

Hi everyone!

Here is the longer version of my remarks around the incident.

I never wrote any statement of that sort before and this statement is a personal initiative, it wasn't requested by anyone (wotc or pastimes) or proofread by such organisations. I feel that with the noise around this topic the spectators deserve as many details as possible and to minimise the criticism on some of the staff. I was responsible for initiating that decision, I'm happy to be accountable to the community.

Anyways here goes :

- The player was not DQed but received a match loss. While I understand it put him out of the tournament, it meant he did receive his top4 prizes after winning the quarter finals as well as no repercussions with Wizards for a possible suspension.
- The infraction that led to the match loss was **Wagering**. In short, a side bet was confirmed to the judge staff by both parties of the bet (the player inside the event and a spectator/friend outside). Notably, it was not for bribery, collusion or anything along those lines. (Although it's the same category in IPG, the two reasons are very different)

#### About the decision making process :

I cannot stress enough how this decision was not taken lightly. I'll be honest, this kind of situation is not why I work events. I work for the Magic players to have a nice day and keep it fair, and I try to find solutions where everyone gets out of this happy. We took the time to ask the player and to their friend about this.

There was sadly no wiggle room for us here. I don't like doing this, and I didn't like doing it then. I'm not proud or happy for giving that penalty, and I will do it again if I'm in that situation again (and the rules are the same).

#### Why a match loss and not a DQ?

We chose to believe the player when they told us they believed it was allowed in the rules

- On one hand high level players are expected to know
- On the other hand, the way they quickly and openly admitted it and said they believed it was allowed led us to not escalate to Cheating and disqualification.

#### Why can't we just allow this?

These rules are set to protect the game and keep these events going (MTG premier events were banned in some countries) and I tried to be as clear as possible with the players about the expectations towards this event that this was not allowed during qualifiers and every round during the Top32.

I do get that things have evolved in various circuits and events around the world with some cases where splits are facilitated by private TOs. In the end, this was a premier event, the sponsor / organizer does not have to provide these cards for us. I believe we should respect their intentions or risk them canceling cool events.

Why is everyone talking about bribery/splits/collusion/equity?

There were indeed discussions before and during the event how to manage bribery. I can say openly that no penalties were given on these topics but it WAS discussed with players. I talked as transparently as I could to spectators and to players during the whole event to avoid any issue. I didn't expect AT ALL a Wagering issue to appear.

I understand that these two topics could be confused especially with the stress, unpleasantness and disappointment and I empathize with the player who posted this a few days ago. I hope no one in the community sends negative messages their way and they see the difference/correct their statement.

At the same time I hope these details will clarify a bit why we had to do this and reduce the noise and accusations of mishandling by the staff. I'm happy to reply to questions, please be nice to our overworked staff. We do our best.