

# NZASP Constitution

## Annexe: Rules of Play as amended at Management Meeting June 2017

The following Rules of Play are applicable to all tournaments and Interclub Challenges organised by Clubs affiliated to the Association.

1. Official Words
2. Grading
3. Timing
4. Attendance
5. Preliminaries
6. Play
  - 6.1 Drawing tiles
  - 6.2 Playing a blank
  - 6.3 End of turn procedure
  - 6.4 Tile tracking
  - 6.5 Flash drawing
  - 6.6 Dispute over score
  - 6.7 Exchanging tiles
  - 6.8 Passing
  - 6.9 Incorrect number of tiles, tiles mixed between sets or tiles remain in bag
  - 6.10 Tile discovered out of the bag
  - 6.11 Tile discovered in the bag
  - 6.12 Accepting and challenging turns
  - 6.13 Self-Adjudication at an External Device
  - 6.14 Self-Adjudication via Smart Device
  - 6.15 Adjudication by an adjudicator
  - 6.16 Successful challenge
  - 6.17 Unsuccessful challenge
  - 6.18 Incorrect adjudication
7. Leaving the playing area during a game
8. End of Game
  - 8.1.3 Six Consecutive Zero Scores End the game
9. Byes
10. Forfeits
11. Results
12. Ethical Behaviour

## **1 Official Words**

- 1.1 The only allowed dictionary and word list is Collins Official Scrabble Words 2015 (CSW2015).
- 1.2 Additional adjudication aids such as word lists and computers may be used at the discretion of tournament organisers, who shall be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of such additional aids.
- 1.3 No word lists or dictionaries may be consulted during a game. Any challenges will be decided by an adjudicator or by self-adjudication by both players using a computer software programme with the appropriate lexicon loaded. Tournament organisers must ensure that the correct lexicon is loaded and that all players understand how to use the programme in the case of self adjudication.

## **2 Grading**

- 2.1 Where there are more than one group of players in a Tournament then the placement of players into grades will be determined by current ratings.
- 2.2 Where players without New Zealand ratings (new players or Overseas players) are entered for a Tournament then the Tournament Organiser has discretion as to placement.
- 2.3 Where a player has not played a rated game in New Zealand for at least two years (i.e. they have a historic New Zealand rating, but no longer appear in the Ratings list), the player and Tournament Organiser may agree that the player should be placed in a higher or lower grade than indicated by their historic rating. In these cases, the player's new rating should be calculated in such a way as to not unduly advantage or disadvantage the other players in the grade.

## **3 Timing**

- 3.1 The use of clocks is compulsory in all official NZASP tournaments.
- 3.2 Each player is allowed twenty five (25) minutes to complete all plays before incurring time penalties. It is the responsibility of players to ensure clocks are set properly. Players are responsible for ensuring that their clock is stopped when it should be.  
*(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*
- 3.3 There is no limit on time per turn.
- 3.4 Clocks may be mechanical or electronic.
- 3.5 The Association will ensure it has a sufficient supply of clocks for use at the Masters and Annual tournaments. These clocks shall be available for loan to clubs for Tournaments.

## **4 Attendance**

- 4.1 Should any player not compete in a game for which he/she is scheduled, for any reason, he/she shall forfeit the game (refer to Rule 10).

- 4.2 If a player is late to start the game that player's clock shall be started at the adjudicator's call to start the game, and will run until the player arrives or twenty five (25) minutes expires. When the player arrives the clocks are neutralised and the preliminaries and the first play are commenced. A player arriving late must start with whatever time is left on his/her clock.
- 4.3 A late player is deemed to have defaulted when twenty five (25) minutes have expired and Rule 4.1 applies.
- 4.4 Where a player who has entered a tournament withdraws less than 24 hours before the scheduled start time the tournament organiser shall determine whether to adjust the draw or allocate a bye in the grade concerned. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*

## **5 Preliminaries**

Before each game begins, it is the responsibility of both players to:

- 5.1 Determine that there are correct tiles. For the first game of the Tournament tiles may be set out on a tile distribution sheet or directly on to the board in any format that clearly shows tiles are present. For all subsequent games tiles are to be arranged on the board in any format that clearly shows tiles are present. (e.g.10x10, 4 blocks of 5x5). The tiles are then transferred to the bag. All bags should be approximately seventeen (17) by thirty four (34) centimetres in dimensions.
- 5.2 Establish who goes first by drawing one tile each from the bag. The nearest to 'A' goes first (a blank beats an 'A'). If identical tiles are drawn then further tiles are drawn until the first player is identified. Once the first player is identified, the second player should return all tiles to the bag prior to the first player drawing any tiles for his/her turn. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*
- 5.3 Notwithstanding Rule 5.2, any club hosting a tournament has the discretion to apply balanced starts, where the starting player is determined in advance to ensure an even distribution of starts for each player in each grade. The National Championships and the Masters Championship must have balanced starts. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*
- 5.4 Enter the players' names on the Score sheets, ensuring that they are identical and that the player going first is listed in the left hand column.
- 5.5 Ensure that clocks are set correctly.

