

# Frequently Asked Questions

## - Case Studies

This document presents a lot of questions which have been sent to ITTF URC/discussed during IR conferences and concerns/issues which are not always exactly defined in regulations and directives.

**Therefore, ITTF URC presents recommendations, which will help us to have a common standard in all events. Nevertheless, it is possible that some described procedures have to be adapted to the circumstances at each specific event** and WTT procedures have to be taken into account.

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# 1. Definitions

## 1.1. Match

**Whenever the word “match” is used by itself it means individual match**

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

If something covers a whole team match (e.g. advice, misbehaviour) then the words “team match” are specifically stated, and often the words “individual match” are also used in the same sentence to differentiate.

# 2. Racket Control

## 2.1. Team Event

If both teams deposit their players' rackets at the Call Area for check before the start of the team match, it means that the umpire will have to carry 6 rackets. This will NOT look nice especially for televised matches.

Final stage matches/TV matches:

It is recommended that in staged matches/televised matches volunteers bring the rackets to the table, either all 6 before the start of the first individual match, or 2 rackets at a time before the start of each individual match.

Another alternative for final staged team matches is for a volunteer, sitting outside the box, to give the rackets for each match to the umpire/assistant umpire in the box and take back the rackets used by the players in the previous match. This volunteer should have the list of matches (score sheet) and therefore should know which rackets to give to the umpire.

A third alternative, where there is sufficient time between matches, is for the assistant umpire to place all the rackets under the assistant umpire's table well before the march in procedure begins.

Therefore, the umpires are not marching in with any rackets.

Not final stage matches or TV matches.

The umpire carries the 2 rackets of the first single, and the assistant-umpire the other 4 rackets. If it is a "normal" match rackets can be kept under the assistant umpire's table in envelopes with the names of the players.

## **2.2. Racket testing after the match**

### **2.2.1. Racket has been tested before the match in the Call Area**

The racket of player A has been tested before the match in the Call Area and the umpire brought the racket to the table and handed it over to the player at the table.

Can this racket also be tested after the match if the racket has not been changed?

Answer: We should not test this racket a second time as the player trusts the officials that everything has been controlled before the start of the match as the player presented the racket on time in the Call Area before the match. If the racket is tested again in error the results of the test should be ignored.

### **2.2.2. Racket has not been tested before the match in the Call Area**

After the match Racket Control Centre detects that the extension of the rubber above the blade is more than the tolerance and forwards it to the referee on duty.

Answer: Any other irregularity must be controlled before the match by the umpire (in this case in the field of play) and player trusts the official that everything that is immediately visible without any device has been controlled before the start.

Therefore, no action from the referee – the racket is legal.

### **2.2.3. No official racket control by ITTF but organiser insists on RC / conflict CM**

No official Racket Control by ITTF.

- Organiser insists to work with Racket Control Room.
- After match test.
- Volunteer in Racket Control finds thickness of 4,2 mm.
- Referee measures with magnifying glass 4,2 mm.
  - Declares racket illegal.
  - Competition Manager informs referee that there is no official racket control by ITTF

- Therefore, forfeit is not correct and declares result of match as correct.

Answer:

- Referee's decision that rackets is illegal cannot be changed by CM.
- If there is no official ITTF Racket control foreseen – Organiser must be informed that no Racket control room will be set up.
- But you can organise racket testing in the call area.
- Attention: only use in referee report: "Log" – not "racket control".

#### **2.2.4. Player refuses to give the racket to the umpire for an after-match test**

This will be treated as misbehaviour and will be reported to the referee.

Decision of the referee:

- a. Red card and disqualification for the match/event/tournament.
- b. = racket control failure and
  - a. If official racket control: entered in referee report: file "racket control" and explanation under incident description: "Player refused racket control".
  - b. No official racket control: entered in referee report: file "Log" AND report to association.

### **2.3. Change of racket during practice period.**

A player, who presented the racket before the match in the Call Area, starts to practice at the table with the official inspected racket and asks the umpire whether he/she can change the racket and use another one?

Answer: It is allowed to change the racket during the practice period/before the start of the match (2.4.8) but the player has to accept that the "new racket" will be tested after the match.

### **2.4. Players in doubles changed rackets**

In doubles match AB vs YZ after the first game has ended, AB come back to the table for the second game. A takes B's racket and B takes A's racket. The opponents complain that AB have changed rackets. The umpire calls the referee.

Possible actions:

- 1 Require that players use their own rackets.
- 2 Disqualify the players for changing rackets.
- 3 Allow the players to continue as the rackets were both checked before the match.
- 4 Other actions?

Answer: The referee needs to determine if the exchange was intentional or accidental.

- If it was accidental, the referee will require the players to use their own rackets. Any points that have been scored while the error persisted count as though it had not occurred. If an error is noticed during a rally, the umpire should immediately declare a let, and not wait until the ball is next out of play.

- If it was intentional, the referee will disqualify both players for changing rackets.

(HMO 7.3.3, Handbook 3.4.2.4)

## **2.5. Voluntary racket control**

A player wants to have a voluntary racket test done and asks the umpire in the Call Area to inspect her/his racket. Can a voluntary test be done in the Call Area?

