

# Force of Will TCG Penalty Guidelines

## Version Information

- This version of Penalty Guidelines will go into effect on August 4th, 2015
- The most up-to-date version could be found at [www.fowtcg.it](http://www.fowtcg.it).
- Discard any older versions of this document to avoid confusion.

## Introduction

This document contains information appropriate to tournaments involving Force of Will Trading Card Game (FoW TCG). It is intended to help judges determine the appropriate penalty when a tournament or game rule infraction occurs. This helps to create and ensure fair and consistent tournament environments for all players.

Honest mistakes will be addressed in a fair and educational manner by the judging staff. Cheating or severe unsporting behavior will not be tolerated. It is assumed that, for the majority of the penalties listed in this document, the player committed the infraction unintentionally. If a judge suspects that the player is intentionally committing infractions, they should bring it to the attention of the Head Judge. In such a case, the infraction may be considered Cheating, and the appropriate penalty should be applied after an investigation.

Judges are present to help create and maintain the integrity of the event. As such, a judge should intervene in a match anytime they observe an error, believe an error has occurred, or to prevent an out of game error from occurring.

This document is split into two different parts:

- Part one outlines penalty types and lists proper procedures to administer and report penalties.
- Part two lists infraction types and provides the appropriate penalties for those infractions.

## ***Part 1 – Penalty Types and Reporting***

### **RULES LEVEL** 4

### **PENALTY TYPES** 5

PT1 - Warning	5
PT2 - Game Loss	5
PT3 - Match Loss	5
PT4 - Disqualification	5

### **PENALTY REPORTING & ADMINISTRATION** 6

PR1 - Reporting penalties	6
PR2 - Disqualification reporting	6
PR3 - Additional time	7
PR4 - Repeat offenses	7
PR5 - Deviation	8
PR6 - Reverse engineering	8

## ***Part 2 – Infraction Types***

### **GAME ERRORS** 9

GE1 - Game Rules Error	9
GE2 - Illegal Game State	10
GE3 - Missed Trigger Automatic Abilities	11
GE4 - Failure to Maintain Game State	12
GE5 - Looking at Extra Cards	13
GE6 - Drawing Extra Cards/Breaking Extra Cards	13
GE7 - Failure to Set Lifebreak Area	15
GE8 - Failure to Set the Ruler Card	16
GE9 - Failure to Reveal Cards	16

### **TOURNAMENT ERRORS** 17

TE1 - Official Policy/Announcement Violation	17
TE2 - Failure to Follow Direct Instructions	17
TE3 - Insufficient Randomization	18
TE4 - Tardiness	19
TE5 - Playing the Wrong Opponent	19
TE6 - Slow play	20
TE7 - Marked Cards without Pattern	20
TE8 - Marked Cards with Pattern	21
TE9 - Outside Assistance	21

### **DECK AND DECKLIST ERRORS** 22

DE1 - Registration Error	22
DE2 - Illegal List	22
DE3 - Illegal Deck	23
DE4 - Failure to De-Side Deck	24



<b><u>UNSPORTING CONDUCT</u></b>	24
UC1 - Minor Unsporting Conduct	25
UC2 - Major Unsporting Conduct	25
UC3 - Severe Unsporting Conduct	26
UC4 - Theft	26
UC5 – Aggressive Behavior	26
<b><u>CHEATING</u></b>	27
CH1 - Manipulating Match Outcome	27
CH2 - Game Object Manipulation	27
CH3 - Misrepresenting Information	28
CH4 - Stalling	28
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>	29

## ***Part 1 – Penalty Types and Reporting***

### **RULES LEVELS**

All tournaments fall under two different rules enforcement levels: Standard and Competitive. The Rules Level (RL) represents the overall atmosphere of the tournament, level of enforcement of technically correct play, and the severity with which infractions are penalized.

Standard Rules Level applies to events such as Local Hobby Store Tournaments, Store Championships, Sneak Preview tournaments and other promotional tournaments aimed at the store level. Competitive Rules Level applies to events such as, National Grand Prix and Worlds Grand Prix. For a complete list of tournaments see the chart below.

Rules Level applies to all tournament players uniformly. Judges should be compassionate to beginner players that are playing in a tournament using the Competitive RL, but should not downgrade penalties or bend the rules for them. Conversely, known tournament players should not be held to higher standards of technically correct play or receive harsher penalties while participating in Standard RL tournaments. Failure to follow these rules may result in the perception of bias towards specific players.

**Event Types and Rules Levels**

<b><i>Standard RL</i></b>	<b><i>Competitive RL</i></b>
Local Hobby Store Tournaments	National Grand Prix Trials
Ruler Leagues	Regional Grand Prix Trials
StoryTeller Championships	National Grand Prix
Prerelease Parties	Regional Grand Prix
Release Parties	Masters
	Worlds Grand Prix

## **PENALTY TYPES**

There are four different penalties available to judges:

- Warning (W)
- Game Loss (GL)
- Match Loss (ML)
- Disqualification (DQ)

Application of these penalties is based on the type of the infraction committed and the Rules Level (RL) of the tournament.

### **PT1 - Warning**

Warnings are a way to track minor infractions. The purpose of the Warning penalty is to alert tournament officials, as well as the player receiving the infraction, of potential problems. Warnings are used to track patterns and identify problematic players, so judges should take the time to report the Warnings they issue.

### **PT2 - Game Loss**

The Game Loss penalty is a forced forfeit of the current game. If a player is between games, the Game Loss penalty should be applied to the next played game in that specific tournament. If the player is between games and simultaneously commits a Game Loss and a Match Loss infraction, apply the Match Loss penalty first, followed by the Game Loss penalty. In the event of a Game Loss penalty before players begin a match, which could occur due to a deck check, neither player is allowed to side deck prior to the first played game.

### **PT3 - Match Loss**

The Match Loss penalty is a forced forfeit of the current match. If a player is between matches, the Match Loss penalty should be applied to his or her next match in that specific tournament. In addition, the head judge may apply the Match Loss penalty to the next match if he or she believes that applying the penalty to the current match is not severe enough as would be in the case of a player about to lose the current match.

#### **PT4 - Disqualification**

The Disqualification penalty is a forced forfeit of the current match and the act of dropping a player from the tournament. This penalty has two degrees of severity: with or without prize.

In the event of a DQ with prize, the player may still be eligible for tournament prizes after the event is over.

