



Upper Deck Tournament Policy: Appendix A

Tournament Penalty Guidelines

Introduction

This document is an appendix to the Upper Deck Tournament Policy (OTP) to help judges determine the appropriate penalty when a tournament or game rule is broken. This helps create fair and consistent tournaments for all players. This document contains information appropriate to all UD game tournaments.

The guiding principle for UD events is that honest mistakes will be addressed in a fair, educational manner by the judging staff. Cheating or severe unsporting behavior will receive zero tolerance. The penalties listed in this document assume that the player committing the infraction did so unintentionally. If a judge suspects that the player is intentionally committing infractions to gain an unfair advantage in the game, they should bring it to the attention of the Head Judge. In such a case, the infraction may be considered Cheating, and the appropriate penalty should be applied after an investigation.

Judges are present to help create and maintain the integrity of the event. As such a judge should intervene in a match anytime that they observe an error, they believe an error has occurred, or to prevent an out of game error from occurring.

This document is split into two different parts. Part one outlines penalty types and lists proper procedures to administer and report penalties. Part two lists infraction types and provides the appropriate penalties for those infractions.

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PART 1 - PENALTY TYPES AND REPORTING

P100. Penalty Types

Five different penalties are available for judges. Application of these penalties is based on the type of the infraction a player committed and the rules enforcement level of the tournament. Sections below further explain specific penalty types.

P101 Warning

Warnings are an official way to track minor infractions. The purpose of the Warning penalty is to alert tournament officials and the player receiving the infraction of potential problems. Because Upper Deck uses warnings to track patterns and identify problematic players they are most useful if judges take the time to report the Warnings they issue.

P102 Round Penalty

A Round Penalty is a second warning for minor infractions. The purpose of the prize penalty is to penalize the player for multiple minor infractions of gameplay. A Round Penalty can vary for each game and game type. For games that cannot accommodate a Round Penalty, the resulting penalty will be upgraded to a Game Loss. A Round Penalty is tracked and is a way for tournament officials to keep the balance of gameplay fair for both players.

In the event of a game ending because of a Round Penalty, the Round Penalty will essentially become a Game Loss. A Round Penalty can simultaneously issued to both or all players. This is an exception to this policy In single game matches this results in games being played until a winner for the match is established using the methods outlined in that specific game's appendix.

For Neopets Battledome TCG:

Once a Round Loss is applied, the current round ends, and the players follow the standard procedure when a player loses a round. In the event the round loss is applied prior to the match starting, do the following:

1. The penalized player will decide to go first or second
2. Each player will draw their opening hands and decide if to mulligan.
3. Each player will then place a Neopet and reveal simultaneously.
4. The penalized player will then place that Neopet face down as if the round had been lost. The opposing player will place the Neopet faceup in the match results zone
5. The opposing player will select a Neopet and place it face up.
6. The penalized player will select a Neopet and place it face up.
7. The players will then continue the game as normal with the player going first being able to battle their first turn.

P103 Game Loss

The Game Loss penalty is a forced forfeit of the current game. If a player is between games, the Game Loss penalty should be applied to the next played game. If the player is in between games and simultaneously commits a Game Loss and Match Loss infractions, apply the Match Loss penalty first, followed by the Game Loss penalty. In the event of a Game Loss penalty before players begin a match, which could occur with a decklist infraction, neither player is allowed to side deck prior to the first played game.

In games that are played in a single game match with rounds, a game loss will be downgraded to a Round Loss Penalty.

This penalty is only appropriate in matches where multiple games are played. In the event of a match consisting of a single game, the Game Loss penalty often essentially becomes a Match Loss penalty. Please refer to Appendix A regarding Penalty Guidelines for the Legendary Deck Building Game for examples and exceptions. A Game Loss penalty simultaneously issued to both or all players are an exception to this policy. In single game matches this results in games being played until a winner for the match is established using the methods outlined in that specific game's appendix.

P104 Match Loss

The Match Loss penalty is a forced forfeit of the current match. If a player is between matches, the Match Loss penalty should be applied to his or her next match. In addition, the head judge may apply the Match Loss penalty to the next match if he or she believes that applying the penalty to the current match is not severe enough as would be in the case of a player about to lose the current match.

P105 Disqualification

The disqualification penalty, or DQ, is a forced forfeit of the current match and the act of dropping a player from the tournament. In the event of a DQ the player forfeits all prizes, with the prize structure shifting down as though the player did not exist in the standings. A player that was disqualified may keep prizes already awarded to them prior to the DQ but does not receive any further prizes. Only the official head judge may issue the disqualification penalty.

P200. Penalty Administering and Reporting

This section explains the process by which judges administer and report penalties. All penalties should always be followed by an explanation of the infraction, explanation of the penalty, potential consequences for repeat offenses of this infraction, and education of the player receiving the penalty.

P201 Reporting Penalties

When a judge issues a penalty to a player, the judge must report the penalty to the scorekeeper. Scorekeepers will enter the details of the penalty into the tournament software so that it will be uploaded into the UD database. The most effective way to communicate a penalty to a scorekeeper is to write a W for warning; RL for Round Loss; GL for Game Loss; ML for Match Loss; or DQ for Disqualification on the front of the result slip to the right of the player's name. In addition, a judge should write down all of the details of the penalty on the back of the match result slip for the match in which the penalty was issued. These details include the name of the player that received the penalty,

the infraction committed, the penalty for that infraction, a brief explanation of what happened, and printed last name of the judge issuing the penalty.