Answer: A voluntary test shall always be done in the Racket Control Centre and NOT in the Call Area. The umpire in the Call Area must send the player to the Racket Control Centre. If there is no Racket Control Centre, the umpires in the Call Area must send the player to the referee on duty and he/she will give an opinion, if there is enough time and space for such a test. (HMO 7.2.6)

## **2.6. Both players fail after-match racket control in last team match**

In a team match played under the New Swaythling Cup system (5 singles), player A won both matches and player B lost both. C defeated Z, but neither of them had presented their rackets for a pre-match racket test and in the after-match test both failed. If both players are deemed to have forfeited the match, result is then 2-2.

Is this the final result?

If so, how do you determine who proceeds to the next round?

If it is a group match then, what match points apply?

Answer: It is important to determine a winner. As there is no specific regulation, following procedure should be followed:

- Calculation of games and afterwards points.
- If it is still not possible the winner shall be decided by lot.

Winner receives 2 points, loser 1 point in the group.

But the final result is 2:2 (important for a possible group calculation at the end). Referee should inform teams during the jury meeting about this procedure.

## 2.7. Use of a different sponge

At the beginning of a match, A protests that X is using a racket with a racket covering (Prasidha 1615 Long) which is different from its original version (the original version is long pimple with no sponge below, but X's racket covering is long pimple with a sponge below). X says that he/she was using this racket for the past three matches, and no one complained. What action should the referee take?

Answer: No action as it is ALLOWED.

Can you change the sponge combined with an authorized racket covering, replacing it with another sponge of different density and/or colour?

Answer: Yes, it is ALLOWED.

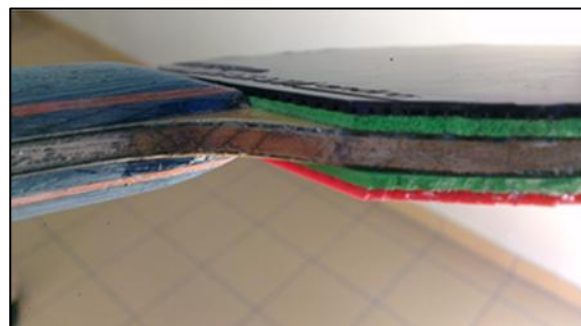
## 2.8. Examples of Rackets

### 2.8.1. Lacquer

Before match control

A player provides a racket.

- Part of wood between the handle and the coverings was covered by lacquer.
- It is impossible to make a precise measurement.





Answer: Other methods must be used for controlling this racket (e.g. magnifying glass).

There is no rule, which forbids using lacquer on this part of the racket.

A racket that fails a thickness test using a loupe magnifier or magnifying glass will not have the result recorded under "racket control" in the referee report but only in the "log" even if there is an RCC. This is in keeping with the decision by ITTF that only ITTF supplied equipment can be documented for the purposes of accumulated failures, and the loupe magnifier or magnifying glass are not supplied by the ITTF.

### 2.8.2. Any size or shape (2.4.1)



ALLOWED (provided that the ITTF logo, the ITTF number (when present), the supplier and brand names are clearly visible near the handle).

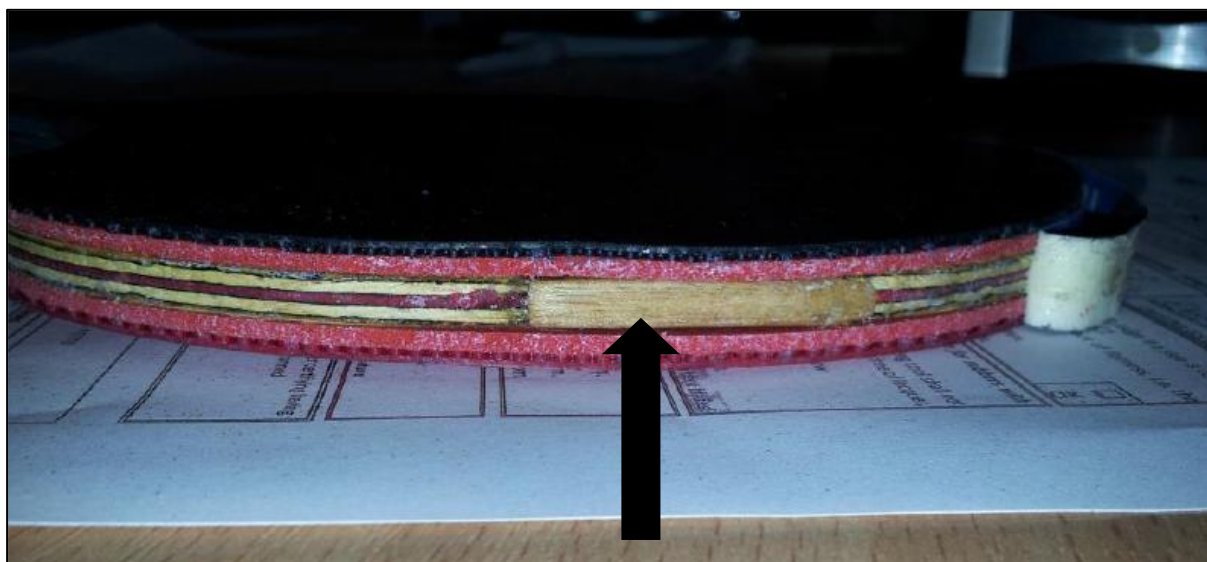


All 3 blades are ALLOWED

### 2.8.3. Blade not continuous (2.4.4)



NOT ALLOWED.



