



"This is a World Championships, so make sure there are no unnecessary people in the playing area", the Referee said . .

CONTACTS

Comments, questions or suggestions on any aspect of umpiring or refereeing are always welcome and members of the committee can be contacted by email at the following addresses:

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ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION Ltd

NURC NEWS

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COMMITTEE 2011-12

The composition of the committee and its specialist panels for the 2011/12 season is as follows:

NURC:	Stuart Sherlock (Chairman), David Edwards, Margot Fraser, John Mackey, Mick Strode, Karen Tonge MBE & Colin Clemett (Secretary)
Umpire Review & Mentoring:	David Edwards, John Mackey, Andy Seward, Tom Purcell & George Tyler
Umpire Selection:	Margot Fraser (Secy, international events), David Edwards (Secy, national events) & Roger Vardon
Umpire Training & Development:	David Edwards, John Mackey, Tom Purcell, Mick Strode & Karen Tonge
Referee Review:	Stuart Sherlock & Mick Strode
Referee Selection:	(international events) Tony Chatwin & Colin Clemett

ITTF RULE CHANGES 2011

There were no changes to the ITTF Laws at this year's AGM and the changes to the Regulations for International Competitions were either editorial or relate primarily to competitions conducted by the ITTF. Copies of the current Laws and Regulations can be downloaded from the ITTF website. It should be remembered that the ETTA Approved Laws (copy attached) are not quite the same as the ITTF Laws, as they include provisions relating to the racket that are from the International Regulations.

RECRUITMENT

Thanks mainly to the series of courses organised and conducted by the Training and Development Panel there was a substantial increase in the number of County Umpires registered last season. Out of a total of 57 new recruits, only 8 were qualified by County Associations, the remainder being directly qualified by the NURC. It is planned to continue the programme with at least 3 courses/year in different Regions, so that over a 3 year period there will be one in each of the 9 Regions. Based on experience gained, there will be some slight changes in the procedure. All candidates will be encouraged to complete a test paper before attending the course, but they will be given the opportunity to amend their answers after the course and before the paper is marked. Those who pass the written test will be given a first practical test at the course venue and the second will be held on a separate occasion.

EXAMINATIONS

Congratulations to Derek Sidaway, Steve Smith and Alan Thomas, who were all successful at National Umpire examinations, and to Brian Jackson and Steve Smith who qualified as National Referees. David Cochrane and Russell Sutcliffe, who attended the Advanced Umpire Training course in Rotterdam during the 2011 World Championships, passed the associated written test and are on their way to acquiring Blue Badge status.

REFEREE QUALIFICATION

It has been decided to make some changes in the procedure for qualifying as Tournament Referees and National Referees. It is no longer mandatory for TR candidates to have experience of tournament organisation and management although having it will obviously be an advantage. Those who pass the written test will be registered as Provisional TRs and will have to demonstrate their practical competence by refereeing at a tournament of 2-star status or equivalent to which the NURC will appoint one or more assessors. TRs who wish to take the National Referee examination may now apply directly, without requiring an endorsement from their parent County Association.

DRESS REGULATIONS

The National Council has agreed to an amendment to the dress regulations for match officials. This means that umpires at national competitions may opt for a navy blue blazer without badge as an alternative to the present royal blue blazer. For umpires at minor competitions, we have arranged for a supply of navy blue sweatshirts with the ETTA logo and "UMPIRE" embroidered on them and these can be ordered from the ETTA Office at a cost of £15, including packing and postage. They are in sizes XS, S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL AND 4XL, so most people should be catered for. A new stock of umpires' ties has been bought and these are available from the ETTA Office at a cost of £7, post free.

INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The following English umpires officiated at international tournaments overseas during the season:

Euro Mini Championships	Schiltigheim	David Cochrane
European Championships	Ostrava	Lynda Reid
Commonwealth Games	New Delhi	David Brown, Karen Tonge
German Open Championships	Dortmund	Mick Strode
Austrian Junior Championships	Linz	Margot Fraser, Lynda Reid
World Championships	Rotterdam	David Cochrane, Derek Sherratt, Russell Sutcliffe, Bob Williamson

Stuart Sherlock was selected by the ITTF URC as Referee of the Brazil Open Championships and he was Referee also of the Madeira Open Championships.

It appears that not all umpires who travel to tournaments overseas are aware that they can claim some financial assistance towards their costs from the ETTA'S Tom Blunn Fund. Details of claims should be sent for endorsement to the NURC Chairman, who will forward them to the ETTA Treasurer.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Referees and Deputies for the 2011-12 National Championships will be:

Senior	Mick Strode (R) and Aubrey Drapkin (DR)
Junior/Cadet	Brian Jackson (R) and Steve Welch (DR)
Under 14	Steve Smith (R) and Steve Welch (DR)

ITTF PRO-TOUR FINALS 2011

The finals of the 2011 ITTF Pro-Tour competition are to be held in London as a test event for the 2012 Olympics. As all of the foreign umpires will be Blue Badge IUs, it was decided that, in selecting the English umpires, priority should be given to those of similar status, and the following have been appointed:

David Brown, David Edwards, Stan Clarke, John Mackey,
Tom Purcell, Derek Sherratt, Mick Strode, Karen Tonge

YELLOW CARDS

Some years ago it was agreed with the Tournaments Committee that where a match was not controlled by a qualified umpire, a Referee who saw that no attempt was being made to control bad behaviour by a player could issue a formal warning by showing a yellow card and taking any steps needed to ensure that the behaviour regulations were applied thereafter. At the request of the TC it has now been agreed that this power can be delegated to another suitably qualified official, but only at tournaments of 3* status and below.

A LET

It is well-known that if the ball in service touches the net and is intercepted by the receiver above the playing surface the rally is a let. This has been part of the Laws since 1934 on the basis that the server, who has not made a good service, should not be entitled to score a point, even though his opponent has done something which would normally be penalised. In 2010 the Finnish Association pointed out that logically the same principle should apply to other actions by the receiver, such as placing a free hand on the table or moving the playing surface, none of which could bring an unfair advantage once the ball had touched the net. Informal enquiries among the umpires at the 2010 World Championships suggested that some of them had already assumed that this was the case, and they were surprised to learn that it was not supported by the Laws. Finland submitted a proposition to the 2010 ITTF AGM to amend the Law to put right what they believed was an accidental omission, but it was not clearly explained and was lost. In 2011 it was re-submitted, this time with the support of the ITTF Rules Committee, but again it failed to secure the necessary majority. It is all reminiscent of the struggle to repeal the "volley" law, which took nearly ten years to reach a successful conclusion. Let's hope that, if Finland do persist with the idea, here, too, logic will eventually prevail.

OBITUARY

We were very sorry to learn during the season of the deaths of Alan Harwood, a very active International Umpire and a former member of the committee, and of Colin Crowe and Pat O'Bryne, long-serving County Umpires.