

# Summary of Changes to WESPA Rules Version 4

In this document, Tournament Directors and players will find a summary to all the changes in WESPA Rules Version 4, including reasons and explanations behind the changes. Changes and key information are highlighted.

## **New Rule: 3.4.3 Unintentionally Pressing the Timer**

"If the timer has been pressed unintentionally, for example, when rotating the board or with a sleeve, the Tournament Director may be petitioned to nullify this action. If the petition is accepted, any time adjustments will be made at the discretion of the Tournament Director if deemed necessary. Play will then proceed as normal."

**Reasoning:** Helps to provide clarity for Tournament Directors when the situation occurs. If a malfunction is suspected to be the cause then refer to 1.4.6 Malfunction of Timers.

## **Addition to Rule 3.9.5 Overdrawing**

"The opponent has **15 seconds** to correct the overdraw. If a correction has not been made, the opponent's timer is started. There is no time limit to making a correction except when it exceeds the assigned game time by 10 minutes (see 5.3.3 Overtime Leading to Forfeiture). Once a correction has been decided, the timer is neutralised, and the chosen tiles are returned to the bag. The remaining tiles are returned to the overdrawing player. Play resumes with the player on turn's clock being restarted."

**Reasoning:** To prevent players from exploiting neutralised time while making the correction and to help keep Tournament scheduling on track.

## **Change to 3.10.1 (b) Accepting the Turn**

"The opponent accepts the turn if he or she neither calls 'hold' nor issues a challenge before **any replacement tile drawn** by the player **is added to the player's rack.**"

**Reasoning:** Provides better clarity on the exact moment the right to challenge ends. Also attempts to limit incidents of 'fast-bagging'.

(Note: for clarity, parts (b)(i) and (b)(ii) have been added to reference Rules 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 with regard to endgame scenarios.)

## **Change to 3.11 Procedures for Issuing and Adjudicating a Challenge**

"After adjudication by any method below, the timer may not be restarted until both players are seated, **the move score has been re-announced or the tiles retracted, and the player whose timer would be running after the challenge has either: returned all face down tiles to their rack (recommended); or commenced with any writing on their scoresheet.**"

**Reasoning:** Some players neglect to return their tiles to their racks immediately upon returning from a challenge at an external device, which meant that the timer could not be restarted. This could be exploited. This change will allow the timer to be restarted if they commence with either of the listed actions. WESPA recommends returning face down tiles to your rack before commencing with other actions.

## **New Section: 3.13 Illegal Moves**

**Reasoning:** Ease of identification. The new section takes the old **3.10.14** and **3.10.15** rules and the two new rules below into one encompassing section solely about illegal moves.

## **New Rule: 3.13.3 Exchanging from Racks of Eight or More Tiles**

"After announcing an exchange and starting the opponent's timer, if a player is discovered to have had a rack containing eight or more tiles, the following algorithm is to be applied:

- (a) If no new tiles have been drawn, the overdraw procedure is applied and the offender loses their turn, i.e. cannot exchange.
- (b) If the overdraw is discovered after any new tiles are drawn, but before any tiles have been returned to the bag: all exchanged, kept, and newly drawn tiles are combined. The overdraw procedure will then be applied (see part (b) of 3.9.5 Overdrawing).
- (c) If the overdraw is discovered after any tiles have been returned to the bag: combine the originally kept tiles, the replacement tiles, any tiles not yet returned to the bag and the newly drawn tiles. The overdraw procedure will then be applied (see part (b) of 3.9.5 Overdrawing)."

**Reasoning:** To help Tournament Directors clarify what to do when the scenario occurs.

### **New Rule: 3.13.3 Exchanging from Racks of Six or Fewer Tiles**

"If a player is found to have exchanged from a rack of six tiles or fewer, one of the following steps is taken:

- (a) If there would have been seven or more tiles in the bag had the exchanger held a full rack, play continues with no penalty to the exchanger.
- (b) If there would have been fewer than seven tiles in the bag had the exchanger held a full rack, implement rule 3.13.2 (i) (Improper Tile Exchanges)."

