

Information to the nations



ITTF PTT has followed recent discussions on www.ipttc.org regarding the new playing system. It is of course important to communicate why these changes were made. Over the last years the process of moving from Factor 10, Factor 20 and Factor 30 tournaments to the New Factor 20 and New Factor 40 tournaments has been on the agenda in informal meetings with the nations during Regional Championships. It was also a decision taken as a result of the last IPC Table Tennis Assembly in Montreux in 2006.

After the Athens Paralympic Games in 2004, the necessity emerged to reduce the large number of matches in events such as Paralympics, World Championships and consequently the Regional Championships.

In 2007, some players complained to the IPC Athletes' Committee about the number of matches to be played in one day in our tournaments. A request from the IPC Athletes' Committee was to review our playing system as the above-mentioned situation was not acceptable! This particularly affected those athletes with higher support needs.

In ITTF events (Olympic Games), the teams are played in RR + KO, but the singles are played in the KO system. This is not a good example for us to follow, for instance because of our ranking system. For this reason, ITTF PTT Division decided to reduce the team events to be played in only KO (from Factor 20 – Factor 100).

The ITTF PTT Tournament committee and the ITTF PTT Division wanted in general to raise the standard, moving away from quantity to improve quality, in our tournaments, after several small and lower quality tournaments in 2004 – 2006 were included on our calendar. The change from quantity to quality would also mean fewer matches (in all tournaments, from factor 20 – factor 100). ITTF PTT Division believes it should be fair to play the same playing system in all tournaments, except Paralympic Games, where we do not play the Open. The only natural way to change the old system was in the team event (for many reasons) from RR + KO to only KO. In this way all matches would be important so increasing the value of ranking points. We definitely need RR + KO in Singles, where all players may compete (this is not the situation in teams). Another possibility was to take out the Open, and only play Singles and Teams (both in RR + KO), but the Tournament committee did not consider this a good solution and the PTT Division accepted this. Should we should continue with the old system (RR + KO in teams, too) the impact would be one extra day in all tournaments, or more tables required (meaning more umpires, meaning more costs for the organizers, teams etc).

The change we made makes it possible to play a number of matches (quantity) during the day with attractive final sessions (quality) and an ability to prioritise for the best players during the evenings with final sessions on 2, 4, 6 or 8 tables so increasing the focus on quality. If we continued with RR and KO in teams we would play very late evenings on 12 – 16 tables, not making a good image for our sport and ignoring the request to have shorter playing days.

The new Regulations for Factor 20 and 40 were published December 2008. It was also written: “Any questions in regards to the current Rulebook or suggestions for the future updates should be sent to technical.officer@ipttc.org.”

Our final point is that the structure of our tournaments has not reached a final structure. There could be changes in the years to come, in the tournament system, in the playing system, in the ranking system, and maybe most of all, regarding competitions for young players. ITTF PTT Division will always look for better solutions, and in this process ITTF PTT Division will always be ready to listen to input from the players, the coaches, the nations etc.

Regards,

ITTF PTT Division