

Table Tennis A.C.T Competition Guidelines

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1. Introduction

The "Table Tennis A.C.T Competitions Guide" [this document] outlines how Table Tennis ACT (TTACT) pennant competitions will be run and how TTACT representative team selections will occur.

This Guide was prepared by the TTACT Competitions Committee and been endorsed by the Board of TTACT.

2. Competition Committee

Each year a Competition Sub Committee will be appointed by the Board of TTACT.

The Competition Sub Committee will nominally include one representative of each Division, with a quorum being three. The Chair of the Competition Committee will be the Competition Director.

The Competition Sub Committee will select players and determine team compositions for the various annual TTACT pennant competitions. The Competition Sub Committee will also select players and construct teams for representative competitions for which TTACT is eligible to participate.

3. Selection Guidelines

3.1 TTACT Representative teams

3.1.1 Introduction

ACT representative teams in all categories [Junior, Youth, and Senior & Veterans] will be selected using the selection criteria detailed below from only those athletes meeting the eligibility criteria, also detailed below.

3.1.2 Selection period

The selection period for all teams begins immediately following the completion of the same event in the previous calendar year and runs up until the posted [by TTACT] closing date for nominations for the event in question.

3.1.3 Eligibility

To be eligible for selection onto an ACT team, all athletes must:

- Be a registered and fully paid up member of Table Tennis ACT ;
- Be in sufficient health and level of fitness to play for the duration of the Teams event; and
- Meet the specific criteria for age categories detailed below.

Junior (under 18)

Includes: Cadet (under 15 and Mini Cadet (under 13).

Input on readiness to be sought from TTACTION Junior Coaching Director.

Youth (under 21)

Input on readiness to be sought from TTACTION Junior Coaching Director.

Senior

No requirements.

Veterans (over 30)

Includes: over 30; over 40; over 50; over 60; over 70; and over 75 age groups for both Men and Women.

To be eligible for selection, athletes should normally be regular ACT Pennant players during the selection period.

3.1.4 Exemptions

The Board may grant an exemption from these eligibility requirements if:

- In their opinion there has been some extraordinary circumstance which has prevented a player satisfying the eligibility requirements, but who, in the opinion of the Board, and on advice from the Competition Committee and /or Coaching Director, is of a sufficient elite standard that they should be included; or

- The numbers of eligible players are insufficient to make up suitable teams, but in the opinion of the Board, it would be beneficial to TTACT to nominate a team

3.1.5 Selection

When selecting players for ACT representative teams, the competition committee will:

- a) Consider only those players who satisfy the relevant requirements for eligibility for ACT selection: and
- b) Take into consideration the following factors in respect of each player who satisfies the relevant requirements for eligibility for selection.
 - Players likely degree of success in the event by assessing factors such as
 - i. The player's national ranking/points rating
 - ii. The player's results from all relevant competitions in which the nominating player has participated in during the previous year. Relevant competitions include ACT Pennant competitions, ACT association championships and previous Australian Veterans/Senior/Junior National Championships and NSW Country Championships.
 - Player's ability to fit in with other selected players participating in the same event or team as well as the appointed coach or manager (if applicable)

3.1.6 Australian National Junior and Australian National Senior Championships

Representative teams [and coaches] for the both Australian Senior and Junior Championships are selected by TTACT. These championships are the premier events on the Australian Table Tennis calendar and any representative team players must be of a sufficient standard such that their participation reflects well on TTACT.

It is assumed that players seeking selection would have competed in one or more TTACT pennants prior to the relevant championship. Accordingly, it should not be assumed that TTACT will always send a team to these championships.

The Competition Committee will call for nominations from interested players and then determine if a sufficient number of players exist at the required standard to warrant sending a team. A recommendation from the Committee will then be sent to the Board for approval.

3.1.7 Approval

All exemptions from the above selection criteria must be approved by the Board of Table Tennis ACT.

3.1.8 Post Selection Requirements

All athletes selected for a Team must attend all compulsory team training sessions in the lead up to the respective championships. Failure to do this, without approval from the relevant Team Manager or Competition Committee, may result in a player being excluded from the team, and remaining

liable for non-refundable financial commitments incurred on their behalf at the time of their exclusion [eg. Non-refundable flights].

