

BEHIND- THE GLASS

Squash Canada's Officiating Newsletter
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FALL 2019

Hey, where the heck is our Pulitzer Prize for reporting in Squash? That's a credit we should have been able to add to our byline by now as the new season is starting; guess it's time for a formal complaint to Columbia University – home of the Pulitzer. Meanwhile, we'll just have to carry on with our usual world-class tradition of reporting on officiating matters in the world of Squash - here in Canada and on the rest of the planet. ED

THE DATABASE (<https://www.squashcanadaofficial.com/>)

We reiterate our usual notice about this treasure trove of stuff for officials. This is *the* site for you as a Canadian ref to find out pretty much everything about the program – including the records of your assessments. Updates are happening all the time – and recently some modifications to policies were made. and teaching aids were added. Also remember that there's a bunch of video modules in there, dealing with just about all of the troublesome aspects of officiating – including using proper explanations, blood and injury situations, managing poor behaviour, and pretty much dealing with every form of interference. Once you're done reading this newsletter, you should head on over there and check it out. And, if you're not registered at that site yet – this is your chance.

Two refs were watching a 70+ match – and one turns to the other and says: *"Now I know why these 70+ guys make it look so effortless; they're making no effort!"*

TIME FOR GLORY

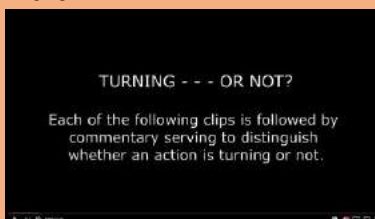
Congratulations to all those who keep marching up the ladder of success. They are the future of the program, helping to ensure our high standards in producing competent officials. This time, we have:

- **Bruce Marrison** – who has attained the status of **Provincial Referee**

This isn't necessarily easy or fast - but persistence pays off. And even though everyone enjoys the recognition that comes with such achievements, we should keep in mind this quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson: *"The reward of a thing well done is to have done it."*

RULES NITTY GRITTY: A GUIDE 'SURROUNDING' TURNING

Get it – 'surrounding'? 😊 OK, OK, it's not that funny. Still, there's much you need to know to make fair decisions when it comes to turning situations. You'll see that a bunch of the usual rules are replaced with special provisions that need to kick in. We'll have a look at those, but first, check out the 6-minute video linked here. It will make clear what turning is - and what just resembles it. Once you're done, come back here and we'll continue. Go ahead, we'll wait....



THE PROVISIONS

Welcome back. So now that you have a good picture of what turning is and isn't, we'll review how we are supposed to deal with it. As we said earlier, the rules surrounding turning are different - and that's for a couple of reasons:

- ✓ firstly, because the act of turning is fraught with risk for the (usually unseen) non-striker;
- ✓ secondly, because it is so often a surprising action.

Therefore the provisions are structured in order to help reduce risk, and also to allow some leniency in dealing with it.

• Turning & hitting the opponent with the ball:

- Normally, when the striker hits the non-striker with the ball which was headed directly towards the front wall – the striker is awarded a stroke.
- However, if the same thing happens but the striker first turned - then the non-striker is awarded the stroke (no matter where the ball was going).

• Turning & refraining from hitting the opponent with the ball:

- Normally, if the striker refrains from hitting the ball which would have hit the non-striker while it was headed directly to the front wall – a stroke is awarded to the striker.
- However, if the striker first turned and then refrained from hitting the ball which would have hit the non-striker while it was headed directly to the front wall – a let is awarded.

• Turning & interference to the swing:

- Normally, if the striker's swing is prevented (meaning a great deal of interference) - the striker is awarded a stroke. That's stated in Rule 8.9.2 and repeated in 8.13.1 under 'Turning'.
- However, if it was prevented while the striker was turning – the decision is most often a let. That's because Rule 8.13.2 (following 8.13.1 mentioned above) allows some leniency and stipulates a let *"if the non-striker had no time to avoid the interference"*.

See - - - the rules makers can sometimes be nice people!



We mentioned in the last BTG newsletter that the time for the Pan American Games (happening every 4 years) was fast approaching – and sure enough it arrived at the end of July. Squash was participating for its 7th time (the first was Mar del Plata, Argentina in 1995). This time, Canada had 3 refs selected - and this article is that trio's entertaining description of that experience for you. ED

LOS TRES ÁRBITROS

Lima 2019 – The Referees' Experience

Three Referees were chosen to represent Canada at this year's Pan Am Games in Lima, Peru: Dave Howard, Viano Oghenekevwe, and Andrés Orozco – pictured here in order from the left.



