



Professional & Amateur Pinball Association Complete Competition Rules

This document contains the rules for the *PAPA World Pinball Championships*. This document is also the baseline for all PAPA-related competitive pinball rulings. *Leagues and tournaments are welcome to copy these rules and adapt them as needed but are required, as per the Creative Commons license, to cite the original source PAPA.org within their own ruleset.* This document is actively updated, and all leagues and tournaments using this ruleset as a baseline are encouraged to update their own rules at least once per year.

The Pinburgh Match-Play Championships ruleset contains adjustments that supersede portions of this document for that specific tournament.

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The event coordinators for the PAPA World Championships are Kevin Martin, Mark Steinman, Elizabeth Cromwell, and Douglas Polka. Event coordinators organize volunteers, designate scorekeepers, handle malfunctions and rulings, delegate responsibilities and authority, and otherwise work to ensure the smooth operation of the tournament. Event coordinators and designated officials may participate in the tournament, but their tickets will automatically be considered void at all times, and they are not eligible to participate in any final rounds or to receive prizes of any kind.

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I. Quick Overview

PAPA tournament rules are quite lengthy and detailed. They reflect the experience of many years of tournament and league play, under many different systems. The principles are simple, however.

In Divisions A, B, and C, qualifying scores will be drawn from a player's best attempts on six of the twelve available machines. Each individual attempt on a machine will be weighted against all other attempts on that same machine and ranked on a scale of 0-100 points. This ranking system allows individual game scores from different eras of pinball to be compared directly with one another. Players are permitted as many attempts as they wish on each of the twelve machines within a division, but only their best attempt on six different machines will count toward their overall qualifying score.

In the three classics divisions, competitors will be scored on their best four out of sixteen machines. In all other divisions, competitors will be scored on their best four of the eight machines available. Qualifying attempts for Divisions A, B, C and D may be made any time the facility is open between Thursday morning and closing time on Saturday.

In the final rounds, qualifying players play against each other in multiplayer games. A point system is used to determine who advances to the next round and, ultimately, who wins the division.

II. Singles Competition

1. Divisions of Play

- **Division D** – Division D at the PAPA World Championships is designed for beginners and novice players. This Division is intended to offer experience to players who are new to competitive pinball. If you are unsure of how PAPA's tournament process works or do not feel comfortable competing in Divisions A, B, or C, we encourage you to play in Division D. Please note that Division D is heavily restricted to only allow newer competitive players.
- **Division C** – Division C at the PAPA World Championships is designed for players with below average league or tournament experience, or anyone who does not feel confident competing in Divisions A or B. Please note that some restrictions will be applied to help determine who can and cannot enter Division C.
- **Division B** – While Division B is frequently labeled as an intermediate division, this designation is relative to the rest of the PAPA World Championships. The level of skill exhibited in this division is higher than the main divisions of the vast majority of tournaments throughout the world. Players with higher than average league or tournament experience who are not yet capable of competing in the main division at the PAPA World Championships play in Division B. Please note that some restrictions will be applied to help determine who can and cannot enter Division B.
- **Division A** – The main division of the PAPA World Pinball Championships is the most renowned event in all of competitive pinball, annually deciding the title of PAPA World Pinball Champion. All players of any skill level are welcome to compete in Division A and challenge for the title!
- **Classics Division** – PAPA offers three separate Classics events at the World Pinball Championships, featuring machines created prior to 1990. The Classics divisions function as their own self-contained daily tournaments and do not prohibit any player from also competing in any other division.
- **Juniors Division** – Only players 15 years old or younger are permitted to play in Juniors. This division offers medals to the winners and is intended to encourage younger players by providing them experience in the PAPA tournament setting. In order to ensure each player has a chance to experience the pressure of a final rounds format, all Juniors players will be entered into the final rounds.
- **Seniors Division** – Only players 50 years of age or older are permitted to compete in the Seniors division.
- **Womens Division** – Only women will be permitted to compete in the womens division.
- **Split-Flipper** – The Split Flipper Division gives competitors the chance to play with a partner. Each player is permitted to control the buttons on one side of the machine cabinet, and they may only do so with a single, designated hand once the ball has been plunged. Players may only switch sides, or hands, between balls, although they are permitted to nudge at all times with their non-designated hand.

Note that the Juniors, Seniors, Womens, and Division D will share the same bank of machines during qualifying and final rounds.

2. Skill Division Restrictions

Divisions A, B, C, & D are considered major divisions. Competitors may only play in one major division at a time. A player may choose to move to a higher major division, with Division A being the highest and Division D being the lowest, automatically voiding all tickets in lower divisions (no refunds are provided), but no player may move to a lower division without special permission from tournament directors. Players are not permitted to change divisions after noon on Saturday.

The following restrictions are designed to discourage any player from intentionally competing beneath his or her level of skill:

- Any player who has placed in the top four of Division B or C at the finals of any previous PAPA tournament must enter the next higher division in their next PAPA tournament. If they fail to qualify in the higher division, they may return to the original lower division in the following year.
- Any player who has qualified in the Division A or B of any previous PAPA tournament may not enter a lower division in subsequent tournaments except at the discretion of tournament officials.
- At the discretion of the tournament officials, any player may be required to move to a higher division based on his or her performance or past league or tournament standings.
- Any player who plays in more than one major division will not be allowed to void their first ticket in the higher division. Non-voided tickets are used by the automated scoring system to establish which division is valid for each player.
- Players ranked between 1 and 199 in the World Pinball Player Rankings are restricted to Division A.
- Players ranked between 200 and 599 in the World Pinball Player Rankings are restricted to Division B or higher.
- Players ranked between 600 and 7499 in the World Pinball Player Rankings are restricted to Division C or higher.
- Only unranked players, or players ranked higher than 7500 in the World Pinball Player Rankings are permitted to compete in Division D.
- No player may move to a higher division after noon on Saturday, in order to prevent sudden shifts in standings late in the qualifying process.

3. Fees

Registration is not required to play mini-tournaments, to play non-tournament machines, or to simply watch. Each registered player receives an identifying number and this number is used to track his or her subsequent play. Registration also does not include tickets in any division; each ticket is sold for an additional fee. Players may enter in their chosen division(s) as many times as they like. Each day of qualifying will have a published cut-off time, beyond which no new ticket may be played.

The fees for tickets in each division are:

Types of Passes	Price	Division	Price
General Attendee	\$20	Division A	\$5 per ticket, or 3 tickets for \$12
Weekend Pass (All 5 Days)	\$75	Division B	\$4 per ticket, or 3 tickets for \$10
Evening Pass (After 7pm)	\$15	Division C	\$3 per ticket, or 3 tickets for \$8
Kids Pass (6-16)	\$15	Division D	\$1 per ticket
Kids Under 5	Free!	Classics	\$4 per ticket, or 3 tickets for \$10
		Other Divisions	\$2 per ticket, or 3 tickets for \$5

No tickets will be refunded at any time, so please plan your timing accordingly with the posted schedule.

4. Prizes

The tournament features a guaranteed package of prizes. In the event of an overrun beyond expenses, excess revenue will fund the operations of the non-profit Replay Foundation.

