



WORLD SQUASH
FEDERATION

Referees' Review December 2007



Editor: Rod Symington

It has been six months since the last *Referees' Review* appeared and a lot has happened in that time. As the Reports in this issue reveal, WSF Referees have been in great demand, and in most of the major tournaments (including the British Open and the World Open) the 3 Referee System was used successfully. The players are much happier with the decisions made by three Referees, and while there are still "pockets of resistance", the 3 Referee System will eventually be accepted everywhere, and in a year or two we will all be thinking: Why did it take so long?

One of the major challenges to be faced now is how to assess the performance of the Central Referee in the 3 Referee System. (Since it is the Central Referee who controls the match, only that Referee can be assessed in respect of the full range of the Referee's duties.) When a player requests a let, we can see how the two Side Referees vote, but if they are in agreement, it is impossible to know what the Central Referee's decision is, since he or she does not have to signal it. However, the development of an electronic voting machine which will record the decisions made by each Referee will provide a record of the

Central Referee's decisions and allow an assessment to be conducted. It is merely a matter of time before this problem is solved; and in any case, the assessment of referees is secondary to the main purpose of refereeing: to get the decisions correct.

The new WSF Assessment Programme has also been applied with considerable success this year in, notably, the European Team Championships and the World Team Championships. While the amount of paperwork for the Assessor has increased slightly, the increase in the openness and fairness of the assessment process represents a major step forward.

However, the new programme can only work successfully if all the WSF Assessors are fully informed about the principles of the "competency-based" assessment process and if they apply those principles in the assessments that they carry out. To this end the WSF has started the ball rolling by appointing two Senior Assessors, Chris Sinclair (AUS) and Rod Symington (CAN) (who were both involved in developing the programme), to promote the new assessment process and to train both existing and future WSF Assessors. Both of them were recently confirmed in their new roles by undergoing a quality control procedure in which the Assessor's debriefing of a referee is observed and evaluated to see if it conforms with the CBTA principles.

In refereeing and assessment matters the WSF is forging ahead, and the future is looking rosy: better referees, better Assessors, and a better officiating system. Now, how about improving the Rules themselves? (See next item.)

Re-Writing the Rules

For over three years a Working Group, chaired by Don Ball (South Africa) has been attempting to simplify the Rules of Squash. It has been a long and arduous process, because all of the discussions have been conducted by e-mail – a process that, as we quickly found out, is singularly unsuited to the project. (It is extremely time-consuming – and often very frustrating – to try to debate the wording of a Rule by e-mail, especially when five people are involved.)

Nevertheless, the Working Group is nearing the end of its task, and within a few months it will be ready to present its results to the WSF and to Member Nations for comment. At this time Member Nations will also have an opportunity to suggest any further rule changes.

It is the nature of such projects – especially in a world-wide organisation – that they take a long time to be completed. Thus we should not expect a final version of the new Rules for perhaps a year or two. (My optimistic guess would be May 1, 2009 for the new Rules to come into effect.)

In the mean time, we will struggle on with the present Rules. But it must be said that *conceptually* the present Rules are in pretty good shape: there are very few areas anywhere any radical changes would seem to be necessary. The perennial questions surrounding such Rules as "Fair View" and "Turning" will, no doubt, be debated again, but overall the Rules at the moment express the way in which squash should be played.

Among the changes that I would make are the following: Call every fault on the serve simply a "fault" Having *five*

different calls for a service-fault is unduly complex and quite unnecessary. Second, since over 90% of the time a player who turns on the ball does hit it (or should not), ban hitting the ball after turning. In this way, safety would be promoted, and the present very complex Rule greatly simplified. Third, overhaul the far-too-draconian bleeding Rule that was, when it was first introduced, an over-reaction to the AIDS scare. Bring it into line with sensible rules in other sports. Finally, simplify the Conduct Rule – see Editorial below)

WSF Referees who would like to suggest rule changes should contact their national association in anticipation of the latter's being asked to make suggestions for changes.

Editorial

(Note: The opinions expressed in this Editorial are the responsibility of the Editor and in no way reflect the official position of the World Squash Federation.)

It happened again: A member of the IOC was present at the Final of the Men's Team Championships in Chennai and witnessed some disagreements between the players and the referees. For those of us who have been around for a few years these "disagreements" were comparatively mild: questioning a few decisions, throwing the racket into the air, etc. Yet one of the first things the IOC Member said after the Final was: "Why do you allow the players to show such dissent at the Referee's decisions?" (This comment was echoed by another distinguished guest from another sport. And it was also the topic of a column in a major newspaper.)

