



TOURNAMENT RULES

1. **PRACTICE TIME** - Practice is not allowed on any tournament table, except during specified periods, and only with the permission of the League Operator or Tournament Director. You are encouraged to practice on all tables designated for that purpose, and are asked to share the practice tables with any other contestants who wish to use them. Generally speaking, a 10 to 15 minute time limit is advised for any one or two individuals using the practice table if other contestants are waiting. Any table designated as a practice table during the event should be reserved for those contestants who have not yet been eliminated from the tournament. Practice is not allowed on tournament tables during play, even though a table may not be in use during short periods.
2. **FORFEIT TIME** - Forfeits will be determined 15 minutes after a match has been called. If a team has registered for the tournament, every effort will be made to locate the team before a forfeit is declared. The League Operator or Tournament Director determines when a match is officially forfeited.
3. **SUDDEN DEATH FORMAT** - When the *Sudden Death* format is in effect, all other League rules apply to player selection. We ask all players to help keep to the schedule by being ready to play when their match is called, and by observing the *Match Time Guidelines*.

8-BALL SUDDEN DEATH - This format is implemented 3 hours and 45 minutes into an 8-Ball match. The rack must be struck in the 5th individual match by the *3-hours-and-45-minutes* mark or all subsequent individual matches will begin with a rack worth 2 team points. If that 2-point rack mathematically wins the team match, the team match will be over; if it does not win the team match, a second rack worth 1 team point will conclude that individual match. This procedure will continue in each subsequent individual match until a team mathematically wins or the overall match finishes in a tie: one 2-point rack, followed by one 1-point rack if necessary. Tie breakers will be decided by the team that won the most individual matches.

NOTE: During Sudden Death, the individual match winner will be the player who wins the 2-point rack.

9-BALL SUDDEN DEATH - This format is implemented 3 hours into a 9-Ball match. The rack must be struck in the 5th individual match by the *3-hours* mark, or all subsequent matches will consist of all points earned being doubled. Each object ball pocketed will count as 2 points and the 9-ball will count as 4 points.

NOTE: Sudden Death times may vary. The League Operator or Tournament Director may choose to split matches rather than use the Sudden Death format.

4. **DECLARING PLAYERS** - Once both teams in a match have declared a player, the players cannot be changed unless the 23 Rule is in jeopardy.
5. **COACHING** - A player may be coached only once per game. If a coach suggests a time-out to the player, the time-out must be taken. However, if a player asks for a time-out, the coach can refuse to take it and no time-out will be

charged. Mark all coaches (time-outs) with a "T" on your scoresheet. Coaches are allowed to place the cue ball (during a coaching time-out) in a ball-in-hand situation. All rules regarding fouling the cue ball apply to the coach when placing the cue ball for a player.

NOTE: Common players and Ineligible players are not allowed to participate as a coach.

6. **OBLIGATION TO PRESENT AND CHECK IDENTIFICATION OF ALL PLAYERS** – All players must have a current valid Photo ID in the form of a state-issued Driver's License or non-driver Identification Card, a Military ID, or a Passport. Players must have their Photo ID with them at all times during the Tournament and should present their Photo ID to the opposing team's captain when put up in a match without having to be asked. It is the responsibility of every team to verify that all opposing players put up in the match have current valid Photo IDs that positively identify each player as being the person shown on the opposing team's roster. Do not assume a player is who they say they are. If an opposing player has not voluntarily presented his Photo ID to your Captain for verification, it is the responsibility of your team's Captain to request the opposing player present his Photo ID and to be satisfied with the opposing player's identity prior to the lag. If your Captain is not satisfied with the identity of an opposing player, your Captain must immediately call over a Referee to examine the identity of the questioned player. If the Referee cannot readily verify the player's identity from the player's Photo ID, he may consult the Tournament Director. The determination of identity made by the Tournament Director, in its sole discretion and judgment, is final. If your Captain fails to verify each opposing player put up in the match and an opposing player turns out to be an imposter or to not have a valid Photo ID, in APA's sole judgment and discretion, your team may be bound by the results of the match and your team may not be granted any relief or remedy. If a player is put up to play and does not have his Photo ID, the individual match will be forfeited to the opponent without right of protest or appeal and the player will not be eligible to play later in that team match. It is no excuse that a player's Photo ID was lost, left somewhere, or that the player needs to go get it. Any team playing (whether intentionally, knowingly, or accidentally) an imposter or a player who cannot verify his identity is subject to immediate disqualification from the Tournament and the team's members all subject to indefinite suspension from further participation in the APA, in APA's sole judgment and discretion.
7. **FRAUDULENT CIRCUMSTANCES** – The entire team of a player who enters or participates under fraudulent circumstances will be disqualified.
8. **SCOREKEEPING** - Scoresheets with *innings* recorded and *Defensive Shots* marked must be kept by a member of both teams or by an official scorekeeper. If it is determined a team is not marking Defensive Shots, then the League Operator or Tournament Director may arbitrarily raise some or all skill levels of players on that team. Scoresheets must be signed and turned in to the Control Table to receive credit for match wins. Refusal to sign a scoresheet does not affect any match protest. It is the responsibility of the winning team to make sure the Control Table receives proper scoresheets.