TOURING AROUND

Andrés and Dave arrived 4 days prior to the start of the games and toured the area to get a feel of the local culture. Lima is a huge city (about 10 million people) representing 1/3 of the total population of Peru. We found lots of beautiful attractions and old buildings as well as fabulous food – all that combined with lots of wildlife attractions associated with being on the ocean.

We took a 1 hour (each way) boat cruise to nearby Palomino Island, where thousands of sea lions hang out; we even had a swim with them once we got there. En-route we observed Penguins on another island. It was a pretty rough trip and about one in three of the participants managed to get an unwelcome reminder of what they had for breakfast – if you catch our drift.



THE WEATHER

And just in case you're wondering, yes the skies remained as gray as you see in these pictures on either side – and that was for the duration of the Squash event to boot. On one particular afternoon, we checked and noticed that Montreal & Toronto were actually warmer than Lima!



AT THE VENUE

Two days before start of play, the glass court you see at left wasn't ready because of a warped floor and a door that wouldn't open inwards - but with a little sanding, refinishing and a remounted door, all was well for the first day of play.

While there, Andrés claimed to be as quick as Usain Bolt on court - but unfortunately Usain failed to show so as to help confirm Andres' claim.



Viano joined us the day before start of play. The Referees had their own room to assemble in and get ready for action. There were 23 of us and an excellent job of organizing the gang was done by Nelson Neto, who was the Tournament Referee of this event for the 7th time. Given that number of Referees, scheduling was made a little easier and there were lots of opportunities for assessments. At the end of it all, between Dave Howard and John Massarella, 62 assessments were carried out with 10 National, 7 Regional, and 1 WSF signatures awarded.



THE FOOD

The trip to and from the venue from our hotel was about 20-40 minutes depending on traffic. Superb food off the hotel menu was provided for us for all 3 meals. There were also snacks and meals provided at the venue but these paled in comparison to what we got at the hotel - so most of us commuted back and forth if we could fit it into the schedule. This write up will not be complete without mentioning the special Peruvian treats we had, especially the Pisco Sour cocktail. That was something special, and apparently the debate continues between Peru and Chile as to who is the author of that amazing drink. Then we tasted the freshest and most amazing avocado ever; it must have been a favorite in the hotel because at one point, we were told that they had run out of it. And finally, we can't forget those delicious deserts, especially the cheese cake laden with actual passion fruit complete with seeds; mmmm something to die for.

We had a reasonably good shuttle service, but if the times didn't suit us, an Uber or Taxi cost only the equivalent of about \$6 USD. And Andrés or other Spanish speaking Referees were invaluable in helping with local transport.

OH YEAH – THE SQUASH

As expected, the squash was awesome and the Canadian squash team went home with 7 medals (a new Canadian Pan Am Games record), which added to our enjoyment of the event. In addition, as you can see on the lower right photo, Julie Payette, the Governor General of Canada, was there to cheer our ladies on.



We also got acquainted with a number of new Referees and re-acquainted with others we'd previously met. The hospitality of our Peruvian hosts was outstanding and, you can be sure, good times were had by all.



So needless to say, this whole thing was a wonderful experience for 'los tres arbitros' from Canada.

The next Pan Am Games will be in 4 years and are in Santiago, Chile; here's their logo:





This is just a reminder that the Squash Canada Officiating Program has its own YouTube site where video modules (listed in the 'Resources' area of our database) are available for immediate playback – without any time-consuming download time (unless of course, you want the module stored on your own computer). A new one on 'Managing Poor Behaviour' was added this summer – so you might want to check that one out.

TIP FOR USE: *Simply click on the camera icon to the right of any of the titles.*

A few years ago during the Tournament of Champions in NYC, the contentious Australian Anthony Hill was stopped in mid-play by the ref's call of 'Not up'. He starts arguing that the ball was indeed good – but the ref nonetheless says: "Play Squash, Mr. Hill!". Hill then retorts with: "That's what I was doing until you stopped me!"

NEW RULES CLINIC - ASSESSORS TAKE NOTE

The Squash Canada Official database (<https://www.squashcanadaofficial.com/>) has a pile of teaching aids available – and a recently modified one is the Rules Clinic. It's a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation meant for the typical club player interested in a casual review of the rules. You may present it in its full and current form – but you also have the option of creating a custom version to meet the needs of a given club. Therefore, to help with that, we've created an INDEX that allows you to locate specific slides by topic – which you can then collate to suit the request. You'll find all that in the database by clicking on 'Resources' in the menu bar – then scrolling down to 'Restricted Training Modules'. In the 'Notes' at the bottom of the title slide, you'll find a link to the full instructions.

