



TOURNAMENTS RULES

(VALID FROM OCTOBER 5, 2020)



Approved by the ITHF
Executive Committee

This is the official document for all International Table Hockey Federation (ITHF) sanctioned tournaments. If a tournament differs in any way from these written guidelines, tournament organizers are responsible for notifying the ITHF and all the tournament participants. If notification is not made, all ITHF competition guidelines must be met or the ITHF reserves the right to disqualify the tournament from the list of sanctioned tournaments.

The definitive language for these rules is English. In the event of any differences in meaning between a translated version and the English version, the English version has priority.

All rules that apply only to team competitions are highlighted in green.

All changes made by the October 2020 vote of ITHF delegates are highlighted in red.

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1. ITHF Tournaments

One of the basic tasks of the ITHF is to increase its player base and international awareness of the sport of table hockey. Therefore, the ITHF is the governing body for the largest Stiga tournaments in the world.

The official table hockey game rules must be observed during all tournaments sanctioned by the ITHF.

1.1 Requests for tournaments

i) Organizers (national associations, clubs or individuals) can ask the Executive Committee of the ITHF (EC) to sanction their tournament. It must be done in advance of request deadlines announced by the EC (typically in March). Requests must be sent by email (or by mail) to the EC (or to the headquarters of the ITHF). Organizers requesting tournament dates must submit a written request indicating the requested dates, location of the tournament and the names of the tournament organizers. In addition, requests must also indicate any planned deviations from these tournament rules, or from the game rules.

ii) If a tournament in any country is not organized by its national association, then the request sent to the ITHF must first be reviewed and approved by the national association, thus guaranteeing that the tournament will follow all ITHF guidelines and rules.

iii) Organizers of international championships such as the European Championships and World Championships are recommended to the EC by vote of the Delegates Conference. Organizers of the following year's championship should be selected during the present year's championship. Requests for organizing any international championship must be sent to the EC at least one month before the voting Delegates Conference.

1.2 Season schedule

i) Scheduling of each season's tournaments is done by the EC before the start of each season (usually before the end of previous season). If there is any international championship during the season, then it must be scheduled as the final ITHF tournament of the season.

ii) If a national federation wants to schedule a national ranking tournament the same day as a WTHT Super Series, they are asked to send an application to ITHF with an explanation for this wish at least 60 days before the tournament. The ITHF will typically accept the request if the WTHT Super Series is organized more than 500 kilometers away.* The ITHF reserves the right to downgrade a tournament (to level 6) if the tournament is organized without asking ITHF for permission to schedule it the same day.

* This tool can be used to see what is within 500 km of any venue:

<https://www.freemaptools.com/radius-around-point.htm> (enter "500" in "Radius Distance", add the city's name in "Place radius by location name" and click "Draw Radius").

2. Rules for tournaments

Tournament rules and guidelines can be proposed by the organizers. However, all proposed deviations from these tournament rules must be announced to the ITHF when requests for tournaments are submitted. Any additional change required by the organizers must be approved in writing by the ITHF before the tournament. Organizers must ensure that all tournament participants know the entire tournament rules before they register for the tournament.

2.1 General rules

All official ITHF table hockey rules and regulations must be applied at the tournament.

2.1.1 Playing classes

- i) Each tournament may hold several different competitions for the following classes:
- **Open** - players of any age, gender or nationality,
 - **Women** – female players of any age or nationality,
 - **Junior** – players aged 18 years or younger all throughout the year when the tournament is held,
 - **Veteran** – players who reach the age of 40 years on or before the year when the tournament is held,
 - **Superveteran** – players who reach the age of 55 years on or before the year when the tournament is held,
 - **Kid** – players aged 13 years or younger all throughout the year when the tournament is held,
 - **Team** – groups of players who fulfill all conditions for the respective category (the same nationality, the same club, only women etc.).

ii) Organizers can arrange any other classes of players and announce the rules for such classes before the tournament registration period.

iii) Organizers can decide that all classes except the open class will be open to domestic players only. The open class cannot be restricted by any condition.

