

RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Grading, Seeding and Promotions

1.1 Players will be seeded in Open and National Competitions in all grades. Seeding lists will be used where they exist and where they do not, players from the same club will be kept apart in the draw as much as possible at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

1.2 In Open Events in Open and National Competitions seedings will be as per the seeding list. Only the top 4 players off the list need be seeded.

1.3 In all other events at Open and National Competitions the seeding of the top 4 players will be at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

1.4 Seeded players or pairs are exempt from preliminary round games except where the entry is less than 8.

1.5 The following is the promotion process in singles competition:

A player who wins a novice event is promoted to D.

A player who wins a D event is promoted to C.

A player who wins a C event is promoted to B.

A player who wins 3 B events in a single season or 2 All-Ireland B titles in a row is promoted to Open. A player who wins an Open singles event will be promoted to Open

Note: This promotion process is confined to singles events at sanctioned tournaments.

1.6 A player winning an event above his/her current grade is restricted to one promotion per tournament. He/she can apply to the Executive Committee for further promotion to the second higher grade.

1.7 A player winning a European Tour event can apply to the Executive Committee for promotion to a comparable RAI singles grade. The Executive Committee must approve any such application.

1.8 Up graded players will remain in their new category for at least three years before becoming eligible for regrading. Applications for regrading must be in writing to the General Secretary. This must be approved by an appointed three person regarding committee. A decision will be made withing 10 days of acknowledgement of the application but will not become effective until 30 days after approval given. A fee of €10 must be paid for all successful regradings.

1.9 The seeding list will be used as the approved guide for all Open Tournaments sanctioned by the Racquetball Association of Ireland.

1.10 The seeding list will cover the results of all open tournaments sanctioned by the RAI, i.e. open, overage and underage.

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1.11 The seeding list backdates to cover the previous twelve months tournaments with no duplication of events within.

1.12 Seeding points will be allotted as follows:-

- 1 point awarded to each player who plays in Open Singles
- 2 points awarded to a player who wins a match but loses in the round of 16
- 3 points awarded to a player who loses quarter-final (round of 8)
- 5 points awarded to a player who loses semi-final (round of 4)
- 7 points awarded to a player who loses final
- 9 points awarded to a player who wins final

No seeding points will be awarded in open singles where there are less than four entrants.

1.13 Seeding points are doubled for National Championships and the Irish Open Championships.

1.14 Draws consist of

Top Half:

- 1st Seed V 8th Seed
- 4th Seed V 5th Seed

Bottom Half:

- 3rd Seed V 6th Seed
- 2nd Seed V 7th Seed

1.15 Up-to-date seeding lists will be sent to host clubs before each Open Tournament and to all clubs at the end of each season.

1.16 Women may play in Men's singles events (except in the National Championships). They may play in three divisions below their current Womens' grades.

2. Gradings, Promotions and Rules (Doubles)

2.1 Doubles for Open Tournaments shall be 1. Open Doubles and 2. C/D/Novice Doubles.

2.2 Doubles pairings for Open can include a maximum of one Open grade player

2.3 A player regarded to C grade for doubles only may not play with another C grade player.

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3. National Championships

3.1 The Association will hold the following National Championships each year for Men and Women.

Singles

Open : all Players

B : all Players except Open Players

C : all Players except Open & B

D : all Players except Open B & C

Novice : all Players except Open, B, C, D

Singles Overage : 30+, 35+, 40+, 45+, 50+, 55+

Novice is defined as:

(a) A division confined to players who have never won a senior singles event at a sanctioned tournament.

(b) A player who wins a novice event at a sanctioned tournament is no longer a novice and is promoted to a "D" category player from that time onwards. He/she is not eligible to play on novice team events from that date.

(c) Winners of Overage, Open, B, C, or D Singles events are not considered "Novices" for the purpose of this category.

Doubles

Open

B/C/D

Novice

30+, 35+ and so on in increments of 5 years

Under 13 and Under 16

Junior Singles

Under 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 21

3.2 Junior Events

Junior "B" Singles: National Junior B Singles Championships to be held each year. Format to be decided by Executive. A player winning a 'B' title may not play in that 'B' division again but may play in another 'B' division. A player winning two 'B' divisions may no longer play in 'B' singles.