In the event of a DQ without prize, the player forfeits all prizes, with the prize structure shifting down as though the player did not exist in the standings. A player that was disqualified without prizes may keep prizes already awarded to them prior to the DQ, but does not receive any further prizes.

Only the official Head Judge may issue the disqualification penalty. Judges should refer to the Disqualification Reporting section for additional instructions regarding disqualifications without prize.

A DQ as a result of repeated upgraded infractions will always be with prize.

#### **PENALTY REPORTING AND ADMINISTRATION**

This section explains the process by which judges administer and report penalties. All penalties should be followed by an explanation of the infraction, explanation of the penalty, potential consequences for repeat offenses of this infraction and education of the player receiving the penalty.

##### **PR1 - Reporting penalties**

When a judge issues a penalty to a player, the judge must report the penalty to the scorekeeper.

Scorekeepers will enter the details of the penalty into the tournament software so that it will be uploaded into the database. The preferred way to communicate a penalty to a scorekeeper is to write, and circle, the appropriate code (W, GL, ML or DQ) on the front of the result slip next to the player's name. In addition, a judge should write down all of the details of the penalty on the back of the match result slip for the match in which the penalty was issued. Those details should include the name of the player that received the penalty, the infraction committed, the penalty for that infraction, a brief explanation of what happened, and either the initials or full name of the judge issuing the penalty. It is always a good idea for the Head Judge of an event to gather a list of all judges' names and initials to provide to the scorekeeper.

In addition to reporting penalties to the scorekeeper, some Head Judges will request that certain infractions or penalties, such as Game Losses and higher, be reported to them as well. Judges should check with the Head Judge regarding this policy at the start of the tournament. Head Judges requesting such a high volume of penalties to be communicated to them must be careful as to not significantly delay tournament operations.

A player may not avoid a penalty by dropping from the tournament or conceding a game or a match. While judges cannot stop the player from doing these actions, they should communicate to the player that such actions have no impact on the penalty and still record the penalty.

Additionally, a player not currently participating in an event may be enrolled into that event for the purposes of tracking any infractions they incur as a spectator, and then subsequently dropped from that event.

Players may never waive penalties for their opponents.

### **PR2 - Disqualification reporting**

A player does not need to be currently enrolled in the tournament to be disqualified. If a spectator or someone on tournament premises commits an infraction that warrants a disqualification, they should be enrolled into the tournament and disqualified using procedures outlined below. Only the Head Judge can issue a DQ penalty.

- Disqualifications with prize never require reporting.
- Disqualifications without prize at Competitive RL tournament always require reporting.
- Disqualifications without prize at Standard RL tournaments do not require reporting except in the cases of theft or aggressive behavior.

When reporting is required, if the Head Judge issues the disqualification without prize penalty to a player, the Head Judge must attempt to collect statements from all relevant parties who were involved in the disqualification. As part of submitting his or her statement, the Head Judge must include his or her name and FOW ID number, the event name, the event date, the name of the player receiving the penalty, and that player's FOW ID number. The Head Judge should also include all relevant details surrounding the penalty, including decklists, player background information, and details of all communication with players, spectators, and judges involved. This correspondence may either be emailed to [staff@fowtcg.it](mailto:staff@fowtcg.it) with the subject line "Disqualification Report".

### **PR3 - Additional time**

If the penalty investigation and administration interrupted the game for longer than one minute, the judge must add additional time to the match. Because of this, the judge should always note the tournament time when they become involved in a game. It is not a requirement that a player asks for additional time before it is granted.

### **PR4 - Repeat offenses**

Penalties for repeat offenses at Standard Rules Level tournaments may, or may not, be upgraded at the Head Judge's discretion.

Most infractions at Competitive Rules Level tournaments should be upgraded for repeat offenses.

There are exceptions to this noted in the affected individual penalty listings.

The standard penalty upgrade path is as follows:

**Warning → Warning → Game Loss → Match Loss → Disqualification with prize**



If an infraction follows a different upgrade path, that path will be noted in that infraction's specific section.

The quickest method to review for repeat offenses is to check with the player if they already have penalties recorded for similar infractions. Then once the match resumes, the judge should check with the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper will have up-to-date information regarding players' penalty histories for the tournament. In the case of conflicting information from the scorekeeper, the player should be investigated to see if they are guilty of lying to a tournament official.

### **PR5 - Deviation**

To deviate from the standard penalty is to assign a penalty that is not normally associated with the specific infraction. This document is a guide for the application of penalties. In extreme cases, only the Head Judge has the authority to deviate from standard penalties. Extreme cases are rare and may include situations that cannot be categorized into any existing infraction.

A judge's desire to educate the player, the judge's level, or the player's experience with tournaments, age or past history are not to be considered extreme cases. Judges should not deviate from standard penalties in these cases. When judges are explaining a penalty guide deviation to the players, judges should be very clear what the standard penalty is to the infraction and why they are choosing a different penalty. Additional explanation is needed because there is a greater potential to appear biased in front of the players.

The specific deviations laid out in the infraction descriptions do not have to be extreme cases to apply. Only the Head Judge has the authority to deviate from a penalty. If another judge believes that a deviation is appropriate, they must consult the Head Judge.

### **PR6 - Reverse engineering**

Reverse engineering of penalties occurs when a judge first decides what type of penalty a player should receive and then tries to match an infraction based on the penalty. This creates an initial decision bias for a judge and is not fair to the players. Judges should never reverse engineer penalties. To avoid this, first determine what infraction occurred and then refer to the penalty guide for the appropriate penalty.

## ***PART 2 - Infraction Types***

This section of the Penalty Guidelines document explains specific infractions and the appropriate penalties associated with those infractions. Most infractions are grouped into categories which may have additional explanations associated with them. Each infraction will first explain the circumstances in which this infraction can occur, followed by any additional consideration for a judge when they are deciding which infraction to apply. Then additional instructions for the judge, such as fixes used for the infraction, are listed, followed by the penalties for both rules levels. Most infractions descriptions are followed with examples that briefly list the circumstances that lead to the infraction and the appropriate actions by the judge(s).

### **GAME ERRORS**

Game errors happen during the course of game play and are usually play errors that result in a game state that is not as it should be. All penalties in this section presume that the error was committed unintentionally. If the judge believes that the error was intentional, they should refer to the Cheating category of infractions.

Both players are expected to maintain the rules of the game and share responsibility for any game errors that occur when the error involves public information. As such, it is possible for an opponent and/or the teammates of the player that is guilty of a particular game error infraction to receive a penalty for failing to maintain an accurate game state as described in that infraction section further below. Game Errors involving private information are an exception to this rule. In such cases, the responsibility for the private game state lies with the player guilty of the particular infraction. In this case, opponents cannot commit the Failure to Maintain Game State infraction, but teammates of the player violating the rule(s) still can.