2.1.2 Seeding

i) Participants in the individual tournament have to be seeded by world ranking in the open category, which can be found at the web page www.ithf.info/ranking. Organizers must use current world rankings (updated no more than seven days before the day of the tournament) for seeding of all players. In special cases, when a player is expected to be much better than his/her ranking shows, the organizers can estimate his/her seeding without respect to the player's real ranking.

ii) If only a few foreign (less than 10) players come to the tournament, then national rankings can be used for seeding players. Foreign players will be seeded in accordance with their world ranking and their national ranking.

iii) Seeding of teams in team competitions should be done by using the world ranking of the three best members of each team.

2.1.3 Grouping

i) All participants in tournaments must be distributed to the basic groups with respect to their seeding. Each group should be of the same quality with respect to the seeding of the players, thus insuring that each group is equal in competitive strength to all other groups.

ii) Organizers can select the way participants will be distributed to the basic groups. It can be done randomly by drawing lots, or by using a seeding system (e.g. if there are four basic groups then players seeded as numbers 1, 8 and 9 will play in basic group A etc.). Non-seeded players should be distributed to the groups randomly.

iii) Each basic group should have the same number of participants, if possible.

iv) Players from the same country should be seeded in equal amount in all groups, if possible.

v) The organizers have to prepare a schedule for the group stages of all competition classes such that players from the same nation meet during the first rounds of the group. This rule must be observed as much as possible.

vi) If there is more than one group stage, then distribution to groups at these stages will be in accordance with the playing system of the tournament and the results from the previous stage of the competition. Mutual matches of players promoted to the next group stage from the same basic group can be counted in the next group stage if this was written in the description of the tournament's playing system.

2.1.4 Points System

i) Individual competition

a) For determining final standings for each round, 2 (two) points will be given for wins and 1 (one) point for draws.

b) The organizers can decide to give 3 (three) points for wins, but must announce this to all participants (and to the ITHF) in advance when opening registration for the tournament.

ii) Team competition

a) In each individual match between two players in team competitions, a win is counted as a “goal for”, and a loss as a “goal against”.

b) After all matches are played in the mutual round, the winning team is awarded 2 (two) points. In the event of a draw, each team gets 1 (one) point.

2.1.5 Placement and Tie-breaking System

i) Individual competition

a) Players' group placings will be decided by using the following criteria (in the order written, without returning to any previous criteria):

- 1) overall number of points,
- 2) number of points from mutual matches between players with the same number of points,
- 3) goal difference (number of goals for minus number of goals against) from mutual matches,
- 4) number of goals for from mutual matches,
- 5) number of wins from mutual matches,
- 6) overall goal difference (number of goals for minus number of goals against),
- 7) overall number of goals for,
- 8) overall number of wins,
- 9) an extra overtime match finishing with the 1st goal.

b) If a player has lost by default to one of the members of a group of players who have the same number of points, then to decide the placings in this group, this player's default result is not counted, and neither are his/her results against any other members of this group.

ii) Team competition

Teams' group placings will be decided by using the same criteria as in individual competitions, but with the following differences:

- 1) In each individual match between two players, a win is counted as a “goal for”;
- 2) In each individual match between two players, a loss is counted as a “goal against”;
- 3) A win in a mutual round (total result of all mutual matches between both teams) is counted as one “win”;
- 4) Instead of extra overtime, a “captains' match” is held.

2.1.6 Time schedule of the tournament

The tournament cannot start earlier than 8:00 and must end before 22:30. There should be a lunch break for all participants of at least one hour in duration.

2.2 Committee of referees

i) The organizers of each tournament must form a committee of referees. The head referee shall be one of the organizers who can answer all questions about the tournament and clarify and enforce all ITHF rules and guidelines. The committee of referees is responsible for running a successful and enjoyable tournament.

ii) At least one member of the committee of referees must be fluent in the English language, but each member should be able to understand English.

iii) It is recommended that each member of the committee of referees has a different nationality.

iv) All members of the committee of referees are selected by the organizers of the tournament at least 1 week before the tournament. The members of the committee of referees must be confirmed by the ITHF Executive Committee. The Executive Committee can make changes to the committee of referees before the tournament.

v) The committee of referees must always have three (3) members and two (2) substitutes. As many ITHF Executive Committee (EC) members as possible must be selected as members of the committee of referees.

vi) If there is no member of the EC at the tournament, then his/her position in the committee of referees can be taken by any representative of the ITHF. If there is no representative of the ITHF present at the tournament, then any foreign player selected by the organizers can take a position in the committee of referees. If there are no foreign players at the tournament, then the board of the local association has to select members of the committee of referees.

vii) If any member of the committee of referees or any member of the EC present at the tournament finds any conflict with the ITHF rules, they must report it to the tournament organizers immediately. Organizers must correct it as soon as possible and ensure that there are not any critical delays during the tournament.

viii) The committee of referees must resolve any disputes as soon as possible, and can ask the organizers to delay the tournament if any disputed results can potentially affect the tournament results.

ix) When solving any dispute, the whole committee of referees must hear each player involved in the dispute.