The first time such a question was asked by IOC Members was when they attended the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002. So here we are almost six years later – and little has changed. It is true that steps were taken by the WSF in 2002 to curb dissent, and there has been some small improvement in player behaviour overall since then, but the fact remains that compared with most other sports – and certainly when compared with sports that are in the Olympics – squash has still not put its house in order in respect of player behaviour.

Those who are involved in squash and who frequently witness dissent by players fail to realise how the image of squash suffers because of bad conduct on court. It takes someone who is not involved directly in the sport to point out what we cannot ourselves see. In respect of bad conduct squash is the last frontier – especially in racket sports. Transfer complaining squash players to a rugby field and they would be back in the changing-room in two minutes.

The responsibility for improving the image of squash by curbing unacceptable behaviour on court (and showing dissent at the Referee's decisions is definitely unacceptable) falls on *everyone* who is involved in the sport: players, referees, coaches, and managers.

Chiefly, however, the people who have the power to stop bad behaviour and thereby improve the sport's image are the referees. A universal policy of zero tolerance would quickly eradicate bad behaviour and raise the image of the sport.

The problem is that the present Rule 17 (Conduct on Court) is far too flexible and therefore unhelpful. Its flexibility

leaves less experienced referees wallowing in doubt about the appropriate course of action, while the required wording makes even the most experienced and cool-headed ones tongue-tied.

Furthermore, it is utterly nonsensical to advise referees (as we do) that a Conduct Warning for one offense (e.g. racket abuse) may be followed by another Conduct Warning for a second offense of that nature or by one of a different type (e.g. delay of game).

The only rational way to frame the Rule would be to declare that an offense is an offense is an offense – and to make it mandatory that the Referee may give only *one* Conduct Warning: a second offense *must* be penalised by a higher penalty.

And why not simply move to yellow and red cards, as are used in so many sports nowadays? Following the commission of an offense by a player, the Referee would utter a simple phrase such as: “Conduct violation” and hold up a yellow card. (Requiring the Referee to say: “Conduct Warning for racket abuse” when the player throws his racket against the wall is redundant when everyone can see what has just happened. In 90% of cases the offense is obvious and the description of it by the Referee is quite unnecessary.)

A second yellow card would signify the award of a stroke to the opponent, and the next offense would result in the loss of a game. How long would it take before conduct on court would be improved?

As long as the sport of squash refuses to enter the 21st century and bring its Rules and procedures into line with all the other sports in the Olympics, the

dream of squash finally jumping the final hurdle and becoming an Olympic sport is likely to remain a dream. The Members of the IOC are watching – and at the moment some of them don’t like what they see.

From the Director

by Graham Waters

Wow another year has passed and we will soon be ringing in 2008. Wasn’t it only last year that we were celebrating Y2K?

The 3 Referee System has gained wide support from referees, players, promoters, and spectators alike. Perhaps the only ones not so happy with it are the members of the press, who now don’t have nearly so many strange decisions or player/referee confrontations to write about! The Guidelines for the use of this system have now been updated, sent to all WSF Referees and Assessors, and appear elsewhere in this newsletter. The next step in the evolution of the system is the development of an electronic mechanism to record the decisions of all 3 Referees and display them on the panel of the Central Referee, who will announce the consensus decision. The PSA is now in the process of developing this device, and we hope to have it available for use early in 2008.

It is anticipated that this new device will also allow an Assessor to properly assess the Central Referee. If the Assessor has the same panel, the Central Referee’s individual can be displayed and monitored. The one drawback of the 3 Referee System has been the inability to assess the Central

Referee because his/her decision was often not easily visible.

The timing of the annual Referee Review and appointment procedure has been changed. To allow all Referees the opportunity to gain the necessary number of matches and assessments under the new CBTA system, nominations will be sought in May with a deadline for submission of late June. This will allow the Review Board an opportunity to review the candidates at a time when there are very few major events on the PSA and WISPA calendars, and only the World Juniors on the WSF's.

The second half of 2007 was very busy and presented a major challenge to the WSF office staff to place Referees and Assessors to 11 events that requested our services. The October/November period was particularly popular with 7 events in those 2 months alone. Fortunately, with some creative assignment strategies, we were able to satisfy all. See the chart below for a full list of those assigned during the second half.