#### **GE1 - Game Rules Error**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to follow game procedures or rules correctly. This generic infraction only applies when the error does not fall into another more specific infraction.

If the judge believes that the players noticed the error within no more than two turns (one turn for each player), and the game play situation is simple enough to back up the game state without significant disruption to the course of the game, the judge may back up the game to the point of the error. Errors discovered immediately should always be backed up. The judge instructs each player to undo actions until the game reverses to immediately prior to the error. Each drawn card that is known to both players is returned to the top of the deck in the appropriate order. For each other draw where cards are not known to both players, the judge should instruct the player to place a random card from their hand to the top of their deck.

If the judge believes the situation is too complex and/or backing up could affect the course of the game, the judge should leave the game state as is and not attempt any fixes. Judges should never attempt partial fixes to the game state. Either everything is backed up or nothing is.

The penalty for a Game Rules Error is a Warning at both Rules Levels.

All Game Rules Error infractions are considered the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalty.

### **Examples:**

*1) A player plays Kiss of Death destroying a light attribute resonator. A Warning for Game Rules Error should be issued to the offending player. The resonator should be left in the graveyard unless the judge feels that the game state can be backed up prior to the error. If more than two turns have elapsed, the game state stays as it is.*

*Kiss of Death, (1)(B), [Spell: Chant - Instant]  
Destroy target non-[Light] resonator.*

*2) A player unintentionally pays 2 wills to play a resonator with a total cost of 3. Upon review, it is revealed the player committed two previous Game Rules Errors earlier this game. As this is their third Game Rules Error offense, a Game Loss should be issued to the offending player, and that player should be informed the next infraction of this kind will result in a Match Loss.*

### **GE2 - Illegal Game State**

This infraction results from a prior misplay not caught by either of the players.

Both players are expected to maintain a legal game state. Because decisions and plans have been made based on the current state, judges should not rewind or fix the game to compensate for potential advantages gained from the illegal game state. In addition, any opponent of the player that received the Illegal Game State infraction should receive a penalty for failing to maintain an accurate game state.

Judges should use game-specific ways to make the game state legal, such as performing Rule Process. If the infraction is caused by a player not having made a required choice, judges should instruct the player to make that choice.

The penalty for an Illegal Game State is a Warning at both Rules Levels.

All Illegal Game State infractions are considered the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalty.

### **Examples:**

*1) A player forgets to put into its owner's graveyard an [Addition:Resonator] that was added to a resonator then destroyed afterward. This violates game rules. A Warning is issued to the player for Illegal Game State and he must immediately put that card into its owner's graveyard because of the game rules violation.*

*2) A player played Tribe Gimmick without choosing a race. Since the choice is not optional, when the error is discovered, that player will receive a Warning for Illegal Game State and must make the choice at that time.*

*Tribe Gimmick, (1), [Resonator:Gimmick]*

*[Enter] Choose a race.*

*[Continuous] As long as this card is in a field, its race is the one chosen upon [Enter].*

### **GE3 - Missed Triggered Automatic Abilities**

This infraction occurs when players miss a trigger in the game and fail to perform actions that the trigger requires. There are two types of triggers:

- Mandatory
- Optional

An optional trigger usually contains the word “may” or “can” in the text. Anything else is a mandatory trigger.

Optional triggers are the responsibility of the player whose card caused the trigger and are part of the skill testing of playing the game. The opponent is not required to remind the player about optional triggers. Judges should assume that the player chose not to perform the optional action and should not issue a penalty for the infraction.

Mandatory triggers must be resolved properly and it is the responsibility of all players to make sure this happens. An opponent is not required to point out the existence of a mandatory trigger until immediately after the time for it to resolve has passed usually marked by the attempt to take a subsequent action.

Some triggers have a default option described in the trigger. When a player misses this type of a trigger, judges must resolve the default action from the trigger immediately without regard to timing rules. If such action causes some spells or abilities on the chase to no longer be legal, the judge must rewind the game state to the point where all such items can be removed. If resolving the default action creates other triggers, they trigger and resolve following the normal timing rules for the game.

Some mandatory triggers will not have a default option described in the trigger. When a player misses this type of trigger and the error is caught before two turns ended (usually one for each player), judges should add the trigger to the chase using specific timing rules for the game. Judges do not rewind the game state to the point where the trigger should have triggered. All players have the option to respond to the trigger. Any choices to be made for such a trigger may not involve objects in referenced zones that were not present at the time of the event that caused the trigger. If more than two turns have passed since the trigger should have occurred, leave the game as it is.

Tracking mandatory triggers is the responsibility of both players. The player whose card creates a trigger receives the Missed Trigger infractions. Opponents of the player that receive the Missed Trigger infraction, receive a Failure to Maintain Game State infraction, if they had an opportunity to correct the Missed Trigger infraction, but did not do so immediately.

The penalty for a Missed Trigger is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

All Missed Trigger infractions are considered the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalty.

**Examples:**

*1) A player controls Butz, the Ebony Knight, but forgets to put the top card of his deck into his graveyard. As the opponent's turn starts, the error is noticed. Since it is an optional trigger it is assumed that the action was not performed and no penalties should be issued.*

*Butz, the Ebony Knight, (B), [Resonator:Knight]*

*[Break] Put this card into your field.*

*[Continuous] At the end of turn, you may put the top card of your main deck into your graveyard.*

*2) A player controls Labyrinth of Doubt. That player fails to pay two water wills before drawing his card.*

*Because this is a trigger with a default action, he will have to banish Labyrinth of Doubt.*

*Labyrinth of Doubt, (U)(U)(2), [Addition:Field]*

*[Continuous] At the end of turn, return each resonator that attacked this turn to its owner's hand.*

*[Continuous] At the beginning of your draw phase, banish this card unless you pay {U}{U}.*

**GE4 - Failure to Maintain Game State**

This infraction occurs when players fail to notice a rules violation committed by their teammate or opponent. Since it is the responsibility of all players to maintain the correct game state, this infraction is usually the counter-part to other Game Error type infractions. This penalty is issued to opponents that could have noticed the error, but did not.

Judges should not issue this penalty to players that had no opportunity to notice or correct Game Error type infractions. This happens when the error occurs with private information or the error is immediately noticed by a player.

