Pokémon Organized Play Official Tournament Formats

Revised: September 19th, 2011

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POKÉMON TRADING CARD GAME TOURNAMENT FORMATS

Pokémon Organized Play supports a variety of tournament formats for sanctioned play of the Pokémon Trading Card Game. This document introduces each of the approved formats and their variations. Tournaments that do not use one of the formats below may not be sanctioned.

1. Standard Format Styles

All sanctioned Pokémon TCG tournaments fall into one of two categories: Constructed or Limited. This section outlines the differences between the two categories, as well as any sub-categories that may exist.

1.1.   Constructed

In a Constructed event, players arrive at the tournament with a 60-card deck. The cards used to build the deck come from each player's personal collection. Decks may not contain more than 4 copies of a single card, as defined by the card's English title, with the standard exception for basic Energy cards. Some cards may have additional construction restrictions on them, which are treated as exceptions to the 4-copy rule. Matches are played for 6 Prize cards.

1.2.   Limited

In a Limited event, players construct their decks using only cards provided by the Tournament Organizer at the event. Each player's deck must contain exactly 40 cards at all times. Decks may contain more than 4 copies of a single card, as defined by the card's English title, with the exception of cards which are limited to one per deck by card text. A Tournament Organizer must announce whether he or she is providing players with basic Energy cards before the date of the event as well as at the event before it begins. Matches are played for 4 Prize cards.

1.2.1.   Sealed Deck

In a Sealed Deck event, players receive booster packs from the Tournament Organizer at the beginning of the event. Each player opens all of his or her booster packs at a signal from the Tournament Organizer and constructs a 40-card deck using only those cards and any basic Energy cards provided by the Tournament Organizer. Players have 30 minutes to construct their decks.

Players may not trade the cards from their booster packs with other players until the tournament ends. The Tournament Organizer may require players to fill out deck lists, including the cards in their decks and any cards not being used. Once the first round of the tournament begins, players may not alter the contents of their decks.

Booster packs used for a Sealed Deck tournament should come from the same set to preserve Evolution chains that may not exist outside of that set.

1.2.2.   Booster Draft

In a Booster Draft event, players receive booster packs from the Tournament Organizer at the beginning of the event. Players split into equal-sized groups, which should not exceed 8 players per group, and are seated in a circle.

At a signal from the Tournament Organizer, each player opens one booster pack without revealing its contents to the other players. Each player then selects one card from his or her booster pack and lays it face down in front of him or her. Once a card has been placed in a player's stack, it is considered selected and cannot be returned to the pack in exchange for another card. Players then pass the remaining cards, face down, to the person on that player's left. The cards selected by each player should remain private knowledge during the drafting process. Each player continues to select one card from among the cards handed to him or her until all of the cards have been selected.

This process repeats for each remaining booster pack, with the passing pattern alternating from left to right as each new pack is opened. After all of the booster packs have been opened and all of the cards have been selected, each player constructs a 40-card deck, using only the cards he or she selected and any basic Energy cards provided by the Tournament Organizer. Players have 30 minutes to construct their decks.

Players may not trade the cards they selected in the draft with other players until the tournament ends. The Tournament Organizer may require players to fill out deck lists, including the cards in their decks and any cards not being used. Once the first round of the tournament begins, players may not alter the contents of their decks.

Booster packs used for a Booster Draft tournament should come from the same set to preserve Evolution chains that may not exist outside of that set.

1.2.3.   Rochester Draft
In a Rochester Draft event, players receive booster packs from the Tournament Organizer at the beginning of the event. Players split into equal-sized groups, which should not exceed 8 players per group, and are seated in a circle.

At a signal from the Tournament Organizer, the player designated as player 1 opens two of his or her booster packs and lays each card face up on the table so that the cards are clearly visible to all players. The players use a snaking draft to select their cards. Player 1 selects the first card and, moving around the circle in a clockwise direction, each player selects one card from the pack, placing it in front of him or her face up. The last player selects two cards, after which the draft proceeds in a counter-clockwise direction. When the draft gets back to the player 1, that player selects two cards, after which the draft proceeds in a clockwise direction once again. The draft continues in this pattern until the last card has been selected. Once the last card from the opened pack is taken, players may realign the cards they drafted in any manner they choose.