**Reasoning:** To help Tournament Directors clarify what to do when the scenario occurs.

### **New Rule: 4.5 Upset or Overturned Boards**

"The Tournament Director must be called immediately and the board and any scattered tiles must not be touched until they arrive. Any tiles knocked off a player's rack may be quickly covered or turned face down to prevent the opponent viewing them. After hearing the testimony of both players and any witnesses of the event, the Tournament Director must decide whether the board was upset accidentally or intentionally."

#### **New Rule: 4.5.1 Accidental Board Upsets**

"If this occurred due to a table collapse, then all tables must immediately be checked for stability and correct extension of legs.

- (a) If the game can be fully reconstructed from recorded plays (subject to approval by the Tournament Director to minimise any impact on tournament scheduling), this must be done and normal play resumes. If the Tournament Director rules that the game cannot be reconstructed due to time constraints, follow the procedure in 4.5.1 (b)).
- (b) If the game cannot be fully reconstructed, the game will end. The final game scores will stand at the point at which the board was upset. Where the number of turns played by each player is uneven, the score for the last turn made is subtracted from the appropriate player's total score. Any disputes concerning final game scores will be resolved by the Tournament Director."

#### **New Rule: 4.5.2 Intentional Board Upsets**

"Upsetting a board intentionally is considered a very serious offence and results in an immediate loss for the offending player. The offending player will also be ejected from the tournament. The spread for the lost game is calculated as follows:

- (a) If the offending the player was not in the lead, they will lose the game by the current margin plus 100 points.
- (b) If the offending player was in the lead, they will lose the game by a margin of 100 points."

**Reasoning:** To help Tournament Directors clarify what to do in the event of both accidental and intentional board upsets.

### **Change to Rule 5.5.1 Right to Recount**

"Either player may request a recount at the end of a game, regardless of spread differential, and with the agreement of the Tournament Director."

**Reasoning:** There should be no limit to recounting where every spread point matters. Tournament Director approval must be sought in case recount length impacts tournament scheduling.

### **Change to Rule 5.5.2 Recount Procedure**

"Partial recounts are ONLY acceptable with both players' consent. If one player refuses, a game must be recounted in full, or not at all. The timer remains neutralised during a recount."

**Reasoning:** Sometimes both players may have neglected, for example, to add the 50 bonus points when a player made a play using all seven tiles from their rack. This can now be corrected without the need to recount the entire game but must be done with both players' consent.

### **Changes to 6.5 Right of Appeal**

"(a) As the Tournament Director's decision is final during a tournament (see 6.1.2 (a)), any appeal of a decision must commence after the completion of the tournament.

(b) Any parties impacted by a Tournament Director's decision during a tournament, or by a disciplinary decision for improper conduct, has right of appeal.

(c) Any appeal must follow the correct hierarchy of channels, namely:

- (i) the first appeal must be to the appropriate local or provincial body, if any;
- (ii) the second appeal must be to the appropriate national body, if any;
- (iii) only then may the player contact the WESPA Executive Committee, who will arrange for the finding to be reviewed as below.

(d) The WESPA Executive Committee will form a committee of disinterested players to consider the appeal, which will be determined either in person or through written submissions sent by email, fax or letter. Members of the WESPA Executive Committee are not allowed to be considered as "disinterested players". The committee so formed is the sole body that will review the correctness of the finding with the purpose of providing a recommendation to be considered by the WESPA Executive Committee.

(e) If the appeal is partly or wholly upheld, the committee will recommend a course of action to the WESPA Executive Committee. This may include the amendment of tournament results. The WESPA Executive Committee will then review the report with a view to either accept (in part or in whole) or reject the recommendation.

(f) There is no further right of appeal."

**Reasoning:** In light of recent incidents, Rule 6.5 in Version 3 proved unsatisfactory. Now it clarifies when an appeal can commence, who has right to appeal, how a committee of disinterested players is formed, and WESPA Executive Committee's role. Part (a) additionally reinforces the notion that a Tournament Director's decision is final.

### **Addition of Tile Distribution to Appendix 1**

**Reasoning:** The original document that Appendix 1 was taken from included tile distribution in picture format.