Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament Rules

Any rule and situation not specifically covered is subject to judgement and discretion of the Intramural Sports staff.

All rules are subject to change at the discretion of the Intramural Sports Office, and the Intramural Sports Office has the final decision on all situations covered and not covered by the rules.

Rule 1: Player Eligibility & Registration

Player Eligibility

- ✓ Currently enrolled (at least half-time), fee-paying Tennessee Tech University students as well as faculty and staff of the University may participate in intramural leagues and tournaments.
- ✓ Prior to each contest and event, participants must check in with a member of the IM staff.
- ✓ **Players can compete for only one (1) team in each single-gendered league** and, if applicable, **one (1) co-rec league**. Once he or she checks-in for one (1) team, that player cannot transfer to another team in that league for the duration of the season.
- ✓ For postseason eligibility, a player must have participated in at least one (1) regular season game.
- ✓ Current varsity athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport. Former varsity athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport for one (1) calendar year (365 days) after their official affiliation with a college or university team has ended.
- ✓ Current professional athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport. Former professional athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport for five (5) years after their official affiliation with a professional team has ended.
- ✓ Intramural Sports Professional staff shall make the final decision on eligibility issues.

Registration

- ✓ Players should register on the Fusion Play App by the posted deadline.

Rule 2: League Format & Team Composition

Tournament Format

- ✓ No-Limit, No Buy-In, No Currency Exchange Tournament
  - ☐ Once a player runs out of chips, player is eliminated
  - ☐ No Currency will be exchanged. Winner receives an IM T-Shirt

Match Format

- ✓ League
  - ☐ Singles - Open

Rule 3: Defaults, Forfeits, Grace Periods, & Protests

Defaults

- ✓ A default is a game not played without penalty (e.g. dropped from the league).
- ✓ To receive a default, the team captain or representative must notify the Intramural Sports Office by **2:00 PM on the day of the contest.**
- ✓ Sportsmanship Rating will be as followed:
  - Winning Team = 8

- Defaulting Team = 5

✓ In order to verify that the request is legitimate, the team captain or representative must notify the Intramural Sports Office via e-mail or in person. Phone calls are not accepted.

Forfeits

✓ A forfeit is defined as one of the following:
- Failing to field a team for an intramural contest without contacting the Intramural Sports Office.
  - The final score shall be 2-0.
- Receiving three (3) or more conduct warnings before, during, and after an Intramural contest.
  - If the forfeiting team is ahead, the final score shall be 2-0 in favor of the opposing team.
  - If the non-forfeiting team has the higher score, the game shall end with the existing score.
- Defaulting two (2) games during pool play.

✓ If a team forfeits its first (1st) game of the season, that team may be dropped from the league and replaced with a team on the waiting list.

✓ Sportsmanship Rating will be as followed:
- Winning Team = 8
- Forfeiting Team = 2

✓ A second (2nd) forfeiture may result in removal from the league.

Grace Period

✓ Each player will be granted a **five-minute (5:00)** grace period.

✓ If the player arrives before the grace period is up, the game may begin.

✓ If the player has not arrived at the end of the grace period, a forfeit will be declared.

Protests

✓ Intramural Sports Graduate Assistants and Professional Staff will consider protests.

✓ During the contest, teams may protest (a) the misinterpretation or the misapplication of a rule or (b) a scoring error. The protest must be submitted immediately, and, if the protest is denied, a timeout will be charged to the protesting team.

Rule 4: Playing Area & Equipment

Playing Area

✓ All games will be played at the Marc L. Burnett Student Recreation and Fitness Center.

Equipment

✓ All poker chips will be provided by Intramural Sports.

Rule 5: Timing & Scoring

Timing

✓ After the first hour of play, there will be a ten-minute (10:00) break in the tournament to allow for table shifting, restroom use and more.

✓ After the break, the top 6 finalists will have one (1) hour of play at the final table until a winner is determined.

Rule 6: Logistics

Seating Arrangements

✓ After check-in, players will be assigned to a table to play at. Once they are assigned a designated spot, they cannot move seats unless the floor supervisor moves them to new seat.

✓ There will be a max of six (6) individuals per table.

- ✓ Players may be moved to another table to keep the tables balanced (Again, this will be designated by the floor supervisor).
- ✓ The tournament will dwindle into the top six (6) finalists. At this point, all players left in the tournament will sit at one (1) table.

