



BALL PERSONS



ITTF.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION -----3

BALL KIDS PROFILE -----4

POSITIONING -----7

RETRIEVING AND RETURNING BALLS ----- 10

UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT----- 12

RECRUITMENT OF BALL KIDS ----- 13

INTRODUCTION

Ball Persons play a very important role in every major table tennis event, as they help to keep matches running smoothly and provide a “clean” show court.

Events are encouraged to utilize persons, between the ages of 8 and 17, unless community or legal requirements dictate otherwise. Therefore, for the purposes of this manual we shall refer to Ball Persons as Ball Kids.

Ball Kids are a great opportunity for events to build commercial, marketing and corporate social responsibility links with the city and table tennis community while providing Ball Kids and budding table tennis stars a unique opportunity to be in the same arena as today’s table tennis professionals.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The basic responsibility of a Ball Kid is to retrieve balls that are on the floor and returning them to the Assistant Umpire during breaks.

A Ball Kids’ supervisor should be assigned for:

- Managing the Ball Kids (roster, communications etc.)
- Meals, Water Breaks and Toilet Breaks
- Planning of training sessions for Ball Kids to know their roles better

Each table will have a minimum of two (2) Ball Kids, and the event should recruit enough Ball Kids to match tables in teams of 2 and with enough Ball Kids to cover breaks, injury or non-attendance. The suggested total number of Ball Kids for a 4-table event is 20 to 24, assuming they will operate in two shifts.

It’s advisable that Ball Kids work in shifts:

- Depending on the number of Ball Kids, there should be two (2) shifts as a minimum or by session depending on the number of Ball Kids and duration of the match schedule.
- The best performing Ball Kids shall be assigned to important matches (e.g. finals, main table matchers with marquee players etc.).

BALL KIDS PROFILE

ROLES

The roles of Ball Kids include:

- Being present during the match preparation, so they are briefed and ready for entering the FoP as instructed.
- Entering the court after the introduction of players and help collect balls starting already from the warm-up.
- Taking the initiative to pick up balls immediately after the balls land on the floor or during towel breaks if the balls land near the umpires' desk.
- Moving swiftly in the court and after picking up the ball, exit immediately through the nearest corner.
- Observing carefully and if a ball is on the floor, but play has already commenced to not run in the court, unless instructed by the umpires/players.
- Returning the balls to the Assistant Umpire after every game and if needed when asked by the Assistant Umpire, based on the designated routes.
- Being alerted and observe the Assistant Umpire, especially when the match reaches 10-10, in case requested to return balls to the Assistant Umpire.
- Pick up any balls that might be left on the floor, during towel breaks (after every 6 points).

CHARACTERISTICS

Ball Kids should:

- Report to the Ball Kids' Supervisor and to the Ball Kids' Waiting Room.
- Check in on time for their shift or when returning from break.
- Get along well with others and not complain about other teammates.
- Be respectful to other Ball Kids and supervisors.
- Pay attention, have great anticipation on the field of play and always gives their best effort.
- Respect and follow all court procedures and tasks:
 - Be discreet and always remain at their designated positions and tasks.
 - Accept their match assignment without questioning the Supervisors.
 - Be a role model for all their teammates.
 - Set a good example by being quiet, while sitting with their group and during changeover periods on the court.
 - Always wear the complete uniform.

BEHAVIOUR

Ball Kids are ambassadors of the event. They should:

- Behave accordingly while in uniform and on the venue grounds.
- Enjoy the event in uniform, but keep in mind that while at the event venue, the uniform must be worn fully and properly. This includes shirt tucked in, shoes tied etc.
- Never crawl under grandstands / seating areas, play games that may impede foot traffic, scream, make excessive noise or run.
- Never speak to a player or match official unless asked a specific question.
- Never applaud or indicate, by facial expression or in any other manner, reaction to the match action.
- Never bounce, juggle or play with balls between points or at change overs.
- Never allow a loose ball to remain on the field of play after the end of a point.
- Never touch a ball unless it has landed on the floor.



