



Professional & Amateur Pinball Association Pinburgh Rules

The Pinburgh Rules are tournament specific alterations built upon PAPA's larger competitive ruleset found at [Competition Rules – Replay Foundation](#) . Any situations not addressed in the Pinburgh rules default to the main set of PAPA Competition Rules. Any tournaments, leagues, or organizations wishing to copy our rules for their own purposes should adopt the primary PAPA ruleset first. All organizations copying our rules are reminded that they are licensed under the Creative Commons, which requires including a reference link back to the original source: [PAPA.org](#).

Pinburgh is the Match Play Championship pinball tournament operated by PGH Pinball under license from the Replay Foundation and held at Rezzanine Esports in Bridgeville PA. This document specifies the official operating rules and regulations of this tournament.

Event coordinators and designated officials may not participate in the tournament.

All players, winning or not, grant PGH Pinball (organizer), Replay Foundation (licensor), and any and all other event sponsors and organizers, individual and collective, the right to use their names, scores, and likenesses for the purpose of promoting this tournament as well as other events. This right is transferable without restriction.

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I. QUICK OVERVIEW

Pinburgh is Match Play For All: three days of match play pinball competition, with no players eliminated until the third day. All players compete in groups on Day 1, with the quality of their play determining whether they go into Division A, Division B, or Division C for Day 2. All players compete in groups on Day 2 within their division, with the quality of their play determining whether they advance to finals. Qualifiers compete for the division prizes on Day 3.

II. OVERALL COMPETITION

1. Divisions of Play

At the beginning of play, all players compete together, without divisions. At the end of play on Day 1, skill divisions are assigned according to rankings and restrictions. Division assignments are based on a player's win/loss record and certain skill division restrictions (see below).

2. Skill Division Restrictions

Division A Restrictions

- Top 50 IFPA WPPR Ranking Overall

Division B Restrictions

- Top 150 IFPA WPPR Ranking Overall

Division C Restrictions

- None

Any player who qualifies for playoffs in any division will be restricted to that division or higher the following year.

Tournament officials reserve the right to modify these restrictions as they deem necessary. Only a player's highest restriction will apply. In all cases, players will be informed before or during play on Day 1 of any skill division restriction that applies to them, and a list of these restrictions will be made available to all players. Note that, for example, a player with a Division B restriction may still qualify in Division A as a result of strong play on Day 1.

3. Schedule

The full tournament schedule will be posted on Pinburgh.com

All players must check in by 9:30 am on Day 1. Players who are not checked in by 9:30 am will be removed from the tournament, and alternate players from the waitlist may be added. Online pre-registration is required.

All players must be onsite for the start of Session 1 at 10 am after checking in by 9:30 am. The penalties for being late for a session can be found under **Player Conduct** below.

There will be a break for dinner after Session 3, with Session 4 starting at 6:15 pm.

4. Prizes

The guaranteed cash prize package with a full field of players for Pinburgh is as follows:

	Division A	Division B	Division C
1st Place	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$800
2nd Place	\$2,700	\$1,500	\$500
3rd Place	\$1,800	\$1,000	\$350
4th Place	\$1,400	\$800	\$250
5th – 8th	\$800	\$400	\$200
9th – 16th	\$400	\$200	\$150
17th-24th	\$300	\$150	\$50
Top Qualifier	\$500	\$300	\$200

The champion also wins the Pinburgh Trophy! Other players who make the final four in Divisions A, Division B, and Division C receive plaques.

Any player with a perfect 12-0 record in any session will receive a commemorative medal. Medals can be claimed at the tournament desk on Saturday afternoon.

III. DAY 1: FULL FIELD PLAY

1. Day 1 Format

Day 1's match play will be a series of five sessions of multiplayer pinball, with multiple games played per session. In each session, opponents are determined based on each player's win-loss record. At the end of the five sessions, players will advance to their respective skill-based divisions.