The Association will hold a Junior Irish Open Championships each year. Format to be decided by Executive.

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3.3 Promoted players will be permitted to take part in the National Championships following the tournament in which they were promoted at their last known category before promotion i.e. they may move back one singles division only and irrespective of outcome, revert to promoted category after national championship.

3.4 The awards for National Championship Events are:-

(1) 1st Golden Medal (s) and 2nd Silver Medal (s)

(2) Bronze medals may be awarded to losing semi-finalists at Junior National events.

3.5 The Executive Committee will notify Clubs that they are open to applications to host National Championships at least 6 weeks before the venues are decided.

3.6 Players playing in national Championships (which are being played over a weekend) will be allowed to take part in two events, up to a maximum of three events if time allows, at the discretion of the Tournament Secretary.

3.7 In the National Championships, all competitors must be the holder of a valid Irish Passport at the date of the Championships.

3.8 Players taking part in National Championships or Open sanctioned Tournaments must be members of clubs affiliated to the Association or have individual memberships of the Association.

4. National Team

4.1 The team selected should elect their own Captains (one Male, one Female) to liaise with the Manager as required.

4.2 To represent Ireland in International Competitions a member of a Club must Irish nationality by producing an Irish Passport. Where there is a problem of joint nationality such competitors may only represent one country and thereafter be subject to the E.R.F and I.R.F Rules on such matters including having to wait 2 years since his/her last international representation if changing countries.

4.3 A code of conduct will apply for National team members and officials taking part in International events. This code of conduct to be signed by participants and officials upon appointment. Failure to sign will lead to automatic forfeiture of position.

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4.4 Players who have emigrated, are permitted to submit themselves for inclusion and/or selection on national teams provided that: .

- They are members of an affiliated club or have individual membership of the RAI.
- They have taken part in two Open events in Ireland in the previous 12 months.
- They have not represented any other country in the previous two years.
- The applicants be approved by and meet the standards set by the Executive of the RAI

5. Overage and Underage Regulations

5.1 Proof of age must be produced.

5.2 Underage Events: these competitions shall be confined to players who are under the age required on January 1st of the tournament year.

5.3 Overage Events: age is determined as of the first day of the tournament.

6 Sanctioned Tournaments

6.1 Seeding points are only available at tournaments where permission has been applied for and granted by the Racquetball Association of Ireland

6.2 Clubs wishing to host Tournaments and requesting permission from the RAI should apply in writing to the General Secretary or Tournament Secretary stating the Dates, Events and Facilities.

6.4 Sanctioned tournaments should offer Ladies events in the categories (1) Open and (2) C/D/Novice combined.

6.5 All Open tournaments, sanctioned by the RAI must offer an under 18 boys and under 18 girls singles event and an Over 40 Men's and Over 40 Women's singles events.

6.6 Sanctioned Tournaments will be included in the Calendar of Events.

6.7 A fixed levy of €100 must be paid on application for tournaments to be sanctioned by the RAI.

6.8 Any player who takes part in a competition who is subsequently discovered to have been ineligible will be excluded from the record for that competition and if the affected player was the overall winner then the runner-up would be automatically recorded as the winner.

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7. All-Ireland Club Championships / Inter Provincials

7.1 The club hosting the All-Ireland Club Championships finals will be permitted to enter teams in each event without having to play in the Provincial Qualifiers.

Clubs may enter a maximum of three teams in any grade.

7.2 Members transferring from Club to Club must apply to the Tournament Secretary during the off season (1st June to 31st August inclusive), and a copy of this notification must be sent to the club he/she is leaving before he/she commences to play for any new Club. A player transferring from one club to another must be a member of his/her new club for six months before being permitted to play in the All Ireland Club Championships.

