

Pokemon GO Review Best Practices:

Information Gathering:

1. Request the players to describe **ISSUE(S)** to you. This is the most crucial part because the entire review hinges on the judge being able to confirm the issue happened. Without knowing what/when the issue was, the review may take a very long time and/or you may miss some critical issue that occurred.
 - a. If multiple issues occurred, ask them to provide you with all instances
 - b. If they say entire game was laggy, ask these followup questions:
 - i. Do you think you were losing turns?
 - ii. Do you think your opponent got extra moves?
 - iii. Did the general lag impact you making any plays i.e. throwing charged moves, switching, catching, etc?
2. Attempt to define players' **INTENT** should the game have worked correctly. Intent is extremely important during your final decision making process because this will drive whether or not the player would have had additional win condition(s) without the game issues.
 - a. Ask player what they were trying to do in the matchup before/when the lag happened, examples:
 - i. Were they trying to farm up energy then switch/catch?
 - ii. Were they trying to force a Charged Attack Priority (CAP)?
 - iii. Were they trying to get to the move and throw as fast as possible?
 - iv. Were they trying to farm a Pokemon down completely?
 - v. Were they just going to play out the matchup in a normal manner?

Review Process:

1. First confirm the **ISSUE(S)** actually occurred. Scrub through the footage yourself or have the competitor direct you through the instances of the game issues. Be sure to confirm the issues on both devices.
2. Confirm the **INTENT** described by the player. Examples:
 - a. If possible, validate they were clicking the switch button if they intended to catch or bank energy and swap out
 - b. If possible, validate they were tapping the correct charged move button if they intended to force CAP or KO opposing pokemon ASAP
3. Determine if the intended play was a realistic option for them.
 - a. Realistic:
 - i. Had lag not occurred, player could have farmed down opponent's pokemon prior to them reaching a move
 - ii. Had lag not occurred, Player could have reached charged move at the same time as Opponent and would have won CAP.
 - iii. Had lag not occurred, player could have swapped out to save energy/health for a different matchup
 - b. Unrealistic:

- i. Player claimed lag prevented them from getting to a move, however they would have reached move the same time as opponent and would have lost CAP
- ii. Player claims lag prevented a farm down, but opponents Pokemon would have reached a move regardless of lag
- iii. Player claimed lag prevented a catch, however opponent throw the charged move at a time where player's pokemon would have been mid-fast move

Determine **Impact**:

1. Determine if the intended plays were impactful and would have allowed for a different game outcome. When determining impact, try to consider all aspects of the game the lag may have impacted: energy, damage, alignment, shields, etc. Impact is the driving force for the final decision in reviews. In order to deliver a fair decision, we need to establish whether the issue significantly changes the game in question. Some examples of impactful v not:
 - a. Possible Impactful Scenarios
 - i. Player could have reached a final CM to KO Opponent's final pokemon had lag not occurred
 - ii. Player could have flipped a matchup and thus won alignment had lag not occurred
 - iii. Player could have obtained a crucial shield advantage had lag not occurred
 - b. Possible Unimpactful Scenarios
 - i. Player did not have enough health to reach a final move
 - ii. Player could have reached a move, but it would not have been enough to KO final pokemon
 - iii. Player could have caught the move but it would have resulted in an impossible to win alignment
 - iv. Player could have reached a charged move to KO a Pokemon, but another Pokemon in the back would have still won the game for the opponent.
2. Remember to consider the entire game state when determining impact. Just because an issue affects how 1 matchup between two pokemon is played out, doesn't mean the other pokemon can't render the issue unimpactful. As a general rule of thumb, we want to consider all aspects of the game, however we want to avoid extensively theorycrafting every possible game state that could have occurred.
3. This may be the most subjective piece of the puzzle and could end in grey areas quite often. In those situations, reach out to other judges for their input as well. You do not need to make all of your decisions alone.

Making the Ruling:

1. The rule of thumb when it comes to making a ruling requires answering these questions:

- a. Did the **Issue** described actually occur? If yes, this may be a potential rematch, so move onto the next question. If not, a rematch should not be granted.
 - b. Was the **Intent** of the player realistic? If yes, this may be a potential rematch, so move onto the next question. If not, a rematch should not be granted.
 - c. Was the issue **Impactful** to the outcome of the game? If yes, this should be ruled as a rematch. If not, a rematch should not be granted.
2. Always deliver your ruling in a well structured manner that clearly lays out the **Issue**, the **Intent**, the **Impact** and what your final decision is. A couple examples of how you can deliver the rulings:
 - a. I was able to confirm that Player A's Azumarill lagged one turn when coming to Mandibuzz. This prevented Azumarill from getting a bubble through on Mandibuzz's Aerial Ace. Then, once Mandibuzz switched out into Annihilape, Annihilape was able to Rage Fist Azumarill for the KO. If Azumarill had gotten the bubble through, Player A would have been able to reach Ice Beam to KO the Annihilape prior to it reaching a charged move. This impacted the outcome of the game because if Azumarill reaches the ice beam, it can KO the Annihilape and then bubble down the Mandibuzz afterwards. Due to this, a rematch will be played for this game.
 - b. I was able to confirm that the game stuttered for Player A when they attempted to catch the Earthquake from Clodsire onto their low HP Marowak, preventing them from making the catch. Player A was clicking to switch to the Marowak right when Player B was throwing the Earthquake. If the game had not stuttered, Player A would have made the catch, which would have KOed the Marowak. Then they could have come back in with Feraligatr and gotten to a Hydro Cannon to KO the Clodsire before the Clodsire would reach another move. Therefore, this will result in a rematch being played.
3. Once you are done delivering the ruling, **ALWAYS** let the players know that they may appeal your decision to a Head Judge. You can always end your rulings with sometime along the lines of: "If you disagree with my decision, or would like to have it looked at further, you may appeal to a Head Judge. Please let me know if you would like to appeal and I will bring them over."

Not all reviews are very straightforward. In some, the issues may be scattered around or very early in the game. This may make defining Intent and Impact very difficult. In others, a player may have difficulty communicating the issue to you due to issue complexity, nerves or whatever other reason. This is meant to help you follow a structured process when doing a review. You are still trusted by your team and leadership to use your own discretion in situations where you may not be able to strictly follow these best practices. That is okay and encouraged. The idea of this is just to help, at the minimum, ask the right questions so that you are making the most well informed decision you can make.