



ALDERAC ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC.

4045 GUASTI ROAD, SUITE 210

ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA 91761

909.390.5444 • FAX 909.390.5446 • events@alderac.com

www.l5r.com and <http://www.facebook.com/legendofthefiverings>

Legend of the Five Rings Code of Bushido Effective with the 2014 Floor Rules.

Introduction

The Code of Bushido provides judges the appropriate penalties and procedures to handle infractions that occur during the course of a sanctioned event. It exists to protect players from potential abuse and ensure the integrity of the L5R event. Violations require a penalty or they are unenforceable.

This document is divided into two parts; General Definitions and Philosophy, and Specific Infraction. Specific infractions are broken down into general classes and subclasses. In general overlapping infractions have been divided for the following reasons.

- Identifying the potential for game advantage (for example: Drawing Extra Cards)
- Correcting the infraction for deviations in base philosophy and class (for example: Looking at Extra Cards vs. Drawing Extra Cards)
- Specifically track a player's repeated infractions
- Clarify penalty upgrades based on repetition and severity

This document is designed to be used with the Legend of the Five Rings Floor Rules, the Ivory Edition Rules, the Ivory Edition Advanced Rules and the officially designated online Rulings Reference.

This document is updated periodically. The most current version is available at www.l5r.com.

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Section 1: General Philosophy

Judges are to be neutral arbiters and enforcers of all policies and rules. Judge should never intervene in games unless a rules violation occurs, they believe a violation may have occurred, a player has a concern of question and/or to prevent a situation from escalating. Judges do not stop play errors from occurring, but deal with errors that have occurred. They must assign penalties to those who violate rules or policies. Their goal is to promote fair and sporting conduct through example and diplomacy. Judges may intervene to prevent errors occurring outside of a game.

All players are to be treated equally according to this and all over guidelines. A player's previous history of infractions, violations and/or errors should not be considered when identifying infractions or applying penalties, though it may affect the manner of investigating said infractions. Unless specifically noted by the AEG Major Events Manager, all players are considered to have a clean slate at the start of each event.

All players are to be held to the standard. Just as previous negative performance should not be taken into account, a player's previous exceptional performance should not create an unfair additional standard. A previous event winner (for example World Champion) should be held to the same level of play as all players at an event, regardless of the judge's personal familiarity with a player.

All players are expected to understand and follow only the rules, policy knowledge and technical skill applicable to the sanctioning level of the current event.

The purpose of a penalty is to educate a player and prevent similar future mistakes. This is done through explanation of the infraction specifics and application of the appropriate penalty to reinforce this education. Penalties also serve to deter and educate other players and are used to track behavior over time.

The severity of the penalty applied to an infraction is based upon but not limited to the following factors:

- Sanctioning level of the event
- Potential for abuse
- Amount of disruption (both in time and people affected)
- Repeated offenses of the player during this event only

Only the Head Judge can ever deviate from these guidelines. Such deviation should only occur in Extreme and Exceptional Circumstances or if the specific violation has no applicable guidance. Extreme and Exceptional Circumstances are rare events. (for example a table collapses creating unrecoverable game states or the venue catches fire and must be evacuated.) Factors such as sanctioning level, round of the tournament, age/experience-level of a player, desire to educate and experience level of the judge are NOT Extreme and Exceptional Circumstances. Assistant and Floor Judges may appeal to the Head Judge if they feel deviation is appropriate.

Judges should be seen as a positive influence on an event. Players should be encouraged to make use of judges, should they feel one is required. Players should not be afraid to call a judge. Players should be rewarded for honest and sportsmanlike conduct when handling infractions. If a player commits an infraction, realizes it and calls the judge over immediately before or without taking any further advantage of the situation, the head judge has the option of downgrading the penalty without it being considered a deviation. For example a player has shuffled and offered his deck to his opponent for cutting, cut is made and the player recovers his deck. While laying out his dynasty he notices that he has left a card from his deck in his card box. He then calls the judge over immediately, the Head Judge may choose to issue a Verbal or Written Warning rather than a Game Loss .

The infractions in this documents are all generally presumed to be unintentional. If a judge believes the offense was intentional, the nature of the infraction may change to a more severe infraction and corresponding penalty.

1.A Sanctioning Level

All events fall into one of two sanctioning levels. This level communicates to both players and judges the expectations in terms of rules enforcement, technical correctness and general procedures used.

The penalties in this guide take into account the sanctioning level of a specific event and as such judges should never deviate based upon a perceived "lesser sanctioning level."

Bushi League

Bushi League events are focused on the fun and social aspects over specific enforcement. Players are expected to know most game rules, have a basic understanding of specific infractions, but generally play in a fashion similar to that of a local event. Players are still responsible for following the rules, but the penalties tend to be less severe, and the focus is on education and sportsmanship over technical precision.

Additional specific distinctions apply for Bushi League events. These distinctions are described in depth in the Floor Rules document.

Samurai League

Samurai League events are focused on professional competitive play. Players are expected to know all game rules and be familiar with specific infractions, although not necessarily to the degree of a judge. Players are still assumed to make unintentional mistakes. Penalties tend to be more severe and a player's ignorance of specific rules and policies is not reason to deviate from these guidelines.

Additional specific distinctions apply for Samurai League events. These distinctions are described in depth in the Floor Rules document.

1.B Definition of Penalties

Verbal Warning

A Verbal Warning is a verbal admonition to a player. This is the least severe penalty that can be given. Verbal Warnings are used in situations of minor incorrect play or disruption where a quick word can easily correct the behavior or situation. It is also used where the potential for advantage is low. No extra time is awarded for a Verbal Warning, as any Verbal Warning that requires more than a few moments to resolve should be upgraded. All Verbal Warnings are noted for the duration of the tournament, but do not need to be reported to AEG.

The specific word "warning" or "caution" does not need to be used for this penalty. Any verbal admonition to a player by a judge should be considered a Verbal Warning for purposes of upgrading repeated infractions.