In addition to reporting penalties to the scorekeeper, some head judges will request that certain infractions or penalties, such as game losses and higher are to be reported to them. Judges should check with the head judge regarding this policy at the start of the tournament. Head judges requesting such a high volume of penalties to be communicated to them must be careful, as to not significantly delay tournament operations.

A player may not avoid a penalty by dropping from the tournament or conceding a game or a match. While judges cannot stop the player from doing any of the above actions, they should communicate to the player that such actions have no impact on the penalty and still record the penalty.

Players may not waive penalties for their opponents.

P202 Additional Time

If the penalty investigation and administration interrupted the game for longer than one minute, the judge must add additional time to the match. Because of this, the judge should always note the tournament time when they become involved in the game. It is not a requirement that a player asks for additional time before it is granted.

P203 Rules Levels

All tournaments fall under two different rules enforcement levels Normal and Competitive. The rules level (RL) represents the overall atmosphere of the tournament, level of enforcement of technically correct play and the severity with which infractions are penalized.

Normal rules level applies to local store tournaments, Hobby League, Sneak Preview tournaments and other promotional tournaments aimed at the store level. Competitive rules level applies to Regional tournaments, National Championships, and World Championships. For a complete list of tournaments see following chart: [Events](#)

Types and Rules Levels

- **Normal Rules Level:** Local Sanctioned Tournament, Sneak Preview Tournament, Local League Events
- **Competitive Rules Level:** Monthly Store Cups, Regional Cups, National Championship, World Championship

Rules levels apply to all players in the tournament uniformly. Judges should be compassionate to beginner players that are playing in a tournament using the Competitive RL, but should not downgrade penalties or bend the rules for them. Conversely, known tournament players should not be held to higher standards of technically correct play or receive harsher penalties while participating in Normal RL tournaments. Not following these rules creates a perception of a bias towards specific players.

P204 Repeat Offenses

Penalties for repeat offenses at Normal Rules Level tournaments may or may not be upgraded at the Head Judges discretion.

Most infractions, such as Slow Play, should be upgraded for repeat offenses at Competitive Rules Level. There are exceptions to this noted in the affected individual penalty listings. Except for as noted in the specific penalty sections, if an upgrade is required, the penalty for each subsequent infraction should be upgraded as following the path below:

Warning—Warning—Round Loss/Game Loss—Match Loss—Disqualification with Prize

The quickest method to review for repeat offenses is to check with the player if they already have penalties recorded for similar infractions. Then once the match resumes, the judge should check with the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper will have up-to-date information regarding players' penalty histories for the tournament. In the case of conflicting information from the scorekeeper, the player should be investigated to see if they are guilty of Unsportsmanlike Conduct infraction.

P205 Deviating from Standard Penalties

To deviate from the standard penalty is to assign a penalty that is not normally associated with the specific infraction. This document is a guide for the application of penalties. In extreme cases, only the head judge has the authority to deviate from standard penalties. Extreme cases are rare and may include situations that cannot be categorized into any existing infraction.

A judge's desire to educate the player, the judge's level, or the player's experience with tournaments, age or past history are not to be considered extreme cases. Judges should not deviate from standard penalties in these cases. When judges are explaining a penalty guide deviation to the players, judges should be very clear what the standard penalty is to the infraction and why they are choosing a different penalty. Additional explanation is needed because there is a greater potential to appear biased in front of the players.

The specific deviations laid out in the infraction descriptions do not have to be extreme cases to apply.

Only the Head Judge has the authority to deviate from a penalty. If another judge believes that a deviation is appropriate, they must consult the head judge.

P206 Reverse Engineering of Penalties

Reverse engineering of penalties occurs when a judge first decides what type of penalty a player should receive and then tries to match an infraction based on the penalty. This creates an initial decision bias for a judge and is not fair to the players. Judges should never reverse engineer penalties. To avoid this, first determine what infraction occurred and then refer to the penalty guide for the appropriate penalty.

P207 Disqualification Reporting

A player does not need to be currently enrolled in the tournament to be disqualified. If a spectator or someone on tournament premises commits an infraction that results in a disqualification, they should be enrolled into the tournament and disqualified using procedures outlined below. Only the Head Judge can issue a DQ penalty.

Disqualifications with prize never require reporting to Upper Deck. Disqualifications at normal RL tournaments do not require reporting to Upper Deck except in the case of theft, threatening or violent behavior.

All disqualifications without prize at competitive RL tournament require reporting.

When reporting is required, if the head judge issues the disqualification without prize penalty to a player, the head judge must attempt to collect statements from all relevant parties who were involved in the disqualification (all players involved, the head judge, floor judge and if applicable the Tournament Organizer). All statements should be forwarded as soon as possible via email to OP@upperdeck.com or via snail mail to Upper Deck, ATTN: Organized Play, 5830 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, CA 92008.

PART 2 - INFRACTION TYPES

This section of the Penalty Guidelines document explains specific infractions and the appropriate penalties associated with those infractions. Most infractions are grouped into categories which may have additional explanations associated with them.

