

# The Spoils - Judge Behavior Document v1.53

by Judge of Great Justice: Terence Jason Dorman



The purpose of this document is to outline how a Judge should behave when running a Spoils event, regardless of whether it is sanctioned or not.

Any judge(s) involved with a Spoils event are a direct reflection of The Spoils, Arcane Tinmen, The Spoils Community, and the venue hosting the event and should act accordingly. It is imperative that the judge(s) act in an appropriate manner to ensure the integrity of the event as well as the fun of the players involved.

## **IMPORTANT RESOURCES TO USE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS DOCUMENT**

The Spoils Rulebook

The Spoils Comprehensive Rules Reference

The Spoils Tournament Policy

The Spoils Penalty Guidelines

The Spoils Tournaments FAQ

The Spoils Judges FAQ

## **Knowledge**

- A judge should do his best to have updated knowledge of the rules.
  - Though of course desirable, complete knowledge of the rules is not required at lower level events.
- Judges should be able to quickly find the answers to questions they can not immediately answer
  - It is suggested that a copy of the most recent version of the Comprehensive Rules Reference be on hand at any event (be it a hard copy or on a computer) so that it may be referred to if need be.
- Tip: Judges are encouraged to be active on The Spoils forums, whether it be posting there or just reading the forums.

## **Turnaround Times**

- Any tournament will benefit from running smoothly, efficiently, and fast.
- "Turnaround Time" in a tournament is the amount of time it takes between two portions of a tournament (rounds, deckbuilding, deck registering).
- A judge should always make his best effort to reduce turnaround times in a tournament.
- Tip: Be active and collect decks/deck registrations as soon as players finish them rather than all at once.
- Tip: Enter match results as soon as they are reported.
- Tip: Post pairings in a manner accessible to all players so that they may be seated quickly.

## **Tournament Level**

- Level 0 Tournament – Casual Play: Open gaming, store-run events, house-rules tournaments, basically anything that is un-sanctioned.
- Level 1 Tournament – ASS Events and Local Sanctioned Tournaments: These are the lowest level ranked events sanctioned by The Spoils. At this level (and onward) game rules should be enforced but loosening the penalty guidelines is encouraged. These events are meant to be fun and extremely casual with major penalties rarely (if ever) enacted.
- Level 2 Tournament – Seasonal Championships (Limited and Constructed): At this level the game rules should be enforced whenever possible as prizes begin to escalate at this level. The event should still be fun and casual but it is important that all players feel they are in a fair and just environment. The penalty guidliness can be loosened a little bit but should definitely still be

considered.

- Level 3 Tournament – Special Tournaments: Events of this caliber are likely to be found at major gaming events such as Gen-Con and Origins. These are events with above average prizes up for grabs (video game systems, music players, televisions, gift-cards, etc). At this level (and onward) both the game rules and penalty guidelines should be enforced normally and as they are written. It is still important for all players to have fun, however, so make sure the attitude and environment of the event is as fun as possible.
- Level 4 Tournaments – States: State events are the first level of major competitive play found in The Spoils. The States level is where events are likely to be populated by tournament players and prize seekers (as well as those who love the game).
- Level 5 Tournament – Nationals and Worlds: These are prestige level events with large prizes and generally large fields of players. While these events are serious in terms of competition and prizes, it should be remembered that all events are meant to be fun. With this in mind, however, rules should be strictly enforced in events of this level.
- A judge should always take the level of the tournament into consideration.
- A judge should provide the same level of attention to all events, regardless of the tournament level.

### **Professionalism**

- Judges and organizers should always conduct themselves as professionally and properly as possible.
- Judges should try to act in a manner in accordance with the desires of The Spoils, Tournament Organizer, and venue.
- Judges should always encourage and maintain fair play amongst all players.
- Judges should be available for all players equally.
- Judges should always be unbiased in all proceedings.
- Judges should speak and conduct themselves in a proper and respectful manner.
- Judges should treat all others in the event fairly and with respect..
- Judges should be aware of their player community and act accordingly.
- With this said, Judges should always be looking to provide a positive attitude towards the event and encourage everyone to have fun.
- Remember: Have fun judging! Events should be enjoyable for everyone, including the judges.

### **Punctuality**

- Be on time when arriving for your event.
  - Arrive early so that you may assist the Tournament Organizer or answer any questions your players may have.
- Strive to be on top of tournament times, including round start, round end, deck construction time (for limited formats), drafting, and any possible breaks.
  - Tip: Have a round clock available that is easily viewable by all players and judges.
- Tip: At the beginning of the tournament announce the timetable for the tournament, including round times, number of rounds, and any breaks which may have been planned.
- Tip: When each round begins make it clear what time the round will end rather than informing the players how long the round is (for example: state "the round will end at 3:45" rather than "you have half an hour").

### **Attire**

- Dress in a manner that indicates your status as a judge.
  - Some possible examples would be an official Spoils judge t-shirt/jersey, a judge patch, or a nametag.

- Formal wear is not required of judges.
- Judges can dress casually but should be sure to make it known that they are a judge however they can, no matter how simple it may be.

### **Availability**

- A judge should do his best to be available for questions, comments, and/or concerns at all times.
  - A judge should be ready and available from the start of the tournament all the way through to the end, including (but not limited to): player registration, deck registration, deck building, swiss-rounds, playoff drafting, playoff rounds, prize distribution, and any breaks that may occur during the tournament.
- It is recommended that judges take the time to walk the floor and look over games as they are in progress.
- If a judge is also a store employee and/or occupied in a game when a ruling is needed and can not immediately address the situation the judge can ask the players to pause the game and will grant them extra time on the round while he is occupied.

### **Language**

- Judges should always speak in a civil and polite manner.
- Harsh or foul language should be avoided.

### **Strategy**

- Judges should refrain from discussing strategy with the players during the course of a tournament; this includes avoiding giving drafting tips, sealed deck strategy, or discussion of any kind of play strategy.
- It is important for the judge to answer rules questions objectively with reference only to the rules, not to the game state.
- If a player asks a rules question in regards to strategy the judge must make it clear that he can not answer strategy questions and can only answer questions regarding the rules and tournament policy.

### **Unbiased Rulings**

- A judge should never act or make a decision based on any bias he may have.
- Judges should be mindful that they are representing themselves, the venue, and The Spoils as a community and company.
- Any bias is negative towards the gaming experience and should be ignored at all times.
- Judges should be fair to all players.
- Judges should always act in accordance with The Spoils Rules and Guidelines.

### **Being a Judge Outside an Event**

- Judges should be aware that they are still considered authority figures even outside of event and should watch their bias outside of events as well.
- Judges should always strive to improve the quality of an event whether or not he is actively judging it. This can be accomplished by assisting active judges (handling results while he is on the floor, running an errand, grabbing food, etc.), answering general player questions, and providing a positive attitude regarding the event, the players, and The Spoils as a whole.
- Judges are encouraged to participate on The Spoils forums at [www.thespoils.com/spoils](http://www.thespoils.com/spoils), answering player questions and making suggestions regarding tournament rules, policy, or game rules.