Behavior of Ball Kids: No fidgeting during matches



Behavior of Ball Kids: Do not stand up unless picking up balls or show reaction to the match



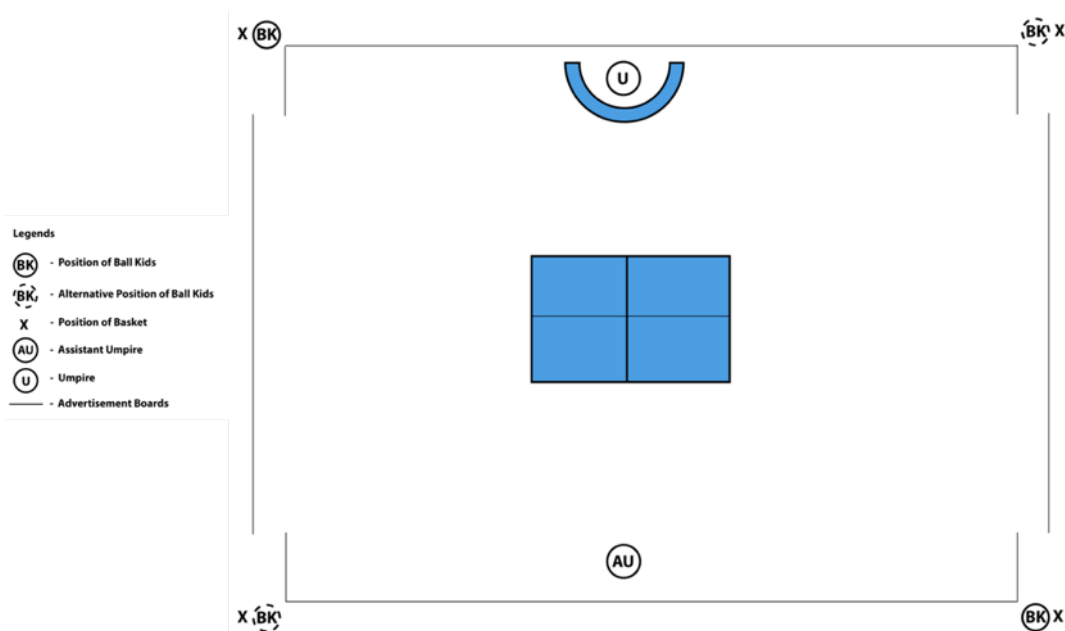
Behavior of Ball Kids: Move swiftly when picking up balls

POSITIONING

Before the match and as soon as the courts are ready the positions of the Ball Kids should be marked. Ball Kids' Supervisors may make use of the court to brief the Ball Kids about the Dos and Don'ts.

POSITION IN LAYOUT A

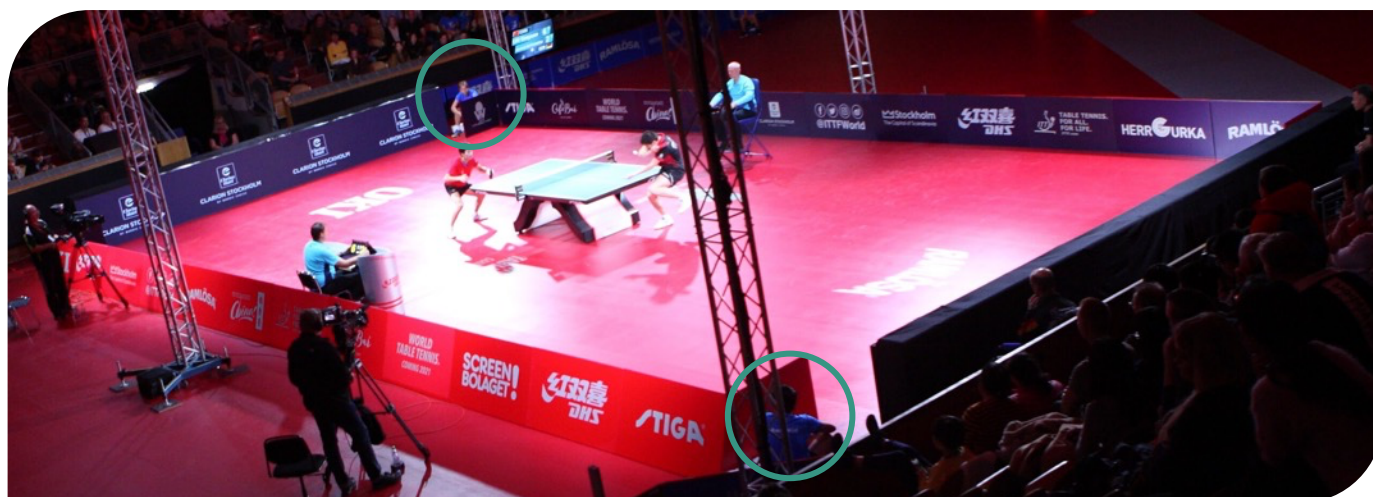
Ball Kids (BK) are situated at opposite ends behind the A-Boards surrounds, either on the left or right side, and always keep the corners slightly open.



