

RACKET CONTROL REPORT

ITTF Para Table Tennis World Championships
Gwangju, Korea , 25th October to 3rd November 2010

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ITTF PARA-TABLE TENNIS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

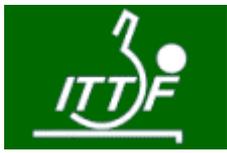
Gwangju, Korea 25 October – 3 November 2010

Submitted by:

RACHEL DE LEON RAMOS

Racket Controller

Philippines



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1. TOURNAMENT

ITTF Para Table Tennis World Championships

2. PLACE

Yeomju Gymnasium, Gwangju, KOREA

3. DATES

From 25 October to 3 November 2010

4. RACKET CONTROL PANEL

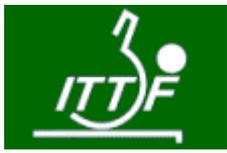
Racket Controllers: Rachel De Leon Ramos (Philippines)
Emiko Kajihara (Japan)

Volunteers: Seo Song-Ah (Korea)
Jeo Jessica (Korea)
Lee Hye Ran (Korea)

5. NO. OF RACKETS CONTROLLED

The scheduled Voluntary Racket Tests were held on October 26, 2010 from 10:30am until 6:30pm and October 27, 2010 from 9:00am to 2:00pm. During the competition, voluntary tests were accommodated starting from the afternoon of October 29 as decided by the referee. A total of **722** rackets were tested in these Championships, **353** in Voluntary Tests and in **369** in Compulsory Tests.

	Compulsory	Voluntary	Total
26 Oct.	0	207	207
27 Oct.	25	124	149
28 Oct.	44	0	44
29 Oct.	123	7	130
30 Oct.	96	11	107
31 Oct.	19	2	21
01 Nov	40	2	42
02 Nov	22	1	23
Total	369	353	722



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6. THICKNESS : RUBBER+SPONGE+ADHESIVE

Forty-six rackets failed the thickness test in the Voluntary Testing. Certain brands of rubbers were found to consistently failing the thickness test.

Due to the decision made by the Referee, supported by the Technical Delegate and Assistant Technical Delegate, these rubbers were still allowed to be used in these Championships. This was a repercussion mainly brought about by a technical fault on the part of the Racket Controllers on-duty, but nevertheless, it was seen the most acceptable decision for all concerned. However, this irregularity on the said rubbers was reported to the chairman of the Equipment Committee, and a further report was agreed to be made regarding these rubbers, which failed to conform even to their respective brand specification which could be readily regarded as the manufacturers' fault. The ITTF already contacted the companies involved and waiting an answer from them.

7. FLATNESS

Ten (10) rackets failed the flatness test in the Voluntary Testing, while none in the Compulsory Testing. The data collected showed a majority of "minus" values, meaning "concaved surface".

8. GLOSS

As there was no glossmeter, the glossiness of the rubbers was measured using the simple reflection method with the help of the net gauge. Five (5) rackets were found to have an illegal surface.

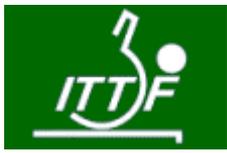
9. MiniRAE TEST RESULTS

Thirty-six (36) rackets failed the VOC test in the Voluntary Testing while only two (2) in the Compulsory Testing. The failed rackets in the Compulsory Testing were then reported to the referee for immediate action.

The highest value measured for failed rackets was a reading of **86.90**. The average of the measurements of VOCs in voluntary and compulsory tests was a reading of **0.5** which was way lower than the future target of a reading of **2** for 2011.

10. TEST PROCEDURE

The list of matches to be controlled for Post-match tests was made known only to the referees and umpires of the matches concerned. As per the recommended procedure, all umpires with assigned matches were given long brown envelopes meant for the rackets. The envelopes of the randomly selected matches/tables had yellow post-it notes inside, meaning



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that particular match/table was for control. Right after the match the umpire collected both players' rackets and brought them to the Racket Control Room. Players were advised that their rackets could be claimed from the Racket Control Room after 10 minutes. As this procedure was very new, there had been the expected confusion among the umpires at the start, which led to cancellation of scheduled matches for control. But this problem was little by little solved as the competition progressed.