TTACT Pennant Competitions

3.2 Selection of Players for a Division

- All players in the competition must be registered with TTACT or an affiliated association.
- Team captains will be the first listed player in each team shown in the draw, unless another is elected by the competition committee.
- For Divisions 2 through 4, players who have finished 1st or 2nd and have played at least 70% of matches in their division in the preceding competition will usually be offered promotion to the next higher division for the subsequent competition. However, this is dependent on the standard of players that register for the subsequent competition.
- Once players have been promoted, remaining places within Divisions 1 through 4 will be filled strictly on the basis of player performance in recent competitions, as indicated by player ratings.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Competition Committee may grant a player a 'Wild Card' entry into a particular Division.
- After players have been assigned to Divisions in this way, player preferences for playing in a particular Division may be taken into account by swapping players who are within 100 points of each other if the swap is mutually desired.
- Players who are assigned to a Division which is different from the one nominated on their application form will be contacted before teams are selected and given the opportunity to withdraw their application.
- If a player is new to the Table Tennis ACT competition (i.e., unranked players), one or more members of the Competition Committee or their delegates will be asked to have a hit with the new player and attempt to assess their standard. In order to assess the player's standard, they may also be asked to participate in a one-off grading event.
- Written applications to play in a Division which falls outside the player's rating may be made to the Competition Committee, stating the reasons why they believe they should be allowed to play in the particular Division being sought. The Competitions Committee will make a final decision on these applications before teams are selected and notify the player/s of the decision.
- If a player has not competed in the last 3 consecutive seasons, the Competition Committee may decide to re-assess the player's rating. In order to be re-assessed the player may be asked to participate in a one-off grading event.

3.3 Reserves

- Reserves for any division should be of a lesser standard to those players who have been selected for regular play in that division, or of a standard equivalent to the players in the next lower division to which they wish to reserve.
- Reserves may be restricted to playing only for No. 1 players, or only for No. 1 or No. 2 players in a particular division in order to ensure the reserving player is not too much stronger than the regular player in the team they are reserving for.
- Where a team wants to use a reserve during a pennant final (including semi-finals), the team captain must get approval from the Division Manager or Competition Director for the Reserve player they are seeking to use; and inform the opposing team captain of the change prior to the night the match is to be played.
- The Division Manager is to take into account the spirit of selecting a reserve who is as close as possible but not exceeding, the playing standard of the player that they are substituting for (a player's current ratings central rating is considered). Also, reserves of a significantly lower standard of the player they are substituting for are to be avoided if feasible.
- Players who are members of a team in a division may not reserve for another team in that division or a lower division at any time.
- A player, whether reserve or regular, who has commenced a singles match shall not be replaced for the duration of that team match.
- Reserve only players are not eligible for best player awards.
- Reserve only players are not eligible for automatic promotion to the next higher division.

3.4 Playing divisions and team compositions

The nights on which divisions are played will be as follows

- Division 1 – Wednesday nights
 - Division 2 – Monday nights
 - Division 3 – Tuesday nights
 - Division 4 – Thursday nights
 - Division 5 – Friday nights
 - Junior Pennant- Saturday afternoons
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- For divisions 1 to 4, the competition committee will, as far as possible, attempt to construct balanced teams by placing players together in a team based on their individual ranking based on rating points.
 - Where a player drops out early in the pennant season and is replaced permanently by another equivalent standard player, that player will be considered a formal member of that team and subject to the normal rules (eg. Eligible for best player, automatic promotion and not allowed to reserve for any other team)

3.5 Semi-Finals and Final

During the Semi-finals and Final, the team which has finished higher on the ladder after the completion of the last round will have their choice of being either the home or away team.

3.6 Best Player Awards

- Best Player awards will be presented at the end of each Pennant to the Best Player and Runner-up Best Player in each Division who has the best match win / loss percentage and who has played more than 70% of games in the competition, provided that this player has not won the previous competition and declined promotion to the next highest Division.
- Players who enter a Pennant competition as a Reserve only will not be eligible for a Best Player award.

3.7 Most Improved Player Award

An award for Most Improved Player [across all divisions] will be presented at the end of the competition calendar year. Changes in ratings points [refer: TTACT Player Rating System (below)] over the course of the competition calendar year will be used to determine who was the most improved player as well as other factors such as performances in state, national and international events and display of fairness and sportsmanship.

With the change to ratings central at the start of 2017, for 2017 only, consideration will be given to using these ratings commencing a few weeks after the commencement of a season (After Round 6) to enable the ratings to better reflect each player's starting ability.

4. TTACT player rating system

Ratings Central is the player rating system used by Table Tennis ACT. Ratings Central is an online ratings system that provides information on events, matches, results, ratings and rankings. It allows TTACT competition players to find out how they rank within the club, but also within the country (Australia) and internationally. Further information regarding the Ratings Central System can be found at www.ratingscentral.com

All Singles Matches played as part of ACT Pennant Competitions (all divisions), including semi-finals and finals, and all singles matches played as part of ACT Championships, including age events, count towards a player's rating.