The penalty for Failure to Maintain Game State is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

This penalty should never be upgraded as it would discourage players that discovered the error from calling a judge.

**Examples:**

*1) A player targets a resonator that cannot be the of spells or abilities with an ability. This error is not noticed for a turn. The judge should issue a Game Rules Violation infraction to the offending player and a Failure to Maintain Game State to the opponent.*

*2) A player attacks with a resonator without [Swiftiness] that was just put in play this turn. This is not noticed by either player until after battle resolves. The player who controlled the resonator is assessed a Game Rules Violation infraction and his opponent should receive a penalty for Failure to Maintain Game State infraction.*

## **GE5 - Looking at Extra Cards**

This infraction occurs when a player accidentally sees cards from any deck when they were not supposed to.

The disruption to the game is minimal; however there is a degree of advantage gained here. To fix this, judges should first determine if part of the deck is a known order via any game effects. If the judge is able to determine what portion of the deck is a known order via some other game effects, he must have the player separate that portion of the deck from the rest in that order. Once the deck is separated into random and known portions, the judge has the player add the erroneously revealed card(s) to the random portion of the deck and the player shuffles that portion. Once the revealed cards are shuffled into the random portion of the deck, the judge has the player combine the random portion of the deck with the known portion and play continues.

In tournaments with Standard Rules Level, if the judge is unable to determine if a nonrandom portion of the deck exists, he should have the player randomize the whole deck. In tournaments with Competitive Rules Level, if the judge is unable to determine the extent of the non-random portion of the deck, the judge should upgrade this infraction to a Game Loss penalty.

The penalty for Looking at Extra Cards is a Warning for both Rules Levels. All Looking at Extra Cards infractions are the same for the purposes of upgrading the penalties.

### ***Examples:***

*1) A player uses the [Activate] ability of Sister of Linorsphairia but looks at the top 4 cards of his Magic Stone Deck for mistake. The player should receive a Warning for Looking at Extra Cards. The judge should determine if any other game effects have ordered any other portions of the deck and set those aside. The judge should have the player shuffle the fourth revealed card into the random portion of the deck and then place the known portion with it.*

*Sister of Linorsphairia, [Ruler]*

*[J-Activate] Pay {W}{W}{2}*

*[Activate] {Rest}: Look at the top three cards of your magic stone deck, choose a light magic stone from among them and put it into your magic stone area. Put the rest on the bottom of your magic stone deck in any order.*

## **GE6 - Drawing Extra Cards / Breaking Extra Cards**

This infraction occurs when a player incorrectly draws extra cards or reveals extra cards from his Lifebreak Area. A card is considered to be drawn once that card is combined with the rest of his or her hand. A break is considered to be performed as a player looks at and/or reveals the top card from his Lifebreak Area.

If the judge is able to deduce through the circumstances of the game what extra card the player drew, this infraction should be downgraded to a Looking at Extra Cards infraction and that remedy applied.

If a player drew too many cards at the start of the game, remove random cards from the player's hand until he has the appropriate number of cards. Then that player shuffles the extra cards back into his deck and the penalty is downgraded to a Warning. This would also apply for a player who drew when going first instead of skipping his draw.

Cards drawn as a result of an earlier Game Rules Error may, or may not be Drawing Extra Cards infractions. In order to determine how to handle this type of situation, the judge must ask the following question:

Did the Game Rules Error **immediately** result in the player drawing a card or cards?

- If yes, then the Drawing Extra Cards infraction is correct, and the appropriate penalty should be applied.

- If no, then the card draw is considered legal, and only the appropriate penalty for the earlier Game Rules Error should be applied.

For Standard RL events, the judge should randomly select a card from the player's hand and place it on top of the player's deck. This card is not revealed to the opponent. When determining the random card, the judge should exclude cards from the player's hand that both players can agree were there, for example, if one of the cards was revealed via an earlier game effect.

Similarly, for Standard RL events, if a player performs an illegal break by looking at and/or revealing one or more Extra Cards from his Lifebreak Area, those cards will be shuffled back into the Main Deck. Then, that many cards will be placed from the top of the Main Deck to the top of your Lifebreak Area without being revealed.

The penalty for Drawing Extra Cards / Breaking Extra Cards is a Warning for Standard Rules Level and a Game Loss for Competitive Rules Level.

### **Examples:**

*1) A player in a StoryTeller Championship event breaks a Tree of Heaven's Blessing from his Lifebreak Area and draws a card, triggering the [Enter] ability for mistake, as it was not summoned. Since this is a Standard Rules Level event, a Warning should be issued for Drawing Extra Cards and a random card should be placed on top of the player's deck. If this were a Competitive Rules Level event, the penalty would be a Game Loss instead.*

*Tree of Heaven's Blessing, (G)(1), [Resonator:Treeman]*

*[Break] Put this card into your field.*

*[Continuous] This card cannot attack.*

*[Enter] Target player draws a card from his or her main deck.*

*2) A player with 3200 Life in a National Grand Prix perform a Lifebreak by revealing its second card. Since this is a Competitive Rules Level event and the player has revealed an extra card from his Lifebreak Area, he will receive a Game Loss for Breaking Extra Cards.*

**3)** *A player at a Competitive RL event controls a resonator with Water Spirit Kris Knife added to it. He plays Wash Away targeting a recovered Mirage Slime in the opponent's field, returning it to its owner's hand. Then, that player attacks his opponent, who controls no resonators, dealing damage to him and drawing a card due to Water Spirit Kris Knife's ability. After that the players discover that Wash Away couldn't target Mirage Slime, at which time the earlier Game Rules Error is realized. In this situation, the Game Rules Error was using Wash Away on an illegal target.*

*Since that action did not **immediately** result in a card being drawn, there is no Drawing Extra Cards infraction. Instead, the appropriate penalty for a Game Rules Error should be given.*

*Water Spirit Kris Knife, (U)(1), [Addition: Resonator]  
[Continuous] Whenever added resonator deals battle damage to your opponent, draw a card.*

*Mirage Slime, (U)(2), [Resonator: Slime]  
[Break] Put this card into your field.  
[Continuous] This card cannot be targeted by spells or abilities.*

### **GE7 - Failure to Set Lifebreak Area**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to set his Lifebreak Area before a game starts.

