



# **SQUASH CANADA OFFICIATING PROGRAM**

# **REFEREE PROGRESSION**

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## **1. Introduction**

The mission is to attract and retain consistently competent Squash Referees, fulfilling a critical component of a competitive national squash community.

The WSF World Squash Singles Rules document is the primary reference, augmented by additional materials such as videos and on-line courses. All Referees are expected to know the rules.

The competency-based process will provide self-directed learning opportunities and tools to enable Referees to continue their development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required before and between assessments. The assessments will confirm the competence and advance the Referees through the distinct levels of Club Referee, Local Referee, Provincial Referee and National Referee designations.

The assessment and confirmation of the Referee is decided by Provincial and National Assessors, based on the fulfillment of the criteria including the candidate's performance in match situations, on the demonstration of knowledge in the assessment debriefing and by meeting learning and experience criteria completed in between assessments. Assessments may also be performed by Regional or WSF Assessors.

## **2. Desired Outcomes**

This section outlines the goals of the program, both for individual Referees and for the community at large – and touches on mechanisms that ensure those goals.

The desired outcomes are:

- That there are a sufficient number of competent Referees at each of the community levels.
- That Referees progress upwards through the certification levels as quickly as they can fulfill the learning requirements and be assessed as competent.
- That Referees will drive their on-going development using the training materials and gaining experience refereeing at tournaments and leagues.

This program provides clearly defined competencies for each level and self-directed learning and assessment tools. The Referee candidates can then facilitate parts of their development and seek opportunities to practice and reinforce the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to advance. The assessment would thus become the confirmation of their progress, rewarding those who have demonstrated competence and provide guidance on learning objectives.

With clear descriptions of observable & measureable competencies, we have designed our program to reflect a number of elements conducive to developing highly trained officials.

Experience and practice will continue to be a key driver of developing competency.

### **3. Referee Designations**

This section lists the 4 levels of Referees along with a short description of their expected abilities and which level of match they should be comfortable officiating.

#### **3.1 Club Referee**

This is the entry point designation for Referees - attained by either completing the on-line course and passing its exam, or by attending the Certification Clinic and passing its exam, or the on-line course exam.

#### **3.2 Local Referee**

This designation is the first level to be achieved through the assessment process. It identifies Referees having a good basic knowledge of interference interpretations and elements of match management, having limited experience in interclub matches and local tournaments, and who are competent to referee local matches involving players not nationally ranked.

#### **3.3 Provincial Referee**

This designation is for Referees competent to referee championship matches at the Provincial level and early-round Open calibre play at the National Championships. This Referee will have had a much broader experience in local, provincial and national tournaments. In addition such a Referee will generally demonstrate better judgement than a local Referee, both in terms of interference decisions, as well decisions and actions relating to match management. Finally, this Referee will have been judged as having a good awareness of the impact of their decisions on the match.

#### **3.4 National Referee**

This designation is for Referees competent to handle matches with any Canadian amateur or professional players – and will have had broad experience in local, provincial, national and professional tournaments. Such Referees will demonstrate advanced judgement of all interference situations, and whose match management will be effective and efficient. Such a Referee will possess acute awareness of the impact of their decisions on the match.

### **4. Administrative Structure**

This section gives a broad overview of the record-keeping aspect of the program, and also explains the availability of program materials.

#### **4.1 Database**

- A Squash Canada on-line database for Referees and Assessors contains the profile of each Referee including their stage of progression.

- There is a section for each Referee related to specific assessment documentation and recommended learning objectives as determined by an Assessor.
- There will be a section dealing with self-directed learning of specific modules related to the stage of development for that Referee. It is currently under development.
- There will be a section allowing the Referee to enter their activity and post comments related to their own concerns and mentoring requests. It is currently under development.
- There will be a section for P/T Administrators to track their Referees' progression and manage their development. It is currently under development.

#### **4.2 Assessment Documentation**

- Every assessed match has a result against benchmark criteria.
- Assessors use a formal document to record the outcomes of specific match performance. The Assessor will also verify the fulfillment of learning objectives needed for the candidate's level of development. Following the match, the assessor must review the match (debrief) and give the candidate the opportunity to sign the document. Failure to follow this procedure will invalidate the assessment if the candidate disputes it.
- Assessors may access the candidate's database file prior to any assessment to determine any specific training objectives that the candidate was addressing.

## **5. The Measurable Competencies**

This section lists all 6 competencies used to assess the candidate throughout the 3 levels which follow the 'Club Referee' level, and offers guidelines for their application.

