



Division Director Handbook

2011-2012 Competition Season

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1 What is NCTTA?

The National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA) is a government-recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to promoting competitive table tennis at the collegiate level throughout North America. As the national governing body of college table tennis, NCTTA maintains the eligibility and integrity of the sport

College table tennis competition is largely organized around geography. At the local level, schools are grouped into divisions. Several of these divisions feed into 6 geographic regions, with winners at the regional level advancing to a national championship:

Division → Regional → National Competition

In addition to team competition, singles competition will also be held at the division, regional and national level.

1.1 How is NCTTA organized?

- ▶ NCTTA consists of member clubs at more than 150 colleges and universities, each assigned to a geographic **division**. Each division is managed by a **division director**.
- ▶ Each **region** consists of 3-5 divisions and is coordinated by a **regional director**.
- ▶ Division directors within a region report to their regional director who serves as a liaison between the division directors and the **League Director Representative**.



- ▶ NCTTA is also supported by a variety of different committees, each focused on a specific area of interest in college table tennis: recruitment, public relations, women’s, eligibility, etc.

1.2 Customer (member) focused

NCTTA is a very customer-oriented organization with division directors serving as the primary contact customers have with the organization.

Who are the customers? NCTTA’s customers consist of anyone involved with an NCTTA member school. This could include: team club presidents/officers, club members (athletes), coaches, and school officials.

1.2.1 Professionalism

As a division director, your **demeanor** and **behavior** are very important when interacting with our customers. It’s critical to act **professionally** at all times, as you are the most visible representative of the organization to the member schools in your division. How people perceive the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association is largely determined by how you behave and how well you carry out your responsibilities as a division director.

1.3 Virtual Volunteering

NCTTA is a completely volunteer-based organization; everyone that works for NCTTA does so as a volunteer. These volunteers are distributed all throughout the country. NCTTA uses several tools and technologies to facilitate distributed communication:

- ▶ **Email** (you must check NCTTA email every 24 hours)
- ▶ **Conference Calls/Webinars**
- ▶ **Collaborative Documents** (Google Docs)
- ▶ **Online Project Management Software** (“the Hub”)
- ▶ **Instant Messaging and Social Networking**

Frequent communication is essential to the organization and is also critical to your job as regional director. By checking email daily, staying active, and communicating regularly, you’ll be able to stay in touch with the division

directors in your region. And you'll be keeping NCTTA professional and customer-focused.

2 Your Role as Division Director

Division directors are the backbone of college table tennis, organizing and supervising college table tennis activities within a particular area of the country. Toward this end, a division director has the following key responsibilities:

- ▶ Acts as the central contact person for all the schools/teams in one geographic division
- ▶ Recruits players and teams within this region to join NCTTA and participate in the NCTTA League
- ▶ Helps plan and coordinate division tournaments and other college table tennis events in the region
- ▶ Supervises divisional League competition and so must maintain detailed knowledge of both NCTTA Competition Rules and the international Laws of Table Tennis (from ITTF)
- ▶ Publicizes college table tennis events within the division, both to member schools and appropriate media outlets in the region
- ▶ For each division competition, submits a written report to the Public Relations Committee describing the results along with interesting storylines from the event
- ▶ Interacts with respective regional director to coordinate activities with the League Director and the other division directors
- ▶ Conducts non-executive votes (as requested) in his or her division, reporting the results to the League Director

Successful division directors must act **respectfully**, **reliably**, and **responsibly** in all of these duties.

2.1 Building Relationships

College table tennis doesn't happen in isolation. The support of teams, players, coaches, and school officials are needed to make college table tennis possible. Pay special attention to how you interact with people not

directly involved with the sport. Be extra respectful in dealing with Athletic Directors, Club/Recreational Sports Directors, and Facility Supervisors; you need their help and support to be able to conduct division competitions and events.

Make an effort to build strong and productive relationships with school officials. Be clear, honest, and straightforward when interacting with them. Send a thank you note or email to key school officials at the host school after a successful division competition. If you take your division director responsibilities seriously and act respectfully and professionally, chances are good that school officials will treat you respectfully as well. It can often take months or years to gain people's trust, and how you act as division director with respect to school officials can affect how NCTTA is perceived for many years to come.

Division directors are *THE* most visible representatives of NCTTA to member schools.

2.2 Training

In order to better acquaint division directors with their responsibilities and the procedures and process of the position, all division directors have **mandatory** training sessions twice a year. The first session typically happens in the Fall before the start of the competition season; the second in the Spring before competition resumes. These training sessions or webinars are conducted online and via conference call.

In addition to the biannual training sessions, all division directors are expected to read this Division Director Handbook and the NCTTA Rules and Regulations in their entirety (available online through the NCTTA website).

2.2.1 Certification

There are two parts to the division director certification process:

- a) **Umpire Certification Test:** Division directors are required to maintain current active certification as USATT Umpires at the Club Level or higher. This ensures that division directors have current knowledge of basic table tennis rules and what is involved with officiating table tennis matches. The Club Umpire Test is open-book

and can be completed online. NCTTA will pay any test fees and provide USATT membership, if necessary. If you are already certified as a Club Umpire, you are encouraged to become certified as a higher-level umpire or take the Certified Referee Exam. NCTTA will be happy to cover the test fees for this as well.