Usually, the disruption to the game is minimal; To fix this, judges should first determine if part of the main deck is a known order via any game effects. If the judge is able to determine what portion of the main deck is a known order via some other game effects, he must have the player separate that portion of the main deck from the rest in that order. Once the main deck is separated into random and known portions, the judge must have the player set his Lifebreak Area with the top 4 cards from the random portion of the main deck. Once done, the judge has the player combine the random portion of the main deck with the known portion and play continues.

If this infraction is discovered before the player draws his first card (or before manipulating his main deck via any game effect), it should be treated as a Game Rules Error instead.

In tournaments with Standard Rules Level, if the judge is unable to determine if a nonrandom portion of the deck exists, he should have the player randomize the whole deck then he should have the player set his Lifebreak Area.

In tournaments with Competitive Rules Level, if the judge is unable to determine the extent of the non-random portion of the deck, the judge should upgrade this infraction to a Game Loss penalty.

The penalty for Failure to Set Lifebreak Area is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

In tournaments with Competitive Rules Level, repeated offenses of Failure to Set Lifebreak Area follow this penalty upgrade pattern:

**Warning → Game Loss → Match Loss → Disqualification with prize**



### **GE8 - Failure to Set the Ruler Card**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to set his or her ruler before a game starts.

Each player is both responsible to set his or her ruler card and to check his or her opponent set his or her ruler card immediately before the game starts.

It may happen by shuffling the ruler into the Main Deck or simply by failing to put the ruler card into the ruler area.

Usually, this infraction is discovered when the game is about to start or immediately after the game started, during the first turn of the player who committed this infraction. To fix this, judges should pull the ruler card out from the Main Deck (if it was shuffled into the Main Deck for mistake) or have that player sets his or her default ruler card (if he or she simply failed to put the ruler card into the ruler area). The default ruler card is the ruler listed in the ruler area of a player's decklist.

The penalty for Failure to Set the Ruler Card is a Warning for both Rules Levels. A penalty for Failure to Maintain the Game State should be issued to that player's opponent as well.

### **GE9 - Failure to Reveal Cards**

This infraction occurs when a player incorrectly puts a card into his or her hand (or into a hidden zone) without revealing it, despite he or she was supposed to do so according to a "search" action instructing to take a card with specific traits. This infraction happens when the card a player failed to reveal is combined with the rest of his or her hand.

If the judge is able to deduce through the circumstances of the game what card the player put into his or her hand, this infraction should be downgraded to a Game Rules Error infraction and he should instruct that player to reveal that card to his or her opponent.

The same happens when all cards in that player's hand would result to be legal cards for that "search" action: in such event, the judge should downgrade the infraction to a Game Rules Error and instruct that player to reveal his or her entire hand to his or her opponent.

The penalty for Failure to Reveal Cards is a Game Loss for both Rules Level.

## **TOURNAMENT ERRORS**

Tournament errors are violations of the tournament rules. Tournament rules exist to ensure a fair tournament experience for all players.

### **TE1 - Official Policy/Announcement Violation**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to follow Official Tournament Policy, or fails to follow general announcements during the tournament.

Players are responsible for knowing and understanding Tournament Policy and must comply with general announcements from Tournament Officials. Failure to do so creates a disruption to the tournament and may create an unfair playing environment for others.

This penalty is also appropriate for exceeding any time limits in an environment outside of a match to include any registration limits for sealed pool build or deck construction. In this case this infraction should be issued after five minutes have passed after the time limit has expired. A second instance of this penalty is appropriate after another five minutes.

Judges should exercise restraint when presented with this infraction. Above all it is important for judges to educate the players that violate policy.

In Standard RL tournaments no penalty exists for this infraction so judges should not issue an official penalty; however, repeated infractions may be penalized at the Head Judge's discretion.

The penalty for Official Policy/Announcement Violation is a Warning for Competitive Rules Level.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) During the player meeting of a National Grand Prix the Head Judge announces that players should not have any food or drink on the table. A player is later observed with an open drink on the match table. A Warning for Official Policy/Announcement Violation should be issued and the player should be instructed to remove that drink from the table.*

*2) At a Competitive RL event the Head Judge announces that players should call for a judge to collect result slips. A player brings up a result slip himself to the scorekeeper.*

*16*

*That player should receive a Warning for Official Policy/Announcement Violation, reminded of what the correct procedure is and instructed not to repeat the incorrect behavior.*

### **TE2 - Failure to Follow Direct Instructions**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to follow specific Tournament Official's instructions aimed specifically at that player. This could happen when a tournament official informally addresses an issue with the player, or as part of resolving a separate infraction.

Players must follow a tournament official's instructions. Failing to do so, undermines the authority of the officials and creates tournament delays. In addition, this infraction implies that a tournament official already observed and attempted to address an issue with a player. As a result the penalty for this infraction is severe at Competitive Rules Level.

The penalty for Failure to Follow Direct Instructions is a Warning for Standard Rules Level and a Game Loss for Competitive Rules Level.

**Examples:**

*1) A judge assessed a Marked Cards Without Pattern infraction in a Competitive RL event and instructed a player to resleeve in between rounds and the player failed to do so. That player should be issued a Game Loss for Failure to Follow Direct Instructions and the player should resleeve immediately.*

*2) A judge instructed a player to remove a drink from the table at a Standard RL event and later sees the same drink on the table. A Failure to Follow Direct Instructions Warning should be issued and the drink removed.*

**TE3 - Insufficient Randomization**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to randomize their decks in such way where they do not know the distribution of any specific cards, or card groups. This could happen when a player fails to shuffle sufficiently after searching their deck, or when a player presets and does not randomize their deck.

Decks may be in any configuration before randomization occurs and players must take care to perform all such randomization at the match table. Additionally, any time a player could see the contents of their deck during shuffling, for example shuffling with card faces toward them, the deck is no longer random and shuffling must be started over. Shuffling undertaken before sitting down for a match will not be taken into account for this infraction.

Random distribution is at the heart of any card game. Without it, players create an unfair playing environment. A good rule for randomization is to perform multiple methods of shuffling multiple times. A single method of shuffling is not sufficient to randomize a deck. However, the majority of insufficient randomization infractions are truly unintentional. It is important for judge to educate players about randomization. If a judge believes that insufficient randomization is intentional, they should refer to the Game Object Manipulation Cheating infraction.

