

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1. **General.** This manual is designed to serve as a guide for the promotion, conduct, and reporting of USATT sanctioned table tennis tournaments.
2. **References.** The following references are available from USATT Headquarters as shown in "the USATT National Publication".
 - 2.a. ITTF Handbook. Contains rules and regulations for table tennis, records of World Championships and other major international competitions, and a directory of ITTF officials and affiliated associations.
 - 2.b. ITTF Rules for (current season). A pocket size manual containing extracts from the ITTF Handbook covering disciplinary regulations, the Laws of Table Tennis, and Regulations for International Competition. It is published biannually following the World Championships.
 - 2.c. ITTF Handbook for Match Officials. Provides guidance to referees and umpires on the conduct of their respective duties. The USATT has adopted this handbook as official guidance for match officials in lieu of publishing a separate USATT referees' and umpires' manual.
 - 2.d. ITTF Handbook for Tournament Referees. Provides more specific guidance to referees. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the Handbook for Match Officials.
3. **Geographic Organization.** The USATT is divided into *eight* tournament regions as indicated below. Each region has a regional tournament coordinator to assist tournament sponsors. The regional organization is also used for other purposes; e.g. each region has a club chairman and a player representative on the players' committee.
 - 3.a. List of Regions and included states:

East: CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV,
Midwest: MI, IL, IN, OH, KY.
Mountain: WY, NE, UT, CO, NM.
North: ND, SD, MN, WI, IA.
Northwest: AK, WA, ID, MT, OR,
Pacific: HI, CA, NV, AZ.
South Central: KS, MO, OK, AR, TX, LA.
Southeast : TN, NC, SC, MS, AL, GA, FL.
 - 3.b. Regional Tournament Coordinators are charged with increasing the number of tournaments within their regions and ensuring that tournaments maintain the high standards appropriate for USATT sanction. They accomplish these responsibilities primarily by advising tournament sponsors and by attending tournaments to get and remain familiar with tournament sponsors and players.

4. **Types Of Tournaments.** Tournaments are classified as Open, Closed, or Invitational. Open tournaments are open to any USATT member or member of another national association affiliated with the ITTF. Closed tournaments are limited to players in a specific area or organization as specified on the entry blank. Invitational tournaments are limited to players specifically invited.
5. **Planning Schedule.** The following chart is a good guide for what needs to be done when. This schedule is appropriate for One & Two Star tournaments.

Action	When to arrange
Confirm playing site and tournament date	1 year – 6 months
Get commercial sponsorship	1 year – 6 months
Identify tournament committee members	4 – 3 months
Request sanction, get mailing labels	6 – 2 months
Print entry blank	After sanction
Arrange for awards/trophies	8 – 6 weeks
Mail entry blanks	6 – 4 weeks
Entry deadline	NLT 2 days before draw
Make the draws	3 days (Wed for Sat event)
Tournament reports	1 day – 1 week after

6. **Sanction Procedures.** All tournaments must be sanctioned by the USATT. Requirements and detailed procedures are provided in Chapter 3 – Tournament Sanction.
7. **Tournament Year.** The USATT tournament year runs from September through August. Any annual requirements are based on the September – August year unless otherwise specified.
8. **Events Limited By Age:**
 - 8.a. Junior events: A player's age on the first day of a tournament will determine eligibility for all junior events in that tournament. Under 18 (listed as –18), under 16 (–16), under 14 (–14), under 12 (–12), under 10 (–10). These events may be listed as Juniors –18 or Boys –18, Girls –18 depending on whether or not you want to separate boys and girls. A player may play in an –18 event until his 18th birthday (if the 18th birthday falls on the first day of the tournament the player is eligible for the event).
 - 8.b. Senior events: The age as of the end of the calendar year will determine the eligibility for all senior events in all tournaments during that year. Seniors over 40 (40+), Esquires 50+, Senior Esquires 60+, Veterans 70+. If a player is 40 by Dec 31 of that year he is eligible for that event.

- 9. Membership Requirements.** All players in a sanctioned tournament must be USATT members except:
- 9.a. Members of other national associations affiliated with the ITTF provided they can show current membership in their association.
 - 9.b. A one time “Tournament Pass” is available to players who have never been members of the USATT. *The pass permits play in the tournament with no other benefits.*
- 10. Entry Fees.** Fees are set to cover the costs of running the tournament and should provide a reasonable amount of play for the cost to the player. Tournament entry fees can be used to help support a program, such as a school or college team, or to support a charity.
- 11. Refund Policy.** Each tournament sponsor should establish a policy on the refund of entry fees for players who enter but do not play. The policy should be in place before the tournament.