The practice of presenting WSF plaques to referees who act as the Central Referee for a World Championship final continues. Recipients so far in 2007 have been Chris Sinclair (Jr. Women's Individual and Junior Women's Teams), Wendy Danzey (Jr. Women's Teams and Women's World Open), and Tahir Khanzhada (Jr. Women's Teams). The referees for the Men's World Open

Final were John Massarella, Roy Gingell, and Mike Riley; and for the Men's Teams Finals they were Yogi Singh and Munir Shah.

One situation that has become very bothersome for the Office Staff and to me is the tendency on the part of some referees, and I must stress it is only a small minority, to not reply to e-mails inviting them to accept an assignment to a tour event. We all understand that it takes a little time to make arrangement with our families and employers, but it is important to let the Hastings staff know whether or not you can accept an assignment, so that they can move on and find somebody else, if necessary.

Of even greater concern is the situation where a referee has been assigned to an event and then pulls out at the last minute. This causes great panic among the promoter and the WSF staff as they hastily try to find a replacement. We understand that emergencies do happen, but the incidents where this happening in 2007 were not triggered by emergencies. Such behaviour reflects badly on all WSF Referees and this practice must not continue.

As always, your comments and suggestions on any aspect of our program are always welcome. I look forward to catching up with many of you during the coming year. My very best wishes go to all for a happy and peaceful holiday season and a healthy and prosperous 2008.

Cathay Pacific Open, Hong Kong

by Ian Allenach

It's Hong Kong, it's November and the event is the Cathay Pacific Hong Kong Open. The WSF-appointees were Mike Collins, Jason Foster, Yogi Singh and myself, Ian Allanach. However we also had help from Mohammed Fayyaz, two talented Malaysians and two competent Japanese. Marshalling this

talented squad was Anthony So, the Tournament Referee.

Up to the quarterfinals the matches were played at the Hong Kong Squash Club, after which we moved to the Plaza Hollywood, where the show court had been set up in the middle of one of Kowloon's major shopping malls. The paying audience was supplemented by the many shoppers on levels 1-4 who stopped to marvel at the fitness and dexterity of the world's top players. The finals brought together the world's best with Nicol David and Amir Shabana taking the titles.

What sticks in the memory?

Being met at the Airport by two charming ladies holding a board with my name on it The message? My luggage was still in London – it arrived 26 hours later.

The generosity of the club and association members in treating us to authentic Chinese food on more than one occasion.

The pleasure on many faces when I was able to confirm that Glasgow had won the Commonwealth Games. The energy and vibrancy of Hong Kong and the participation of the referees in that vibrancy.

Meeting former world referee Chris Clark at the opening reception – a man with a fund of stories.

And on the squash side

One young Australian exhibiting deplorable behaviour – hit by me for a warning, a stroke and a game in the same match – and still he argued. He was the odd one out among a highly professional group of players.

Shot of the tournament played by Lincou against Bradley Ball – apparently beaten by a delicious tight back wall drive, the response was a measured volley boast reverse angle kill nick.

Rally of the tournament in the Palmer/Shabana match. Twice Palmer dived full length to stay in rally under constant pressure from Shabana. It ended in a let and the crowd stood and applauded them both. Then all turned to watch the replay on the big screen, Shabana acknowledging Palmer's efforts, as he saw the commitment from a new angle – not the time for the Referee to say "Play on. Please"!

Fabulous ladies and men's finals. I refereed the men and not a single stroke was awarded in 62 minutes play. This was testimony to the accuracy of the shots and the players' speed in clearing.

Yes – let's come back to that big screen behind the lone referee. Let's assume there were some disputed

points!! As referees we found the audience looking back behind us to review a decision – hm – it was very tempting to do it ourselves. What we really wanted was for them to turn back saying “Good call!!!” but sometimes we heard words like “Never!”.

The Cathay Pacific tournament was a heady mix of experiences. You survive the ubiquitous frantic taxi driving to the venue (Toyota must have provided zillions of these taxis to HK), you then match world-class squash with world-class refereeing, sprinkle in a knowledgeable and friendly squash audience, accept some wonderful hospitality in a setting second to none, and end the day unwinding with supportive colleagues, enjoying some of the best food in the world, washed down with some amber nectar.

Not a bad appointment!

