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Statement Regarding the Disqualification of Tomoharu Saitou

Sideboard Staff

Tomoharu Saitou has been disqualified without prize from Grand Prix Kobe. Head Judge Masayuki Kunimitsu issued the following statement regarding the disqualification.

"As many people may recall, Tomoharu Saitou was disqualified without prize from the 2001 Asia-Pacific Championship for violating Section 161 (Cheating--Bribery/Collusion) of the DCI Penalty Guidelines.

In the third round of the Grand Prix, Saitou was playing the third game of his match. As the game neared its finish, Saitou was in a situation where it was guaranteed that he would lose on his opponent's next turn. At the end of his opponent's turn, Saitou began counting his deck, changing the order of the cards in his library while doing so. He then placed his deck in front of his opponent, as if offering it to his opponent to cut. Saitou's opponent, while somewhat confused at Saitou's actions, then cut the deck. Saitou immediately raised his hand and called a judge, claiming that his opponent was manipulating his deck. During the following investigation, Saitou admitted in an interview that when he called for a judge, he was hoping that by doing so he would be able to turn things to his favor and win the match.

Saitou's actions clearly violate Section 152 (Unsporting Conduct--Severe) of the DCI Penalty Guidelines. This, coupled with what occurred at APAC, made me feel that I could not ignore his repeated offenses, giving me no choice but to disqualify him without prize.

The investigation into this incident was conducted in the fairest manner, with the cooperation of the players involved, spectators, and other tournament staff. I would to thank all those who came forward and offered statements and assisted the investigation for their time and help.

--Masayuki Kunimitsu"

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