

The International Table Tennis Federation

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OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING GLUE

Due to an unconfirmed health incident that occurred recently in Japan that may be related to the use of glue the Board of Directors of the ITTF addressed this issue at its meeting on 25 May 2007 in Zagreb, Croatia. A step-by-step set of recommendations were proposed by the ITTF's Executive Committee in order to eliminate the possibility of any further health issues related to gluing. Based on a majority decision taken by the Board of Directors of the ITTF, Glues containing harmful volatile compounds are no longer approved by the ITTF effective immediately. Although it is felt by the Board of Directors that the current levels of volatile compounds in Glues used to affix rubber coverings to the table tennis blade are in very small quantities and if applied correctly in a ventilated area provide no serious health risk to the players, it is felt, however, that long term use of such glues may have negative health effects. Therefore, **as of immediate effect the ITTF informs all players and national associations to cease using glues containing harmful volatile compounds (VCs)**. This includes glues with organic and inorganic volatile compounds excluding water.

It is the responsibility of each player, or his/her parents in case of minors, to cease using glues containing harmful VCs. Any player using such glues will be doing so at his/her own risk and the ITTF will not be held responsible for any consequences or ill effects resulting from the use of such glues. The use of water-based glues, free of harmful volatile compounds, is highly advisable. It should be noted that some water-based glues do contain harmful compounds and should be avoided.

The ITTF will recommend to the manufacturers and suppliers to publish and circulate widely a list of available glues that are free of harmful volatile compounds.

All existing ITTF approvals of glues are WITHDRAWN effective immediately. This withdrawal applies to ALL glues currently on the market. The ITTF will cease to approve any type of glue effective immediately. However, the ITTF's current "racket testing" programme and protocols will continue controlling the amount of VOCs in a racket in order to protect the health of the players.

As of 1 January 2008 for ITTF Junior events (U-18), and as of 1 September 2008 for all other ITTF events, the ITTF will implement a new racket testing programme and protocol, using the Enez* and RAE instruments to ensure that all rackets used by players are free of volatile compounds except water.**

In addition, the Board of Directors has approved that as of 25 May 2007, in the case that a proven severe health incident is confirmed by the medical authority recognized by the ITTF as defined by the Board of Directors, then the ITTF will implement the new testing programme immediately (VC free except for water) at the date the incident is confirmed and sanctions would be applied for failed tests as of that date.

The ITTF urges all parties involved, players, national associations, continental associations, manufacturers, and parents to act accordingly.

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IMPORTANT NOTES REGARDING THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT REGARDING THE USE OF GLUE DATED 21 JUNE 2007

- * Enez The ITTF commissioned a German company, WASSING, to produce a practical instrument that detects the existence of harmful volatile compounds in a table tennis racket. National Associations can now purchase this device through the ITTF or directly from Wassing. The device is named "Enez" and is portable and very easy to use. Composite rackets will be tested, as used by the player, at competitions. The ITTF will not test racket components separately; the **entire** racket is subjected to the test by placing it within the Enez device.
- ** RAE In case of a dispute or to verify the results produced by the Enez device, the ITTF will use an industrial very accurate device produced by RAE in the USA as a backup to the Enez results and also to calibrate the Enez devices. The RAE device will be used at all ITTF major events.
- Current testing The current racket-testing programme will continue until the new testing using Enez will be introduced. The ITTF recommends that national associations procure the new Enez devices as soon as it is available and start to use such devices internally in order to be ready for the implementation of the new testing programme using Enez within their own association.
- National date The implementation date at the national level of the new testing programme will be decided by each national association.
- Manufacturers The ITTF is aware that manufacturers need to use glue for several components of the table tennis racket. This is an application of glue at the manufacturing level. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the manufacturers to ensure the safety of their own employees and to follow the national standards in their own country to protect the health and level of exposure of the their employees to harmful volatile compounds.
It is also the responsibility of the manufacturers to properly air all their products before packaging to ensure that all existing harmful volatile compounds have evaporated and are not trapped in the packaging.
- Players The ITTF will test at events the complete racket as used by the player. It is the responsibility of the players to ensure that their racket is free of harmful volatile compounds. The ITTF will hold the player directly responsible for any failed test and will implement its rules accordingly. Players must ensure that their racket, racket covering, bonding materials, and any other part of their racket are free of any harmful volatile compounds. This can be achieved by properly airing the racket and all its components for up to 72 hours.
- Medical Authority The ITTF's Board of Directors has defined in its meeting of 25 May 2007 the medical Authority that would determine and confirm the occurrence of a serious health incident. As of this confirmation, the new racket-testing programme will start immediately overriding the implementation dates established by the Board of Directors.
- VOCs Volatile Organic Compounds

Harmful VCs Volatile Compounds other than water (for ITTF definition purposes)

@ ITTF – June 2007