

The Challenges in Refereeing: The Way Forward

Theme of Conference

“The Challenges in Refereeing: The Way Forward”

- Where do we stand right now?

My Experience

- 25 years
- Over 20 countries
- Clinics and seminars at all levels: beginners, intermediate, advanced, elite
- 2,500 referees trained

What Squash Referees Want

- 1. Referee Development: from beginning to elite level
- 2. Referee progress: a fair and open system that permits referees to advance to higher levels.

Be Realistic

- Not every squash player can reach the top-20, and not every referee can reach the top-20 in refereeing either.
- **But** *all* referees, like all players, should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Nobody should be held back for any reason and prevented from achieving that potential.

Aim

- Aim: Every referee should be given the opportunity to fulfill his or her full potential and to attain the level appropriate for his or her ability and experience.

Fair and Open Process

- WSF Programmes (CBTA) have shown the way
- Member Nations can copy existing programmes (e.g. England, Canada, Australia, India, Malaysia, South Africa)

Referee Development (1)

1. From Beginner to National Level:

- Need for “referee coaches”
- Need for teachers, not WSF Assessors
- WSF has teachers, needs to use them more effectively

Referee Development (2)

2. Elite Level:

- We must develop a strategy for the continued professional development of elite referees.

Consistency

- Standards
- Preparation

Assessments and Progress

- Feedback = Progress?
- Problem with current assessment process
- E.g. X and Y

Assessments and Progress

- An independent Assessor team, with assessments of referees by Assessors from different regions.
- But it is not enough to say: We do not have the resources. We must either find the resources or develop a better strategy.
- Until we do the assessment of referees at the elite level will always be insufficient and questionable.

Professionalism

- Let us be clear about one thing: the sport of squash is becoming more and more professional, and that means that although we still do not pay referees for their services, we *must* demand that they, too, become more and more professional, both in performance and conduct.

Professionalism

- Need for more oversight
- Elite development needs goals

Your Individual Development

Come from far and wide

Universal standards

Universal consistency

Learning to See

- The biggest problem
- It is very difficult to teach people to see what the top referees see.

Eye-Witness Testimony

- There is a reason for this: eye-witness testimony is extremely unreliable.
- Countless studies have shown that what people testify to having seen cannot be trusted.
- In more recent times there have been many, many cases where people convicted of a crime based on eye-witness testimony have later been declared innocent on the basis of DNA evidence (often after having spent many years in jail).

Learning to See

- My colleague, Ian Allanach, and I have collaborated in preparing for you a series of presentations that aim to improve your personal refereeing skills and to teach you to see what the top referees see.

Visual Images

- A picture is worth a thousand words, and a visual example that we can all see and discuss is far superior to merely talking about a situation.

The Way Forward

- This Conference
- Questions and Contributions
- A communal effort