Constitution –

Revised and approved at the IBTA General Meeting on 2/12/2025.

INTERNATIONAL BLIND TENNIS ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION & STATUTES

1. – NAME

The name of the Association shall be the "**INTERNATIONAL BLIND TENNIS ASSOCIATION**" ("the Association.")

2. – OBJECTS

The objects of the Association shall be to:

2.1. – Advance, encourage, promote, co-ordinate, and manage tennis activities for blind and vision Impaired players including, but not limited to:

(i) Increasing global participation in Blind and Visually Impaired Tennis ("Blind Tennis") by promoting and coordinating activities, programs and major events.

(ii) Develop and grow Blind Tennis to engage people who are blind or have low vision to pursue healthy lifestyles and be part of active communities.

(iii) Defining and regularly reviewing the sight classification and testing regulations;

(iv) Encouraging the development of best practice coaching techniques for blind and vision impaired players;

(v) Encouraging the development of consistent and high quality specialist equipment for Blind Tennis;

(vi) Encouraging the development of consistent and high-quality specialist equipment, this includes the approval of the ball, racket size and court dimensions for the game; and

(vii) Ensuring the necessary safeguarding and child protection policies are applied as appropriate to the game of Blind Tennis.

2.2. – Liaise with other sporting organisations.

2.3. – Seek recognition of the game of Blind and Visually Impaired Tennis from the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA)

2.4. – Work towards the involvement of Blind Tennis within the Paralympic Movement.

2.5. – Stage World Championships at least every two (2) years

2.6. – Sanction international events conducted between Members (defined in Clause 3 below).

2.7. – Provide assistance and advice to Members such appropriate.

2.8. – Protect and advance mutual interests of Blind and Vision Impaired tennis players.

2.9. – Indemnify, so far as the Law shall reasonably allow, any Member or officer of the Association in respect of any action taken or to be taken on liability incurred or to be incurred by such officer or Member in any matter which will benefit the Association provided that such officer or Member has acted or will be acting with the full approval of the Executive Committee ("the Committee" and is not otherwise acting unlawfully or in breach of their duties to the Association.

2.10. – Do all things necessary to further the game of Tennis for Blind and Vision Impaired players and generally to do all such acts and things which may appear to be directly or indirectly incidental or conducive with the attainment of furtherance of the above objects or any of them.

3. – DEFINITIONS

(a) **"FINANCIAL YEAR"** shall be from 1 January to 31 December.

(b) **"MEMBER"** shall mean any organisation affiliated with the Association in accordance with clause 6 below.

4. – OFFICE

The registered office of the Association shall be as determined by the Executive Committee from time to time.

5. – THE ASSOCIATION

The Association shall consist of affiliated countries where Blind Tennis for the blind and vision impaired players is played.

6. – MEMBERSHIP

6.1. – In a country, where Blind Tennis for blind and vision impaired players is played, any one of the following national organisations may apply for membership of the Association:

(i) National Tennis Federation;

(ii) National Blind Sporting Association;

(iii) National Paralympic Council; and

(iv) National organisation for blind and vision impaired people.

6.2. – In a country, where blind and vision impaired tennis is played, a local or a regional body may apply for non-voting associate membership of the Association including a tennis club that is affiliated to a National Federation.

6.3. – Where a player resides in a country that does not have national or local bodies as members of the association, they may apply for nonvoting individual membership of the Association.

6.4. – Organisations applying for national or local membership should have in place or undertake to have the following:

1. A formal constitution
2. Appropriate governance and financial processes
3. Be of a Not-for-profit nature
4. Committed to training qualified coaches in blind and visually impaired tennis

6.5. – Such application shall be in writing, addressed to the secretary of the Association, and shall contain all relevant details of the organisation making application for membership in order to evidence compliance with the criteria of membership, such criteria which shall be developed and amended from time to time by the Executive Committee to be approved by the members at a General Meeting.

6.6. – The Secretary shall advise each Member and each officer of the Executive Committee in writing of an application for membership within a

week after receipt of application. Members shall have a period of thirty (30) days from the date of the aforementioned communication to consider each application and provide its view to the Executive Committee. After the 30th day the Executive Committee shall determine membership.

