

## FAQ For USATT Star Table

**1Q.** *Where can I get a lux meter?*

**1A.** They are readily available at most photo shops and on Amazon. Search for *lux meter* on Amazon and many results will appear with prices starting around \$10 or so. We recommend that all USATT affiliated clubs that run sanctioned events obtain a light meter so that you know how strong the lighting is for your players. Lighting is an important aspect to playing our sport well and it will benefit all players to provide the best lighting possible. At this time, we do not recommend using light meter apps for smartphones due to their variability in readings compared to using a dedicated light meter.

**2Q.** *Once I get the lux meter, how do I use it to measure the lighting?*

**2A.** You'll need to follow the instructions that come with the meter to know how to use the device. But to measure the light at the tournament venue, the meter should be held at table height wherever a table will be located. We encourage Tournament Directors (TD's) to sketch out a layout of the tournament venue so each table is located within the allotted space and you know where to measure the light. If any table location falls below a level listed on the star table, then you cannot claim points for meeting that criterion. If most tables meet a certain level and only a few don't, then we recommend not setting up tables at those locations that don't meet that criterion or use those tables only for unsanctioned play. To get the most accurate readings, you may want to set up a TT table at each table location and measure the light by laying the meter on the table. It's entirely possible that the lighting will be stronger above an elevated surface like this because the light from the ceiling will reflect off the table surface to slightly increase the light level.

**3Q.** *What about natural lighting, glare and/or shadows?*

**3A.** If natural lighting influences the amount of light in your venue, take your light readings on an overcast day and/or at the latest part of day that you anticipate holding matches. The idea behind lighting standards is that adequate lighting be provided at all matches at USATT tournaments. If your lighting does not meet the minimum level for all of your sanctioned matches at that tournament, then don't claim points for that criterion. We recommend that any sources of natural light that might present glare or shadow issues on any of the tables be covered up with an opaque covering. If you do this, then take your readings with these coverings in place. Alternatively, you can take your light readings at night to simulate the effect of covering natural light sources. Tournament directors should be aware that if natural lighting is used in a venue and not covered, then it may well result in some tables being unplayable at various times of the

day as glare and/or shadows affect visual acuity. This can then negatively affect your scheduling. Players should not be required to play matches on tables with noticeable glare and/or shadows.

**4Q.** *What about bulbs burning out, lights fading, or fixtures going bad between the time I measure the lighting when applying for sanction and the time the tournament is actually held?*

**4A.** Since sanction requests are typically turned in months in advance of the tournament, the TD should inspect the venue several days prior to the tournament to ensure that lighting and other conditions are relatively the same as when the sanction was requested. If the lighting or other conditions are substantially different, then the TD should contact whoever is responsible for maintenance at the venue and request the problem(s) be corrected before the tournament begins. If this is not possible, then we suggest not using any courts with lighting below the minimum standard. TD's will not be held accountable for inadvertent discrepancies of this nature, but the same discrepancy should not occur for future tournaments.

**5Q.** *What if my tournament grades as a 1-star but I don't have a referee available higher than a Club Umpire? Can I intentionally "downgrade" my tournament to a 0-star so I can use a Club Umpire?*

**5A.** Yes, you can request sanction at a lower star level than the one your tournament grades at. You may not, however, intentionally misrepresent the actual qualifications of your tournament to get a higher or lower star level.

**6Q.** *My tournament grades as a 5-star event. Are there other requirements for 5-star tournaments?*

**6A.** 5-star tournaments not only have to meet the criteria listed on the star table, but other criteria as established by the Tournament Advisory Committee (TAC) and/or the Board of Directors. These additional criteria include an on-site visit by the National Sanctioning Coordinator or his representative and a review and vote by the TAC.

**7Q.** *Can I ignore certain sections of the star table?*

**7A.** Yes, you may skip any section if you are uncertain of meeting the criteria associated with that section. You simply won't get any points for that section. If a criterion is marked as being required for a certain star level, then that section must be marked before approval for that star level.

**8Q.** *What are the repercussions if I anticipate meeting certain criteria, and fill out the form with that anticipation, but then cannot actually meet the criteria at the tournament? For instance, say I anticipate having a club member provide food and drink*

*at the venue, but then that club member gets sick and I am unable to provide food and drink.*

**8A.** Repercussions for deliberately falsifying the sanction request form in an attempt to get a higher star rating have not been determined as of the time of this writing. Inadvertent mistakes like the one described will not result in any penalties.