Division A		Division B	
1st Place	7000 + Trophy	1st Place	2000 + Trophy
2nd Place	2000 + Medal	2nd Place	1000 + Medal
3rd Place	1200 + Medal	3rd Place	600 + Medal
4th Place	800 + Medal	4th Place	400 + Medal
5th-8th Place	400	5th-8th Place	200
9th-16th Place	250	9th-16th Place	125
17th-24th Place	200	17th-24th Place	100
Division C		Division D	
1st Place	1000 + Trophy Cup	1st Place	150 + Trophy Cup
2nd Place	500 + Medal	2nd Place	125 + Medal
3rd Place	300 + Medal	3rd Place	100 + Medal
4th Place	200 + Medal	4th Place	75 + Medal
5th-8th Place	100	5th-8th Place	50
9th-16th Place	75	9th-16th Place	25
17th-24th Place	50	17th-24th Place	25
Classics I, II, & III		All Other Divisions	
1st Place	1000 + Trophy Cup	1st Place	Medal
2nd Place	500 + Medal	2nd Place	Medal
3rd Place	300 + Medal	3rd Place	Medal
4th Place	200 + Medal	4th Place	Medal
5th-8th Place	100		
9th-16th Place	75		
17th-24th Place	50		

Total prize package \$37,000+

The winner of the A Division will also receive the title ***“World Pinball Champion”***. This title remains in effect until the next annual PAPA tournament, or will expire after two years if PAPA tournaments are discontinued.

III. Singles: Qualifying Rounds

1. Purchasing Tickets

Before purchasing any tickets, players must be registered. A registered player may purchase qualifying round tickets in one or more appropriate divisions (at most one skill division, plus special divisions if eligible). Each purchased ticket is specific to one division. Players should keep their registered player number handy for use when purchasing tickets.

Tickets will not be sold for any division beyond the posted time, nor will tickets be sold for the Classics Division except when it is operating. Tickets are non-refundable unless by special permission or as described herein.

2. Playing a Ticket

When a competitor is ready to play a qualifying round ticket, he or she approaches the bank of machines designated for the division corresponding to the ticket. The player will select the appropriate machine to be played for the qualifying ticket. The exact number of machines in each bank may vary from division to division and from tournament to tournament. A typical example might be a bank of twelve machines, from which six count toward the overall qualifying score.

Only the highest score achieved by the player on each machine, no matter how many times that player has played that specific machine, will count toward that player's score. The player will line up behind the machine he or she wants to play. When it is the player's turn, he or she will signal for a scorekeeper who will take down the player's number. At no time may the player begin play on any machine without being instructed to do so by the scorekeeper. Players may select a different machine for each qualifying ticket.

After playing each game, the player will request that the scorekeeper record his or her score before leaving the machine. It is the player's responsibility to ensure that the scorekeeper takes down the score, and to verify the score for correctness prior to submission. If a player's score is recorded incorrectly and the result is beneficial to the player, tournament directors reserve the right to correct the mistake. In all other qualifying situations, the recorded score will stand.

When each ticket has been completed, the player must verify the score with the scorekeeper prior to its submission.

At any point during play or immediately after play has been completed, the player may elect to abandon his or her ticket by notifying the scorekeeper that the ticket in question should be voided. This will void the score for that specific ticket, and the ticket will not be entered into the scoring system except as a "void", which does not affect scoring in any way. No money will be refunded for a voided ticket.

Players who begin a ticket must remain present to complete the ticket or risk it being voided by a scorekeeper or tournament director.

3. Scoring

Scores posted on a particular machine are maintained in a ranking. Point values are assigned to each position in this ranking. The overall qualifying score of a competitor is the total of the point values assigned to his or her highest scores on the machines that have been played. Because the rankings will change as new scores are posted on each machine, the overall qualifying score of a competitor may change as the qualifying rounds progress.

It is important to note that only a subset of games in each division count toward a competitor's overall qualifying score. For instance, in Divisions A, B, & C, a total of twelve games will be available for competitors to play, but only a competitor's highest scores on six separate machines will count toward their qualifying total. Competitors retain the option of playing all twelve machines during the qualifying period, but it is not necessary in order to advance to the final rounds.

In the event of two or more scores on a machine being exactly tied, the highest point value of the tied positions will be awarded for each such score.

There are no scoring normalizers or other adjustments. Scores cannot be compared across divisions. As the qualifying rounds progress, players may wish to adjust their choice of qualifying machines according to the scores already posted, as well as their personal skills and preferences.

The rank of the player's result on each machine contributes the following points to the score for that ticket.

Rank	Score
1st	100 points
2nd	90
3rd	85
4th down to 87th	84 down to 1

Tournament officials will provide up-to-date scores and rankings at all times, using a projected screen or television-type display. The up-to-date scores and rankings are also available on the web site at all times.

4. Scoring Example

Example: The games available in qualifying were:

1. Supersonic
2. Space Invaders
3. World Cup Soccer
4. The Shadow
5. Jackbot
6. World Poker Tour
7. Rolling Stones
8. Attack From Mars
9. Centaur
10. Metallica
11. Wizard of Oz
12. Addams Family

Elizabeth played several games multiple times and others zero times. Any scores lower than those listed below did not count toward Elizabeth's final qualifying ranking.

- Elizabeth's highest score on Supersonic was third overall, scoring her 85 qualifying points.
- Elizabeth's highest score on Space Invaders was 18th, scoring her 70 points (155 total through two games).
- Elizabeth's highest score on World Cup Soccer was 15th, earning her 73 points (228 through three games).
- Elizabeth's highest score on The Shadow was the 1st, earning her 100 points (328 through four games).
- Elizabeth's highest score on Jackbot was 5th, earning her 83 additional qualifying points (411 through five games).
- Elizabeth's highest score on World Poker Tour was 6th, earning her 82 qualifying points (493 through six games).
- Elizabeth's highest score on Rolling Stones was 22nd, earning her 66 additional qualifying points (This ticket was not high enough to be included in Elizabeth's top six overall scores, and so it does not count toward her qualifying total).
- Elizabeth's highest score on Attack From Mars was 150th, earning her 0 additional qualifying points (This ticket was not high enough to be included in Elizabeth's top six overall scores, and so it does not count toward her qualifying total).
- Elizabeth's highest score on Centaur was 22nd, earning her 66 additional qualifying points (This ticket was not high enough to be included in Elizabeth's top six overall scores, and so it does not count toward her qualifying total).
- Elizabeth chose not to play Metallica
- Elizabeth chose not to play Wizard of Oz
- Elizabeth chose not to play Addams Family

In the above example, Elizabeth's qualifying total will be 493 points, which is the sum of her highest six individual machine scores out of the twelve available machines. It is important to note the total number of points needed to qualify will change from year to year depending on how players perform on the games and rank against one another. In this example, the highest possible qualifying score would be first place on all six games, or 600 points.

IV. Singles: Final Rounds

1. Advancing to Finals

When qualifying rounds have been completed, a final calculation of scores will be made. Those scores will be ranked, and the top unique players in each division will advance to the final rounds. No player may qualify in more than one skill division.

