

Refereeing Code

Distribution: BFA members

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1. REFEREES

The recruiting, formation and regulation of Referees, also referred to here as Officials, is the responsibility of the ITSF Rules Commission in cooperation with its member Federations. The BFA is permitted to train and certify new ITSF Referees according to the program put forth by the ITSF Rules Commission who has the final authority in determining ranking and eligibility to officiate at ITSF sanctioned events.

1.1. Becoming a Referee

Anyone who wishes to become a certified ITSF Official must be a member of the BFA or other ITSF Federation. The process for becoming a Referee begins with mandatory attendance at an approved Official's Clinic, which is typically held at most major ITSF tournaments and at two UK tournaments each year, followed by passing a written examination and evaluation of ability.

1.1.1. Education

The training of new officials includes the teaching of common rules, identify jarring, resets, and other such infractions as well as the procedures for stopping play to make calls. It is important for referees to be sufficiently knowledgeable of the rules, be able to quickly recognize violations and to be firm and confident when enforcing penalties.

1.1.2. Testing

Upon completion of the education and training segment of the Officials Clinic, a written test will be administered to determine if the candidate has sufficient knowledge of the rules. Candidates who achieve a 75% score or higher on the written examination will be accredited as 'Assistant' level officials.

1.1.3. Evaluation

Once the person passes the written exam, he/she shall be assigned to referee matches together with a Regional rated Official or higher for evaluation and ranking. Newly certified referees will be promoted to the next level by the BFA Referees Commission based on their experience and performance, to include:

Regional – Must referee a minimum of 2 matches to a satisfactory standard

National – Must referee a minimum of 10x matches to a satisfactory standard

2. LEVELS OF OFFICIALS

The Rules Commission of the ITSF has specified the following ranks for Referees:

Assistant Official, Regional Official, National Official

International Official*, International Official**

The BFA Referees Commission is authorized to promote referees up to the level of National Official and may petition the ITSF Rules Commission to request that a higher level be assigned. Candidates for International * status must have experience of refereeing matches outside the UK.

2.1. Assistant Official

Assistant Official's may not officiate matches without a higher ranked referee at the table. Assistants are considered to be in a training period until properly evaluated and promoted to the next level.

2.2. Regional Official

Regional Officials may officiate matches without a higher ranked official present at ITSF Pro Tour events within their local geographical area. A Regional Official may not referee matches in a Masters, International or World Championship Series tournament without a higher ranked official present.

2.3. National Official

National Officials may officiate matches without a higher ranked official present at all ITSF tournaments, within their own country and local geographical region, except as prescribed by the ITSF Referees Code.

2.4. International* and International** Official

The rank of International one star and two stars is decided by the ITSF Rules Commission taking many factors into consideration. These considerations include overall knowledge of the rules, authority at the table,

and respect of the players and other referees. International Officials may referee at any ITSF tournament without restrictions.

3. OFFICIATING MATCHES

It is essential that referees be available to officiate matches at tournaments to help ensure a fair environment for the competitors. Officiating matches is an admirable responsibility which can be both rewarding and fulfilling.

3.1. Availability at Tournaments

When a certified Official registers to play in a tournament he/she will automatically be added to the list of referees available to officiate matches during the competition. If the referee is not registered in any events on a given day then he/she will be considered unavailable unless otherwise indicated.

3.2. Obligation to Officiate

An Official is required to officiate matches when called upon but may be excused in the following circumstances:

- If the Referee has been or is soon to be called up to play a match.
- If the Referee has recently finished a match and wishes to leave the tournament site.
- If there is a close relationship with any member of either team to be officiated.
- Any other reason considered valid by the Tournament Director, or Head Official.

3.2.1. Penalty for Refusing to Officiate

On the first occasion that a Referee refuses to officiate a match without a valid reason he/she will be issued a warning. Upon further refusals the Rules Commission will suspend the official for a period of time and may revoke his/her referee status. The penalty and period of suspension will be determined by the Referees Commission. The referee will be given a reasonable amount of time to file an appeal.

3.3. Referee Code of Conduct

Referees should not engage in arguments with any player or provoke them into aggressive actions. Officials must display exemplary behaviour and respect towards the players, spectators, tournament organizers, the media, and their fellow referees. More specifically, Referees must present themselves in a manner that exhibits a highly professional and respectful image of the sport.

3.4. Behaviour Toward Officials

All Referees have the right to be respected for their position and should not be impeded in any way from exercising their duties and responsibilities at a tournament. Players who improperly challenge an official or behave in a disrespectful way toward an official will be subject to disciplinary action according to the rules of the Disciplinary Commission.