2. Playing a Session

During each session, all players will be assigned to a group. A set of four machines will be randomly assigned, which will usually consist of one dot-matrix machine (DMD), one electromechanical machine (EM), one late solid state (LSS) or early dot-matrix machine, and one early solid state (ESS) machine. Unless a special circumstance arises, players will not be assigned to the same machine set twice. Games must be played in the order prescribed by the group's score sheet, since there are multiple groups playing on the same machine set. Players attempting to "leapfrog" another group or play their assigned machines out of order may receive a yellow or red card.

Players must go to their assigned groups promptly. If a player is missing, do not start play; inform tournament organizers of the missing player. Any player who is more than 10 minutes late for their group will be removed from the group, disqualified from the session, and will automatically receive a 0-12 record for the session.

Practice or warm-up time is not allowed for anyone during or between sessions. The only designated practice time is on the Wednesday before Pinburgh, as listed in the Pinburgh schedule. The best-seeded player within each group (the first player listed on the scoresheet) chooses their order of play for the first game. The remaining players choose their order of play, in descending order from best to worst seeding. For subsequent games, the last-place finisher of the previous game chooses their order of play for the next game. The remaining players choose their order of play, in ascending order of finish in the previous game (3rd place, then 2nd place, then 1st place).

All players will play their games and record the results. In any scenario where a player has already defeated his or her opponents and still has one ball left to play, that ball should be plunged but not played, as it cannot affect the results. A score must be recorded for the winning player. A player refusing to end their game under these circumstances may be given a yellow or red card by tournament officials.

Exact score ties between two or more players will be resolved with a one-ball playoff on the same game. In the case a one-ball playoff is needed players will play in the same order they played in on the tied game.

When all four games have been completed by a group, each player will have a win-loss record from the session. The best possible win-loss record for a session is 12-0 and the worst is 0-12. In three-player groups, win-loss records will be multiplied by a factor of 1.5. In the unlikely event of a two-player group, win-loss records will be multiplied by a factor of 3. In the even less likely event of a one-player group, that player will be assigned an existing 4-player group to "shadow", playing three of the same machines. Wins

and losses will be assigned for that player, competing against 4 opponents in each game, for a possible total of 4 points per game. Corresponding wins and losses will not accrue to players in the 4-player group.

A group must complete and sign its score sheet for the session, then return it to the Pinburgh tournament desk. While it is not necessary for the entire group to be present when returning a score sheet, delivery by more than one player is recommended. Please note that prompt entry of score sheets is essential to the timely progression of the tournament.

Once completed and signed, all score sheets are final. Please check the score sheet carefully before signing. Unsigned score sheets will be processed normally; if there is any dispute that necessitates a ruling, it must be brought to the attention of tournament officials immediately. Once seedings have been published for the next session, no changes can be made to prior recorded results, except to reverse any advantage a player may have gained from an incorrect score sheet. Tournament officials will not reverse any disadvantage a player receives by signing an incorrect score sheet.

Sessions are scheduled for 2 hours and 15 minutes. Please inform tournament officials immediately if a ruling is needed or if a game is malfunctioning. Move on to the next machine as soon as it is available.

3. Game Assignment

A list of the games used in the tournament will be available online in advance of the tournament, and on <http://pinburgh.com> during the tournament.

More than one group of players will be assigned to the same set of machines, and will play in a different order, so as to minimize delays. Groups may not skip or play machines out of order. In cases where a game in a group has malfunctioned, a new game may be assigned from the backup area, and the score sheet will indicate this.

4. Seeding Players

Before the first session, all players will be “seeded” in the tournament, using their overall WPPR ranking as of July 1st, 2025. Unranked players will be given the worst available seeds in no particular order.

Following each session, players will be “seeded” in the next session by their cumulative win-loss records, with the best win-loss record receiving the best seed. When seeding a session, ties in win-loss records will be broken by random draw.