- b) Division Director Certification Test:** The Division Director Certification Test focuses on NCTTA competition rules and the duties and responsibilities of division directors. It is an open book test that can be taken via email after completion of the division director webinar. In addition to the webinar, the primary references for the exam are this Division Director Handbook and the NCTTA Rules and Regulations.

Upon successful completion of the division director certification process, you will be mailed a certificate noting your achievement.

2.2.2 Welcome Materials

After completing your division director certification, you will receive by mail several items that will be useful for you as division director:

- ▶ Printed copy of the *NCTTA Division Director Handbook*
- ▶ Printed copy of the *NCTTA Rules and Regulations* (to bring with you to division tournaments)
- ▶ Printed copy of the USATT/ITTF *Laws of Table Tennis*
- ▶ NCTTA brochures (for use in recruiting, among other things)
- ▶ An NCTTA division director polo shirt (to be worn at all NCTTA events)

3 Getting Started (Organizing Your Division)

3.1 Gathering Contact Information

To be an effective division director, it's essential that you be able to maintain regular, active communication with all of the member schools in your division. The first step toward being able to do this is to **collect and maintain current contact information for all key club officers of your member schools** (club presidents and treasurers in particular). It's very important to have at least two contact people for each member club; often

as the year goes on, one contact may become less responsive. Having multiple points of contact will allow you to better stay in touch with the teams in your division.

In terms of contact information, collect the following:

- ▶ names
- ▶ email addresses
- ▶ cell phone number and apartment/dorm/home phone number
- ▶ instant messaging IDs (AIM, Yahoo, MSN, Skype)
- ▶ Facebook contact information

Basically you want to be able to get a hold of them even better than their parents!

After your division director webinar, you will be given access to an online document listing the current member schools in your division and the most recent available contact person/information for each school. As you contact each school and gather contact information for the upcoming season, please update this online document to reflect these changes. Similarly, keep the list of contact information current with any changes throughout the season.

3.2 Introductory Welcome Letter

After collecting all the names and emails of returning schools and potential new schools for the upcoming season, send all your contacts an email introducing yourself as the division director along with what to expect in the months ahead. See below for a Sample Welcome Letter you can adapt for your needs.

After establishing initial contact, be sure to follow up with emails, Facebook messages, etc. to keep all the schools engaged.

3.2.1 Sample Welcome Letter

Hi, my name is Joe Smith, I am a junior at (insert University) or a working professional from (insert city) and I am the Director of the (insert Division Name) for the 2011-2012 Season. I'll be your main contact for this year's intercollegiate table tennis action. On behalf of the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA) I would like to welcome all the new and returning schools to the league and hope that you all have a fun and exciting season.

Here's some important information about the upcoming season ... (insert key information you feel is appropriate at this stage) ...

If you have any questions or if there's anything I can do to improve your college table tennis experience, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Joe Smith
(insert Division name) Division Director
emailaddress@nctta.org

3.2.2 Items to Include in the Welcome Letter

There are several areas you should touch on with member schools in your division before the season starts. This can be done in the welcome letter or in some follow-up communication:

- ▶ Review of *NCTTA Rules and Regulations* for the upcoming season (these can be accessed online via the *Documents* section of the NCTTA website).
- ▶ Review of NCTTA Membership Requirements, membership fees paid and forms submitted by October 1st or online 48 hours prior to first meet (see Section 3.5 for more on this).
- ▶ Review of eligibility requirements: undergraduate students minimum 2.0 GPA and 6 credit hours, graduate students minimum 3.0 GPA and 4 credit hours (see *NCTTA Rules and Regulations* for complete eligibility)

requirements). Eligibility forms must be submitted at or before the first division meet in both the Fall and the Spring.

- ▶ Discussion of schedule for division meets including when the singles competition will be held. Schedule for season must be set by October 1.
- ▶ Mention of team uniform requirements: matching shirts are needed for division play.

This is not necessarily an exhaustive list but gives an idea of the types of information you'll want to pass along to the teams in your division before the season starts.

3.3 Preseason Captains Webinar

Gather all the captains from each team in your division for an online meeting (webinar) prior to the start of the season. The webinar will allow all the team captains to meet each other (over the phone). It will also give you a chance to review the *NCTTA Rules and Regulations* with all the schools and let the teams know what to expect in NCTTA competitions. At a minimum, you should cover all of the items in Section 3.2.2, even if you already mentioned them in a welcome letter (a little repetition never hurts).

The webinar should be scheduled some time before the first meet in your division at a time convenient for all the team captains. NCTTA will help with setting up the online meeting space, call-in number, code, etc. and can have someone on the call to provide support if needed.

3.4 Division Communication

Communicate with all the members in your division early and often. Set the tone for division communication in the preseason and maintain frequent communication as the season progresses. Aim for at least one college table tennis-related email every two to three weeks during the season.

Facebook is a great way to keep in touch with member schools, in particular, consider creating an official Facebook group for your NCTTA Division. Individual members of teams in your division can join, making it an effective way to keep people informed of division news. Some divisions already have Facebook groups in place, in which case you'll just have to remember to update it throughout the season.

