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ISPA-Canada generally complies with the International Skat Order and Skat Tournament Order published by DSKV and ISPA World, with minor deviations adjusted to Canadian circumstances. All ISPA Canada Skat clubs and members must strictly adhere to the ISPA Canada Tournament Agreement proposed by the ISPA Canada executive and ratified by its membership in 1994/95. Nonconformity by clubs or individuals may result in disciplinary action by the ISPA Canada executive and could lead to expulsion from the International Skat Players Association.

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## Foreword



The Skat Order is the internationally binding set of rules for all Skat players.

The Skat Order represents the culmination of a long and rich historical endeavor to standardize the rules of the most popular card game in German-speaking regions.

The following version presents a comprehensive system like never before, making it possible for Skat to be played all over the world according to absolutely uniform standards.

The Skat Order is not to be viewed as rigid dogma but as a living document. Those charged with responsibility for its maintenance are open to new ideas and developments which may arise from practical experience in playing the game.

The Skat Order provides the foundation for deciding all technical issues. Its strict application is the foremost prerequisite for avoiding disputes and disagreements.

The uniform Skat rules were adopted on November 11, 1998, in Halle/Saale by the 27<sup>th</sup> German Skat Congress, by agreement between the German Skat Union (DSKV) and the International Skat Players Association (ISPA World).

The International Skat Court (ISKG), along with its referee organizations, is responsible for interpretation and supervision of the rules.

Amendments to the International Skat Order are possible only upon the official decision of both partners. All proposed amendments must be circulated, with adequate notice, between the partners, who must promptly publicize their decision.

Altenburg, November 2018

International Skat Court

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# Skat Tournament Order (SkWO)

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## Addresses



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Established: 1976

# Definitions of persons referenced in the Skat Order and the Skat Tournament Order

**Participant:**

Every person playing in an event.

**Playing Partner:**

Each of the three to five persons playing at the same table.

**Player:**

Each of the three playing partners involved in the game in question.

**Opposition:**

All of the playing partners at a table except the declarer.

**Defender:**

Each of the two players who play against the declarer.

**Declarer:**

The player who wins the bidding and announces the game to be played.

**Kibitzer:**

A non-playing partner or spectator who is watching a game. Tournament organizers and referees are not considered kibitzers.

# International Skat Order (ISkO)

## 1 Overview

### 1.1 The Game of Skat

- 1.1.1 Skat is a card game played by three or more players. Each game is played by a declarer against two defenders.
- 1.1.2 The game originated in Altenburg, Germany, during the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was developed by combining elements of several older card games.
- 1.1.3 Two cards dealt face down, called the skat, give the game its name. The word skat is derived from Italian *scartare* and French *écarter*, which refer to the laid away cards.
- 1.1.4 The foremost priority is to promote uniformity in Skat by observing and adhering to all the rules of the Skat Order.
- 1.1.5 All participants must conduct themselves in a fair, objective and sportsmanlike manner, and not raise specious arguments.

### 1.2 The Deck

- 1.2.1 A Skat deck consists of 32 cards in four suits. The suits are ranked, high to low, in the following order: clubs, spades, hearts, and diamonds.
- 1.2.2 The eight cards in each suit have the following values:

|          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. Ace   | 11 points |
| 2. Ten   | 10 points |
| 3. King  | 4 points  |
| 4. Queen | 3 points  |
| 5. Jack  | 2 points  |
| 6. Nine  | 0 points  |
| 7. Eight | 0 points  |
| 8. Seven | 0 points  |

The card values in each suit total 30 points, so the entire deck contains **120 points**.