## **6 Play**

### **6.1 Drawing Tiles**

- 6.1.1 The player going first draws seven tiles and places them on his/her rack. The first player's clock is started when the first player has at least one tile on his/her rack or there are at least three tiles showing face up which the first player can see. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*
- 6.1.2 When drawing tiles the proper procedure is to hold the bag above the table so that the contents are not visible, show an open palm, and draw the required number of tiles from the bag and place them face down in front of the player. They should then be transferred to the rack upon confirmation that the correct number has been drawn.

- 6.1.3 When more than the required number of replacement tiles have been drawn, the following procedure is to be applied:
- 6.1.3.1 If the player has not yet placed any replacement tiles on his/her rack, the opponent shall pick as many tiles as are overdrawn from those lying face down on the table and return them to the bag.
- 6.1.3.2 If the player has commenced to place replacement tiles on his/her rack then all that player's tiles shall be combined, either on the player's rack or face down on the table, and the opponent shall pick from those tiles as many as are overdrawn plus one. After looking at those tiles the opponent shall select one tile to be replaced on the player's rack and return the remaining tiles to the bag.
- 6.1.3.3 If either player has seen the tile(s) to be returned to the bag, the other player is entitled to see them also.
- 6.1.3.4 Where a player finds that an opponent has more than seven tiles on his/her rack then the opponent shall turn his/her rack to the player and the player shall choose which tile(s) to return to the bag.
- 6.1.3.5 Clocks will be neutralised from the time of discovery of the extra tile(s) until the extra tile(s) are returned to the bag. It is the responsibility of the player whose clock is running to neutralise the clock and the responsibility of the player waiting for his opponent to move to restart the clock.

## **6.2 Playing a blank**

- 6.2.1 When playing a blank the player must declare what letter it represents. The blank shall continue to represent the declared letter for the remainder of the game. The player playing a blank will write the letter that the blank represents on the result sheet that will be used for the game and will ensure that the other player has sighted it. In any case where one or both players are vision impaired the clock will be neutralised and an adjudicator will be called to ensure that the blank is correctly recorded and understood by both players.
- 6.2.2 A player who plays a blank must declare it as in the rule above, BEFORE pressing the timer. If a player ends the turn without correctly declaring a blank, the opponent may immediately restart that player's timer and demand that the blank be properly declared. Pressing of the timer by the opponent in this instance does not count as a passed turn.

## **6.3 The end of turn procedure**

- 6.3.1 Position the tiles to be played on the board.
- 6.3.2 Declare the score for the turn. At this stage, the player may still adjust the move in any way.
- 6.3.3 Start the opponent's clock. The move can no longer be adjusted in any way.
- 6.3.4 Record the score for the turn and the cumulative score in the normal space on his or her score sheet.
- 6.3.5 Each player shall record the score on his/her score sheet.

- 6.3.6 Replenish the rack from the bag.
- 6.3.7 A player who omits to press the timer while making a turn completes that turn as soon as he/she starts to draw replacement tiles.

#### **6.4 Tile Tracking**

Tile tracking in all forms is optional.

#### **6.5 Flash Drawing**

- 6.5.1 If the player fails to record scores as required by Rule 6.3.4 before drawing a replacement tile, or if the player pre-writes the scores, he or she has flash-drawn. The opponent is not considered to have accepted the turn, and may challenge even after a replacement tile is drawn.
- 6.5.2 Flash-drawing constitutes unethical behaviour.
- 6.5.3 If a turn is successfully challenged after a flash-draw, then:
  - 6.5.3.1 If no flash-drawn tile has touched the player's rack, all flash-drawn tiles are revealed to both players and returned to the bag,
  - 6.5.3.2 If a flash-drawn tile has touched the player's rack, the player is overdrawn by the number of tiles drawn in the flash-draw, and Rule 6.1.3 applies.

#### **6.6 Dispute over score**

If there is a dispute in respect of the score for the turn, clocks will be neutralised until the dispute is resolved. It is the responsibility of the player whose clock is running to neutralise the clock and the responsibility of the player waiting for his/her opponent to move to restart the clock.

