



## SKYCITY Poker Room House Rules

SKYCITY poker games shall at all times be conducted in accordance with the NZ Gazetted Poker Rules. A copy of these rules are available on request.

### Rule 1 : Poker Supervisors / Tournament Directors

Poker Supervisors / Tournament Directors are to consider the best interest of the game and fairness as top priorities in the decision-making process. Unusual circumstances can on occasion dictate that decisions in the interest of fairness take priority over all other considerations. The Poker Supervisors / Tournament Directors decision is final but where a customer is dissatisfied, they may make a complaint to a gambling inspector.

### Rule 2 : Official Language

The English only rule will be enforced on the poker table.

### Rule 3 : Official Poker Terminology

Official terms are simple, unmistakable, time-honoured declarations like: bet, raise, call, fold, check, all-in, pot (in pot limit only). The use of non-standard language is at the players risk because it may result in a ruling other than what the player intended. It is the responsibility of the player to make their intentions clear. See house rules 36 & 44.

### Rule 4 : Communication

Players may not talk on the phone while at the poker table. No electronic devices may be placed on the table.

### Seating Players, Breaking & Balancing Tables

### Rule 5 : Random Correct Seating

Tournaments and satellites will be randomly assigned. A player who started the tournament in the wrong seat with the correct chip stack amount will be moved to the correct seat and will take his current total chip stack with him.

### Rule 6 : Special Needs

Accommodations for players with special needs will be made when possible.

### Rule 7 : Breaking Tables

*Tournament:* Players going from a broken table to fill seats assume the rights and responsibilities of the position. They can get the big blind, the small blind, or the button. The only place they cannot get a hand is between the small blind and the button.

*Cash Games:* Players can receive cards on the big blind or the button.

### Rule 8 : Balancing Tables

In tournament play when balancing tables, the player who will be the big blind next will be moved to the worst position, including taking a single big blind when available, even if that means the seat will have the big blind twice. Worst position is never the small blind. Play will halt on any table that is 3 or more players short. The clock will only be paused when condensing tables down to a final table. Once chip stacks are placed on the felt of the final table, the clock will be re-started.

### Rule 9 : Number of Players at Final Tables

*Tournament:* In flop games, the final will consist of a maximum of 10 players. In six handed games, the final table will consist of a maximum of seven players. Unless otherwise specified by the Poker Supervisor / Tournament Director.

*Cash games:* Tables will be 9 handed.

### Pots / Showdown

### Rule 10 : Declarations

Cards speak. Verbal declarations as to the content of a players hand are not binding; however, any player deliberately miscalling his hand may be penalized.

### Rule 11 : Face Up for All-Ins

In tournament play, all cards will be turned face up without delay once a player is all-in and all betting action by other players in the hand is complete.

### Rule 12 : Showdown Order

In a non-all-in showdown, the player who made the last aggressive action must show first. If there was no betting and all players check, the player to the left of the button shows first and so on clockwise. Players must show both hole cards to claim any called hand.

### Rule 13 : Playing the Board at Showdown

A player must show all hole cards when playing the board in order to get part of the pot.

### Rule 14 : Asking to See a hand

Except where House Policy requires a hand to be shown or provides an express right to see a hand on request, asking to see a hand is a privilege granted at the Tournament Directors discretion to protect the integrity of the game (suspicion of invalid hand, collusion, etc) This privilege is not to be abused. A player who mucks his hand face down at showdown without fully tabling it loses any rights he may have to ask to see any hand.

**Rule 15 : Killing a Winning Hand**

Dealers cannot kill a winning hand that was tabled and was obviously the winning hand. Players are encouraged to assist in reading tabled hands if it appears that an error is about to be made.

**Rule 16 : Awarding Odd Chips**

The odd chip goes to the high hand. In flop games when there are 2 or more high hands, the odd chip(s) will go to the left of the button.

**Rule 17 : Side Pots**

Each side pot will be split separately.

**Rule 18 : Disputed Pots**

The right to dispute a hand ends when a new hand begins. See House Rule # 19.

**General Procedures**

**Rule 19 : New Hand and New Limits**

When time has elapsed in a round and a new level is announced by a member of the tournament staff, the new level applies to the next hand. A hand begins with the first riffle. If an automatic shuffler is being used, the hand begins when the green button is pushed.

**Rule 20 : Chip Race**

When it is time to colour up chips, they will be raced off with a maximum of one chip going to any player. The chip race will always start in the number 1 seat. A player cannot be raced out of a tournament: a player who loses his remaining chip(s) in a chip race will be given one chip of the smallest denomination still in play. Players are encouraged to witness the chip race. In the case of the same high card being draw, the suit order will apply as follows from highest to lowest order: spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs.

**Rule 21 : Chip Stacks Kept Visible and Countable**

Players are entitled to a reasonable estimation of an opponents chip count, thus the chips should be kept in countable stacks. SKYCITY Poker recommends clean stacks in multiples of 20 as a standard. Players must keep their higher denomination chips visible and identifiable at all times. Tournament Directors will control the number and denomination of chips in play and may colour up at their discretion. Discretionary colour ups are to be announced.