Sample Policy: (NOTE: This policy is not binding on any sponsor)

- 11.a. Player withdrawing before the entry deadline – full refund.
 - 11.b. Player entering by mail on time and withdrawing before the day of the tournament (or before draws are completed) (specify) – full refund.
 - 11.c. Player entering by phone and withdrawing before tournament day – refund less \$3.00 processing fee. There is no requirement to accept phone entries.
 - 11.d. Player defaulting without notifying the sponsor – refund less \$5.00 (less \$8 if phone entry). No refund will be made unless the player requests it in writing. Any refund to a defaulting player is at the discretion of the tournament committee. A refund to such a player normally will not be made if the tournament is losing money or refunding fees would cause a loss.
- 12. Prize Money and Olympic Eligibility.** The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has passed the responsibility to the ITTF to determine eligibility requirements for table tennis participation in the Olympic Games. The ITTF has determined that for table tennis, the Olympics will be considered Open to both amateur and professional players without distinction.
- 13. Prize Money Distribution.** Cash awards can be used to attract players to a tournament and, as in other sports, reward excellence.
- 13.a. Cash distribution by events. There are two theories on distribution of prize money; each has merit.

13.a.1. There are very few players in the U.S. that are good enough to earn a living in the sport. Prize money should be concentrated in the championship events to give these professionals priority; to separate professionals from amateurs; and to add prestige to the sport by publicizing the players' winnings.

13.a.2. Prize money comes from entry fees. Players in the "class" events should have the opportunity to compete for money because it's their money supporting the tournament. Although these players cannot earn a living playing the sport they can, if successful in a tournament, break even on their expenses.

13.b. Any cash prize offered in the entry blank must be paid. The sole exception is money for an event that is canceled because of insufficient entries. Prizes may be increased based on the size of the draw but never reduced. **Failure to pay advertised cash prizes may be grounds for denial of sanction for future tournaments and/or other official disciplinary action.** If uncertain of the amount of money to be collected in entry fees, the entry blank should advertise only those prizes that can be paid with the smallest reasonable number of entries. In major tournaments, championship events and age limit events cannot be canceled if there are at least *four* entries in the event.

13.c. A practice that some sponsors use is to award a percentage of the entry fees for the event as prizes. e.g. Championship Singles 80% of entry fees, split 60/40 between 1st & 2nd places. This has the advantage of minimizing the chances for losing money. The disadvantages are that more players may enter if they know the prize money; and it minimizes the financial gain if you have a large entry.

Sample Policy – Prize Distribution

(NOTE: This policy is not binding on any sponsor)

13.d.

Recognizing the validity of both of the above theories, prize money is distributed in accordance with the players expected to attend. To attract the top players from outside the region you need significant cash prizes. In order for many players to travel long distances it is appropriate to offer a reasonable amount (e.g. \$50 – \$100) down through 8th or 16th place in championship singles.

13.d.1. Three Star Open: Prize money will be distributed with emphasis on the championship events. Money obtained from sponsors should be used to pay the awards in these events as much as possible. Money will be paid in the "class" events if possible as outlined below for two star tournaments.

13.d.2. Two Star Open without commercial sponsorship: In recognition of regional players' support throughout the year, prize money normally is

distributed down through the class events as indicated in the chart below.

Sample Events List and Prize Distribution

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Championship Singles	\$800	\$400	\$200	\$200
Under 2000	\$100	\$60	\$20	
Under 1900	\$100	\$60	\$20	
Under 1800	\$100	\$60	\$20	
Under 1700(RR)	Trophy	Trophy		
Under 1200(RR)	Trophy	Trophy		
Novice Singles (-1000)(RR)	Trophy	Trophy		
Women's Singles	\$30	\$20		
Senior (40+) Singles	\$30	\$20		
Junior (-18) Singles	Trophy	Trophy		
Championship Doubles	\$100	\$60		
Doubles (-3800 combined)	Trophies	Trophies		

13.d.3. Two Star Open with commercial sponsorship. Prize money obtained from the sponsor normally will be offered in the championship events in addition to the above money. Money from entry fees will be offered in the class events.

13.d.4. Money normally is not offered in junior events. If top national juniors are expected you may offer "expense money" and hold a junior class "A" event without money for lower rated players.

13.d.5. Women's and senior events will be considered minor events (except for major tournaments) and will have no more prize money than the lowest class money event. Women and seniors are allowed to play in any event and may compete with all other players based on their ability.

13.d.6. No Star Open. Trophies rather than cash prizes normally are awarded, if money is available, an appropriate distribution is \$100 to the winner and \$60 to the runner-up in championship singles.

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