8-BALL ONLY - When a team mathematically wins the team match, meaning their opponents can no longer gain enough points to tie or win the match, **the match is over**. Do not finish that individual match; simply mark on the scoresheet **Not Finished (NF)**. Mark **Early 8's (E8)**, **8-ball Scratch (8S)**, **8 Wrong Pocket (8WP)**, **8-on-the-Break (8OB)**, and **Break-and-Runs (BR)** on your scoresheets.

9-BALL ONLY - When one team reaches 51 points, **the match is over**. Do not finish that individual match; simply mark on the scoresheet **Not Finished (NF)**. Make sure you mark all balls pocketed, dead balls, **Break-and-Runs (BR)** and **9-on-the-Snaps (9OS)**.

NOTE: Any team caught fraudulently keeping score—adding innings, altering scoresheets in any way, etc.—will be subject to disqualification.

9. **DRESS CODE** - Proper attire must be worn at all times in and around the tournament site. The League Operator or Tournament Director shall determine what is proper attire, and is responsible for requiring the change of improper attire on the part of any contestant. Any change of improper attire is not just cause for delay in the progress of a team match. The dress code will be enforced.
10. **NO EARPHONES** – It is not permissible to wear earphones of any type during Tournament play. This includes ear buds, headphones, headsets, Bluetooth devices, etc.

11. **CELL PHONE USE** – During the shooter’s turn at the table, cell phone use is prohibited for that player. During a coaching, cell phone use is also prohibited.
12. **NO SMOKING** - Smoking is not permitted at the pool table; however, ashtrays may be provided on each team/player table pending location acceptance.
13. **GAME RULES** - APA game rules apply. Any and all Local Bylaw(s) or interpretation(s) which are not in full accord with the National Rules established by the APA do not apply to your participation in the National event. It is your responsibility to know what is a National Rule (or standard), and what is a Local Bylaw (or standard). The game rules used during your event are covered in the ***Official Team Manual***. You should be familiar with these rules.
14. **SKILL LEVELS** - The APA is the sole judge of a player’s ability, and may at any time raise a player’s skill level if the APA believes that he is not playing up to his true ability. It is especially important the skill level at which you participate in this event reflects your true ability according to National Rules and standards. **This is your responsibility**. You are advised by the APA to make certain you and your teammates fully understand and conscientiously follow all of the National rules and standards. If you determine you or one of your teammates skill level is not accurate, then you must notify your League Operator or Tournament Director prior to entering and playing in the event. Doing so will not necessarily prevent your disqualification; it will, however, help in determining your eligibility status.

