

An Official's View

By Dr. Azmy

CELEBRATING UMPIRES

Several weeks ago I visited San Salvador to attend an ITTF Umpires/Referee Seminar.

The seminar was conducted by Colin Clemett, the Chairman of the ITTF Rules Committee. It lasted for two days. According to the Chairman's report, 16 umpires from El Salvador, Costa Rica and Guatemala attended. Some were International Umpires, while others were National Umpires. Day one dealt with the interpretations and applications of laws and international regulations. Day two dealt with the management and supervision of match officials, scheduling and the conduct of the draw. The report noted that one of the basic problems for the attendants was the 'power' of the Referee. The seminar succeeded in clarifying the responsibilities, obligations, and duties of Referees.

Unfortunately, due to last minute travel reservations, I arrived late. I was told that the seminar was opened by a parade and a musical ceremony. I attended the closing ceremony, which was equally impressive. Besides the parade and music there was an attitude of celebration. It was a ceremony for the umpires who passed the International Umpires Exam. Each was congratulated by the President of the El Salvador Table Tennis Association, Mr. Rivera, who gave a brief history of the accomplishments of that umpire. At the end, each umpire received a certificate from the ESTTA President and a plaque presented by Mr. Colin Clemett. That night Mr. Rivera gave a party at his house in honor of the successful umpires and guests. It was a symbolic gesture of appreciation for these umpires who have given a part of their lives to the service of the sport in Latin America.

I am presenting this whole picture hoping to encourage many of our umpires to shoot for the Intentional Umpires Exam. On the other hand, I hope that the USATT will give more help and attention to the plight of umpires and officials.

The following are some recommendations which were proposed by Allen Barth, Chairman of the USATT Sanctioning Committee, regarding hospitality standards for Referees and Umpires.

Referee

Transportation - Full airfare or mileage compensation if traveling by car

Lodging - Hotel room paid or home accommodation with a host who is a member of the sponsoring club

Meals - Three meals per day provided or a minimum of \$25 per day in meal money

Optional Award – Plaque or similar item acknowledging the referee's contribution to the success of the tournament

Umpires

Lodging - 1/2 motel room or home accommodations as outlined above

Meals - Three meals per day provided or minimum of \$25 per day in meal money

Optional Award - Certificate or memento acknowledging the umpire's contribution to the tournament

Optional Travel – Negotiable

The Referee and all umpires should also be given, free of charge, any tournament T-shirt, goody bag, etc., and free admission to the tournament party. A mention of the Referee's name in any magazine article would also be appropriate. These standards are not inclusive, and extra consideration should be given to any official who does a particularly outstanding job. The Referee should receive extra compensation if he/she takes an active part in the conduct of the draw.

All expenses incurred through officiating should be included in the tournament budget just as trophies, printing, etc., are considered. It is the obligation of all tournament committees to provide the best possible presentation of the feature matches, which certainly includes competent, properly attired match officials.