On the other hand, the list of matches to be controlled for Before-match tests, from quarterfinals on was published at least one hour before the scheduled matches, and placed at the pigeon box and outside the doors of Rule 51 and Racket Control rooms. The players had to bring their rackets to the Racket Control room at least 20 minutes before their scheduled match. The tested rackets were then brought to the umpire at the playing area by the volunteers in marked envelopes.

However, a number of players opted to have After-match tests claiming that they wanted to have more time to practice prior to their match. In a case like this, a volunteer had to wait inside the playing hall to ensure that the racket used in the particular match would go directly to the Racket Control room for testing right after the match.

11. RACKET CONTROL ROOM

The Racket Control Room was fantastic. From the location, space, accessibility, facilities, and down to the office supplies and equipment made available, the Racket Control Room had been the most ideal room for the Racket Control activities. The size alone of the room was more than double of the recommended space of 30 sqm. This made possible the easy flow of human traffic coming and going through the room, including the wheelchair players.

Aside from meeting the requirements for Racket Control working station, the room had its temperature regulator as well as a comfort room. In addition, a telephone line was made available in the room as well as a mobile phone for the Chief Racket Controller.

12. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

INSPECTION OF RACKET CONTROL ROOM

As Chief Racket Controller, I inspected the dedicated room for Racket Control on the afternoon of the same day I arrived to Gwangju, Korea, which was on October 25. The room had already been prepared then. There was a computer with printer, lockers with keys, long tables, office chairs, and office supplies. All I did was to re-arrange the set-up and asked for more chairs. I also received the package from Spain bearing the two miniRAEs. When I asked about the other testing devices, I was told that there was none received. So I had to ask the Referee and the Technical Delegate regarding this but it was of no help. Entertaining the thought that it could have been possibly overlooked, the Referee and I suggested to the KTTAD coordinator to try borrowing from KTTA or table tennis suppliers. But, fortunately, it turned out to be a baseless worry as one arrived that evening.



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REFEREE'S BRIEFING

The Chief Racket Controller attended the Referee's Briefing held on October 26 at 10:30am. There I discussed about the Racket Control Procedures and answered questions and/or clarifications. This went on longer than expected as the procedure was new and unfamiliar to most, if not all, of the umpires present.

TECHNICAL MEETING

The Chief Racket Controller was not able to attend the Technical Meeting, held also on October 26 at 1:30pm, though it was pre-agreed with the Technical Delegate as I could not leave the Racket Control Room as a long queue had already built up for the Voluntary Testing. Only two of us were doing the tests at that time.

VOLUNTEERS

The scheduled Volunteers' training a day before the tournament, which was from 9:00am to 10:00am on 26 October, did not materialize as there was not even a single volunteer who showed up for the training. One volunteer, an old man, was assigned to the Racket Control Room in the morning and then a new one, a girl, in the afternoon, but only for rotating post, not really meant for stationary work in the Racket Control. After a number of follow ups were made, three volunteers, all young girls, finally started working in the Racket Control Room on the mid-afternoon of the second day, October 27. These three girls, trained to do the actual tests, became the regulars in the Racket Control Room until the final day of the competition. While additional volunteers had to help in the Racket Control room specifically during the last two days when Before-match tests were in operation and required tested rackets to be brought to the hall.

On the other hand, it is worthwhile to note that the young, energetic, and friendly volunteers made the Racket Control foster a relaxed and vibrant atmosphere. They may not have prior involvement with this sport but they embraced their job with so much enthusiasm and dedication. Likewise, players and/or coaches felt welcome and at ease while in the room which were a very refreshing sight, to say the least.