A player's rating increases when he wins a match and decreases when he loses a match against another rated player. The amount by which his/her rating changes depends upon the difference in rating between the two players at the start of the match. Ratings are updated weekly, using player ratings that applied at the start of that week.

Based on performance at pre-competition trials, new players are assigned notional ratings before the commencement of a competition.

Best player awards for a Pennant competition are assigned on the basis of percentage wins in that competition (player ratings are not taken into account). However, changes in ratings points over the course of a Pennant season may be used to determine an award for the most improved player across all divisions.

Ratings points are used as the basis for assigning players to divisions in a Pennant competition, and also as the basis for assigning players to teams within a division (with the aim of producing teams that are as even as possible in playing strength).

5. PLAYING REGULATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

5.1 Clothing: The main colour of shirts must not be white other than sleeves and collars, shall be different from that of the colour of the ball in use.

5.2 Match format: All matches for Divisions 1 to 4 inclusive will be the best of 5 advantage games, 11 points. There will be 9 singles and 2 doubles matches per team match. For Division 5 and juniors there will be 4 singles and a doubles match per team match.

5.3 Reserves: Please refer to section 3.3

5.4 Time out: During any individual match (including doubles), a player or a team member may call a 'Time Out' by signalling the umpire (after the end of a point, but before the next point starts). Only one Time Out may be called for a player/team during the match. The time out is to be no longer than one minute, as recorded and determined by the match umpire.

5.5 Coaching during matches: Coaching during matches is only permitted between games and during time out periods. Coaching is not permitted between points in TTACT pennants.

5.6 Towelling down: Play should be continuous except if the umpire deems it necessary such as for removing moisture from the surface of a bat, which may be raised by either player before a point is played. Players are entitled to 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.

5.7 Undue noise: Players must not make undue noise that could interrupt the concentration of players on adjacent tables.

5.8 Competition Ladder: Teams get 3 points for a win, 2 points for a draw, 0 points for a bye, 1 point for a loss, 1 point for a forfeit.

5.9 Finals: The top four teams will meet in semi-finals: (1) v (4), and (2) v (3); and semi-final winners will play the final in each division.

5.10 Membership: Players and reserves must be members of Table Tennis ACT. In Divisions 4 and 5 and the junior pennant, unrated players may be used as reserves provided they take temporary membership to cover the period of play.

5.11 Best player award: To be eligible for the best player award, players must have played at least 70% of possible matches in the round robin stage before finals.

5.12 Forfeited matches: Forfeited matches are taken into account in the team score; but not towards individual percentages or ratings.

5.13 Division Managers: On the night of their competition, Division Managers have the authority of the Board to provide leadership in organising various aspects of the competition and to resolve issues about conduct of play on those nights. They open up the centre at the beginning of the evening and close up (or delegate close up) at the end of the evening's play. The Division Managers act as the referee for their division. (Umpires are the final arbiters of the facts of a disputed point, but the referee may overrule about interpretation of these facts).

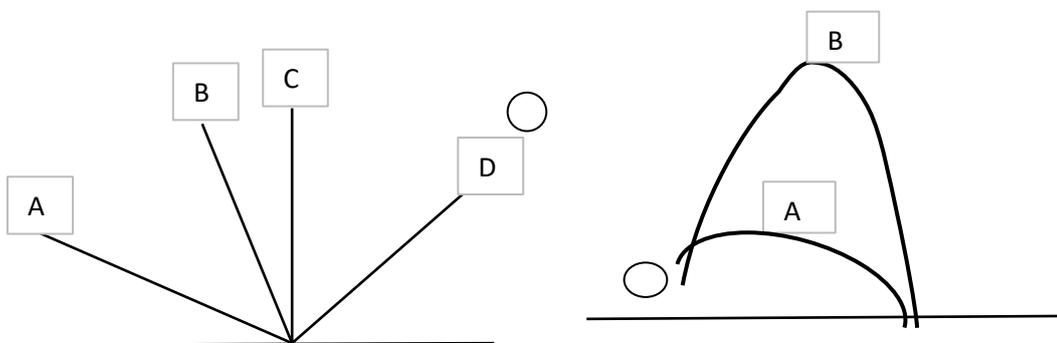
5.14 The serve: To be legal, a serve must commence from behind the base line, and from above the table surface. The ball shall be presented and held still in the palm of the hand (unless it is not possible due to disability) prior to commencement of the serve. The ball shall be tossed vertically at least 16 cm and struck while falling. The ball shall be clearly visible to the opposing player(s) and the umpire.