NOT ALLOWED.

#### 2.8.4. Gripped by the fingers (2.4.5)



ALLOWED.



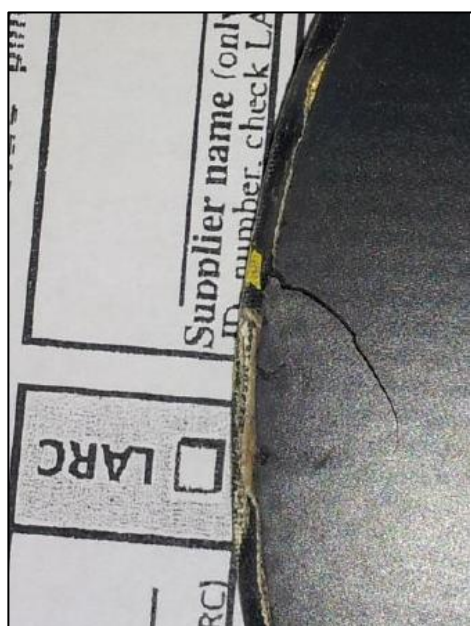
ALLOWED.

### 2.8.5. Matt, bright red (2.4.6)



NOT ALLOWED.

### 2.8.6. Slight deviations (2.4.7.1)



ALLOWED up to 1 cm from the edge.  
NOT ALLOWED in the middle.



NOT ALLOWED (Colour).



### **3. Penalty Point System (PPS), Misbehaviour of players**

#### **3.1. Time wasting**

A player comes late for his/her match and the umpire shows a yellow card for time wasting. The referee is called to the table. What should he/she do?

Answer: Referee instructs the umpire that he cannot issue a yellow card for this offence as the player was not in the playing area and therefore not under the jurisdiction of the umpire. The referee then must decide regarding the degree of lateness and determine if the match goes ahead or if the late player is defaulted.

#### **3.2. Time wasting – doubles pair**

Doubles pair: Both players do not return to the table from the break between the games. Decision yellow card for the pair? Who takes the card to the singles?

Answer: In 3.5.2 (Regulations), HMO 17.2 and 17.3 it is stated that any warning or penalty is awarded to the player, and we also see "player of a doubles pair".

Umpire can either only give it to one of the players (e.g. who might be the later one) or if the umpire is of the opinion that both are delaying it would be yellow and yellow/red = next game of the doubles starts at 0-1 and in the next individual matches both players carry forward a yellow card.

#### **3.3. Misbehaviour of both players of a doubles pair**

Both players of a doubles pair (A and B) have misbehaved immediately following the loss of a game (one player threw the racket, the second one shouted bad words).

Answer: Yellow card to player A and yellow/red to player B. It makes no difference whether it is in the same moment or a little bit later. A warning or penalty incurred by either player of a doubles pair shall apply to the pair (Handbook 3.5.2.6). In the next individual match of this team match each player starts with a yellow card.

### **3.4. Clarification of HMO 17.3.4**

A warning or penalty incurred by either player of a doubles pair shall apply to the pair.

The next game of that doubles match starts at the score of 0-1 or 1-0 in favour of the offender's opponent. In the next individual match of this team match each player starts with a yellow card.

Cards carry forward between individual matches (singles and doubles) but penalty points do not.

### **3.5. Misbehaviour after the end of an individual match in a team event**

Team match Austria (A) vs Germany (X)

A1 plays 1<sup>st</sup> individual match and at the end of the match, the player throws the racket.

Umpire shows yellow/red (1 penalty point)

A2 – individual match: at the end of the match: yellow/red (2 penalty points)

Both players play doubles – how do we start?

Answer: Doubles will start with yellow/red 2 penalty points, but the score is 0:0 as at the start of the 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. (Handbook 3.5.2.6)

### **3.6. Player destroys his/her racket**

A player has damaged one side of his/her racket in a moment of anger and wants to continue to play with this racket.

Answer: Player is not allowed to change the racket but can play with his/her "non-damaged" side of the racket, if for all other requirements the racket still complies with ITTF Handbook rule 2.4. If the racket cannot be used anymore (is not legal), the player forfeits the match. (Handbook 3.5.2.6, HMO 7.3.3)

### **3.7. Player destroys the ball during the match**

A player destroys the ball on purpose after he/she has lost a point.

Answer: Umpire must show a YELLOW card for misbehaviour. (Handbook 3.4.2.1.3, 3.5.2.1)

### **3.8. Lifting the table violently**

In a match the behaviour of a player is very volatile such that at one point the player lifts his/her end of the table and slams it down violently. The spectators are clearly very unhappy with the behaviour. The umpire issues a yellow card.

- a. If the umpire summons you as Referee what should you do?
- b. If the umpire does not call for you but you see the event from your seat. What action should you take?

Answer: The umpire has made her/his decision that it is a yellow card for misbehaviour.

A. On arrival at court, the referee will talk with the umpire alone about case and ask what he/she saw and afterwards should disqualify the player.