Singapore Women’s Squash Masters 2007

by Mike Collins

A surprise and extremely rushed trip to officiate at the CIMB Singapore Women's Squash Masters 2007 turned out to be well worth the last minute scramble for flight bookings and unscheduled leave. The tournament which was a new event very recently squeezed into the Calendar was extremely well covered and supported by the public and press and even ESPN in prime time. The top 9 out of 10 ladies were in Singapore after having just completed the Malaysian Open, and the quality and level of squash proved to be just reward for the large crowds who crammed into every available space at

the squash complex. Desmond Hill, Graham Dare and their team from Singapore Squash were thoroughly pleased with the success of the event and there was immediate talk of a bigger and better event next year and even a hint of having the court set on a floating platform on the water alongside the magnificent Singapore city centre. I personally was treated to very warm and generous hospitality and was shown Singapore in style. I do hope Singapore will be able to go from strength to strength with future events and return to the forefront of squash.

Tournament of Champions, New York

by Jos Aarts

Right. Where do you start when reporting about your maiden trip on the PSA tour and the tournament already well in to its third day before you even know you are expected to write a report. Graham Waters shocked me with that request when I checked my e-mail. Luckily, he had the courtesy of presenting me the red line as well: your first assignment!

I guess, probably best is to do it in chronological order.

About 3-4 weeks before the US Open was about to start I received an email from Rebekah Viles at WSF headquarters: Was I able to fly to New York. I assumed that the WSF Miss Money penny wouldn't accept a no for an answer, so I said: Yes, of course!

So there I was, in JFK, with no clue if I was going to be met. After checking my latest e-mails, which cost me 8 dollars for 6 minutes (welcome to New York!) , I found out that I was

supposed to find my way downtown by myself. Not a problem: if you can find your way in Amsterdam, how difficult could it be?

But after running into Peter Barker and Ong Ben Hee in JFK airport, we decided to share a cab. Peter B. turned out to be a heck of a negotiator. He managed to get the cabfare down from \$45 dollars a head to only \$30! After a 90-minute drive in the slow traffic, I was dropped off at the Printing House Squash and Fitness Club in Manhattan. This is a well-equipped leisure centre with, of course, a lot of cardio fitness stuff and personal trainers all over the place. But also even a boxing ring (!) and 5 squash courts, although one was under renovation.

Big surprise! Although I had send my travel schedule, they weren't expecting me for the qualifying matches! But Sean Gibbons, one of the promoters did a great job in finding me a room for 2 nights. I already saw my self under a Central Park tree in a carton box...

Another surprise for Sean the next morning was that when the qualifying rounds started, a couple of American referees showed up. Assistant tournament Referee, Wayne Smith from Canada, was a happy man: he had lots of referees to work with.

So, having in total 5 referees present for 2 matches at a time, when not using markers, allowed me to take some photographs of other matches for my mate Steve Cubbins, when I was off duty as a referee. I haven't broke the news to him yet that I, now being a newly appointed IR, I have to cut down on doing that.

During the second day, Mike Riley, Tournament Referee arrived and we had some gruelling final matches in the

Qualifying Round, followed by some tough first round matches – such as Golan, not able to continue after a collision with El Hindi, and the shock defeat of John White by Omar Mosaad.

Having spend two nights in different hotels, we would now be able to check in at the Off Soho Suites hotel. Which turned out to be a laid-back hotel on the edge of Soho and Chinatown. Our room was actually a suite, with separate living, kitchen and a bedroom with two separate, 10 inches short (!) beds. The 3rd promised bed turned out to be the sofa in the living room. Decision time: Who had to sleep on the couch? The answer was pretty easy.: Wayne Smith from Canada arrived last. And in fact, being an exiled New Zealander, didn't help his case either.

After the first round matches ended on Sunday night, Jim Wellington (WISPA tournament promoter and in New York moonlighting as a squash reporter) and I went to visit the Roseland Ballroom to check on the venue. Less then 18 hours before the evening session on the glass court was scheduled to start, the McWil people still had to start with all the glass panels and support panels. That really didn't look well at all! So I made a bet with Wayne (for just one dollar!) that they would not make it on time!

The next day, after finishing the afternoon session at the Printing House Squash Club we all went to the Roseland, hoping for a miracle. And a miracle was performed!

When we arrived at 17.30, only 30 minutes before the start of the first match, the court was erected completely! There was a scaffold on court for some final preparations on the court lighting but only 45 minutes late the first match went on court! Almost incredible, I found out later

that the crew only had a 2 hour nap at night.