Written Warning

A Written Warning is an officially tracked penalty. Written Warnings are used in situations of incorrect play when a reasonable amount of time is needed to correct the situation. The purpose of a Written Warning is to alert both the judges and the player(s) involved that a problem has occurred. A time extension should be issued if the ruling takes more than a minute to resolve. The TO should report any Written Warning to AEG in the appropriate event reporting form after the event.

Game Loss

A Game Loss is issued in situation where the procedure to correct the offense takes such a significant amount of time that may slow the entire event or causes significant disruption to the event as a whole. It is also used for some infractions that have a high probability for a player to gain advantage.

A Game Loss ends the game immediately and the player who committed the infraction is considered to have lost the for the purpose of game reporting.

If a Game Loss is awarded between rounds, the player receiving the penalty is still awarded the penalty even if said player drops from the event.

In the event a Game Loss is awarded in a best two out of three match, The Head Judge may award a full Match Loss instead of a Game Loss for infractions that would normally result in only a Game Loss, if the infraction is severe enough. This should be limited to Samurai League events, but is not specifically barred from being utilized in Bushi League events.

The TO should report any Game Loss to AEG in the appropriate event reporting form after the event.

Event Disqualification

A Disqualification is applied for activity that damages the integrity of the event as a whole, for excessive repeat offenses or severe misconduct. It may also be applied when a player is unable to continue but refuses to drop the from the event. (for instance a player loses his deck)

The recipient of a Disqualification does not need to be actively playing in the event. He/she may be spectating or otherwise acting as a bystander. Severe misconduct is still severe misconduct. If this happens, the TO should report this penalty along with all other penalties in the appropriate event reporting form.

Disqualification can occur without direct proof of action so long as the Head Judge determines sufficient information exists to believe the event's integrity has been compromised. It is recommended that the Head Judge report this fact to AEG along with the TO's form.

When a Disqualification is applied the player loses his/her current match and is dropped from the event. If a player has already received prizes that player may keep those prizes but does not receive any additional prizes regardless of performance.

When a player is disqualified during an event, he/she is removed from the event and no longer takes a place in the final standings. This means all players in the event will advance one spot in the standings and are thus entitled to any prizes the standing would offer. If this disqualification is made after a cut is, no additional players advance into the cut rounds of play however they move up in the standing for prize related factors. For example, is a player is disqualified during the quarterfinal round of an event, the former 9th place player does not advance into the top 8, but does move into the 8th place standing.

Suspensions and Bans

Suspensions will be awarded with a period of 6, 9 or 12 months according to the severity of the infraction. Longer suspensions may be awarded for repeated violations. Any player who accumulates more than 5 years of suspensions will face a lifetime ban.

1.C Applying Penalties

Any time a penalty is issued, the judge must explain to the player(s) involved the infraction, the procedure for fixing the situation and the penalty. If the Head Judge chooses to deviate from this guide, the Head Judge is expected to explain both the standard penalty and the reason for the deviation.

Any penalty higher than a Verbal Warning is reported with the event report to that a permanent record can be kept by the AEG Major Events Manager.

Some penalties feature additional procedures to handle the offense beyond the base penalty. These procedures exist to protect officials from accusations of unfairness, bias or favoritism. Deviations from these procedures may produce accusations against the judge. These procedures do not, and should not, take into account the game being played, the current board situation or who will benefit strategically from the procedure associated with the penalty. While it is tempting to try to "fix" game situation, the danger of missing a subtle detail or showing favoritism to a players makes this a bad idea.

If a procedure notes a variation used to "best of three matches" this refers to matches consisting of a best two out of three series.

Separate infractions committed or discovered at the same time are treated as separate penalties,

though if the root cause is the same, only the more severe one is applied. If the first penalty would cause the second one to be inapplicable, the more severe penalty is issued first, followed by the less severe penalty and so forth if still applicable. (such as a Disqualification issued along with a Match Loss)

Some violations of event rules will not meet the criteria for any specific infraction. Many minor offenses that a player can commit, even intentionally, are not covered by a specific infraction and should be handled with a Verbal Warning. If repeated, directly instruct the player not to repeat the offense, and handle further offenses as Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Major for failing to follow direct instruction of an event official.

1.D Repeat Offenses

The penalty for the first offense is listed in the "Penalty" portion of each infraction. For a repeat offense, upgrade the penalty to the next level on the following upgrade path unless instructed otherwise in the penalty procedure:

- Verbal Warning
- Written Warning
- Game Loss
- Disqualification

Penalties continue to be upgraded with further offenses. If the Head Judge upgrades or downgrades a penalty, it should be considered as the original penalty for further upgrades. Only the Head Judge can upgrade a penalty to Disqualification.

Section 2: Deck Errors

The section deals with problems related to errors in the registration and/or contents of a specific card pool or deck.

If the judge believes that a given Deck Error is intentional, that violation should be upgrading to Cheating: Manipulation of Game Materials.

2.A Deck Error: Failure to Follow Construction Guidelines

Definition

A player is considered to have committed this infraction when one or more of the following conditions are true:

- The player's deck contains more than 3 of any given non-unique card (unless the card specifically allows for this construction guideline to be altered.)
- The player's deck contains more than 1 copy of any given unique card.
- The player's deck contains cards specifically banned within the format.
- The player's deck contains cards from sets not allowed in the format.
- The player's deck fails to meet minimum or maximum deck limits.

Examples

1. A player has 4 copies of "Blocked Supply Lines" in his/her fate deck.
2. A player has 2 copies of "Creating Order" in his/her fate deck.
3. A player is playing "Well-Defended Farm" in an Ivory Arc event.
4. A player is playing "Rallying Cry" in his/her Ivory Arc fate deck.
5. A player is playing 39 fate cards in his/her Ivory Arc deck.