The penalty for Insufficient Randomization is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

**Examples:**

*1) After searching his deck, a player performs only riffle shuffling, with the cards facing him, and presents his deck to his opponent. A Warning for Insufficient Randomization should be assessed, the player should be instructed in proper shuffling technique and the deck should be properly randomized.*

*2) After side decking for the second game in a match, a player pile shuffles only twice before presenting his deck to his opponent. A Warning for Insufficient Randomization should be assessed, the player should be instructed in proper shuffling technique and the deck should be properly randomized.*

#### **TE4 - Tardiness**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to arrive to his seat before the round started. It is important that players are on time for their rounds. Tardiness delays the tournament for all players, especially if they have to wait for the tardy match to get finished. This infraction has two different penalties associated with it:

- Three minute Game Loss penalty
- Ten minute Match Loss penalty

This penalty also applies to a player who loses his or her deck between matches, and so can't present a legal deck before the above time limits expire. A player receiving a Match Loss for Tardiness is dropped from the tournament unless he reports to the Scorekeeper before the next round.

The penalty for Tardiness is a Game Loss at three minutes and a Match Loss at ten minutes for both Rules Levels.

#### **TE5 - Playing the Wrong Opponent**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to correctly identify his table number on the pairings, and sits at the wrong table.

This is a severe infraction that is usually discovered later in the round, and solutions vary based on the tournament rules level and the round time when this infraction is discovered. For Standard Rules Level tournaments judges should adjust the pairings for the round to match them with how players sat. For Competitive tournaments judges should assess a penalty based on the round time when the infraction was discovered. If discovered before the time that a Game Loss would be awarded for Tardiness, ensure the players find the correct seats and assess no penalty. If more than three minutes, but less than ten minutes have passed in the round when the infraction was discovered, the penalty for this infraction is a Game Loss. If ten or more minutes have passed, the penalty for this infraction is a Match Loss. This infraction usually results with two players sitting at incorrect tables and two players sitting at the correct tables. Since all players are responsible for making sure that they play correct opponents, players that sat at the right table have committed the Official Policy/Announcement Violation infraction.

The penalty for Playing the Wrong Opponent is a Warning at Standard Rules Level. At Competitive RL the penalty is a Game Loss at three minutes and a Match Loss at ten minutes.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player misreads the pairings display and sits at the wrong table during a Competitive RL event. The error is not caught until the round is almost over. That player receives a match loss, and the player who is at the correct seat also receives a warning for violating policy (failing to verify that he is playing correct opponent).*

### **TE6 - Slow play**

This infraction occurs when a player unintentionally causes a delay of the game. This can happen through non-action by the player, or through repetitive action that does not progress the game.

Players are responsible for playing at an efficient pace regardless of the complexity of the game or the number of decisions that have to be made. Failure to do so slows down the whole tournament. In addition to assessing a penalty for this infraction, the judge must also give players two extra turns, one for each player to be taken as part of end of match procedures.

The penalty for Slow Play is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player is excessively slow while deciding to keep her initial hand. A Slow Play infraction should be given to that player and two extra turns will be given to the match if it goes to time.*

### **TE7 - Marked Cards without Pattern**

This infraction occurs if a player has cards or sleeves that are easily distinguishable from other in the same deck. This includes bent or excessively worn cards, cards with distinctive markings, and sleeves that are dirty, worn, or damaged. The cards that are distinguishable are random for this infraction. If the cards that are easily distinguishable have a pattern, judges should issue the Marked Cards with Pattern penalties.

Marked cards represent a significant advantage for cheating. However, judges should be aware that solutions for this infraction take time to implement and may unnecessarily delay the tournament. Judges may require a player to replace the marked sleeves or cards immediately, or in some cases require that the player to resleeve their entire deck after the current round. If a player chooses to resleeve his cards immediately, they have three minutes to do so, before judges may apply tardiness penalties.

A player is never required to buy new sleeves, and may wish to instead drop from the tournament instead of choosing to follow a judge's instructions.

The penalty for Marked Cards Without Pattern is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player has three card sleeves with noticeable thumbnail marks. All three appear to be different and are on different cards. The player should re-sleeve the three marked cards and a Warning should be issued.*

*2) A player's sleeves appear to have a factory defect where the card sleeves are many different lengths. There appears to be no pattern to the defect. A Marked Cards without Pattern infraction should be applied. The player should resleeve in between rounds.*

### **TE8 - Marked Cards with Pattern**

This infraction occurs if a player has a significant number of cards marked and it appears that there is an unintentional but noticeable pattern among them.

Markings with a pattern represent a huge potential for abuse. Although this infraction assumes accidental marking, having significant markings can give players an advantage in tournaments. It is appropriate to investigate further to make sure that the player did not do this intentionally.

Intentionally marking cards or taking advantage of known markings regardless of their origin is a Game Object Manipulation infraction and requires a Disqualification penalty.

The penalty for Marked Cards with Pattern is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) All of the resonator cards in a player's deck have sleeves with a noticeable factory marking. All of his [spell:chant] cards sleeves are normal. The judge believes this error is unintentional after an investigation. A Game Loss should be issued for this infraction and the deck should be resleeved.*

### **TE9 - Outside Assistance**

This infraction occurs when a player seeks advice from others once they have sat for their match. This infraction also applies to anyone who gives advice to players who have sat for their match.

Notes also can fall into Outside Assistance when a player at any time after arriving at the play table references notes made before the official beginning of the current match, including OCR text that has not been provided by a judge.

These criteria also apply to any deck construction portions of a limited tournament. Additionally, no notes of any kind may be made during a draft. Notes made during a match may be referenced during that match or between matches. Notes made outside the current match may not be referenced once a player has sat for their match until after his or her match is completed.

The penalty for Outside Assistance is a Warning for Standard Rules Level and a Game Loss for Competitive Rules Level.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player at a local store draft is in the deck construction portion of the event. He asks his friend his opinion on which of two resonators he should put in his deck. A judge overhears the friend give an answer. Both players should receive a Warning for Outside Assistance and instructed not to repeat the behavior.*

*2) A player at a National Grand Prix pulls from his pocket a list of side decking suggestions after Game 1 of a match. The judge should issue a Game Loss for Outside Assistance and instruct the player against further use of the notes during a match.*

## DECK AND DECKLIST ERRORS

This category of infractions covers infractions that players may commit during decklist registration or deck construction. The majority of these infractions are discovered in between games, or rounds. In such cases, judges should apply the penalty towards the next game, and should not retroactively apply the infraction.

For these infractions, if the error is discovered before a match begins and the infraction warrants a Game Loss, as is likely during a deck check, neither player is allowed to use their side deck for game 2.

### DE1 - Registration Error

This infraction usually occurs when:

- A player forgets to write their name on the decklist.
- A player forgets to register a ruler on their decklist.
- A player fails to correctly register his limited card pool before passing it to another player in the tournament.