NOTE: If a player is currently active in more than one APA League area, the player must certify and participate at the highest skill level.
15. **FOULS** - Fouls may be called by the player or by the Team Captain. It should be kept in mind, since everybody on the team may communicate with the coach, that in effect, anyone on the team may call a foul, but only a call made by the Team Captain or the player makes it official. Each player is advised before taking ball-in-hand, to make certain you actually have ball-in-hand. If you do not confirm ball-in-hand with your opponent, or with Tournament Officials, and there is a difference of opinion, then you subject yourself to the potential costly mistake of fouling the cue ball unknowingly.
16. **CUE BALL FOULS** - The cue ball is always alive. Do not touch the cue ball while it is still rolling. Doing so may result in a foul.
17. **CLOSE SHOTS** - If a shot looks like it may result in a “bad hit,” stop the game and get a Tournament Official to make the call. Either player may stop the game to ask for a call. The decision of the Tournament Official is final. If a shot is close and a Tournament Official is not called, the ruling will have a tendency to be in the shooter’s favor.
18. **MARKING THE POCKET (8-BALL ONLY)** – A coaster, pocket marker or any other reasonable marker (to avoid confusion, although it is permissible, we do not recommend marking the pocket with chalk) must be placed next to the pocket the 8-ball is intended to enter. If a player pockets the 8-ball without marking the intended pocket, and the opponent calls loss of game, it will result in a loss of game. Both players may use the same marker. Only one marker should be on the table. However, if more than one marker is on the table, as long as you clearly mark the pocket where you intend to pocket the 8-ball you have properly marked the pocket. If the marker is already at the intended pocket from a previous attempt or game, it is not necessary for the shooter to touch it, pick it up, or reposition it. **Anyone** may remind a player to place the marker and it will not be considered coaching or a foul.
19. **THE 23-RULE** - The 23-Rule will be enforced. No team may play five players whose combined skill levels exceed 23. In addition, a team must show it could have fielded a legal team (meaning it could have fielded 5 players that did not exceed 23) if the match had gone the entire 5 individual matches. If the total skill levels of the lowest five players listed on your roster is equal to or less than 23, then your team can meet the 23-Rule. This means a team may not lead off with three players whose skill levels add up to 19 unless there are two 2’s listed on the roster. A team may not try to win with its first three players and disregard the 23-Rule.

If the total skill levels of the lowest five players listed on the roster exceed 23, the team will have to play four players whose skill levels do not exceed 19 and forfeit the fifth match. If the skill levels of the lowest four players on the roster exceed 19, then they can play three players to 15 and forfeit the fourth and fifth matches.

20. FORFEITING MATCHES - Individual matches may be forfeited at any time during a team match. If an individual match is forfeited *after* the rack has been broken, the skill level of both players in the match will count towards the 23-Rule. If an individual match is forfeited *before* the rack has been broken, the player on the team receiving the forfeit remains eligible to play again as the forfeit does not count as a match played. Both teams must be able to show at the end of the team match they could have fielded a legal team. (Meaning they could have fielded five players that did not exceed 23 had all five individual matches been played.) For example, if the opposing team puts up a SL7, your team cannot forfeit using an unavailable player so your opponent can't play their SL7. The opposing team would regain the use of their SL7 as long as they can show that they can still remain within the 23-Rule had all five individual matches been played.

Note: Individual forfeits will be worth 3 points (instead of 2) for 8-Ball and 20 points (instead of 15) for 9-Ball. If a player chooses to forfeit during their individual match; no earned points will be given to him. Scoresheets should be marked with a (F) for all forfeited matches.

21. INELIGIBLE PLAYERS - Ineligible players are those players who, for whatever reason, are not eligible to play in any match during this tournament. All ineligible players will be removed from the Higher Level Tournament roster and will not count for 23-Rule purposes. Ineligible players are not allowed to participate as a coach.

22. SENIOR SKILL LEVEL PLAYERS (9-BALL ONLY) - Only two senior skill level players may play in any given team match. Senior skill level players are those players who have a skill level of 6, 7, 8 or 9.

23. COMMON PLAYERS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL - A common player is defined as a player on more than one team. A team may have up to two players that are common with another team in the same format at the National Level of the Team Championships. A player may be common on up to two teams in each format at the National Level of the Team Championships. This means you may qualify on up to two 8-Ball teams and two 9-Ball teams. If you qualify on more than two teams in any format, you must choose which team rosters you will stay on prior to entering the National Level of the Championships. Common players are not allowed to participate as a coach. During the LTC, if a common player(s) chooses to participate and not sit out, they are then declaring a team. Once a team is declared they may not advance with the other team, win or lose. They will then become ineligible on the opposing roster.