After all of the cards from the first two packs have been selected, player 2 (to the left of player 1) opens two booster packs and lays each card face up on the table so that the cards are clearly visible to all players. Starting with player 2 and moving clockwise, players select cards from the opened pack, adding them to their card pools, using the same snaking draft described above. As the cards in opened packs are exhausted, the player to the left of player 2 opens two packs and each of the players takes turns selecting a card, starting with the player who opened the pack.

This process repeats until all remaining booster packs have been opened and all of the cards have been selected. Each player constructs a 40-card deck, using only the cards he or she

selected and any basic Energy cards provided by the Tournament Organizer. Players have 30 minutes to construct their decks.

Players may not trade the cards they selected in the draft with other players until the tournament ends. The Tournament Organizer may require players to fill out deck lists, including the cards in their decks and any cards not being used. Once the first round of the tournament begins, players may not alter the contents of their decks.

Booster packs used for a Rochester Draft tournament should come from the same set to preserve Evolution chains, which may not exist outside of that set.

1.2.4. Solomon Draft

In a Solomon Draft event, players receive booster packs from the Tournament Organizer at the beginning of the event. Players are randomly split into pairs and are seated across the table from each other.

At a signal from the Tournament Organizer, both players open all of the packs given to them and briefly review the cards they've received. All of the cards are then shuffled together into a single stack of cards and set face down.

At the beginning of the draft, the players flip a coin to determine drafting priority. The winner of the flip is designated as player 1; the loser is designated as player 2.

Player 1 takes the top 4 cards from the stack and lays them face up on the table. Player 1 selects one card and places it face down in his or her draft pile. Player 2 selects two cards and places them face down in his or her draft pile. Player 1 then takes the final card and places it face down in her or her draft pile.

Player 2 takes the top 4 cards from the stack and lays them face up on the table. Player 2 selects one card and places it face down in his or her draft pile. Player 1 selects two cards and places them face down in his or her draft pile. Player 2 then takes the final card and places it face down in her or her draft pile.

Players continue to alternate drafting order until the stack is depleted. Players may not reference the cards that they have drafted until the stack is depleted. It is up to the Tournament Organizer's discretion as to whether or not players may draft cooperatively, but this must be announced before the draft begins.

Each player constructs a 40-card deck, using only the cards he or she selected and any basic Energy cards provided by the Tournament Organizer. Players have 30 minutes to construct their decks.

The Tournament Organizer may choose to have players re-draft against a different opponent in later rounds. If this will occur at any point in the tournament, the Tournament Organizer must announce this prior to the start of the tournament. If a re-draft will occur during the

tournament, players are required to keep all of the cards that they drafted for the duration of the event.

Players may not trade the cards they selected in the draft with other players until the tournament ends. The Tournament Organizer may require players to fill out deck lists, including the cards in their decks and any cards not being used. Once the first round of the tournament begins, players may not alter the contents of their decks.

Booster packs used for a Solomon Draft tournament should come from the same set to preserve Evolution chains, which may not exist outside of that set.

2. Standard Deck Construction Rules

All cards from Pokémon Trading Card Game expansion sets with the standard Pokémon TCG card back that have been released in the United States, including promotional cards, are legal for tournament play unless listed otherwise. Cards from collector's sets, such as the Pokémon World Championship decks, and cards with the words "NOT TOURNAMENT LEGAL" printed on them, are not allowed in tournaments. Specific formats may include additional rules restricting which card sets are allowed.

3. Sanctioned Formats

Pokémon Organized Play supports two formats for sanctioned play: Modified and Unlimited. Sanctioned events are listed on the POP website, and the results are reported to POP after the event concludes.

3.1. Modified Format

The Modified format is the standard tournament format for Pokémon Organized Play events. This format will be used at all premier events unless specified otherwise. The Modified format for the rest of the 2011 season and the entirety of the 2012 season will consist of the following sets:

HeartGold & SoulSilver

HS—Unleashed

HS- Undaunted

HS- Triumphant

Call of Legends

Black & White

HS Trainer Kit

Black Star Promo Cards numbered HGSS01 and higher and Black Star Promo Cards numbered BW01 and higher.

In addition, future Pokémon TCG sets will become legal as they are released, per the Pokémon Organized Play Tournament Rules.