## 2.0 Basic Rules

### 2.1 Possible Games

2.1.1 There are two classes of games, those where the declarer picks up the skat, and 'Hand' games where the declarer does not pick up the skat. In both instances there are three types of games which may be played:

- Suit games (Clubs, Spades, Hearts, Diamonds)
- Grand games
- Null games

2.1.2 These are all the possible games:

|                            | Class I                 |             | Class II                                       |      |          |        |        |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--|------|----------|--------|--------|
| Game Type                  | Games with skat pick up |             | Games without picking up the skat (Hand games) |      |          |        |        |
| Suit Games                 | Diamonds                |             | Diamonds                                       | Hand | Diamonds | Open   |        |
|                            | Hearts                  |             | Hearts   | Hand | Hearts   | Open   |        |
|                            | Spades                  |             | Spades   | Hand | Spades   | Open   |        |
|                            | Clubs                   |             | Clubs  | Hand | Clubs    | Open   |        |
| Grand Games                | 'Grand'                 |             | Grand  | Hand | Grand    | Ouvert |        |
| Null Games (Ouvert = Open) | Null                    | Null Ouvert | Null   | Hand | Null     | Hand   | Ouvert |

## 2.2 Ranking of the Cards

2.2.1 In a Suit game, only one suit is trump. The other three suits are ranked below the trump suit and are equal to each other.

2.2.2 The highest trumps in a Suit game are the Jacks, ranked in the same order as the suits. The next seven cards in the trump suit are ranked according to their value.

2.2.3 In a Grand game, only the four Jacks are trump, ranked in the same order as the suits.

2.2.4 In a Null game there is no trump suit or trump cards. The Jacks are just another suit card. The order of the cards changes to: Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Ten, Nine, Eight and Seven.

## 2.3 Tops

2.3.1 The highest trump cards, in an uninterrupted sequence from the Jack of clubs down, are called "Tops".

- 2.3.2 If the declarer's cards, including the skat, contain the Jack of clubs, he is said to play "with" a specific number of Tops. If the declarer's cards do not contain the Jack of clubs, then additional absent high trump cards come into consideration, and he is said to play "without" a specific number of Tops.
- 2.3.3 It is possible to play Suit games "with" or "without" up to eleven Tops (four Jacks and seven trump cards), and Grand games "with" or "without" four Tops (four Jacks).
- 2.3.4 Suit and Grand games "with" Tops compute at the same win level as games "without" the same number of Tops.

## 2.4 Basic Values

2.4.1 Every Suit game and Grand game has a constant basic value:

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Diamonds         | 9  |
| Hearts           | 10 |
| Spades           | 11 |
| Clubs            | 12 |
| Grand and Ouvert | 24 |

2.4.2 Each Null game has a distinct value:

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Null             | 23 |
| Null Hand        | 35 |
| Null Ouvert      | 46 |
| Null Ouvert Hand | 59 |

## 2.5 Win Levels and Criteria

2.5.1 In Suit and Grand games, the following win levels apply:

| Level | Class I                | Games where the skat is picked up  |
|-------|------------------------|--|
| 1     | Basic game             | Won or Lost  |
| 2     | Schneider              | Won or Lost  |
| 3     | Schwarz                | Won or Lost  |
| Level | Class II               | Games where the skat is not picked up<br>(Hand games)<br>(Not picking up the skat adds one multiplier) |
| 2     | Basic game             | Won or Lost  |
| 3     | Schneider              | Won or Lost  |
| 4     | Schneider<br>Announced | Won or Lost  |
| 5     | Schwarz                | Won or Lost  |
| 6     | Schwarz<br>Announced   | Won or Lost  |
| 7     | Open                   | Won or Lost  |

2.5.2 The game value of each game is expressed as points. Except for Null games, the game value is calculated based on the class and basic value of the game, combined with the win level and number of Tops credited to the declarer.

2.5.3 The Tops and win levels are added together to yield the sum of the hand. The two game classes thus yield the following possibilities:

|                      | <b>Class I<br/>Games where the<br/>Skat is picked up</b> | <b>Class II<br/>Hand games<br/>(Games where the skat<br/>is not picked up)</b> |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Tops                 | 1 to 11  | 1 to 11  |
| + win levels         | 1 to 3   | 2 to 7   |
| <b>= Sum of hand</b> | <b>2 to 14</b>   | <b>3 to 18</b>   |

The respective sum of the hand is then multiplied by the basic value of the declared game, which yields the specific value of a won game.