NOTE: Matches will not be held up for players who are participating on multiple teams.

24. TIE BREAKERS:

8-BALL ONLY – In the event a team match is tied (5 to 5, 6 to 6, or 7 to 7 match points), the tie would be broken by the number of individual matches won by each team.

If the team match is tied after four matches and neither team can field a fifth player, the team that won the first two of three individual matches would be declared the winner.

9-BALL ONLY – In the event a team match ends 50-50, the number of individual matches won by each team would break the tie.

If the team match is tied 40-40 after four matches and neither team can field a fifth player, the team that won the first two of three individual matches would be declared the winner.

25. EXCESSIVE SKILL LEVEL MOVEMENT: - If Higher Level Tournament play is to be truly meaningful and rewarding, then those who play below their true ability must be penalized. Any evidence of a player playing at a skill level below his true ability should be noted on your scoresheet. In order to conduct a fair and equal tournament for all APA members, APA must ensure that all participants are playing at skill levels that are not below their true ability. Handicap manipulation compromises the fairness and integrity of tournament play and cannot be tolerated. League Operators and/or Tournament Directors review the performance of each player after every round of play and make skill level adjustments as necessary.

The Tournament Director (including NHRC and other Tournament Officials) is the sole judge of a player's ability and has the authority to make this determination in the exercise of its absolute judgment and discretion. The Tournament

Director may disqualify any team if, in the Tournament Director's sole judgment and absolute discretion, a team is deemed to have an unfair advantage due to excessive upward movement of the skill levels of one or more players. Player skill levels may be raised at any time (before, during or after this Tournament) due to objective and/or subjective considerations to whatever skill level the Tournament Director considers appropriate in its judgment and discretion. The determination of whether the skill level at which a player is playing is below the player's actual playing ability is necessarily subjective. All situations are separate. Action or inaction taken with one player or team has no effect and will not limit the authority of the Tournament Director to take whatever action (or no action) the Tournament Director considers appropriate regarding another player or team.

- 26. PROTESTS** - The Team Captain must make all protests to the League Operator or Tournament Director in a sportsmanlike manner. There is a \$50.00 filing fee for any protest, which is refundable if the team filing wins the protest. Any team disrupting the tournament, causing a scene, or causing other problems at or around the tournament site will lose the right to protest. The League Operator or Tournament Director will resolve all issues on the spot. The APA is the highest authority. Any rulings made by the APA are final. Protests regarding skill level complaints will not be accepted, review is done between each and every round of play.
- 27. RULES OF CONDUCT** - The APA has established and will strictly enforce the following conduct rules for Higher Level Tournament play.
- a. No loud, abusive or profane language will be tolerated at this tournament. You are in the League to have a good time and to enjoy some friendly competition. If you experience a problem, one of the Tournament Officials will address it; simply bring the matter to our attention. Remember that in each situation the ruling will favor one side against the other side, and it is required that each team or player accept official rulings without causing a scene.
 - b. Unsportsmanlike conduct directed to the opposing player, team or Tournament Official is not allowed.
 - c. Anyone involved in an incident that includes either physical abuse or the throwing of an item will be disqualified immediately, and required to leave the tournament premises.
 - d. Anyone caught hitting a cue against the table, wall, floor, etc., or recklessly swinging a cue will be disqualified immediately and required to leave the tournament premises.
 - e. Abusive behavior directed to the Tournament Director or any of his designates will not be tolerated.
 - f. Excessively slow play will not be tolerated. You will be warned before any penalty occurs.

The penalties for violating any of the six categories detailed above are as follows:

A warning may or may not be given, depending upon the severity of the situation.

1. Penalty Level 1 - Your opponent will be given ball-in-hand. If the player is still shooting, or already has ball-in-hand, then that player will be allowed to shoot until missing, and then be given ball-in-hand again.
2. Penalty Level 2 - Your opponent will be granted the game. (In 9-Ball, your opponent will be granted the game, along with points for all balls remaining on the table.)
3. Penalty Level 3 - Your opponent will be granted the match.
4. Penalty Level 4 - Disqualification.