B. Referee should intervene and ask the umpire what he/she saw and then disqualify the player.

### **3.9. Celebrations after the match**

After winning the final match of an event a player took off his shirt and celebrates.

Answer: Depending on the region, where the tournament is held, (Arab countries, Asia) the referee will have to judge the response of the spectators, and if necessary, intervene and inform the player to stop this behaviour immediately but it is not counted as misbehaviour.

After winning the match a player jumps on the table

Answer: Depending on the point of time the umpire must react.

If it is the only match being played or was the final match of an event, the behaviour can be accepted as positive emotion and it is not disturbing any other ongoing match.

If it is during a tournament and other matches are still ongoing, this behaviour shall be stopped by the umpire and if necessary, a yellow card for misbehaviour has to be shown.

### **3.10. Very serious misbehaviour after the end of a match**

After losing the match a player insults the umpire or referee, destroys equipment, or seriously misbehaves in any other manner.

Answer: In addition to including the incident in the Referee Report, in cases of serious misbehaviour the referee must:

- a) Disqualification depending on the incident (see [misbehaviour guidelines](#))
- b) Send a report to the offender's Association (3.5.2.12).
- c) Send a report to the ITTF Integrity Unit.
- d) Immediately send a separate report to the ITTF Competition Director/WTT Event Supervisor with a copy to the ITTF URC.

### **3.11. Multiball-system: Player refuses to play with the next ball**

During the first game of a multiball match, the assistant umpire throws a ball to a player, he/she looks kicks the ball away and asks for another ball.

Answer: is not allowed: The first time the umpire provides informal explanation and informal warning and the next time Penalty Point System will be used (Time Wasting)

## **4. Advice**

### **4.1. Use of an interpreter**

An adviser in an individual match takes with him/her an interpreter to talk to player.



Answer: In an individual event a player or pair may only receive advice from one person. It is not allowed to also have an interpreter (Handbook 3.5.1.2). The interpreter may only be used in case of an appeal to communicate with the referee (Handbook 3.5.1.7).

## **4.2. Change of coach during practice period**

Do we allow one coach during the practice period being replaced by another coach before the match starts?

Answer: Yes, a player reserves the right to change the designated advisor or to designate the advisor after entering the field of play but before the start of the match (see doc "Workflow description").

## **4.3. Red card in a team event**

If there are 5 people on the bench and one will get a red card, is it valid for all of them, or just one of them should leave? Which one?

Answer: The first warning (yellow) goes to the whole bench, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> warning (red) goes to the individual coach. This coach must leave the playing area and the others can remain at the bench. (Handbook 3.5.1.4). The leaving coach can not be replaced.

## 4.4. Advice – Scenarios

3.5.1.3 Players may receive advice at any time except during rallies provided that continuity of play is not affected (Handbook 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.

	Scenarios	Legal Advice	Illegal Advice	Misbehavior (Time wasting)
A	Advice during the practice period and between end of practice and start of a match	Is allowed if it does not delay practice and the start of the match. If it delays the start of the match, the umpire must call the players to the table. If they refuse the umpire must call the referee.		
1	Advice during a rally		Coach	
2	Advice during suspension of play and between games	X		
3	Advice between rallies, no interruption of continuity	X		
4	Player obviously makes a detour to go to coach (for advice) when going to pick the ball			Player
5	Player moves very slowly to pick up ball/return to table while coach is giving advice			Player
6	A goes to coach for advice when X retrieving ball and is ready to play when X returns to court	X		
7	A goes to coach for advice when X retrieving ball from outside court and do not return to table immediately when X returns to court			Player

	Scenarios	Legal Advice	Illegal Advice	Misbehavior (Time wasting)
8	After retrieving ball from outside court, player goes to coach for advice instead of going straight to table to start play			Player
9	Advice when player is ready to serve (ball on palm)	X		Coach (if it is obvious that coach wants to disturb opponent)
10	Advice before service (player bouncing ball on table)	X		
11	Advice during toweling	X		
12	Player looks to coach before serving	X		
13	Player moves slightly to coach side for advice between rallies	X		
14	Player goes to coach for advice between rallies			Player

## 5. Match Procedure

### 5.1. Nomination of teams/players

#### 5.1.1. Team not complete

In a team match one of the players is injured before the match and the team captain asks you to allow the team to play with only two players.

Answer: According to the regulations for World, Olympic and Paralympic Title Competitions the referee may allow a team to play with one player absent, where he or she is satisfied that the absence is due to accident, illness, injury, or circumstances outside the control of the player, or the association concerned (Handbook 4.1.10.2). Whilst it is not specified for other events it shall be used in the same way.

#### 5.1.2. Change the nomination for doubles

A team match is being played under the former Corbillon system of 4 singles and a double (A vs X, B vs Y, doubles, A vs Y, B vs X). At the start of the match, the captain of team

A/B/C nominates B/C as the doubles pair. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> singles the captain wishes to change his nomination to A/C.

Answer: It is allowed to change the nomination as the pairs for a doubles match need not to be nominated until the end of the immediately preceding singles match (Handbook 3.7.7.4).

But it is necessary to inform the captain of the opposing team about the fact that Team A/B/C will change their nomination.