Each infraction will first explain the circumstances in which this infraction can occur, followed by any additional consideration for a judge when they are deciding which infraction to apply. Then additional instructions for the judge, such as fixes used for the infraction, are listed, followed by the penalties for both rules levels. Most infractions descriptions are followed with examples that briefly list the circumstances that lead to the infraction and the appropriate actions by the judges.

P300. Game Errors

Game errors happen during the course of game play. They are usually play errors that result in a game state that is not as it should be.

All penalties in this section presume that the error was committed unintentionally. If the judge believes that the error was intentional, they should refer to the Cheating category of infractions.

All players are expected to maintain the rules of the game and share responsibility for any errors that occur when the errors involve public information. As such, it's possible for an opponent and the teammates of the player that is guilty of a game error infraction to receive a penalty for the Failure to Maintain Game State infraction as described in that infraction.

P301 Game Rules Error

This infraction occurs when a player fails to follow game procedures or rules correctly. This infraction only applies when the error does not fall into another more specific infraction.

While a Game Rules Error can usually be attributed to one player, all players share the responsibility for what is happening during the game. Opponents or teammates of the player receiving the Game Rules Error penalty may also receive the Failure to Maintain Game State penalty. Judges should refer to the Failure to Maintain Game State infraction for additional information. A Game Rules Error involving private information is an exception. In such cases, the responsibility for the private game

state lies with the player guilty of the Game Rules Error infraction. In this case, opponents can not commit the Failure to Maintain Game State infraction, but teammates of the player violating the rules still can.

If the judge believes that the players noticed the error within no more than one turn for each player, and the game play situation is simple enough to back up the game state without significant disruption to the course of the game, the judge may back up the game to the point of the error.

The judge instructs each player to undo actions until the game reverses to immediately prior to the error. Each drawn card that is known to both players is returned to the top of the deck in the appropriate order. For each other draw where cards are not known to both players, the judge should instruct the player to place a random card from their hand to the top of their deck.

If the judge believes the situation is too complex and/or backing up could affect the course of the game, the judge should leave the game state as is and not attempt any fixes. The judge should never attempt partial fixes to the game state. Either everything is backed up or nothing is.

The penalty for a Game Rules Error is a Warning at both Rules Levels.

All Game Rules Error infractions are the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalty. Upgrading this penalty for repeat offenses is an exception from the standard upgrade path. Judges should use the upgrade path below:

Warning—Round Penalty—Game Loss—Match Loss—Disqualification with prize

P302 Illegal Game State

Illegal game state infraction result from a prior misplay not caught by either of the players.

Both players are expected to maintain a legal game state. Because decisions and plans have been made based on the current state, judges should not rewind the game to compensate for potential advantages gained from the illegal game state. If there is a card in play that is not legally able to be played, it should be moved to the discard with none of it's card abilities triggered. In addition, any teammates or opponents of the player that received the Illegal Game State infraction receive a penalty for the Failure to Maintain Game State infraction.

If the infraction is caused by a player not having made a required choice, judges should instruct the player to make that choice.

The penalty for an Illegal Game State is a Warning at both Rules Levels.

All Illegal Game State infractions are the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalty. Upgrading this penalty for repeat offenses is an exception from the standard upgrade path. Judges should use the upgrade path below:

Warning—Round Penalty—Game Loss—Match Loss—Disqualification with prize

P303 Missed Trigger

This infraction occurs when players miss a trigger in the game and fail to perform actions that the trigger

requires. There are two types of triggers, mandatory and optional. An optional trigger usually uses the word “may” or “can” in the text. Anything else is a mandatory trigger.

Optional triggers are the responsibility of the player whose card caused the trigger and are part of the skill testing of playing the game. The opponent is not required to remind the player about optional triggers. Judges should assume that the player chose not to perform the optional action and should not issue a penalty for the infraction. Mandatory triggers must be resolved properly and it is the responsibility of all players to make sure this happens. An opponent is not required to point out the existence of a mandatory trigger until immediately after the time for it to resolve has passed.

Some triggers have a default option described in the trigger. When a player misses this type of a trigger, judges must resolve the default action from the trigger immediately without regard to timing rules. If such action causes some items on the chain to no longer be legal, the judges must rewind the game state to the point where all such items can be removed. If resolving the default action creates other triggers, they trigger and resolve following the normal timing rules for the game.

Some mandatory triggers will not have a default option described in the trigger. When a player misses this type of trigger and the error is caught before two turns ended (usually one for each player), judges should add the trigger to the chain using game specific timing rules for the game. Judges do not rewind the game state to the point where the trigger should have triggered. All players have the option to respond to the trigger. Any choices to be made for such a trigger may not involve objects in referenced zones that were not present at the time of the event that caused the trigger. If more than two turns have passed since the trigger should have occurred, leave the game as it is.

Tracking mandatory triggers is the responsibility of both players. The player whose card creates a trigger receives the Missed Trigger infractions. Opponents and teammates of the player that receive the Missed Trigger infraction, receive a Failure to Maintain Game State infraction, if they had an opportunity to correct the Missed Trigger infraction, but did not do so immediately.

The penalty for a Missed Trigger is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

All Missed Trigger infractions are the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalty. Upgrading this penalty for repeat offenses is an exception from the standard upgrade path. Judges should use the upgrade path below:

Warning—Round Penalty—Game Loss—Match Loss—Disqualification with prize

P304 Failure to Maintain Game State

This infraction occurs when player’s fail to notice a rules violation committed by their teammate or opponent. Since it is the responsibility of all players to maintain the correct game state, this infraction is usually the counter-part to other Game Error type infractions. This penalty is issued to opponents or teammates that could have noticed the error, but did not.