REFEREE PROGRESSION – A COUPLE OF CHANGES

Some minor changes have been made to the 'Criteria for Promotion' sections of the 'Referee Progression' document – notably in sections 7.1.5, 7.2.5, & 7.3.5. The changes serve to harmonize the requirements for all 3 levels of upgrade (to Local, Provincial, & National), both for simplicity and to help promote higher standards. Each of those sections continues to vary in so far as numbers of signatures, competencies, and games required – but the last stipulation is now identical for all 3, and reads:

The candidate must have had 2 satisfactory conversations with 2 different Assessors about the decision-making principles relating to interference. The Assessors must be satisfied that the Referee's responses demonstrate a level-appropriate understanding of the concepts and principles and display an understanding of the impact of those decisions on the match.



Canadian Graham Ryding, behind 3-14 in the first game of a PSA event many years ago, loses the final point on the sole officiating decision. On the way out of the court, he turns to the ref and wisecracks: "You cost me that game!"



PROFESSIONAL SQUASH DEBUTS REAL-TIME BIOMETRIC DATA AND STATS TRACKING



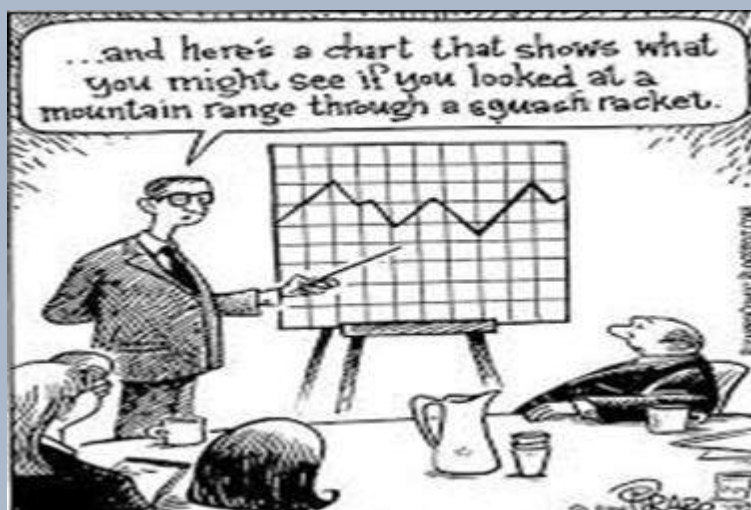
Although not directly related to officiating, this news is nonetheless interesting for us as refs because it features the adoption of new technology in Squash. And who knows, maybe soon they'll plug the officials into the project to see what data they can render from a different perspective.

Around mid-summer, a company called Sports Data Labs (<http://www.sportsdatalabs.com/>) has been engaged by the PSA to track and gather biometric (e.g., heart rate) data on professional squash players - with the goal of utilizing the info to tell new stories around athletic performance in professional squash. The first foray is set for the end of this coming January at the Tournament of Champions in New York City.

As well, the PSA has made another technology-related deal with a company called InteractiveSQUASH (<http://interactivesquash.com/>), which will provide technology to track a different number of performance metrics in real-time at February's Swedish Open - this time specifically centering on motion tracking of the players and ball.

The system (known as 'MoTrack') will use cameras and sensors to capture player speed and distance covered, as well as ball speed and trajectory off the front wall of the glass court. The idea is to merge sport and technology in truly real time, with data instantly available to fans and players – and that in turn helping increase the attractiveness of the sport both live and online.

It's hoped that all of this might ultimately prove useful for the next push for inclusion of Squash into the Olympic Games – this time for 2024. Squash has been refused as an Olympic sport three times and given that the Olympics are taking a much more tech-friendly approach in an effort to capture a younger audience – this aligns quite well with that thinking.