**Rules 22 : Deck Changes**

Players may not ask for deck changes.

**Rule 23 : Re-buys and Re-entries**

*Re-buy* : A player may not miss a hand. If a player announces the intent to re-buy before a new hand, he is playing chips behind and is obligated to make the re-buy.

*Re-entry* :A player may re-enter a specifically advertised re-entry tournament as per the advertised conditions for entering that tournament. Not all tournaments will be re-entry.

**Rule 24 : Calling for a Clock**

Once a reasonable amount of time has passed and a clock is called for, a player will be given a maximum of one minute to make a decision. If action has not been taken before the time expires, there will be a 10 second countdown followed by a declaration to the effect that the hand is dead. If the player has not acted before the declaration, the hand is dead. A player must be at his seat to call time.

**Rule 25 : Rabbit Hunting**

No rabbit hunting is allowed. Rabbit hunting is revealing any cards "that would have come" if the hand had not ended.

**Player Present / Eligible for a Hand**

**Rule 26 : At Your Seat**

*Tournament* : A player must be seated at their seat by the time the player has received their second card on Hold'em or their fourth card in Omaha in order to have a live hand. Where the tournament has moved to "hand for hand" players must be at their seat by the time the dealer deals their first card in order to have a live hand. A players hand is deemed dead once the last hole card is dealt and will be mucked. A player must be at his seat to call time.

*Cash Game* : A player must be seated with chips to receive cards. A player who leaves their seat for a period of 3 rounds or more will have their chips removed from the table and seat given to any waiting player. The remove player will be placed at the bottom of any waiting list for another seat.

**Rule 27 : Action Pending**

A player must stay seated at the table if they have a live hand.

**Button / Blinds**

**Rule 28 : Dealer Button**

Tournament play and cash play will use a dealer button.

**Rule 29 : Dodging Blinds**

Players who intentionally dodge any blind when moving from a broken table will incur a penalty.

**Rule 30 : Button in Heads Up Play**

The small blind is on the button and acts first pre-flop and last on all subsequent betting rounds. The last card is dealt to the button. When beginning heads-up play, the button may need to be adjusted to ensure no player takes the big blind twice in a row.

### **Dealing Rules**

#### **Rule 31 : Misdeals**

In flop games, misdeals include but are not necessarily limited to a) exposure of the first card dealt; b) two or more exposed or boxed cards; c) first card dealt to the wrong seat; d) cards dealt to a seat not entitled to a hand; e) a seat entitled to a hand is dealt out. Players may be dealt two consecutive cards on the button. If substantial action occurs, a misdeal cannot be declared and the hand must proceed.

#### **Rule 32 : Substantial Action**

Substantial action is defined as either a) any two actions in turn, at least one of which must involve putting chips in the pot (i.e. any two actions except two checks or two folds); or b) any combination of three actions in turn (i.e. check, bet, raise, call or fold).

#### **Rule 33 : Four Card Flop**

In all flop games, if the flop has too many cards dealt and turned face up it shall be taken back by the dealer, together with the card and shuffled with the remainder of the deck. The dealer shall cut, burn a card and then re-deal the flop.

#### **Rule 34 : Exposed Turn and River Card**

In all flop games, if any card except the flop is exposed by the dealer prior to the completion of a betting round the maximum bet allowed for that round of betting shall not exceed the maximum amount already wagered for that round of betting. The exposed card shall then be used in normal sequence.

### **Play : Bets and Raises**

#### **Rule 35 : Verbal Declarations / Acting in Turn**

Players must act in turn. Verbal declarations in turn are binding. Chips placed in the pot in turn must stay in the pot.

#### **Rule 36 : Action Out of Turn**

Action out of turn will be binding if the action to that player has not changed. A check, call or fold does not change action. If action changes, the out of turn bet is not binding and is returned to the out of turn player who has all options including: calling, raising or folding. An out of turn fold is binding. Players who act out of turn may be penalised.

#### **Rule 37 : Methods of Raising**

In no-limit or pot-limit, a raise must be made by (1) placing the full amount in the pot in one motion; or (2) verbally declaring the full amount prior to the initial placement of chips into the pot; or (3) verbally declaring "raise" prior to the placement of the amount called into the pot and then completing the action with one additional motion. It is the player's responsibility to make his intentions clear.

#### **Rule 38 : Raises**

A raise must be at least the size of the previous bet or raise of the current betting round. If a player puts in a raise of 50% or more of the previous bet but less than the minimum raise, they must make a full raise. The raise will be exactly the minimum raise allowed (see exception for multiple same-denomination chips in Rule 39). In no-limit and pot-limit, an all-in wager of less than a full raise does not reopen the betting to a player who has already acted.

