

It is generally agreed that the current PRICE ball often loses its paint long before the conclusion of a five-game match. In response to certain events over (approximately) the past 12 months, the EFA has decided to change its current policy for replacing the ball before the end of a match.

A discussion group have looked at this issue and have formulated the following policy:

EFA FIVES BALL POLICY FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2022 SEASON

Principles 1 and 2 apply TO ALL COMPETITIVE FIVES AT ALL LEVELS, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE LENGTH OF THE MATCH:

1. With the agreement of all four players, a ball other than the PRICE ball may be used. Otherwise, the PRICE ball shall be used.
2. With the agreement of all four players, the current ball may be replaced at any time in the match by an agreed ball of the same type, new or used.

When there is not agreement on replacing the ball (i.e. Principle 2 does not apply), Principle 3 shall apply to ALL MATCHES PLAYED AS BEST OF 5 GAMES IN TOURNAMENTS/COMPETITIONS WHERE THE ORGANISER IS PRESENT:

3. (a) Before the match the players shall agree (subject to Principle 1 above) upon a new PRICE ball and also a second ball (the **“Potential Replacement Ball”**). The Potential Replacement Ball shall be a used PRICE ball which is still completely (or almost completely) white, as supplied by the Organiser, unless: (i) all four players agree instead that the Potential Replacement Ball shall be a new ball; (ii) insufficient used balls are available, in which case the Potential Replacement Ball shall be a new ball; or (iii) the Tournament Organiser, in his/her discretion, determines otherwise.

(b) Either pair may request a replacement ball if it believes that the ball has CLEARLY lost OVER HALF of its original white coat. The Tournament Organiser shall be the final arbiter of whether or not this is the case. If he/she agrees, then the current ball will be replaced by the replacement ball at the END OF THE GAME ONLY. If he/she disagrees, then the match shall continue with the current ball (subject to any further request at the end of the following game).

(c) The Tournament Organiser has discretion to allow a second or further replacement ball if he/she has sufficient supplies.

When there is not agreement on replacing the ball (i.e. Principle 2 does not apply), Principle 4 shall apply to ALL OTHER COMPETITIVE FIVES MATCHES played over five games.

4. It is good practice to have at least one used or new white fives ball available as a potential replacement, and which is agreed upon by both pairs at the start of the match. If the ball CLEARLY HAS LESS THAN HALF OF ITS WHITE PAINT LEFT AT THE END OF ANY GAME and one pair wishes to change the ball, the EXPECTATION is that the players will agree to use the replacement ball. Players are asked to act in accordance with the Spirit of the Game, bearing in mind that competitive Fives matches are not intended to be played for long periods of time (i.e. more than part of one game) with a ball that has lost a substantial amount of its whiteness.

The EFA hope that this will be sufficient to solve any ball disputes amicably.

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