Philosophy

Any player whose physical deck fails to meet the official construction guidelines, has an illegal deck. When a player uses an illegal deck, it calls into question all results in which that player is involved and all results that result from the opponents of that player. Whether a player wins or loses those matches, the possibility that with a legal deck the result might have been different causes a high potential for abuse and a corresponding high penalty.

It is assumed that a player may have accidentally included extra cards, illegal cards or insufficient cards. If the Head Judge has reason to believe this mistake was intentional, the violation becomes Cheating: Manipulation of Game Materials.

When an illegal deck is discovered, the Head Judge and the player must correct the error. If additional copies of cards are included those extra cards must be removed. If banned cards are included they must be removed. If the deck is no longer legal, the player must concede and withdraw from the event.

In Bushi League events, the Head Judge may work with the player to make the deck legal for play, on the first round only. After the first round of the event the deck should not be changed and unless fixing the situation leaves a correct deck, the player must withdraw from the event.

When a player loses cards or accidentally picks up cards from an opponent, that violation is handled as if the violation is a Deck Error: Deck vs. Deck List Mismatch.

In no case should Game Losses be awarded beyond the current or next round. If the error is discovered during a game, the game ends immediately and a Game Loss is awarded. If the error is discovered between rounds, the penalty applies to the next round. In both cases all changes must be made before the player is paired for an additional round.

Penalty

Bushi League: Game Loss
Samurai League: Game Loss

2.B Deck Error: Illegal Deck List

Not all Bushi or Samurai League events require the submission of a Deck List from all players. This violation should be ignored for events that do not require Universal Deck Lists.

If at all possible it is recommended that several players be selected at random throughout the course of the event to verify that their physical deck matches the Deck List provided. Usually this would mean 1 or 2 players for each round of the event.

Definition

A player is considered to have committed this infraction when one or more of the following conditions are true:

- The Deck List contains an illegal number of cards for the format.
- The Deck List contains cards that are illegal for the format.
- A card listed is not identified by its full proper name.
- The Deck List contains cards that would make the deck illegal because it would violate a game rule

Examples

1. A player lists only 39 cards when the minimum is 40 cards.
2. A player in a Strict Ivory Format lists Moto Chagatai on his Deck List.
3. A player lists abbreviations like "Sup Tac" for the card "Superior Tactics"
4. A player lists 4 copies of a card when the format only allows 3 copies of the card

Philosophy

If the Deck List is illegal, the player is considered to have an illegal deck, regardless of the physical contents of his/her deck. However, because the majority of such infractions are due to a clerical error, it is not in best interest to punish a player heavily for an Illegal Deck List. Whenever possible, it is best to correct the Deck List to match a player's actual deck.

Ambiguous or unclear names on a Deck List may allow a player to manipulate the contents of his/her deck up until the point at which they are discovered. Factors like the specific format being played should be taken into account when assigning this penalty and the Head Judge may downgrade if he/she believes the intended card is obvious and the potential for abuse is minimal.

Unless the judge has reason to believe that the deck itself is illegal for the format, this penalty should only be issued between rounds. Correct the player's Deck List so it is legal and then let the player continue playing in the tournament with a deck matching the corrected list.

Penalties

Bushi League: Written Warning

Samurai League: Written Warning

2.C Deck Error: Deck vs. Deck List Mismatch

Not all Bushi or Samurai League events require the submission of a Deck List from all players. This violation should be ignored for events that do not require Universal Deck Lists.

If at all possible it is recommended that several players be selected at random throughout the course of the event to verify that their physical deck matches the Deck List provided. Usually this would mean 1 or 2 players for each round of the event.

Definition

A player is considered to have committed this infraction when one or more of the following conditions are true:

- A player has lost cards from his/her deck.

- A player has cards from a previous opponent shuffled in with his/her deck

Examples

1. A player shuffles his/her deck and realizes he now has 39 fate cards when the minimum is 40.
2. A player shuffles his deck and noticed an off color sleeve.
3. A player reveals his/her dynasty and notices a personality that does not belong.

Philosophy

The Deck List is the ultimate guide to a player's deck. Deck Lists are used to ensure that decks are not altered in the course of an event. As long as the Deck List indicates a legal deck, but the physical contents of the deck do not match the Deck List, the player needs to restore the deck to reflect the Deck List. However, if the Head Judge believes that error was obviously clerical (for example listing Copper Mines instead of Stables when playing Unicorn despite both being legal options), the judge may alter the Deck List to match the deck. When making this decision, judges should be mindful of potential abuse.

If a player discovers his/her error (for example drawing his hand and finding a card not present in his/her deck) and immediately calls a judge, the Head Judge may downgrade the penalty, correct the situation and allow play to resume.

The player must make any changes necessary so that the contents of the deck match what is recorded on the Deck List. If during a game and the game is to continue, replace all illegal cards with their legal counterparts (including hidden cards in deck, face down in provinces, or in hand). Any changes made to a hidden cards must be followed by full shuffle randomization. If the incorrect card is not in a hidden zone, (for example due to having been played) upgrade the penalty to a Game Loss.

In the case that cards are lost and cannot be recovered or replaced with identical cards (proxies are not allowed) then the Head Judge may allow the player to remove those cards from his/her list and continue play if the new list is still legal. (for example a player with 41 fate cards loses a fate card and now has 40) Once the Deck List has been changed to reflect this new state the deck cannot be reverted even if the lost cards are later found. If the deck is no longer legal without the missing cards the player is forced to concede and withdraw from the event.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning

Samurai League: Written Warning

Section 3: Game Play Errors

Game play errors are caused by incorrect or inaccurate play of the game such that it results in violations of the game rules. Many offenses fit into this category and it would be impossible to list them all. The guide below is designed to give judges a framework for assessing how to handle a Game Play Error.

Most Game Play Error infractions are assumed to have been committed unintentionally. If the judge believes that the error was intentional, he/she should examine the Cheating infractions to see if one should be used instead.