It is extremely important that umpires watch the service action closely and if players have doubtful or illegal services react as early and clearly as possible for two main reasons:

1. By reacting clearly and consistently the umpire shows the player that they are watching, and most players will then try to modify their service action.
2. If the umpires wait because the service action only is slightly incorrect or maybe doubtful, it is the experience that it will become more and more incorrect during the match. If the umpires then react at 10-10 the player could with some right complain and point out that he/she has been using the same service in the whole match.

There is sometimes a tendency that umpires pay most attention to the aspects that they find easiest to check. To offset this tendency, a short summary will remind the aspects of a good service:

- **Free Hand:** ball is resting freely on its palm
- **Ball:** Above the level of the playing surface and behind the servers end line
- **Throwing the ball:** near vertically upwards, it must rise at least 16cm



In the left Diagram services B and C are acceptable, whilst A and D are not. The height of the toss is also a factor in determining whether the toss is near vertical. In the right Diagram the ball is projected from, and struck at, the same place, but service A is a fault, whilst B is acceptable

Striking the ball: The ball must not be struck until it is falling from the highest point of its trajectory.

Visibility: Ensure that the receiver can see the ball throughout the service; the Umpire or Assistant Umpire shall be satisfied that this is the case. The ball shall not be hidden from the receiver at any stage by any part of the body, or anything the server is wearing or carrying. As soon as the ball has been projected upward, the server shall completely remove his free arm from the space between the ball and the net.

There is no requirement that the receiver has to be able to see the racket throughout service.

Warning: An Umpire or Assistant Umpire, who suspects but is not sure that a player's service action is illegal, may warn the player without awarding a point. Only one warning may be given during a match.

5.15 Misbehaviour (and the role of Division Manager): Incidents of misbehaviour, such as swearing or violent behaviour, should in the first instance be reported to the Division Manager. Serious incidents of misbehaviour will be referred by the Division Manager to the TTACT Board.

6. REGULATIONS FOR TABLE TENNIS ACT PENNANT COMPETITIONS (Based on ITTF International Regulations 2017)

6.1 SCOPE OF REGULATIONS

Applies to all players, and officials involved in the various Table Tennis ACT Pennant Competitions held throughout a calendar year.

6.2 APPROVED EQUIPMENT

The covering material on a side of the blade used for striking the ball shall be of a brand and type currently authorised by the ITTF and shall be attached to the blade so that the brand and the ITTF logo are clearly visible near the edge of the striking surface. Note: Lists of all approved and authorised equipment and materials are maintained by the ITTF Office and details are available on the ITTF web site.

6.3 PLAYER CLOTHING

Playing clothing shall normally consist of a short-sleeved or sleeveless shirt and shorts or skirt or one-part sports outfits, socks and playing shoes.

The main colour of clothing, other than sleeves and collar of a shirt shall be clearly different from that of the ball in use.

Clothing shall not carry designs or lettering which might cause offence or bring the game into disrepute

Any question of the legality or acceptability of playing clothing shall be decided by the referee.

6.4 PLAYING CONDITIONS

No food or drink is to be taken into the playing area at any time, with the exception of water held in non spill-able / non breakable water containers.

Unless specific exemptions have been obtained via the Table Tennis ACT Board, no alcoholic beverages are to be brought into or consumed within the Table Tennis Centre.

6.5 GLUING

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.

Attachment of racket coverings to rackets using water based VOC free glues is permitted in the Table Tennis Centre.

6.6 REFEREE

The appointed Division Manager will serve as the Referee during TTACT Pennant Competitions.

The referee shall be responsible for:

- a. checking the eligibility of reserve players;*
- b. deciding whether play may be suspended in an emergency;*
- c. deciding whether players may leave the playing area during a match;*
- d. deciding whether statutory practice periods may be extended;*
- e. deciding any question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations, including the acceptability of clothing, playing equipment and playing conditions;*
- f. taking disciplinary action for misbehaviour or other breaches of regulations.*

Where, with the agreement of the competition 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.

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

Where the referee is satisfied that it is necessary to do so he may replace a match official with another at any time, but he may not alter a decision already made by the replaced official on a question of fact within his jurisdiction.

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

6.7 UMPIRE

- An umpire shall be appointed by the team captain for each team match.
- The umpire shall sit or stand in line with the net.

