

# *DCI Certified Judge's Handbook*

Updated 11/06/2006

The contents of this handbook are primarily derived from the tournament organizer's handbook. It focuses on issues a judge of a tournament would need to know in performance of judging tasks. Not included here is most sanctioning, reporting, or software information. As such the section numbers of this handbook may skip as the references to the Tournament Organizer Handbook were maintained.

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## **DCI Mailing Addresses**

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DCI Tournament Sanctioning  
P.O. Box 1080  
Renton, WA  
98057-1080

Or at:

Wizards of the Coast  
ATTN: DCI Sanctioning  
1600 Lind Ave SW, Suite 400  
Renton, WA  
98055

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## **DCI Numbers and You**

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### **B.4 - Finding Lost or Forgotten DCI Numbers**

Given that ratings and rankings are designed to reflect a player's overall performance in the sanctioned games they play, each player may only have one DCI number. However, considering that these membership cards are consumed easily by washing machines and other water hazards, the DCI recognizes that these cards can be mutilated beyond recognition. If you have a player registering who has lost his or her DCI number, issue the player a new DCI number (following the "Issuing DCI Numbers" section above), and have the player fill out a new DCI Membership Card. The player then needs to be instructed to send an email to the Wizards of the Coast Customer Service team (<http://wizards.custhelp.com>). Please be sure to let the player know to include his or her new DCI number, name, address, date of birth, and a request to have the extra numbers combined in the body of the email when they send it.

*(Note: if the player does not know their prior DCI numbers, they need to include a request in the email for the Customer Service Team to look up the player's old numbers so that they can be combined.)*

### **B.5 - Fixing Players with Multiple DCI Numbers**

A player may have multiple DCI numbers for a variety of reasons, but to make sure ratings and rankings are calculated correctly and efficiently, we need each player to keep only one number. If a player you know has multiple numbers, they must request to have all of the numbers merged together by emailing Wizards of the Coast Customer Service (<http://wizards.custhelp.com>). Please be sure to let the player know to include his or her new DCI number, name, address, date of birth, and a request to have the extra numbers combined

in the body of the email when they send it. *(Note: if the player does not know their prior DCI numbers they need to include a request in the email for the Customer Service Team to look up the player's old numbers so that they can be combined.)*

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you believe a player is using multiple DCI numbers to gain a ratings advantage, you should contact the DCI immediately via the Judge Center Investigations section.

## Section C

### **Tournament Operating Procedures**

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The DCI recommends using the Swiss tournament system at all events, and it is required at premier events such as the **Magic: The Gathering Pro Tour™**. Also known as the Swiss Draw, this tournament style allows all participants to play in every round, pairing each round's players based on their current records and standings. To determine who plays against whom, players with the best match records are matched against each other, and then the next highest records, etc.

Review the appropriate game's DCI Standard Floor Rules for round-length recommendations. Some games, such as **Magic: the Gathering**, are best two out of three games only. If a player won the first two games, the match ends. Players are not allowed to play the third game once the match is decided.

This system offers many advantages over single-elimination. To begin with, all players get to participate for the duration of the tournament, and any number of players may play with (at most) one bye per round.

#### **C.1 - Number of Rounds**

<u>Number of players</u>	<u>Number of rounds</u>
<u>4-8</u>	<u>3 rounds of Swiss</u>
<u>9-16</u>	<u>4 rounds of Swiss</u>
<u>17-32</u>	<u>5 rounds of Swiss</u>
<u>33-64</u>	<u>6 rounds of Swiss</u>
<u>65-128</u>	<u>7 rounds of Swiss</u>
<u>129-226</u>	<u>8 rounds of Swiss</u>
<u>227-409</u>	<u>9 rounds of Swiss</u>
<u>410+</u>	<u>10 rounds of Swiss</u>

#### **C.2 - Scoring Swiss Rounds**

Games and matches are worth the following points during Swiss rounds:

<u>Match won</u>	<u>3 points</u>
<u>Match drawn</u>	<u>1 point</u>
<u>Match lost</u>	<u>0 points</u>

*\*Note: The scoring method outlined above is intended to help players and judges track results within a tournament, but it is not relevant in participants' DCI rankings.*

## Section D

### Enhanced K-Value System

#### **D.1 - Introduction**

The Enhanced K-value system allows tournament organizers to receive special K-values for events that meet certain criteria. This system is not used for premiere events, which have set K-values.