5. Group Assignment

All players are assigned opponents for each session based on seeding. In each session, the field is “tiered” for assignment into groups, using predetermined tier sizes. Within each tier, groups are created generally using the best available seed, the worst available seed, and the two available seeds that are closest to the middle of the tier. The last tier in each session may have fewer players. For examples of how tiering works, please see <https://papa.org/competitions/competition-rules/pinburgh-groups/>

6. Division Assignment

At the end of Session 5, players will be assigned into their respective divisions.

The top third of the field of players, ranked by cumulative win-loss records, will qualify for Division A, rounded up. In the case of a 244 player Pinburgh, this would be the top 82 players.

The remaining players will be split between Division B and Division C.

Any player with a Division restriction will be added into that division regardless of their win-loss record.

In case of ties for Division A qualification, all players tied for the last spot will be placed in Division A for day 2.

For all other division qualification ties, players with the higher record after Session 4 will be placed in the higher ranked division. Further ties will be broken by higher record after Session 3, after Session 2, after Session 1, and by initial seeding.

IV. DAY 2: DIVISIONAL PLAY

1. Day 2 Format

Day 2's match play is identical to Day 1: a series of five sessions of multiplayer pinball (numbered 6 through 10), with multiple games played per session. In each session, opponents are determined based on a player's cumulative win-loss rank. At the end of the five sessions, top finishers will advance to Day 3's finals.

2. Playing a Session

Sessions on Day 2 play identically to Day 1.

Please remember: Once completed and signed, all score sheets are final. Please check the score sheet carefully before signing. Score sheets must be turned in as soon as possible, since prompt entry of score sheets is essential to the timely progression of the tournament.

3. Game Assignment

The assignment of games on Day 2 will be performed in the same fashion as on Day 1.

4. Seeding Players

Before Session 6, players will be "seeded" by their cumulative win-loss record from Day 1, with ties broken by random draw.

Following each session, players will be "seeded" in the next session by their cumulative win-loss record, with ties broken by random draw.

5. Group Assignment

In each session, the field will be "tiered" for assignment into groups, using predetermined tier sizes, in the same fashion as Day 1's sessions. Three-player matches will appear only within the lowest tier. For examples of how tiering works, please see

<https://papa.org/competitions/competition-rules/pinburgh-groups/>

6. Qualifying for Finals

At the end of Session 10, qualifiers will be determined by the best win-loss records from Sessions 1-10.

The top 24 players in each division will qualify for finals, with the top 8 receiving a first round bye.

In case of ties for Division A finals qualification or top qualifier, players will play a one game tiebreaker on a game chosen by a TD to break the tie.

For all other division finals qualification ties, players with the higher record after Session 4 will be placed in the higher ranked division. Further ties will be broken by higher record after Session 3, after Session 2, after Session 1, and by initial seeding.

All other ties for any position, qualifying or not, will be broken by the tied players' cumulative win-loss records after Session 9, then cumulative win-loss records after Session 8, and previous sessions' cumulative records as needed. In the unlikely event that players had the same win-loss record through all ten sessions, final position will be determined by the original seeding of the tournament.

V. DAY 3: FINAL ROUNDS

1. Final Rounds

Final rounds employ the same format as session play. All finalists, including finalists with byes, must check in before the first round. The deadline to check in is 20 minutes before the first round starts. Any player who is not checked in will be disqualified. Players will be moved up in rank, and alternate players will take the worst-seeded positions in the finals.

Any player electing to not participate in finals, or who misses check in, or who is disqualified from finals at any time for any reason, forfeits any potential prize payout.

Players in final rounds will be placed in four-player groups and play a four-game session in the same format as Sessions 1-10. The best-seeded player in the group will select from the available sets of machines for his or her group to play, or may elect to give up this choice to the next player. Choice of sets will then proceed through the remaining groups, in descending order of seeding, with the best-seeded player in each group making the choice. Each set of machines may be selected by a maximum of two groups. Some groups may not get to select a machine set.

