



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.

Date: 09/2019

Copyright © ITTF

1. RACKET CONTROL	4
1.1. Team Event.....	4
1.2. Self-adhesive labels	4
1.3. Racket testing after the match	5
1.3.1. Racket has been tested before the match in the Call Area	5
1.3.2. Racket has not been tested before the match in the Call Area	5
1.3.3. No official racket control by ITTF but organiser insists on RC / conflict CM.....	5
1.3.4. Player refuses to give the racket to the umpire for an after-match test.....	6
1.4. Change of racket after and during practice period	6
1.5. Players in doubles changed rackets.....	6
1.6. Voluntary racket control	7
1.7. Both players fail after match racket control in last team match	7
1.8. Use of a different sponge	8
1.9. Examples of Rackets	8
1.9.1. Lacquer	8
1.9.2. Any size or shape (2.4.1).....	9
1.9.3. Blade not continuous (2.4.5).....	9
1.9.4. Gripped by the fingers (2.4.4).....	10
1.9.5. Matt, bright red (2.4.5)	11
1.9.6. Slight deviations (2.4.7.1).....	12
2. PENALTY POINT SYSTEM (PPS), MISBEHAVIOUR OF PLAYERS.....	13
2.1. Time wasting.....	13
2.2. Misbehaviour of both players of a doubles pair	13
2.3. Misbehaviour after the end of an individual match in a team event.....	13
2.4. Player destroys his racket.....	14
2.5. Player destroys the ball during the match.....	14
2.6. Specific cases	15
2.7. Celebrations after the match	15
2.8. Very serious misbehaviour after the end of a match.....	15
3. ADVICE.....	17
3.1. Use of an interpreter.....	17
3.2. Advice.....	17
4. MATCH PROCEDURE.....	19
4.1. Nomination of teams/players.....	19
4.1.1. Team not complete.....	19
4.1.2. Change the nomination for doubles	19
4.2. Service.....	19
4.3. Intervals	20
4.4. Time Out – 2 nd Time Out after the 1 st one.....	20
4.5. Around the net	20
4.6. Ball breaks during a rally.....	20
4.7. Both players want to change the ball during a match	21
4.8. Expedite System.....	21
4.8.1. Error in counting.....	21

4.9. Suspension of play due to Medical Break.....	21
4.10. Player changing a playing garment during an authorised interval: time exceeds 1 minute	23
5. EQUIPMENT IN THE FIELD OF PLAY	23
5.1. Camera on the net.....	23
6. PLAYING CLOTHING.....	24
6.1. Clothing of doubles pair	24
6.2. Name on the shirt and 3 letter association	24
6.3. Playing without shoes	24
6.4. Examples:	25

1. Racket Control

1.1. 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 recommend 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.

1.2. Self-adhesive labels

Please use (white) self-adhesive labels (not post-it) with the name. For the next match just cover the previous one with another self-adhesive tag. When there is an after-match control, the cover/racket bag concerned may have an additional coloured post-it or small coloured sticker.

1.3. Racket testing after the match

1.3.1. 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?

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 he 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.

1.3.2. 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.

Any other irregularity has to 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.

1.3.3. No official racket control by ITTF but organiser insists on RC / conflict CM

Case 3



No Official Racket Control by ITTF

- **Organiser insists to work with Racket Control Room**
- **After match test**
- **Volunteer in RC finds thickness of 4,2**
- **Referee measures with magnifying glass 4,2**
 - 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
- *Referee's decision that racket is illegal cannot be changed by CM*
- *If there is no official ITTF Racket control foreseen – Organiser has to 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"*

1.3.4. 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

1.4. Change of racket after and 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?

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.

1.5. Players in doubles changed rackets

In a 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?

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.

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

1.6. 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?

A voluntary test shall always be done in the Racket Control Centre and NOT in the Call Area.

The umpire in the Call Area has to send the player to the Racket Control Centre.

If there is no Racket Control Centre, the umpires in the Call Area have to 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.

1.7. Both players fail after match racket control in last team match

Case studies

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

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.

1.8. 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 was using this racket for the past 3 matches and no one complained. What action should the referee take?