3.5 Membership Process

All schools in your division must complete the NCTTA membership process and become member schools before they are allowed to compete in NCTTA competition. The full details of the membership requirements can be found in the *NCTTA Rules and Regulations*. A few key things to keep in mind:

- ▶ The membership process is completed online via the NCTTA website. Schools enter their club information, agree to the terms of NCTTA membership, and pay the NCTTA membership fees entirely online.
- ▶ Credit cards and PayPal are acceptable forms of online payment for the NCTTA membership fees. If a club needs to pay some other way (a check written by their school for example), they should email NCTTA directly (info@nctta.org) to coordinate this.
- ▶ Division Directors cannot accept any membership fee payments at a division meet. **Membership fees must be received by NCTTA on October 1st or with late fees at least 48 hours prior to the first division meet of the season.**
- ▶ The *NCTTA Eligibility Form* cannot be completed online; a paper copy must be filled out by the school's registrar office.

Completion of the NCTTA membership requirements online will be tracked via a shared spreadsheet for your division. Each school will be listed along with where they stand in terms of completion of the membership requirements. Though updating this spreadsheet is primarily your responsibility as division director, NCTTA will update it before each meet in your division so that you know in advance who is eligible to play.

All schools must have satisfied the membership requirements prior to the first division meet.

We have a strict “no pay no play” policy and it falls to the division director to enforce it. Send home any teams that haven't paid their membership fees or completed the NCTTA membership process.

3.6 Recruitment

As the primary (and often only) local NCTTA official within your division, you are encouraged to act as the recruitment directors within your division.

Here are some things you can do to attract new schools to college table tennis:

- ▶ Attend USATT tournaments or other table tennis events in your region and bring along some NCTTA brochures (included with your division director welcome materials, see Section 2.2.2). Hand out the brochures to parents, juniors, high school and college students, and talk to them about college table tennis, why it's great, and how they can participate.
- ▶ Work with the NCTTA Recruiting Committee (send email to recruiting@nctta.org) to identify potential schools in your region that might be interested in college table tennis. NCTTA has experienced recruiters that can assist you if you run into difficulties and can approach a school on your behalf via email, traditional mail, etc.
- ▶ Visit potential schools in your division (especially if they're close by). Arrange to meet with a club president, club/recreation sports director, etc. Nothing shows your interest in having them participate more than showing up in person.
- ▶ Get creative! Every region is different and every school is different. What works well in some areas may not work so great in others. Try lots of different approaches to recruiting and see what works best.

3.6.1 How Recruitment Benefits Your Division

Recruitment is clearly essential to the continued growth and success of college table tennis. And it can also benefit your division in more direct ways. Divisions must maintain at least 3 playing schools to be considered official (and qualify teams to the Championships), so it is in your best interest to maintain at least 4 or 5 schools at all times. That will help guard against negative consequences from a last minute default. Don't get caught in a division with only 3 schools, because, if one or more schools default; your division would then be considered transitional and unable to qualify teams to the regional championships.

Larger divisions (with 6 or more active, playing schools) have a distinct advantage when it comes to wild card qualification: they are eligible to qualify a second school to regionals (as a wild card) before any smaller divisions are. Just one more reason why active recruitment is a good idea.

4 Planning Division Tournaments

4.1 Season Overview

The NCTTA League Competition Season spans about 6 months, roughly following the academic year. The first five months constitute the regular season, focusing on division play. The season culminates in month six with the regional championships with regional winners advancing to the College Table Tennis National Championships held each spring.

4.1.1 Season Timeline

August - September	Gather contact information, send welcome email, captain's webinar
October 1	Competition season begins, season schedule must be in place
October - December	Fall division tournaments
January - February	Spring team and division singles competition
February 15	Season concludes
March 8	Last date for regional championships
April	National Championships

4.1.2 Season Format

Divisions are free to use whatever season format that works best for their member schools as long as it satisfies the following requirements:

- 1) Every team must play every other team in its division at least twice during the season.
- 2) Every team must play every other team at least once before December 31st.

For example, divisions are free to use a format in which: (a) every team plays every team three or more times, (b) most of the division matches are played in the Fall, or (c) matches against non-division opponents are included. All of these possibilities satisfy the two season format requirements above.

Here are a few commonly used season formats:

- ▶ **A few large tournaments:** All the teams in the division participate in each tournament and everyone plays everyone at these meets. This is the easiest season format to schedule and works best with smaller divisions (8 teams or less) and divisions with large facilities and lots of tables.
- ▶ **Several smaller tournaments:** Only a few teams participate in each tournament, so it takes a large number of events over the course of the season to ensure every team plays every other team twice. This format works best in larger divisions (8 or more teams) and in relatively dense divisions where long distance travel is not required. If only small facilities with limited numbers of tables are available, this may be the only type of format that's workable.

Whatever format you settle on for your division, it's important that you clearly communicate the format to all the teams prior to the start of the season (in preseason emails or captains meeting, for example). As the division director, you must be present for all division tournaments, regardless of the season format.

4.2 Choosing Dates and Locations

Selecting the best date, host school, and facility for a particular division meet requires significant coordination with all the schools division. When and where a division tournament is held can often be the difference between an outstanding, well-attended event and a mediocre one.

The season schedule (dates and locations for division tournaments) needs to be set and published by October 1.

