

## *Merciless Syndicate*

### **Official Rules**

<https://merciless.gg>

[mercilesssyndicate@gmail.com](mailto:mercilesssyndicate@gmail.com)

### **Overview**

*The Merciless Syndicate creates and hosts custom 3v3 and individual events in addition to ranked Devon Series events. For our in-house events, our rules below apply in full. For our Devon events, the Devon rules shall usurp our own in cases of conflict.*

### **Lag & Dispute Protocol**

*Generally speaking, we take the term "lag" to be short for "network lag," which refers to significant network alterations in the game that lead to unfair play for either trainer and significantly alter the outcome of a game. The responding Judge will reply and then handle the situation in DMs and inform you of next steps. Do not post video in main channels as it will potentially reveal hidden information. While you wait, and In order to ensure that we don't run out of round time, we do require provisional rematches on the mutually agreed upon game(s). You should always play out your battle to completion barring the exceptions noted below.*

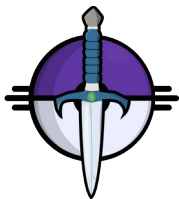
*Each format has its own set of unique rules that differ due to the setup and format of those events. Those unique rules not only include variations in dispute protocol for technical disputes, but they also include conduct (slow play, no show, stalling) rules specific to each event. So, in addition to initiating the dispute by tagging for a Judge in the coordination channel, you must also follow the steps outlined in the rules for your specific format:*

- [Team Format](#)
- [Individual Format](#)
- [Devon Corporation Format](#)

### **General Guidelines & Known Issues**

1. *Rematch policy* is to allow the non-disputing trainer to choose "same leads only" or "same leads and back lines." Trainers are not obligated to try to work things out and should always feel comfortable seeking the Judges' insights if they so choose in order to limit revealing show 6 / hidden information. If both trainers agree to work it out on their own, this rematch policy still applies. Whether the trainers agree or not, provisional rematches should always be played in order to avoid delays.

Note: Ties are not rematches and must be replayed with the option of each trainer using completely new battle parties.



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Exception: Devon Corporation events utilize same leads if not all three Pokemon were seen. If all three Pokemon were seen, then same parties are used. Other possibilities exist at the discretion of the Judges and as allowed by Devon Corporation rules.

2. *Significantly altered outcomes due to lag* are determined by the Judges assuming reasonable standard play and/or energy calculations from the moment of lag forward. Generally speaking, if a potential win condition was not available due to lag, we award a rematch.

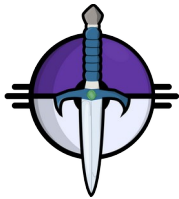
Clarification 1: Losing 1-turn, missing sneaks, being denied, or other similar micro-failures are considered “state of the game” and should be planned for in gameplay mechanics, not with disputes. These types of game failures are not generally eligible for disputes and are not considered significantly altering.

Exception to Clarification 1: 1-turn lag is disputable if and only if it occurs at the beginning of a battle (only leads have been shown) and if and only if the trainer backs out prior to either side revealing backlines. (See Clarification 2 for rematch protocol.)

Clarification 2: Whenever *any form of lag* occurs at the beginning of a battle (only leads have been shown), and the trainer intends to dispute this lag, they are required to immediately backout before backlines are shown. In such situations, opponents shall play a *provisional* rematch where both trainers are required to use the *same lead* Pokemon but may optionally choose different backlines. The disputing trainer is required to tag Judges and subsequently submit video evidence in support of this claim. If the trainer stays in and either side has revealed part or all of their backlines, then the dispute claim will be invalidated.

Exception 2: See #3.

3. *For charge move priority (cmp) errors, cmp tie errors, charge moved button failure, fast move button failure, etc.*, the Merciless Syndicate team will issue a rematch if/when the outcome of the game was significantly altered. Examples include but are not limited to end of game cmp priority errors whereby the buttons cannot be pressed,



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don't render, render too quickly and prohibit tapping them, factual cmp tie errors where a button was pressed but lost priority despite no condition under which it has lower attack, and/or fast moves failing to register on force swap and/or in farm down situations, are all considered by the Merciless Syndicate staff to be significantly altering to the integrity of the game.

Clarification: Losing 1-turn on swap or force swap (re-entry) is not eligible for a dispute in and of itself. This is because the game is currently inconsistent on whether it issues a turn or not on swap or force swap (re-entry).