## **5.2. Service**

### **5.2.1. Change of server after the end of the practice period**

In doubles, the serving pair told the Umpire that A serves; can they change this decision after the practice period, and B will serve?

Answer: It is recommended not to allow the change as it has an immense impact on the whole procedure. The umpire might have already entered the data in the system (touchpad). Information might have been forwarded to media. A decision made shall not be changed anymore.

Can players of a double tell the umpire that they will only decide after the practice period?

Answer: No.

### **5.2.2. Complaint about service**

Player A serves. Player X makes a correct return, but shouts "Wrong service!" as he/she makes the return. Player A catches the ball and asks the umpire "What? Why is he shouting?" Player X explains to the umpire that A's service was wrong.

Answer: The ball was still in play when A caught it. Following options:

Option 1. (preferred) LET: and give a warning to X for misbehaviour OR

Option 2. Point to X because A didn't make a good return.

### **5.2.3. Service with racket handle**

Player X serves with his racket handle. Is this allowed?

Answer: Yes. A player can strike the ball with any part of the racket held in the hand, or with the playing hand below the wrist (Handbook 2.5.7), except that the player may not strike the ball with a side of the racket blade whose surface does not comply with the requirements of Handbook 2.4.3, 2.4.4 and 2.4.5. (2.10.1.8).

#### **5.2.4. Service: Ball touches first net**

How is it decided if the ball on serve first touches the net, then the server's own half of the playing surface and then the opponent's half of the playing surface?

Answer: Decision: Point to the receiver.

Handbook 2.6.3 service: the ball shall touch first his or her court.

Handbook 2.9.1.1 let is only possible if the service is otherwise correct (= comply with 2.6.3).

#### **5.2.5. Warning after faulting a service**

If the umpire or assistant umpire decides that the service is incorrect, can he/she still have doubts about the legality of any subsequent service by that player or his or her doubles partner and call a warning?

Answer: Yes, a warning is still possible in case of the first doubtful service, no matter if a service has been faulted before.

According to law (Handbook) 2.6.6.1 the server may be warned by the umpire or assistant umpire in case of doubtful legality of a service on the 1<sup>st</sup> occasion in a match – independent from the fact whether a service of this player or pair was considered incorrect earlier in this match or not.

### **5.3. Intervals**

During intervals between games, player X leaves the playing area and wants to sit on the bench. The bench is close to playing area (next to surrounds). Is this allowed?

Answer: Players are allowed to sit down between games so long as they are within 3 metres of the playing area, under the supervision of the umpire (Handbook 3.4.4.7).

## **5.4. Time-out, 2<sup>nd</sup> time-out after the 1<sup>st</sup> one**

A vs X.

A asks for a time-out and returns after 45 seconds.

At this moment X asks for a time-out.

Allowed or not?

Answer: 2<sup>nd</sup> time-out is still between the rallies and allowed (Handbook 3.4.4.2.3, HMO 13.1.1 and 13.1.4).

## **5.5. Request for time-out in a Doubles Match – but one player of the pair does not agree**

During the match, X requests a time-out, but Y disagrees – in this situation, what action should the umpire take? Do both players have to agree on a time-out or can one of the pair request it?

Answer: In doubles (individual event), the pair shall be regarded as one unit (see Handbook 2.9.1.1, 2.9.1.2). This certainly applies throughout 3.4.4.2. Consequently, if a doubles player requests a time-out and the partner does not agree, the time-out shall still be considered called by this pair and the umpire shall suspend play in accordance with 3.4.4.2.4. The umpire must act on the first request he/she gets from the players (doubles pair as a unit).

## **5.6. Around the net**

Player A makes a backspin shot and the ball travels over the net and lands on the opponent's (X) side and then returns over the net. X runs to the side of the table and, while he/she is on A's side of the table, strikes the ball while it is still in the air. The ball hits A's side and A is unable to return the ball. What decision should the umpire make?

Answer: Point to X as he made a good return, which won the point (Handbook 2.7.1).

## 5.7. Ball “breaks during a rally”

After consultation with ITTF Athletes Commission, Rules Committee, ETTU Athletes Commission and coaches during events, following procedures should be followed:

If a player hits the ball (e.g. with the edge) of the racket and the umpire can't see whether the ball is broken (e.g. two halves), he/she has to wait whether the return is good.

If the return is good, but it is obvious that the ball is damaged, the umpire has to call a “LET”.

Otherwise, the umpire has to decide the rally as a point.

**After** the rally a player **cannot** claim that the ball was broken in the previous rally.

## 5.8. Both players want to change the ball during a match

(E.g., after the 3<sup>rd</sup> game)

Answer: Umpire takes a new ball, which has been chosen before the match.

## 5.9. Expedite System

### 5.9.1. Error in counting

Match is played in expedite system.

Stroke counter counts 1,...4, 5, 7.

What can the umpire/referee do:

A. Umpire recognizes the mistake during the rally?

B. Umpire recognizes the mistake after the rally?

Answer:

A. Let.

B. No action as it is a decision of fact by the stroke counter and cannot be changed.  
(HMO 4.5.1)

## 5.10. Suspension of play due to Medical Break

Player A vs Player X.

