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 **CLUB MEMBER’S HANDBOOK**

**PART 1 - CLUB RULES**

**1. COPE FOUNDATION**

The Cope Foundation complex contains a 24 hour residential care centre for individuals with severe and profound learning difficulties. This centre is within 50 metres of the club premises and it is therefore imperative that the club members are aware of this and behave accordingly while attending the training and competitions. The general environs of the Cope Foundation are not to be considered as part of the Club. They are private property as far as the table tennis club is concerned and may only be used for access.
In this respect this Constitution will be implemented without exception and breaches will not be tolerated.

**2. RULES FOR CONDUCT OF TRAINING**

2.1 All training sessions will be supervised by either a qualified coach or a member of the Committee. In the case of players under 18 a parent or family member will be required to attend sessions. In the case of Special Olympic (SO) members training sessions may also be supervised by registered SO volunteers on the basis of a maximum ratio of 4 players to 1 volunteer.

2.2 Access for special training sessions may be arranged through the Committee.

2.3 The players are responsible for setting up the tables and nets. The players are also expected to take down and put away the tables, nets and balls in the designated storage area when the session is over. Supervision, where necessary, will be provided to SO players by Club volunteers.

2.4 Players must be on time for training. This means ready to start training, and not just arriving at the Club.
Players arriving late, without prior permission, will not take part in formal training.
Players must wear appropriate clothing e.g. T-Shirt, shorts or tracksuit, sports shoes. The wearing of the Club T-Shirt for competitions is mandatory. Any person who receives Club kit advertising a sponsor's name is obliged to wear it when representing the Club in any match or tournament, for the duration of the sponsorship period, and agreement to play for the Club is deemed to be agreement to wear any kit thus provided.
Players are expected to have a suitable flat drink in a suitable container - "junk food" is not permitted.
Players are expected to attend all prescribed sessions.
Players must notify their coach if they cannot attend training.
Players must remain for the full session.
Players are expected to enter tournaments as prescribed by the Club.
Players who do not obey coaches’ instructions will take no further part in the training session and the parents will be notified to come and collect them.

Please take note that the toilets in this Club are available to other users of the facilities at Beech Hill e.g. the soccer club. Under age players will be expected to inform the coach of their wish to use the toilet and when they have returned from the toilet.

2.5 The Club reserves the right not to appoint a coach to, or enter into competition, a player who has contravened these rules.

2.6 During training players must remain within the environs of the Club unless under the supervision of the coach in charge. The environs of the Club are defined as the sports halls.

2.7 Under no circumstances may Club property be removed without the consent of the Committee.

2.8 Any member who causes loss or damage, other than accidental, shall make good such loss.

2.9 The hallways and changing areas must be kept clean and tidy.

2.10 Only relevant food and drink will be permitted in the halls and changing areas of the Club. During tournaments and training camps designated eating areas will be provided. Any food waste or wrapping must be placed in the bins provided. Any spillage of food and drink must be cleaned up immediately.

2.11 Under no circumstances will alcohol, tobacco and any other substance prohibited by either the law of the land, TTI (Table Tennis Ireland), SOI (Special Olympics Ireland) or the Cope Foundation be tolerated in the environs of the Club nor will consumption of any of these substances by any member during ANY club activities be permitted.

2.12 Any member of the Club found to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other banned substance will face immediate expulsion from the Club.

2.13 **Club Training Times**

Monday: 7.00 pm - 10.00 pm (7.00 pm – 8.30 pm for under age players)

Wednesday: 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm (Special Olympics players)

Thursday: 7.00 pm - 10.00 pm (7.00 pm – 8.30 pm for under age players)

Sunday: 11.00 am - 1.00 pm (Integrated Session)

**3. BEHAVIOUR**

3.1 **All members need to have read the *Club Code of Ethics*, which sets out the Club policy and procedures with regard to child protection for under age members and the safeguarding of vulnerable adult members. A summary of the main points of the Code is contained in Part 3 of this handbook.**

**4. SOCIAL MEDIA**

4.1Members will be asked, in the membership application form, to opt in or opt out of giving permission to the Club for their photographs to be posted on the Club website and/or Facebook page. In the case of underage and intellectually impaired players, parental/family consent will be required.

**PART 2 – EXTRACT FROM CLUB CONSTITUTION**

**12. AFFILIATION**

12.1 The club shall be affiliated to TTI and SOI on an annual basis, including payment of an affiliation fee. The Club affairs shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules and Policies governing TTI and SOI. The Club and its members shall no longer be affiliated if it fails to submit relevant affiliation documentation and pay the annual fee or any other prescribed levy by the specified due date.

12.2 The club recognises and pledges to uphold the Code of Ethics for Good Practice for Children's Sport as published by the Irish Sports Council and the Rules & Policies of SOI.

12.3 Members who wish to compete in tournaments arranged by the TTI, or its subsidiaries, and/or SOI must be affiliated to either the TTI, SOI or a kindred association.