So I won my bet with Wayne S., but somehow he kept forgetting paying up! Oops, I almost forgot! All the refs present assisted Mike Riley in sweeping the court floor to gain some extra time. Being a photographer I took a few pics which were published on squashsite.co.uk. As you will understand, some refs were offering money for not publishing the pictures in fear of getting in trouble at home! Sorry, guys! The world needs to know!

All matches on the glass court were refereed using the 3 ref system. Of course, there were still a few arguments with players, but really nothing worth mentioning. The only adjustment came from Alex Gough after the first session, who insisted on having also a visible hand-signal from the main referee.

So all the matches went on straightforwardly with only some surprise results in the semis and, from a spectator point of view, a disappointing final which only lasted three games. Some spectators left their seat to get a drink after the first game but didn't make it back on time before the start of the second. Security personnel didn't allow them go back to their seats during that 2nd game and the 3rd game wasn't really a game at all. So they paid US\$150, just to see one game!

Most of the time, after the final is played, you fly out with one of the first possible flights. Because, as already mentioned, it was my first time in the Big Apple, I had booked a flight for 22.10 hrs. the next day. This made it possible to do some extra sightseeing and, even more important, being on a night flight: sleeping throughout the flight back home!

So, having a hotel on the edge of Soho, this was again an easy decision: Chinatown, Soho and Little Italy, which is actually nothing more than one street with a lot of Italian restaurants. So I walked around for some hours and nothing much to tell, except that Chinatown these days does have approximately 7346 shops. And they all seemed to sell exactly the same watches, bracelets, sunglasses, jewellery, "I love NY" mugs and other typical tourist stuff. But if you go in a couple of streets further you find Mottstreet. Only there you can smell the real Chinatown atmosphere, with all kinds of typical Chinese food stores. In one fish shop I saw several overcrowded aquariums where the fish were not able to swim or move at all. Just managing to breathe. And "just" is also an understatement as well! But you could feel that any moment that famous Chinese dragon could come around a corner.

Not a bad finish for my "first assigned" tournament!

WSF Refereeing Assignments 2nd half 2007

Month	2007	Site	#	Referees Assigned
July 30–A4	Singapore Women's Masters	Singapore	1	Mike Collins
Aug. 1-13	Junior Women World Championships	Hong Kong	4	Wendy Danzey, Mohammad Fayyaz, Tahir Khanzhada, Chris Sinclair
Sept. 18-24	British Open	Manchester	2	Roy Gingell, Dean Clayton,
Sept. 27-04	U.S. Open	New York	1	Jos Aarts
Oct. 21-27	Women's World Open	Madrid	4	Jos Aarts, Dean Clayton, Wendy Danzey, Graham Waters
Oct. 23-28	Saudi International	Al-Khobar	3	Roy Gingell, John Massarella, Nasse
Oct. 28–N3	Qatar Classic (07)	Doha	6	David Atkins, Dean Clayton, Mike C Wendy Danzey, John Massarella, Gra
Nov. 4 - 11	Hong Kong Open	Hong Kong	4	Ian Allanach, Mike Collins, Jason Fo Singh
Nov. 12-19	Pakistan Open	Islamabad	3	Fahim Gul Khan, Jamshed Gul Khan, Tahir Khanzhada,
Nov. 23- D1	World Open	Bermuda	4	Roy Gingell, John Massarella, Mike Riley, Jack Flynn (TR & A)
Dec. 6-12	Men's World Team Championships	Chennai	5 + 1	Damien Green, Tahir Khanzhada, Mu Chris Sinclair, Yogi Singh, Rod Symi

2007 Epstein Becker and Green WISPA World Squash Tour Event, 20th – 24th June. The Los Angeles Athletic Club

by Chris Sinclair

I was travelling to Canada to see my family and looked at the PSA and WISPA websites and noticed that a WISPA event was scheduled in LA. I had met the LAAC squash pro and Tournament Director Bob Hanscom at

a World Women's event some years ago, so I first asked WISPA to ascertain if I might approach Bob, then asked Bob if he'd like a referee for the event and he agreed. To my pleasant surprise Rod Symington (WSF Assessor from Canada) also attends this Tournament each year and it was great to see him again.

Players

There were 23 WISPA players with the top seeds being Natalie Grainger (USA world #5) and Samantha Teran (Mexican world #22). In the final Natalie defeated Egypt's Raneem El

Weleily – current world junior champion.