Both players are expected to maintain the game rules and to share some responsibility for any errors that may occur involving public information. As a result, no attempt should be made to determine or correct any advantage gained in assessing the penalty and associated procedures for fixing the offense. Additionally Game Play Error: Failure to Maintain Game State is issued to the opponent in the case of some infractions regarding public information.

3.A Game Play Error: Incorrect Representation

Definition

Due to a minor clerical error, the game is somehow inaccurately represented, but the game state is clear to both players and the action is ultimately legal. If the error has affected game play or been allowed to continue to the point where ambiguity exists, treat it as a Game Play Error: Game Rule Violation instead.

Examples

1. A player forgets to put counters onto a personality that comes into play with counters on it.

Philosophy

These errors do not have significant impact on the game, but could cause confusion at a later point if not remedied. Such errors should be corrected immediately.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Verbal Warning

3.B Game Play Error: Illegal Game State

Definition

The ongoing state of the current game is illegal as a result of a prior misplay.

Examples

1. A personality with the Loyal Trait is controlled by a player playing a clan other than one the personality can legally join.

Philosophy

Both players share responsibility in allowing the game to continue in this illegal state. Because any decisions and plans have been made based on this state, no effort should be made to back up the game in order to fix the effects of the illegal state. Apply state-based effects. If the problem is due to a player not having made a required choice, the player does so immediately. In addition, the opponent of the player controlling the card that caused the state to become illegal should receive a Game Play Error: Failure to Maintain Game State.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning

Samurai League: Written Warning

3.C Game Play Error: Missed Trigger

Definition

A game event triggers, but the player controlling the trigger is unaware of its existence and/or forgets to perform the action specified by the trigger.

Examples

1. A player forgets to remove a counter from a Secrets on the Wind spell after using it.
2. A player forgets to draw a card from his/her A Game of Dice trigger during his End Step.
3. A player forgets to place 2x +1F counters on Kakita Hideo, the Fallen Keeper after he wins a duel.

Philosophy

Triggers are actions that the game asks players to take as a result of an event occurring. Because the representation of these triggers is often invisible, players will miss them on occasion.

If the trigger contains an optional instruction (typically the word "may") and specifies no consequences for not performing the action, the player is assumed to have chosen not to perform the trigger and thus no penalty should be issued.

If the trigger requires no choices to be made and has no effect on the visual representation of the game, the ability is assumed to have resolved at the correct time and thus no penalty should be issued. The visual representation consists of elements the players are able to see happening, such as adding counters to a card or changing honor totals.

If the missed trigger is not caught within a time that a player could reasonably be expected to notice, opponents who might potentially have benefited from the error receive a Game Play Error: Failure to Maintain Game State. If the missed trigger is noticed after some irrevocably action has been taken, no attempt should be made to rewind the game state.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Verbal Warning

3.D Game Play Error: Failure to Reveal

Definition

A player forgets to reveal information that he/she is required to reveal by a game rule or effect.

Examples

1. A player uses Imperial Gift and places the card directly into his/her hand without revealing it.
2. At the end of a game, a player shuffles his/her "ninjutsu" cards back in the deck without revealing.

Philosophy

Failing to reveal a card prevents opponents from verifying that an effect was played correctly. While the error is easy to make, the potential for abuse is high.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning
Samurai League: Game Loss

3.E Game Play Error: Looking at Extra Cards

Definition

Players are considered to have looked at a card when they have been able to observe the face of a hidden card, or when a card is moved any significant amount from a deck, but before it touches the other cards in their hand. This includes errors of dexterity or catching a play error before the card is placed into his/her hand. Once a card has been placed into his/her hand or if a player takes a game action after removing the card from the library, the offense is no longer Looking at Extra Cards.

A player is not considered to have looked at extra cards when he/she places a card face down on the table (without looking at the card) in an effort to count out cards he/she will draw.

This penalty is applied only once if one or more cards are seen in the same action or sequence of actions.

Examples

1. A player accidentally reveals (drops, flips over) a card while shuffling her opponent's deck.
2. A player flips over an extra card while drawing from the deck.
3. A player looks at 5 cards while using the card "Temples of Gisei Toshi" instead of 4.

Philosophy

It is easy and common for players to accidentally look at or reveal extra cards during play.

Players should not be using this penalty to get a "free shuffle" or to attempt to shuffle away cards they don't want to draw. This is Cheating: Fraud. Players also are not allowed to use this penalty as a stalling mechanism. The deck is already randomized, so shuffling in the revealed cards should not involve an excessive amount of effort. Make sure to give sufficient time to account for the shuffling.

Shuffle the randomized portion of the deck. This requires first determining whether any portion of the deck is not random, such as cards that have been manipulated on the top or bottom of the library, and separating those. Once the deck has been shuffled, any manipulated cards are returned to their correct locations.

Care must be taken before shuffling to make sure that there are no "legally known" cards in the deck. Check with both players to verify this, and check the discard, removed from game and in-play zones for cards that create these effects.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Written Warning

3.F Game Play Error: Drawing Extra Cards

Definition

This infraction is committed when a player is instructed to draw one or more cards, but draws too many. If a player incorrectly draws cards at a time they were not supposed to, or draws cards as part of another offense, the infraction is a Game Rule Violation.

Anytime a card is placed into the hand from a deck, it is considered to have been drawn for purposes of all penalties and infractions.

Examples

1. A player draws 2 cards at end of turn instead of 1.
2. A player plays "A Game of Dice" and draws 3 extra cards instead of 2.

Philosophy

Though this error is easy to commit accidentally, the potential for it to be overlooked by opponents

mandates a higher level of penalty.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning
Samurai League: Game Loss

3.G Game Play Error: Improper Drawing at Start of Game

Definition

Players committing this infraction draw extra cards (or too few cards) when they draw their hands initially.

Examples

1. A player draws six cards in his/her initial hand instead of five.
2. A player draws four cards in his/her initial hand instead of five.