### **5.1 Direct Access**

Deals in particular with whether the non-striker is making the effort to provide the striker with direct access to the ball (i.e., clearing properly). This is determined mainly by the speed and direction of that effort – including the lack of any clearing effort at all.

### **5.2 Play Ball**

Deals with judging the striker's ability to make a good return and the ability to do so. Falling within the scope of this competency are other considerations, such as whether there was minimal interference, a complete lack of interference, created interference, playing through, or the occasional case where the player requesting the let is not the striker.

### **5.3 Swing Interference**

Deals with properly determining the part of the swing involved (backswing, downswing, or follow-through), whether the degree of involvement was 'prevented' or 'affected' – including how excessive or exaggerated swings are addressed by the Referee.

### **5.4 Front-wall Interference**

This encompasses all aspects of interference to the path of the ball, including when the ball is travelling to either the front or side wall, or when the ball is travelling from the front wall. Also evaluated is the candidate's understanding the role timing in the request for let as it relates to the potential for the opponent to be hit by the return.

### **5.5 Performance as a Marker**

Whether acting in the dual role of Marker & Referee, or solely as Marker, the candidate must demonstrate an understanding of the scope of a Marker's responsibilities – all while performing the related tasks efficiently. This would include making any appropriate calls and announcements and repeating the Referee's decisions where appropriate.

### **5.6 Match Management**

This competency is meant to evaluate how the candidate manages the match overall, including the interference decisions - but also how a broad range of items not directly related to interference (e.g., poor behavior, injury/illness, communications, etc.) are dealt with. This evaluation will also include the correct use of the Conduct Rule all while demonstrating confidence, composure and consistency throughout.

## **GENERAL NOTES**

Considering all the above competencies, the Assessor will evaluate the candidate on the consistency of decisions over similar situations.

The debriefing itself will provide the opportunity to test the candidate's correct understanding and application of certain rules - whether or not they were actually invoked during the match.

As Referees gain experience and progress through the designations, they will be expected to display an increasing understanding of and correct application of interference interpretations.

All decisions may be viewed as routine, difficult, or influential (meaning, reasonably expected to affect subsequent player actions or behavior). An incorrect influential decision may result in a failed assessment.

The Assessor's responsibility is to determine the Referee's comprehension of the principles related to the individual competencies often enough to deem

the Referee capable of handling that competency in a more challenging match.

All demonstrations of competency will be recorded in the database, will form a 'history' for the assessment process, and will be a factor in the promotion decisions made by the Assessors.

The competencies demonstrated in assessments are only valid for the level being assessed to. For example, if an individual demonstrates Front Wall (FW) competency when being assessed from the Club to Local level, the individual will again need to demonstrate Front Wall (FW) competency when being assessed from the Local to Provincial level. Decision difficulty generally increases as player level increases."

An acceptable error rate will be indicated for each level of progression.

## **6. Experience**

The candidate must attain enough match experience to be exposed to situations which may arise in a match in which the Referee is being formally assessed. Each Referee designation will have a specified number of required matches as outlined in the 'Criteria for Progression' section which follows, as well as in Figure 1, "Referee Progression Matrix" found at the end of this document.

## **7. Criteria for Progression**

### **CONSECUTIVENESS**

While moving from one level to the next, once a candidate has successfully achieved a match signature or confirmation of a competency, he/she must not thereafter fail either of them. Our system requires that those signatures and competencies be 'consecutive' as further confirmation of the candidate's skills. However, it is not considered a failure if an overall assessment was recorded as 'Not Valid', or if a checkmark beside a competency was recorded 'Not Applicable'; neither of those affect the 'consecutive' requirement. Note also that an occasional error in decision making does not necessarily preclude the award of a match signature nor of a specific competency – assuming that enough positive evidence is available for either.

### **POOLING OF CALLS**

In an effort to partially overcome the problem of 'not enough calls', matches may be pooled so as to aggregate the refereeing decisions over multiple matches to help gather enough information. This may only be done by the same Assessor at the same event.

## **7.1 CLUB Referee to LOCAL Referee**

### **7.1.1 Level of Play**

Any competitive match

### **7.1.2 Demonstration of Competencies**

At this level, the candidate must possess a basic command of the key principles for all 6 competencies - and be able to explain the thinking that led to the decisions made during the match. There is no requirement to demonstrate any number of competencies and progression to this level only requires overall match performance to Local Level

#### ❖ Overall Match Competency

To receive a match signature, the overall error rate must be less than 20% and the candidate must have enough calls to demonstrate competency. A maximum of 1 error on the rule application of any competency will be allowed on any assessment.

### **7.1.3 Experience**

Is self-recorded and requires a minimum of 25 games (not matches) as a Referee, including at least 15 at a sanctioned tournament.

