

# BEHIND THE GLASS

Squash Canada's Officiating Newsletter

Published by: Squash Canada's Officiating Committee

## SPRING 2019

Well, we're not sure what happened again; it sure looks like our Pulitzer Prize for Squash journalism ain't forthcoming. Maybe we need to use longer words and stuff like that? We'll keep at it, but meanwhile we're in the home stretch of the season and there's more stuff to report on – so here we go.

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

We're gonna keep reminding everyone about this in each edition, because this is *the* site for Canadian refs to find out pretty much everything about our program – including the records of your assessments. The site has recently been updated for smoother operation, and if things go as planned – you'll soon be able to keep your own match logs there as well. Remember also that there's also a bunch of video modules there, touching on just about all of the troublesome aspects of officiating – including proper explanations, blood and injury situations, and pretty much every form of interference. Come to think of it, why don't you just mosey on over there right now and check out a couple of them? If you haven't registered there yet – this is the time.

### ASSESSMENT FORM - VERSION 'K'

Our new assessment form was uploaded to our database in March. It's the product of much-appreciated input from a bunch of Assessors. If you're an Assessor, you'll like this edition because, among many changes, it has areas reserved to identify pooled matches – thus avoiding the need to scribble all over the place to keep track of the different matches used to generate an assessment. And because we have recently trimmed our competency list down from 15 to 6 - recording a candidate's proficiency will certainly be streamlined.

### THE ASSESSOR TRAINING COURSE (ATC) NOW REVISED

At the core of our program is this extensive course through which our Assessors are trained. It was created a few years ago with the goal of promoting greater consistency in the evaluation of Referees and in teaching the various clinics. Along the way, several suggestions for improvement have been made and indeed – that is now a 'fait accompli'; all done and uploaded to the data base. This new edition reflects the reduced competency list competencies (as mentioned above), has had some of the wording trimmed down & clarified, and gives greater guidance to Assessors in quite a number of areas. The next step is a similar review of the ATC's exam - which has actually started. We consider all these to be 'living documents' – and with that in mind, will necessarily be subject to continual improvement as time goes by.



## THE PSA 2-REFEREE SYSTEM (2RS)

We've talked in previous editions of the BTG about how we wanted to adopt a version of the PSA's 2RS for use here in Canada in events where no technology for video review is available. The key innovation of the 2RS (with or without video) is that for the first time in the history of Squash, it makes it possible for the officials to confer before issuing a final decision. Players are allowed one appeal per game, and when it occurs, the Appeal Referee is called upon to make a final decision, usually after consulting with the Match Referee. If the Match Referee's decision is overruled – the player gets to keep the appeal; otherwise, it's lost.

Well, the latest news is that the 2RS was used in February at a Toronto PSA event, and some very interesting information was gleaned from a data set of 22 matches – mainly because a court monitor who was able to keep track of every decision was available for all matches.

Decisions	Total Decisions (YL+NL+S)	325	
YL	Yes Lets	166	51%
NL	No Lets	43	13%
S	Strokes	116	36%
Apps	Marking Appeals	18	
AR Decisions	Total Decisions by AR	70	22%
AR Decisions Dir	Direct Referral to AR	4	6%
UP	Decisions Upheld	51	73%
OR	Decisions Overruled	15	21%
AR Apps	Marking Appeals to AR	5	2%

These results were submitted to the PSA's Lee Drew in support of the PSA endorsing this no-tech version of the PSA's 2 Referee System – along with significant other documentation which outlined the many advantages of implementing this system for use in PSA events where video technology is not available. Among the issues pointed out was how valuable this 2RS option is in terms of training Referees in preparation for the procedures on the Show Court.

