

## **Skill Divisions**

There will be two divisions for competition, A (intermediate/advanced) and B (novice/intermediate). The format is set this way to give beginner and novice players a chance to compete and win prizes in a tournament setting. The two division system is dependent, however, on sufficient registration. If there are too few players in either division (at least 8 players are needed in each), the two divisions will be combined and all players will compete for the same spots in the final rounds. The determination on one- or two- division playoffs will be made by 3:30pm.

Some rules about the divisions:

Players must declare a division prior to qualifying.

Players may switch from B to A division after qualifying has started (lower division entries will be void), but may not move from the A division to the B division. However, no movement from the B to A division will be allowed after 3:30pm. If a player switches from B to A, the B division scores will be voided and the player must re-play each machine in the A division.

Restrictions on divisions: Players who have qualified in the top eight positions of the past tournaments at Pinballz (Battle the Bat, Pin-Golf, Battle of the Bands), and players who are ranked 750<sup>th</sup> and above in the IFPA World Player rankings, **must declare A division**. Again this is to give novice and intermediate players a chance to compete and win in a tournament setting. A partial list of B-division excluded players will be provided on the day of the tournament. Players who wish to play in the B division may have their IFPA rankings checked at registration time. If a player who is not technically eligible for B division plays in B anyway, their entries will be void and they will not be eligible to receive prizes for B division.

## **Qualification**

There are four machines available to play. A contestant may purchase as many additional single-machine entries as he/she wishes, but must play each of the four games at least once. If a player plays the same machine multiple times, only the highest score will stand. The machine scores will be compared to those of other players in the same division using the system below to determine their point score for that machine. The highest point scores from the four machines will be added together to arrive at the player's total point score.

Highest score: 100 points

2<sup>nd</sup> highest: 95 points

3<sup>rd</sup> highest: 90 points

4<sup>th</sup> highest: 85 points

5<sup>th</sup> highest: 84 points

6<sup>th</sup> highest: 83 points

etc

The number of players advancing to the finals rounds will depend on the number of total entries in that division, being no less than four and no more than eight. The ratio of finals players to total players in the division will be  $1/3$ , rounding up to 4, 6, or 8 at the maximum. For example if there are 15 players in A division,  $15/3 = 5$ ; 5 rounds up to 6; 6 players will be in the finals. The number of competitors in the finals will be decided at 4:30PM.

### **Semifinals**

**Note: if only four players in either division make it to the semifinals based on the number of total entries, the semifinals will be skipped in that division and the four competitors will proceed to finals competition.**

The top  $x$  qualifiers will compete in a PAPA-style 4-2-1-0 point system semifinal, where the players play three four-person games on three different machines. The player with the highest score in a given game receives four points, next highest receives two, and so on.

### **Ties:**

In a semifinal round if a tie in points awarded occurs, a single tiebreaking game will take place on a tournament machine determined randomly.

### **Missing Players:**

Absentee players will be given no less than five and no more than ten minutes to return to play. If the player does not appear after five minutes, an announcement will be made over the PA. If the player has not returned after ten minutes, his or her ball will be plunged and play will continue.

### **Choice of Machine and Order:**

The group with the highest seeded player gets choice of machine and order of play. The player ranked first chooses either machine or his own order of play. If that player chooses machine, the rest of the players choose their order by descending order of seeding. If the top player chooses order, the rest of the players in the group first choose order of play in descending seeding order, and then the second highest seeded

player chooses the machine on which they will play. If there are multiple groups in the semifinals, the group with the highest seeded player completes this process first, and then the second group does. This proceeds first with A division first, then B division will select from the remaining machines.

Depending on the number of qualifying players, finalists will be grouped as follows:

#### Six Players

Two groups of three – one group with players ranked 1, 4, and 6; and the other with players ranked 2, 3, and 5.

#### Eight Players

Two groups of four – one group with players ranked 1, 4, 5, and 8; and the other with players ranked 2, 3, 6, and 8.

After semifinals, the top four players in point standings regardless of their group will proceed to the finals round.

### **Finals**

Finals will proceed just like semifinals, with the highest scoring player receiving four points, next highest two points, and so on. The player with the highest point total at the end of the finals is the champion of the Summer of Magic Pinball Tournament.

#### Malfunctions and Stuck Balls

Regarding major, minor, and beneficial malfunctions, and stuck balls, we will adhere to the following rules set forth by the IFPA and borrowed from their web site.

##### 1. The Nature of Pinball

The unique charm of pinball lies, in large part, in the physical nature of the game. Unfortunately, this means that unusual events and outright malfunctions cannot be prevented, nor can they be perfectly compensated for. IFPA attempts to strike a balance between compensating for malfunctions and accepting the physical nature of the game. In certain cases, malfunctions will be dealt with more strictly during finals rounds than during qualifying rounds, at the discretion of tournament officials.