Rod and I refereed all the matches and marked and refereed together from the quarter finals.

Courts

We used 2 glass-back courts with excellent tiered spectator seating. Since we were in Los Angeles, the MC was an actor with a great voice (and looks!)

Accommodation

Beautiful ‘olde worlde’ rooms just a few floors above the courts – brilliant. The dining areas were great and Rod and I were well looked after generously.

Functions

A “Meet the Players” function was fully sponsored at the Club and the presentation function was at a pub nearby – the girls had a great time with karaoke.

Publicity

Through the generosity of a club member, Steve Cubbins from Squashsite attended. Despite having his passport, cameras and computer stolen on arrival at LAX, he provided a brilliant service.

This was a great event – well run and extremely enjoyable. I loved the limo pick up from the airport! Thanks Bob and Rod – see you next year!

Endurance World Open, Bermuda

by Jack Flynn

At the beginning of September I accepted a most welcome assignment to act as Tournament Referee/Assessor

at the World Open in Bermuda. I left Dublin Nov 22nd and met up with World Referees Roy Gingell and John Massarella at Gatwick for the 7-hour flight to this beautiful Island in the mid-Atlantic ocean. On the journey I renewed acquaintances with some players and members of the press corps many of whom I had not seen for some time.

The draw for qualifying rounds took place at 10.00 am on the following morning at the Bermuda Squash Rackets Association Club in Devonshire, 30 mins drive from our hotel, the Fairmount Southampton, and play commenced at 12 noon in front of a very enthusiastic audience. Patrick Foster, the former Irish International, is the resident coach there and he was most helpful to us providing anything we needed. The traditional referee/marker system was used for qualifying and following discussions with PSA and Tournament Director Ross Triffitt it was decided to continue to do so at the club and change to 3 referee system for all matches on the all-glass court back at the main venue. This led to the first round proper being split, with half the matches on each of the first 2 days being at the club and the remainder at the glass court. It would not have been logistically possible to use the 3 referee system for a complete 1st round, so a compromise was reached to accommodate a request from the players to use a 3 referee system for as many matches as possible. This lessened the opportunities for assessing, but I was able to cover all the referees with help from John and Roy. The decision to split the 1st round turned out to be justified as the average time for a match for final qualifying and 1st round at the club was in excess of 60 minutes - several exceeded 70 minutes, with one lasting 99 minutes. The referees

were assigned a mini bus-taxi, driven by Sydney, for the journeys and this helped the group to blend together. The journey took between 30 and 50 minutes depending on the traffic, and John's impressions and Roy's humorous text messages were to the fore, together with a lot of friendly banter.

The all-glass court in the huge tent, located in the hotel car park was the biggest enclosed arena I have seen for a squash event, with a stunning panoramic view over Horseshoe Bay, and the organizers are to be congratulated for the foresight and tremendous effort in providing this stunning venue. The first match on the court followed the official opening ceremony performed by the Premier, Dr. Ewart Brown, before a capacity audience.

When the first round was completed all remaining matches were on the glass court commencing at 6pm each day, except for semis and final that were scheduled a little later. This gave the officiating team time to relax during the day and get some well-earned rest. John and Roy took to the beach which had a warning to beware of Portuguese Man-o-War jellyfish but they disappeared once John took to the water! Mike, Wes and Jack played on the Hotel's famous par-3 gold course, described by none other than Davis Love III as the best in the world – it certainly was the hardest I have ever played. Sheldon decided to catch up on some work.

It was close to midnight when play finally ended the first session of round 2, so it was a quick dash back to the hotel for a late dinner. John has a tendency to remove his shoes at times like this and the left one mysteriously disappeared when he was in the rest room. He spent quite some time on his

hands and knees searching for the lost shoe, much to the delight of players, coaches and assembled press corps. Even more mysteriously it reappeared at breakfast time, much to John's relief.

Wednesday 28th the bottom half of the 2nd round was about to bring unforeseen problems for players and officials alike. With humidity running at 94% court conditions changed dramatically with the non-slip floor proving to be anything but. On previous days court cleaners were required a little more than expected but now they were called to court after every 2/3 rallies. Some of the players' clothing did not help – made of a nylon-type material rather than cotton, it failed to absorb moisture. Suspending play was considered at the time in consultation with Tournament Director Ross Triffitt, but it was decided to continue using the court cleaners as required, and somehow we got to the end of the 2nd round.