X is allowed a suspension of play for medical reasons at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> game.

X started the match with a leg bandage and seemed to use the suspension of play to attend to the bandage.

Answer: Not allowed according to Handbook 3.4.4.5 as it is a disability which was present already at the beginning of the match.

BUT using common sense it is allowed in the same way as re-tying the shoelace is not a problem.

### **5.11. Player changing a playing garment during an authorised interval: time exceeds 1 minute**

If a player needs to change a playing garment, he or she may be allowed to leave the playing area to do so during any authorised interval in play, accompanied by an official. The referee may give permission on each occasion or as a general dispensation to umpires before play begins (extract HMO 8.6.1).

In a lot of tournaments, the 1-minute interval will be exceeded (e.g. a long way to the changing room or washroom). It is recommended to prepare a specific place for changing clothes close to the playing area.

### **5.12. Player moving to the other side of the table during the rally**

Assar's stroke results in an edge ball and then Assar moves to the side of Qiu.

What should be the umpire's decision?

Answer: LET.

Which rule can we apply?

Handbook 2.9.1.3 Disturbance outside the control of the player.





### **5.13. Player has troubles with contact lenses and has to change the lenses**

Player has some problems with his contact lenses and needs to change one of his contact lenses.

Answer: A short break is allowed to change the contact lenses

### **5.14. Treatment of bleeding**

What to do if the player does not stop bleeding (especially nose bleeding) in 10 minutes

Answer: There is no time limit for bleeding.

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.

### **5.15. Player's glasses on the playing surface**

During a match, a player A's glasses fall on the playing surface of his court, at the moment his opponent player B returns the ball just hitting right on the glasses

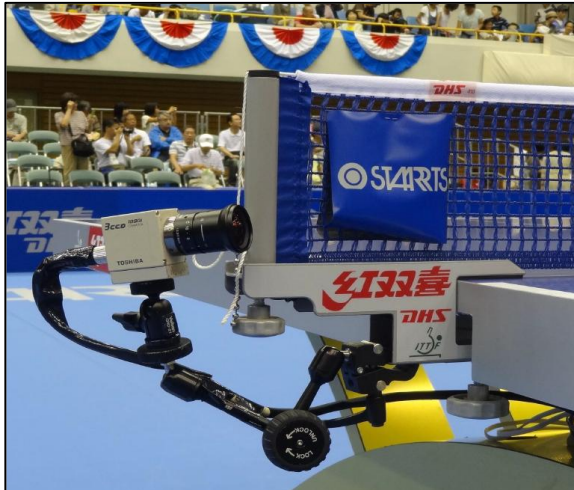
Answer: Point for player B - Obstruction

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.

2.5.13 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.

## 6. Equipment in the field of play

### 6.1. Camera on the net



Referee must inform players and coaches during the jury meeting whether it is part of the net or not. If it is small technical equipment, it must be considered as part of the net (Handbook 3.2.3.9)

In the example to the left, the camera is not part of the net.

### 6.2. Undercarriage of the table

In the example below is not part of the net assembly but undercarriage of the table.



### 6.3. Wheelchair – PARA: tyre of wheel chair is broken

The tyre of the player's wheel was destroyed during the 2nd game.

Has the player the right to ask for a timeout to repair his wheel during a match?

Answer: HMO/Appendix F:

If a wheel becomes dislodged during play, the referee may allow a short time before the next rally to reattach the wheel.

- A short break is possible to repair the wheel or change the wheelchair
- Referee has to ensure that the break is the shortest possible
- No Time Out necessary

## **7. Playing clothing**

### **7.1. Clothing of doubles pair – short/skirt**

Women's doubles pair: one player is wearing shorts and the other one a skirt. Apart from that colour and design are identical.

Answer: Players are dressed uniformly (Handbook 3.2.2.7) – players can choose whether they play short or skirt (see also mixed doubles).

### **7.1. Clothing of doubles pair – colour of shirts**

Player A wears yellow, and B wears blue. Player X and Y wear both blue shirts.

Do we need to toss and ask one pair to change?

Answer: No problem. Is allowed as you can distinguish both pairs easily and this is also the intention of the rule (Handbook 3.2.2.8).

Player A wears yellow, and B wears blue, and X wears yellow and Y wears blue.

Answer: Not allowed: Toss and one of the players of the "losing" team must change (Handbook 3.2.2.9) (allowed in WTT events).

### **7.2. Name on the shirt and 3 letter association**

T-shirts having the association code on the top and the name underneath are allowed.

(Handbook 3.2.2.3)

### 7.3. Playing without shoes

A player wants to play without shoes, because during the day his legs swell and it's very painful and impossible for him to use shoes.

Answer: The referee has the power to allow the player to play without shoes. (Handbook 3.3.1.2.10)

### 7.4. Examples:

Headscarf:  
ALLOWED.

(Handbook  
3.3.1.2.10)



Tights:  
ALLOWED.

(Handbook  
3.3.1.2.10)



## 8. Misbehaviour from the point of view of Umpires, Referees and Players

Questions from webinar 03.06.2020

1. What would the referee do if the umpire gives a red card to a player/pair for the first act of misbehaviour?

Answer: An umpire has no power to show a red card to a player/pair. In this case the referee must step in, analyze the situation, and correct the decision. For example, if the situation is serious, it could warrant a possible disqualification. If the misbehaviour was not serious, the referee could direct the umpire to show the player a yellow card.