Misdeals

- ✓ <u>All misdeals shall be reshuffled and cut.</u>
- ✓ All dealers may be intramural staff members unless staff deems it necessary for players to alternate dealing.
    - Intramural staff will be trained in how to facilitate the game, but they are not professional dealers.
- ✓ The following are considered misdeals:
    - Dealer exposes any of the "hole" cards to any player.
    - Dealer starts with the wrong position or deals out of sequence (empty chair).
    - If too many cards are exposed during the flop or a card was not burned, the cards shall be reshuffled, and a new card burned with three (3) new "flop" cards being dealt.
    - If too many cards are turned, or a card not burned during the "turn" or "river" the existing "community" cards shall remain, the remaining cards will be reshuffled and a new card burned, and a new single card turned.
    - Dealer gives any player less or more than the two (2) "hole" cards.
- ✓ Once two (2) players (after the blinds) have acted upon their hands, the entire hand shall be played to conclusion regardless of misdeal.
- ✓ If a card is found face up in the deck it shall be placed on the bottom of the deck and the next card shall be played.
- ✓ If a card is found missing from the deck prior to any betting it shall be replaced, shuffled, and cut. If two (2) players have acted, the hand shall be played to conclusion.
- ✓ A card dropped or exposed by a player shall continue to be played.

<u>Rule 7: Game Play</u>

Round Rules

- ✓ The Blinds
    - At this time, the player indicated as the small blind will pay that amount, and the big blind player will play that amount.
    - Only these players will have chips in play at this time.

Betting rounds:

1. **Pre-flop**:
    - **a.** The dealer will deal all players in at this time. Each player will receive two cards. (Hole Cards)
    - **b.** After the cards have been delt, all players now have the option to play the game. Players must verbally or physically express what their action is:
        - **i.** Call
        - **ii.** Fold
        - **iii.** Raise (Must Announce Amount)
    - **c.** After all bets are in, the dealer will collect the pot.
2. **Flop**:
    - **a.** Dealer will burn one (1) card.
    - **b.** Dealer will deal three (3) flop cards onto the table.
    - **c.** Now another round of betting will take place.
    - **d.** Again, all bets must be verbally or physically expressed.
3. **Turn**:
    - a. Dealer will burn one (1) card.

b. Dealer will turn one (1) more card over onto the community hand.
c. Then another round of betting will take place.

4. **River**:
   - **a.** Dealer will burn one (1) card
   - **b.** The dealer will place the last card onto the table.
   - **c.** The final round of betting will occur.
5. **Showdown**:
   - **a.** Once the final round is completed, if there are two or more players still left in the game, then all players must show their cards.
   - **b.** If there is no showdown, the last player remaining does not need to show their cards, and they collect the entire pot.
     - **i.** Player may choose to show their cards.
   - **c.** If there are more than one finalist for this round, then the player with the higher hand will receive all the chips

All In:

- ✓ If a player cannot cover a blind, they must use all remaining chips and post a short blind and declare "All-in".
- ✓ Both blinds and each called bet (not including raises) from the "pre-flop" round will go into a (main) pot.
- ✓ All raises from the "pre-flop" round and all bets from additional rounds will be placed into a (side) pot.
- ✓ The "All In" player will not be able to bet for the remainder of the hand and should they win the hand they will win only the amount from the (main) pot with the (side) pot going to the next best winning hand.
- ✓ If they do not win the hand, they are eliminated from the tournament and the winning hand receives both pots
- ✓ When a player does not have enough chips to cover a call they must fold or declare "All-In" and bet all remaining chips.
- ✓ Players who follow the "All-In" player will call the entire bet with a portion equaling the "All-In" player going into the (main) pot and the remaining chips going into a (side) pot.
- ✓ All additional betting for the remainder of the hand will go into the (side) pot. The "All-In" player is only entitled to the (main) pot should they win the hand with the (side) pot going to the next best hand.
- ✓ If more than one player goes "All-In" during a hand additional (side) pots will be created using the same rules as above.
- ✓ A player may only win a pot equaling his "All-In" bet and the called bets from following players.

Button rotation:

- ✓ After each hand, the dealer button moves clockwise.

Rule 8: Betting Rules

No-Limit Structure:

- ✓ Bets & Raises can be any amount.
- ✓ Maximum Number of Bets per hand per player is four (4).
  - Bet, Raise, Re-Raise, and Cap)

Rule 9: Tournament Specific Rules

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- ✓ The following actions are improper, and grounds for warning, suspending, or barring a violator:
  - Deliberately acting out of turn.
  - Deliberately splashing chips into the pot.
  - Agreeing to check a hand-out when a third player is all-in.