All-Ireland Club Championships - Rules:

7.3 Men's / Ladies Teams:

- a) There will be three categories of team events.
- b) **Open** grade - the club may choose its strongest players to represent it in this grade..
- c) **Intermediate** grade - the club may choose any players, from and including 'B' grade, down to novice players.
- d) **Novice** grade - The club must choose novice players only.
- e) In all grades, the event will consist of two singles match's and one doubles match. Each team must have a minimum of two players and maximum of four players and the team may place their players in any position they see fit.
- f) In all grades, the scoring will be the best of two games to fifteen, with one point awarded to the winner of each game. Therefore, a singles player or 'doubles team' can win two points for his team by winning two games to zero.
- g) The winner of the competition will be the team with the most number of points won. If two teams are tied for the championship, the winner of the 'head-to-head' match will decide the eventual outcome. A countback of aces will be used if the teams are still tied.
- h) Teams must be presented in writing to the official in charge, before the commencement of the competition and cannot be changed for that competition.
- i) Entry fees must be paid **before** play commences.

7.4 Junior Teams

- a) Separate competition for boys and girls
- b) Team to consist of one under 12 player, one under 15 player and one under 18 player.
- c) Teams must field full teams in order to complete
- d) Format to be decided by National Junior Committee

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APPENDIX ONE

Racquetball Association of Ireland

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. GENERAL

The Racquetball Association of Ireland Code of Conduct is issued pursuant Rule 3.17 Technical Fouls and Warnings of the International Racquetball Federation Rule Book (See Appendix Two) and covers the conduct of events run and organised under the auspices of Racquetball Association of Ireland and is designed to secure the future well-being of racquetball. Different aspects of the Code may have relevance to players, officials, spectators and administrators involved in a racquetball tournament or competition. The Code, therefore, applies to all these categories and should be understood by all concerned with competitive racquetball. Racquetball Association of Ireland supports the Rules of Racquetball as published by the International Racquetball Federation. All tournaments and competitions organised in Ireland under the auspices of or in conjunction with Racquetball Association of Ireland shall be played according to these rules and the Rules and Regulations of the Racquetball Association of Ireland.

2. EVENTS ADMINISTRATION

Organisers of racquetball tournaments and competitions must ensure that clear and comprehensive regulations are prepared and available to all competitors in time to permit compliance with such regulations.

Administrative instructions, which require particular actions by players and / or officials, must be clearly stated and communicated to those concerned.

Adequate arrangements must be made to permit the proper conduct of a tournament or competition.

3. PLAYERS

The Code of Conduct for players (and their managers and coaching staff where applicable) applies to individuals and teams. Any player who enters tournaments or competitions thereby accepts all regulations associated with the event, and shall subsequently comply with them.

No players shall withdraw from an event after submitting an application to enter without the consent of the event organiser. Such consent will normally only be given in the following circumstances:

a) When the player has incurred accidental injury or ill-health after submitting an entry application.

b) When family or other circumstances warrants a player to withdraw

Players must be familiar with the Rules of Racquetball and must make every effort to comply with them.

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Players must conduct themselves at all times in a way which brings credit to the image of racquetball in the eyes of spectators, the media and sponsors. They must behave with dignity on court and recognise the need for continuity of play. They must recognise the legitimate interests of the racquetball media, and make themselves available to meet reasonable requests for interviews, photo calls and press briefings. They must also recognise their responsibilities to sponsors and event organisers, and meet reasonable requests to attend formal and informal functions associated with the event. Some specific aspects of behaviour on court, or in public which are considered **contrary** to creditable conduct are included in the following list which is not intended to be comprehensive.

- (a) Swearing
- (b) Making offensive gestures
- (c) Disputing decisions made by a referee
- (d) Arguing/conversations with line judges
- (e) Deliberate contact between players or between players and playing equipment.
- (f) Making offensive comments, or comments which might be regarded as offensive about opponent, match officials, coaches or spectators on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

4. SPECTATORS AND COACHES

Spectators must remain silent during rallies, and should not encourage extended and undignified delays between rallies by attempting to provoke discussion between players and officials, or between the players themselves.