Judges should not issue this penalty to players that had no opportunity to notice or correct Game Error type infractions. This happens when the error occurs with private information or the error is immediately noticed by a player.

The penalty for Failure to Maintain Game State is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

This penalty should never be upgraded, as it would discourage players that discovered the error from calling a judge.

P305 Looking at Extra Cards

This infraction occurs when a player accidentally sees cards from any deck when they were not supposed to.

The disruption to the game is minimal; however there is a degree of advantage gained here. To fix this, judges should first determine if part of the deck is a known order via any game effects. If the judge can determine what portion of the deck is a known order via some other game effects, he must have the player separate that portion of the deck from the rest in that order. Once the deck is separated into random and known portions, the judge has the player add the erroneously revealed cards to the random portion of the deck and the player shuffles that portion. Once the revealed cards are shuffled into the random portion of the deck, the judge has the player combine the random portion of the deck with the known portion and play continues.

In tournaments with Normal Rules Level, if the judge is unable to determine if a non-random portion of the deck exists, he should have the player randomize the whole deck.

In tournaments with Competitive Rules Level, if the judge is unable to determine the extent of the non-random portion of the deck, the judge should upgrade this infraction to a Game Penalty.

The penalty for Looking at Extra Cards is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

All Looking at Extra Cards infractions are the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalties.

P306 Drawing Extra Cards

This infraction occurs when a player incorrectly draws extra cards. A card is considered to be drawn once that card is combined with the rest of his or her hand. If the judge can absolutely deduce through the circumstances of the game with no input from the opponent what extra card the player drew, this infraction should be downgraded to a Looking at Extra Cards infraction and that remedy applied.

Another deviation from the standard penalty of this infraction would be if a player drew too many cards at the start of the game. In this case, remove random cards from the player's hand until he has the appropriate number of cards, have the player shuffle the extra cards back into his deck and downgrade this penalty to a Warning.

Judges should not apply the drawing extra cards penalty for cards drawn as a result of a Game Rules Violation, and instead should apply penalties for the Game Rules Violation infraction. This applies only if the card draw is a result of a legally played and resolved game action not an illegal game action.

The disruption to the game is significant. However, for Normal RL the judges should fix the game state and allow the game to continue after giving the player a Warning. The judge should randomly select a card from the player's hand and place it on top of the player's deck. When determining the random card, the judge should not exclude any cards from the player's hand, even for example one of the cards was revealed via an earlier game effect. For Competitive RL the judge should assess a Game Loss penalty for this infraction.

The penalty for Drawing Extra Cards is a Warning for Normal Rules Level and Competitive Rules Level.

P307 Rolling Too Many Dice

This infraction occurs when a player rolls too many dice when resolving a game effect.

If the disruption to the game is minimal, the judge should fix the infraction by removing extra die roll results of the most beneficial die roll. Opponents and teammates of the player may receive a Failure to Maintain Game State infraction.

The penalty for Rolling Too Many Dice is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

P308 Rolling Too Few Dice

This infraction occurs when a player rolls too few dice when resolving a game effect.

If disruption to the game is minimal the judge should fix the infraction by allowing the player to roll an additional dice to arrive to the correct dice total. If this error is caught after dice have been moved after rolling, leave the game state as it is. Opponents and teammates of the player may receive a Failure to Maintain Game State infraction.

In Normal Rules Level tournaments, the judge should not issue an official penalty for this infraction. However, repeated instances of this behavior can be upgraded to a Warning at the head judge's discretion at Normal RL.

No penalty exists for this infraction for Normal Rules Level. The penalty for Rolling Too Few Dice is a Warning for Competitive Rules Level.

P309 Rolling Dice At The Wrong Time

This infraction occurs when a player rolls dice when they are not supposed to.

When a player rolls dice when there is no legitimate reason to, the roll is voided. These dice cannot be "held" for a future roll.

If the Rolling Dice At The Wrong Time happens during the battle phase and is related to the Attack, Defense, and Agility Rolls, a different procedure is followed. If a player rolls combat dice without giving the opponent an opportunity to play an effect before rolling, the opponent can choose to play a card or effect. If that happens, the roll is invalidated, and the roll is done again after all cards and effects are resolved.

P400. Tournament Errors

Tournament errors are violations of the tournament rules. Tournament rules exist to ensure a fair tournament experience for all players. These are tournament rules not game rules.

P401 Official Policy/Announcement Violation

This infraction occurs when a player fails to follow Official Tournament Policy, or fails to follow general announcements during the tournament.

Players are responsible for knowing and understanding Tournament Policy and must comply with announcements from Tournament Officials. Failure to do so creates a disruption to the tournament and may create an unfair playing environment for others.

This penalty is also appropriate for exceeding any time limits in an environment outside of a match to include any registration limits for sealed pool build or deck construction. In this case this infraction should be issued after five minutes have passed after the time limit has expired. A second instance of this penalty is appropriate after another five minutes.

Judges should exercise restraint when presented with this infraction – above all it is important for judges to educate the players that violate this policy. In Normal Rules Level tournaments, the judge should not issue an official penalty for this infraction.