4.2.1 Host Site and Facility Selection

A number of different criteria should be evaluated when deciding where to hold your division tournaments. Get input from member schools as to what types of facilities they have at their institution, and then consider the following:

- ▶ **Travel Distance:** A central location that minimizes how far teams have to travel is generally preferable.
- ▶ **Playing Conditions:** How much space is available at the facility? Will courts be large enough or all crammed together? Are the ceilings high enough? What is the lighting like? What kind of flooring surface is at the facility (and how often is it cleaned)? Is there space for spectators or people not playing matches to sit without interfering with the active courts? Is there space for a control table for the tournament director (you)? Basketball gyms or ballrooms often make good facilities as they tend to have lots of space, wood floors, high ceilings and decent lighting.
- ▶ **Equipment:** How many table tennis tables does the facility have? What kind of condition are they in? How about the nets (maybe some teams will need to bring some quality nets with them)? Does the facility have an office table and some chairs that you can borrow for a tournament registration/control desk?

Some divisions have all their division meets in the same facility (the best or most centrally located one). Other divisions like to move their meets around so that several different schools have a chance to host; everyone likes to be the home team once in a while.

4.2.2 Date Selection

Obviously you want to try and schedule division tournaments for days when teams are best able to attend. Here are some other scheduling considerations:

- ▶ **Dates to Avoid:** Certain dates you'll want to eliminate right off the bat. This would include any **major holidays** (academic, religious, or otherwise), **exam periods**, and **weekends of home football games**. Academic calendars are easy enough to look up on each school's website, as are college football schedules. So it should be easy to find which days or weekends to avoid.

- ▶ **Facility Availability:** Most college facilities (especially gyms, ballrooms, etc.) are used for a wide range of events and activities; you'll need to find a day in which the desired facility can be reserved for a large block of time. Saturdays are often best, but Sundays can also work, especially to avoid football games. For head-to-head matches where travel distances are small it may be possible to schedule weekday evening matches.
- ▶ **Tournament Duration:** How much time will you need the facility for? This depends on the number of teams and format of your tournament, but figure team contests played on two tables at a time will run about an hour. For most tournaments 8 hours is a minimum; try to get the facility for 10 or more hours if you can. It's always best to err on the safe side and reserve more time than you think you'll need. Inevitably, teams will show up late and matches will run long. No one wants to be in the middle of the doubles match to determine the division winner when your time is up and the facility manager comes by to kick everybody out.
- ▶ **Postponement/Rescheduling:** Sometimes unexpected things happen causing a division tournament to be postponed and or rescheduled for a different date. Could be a snowstorm, other severe weather, natural disaster, anything. Prepare for this possibility. Avoid scheduling division tournaments toward the end of the semester or on the last possible weekend of the season, because if something comes up, there's no time left to reschedule.

Once you've settled on where and when tournaments are going to be held you can notify the teams in your division and send along the season schedule to your regional director to be posted on the NCTTA website.

Get confirmation of the facility reservation from the facility manager in writing (or email).

Written confirmation will help ensure that everyone agrees on the same date and time and that your facility time isn't later given away to someone else (as can happen with more informal verbal agreements).

4.3 Tournament Preparation

4.3.1 Contacting Member Schools

In the weeks and months leading up to a division tournament, notify your member schools **EARLY** and **OFTEN** about the event. You want to get the tournament on their calendars before they make other plans for that weekend. Frequent communication helps generate anticipation around the event as well. Here are some things you'll want to communicate to member schools (repeatedly) as the event approaches:

- ▶ Encourage them to bring a women's team (and point out the associated membership fee discount).
- ▶ Encourage them to bring one or more junior varsity teams (B teams), assuming you have enough time and space for it.
- ▶ Remind them that the membership registration process (including fee payment) must be completed before the first tournament. Encourage them to do this online before the event (easier for you, easier for them). Ask them to print out a copy of their receipt and bring it with them to the tournament for confirmation.
- ▶ Remind them to take their eligibility forms to their school's registrar office for verification (as this can take a few days or longer) and to bring the completed form with them to the first tournament. If possible, have them also scan and email you a copy of the completed eligibility form after getting it back from the registrar. Eligibility check is only required for players on varsity coed or women's team, but it doesn't hurt to include players from a JV team on the form, especially if there's even a remote chance that they might compete for the school at the Championships (you never know when someone might get injured).
- ▶ Ask them to confirm that they will be attending and to send you team rosters for the tournament a week in advance. Often teams won't show up because they wait to the last minute to assemble their team roster for the meet and then have difficulty recruiting enough players. By asking for this information well in advance, it will force them to think seriously about the event and who from their school will be attending.
- ▶ Give teams a time to show up for the event, but make sure the time you advertise is at least 30 minutes before you're planning on starting the tournament. So if you'd like the first match to start at 9 am, tell teams that the tournament will start at 8:30 am and that they'll want to get

there a little before then to warm-up. That way when teams show up a little late (as they invariably do), you can still start the first matches of the day on time.