The determination of final qualifying standings will be made by tournament officials at the end of qualifying on Saturday night, and shall not be changed for any reason, including player error or tournament error.

The number of qualifying slots which will advance to the final rounds is partly dependent upon the number of players competing. At a minimum, each division will take the top eight qualifiers to the final rounds. This may expand to nine, twelve, sixteen, or other numbers as determined by tournament officials. The final decision on expanding the number of qualifiers in each division will be made no later than 11pm on the Friday night of the tournament. In the event that any chosen number of qualifiers does not match the groupings described in these rules (for 6, 8, 9, 12, 16, or 24 players), the groupings will be posted at the time of the decision. Based on attendance in recent years, standard practice has been to include 24 competitors in the final rounds.

Finals in each division will consist of a semifinal round and a final round, unless twelve or more qualifiers are playing, in which case additional rounds may be employed.

In the event a qualifying player is not available, he or she will be skipped in the ranking as if he or she had not qualified. Upon discovering at any point (before finals play or during finals play) that a player is not present, tournament officials will make a specific announcement for that player, allowing at least ten minutes for that player to appear. Substitutions or late arrivals are not allowed.

No player shall be allowed to play in the finals of more than one division simultaneously. Any player who qualifies in two divisions with a scheduling conflict must select only one finals round in which to compete.

2. Qualifying Tiebreak Procedure

In the event that two or more players are tied on the qualifying bubble, such that not all of the tied players can advance to the final rounds, or a meaningful tiebreaker needs to be played, such as to determine a bye, a tiebreaking procedure will be utilized. A single game will be played on a machine selected by tournament officials from the qualifying bank of the division. The tied players will play, in randomly determined order, in a multiplayer game on the selected machine, and will subsequently be ranked in the order of their scores on that game. If more players are tied than the selected machine will support in a single game, multiple games will be played to accommodate all tied players, in randomly determined order, and the resulting scores will be compared as if they had occurred in a single game on the same machine.

Player groups in a tiebreaker will be arranged breadth-first so that each group is of similar, but descending, size. For example, five players will be arranged as a group of three and a group of two, rather than a group of four and a solo player. Nine players would be arranged as three groups of three.

In the event that two or more players are tied but are not on the qualifying bubble, a random tiebreak procedure will be implemented to assign players to groups. Under no circumstances will players be given a choice of groups at any time.

3. Final Round Machines & Warmup

The machines used for final rounds in each division will be designated before the beginning of the final rounds of play. This designation will be determined solely by tournament officials, and may include in each division machines that were not utilized in the qualifying rounds for that division, as well as machines not previously utilized in the tournament at all. There will be at least four machines available in each division, and quite likely more.

All games played in the final rounds are treated as three-player or four-player. In the event a machine being utilized does not support enough simultaneous players, multiple games will be played on the same machine, with playing order preference going by original seeding as usual, and the resulting scores will be compared as if a single multiplayer game had been played.

Before the final rounds begin, a 30-minute warmup period will be provided. This allows players to obtain a feel for certain machine features such as kickouts. Any player who notices problems with a machine at this time must notify tournament officials. This warm-up period will only be made available in Divisions A, B, C, and D.

4. Final Round Scoring

Each group will play three separate four-player games, each on a different machine from among those designated for that division.

Each four-player game will be scored as follows:

Rank	Score
1st	4
2nd	2
3rd	1
4th	0

Three-player games will be scored as if a nonexistent fourth player received the 4th place finish (i.e., 1st earns 4 points, 2nd earns 2, and last earns 1).

In the event of two or more scores on a machine being exactly tied, the players with such scores will immediately play a tiebreaker game, on the same machine, unless another machine is selected by tournament officials.

The group that contains the highest-seeded player gets first choice of machine and order of play. The highest-seeded player within each group may choose *either* the machine to be played, or the order of play. If the highest-seeded player chooses order of play, the remaining players may choose their order, in descending order of seeding, and choice of machine then goes to the next highest-seeded player in the group. Conversely, if the highest-seeded player chooses the machine to be played, then the next highest-seeded player chooses the order of play, with the remaining players choosing order of play in decreasing order of seeding. Once a player verbally announces their game choice, or chooses position, that decision cannot be changed.

If at any point a high-seed player declines to make a choice, the choice is deferred to the next highest-seeded player, as appropriate. The affected group still retains its order of choice among groups, however. If no player in a group will make a choice, the choice(s) are determined by tournament officials, who may or may not choose randomly.

Note that the original seeding of players when entering the final rounds from qualifying is used in every round. At no time does a player's seeding change from round to round; therefore the advantage of qualifying in first place can be significant.

No group may select a machine which has already been selected by a group in the same round, nor may they choose a machine on which they have already played in that round (unless machine malfunctions have made this unavoidable; tournament officials may choose to provide additional or substitute machines, however). If the machine selected is currently being played by another group in a previous round of play, the group may wait for that round of play to be completed. For example, if one group is playing a given machine as their first machine, a different group may choose to wait for it as their second machine.

In the event a division's final round overlaps with qualifying for a different division on the same bank of games, final round groups are permitted to wait for games that are being used by players attempting to qualify for a different division.

In the event too few machines are available during any round of play, the group(s) with the lowest high-seed players will be forced to wait until a game becomes available. As soon as a game becomes available, as indicated by the scorekeeper, the next highest-seeded group must begin play on that machine. In this situation, choice of order of play will be made by the highest-seed player in the group (unless that player declines, as described above).

When all games have been completed by a group, each player will have a point total for the round. The players with the top two point totals from each group will advance.

5. Round of 24

If a Round of 24 is to be used, it will consist of players ranked 9th through 24th, with the top eight highest seeded players receiving a bye.

	24 Qualifiers
Group 1	#9, #16, #17, #24
Group 2	#10, #15, #18, #23
Group 3	#11, #14, #19, #22
Group 4	#12, #13, #20, #21

6. Quarterfinal Round

A quarterfinal round may be employed only if twelve or more qualifiers are playing in a division. Tournament officials may choose to skip this round even with twelve or more qualifiers.

In the quarterfinal rounds, the qualifiers in each division will be divided into three or four groups as follows:

	12 Qualifiers	16 Qualifiers
Group 1	#1, #6, #7, #12	#1, #8, #9, #16
Group 2	#2, #5, #8, #11	#2, #7, #10, #15
Group 3	#3, #4, #9, #10	#3, #6, #11, #14
Group 4	n/a	#4, #5, #12, #13

7. Semifinal Rounds

For the semifinal rounds in each division, the qualifiers in each division (or players advancing from quarterfinals, if those were played) will be divided into two to four groups of three or four, as necessary depending on the number of qualifiers. The groups will be organized according to the original qualifying rank as shown here:

# Qualifiers:	6	8	9
Group 1	#1, #4, #6	#1, #4, #5, #8	#1, #6, #9
Group 2	#2, #3, #5	#2, #3, #6, #7	#2, #5, #8
Group 3	n/a	n/a	#3, #4, #7
Group 4	n/a	n/a	n/a

As in the previous round, the players with the top two point totals from each group of players will advance.

8. Final Round

In each division, four players advance to the final round. The final round for each division is conducted in the same manner as the semifinal round. The total scores for this round will determine the ordering of winners in each division. All ties in the final round are considered significant.