2. How can you distinguish between bad behaviour and emotions?

Answer: Positive emotions are an important part of the sport and shall not be avoided. However, behaviour, which unfairly affects an opponent, offends spectators, or brings the sport into disrepute is not allowed. (3.5.2.1)

3. When is the correct time for showing up as a referee if the umpire on duty cannot control the match?

Answer: As soon as the referee realises that there might be problems with a match (behaviour of players, discussions...), he/she should approach the field of play - not immediately step in but stay close to the court (show presence). If he/she has the feeling that the umpire cannot control the match anymore, he/she must intervene.

4. While misbehaviour can be difficult to define, do we (or should we) treat such behaviour differently after a player wins a match or loses a match?

For example, if a player throws his or her racket at the surround after winning or losing a match with or without damaging the surround.

Answer: Positive emotions are an important part of the sport and shall not be avoided. However, behavior, which unfairly affects an opponent, offends spectators, or brings the sport into disrepute is not allowed. (3.5.2.1)

Throwing racket: decision depends on the specific situation.

Throwing into the surroundings is not acceptable and is treated as misbehavior.

5. What is the rule regarding shouting?

Answer: Shouting is not specifically mentioned but 3.5.2.1 is valid:

Behavior, which unfairly affects an opponent, offends spectators, or brings the sport into disrepute are not allowed (3.5.2.1).

6. If a player, in a team match, receives a red card in the first match what score should be shown on the scoresheet in the player's second match?

Answer: Depending on the severity of the misbehaviour, the referee may decide to disqualify the player for the whole team match. In that case the player's second match would be recorded as a walkover to the opponent

7. How should the referee handle misbehaviour by a player arising from wrong decisions by the umpire?

Answer: The referee must analyse the scenario and it is important to calm down the situation, considering this specific situation. Nevertheless, a wrong decision does not justify misbehaviour and necessary measures might be necessary (3.5.2.1) but also a further observation of this match is necessary.

8. Can the Referee disqualify a player who has received several yellow cards during a tournament in different matches? Can the referee only warn him/her? If so, how does the referee do it? In a formal or informal way? What happens if the player receives another YC after that warning?

Answer: A player, who receives several yellow cards during a tournament should be informed by the referee that continuous misbehaviour might lead to a disqualification. It is important to record all yellow cards in the referee log.

9. A player asked for time-out, but after the time-out was over the player did not come back. The AU loudly announced "time", the umpire 3 times called player's country and name, because the coach was talking to the player. When the player is back at the table, should the yellow card be shown to player or coach?

Answer: Depending on the situation the yellow card should be given either to the player or coach. If the coach does not stop talking to the player, the yellow card might be given to coach (3.5.2.1 unfairly affects opponent, who is ready). Otherwise, the yellow card must be given to the player.

10. According to 17.1.7 of HMO, the assistant umpire can interrupt play, because of misbehaviour. Can the umpire take no action?

Answer: The umpire has the final decision (3.3.2.3.10).

11. What action should an umpire take when he is pushed off his chair and fell onto the floor by the losing player after a match had ended?

Answer: The umpire must call the referee.

12. How do you deal with rowdy elements in the spectator stands?

Answer: The referee must contact the organiser. It is the responsibility of the organiser to ensure a fair and correct tournament. Spectators, disturbing the event, should be removed from the venue. If a fair event cannot be ensured the tournament cannot continue.

13. If someone is coaching a player from the tribune, can I as the umpire show them a red card and send them away or must I send for the referee?

Answer: The umpire must inform the referee, who will contact the organiser (see question above).

14. If a player is sweating heavily during the match and umpires can obviously see the sweat droplets on the floor. The player request to have towelling when it is not the allowed period, which is every 6 points. Can the umpire allow the player to do so?

Answer: It is the task of the umpire to ensure fair conditions and in case of sweat it can be necessary to relax the 6-points regulation.

HMO 13.3.2 refers to players wearing spectacles.

HMO 13.3.3 The purpose of the restriction on towelling is to prevent it being used as a delaying tactic, either to gain extra rest time or to disturb the rhythm of an opponent's game. There is no reason why players may not towel at times which do not further interrupt the continuity of play, such as when the ball is being retrieved from outside the playing area, but care must be taken that players do not deliberately cause such breaks.

15. How do you deal with misbehaviour during the match and during the tournament when a player is not playing? Also, misbehaviour by non-players during the tournament?

Answer:

Players:

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. The referee must act according to 3.5.2.8.

Non-Players:

The referee must contact the organiser. It is the responsibility of the organiser to ensure a fair and correct tournament. Spectators, disturbing the event, should be removed from the venue. If a fair event cannot be ensured the tournament cannot be continued.

16. Dealing with players shouting out in a language you or your assistant umpire do not understand. Would this be different if you or your assistant understands the language? If so, is this fair on players who speak a common language like English, French, German or Spanish?

Answer: The umpire must act as soon as abusive language is used. If the language used is not known to the umpire, the umpire can only act taking into account the body language/emotions and if he/she is sure that the behaviour is not acceptable, the player must be warned.