As in regular Pinburgh sessions, the best-seeded player within each group chooses the order of play for the first game. The remaining players choose their order, in descending order of seeding. For subsequent games, the last-place finisher of the previous game chooses the order of play for the next game. The remaining players choose their order, in ascending order of finish in the previous game.

The top two of four players in each group, according to win-loss record, will advance to the next round, until the final four players are determined. These four players will play a final four-game session to determine the division winner. In case of a significant tie, a one-game playoff will be played on a machine randomly selected by tournament officials among finals machines in other machine sets, with the best-seeded player having the choice of play order. In case of a tie between the first and second-place finishers in a group, both players advance and a tiebreaker is not required.

VI. MALFUNCTIONS & RULINGS

Most malfunctions and rulings are governed by the full PAPA ruleset. The specific rules below supersede the full PAPA ruleset, found at <https://papa.org/competitions/competition-rules>.

1. Major Malfunctions

If a major malfunction occurs that will require significant repairs, tournament officials may declare a "Disabled Machine" (see section below). Because the tournament needs to move quickly from session to session, it is not possible to make significant repairs during a match. A new machine will be assigned to the group for immediate play, and the game in progress will be declared void.

In the event that two or more different major malfunctions take place during the same game, the machine will be declared "Disabled" and a new machine will be assigned to the group for immediate play. During final rounds, if the first machine in a set is disabled, the machine set selection process will be restarted, if possible.

2. Beneficial Malfunctions

Any situation which indicates the presence of a beneficial malfunction should be brought to the attention of tournament officials immediately. Any player who intentionally takes advantage of a significant beneficial malfunction may be given a score of zero by tournament officials.

Examples of significant beneficial malfunctions include a machine giving an unearned multiball by releasing locked balls, placing two balls in the plunger lane, or kicking additional balls into play when not an intended part of gameplay. In these situations, the player must immediately drain all additional balls, or trap the balls so that a tournament official can do so. Any player who intentionally plays an unearned multiball will be given a score of zero by tournament officials.

If a beneficial malfunction has significantly increased the score of any player(s), affected players' scores will be void, as described in "Catastrophic Malfunctions". Tournament officials will determine whether it is appropriate to continue play on the same machine or declare it Disabled.

3. Disabled Machines

Any tournament machine that breaks down during play will be attended to by technicians as soon as possible. In the event that a breakdown cannot be repaired, the machine may be taken out of service temporarily or permanently. Results on that machine from prior sessions will not be disqualified, and the machine will be replaced by another machine selected by tournament officials.

Tournament officials may choose to disable a machine for any reason during or between sessions of play. Typical reasons may include malfunctions, incorrect settings, or unusually long playtime.

VII. MACHINE SETTINGS

Most rules governing machine settings are identical to the full PAPA ruleset. The specific rules below supersede the full PAPA ruleset, found at <https://papa.org/competitions/competition-rules>.

1. Software Settings

Please note that older machines may have different settings, such as allowable extra balls, five-ball play, or a Tilt penalty of “entire game” rather than “current ball”. Players will play the game “as is”, even if there is no sign indicating an expected change in machine behavior. For example, if a machine is set for five-ball play, groups may not end the game after three balls. Electromechanical machines will generally be set for five-ball play, but if they are set for three, they will be played as three. Please contact tournament officials if a game is acting in an unusual way.

A few machines have been designated as single-player games, even though they may support multiple players, due to “catch up” features or other issues with significant competitive impact. These machines will have signs on them, and will be marked as such on score sheets.

VIII. PLAYER CONDUCT

Most rules governing player conduct are identical to the full PAPA ruleset. The specific rules below supersede the full PAPA ruleset, found at <https://papa.org/competitions/competition-rules>.