No action as it is ALLOWED

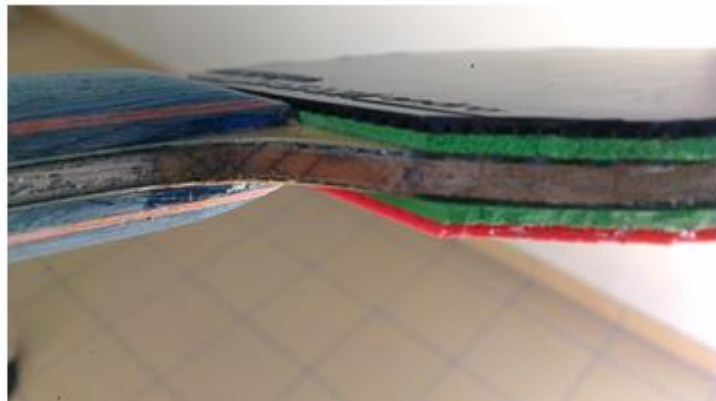
1.9. Examples of Rackets

1.9.1. Lacquer

Before match control

A player provides a racket

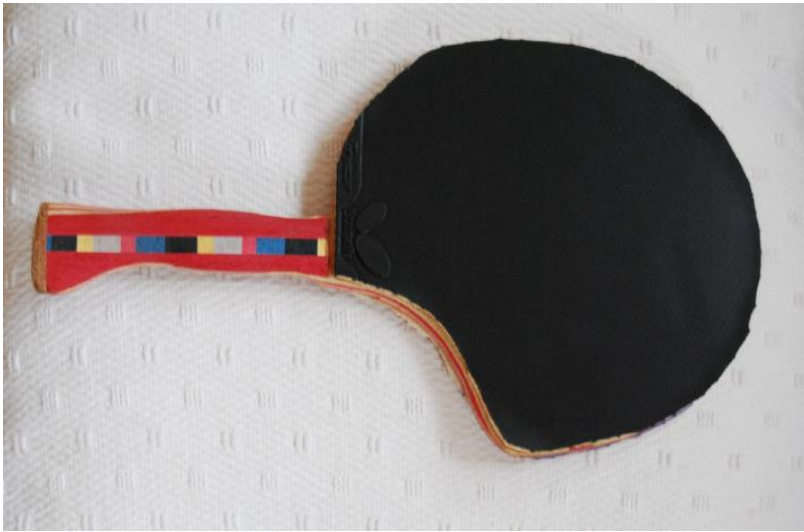
- part of wood between the handle and the coverings was covered by lacquer
- It is impossible to make a precise measurement



Other methods have to 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 a 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

1.9.2. Any size or shape (2.4.1)

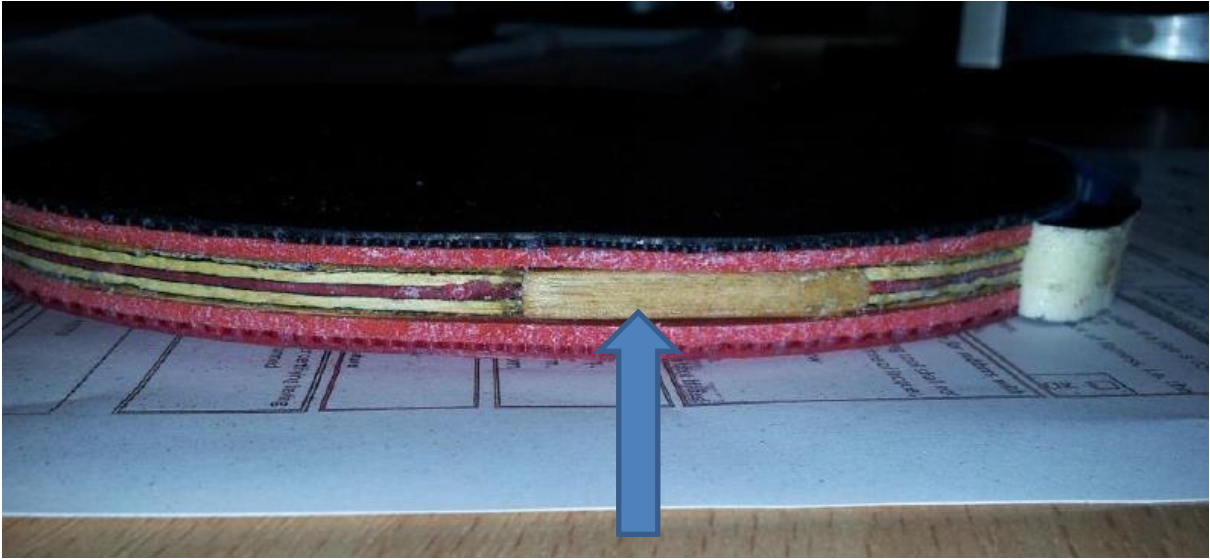


ALLOWED (provided that the ITTF logo, the ITTF number (when present), the supplier and brand names are clearly visible near the handle)

1.9.3. Blade not continuous (2.4.5)



NOT ALLOWED



NOT ALLOWED

1.9.4. Gripped by the fingers (2.4.4)



ALLOWED



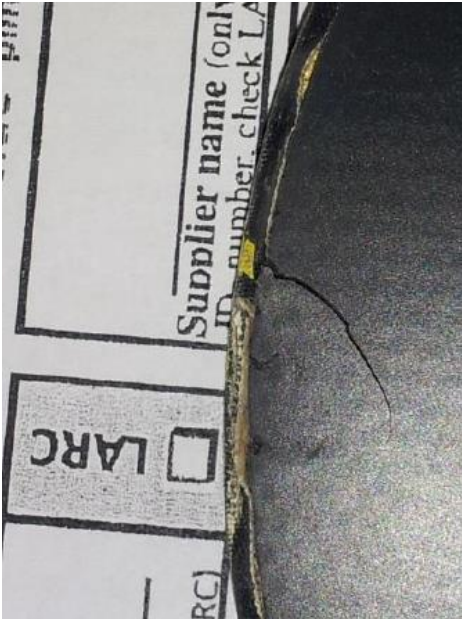
ALLOWED

1.9.5. Matt, bright red (2.4.5)



NOT ALLOWED

1.9.6. Slight deviations (2.4.7.1)



*Allowed up to 1 cm from the edge
Not allowed in the middle of the rubber*



NOT ALLOWED (COLOUR)

2. Penalty Point System (PPS), Misbehaviour of players

2.1. Time wasting

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

Referee instructs the umpire that he cannot issue a yellow card for this offence as the match has not started.