Unless otherwise determined by tournament officials, the same machines will be used in the final rounds as the previous rounds.

9. Winners

All information on collecting prize money can be found at <https://papa.org/prizes>

10. Classics Division

The final rounds of the Classics I, II, and III divisions, as played on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings of the tournament, will utilize the final rounds format of the A/B/C/D divisions.

In the event that a selected machine supports fewer than four players, the players will play multiple one-player or two-player games in turn, with the resulting scores being compared as if a four-player game had been played.

Machines used in Classics may include extra balls and/or five-ball play. These features may be utilized by the player unless otherwise posted.

Winners for each day of Classics competition will receive their awards promptly and do not need to wait until the awards ceremony on Sunday. We appreciate everyone's understanding of the unique challenges and limitations of using older machines for a competitive tournament. All prize checks will be mailed out no later than 60 days following the event.

11. Final Round Tiebreak Procedure

Significant ties between players at the end of any final round will be resolved by one tiebreaking game chosen by the highest seed involved in the tie. The high seed is not permitted to choose a game that has already been played by the group in that round. Note that a tie is only significant if it affects whether or not a player will advance toward the final round, or occurs in the final round.

If more than one group of players are tied, the machine is chosen for the group with the highest-ranking tied player first. The selected machine is not available for selection in lower groups. All tied groups will play their tiebreaking games in parallel.

In the unlikely event of an exact scoring tie on the tiebreaking game, only those affected players will play another tiebreaking game, on another game chosen in similar fashion, under the same rules.

V. Other Competitions

1. Mini-Tournaments

Rules and descriptions of all mini-tournaments, if offered, will be posted at the event.

2. Target Scores

On any given day of the tournament, tournament officials may choose to post a set of target scores or objectives for certain machines. The first player to reach any target score will be awarded \$100 cash. Target scores expire at the end of the day and are only awarded to the first player to exceed the score.

3. Door Prizes

Other door prizes and/or random drawings may be offered as tournament officials see fit.

VI. Malfunctions and Rulings

1. The Nature of Pinball

The unique charm of pinball lies, in large part, in the physical nature of the game. Unfortunately, this means that unusual events and outright malfunctions cannot be prevented, nor can they be perfectly compensated for. PAPA attempts to strike a balance between compensating for malfunctions and accepting the physical nature of the game.

In certain cases, malfunctions will be dealt with more strictly during final rounds than during qualifying rounds, at the discretion of tournament officials.

2. Minor Malfunctions

A minor malfunction is any incident without external cause which deviates from the normal course of gameplay, without directly causing a player's loss of turn and without providing any player a significant advantage over others. A minor malfunction is considered part of normal play. Tournament officials shall determine what constitutes a significant advantage; in the event that such an advantage is obtained, refer to "Beneficial Malfunctions".

A minor malfunction that occurs repeatedly, to the extent that it is markedly affecting play of the machine, may be considered a major malfunction at the sole discretion of tournament officials. If a player receives a tilt warning caused inadvertently by another player's action, please see the "Player Errors" section for how that situation will be handled.

3. Major Malfunctions

A major malfunction is a gameplay problem with a machine that results in the premature loss of ball in play in a fashion that is not a normal feature of the machine's gameplay. These may be unusual one-time events, or they may indicate a recurring problem that will need to be addressed by technicians.

Examples of major malfunctions include:

- The bonus count begins while the ball is still in play. This can happen if, for example, the machine loses track of how many balls are in the drain trough.
- A flipper or other major playfield feature ceases to function.

Note that unrepeated physical failures, such as kickbacks or balls jumping off ramps, balls flying over flippers, or balls moonwalking into the outlane following a successful shot do not qualify as major malfunctions. This is the physical nature of pinball.

Any malfunction that results in the loss of one or more balls during multiball play, without losing all balls so as to end the player's turn, will only be considered a minor malfunction. Loss of any lit feature, running mode, or other gameplay specifics, shall not be considered a major malfunction. Loss of Tilt warnings, without loss of ball, shall not be considered a major malfunction. If the loss of Tilt warnings was caused by another player, please see the "Player Errors" section for how that situation will be handled.

Should a player lose a ball due to a flipper not engaging when the flipper button is pressed, or due to a flipper sticking in the held position when the flipper button is pressed, they should immediately notify a tournament

official. The tournament official will attempt to recreate the problem by pressing the flipper button for up to 3 minutes. If the tournament official is able to recreate the problem, this will be treated as a Major Malfunction. If the problem is not able to be recreated, this will not be treated as a Major Malfunction and play will continue. If the game is in multiball play and one or more balls are lost as a result of this kind of issue, possibly ending multiball but not ending the ball in play, this will be considered no worse than a minor malfunction.

When a major malfunction occurs, it is the player's responsibility to notify the scorekeeper, calmly and promptly. The scorekeeper will request advice from a tournament official. If the official(s) agree that the incident is a major malfunction, one of the following steps will be taken, in order of priority:

- 1. If the machine's software supports adding balls to a game already in progress, a tournament official will add a ball to the game in progress and the affected player will complete their game. All other players will continue to play their game as normal, without skipping a ball.
- If the major malfunction cannot be fixed without resetting the machine, the player's score will be recorded and their game will be terminated and restarted. The affected player will continue their remaining balls on the restarted game and their score from the aborted game will be added to their total. For example, if such a malfunction occurs on Ball 2 of a 3-ball game, the player will be given two new balls on a restarted game. In multiplayer games, all players will receive the same compensation.
- If the major malfunction can be fixed without resetting the machine, the player will be provided with one additional ball of play at the beginning of a new game, after the current game has been completed. The player's total score on the additional ball will be added to his or her previous score, and the new game will be terminated.

Tournament directors may allow the player to play ball 3 or 5 of the new game, if that player has been denied certain features that are freely awarded by the machine. Examples of this include 'Double Bonus' balls on many EM machines, as well as pity Mist Multiball on Dracula should the player have not yet played one. The player's total score on the additional ball of play will be added to his or her previous score, and the new game will be terminated. Tournament directors will NEVER attempt to re-establish the state of any game features at the time of the Major or Catastrophic Malfunction.

In the event that two or more major malfunctions take place during the same game, the current scores of the player(s) will be recorded, and the game terminated. Once the machine has been repaired, players will be provided additional ball(s) of play on a new game, as necessary to provide the correct number of balls of play for each player. In the event that a recurring major malfunction cannot suitably be repaired, the failure must be treated as a catastrophic malfunction.

Under certain specific conditions, a major malfunction may be declined by the player. This must be approved by the tournament official, and must not result in a situation which provides an unfair advantage to the player.

4. Known Malfunctions

Any malfunction or unusual behavior that is determined to be relatively minor but unusual enough to merit comment may, at the discretion of tournament officials, be posted for players to be aware of before playing the affected machine. Players who have played the machine before this notice is provided will not be allowed to replay the machine nor to replace it with play of another machine. The occurrence of any posted malfunction will be treated as a minor malfunction unless it worsens or interacts with another feature to yield a major malfunction.