The umpire shall be responsible for:

- a. checking the acceptability of equipment and playing conditions and reporting any deficiency to the division manager;
- b. conducting the draw for the choice of serving, receiving and ends;
- c. deciding whether the requirements of the service law may be relaxed for a player with physical disability;
- d. controlling the order of serving, receiving and ends and correcting any errors therein;
- e. deciding each rally as a point or a let [note that players themselves cannot call a let];
- f. calling the score, in accordance with specified procedure;
- h. maintaining the continuity of play;
- i. taking action for breaches of the advice or behaviour regulations;
 - The umpire shall decide whether or not the ball in play touches the edge of the playing surface;
 - The umpire may decide that a player's service action is illegal;
 - The umpire may decide that, in an otherwise correct service, the ball touches the net assembly while passing over or around it;
 - The umpire may decide that a player obstructs the ball
 - The umpire may decide that the conditions of play are disturbed in a way that may affect the outcome of the rally;
 - The umpire will time the duration of the practice period, of play and of intervals.

6.8 APPEALS

- No agreement between players, or between team captains 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 competition committee.
- No appeal may be made to the referee against a decision on a question of fact by the responsible match official or to the competition committee on a question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations by the referee.

- An appeal may be made to the division manager against a decision of a match official on a question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations, and the decision of the division manager shall be final.
- An appeal may be made to the competition committee against a decision of the division manager on a question of tournament or match conduct not covered by the Laws or regulations, and the decision of the competition committee shall be final.
- An appeal may be made only by the captain of a team participating in the match in which the question has arisen.
- A question of interpretation of Laws or Regulations arising from the decision of a division manager, or from the decision of the competition committee, may be submitted by the player or team captain eligible to make an appeal, to the TFACT Board for consideration.

6.9 SCORING

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- At the end of a game the umpire shall name the winning player or pair.
- In addition to calling the score the umpire may use hand signals to indicate his decisions.
- The score shall be called in English or in any other language acceptable to both players or pairs and to the umpire.
- The score shall be displayed on mechanical indicators so that it is clearly visible to the players.

6.10 EQUIPMENT

A racket shall not be replaced during an individual match unless it is accidentally damaged so badly that it cannot be used.

Unless otherwise authorised by the umpire, players shall leave their rackets on the table during intervals.

Players may clean their rackets during designated intervals, provided they do not leave the playing area.

6.11 PRACTISE

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.

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.

6.12 INTERVALS

- Play shall be continuous throughout an individual match except that any player is entitled to
 - a. an interval of up to 1 minute between successive games of an individual match;
 - b. 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.

- A player or pair may claim one time-out period of up to 1 minute during an individual match.
- The request for a time-out may be made by the player or pair or by the team captain.
- If a player or pair or captain disagree whether a time-out is to be taken, the final decision shall be made by the captain.
- 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.
- Play shall be 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 timeouts they shall remain within a reasonable distance of playing area.

6.13 ADVICE

- In a pennant match, players may receive advice from their team members.
- 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 warn him that any further such offence will result in his dismissal from the playing area.
- After a warning has been given, if in the same match anyone again gives advice illegally, the umpire shall send him away from the playing area, whether or not he was the person warned.
- The dismissed adviser shall not be allowed to return, except when required to play, and he shall not be replaced by another adviser until the match has ended.
- 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.
- 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.

6.14 MISBEHAVIOUR

- 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.

- 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, warn the offender that any further offence is liable to incur penalties.
- 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 shall award 2 points.
- The Referee shall have the power to disqualify a player from a match, and may recommend suspension/ not counting of matches to the Competition Director, for seriously unfair or offensive behaviour, whether reported by the umpire or not.
- Cases of very serious misbehaviour shall be reported to the TTACT Board.

6.15 GOOD PRESENTATION

Players, coaches and officials shall uphold the object of good presentation of the sport; in particular players have to do their utmost to win a match and shall not withdraw except for reasons of illness or injury.

THE LAWS OF TABLE TENNIS (CHAPTER 2 FROM ITTF LAWS 2017)

The complete version of the "Laws of Table Tennis" can be downloaded from the [International Table Tennis Federations \(ITTF\) website](#).

NOTE: *In cases of difference in TTACT pennant rules and ITTF laws, TTACT pennant rules take priority, especially in relation to serving. The ITTF laws will apply when there is no equivalent TTACT rule. Players should familiarise themselves with both the TTACT pennant rules and ITTF laws outlined in this guide.*

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.

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.

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. However, no part of a player's wheelchair nor a foot of a standing player of this pair shall protrude beyond the imaginary extension of the centre line of the table. If it does, the umpire shall award the point to the opposing pair.

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;

2.9.1.2 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 twice 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 as provided under the order of play (2.8.3)

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.