

An Official's View

By Dr. Azmy

Umpire Level Requirements

We are looking for umpires wanting to travel to foreign countries. Only International Umpires can be sent to umpire overseas. We do send National Umpires to umpire in Canada. USATT pays partial travel expenses for umpires sent to foreign tournaments. It is a great experience for those who go.

USATT has 34 active International Umpires. Of those 34, all but six are over 50 years old and 20 are over 60. We want to encourage younger umpires to step up and move up to the international level.

The steps are:

Club Umpire – Any USATT member can pay \$10 and take the open book exam on the web or on paper. The exam is 50 true/false, multiple choice and playing situation questions.

Regional Umpire – A club umpire with a minimum of one year's umpire experience including at least 25 high level matches of which at least five are doubles. The exam is 50 multiple choice and playing situation questions with a one-hour time limit. The exam fee is \$15.

National Umpire – A regional umpire with a minimum of one year's Regional Umpire experience, including at least 25 high level matches of which at least five are doubles. The exam is 50 questions with a one-hour time limit. The exam is given only at the U.S. Open and the U.S. Nationals.

International Umpire – Must be an active National Umpire for at least two years and be recommended by the Rules/Officials Committee.

More details on these exam levels are on the USATT web site under the Rules tab.

Umpire Recertification – To ensure that umpires keep up with rules changes, all USATT umpires must recertify every three years beginning in 2006. The recertification exam is an open book exam that can be taken free on the web or for \$5 on paper.

New Referee Requirements

In 2003 USATT began a certified referee program to provide a uniform standard for referees. The old standard required the referee to be a regional or higher umpire. Many of those umpires qualified by umpire rank have not had to answer any referee question on an exam.

Many tournaments did not have a regional or higher umpire available. The certified referee qualification was developed to allow any umpire to take the training and become certified as a referee. Beginning in 2007 all referees will have to have passed a referee exam.

The referee candidate pays a \$15 fee and receives a current copy of the Tournament Guide and a referee CD. The CD contains several PowerPoint lessons on the duties of the referee. The CD also contains other useful items including the ITTF Laws and Regulations and the Tournament Guide which contains downloadable forms needed to run a tournament.

After studying the Tournament Guide and the Referee CD, the candidate to take the exam. The exam consists of 25 questions and a separate requirement to make a draw requirement.

If you would like to help improve the sport, consider becoming an umpire or referee.