5. Catastrophic Malfunctions

A catastrophic malfunction is any event, not caused by a player, which immediately ends play for all players on the machine.

Examples of catastrophic malfunctions include:

- The game system crashes and/or resets due to a software error or component failure.
- Power is lost or interrupted.
- A new game starts.
- A major malfunction repeatedly recurs in spite of attempts to repair the machine.

Any event caused by a player, intentionally or unintentionally, including Slam Tilts, is covered under "Player Errors" below.

When a catastrophic malfunction occurs, if the scores are able to be recorded, players will be provided the appropriate number of additional ball(s) of play on a new game once the machine has been repaired. If the scores are not retrievable, players will be forced to start their game over.

Tournament directors may allow the player to play ball 3 or 5 of the new game, if that player has been denied certain features that are freely awarded by the machine. Examples of this include 'Double Bonus' balls on many EM machines, as well as pity Mist Multiball on Dracula should the player have not yet played one. The player's total score on the additional ball of play will be added to his or her previous score, and the new game will be terminated. Tournament directors may attempt to re-establish the state of certain game features at the time of the Major Malfunction if the tournament directors feel this has a material impact on the results of the game/match in play. An example would include reaching Super Bonus on Bally games that carry this forward for future balls.

If a machine affected by catastrophic malfunction cannot be repaired in order to continue play, it is considered disabled; please see "Disabled Machines".

6. Beneficial Malfunctions

Any malfunction which provides at least one player with a significant advantage over any other player competing on that machine is known as a beneficial malfunction. Tournament officials shall determine what constitutes a significant advantage.

Any beneficial malfunction which results in a player being able to continue play of a ball that normally should have ended is allowed once per game. Examples of this would include an unexpected software ball save or a ball that comes to rest on an unlit kickback in the outlane (which will lead to a ball search, kicking the ball back into play). Any such behavior shall not be allowed if it repeats, meaning that tournament officials may require players to allow the repeatedly-saved ball to drain, or play on the machine may be terminated in accordance with catastrophic malfunction rules, at which point repairs may be attempted.

For situations where a ball goes through the drain trough area without triggering the trough switch, and is spit out into the plunger lane as the same 'ball in play' will be immediately placed in the drain. This mostly occurs in EM machines, and early Williams Solid State machines. For situations where the playfield isn't yet valid (typically this is a minimum switch count or some sort of scoring having been made), players will be allowed to continue play as normal. Please contact a tournament director immediately should this situation arise.

Any beneficial malfunction which provides one or more players with a significant scoring or strategic advantage in a way that is not part of normal gameplay will void the score of the affected player(s), unless all immediately-affected players and tournament officials can agree on a suitable adjustment of the score or other elimination of the advantage. If the beneficial malfunction has been specifically avoided by the player, it is unlikely that a penalty is necessary. If any player score(s) are voided, the affected player(s) may then replay the game after the other players have finished, and the new score(s) are used for the affected player(s).

Examples of beneficial malfunctions would include a jackpot switch that registers when a different target is hit, or a valuable switch that scores once without the ball contacting it. See also "Stuck Balls", below.

Any situation which indicates the presence of a beneficial malfunction should be brought to the attention of the scorekeeper promptly, who will alert tournament officials. Any player who intentionally takes advantage of a significant beneficial malfunction may be given a warning and/or have his or her affected ticket interrupted and disqualified by tournament officials.

7. Stuck Balls

During the course of play, it is possible for one or more balls to become stuck on a playfield feature, usually after becoming airborne. If this happens during single ball play, the player must wait for three automatic ball searches to occur. At the discretion of the tournament director, the forcing of a ball search to be triggered can be waived. This is for situations where inducing a ball search has adverse effects on the current game state. The expiration of any timed feature during this period is not considered a malfunction.

If the stuck ball has not been freed after four such searches, or if the machine is not performing searches for some reason, the player must alert the scorekeeper, and a tournament official will be brought to the machine. The player must remain alert and at the machine, as he or she is responsible for the ball if it becomes freed at any point. Where possible, machines will be configured with "chase" features disabled, so that additional balls will not be released into play as a result of ball searches. However, in the event this occurs, the player is responsible for continuing play, and a suitable malfunction will only be ruled if the machine is unable to function normally from this point forward.

A tournament official may initially choose to try to free the stuck ball through judicious nudging, tapping, etc. The player must remain ready to resume play at the machine during this attempt. If actions by the official result in a Tilt, this will be treated as a major malfunction (not the fault of the player). If the official frees the ball but the player does not successfully continue play, this is normal play (the fault of the player). Loss of Tilt warnings due to tournament official nudging is considered normal play.

If the tournament official is unable to free the stuck ball, the machine will be opened, and the stuck ball freed and placed either in the plunger lane, or on the upraised flipper of the tournament directors choosing, with the flipper button held by the player. In the event this is not possible, the official may select another location or feature where the ball can be placed safely while the machine is being closed in order to resume normal play.

If more than one ball is stuck, all freed balls will be placed on the flipper(s) of the tournament director's choice before play resumes, or in the plunger lane if the flippers are inactive while the machine is open.

If the ball is inadvertently freed while the machine is open and drains without the player regaining complete control (stopped on a flipper), this will be treated as a major malfunction. If the machine cannot be opened successfully, or if opening or closing the machine terminates the game(s) in progress for any reason, this will be treated as a catastrophic malfunction. If the ball is freed and the machine closed without the player's loss of ball, play continues as normal. If the game is in multiball play and one or more balls are lost as a result of freeing stuck balls, possibly ending multiball but not ending the ball in play, this will be considered no worse than a minor malfunction. If any feature or mode that is lit or active times out while one or more balls are stuck, this will not be considered a malfunction.

Any player who chooses to shake or bump the machine in order to free a stuck ball does so at his or her own risk. No allowance will be made for a player who tilts while attempting to free a stuck ball, whether or not tournament officials are present.

If a ball becomes stuck during a multiball mode, the player should attempt to trap the other ball(s) in play and request assistance. A stuck ball during multiball often represents a significant beneficial malfunction, and intentionally taking advantage may result in a penalty. Please note specifically that a ball ending up in the plunger lane during multiball on a machine where there is no autoplugger (or where the autoplugger for some reason refuses to fire) counts as a stuck ball, and the ball must be plunged by the player. See "Beneficial Malfunctions" for further details.

Any player who misuses a game feature in order to intentionally trap a ball during a multiball mode, such as holding in the plunger on Tommy in order to defeat the autoplugger, may be given a warning and/or have his or her affected game disqualified by tournament officials. Please note that intentionally causing ball searches is also prohibited (see "Delay" under "Player Conduct").

In situations where a ball is trapped in a way that it can be released through player action other than shaking or bumping – for example, a ball at rest underneath a flipper or any other mechanism which the player controls – this is not deemed to be a stuck ball. Balls trapped in this fashion during multiball modes are not generally considered to be a rules violation, although the ruling will depend on the exact machine and situation.