2.5.4 The declarer wins a basic game by taking 61 or more points, including points of the two skat cards.

2.5.5 A party who takes 30 or fewer points is designated **Schneider**.

2.5.6 A party who does not take a single trick is designated **Schwarz**.

2.5.7 **Schneider Announced** or **Schwarz Announced** will be so scored only if the declarer, in a **Hand game**, actually made the respective announcement in his game declaration. If he wins at a level higher than the announced level, the higher level counts. If the declarer does not achieve the announced level, he loses the game at the announced or higher level. Declarer's negative score is not redoubled (no "own Schneider").

2.5.8 **Open** (Ouvert) is a valid game level only in open Suit and Grand games. The declarer must win every trick. These games encompass all the multipliers through Schwarz Announced. For example, a game of Clubs Ouvert "with two" would count  $9 \times 12 = 108$  points. A game of Grand Ouvert with four Jacks would score  $11 \times 24 = 264$  points.

2.5.9 The declarer wins a Null game if he does not take a single trick.

2.5.10 If there is a disagreement, the opposition must prove that the declarer lost, and the declarer must prove that he achieved the claimed win level.

2.5.11 Each lost game is entered on the score sheet as a negative number equal to twice the value of the game played.

## 2.6 Determining the Game Class

2.6.1 The Skat always belongs to the declarer and only he can look at it.

2.6.2 In games where the declarer picks up the skat and looks at it, he must put any two cards of his choice back into the skat. That is, he "buries" them face down on the table. He then declares the game to be played.

2.6.3 In Hand games, the skat remains face down, unseen by any player. The declarer's game declaration is thus based on the ten cards in his hand.



- 2.6.4 The declarer designates one suit as trump (Suit game) or chooses a Grand game or a Null game.
- 2.6.5 In an open game, the declarer, before the opening lead, must lay down his ten hand cards face up and clearly visible. If the declarer does not do so, the opposition may request compliance.

The declarer's cards must be arranged by suit and in sequential order. Noncompliance with this rule entitles the opposition to properly arrange the cards.

## **3.0 Initiating the Game**

### **3.1 Table Seating**

- 3.1.1 The order in which the playing partners sit at a table may be either drawn or predetermined. Playing partner No.1 first chooses a seat. The remaining playing partners then sit in clockwise order beginning at the left of Player No. 1.
- 3.1.2 A new playing partner may join a table only at the start of a new round. If he does not replace a departed playing partner, he must sit to the right of playing partner No. 1.
- 3.1.3 A playing partner may leave the game only after a round is complete. Moreover, he must announce this intention before the round begins.

### **3.2 The Deal**

- 3.2.1 Playing partner No.1 deals the first hand. The playing partner to his right must deal the last game of a round.
- 3.2.2 The dealer must thoroughly shuffle the cards. The player to his right must then cut the deck one time. The cards are then dealt from the top.
- 3.2.3 If the cards are shuffled in a riffing (North American) manner, they must be shuffled one more time in the overhand (German) manner before being cut.
- 3.2.4 Cutting the cards is mandatory. A minimum of **four** cards must either be lifted up or left on the table.
- 3.2.5 If a playing partner at a table with more than three playing partners is temporarily absent, the playing partner to his immediate right may cut the cards unless the absentee has expressly reserved his right to do so. If there is an extended absence, a referee determines how to proceed.
- 3.2.6 Beginning with the playing partner to the left of the dealer, the cards are dealt in the following manner. One round of three cards to each player. Two cards as the skat. Then four cards to each player and finally three cards to each player.
- 3.2.7 If there are four playing partners at a table, the dealer does not receive any cards. If there are more than four playing partners, the two persons seated to the immediate left of

the dealer and the person seated to the immediate right of the dealer are the three players.