A ref awards a stroke against a player who gets royally smacked in the face by a reasonable backswing. The player, after stumbling away, retorts with: *"Wadda ya mean, stroke!?! I was clear!"*

In an early round, Jonathon Power was warming up against some sacrificial lamb – a player who happened to be using the Dunlop 'Power' racquet. Jonathon's dad was watching, and leans over and whispers to a nearby ref: *"You know you're in trouble when the racquet you're using has your opponent's name on it."*



## RULES NITTY GRITTY – INTERFERENCE TO THE VIEW

So far, this video-based series has touched on interference to the access (2 facets), to the swing, and to the ball. This time we're talking about the 4<sup>th</sup> and final form of interference.

Seeing the ball is clearly the most fundamental of all requirements because not much can happen otherwise. Interference to the view is in fact, the most common of all interferences because the ball is constantly disappearing from view. Just think back to your own match play; in fact, you might have noticed that each and every time you officiate you continue to experience the very same thing.

### General

- This interference is extremely frequent, but mostly fleeting – and so rarely compromising to the striker
- Unlike the other forms of interference, it rarely occurs alone - generally associated with 'access' interference
- It represents the fewest requests for lets, given its often quick occurrence and typical insignificance

### Duration – the key

- Fleeting obstruction qualifies it as 'minimal interference' (essentially having no effect) – thus resulting in a "No Let"
- Prolonged obstruction (e.g., a second or more) qualifies it as significant - thus worthy of consideration

### Additional notes

- Prolonged obstruction typically occurs in the front corners, mostly with boasts and drops.
- It can also occur with returns hit close to the outgoing player's body
- Given its quickness, a verbal request for let often comes too late, as the ball has typically passed by
- The obstruction to view is generally greater the closer the striker is to the opponent
- Your own difficulty in seeing the ball can be a useful guide in judging its significance to the player at that moment
- The speed of occurrence usually precludes application of the usual decision-making considerations

### The decisions

- A let is typical because Referees tends to give the player the benefit of the doubt - and because uncertainty often exists as it tends to be blended with access interference
- A denial of let is often justified because the effect of the interference typically minimal
- A stroke is virtually unheard of – possibly justifiable only if the view was prolonged and deliberately blocked

Here's a short video compilation of 4 instances demonstrating the usual insignificance of this kind of interference - and the likely appropriateness of denying a let. This is especially true given renewed advisories encouraging decisions which promote continuity of play. Appropriately issued, the No Let is just such a decision.



[Click To View](#)



Don't forget that our 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). **TIP FOR USE:** *Simply click on the camera icon to the right of the title.*

## TIME FOR GLORY

The following folks are moving on up the ranks – possibly now needing to hire a PR manager with all the attention they are about to get. Also, see additional praises/advancement in the Canada Winter Games summaries.

- Greg Van Staveren (ON) : designated as Provincial Assessor
- Darrin Manley (ON) : designated as National Referee
- Stephen Atkins (AB) : designated as National Referee
- Jimmy Valliere (BC) : designated as Provincial Referee
- Jeff Hipfner (NT) : designated as Provincial Referee

Indeed, they deserve much praise because getting there is the end result of countless matches officiated and assessments passed. These are the people who ratchet up our standards and make our program among the best on the planet. Congratulations!



This year is the 7<sup>th</sup> time that Squash has been a part of the Pan American Games – and in 2019 they will take place at the end of July in Lima Peru. A number of our qualified Canadian refs applied and we can now proudly congratulate the 3 who have been selected: Dave Howard, Andres Orozco, & Viano Oghenekevwe. It will no doubt be a memorable experience for them.

## THE NATIONALS

The two final events that close out the season every year are coming soon: The Senior Nationals this year are in Toronto at the Mayfair Lakeshore Club from April 30<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> – and the Junior Nationals are at the Royal Glenora club in Edmonton from April 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>.







The 1991 Canada Winter Games in Prince Edward Island was the place where Squash had its initial participation. This time the place was Red Deer College, featuring a newly built venue combining rink, basketball/volleyball, and 4 enclosed squash courts. There were 16 refs (2 Regional, 7 National and 7 Provincial) from 8 Provinces & Territories who showed up during the last week of February to this beautiful city of 100,000 on the Red Deer River - just short of the halfway mark between Calgary and Edmonton and just short of a kilometer above sea level.