#### **6.7 Exchanging Tiles**

- 6.7 Players may exchange one to seven tiles in lieu of a turn providing that there are at least seven tiles left in the bag. The procedure for changing is as follows:
  - 6.7.1 Declare the intent to change and the number of tiles to be changed.
  - 6.7.2 Place the tiles to be changed face down on the table. At this point the opponent's clock may be restarted.
  - 6.7.3 Pick the same number of tiles from the bag and place these face down on the table separate from those to be changed.
  - 6.7.4 Upon confirmation that the numbers are correct place the replaced tiles back in the bag.
  - 6.7.5 Place the replacement tiles on the rack.
  - 6.7.6 If during the exchange it is found that too many replacement tiles have been drawn, the procedure detailed in Rule 6.1.3 shall be followed.

## **6.8 Passing**

Players may pass any number of times in a game. The opponent's clock is started as soon as the intention to pass is declared.

## **6.9 Incorrect number of tiles, tiles mixed between sets or tiles remain in bag**

In the case where, for any reason, and at any time during a game, it is determined that there are either an incorrect number of tiles, or tiles have been mixed between two sets of players, or tiles remain in the bag following the completion of the game, no attempt will be made to rectify the situation until the completion of the affected game(s). Play will continue with the remaining tiles in the respective bags. No adjustment will be made to either game's final score, nor any individual player's final score. Following the completion of the affected games the players involved will be responsible for sorting out the mixed tiles and creating 10 by 10 squares on both of the boards.

## **6.10 Tiles discovered out of the bag**

If any tiles are discovered outside the bag at any time during a game and before the result sheet has been signed, then:

6.10.1 Both players see the tiles and the tiles are returned to the bag;

6.10.2 Any tiles that may have been removed from players' racks in the belief that the game was over are replaced; and one of the following steps is taken:

6.10.3. If both players have seven tiles on their racks, play resumes as usual;

6.10.4 If only one player has seven tiles, that player's opponent should draw from the bag;

6.10.5 If neither player has seven tiles, the players ascertain who should have drawn replacement tiles earliest and that player draws from the bag. If only one player has tiles after this is done, the game is over and the result recalculated as necessary.

6.10.6 Under no circumstances may any moves be replayed.

## **6.11 Tile discovered in the bag**

If any tiles are discovered in the bag which players had thought to be empty, before the result sheet has been signed, then:

6.11.1 Both players see the tiles;

6.11.2 Any tiles that may have been removed from players' racks in the belief that the game was over are replaced; and

6.11.3 The players ascertain who should have drawn replacement tiles earliest and that player adds the tiles to his or her rack.

6.11.4 If both players still have tiles after this process, play resumes. If only one player has tiles, the game is over and the result recalculated as necessary.

6.11.5 Under no circumstances may any moves be replayed.

## **6.12 Accepting and Challenging Turns**

A player may challenge ANY or ALL words formed in a turn. The procedure to do so is as follows:

### **6.12.1 Accepting the Turn:**

- 6.12.1.1 A Challenge may not be declared until the player's turn has ended (refer 6.3).
- 6.12.1.2 Once a player presses the timer, the opponent may:
  - 6.12.1.2.1 Issue an immediate challenge.
  - 6.12.1.2.2 Call 'hold'.
  - 6.12.1.2.3 Choose to accept the turn without calling 'hold' or issuing a challenge.
- 6.12.1.3 The opponent accepts the turn if he or she neither calls 'hold', nor issues a challenge before the player removes a replacement tile from the bag.
- 6.12.1.4 Accepting a turn waives the right to challenge that turn.
- 6.12.1.5 Writing by the opponent does not affect acceptance of a turn.
- 6.12.1.6 Unambiguous words such as 'accept' or 'okay' must be used to release a hold.

### **6.12.2 Challenging a turn**

- 6.12.2.1 The challenger verbally expresses an unambiguous intention to challenge. The declaration to challenge cannot be withdrawn. The player may not draw any tiles from the bag. The challenger neutralises the clock at this point. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*
- 6.12.2.2 If more than one word in a turn is challenged, this must be executed as one challenge, after all challenged words have been entered. Words in a turn cannot be challenged individually as this may have the consequence of confirming a particular word as correct or not correct. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*

## **6.13 Self-Adjudication at an External Device**

- 6.13.1 The player issuing the challenge clearly informs the opponent which word or words are being challenged;
- 6.13.2 To minimise errors, it is advised that either player writes the word/s down on a challenge slip.
- 6.13.3 Both players cover their tiles or turn any tiles on their racks face down and proceed to the adjudication device.
- 6.13.4 The player issuing the challenge types the word or words to be challenged into the adjudication programme.