- 3.2.8 If during the deal one or more cards is exposed, regardless of whose fault, the cards must be shuffled, cut and dealt again.
- 3.2.9 The cards must be dealt in such a manner that their faces cannot be seen by any player. To avoid unnecessary disputes, players should pick up their cards only after a valid deal is completed.
- 3.2.10 Each player must pick up and hold his cards so that they are not visible to the other players. A player is not permitted to look into another player's cards or to receive information about them.
- 3.2.11 Each player must count his cards after the deal and, before the end of the bidding, report any discrepancy in the distribution of the cards.
- 3.2.12 If the cards are misdealt resulting in an unequal distribution, they may be redealt only if the error is detected before the end of the bidding or if both parties (declarer and opposition) have an incorrect number of cards.
- 3.2.13 Any objection relating to the shuffling, cutting or dealing of the cards must be made before the person objecting picks up his cards.
- 3.2.14 If a playing partner deals a hand out of turn, the game is void, even if it was completed or was the last game in the round. A round is completed when the first game of the next round has been declared. The last round in a series is completed when the score sheet is signed.
- 3.2.15 If, within a round, there has been a deal out of turn, all games must be replayed from the point where the unauthorized deal occurred.
- 3.2.16 If games were dealt out of turn in previous rounds, all completed games in subsequent rounds remain valid. However, the round in progress must be replayed, beginning with a deal by playing partner No. 1.
- 3.2.17 A player who looks at or exposes the skat during or after a valid deal is barred from bidding.
- 3.2.18 A player who during or after a valid deal picks up the skat with his cards, is barred from bidding. In such cases, the offending player must shuffle his 12 hand cards, from which the dealer shall draw two cards as the new skat. The original skat may be restored only if all three players can unequivocally identify it.
- 3.2.19 After every valid deal there must be a valid game. A passed in game is deemed a valid game.

### 3.3 Bidding

- 3.3.1 After the deal, the declarer is determined through a bidding process, that is, the offering and acceptance (holding) of game values. The minimum bid is 18 and the maximum bid is 264.
- 3.3.2 The bidding starts by the player to the left of the dealer (forehand) responding to the bid of the player to his left (middlehand). Middlehand and the third player (rearhand) must offer valid game values but may skip values. To avoid misunderstandings, bids should be in numbers only.
- 3.3.3 If forehand does not want to play a game at the same or higher value than the value offered by middlehand, he must pass. Rearhand then bids to middle-hand in the same manner or passes.
- 3.3.4 If middlehand does not want to play, or if his highest offer is accepted (held) by forehand, he must pass. Rearhand may then continue bidding to forehand or pass.
- 3.3.5 The player who offers or accepts (holds) the highest bid always becomes the declarer.
- 3.3.6 If middlehand and rearhand both pass, **forehand may** pick up the skat without announcing a bid or may declare a Hand game. Forehand is then required to play a game. If forehand has no bid of 18, he may **not pass** until middlehand bids. If middlehand passes, forehand may not pass until rearhand has either bid or passed
- 3.3.7 If all three players pass, the hand is passed in and the next playing partner deals. Under no circumstances may the same playing partner deal two hands in a row after a valid deal.
- 3.3.8 The announcement of a pass, bid offer or bid acceptance (holding) is irrevocable.
- 3.3.9 If, **before the end of the bidding**, a player picks up or looks at the skat or looks at the cards of another player, he is barred from further bidding. In addition, the other two players are no longer bound by their bids. They can pass or restart the bidding. This rule also applies if the dealer or another playing partner looks at the skat before the bidding has ended. A player who passes before being offered a bid may not re-enter the bidding.
- 3.3.10 If, after **completion of the bidding**, only the defenders have an incorrect number of cards, the declarer is deemed to have won a game with a value based on the last bid and the number of present or absent Tops. If the declarer elects to play a game, the number of cards must first be corrected. If only the declarer has an incorrect number of cards, he is deemed to have lost the game.
- 3.3.11 If, after completion of the bidding, it is noticed that the skat was exposed prior to the completion of bidding, then the declarer has the option of playing or passing.

### **3.4 Parties**

- 3.4.1 The three playing partners are divided into two parties. The declarer is one party. The other party, called the opposition, is comprised of the two defenders and any other playing partners.
- 3.4.2 Each opposition member bears equal responsibility for the success or failure of the defenders. Therefore, all players are also jointly responsible for the consequences of rule violations or concession of a game by any of its members.
- 3.4.3 A playing partner who is not involved in the current game may look at the hand of only one player. However, this is not a right but a privilege.

