



**Guidelines for
Regional & National
Assessors**

February 2009

WSF GUIDELINES FOR REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ASSESSORS

Introduction

As part of its commitment to improve international refereeing, WSF has adopted a Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) framework. Programmes have been developed for each level of refereeing from Introductory to World and they specify:

- The pre-requisites needed to enter the programme - eyesight and hearing requirements, existing refereeing qualifications and previous refereeing experience,
- The competencies (knowledge and skills) required,
- Training to achieve the competencies,
- Assessment requirements, including standards and the number and level of assessments needed,
- Refereeing activity needed prior to appointment, and
- Ongoing assessment and activity requirements for re-appointment.

Full details can be found in the respective WSF CBTA programmes. Sections that are particularly relevant to assessment are included in the appendices to these guidelines (see CBTA Programme Summary below).

The WSF recognises the right of Regional Federations and Nations to determine their own standards for their Regional and National level referees. Thus the standards and procedures outlined in this document are intended as recommendations only, particularly for those Member Nations that do not yet have a full referee training programme, or who are in the process of developing one. However, it should be noted that the standards specified in these Guidelines and the WSF CBTA Programmes for the Regional or National levels are pre-requisites to candidature at the International Referee level (see WSF CBTA Programme for International Referees).

An assessment sheet has been developed to cover the competencies, specified in the CBTA programmes for the National and Regional levels, that are assessed when candidates referee matches (see WSF Assessment Sheet for National and Regional Referees attached as Appendix 4). Again, this assessment sheet is not intended to replace any sheets that Regional Federations or Member Nations may already be using. Rather, their purpose is to demonstrate how the competencies being required of a referee might be assessed. The recommended sheet contains a separate page where the assessment against each of the competencies is made, and standards for these assessments are defined (see page 3 of Appendix 4).

In the interest of fairness towards candidates, all Assessors should apply similar standards when assessing candidates. These guidelines have been developed to assist Assessors in using the new assessment sheets to assess candidates for National and Regional level to a consistent standard, and in accordance with the respective CBTA programmes for those levels.

CBTA Programme Summary

Content from the CBTA programmes that is particularly relevant to assessment can be found in the appendices to these guidelines as follows:

- Competencies (required knowledge and skills) for National and Regional Referees - contained in the first column of Appendix 1. The competencies are the same for each level, but assessment requirements and standards differ.
- Assessment standards (detailed description of the standards to be achieved for successful assessment) - contained in columns 3 and 2 of Appendix 1 for National and Regional levels respectively, together with an explanation. These relate directly to the new WSF Assessment Sheet for National and Regional Referees. Pages 3 and 4 of the Sheet (Regional and National levels respectively) require the WSF Assessor to record the standard achieved against each competency.
- Criterion-based representation of the National and Regional standards – contained in Appendix 2, together with further standards that do not meet the National and Regional criteria. These are included as a further guide to differentiating between the various levels of competence for referees.
- Sections from the recommended WSF National and Regional CBTA programmes covering the activity and assessment requirements for each level – contained in Appendix 3. These specify the minimum number and level of matches that must be refereed by candidates, the minimum number of assessments that a candidate must pass and the minimum player standard for those assessments (Note: These are minimum *recommendations* only. Each Member Nation and Regional Federation must decide what is the appropriate level of activity for the achievement of the various levels of referee accreditation).

GUIDELINES FOR USING THE WSF ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR REGIONAL AND NATIONAL REFEREES

This section contains further clarification on completing the WSF Assessment Sheet. It contains definitions of terms used in the sheets and full explanations of the standards to apply to assessment of the competencies.

While the assessment of a candidate's performance is always dependent on the judgement of the Assessor, Assessors are required to follow these guidelines in reaching their overall assessment. Where an Assessor decides not to apply a specific guideline, this must be documented (with reasons) on the assessment sheet.

Page 1 – Key to Incorrect Decisions:

An important aspect in achieving consistency between Assessors is the interpretation of the Key to Incorrect Decisions. To achieve this consistency, the following definitions will apply:

- Marginal Difference – applies to a situation where the candidate's decision is different to that of the Assessor but within an acceptable limit of the Assessor.
- Incorrect Decision – the decision is clear to the Assessor, but the candidate gives a different decision
- Totally Wrong Decision – the candidate completely misinterprets the situation and gives a totally wrong decision

Pages 3 and 4 – Rules Interpretation and Decision-Making for Regional and National levels:

Candidates must achieve the required standard in all competencies on this page of the Assessment Sheet in order to pass the assessment. Therefore, it is important for all Assessors to follow a common standard so that candidates are treated in a similar manner by different Assessors. Appendix 1 contains the standards that are used, together with brief explanations. Further explanation is contained below.