No penalty exists for this infraction for Normal Rules Level. Repeated infractions may be penalized at the Head Judge's discretion. The penalty for Official Policy/Announcement Violation is a Warning for Competitive Rules Level.

P402 Failure to Follow Direct Instructions

This infraction occurs when a player fails to follow specific Tournament Official's instructions aimed specifically at that player. This could happen when a tournament official informally addresses an issue with the player, or as part of resolving a separate infraction.

Players must follow a tournament official's instructions. Failing to do so, undermines the authority of the officials and creates tournament delays. In addition, this infraction implies that a tournament official already observed and attempted to address an issue with a player. As a result the penalty for this infraction is severe at Competitive Rules Level. This infraction should not be used as a tool to encourage player obedience.

The penalty for Failure to Follow Direct Instructions is a Warning for Normal Rules Level and a Game Loss for Competitive Rules Level.

Examples:

A player is sitting at a table that is to be used for a tournament soon. When asked to leave by a judge, the player wants to finish sleeving his deck first. The judge should allow the player to complete his task in a reasonable time and should not award a Failure to Follow Direct Instructions unless the player continues to sit in violation of the judge's instructions after his task is complete.

A judge assessed a marked card no pattern penalty in a Competitive RL event and instructed a player to resleeve in between rounds and the player failed to do so. That player should be issued a Game Loss for Failure to Follow Direct Instructions and the player should resleeve immediately.

A judge instructed a player to remove a drink from the table at a Hobby League and later sees the same drink on the table. A Failure to Follow Direct Instructions Warning should be issued and the drink removed.

P403 Insufficient Randomization

This infraction occurs when a player fails to randomize their deck in such way where they do not know the distribution of any specific cards, or card groups. This could happen when a player fails to shuffle sufficiently after searching their deck, or when a player presets and does not randomize their deck. Decks may be in any configuration before randomization occurs and players must take care to perform all such randomization at the match table. Shuffling undertaken before sitting down for a match will not be taken into account for this infraction.

Random distribution is at the heart of any card game. Without it, players create an unfair playing environment. A good rule for randomization is to perform multiple methods of shuffling multiple times. A single method of shuffling is not sufficient to randomize a deck. However, the majority of insufficient randomization infractions are truly unintentional. It is important for judges to educate players about randomization. If a judge believes that insufficient randomization is intentional, they should refer to the Game Object Manipulation Cheating infraction.

Dice roles also play a role in randomization. Dice should be shuffled in the hand before being rolled. A sufficient dice role must be rolled on the table and in the player's field of view. Any dice that are rolled off the table or out of either players line of view will be considered an insufficient randomization and must be re-rolled.

The penalty for Insufficient Randomization is a Warning for both Rules Levels. Examples:

A player shuffles his deck after a search with the cards facing themselves. They perform only riffle shuffling afterwards and present it to their opponent. A Warning for Insufficient Randomization should be assessed and the player instructed in proper shuffling and the deck randomized again.

After sidedecking for the second game in a match, a player only pile shuffles twice before presenting it to his opponent. A Warning for Insufficient Randomization should be assessed and the player instructed in proper shuffling and the deck randomized again.

P404 Tardiness

This infraction occurs when a player fails to arrive at their seat after the round started.

It is important that players are on time for their rounds. Tardiness delays the tournament for all players, if they have to wait for the tardy match to get finished. This infraction has three different penalties associated with it: at 3 minutes is a Game Penalty. At 5 minutes the tardy player receives a Game Loss penalty. At 10 minutes the tardy player receives a Match Loss penalty. This penalty also applies to a player who loses his or her deck between matches and so can't present a legal deck before the above time limits expire. A player receiving a Match Loss for Tardiness is dropped from the tournament unless he reports to the Scorekeeper before the next round.

The penalty for Tardiness is a Game Penalty at 3 minutes, Game Loss at 5 minutes, and a Match Loss at

10 minutes for both Rules Levels.

P405 Playing the Wrong Opponent

This infraction occurs when a player fails to correctly identify his table number on the pairings and sits at the wrong table.

This is a severe infraction that is usually discovered later in the round, and solutions vary based on the tournament rules level and the round time when this infraction is discovered. For Normal Rules Level tournaments judges should adjust the pairings for the round to match them with how players sat. For Competitive tournaments judges should assess a penalty based on the round time when the infraction was discovered. If discovered before the time that a Game Loss would be awarded for Tardiness, ensure the players find the correct seats and assess no penalty. If more than 5 minutes, but less than 10 minutes have passed in the round when the infraction was discovered, the penalty for this infraction is a Game Loss. If ten or more minutes passed, when the infraction was discovered, the penalty for this infraction is a Match Loss. This infraction usually results with two players sitting at incorrect tables and two players sitting at the correct tables.

Since all players are responsible for making sure that they play correct opponents, players that sat at the wrong tables committed the Playing the Wrong Opponent infraction. Players that sat at the right table committed the Official Policy/Announcement Violation infraction.

The penalty for Playing the Wrong Opponent is a Warning at Normal Rules Level. At Competitive RL the penalty is a Game Penalty at 3 minutes, Game Loss at 5 minutes, and a Match Loss at 10 minutes.

