warn the server; but any subsequent service by that player or his or her doubles partner which is not clearly legal shall be considered incorrect.

- 2.6.7 Exceptionally, the umpire may relax the requirements for a correct service where he or she is satisfied that compliance is prevented by physical disability.

2.7 THE RETURN

- 2.7.1 The ball, having been served or returned, shall be struck so that it touches the opponent's court, either directly or after touching the net assembly.

2.8 THE ORDER OF PLAY

- 2.8.1 In singles, the server shall first make a service, the receiver shall then make a return and thereafter server and receiver alternately shall each make a return.

- 2.8.2 In doubles, except as provided in 2.8.3, the server shall first make a service, the receiver shall then make a return, the partner of the server shall then make a return, the partner of the receiver shall then make a return and thereafter each player in turn in that sequence shall make a return.

- 2.8.3 In doubles, when at least one player of a pair is in a wheelchair due to a physical disability, the server shall first make a service, the receiver shall then make a return but thereafter either player of the disabled pair may make returns.

2.9 A LET

- 2.9.1 The rally shall be a let:

- 2.9.1.1 if in service the ball touches the net assembly, provided the service is otherwise correct or the ball is obstructed by the receiver or his or her partner;

2: The Laws of Table Tennis

- 2.9.1.2 if the service is delivered when the receiving player or pair is not ready, provided that neither the receiver nor his or her partner attempts to strike the ball;
- 2.9.1.3 if failure to make a service or a return or otherwise to comply with the Laws is due to a disturbance outside the control of the player;
- 2.9.1.4 if play is interrupted by the umpire or assistant umpire;
- 2.9.1.5 if the receiver is in wheelchair owing to a physical disability and in service the ball, provided that the service is otherwise correct,
 - 2.9.1.5.1 after touching the receiver's court returns in the direction of the net;
 - 2.9.1.5.2 comes to rest on the receiver's court;
 - 2.9.1.5.3 in singles leaves the receiver's court after touching it by either of its sidelines.
- 2.9.2 Play may be interrupted
 - 2.9.2.1 to correct an error in the order of serving, receiving or ends;
 - 2.9.2.2 to introduce the expedite system;
 - 2.9.2.3 to warn or penalise a player or adviser;
 - 2.9.2.4 because the conditions of play are disturbed in a way which could affect the outcome of the rally.

2.10 A POINT

- 2.10.1 Unless the rally is a let, a player shall score a point
 - 2.10.1.1 if an opponent fails to make a correct service;
 - 2.10.1.2 if an opponent fails to make a correct return;
 - 2.10.1.3 if, after he or she has made a service or a return, the ball touches anything other than the net assembly before being struck by an opponent;
 - 2.10.1.4 if the ball passes over his or her court or beyond his or her end line without touching his or her court, after being struck by an opponent;
 - 2.10.1.5 if the ball, after being struck by an opponent, passes through the net or between the net and the net post or between the net and playing surface;
 - 2.10.1.6 if an opponent obstructs the ball;
 - 2.10.1.7 if an opponent deliberately strikes the ball **more than once** in succession;
 - 2.10.1.8 if an opponent strikes the ball with a side of the racket blade whose surface does not comply with the requirements of 2.4.3, 2.4.4 and 2.4.5;
 - 2.10.1.9 if an opponent, or anything an opponent wears or carries, moves the playing surface;
 - 2.10.1.10 if an opponent, or anything an opponent wears or carries, touches the net assembly;

- 2.10.1.11 if an opponent's free hand touches the playing surface;
- 2.10.1.12 if a doubles opponent strikes the ball out of the sequence established by the first server and first receiver;
- 2.10.1.13 as provided under the expedite system (2.15.4).
- 2.10.1.14 if both players or pairs are in a wheelchair due to a physical disability and
 - 2.10.1.14.1 his or her opponent does not maintain a minimum contact with the seat or cushion(s), with the back of the thigh, when the ball is struck;
 - 2.10.1.14.2 his or her opponent touches the table with either hand before striking the ball;
 - 2.10.1.14.3 his or her opponent's footrest or foot touches the floor during play.
- 2.10.1.15 if, where an opposing doubles pair includes at least one player in a wheelchair, any part of the wheelchair or a foot of a standing player crosses an imaginary extension of the centre line of the table

2.11 A GAME

- 2.11.1 A game shall be won by the player or pair first scoring 11 points unless both players or pairs score 10 points, when the game shall be won by the first player or pair subsequently gaining a lead of 2 points.

