



## Changes to Substitute Regulations

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We wish to remind players that the procedures governing 'Overweight' substitutes are changing. Previously those using an 'Overweight' substitute were the subject of a penalty expressed either as a specific number of IMPs per board or as some fraction of the top on one or more boards. Now, in the interests of maintaining an equal playing field, a pair or team employing the services of an 'Overweight' substitute will have their session score limited (or capped) such that it cannot be greater than the average of that earned in the sessions where the substitute was not employed. Any such adjustment will only be calculated at the conclusion of the event, which means it will no longer impact upon the draw.

All calculations are performed using the primary scoring unit of the event (i.e., VPs for Swiss Teams and Swiss Pairs; Nett IMPs for Butler Pairs and X-IMP Pairs; Matchpoints for Matchpoint Pairs).

Only those sessions unaffected by the use of an overweight substitute are included in the final calculations. Hence if there were two sessions where a contestant employed the services of overweight substitutes, then both of those sessions would be excluded.

It should also be noted that the use of multiple substitutes can potentially place a contestant at risk in respect to the minimum board-rule requirements, since contestants who fail the board-rule are themselves reclassified as substitutes.

Players are required to play half the sets of an event ( $n/2$  where  $n$  = the number of sets). When there is an odd number of sets then the requirement varies between teams events and pairs events (which includes those scored at IMPs as well as those scored at matchpoints): in a teams event all players in the team must play  $n/2$  (rounded down) sets; in a pairs event each player must play  $n/2$  (rounded up) sets. What this means is that in a pairs event each player must play at least half the sets (so 2 of 3; 6 of 11 etc); in a teams event a player can play just under half - but only if there is an odd number of sets (so 4 of 9; 7 of 15 etc).

In a pairs event (whether scored at matchpoints or IMPs) each player must play at least half the sets with their partner, (e.g., in a four-week event, a player can't be away for two weeks if their partner is also away for a different week). No substitute may play more than half the sets.

The purpose of the policy on substitutions is to try to maintain equity. It is unfair to other contestants to play with a substitute who is much better than the scheduled partner/teammate. Consequently, if a substitute is deemed to be 'Overweight', then the result for the session in question (for the offending side) will be the lesser of either:



- a) The actual score earned at the table or;
- b) The average of the scores obtained during the rest of the event (i.e., the average of those sessions/matches where an overweight substitute was not employed).

At the conclusion of the event the opponents of the unit containing the overweight substitute will receive, in lieu of their result for that specific encounter, the greater of either:

- a) Their actual table score or;
- b) The complement of the offender's capped result.

Whenever a substitute is used, (whether they be overweight or not), the contestant must always specify on the relevant form which member of the pair or team is to be replaced.

In order to evaluate whether a substitute is of a comparable standard to the absent player, the following factors will be considered:

- a) The playing records of both the absent player and the substitute (i.e., their performance in events), both separately and in various partnerships;
- b) Each player's recent form as an individual. Longer term form may also be used, especially in the absence of recent activity; and
- c) The respective experience levels of both partnerships.

Notification of the need to use a substitute should be sent to the Match and Tournament Committee (MTC) or the Director well in advance of the session in question.

Substitutions that have been notified in a timely manner will be considered by the full MTC panel. Late notifications pertaining to the final session of an event will still require the concurrence of at least two MTC members prior to any action being taken, (with the proviso that the affected contestant may subsequently appeal to the full MTC).

These new conditions take effect now with the commencement of the Pennant and for all subsequent Victorian events.

Approved by:  
VBA Match and Tournament Committee  
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