12.4 All integrated Club training sessions and other activities, where the involvement of all Club players is concerned, will be conducted under the Rules of TTI.

12.5 All training sessions and other activities, where the sole participation of SO players is concerned, will be conducted under the Rules of SOI.

**13. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

13.1 Membership of the Club will be open to all persons who are deemed eligible under the rules of TTI. Membership shall be granted on the basis of the person completing and submitting a membership form, along with the appropriate membership fee, to the Club Secretary.

13.2 All applications will be ratified by the Committee before membership is confirmed. These applications may be made at any time before or during the Membership Year.

13.3 Acceptance of membership of and participation in any Club activities by any person is at the discretion of the Committee, however, the Committee shall not refuse application for membership on the grounds of race, gender, religion, politics or ability.

**14. MEMBERSHIP**

14.1 There shall be the following definitions of ordinary membership:

Senior Member: a person who has filled out a membership form and paid the full membership fee in respect of the current membership year and is only eligible to play in senior ranking tournaments under TTI regulations.

Junior Member: a person who has filled out a membership form and paid the junior membership fee in respect of the current membership year and is eligible to play in junior & senior ranking tournaments under TTI regulations.

Special Olympics Member: a person who has filled out a membership form and paid the SO membership fee in respect of the current membership year. Membership in the Club shall be open to any person with an intellectual impairment aged 6 years and over (who can train at age 6 years but cannot compete until age 8 years).

Associate Member: a person who has filled out a membership form and paid membership fee in respect of the current membership year at another club may be accepted as an associate member. Associate Members may not avail of club sponsorship or special rates.

Student Member: a senior player in full-time education who has filled out a membership form and paid the student membership fee in respect of the current membership year and is only eligible to play in senior ranking tournaments under TTI regulations.

Casual member: a person who has filled out a membership form but who only pays for each session as they attend.

 Non Playing Member: Family Members of player members and volunteers, who are registered with Cope Foundation and/or SO Ireland, shall be allowed to become members of the Club. Such members will complete a membership form but membership is free.

The Membership Year shall run from 1st January to 31st December. The period of membership shall be in respect of one Membership Year only.

The Committee may expel any member for behaviour likely to bring the Club into disrepute, or for non-payment of the annual subscription or other fees owed to the Club in accordance with the rules.

**15. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

15.1 The Committee shall consist of the following six functions as a minimum (functions may be combined). All persons on the Committee must have membership of the Club and must be 18 years or older:

Chairperson,
Secretary

Treasurer,

Membership Officer,
Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer,

Head Coach

15.2 The Committee may also have a Player Representative (s) and a Public Relations Officer enjoined.

15.3 The Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and serve from the end of the meeting at which they are elected until the end of the Annual General Meeting following.

15.4 Player Representatives will be elected by vote from among the player membership as follows and will serve until the end of the Annual General Meeting following;

1 x representative from mainstream players

1 x representative from Paralympic players

1 x representative from SO players

15.5 All other Committee positions will be filled by co-option and the persons involved will serve until the end of the Annual General Meeting following.

15.6 The Committee may fill a casual vacancy occurring during the season by co-option.

15.7 All Committee positions are for a two year duration and the same person may serve on the Committee for a maximum of six years. After six years a gap of one year is required before re-commencement of any Committee position.

**16 MEETINGS**

16.1 No member shall exercise more than one vote at any meeting.

16.2 Notice of General Meetings stating the time, place and agenda shall be communicated to members by the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

16.3 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be held whenever the Committee may deem such a meeting expedient, or, whenever a request by at least 25% of the members in writing is delivered to the Secretary. The specific reason for such a meeting must be included in the written request and no business, other than the specific reason for which the meeting is requested, shall be transacted at any EGM. At least 4 weeks’ notice will be required when submitting a request for an EGM.

**17. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

17.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be held once annually in any calendar year on a date decided by the Executive Committee.

17.2 Notice specifying the date, place and hour of the Annual General Meeting, together with the Agenda, shall be given by the Secretary to the Committee members and all members no later than fourteen days prior to the date of the meeting.

17.3 All members of the Club, and over 16 years of age, shall be entitled to attend General Meetings.

17.4 Every question at a General Meeting shall be determined by a simple majority, with the exception of a rule change which will require a two/thirds majority, of Members present and voting, each member having one vote.

17.5 Under 16 members’ voting rights will be expressed by parental proxy only.

17.6 In the case of an equality of votes for and against a motion, the chairman of the meeting shall exercise a casting vote.

17.7 The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be to:

Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any General Meetings held since the last Annual General Meeting;

Receive the accounts for the year from the Treasurer;

Receive the annual report of the Committee from the Secretary;

Elect the Officers of the Club;

Elect a delegate to attend and vote on behalf of the Club at TTI (Munster Branch) and national meetings of TTI.

Review Club membership rates and agree them for the forthcoming year;

Transact such other business received in writing by the Secretary from members 14 days prior to the meeting and included on the agenda.