NOTE: If the violation or disturbance that caused the initial penalty level to be levied does not cease, the Tournament Director and/or designated assistant has the right to go from one penalty level to the next penalty level immediately.

- 28. WARNINGS** - If a warning is given in an individual match, that warning will follow the team throughout the remainder of the event. For example, if a player is warned for sharking his opponent, and in a subsequent match a player from that same team is warned for sharking his opponent, the result will be ball-in-hand for the opponent. Such warnings will be noted by a Tournament Official on the scoresheets.
- 29. SPORTSMANSHIP** - The primary objective of the League has always been to provide players of all abilities with the fun and enjoyment of friendly competition. Naturally, each player arrives hoping to do well, and all players will be doing their best to win. Each player is expected to accept defeat in a sportsmanlike manner.

Two common violations of good sportsmanship are conceding an unfinished game and undoing a cue during play. Both forms of conduct are frowned upon by professionals, and should be eliminated from amateur play. All players are asked to allow opponents to finish the game before racking the balls or undoing cues. No penalty will be assessed unless, in the opinion of the League Operator or Tournament Director, a repeated violation of this conduct rule occurs.

Another area of good sportsmanship concerns fouls. A foul is a foul and should be observed as such. Occasionally, a player feels that a foul is a foul only if he gets caught. Generally speaking, a professional player will call a foul on himself. Likewise, good sportsmanship in the amateur ranks requires a player to admit a mistake, and live with the consequences. However, it is technically a player's responsibility to protect the outcome of his match. Pay attention to your game.

30. EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS – In general, any piece of equipment designed specifically for pocket billiards, with the exception of jump cues and laser devices, is acceptable in APA Tournament play. Some specialty cues (see **Specialty Cues** described below) may be limited in use. Special equipment, such as bridges and cue extenders, are legal. You may change cues and/or cue shafts during a game provided the cues and/or shafts you are switching to do not violate any rules of use, and you remain within the Time Guidelines.

Specialty Cues – Cues specially tailored to perform specific shots. These include, but are not limited to, jump cues, break cues, and jump-break cues (combination of jump cues and break cues).

Jump Cues – A specialty cue designed for attempting jump shots. They may not be used to perform jump shots or massé shots in standard APA League and tournament play.

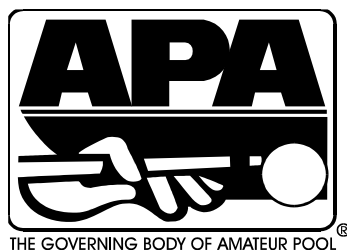
Break Cues – A specialty cue designed for breaking. Sometimes combined with jump cues to form a jump-break cue, these cues are allowed in APA play for breaking. They may not be used to perform jump shots or massé shots in standard APA League and tournament play.

Regular Shooting Cues – Any cue designed to shoot the majority of shots in a game of pool. These cues may also be used to perform jump shots, massé shots and break shots in all APA League and tournament play.

Any equipment bearing any message or image of a sexually explicit or political nature, or a message or image which may be offensive due to the use of profanity or by the virtue of its promotion of violence, alcoholism or substance abuse shall be prohibited from use in all APA events. The Tournament Director shall be the enforcing authority of this regulation.

The Tournament Director shall have the right to inspect a player's cue(s) at any time during a tournament without prior notice to the player, and if the cue(s) are found to be in violation of this regulation, the player shall immediately cease using the objectionable cue during tournament play, or face immediate disqualification and forfeiture of all prize money earned and/or entry fee paid.

31. DISQUALIFICATION - A team or player may be disqualified from this Tournament in the Tournament Director's sole judgment and discretion. Grounds for disqualification include without limitation (a) excessive skill level movement, (b) irregularities or falsification of any Tournament scoresheet or contents of the Certification Package, (c) fraudulent circumstances of whatever nature, or (d) sportsmanship violations or conduct deemed to be a discredit or affecting the integrity of the Tournaments, the League or the sport. **Disqualification of a team for any reasons means forfeiture of all titles, awards, prize money, and minimum two (2) year suspension of team members from the League.** Disqualification can occur at any time - prior to, during, or after the event.



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