Positioning of Ball Kids in Court Layout A

Each court will have:

- 4 baskets; 1 basket on each corner
- 2 smaller tubes; 1 for each Ball Kid
- 4 stools placed behind the corners at the position of Ball Kid; the stools are provided by an ITTF/WTT sponsor, unless otherwise advised.



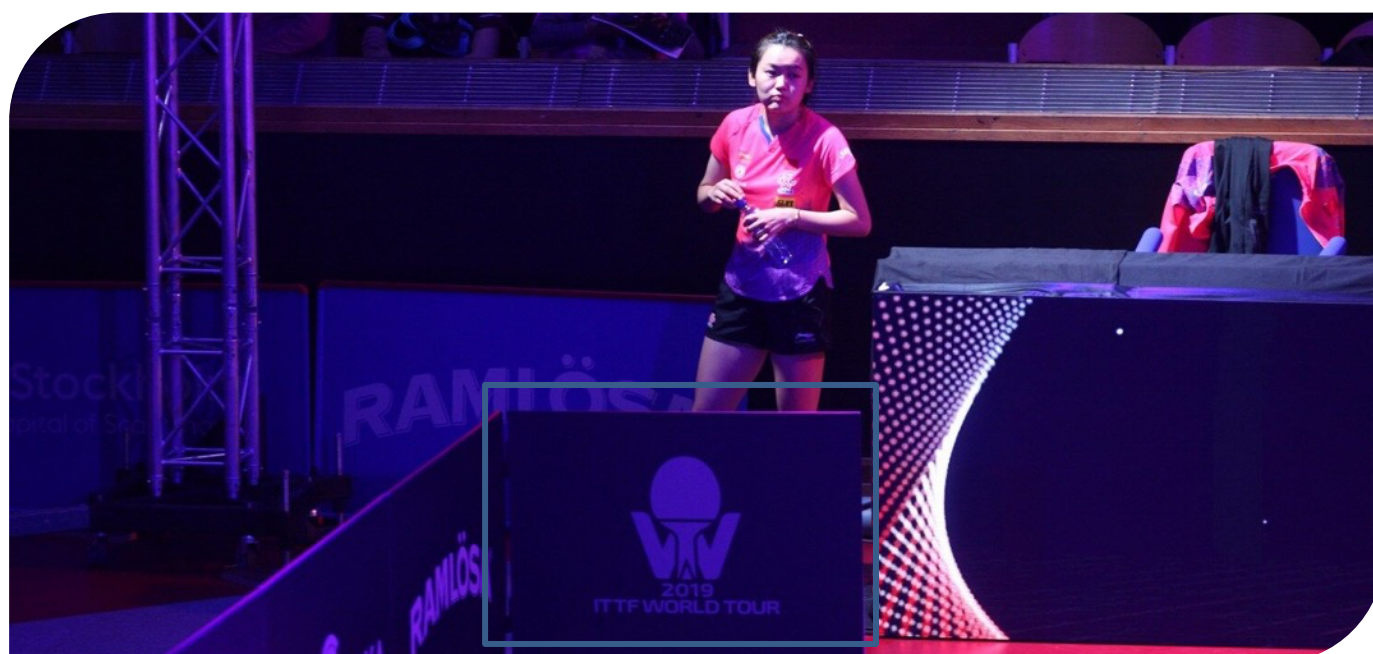
Positioning of Ball Kids in Court Layout A

Each court will have 2 Ball Kids. They are either at the left or right side of the LED Screen and at opposite ends