Examples:

A player misreads the pairings display and sits at the wrong table during a Competitive RL event. The error is not caught until the round is almost over. That player receives a match loss, and the player with whom he or she has swapped seats also receives a warning for violating policy (failing to verify that he is playing correct opponent).

P406 Slow Play

This infraction occurs when a player unintentionally causes a delay in the game. This can happen through non-action by the player, or through repetitive action that does not progress the game.

Slow play can include, but is not limited to, repetitive actions, non-actions, and intentionally causing dice re-rolls.

Players are responsible for playing at an efficient pace regardless of the complexity of the game or the number of decisions that have to be made. Failure to do so slows down the whole tournament. In addition to assessing a penalty for this infraction, the judge must also give players two extra turns, one for each player to be taken as part of end of match procedures.

All Slow Play infractions are the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalty. Upgrading this penalty for repeat offenses is an exception from the standard upgrade path. Judges should use the upgrade path below:

Warning—Round Penalty—Game Loss—Match Loss—Disqualification with prize

The penalty for Slow Play is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

P407 Marked Cards Without Pattern

This infraction occurs if a player has cards or sleeves that are easily distinguishable from other in the same deck. This includes bent or excessively worn cards, cards with distinctive markings, and sleeves that are dirty, worn, or damaged. With games that use infusion cards, if the thickness of the card and infusion are distinguishable from the rest of the deck can be applicable to this rule. The cards that are distinguishable are random for this infraction. If the cards that are easily distinguishable have a pattern, judges should issue the Marked Cards with Pattern penalties.

For Neopets Battledome TCG players can sleeve their Neopets and Rainbow Pool in a different color from the rest of their deck, as these pool of cards are not randomized and can help players differentiate their cards from their inventory deck.

Marked cards represent a significant advantage for cheating. However, judges should be aware that solutions for this infraction take time to implement and may unnecessarily delay the tournament. Judges may require a player to replace the marked sleeves or cards immediately, or in some cases require that the player to resleeve their entire deck after the current round. If the infusion of a card is in question, a player can choose to insert inner sleeves or double sleeve the rest of their deck to make all cards of similar thickness. If a player chooses to resleeve his cards immediately, they have three minutes to do so, before judges may apply tardiness penalties.

Promotional Jumbo Cards are considered marked cards without a pattern, as the size and the dimensions of the cards make them distinguishable from one another.

A player is never required to buy new sleeves and may wish to instead drop from the tournament instead of choosing to follow a judge's instructions.

The penalty for Marked Cards Without Pattern is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

Examples:

A player has three card sleeves with noticeable thumbnail marks. All three appear to be different and are on different cards. The player should re-sleeve the three marked cards and a Warning should be issued.

A player's sleeves appear to have a factory defect where the card sleeves are many different lengths. There appears to be no pattern to the defect. Marked Cards without Pattern infraction should be applied. The player should resleeve in between rounds.

P408 Marked Cards With Pattern

This infraction occurs if a player has a significant number of marked cards and it appears that there is an unintentional but noticeable pattern among them.

Markings with a pattern represent a huge potential for abuse. Although this infraction assumes accidental marking, having significant markings can give players an advantage in tournaments. It is

appropriate to investigate further to make sure that the player did not do this intentionally. Intentionally marking cards or taking advantage of known markings regardless of their origin is a Game Object Manipulation infraction and requires a Disqualification penalty.

The penalty for Marked Cards With Pattern is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels.

P409 Outside Assistance

This infraction occurs when a player seeks advice from others once they have sat for their match. This infraction also applies to anyone who gives advice to players who have sat for their match.

Notes also can fall into Outside Assistance when a player at any time after arriving at the play table references notes made before the official beginning of the current match, including OCR text that has not been provided by a judge.

These criteria also apply to any deck construction portions of a limited tournament. Additionally, no notes of any kind may be made during a draft. Notes made during a match may be referenced during that match or between matches. Notes made outside the current match may not be referenced once a player has sat for their match until after his or her match is completed.

The penalty for Outside Assistance is a Match Loss for Normal Rules Level and Competitive Rules Level.

Examples:

A player at a local store draft is in the deck construction portion of the event. He asks his friend his opinion on which of two quests he should put in his deck. A judge overhears the friend give an answer. Both players should receive a Warning for Outside Assistance and instructed not to repeat the behavior.

P500. Deck, Party and Decklist Errors

This category of infractions covers infractions that players may commit during decklist registration, deck construction, or party construction. Majority of these infractions are discovered between games, or rounds. In such cases, judges should apply the penalty towards the next game and should not retroactively apply the infraction.

For these infractions, if the error is discovered before a match begins and the infraction warrants a Game Loss, as is likely during a deck check, neither player is allowed to use their sidedeck for game 2.

P501 Registration Error

This infraction occurs when a player fails to correctly register his limited card or minis pool before passing it to another player in the tournament or forgets to write their name on the decklist.

The disruption to the tournament is minimal and the error is usually caused by the person using the limited pool to build or a judge collecting the decklists. Judges should correct the error and initial their correction.

No penalty exists for this infraction for Normal Rules Level. The penalty for a Registration Error is a Warning for Competitive Rules Level.

P502 Illegal List

This infraction occurs when the decklist or the party list does not meet tournament rules for deck building. The most common infractions are banned cards, quantities of cards beyond the maximum allowed, or too few cards on the decklist. Certain combinations of infusion overlays and cards are restricted or banned from play which can put a player at fault of an illegal deck list. This infraction also applies to side decks for games that use a side deck.