In the event of disruptive or threatening behavior on the part of any spectator, relative, parent, guardian, or coach at any RAI sanctioned event, the referee is empowered to address a first offense by enforcing sanction #1 detailed below. For additional infractions, the tournament director, or RAI official in attendance, either of their own accord or at the request of the referee, is empowered to enforce sanctions #2 and #3 as warranted.

1. For the first offense: violator may watch, but not speak, while the athlete's match is being played.
2. For the second offense: violator may not watch the athlete's match, but may remain within the building.
3. For the third offense: violator will be removed from the club for the duration of the tournament, and pertinent authorities advised of the restriction. If a given situation so warrants, the tournament director or RAI official may invoke this sanction immediately and without previous offenses, in the interest of safety.

Coaches are bound by the same rules as players, in as far as technical violations are concerned. Full listing and appropriate disciplinary measures are detailed in Rule 3.17.

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5. DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

The *Racquetball Association of Ireland* supports the Rules of Racquetball as published by the International Racquetball Federation. All tournaments and competitions organised in Ireland under the auspices of or in conjunction with Racquetball Association of Ireland shall be played according to the rules of racquetball.

6. RULES OF RACQUETBALL – CODE OF CONDUCT AND RESULTING PENALTIES

6.1 Are contained within the Rules of Racquetball and they outline the powers available to any referee for dealing with on court offences by players.

6.1.1 In addition, the Tournament Director must submit a report to the Racquetball Association of Ireland within seven days of a Referees Technical (point or match) being awarded. The referee must inform the Tournament Director that he/she issued a Referees Technical. This report will have details of offence/s, players involved and the names of referee/line judges. A Referees Technical Warning shall not constitute the necessity of a Tournament Directors Report.

The Tournament Director must also include details of any breeches of the Code of Conduct that have not been dealt with by the referee during the match. Where a Grade II or Grade III offence is deemed to have occurred then the procedures in paragraph 6.1.1 should be implemented. Witness details should be taken if applicable, and a brief statement taken if possible. The result of the match as called by the referee will not be affected by breeches noted independently by the Tournament Director.

6.1.2 The following offences, Graded I to III in order of seriousness, if committed by an Individual may be subject to penalties under Rule 3.17 of the International Racquetball Federation Rules and will result in fines and/or disciplinary action being taken against the responsible person;

Grade I

The Individual:

Commits any Rule 3.17 offence not falling within Grades II and Grades III below. Three Technicals Fouls against a player/team per match shall result in the player/team being disqualified. In this instance, it is elevated to a Grade II offence.

Grade II

The Individual:

- i fails to complete a match for a reason other than injury, illness or emergency situation;
- ii defaults from a Championship or Tournament (the RAI may require evidence of bona fide injury, illness or other emergency situation);
fails to make himself available to meet any reasonable request for media

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- interviews;
- iii is disqualified by the referee.

Grade III

The Individual:

- i physically abuses his opponent, Referee, officials, spectators or sponsors;
- ii participates when suspended, ineligible or unqualified;
- iii influences the result of a match by arrangement;
- iv is guilty of any other unreasonable conduct which brings the game into disrepute, including behaviour as a result of intoxication by any means including use of recreational substances such as alcohol, marijuana and hallucinogens.

This list is not exhaustive and all cases of Code of Conduct violations, including those by spectators and coaches will be dealt with the the RAI Disciplinary Committee.

Fines and suspensions shall be enforced as follows:

- Grade I** Upon 3 incident of Grade I Violations in 12 months - Written warning to the individual and mandatory requirement to attend rules course before taking part in next competition. Two written warnings within 12 months shall constitute a Grade II offence
- Grade II** **Fine of €100.** (Note: Two fines of €100 within 12 months shall constitute a Grade III offence).
- Grade III** Six month ban from all RAI Tournaments, Teams or events plus a **fine of €200.**

7. DISCIPLINARY MATTERS AT CLUB LEVEL

7.1 If not already covered in paragraph 6, will be dealt with by the club concerned or other delegated appropriate authority.