1. Absences

When session groups are announced, all players must proceed immediately to their assigned set of machines and check-in with the other players in their assigned groups. If a player is absent, tournament officials must be notified promptly. An announcement may or may not be made to attempt to locate the absent player. Any player absent 10 minutes after a session's start time will be disqualified from the session, and will receive a score of 0-12.

When a player is determined to be absent, tournament officials will alter the affected group appropriately, recognizing that other groups will have begun play and should not be unduly disrupted. 4-player groups will continue as 3-player groups.

Under extraordinary circumstances due to multiple player absences, a 2-player group or even a 1-player group may be forced to play. In the event of a 2-player group, four machines will be played and the record will be tripled, yielding the standard point opportunity to each player. In the event of a 1-player group, the player will be assigned to "shadow" an existing 4-player group and play three of the same machines. Wins and losses will be assigned for that player, competing against 4 opponents in each game, for a possible total of 4 points per game. Corresponding wins and losses will not accrue to players in the 4-player group.

If a player who was present initially cannot be found during the play of a group, tournament officials must be notified promptly. That player will be allowed no more than 3 minutes to return. If he or she does not return, that player will receive a score of zero for the game. Each ball for that player will be plunged and left unplayed. Any player who has more than one such absence may be disqualified from the tournament.

Any player who is absent at the beginning of two consecutive sessions without notifying tournament officials of an emergency in advance will be disqualified from the tournament.

Any player who is not present at the beginning of finals will be disqualified and replaced by the next lower-ranked player. Any player who is absent during final rounds will be subjected to the rules described above for absences during group play.

At no time may any person be substituted for an absent player.

2. Disallowed Practice

Practicing on any tournament machine except during the designated times on Thursday morning is strictly forbidden. Practice will be treated as interference and penalized accordingly. Note in particular that there is no practice time for finalists at any time on Saturday.

3. Coaching

Coaching of any player while the player is at a machine is not allowed and may lead to sanctions, such as removing the coach from the area, voiding the player's game in progress, or issuing a yellow or red card. Spectators and other players must refrain from commenting on play in a way that affects the current game.

4. Reference Materials

No player may use reference materials of any kind, whether printed or electronic, while playing his or her ball. Reference materials may be used at any other time, however, even during a session or final round.

5. Disqualifications

Any player disqualified from a game for any reason will cease play on that game immediately and will receive a score of 0.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

All miscellaneous rules are identical to the full PAPA ruleset, found at <https://papa.org/competitions/competition-rules>. Additional, superseding rules are listed below.

1. Special Score Handling

Any player who reaches the maximum possible score on a machine that has such a limit, will receive that score as their total. If two or more players reach the maximum possible score on the same game, those players will be considered tied for that game.

During any session or finals, any player who causes the machine to "roll over" beyond its scoring capacity, thereby showing a lower score than the actual score, should draw attention to this, reasonably promptly, for other players in the session and/or available tournament directors, to avoid any confusion over the actual score.

Tournament officials may declare a player as a winner of a game in progress; that player will get a record of 3-0 for that game. This will generally occur only if the pace of the tournament is at risk due to exceptionally good play. The affected player must stop play immediately. Any other player reaching the same score in that game will also receive a 3-0 record.

In the event that any player's order of finish is known, but specific scores are no longer retrievable, the order of finish will be considered correct, and approximate scores may be recorded that correspond to the correct and known order of finish.

2. Event Disruption

In the event of a power outage, large disruption, or similar circumstance that impacts the Pinburgh schedule in a significant way, tournament officials retain the right to shorten any phase of the tournament, including but not limited to shortening rounds, eliminating rounds, adjusting the number of qualifiers and prize amounts, or rescheduling portions of the tournament. All decisions made by tournament coordinators in this regard are final, and no refunds will be issued should a large disruption of the nature discussed here trigger the enforcement of this rule. By participating in Pinburgh, all players understand and accept the risk that large disruptions outside the control of Pinburgh staff could potentially impact the event and force alterations to the schedule and other related aspects of the tournament.

3. Creative Commons License



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