The referee then has to decide regarding the degree of lateness and determine if the match goes ahead or if the late player is defaulted.

2.2. 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).

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 (3.5.2.6). In the next individual match of this team match each player starts with a yellow card.

2.3. Misbehaviour after the end of an individual match in a team event

Team Match Austria (A) – Germany (X)

A1 plays 1st individual match and at the end of the match, he throws the racket

Umpire shows yellow/red (1penalty point)

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

Both players play double – how do we start ?

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. (3.5.2.6)

2.4. Player destroys his racket

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 to ITTF Handbook rule 2.4. If the racket cannot be used anymore (is not legal), the player forfeits the match.

2.5. Player destroys the ball during the match

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

Umpire has to show a YELLOW card for misbehaviour.

2.6. Specific cases

In a match the behaviour of a player is very volatile such that at one point he lifts his end of the table and slams it down violently. The spectators are clearly very unhappy with his 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?

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 she/he saw and afterwards should disqualify the player.

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

2.7. Celebrations after the match

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

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 the player jumps on the table

Depending on the point of time the umpire has to 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.

2.8. 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.

In addition to including the incident in the Referee Report, the referee has to:

- a) *Send a report to the offender's Association (3.5.2.12)*

b) *Immediately send a separate report to the ITTF Competition Director with a copy to the ITTF URC and the CM of the event. The ITTF will convene a Disciplinary Panel as necessary (3.5.2.13).*

There will be no disqualification (red card) in this situation.

3. Advice

3.1. Use of an interpreter

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

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

3.2. Advice

3.5.1.3 Players may receive advice at any time except during rallies provided that continuity of play is not affected (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			
A	Advice between end of practice and start of a match	Is allowed as long as it does not delay the start of the match. If it delays the start of the match, the umpire has to call the players to the table. If they refuse the umpire has to call the referee.		
		Legal Advice	Illegal Advice	Misbehaviour (time wasting)
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 make a detour to go to coach (for advice) when going to pick the ball			Player

		Legal Advice	Illegal Advice	Misbehaviour (time wasting)
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 Ready to play when X returns to court	X		
7	A goes to Coach for advice when X retrieving ball from outside court Do not go back to table immediately when X returns to court			Player
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

4. Match Procedure

4.1. Nomination of teams/players

4.1.1. 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.

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 (4.1.10.2). Whilst it is not specified for other events it shall be used in the same way.

4.1.2. Change the nomination for doubles

A team match is being played under the former Corbillon system of 4 singles and a doubles (A v X, B v Y, doubles, A v Y, B v X). At the start of the match, the captain of team A/B/C nominates B/C as the doubles pair. After the 2nd singles the captain wishes to change his nomination to A/C.

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 (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.

4.2. Service

Player A serves. Player X, makes a correct return, but shouts "Wrong service!" as he 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.

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.

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

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 (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 2.4.3, 2.4.4 and 2.4.5. (2.10.01.7)

4.3. 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?

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 (3.4.4.7).

4.4. Time Out – 2nd Time Out after the 1st one

A vs X

A asks for a Time Out and after 45 seconds comes back.

At this moment X asks for a Time Out.

Allowed or not?

2nd Time Out is still between the rallies and allowed (3.4.4.2.3).

4.5. 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 back over the net. X runs to the side of the table and, while he 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?

Point to X as he made a good return which won the point

4.6. Ball breaks during a rally

Umpire has to call LET (2.9.2.4) - regardless of direction of ball's trajectory

If a ball is obviously cracked or completely broken during a rally then the umpire will always call „let“(2.9.2.4 because the conditions of play are disturbed in a way which could affect the outcome of the rally). The trajectory of the ball is irrelevant and it doesn't matter where the ball is when it is struck.

E.g. If a player hits the ball with the edge of the racket and the ball breaks into two halves or the broken ball goes into a direction away from the table, the umpire has to call a LET.

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

4.7. Both players want to change the ball during a match

(e.g. after the 3rd game)

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

4.8. Expedite System

4.8.1. 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?

A. Let

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

4.9. Suspension of play due to Medical Break

Player A v Player X

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

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

Not allowed according to 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.

4.10. 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. (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. Equipment in the field of play

5.1. Camera on the net



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

In the example above the camera is not part of the net.



It is not part of the net assembly but undercarriage of the table

6. Playing clothing

6.1. Clothing of doubles pair

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

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

6.2. Name on the shirt and 3 letter association

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

6.3. 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.

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

6.4. Examples:

Headscarf



Allowed



Allowed