Any ball that comes to rest in an outlane, where any portion of the ball is below the outlane post, is not deemed a stuck ball. In these instances, players will have the option of attempting to free the ball themselves or to ask a tournament official to manually trigger the outlane switch and drain the ball for them. Please note that when this happens in multiball, in no way will a player be allowed to take advantage of this situation by continuing to play any other balls currently available. The situation of this ball that has come to rest needs to be dealt with immediately by either the player or tournament director. Also, please note that any ball coming to rest on the apron is considered as having come to rest in the outlane and should be treated as such.

A ball which has come to rest on top of a center post, an inlane-outlane post/guide or a lamp insert/playfield divot directly above an outlane will not be considered a stuck ball. Players may choose to free balls resting in these positions through nudging of the machine, or request that an official end the ball in play by manually placing it in the drain for center post incidents, and the outlane for inlane-outlane incidents. If an automatically-triggered kickback exists that will send the ball back into play upon draining it in the appropriate outlane, that feature will be manually triggered, and the ball will be treated as a stuck ball from that point and placed on a flipper or other suitable location. Player-controlled kickback features, such as mini-flippers, posts, or manually-controlled kickbacks that send the ball back into play, do not count toward establishing stuck ball status in this case, and the player will not be permitted to utilize these features or touch the game until the ball has reached the ball trough. If the ball is stuck on any playfield element that is located between the flippers, the ball will be considered a stuck ball if there is no chance of a drain from the ball rolling off of its resting place.

If, during multiball, a ball comes to rest in an outlane or on top of a center post, inlane-outlane post/guide, or directly above an outlane, in no way will a player be allowed to take advantage of this situation by continuing to play any other balls currently available. This situation must be dealt with immediately by either the player or a tournament official. The player must attempt to free a ball resting in these positions, or request that an official place the ball in the drain or outlane.

In multiball, some games offer the opportunity to stick a ball in an area that can only be freed if the player uses another ball to free it. Examples include getting a ball stuck behind a visor on games including Attack From Mars, Jackbot and Spider-Man. The ruling in this situation is based on whether the game has software written into it to specifically address the mode or situation. On Attack from Mars and Jack*Bot, the Dirty Pool rule is specifically written for that situation. In these cases the ball behind the visor would NOT be considered stuck and players would continue to play on. On Spider-Man however, since there is no game rule written for that situation, this would be considered a stuck ball and the player should attempt to trap the other ball(s) in play and request assistance.

For any balls stuck in multiball play, no attempts should be made by the player to continue shooting shots around the playfield trying to free the stuck ball. The stuck ball has to be dealt with under the rules above. Any loss of the multiball due to freeing the stuck ball(s) will not be considered a Major Malfunction.

8. Disabled Machines

Any tournament machine that breaks down during play will be attended to by technicians as promptly as possible. In the event that a breakdown is severe and cannot be repaired promptly, the machine may be taken out of service temporarily or permanently. A permanently disabled machine may be replaced with a substitute by tournament officials. If the failed machine is eventually repaired, it will be put back into play.

In the event that any players completed their game before the machine became disabled, and their finishing position on that game has been determined, that finishing position will stand and that player will not participate on the substitute machine. The remaining players will then play off on the substitute machine to determine the remaining finishing positions that were not able to be determined on the original machine.

Scores will be kept on a disabled machine if the tournament is greater than 50% through the designated qualifying time period. If the tournament is less than 50% through the designated qualifying time period, all scores will be considered void. In the event all scores on a machine are considered void, players will be compensated with the appropriate number of replacement tickets relative to their specific number of entries on the disabled machine. In the event the software is not able to track the specific number of tickets each player should be refunded, they will each be given one replacement ticket.

In the Classics Division, scores for a disabled machine will be allowed to stand after 2 pm on that day. If a machine falls disabled before this time, affected players will be invited to amend their qualifying tickets as described above.

9. Player Errors

A player error is any player action, purposeful or accidental, which affects the normal play or outcome of a game in progress.

Any player who tilts his or her ball in play will not receive any penalty other than the normal loss of ball. Note that some older machines may penalize the player with loss of game; this is equivalent to tilting all remaining balls in order. Abuse of machines is covered under "Player Conduct". Any player who tilts the ball of another player will receive a score of zero for that game, unless tournament officials grant an exception based on the behavior of the machine in question.

Any player who tilts their own ball, which then results in a tilt warning given to the following player will not have any consequences for the first offense. The player with the warning will be allowed to continue play as normal, or choose to have the ball played on a fresh game. Please note that games that allow for an additional ball to be added to the current game in progress, or for tilt warnings to be removed by a software adjustment, this solution will be used. A second offense by the same player anytime throughout the tournament, and it will be treated as a tilt of another player's ball, with the rules from the previous paragraph being enforced.

Any player who slam tilts a machine, thereby ending play for all players, will receive a score of zero for that game. The slam tilt is treated as a catastrophic malfunction for any other player(s) who have not completed their game(s) in progress. If a tournament official rules that the slam tilt sensor is not functioning properly, the slam tilt will be treated as a catastrophic malfunction for all players.

Any player who deliberately tilts or slam tilts a machine in order to derive some benefit to his or her own play, or the play of others, under these rules, will receive a score of zero. Repeated offenses may result in ejection from the tournament.

Any player who moves a game to the point it slides off of a rubber foot beneath the game's leg will be given a score of zero for the game. This is determined based on any portion of the leg leveler being in physical contact with the ground. A tournament director will then attempt to put the game back onto the rubber foot. If successful, the game will continue. If a tilt-through occurs, the appropriate tilt-through procedure will be followed. Should this happen to the last player on the last ball of the game, the same rules will be enforced, with a score of zero being given to that player.

Any player who deliberately interferes with the play of another player, through distraction, touching the machine or player, or disrupting tournament procedures, will receive a score of zero for the game. Any repeated offense under this rule will result in ejection of the player from the tournament. Any non-player, or tournament participant not playing in the game in progress, who deliberately interferes with the play of any tournament game, will be ejected from the facility.

Accidental interference is regrettable but can happen. Any player or non-player who accidentally interferes with the play of any tournament game will be warned. If the interference was sufficient to cause the loss of ball, this will be treated as a major malfunction. If the interference terminated play for all players (for example, tripping over a power cord and pulling it from the wall), this will be treated as a catastrophic malfunction.

In any multiplayer match on any machine, it is the equal responsibility of ALL players involved in the match to ensure that the correct number of players are started. If a game is started with the incorrect number of players, anything that occurs within that game is considered void, with no penalty to any player. At no time may players be added to the game once player 1 has plunged their ball into play. At no time may player 1 finish their game as a single-player. The game must be restarted from scratch, with the correct number of players started. Players may always ask a scorekeeper or tournament official to instead start the game in any final round. If the scorekeeper or official makes a mistake, the game will be terminated and restarted, with no penalty to any player. There will be no compensation or adjustment of scores or game state at any time.

A player who plays out of turn in a multiplayer game will receive a score of zero. The affected player may choose to take over the ball in play, if possible, or he or she may choose to have the incident treated as a major malfunction. In the event the player takes over, he or she shall be deemed "in control" after declaring his or her intent, taking his or her position at the table, and making contact with the ball via the flippers. The affected player may not change his or her mind once he or she is "in control". Any player who plays out of turn deliberately in order to employ this rule will be disqualified. Any points scored when a ball is being played out of turn count. It is the responsibility of all players to ensure the correct player is on the machine at all times.