4.3.2 Printing Forms

You'll need to have a variety of blank forms to record various information both before and during the competition. These are most easily printed using the NCTTA competition spreadsheets, as they can pre-fill many of the fields on the form. If you won't have a printer available on site you can also pre-print copies of these forms from the *Documents* section of the NCTTA website, <http://www.nctta.org/documents.html>:

- a) **Roster Submission Form**, to be filled out at the start of the event. 5-25 copies (at least one for each team that will be competing).
http://www.nctta.org/doc/NCTTA_Roster.pdf
- b) **Match Score Sheets**, to record scores for each team contest. 25-75 copies (at least one for each match that will be played).
<http://www.nctta.org/doc/TeamContestScoresheet.pdf>
- c) **Singles Match Score Sheets** (singles competition only), to record scores for singles matches (one for each match that will be played).
http://www.nctta.org/doc/11point_IndivScoreSheet.pdf
- d) **Team Match Player Selection Form**, to indicate which players on a roster will compete in a particular team contest. 50-150 copies (at least two for each match that will be played).
<http://www.nctta.org/doc/TeamMatchPlayerSelectionForm.pdf>

4.3.3 Gathering Equipment

There are several important pieces of equipment you'll need for your division tournament. Some of this may already be available at the competition facility (confirm with the facility manager), some you'll have to bring with you. Here's a checklist to help you make sure you have everything you need:

- table tennis tables** (at facility)
- nets** (may have to bring some with you, depending on quality)

- ❑ **balls** (one gross -- 144 balls will be sent to each division director for use in division competitions; please distribute any remaining balls to member schools at the end of the season)
- ❑ **barriers** (if available, many schools have some already from previous seasons)
- ❑ **net height measurer** (to check nets before the competition starts)
- ❑ **table numbers** (print large numbers on full size sheets of paper, from 1 through however many tables you have; two per table is best so you can tape one to each side of the table)
- ❑ **clipboards** (one for each table, with corresponding label numbers)
- ❑ **pens or pencils** (to record match scores; unless these are attached to the clipboards, they have a way of disappearing, so bring at least 2 times the number of tables you have)
- ❑ **table and chairs for control desk** (most facilities will have these, you'll just have to check to make sure you can use them)
- ❑ **whiteboard or corkboard/bulletin board** (some facilities have boards on wheels that you can roll into the gym, or you may be able to bring a whiteboard with you; while not essential, this can be very useful for writing up/posting match schedules and results and can make the event much more organized)
- ❑ **digital camera** (if you have one or can borrow one; not essential, but photos of the event are great to have)
- ❑ **tape** (scotch tape, duct tape, etc. useful for many things so it's always good to have some around, just in case)
- ❑ **towels** (one or two to wipe off the tables or floor, if necessary)
- ❑ **rulebook** (printed copy of the NCTTA Rules and Regulations and the USATT Laws of Table Tennis)

4.3.4 Tournament Staff

As the division director, you are the tournament director for division meets. You're responsible for managing the competition according to NCTTA rules.

Consider recruiting an assistant tournament director to help you run the competition.

The assistant could be a friend, school official, a member of a local table tennis club, or member of a school in your division. NCTTA can also help with finding another USATT certified umpire in your area to help out.

Having another person will help keep the tournament running smoothly, especially if you have to step out for a few minutes. Plus, this additional person will have an opportunity to learn the NCTTA rules and learn about running NCTTA competitions.

4.4 Promoting Division Events

The more people that know about college table tennis events happening in your area, the better. After you've put in the effort to plan a great event, it's a little disappointing if nobody knows about it. Here are a few tips to keep in mind when promoting your division's events:

- ▶ Use a variety of different media and techniques to get the word out:
 - ▶ post flyers around the host campus (the host club can do this)
 - ▶ send emails to various student groups on campus
 - ▶ contact school and local media outlets, including both the school newspaper, radio, and television stations and any local newspapers (daily or weekly), radio, or television stations in your city
 - ▶ get the event posted to an (online) campus calendar or club sports/recreation website
 - ▶ use word of mouth, tell your friends and family, get members of all the clubs participating to tell their friends and family, use Facebook
- ▶ Publicize the event both at the host school and at all the member schools participating. Schools often like to know if a team representing the school competes (and does well).
- ▶ Enlist the help of the club officers and members of the host school to promote the event and reach out to local contacts.
- ▶ Take advantage of press releases sent out before and after the event; these can be helpful in contacting various media outlets. Be sure to follow up with local media that have been sent press releases and you think might cover the event. Phone calls are often the most effective, be persistent.
- ▶ Try a cross-promotional effort with local businesses (again, local contacts are key for this). Make a local company a sponsor of the event, give them recognition in all flyers, emails, etc. about the event and promote them at the event itself. In exchange the company might give financial or value-in-kind support (see Section 4.5.1) but would also

promote the event to its customers. For example, imagine an event flyer distributed with every delivery of pizza or Chinese take-out from a local establishment.

- ▶ Contact the NCTTA Public Relations Committee (via email at publicrelations@nctta.org) if you need help or guidance in promoting your event.

4.5 Financial Support

4.5.1 Sponsorship

Consider approaching local companies to sponsor League competitions in your division. NCTTA has an exclusive sponsorship for table tennis equipment, so table tennis companies are pretty much off limits, but almost any other kind of sponsor is fair game. While securing financial support from sponsors can be difficult, often in-kind sponsorships (such as gift certificates, merchandise, etc.) are easier to come by as the cost of such contributions to the sponsor is much less. For example, if you were in need of office supplies for your event you might approach a local copy or office supply store. Locally owned companies are often best, the easier it is to reach an owner, manager, or key decision-maker the better.

4.5.2 Financial Assistance

In the event any extra or out-of-the-ordinary expenses should arise during the management of your division, you may request financial support from NCTTA to help cover these costs. Also, if you have a new or unique idea for improving your division or the organization, you can request financial support for your idea as well.

Please submit any financial assistance requests to your regional director.