VOLUNTARY RACKET TESTING

Due to the non-availability of Volunteers, the Racket Controllers on-duty had to administer the Voluntary Racket Testing themselves. But prior to this, familiarization with the work entailed, forms to be completed and testing devices to be used took place. Only the Chief Racket Controller was with experience, having taken a few Racket Control assignments in the recent past.

Interestingly, the Voluntary Racket Testing, which was supposedly only for one day and in a prior agreed time schedule, had to be extended due to the large influx of players who wanted their rackets checked. This plausible decision to extend the schedule for Voluntary Testing was made by the Referee and the Technical Delegate as dictated by the circumstances. The Voluntary tests then ran nonstop from 10:30am to 6:30pm on October 26, and again nonstop from 9:00am to 2:00pm on October 27.



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The usual schedule for Voluntary Testing is in the afternoon a day before the tournament, and runs for 6 hours at the most. However this was not observed here, as decided by the Technical Delegate, in consideration of the other scheduled activities for that day. At the end, the Racket Controllers were able to accommodate all the players who wanted their rackets checked before they embarked on their very first match in these Championships.

DEVICES

There was only one set of Thickness and Flatness device used in this competition, which was brought by Alison Burchell from the ITTF office. Though there were two miniRAEs sent from Spain, only one was functioning and the other was not. This was reported to Vicky Eleftheriade and she in turn advised the Chief Racket Controller to try to calibrate it, and even sent the process of calibration. However this did not work either. As a result, only one miniRAE was used in this competition from start to finish. But in spite of this, the Racket Controllers tried to schedule a maximum number of matches/tables to be controlled per session that they could handle, with the confirmation of the Referee.

On the other hand, a magnifier with scale was used in testing the thickness of rubbers for rackets with either attached straps or some form of reinforcement around the handle or on the edge of the blade near the handle. As this was the first Para event assignment for both Racket Controllers on-duty, encountering such kind of rackets were also very new to them.

RACKET CONTROL FORMS

The necessary forms for Racket Control were only made available on the morning of October 26, which was previously requested to be ready by October 25, after a number of follow ups. This added to the concerns piling up in the Racket Control room in that morning of October 26 as the room was being readied for the scheduled Voluntary Testing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Volunteers' training is a must. The number of volunteers must correspond to the magnitude of the event. A specific number of volunteers must be assigned solely for the Racket Control Room and must not take other posts.
2. Meeting with the Referee a day before the match is a must. This would ensure the smooth flow of the Racket Control activities, procedures, and set standard.
3. The number of testing devices available must also correspond to the magnitude of the event.



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MESSAGE OF THANKS

This had been the first assignment in a Para tournament for both the Racket Controllers on-duty. Though the start of the work had not gone so well but rather had encountered a number of glitches, the Racket Controllers-on duty found the experience here as most satisfying and fulfilling. The working atmosphere had been surprisingly relaxed, fun, and enjoyable. It helped a lot that the people behind this event had been very supportive, cooperative, and concerned all throughout. There was the undeniable spirit of harmony which effectively conquered differences in shapes and sizes. A concerted effort attune with the attitude that everything is possible. In effect, everybody was contributing in his or her own simple way to ensure the smooth rendition of these Championships from start to finish.

Having said that, the Racket Controllers on-duty would like to express their gratitude to each and everyone who has helped, inspired, and moved them, one way or another, to perform their duties to the best of their abilities. They sincerely thank the Organizing Committee and its workforce, the Korea Table Tennis Association for the Disabled, ITTF Para TT Division led by its chairperson Mr. Oivind Eriksen, Technical Delegate Mr. Nico Verspeelt, Tournament Referee Mr. Cyril Sen and his team, as well as our volunteers, for their devoted co-operation, assistance, and support to the Racket Control works.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R de Leon Ramos', is written in a cursive style.

RACHEL DE LEON RAMOS

November 7, 2010
Manila, Philippines