- x)** Each member of the committee of referees has one vote. Each dispute must be resolved in consultation with the entire committee of referees.
- xi)** If any member of the committee of referees is involved in the dispute, then he/she must be replaced by a substitute when the committee of referees is resolving this dispute.
- xii)** The committee of referees must announce the final decision to both sides of the dispute.
- xiii)** The committee of referees must select a referee if a player or both opponents ask for a referee to watch their matches. It must be ensured that both opponents will understand the referee. An interpreter may be used. The referee does not need to be a member of the tournament's committee of referees. A match referee is mandatory for semi-finals and finals at Majors, Super Series, world championship and continental championship tournaments.
- xiv)** The committee of referees can warn and disqualify players. Warnings can be visualized by using a yellow card. Disqualifications can be visualized by using a red card.

2.3 Playing system

- i)** The playing system used at a tournament must be announced before the end of the registration period. The playing system used at ITHF tournaments may vary, but the following guidelines are mandatory for every tournament:
- Each participant must have an equal chance to win the tournament.
 - The playing schedule must be designed such that matches are scheduled randomly, thus ensuring that no single player shall play against the top seeded players in their basic group in succession.
 - The top 16 players must compete in best-of-7 (seven) matches during the final play-offs. All other play-offs may be best-of-5 (five) or best-of-3 (three) at the tournament organizers' discretion. If a tournament is late, organizers have the option of making first-round play-off matches best-of-5 (five).
 - Re-seeding during play-offs is not allowed. Play-off brackets must be defined prior to the start of all play-offs and maintained throughout.
- ii)** Bronze medal matches do not have to be held and the bronze medal can be either shared or decided with respect to the standings in the final group. However, the bronze medal / third place cannot be shared in World Tour tournaments.
- iii)** If any team match ends with a draw during a play-off, then no overtimes take place, but a “captains' match” will be held instead. If the captains' match ends in a draw, overtime will be played until a goal is scored. The team that is represented by the captain who wins the captains' match wins the whole team match.
- iv)** All knock-out matches (e.g. play-offs) in team competitions end automatically as soon as the winning team is known. The final score remains as it is when play stops.

2.3.1 *Playing system in international championships*

(World Championships in uneven years and European Championships in even years)

i) In the open competition of World Championships and European Championships, 64 players are promoted to the final divisions, which are played as two final divisions with 32 players in each of these divisions.

Players promoted to a final division from the same basic group do not have to play against each other again. Mutual matches in this case will be counted.

ii) From each final division with 32 players, the 12 best players are promoted to the play-offs (best-of-7).

iii) Play-offs will be played as follows:
(A and B refer to the two different final divisions)

The first play-off round is shown in brackets.

Numbers 1 to 4 from each final division will enter the play-off in the 2nd round.

1A - (8B - 9A)

4B - (5A - 12B)

3A - (6B - 11A)

2B - (7A - 10B)

2A - (7B - 10A)

3B - (6A - 11B)

4A - (5B - 12A)

1B - (8A - 9B)

2.4 *World Table Hockey Tour*

i) The ITHF World Table Hockey Tour (ITHF WTHT) is an individual open series of tournaments that runs throughout one season. Tournaments belonging to the ITHF WTHT are divided into two classes: the biggest and most prestigious are included in the ITHF WTHT Super Series, the others are included in the ITHF WTHT.

ii) Selection of tournaments belonging to ITHF WTHT Super Series is done by the Executive Committee of ITHF. No country shall host more than a combined total of two tournaments in the ITHF WTHT Super Series in one season, with the following exception: The host of the World Club Championships (which is to be held at most once every two years) shall always be allowed to host a Super Series tournament on the same weekend as the World Club Championships, even if this means their country hosts more than a combined total of two tournaments in the ITHF WTHT Super Series in that season.

iii) Participants in each ITHF WTHT tournament get WTHT points according to their final placings.