The disruption to the tournament is minimal and the error is usually caught by the person using the limited pool to build, or a judge collecting the decklists. Judges should correct the error, and initial their correction. If this infraction is not caught by the player receiving the decklist before the decklist is turned in, the player who received the decklist will also receive an Illegal List infraction.

No penalty exists for this infraction for Standard Rules Level. The penalty for a Registration Error is a Warning for Competitive Rules Level.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player in a Competitive Rules Level event receives a card pool with 1 Shock Troop of Asakna listed on the decklist when there are 2 in the pool. The judge should verify the card pool with the player who registered it and give that player a Warning for Registration Error. The judge should update the decklist with the correct card count and initial by the change.*

### DE2 - Illegal list

This infraction occurs when the decklist does not meet tournament rules for deck building. The most common infractions are banned cards, quantities of cards beyond the maximum allowed, or too few cards on the decklist. This infraction also applies to side decks. List errors are most often the result of clerical errors when the list is being created.

For Competitive Rules Level tournaments, when handing out multiple illegal decklist penalties (usually at the beginning of round 2), judges should make sure that they prevent game play from starting at tables with this infraction. The easiest method to do this is to send a judge to each of the tables with infractions before the round starts and instruct players to not begin play.

In situations where both the deck and the decklist are illegal, judges should only issue the penalty for illegal list. If the list is illegal, but the deck is legal; change the list to match the deck. If the list and deck are illegal, make the minimum adjustments necessary to make the deck legal, then make the list match the deck.

The penalty for Illegal List is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

### **Examples:**

*1) A player has listed 38 cards on his constructed decklist but has 40 cards in his physical Main Deck and is otherwise legal. The player will receive a Warning for Illegal List. The decklist should be updated to include the two cards from his legal Main Deck.*

*2) A player has 3 copies of Shock Troop of Asakna listed in his 40 card Main Deck list and 2 copies of the same card listed in his 15 card Side Deck list. These numbers are verified to match the actual Main Deck and Side Deck. This violates the rule that you can only have 4 copies of a card between your Main Deck and Side Deck. The player will receive a Warning for Illegal List. He must then choose a copy to remove to bring him down to the four-of rule and then add another card to make his deck legal. After his deck and side deck are legal, change the list to match.*

### **DE3 - Illegal Deck**

This infraction occurs when a player has a deck that does not match their legal decklist. The most common infractions are cards left from previous opponent's decks, lost cards, or a mismatch between the decklist and the deck. Failure to De-Side Deck is a separate infraction and does not fall under the illegal deck infraction. For Competitive RL events, other cards kept in the same location as the side deck will be considered part of the side deck for purposes of this infraction.

If a player, up to the time that either player plays a card in a game, discovers that they are guilty of an Illegal Deck infraction, they may immediately call a judge. If they call a judge on themselves, and this is the first time they committed this infraction in the tournament, the Head Judge may downgrade the penalty.

To fix this infraction the player fixes their deck to match their decklist. If the decklist is illegal, the judge should instead treat the infraction as an illegal list infraction.

If no decklists are being used, and this is a Standard RL event, the player must remove all illegal cards from all zones and replace them with legal cards. Those legal cards are then shuffled into the randomized portion of their deck. Then, based on where the illegal cards were found, the player will perform one or more of the following actions:

- If an illegal card was found in play, the Deck, the Graveyard or the RFG zone, then nothing more is done and play continues as normal.
- If an illegal card was found in the player's hand, then that player will put cards from the top of their deck into their hand until they have replaced the same number of illegal cards. (This is not a draw event.)

The penalty for Illegal Deck is a Warning at the Standard RL and a Game Loss at the Competitive RL.



### **Examples:**

*1) A player enters a National Grand Prix with five of the same non-unlimited card between his main and side decks, while his decklist has four listed, and is otherwise legal. The judge issues a Game Loss penalty after determining it was an honest mistake. The player must remove one of the illegal cards in the main deck or side deck to make the deck match the decklist.*

### **DE4 - Failure to De-Side Deck**

This infraction occurs when a player fails to return their deck to the original configuration for a new game.

If a player, up to the time that either player plays a card in a game, discovers that they are guilty of a Failure to De-Side Deck infraction, they may immediately call a judge. If they call a judge on themselves and this is the first time they committed this infraction in the tournament, the Head Judge may downgrade the penalty to a Warning. If this infraction is discovered during a game, the penalty for this infraction is a Game Loss.

To fix this infraction, the player fixes their deck to match their decklist. In the case of a downgrade, the side deck cards should be returned to the side deck and cards should be drawn from the deck to replace them.

The penalty for Failure to De-Side Deck is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels. However, this penalty is frequently downgraded to a Warning as outlined in the above infraction description.

### **Examples:**

*1) A player in a tournament draws his opening hand in round 3 and realizes that one of those cards should be in his side deck. He immediately calls for a judge before the start of the game. Since the player realized the error himself and has not played anything yet, the Head Judge has the authority to downgrade the penalty for the Failure to De-Side Deck infraction to a Warning.*

*2) A player in a tournament uses the [Activate] ability of Sister of Linorsphairia and looks at the top 3 cards of his Magic Stone Deck, one of which should be in his side deck. This issue happens several turns into the game, thus, is unable to be downgraded by the Head Judge. A Game Loss is issued for Failure to De-Side Deck.*

## **UNSPORTING CONDUCT**

Players are expected to behave in a sporting and professional manner toward other players, spectators, and tournament officials. This group of penalties deals with inappropriate behavior that a player may exhibit during a tournament. For this group of penalties, it is assumed the infractions committed were done so intentionally.

It is important to allow players to have fun and enjoy themselves, but that must be balanced with the need to protect others against truly offensive behavior that will jeopardize other players' tournament activity. This is an area where judges must use their common sense to determine when to allow natural behavior to occur and when to step in and moderate a situation.

### **UC1 - Minor Unsporting Conduct**

This penalty is appropriate for minor examples of unsporting conduct, the most common of which are swearing out loud at no particular person, leaving trash in the player area, or inappropriate gestures.

Depending on the audience of the tournament, the Head Judge may wish to be more or less lenient when it comes to swearing. At a junior event, penalties should be enforced for swearing, but at an event with all adults, the judge has freedom to enforce penalties based on the age of the players present.