**9Q.** *What is a feature match?*

**9A.** *Feature matches* should include, at a minimum, the semi-finals and finals of the men's and women's singles (or Open Singles). Other matches may be included depending upon which matches the tournament organizers want to highlight. In general, as star level goes up, it is expected that more feature matches will be offered. Feature matches should be clearly delineated from other matches by providing a larger court, completely surrounding it with barriers, using an umpire and scorekeeper, providing spectator seating, locating it on the best flooring and in the best lighting, and other similar presentation techniques so the feature players have the best conditions that the tournament can offer. For round robin events without true semi-finals and finals, simply designate a few matches in the last one or two rounds that have a good chance of being the most decisive to determine the RR winner, or that are deemed the matches to be the ones that should be the most exciting by the Tournament Committee. Either way, choosing a RR format is not an excuse for not offering feature matches.

**10Q.** *I'm confused on the criteria under Scheduling. Can you explain?*

**10A.** *Event start times* is pretty much the standard that most tournaments meet nowadays—it's simply a list of the events with a starting time listed. *All events, all rounds* means that every event has a starting time and then every round after the first round also has a starting time. *Published schedule of each player, all rounds* is what you typically receive at the US Open and Closed when you register—a personalized list of all your events and the starting time for each match you play within those events.

**11Q.** *Do vending machines count as Drink and Food?*

**11A.** No, *drink and food* is freshly prepared food available at a stand or booth or delivered fresh to the venue.

**12Q.** *The flooring in my venue is a rubberized sports flooring similar to indoor tennis courts. I do not know what the subflooring is. How do I rate this floor?*

**12A.** Score it as 4 points—*Rubberized mat on wood* for all matches.

**13Q.** *What if my tables were previously approved by USATT or ITTF, but they are not presently on the approved list?*

**13A.** If tables are purchased when they are USATT or ITTF approved, they may be used for a USATT sanctioned tournament even if that table model is no longer USATT or ITTF approved. Furthermore, if a club bought tables in the past when they were approved, and purchases additional tables of the exact same model, *for the specific purpose of providing additional tables for a USATT sanctioned tournament*, those additional tables may also be used. ITTF sanctioned events must use current ITTF approved tables.

**14Q.** *Which tables are considered to be wheelchair-friendly?*

**14A.** Wheelchair friendly tables are listed on the ITTF approved tables webpage: [http://www.ittf.com/front\\_page/ittf1.asp?category=tables](http://www.ittf.com/front_page/ittf1.asp?category=tables). Look for tables with the wheelchair symbol (♿).

**15Q.** *I want to provide some wheelchair friendly tables for any wheelchair players who show up at my tournament, but doing so will make me ineligible for receiving points in the Tables category.*

**15A.** Wheelchair friendly tables are exempt from the criteria in the Tables section if they are being provided for wheelchair players. So, for instance, if you have two types of tables plus one or more wheelchair tables, then you still qualify to receive 2 points for *No more than two models in use*. You may not, however, use this exemption for wheelchair tables to meet the requirements for number of different table models allowed for various star levels. So, for instance, if a tournament has a large number of a wheelchair-friendly tables plus another table model, that would count as 2 table models and make that tournament ineligible for a 4-star grade which requires only 1 model. A wheelchair-friendly table is exempt only if the TD has a reasonable expectation that those tables are needed to accommodate wheelchair players.

**16Q.** *What's a show table?*

**16A.** A *show table* is a table with special presentation features not found on regular tables. These features might include artistic flourishes, special under-table decorative lighting, side curtains or aprons, and other features that make the table stand out from regular tables and offer high presentation values to the matches played thereon.

**17Q.** *What is considered as 'Print'? Do we need to have articles published about the tournament in USATT magazine or some other publications as well?*

**17A.** *Print* is local newspaper coverage or a write-up for a TT magazine/newspaper. A TD has no control over whether a newspaper/magazine actually prints submitted material, so you get 1 point for this as long as you have submitted press releases about your tournament to the media, preferably both before and after the event.