2.12 A MATCH

- 2.12.1 A match shall consist of the best of any odd number of games.

2.13 THE ORDER OF SERVING, RECEIVING AND ENDS

- 2.13.1 The right to choose the initial order of serving, receiving and ends shall be decided by lot and the winner may choose to serve or to receive first or to start at a particular end.
- 2.13.2 When one player or pair has chosen to serve or to receive first or to start at a particular end, the other player or pair shall have the other choice.
- 2.13.3 After each 2 points have been scored the receiving player or pair shall become the serving player or pair and so on until the end of the game, unless both players or pairs score 10 points or the expedite system is in operation, when the sequences of serving and receiving shall be the same but each player shall serve for only 1 point in turn.
- 2.13.4 In each game of a doubles match, the pair having the right to serve first shall choose which of them will do so and in the first game of a match the receiving pair shall decide which of them will receive first; in subsequent games of the match, the first server having been chosen, the first receiver shall be the player who served to him or her in the preceding game.

- 2.13.5 In doubles, at each change of service the previous receiver shall become the server and the partner of the previous server shall become the receiver.
- 2.13.6 The player or pair serving first in a game shall receive first in the next game of the match and in the last possible game of a doubles match the pair due to receive next shall change their order of receiving when first one pair scores 5 points.
- 2.13.7 The player or pair starting at one end in a game shall start at the other end in the next game of the match and in the last possible game of a match the players or pairs shall change ends when first one player or pair scores 5 points.

2.14 OUT OF ORDER OF SERVING, RECEIVING OR ENDS

- 2.14.1 If a player serves or receives out of turn, play shall be interrupted by the umpire as soon as the error is discovered and shall resume with those players serving and receiving who should be server and receiver respectively at the score that has been reached, according to the sequence established at the beginning of the match and, in doubles, to the order of serving chosen by the pair having the right to serve first in the game during which the error is discovered.
- 2.14.2 If the players have not changed ends when they should have done so, play shall be interrupted by the umpire as soon as the error is discovered and shall resume with the players at the ends at which they should be at the score that has been reached, according to the sequence established at the beginning of the match.
- 2.14.3 In any circumstances, all points scored before the discovery of an error shall be reckoned.

2.15 THE EXPEDITE SYSTEM

- 2.15.1 Except as provided in 2.15.2, the expedite system shall come into operation after 10 minutes' play in a game or at any time when requested by both players or pairs.
- 2.15.2 The expedite system shall not be introduced in a game if at least 18 points have been scored.
- 2.15.3 If the ball is in play when the time limit is reached and the expedite system is due to come into operation, play shall be interrupted by the umpire and shall resume with service by the player who served in the rally that was interrupted; if the ball is not in play when the expedite system comes into operation, play shall resume with service by the player who received in the immediately preceding rally.

- 2.15.4 Thereafter, each player shall serve for 1 point in turn until the end of the game, and if the receiving player or pair makes 13 correct returns in a rally the receiver shall score a point.
- 2.15.5 Introduction of the expedite system shall not alter the order of serving and receiving in the match, as defined in 2.13.6.
- 2.15.6 Once introduced, the expedite system shall remain in operation until the end of the match.