### **3.5 Game Declaration**

- 3.5.1 The successful bidder (declarer) must declare a valid game. The declaration must be stated without pauses and must be complete. Hand and Open (Ouvert)) games must also be so declared in order for the declarer to receive the enhanced game value. A declaration is irrevocable.
- 3.5.2 The declarer may declare any game that has a value equal to or higher than the highest value bid.
- 3.5.3 Following a valid deal, the declarer is deemed to have lost if he declares a game while holding more or fewer than ten cards in his hand. The loss is computed at the basic level without counting Schneider or Schwarz. A card led by the declarer before declaring a game counts as a hand card. The same applies to cards laid down by the declarer in Open (Ouvert) games.
- 3.5.4 After declaring a valid game, the declarer may not look at the skat or change its contents. Violation of this rule results in a lost game at the basic level without counting Schneider or Schwarz.
- 3.5.5 After picking up the skat, the announcement of Hand games and win levels is not allowed. Only the announced game counts for scoring (see Table 1.2.1).
- 3.5.6 If the declarer after picking up the skat can no longer play the intended game because of the bid and the win level, he may declare a game that satisfies his bid and concede a loss.

### **3.6 Overbid games**

- 3.6.1 An overbid game where the skat has been picked up must be calculated using multipliers sufficient to cover the bid. On the score sheet, a game in which the game value is unachievable should be marked as "overbid".
- 3.6.2 A declaration of a no longer playable Null game results in a loss of a Suit or Grand game at a value commensurate with the last bid and the number of present or absent Tops.

- 3.6.3 If the declarer cannot achieve his bid in a Hand game because there was a Top card in the skat, the declarer has overbid and loses the game even if he takes more than 60 points. The score must be calculated with sufficient multipliers to cover the bid.
- 3.6.4 A game which, before the first trick is played, is theoretically impossible to win, cannot be converted to a win due to a rule violation by a defender.

## 4.0 Execution of the game

### 4.1 The Lead

- 4.1.1 The game begins with the game declaration. After the declaration, forehand makes the opening lead. Thereafter, the player who takes the trick leads to the next trick. If the declarer **leads out of turn** before declaring a game, he is deemed to have lost a game with a value based on the last bid and the present or absent Tops.
- 4.1.2 A led or played card cannot be taken back. A card is considered led or played if it lies completely on the table. In Open (Ouvert) games, the announcement of a card to be led constitutes a lead of that card. If play continues after violation of this rule, appropriate corrections must be made.
- 4.1.3 Playing out of turn (or other rule violations) ends the game. The game is won or lost at this point based the accumulated points up to the time of the violation.
- 4.1.4 If a player plays out of turn or otherwise violates a rule before the game is decided, the offending party loses the game at the basic level (not Schneider or Schwarz). A higher score must be based on proof that, absent the violation, it would with certainty have been achieved.
- 4.1.5 If the declarer is forced to achieve a higher multiplier to win the game and a defender leads out of turn or otherwise violates a rule, the declarer is deemed to have won the game at the enhanced value. This exception applies unless the defenders have already taken sufficient points to render the enhanced value impossible to achieve.
- 4.1.6 An offending party must continue playing if the other party demands it. The rule violation is then deemed waived.
- 4.1.7 If a lead out of turn is not noticed until after the trick is complete, the lead is deemed to have been properly made.
- 4.1.8 An opposition member is not allowed to prevent a defender from leading out of turn or violating another rule. Violations of this rule are governed by rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.
- 4.1.9 If a defender accidentally plays two or more visible cards or drops a visible card or improperly exposes a card, the game is terminated in accordance with rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.
- 4.1.10 A lead out of turn on the last trick is irrelevant.