Events with higher K-values allow players to accumulate more DCI ratings points when they do well within these higher-level events. For example, a player who gains 30 DCI ratings points at a tournament with a K-value of 16 would earn 60 points at a tournament with a K-value of 32. If you have local players that pay close attention to their DCI ratings and are constantly looking to improve their rating, running events at your store with a higher K-value is a great service to provide them.

Most tournaments receive a default K-value of 16, but organizers may apply for a higher K-value when they submit the tournament results. Organizers who wish to apply for a higher K-value must meet the minimum criteria listed below on the K-value Criteria Chart. Organizers not specifically applying for a higher K-value will receive a K-value of 16 (or 8K if Friday Night Magic).

Organizers are welcome to use enhanced K-value as a method to promote their tournaments, but the event must meet the K-value they advertise. If the event does not, they must announce the event's actual K-value before the tournament begins.

#### **D.2 - K-Value Explanations**

**8K:** This is used for all premier events directed at the casual player, such as Friday Night Magic.

**16K:** This K-value is the default for all events. A certified judge is not required and there are no mandatory rules enforcement levels\* (REs) or deck verification requirements.

**24K:** Organizers may apply for this K-value if they:

- Use a certified judge;

- Use a minimum of REL 2\*;
- Use deck verification procedures; and
- Have a minimum of 16 players participate.

**32K:** Organizers may apply for this K-value if they:

- Use a judge certified of Level 2 or higher;
- Use a minimum of REL 3\*;
- Use deck verification procedures; and
- Have a minimum of 32 players participate.

**40K:** This K-value is reserved for select premier events, such as Grand Prix and National Championships. This K-value is not available for general DCI-sanctioned events. See **Magic: The Gathering** Premier Event Descriptions for more information.

**48K:** This K-value is reserved for select premier events, such as Pro Tour™ and World Championships. This K-value is not available for general DCI-sanctioned events. See **Magic: The Gathering** Premier Event Descriptions for more information. \*For more information regarding Rules Enforcement Levels (RELs), see the DCI Universal Penalty Guidelines.

<b>K-Value Chart</b>	<b>8K</b>	<b>16K</b>	<b>24K</b>	<b>32K</b>
Minimum Number of Players	8	8	16	32
Certified Judge	Optional	Optional	Required	Required
Deck Verification Procedures:	Optional	Optional	Required	Required
Rules Enforcement Level (REL):	REL 1	REL 1	REL 2	REL 3

*(NOTE: 40K and 48K events are assigned directly by the DCI for select premier events only.)*

### **D.3 - K-Value Criteria Explanation**

**Minimum Number of Players:** In order for events to receive 24K, there must be a minimum of 16 players in the tournaments. In order for events to receive 32K, there must be a minimum of 32 players in the tournaments.

**Certified Judge:** A certified judge is required to receive a K-value of 24K or higher. A certified judge is not required for tournaments of 8K or 16K. A minimum of a level 1 DCI Certified Judge is required for events of 24K. A minimum of a level 2 DCI Certified Judge is required for events of 32K. *(Note: 24K and 32K events also have minimum participation requirements.)*

**Deck Verification Procedures:** In order to receive a K-value of 24K or higher, organizers must use the following deck verification tools and procedures:

- Deck-lists;
- Deck-checks; and
- Deck-swaps (for sealed deck).

**Rules Enforcement Level (REL):** This requirement refers to the minimum Rules Enforcement Level that must be used at the event in order for it to receive the desired enhanced K-value. The most common REL is 1. If you wish to apply for 24K, you must use REL 2 or higher. If you wish to apply for 32K, you must use REL 3 or higher. Tournament organizers must announce the K-value of each event before the beginning of its first round.