## 2. Minor Malfunctions

A minor malfunction is any incident without external cause which deviates from the normal course of gameplay, without directly causing a player's loss of turn and without providing any player a significant advantage over others. A minor malfunction is considered part of normal play. Tournament officials shall determine what constitutes a significant advantage; in the event that such an advantage is obtained, refer to "Beneficial Malfunctions". A minor malfunction that occurs repeatedly, to the extent that it is markedly affecting play of the machine, may be considered a major malfunction at the sole discretion of tournament officials.

## 3. Major Malfunctions

A major malfunction is a gameplay problem with a machine that results in the premature loss of ball in play in a fashion that is not a normal feature of the machine's gameplay. These may be unusual one-time events, or they may indicate a recurring problem that will need to be addressed by technicians.

Examples of major malfunctions include:

The bonus count begins while the ball is still in play. This can happen if, for example, the machine loses track of how many balls are in the drain trough.

A lit kickback fails to return the ball to play, ending the player's turn. This does not apply to other ball saving devices such as timed ball savers, ball traps, gates, or "virtual" kickbacks.

Any malfunction that results in the loss of one or more balls during multiball play, without losing all balls so as to end the player's turn, will only be considered a minor malfunction.

Loss of Tilt warnings, without loss of ball, shall not be considered a major malfunction.

Loss of any lit feature, running mode, or other gameplay specifics, shall not be considered a major malfunction.

When a major malfunction occurs, it is the player's responsibility to notify the scorekeeper, calmly and promptly. The scorekeeper will request advice from a tournament official. If the official(s) agree that the incident is a major malfunction, the player will be provided with one additional ball of play at the beginning of a new game, after the current game has been completed. No attempt will be made to re-establish the state of the machine at the time of the major malfunction. The player's total score on the additional ball of play will be added to his or her previous score, and the new game will be terminated.

If a major malfunction occurs early in the play of the first ball by the first player, tournament officials may rule that the current game is voided. Machine repairs will be attempted and the player(s) will restart their play without needing to track the previous score. In the event that two or more major malfunctions take place during the same game, the current scores of the player(s) will be recorded, and the game

terminated. Once the machine has been repaired, players will be provided additional ball(s) of play on a new game, as necessary to provide the correct number of balls of play for each player.

Alternatively, tournament officials may choose to allow the affected player(s) to replay the game from scratch, and the higher score for each player will be recorded as his or her official score, except in any case where the original score was unfairly improved by the malfunction or was significantly increased during attempts to investigate or cure the malfunction. In the event that a recurring major malfunction cannot suitably be repaired, the failure must be treated as a catastrophic malfunction. Under certain specific conditions, a major malfunction may be declined by the player. This must be approved by the tournament official, and must not result in a situation which provides an unfair advantage to the player.

#### 4. Known Malfunctions

Any malfunction or unusual behavior that is determined to be relatively minor but unusual enough to merit comment may, at the discretion of tournament officials, be posted for players to be aware of before playing the affected machine. Players who have played the machine before this notice is provided will not be allowed to replay the machine nor to replace it with play of another machine. The occurrence of any posted malfunction will be treated as a minor malfunction unless it worsens or interacts with another feature to yield a major malfunction.

#### 5. Catastrophic Malfunctions

A catastrophic malfunction is any event, not caused by a player, which immediately ends play for all players on the machine.

Examples of catastrophic malfunctions include:

The game system crashes and/or resets due to a software error or component failure.

Power is lost or interrupted.

A new game starts.

A major malfunction repeatedly recurs in spite of attempts to repair the machine.

Any event caused by a player, intentionally or unintentionally, including Slam Tilts, is covered under "Player Errors" below. In the event that two or more major malfunctions take place when a catastrophic malfunction occurs, the current scores of the player(s) will be recorded, and the game terminated. Once the machine has been repaired, players will be provided additional ball(s) of play on a new game, as necessary to provide the correct number of balls of play for each player.

Alternatively, tournament officials may choose to allow the affected player(s) to replay the game from scratch, and the higher score for each player will be recorded as his or her official score, except in any case where the original score was unfairly improved by the malfunction or was significantly increased during

attempts to investigate or cure the malfunction. If a machine affected by catastrophic malfunction cannot be repaired in order to continue play, it is considered disabled; please see “Disabled Machines”.

## 6. Beneficial Malfunctions

Any malfunction which provides at least one player with a significant advantage over any other player competing on that machine is known as a beneficial malfunction. Tournament officials shall determine what constitutes a significant advantage. Any beneficial malfunction which results in a player being able to continue play of a ball that normally should have ended is normally allowed once per game.

Examples of this would include:

An unexpected software ball save.

A ball that bounces back into play without player action, or a ball that comes to rest on an unlit kickback in the outlane.