8. DISCIPLINARY MATTERS AT EVENTS AT PROVINCIAL LEVEL

8.1 If not already covered in paragraph 6 will be dealt with by the Provincial Council concerned.

8.2 Any appeals will be dealt with by a Provincial Council Appeals Panel, so convened or by the Racquetball Association of Ireland itself, if so referred (9.3). The Provincial Council Appeals Panel should meet within 28 days of appeal notification.

9. DISCIPLINARY MATTERS AT EVENTS

9.1 Disciplinary Matters will be dealt with by the Racquetball Association of Ireland's Disciplinary Panel.

9.2 Any appeals will be dealt with by the Racquetball Association of Ireland's Appeals Panel.

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10. GUIDANCE DEALING WITH DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES, DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS AND APPEALS

10.1 If not already covered in paragraph 2, the alleged offender must be informed as soon as possible after the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct, that a report is to be submitted to the appropriate Disciplinary Panel and that he/she may be the subject of a disciplinary hearing.

10.2 A written report and written statements must be submitted to the appropriate Disciplinary Panel by the appointed tournament director, or other appropriate person within seven days of the alleged breach.

10.3 The appropriate Disciplinary Panel must notify the alleged offender in writing that a formal complaint against him/her has been received, and copies of the written report and statements referred to in paragraph 6.1.1 above should be supplied to him/her. He/she must be invited to provide written response about the incident or incidents which gave rise to the allegation, and indicate whether he/she accepts the accuracy of the supplied documentation, and in serious cases should be informed of his/her right to have the matter dealt with at a disciplinary hearing under 10.4 below

10.4 A Disciplinary Panel shall consist of not less than three persons appointed to consider the written reports and other relevant documentation and, if necessary, shall convene a disciplinary hearing to be held at the Disciplinary Panel's discretion. The Disciplinary Panel should be given clear guidance as to its powers to impose disciplinary sanctions should it find the allegations to be substantiated by the evidence. The Disciplinary Panel may be standing or convened to consider a particular incident, and may not contain any person who has any connection with the parties involved.

10.5 If a hearing is called, it is essential that the alleged offender be given reasonable opportunity to attend (minimum 14 days) and/or be represented, and statements taken from witnesses must have been served on him/her fourteen days prior to the hearing.

10.6 Consideration of the alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, whether involving a disciplinary hearing or not, should be dealt with as a clear priority. (It is impossible to set an arbitrary timescale to cover all levels of racquetball but, at the very least, the aim should be to complete the initial disciplinary process (excluding appeal) within one month of the alleged breach).

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10.7 The alleged offender should have the right to appeal to the Appeals Panel as set out in paragraph 10.9 against the findings of the relevant Disciplinary Panel and/or any penalty imposed. He/she should also have the right to convene an appeal hearing.

10.8 A range of sanctions are available as outlined in Paragraph 6.1.2 above for application by a Disciplinary Panel which considers that the Racquetball Association of Ireland's Code of Conduct has been breached.

10.9 Any person wishing to appeal against a decision by a Disciplinary Panel must register an intention to appeal to the relevant Appeal Panel in writing, with the Disciplinary Panel, which issued the sanction within seven days of being notified of the Disciplinary Panel's decision. Persons appealing against a decision by the Racquetball Association of Ireland's Disciplinary Panel must provide a deposit of €100.00 in the form of a cheque to the Racquetball Association of Ireland. The deposit will be returned in full if the appeal is upheld. If the appeal is not upheld, the costs of the appeal will be taken from the deposit. Any penalty imposed by a Disciplinary Panel shall be suspended pending the outcome of the appeal. An Appeal Panel will consider the matter afresh by way of a re-consideration of all relevant reports and statements and should consider the reports and findings of the Disciplinary Panel who first handled the case. The Appeal Panel may call a further hearing and may consider fresh evidence. Those appointed to hear an appeal may confirm, set aside, reduce or increase any penalties already imposed.