## Section G

### DCI JUDGES

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The misunderstanding that occurs between the largest organizer and the leading judge in a community is actually not uncommon. It primarily stems from two things: a lack of respect for the other's role, and a lack of communication about those roles.

The lack of respect issue has to be handled by the individuals, however, as for communication of roles, this is Wizard of the Coast's viewpoint. An organizer's role is to provide logistics and staff, and to market an event—handling the business end of matters and customer service. Organizers get venues, set up venues, get product, organize product, hire staff, buy insurance, create marketing, dress a hall, rent equipment, plan the schedule, and deal with customer problems stemming from registration, product, and staff, etc.

The judge's role is to enforce DCI policies, issue penalties, keep things appearing fair, make rulings on the game or tournament, maintain integrity of the event, efficiently run the event in a reasonable timeframe, manage the judges, communicate to the staff, and mentor judges.

Problems arise when either party steps into the other's expertise or overlap occurs.

When you find yourself addressing the other's area of expertise, step away and let that person handle it without comment until after all is said and done. Do not interfere, even if you think it's wrong. Give your comments after, but ask first if input is desired. Generally if you have respect, input will be desired.

When you find your duties overlapping, communicate directly before anyone makes a decision or seek a mutually respected mediator. A good example of this is staffing where the organizer and head judge of a larger event will want to work together to ensure the head judge has the appropriate amount of skilled staff and others in training.

Common dos and don'ts:

- Judges: Don't worry about the decorations or floor plan until it's been proven to fail and you can give solid examples.
- Tournament Organizers and Judges: Do not try to give customer service via penalties. Give customer service *after* the tournament if you feel the player deserves something.
- Tournament Organizers: Decklists are a judge's tool. Don't alter policy without your judge approving.

- Tournament Organizers and Judges: Players are not cheaters; they are customers. Customers can be wrong, even when they think they are right—but their perception is always correct, whether or not their facts are.
- Tournament Organizers and Judges: You can always find new judges and organizers. Nothing says either will be as good as the last, and likely not even close for years.
- Tournament Organizers and Judges: You have a common purpose from different viewpoints. Share in the successes together and learn together from the mistakes. Fix the problem not the blame.

## **Section *H***

### **DISQUALIFICATION REPORTING PROCEDURE**

#### ***H.1 - Introduction***

This document outlines the responsibilities for tournament players, judges, and organizers for reporting the disqualification (DQ) of a DCI member from a DCI-sanctioned event.

This document is not intended to provide instructions on how to conduct a disqualification or on-site investigation. Head judges and tournament organizers should decide how best to conduct such reviews based on their particular circumstances.

#### ***H.2 - Rationale***

All disqualifications from DCI-sanctioned events are reviewed by the DCI and are subject to investigation. Gathering statements and information according to this procedure reduces the length of time needed to resolve DCI reviews and investigations, and increases the accuracy of the required information. These reports also help ensure that disqualifications are fairly issued.

#### ***H.3 - Summary***

When any disqualification is issued during a DCI-sanctioned tournament, the head judge is required to file a detailed report with the Organized Play Investigations Manager at Wizards of the Coast Headquarters in Renton, WA (USA) on conclusion of the tournament or convention – within two weeks, please.

#### ***H.4 - Application***

Compliance with this policy is required for all DCI-sanctioned tournaments. This policy applies to any DCI member that disrupts or interferes with a DCI-sanctioned tournament, including those not enrolled or active in that tournament.