Any such behavior shall not be allowed if it repeats, meaning that tournament officials may require players to allow the repeatedly-saved ball to drain, or play on the machine may be terminated in accordance with catastrophic malfunction rules, at which point repairs may be attempted.

Any beneficial malfunction which provides one or more players with a significant scoring or strategic advantage in a way that is not part of normal gameplay will void the score of the affected player(s), unless all immediately-affected players and tournament officials can agree on a suitable adjustment of the score or other elimination of the advantage. If the beneficial malfunction has been specifically avoided by the player, it is unlikely that a penalty is necessary. If any player score(s) are voided, the affected player(s) may then replay the game after the other players have finished, and the new score(s) are used for the affected player(s).

Examples of beneficial malfunctions would include:

A jackpot switch that registers when a different target is hit.

A valuable switch that scores repeatedly without the ball contacting it.

A failed Tilt sensor.

A ball stuck during multiball. See also “Stuck Balls”.

Any situation which indicates the presence of a beneficial malfunction should be brought to the attention of the scorekeeper promptly, who will alert tournament officials.

Any player who intentionally takes advantage of a significant beneficial malfunction may be given a warning and/or have his or her affected match interrupted and disqualified by tournament officials.

## 7. Stuck Balls

During the course of play, it is possible for one or more balls to become stuck on a playfield feature, usually after becoming airborne. If this happens during single ball play, the player must wait for automatic ball searches to occur. The expiration of any timed feature during this period is not considered a malfunction. If the stuck ball has not been freed after four such searches, or if the machine is not performing searches for some reason, the player must alert the scorekeeper, and a tournament official will be brought to the machine. The player must remain alert and at the machine, as he or she is responsible for the ball if it becomes freed at any point. Where possible, machines will be configured with “chase” features disabled, so that additional balls will not be released into play as a result of ball searches. However, in the event this occurs, the player is responsible for continuing play, and a suitable malfunction will only be ruled if the machine is unable to function normally from this point forward. A tournament official may initially choose to try to free the stuck ball through judicious nudging, tapping, etc. The player must remain ready to resume play at the machine during this attempt. If actions by the official result in a Tilt, this will be treated as a major malfunction (not the fault of the player). If the official frees the ball but the player does not successfully continue play, this is normal play (the fault of the player). Loss of Tilt warnings due to tournament official nudging is considered normal play. If the tournament official is unable to free the stuck ball, the machine will be opened, and the stuck ball freed and placed either in the plunger lane, if it is manually controlled, or on the upraised flipper of the player’s choice, with the flipper button held by the player. In the event this is not possible, the official may select another location or feature where the ball can be placed safely while the machine is being closed in order to resume normal play. If more than one ball is stuck, all freed balls will be placed on the flipper(s) of the player’s choice before play resumes, or in the plunger lane if the flippers are inactive while the machine is open. If the ball is inadvertently freed while the machine is open and drains without the player regaining complete control (stopped on a flipper), this will be treated as a major malfunction. If the machine cannot be opened successfully, or if opening or closing the machine terminates the game(s) in progress for any reason, this will be treated as a catastrophic malfunction. If the ball is freed and the machine closed without the player’s loss of ball, play continues as normal. If the game is in multiball play and one or more balls are lost as a result of freeing stuck balls, possibly ending multiball but not ending the ball in play, this will be considered no worse than a minor malfunction.

If any feature or mode that is lit or active times out while one or more balls are stuck, this will not be considered a malfunction. Any player who chooses to shake or bump the machine in order to free a stuck ball does so at his or her own risk. No allowance will be made for a player who tilts while attempting to free a stuck ball, whether or not tournament officials are present. If a ball becomes stuck during a multiball mode, the player should attempt to trap the other ball(s) in play and request assistance. A stuck ball during multiball often represents a significant beneficial malfunction, and intentionally taking advantage may result in a penalty.

Please note specifically that a ball ending up in the plunger lane during multiball on a machine where there is no autoplugger (or where the autoplugger for some reason refuses to fire) counts as a stuck ball.

See “Beneficial Malfunctions” for further details. Any player who misuses a game feature in order to intentionally trap a ball during a multiball mode, such as holding in the plunger on Tommy in order to

defeat the autoplunger, may be given a warning and/or have his or her affected game disqualified by tournament officials.

In situations where a ball is trapped in a way that it can be released through player action other than shaking or bumping – for example, a ball at rest underneath a flipper which the player controls - this is not deemed to be a stuck ball. Balls trapped in this fashion during multiball modes are not generally considered to be a rules violation, although the ruling will depend on the exact machine and situation.

#### 8. Disabled Machines

Any tournament machine that breaks down during play will be attended to by technicians as promptly as possible. In the event that a breakdown is severe and cannot be repaired promptly, the machine may be taken out of service temporarily or permanently. A permanently disabled machine will be replaced with a predetermined substitute by tournament officials. If the failed machine is eventually repaired, it will be put back into play the following session or round.