The best five results for each player from all ITHF WTHT tournaments are counted (in the 2020/2021 season – the best four results from all ITHF WTHT tournaments).

iv) When multiple players have the same number of WTHT points, the following tiebreakers are used:

1. comparing the players' highest points,
2. comparing the players' points in tournaments that they all have attended,
3. comparing the numbers of participants in tournaments where the players obtained their highest points,
4. comparing the results of all matches between the players during the whole season,
5. comparing the score from all WTHT tournaments,
6. ITHF world ranking – version valid after the last WTHT tournament of the season.

v) WTHT point system

The table below defines how many WTHT points are obtained for each placing:

| Place | Super | WTHT |
|-------|-------|------|
| 1 | 200 | 160 |
| 2 | 190 | 150 |
| 3 | 185 | 145 |
| 4 | 180 | 140 |
| 5 | 178 | 138 |
| 6 | 176 | 136 |
| 7 | 174 | 134 |
| 8 | 172 | 132 |
| 9 | 170 | 130 |
| 10 | 169 | 129 |
| 11 | 168 | 128 |
| 12 | 167 | 127 |

From 9th place downward, tournaments' points will descend by one point per placing in all three systems.

In the ITHF WTHT Super Series, there will be points for the first 178 players in the final standings.

In the ITHF WTHT, there will be points for the first 138 players in the final standings.

vi) If at the end of a season the World Championship or the European Championship is not held, then ITHF holds ITHF Masters in which 50 best players following the results of the ITHF WTHT of this season can take part. This tournament receives the second level in the World Ranking ITHF.

2.5 *International championships*

i) Each international championship shall be held at most every two years. The organizers of the World and European Championships are the host country and the ITHF. Only national federations can register players for these tournaments.

All other players, who do not have their own national federation, must be approved for participation by the Executive Committee of the ITHF.

Players may only represent countries for which they possess a valid travel (international) passport.

If a player changes his country of residence, he can only represent a new country at the World Championships and the European Championships if he changed the country on or before December 31 of the previous year.

ii) The World Championship is open for representatives of each country. Maximum numbers of representatives from each country are shown in the following table. Numbers of participants from organizing countries are stated in the brackets.

| | |
|------------------------|--------|
| Open category | 8 (12) |
| Woman's category | 5 (5) |
| Juniors category | 5 (5) |
| Veteran category | 5 (5) |
| Kids category | 5 (5) |
| Superveterans category | 5 (5) |

iii) At the European Championship, only European citizens (i.e. holders of passports from Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, the Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine or the United Kingdom) can participate. Maximum numbers of participants from each country are stated in the following table. Maximum numbers of participants from the organizing country are stated in the brackets.

| | |
|------------------------|---------|
| Open category | 10 (14) |
| Woman's category | 5 (5) |
| Juniors category | 5 (5) |
| Veteran category | 5 (5) |
| Kids category | 5 (5) |
| Superveterans category | 5 (5) |

iv) The top 20 players in the season's overall World Table Hockey Tour ranking directly qualify for the open category of the international championship held in the same season. Up to 3 players from each nation can directly qualify in this way. Also, the top 3 veterans, the top 3 superveterans, the top 3 juniors, the top 3 kids and the top 3 women in the season's overall WTHT ranking directly qualify for the veterans/superveterans/juniors/kids/women categories respectively. Up to 1 player from

each nation can directly qualify in this way in each of these 3 categories. Direct qualification is not transferable to any player in a lower position in the WTHT ranking.

v) Defending champions in each category can participate (the only exception is the juniors category, where the defending champion can participate only if he/she fulfils the age requirement). Defending champions are excluded from the rule describing the maximum number of players from each nation who can directly qualify through the WTHT.

vi) If a player wants a wild card, he/she should apply at his national federation, which could decide to give a place from its national quota to this player.

vii) Only one national team can represent each country in each team competition. The EC of the ITHF can allow an international team to participate in the team competition, but none of its members can be representatives of a country that is participating in the team competition.

viii) Each team in the open class consists of five players.
The minimum number of team members is four and the maximum is ten.

Each women's team consists of three players.
The minimum number of women's team members is three and the maximum is five.

Each veterans team consists of three players.
The minimum number of veteran team members is three and the maximum is five.