#### ***H.5 - Procedure***

The head judge is responsible for reporting all information gathered as part of the decision to disqualify a player, plus any additional information that may assist the DCI in evaluating the incident. All reasonable efforts should be made to minimize the disruption such a collection of information and statements may have on the tournament. To report the information the

head judge should use the Investigations section of the Judge Center (<http://judge.wizards.com>)

## Section I

### **Disqualified and Suspended Player List**

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Current Suspended Player list at [www.thedci.com](http://www.thedci.com)

Submit a DQ report at <http://judge.wizards.com>

Cheating and unsportsmanlike conduct are not tolerated at DCI-sanctioned tournaments, and we seek your help in ensuring that these rules are properly and fairly enforced. Persons who cheat or commit acts of unsportsmanlike conduct diminish the integrity of our games as an organized, intellectual sport. The DCI empowers tournament officials to disqualify (DQ) participants who violate these rules. All disqualifications are subject to DCI review and further penalties may be assessed. These further penalties can include; no action, an official warning letter, or suspension of memberships (organizer, judge, and/or player) for a period of months or years. The DCI reviews each case at the conclusion of the suspension period and makes a decision based on the player's new statements to permit the member to again participate in sanctioned tournaments or to extend the suspension.

**The DCI requires that you do not allow suspended DCI players to participate in your sanctioned tournaments for the duration of their suspension.** Failure to adhere to this policy jeopardizes your sanctioning privileges. If you have any questions regarding the status of an individual member, you may contact us at your convenience. While we regret the necessity of such stern measures, we believe they are necessary in order to safeguard the integrity of the tournament structure, and create enjoyable play environments for all DCI members.

Thank you very much for your assistance. We hope that tournament organizers and the DCI can work together to protect the integrity of the sanctioned-tournament structure. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please do not hesitate to contact us at your earliest convenience.

## Section L

### **Definition of Rules Enforcement Level (REL)**

Rules Enforcement Level is a means to communicate to the players and judges what expectations they can have from the event in terms of rigid enforcement (versus education), technically correct play, and procedures (decklists, stamping, judge to player ratio, etc...).

For example: A player who has played in a championship level event is playing at a pre-release event locally and a judge notes that two of his sleeves are smudged. At Professional level play a judge would check over the entire deck but at the Regular level of play such strict enforcement is unwarranted.

The REL of an event should increase based on the prizes awarded and the distance we expect a player to travel. The further people will travel and the bigger the attendance expected the stricter we need to be. People who travel further have a higher competitive level and desire fair instead of fun.

**Regular:**

Regular events are those where the focus is on fun and social aspects, not enforcement. Most tournaments are run at this level unless they offer sizeable prizes or invitations (exceptions for junior events). Players know most of the game rules, may have heard of policy and what is "really bad", but generally play as they do at home.

- These events don't require deck verification
- These events don't require certified judges

REL 1: Pre-release Events, Friday Night Magic, Dreamblade Edge

REL 2: Junior Super Series Open, Grand Prix Trial

**Competitive:**

Competitive events are those with significant cash prizes, Pro-points, and/or invitations awarded to Professional events. Players are expected to know the game's rules – but not technically so. They are expected to be familiar with, but not knowledgeable of policies and procedures (they know what is "really bad" to do at a tournament), and unintentional errors are not punished severely. These are competitive level events that protect the interests of all players by providing event integrity while also recognizing that not all players are intimately familiar with Professional level event structure, proper procedures, and rules.

- These events use a certified judge and use deck verification procedures.
- The highest-level certified judge available should be on staff.
- These events may require a few staff or judges to support the head judge.

Example: A PTQ is competitive, but not Professional, because it mixes experience levels and player expectations. It attracts Pro and semi-Pro level players but also attracts amateur players.

REL 3: Pro Tour Qualifier, Dreamblade 1K, Dreamblade 10K

REL 4: Grand Prix (day one)

**Professional:**

Professional level events offer large cash awards, prestige, and other benefits that draw players from great distances. These events hold players to a higher standard of behavior and technically correct play than competitive events. Unsporting or Procedural infractions will often receive a higher level of penalty. They are where players can expect that even completely unintentional errors can receive severe penalties.

- These events use a certified judge and use deck verification procedures.
- The highest-level certified judge available should be on staff.
- These events should use several certified judges in support.

REL 4: Nationals, Grand Prix (day two)

REL 5: World Championship, Pro Tour, Dreamblade Championship