



## **Announcement regarding defaults / withdrawals and premature departures:**

There are two issues we need to address, they confused us at the events in 2018, because particularly in sports there is really only one big cross-border family and the “law” of fairness applies to all. So there is need for change:

- **Defaults/withdrawals:** It has happened several times that players have given up in the middle of the tournament or simply stopped to compete, meaning, they have not completely finished the tournament. If this is due to actual injuries or sudden illness, there is no discussion and health is always coming first, no doubt. These occurrences are also comprehensible, understandable and usually verifiable.  
We are referring here rather to situations in which players simply don't continue or appear from one day to the other, possibly losing the desire due to not achieving the expected results or seeing no sense in, for example, playing the consolation or placement matches. Not only does it harm someone him-/herself, it should feel even worse that he/she is damaging the opponent even more, because it takes away scheduled matches that the opponent was looking forward to and waits for, probably for which he/she took the long journey. Someone should put him-/herself in the position of the opponent in advance and ask him-/herself how the reaction would be in case of reversed roles.
- **Premature departures:** As mentioned above, it's important, but also normal, to finish tournaments properly and that includes scheduling the departure in advance so that, according to the timely published schedule, players are able to play all the matches according to the official and planned schedule till the end. We at our end will certainly work to ensure that the tournaments end at reasonable times, which is not always easy due to the number of participants, but we are working on it. In the future it will certainly be mentioned even clearer that a participation in our tournaments is only possible if the athletes can guarantee right from the start and plan in advance that they will be able to finish the tournament in terms of the time schedule. Deliberately planned or even booked premature departure will no longer be accepted. Of course, this has nothing to do with above mentioned forced premature termination because of actual injuries or sudden illness.

We don't want to express what we will do if this appears again, especially since it's more important for us to appeal to the general fairness that our beautiful sport is about!

True athletes compete right till the end or as long as they are able to!

Best,

**Jörg Bitzigeio**  
High Performance Director  
USA Table Tennis