## 4.2 Following Suit or Trump

- 4.2.1 After a lead, the player to the leader's left plays a card, then the third player. If possible, the card played must be of the same suit or same designated trump.
- 4.2.2 If a player does not have a card in the suit led, he is entitled to play a trump card or a card of a different suit. If a trump card is led and a player has no trump card, he may play any card.
- 4.2.3 If a player is able to follow a suit or trump lead but fails to do so, the game is terminated in accordance with 4.1.3 to 4.1.6. However, the non-offending party may demand that the misplay be corrected and that the game continue.
- 4.2.4 If a failure to follow suit or trump is not noticed until later in the game or after the game is over, play is stopped and reviewed retroactively from the point of the violation, and is scored according to 4.1.3 to 4.1.5.
- 4.2.5 The right to retroactively assert a failure to follow suit or trump expires when both parties have thrown in their cards.
- 4.2.6 If, after a valid deal, it is discovered during the course of play that a player has too many or too few cards because he "buried" incorrectly, played two cards at once or did not play at all to a previous trick, or for some other reason ended up with an incorrect number of cards, the game ends in favor of the party with the correct number of cards, and is scored in accordance with 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.
- 4.2.7 A defender is not allowed to prematurely play a card or to separate a card from the others in his hand in a manner that may influence the outcome of a game. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 apply.
- 4.2.8 If during the game any playing partner looks at the skat or exposes it, the game is immediately terminated. The outcome of the game is determined by rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.
- 4.2.9 All playing partners must refrain from comments and gestures which could reveal their cards or influence the outcome of the game. Violations are governed by rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.

## 4.3 Tricks

- 4.3.1 A trick consists of one card each from forehand, middlehand and rearhand. A trick is complete as soon as the third card lies on the table.
- 4.3.2 Assuming valid play, a trick belongs to the player who
- Played the highest ranking card in the suit led, as long as the trick contains no trump card, or
  - Played the highest ranking trump card in the trick.
- 4.3.3 Tricks must be gathered in in such a manner that the last card played is visible to every player. A player who has not yet led a card or played a card on the next trick is entitled, upon request, to see the last trick again.

- 4.3.4 Each trick must be gathered in, stacked in the order taken, and maintained face down until the game is over, in such a manner that the game can be reconstructed. The owner of a trick may lead a card for the next trick before gathering his trick.
- 4.3.5 If the declarer does not gather in one or more successive tricks, he is deemed to be indicating that he will take all remaining tricks. If he fails to do so, the game is deemed to have ended, retroactive to the last trick properly gathered in by the declarer. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 apply.
- 4.3.6 Looking at, counting or exposing face down tricks by any playing partner terminates the game according to rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 (but see 4.4.3).
- 4.3.7 No playing partner is allowed to count trumps or points out loud (see 4.2.9).

#### **4.4 Shortening up the Game**

- 4.4.1 In general, every game should be played to the end. However, the declarer is entitled to concede his declared game as lost, as long as he still **holds at least nine** cards and his hand correctly reflects his bid and the number of present or absent Tops.
- 4.4.2 With fewer than nine cards in his hand, the declarer may concede the game only with the permission of at least one opposition player (joint liability).
- 4.4.3 A game is immediately terminated if one opposition player gives up. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 apply (joint liability).
- 4.4.4 The declarer, by laying his cards face up on the table or otherwise exposing them, even to only one defender, is deemed to be proposing to shorten up the game. If the outcome of the game is not yet decided, and if both defenders consent to the shortening, then the declarer has won his declared game. A higher win level can be calculated only if the declarer claims it at the time he proposes to shorten up the game. If a defender does not consent to the shortening, then play of the game shall be resumed with the declarer's cards exposed, and shall be scored according to the outcome.
- 4.4.5 A defender may reveal his cards only if the declarer cannot take another trick under, regardless of how the game is played. Otherwise, the remaining tricks belong to the declarer. The Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 apply accordingly.
- 4.4.6 If a player throws in his cards, the game is ended and that player's party may count only the tricks and points taken up to that point. Win levels will be calculated only if they cannot be theoretically excluded.

#### **4.5 Procedures for rule violations and doubtful cases**

- 4.5.1 Violations of the International Skat Order and the Tournament Game Order should be immediately reported by a participant.
- 4.5.2 All disputes and cases of doubt are decided the tournament director or a duly appointed referee, based on by the International Skat Order.

- 4.5.3 Objections to a referee's decision must be made before the next series starts, to the arbitration board, which consists of at least three members, announced before the event starts. After the last series in a tournament, an objection must be made within 15 minutes after the tournament has ended, and resolved by an arbitration board before the tournament results are announced.
- 4.5.4 Objections to the decision of the arbitration board may be sent, in writing, to the International Skat Court, which decides only technical rule questions. The settlement of disputes before public courts remains unaffected.