With humidity again above 90% and a larger crowd expected, even more problems were forecast, but Ross and his team, after trying various options finally came up with a solution, and 4 tremendous matches ensued in the quarter finals. However, the problem still remained with the glass floor under certain atmospheric conditions providing to be dangerous and virtually unplayable. The safety of the players was always our priority, so it was fingers crossed that the court would remain as safe for the next 2 days, as it did for the quarters.

With play not commencing until 7pm there was free time for the referees to enjoy Bermuda. Mike took the early ferry to Hamilton, Wes was back to the golf course for his second round of the week, Sheldon's wife, Deyna, arrived

from Florida the previous night and they had some time together. John, Roy and Jack went Boating in the Sound (we took the noon ferry!) and were given an impromptu cruise amongst the smaller islands, when the captain decided to divert to avoid a passing shower. He also gave a very informative running commentary on who owned what and who lived where in the vicinity.

Back in the afternoon to prepare for the semi-finals before a capacity audience. Two entertaining matches played in an excellent spirit with few interruptions for floor cleaning/wiping – the ventilation seemed to have done the job.

The eagerly awaited Final, with John as center referee and Roy and Mike on the sides, started slowly with Gaultier 4-1 in front in the early stages, but once Shabana got going he dominated his opponent with an awesome display of attacking squash and he was a worthy winner 3/0 in 42 minutes. The match was followed by prize-giving and the wrap-up party continued until the early hours.

Sunday was spent tidying up and packing for the journeys home. Mike to Long Island, New York, West to Edmondton, Sheldon to Florida, John, Roy and Jack to Gatwick, en route to Doncaster, Maesteg and Dublin respectively. All agreed it was a great event superbly run by the organizing committee.

The quote of the week came from the photographer Fritz Borchert. At lunch one day John Masserella enquired of him if he was having a pudding (dessert). Much to the delight of the gathering of referees and journalists Fritz replied in his heavy German accent “No I don’t want to look like you!”

9th WSF Refereeing Conference, Chennai, India, 4- 5 December 2007

by Rod Symington

The Taj Connemara Hotel in Chennai was the venue for the 9th WSF Refereeing Conference, organized by Chris Sinclair (AUS) and Rod Symington (CAN). Officially, 21 referees from outside India were registered and 24 from with the country.

The presenters were Rod Symington (CAN), Chris Sinclair (AUS), Munir Shah (Singapore), Damien Green (AUS), and John Small (AUS).

Among the practical refereeing topics presented were backswing interference, blocking, minimal interference, physical tactics, conduct, injuries, and the new 3 Referee System.

The new WSF CBTA Programme for the training of referees was introduced and the assessment process explained. In addition, the attendees learned about mentoring as a means of developing referees.

The Conference was highly successful: 100% of the respondents to an end-of-conference survey rated it either 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

Our thanks go to Major Maniam in Chennai and to the Squash Rackets Federation of India for their support, help, and generosity in staging this successful event.

Men's World Team Championships, Chennai, India, 6 – 12 December 2007

by Rod Symington

The magnificent ICL Squash Academy in Chennai was the venue for the 21st WSF Men's Team Championships. The facility contains seven beautiful squash courts, and the all-glass court (yes, including the glass floor) had also been erected in the gym area. The squash facility also provides an internet wi-fi connection throughout.

A record 29 teams had entered (including Russia and Chinese Taipei), which meant that there was plenty of refereeing for everyone. The WSF-appointees – Chris Sinclair, Munir Shah, Yogi Singh, and Damien Green – were assisted several referees from abroad who had traveled to Chennai at their own expense and a number of local referees.

The tournament organization was superb in every way, as was the hospitality extended to both players and officials. A referees' meeting was conducted every morning at 11 p.m. by the Tournament Referee, Muneer Sait, at which issues that arose each day were discussed.

During the first three days the 29 teams were divided into three pools and playing sessions were held at 12 noon and 4 p.m., with either six or seven courts in operation. Since even the third match in a dead rubber had to be played as the best of five games, the sessions were long and referees quickly got used to eight-hour work-days.

There were no upsets until the knockout stage began on the fourth

day. Then India (seeded 10th) surprised Wales (seeded 5th), and the Netherlands (seeded 8th) knocked Pakistan (seeded 7th) out of the top eight. For India it would be the first time they had finished in the top eight in the Men's World Team Championships.