Over the 6 days of competition, the Marker/Referee system was used – supplemented by use of the Club Locker tablet application. Turns out that application and the software for the Canada Games results were not compatible; that led to some duplication – but it also turns out not to have been a big deal overall.

There was much Referee/Assessor development work done over the time in Red Deer. Over the period Stevin Arseneault, Chris Mills and Mike Tooley refreshed their Provincial Assessor requirements. Thomas Hori and Jeff Hipfner completed full requirements to become Provincial Assessors. Congratulations guys!

The volunteers were everywhere, helping with everything from snacks and water to venue access control and running results – and including a medical support team on site. The refs had their hideaway along with Squash Canada staff in a small room close to the courts – and all refs were kept busy to the very end. Now they can't wait for the next Canada Games in 2023.



At an exhibition some years ago, when a reporter asked the 85+ seven-time British Open winner Hashim Khan, about his ability to hit the nick, Hashim replied:  
*"Easy. Ball in air. Racket hit ball. Ball hit nick. Easy."*



As announced in our Fall edition, January 1<sup>st</sup> brought us a new edition of the WSF rules of the game - but don't worry if you didn't catch it. There are but a few minor changes – some potentially serving only to add a bit of confusion.

Here again is the summary:

- Time period allowed for the Warm up in Rule 4 .1: changed to 4 minutes with half time to be called at 2 minutes.
- Rule 8.11 amended to read: “Freedom to strike the ball to any part of the front wall” (leaving out the word entire).
- Rule 8.1.4 amended to read: “the freedom to strike the ball to any part of the front wall” (leaving out the word entire).
- A new rule added 8.9.3: “Where there has been no actual contact and the swing has been held by the striker for fear of hitting the opponent, the provisions of 8.6 apply.”

Leaving out the word ‘entire’ does seem to imply that the non-striker no longer has to clear the whole front wall for the striker to hit the ball to – even though the PSA issued a stricter policy (September 2018) of awarding a stroke when the non-striker is found in the ‘Danger Zone’. Subsequently, Lee Drew of the PSA explained (January 2019) that the change was to encourage players to play the ball (safely) to the front wall without hitting their opponent, and be given enough space to cross-court a ball.

As for the last bullet, if you read the 2019 rules, you'll see that this newly added 8.9.3 makes clear that in cases where the striker refrains – you should then look to 8.6 for how to decide the call. It probably wasn't intended, but with that reference, one could imply that the concepts of ‘affected’ and ‘prevented’ (8.9.1 & 8.9.2) no longer apply for swing interference because this change tells you to use 8.6.

## THE SQUASH CANADA OFFICIATING COMMITTEE

Again, we just want you to be aware of the folks keeping 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 the Squash Canada Programs Manager (Geoffrey Johnson) and a WSF representative (Wayne Smith). And we rush to acknowledge the very helpful work of some key refs on the periphery of the SCOC who have been helping with the various projects on the go. They are Curtis Gillespie (AB), Noman Nadeem (ON), Bob Mansbridge (ON), Greg van Staveren (ON), & Andres Orozco (ON).

### CAUGHT IN THE ACT!

Our international correspondents are everywhere – and one of them submitted this for the “stunned by that video overrule” award. (... *and maybe even the “verbally abused by a spectator” award?* - ED)



### FEEDBACK & INPUT

Another one bites the dust – but we'll have another for you in June with some news from the Nationals and such. Of course, if there's some kind of national Squash emergency needing immediate circulation, then we'll send out a 'flash' edition. If before then you've got something to say - email Geoffrey Johnson (Squash Canada Programs Manager) at: [geoff.johnson@squash.ca](mailto:geoff.johnson@squash.ca)