## **Skat Tournament Order (SkWO)**

### **1.0 General**

- 1.1 Tournaments are events organized by clubs or individuals. Their purpose is to bring together all players for an enjoyable game of Skat.
- 1.2 Tournaments provide a means of assuring that Skat is played according to the uniform rules of the Skat Order and does not become tainted by unorthodox play or customs.
- 1.3 All differences in age and occupation are set aside at the Skat table. The friendly but competitive atmosphere of the tournament as a whole and at each table, as well as the changing alliances during the play of the game, all serve to unite the participants. The satisfaction of executing a difficult play and the recognition of one's own and others' analytical or judgmental errors trigger gratifying emotions; however, civility then tempers their expression. In this manner, Skat tournaments promote and strengthen character and personality, and convert community spirit into a reality.
- 1.4 Skat tournaments may be open either to all Skat players or restricted to a limited constituency (clubs, leagues, qualifying contests).
- 1.5 Depending on the terms of the tournament advertisement, tournaments are played for individual prestige, money, trophies or merchandise.
- 1.6 The Skat Order and the Skat Tournament Order govern the course of a tournament.

### **2.0 Legal Questions**

- 2.1 Skat tournaments are subject to public laws.
- 2.2 The tournament plan governs the rights and duties of the participants. This constitutes a quasi-contract which is binding on both the organizer and participants.
- 2.3 The organizer, together with the appointed tournament management, is responsible for conducting the tournament.



### **3.0 Organizer**

- 3.1 The organizer must be identified as such in the tournament advertisement and the tournament plan.
- 3.2 The organizer may delegate the running of the tournament to management. Referees may be appointed to settle disputes. Such persons should be sufficiently familiar with the rules of the game, in particular with the Skat Order; be capable of making swift, fair and correct decisions; possess a sense of responsibility; and be considered trustworthy in every respect.
- 3.3 The organizer and management are responsible for strict compliance with the Skat Order. They establish the conditions of play and prize schedules, manage and supervise the overall event, and upon completion of the event are obligated to provide an accounting. The organizer alone is responsible for distribution of prizes.
- 3.4 If a tournament must be prematurely terminated or proves to be unworkable, whether due to too few participants or for some other reason, the organizer and management remain obligated to conduct an abbreviated tournament. They must either refund all entry fees or award prizes on a percentage basis.

### **4.0 Tournament Plan**

- 4.1 The tournament plan should be concise but comprehensive. It must comply with the Skat Order, be precise, clear and free of any contradictions.
- 4.2 The following information must be included:
  - a) Organizer,
  - b) Entry Fees and lost game fees,
  - c) Scope of the tournament and number of series,
  - d) Number of players at a table,
  - e) Use of funds and expenditures,
  - f) Organizer's right to bar or expel participants,
  - g) Referees and Arbitration Board,
  - h) Reference to the International Skat Order.
- 4.3 The tournament plan must be posted during the tournament and available at all times to all participants.
- 4.4 Playing partners must use the new deck of cards provided to each table. After a session is played the scorekeeper is allowed to keep the used deck of cards for his work, if no other arrangement are made by the organizer.
- 4.5 The playing partner in seat No. 1 usually keeps score. If all agree, a different playing partner may keep score.

## **5.0 Participant**

- 5.1 The right to participate is established by acquiring a non-transferable start card or by being named in the list of participants. Payment of the entry fee commits both parties.
- 5.2 Every participant is required to strictly abide by the Skat Order and the provisions of the tournament plan. He must familiarize himself with the tournament provisions and conduct himself in a manner which does not cause disruption.
- 5.3 Upon verifiable proof of a deliberate violation of the rules, the organizer and management have the right to summarily expel any participant from the tournament. All participation fees are forfeited. A request to re-register may be denied. The organizer further has the right to bar anyone from participating in a tournament, without stating the grounds.
- 5.4 All participants are required to play each series to its end. They may not allow another player to take their place in a game. If a participant acrimoniously leaves a game, or due to an emergency, management may designate another person to rightfully and responsibly take the place of the prematurely departing person.
- 5.5 Organizers and members of management are allowed to participate in the tournament on the same basis as all other participants, as long as supervision of the tournament is assured.