Thereafter, things went according to seeding, resulting in Australia versus France, and England versus Egypt in the Semi-Finals. The long PSA season and the recently completed World Open in Bermuda had taken its toll on some players, and the teams with the healthiest and freshest players, Australia and England, won their way through to the Final, in both cases by winning the first two matches in the tie.

The Final was a tense affair for a while. David Palmer (AUS) and Nick Matthew (ENG) became engaged in see-saw battle: Palmer won the first two games which were both very close; then Matthew came storming back to win the next two games. But Palmer jumped ahead early in the fifth game and never looked back.

The second match was perhaps the best of the entire Championships. James Willstrop and Stuart Boswell staged an exhibition of how squash can be played, if the players set their mind to it. There were two big men on court, yet they almost never collided, clearing beautifully and playing the ball whenever possible. If two tall men can play squash like this, why can't all players? Willstrop was the winner of this exquisite match.

And so it came down to the final match between Peter Barker (ENG) and Cameron Pilley (AUS). The Englishman lived up to his higher ranking and dissected his opponent in

three clinical games – and England were the champions again.

I have been to a number of World Championships, and this one was certainly one of the most successful in every way. The Squash Rackets Federation of India deserve to be congratulated on staging a superb event.

Guidelines for Using the 3 Referee System

The 3 Referee System uses a Central Referee and 2 Side Referees. In addition, a Marker may be used, if a competent one is available. If one is not, the Central Referee performs all of the normal duties of the Marker and the Right Side Referee keeps score as a backup to the Central Referee.

Use of the System

The system should be used whenever conditions and the availability of the required number of referees permit. However, to be fair to all players in any event, it should be used for *all* matches in the same round, or not at all in that round. Players must *not* be recruited to act as Referees, neither as a Central Referee nor as a Side Referee.

Position of Referees

- This system should only be used when a match is played on a glass back court (or all glass court) with tiered seating behind it. The Central Referee should be located in the middle of the gallery approximately 6-8 rows back and with as much elevation as possible. The side Referees should sit one or two rows in front of the Central Referee, in line with each

inside-line of the service box. If a Marker is used, he or she should sit beside the Central Referee. The 3 Referees are permitted (and encouraged) to confer with each other between games to discuss and possibly remedy any difficult situation that may have arisen earlier in the match.

Responsibilities

- If a Marker is employed, the Marker and Central Referee have all the same responsibilities as they do in the traditional system. Otherwise, the Central Referee acts as both Marker and Referee.
- Each time a player requests a let or appeals against a Marker's call or non-call, all 3 Referees render a decision simultaneously, using either an electronic device provided or hand signals, and the overall decision is announced by the Central Referee. There is **NO** appeal to this decision.
- The Central Referee maintains **SOLE** responsibility for time keeping, injury, and conduct rulings. (No appeals are allowed to these decisions.)
- If no electronic device is available, the agreed hand signals are as follows:
 - Yes Let – the index finger and thumb shaped into an “L”
 - Stroke – a clenched fist
 - No Let – an open hand, palm down
 - Ball was good – thumb up
 - Ball was not good – thumb down

- Unsighted or unsure whether a return was good – cover eyes with hand.
- When a return is questionable and the Central Referee (or the Marker) makes no call, each Side Referee should indicate by
 - means of a hand signal (thumb up or thumb down) whether the return is good or not. If both Side Referees agree that the return is not good, the Central Referee must stop the rally and rule accordingly. This will prevent the situation where the result of a long rally is reversed on appeal.

The Future of Squash – A Visionary?

“What is the future of squash? Year after year, more courts spring up and raise their crops of delight in battle, of thumping feet, of fitness and of temporarily overtired hearts. Year after year, the game is played more widely, for the most part in a sporting and anything but press-conscious spirit. In some respects, the position of the game is unique. It really does begin to look as if squash is going to be the first really popular game which cannot be capitalized upon or played before roaring crowds.

Lawn tennis, from its infancy, was always potentially a public spectacle. Real tennis and rackets can never be popular because of the cost of the courts, balls and rackets. But squash appears to be taking a unique path of

its own. Never, except by means of mirrors or television, or by the aquariumisation of the court, will it be possible for the final of the world championship to be watched by thousands.

Is it possible that a game with a doubtful reputation as regards to health, a game the limitations of which are known and admitted to by its votaries, a game which is incapable of being publicized, is going to take its place among the most popular pastimes of the future?

I rather think it is!”

K.C. Gander Dower
The Squash Rackets Annual
 1937-1938

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