#### **Rule 39 : Oversized Chip Betting**

Anytime when facing a bet or blind, placing a single oversized chip in the pot is a call if a raise isn't first verbally declared. To raise with an oversized chip, raise must be declared before the chip hits the table surface. If raise is declared (but no amount), the raise is the maximum allowable for that chip. When not facing a bet, placing an oversized chip in the pot without declaration is a bet of the maximum for the chip.

#### **Rule 40 : Multiple Chip Betting**

When facing a bet, unless a raise is first declared, multiple same-denomination chips is a call if removing one chip leaves less than the call amount. Example of a call: preflop, blinds are 200-400: A raises to 1200 total (an 800 raise), B puts out two 1000 chips without declaring a raise. This is just a call because removing one 1000 chip leaves less than the amount needed to call the 1200 bet. Placing mixed denomination chips in the pot is governed by the 50% standard in Rule 37.

#### **Rule 41 : Number of Allowable Raises**

There is no cap on the number of raises in no-limit and pot-limit play. In limit events there will be a limit to raises even when heads up until the tournament is down to two players; the house limit applies.

#### **Rule 42 : Accepted Action**

Poker is a game of alert, continuous observation. It is the caller's responsibility to determine the correct amount of an opponent's bet before calling, regardless of what is stated by the dealer or players. If a caller requests a count but receives incorrect information from the dealer or players, then places that amount in the pot, the caller is assumed to accept the full correct action and is subject to the correct wager or all-in amount. As with all tournament situations, House Rule 1 may apply at the Tournament Directors' discretion.

#### **Rule 43 : Pot Size and Pot Limit Bets**

Players are entitled to be informed of the pot size in pot-limit games only. Dealers will not count the pot in limit and no-limit games. Declaring "I bet the pot" is not a valid bet in no-limit but it does bind the player to making a bet.

#### **Rule 44 : String Bets and Raises**

Dealers will be responsible for calling string bets and raises.

#### **Rule 45 : Non-Standard and Unclear Betting**

Players use unofficial betting terms and gestures at their own risk. These may be interpreted to mean other than what the player intended. Also, whenever the size of a declared bet can have multiple meanings, it will be ruled as the lesser value. Example: "I bet five". If it is unclear whether "five" means \$500 or \$5000, the bet stands as \$500. See House Rules 3 & 36.

#### **Rule 46 : Non-Standard Folds**

Anytime before the end of the last betting round of a hand, folding in turn when facing a check or folding out of turn are both binding folds and may be subject to a penalty.

#### **Rule 47 : Conditional Statements**

Conditional statements regarding future action are non-standard and strongly discouraged; they may be binding and/or subject to a penalty at the Poker Supervisors / Tournament Directors discretion. Example, "if – then" statements such as "if you bet, the I will raise".

### **Play : Other**

#### **Rule 48 : Chips in Transit**

Players may not hold or transport tournament chips in any manner that takes them out of view. A player who does so will forfeit the chips and may be disqualified. The forfeited chips will be taken out of play.

#### **Rule 49 : Accidentally Killed / Fouled Hands**

Players must protect their own hands at all times. If a dealer kills a hand by mistake, or a hand is fouled, the player will have no redress and is not entitled to a refund of bets. If the player initiated a bet or raise and hasn't been called, the uncalled bet or raise will be returned to the player.

### **Etiquette and Penalties**

#### **Rule 50 : Penalties and Disqualification**

A penalty may be invoked if a player;

- i) exposes any card with action pending
- ii) throws a card off the table
- iii) violates the one player to a hand rule or similar incidents occur
- iv) is involved in cases of soft play, abuse, disruptive behaviour or cheating

Penalties available to the Tournament Director include;

- i) verbal warnings
- ii) missed hand penalties
- iii) disqualification

Except for a one-hand penalty, missed hand penalties will be assessed as follows; The offender will miss one hand for every player, including the offender, who is at the table when the penalty is given multiplied by the number of rounds specified in the penalty. For the period of the penalty, the offender shall remain away from the table but will continue to be dealt in.

Tournament staff can assess a one hand penalty. 1-, 2-, 3-, 04 4-round penalties or disqualification. A player who is disqualified shall have their chips removed from play. Repeated infractions are subject to escalating penalties.

#### **Rule 51 : No Disclosure**

Players are obligated to protect other players in the tournament at all times. Therefore, players whether in the hand or not, may not:

- 1) Disclose contents of live or folded hands
- 2) Advise or criticise play at any time
- 3) Read a hand that hasn't been tabled

The one-player-to-a-hand will be enforced.

#### **Rule 52 : Exposing Cards**

A player who expose their cards with action pending may incur a penalty, but will not have a dead hand. The penalty will begin at the end of the hand.

#### **Rule 53 : Ethical Play**

Poker is an individual game. Soft play will result in penalties, which may include forfeiture of chips and/or disqualification. Chip dumping and/or all other forms of collusion will result in disqualification.

#### **Rule 54 : Etiquette Violations**

Repeated etiquette violations will result in penalties. Examples include but are not limited to, unnecessarily touching other players cards or chips, delay of the game repeatedly acting out of turn and excessive chatter.