The penalty for Minor Unsporting Conduct is a Warning for both Rules Levels.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player leaves scraps of paper or food on his table after a match. The player should be instructed to clean up and a Warning should be issued for Minor Unsporting Conduct.*

*2) A player swears during a tournament in the tournament area. The player should be told to be careful of his language and a Minor Unsporting Conduct infraction issued.*

*3) A player insults her opponent. The offending behavior should be corrected and a Warning should be given to the player.*

### **UC2 - Major Unsporting Conduct**

This penalty is appropriate for major examples of unsporting conduct.

These types of behaviors have the potential to become out of control and should be curtailed as soon as possible. The situation should be defused first and then the penalty issued when the player is calmer.

The penalty for Major Unsporting Conduct is a Game Loss for both Rules Levels.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player uses profanity to argue with the Head Judge about a ruling. The player should be taken aside and calmed down. Afterwards a Game Loss should be issued for the Major Unsporting Conduct.*

*2) A player throws his deck or his dice in frustration after losing a match. The player should be taken aside and calmed down. Afterwards a Game Loss should be issued for the Major Unsporting Conduct.*

*3) A player refuses to sign or rips up a match result slip. The player should be taken aside and explained about why his behavior is disruptive. Afterwards a Game Loss should be issued for the Major Unsporting Conduct.*

### **UC3 - Severe Unsporting Conduct**

This penalty is appropriate for extreme examples of unsporting conduct, and results in a disqualification without prize. A statement must be sent to the email address at the start of this document outlining the incident leading to this penalty.

A player does not need to be enrolled in the tournament to commit this infraction. If a spectator or a player no longer in the tournament commits this infraction, the judge should enroll them into the tournament and disqualify them.

The penalty for Severe Unsporting Conduct is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player writes on tablecloths or defaces the tournament area. The player should be Disqualified without Prize.*

*2) A player verbally threatens a judge. The player should be taken aside and Disqualified without Prize.*

*3) A player intentionally causes damage to the tournament site or someone else's belongings. The player should be taken aside and Disqualified without Prize.*

### **UC4 - Theft**

This infraction occurs if a player steals something at or around the tournament site.

A player does not need to be enrolled in the tournament to commit this infraction. If a spectator or a player no longer in the tournament commits this infraction, the judge should enroll them into the tournament and disqualify them.

The penalty for Theft is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels.

### **UC5 - Aggressive Behavior**

This infraction occurs if a player is openly aggressive towards other players, spectators, or tournament officials.

The safety of tournament participants is of highest importance. There is no tolerance for players violating this rule.

A player does not need to be enrolled in the tournament to commit this infraction. If a spectator or a player no longer in the tournament commits this infraction, the judge should enroll them into the tournament and disqualify them.

The penalty for Aggressive Behavior is a Disqualification for both Rules Levels.

## **CHEATING**

A player is Cheating when they intentionally commit an infraction to gain a significant advantage or allow an infraction to be committed knowingly and results in a disqualification without prize.

In Standard Rules Level tournaments, both players may legitimately not know that some of these offenses, such as bribery and random match outcomes, are against the Tournament Policy. In such cases, and only at tournaments with Standard Rules Level, the Head Judge may downgrade the penalty to a Match Loss if he feels the offense was taken without malice or preplanning.

### **CH1 - Manipulating Match Outcome**

This infraction occurs when one, or both, players attempt to manipulate or randomize the outcome of a match.

When one player offers another anything for a match outcome, this player has committed bribery.

When the player's opponent accepts the offer, both players have committed collusion.

Manipulating outcomes of the match destroys tournament integrity. An undeserving person advances in the tournament at the expense of someone who should have legitimately advanced.

The penalty for manipulating Match Outcome is a Disqualification without Prize for both Rules Levels.

#### ***Examples:***

*1) A player offers booster packs to their opponent in exchange for a concession in the final round. The player should be Disqualified without Prize for Manipulating Match Outcome. If the player's opponent accepts the offer, they should be Disqualified as well for Collusion.*

*2) Two players decide the outcome of a match via a coin flip at a Standard RL event. Both players should be Disqualified without Prize. If the Head Judge believes that the players legitimately did not know that this action was not allowed he has the option to downgrade this penalty to a Match Loss.*

### **CH2 - Game Object Manipulation**

This infraction occurs when a player manipulates cards, or game mechanics. This includes, but is not limited to, intentionally drawing extra cards, changing the game state, or marking cards.

Manipulating cards or game mechanics destroys tournament integrity, places unnecessary burden on tournament officials, and creates a negative experience for competitors.

The penalty for Game Object Manipulation is a Disqualification without Prize for both Rules Levels.

**Examples:**

- 1) A player purposely draws an extra card and attempts to conceal it.*
- 2) A player intentionally marks four of their key resonator cards so that they can predict when those cards will be drawn.*
- 3) A player deliberately switches the top card from his Lifebreak Area with a card in his hand.*

**CH3 - Misrepresenting Information**

This infraction occurs when a player intentionally misrepresents public information to their opponent, or any kind of information to tournament officials. This includes, but is not limited to, omitting damage, misrepresenting rules or policies, misrepresenting an event that happened during the game, and lying to tournament officials.

While bluffing is a component of trading card games, players may not lie about public information to their opponents and may never give incorrect information to tournament officials.

This infraction is also used for instances of a player observing an infraction and bringing it up at a later time more to his benefit. This infraction should not be applied to a player revealing an infraction in good faith at an appropriate later time.

The penalty for Misrepresenting Information is a Disqualification without Prize for both Rules Levels.

**Examples:**

- 1) A player intentionally tells his opponent that he has no cards in his hand while he has one card .*
- 2) A player lies to tournament officials during an investigation during an appeal to make his side of the argument stronger.*
- 3) A player notices his opponent has put an extra Magic Stone into his Magic Stone Area. He waits until he is losing the game to bring it to the attention of the judge in the hopes of his opponent getting a severe penalty. Upon discovering this fact, the head judge should issue a Misrepresenting Information infraction and disqualify the reporting player.*

**CH4 - Stalling**

This infraction occurs when a player intentionally plays slow during a game to gain an advantage. Players that intentionally play slow to gain an advantage from end of match procedures create an unfair game environment, and unnecessarily delay the tournament.

The penalty for Stalling is a Disqualification without Prize for both Rules Levels.

**Examples:**

*1) A player who won the first game of the match purposely plays slowly in order to stall for time and wait for the round to end.*

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

For the most recent information about tournament policies and for other language versions of this document, please visit [www.fowtcg.it](http://www.fowtcg.it).

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