5 Division Tournament Management

5.1 Learn and Know the NCTTA Rules

You will receive a printed copy of the *NCTTA Rules and Regulations* in your division director welcome materials (see Section 2.2.2) and they can also be accessed online through the Documents section of the NCTTA website. Read

the NCTTA rules carefully and make sure you understand them fully. At division tournaments it will be your job to enforce NCTTA rules.

Bring a printed copy of the *NCTTA Rules and Regulations* with you to all division tournaments.

There's no shame in looking up a rule that you're not sure about. Failing to enforce proper NCTTA rules because you didn't bring along a copy of the NCTTA rulebook is simply not acceptable.

You should also be familiar with the *Laws of Table Tennis* as published by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) and USATT. These are the rules the umpire test is based on. Bring a printed copy of the Laws of Table Tennis with you to all division tournaments along with the NCTTA rulebook.

5.2 Competition Management

5.2.1 Draws and Schedule for Team Competition (Day Before)

A day or two prior to the tournament, you'll want to put together draws and a preliminary schedule for the event. Most division competitions (in which all teams show up at a single event) are round robin where every varsity team plays every other varsity team. For smaller tournaments with fewer teams, the schedule and order of play may not be so significant and may be easier to put together. Some guidelines to follow when creating a tournament schedule:

- 1) Make a list of all the teams you expect to attend. Divide the list into categories: coed varsity teams, women's varsity teams, junior varsity teams (B teams, C teams, etc.).
- 2) Try to rank (seed) the teams based on team rating (combined ratings of top 4 players using the formula $1.5 * (A+B) + C + D$). Ranking only matters for varsity coed and women's teams.
- 3) Enter the teams in the NCTTA competition spreadsheets and try to follow the order of play specified on the round-robin sheets (so that, for example, the top 2 varsity teams would play last). If not using the competition spreadsheets, download and fill in some

blank round-robin draw sheets, for example those at <http://crystalcanyon.net/lrose/forms.pdf>

- 4) Varsity coed and women's teams get first priority schedule wise. You need to make sure you finish all the scheduled matches where two varsity teams play each other. Women's teams should play roughly the same number of matches as coed teams (women's teams may need to play some JV teams to make this happen).
- 5) Schedule matches involving junior varsity teams to fill available space after you're sure all the varsity matches will fit. Consider holding a separate junior varsity tournament or scrimmage if there are more JV teams than you can accommodate in one day.
- 6) Create a spreadsheet with blanks for various times and tables, filling in the blanks with matches you've scheduled.
- 7) Usually it's best to schedule a team contest on two tables at a time (e.g. Michigan vs. Ohio State on Tables 3 and 4). Figure a team contest allotted two tables will last about an hour.
- 8) Incorporate a lunch break into the schedule if you plan on having one. Otherwise be sure to tell the teams that no lunch break is built-in so they should bring some food with them. Often it's possible to give a break to some teams for a single round (while other teams are playing) and then give a break to the remaining teams in a subsequent round.
- 9) Even though you might create a schedule with specific times and table assignments on it, you may not want to publish these times and table numbers in advance because it limits your flexibility during the tournament. Instead consider just making available the order of play and round-robin groupings. That way when some contests run slower than others, you can reassign contests to different tables to keep things on track.

5.2.2 Draws and Schedule for Singles Competition

If possible, try to hold the division singles tournament in conjunction with the spring team competition to maximize the number of attendees. Some guidelines to follow when creating a singles competition schedule:

- 1) Players should be seeded using NCTTA individual ratings. For more information, see NCTTA Rules and Regulations - section 5.3.
- 2) Organize players into round-robin groups of 4 to 5 players based on seeding (using the snake system). Allot about 2 hours on a single table for each round robin group of 4 players.
- 3) Winner and/or runner up from each group will advance to a single elimination bracket. Allot about 20 to 30 minutes for each single elimination match/round.

5.2.3 Arrival and Setup

Try to arrive at the competition facility as early as you can – **at least 45 minutes before you've scheduled the first match**, maybe even earlier depending on how much setup you'll need and how much help you'll have.

Do everything in your power to start the first matches of the day on time.

A late start and you'll end up running late for the rest of the day and may not be able to finish all of the matches.

You'll need to make sure all the tables are setup and well spaced, with barriers placed where appropriate. Check the net heights and tension. You may also want to wipe off the tables with a towel if they're dirty or dusty. And of course you'll need to ready your control desk area.

5.2.4 Rosters and Registration

As teams arrive collect any eligibility forms from them. You may want to print out a list of the teams and players attending from the competition spreadsheet to mark off what you've received.

Have each team fill out an *NCTTA Roster* form and enter the information in *NCTTA Roster.xls* to indicate who will play on the team and in what order. **This order must be followed for the entire tournament.** Keep submitted rosters out of view of other teams until all of the rosters have been collected.

Ask for full names on the *NCTTA Roster* form. Nicknames can often cause confusion especially for eligibility checks.

Please also verify that valid email addresses have been collected for players listed on the team roster.

You should also check that the players listed on each varsity team roster match those on a submitted eligibility form. If you have reason to be suspicious, you may want to check student IDs for varsity team players to make sure they match the names on the roster and eligibility forms. We have had some incidents with teams trying to “substitute” ineligible players for players/names that had passed the eligibility check.