With the exception of basic Energy cards and previously printed cards that appear in Modified-legal sets, players may not use cards from Pokémon sets prior to *HeartGold & SoulSilver.* Players using previously printed cards that appear in Modified-legal sets must play those cards using the wording of the most recent printing of the card. New sets are allowed as soon as the product has been released in that rating zone. In events that include multiple rating zones, such as the Pokémon TCG World Championships, the format of the United States will be used.

There are currently no cards banned in the Modified format.

3.1.1. Constructed
Modified–Constructed events use the standard Constructed rules, as listed in section 1.1, in addition to the Modified format rules listed in section 3.1.

3.1.2. Limited
Modified–Limited events use the standard Limited rules, as listed in section 1.2, in addition to the Modified format rules listed in section 3.1. Sealed Deck, Booster Draft, Rochester Draft, and Solomon Draft, detailed in section 1.2, are all appropriate formats for Modified–Limited events.

3.2. Unlimited Format
Unlimited decks may contain cards from any and all Pokémon Trading Card Game sets and promotional cards that have been released in the United States. Players using cards that have been reprinted in a later set must play those cards using the wording of the most recent printing. New sets are allowed as soon as the product has been released.

There are currently no cards banned in the Unlimited format.

3.2.1. Constructed
Unlimited–Constructed events use the standard Constructed rules, as listed in section 1.1, in addition to the Unlimited format rules listed in section 3.2.

3.2.2. Limited
Unlimited–Limited events use the standard Limited rules, as listed in section 1.2, in addition to the Unlimited format rules listed in section 3.2. Sealed Deck, Booster Draft, and Rochester Draft, detailed in section 1.2, are all appropriate formats for Unlimited–Limited events.

4. Unsanctioned Fun Formats
The formats listed below are intended as a fun, alternate way to play the Pokémon TCG and are not recognized as sanctionable formats. These formats are great for leagues, casual gatherings, or side events. We've included the official rules for these formats to help provide consistency, should your Tournament Organizer or League Leader decide to run a non-sanctioned event using one of these formats.

4.1. 2-on-2 Battle
The 2-on-2 Battle format allows each player to have 2 Active Pokémon in play at a time. This game is played exactly like a regular game of Pokémon except for a few rules changes.

- Players may put up to 2 Basic Pokémon into play, face down, at the beginning of the game.
- No player may have more than 6 Pokémon in play at any time. If possible, a player must have 2 Active Pokémon in play at all times.
- Only 1 Pokémon may attack each turn. During his or her turn, a player may only choose 1 Defending Pokémon to attack unless the text of a Pokémon's attack refers to "each Defending Pokémon."
- When both of a player's Pokémon are Asleep, Burned, Confused, or Poisoned, that player can make an attempt to recover or avoid damage in whatever order he or she would like. When 1 of that player's Active Pokémon becomes Paralyzed, it cannot attack on that player's next turn—though his or her other Pokémon may still attack if it is not affected by a Special Condition that would prevent it from doing so.
- If a Trainer card has an effect on an Active Pokémon, a player must choose only 1 Active Pokémon for that card's effect, unless that card specifies that it affects more than 1 Pokémon.
- When a player's Pokémon uses an attack on an opponent's Baby Pokémon that requires a flip, that player must flip a coin. However, if 1 of the defending player's Pokémon is a Baby Pokémon that requires a flip and the defending player's other Pokémon is not, the attacking player does not have to flip a coin to attack the non-Baby Pokémon.

4.1.1.   Constructed
2-on-2 Battle–Constructed events use the standard Constructed rules, as listed in section 1.1, in addition to the 2-on-2 Battle format rules listed in section 4.1.

4.1.2.   Limited
2-on-2 Battle–Limited events use the standard Limited rules, as listed in section 1.2, in addition to the 2-on-2 Battle format rules listed in section 4.1. Sealed Deck, Booster Draft, and Rochester Draft, detailed in section 1.2, are all appropriate formats for 2-on-2 Battle–Limited events.

4.2.   30-Card
The 30-card format allows players to build decks consisting of half as many cards as a standard deck. This tends to reduce the amount of time needed to play a match, allowing players to get in more games in a shorter time frame than a standard game.

4.2.1. Constructed
In a 30-Card-Constructed event, players arrive at the tournament with a 30-card deck. The cards used to build the deck come from each player's personal collection. Decks may not contain more than 2 copies of a single card, as defined by the card's English title, with the standard exception for basic Energy cards. Matches are played for 3 Prize cards.