6.7. – The Secretary shall advise such organisation of the outcome of their application for membership within 14 days after decision by Executive Committee of such application. They will then have 30 days to pay the membership for the year and any joining fee that may exist.

7. – CEASING MEMBERSHIP

7.1. – Any Member may resign from membership by giving a 30-day written notice to the secretary.

7.2. – The Member resigning shall be liable for any outstanding subscriptions or dues owed to the Association.

7.3. – The resignation will be recorded by the Secretary and all member countries notified of the resignation within fourteen (14) days of it being received by the secretary.

7.4. – Membership is also terminated if the member ceases to exist; or at a meeting of the Executive Committee at which half the officers are present, a resolution is passed resolving that the member is expelled on the ground that his or her continued membership is harmful to or is likely to be harmful to the interests of the Association. Such a resolution may not be passed unless the member has ben given at least fourteen (14) business days' notice that the resolution is to be proposed, specifying the circumstances alleged to justify expulsion, and has been afforded a reasonable opportunity of being heard of making written representation to the Executive Committee. The member shall nevertheless be liable for any outstanding subscriptions or dues owed to the Association.

8. – SUBSCRIPTIONS

The levels of subscriptions to be paid by Members shall be determined at a General Meeting and shall be payable by 30 April in each calendar year. To participate in General Meetings a Member must have paid the subscription for the all previous years of its Membership of the Association and the relevant Financial Year of the meeting.

9. – THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

9.1. – The membership of the Committee shall consist of up to seven (7) officers:

(i) President;

(ii) Vice President;

(iii) Secretary;

(iv) Head of Finance;

(v) Head of Public Relations and Marketing;

(vi) Head of Technical; and

(vii) Head of Medical and Research

9.2. – The Committee shall have the power to:

(a) Conduct the day-to-day management of the association including, but not limited to:

(i) Defining the policies and procedures of the Association in all matters affecting the control and management of the game of Blind Tennis for blind and vision impaired players; and

(ii) Dealing with the financial matters of the Association.

(b) Recommend any amendments to this Constitution to the General Meeting, which shall have the power to approve such changes.

(c) Recommend any amendments to the Rules of Blind Tennis changes or amendments to the code of classification for Blind Tennis to the General Meeting, which shall have the power to approve such changes; and

(d) Co-opt up to (2) members to the Committee for a maximum of one year, if deemed necessary.

9.3. – The Committee may delegate any of its powers or functions to a sub-committee(s).

9.4. – The officers of the Committee shall be elected at a General Meeting and shall hold office for up to a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms of

three (3) years applicable at the end of the 2025-26 term. An officer of the Committee that has held two (2) terms may not be reappointed until a further four (4) years have elapsed.

9.5. – Any nominee, not elected to the office for which first nominated, shall be eligible to be nominated for an alternative position.

9.6. – No Member country may have more than two (2) officers that the Member has nominated elected onto the Committee at any one time.

9.7. – In the event of a casual vacancy on the Committee, the Committee may fill the position and the person shall remain in office until the next General Meeting at which point he or she shall be eligible for election to the relevant office at that General Meeting.

9.8. – The costs of an officer to attend a general meeting should be covered by the relevant nominating Member.

10. – NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE

10.1. – Elections for all positions on Committee shall take place at the General Meeting as provided for in Clause 10.3. An independent Nominating Committee will be responsible for vetting candidates and overseeing the elections.

10.2. – Nominations for all positions shall be in writing. The nomination form shall be signed by the nominee, proposer and seconder. The proposer and seconder must be officers of a Member. Electronic nomination forms will be accepted.

10.3 . – Nomination forms are to be circulated to all Members at least eight (8) weeks prior to the General Meeting and the Secretary shall be receipt of nominations at least six (6) weeks prior to the General Meeting**.**

10.4. – A list of nominations, together with curriculum vitae, shall be forwarded to the Members four (4) weeks prior to the General Meeting.

10.5. – If two (2) or more nominations are received for any one (1) position, then a secret ballot shall be held.

10.6. – If insufficient nominations are received by the closing date, the vacant positions may be filled by calling for nominations from the floor at the General Meeting.