This article appeared in the WSF's newsletter (World Squash Update) dated July/August 2019. ED



Work continues apace on the development of WSO (World Squash Officiating), in partnership with PSA. Recent developments include:

- ❖ The requirements analysis has been completed by the website providers and the site functionality fully mapped out.
- ❖ The website build is now underway with an achievable timeline in place to launch at the end of 2019.
- ❖ The site will be a resource, education and assessment portal for all levels of referee.
- ❖ Everyone who registers will have their own account where they can track progress and take online tests to progress to the next level.
- ❖ Largely video based to make it as interactive as possible using annotated clips from the SquashTV library.
- ❖ This will make the refereeing pathway clearer and more accessible for everyone.
- ❖ Having singular, worldwide levels where everyone completes the same coursework will help to increase the overall standard of refereeing.

One ref's advice to another, about the occasional problem of explaining your calls: *"A closed mouth gathers no foot."*



CANADIAN REFEREES & U.S. SQUASH

It seems that more of our refs are participating down south in U.S. Squash events – and that can only be good news because of the pool of experience it adds to the Canadian program. A recent notice went out to about 45 officials (about half of which are Canadians) involved in officiating at events endorsed by U.S. Squash and by the U.S. College Squash Association – and it sets out the terms for assessments and log keeping for this season. Squash Canada does, of course, recognize such assessments as long as they are performed by any of our certified Provincial or National Assessors who may be down there as well – or by any Regional or WSF Assessors.

If you want more information about how you can participate, contact Joe Ellis (joeellis610@gmail.com), one of the Squash Canada Officiating Committee members who can steer you in the right direction on this issue.

REMOTE VIDEO ASSESSMENTS

The SCOC has now approved a policy which standardizes the practice of performing assessments based on video submissions. We're all aware of the size of our country and the difficulties of getting Referees seeking assessments together with Assessors – and this approach has found favour in several cases. The policy touches on everything from how the matches are assigned, the format for submission, associated fees, and so on. You will find all the details in a document of the same name found on the database (<https://www.squashcanadaofficial.com/>) by clicking on 'Resources' in the menu bar and scrolling down to 'Documents'.

THE SQUASH CANADA OFFICIATING COMMITTEE

We just want you to be aware of the folks helping to keep all of this together - the 5-person SCOC composed of Dave Howard (ON) (Chair), John Roche (BC), Les Homme (ON), Joe Ellis (AB), & Barry Faguy (QC). The committee also includes Geoffrey Johnson (Squash Canada Programs Manager) and Wayne Smith (WSF representative). And we rush to acknowledge the very helpful work of some key officials on the periphery who've been pitching in on various projects the SCOC has on the go. They are Curtis Gillespie (AB), Noman Nadeem (ON), Bob Mansbridge (ON), Greg van Steveren (ON), and Andres Orozco (ON).

Years ago, Australian Stuart Boswell is taken by surprise by a shot coming from the front wall, right at him down the middle of the court. Reflexively, he takes his racket back and then around forward to hit the ball between his legs – but forgets to shorten the follow-through. As he crumples to the floor in obvious pain, his opponent, Englishman Lee Beachill, opens the door and says to the ref: *“I think ‘the ball’ is broken!”*

PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Over the next few editions, we'll include here a brief article outlining the most recent goings on in the regions – this time featuring news from the land of mountains, stampedes & oil.



Squash Alberta has put out a series of notices outlining its mission of educating players on the rules of the sport and of helping promote fairness and fun for everyone – as well as including encouragement for more people to take up refereeing. Unfortunately, there are some players coming from other sports who bring attitudes of aggression and intimidation - which in turn causes others to feel uncomfortable and unwelcome, thus tending more easily to leave the sport.

Also aware that the next generation of officials in Alberta needs to be built, its volunteers are approaching the task from multiple angles – specifically using Assessors & instructors to advance clinics, courses, and mentoring.

Their current committee (Joe Ellis, Grant Currie, Rod McDougal, Arthur Hough, Jorge Rabacal & Ken Cross) got the ball rolling in August by running free clinics and courses throughout the province. This included a tactic (adopted in several places throughout the country) of having Interclub teams receive points for having their members participate in these clinics (including Squash Canada's basic online Certification Course). As well, efforts are under way to increase opportunities for officiating and the related rate of assessments. Some bonus effects to all the above should be to reduce the number of incidents of poor conduct on court, break down barriers between officials, players, & parents - and so increase the respect for and support of officials. Looks like they're on the right track!

FEEDBACK & INPUT

And so, the Fall 2019 edition of the BTG bites the dust; the next one will be the Winter 2020 edition. Of course, if something of acute importance comes up in between, we'll then send out a 'flash' edition. Meanwhile, if you've got something to say - email Geoffrey Johnson (Squash Canada Programs Manager) at: geoff.johnson@squash.ca