

DUTY OF CARE

In the past season there have been several instances of young players being subjected to aggressive treatment amounting to bullying by over-keen coaches or parents. Although the intention was, no doubt, to motivate the players to better performance some of them were clearly distressed and this should not be allowed to happen. If an umpire believes that a young player is being put under unreasonable pressure by such action play should be stopped and the person responsible asked to desist. If this does not produce the desired result the matter should be reported to the referee for further action, which could include banishment from the playing area.



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 2012-13

The composition of the committee and its specialist panels is unchanged for the current season and 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:	Karen Tonge (Coordinator), David Edwards, John Mackey, Tom Purcell & Mick Strode
Referee Review:	Stuart Sherlock & Mick Strode
Referee Selection:	(international events) Tony Chatwin & Colin Clemett

ITTF RULE CHANGES 2012

As in 2011, there were no changes to the ITTF Laws at this year's AGM, but there were some amendments to the procedure for racket testing. In future, rackets will normally be tested before a match and post-match testing will be limited to situations where a pre-match test could not be conducted. A player whose racket fails a pre-match test may be allowed to play the match with a replacement racket, but this racket will be tested afterwards. More surprisingly, the Equipment Committee decided that it would no longer be necessary to test for glossiness, following an assurance from the Athletes Commission that none of its members had ever been troubled by reflection from an opponent's racket. However, the Committee seems to have harboured some remaining doubts because the Technical Leaflet on rackets includes the following statement:

"Testing for excess levels of rubber gloss no longer forms part of standard racket testing procedures. However, a player may ask the umpire to examine the opponent's racket for high levels of gloss before the start of a match. The umpire may, if he or she sees fit, ask for the racket to be inspected for high levels of gloss."

This suggests that the umpire should not take the initiative in questioning the glossiness of a racket, but that if a player does so the referee must be asked to decide the matter. A referee could be placed in a difficult situation if he ruled against a racket which had been passed by racket control, and it seems that the implications have not been fully thought through.

OBITUARY

We were very sorry to learn during the season of the deaths of Fred Ingram TU of Cornwall and Phil Gower IU, IR of Essex, and our sympathy goes to their families.

TRAINING & RECRUITMENT

Another 20 County Umpires were registered last season, all but 3 of them as a result of NURC training courses. The increase in the number of active umpires over the past two seasons means that, for the first time in many years, there are more applicants to officiate at the competitions for which the NURC is responsible for providing umpires than the number of places available, and the Selection Panel is able to make selections rather than desperately try to fill vacancies. The training programme continues, with courses planned initially for Yorkshire and London to be followed later by others elsewhere in the country.

QUALIFICATIONS

Congratulations to David Gough (Gloucestershire) and Harry Jutle (Herefordshire) who were successful at the National Umpires held in June, and to Cliff Bell (Staffordshire) who qualified as a Tournament Referee.. It is proposed to hold another NU examination towards the end of the season and any CUs interested should apply as soon as possible to the NURC Secretary. To remind you of the requirements, candidates must normally have had 2 years' experience of umpiring at events played under the ITTF Regulations for International Competitions since qualifying as a CU; as a guide, this should include at least 6 open tournaments. However, those with exceptional qualifying experience may be accepted earlier at the discretion of the committee.

LONDON 2012

English officials played a prominent part in what are widely regarded as the best Olympics/Paralympics table tennis competitions so far. Former NURC Chairman Richard Scruton was the Competition Manager for both, and the following umpires and referees were selected:

Olympics	Deputy Referee	Stuart Sherlock
	Referee Assistant	Steve Smith
	Umpires:	John Mackey, Tom Purcell, Mick Strobe
Paralympics	Deputy Referee:	Steve Welch
	Referee Assistant:	Steve Smith
	Umpires:	David Brown, Stan Clarke, David Cochrane, Neil Curtis, David Edwards, Margot Fraser, Dave Goulden, Peter May, Mike Payne, Lynda Reid, Mick Reynolds, Derek Sherratt, Russell Sutcliffe, Karen Tonge, Bob Williamson
	Score operators:	Dennis Calver, Margaret Calver, John Hardcastle, Brian Jackson, Alex Mercer, Lesley Slack, Brian Watkins, Matt Morris

In addition to those chosen as Technical Officials many others contributed in various essential supporting roles to the success of this once-in-a-lifetime event.

INTERNATIONAL UMPIRES

IUs who officiated at international tournaments overseas during the season were:

Euro Mini Championships	Schiltigheim	David Cochrane
INAS Global Games	Genoa	John Mackey
European Championships	Gdansk	John Mackey, Peter May, Lynda Reid, Derek Sherratt
Men's World Cup	Paris	Tom Purcell
PTT Asian/Oceanic Championships	Hong Kong	Eric Pentland
Slovenian Open Championships	Velenje	Neil Curtis, Bob Williamson
Slovenian Junior Open Championships	Velenje	Neil Curtis, Bob Williamson
World Team Championships	Dortmund	David Cochrane
ISF World Schools Championships	Cagliari	Margot Fraser, Lynda Reid
Euro Olympic Qualifying Tournament	Luxembourg	David Edwards
European Youth Championships	Schwechat	Neil Curtis, Eric Pentland

INTERNATIONAL REFEREES

The following were appointed Deputy Referees at international competitions:

Slovakian PTT Championships	Piestany	Karen Tonge
European PTT Championships	Split	Steve Welch
European Youth Championships	Schwechat	Mick Strobe
Men's World Cup	Paris	Stuart Sherlock

Unfortunately, at the Euro PTT Championships Steve Welch had a fall which resulted in his being hospitalised and, as a result, he was unable to join Stuart Sherlock and Karen Tonge at an ITTF Referee Seminar in Vienna. We were very pleased to learn that Stuart had been nominated by the ITTF Umpires & Referees Committee as one of only 12 "Advanced Referees" (we are assured that the description refers to competence and not to age . . .)

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Referees and Deputies for the 2012-13 National Championships will be:

Senior Championships	Brian Jackson	Steve Welch
Junior/Cadet Championships	Karen Tonge	Aubrey Drapkin
Under 11-14 Championships	Steve Smith	Mick Strobe
Junior Cadet Masters Tournament	Mick Strobe	-----

YELLOW CARDS

In a further attempt to control persistent misbehaviour the so-called "sanctions scheme" has been strengthened and the penalties made more severe. A player receives a "penalty mark" for each warning or penalty imposed by an umpire and incurring 5 penalty marks within a period of twelve months will result in his or her being suspended from competitive table tennis for a period of one month. Subsequent accumulation of 3 penalty marks within twelve months will result in a further period of suspension. For the scheme to work effectively, warnings and penalty points must be seen to be awarded fairly and consistently. In terms of penalty marks a formal warning carries the same weight as the award of a penalty point and should not, therefore, be used lightly. Bad behaviour should always be curbed but, before showing a yellow card for a first minor offence, umpires should consider carefully whether the matter could, perhaps, be dealt with by an informal warning.