- 6.13.5 The opponent verifies that the word or words are correctly typed and executes the adjudication command.
- 6.13.6 The timer may not be restarted after a self-adjudicated challenge until both players are seated, tiles are uncovered or back on racks and any incorrect word is removed from the board.
- 6.14 Self Adjudication via Smart Device:**
- 6.14.1 The challenger clearly informs the opponent which word/s is/are being challenged.
- 6.14.2 The challenger types in the word/s being challenged into the adjudication programme.
- 6.14.3 The opponent verifies that the word/s is/are correctly typed and then gives verbal consent for the challenger to execute the adjudication command.
- 6.14.4 Note that the use of a smart device for self-adjudication must be agreed to by both players. The following requirements with regard to smart device adjudication are mandatory:
- 6.14.4.1 It is preferable for players to agree to the use of a smart device before beginning the game.
- 6.14.4.2 The minimum screen size must be at least 3.5 inches (89 millimetres) measured diagonally.
- 6.14.4.3 The device must be set so that it cannot make distracting sounds or vibrations.
- 6.14.4.4 The device must be used in adjudication mode and may not be used in other modes.
- 6.14.4.5 While in use, the screen must remain visible to both players.
- 6.14.4.6 The device's adjudication programme must be capable of accepting multiple words to be challenged at a time.
- 6.14.4.7 The device's adjudication programme must use the official word list (as per Rule 1.1) as its lexicon.
- 6.14.5 The timer may not be restarted after a self-adjudicated challenge until both players are seated, tiles are uncovered or back on racks and any incorrect word is removed from the board.
- 6.15 Adjudication by an adjudicator**
- 6.15.1 The challenger writes the word or words being challenged clearly in capital letters on a challenge slip and underlines them, adds the table number, raises his/her hand and calls 'challenge' to the adjudicator.
- 6.15.2 The decision of the Adjudicator will be indicated on the challenge slip. The Adjudicator **MUST NOT** give any indication to either player that any particular word is wrong or right, but adjudicate on the turn as a whole.
- 6.15.3 The decision of the Adjudicator may be appealed once only to a Referee.

## **6.16 Successful Challenge**

If the challenge is successful, i.e. the turn played is incorrect, the tiles played in the turn are removed from the board, the player then misses a turn. This will be indicated on the score sheet and the player restarts the challenger's clock.

## **6.17 Unsuccessful Challenge**

If the challenge is unsuccessful, i.e. the turn played is correct, the challenger does not miss a turn; however the player receives 5 points for each word challenged in addition to his/her turn score. The player restarts the challenger's clock.

## **6.18 Incorrect adjudication**

In the case where a challenge is later found to have been incorrectly adjudicated no adjustment may be made to the scores of either player.

## **7 Leaving the playing area during a game**

7.1 Players must obtain the Tournament Director's permission to leave the playing area during a game.

7.2 If permission is obtained, the Tournament Director will supervise the following procedure:

7.2.1 The player wishing to leave must complete a turn except for drawing replacement tiles, the player may then leave the playing area. While the player is absent the opponent may complete a turn except for drawing tiles.

7.2.2 The opponent then neutralizes the clock. The Tournament Director will rule on restarting the clock or the game being forfeited if the player is absent for an extended time or unable to return to complete the game.

7.2.3 In the event of an emergency, players may leave the playing area without obtaining permission. The opponent must alert the Tournament Director immediately if this occurs.

7.2.4 Supervision of either player is at the discretion of the Tournament Director. Either player may request, but may not compel, supervision. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*

## **8 End of Game**

8.1 Play continues in turn until:

8.1.1 Either one player plays the remaining tiles on his/her rack and there are no tiles in the bag,

8.1.2 Or neither player can make a valid play.

### **8.1.3 Six Consecutive Zero Scores End the game**

Once there are fewer than 7 tiles in the bag, the game ends after the six consecutive turns scoring zero. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*

8.2 A player attempting to play out must neutralise the timer, rather than starting the opponent's timer. The opponent must then either:

- accept the turn by revealing his or her unplayed tiles;
- call 'hold';
- or challenge the turn.

*(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*

**8.2.1 Right to restart the Timer**

If a player has attempted to play out, and the opponent fails to accept the turn within approximately five seconds, then the player is entitled to restart the opponent's timer while awaiting the opponent's action. If an opponent's timer is so started, the opponent must neutralise the time after deciding either to accept the turn or to challenge. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*

8.3 The score of the player who goes out will be increased by double the sum of the value of the tiles remaining on the opponent's rack. If both players have tiles left the value of the tiles held by each is deducted from their respective score.