Each juniors team consists of three players.
The minimum number of junior team members is three and the maximum is five.

ix) The captain of each team must be announced to the organizers no later than the start of the play-off or placement matches.

x) Substitution of players during team matches is allowed between each 5-minute round. Once a player has been substituted, that player cannot play again in that team match.

xi) At World Championships and European Championships, it must be clear which nation a player represents. All players shall play in their national team shirt. This could be a simple T-shirt with a symbol, flag or colors representing the nation.

xii) Rules for other international championships will be set by the Executive Committee of the ITHF when necessary.

2.6 Other tournaments

The ITHF can decide to organize any other tournament. The exact date, rules and conditions must be announced at least two months before the tournament to enable all interested persons to participate.

ITHF can decide to organize the World Club Championship (WCC).

- i) Players can only change clubs in two transfer windows, which is from 15th of December to 31st of January and from the Monday after the annual international championship in June (European or World Championships) to the 31st of August.
- ii) Players can only change club once every year.

iii) When establishing a completely new club, only players from two clubs can change to this club in the same transfer window.

iv) Players from a maximum of one club can change to the same club in the same transfer window.

3. Rules for organizers

3.1 Introduction

i) Notification must be sent to the ITHF at least one month before the tournament, including the date and time of the tournament, the registration deadline, the location and venue of the tournament, directions to the venue, entry fee, method of payment, availability of chairs, the organizers' phone numbers and contact details, local rules and any other necessary information. Organizers are asked to set up a web page containing all this information and they must send the link to the ITHF. Organizers of all tournaments on the World Tour, the World Club Championships, the World Championships and the European Championships must provide a website with all information in English. Other languages are also allowed, but English must be the primary language.

ii) Organizers of every ITHF tournament should send out press releases and make significant media contact concerning the tournament.

iii) Prizes should be awarded to the top three (3) finishers in the tournament and to the winner of each group's play-off. The organizers may determine any additional prizes and awards.

iv) Organizers should provide basic refreshment and comfort facilities during the tournament.

v) Tournament time schedules set by the organizers should allow all participants to have enough toilet/food/refreshment breaks of a sufficient length during the tournament. If any participants in a group are scheduled to play more than 16 matches in a row, there must be at least one break for all members of the group.

3.2 Tournament hall

i) The tournament hall must be large enough to accommodate the number of participants registered for the tournament. The tournament should be played in one hall. If this is not possible, then identical conditions must be ensured in all rooms used.

ii) There must be sufficient light and good ventilation in the tournament hall during the entire tournament. No smoking is allowed in the tournament hall or any other rooms reserved for the tournament participants. Drinking of alcoholic beverages is not allowed in the tournament hall.

iii) The tournament hall must be kept clean and the final play-off shall be played in a special area that is clean and appropriate for media coverage and the prestige that a final play-off commands.

iv) There must be sufficient space between games. It is recommended to have at least 1.5 m of free space behind both goal cages and 0.5 m on both sides of each game. This means there should be at least 3 m between adjacent games' goal cages where players stand back-to-back, and at least 1 m between games where players stand side-to-side. There shall be more free space for play-off matches.

v) The height of tables used under the games must be between 700 and 800 mm.

3.3 Games

i) The organizers must provide the following conditions for all games:

- Games must be fastened to the table, must be numbered and have a designated home and away side. Games used during play-off matches must be fastened to separate tables.
- The white goal net insert that comes with new Stiga games must not be used.
- Games shall only be mounted on stable tables.
- All games must use the plexiglas barrier screens, which must be clean to allow all players to see the whole game.
- All rods shall slide easily and be cleaned.
- The goal cups must be removed. The hole below the cage can remain open, or either suplaks or a fabric bag that can contain at least 20 pucks can be used.
- Game surfaces must be cleaned. No cleaning substance that changes the factory surface speed can be used on the game's surface.

ii) The number of games used during the tournament should correspond with the number of participants and selected playing system. All games should be in excellent condition, or similar. If any problem occurs, organizers are obliged to repair the game or replace it with another one. This should be done without any serious tournament delays.

iii) There should be several prepared reserve games available to prevent delays caused by the repair of broken games. It is recommended to have at least 1 reserve game for every 15 games used.

iv) At least two pucks should be available for each game. The organizers are responsible for checking this number of pucks before the start of each stage of the tournament. At least five pucks must be available for each play-off series.

v) Organizers must ensure that a sufficient number of spare figures are available close to the games, to allow fast replacement of broken figures.