Because of the severity of the penalty for this infraction, it is recommended that judges should not use decklists during majority of Normal Rules Level tournaments.

If a player, up to the time that either player plays a card or a mini in a game, discovers that they are guilty of an Illegal List infraction, they may immediately call a judge. If they call a judge on themselves, the head judge may downgrade the penalty to a warning. If this infraction is discovered during a game, the penalty for this infraction is a game loss.

For Competitive Rules Level tournaments, when handing out multiple illegal deck list penalties (usually at the beginning of round 2), judges should make sure that they prevent game play from starting at tables with this infraction. The easiest method to do this is to send a judge to each of the tables with infractions before the round starts and instruct players to not begin play.

In situations where both the deck and the decklist are illegal, judges should only issue the penalty for illegal list.

If the list is illegal, but the deck or party is legal; change the list to match the deck. If the list and deck or party are illegal, make minimum adjustments necessary to make the deck or party to make it legal then make the list match the deck.

The penalty for Illegal List is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels. However, this penalty is sometimes downgraded to a Warning as outlined in the above infraction description.

P503 Illegal Deck

This infraction occurs when a player has a deck that does not match their legal deck list. The most common infractions are cards left from previous opponent's decks, lost cards, or a mismatch between the deck list and the deck. Failure to de-sidedeck is a separate infraction and does not fall under the illegal deck infraction. Other cards kept in the same location as the sidedeck will be considered part of the sidedeck for purposes of this infraction.

If a player, up to the time that either player plays a card in a game, discovers that they are guilty of an Illegal Deck infraction, they may immediately call a judge. If they call a judge on themselves, and this is the first time they committed this infraction in the tournament, the head judge may downgrade the penalty to a Warning. If this infraction is discovered during a game, the penalty for this infraction is a Game Loss.

To fix this infraction the player fixes their deck to match their deck list. If the deck list is illegal, the

judge should instead treat the infraction as an illegal list infraction.

The penalty for Illegal Deck is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels. However, this penalty is sometimes downgraded to a Warning as outlined in the above infraction description.

P504 Failure to De-sidedeck

This infraction occurs when a player fails to return their deck to the original configuration for a new game.

If a player up to the time that either player plays a card or a mini in a game discovers that they are guilty of a Failure to De-Sidedeck infraction, they may immediately call a judge. If they call a judge on themselves and this is the first time they committed this infraction in the tournament, the head judge may downgrade the penalty to a Warning. If this infraction is discovered during a game, the penalty for this infraction is a Game Loss.

To fix this infraction, the player fixes their deck to match their deck or party list. In the case of a downgrade, the sidedeck cards should be returned to the sidedeck and cards should be drawn from the deck to replace them.

The penalty for Failure to De-sidedeck is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels. However, this penalty is frequently downgraded to a Warning as outlined in the above infraction description.

P505 Dice Regulation

Dice are subject to checks at the same time as deck checks. Dice are inspected for flaws and distinguishable marks. Any dice that is considered unusable by the judge must be replaced by the user.

Dice are to be cubed, six sided with no structural marks or flaws. Dice must have numbers to distinguish numbers 1-6. Dice can be no larger than 25mm and no smaller than 8mm. Wooden dice are prohibited from being used as a method of randomization and can only be used to track damage counters.

Any dice that is distributed by The Upper Deck Company are legal in Organized Play, as long as they are from damage and are unmodified.

A player must be able to roll all required dice for a given turn simultaneously from the same roll.

If a player, up to the time that either player plays a card game, discovers that they are guilty of an illegal dice infraction, they may immediately call a judge. If they call a judge on themselves, and this is the first time they committed this infraction in the tournament, the head judge may downgrade the penalty to a Warning. If this infraction is discovered during a game, the penalty for this infraction is a Game Loss.

To fix this infraction, the player changes out their dice to meet the regulations. If all the dice are illegal, the judge must give an appropriate amount of time for the player to replace their dice. Time in between replacing dice is subject to tardiness rulings.

The penalty for illegal dice usage is a warning for both rules levels. This infraction can be upgraded to a game loss depending on the severity of the infraction.

P600. Unsporting Conduct

Players are expected to behave in a sporting and professional manner toward other players, spectators, and tournament officials.

This group of penalties deals with inappropriate behavior that a player may exhibit during a tournament. This group of penalties covers intentional infractions. It's important to allow players to have fun and enjoy themselves, but that must be balanced with the need to protect others against truly offensive behavior that will jeopardize other players' tournament activity. This is an area where judges must use their common sense to determine when to allow natural behavior to occur and when to step in and moderate a situation.

P601 Minor Unsporting Conduct

This penalty is appropriate for minor examples of unsporting conduct, and results in a Warning. Most common is swearing undirected at anyone, leaving trash in the player area, or in appropriate gestures.

Depending on the audience of the tournament, the head judge may wish to be more or less lenient when it comes to swearing. At a junior event, penalties should be enforced for swearing, but at an event with all adults, the judge has freedom to enforce penalties based on the age of the players present.

The penalty for Minor Unsporting Conduct is a Warning for both Rules Levels. Examples:

A player leaves scraps of paper or food on his table after a match. The player should be instructed to clean up and a Warning should be issued for Minor Unsporting Conduct.