- Reading a hand for another player at the showdown before it has been placed face up on the table.
- Telling anyone to turn a hand face up at the showdown.
- Revealing the contents of a live hand in a multi-handed pot before the betting is complete.
- Needlessly stalling the action of a game.
- Deliberately discarding hands away from the muck.
- Cards should be released in a low line of flight, at a moderate rate of speed (not at the dealer's hands or chip rack).
- Stacking chips in a manner that interferes with dealing or viewing cards.
- Making statements or taking action that could unfairly influence the course of play, whether the offender is involved in the pot or not.

Table Rules

- ✓ When a participant advances or is asked to move to another table, an intramural supervisor will escort the individual.
- ✓ A supervisor should be made aware of the problem when it occurs, and all play must stop with all cards and chips remaining as-is until a resolution is reached.
- ✓ Each player must play and call his/her own hand.
  - No assistance may be given by other players or spectators.
- ✓ Should a player need to briefly leave the game, all play will stop.
  - Another player may not play for the absent player nor post any blind.
- ✓ All cards must remain in full view and are not allowed beyond the edge of the table.
- ✓ All players are entitled to a clear view of the opponent's chips with higher denominations made easily visible.
  - Hiding chips is not allowed.
- ✓ Looking through discards or remaining deck cards is not allowed at any time.
- ✓ The dealer of each hand will be responsible for verifying all bets, raking bets into pot and awarding the pot to the winning player(s).

<u>Rule 10: Rank of Hands</u>

Royal Flush:

- ✓ The best possible straight flush is known as a royal flush, which consists of the ace (A), king (K), queen (Q), jack (J), and ten (10) of a suit.
  - A royal flush is an unbeatable hand.



Straight Flush:

- ✓ Five (5) cards in numerical order, all identical suits.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest rank at the top of the sequence wins.



Four of a Kind:

- ✓ Four (4) cards of the same rank, and one (1) side card or ‘kicker’.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest four (4) of a kind wins.
  - In community card games where players have the same four (4) of a kind, the highest fifth (5^{th}) side card ('kicker') wins.



Full House:

- ✓ Three (3) cards of the same rank, and two (2) cards of a different, matching rank.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest three (3) matching cards wins the pot.
  - In community card games where players have the same three (3) matching cards, the highest value of the two (2) matching cards wins.



Flush:

- ✓ Five (5) cards of the same suit.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - The player holding the highest ranked card wins.
  - If necessary, the second (2^{nd}) highest, third (3^{rd}) highest, fourth (4^{th}) highest, and fifth (5^{th}) highest cards can be used to break the tie.
  - If all five (5) cards are the same ranks, the pot is split.
  - The suit itself is never used to break a tie in poker.



Straight:

- ✓ Five (5) cards in sequence.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest ranking card at the top of the sequence wins.
  - Note: The Ace (A) may be used at the top or bottom of the sequence, and is the only card which can act in this manner.
  - A,K,Q,J,T is the highest (Ace high) straight; 5,4,3,2,A is the lowest (Five (5) high) straight.



Three (3) of a kind:

- ✓ Three (3) cards of the same rank, and two (2) unrelated side cards.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest ranking three (3) of a kind wins.
  - In community card games where players have the same three (3) of a kind, the highest side card, and if necessary, the second (2nd) highest side card wins.



Two (2) pair:

- ✓ Two (2) cards of a matching rank, another two (2) cards of a different matching rank, and one (1) side card.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest pair wins.
  - If players have the same highest pair, highest second (2nd) pair wins.
  - If both players have two (2) identical pairs, highest side card wins.



One (1) pair:

- ✓ Two (2) cards of a matching rank, and three (3) unrelated side cards.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest pair wins.
  - If players have the same pair, the highest side card wins, and if necessary, the second (2nd) highest and third (3rd) highest side card can be used to break the tie.



High card:

- ✓ Any hand that does not qualify under a category listed above.
- ✓ In the event of a tie:
  - Highest card wins.
  - If necessary, the second (2nd) highest, third (3rd) highest, fourth (4th) highest and smallest card can be used to break the tie.



Ejections

- ✓ When one (1) member of a team is ejected, that team shall forfeit the contest.

- ✓ Ejected players must leave the Fitness Center and/or Intramural Fields immediately and cannot return to play **ANY** sport until he/she has been cleared for participation by a professional staff member of the Intramural Sports Office.