1. Knows all the Rules that arise in a match and applies them correctly.

It will be unlikely that a single match would provide the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate full knowledge of *all* the Rules of Squash. Thus the Assessor can assess the candidate's knowledge only of those Rules that arise in a match.

2. Correct decisions on interference, including minimal interference.

The standard for an acceptable performance by a candidate in this area is consistently correct decisions on interference throughout the match. A 10% error rate is allowed.

However, a totally wrong decision on interference must result in a negative assessment of this competency at Regional level, and no more than 1 (one) totally wrong decision is allowed at National level.

3. Correct decisions on other areas.

There are too many possible "other areas" to be listed here, but examples in this category would be: turning, further attempts, injuries and bleeding, fallen objects, etc. Here again, the standard that Assessors should apply is a maximum 10% error rate. Again, a totally

wrong decision in this category should result in a negative judgement of this competency at Regional level and only 1 (one) is allowed at National level.

4. Consistency in decision-making.

Consistency in decision-making is the primary requirement of all officiating. In squash, this is the ultimate test of a referee. A National Referee must demonstrate an adequate level of consistency in decision-making during a match, and a Regional Referee must demonstrate a good level of consistency.

5. Understand the game at the national/regional level.

Context of the match - not all matches are of the same intensity or importance. The Final of the British Open for example, is clearly a more intense (and more important) event than the third match in a dead rubber at a World Team Championships. While the candidate is still expected to make correct decisions in all matches, the candidate should also demonstrate an awareness of the event and the significance of the match.

Correct decisions on winning shots - it is too easy for a referee to award a let when a tough (but correct) decision is required. Regional and National Referees must demonstrate both the competence and the courage to say "No let" when a winning shot has been struck.

6. Recognition of tactics used by players and dealing with them.

Movement of the players - the candidate must demonstrate a good understanding of the players' movement both to the ball and in clearing after having hit the ball. The latter is the most crucial: a player who does not clear as quickly as possible out of the opponent's direct path to the ball must be penalised (if the opponent requests a let), and any candidate for Regional or National levels must demonstrate an understanding of that situation. At the Regional level in particular, the ability to recognise that a player is not making every effort to clear after completing the follow-through is essential.

Swing-interference - this is often a difficult area for referees, and the Assessor must be looking for consistency of decision-making by the candidate. It may well be that the Assessor would apply a slightly different standard on backswing interference from that of the candidate in the match, but the Assessor should permit the candidate to establish a standard (as long as it is within acceptable limits) and then assess whether or not the candidate's subsequent decisions remain consistent with this standard.

Player's effort to play the ball - the candidate must demonstrate an understanding of situations where a player fails to make every effort to get to and play the ball. It might happen, for example, that the player takes a slightly indirect line to the ball in order to create interference, or to create more interference than there would have been if the player had taken a direct line; or a player may request a let when the interference is so minimal that it was not a significant impediment to that player's ability to play the ball. If the Referee does not send a clear signal to the player that the latter must make every effort to go to and play the ball, the flow of the match will probably suffer, and too many lets will be the result.

Numbers of allowable marginally different, incorrect and totally wrong decisions for each of the three areas above are specified in Appendix 1. Assessors are to use their judgement on passing a candidate when a combination of marginally different and incorrect decisions occur. The range in the number of marginally different and incorrect decisions is given to allow Assessors flexibility to account for the total number of these decisions in the match. Again, a totally incorrect decision in any of these categories should result in a negative judgement of the competency.

7. Good control of the match.

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to maintain firm and effective control of the match, without being officious or overbearing. A candidate who overlooks poor conduct by a player is not performing to Regional or National standard.

8. Good communication with the players.

The ability to explain decisions quickly and clearly, plus the ability to communicate effectively with the players is an essential element of Regional and National Referees' competence.

Note: Where an Assessor appointed to a match is also a WSF Assessor and assesses that a candidate for re-appointment as a National or Regional Referee has exceeded the required standard against all or most of the competencies for Regional Referee, the Assessor may also choose to fill in and attach to the assessment sheet the Rules Interpretation and Decision-Making page (page 3) from the WSF Assessment Sheet for International Referees. This should be done before Assessor and candidate sign the assessment sheet. This will provide the candidate with more specific information on the candidate's performance against the International standard and areas requiring improvement before that standard is reached.