4.2.2. Limited
In a 30-Card-Limited event, players construct their decks using only cards provided by the Tournament Organizer at the event. Each player's deck must contain exactly 30 cards at all times. Decks may contain more than 2 copies of a single card, as defined by the card's English title, with the exception of cards which are limited to one per deck by card text. A Tournament Organizer must announce whether he or she is providing players with basic Energy cards before

the date of the event as well as at the event before it begins. Matches are played for 3 Prize cards.

Aside from the deck construction changes listed above, the standard Limited rules detailed in section 1.2 apply to 30-Card-Limited events.

4.3. Team Battle

The Team Battle format allows two players to participate on a team, each player having one Active Pokémon. This game is played exactly like a regular game of Pokémon except for a few rule changes.

Set Up:
- Players sit on opposite sides of the table with the teams positioned diagonally to each other, so each player is facing a member of the opposing team.
- One member of each team participates in a coin flip to determine which team goes first. The winning team then chooses which of its players will go first. The turn sequence starts with the chosen player and then proceeds clockwise around the table, the turn order alternating between teams.
- Each player draws seven cards. Each player places one Active Pokémon and up to four Benched Pokémon. Players then place half as many Prizes as they would for a single-player game, based on the format styles outlined in section 1.
- Any player who cannot place an Active Pokémon reveals his or her hand to all players and declares a mulligan. The opponent across the table from the player may draw one card from his or her deck for the mulligan after both players have placed their Prize cards. If both the player declaring the mulligan and the opponent across the table from that player declare a mulligan, both players shuffle and set up again without their teammates drawing any extra cards.
- The player going first for each team may not play any Trainer, Supporter, or Stadium cards on his or her first turn.

Game Play
- Players may not reveal their hands to their teammates or to the opposing team unless a game rule requires them to do so.
- Only the player whose turn it is may initiate conversation with his or her teammate. Conversation should be limited to short "yes" or "no" questions. General strategy or moves should not be discussed.
- If an attack or action on a player's card Knocks Out the opposing player's Pokémon, the acting player draws the appropriate number of Prize cards. If the player does not have enough Prize cards remaining, the player's teammate draws the remainder from his or her Prize cards.
- If a player's last Pokémon is Knocked Out but the player's teammate still has at least one Pokémon in play, the player is not eliminated from the game and may play Trainer, Supporter, and Stadium cards on his or her turn. If that player draws a Basic Pokémon, he or she must play it in the Active position on the first available opportunity. If neither player on a team has any Pokémon in play, the opposing team wins the game.
- If a player cannot draw a card at the beginning of his or her turn, that player is removed from the game. That player's teammate places Prize cards from the bottom of his or her deck equal to the eliminated player's remaining Prize cards.

Card References
- Cards which state "you" or "your" refer to the active player or his or her teammate, as designated by the player.
- Cards which state "your opponent's Pokémon" refer to the opponent that is being attacked, if the player is attacking, or the player's choice of opponent, if the player is not attacking.
- Cards worded for 2-on-2 Battle are applied to both players on a team. For example, cards which refer to "each Defending Pokémon" will affect both teammates' Defending Pokémon.
- Effects and attacks which refer to "all Pokémon in play" affect all Pokémon in play for both teams.

Between Turns
- Between-turns actions are taken before and after the turn of the player that owns the affected card.
- The effects of Special Conditions are checked for before and after the affected player's turn.

4.3.1.   Constructed

Team Battle–Constructed events use the standard Constructed rules, as listed in section 1.1, with the addition of the Team Battle format rules including the number of Prize cards used, as described in section 4.3.

4.3.2.   Limited

Team Battle–Limited events use the standard Limited rules, as listed in section 1.2, with the exception of the number of Prize cards used, in addition to the Team Battle format rules, listed in section 4.3. Sealed Deck, detailed in section 1.2.1., is an appropriate format for Team Battle–Limited events, though teammates are permitted to trade cards during the deck-construction process.

POKÉMON VIDEO GAME TOURNAMENT FORMATS

Pokémon Organized Play supports several tournament formats for sanctioned play of the Pokémon video games. This document covers each of the approved formats and their variations. Tournaments that do not use one of the formats described here may not be sanctioned.