Positioning of Ball Kids in Court Layout A

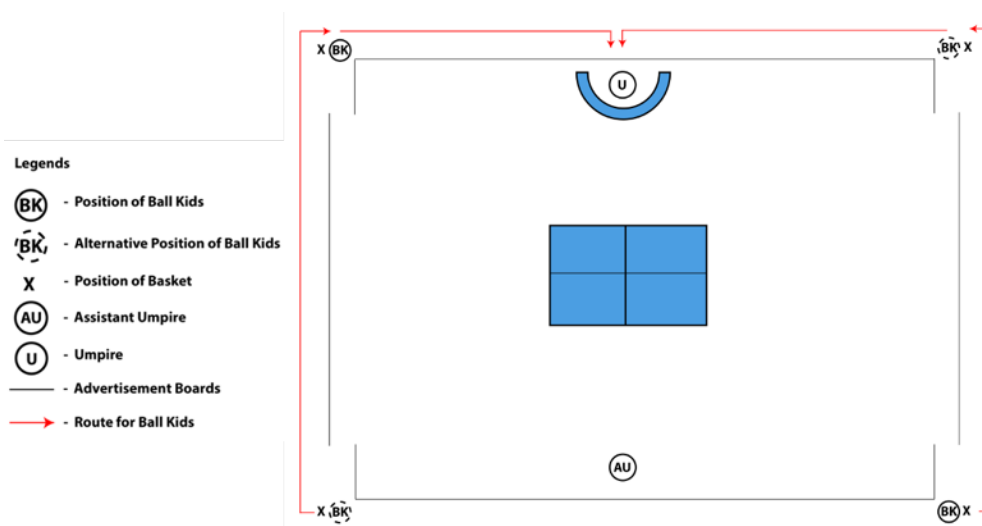
Each court will have 2 Ball Kids. They are either at the left or right side of the LED Screen and at opposite ends



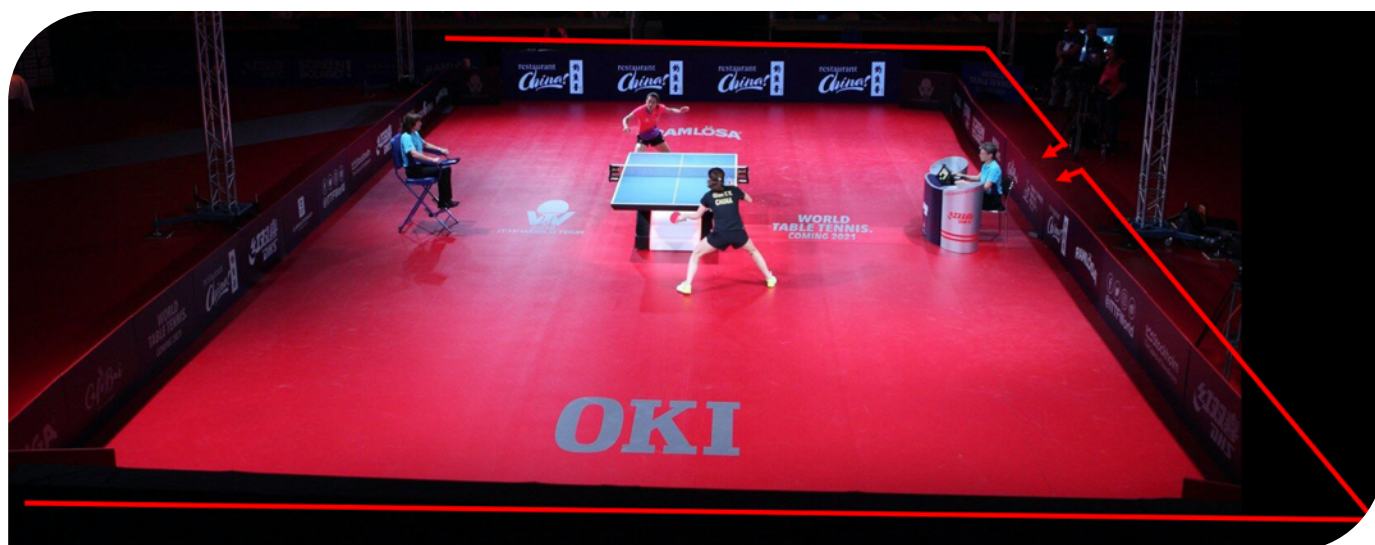
Keep corners slightly open at all times. If players close the corners ball kids can adjust them.