**No pay = No play
If a team has not turned in its membership fees,
membership forms, or eligibility forms it cannot compete.**

5.2.5 Welcome and Introduction

Before you start the first matches (about 10 minutes before your anticipated start time), gather together all the team captains (could be everyone at the tournament for a smaller competition). Give a quick welcome and introduction to the event, mentioning the following:

- a) Who you are, your name and position (let them know that you are in charge and running things).
- b) NCTTA membership requirements (membership forms and fees) and eligibility forms. Make sure everyone has submitted these (shows a printout/receipt from the online form or just check your division spreadsheet on Google Documents to see if a team has paid or not). Receipts for membership fees are handled by the NCTTA Treasurer (treasurer@nctta.org).
- c) Tournament format/schedule including: order of play, match procedures, and generally how things will flow.
- d) Brief overview of NCTTA competition rules (you will have covered this at the preseason captain’s webinar, so this should just be a review). Make sure you hit the basics: 4 singles matches, 1 doubles

match, best of 5 games to 11 points, only play the doubles if tied 2-2. Also emphasize 2 minute limit on warm-ups.

- e) Thank them for attending. Make it clear you value their participation and want them to have the best possible experience.

5.2.6 Preparing Score Sheets

The NCTTA competition spreadsheet will automatically prepare score sheets for you if given the list of players participating. In the event of printer failure or personal preference, score sheets can also be prepared manually:

- 1) Fill out the names of the two teams playing and indicate whether varsity, women's, or junior varsity. For singles fill out the names of the two players playing.
- 2) For each team, copy their team roster (lineup) from the *NCTTA Roster* they filled out to the *NCTTA Team Contest Score Sheet* for the contest. It should then be clear which two players will compete in each singles match of the contest.
- 3) For varsity matches the player in the number 1 singles position for the contest must play doubles.
- 4) If a team's roster contains more than 4 players, you need to ask the team captain which 4 players will play in this team contest. The order of players in the contest lineup must match the roster order.

Usually while one round of matches is being played, you can start preparing the score sheets for the next round of matches.

5.2.7 Calling Matches

Ok, it's finally time to start playing some matches! Here's the basic process for calling matches:

- 1) When a team/singles contest is ready to be played, put the score sheet on the clipboard corresponding to the table(s) the match should be played on. (Remember the clipboards should be numbered to correspond to the table numbers).

- 2) Find the captains for each team or the individuals in the contest and send them out to the table(s) with the clipboard, score sheet, and a pen or pencil to record the scores.
- 3) **Teams must play all 4 singles matches. Doubles in team competition is played ONLY if the score is 2-2 after the singles matches.**
- 4) All matches are played best of 5 games to 11 points.
- 5) Have players write down the scores of each game on the score sheet and **circle the winner** of each match and the winner of the overall contest. **Record every score of every match.**
- 6) **A captain for each team (or both players in singles) must sign the score sheet once the match is complete.** Look over each score sheet as it is turned in to make sure that all scores have been recorded correctly and make sense. Sign the score sheet to indicate you've checked it over.
- 7) Once a clipboard comes back, you know a table is free. Swap out the completed score sheet and send out a new match to that table.

Score sheets are often returned incomplete or with mistakes. In the past we've had tie-breakers come down to points won/lost, and such mistakes could end up deciding the division winner. Since score sheets serve as the official record of the results, it's important that they be filled out correctly.

Double-check all score sheets as they come in to make sure they are filled out correctly and are signed at the bottom.

Efficiency counts, try to keep things moving. The goal should be to have all tables in use all of the time, or as close to that goal as you can get. The quicker you can get the next batch of matches going after the previous round finished, the sooner your tournament will finish.

Pay attention to any open tables you see during the tournament. Sometimes you'll see open tables because teams are playing the doubles match. Other times teams will just sit and wait indefinitely for their opponents to show up at a table. You'll have to go help them track down the other team. Occasionally, a team captain will hang on to the clipboard

instead of immediately returning it after a match. If you see two players of the same team hitting with each other, there's a good chance that's really an empty table. If you're on the lookout for open tables you can keep the tournament running efficiently and finish the day on time.

Getting Help: If you are inexperienced in running tournaments or would like some guidance, please call and ask for help either the day of the event or better yet, beforehand. See Section 9 for contact information.

5.3 Tournament Wrap-Up

Once all the matches have been played, it's time to clean up. It's great if people from the host school can help with putting away equipment, picking up any trash, etc. Clean-up goes much faster with several extra hands.

Leave the facility in the same condition you found it in at the start of the day. This can help create a positive overall impression from host school officials. Plus, it's just common courtesy.

6 Post-Tournament Reporting

After a tournament has finished, you'll need to make sure that all the tournament results are recorded and properly reported to NCTTA:

- 1) Email the NCTTA competition spreadsheets (both the team and singles competition results) to results@nctta.org

Scores must be submitted within 3 days of the competition.

- 2) After submitting the scores, hang on to the original match score sheets until the end of the season. Occasionally there are disputes or errors in entry and we have to refer back to the original score sheet as the definitive take on what happened in a match.
- 3) Make copies of all eligibility forms, then mail originals to the Eligibility Committee at the address on the top of the form.

Make copies of all NCTTA division paperwork for your records before mailing in the originals. These are a backup in case something gets lost in the mail.