A player swears during a tournament in the tournament area. The player should be told to be careful of his language and a Minor Unsporting Conduct infraction issued.

A player insults her opponent. The offending behavior should be corrected, and a Warning should be given to the player.

P602 Major Unsporting Conduct

This penalty is appropriate for major examples of unsporting conduct. These types of behavior have the potential to become out of control and should be curtailed as soon as possible. The situation should be defused first and then the penalty issued when the player is calmer.

The penalty for Major Unsporting Conduct is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels.

Examples:

A player uses profanity to argue with the head judge about a ruling. The player should be taken aside and calmed down. Afterwards a Game Loss should be issued for the major Unsporting Conduct.

A player throws his deck or his dice in frustration after losing a match. The player should be taken aside and calmed down. Afterwards a Game Loss should be issued for the major Unsporting Conduct.

A player refuses to sign or rips up a match result slip. The player should be taken aside and explained about why his behavior is disruptive. Afterwards a Game Loss should be issued for the major Unsporting Conduct.

P603 Severe Unsporting Conduct

This penalty is appropriate for extreme examples of unsporting conduct, and results in a disqualification without prize. A statement must be sent to the address at the start of this document outlining the incident leading to this penalty.

A player does not need to be enrolled in the tournament, to commit this infraction. If a spectator or a player no longer in the tournament commits this infraction, the judge should enroll them into the tournament and disqualify them.

The penalty for Severe Unsporting Conduct is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels.

Examples:

A player writes on tablecloths or defaces the tournament area. The player should be Disqualified without Prize.

A player verbally threatens a judge. The player should be taken aside and Disqualified without Prize.

A player intentionally causes damage to the tournament site or someone else's belongings. The player should be Disqualified without Prize.

P604 Theft

This infraction occurs if a player steals something at or around the tournament site.

A player does not need to be enrolled in the tournament, to commit this infraction. If a spectator or a player no longer in the tournament commits this infraction, the judge should enroll them into the tournament and disqualify them.

The penalty for Theft is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels

P605 Aggressive Behavior

This infraction occurs if a player is openly aggressive towards other players, spectators, or tournament officials.

The safety of tournament participants is of highest importance. Upper Deck has zero tolerance for players violating this rule.

A player does not need to be enrolled in the tournament, to commit this infraction. If a spectator or a player no longer in the tournament commits this infraction, the judge should enroll them into the tournament and disqualify them.

The penalty for Aggressive Behavior is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels.

P700. Cheating

A player is Cheating when they intentionally commit an infraction to gain a significant advantage and results in a disqualification without prize.

In Normal Rules Level tournaments, both players may legitimately not know that some of these offenses, such as bribery and random match outcomes, are against the Tournament Policy. In such cases, and only at tournaments with Normal Rules Level, the Head Judge may downgrade the penalty to a Match Loss if he feels the offense was taken without malice or preplanning.

P701 Manipulating Match Outcome

This infraction occurs when a player or both players attempt to manipulate or randomize the outcome of a match. When one player offers another anything for a match outcome, this player committed bribery. When the player's opponent accepts the offer, both players committed collusion.

Manipulating outcomes of the match destroys tournament integrity. An undeserving person advances in the tournament at the expense of someone who should have legitimately advanced.

The penalty for manipulating Match Outcome is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels. Examples:

A player offers booster packs to her opponent in exchange for conceding the final round. The player should be Disqualified without Prize for Manipulating Match Outcome. If the player's opponent accepts the offer, he should be Disqualified as well for Collusion.

Two players decide the outcome of a match via a coin flip at a Hobby League event. Both players should be Disqualified without Prize. If the Head Judge believes that the players legitimately did not know that this action was not allowed he has the option to downgrade this penalty to a Match Loss.

P702 Game Object Manipulation

This infraction occurs when a player manipulates cards, or game mechanics. This includes, but is not limited to, intentionally drawing extra cards, changing the game state, or marking cards.

Manipulating cards or game mechanics destroys tournament integrity, places unnecessary burden on tournament officials, and creates a negative experience for competitors.

The penalty for Game Object Manipulation is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels.

P703 Misrepresenting Information

This infraction occurs when a player intentionally misrepresents public information to their opponent, or any kind of information to tournament officials. This includes, but is not limited to, omitting damage, misrepresenting rules or policies, misrepresenting an event that happened during the game,

and lying to tournament officials.

While bluffing is a component of trading card games, players may not lie about public information to their opponents and may never give incorrect information to tournament officials.

The penalty for Misrepresenting Information is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels. Examples:

A player lies to tournament officials during an investigation during an appeal to make his side of the argument stronger.

A player enters a tournament using a different UDE number to protect their rating.

P704 Stalling

This infraction occurs when a player intentionally plays slow during a game to gain an advantage.

Players that intentionally play slow to gain an advantage from end of match procedures create an unfair game environment, and unnecessarily delay the tournament.

The penalty for Stalling is as follows:

Match Loss—Disqualification with prize

Example: A player who won the first game of the match purposely plays slowly in order to stall for time and wait for the round to end.

Contact Information

For general questions regarding Upper Deck programs, please email:

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Version Information

- This version of the Upper Deck Penalty Guidelines was updated on October 24, 2025
- Delete or destroy any older versions of this document to avoid confusion.