If a player does get disqualified from a game, their position in the game is considered open. Any interference caused by player error (for example, tilt throughs or accidentally playing out of turn) in that position will have no additional consequences to the offending player. Any activity played in that open position will be considered void.

For certain tournament machines, only players 1 and 3 will be used to help prevent tilt throughs. It is the equal responsibility of ALL players involved in the match to ensure that players do not accidentally play in the player 2 and 4 positions. If a player accidentally does play in position 2 or 4, anything that occurs within that ball is considered void, with no penalty to any player. Players must play their proper ball in the correct player slot.

In qualifying rounds, any player who starts a multiplayer game will only be allowed to complete the "player one" game, regardless of when he or she noticed the error. Any player who restarts a qualifying game, rather than completing it and allowing it be recorded, will have that ticket disqualified. Repeated offenses will lead to ejection from the tournament.

Because the tournament divisions consist solely of singles play, coaching of any player during a game, in any round, is not allowed. Two exceptions to this rule are Juniors Division and the Split Flipper Division. Juniors players may have no more than one coach during their qualifying and final rounds of play, while Split Flipper teammates are permitted to discuss game strategy and offer advice to one another. If a non-Junior player specifically requests advice on a game feature during play, his or her question may be addressed only by a tournament official, and answered only in terms of whether or not the machine is functioning correctly. Non-Junior players are not to seek assistance from other players or spectators. Informing player 1 too many or too few games have been entered into the machine will not be penalized as coaching.

No player may use a camera or visual aid of any kind, other than the instructions provided by the machine, while standing at the machine. A player may review electronic or written notes in between turns of a multiplayer game or between games, but not during their own turn or between balls of a single-player game. While not actively playing, players are of course free to discuss features and strategies as much as they like, including between balls during a game, but no spectator or other player is compelled to answer, nor are they responsible for incorrect advice or answers to questions.

Applying physical force to a machine in order to derive a benefit from the activation of a switch, stuck ball, or other other scoring feature shall only be permitted if the benefit cannot be repeated continuously as determined by a tournament director. Nudging a machine so a locked ball moves and registers a switch causing a ball save, or nudging in order to manipulate a feature to begin a multiball would be permissible. Examples include shaking Bram Stoker's Dracula such that the mist ball falls from its magnet starting multiball, shaking Avatar when a ball is in the Link assembly causing it to register, or shaking The Walking Dead causing the Well Walker to register a hit. Shaking a machine repeatedly in order to derive a continual benefit from a loose switch or stuck ball is not permitted. For example, shaking Champion Pub such that the boxer gives free hits over and over allowing the player to score continually. Any player who intentionally takes advantage of a significant beneficial malfunction may be given a warning and/or have his or her affected game interrupted and disqualified by tournament officials.

In mini-tournament events which feature team play, players on a team may freely discuss game features and strategy without penalty.

Tournament officials will be the sole determiners of what constitutes interference and whether or not it is accidental or deliberate. Scorekeepers are strongly encouraged to watch for and, if possible, prevent incidents of interference.

10. Rulings

Rulings shall be made by tournament officials, which includes event coordinators and any person(s) designated as officials by the coordinators. Designated officials may have restrictions on the breadth of rulings, and may be overridden by tournament officials. Any designated official or event coordinator is excluded from ruling on any play situation that directly affects his or her actual or potential standing as a player. Such persons may also be recused where their decision affects a close friend or family member, at the discretion of other tournament officials. Final authority for any ruling, including rulings that contradict or vacate anything written in this document or in other PAPA materials, rests with the Chairman of the Replay Foundation, Kevin Martin.

PAPA accepts all feedback and constructive criticism, including player complaints, without reservations. However, please recognize that PAPA strives to be fair even in the most difficult situations. Complaints will be taken seriously, ruled upon, and considered resolved. There is to be *no whining*

VII. Machine Settings

1. Software Settings

In general, the software settings of each machine will be adjusted to best accommodate tournament play. The following settings will be employed on any machine that supports them:

- Tournament Mode
- Free Play
- 3 Balls
- Extra Balls disabled
- Buy-In or Continues disabled
- Game Restart disabled
- 2 Tilt Warnings (may be 0 on older machines)
- Flipper AutoLaunch disabled
- Timed AutoLaunch disabled
- Standard Factory Settings for Ball Savers, Difficulty, Timers, etc
- Specific Difficulty Settings as determined by tournament officials
- Automatic Reflexing Features disabled
- Replays disabled (no score or Extra Ball awarded)

These settings may vary according to division, at the discretion of tournament officials. In general, expect settings to be the most difficult in the A Division.

Please note that older machines, such as commonly used in the Classics Divisions, may have different settings, such as allowable extra balls, five-ball play, or a Tilt penalty of "entire game" rather than "current ball".

2. Hardware Settings

Machines used for tournament play will be prepared and kept in good working order to the greatest extent possible. Each machine will be properly leveled left-to-right and inclined front-to-back.

Any player with a complaint or question about the hardware setup of a machine should make his or her inquiry in between games, or in between balls, if urgent.

3. Machine-Specific Settings

In order to best suit tournament play, certain machines may be subject to specific settings or rules adjustments, at the discretion of tournament officials. These adjustments will be made before tournament play begins, and will be documented if possible. The intent is to eliminate features which can be abused by skilled players, or which arbitrarily extend play time to a degree that would hinder the smooth progress of the tournament.

VIII. Player Conduct

1. Facility

The PAPA facility is private property and must be treated with respect. PAPA reserves the right to refuse entry to anyone at any time, as well as to remove anyone from the property at any time. Any person(s) may be banned from the property, indefinitely, at the discretion of tournament officials. Banned persons will be prosecuted for trespass if necessary.

The tournament facility and playing areas must be kept clean. Food and drink are *not allowed* in the playing areas. In the tournament area, drinks are allowed *only* for actively qualifying players. Please keep the cap on your bottled drinks when not in use. Spills of any kind should be reported to officials immediately. There is a cafe area adjacent to the tournament where food and drink should be consumed. Trash should be deposited in the provided receptacles. Please do not remove chairs from any area where they have been placed.

All areas inside the building are strictly non-smoking. Smoking is restricted to designated areas outside the building. Weapons and illegal drugs are prohibited on the property. Naturally, any and all types of illegal activity are prohibited as well. The PAPA facility is not a daycare service! Anyone under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Violation of any of these rules may lead to ejection from the property.

2. Personal Conduct

All players are expected to conduct themselves in a polite and sensitive manner. Outbursts, especially those including indecent language, are unacceptable. A wide variety of players and observers will be present, including media, and these types of outbursts do nothing to promote pinball as a sport.

Any player who behaves rudely toward any scorekeeper or tournament official may be warned, disqualified, and/or ejected from the facility. Any player who argues a ruling once it has been made will receive a warning. Any player who continues arguing once receiving a warning will receive a score of zero for the game in question, a voided ticket, ejection from the tournament, or ejection from the building, as determined at the sole discretion of the tournament director involved. These penalties will be given out in this order unless the circumstances are extreme enough to warrant otherwise.