Philosophy

This is generally a minor infraction and deserves a fairly minor penalty. Attention should be paid for possible abuse by players seeking to shuffle.

If the player has drawn too few cards, instruct them to draw up to the correct number. If the player has drawn too many cards, the judge will remove the excess cards from the hand at random and shuffle them into the deck.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Written Warning

3.H Game Play Error: Failure to Discard

Definition

A player fails to move one or more cards from his/her hand to the discard or removed from game pile when required to by an effect or the rules of the game.

Examples

1. A player keeps 9 cards at the end of his turn instead of discarding down to 8.
2. A player is targeted by "Disrupting Communication" and does not discard a card from the effect.

Philosophy

While this is technically a Game Rule Violation, the infraction requires an additional fix to mitigate the potential advantage.

The player moves the number of cards that he/she was supposed to move from his/her hand to the appropriate zone.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Written Warning

3.I Game Play Error: Game Rule Violation

Definition

This infraction covers the majority of game of game situations in which a player makes an error or fails to follow a game procedure correctly. It handles violations of the Comprehensive Rules that are not covered by the other Game Play Errors.

Examples

1. A player does not attack with a personality that must attack each turn.
2. A player fails to move a destroyed personality to the discard.
3. A player pays 8 gold for a 9 gold card.
4. A player makes use of an action that is no longer available for use.

Philosophy

While Game Rule Violations can be attributed to one player, they usually occur publicly and both players are expected to be mindful of what is happening in the game. It is tempting to try and 'fix' these errors, but it is important that they be handled consistently, regardless of their impact on the game.

If the error was discovered within a time frame in which a player could reasonably be expected to notice the error and the situation is simple enough to safely back up without too much disruption to the course of the game, the judge may back up the game to the point of the error. Each action taken is undone until the game reaches the point immediately prior to the error. Cards incorrectly placed in hands are returned to the zone from which they were moved (if the identity of the incorrectly drawn card is known to all players, a random card is returned instead). Once the game is backed up, it continues from that point.

If not caught within a reasonable time frame, or backing up is impossible or sufficiently that it could affect the course of the game, the judge should leave the game state as it is and not attempt any form of partial "fix". Generally any change of phase, resolution of combat, or at least 5 subsequent actions should be considered impossible or sufficiently complex.

Additionally, opponents who might have potentially benefited from the error receive a Game Play Error: Failure to Maintain Game State.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Written Warning

3.J Game Play Error: Failure to Maintain Game State

Definition

This infraction is committed by a player who has allowed any player in the game to commit a Game Play Error and has not pointed it out before he/she could potentially gain advantage. This distinction determines whether a player should receive a penalty or not. A player simply reporting an error does not receive a penalty but a player who fails to report the error and allows the game to continue does.

If a judge believes a player is intentionally not pointing out other players' illegal actions, either for his/her own advantage, or in the hope of bringing it up at a more strategically advantageous time, the infraction is Cheating: Fraud.

Examples

1. A player fails to mention that an opponent is attaching a spell to a non-shugenja personality.
2. A player fails to mention that an opponent must discard a card to "Boyoh Mercenaries" as it enters play, and the turn continues through the Dynasty Phase.

Philosophy

If an error is caught before a player could gain advantage, then the dangers of the ongoing game

state becoming corrupted are much lower. If the error is allowed to persist, at least some of the fault lies with the opponent, who has failed to notice the error.

Judges should not usually upgrade this penalty, as players will be reluctant to call a judge if they believe that they could receive a significant penalty as a result.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning

Samurai League: Written Warning

Section 4: Tournament Errors

Tournament Errors are violations of the Legend of the Five Rings Floor Rules. If the judge believes that the error was intentional, he/she should first examine the Cheating infractions to see if one should be used instead.

4.A Tournament Error: Tardiness

Definition

A player fails to comply with announced time limits.

Examples

1. A player arrives to his/her seat more than 5 minutes after the round begins.
2. A player shows up more than 5 minutes after the cut off time for initial event registration.
3. A player sits in the wrong seat and plays the wrong opponent.

Philosophy

Players are responsible for being on time and in the correct seat for their matches, and for completing registration in a timely manner.

A penalty will not be given if a round started early and a player arrived at his/her seat before the originally announced start time.

The penalty and fix for this infraction is special in that it is modified in severity by the amount of time tardy. A player is awarded a Written Warning for being 5 minutes late for a match and a Game Loss for being 10 minutes late for a match. These times are tracked by the judge and marked as soon as these two bench marks are reached. No additional time should be awarded by this violation.

If a player is awarded a Game Loss for tardiness they will be dropped from the event unless they return before the end of that round and receive special permission to return to the event from the Head Judge.

In the best two-out-of-three portion of an event, a Game Loss is typically awarded at the 5 minute mark instead of a Written Warning and a full Match Loss is awarded at the 10 minute mark.

Penalty

Bushi League: See Above, Written Warning or Game Loss

Samurai League: See Above, Written Warning or Game Loss

4.B Tournament Error: Outside Assistance

Definition

A player, spectator, or other tournament participant does any of the following:

- Seeks advice from others once in his/her seat of the match.
- Gives advice to players who are in their seat for their match.
- During a game, references notes made before the current match, including Oracle of the Void text that has not been provided by a judge.

These criteria also apply to any deck construction portions of a limited event. Additionally, no notes or communication of any kind may be made during a draft.

Notes made during a match may be referenced during that match or between matches only. Notes made outside the current match may only be referenced between matches.

Examples

1. A player communicates with a spectator about which play is the correct to make in a given situation.
2. A spectator points out a play during the game.
3. A player looks at notes from his/her pocket for advice on what cards do or may be in the opposing deck. (This includes digital media and communication)

Philosophy

Tournaments test the skill of a player, not their ability to follow external advice or directions. Any strategy advice, play advice, or construction advice from an external source is considered assistance.