## **6.0 Conducting the Tournament**

### **6.1 Seating Order**

- 6.1.1 Seating at tables is set by the tournament management or by drawing table seating cards. Every table has four seats. There can at most be three tables with three players.
- 6.1.2 A participant who changes his assigned table seat without permission of the tournament management is subject to expulsion.
- 6.1.3 The assigned table seat must be retained until the end of a series.
- 6.1.4 A table seating card is valid only for the series for which it was drawn or assigned.
- 6.1.5 Only players with the correct table seating cards are permitted at the table. "Kibitzing" is not permitted.

### **6.2 Score Sheet**

- 6.2.1 The playing partner in seat No. 1 is normally the scorekeeper. Under exceptional circumstances and with permission of the tournament management, a different playing partner may keep score. Every playing partner is responsible for the correct marking of the score sheet, which must be available at all times for inspection. The dealer should always check to see that the previous game was correctly scored.

- 6.2.2 Immediately upon completion of every game, the score sheet should be marked with the basic game value, Tops and win level, or with the value for a Null game, as well as the score for winning or losing the game.
- 6.2.3 In order to avoid unnecessary disputes, the declarer should articulate the game he just played. The scores should immediately added up or subtracted, so that the current score is recognizable at all times.
- 6.2.4 Errors on the score sheet may be corrected only upon agreement of all playing partners up until the end of the current series.
- 6.2.5 At the end of the tournament, all score sheets must be signed by all players before they are returned to the tournament management. Only then can a prize be claimed by players.
- 6.2.6 The tournament management has the right to:
  - a) Check the score sheet at any time
  - b) Declare as invalid a deficient, illegible or incomplete score sheet.
- 6.2.7 Errors on score sheets may be corrected by management by entering the lowest possible point value. If all playing partners agree, missing or corrected scores may belatedly be entered on the score sheet.

### 6.3 Scoring

- 6.3.1 The performance of participants is scored as follows:

Game points achieved and number of games played are combined on the score sheet. For each won game, the player receives a bonus of 50 points. For each lost game, the player loses 50 points. At a table with three playing partners, each playing partner is awarded 40 bonus points for each lost game of the other playing partners. At a table with four playing partners, each playing partner is awarded 30 bonus points for each lost game of the other playing partners. A playing partner's game points, plus the bonus points for games played, plus the bonus points for others' lost games yields his final score.

#### Scoring Formula

Game points for the player

+ Number of won games **minus** the player's lost games x 50.

+ Number of playing partners' lost games x 30 (40 at a table of 3 players).

In case of a tie, the player with the most won games prevails. If there is still a tie, the player with the fewest number of losses prevails. Should the scores still be tied, lots are drawn or a coin tossed to determine the winner.

### Scoring example for a table of 4 players

Player A: 437 game points, 12 won games, 3 lost games. Players B, C, D together lost a total of 6 games.

#### Calculating the total score for player A:

|                        |          |             |
|------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Game Points            |          | 437         |
| Won Games              | 12       |             |
| - Lost Games           | <u>3</u> |             |
|                        | 9 x 50   | 450         |
| + Lost Games of others | 6 x 30   | 180         |
|                        |          | <hr/>       |
| <b>Final Score</b>     |          | <b>1067</b> |

6.3.2 This tournament scoring system supersedes the former system, which was based solely on game points. Under the current system, winning high-scoring games is not the sole deciding factor. Rather, winning numerous smaller games is also rightly considered and can influence the outcome. Moreover, the bonus points for others' lost games reward good defensive play. They also compensate a player who may have lost opportunities to play games due to overbidding by other players.

## 6.4 End of the Tournament

- 6.4.1 Participants who have finished playing are not allowed to kibitz at tables where games are still in progress.
- 6.4.2 After the results of the tournament are compiled, the prizes are awarded. If a prize has to be mailed or delivered, the recipient pays the expenses.
- 6.4.3 The organizer must retain all score sheets, start cards and any other tournament documents for a period of 6 months.