Any express or implied threats or actions of violence are grounds for immediate ejection from the facility, and authorities will be contacted. Other possible grounds for ejection include but are not limited to fraud, theft, illegal activity, harrassment, inappropriate behavior, public drunkenness, etc.

Any person ejected from the facility is banned and may not return to the property. Banned persons will be prosecuted for trespass if necessary.

3. Abuse of Machines

Tilt sensors are employed to determine what constitutes unduly rough handling of each machine, within the parameters of normal play. Abusive handling such as punching, kicking, lifting, tipping, or rocking a machine, or hitting the glass in any way, is grounds for a warning and possible disqualification of game or ejection from the tournament, at the discretion of tournament officials.

4. Interference, Collusion, and Cheating

Any player who intentionally interferes with tournament play or otherwise disrupts the tournament setting will be warned and/or ejected from the tournament, at the discretion of tournament officials.

Any form of cheating, including game restarts, tampering with games, tampering with recorded results, scorekeeper intimidation or collusion, or anything else not covered here, will be addressed by tournament officials as appropriate, including disqualification and/or ejection from the tournament.

Any collaborative effort between players in an attempt to unfairly affect the outcome of the competition, or to “lock out” a third player, or to otherwise refrain from making the best possible competitive effort on each and every game played, will be looked upon very poorly by tournament officials, and may result in disciplinary action, including disqualification and/or ejection from the tournament.

5. Intentional Delays

No player may delay their game for more than 60 seconds, except to await a ruling or resolution of an environmental inconvenience. Environmental inconvenience is defined as any condition which can reasonably be expected to be resolved quickly, such as unusual noise, lighting problems other than sunlight, or repairs to an immediately adjacent machine. No player may wait for more than 60 seconds from the end of the previous player’s turn to begin their turn. The first violation as witnessed by a Tournament Director will result in a warning. A second violation and all subsequent violations of this rule during a tournament will result in a score of zero on that game for the player.

Intentional delay is defined as time when the player is intentionally making no progress towards in-game objectives, including but not limited to time during which the ball is left in the plunger lane, held on a flipper, or passed from one flipper to another. Stuck balls do not count as intentional delays. Holding one or more ball(s) while one or more ball(s) remain in play does not count as intentional delay.

A player may not intentionally cause a ball search in order to activate any feature of the game. A player is permitted to wait a reasonable amount of time, as determined by the tournament director, for a tilt mechanism to settle.

6. Absences

During qualifying rounds, any player who is absent at the start of the game will have his or her name announced by the scorekeeper three times. If the player in question remains absent at that time, the next player in the queue will be moved forward. During final rounds or any qualifying format that involves group play, if a player is absent when it is his or her turn to play, he or she will be awarded three minutes to return before the game in question will be recorded as a zero. A second three-minute absence by any player in the final rounds will result in their elimination from the tournament. Any player who has an emergency should notify a tournament official so that accommodations may be made. Should a player have to permanently leave the tournament for any reason prior to its conclusion, he or she will not be permitted to pre-play any games, and all scores for any remaining games will be recorded as zero points.

Note that an absence at the beginning of final rounds results in the player not being part of the final rounds at all.

7. Death Saves, Bangbacks, etc

Techniques known as “Death Saves” and “Bangbacks” are sometimes employed by certain advanced players. Because the effectiveness of these techniques varies from machine to machine, and because of the risk of injury to either player or machine, these techniques are banned from tournament play. In the event that a drained ball bounces back into play without deliberate player action, such as in the case of a “lazarus”, this is considered the mechanical nature of pinball and the ball may be played. If this situation occurs repeatedly, and there is question as to whether the lazarus ball was naturally occurring or induced by the player, tournament directors may end the game in progress and award a score of zero.

8. Wagering or Gambling

Players are strictly prohibited from placing, soliciting, or facilitating any bet, whether directly or indirectly through a third-party, on any IFPA sanctioned tournament in which they are a participant. This rule extends to Tournament Directors, Scorekeepers and tournament volunteers of that event. This includes betting on game outcome, statistics, score, performance of any individual participant, or any other kind of “proposition bet” on which wagering is offered.

The penalty for such offenses will be a 1-year suppression of that person from the IFPA World Pinball Player Rankings (WPPR) system, forfeiting their right to any IFPA related perks during the time of suppression. In addition, the IFPA grants full authority to the organizers of the IFPA sanctioned tournament in question to levy any additional penalties as appropriate to the offending person at their discretion.

9. Internet Use

The facility provides access to Internet kiosks as well as a wireless Internet access service, at no charge. This is provided to our players and guests as a courtesy and we expect proper behavior. Any abuse or misuse of the service may result in ejection from the tournament and/or facility.

10. Accommodating Disabilities

Tournament officials will make every reasonable attempt to accommodate genuine disabilities, and may also elect, on a case-by-case basis, to ameliorate injuries or other hardships. Players who are not fluent in English are allowed to utilize a bilingual assistant in order to understand these rules, official rulings, and so forth.

IX. Miscellaneous

1. Special Score Handling

a. Any player who reaches the maximum possible score on a machine that has such, will receive that score as their total. For example, Guns n Roses stops scoring at 9,999,999,990 points.

b. Any player whose machine “rolls over” to a zero score is responsible for immediately advising the scorekeeper, both when this is imminent, as well as when it happens. The scorekeeper will then make a note to record the appropriately increased score. If the player fails to notify the scorekeeper, he or she may not receive the increased score.

c. On the game NBA Fastbreak using basketball-style scoring, each championship ring collected by the player shall cause their recorded score to be increased by 100 points.

d. When playing an electromechanical machine, players must understand that some score reel skipping or inaccuracies are inevitable over the course of a tournament due to the mechanical nature of the mechanism. If a score reel is not operating properly, players must notify officials immediately. No ruling will be made unless the score reel in question is the highest, or next-to-highest value reel. Tournament directors reserve the right to adjust scores on electromechanical machines if an obvious error has been made and the integrity of the match in question can be maintained. If the error in question was not witnessed by a tournament director, or it did not occur in a way such that an obvious correction can be made, no adjustment will be made and the score shown will stand. In the case of a continuously malfunctioning score reel, tournament directors reserve the right to declare a game invalid for the affected player, or for all players involved in the match.

e. If a player verbally concedes for any reason, the concession will only be considered valid if it is witnessed by a scorekeeper, tournament director, or all members of a group. If a player attempts to use an invalid verbal concession to interfere with an opponent, the issue and resolution will be treated on a case-by-case basis, and the offending player risks receiving a score of zero for the game in question.

f. Due to the complex and imperfect nature of pinball machines, rare and / or unusual scoring situations may arise that are the unintended consequences of programming oversights, errors, mechanical issues, or wiring issues. If a tournament director deems a player is taking advantage of an unexpected scoring situation or an obscure “programming bug”, the tournament director reserves the right to warn the player in question to not abuse the situation further, end the game in progress at the current score, award a score of zero, or ask the player to restart the game. The determination of whether a player is taking advantage of a software or scoring issue and the subsequent penalty, if any, is left up to the discretion of the tournament director and will be based on the particulars of the specific situation.

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