Spectators who commit this infraction may be asked to leave the venue if they are not enrolled in the event.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning

Samurai League: Game Loss

4.C Tournament Error: Slow Play

Definition

Players who take longer than is reasonably required to complete game actions are engaging in Slow Play. If a judge believes a player is intentionally playing slowly to take advantage of the time limit, the infraction is Cheating: Stalling.

Examples

1. A player repeatedly reviews his opponent's discard pile without any significant change in game state.
2. A player spend more than 3 minutes shuffling and performing other Pre-Game functions.
3. A player spends more than a full minute to perform an action or change game state.
4. A player repeatedly counts force totals over and over without performing actions to change the totals in between.

Philosophy

All players have the responsibility to play quickly enough so that their opponents are not at a significant disadvantage because of the time limit. A player may be playing slowly without realizing it. A comment of "I need you to play faster" is often appropriate and all that is needed. Further slow play should be penalized.

If Slow Play has significantly affected the result of the match, the Head Judge may upgrade the penalty.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning

Samurai League: Written Warning

4.D Tournament Error: Insufficient Randomization

Definition

A player unintentionally fails to sufficiently randomize his/her deck before presenting it to his/her opponent. A deck is not randomized if the judge believes a player could know that position or distribution of one or more cards in the deck. If the insufficient randomization was intentional, the infraction is Cheating: Manipulation of Game Materials.

Examples

1. A player forgets to shuffle his/her deck after searching for a card.
2. A player searches for a card, then gives the deck a single cut or riffle-shuffle before presenting the deck to his opponent.

Philosophy

Players are expected to randomize their deck thoroughly when it is required and are expected to have the skill and understanding of randomization to do so. Any time cards in a deck could be seen, including during shuffling, it is no longer randomized, even if the player only knows the position of one of two cards. Players are expected to take care in shuffling not to reveal cards to themselves or other event participants.

Players are assumed to know the order of their cards before starting to shuffle and sufficient randomization means the player can no longer gain advantage from this knowledge. A player should randomize his/her deck using multiple methods. Patterned pile-shuffling or less than 6 riffle-shuffles are not sufficient randomization. In all cases after the deck is sufficiently randomized the player must present the deck to his/her opponent for further randomization, typically done in the form of a cut and/or a shuffle.

If a player feels his/her opponent has failed to properly randomize the deck, he/she may request a judge to adjudicate the randomization. Abuse of this request may result in penalties for Cheating: Stalling. Be mindful of players taking excessive amounts of time to shuffle.

Any manipulation, weaving or stacking prior to randomization is acceptable, as long as the deck is thoroughly randomized afterwards. Doing so and not sufficiently randomizing afterwards is defined as Cheating: Manipulation of Game Materials.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning

Samurai League: Game Loss

4.E Tournament Error: Failure to Follow Official Announcements

Definition

This infraction is committed by a player who fails to follow an instruction given to a broad audience he/she is included in. Most often these are registration instructions, safety instructions or venue rules. Instructions given directly to an individual and not followed are penalized as Unsporting Conduct: Major.

Examples

1. A player smokes, drinks or eats in a venue where signage indicates such is forbidden.
2. A player fails to leave an area of the venue that a general announcement has asked all players to leave.
3. A player fails to provide a deck list with registration after it is announced that it is required.

Philosophy

Players are required to be attentive and follow the instructions of tournament officials.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning

Samurai League: Written Warning

4.F Tournament Error: Draft Procedure Violation

Definition

A player commits a technical error during a draft. This does not cover any attempts to view or reveal cards that are hidden, which is handled by Cheating: Hidden Information Violation.

Examples

1. A player passes a booster to his/her left when it is supposed to go to his/her right.
2. A player starts to put a card on his/her pile, then pulls it back to the pack.

Philosophy

Error in draft procedure are disruptive and may become more so if they are not caught and corrected quickly.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Written Warning

4.G Tournament Error: Marked Cards and/or Sleeves

Definition

A player's cards and/or sleeves are marked or oriented in a way that could potentially give a significant advantage to that player. If the judge believes that the player intentionally marked his/her cards and/or sleeves, or took advantage of the markings on cards and/or sleeves, the infraction is Cheating: Manipulation of Game Materials.

Examples

1. A player's cards have become damaged and scuffed through play, and thus could result in telling additional not intended information to one or both players.

Philosophy

If the possibility for advantage is high, the player should receive a significant penalty. This penalty still presumes that the cards are marked unintentionally.

The player needs to replace the card(s) or sleeve(s) with an unmarked version. If a player is unable to do so within a reasonable amount of time, he/she must withdraw from the event. Reasonable amount of time is defined as the start of the next round if discovered between rounds or standard time limits for tardiness.

Penalty

Bushi League: Written Warning
Samurai League: Game Loss

Section 5: Unsporting Conduct

Unsporting conduct is disruptive behavior that may affect the safety, competitiveness, or enjoyment of an event in a significantly negative fashion. An offense that doesn't seek in-game advantage is often unsporting behavior. If it could provide an in-game advantage the offense is handled by other infractions.

Being enrolled in the tournament is not a requirement to receive an Unsporting Conduct penalty. Although these guidelines refer to players, other people in the venue, such as spectators, staff, or judges are held to the same standard of behavior.

Unsporting behavior is not the same as a lack of sporting behavior. There is a wide middle ground of "competitive" behavior that is certainly neither "nice" nor "sporting" but still doesn't qualify as "unsporting." The Head Judge is the final arbiter on what constitutes unsporting conduct.

Judges should inform the player how his/her conduct is disruptive. The player is expected to correct the situation and behavior immediately. However, while making sure that the player understands the severity of his/ her actions is important, judges should focus first on calming a situation, and deal with infractions and penalties afterwards.

5.A Unsporting Conduct: Minor

Definition

A player that is disruptive to the event or its participants. It may affect the comfort level of those around the individual, but determining the actual affect on other players is not required to apply this penalty.