8.4 If a player has used more than the twenty five (25) minute playing time on his/her clock then that player's score will be reduced by ten points for every minute overtime or part thereof.

8.5 The player with the higher adjusted score is the winner. In the event of both players having the same adjusted score then each will be credited with one-half win.

8.6 Totals for each player are carried to the bottom of the score sheet. Both players must ensure that their score sheets agree. The results slip is to be filled in with the required information, checked and signed by both players.

8.7 The tiles are then arranged on the board in accordance with Rule 5.1 ready for the next game.

8.8 The winning player will ensure that the results slip is handed to the Scorer.

**9 Byes**

9.1 When there is an uneven number of players in a grade, the player without an opponent in each round will receive a bye.

9.2 When players in a grade receive an unequal number of byes, the bye shall count as a win, with the player's average score, +50 spread points and average bonus words for the Tournament added to the player's aggregate score, spread points and bonus words.

9.3 Wins awarded from byes shall not be counted in ratings calculations.

**10 Forfeits**

10.1 Players shall forfeit games in the following circumstances:

10.1.1 Failure to compete in a scheduled game

- 10.1.2 Where player must leave a game in progress and both players are not able to finish that game at an arranged time later.
- 10.1.3 Where the NZASP Executive Committee so determines (refer to Rule 12.4). *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*
- 10.2 The forfeited game shall count as a win to the scheduled opponent, with the player's average game score, +50 spread points and average bonus words for the Tournament added to the player's aggregate score, spread points and bonus words.
- 10.3 The forfeited game shall count as a loss against the scheduled opponent for the player who forfeits, and no points or bonus words for that round and -50 spread points.
- 10.4 Forfeited games shall not be counted in ratings calculations.
- 10.5 Where games are forfeited under Rule 10.1, the NZASP Executive Committee may also exclude the player from the Rankings for up to year from the date of the tournament. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*

## **11 Results**

- 11.1 Tournament and/or grade placings are determined by the number of wins. In the event of a tie then the total spread for all games for each player will be used to resolve the tie.
- 11.2 In Teams' events the winner will be decided on the combined wins and spread of the team members in the same manner as Rule 11.1.
- 11.3 Tournament Organisers are required to forward results of the Tournament to the Website Co-ordinator, the Ratings Manager and the Magazine Layout Editor as soon as possible following completion of the tournament, and must retain all result slips until the results and new ratings have been published on the website.
- 11.4 The content of the results forwarded must include grade, player's full name, club, number of wins, total spread, average points per game. Where a grade or grades are not played as round robins, a copy of the draw for the grade must be included.

## **12 Ethical Behaviour**

- 12.1 Smoking is not allowed in the Playing Area.
- 12.2 Please do not talk needlessly to your opponent, or make comments, or use distracting mannerisms, during play.
- 12.3 Any transaction, i.e. changing of tiles, renewing the tiles on the rack after a turn, putting overdrawn tiles back in the bag, should always be done above the table where the transaction can be seen openly. Refer to Rule 6.1.2.

- 12.4 A player who is sure that his or her opponent is transgressing the Rules of Play at Tournaments should make this known to the opponent and the adjudicator at the time. The tournament organiser should refer the complaint to the NZASP Executive Committee to be dealt with urgently. The NZASP Executive Committee may call upon the two people concerned and any other witnesses. The NZASP Executive Committee will make a final decision on any matter thus reported. *(Amended Management Meeting 3/6/2017)*
- 12.5 Players finishing their game early are asked to leave the Playing Area if they wish to talk.
- 12.6 An observer may watch the plays of a player providing the following conditions are met:
- 12.6.1 Both players must agree to the presence of the observer.
- 12.6.2 The observer must sit behind the player being observed.
- 12.6.3 The observer may not return to the game should he/she leave part way through.
- 12.6.4 The observer must not be in a position to observe both players' racks.
- 12.6.5 No communication may take place between the observer and either of the players.
- 12.6.6 The positioning of the observer must not impede other players.
- 12.7 Players must sit opposite each other at the table unless mutually agreed that they sit side on.
- 12.8 Players are asked to keep the Playing Area free of all bags, books and extraneous items. Players who have finished their game and wish to refer to books must do so outside the Playing Area.
- 12.9 If there is no rule that covers a particular situation, then normal courteous behaviour should prevail. Where agreement cannot be reached between players the Adjudicator's decision shall be sought and will be final.