5. Standard Format Style

All sanctioned Pokémon video game tournaments require players to assemble a team of Pokémon, with items, prior to the start of the event. The standard format style for all PLAY! Pokémon tournaments is Double Battle.

5.1. Double Battle

In Double Battles, each player selects four Pokémon from his or her party of six to battle with. At the start of the battle, players send out the first two Pokémon in their party, making a total of four Pokémon on the battlefield. Game play continues until a player knocks out all four of his or her opponent's Pokémon.

6. Standard Team Construction Rules

When building a team for a PLAY! Pokémon tournament, all players must adhere to these standard construction rules.

- A player's team cannot contain two Pokémon with the same Pokédex number
- Each Pokémon on a player's team can hold an item, though no two Pokémon may hold the same item
- A player's team cannot contain two Pokémon with the same nickname
- A player's team cannot contain a Pokémon nicknamed with the name of another Pokémon (for example, an Unfezant named "Pidove")
- Pokémon may only use moves that have been learned through one of the following methods:
  - By leveling up
  - By TM or HM
  - As an Egg move, through breeding
  - From a character in the game
  - A move already known by a Pokémon received at an official Pokémon event or promotion

7. Sanctioned Format

Pokémon Organized Play supports one format for sanctioned play: Modified. Sanctioned events are listed on the POP website, and the results are reported to POP after the event concludes.

7.1. Modified Format

The Modified format is the standard tournament format for PLAY! Pokémon video game events. This format will be used at all premier events unless specified otherwise. The Modified format for the 2011–2012 season will use the following restrictions:

- Only *Pokémon Black Version* and *Pokémon White Version* Game Cards are permitted for use.
- Players may use Pokémon from the National Pokédex, from No. 001–646, that are caught in the game, transferred from a previous Pokémon title, or received at an official event or distribution
- The following Pokémon may not be on a player's team:

  - 150 – Mewtwo
  - 151 – Mew
  - 249 – Lugia
  - 250 – Ho-Oh
  - 251 – Celebi
  - 382 – Kyogre
  - 383 – Groudon
  - 384 – Rayquaza
  - 385 – Jirachi
  - 386 – Deoxys
  - 483 – Dialga

  - 484 – Palkia
  - 487 – Giratina
  - 489 – Phione
  - 490 – Manaphy
  - 491 – Darkrai
  - 492 – Shaymin
  - 493 – Arceus
  - 494 – Victini
  - 643 – Reshiram
  - 644 – Zekrom
  - 646 – Kyurem

- Pokémon must be placed in the Battle Box.
- Pokémon above level 50 are permitted, but they are auto-leveled down to 50 for the duration of battle.
- Players may use Pokémon with Hidden Abilities that have been officially released via *Pokémon Black Version* and *Pokémon White Version*, the Pokémon Global Link, or an official event or promotion.
- Pokémon may not know the moves Sky Drop or Dark Void.
- The Wonder Launcher cannot be used during battle.

8.   Unsanctioned Fun Formats

The formats listed below are intended as a fun, alternate way to play the Pokémon video game and are not recognized as sanctioned formats. These formats are great for leagues, casual gatherings, or side events. The official rules for these formats are included here to help provide consistency for cases when your Tournament Organizer or League Leader decides to run a non-sanctioned event using one of these formats.

8.1.   Single Battle

The Single Battle format is the basic battle format, where two Pokémon battle one-on-one.

8.2.   Triple Battle

The Triple Battle format allows each player to send out three Pokémon at a time, with one Pokémon in the center and the two remaining Pokémon to its left and right. Pokémon are limited as to which opposing Pokémon can be affected by moves based on where they are positioned on the battlefield.

8.3.   Rotation Battle

In this format, each player sends out three Pokémon at a time, with one Pokémon to the front and two Pokémon to the rear. Only the Pokémon in the front can attack. Between turns, players have the option of rotating the team, allowing one of the Pokémon in the rear to move to the front and the Pokémon in the front to move to the rear.

Appendix A.   Document Updates

Pokémon Organized Play reserves the right to alter these rules, as well as the right to interpret, modify, clarify, or otherwise issue official changes to these rules, with or without prior notice.

Document updates will be made available at www. pokemon.com

Changes for September 19, 2011
7.1.   Added Jirachi to the banned Pokémon
7.1.   Clarified the use of Hidden Abilities

Changes for September 1, 2011
General reformatting of document.
Added Video Game tournament formats