Examples

1. A player uses excessively vulgar and profane language.
2. A player taunts his opponent for making a bad play.
3. A player leaves excessive trash in the play area after leaving the table.
4. A player appeals to the Head Judge before waiting for the Floor Judge to Issue a ruling.
5. A player inappropriately demands to a judge that his/her opponent receive a penalty.
6. A player fails to meet basic hygiene standards.

Philosophy

All participants should expect a safe and enjoyable environment at a tournament, and a participant needs to be made aware if his/her behavior is unacceptable so that this environment may be maintained.

In addition to the Written Warning, the player must correct the problem immediately or face upgraded penalties for the repeated infractions. A judge may upgrade repeated Unsporting Conduct: Minor infractions for different offenses.

Any Unsporting Conduct: Minor infraction that is considered especially egregious should be upgraded to Unsporting Conduct: Major or another applicable more severe violation. The Head Judge may make this change with standard reasons for deviations.

Penalty

Bushi League: Verbal Warning
Samurai League: Written Warning

5.B Unsporting Conduct: Major

Definition

Unsporting Conduct: Major infractions fall into three basic categories:

- Failing to follow the a direct instruction from a tournament official
- Insulting another person based on his/her race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Aggressive or violent behavior that is not directed at another person or person's property.

Examples

1. A player is asked to leave a play area and is still watching a match (even another match) a few minutes later.
2. A player continues to argue with the Head Judge about a ruling after being asked to stop.
3. A player uses a racial slur against his/her opponent.
4. After losing a match, a player throws his/her cards onto the table and knocks his/her chair over in anger.
5. A player picks up one of his/her tokens that has been removed from the game and tosses it across the room.

Philosophy

Officials should expect their instructions to be followed without needing to issue an interim warning. This only applies to specific and directed instructions. Failure to follow general announcements is handled through specific infractions or in Tournament Error: Failure to Follow Official Instruction.

Hate speech and other insults targeted at a protected class indicate a deeper issue and must be dealt with swiftly. Even if unfounded, they may be offensive to spectators or other nearby individuals. Local areas may have additional protected classes that fall under this category.

Undirected aggressive behavior needs to be curtailed. It is disruptive, can leave a lasting negative impression on those around, and may turn to directed aggressive behavior if not dealt with swiftly. Care should be taken not to escalate the situation if at all possible. The player may need to be removed from the area to receive the penalty and may need a few moments to cool down.

The player must correct the behavior immediately, and be expected to refrain from similar behavior or face more severe penalties. A judge may upgrade repeated Unsporting Conduct: Major infractions for different offenses.

Penalty

Bushi League: Game Loss
Samurai League: Game Loss

5.C Unsporting Conduct: Bribery and Wagering

Definition

Bribery occurs when a player offers an incentive to entice an opponent into conceding, drawing or changing the results of a match, or accepts such an offer. Refer to the AEG Floor Rules Document for a more detailed description of what constitutes bribery.

Wagering occurs when a player or spectator at a tournament places a bet on the outcome of a tournament, match or any portion of a tournament or match. The wager does not need to be monetary, nor it is relevant if a player is not betting on his/her own match.

Examples

1. A player offers his/her opponent \$100 to concede the match.
2. A player offers his/her opponent a card in exchange for a draw.
3. A player asks for a concession in exchange for a prize split.
4. Two players agree that the winner of the match will be able to choose a rare out of the other person's deck to keep after the match.
5. Two spectators place a bet on the number of games that will be needed to decide a final match.

Philosophy

Bribery and wagering disrupt the integrity of the tournament, are strictly forbidden and in some cases may break local laws.

At a Bushi League event, the Head Judge may downgrade the penalty to Game Loss if he/she believes that the player committing the infraction was not aware that what he/she was doing was illegal.

Penalty

Bushi League: Disqualification
Samurai League: Disqualification

5.D Unsporting Conduct: Aggressive Behavior

Definition

A player acting in a threatening way towards others or their property.

Examples

1. A player threatens to strike another player.
2. A player pulls a chair out from under another player, causing him/her to fall.
3. A player makes threats against a judge after receiving a ruling.
4. A player tears up a card belonging to another player.
5. A player intentionally over turns a table.

Philosophy

The safety of all people at an event is of paramount importance. There will be no tolerance of physical abuse or intimidation.

In all cases the offender should be asked to leave the venue.

Penalty

Bushi League: Disqualification
Samurai League: Disqualification

5.E Unsporting Conduct: Theft

Definition

A player steal material from the event, such as cards or tournament equipment. This includes materials from both players and the event staff.

Examples

1. A player in a draft pockets a foil rare instead of passing it despite having already chosen a card for his draft deck.
2. A player steals prize support from the event staff or from another player.
3. A player steals the table number, table cloth or other material related to the event.
4. A player realizes he/she has a previous opponents card(s), and hides the fact instead of telling a tournament official and/or the previous opponent.

Philosophy

Players enter a tournament expecting that their materials will be protected. This does not absolve players from their responsibility to keep an eye on their possessions, but they should expect to be able to retain the materials they began with or were given during the event. Other instances of theft

not involving tournament materials are the responsibility of the Tournament Organizer, though judges are encouraged to help in any way possible.

The offender should be asked to leave the venue by the organizer and if needed appropriate legal authorities should be notified.

Penalty

Bushi League: Disqualification

Samurai League: Disqualification

Section 6: Cheating

This section deals with some intentionally committed infractions that can often give a player a significant advantage.

In almost all cases Cheating results in Disqualification. The Head Judge may downgrade these penalties to Game Loss if he/she believes that the player committing the infraction was not aware that the behavior was illegal. This may only be done in Bushi Level events as cheating is universally not tolerated.

6.A Cheating: Stalling

Definition

A player intentionally plays slowly in order to take advantage of the time limit. In the event the action was not intentional the infraction is Tournament Error: Slow Play instead.