- 4) Write a two- or three-paragraph summary of the competition and submit it to the NCTTA Media Relations Committee (publicrelations@nctta.org). The summary should focus on interesting storylines in the tournament and highlight the most dynamic players, teams, or matches. Try to provide more information than just a summary of match scores. Write-ups will be used for press releases and for the NCTTA newsletter.
- 5) Send an email to all the member schools in your division to thank them for participating. You can let them know where to find the results for the tournament and updated ratings (both posted online). Also let teams know when the next event will be.
- 6) Collect any pictures taken at the event and post them online perhaps through Facebook, or Flickr, or some other photo sharing site. Send around a link to the photos to the member schools in the division and let the Public Relations Committee know about them.

7 Other Events

Outside of club practices and events, NCTTA League competition is the primary activity college table tennis teams participate in. But since a variety of other table tennis-related events and activities happen every year, as a division director we encourage you to:

- a) Stay informed about upcoming table tennis events in your region.
- b) Notify your member schools of any events that you think they might be interested in and encourage them to participate.
- c) Attend such events yourself, if possible, and consider volunteering your time and expertise to help make the events better.

7.1 USA Table Tennis Events

USA Table Tennis (USATT) is the governing body of table tennis in the United States and sanctions several hundred tournaments all around the country each year. You can see a list of all the sanctioned tournaments coming up through the USATT website (www.usatt.org) and pass along information about any tournaments you learn about.

USATT membership is discounted for college students (only \$25), so encourage students in your division to join. They'll receive a copy of the bi-monthly USATT magazine (which often includes a college table tennis article) and also gain entry to USATT-sanctioned tournaments.

As you learn about upcoming USATT tournaments in your region, forward information about these tournaments to the teams in your division. You can see a list of all the sanctioned tournaments coming up through the USATT website (www.usatt.org). Some tournaments even have discounted student entry fees or college-only events specifically for college players or teams.

7.2 Non-competitive Activities

Events in your division are not limited to the official NCTTA division tournaments. Obviously these tournaments are important, but they generally aren't scheduled every week. Consider scheduling some additional less competitive events to keep member clubs engaged in college table tennis between the more formal competitions:

- ▶ **Scrimmages** – Can involve junior varsity teams and less experienced players; can follow any format, team or individual (doesn't need to follow NCTTA rules). 41- or 51-point handicap matches allow players of all skill levels to compete on equal footing. Scrimmages are great for the preseason; they can act as a gentle introduction to League play before the first division tournament is scheduled.
- ▶ **Group Practice Sessions** – Often clubs/teams only have a few top-level (varsity-level) players, and they don't get to practice against other top players very often. A group practice session is a great way to get together top players from several different schools for training.
- ▶ **Clinics** – This works great especially if you can find an experienced coach in your division that can give players tips to improve their game. Also consider organizing clinics a coaching clinic in your region where a high-level coach might discuss coaching strategies, training techniques, etc. to improve the level of coaching in your division.
- ▶ **Exhibitions** – Consider holding a table tennis exhibition involving college players in your city, town, or wherever. It's a great way to promote NCTTA division tournaments and generate interest in college table tennis in your area. Exhibitions are also great at elementary schools or boys and girls clubs to attract new youngsters to the sport.

- ▶ **Social Events** – Feel free to get creative, you can have fun events in your region that aren't focused on competitive table tennis. Clubs have done group movie nights, held competitive video game table tennis tournaments, the sky's the limit.

If there are some interesting events beyond League tournaments happening in your division, be sure to let your regional director and the NCTTA Public Relations Committee (publicrelations@nctta.org) know about them so that we can share these great ideas with other divisions.

8 DOs and DON'Ts

Here are some final tips and reminders for being an effective division director; a short list of things you either should or should not do:

- ✓ **Do** be respectful and professional in all NCTTA-related communication.
- ✗ **Don't** tell a school that college table tennis is only for men.
- ✓ **Do** collect phone numbers from all club contacts in your division.
- ✗ **Don't** allow a school to play without having turned in payment or forms.
- ✓ **Do** show up on time for all division events.
- ✗ **Don't** schedule a meet the same weekend as a home football game.
- ✗ **Don't** make up your own rules and pass them off as the official ones.
- ✓ **Do** wear your NCTTA polo shirt at all NCTTA division events.
- ✓ **Do** submit scores/results within 3 days of a division tournament.
- ✓ **Do** check your NCTTA email every single day.

9 Where to go for help

If you have a question that isn't covered by this handbook, please contact one of the people listed below as they should be able to help you. We are available to assist you 24/7 with any problems, concerns, or chaos you may or may not encounter. Contact us anytime as we are EAGER to help you do the best possible job as division director.

First Point of Contact:

South: David Livings
david.livings@nctta.org

Great Lakes: Lillian Yu
lillian.yu@nctta.org

Midwest: Linda Leaf
linda.leaf@nctta.org

Mid-Atlantic: Seemant Teotia
seemant.teotia@nctta.org

Northeast: Nelson Gore
nelson.gore@nctta.org

West: Kevin Li
kevin.li@nctta.org

Additional Contacts:

Contact information for key NCTTA people (board members, committee chairs, division directors, etc.) is on the NCTTA website (www.nctta.org).

Primary Mailing Address:

NCTTA
2322 5th Street #204
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Secondary Contact:

Chris Wang
League Director Representative
leaguerep@nctta.org
(602) 652-2689

Don't be afraid to ask for help. It's much better to check with an NCTTA representative when in doubt, rather than make a mistake that could jeopardize your division.