10.10 Any expenses of the Disciplinary Panel, the informant and witnesses involved in the first disciplinary hearing will be borne by the Disciplinary Panel dealing with the alleged breach of the Code. The alleged offender must bear his/her own expenses unless the Disciplinary Panel otherwise decides. However, the Disciplinary Panel may, if it so decides, pass on costs reasonably incurred by the offender.

10.11 All expenses incurred or connected with any Appeal (including costs associated with any hearing) will be borne by the person making the appeal, unless the findings of the Disciplinary Panel (or any part thereof if there is more than one allegation), are set aside. These costs or such proportion as is considered reasonable by the relevant Appeal Panel hearing the appeal, will then become the responsibility of the Disciplinary Panel whose decision has been appealed against.

10.12 An alleged offender may be assisted by a legal adviser or supporter at a hearing if he/she so wishes.

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11. CIVIL OR CRIMINAL ACTION

If civil or criminal proceedings are pending, all reports and statements should be collated as normal, but the disciplinary proceedings postponed until a decision by the civil or criminal authorities has been reached.

12. PENALTIES

In order to ensure that punishments are as consistent as possible, all results of the disciplinary hearings should be given to the Racquetball Association of Ireland immediately the appeal time limit has expired. Relevant information will then be circulated periodically to Clubs and published on the Racquetball Association of Ireland website.

13. DRUG REGULATIONS

The anti-doping rules of the Racquetball Association of Ireland are the Irish Anti-Doping Rules as amended from time to time. These rules override the code of conduct where conflicts occur.

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CODE OF CONDUCT - APPENDIX TWO

IRF rules • 2008-2010 Official International Racquetball Federation Rules

Rule 3.17 TECHNICAL FOULS AND WARNINGS

(a) The referee is empowered to deduct one point from a player's or team's score when, in the referee's sole judgment, the player is being overly and deliberately abusive. The actual invoking of this penalty is called a "referee's technical." If the player or team against whom the technical was assessed does not resume play immediately, the referee is empowered to forfeit the match in favor of the opponent. Some examples of actions which may result in technicals are:

1. Profanity.
2. Excessive arguing.
3. Threat of any nature to opponent or referee.
4. Excessive or hard striking of the ball between rallies.
5. Slamming of the racquet against walls or floor, slamming the door, or any action which might result in damage to the court and/or injury to other players.
6. Delay of game. Examples include (i) taking too much time to dry the court, (ii) excessive questioning of the referee about the rules, (iii) exceeding the time allotted for timeouts or between games, (iv) calling a timeout after the service motion begins, (v) calling a timeout when none are remaining will result in a technical warning. If this occurs again in the same game it will result in a technical foul. (vi) a technical foul will be assessed if the warm-up period is violated. The allowed warm-up time in singles is 5 minutes maximum for both players at the same time. In doubles each team will be allowed 4 minutes maximum for the warm-up.
7. Intentional front line foot faults to negate a bad lob serve.
8. Anything considered unsportsmanlike behavior.
9. Wearing improper clothing/uniform, as specified in Rule 2.5 (b).
10. Failure to wear proper eyewear, as specified in Rule 2.5 d).

(b) Coaching. Where coaches are involved, coaches or team representatives are bound by the same rules as far as technicals are concerned and any infractions are charged against the player. No coaches or representatives are allowed in the courts at anytime during a match unless granted permission by the referee. Failure to observe this rule is a technical and will be charged against the player. Any coach or player conducting themselves in a negative manner towards the referee or linesperson of a match shall receive the following penalties:

- First Offence: technical warning (minimum)
- Subsequent Offences: technical on the coach/person's player or team.

c) Technical Warning. If a player's behavior is not so severe as to warrant a referee's technical, a technical warning may be issued without the deduction of a point.

d) Effect of Technical or Warning. If a referee issues a technical foul, one point shall be removed from the offender's score. No point will be deducted if a referee issues a technical warning. In either case, a technical foul or warning should be accompanied by a brief explanation. Issuing a technical foul or warning has no effect on who will be serving when play resumes. If a technical foul occurs when the offender has no points or between games, the result will be that the offender's score becomes minus one (-1).