Arising out of such other business to propose motions and nominations for any elective office for submission to the Annual General Meeting of TTI.

At all General Meetings, the chair will be taken by the Chairperson or, in their absence, by a deputy appointed by the Club or by members attending the meeting who are eligible to vote.

Decisions made at a General Meeting shall be by a simple majority of votes from those members attending the meeting. In the event of equal votes, the Chairperson shall be entitled to an additional casting vote.

A quorum for a General Meeting shall be ten per cent of members eligible to vote and at least three Committee members including two from Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Coach.

**18. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

18.1 This Constitution may only be amended at an AGM, or EGM specially called for that purpose.

18.2 Proposed alterations to the Club Constitution must be consistent with the Rules and Articles of Association of TTI.

18.3 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any member of the Club, and must be submitted to the Secretary in writing. Any proposed alterations to the Club Constitution may only be considered at a General Meeting, convened with the required written notice of the proposal. Any alteration or amendment must be proposed by a member of the Club and seconded by another member. Such alterations shall be passed if supported by not less than two-thirds of those members present at the meeting, assuming that a quorum has been achieved.

18.4 Amendments related to or affecting the Club Constitution may from time to time be passed at a General Meeting of TTI. In such circumstances the amendment shall be adopted by the Club and incorporated into this Constitution.

**19. ETHICS & BEHAVIOUR**

19.1 The Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the Club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Club and the guidelines contained in the Club’s Member’s Handbook.

19.2 Club policy and procedures for both child protection and the safe guarding of vulnerable adults is provided for in the Club’s Code of Ethics, a summary of which is included in Part 3.

**20. CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS**

20.1 All concerns and complaints will be handled in accordance with the Code of Ethics.

20.3 Any complaint by, or against, an underage or intellectually impaired member will require a family member, or family appointed advocate, to be present at any disciplinary meetings.

**PART 3 – SUMMARY OF CODE OF ETHICS**

1. This Code of Ethics outlines the minimum levels of behaviour that we require of

our members. The Code applies equally to players, coaches, volunteers, to parents and guardians and to our Club officials. While the promotion of the Code at Club

level may be seen as the responsibility of the Club’s Protection Officer, ultimately it is everybody’s responsibility to ensure that the Code is fully implemented.

 Breaches of our Code will unfortunately occur from time to time. This may happen

 as a result of carelessness, poor practice, lack of understanding or there may in

 some instances be deliberate or indeed calculated breaches of the Code.

2. Volunteers and Coaches

Should be positive during sessions and competitions, praise and encourage effort as well as results

Should put welfare of the player first, strike a balance between this and winning / results

Should encourage fair play and treat participants equally Should recognise developmental needs, ensuring activities are appropriate for the individual

 Should plan and prepare appropriately

Should have experience relevant to working with young or vulnerable people or hold up-to-date qualifications and be committed to the guidelines in this Code

 Should involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise

 Should keep a record of attendance at training and competitions

 **Should keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken (incident book)**

Should keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise

Should report any concerns in accordance with this Code’s reporting procedures

**Avoid spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others**

 **Avoid taking sessions alone**

 Avoid taking children on journeys alone in the car

Not use any form of punishment or physical force on a child

 Not take children to their home

Not exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward

Not engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and /or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child or vulnerable adult. This includes innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms

3. Under- age players/ Vulnerable adult players

All underage players are to be signed in by an adult who is responsible for them at all times during the training session. Any adult dropping off a few children must sign in each child and is responsible for them during training. If they wish to leave they need to inform the coach.

Please take note that the toilets in this Club are available to other users of the facilities at Beech Hill e.g. the soccer club. Under age players will be expected to inform the coach of their wish to use the toilet and when they return from the toilet.

No underage/ vulnerable adult player is to be left alone with a committee member when being dropped off or before being picked up at the Club.

4. Neither the Club nor any of its members shall discriminate in any way against another member of this club, any other club and its members, or any member of TTI and SO or member of the general public with regard to a gender, race, creed, skin colour, or ability. The Club expects members to show respect for fellow members. Rude or offensive behaviour, including the use of bad language, by one member towards another member will lead to expulsion from the Club. Failure to follow an instruction of a member of the Committee may lead to disciplinary action including expulsion from the Club.

5. Any concern in relation to possible misconduct, on the part of a Club member, should be brought to the attention of the Protection or Assistant Protection Officer. A complaint should be submitted directly to the Committee.

6. The Club membership application form and a duplicate form are contained within the Club Handbook. The Club secretary shall retain the duplicate membership form. The form will require a signature for permission to publish member’s names and photographs, to acknowledge that they have received a copy of the Club Handbook and that parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of under-age/ vulnerable players during trainings.

7. Note each adult member or parent/guardian of a member should take care to read and familiarise themselves with the Club Handbook, which includes their duplicate membership form, to ensure safety and proper conduct within the Club.