Examples

1. A player has 2 Holdings in his/her Dynasty provinces at the end of turn, no options available to significantly affect the game and spends excessive time "thinking" about what to do to eat up time on the clock.
2. A player is ahead in games of a best two-out-of-three match and significantly slows down his pace of play so the opponent has little chance to catch up.
3. A player playing slowly appeals a warning in an attempt to gain advantage by using the extra appeal time to make a play decision.
4. A player intentionally exceeds the pregame time limit before the third game in an attempt to make it harder for his/her opponent to win within the time limit.
5. A player losing a game starts slowing down the pace of play in an attempt to run out the clock.

Philosophy

If a player is stalling, the integrity of the match is compromised and he/she will face a serious penalty.

Penalty

Bushi League: Disqualification
Samurai League: Disqualification

6.B Cheating: Fraud

Definition

A person intentionally and knowingly violates or misrepresents rules, procedures, personal information or any other relevant tournament information. Note that Fraud, like most cheating, is determined by an investigation and will often appear on the surface as a Game Play Error or Tournament Error.

Additionally, it is Fraud if a player notices an offense in their match and does not immediately call attention to it.

Examples

1. A player enters a tournament under an assumed name in an attempt to manipulate results.
2. A player alters the results of a match after the match is over.
3. A player lies to a tournament official in order to gain or keep an advantage.
4. A player lies about his/her honor total to either his/her opponent or a tournament official
5. A player observes his/her opponent make an illegal play but does not call a judge because it is to his/her advantage.
6. A spectator gives false or misleading information to a tournament official that helps another player to cheat.

Philosophy

There will be zero tolerance for this type of activity. One does not need to be a player in a game to commit Fraud. In particular, spectators watching a game must not provide false or misleading information if asked.

A player must be aware that he/she has committed an error in representation in order for the infraction to be Fraud. For example, a player targeting a personality with 4 chi with Planted Evidence without having a Ninja in play has not committed Fraud if he/she forgot that Planted Evidence can only target a personality with 3 chi unless he/she has Ninja personality in play, even though the action was intentional and illegal. It is only Fraud if a judge believes he/she was aware and hoping that his/her opponent would miss it.

Penalty

Bushi League: Disqualification
Samurai League: Disqualification

6.C Cheating: Hidden Information Violation

Definition

A player, spectator or other tournament participant intentionally and illegally seeks or reveals information in an attempt to gain advantage. A player has not committed an infraction if the information was revealed to them by his or her opponent accidentally, nor is he or she required to advise an opponent who may be doing so, as long as he or she does not go to excessive lengths to take advantage of this.

Examples

1. A player in a draft intentionally reveals a card he/she drafted to another player during the draft.
2. A player in a draft intentionally peeks at the cards from which his/her neighbor is selecting.
3. A player intentionally peeks at the top card of his/her deck when his/her opponent is not looking.
4. A player intentionally looks at the opponent's cards while shuffling or cutting.

Philosophy

Hidden information is a fundamental part of the play experience of many games, and attempting to undermine it violates the integrity of the tournament. Note that, in general, players are allowed to reveal information that is hidden to their opponents unless it is explicitly banned by the rules of the format.

Penalty

Bushi League: Disqualification
Samurai League: Disqualification

6.D Cheating: Manipulation of Game Materials

Definition

A player physically manipulates game materials (cards, dice, sleeves, etc.) illegally to try to gain an advantage.

Examples

1. A player changes the order of the cards in his/her deck during a search and does not sufficiently randomize afterwards.
2. A player marks all of his/her Holdings with a thumbnail mark on the corner of the sleeve.

3. A player draws extra cards when his/her opponent is not looking.
4. A player in a draft adds cards to his/her card pool.

Philosophy

There is no tolerance for such blatant disregard for the rules. In many cases the only distinction between Cheating: Manipulation of Game Materials and some lesser offense is if the offense was made intentionally.

Penalty

Bushi League: Disqualification

Samurai League: Disqualification

Section 7: Penalty Quick Reference Chart

Category	Name	Bushi Penalty	Samurai Penalty
Deck Error	Failure to Follow Construction Guidelines	Game Loss	Game Loss
Deck Error	Illegal Deck List	Written Warning	Written Warning
Deck Error	Deck vs. Deck List Mismatch	Written Warning	Written Warning
Game Play Error	Incorrect Representation	Verbal Warning	Verbal Warning
Game Play Error	Illegal Game State	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Game Play Error	Missed Trigger	Verbal Warning	Verbal Warning
Game Play Error	Failure to Reveal	Written Warning	Game Loss
Game Play Error	Looking at Extra Cards	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Game Play Error	Drawing Extra Cards	Written Warning	Game Loss
Game Play Error	Improper Drawing at Start of Game	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Game Play Error	Failure to Discard	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Game Play Error	Game Rule Violation	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Game Play Error	Failure to Maintain Game State	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Tournament Error	Tardiness	*Special	*Special
Tournament Error	Outside Assistance	Written Warning	Game Loss
Tournament Error	Slow Play	Written Warning	Written Warning
Tournament Error	Insufficient Randomization	Written Warning	Game Loss
Tournament Error	Failure to Follow Official Announcements	Written Warning	Written Warning
Tournament Error	Draft Procedure Violation	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Tournament Error	Marked Cards	Written Warning	Game Loss
Unsporting Conduct	Minor	Verbal Warning	Written Warning
Unsporting Conduct	Major	Game Loss	Game Loss
Unsporting Conduct	Bribery and Wagering	Disqualification	Disqualification
Unsporting Conduct	Aggressive Behavior	Disqualification	Disqualification
Unsporting Conduct	Theft	Disqualification	Disqualification
Cheating	Stalling	Disqualification	Disqualification
Cheating	Fraud	Disqualification	Disqualification
Cheating	Hidden Information Violation	Disqualification	Disqualification
Cheating	Manipulation of Game Materials	Disqualification	Disqualification

*See listing for full explanation.