3.4 Before the tournament

- i)** The organizers should collect all registration fees from participants before the tournament begins. All tournament revenues belong to the organizers; no fee is paid to the ITHF.
- ii)** The organizers should make all participants familiar with the timer that will be used for measuring playing time before the tournament begins.
- iii)** The organizers have to announce the members of the tournament's committee of referees to all participants before the tournament starts.

3.5 During the tournament

- i)** The organizers should provide continuous reports of tournament results and standings. Participants should have a right to see their group standings at least once during each group's schedule. The organizers can decide to stop continuous reports of tournament results and standings before the finish of the current group stage.
- ii)** It is recommended that tournament results are posted online during international tournaments.
- iii)** The organizers are responsible for maintaining the official result sheets during the tournament, so that each player's results can be checked.
- iv)** The match schedule for each match must specify which side of which game each player shall use. The only exception is play-offs, where players can select games by themselves from the group of games that were chosen by the organizers for play-offs.
- v)** During play-offs, all players must have sufficient time to prepare themselves for their matches, and for finding the game where they want to play.
- vi)** The organizers should ensure that all pairings in each play-off round begin their series at the same time.
- vii)** The organizers must ensure that no participant will be bothered during the tournament by other players, or by the audience. Players can ask for sufficient free space around them and around the table, especially during the play-off matches. The organizers must ensure that the audience will not disturb the players in any way, including loud talking or yelling.
- viii)** The organizers should not organize any ceremony during play-off series matches. The ceremony can be held during the break between play-off series.
- ix)** An exact translation of the game rules and the playing system in the English language must be available.

x) The organizers have to ensure that all postponed matches are played as soon as possible, no later than 3 rounds before the finish of the current group stage. The organizers must announce a break for other players if necessary for playing the postponed matches. If a match is postponed during the last 3 rounds before the finish of the current group stage, this match must be played immediately.

3.6 After the tournament

Organizers must send results to the world ranking list administrator and to the ITHF within two days after the tournament. All participants should know their results immediately after the tournament.

4. Rules for participants

Every participant shall respect these rules, the committee of referees and the organizer's will during the whole tournament. Players must behave properly during the course of a tournament. Players must follow the playing schedule set by the organizers, cannot move the games or tables without permission of the organizers, and must play all matches with the games, game parts and figures provided for the tournament, rather than using their own.

4.1 Where to play

i) If it is not decided where a game shall be played, the home player for that game shall decide where to play. The home player can let the opponent select the game and where to play and instead he/she may choose the side of the game. The player who chooses the game has to let the opponent choose the side.

ii) If a game is faulty, the player may modify it so that it behaves normally (e.g. making the ice surface flat). Modifications that make the game behave abnormally (e.g. raising part of the ice to make a ridge that will trap the puck) are prohibited.

iii) During a match, the only repair allowed is to replace broken figures – the game can only be seriously repaired if both opponents agree. If the players cannot agree on the quality of the selected game, the committee of referees shall decide if there is any need for repair or replacement of the game, any figure or any rod.

iv) In team competitions:

a) The organizer chooses the required number of games, plus 2 spare games (e.g. in competitions with 5 matches per round, the organizer chooses 7 games).

b) The home team can choose which of these games they want, and will not change games during the whole team match (except at World Championships and European Championships – at these tournaments, all players in both teams move one step to the right between games).

c) The away team can choose the side of each individual game (organizers can then swap Sweden/Finland figures if they want the same figures on each side).

d) Any modifications to games (e.g. rod replacements) can be requested by either team.

e) All of the above steps (a to d) must occur within a time limit defined by the organizer (e.g. in the 15 minutes before the scheduled start time).

f) No further changes to games may be made during the round, except in the event of breakages.

g) After the captain of the home team has given a completed team sheet to the captain of the guest (opponent) team, the home team cannot substitute its players until after the next 5-minute match.