RETRIEVING AND RETURNING BALLS

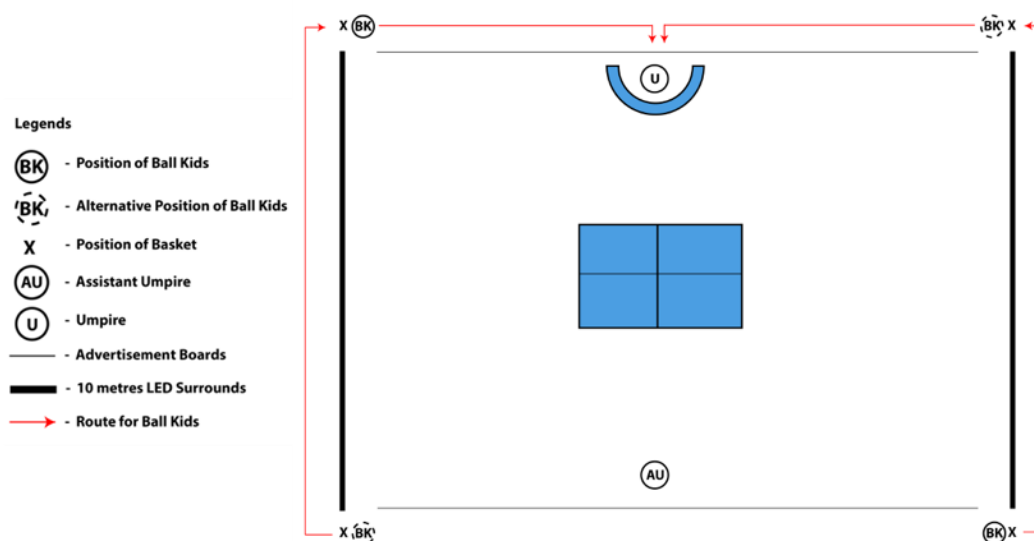
Ball Kids must pick up balls immediately once balls land on the floor, during towel breaks if balls land near umpires' desk. Balls are to be returned to the Assistant Umpire after every game and if needed when asked by the Assistant Umpire based on the routes indicated with red arrows. Ball Kids must follow the route indicated in red unless the space outside the court is tight.



Ball Kids Route for Court Layout A



Ball Kids Route for Court Layout A



Ball Kids Route for Court Layout B



Ball Kids Route for Court Layout B

UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT

One of the basic responsibilities of a Ball Kid is to be properly attired. As ambassadors of the event Ball Kids should be mindful of their appearance, on the venue ground, to be neat in their uniforms and any official equipment or accessories provided.

ITTF/WTT sponsors will provide Ball Kids with the following attire and equipment:

- Shirts
- Shorts
- Stools

The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) will have to provide the following to the Ball Kids. However, ITTF/WTT still reserves the rights for these items and can anytime find a supplier/sponsor:

- 2 baskets per court on opposite ends; recommended to be branded with event logo
- Tubes for each Ball Kid to keep balls, if basket is not with them
- Avoid bright colors and follow the overall event branding

RECRUITMENT OF BALL KIDS

Events should make use of the recruitment process to evaluate the Ball Kids' performances and recruit those that are up to mark. A pre-event training for the Ball Kids should be conducted for at least 1.5 hours and preferably 1 to 2 days before the event. The training should cover all roles and responsibilities mentioned earlier in this guideline and practice on court.

The LOC should develop a recruitment plan based on local best practices, but some examples of good practice include:

- Connect with local nearby schools or table tennis/sports clubs
- Work with the local National Association and/or Table Tennis Interest Groups
- Organise a recruitment campaign for Ball Kids
- Promotion through social media, holding a media day, media call out for registration to become Ball Kids and organizing a small-scaled event in the community, which helps to contribute in the event commercial and marketing promotions.

During the recruitment process a set of criteria should be in place and accessed, based on performance displayed during the trial. Some of the criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Confirmation of availability for the event
- Report on time for the training/trials
- Ability to listen to instructions clearly
- Agile and quick on the feet
- Focus and not easily distracted
- Good communication skills with peers