Page 5 - Description of match:

The Assessor's judgement of the level of difficulty of the match is crucial in gaining an overall appraisal of the candidate's performance. It may well be that the candidate made correct decisions throughout the match, but if the match was very one-sided, or if there were comparatively few decisions, or if most of the decisions were straightforward, this should result in the Assessor's designating the match as "easier than the required standard." On the other hand, a match that lasted 100 minutes and the candidate made 85 decisions would merit the description "very difficult match."

While it is not possible (or advisable) to reduce the assessment of the level of difficulty of a match to an arithmetical formula, a guideline for a match that meets the National and Regional standard of difficulty might be one that lasts at least four games and in which the candidate had to make at least 25 decisions, of which a significant number were difficult rather than easy.

In addition, in assessing the difficulty of a match, Assessors need to pay attention to the quality of the players, their world ranking, their behaviour on court, and the importance of the match.

Page 5 - Position of Referee and Assessor:

A candidate's performance may be affected by the location of the Referee's seat during a match. One might expect a candidate who is seated in the optimum location to have a better opportunity of performing to National standard than one who is seated twenty rows behind the court. As a guideline, Assessors may apply the following standards:

Excellent – in the position prescribed by the Rules, immediately over the back wall, or on an overlooking balcony.

Reasonable – seated in the audience in a central position (in line with the T) no more than 15 feet (4.5 metres) from the back wall and raised sufficiently to permit the officials a good view of the action on court.

Not Reasonable – further back from the court and/or without sufficient elevation.

Similarly, the position of the Assessor may well affect the assessment. Ideally, the Assessor would be seated close to the candidate, in order to have a similar perspective of the court. If the position of the Assessor is nowhere near that of the candidate, this needs to be taken into consideration in the Assessor's assessment of the candidate's performance.

Page 5 - Assessor's Summary – Candidate Receptive to Feedback – Final Comments

The Assessor should fill in the Assessor's Summary section prior to discussing the assessment with the candidate. After discussion, the Assessor should fill in the Receptive to Feedback section and the Final Comments section, prior to signing and having the candidate sign.

Appendix 1

Competencies and Assessment Standards for the National and Regional Levels

	Competencies	Regional Standard	National Standard
1.	Know the Rules and apply them in accordance with accepted international interpretations	Knows all rules arising in a match and applies them correctly	Knows all rules arising in a match and applies them correctly
2.	Make correct decisions on interference, including minimal interference	All decisions on interference good - no more than 10% error rate - no totally wrong decisions	Almost all decisions on interference adequate - no more than 10% error rate - no more than 1 (one) totally wrong decision
3.	Make correct decisions on other areas of the Rules	All decisions on other areas good - no more than 10% error rate - no totally wrong decisions	Almost all decisions on other areas adequate - no more than 10% error rate - no more than 1 (one) totally wrong decision
4.	Demonstrate consistency in decision-making	Good consistency in decision-making	Adequate consistency in decision-making
5.	Understand the game at the national/regional level	Good understanding of the game at regional level, including understanding the context of the match and winning shots at regional level	Adequate understanding of the game at national level, including understanding the context of the match and winning shots at national level
6.	Recognise tactics used by players and deal with them	Good recognition of tactics relating to movement of the players, swing-interference and effort to play the ball. In each of these areas: - no more than 2 or 3 marginal differences - no more than 1 or 2 incorrect decisions - no totally wrong decisions	Adequate recognition of tactics relating to movement of the players, swing-interference and effort to play the ball. In each of these areas: - no more than 3 or 4 marginal differences - no more than 2 or 3 incorrect decisions - no more than 1 (one) totally wrong decision
7.	Demonstrate control of the match using the Conduct rule, if necessary	Good control of the match	Adequate control of the match
8.	Communicate effectively with players	Good communication with the players	Adequate communication with the players