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 **Executive Committee** shall have power to authorise the organiser of an open tournament to adopt **temporary** law variations.
- 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, flooring and ball to be used; the choice of table, net assembly and ball shall be as laid down by the ITTF or by the Association in whose territory the competition is held, selected from brands and types currently approved by the ITTF; for selected ITTF sanctioned tournaments, the flooring shall be of a brand and type currently approved by ITTF.
- 3.2.1.3 Any ordinary pimped rubber or sandwich rubber covering the racket 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, such as part or all of a tracksuit, 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 3.2.5.9; 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.
- 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 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; for Veteran events, the playing space may be reduced, but shall not be less than 10m long and 5m 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, printed numbers identifying the table, flooring, umpires tables and chairs, score indicators, towel and ball

boxes, surrounds, boards on the surrounds indicating the names of players or Associations, and small technical equipment which shall be fitted in a way that does not affect play.

- 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 it shall be resilient; the flooring may be rigid 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.
- 3.2.3.9 Technical equipment on the net assembly shall be considered part of it.

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: Regulations for International Competitions

- 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.
- 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 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 or on playing clothing, umpires' clothing or players' numbers and there shall be no special additional displays.
- 3.2.5.1.1 Advertisements or markings in or next to the playing area, on playing clothing or numbers and on umpires' clothing, 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; however, for competitions not explicitly organised for players under 18 years of age, the ITTF may allow advertisements or markings for non-distilled alcoholic drinks on equipment and fittings in or next to the playing area, provided the local law permits.
- 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 6 advertisements on the floor of the playing area; such markings
 - 3.2.5.5.1 may be placed 2 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;
 - 3.2.5.5.2 at the end shall not be less than 3m from the table's end line next to the marking;
 - 3.2.5.5.3 shall be of the same uniform colour different from the colour of the ball in use, unless other colours have been agreed in advance with the ITTF;
 - 3.2.5.5.4 shall not alter significantly the surface friction of the flooring;
 - 3.2.5.5.5 shall consist only of a logo, wordmark or other icons, and shall not include any background.
- 3.2.5.6 Advertisements on the table shall comply with the following requirements:
 - 3.2.5.6.1 There may be 1 permanent advertisement of the manufacturer's or supplier's name or logo on each half of each side of the table top and on each end.
 - 3.2.5.6.2 There may be 1 temporary advertisement, which also can be of the manufacturer's or supplier's name or logo, on each half of each side of the table top and on each end.
 - 3.2.5.6.3 Each permanent and each temporary advertisement shall be contained within a total length of 60cm.
 - 3.2.5.6.4 Temporary advertisements shall be clearly separated from any permanent advertisements.
 - 3.2.5.6.5 Advertisements shall not be for other table tennis equipment suppliers.
 - 3.2.5.6.6 There shall be no advertisement, name of table, name or logo 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 There may be 2 advertisements on nets on each side of the table which shall be clearly different from the colour of the ball in use, shall not be within 3cm of

the tape along the top edge; advertisements placed on parts of the net within the vertical extensions of the side lines of the table shall be a logo, wordmark or other icons in a single dark colour.

- 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; if such numbers are not used there may be additional temporary advertisements for tournament sponsors within a total area of 100 cm².
- 3.2.5.11 Advertisements on umpires' clothing shall be contained within a total area of 40cm².

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: Regulations for International Competitions

- 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;
 - 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 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 at any time except during rallies provided play is not thereby delayed (3.4.4.1); 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.

- 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.
- 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: Regulations for International Competitions

- 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 according to 3.6.3.3 and 3.6.3.4 unless otherwise stated in the specific regulations for such particular event or group of events.
- 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 Remaining entries shall be separated only in groups and in the first round of the qualification draw for knock-outs and the main draw, but not in further rounds.
- 3.6.3.5 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.
- 3.6.3.6 A mixed doubles pair consisting of players from different Associations shall be considered a pair of the Association to which the man belongs.
- 3.6.3.7 Alternatively, any doubles pair consisting of players from different Associations may be considered a pair of both of these Associations.

- 3.6.3.8 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 3.6.3.3-4.

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.
- 3.7.1.2 Except for Veteran events, 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

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) doubles B & C v Y & Z

2) A v X

3) C v Z

4) A v Y

5) B v 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.
- 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 (1.3.1) 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 (1.8.4) 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.