10.7. – The incoming Committee shall assume office at the conclusion of the General Meeting.

11. – COMMITTEE MEETINGS

11.1. – The Executive Committee shall meet when and as required and as requested by the President or by at least two (2) members of the Executive Committee.

11.2. – The quorum for such Executive committee meetings shall be four [4] people.

11.3. – Executive Committee meetings may be held via any electronic media.

12. – HONORARY POSTS

12.1. – The Members at the General Meeting may appoint and remove any individual(s) as patron(s), president(s), life president(s) and vice-president(s) of the Association on such terms as they shall think fit.

12.2. – A patron or past president shall have the right to be given notice of, to attend and speak (but not vote) at any general meeting of the Association and shall also have the right to receive accounts of the Association when available to members.

12.3 – Each Member country shall appoint a Country Representative ("CR"). The role will:

- Act as the communication link between the players and associations in the country and the President and Executive Committee of IBTA.
- Facilitate the growth development of blind tennis in the country including building strong coaching skills and growing the number of clubs and players. A Country Representative must reside in the country he or she is representing and must be prepared to attend at least three quarterly CR meetings in twelve months. He or she may appoint a replacement for the fourth meeting via their member association. Failure to do so will result in the member country being asked to appoint a replacement.

13. – GENERAL MEETING

13.1. – The General Meeting of the Association shall be held at least every two years and notice of not less than sixteen (16) weeks shall be given in writing by the Secretary to all Members of the date, time and venue of the General Meeting.

13.2. – Any proposed changes to the Constitution shall require a minimum of eight (8) weeks' notice in writing to Member.

13.3. – Notification of changes adopted at the General Meeting shall be circulated to all Members with twenty one (21) days of the meeting and shall take effect thirty (30) days after the meeting.

13.4. – The quorum for such General Meeting shall be two-thirds of the eligible votes.

13.5. – All Member Countries taking part in the General Meeting shall have paid the relevant subscription in accordance with clause 8 above.

13.6. – No proxy vote shall be allowed.

13.7. – Each member country shall be entitled to one (1) vote. In the event of an equal number of votes, the President shall have a casting vote, except in the case of an election when a re – ballot shall be held.

13.8. – The ordinary business of the meeting shall be:

(a) to receive and confirm the Minutes of the previous General Meeting.

(b) to receive the following Reports:

(i) President's Report

(ii) Financial Report including the accounts of the Association for the relevant Financial Year

(iii) Reports from Member Countries

(iv) Sub-Committee Reports.

(c) to elect the Executive Committee for the forthcoming term.

(d) to determine the Members' subscriptions.

(e) to determine the venue for the next World Championships if formal bid applications have been received prior to the general meeting.

(f) Items suggested by members.

13.9. – All communications and actions must be inclusive and accessible.

14. – FINANCIAL AUDITOR

A suitably qualified person or firm, not a member of the Association or its Member Countries, shall be appointed as Auditor at the General Meeting.

15. – ALTERATIONS

The Constitution of the Association shall not be altered except by a 75% majority of votes cast at a General Meeting.

16. – PLAYING RULES

In all events conducted by the Association, games shall be played under Rules of the Blind Tennis approved by a General Meeting.

17. – CODE OF CLASSIFICATION

The Code of Classification shall be as approved by the General Meeting.

18. – GRIEVANCE:

The Association may put in place a disciplinary and grievance committee that shall have the power to consider disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for behaviour, which brings the game into disrepute. Members, players and coaches shall have the right to bring appeals on any issue that is in relation to this constitution or rules of tennis. Appeals under sight classification decisions shall be heard as prescribed in the classification rules and procedures.

19. – WINDING UP

In the event of the Association being wound up for any reason whatsoever, the funds, after sale of assets and payment of debts, liabilities and costs incurred in winding up the Association, shall be distributed amongst Members or other Organisations as determined by the current nonprofit IBTA Community Interest Company (CIC) articles or future charity status.

The laws of the United Kingdom as the country in which IBTA is currently registered shall govern this Constitution.

About Us

The International Blind Tennis Association (IBTA) is the organisation that regulates the sport of Blind Tennis internationally.