Appendix 2

Criterion-Based Assessment Standards

	Regional Standard	National Standard	Not Yet National Standard	Below National Standard
1.	Knows all rules arising in a match and applies them correctly	Knows all rules arising in a match and applies them correctly	Knows rules arising in a match and mostly applies them correctly	Does not know a number of rules and/or applies some incorrectly
2.	All decisions on interference excellent (up to 10% errors)	Almost all decisions on interference correct (10% errors)	Some decisions on interference incorrect (more than 10% errors)	Many decisions on interference incorrect (more than 15% errors)
3.	All decisions on other areas excellent	Almost all decisions on other areas correct	Some decisions on other areas incorrect	Many decisions on other areas incorrect
4.	Superior consistency in decision-making	Good consistency in decision-making	Barely adequate consistency in decision-making	Poor consistency in decision-making
5.	Good understanding of the game at regional level	Adequate understanding of the game at national level	Barely adequate understanding of the game at national level	Poor understanding of the game at national level
6.	Good recognition of tactics used by players and dealing with them	Adequate recognition of tactics used by players and dealing with them	Barely adequate recognition of tactics used by players and dealing with them	Poor recognition of tactics used by players and dealing with them
7.	Good control of the match	Adequate control of the match	Barely adequate control of the match	Poor control of the match
8.	Good communication with the players	Adequate communication with the players	Barely adequate communication with the players	Poor communication with the players

Minimum Recommended Requirements for Activity and Assessments (excerpted from the WSF CBTA Programmes for National and Regional Referees)

Note: These are minimum *recommendations* only. Each Member Nation and Regional Federation must decide what is the appropriate level of activity for the achievement of the various levels of referee accreditation.

NATIONAL REFEREE

Activity – Initial Appointment and Re-Appointment

5.1 In order to achieve a satisfactory level of activity, a candidate must fulfil the requirements both of 5.1.1 and 5.1.2:

5.1.1 Within a 3-year period, a candidate will be required to referee at least 12 matches that conform to the following standards:

5.1.1.1 Any tournament or other match (but not exhibitions) involving male players ranked in the top 20 nationally at the time of the match; or

5.1.1.2 Any quarter-final or subsequent match in national open tournaments or major competitions; or

5.1.1.3 Any match qualifying as refereeing activity for candidates for Regional or International levels; or

5.1.1.4 Any other match considered to be of an appropriate level by a National Assessor; and

5.1.2 Of these 12 matches, at least 8 must be men's matches and at least 1 must be a match between male players ranked in the top 20 nationally.

4.1 Practical Refereeing

A satisfactory demonstration of refereeing skills is required on Squash matches:

- of appropriate national standard and difficulty as defined in Section 5.1;
- that usually last at least four games and in which the candidate has to make at least 25 decisions, of which a significant number are difficult rather than easy; and
- with at least 90% of the decisions made rated as correct and consistent.

Assessment – Initial Appointment and Re-Appointment

4.4.1 To be eligible for appointment, a candidate must, in a 3-year period, receive at least 3 successful assessments (i.e. "pass") in matches from the categories in Section 5.1.1, at least 2 of which must be on men's matches and at least 1 of which must be on a match between male players ranked in the top 20 nationally. The candidate must also undertake the refereeing activity in Section 5.1.

4.4.2 The assessments in 4.4.1 above must be from at least two assessors.

REGIONAL REFEREE

Activity – Initial Appointment and Re-Appointment

5.1 In order to achieve a satisfactory level of activity, a candidate must fulfil the requirements both of 5.1.1 and 5.1.2:

5.1.1 Within a 3-year period, a candidate will be required to referee at least 12 matches that conform to the following standards:

5.1.1.1 Any tournament or other match (but not exhibitions) involving male players ranked in the top 30 regionally, PSA players ranked in the top 200 or WISPA players ranked in the top 75 at the time of the match; or

5.1.1.2 Any quarter-final or subsequent match in major regional or national open tournaments; or

5.1.1.3 Any match qualifying as refereeing activity for candidates for the International level; or

5.1.1.4 Any other match considered to be of an appropriate level by a Regional Assessor; and

5.1.2 Of these 12 matches, at least 8 must be men's matches and at least 1 must be a match between male players ranked in the top 30 regionally.

4.1 Practical Refereeing

A satisfactory demonstration of refereeing skills is required on Squash matches:

- of appropriate regional standard and difficulty as defined in Section 5.1;
- that usually last at least four games and in which the candidate has to make at least 25 decisions, of which a significant number are difficult rather than easy; and
- with at least 90% of the decisions made rated as correct and consistent.

Assessment – Initial Appointment and Re-Appointment

4.4.1 To be eligible for nomination, a candidate must, in a 3-year period, receive at least 3 successful assessments (i.e. "pass") in matches from the categories in Section 5.1.1, at least 2 of which must be on men's matches and at least 1 of which must be on a match between male players ranked in the top 30 regionally. The candidate must also undertake the refereeing activity in Section 5.1.

4.4.2 The assessments in 4.4.1 above must be from at least two assessors.