### **7.1.4 Training Modules**

No training modules are required

### **7.1.5 Criteria for Promotion**

- Must obtain 2 consecutive, successful match assessments by a Provincial or National Assessor. Any matches subsequent to this cannot contain a 'Not to Standard'.
- Must have refereed 25 games at the specified level.
- 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.

#### **General notes**

- An Assessor may recommend learning objectives to the Referee and still recommend progression.
- Ideally, the Referee would have displayed a willingness (attitude) to address any learning objectives from a prior assessment.



- The difficulty of the match, the difficulty of decisions in the match, and number of influential decisions will be used to determine if the match is valid for an upgrade. Pooled matches would also apply as 'the match'

## 7.2 LOCAL Referee to PROVINCIAL Referee

### 7.2.1 Level of play

Quarter-final (1/4) match, or later round, of a Provincial Championship or any National Championship Open match.

*NOTE: Even though a match may not meet these criteria regarding player levels, an Assessor may consider any given match as eligible if it contains sufficient challenges to demonstrate pertinent competency.*

### 7.2.2 Demonstration of competencies

At this higher level, the candidate must possess a clear command of the key principles for all 6 competencies – and be able to justify any decisions made during the match.

#### ❖ Interference competencies (**DA, PB, SW, FW**)

- There must be at least 3 decisions for an Assessor to determine a 'Pass' or a 'Not to Standard' on any interference competency.
- In order to receive a 'Pass' for a specific interference competency, the candidate must have made:
  - a) At least 3 correct, or 2 influential decisions
  - b) 4 or more wherein 80% were correct.
- No 'Pass' for a specific interference competency may be awarded unless the requirements above are met.
- A Not to Standard (NTS) will be given for a specific competency if:
  - a) 2 or 3 incorrect decisions are made with 3 or less examples of this competency demonstrated
  - b) 4 or more wherein more than 20% were incorrect

#### ❖ Non-interference competencies (**MR, MM**)

- For the **Marker** competency at this level, the candidate should make no more than 2 errors.
- For the **Match Management** competency at this level, the candidate should be very composed, and when required, should speak to the players in an assured voice and communicate the concepts precisely and concisely.

❖ Overall Match Competency

To receive a match signature, the overall error rate must be less than 15%. No errors on the rule application of any competency will be allowed on any assessment.

**7.2.3 Experience**

Is self-recorded and requires a minimum of 75 games (not matches) as a Referee, including at least 50 at a 'B' player level or above during sanctioned tournaments. As well, at least 5 games must be of semi-final or final round of a provincial championship category.

**7.2.4 Training modules**

The candidate must have studied and be ready to discuss both the 'Injury/Illness' and 'Managing Poor Behavior' modules.

**7.2.5 Criteria for promotion**

- Must obtain 3 successful match assessments (the last 2 consecutively) – 2 of which must be by a National Assessor. Any matches subsequent to this cannot contain a 'Not to Standard'.
- Must obtain at least 3 consecutive successful demonstrations of each of the 6 competencies. Any competencies subsequent to this cannot contain a 'Not to Standard'.
- Must have refereed 75 games at the specified level.
- Must successfully complete the required training modules.
- 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.

**General notes**

- An Assessor may recommend learning objectives to the Referee and still recommend progression.
- To be judged competent and be recommended to the 'Provincial' level, the Assessor must see sufficient evidence to warrant such judgement and be satisfied that the Referee's responses demonstrate a thorough understanding of the concepts and principles.
- The Referee must display an understanding of the impact of their decisions on the match.
- There is no minimum number of correct decisions required for a match signature. The difficulty of the match, the difficulty of decisions in the match, and number of influential decisions will be used to determine if

the match is valid for an upgrade. Pooled matches would also apply as 'the match'

## 7.3 PROVINCIAL Referee to NATIONAL Referee

### 7.3.1 Level of play

Matches involving players ranked nationally in the top 20, or professional match involving male PSA players ranked in the top 250 or female PSA players ranked in the top 125.

*NOTE: Even though a match may not meet these criteria regarding player levels, an Assessor may consider any given match as eligible if it contains sufficient challenges to demonstrate pertinent competency.*

### 7.3.2 Demonstration of competencies

At this highest level, the candidate must possess an advanced command of the key principles for all 6 competencies - and be able to justify any decisions made during the match.