4.2 Writing results

i) Players must record their match scores and report them to the scorekeeper accurately. Each result must be written on the official sheet before the next round begins. The winner of the match is responsible for writing the result. If the game ends in a draw, then it is up to both players to make sure that the result is recorded correctly.

ii) If a player doesn't submit the result, the scorekeeper can request the result during the next round (even during play). If the scorekeeper cannot find the result, if the players refuse to disclose the result, or if neither player can be found, then the match will not count for either player.

iii) No result can be changed after the group stage is finished, unless there was a scoring mistake while entering the results into the computer. If any player claims such a mistake, then the organizers must provide him or her the official score sheet for review. Claims about scoring mistakes must be reported promptly after the final results are released. Organizers should announce the deadline for reporting mistakes found in official results.

4.3 Play-offs

i) The players can select the games for their play-off series from the group of games prepared by the organizers for the play-off. The selection is made as described in section 4.1. The home player is the player ranked higher in the group stage (stage in which standings are used for seeding of the play-off). If the players played in different groups and their ranking in these groups was the same, then the home player is the one who was seeded higher in the tournament.

ii) If several players select the same game, then the series played by the player who was ranked higher in the group will be played on that game. If these players were ranked the same, the player seeded higher in the tournament shall use the game.

iii) Players can select the game, but they must use the table selected by the organizers.

iv) Players should change sides of the game after the 2nd, 4th and any subsequent matches in the play-off series. Before the series begins, or at the first change of sides, the players can agree not to use side-changing, but if either player wants to use side-changing, the other must respect this.

v) The whole play-off series should be played on the same game – the only exception is when the game is broken and cannot be repaired quickly. The new game shall be selected the same way as the broken game was selected.

vi) Any participating player can ask the committee of referees for a referee before any of his/her play-off matches. This referee will ensure observance of the table hockey rules and can be asked by either of the opponents to start all face-offs during the match.

4.4 Making a complaint to the committee of referees

i) Any player can submit a complaint to any member of the tournament's committee of referees.

ii) Any complaint must be submitted right after the incident or right after the finish of the match when the incident happened.

iii) After a complaint is submitted, the committee of referees shall meet and the whole committee will hear both sides of the dispute. The committee can also hear witnesses.

iv) The final decision of the committee of referees must be announced to both sides of the dispute.

4.5 Leaving before the end

i) If a player plays less than 80% of the scheduled matches in the group stage, he/she is considered to have retired. All his/her matches in his/her group will be eliminated and the group standings will be recalculated by the organizers of the tournament. The retired player will finish last in his/her group.

ii) If a player plays at least 80% of the scheduled matches in the group stage before retiring, he/she will retain all results, and group standings will not be recalculated.

iii) If a player retires from the tournament between two group stages or between a group stage and play-off, no other player can replace them.

4.6 Exclusion from the tournament

i) Any player physically attacking anyone else will be disqualified immediately.

ii) A player can be disqualified from the tournament by the tournament's committee of referees if he/she is:

- repeatedly breaking table hockey game rules or tournament rules;
- found intentionally altering the score reported to the scorekeeper;
- found intentionally drawing or losing a match;
- asking other players to intentionally play for results;
- seriously disturbing the tournament;

- drunk or impaired during the tournament.
- found intentionally damaging the games used or anything else at the tournament venue.

iii) If a player is disqualified, all his/her results from the current group stage will be eliminated and the group standings will be recalculated. If the next group stage or play-offs have already started, the results from previous groups are not affected by the disqualification.

iv) If a player is disqualified during a match in a team competition, the team must play with a reduced number of players. After the team match, a substitute can be called into the team. The maximum number of members of the team is not changed by this disqualification.

v) Disqualified players don't get any tournament points, placings or world ranking points. This affects the final tournament placings of other participants (players whose placings are worse than those of the disqualified players get better final tournament placings).

vi) All disputes should be solved during the tournament by the organizers and the tournament's committee of referees. If they cannot be solved during the tournament, they must be passed to the national association of the country where the tournament is held. The association can ask the ITHF for help with solving disputes.

vii) All incidents must be reported to the ITHF by the organizers. The Executive Committee of the ITHF can decide on further punishment of a player in accordance with all ITHF documents and rules. The Executive Committee of the ITHF reserves the right to suspend a player from ITHF tournaments. The ITHF can recommend that all national associations suspend a player from their tournaments.

5. Conclusion

Adherence to the rules described in this document should be overseen mainly by each tournament's committee of referees, by representatives of the national associations of each country where tournaments are held, and by representatives of the ITHF.