17. What is the guidance about a player throwing a racket on the table at the end of a game?

Answer: The umpire must analyse whether the racket has been thrown from far away and hit the table in a loud way, which may destroy the table or bring the sport into disrepute (3.5.2 misbehaviour). Otherwise, it is not treated as misbehaviour.

18. What is classed as a serious offence (3.5.2.2 ITTF Handbook)?

Answer: Serious offences are offences, which are more serious than under 3.5.2.1. There is no exhaustive list, but examples might be: threatening the opponent, officials, destroying the equipment, which will not allow to continue the match (e.g. destroying the table).

19. If a player accidentally moves the playing surface, then according to HMO 12.1.2 the player will not be penalised. Does "shaking" and "moving" have the same meaning here?

Answer: Only lifting, permanent shifting or displacement, or intentional shaking the tabletop should result in the awarding of a point (Handbook 2.10.1.9).

20. What happens if a player, due to some inconvenience during the game due to not agree with an umpire's decision, does not want to continue to play? After talking with the referee, he decides to continue, but he makes a bad show.

Answer: The player brings the sport into disrepute (3.5.2.1), which is treated as misbehaviour. The umpire must warn the player (Penalty Point System) and, if necessary,



the referee must act accordingly (disqualification). Additionally, 3.5.3 "Good presentation" will lead to a report to the ITTF Integrity Unit.

21. Can referees show a yellow card to a player if happens something outside the playing area?

Answer: A referee cannot show a yellow card, but will warn the player, without showing a yellow card and if the player continues to misbehave, he/she might be disqualified.

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.

22. What is the correct procedure of a referee if it is reported by the umpire that the player who lost at the end of the match threw the racket against the surrounds or refuses to greet the team of umpires and leaves the field of play.

Answer: The referee, and also the umpires, should acknowledge that a player, who lost a match may be disappointed and frustrated and sometimes refuses to shake hands with the umpires. This behaviour should not be recorded as misbehaviour.

BUT throwing the racket against the surroundings is regarded as misbehaviour.

23. In a round robin group of 4, there is an altercation between player A and B, resulting in a physical fight. As a referee do you disqualify both and only have one group match or do you punish the first offender?

Answer: The referee must analyse the whole situation. A close cooperation with the Competition Manager/Event Supervisor and the organiser is necessary. Depending on the result of the analysis the referee might disqualify one or both players.

24. How should the excess of screams be sanctioned, and when is it recommended?

Answer: Screaming should not unfairly affect the opponent or any other players in the venue. The decision whether it must be sanctioned depends on the circumstances (loudness level in the venue, spectators, etc.).

25. During the interval between games, a player was talking somewhat loudly with his friend, a spectator in the stand, about the opponent, the previous game and his (the player) mistakes. There was no adviser and the spectator's stand was very near.

Answer: It is not forbidden to talk with spectators but if it unfairly affects the opponent or any other player, the umpire must inform the player that this behaviour is not acceptable.

26. Can the assistant umpire give a warning concerning misbehaviour?

Answer: No. HMO 17.1.7: The assistant umpire may often be in a better position than the umpire to see misbehaviour. If this occurs, the assistant umpire should immediately draw this to the umpire's attention, interrupting play, if necessary, by calling "stop" and raising his or her hand. The umpire should then take any appropriate action.

27. An umpire shows a red card to a coach to leave the bench. The coach goes to the stands and his player begins to insult the coach for misbehaving towards the umpire. The player's voice was so loud that the umpire and other spectators heard. Because the player was on the side of the umpire, is it appropriate for the umpire to penalise the player for misbehaving towards his coach?

Answer: The umpire still must inform the player that this behaviour brings the sport into disrepute and must be stopped and is considered as misbehaviour.

28. Player kicks a ball to ball person when multiball system was in use. Me as the umpire, did not use a card to the player, while feeling strange. What do you think of this action?

Answer: No action by the umpire. This is action might even be necessary to allow the player to continue the match.

29. What is the difference in misbehaviour between deliberately damaging racket to change it, and damaging it "only" because of nerves?

Answer: See also FAQ 3.6: A player has damaged one side of his racket in a moment of anger and wants to continue to play with this racket.

Player is not allowed to change the racket, but he can play with his "non - damaged" side of the racket, if for all other requirements the racket still complies with ITTF Handbook rule 2.4. If the racket cannot be used anymore (is not legal), the player forfeits the match.

If the racket has been damaged unintentionally, the player is allowed to change the racket.

30. One player makes an obscene movement intended to opponent's coach, but the umpire does not see it. The offended coach asks the umpire to penalize the player for bad behaviour. What action should the umpire take?

Answer: The umpire can only judge the situation, which he/she could see and of course will also ask his assistant umpire. The coach still has the possibility to make an appeal to the referee, who will analyse the situation.

31. When should the referee be called to a match where there is a dispute?

Answer: Either one of the coaches might call the referee if he/she does not agree with the decision of the umpire. But also, the umpire can call the referee, if it is obvious that the players are not accepting his/her decision and are not continuing to play.

32. If during the time-out the coach hit the player, scolding him about the game, should the umpire intervene in this situation?

Answer: The umpire should immediately inform the referee.