

## National Series

The following overview illustrates the principles and practical processes to deliver the National Series event format.

### Format

1. A series of four rounds each season
2. Boys and girls categories at U13, Cadet and Junior age-groups
3. Rounds for each boys and girls age-group will rotate around the host venues
4. Each category will play in divisions of 6 persons, with a minimum of 12 players (2 tiers) and a maximum of 30 players (5 tiers)
5. Each division will play a full round-robin on each round
6. Best of 5 games, 11-up
7. The number of tiers in each category will be determined each season at the sole discretion of the Head of Performance Development
8. There will be promotion/ relegation between each tier after each round, 2-up/ 2-down
9. 2 players will also be relegated from the bottom tier after each round

*Nb. it is anticipated that Girls play on Saturday/ Boys play on Sunday (or vice versa), meaning: 5 matches per player per round; 15 matches per division per round; with 1 table per division, this would equate to c.10hrs play at 40mins per match, but will be played on a rolling basis, and the largest projected cohort (30 players) can be delivered in a 5-table venue – larger venues and/ or smaller cohorts should complete play on more than 1 table per division*

### Seeding

10. Divisions will be seeded contiguously at the beginning of the Series based on <the most recent ratings list at the time>; thereafter promotion/ relegation will apply for each round
11. Each division in each round will be seeded on the basis of the most recent rating list, in order to produce a playing schedule

### Eligibility

12. Players must fulfil all the following criteria:
  - a. TTE Compete Plus members or home country reciprocal members
  - b. British nationals who were born in or have their main residence in one of the home countries
  - c. Have indicated one of the home countries as their nationality in their TTE membership profile
13. If a player becomes ineligible, they will forfeit their place in the Series for the remaining rounds

### Invitations

14. Invitations will be issued 1 month prior to the first round of each season
15. Invitations will be determined by the ratings for eligible players in each category, plus up to 4 wildcards in each category at the sole discretion of the Head of Performance Development (eg if the cohort is 24 players, then 20 will be invitations and 4 will be wildcards)
16. Declined places and unused wildcards will revert to eligible players in rating order
17. For the avoidance of doubt, performance in the Series in a previous season has no bearing on invitations for following seasons
18. If a player is eligible for invitation in more than one age-category, then they must choose one category to enter in consultation and agreement with the Head of Performance Development.
19. Players will be treated independently in each age-group in respect of relegation replacements and wildcard replacements, but may only be active in one age-group at any one time

*Nb. If the first round is in August, then this will be based on ratings from the previous season, but with age-eligibility factored for the season in question*

### **Relegation Replacements**

20. Players relegated from the bottom tier in any category will be replaced in the following round by the next eligible player in the ratings list preceding the following round who is not yet part of the Series, including any players who declined an original invitation, and notwithstanding any restrictions due to previous illegitimate absence. Replacement players will join the bottom tier
21. Players relegated from the bottom tier in any category will be ineligible for selection as a *replacement* in that age-group for one round

### **Player Unavailability & Wildcard Replacements**

22. If a player is unavailable, the Head of Performance Development shall at their sole discretion deem the absence either:
    - a. *Legitimate* absence (eg due to injury/ illness, suspension, extenuating personal circumstance or unavoidable international commitment)  
OR
    - b. *Illegitimate* absence
  23. Players who are *illegitimately absent* will be ineligible as a *replacement* in all age-groups for one further round
  24. Players who are *legitimately absent* will regain their existing place in the same tier in the following round
  25. Any vacancies created by either legitimate or illegitimate absence, or by changes in player eligibility, will be filled contiguously (eg players 'shuffle-up'). The resultant vacancy(s) in the bottom tier will be filled by a *wildcard replacement(s)* at the sole discretion of the Head of Performance Development. If no wildcard replacement is nominated by the Head of Performance Development, this vacancy will revert to the next eligible player on the rating list who is not yet part of the Series, including any players who declined an original invitation, and notwithstanding any restrictions due to previous illegitimate absence. Wildcard replacements remain valid for all remaining rounds in the season, subject to relegation
  26. For any divisions so affected by legitimate absence, and for each instance, an additional relegation place will be created for that round only, in order to allow legitimately absent player(s) to re-enter their original tier for the following round. As an example: if a legitimate absence is in the top tier, then players in all divisions will 'shuffle-up' and all divisions will have an additional relegation place created, including the bottom tier, in order for balance to be regained when the absent player rejoins
- Ranking weighting – 1.75x
  - Clothing – as standard; must have name on back
  - Winner of R4 – trophy for each Series Champion (x6) plus medals for top3 in each Series (x18)
  - Gr4 preferred (12x6m courts), Gr3 minimum (10x5m courts)
  - Ideal officiating standards would be NR+ referee, and 1.5 umpires per table at each venue, with at least 1x IU+. Aim as a minimum in launch year to have TR+ referee, and 1 umpire per table, but table umpires if required. Anticipated to be appointed via TOC Committee, with active liaison with host clubs for local officials
  - Players will be required to pay an upfront flat fee to participate. There will be no refund in the event of legitimate or illegitimate absence. Except where they have already played an earlier round, players called up for subsequent rounds will be required to pay a proportional fee. Players relegated from the Series will receive a proportional rebate at the end of the season.