**18Q.** *My tournament venue is by my estimate 4 stories high. I don't have the exact measurement but I don't think you can hit the ball up so high to reach that ceiling.*

**18A.** Do your best to get an accurate measurement, but this is a tough one to measure. For closed ceilings, measure to the ceiling tiles or drywall that form the ceiling. For open ceilings, measure to the bottom of the rafters or beams that support the roof or next higher floor. Measure to the lowest point above any court that will be used for sanctioned play. There is no allowance for ceiling height that is different on feature courts than it is on the regular courts. So take the least common denominator for all the courts—claim only what you can promise for all courts. If the walls are concrete block, you can count the number of rows and multiply by 8 inches. You might also ask a building superintendent, coach, or other personnel who is assigned to that gym to tell you the height. But if you are lacking a more accurate measurement, you just have to use your best guesstimate.

**19Q.** *I notice that both "12 feet between tables" and "19x38 courts for feature matches" are requirements for 3-star and up, but "Select one" is noted for that category. Why the discrepancy?*

**19A.** Yes, both are requirements for 3-star and up. That means that 3-5 star tournaments must offer a minimum of 12 feet between tables and provide at least one feature court with 19 feet by 38 feet dimensions. When filling out the Star Table, only claim 5 points for *19x38 courts for feature matches*. Do not also mark *12 feet between tables* or claim 2 points for meeting that criterion. 0-2 Star tournaments may mark *12 feet between tables* and claim 2 points if that is the minimum criterion they meet.

**20Q.** *I play our tournaments in a racquetball facility, with each table in a separate racquetball court. How should I mark the court size, ceiling height, and barrier sections?*

**20A.** Racquetball courts measure 20 x 40 feet with a ceiling of 20 feet, so you would mark *19x38 courts* for 6 points, *16 ft. ceiling height* for 2 points, and *All courts fully barriered* for 6 points.

**21Q.** *At our tournament, we run a giant round robin separated into two main categories—U1600 and U2000. If we have all tables alike per event, does that count? The players won't need to change from one table to another. However, the U1600 players will be using one model of table and the U2000 players will be using a different model. The players in each event won't need to change the model of table at any time during the tournament, but there will be 2 models of table in the gym.*

**21A.** At this point in time, there is no allowance for separating the conditions offered for a particular event or events. The criteria stated are for all events at the tournament. I do see your point; however, in that players will continue to play on only one model of table throughout the tournament and will not ever need to switch to another model. Perhaps this is a refinement to this system that will be implemented in the future.

**22Q.** *My point total is 45, but I don't have room to set up 250 seats. Do I still qualify as a 4-star tournament?*

**22A.** No, 250 seats is a minimum requirement for 4-star events. Your star level will be lowered to 3-stars until you are able to accommodate 250 seats. You must meet all minimums for a particular star level, including referee requirements, before you will be granted sanction at that star level.

**23Q.** *What if the event variety overlaps, like a novice doubles event or a junior team event? If an event overlaps 2 categories, does that count as 1 point or 2 points?*

**23A.** There is 1 point maximum for one event. So a Junior Teams event would count as 1 point, either as a junior event or a team event.

**24A.** *For live streaming, does it need to be for the entire event? What if we just did live streaming for the Open semis and finals? Is a certain video quality required?*

**24A.** At this point in time, any live streaming of any quality will count for points, whether it is just for your finals, for several feature matches, or the entire tournament.

**25Q.** *For my feature matches, I normally provide a scoring device to the umpire, who then serves as both umpire and scorekeeper. So do I get 4 points for this?*

**25A.** No, you would only get 3 points for *Umpires for featured matches*. To get points for scorekeepers, they must be different people than the umpire for the match.

**26Q.** *I'm giving away gift certificates and prizes worth a lot of money. Do I include their value in the Cash Prizes cell on the Sanction Request Form?*

**26A.** Yes, but only at 50% value. Cash Prizes, for the purposes of filling out the Sanction Request Form, which then determines the sanction fee and the number of points to be awarded for prize money on the Star Table, shall include:

Full value for cash, other legal tender, and checks

50% value for any type of gift certificate

50% of the manufacturer's retail price for any commercial product

0% value for trophies, medals, certificates, cups, plaques, and other similar awards.

For example, if a tournament gave out \$500 cash, \$300 in gift certificates, table tennis equipment worth \$200, and trophies worth \$100, then the value that should be placed in the Cash Prizes cell on the Sanction Request Form would be \$750 (\$500 + [\$300 x 50%] + [200x 50%] + [\$100 x 0%]).