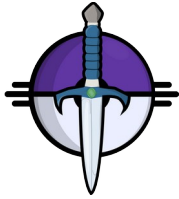
Exception: If/when the 1-turn loss caused the trainer fail to KO the opponent and/or to SKO themselves and the opponent, then this is rematch eligible so long as the lag also significantly altered the outcome of the game.

4. *Def wins are never issued in Merciless Syndicate events.* At the Merciless Syndicate, we do not issue so-called *def wins*. This is because we do not feel it is not the role of Judges or Discord nerds to decide who wins a game. We understand there are frustrating situations that happen and strong opinions on this issue, and it is our policy to award a rematch in qualifying situations and let a clean match decide the victor. *Please see the exceptions below for if/when we host metas from another venue/format such as but not exclusive to Devon Corporation.*

Clarification: Trainers are permitted to share video of each other's side and, so long as both sides agree, adjudicate matches outside of the Judge's discretion. If agreement cannot be reached, then the above-stated policy applies.

Exception: Devon Series events permit def-wins. The Syndicate team will work closely with Devon support in qualifying situations.

5. *Sudden game closure* is eligible for rematch if the outcome was sig altered and the video confirms such. At Merciless Syndicate, we have evidence that this happens with properly configured and modern devices with no memory or cpu limitations. Therefore, we do not consider this to be the trainers' fault that the game is so poorly coded that it crashes spontaneously.



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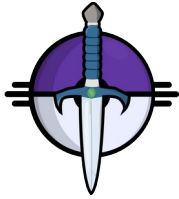
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6. *Device not compatible error*. Traditional rulings on this are largely based on a Reddit post where someone made a claim that it happens due to memory/cpu issues from underpowered or over-storages devices. While our research has shown that there is some truth to this, our research has also shown that this happens randomly on properly powered/configured devices. Therefore, if video evidence is provided, this is rematch eligible.
7. *Graphical asset errors* are viewed case by case as they can be complex. Often, these are entirely “visual” and all energy and advantage were not gained by either trainer. However, at times the glitches can cause trainers to significantly alter game play either because typing, purified and/or shadow status, or other mission-critical information was not properly known. These issues are therefore rematch eligible, but are viewed on a case by case basis to determine whether they were significant or not.
8. *Coaching matches* is not only allowed, but encouraged. For team events, we encourage trainers to plan together, battle together, and help one another excel at the game. For individual events, we also encourage trainers to work with a coach or coaches so long as that trainer is not also signed up for the same event. Trainers may not, however, post or release any video that reveals hidden move and/or playstyle information to anyone in the event, whether individual or team.
9. *Weak connections, the weak connection error, and/or poorly functioning devices*, are generally not grounds for disputes. It is every trainer’s individual responsibility to ensure they have both a properly functioning device and strong/reliable internet connection.

Exception: There are rare times when, despite having a high quality device and strong connection, that flaws in Niantic’s servers and/or game code can cause the weak connection error to appear by no fault of the trainer. These situations, so long as supporting video evidence can be provided, shall be viewed case by case are not necessarily ineligible for rematches.

10. *Incorrect party submission and/or wrong battle party use* is not tolerated. We certainly understand that good faith mistakes happen, but if/when parties have already been revealed, permitting changes or rematches provides an unfair advantage. Therefore, if a trainer uses a Pokemon that was not on their battle party, this shall



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result in an immediate game loss.

Clarification: In open moveset tournaments when an incorrect move, incorrect Pokemon, or incorrectly used shadow or non-shadow form is used, and the issue is caught within the round, it shall be an auto-loss for that game and they must use the correct move, form, or Pokemon moving forward. If the issue is not caught until after round expiry, then the trainer shall not be allowed to use that Pokemon moving forward from the point the Judges find out.

Exception: If the issue is caught before battling, Judges will make a decision as to whether a good-faith allowance is allowed or not. If the error is CP-related, trainers can appeal for a one-time good-faith mistake allowance.

Exception: For open move events, trainers may appeal for a one-time good-faith mistake allowance. Examples include but are not limited to someone registering Shadow Gardevoir with charge beam, which is universally agreed to be an unlikely choice. Allowances will be viewed case by case, but if the move change is impactful, it will likely be rejected whether fast or charged move.

11. Discretion shall be used if, during the course of an event, an entirely new state of the game, bug, or other serious error emerges. Each situation will be reviewed case by case.

*At the Merciless Syndicate, we do recognize dispute or game malfunction situations can be hard to determine and agree upon, so every dispute is managed by a minimum of three veteran judges on the Merciless Syndicate team. Trainers are permitted one appeal per tournament. Appeals will be judged by a different set of three veteran judges.*