3.5. Impartiality of Officials

All referees must be exceedingly fair and impartial when officiating matches. Any bias or favouritism will not be tolerated and will be treated in the most serious manner.

3.5.1. Reporting a Referee for Bias

A team or player who believes they are the victim of biased actions from an official may file a complaint with the BFA Referees Commission within one month after the date of the incident. The Referees Commission will evaluate the claim and forward it to the Disciplinary Commission if further action is required.

3.5.2. Penalty for Referee Guilty of Bias

Referees who are found guilty of bias after a formal review of reports submitted by the referee, players, and other witnesses will have their Referee status revoked and will not be permitted to officiate matches in a BFA sanctioned tournament indefinitely.

3.6. Review of Officials

The rankings of Officials are valid for the entire tournament year. Rankings can be changed during the course of the season based on the Official's performance plus feedback from players, referees, and tournament directors. The ITSF Rules Commission will also accept recommendations from Member Federation's Head Official or Sport Commission.

3.7. Payment to Referees

The BFA Referees Commission shall set the amounts to be paid to the Referees for the entire tournament year, except where specified by the ITSF Referees Code.

4. OFFICIATING

Referees should exercise their officiating duties in a consistent manner while adhering to the standard procedures specified in this manual and as instructed by the ITSF Rules Commission.

4.1. Official Terms

Jar (Jarring): Slamming a rod into the table during play which jeopardizes the opponent's possession of the ball.

Reset: Bumping a rod into the table which does not affect the opponent's possession but hinders the player's ability to execute a pass or shot.

Distraction: Making noises or movements during play that are deemed to divert the opponent's attention away from the play.

Dead Ball: A ball which has completely stopped moving on the table and is out of reach of all player figures.

Serve: Process of putting the ball into play at the beginning of the game, after a point is scored or as determined by rule. The Serve begins at the middle man of the five man rod.

Ready Protocol: Method for ensuring that the opponent is ready before serving the ball or resuming play. After both teams are deemed ready, the player in possession of the ball must touch two men and wait one second before the ball may be advanced.

Possession: The ball is within reach of a player figure and in control or has been played forward or backwards by striking the ball.

4.2. Officiating Procedures

It is important that Referees speak clearly and decisively when calling infractions and be ready to explain the reason for making a call quickly and accurately without delaying the game.

4.2.1. Position at the Table

The Referee should stand at the left side corner of the table and should remain still during play to avoid distracting the players or obstructing the view of spectators.

4.2.2. Detection of Jarring

The Referee should place a hand on the table to help determine if any jarring occurs. It is advisable to position the hand in a manner that will not be considered distracting to the players.

4.2.3. Stopping Play

When a violation has occurred, the Referee should raise his/her hand above the table and direct the players to hold the ball and stop play.

4.3. Officiating Equipment

Head Officials are required to provide the necessary equipment essential to officiating matches. The equipment and appearance of Referees helps to project an image of authority that gains the respect of the players and helps to assure compliance when a call needs to be made.

4.3.1. The Scorecard

The scoreboard must be completed with the utmost care as it is can be very helpful in keeping track of the games, scores, violations, etc. The Scoreboard is also an official document that needs to be submitted for Referee payment and may also be consulted in case of dispute. The official scoreboard is provided as Annex IV of the ITSF Referee Code.

4.3.2. The Stopwatch

The Stopwatch is required to keep track of time of possession, duration of time outs, and time between games. It is preferable to use stopwatches that do not distract the players by making beeping sounds.

4.3.3. Official Patches and Attire

Referees are encouraged, and during ITSF tournaments are required, to wear an official Referee shirt and ITSF patch indicating the Referees ranking when officiating matches.

5 Head Official

A Head Official must be appointed for all BFA Ranking Tournaments, he or she must be a National or International referee.

5.1 Duties of Head Official (HO)

5.1.1 The HO is the ultimate arbiter of decisions concerning interpretation of rules. He or she may assign this role to a more senior (International * or **) official if one is present.

5.1.2 The HO is responsible for maintaining a list of referees present at the tournament, including any qualified overseas players

5.1.3 The HO should ensure the following are available to referees

Referees Shirt & Patches

Stopwatches

Match scorecards

5.1.4 The HO is responsible for assigning referees to matches

5.1.5 The HO is responsible for collecting scorecards at the end of matches

5.1.6 The HO is responsible for paying referees where applicable