#### ❖ Interference competencies (**DA, PB, SW, FW**)

- There must be at least 3 decisions for an assessor to determine a 'Pass' or a 'Not to Standard' on any interference competency.
- In order to receive a 'Pass' for a specific interference competency, the candidate must have made:
  - a) At least 3 correct, or 2 influential decisions
  - b) 4 or more wherein 80% were correct.
- No 'Pass' for a specific interference competency may be awarded unless the requirements above are met.
- A Not to Standard (NTS) will be given for a specific competency if:
  - a) 2 or 3 incorrect decisions are made with 3 or less examples of this competency demonstrated
  - b) 4 or more wherein more than 20% were incorrect

#### ❖ Non-interference competencies (**MR, MM**)

- For the **Marker** competency at this level, the candidate should make no more than 1 error.
- For the **Match Management** competency at this level, the candidate must demonstrate (if required) the appropriate use of the Conduct Rule, and should provide confident, pertinent, and correct explanations to the players and audience. As well, the candidate should possess an excellent understanding of

advanced-player strategies as they relate to the interference competencies.

❖ Overall Match Competency

To receive a match signature, the overall error rate must be less than 10%. No errors on the rule application of any competency will be allowed on any assessment.

### **7.3.3 Experience**

Is self-recorded and requires a minimum of 100 games (not matches) as a Referee, including at least 75 of A level or above matches at sanctioned tournaments, of which at least 15 be of a semi-final or final of a provincial or national championship category.

### **7.3.4 Training modules**

The candidate must have studied and be ready to discuss both the 'Ethics' and 'Improving Explanations' modules. In addition, the candidate must complete the free NCCP 'Making Head Way in Sport' course – which can be found at: <https://thelocker.coach.ca/> (where the official must create a profile and access training under the 'eLearning' section).

### **7.3.5 Criteria for promotion**

- Must obtain 5 successful match assessments (the last 3 consecutively) - 3 of which must be by National Assessors, FPS Assessors, or WSF Assessors. Any matches subsequent to this cannot contain a 'Not to Standard'.
- Must obtain at least 4 consecutive successful demonstrations of each of the 6 competencies. Any competencies subsequent to this cannot contain a 'Not to Standard'.
- Must have refereed 100 games at the specified level.
- Must successfully complete the required training modules.
- 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.

### **General notes**

- An Assessor may recommend learning objectives to the Referee and still recommend progression.

- To be judged competent and be recommended to the 'National' level, the Assessor must see sufficient evidence to warrant such judgement and be satisfied that the Referee's responses demonstrate an advanced understanding of the concepts and principles.
- The Referee must display an acute understanding of the impact of their decisions on the match.
- There is no minimum number of correct decisions required for a match signature. The difficulty of the match, the difficulty of decisions in the match, and number of influential decisions will be used to determine if the match is valid for an upgrade. Pooled matches would also apply as 'the match'.

**NOTE:** The last page below contains a matrix which summarizes in chart form, the specific criteria listed above.

## REFEREE PROGRESSION MATRIX

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	COURSE	EXAM	MATCH SIGNATURES	ASSESSORS	EXPERIENCE TOTALS	EXPERIENCE LEVELS	6 COMPETENCIES
<b>CLUB</b>	Online or Live	Online or Live	None	None	None	None	None
<b>LOCAL</b>	None	None	2 consecutive successful	By Provincial or National Assessors	A minimum of 25 games	At least 15 at sanctioned events	
<b>PROVINCIAL</b>	Injury/Illness Managing Poor Behavior	None	3 successful with at least 2 consecutive successful	At least 2 by a National Assessor	A minimum of 75 games	At least 50 at 'B' level or above at sanctioned events – 5 of which must be at semi-final or final rounds of a provincial championship	3 consecutive successful of each
<b>NATIONAL</b>	Ethics Improving Explanations Concussion Protocol	None	5 successful with at least 3 consecutive successful	At least 3 by National, FPS, or WSF Assessors	A minimum of 100 games	At least 75 of 'A' level or above at sanctioned events – 15 of which must be at semi-final or final rounds of a provincial or national championship	4 consecutive successful of each
<b>QCP</b>	None	None	2 consecutive successful in 3 years	National Assessors	20 games per year	At 'A' level or higher	None

### THE 6 COMPETENCIES

1. **DA** (Direct Access) – Decision on the effort to allow direct access to the ball
2. **PB** (Play Ball) – Decision on the effort or ability to get to and play the ball
3. **SW** (Swing) – Decision on swing-interference
4. **FW** (Front Wall) - Decisions on front wall interference
5. **MR** (Marker) - Performance as Marker
6. **MM** (Match Management) – Match Management Performance

### NOTES

- 'Consecutive' refers to the successful achievement of 2 or more match signatures, or confirmations of competencies.
- The 'Consecutive' criterion is not affected by a match recorded as 'Not Valid', or a competency recorded as 'Not Assessable'.