

WSF Referees' Review

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**WORLD SQUASH
FEDERATION**

May 2006

Prodesse et delectare



The modest resumption of the *Referees' Review* last December was followed by a modest response. In fact, the response was so modest as to be almost invisible and inaudible.... Referees are used to being alone in the hot seat, but editors of referees' newsletters, it seems, are a lonely race on a distant planet.

Nevertheless, there are signs that there is a great hunger abroad in the universe: even if WSF Referees don't read their own *Referees' Review*, many others do. I heard from a number of people (well, *one* is a number!) who wished to be "placed on the mailing list". I took that to mean the e-mailing list, as this *Review* only exists in cyberspace. There is, in fact, widespread interest in what is happening in the rarefied atmosphere of international squash and a palpable desire to learn: enthusiastic referees all over the world want to broaden their knowledge and to improve their abilities.

Thus I urge all our readers to make the URL: www.worldsquash.org/may2006refletter.html of this magnificent and momentous e-broadsheet known to all and sundry who might be mildly amused by the antics of the refereeing nobility. If our fame spreads to all corners of the globe, who knows what we might achieve?

This edition of the *WSF Referees' Review* contains a wealth of interesting and informative material – and a few chuckles as well. I hope you will be both amused and edified. Our motto is now and always will be: *prodesse et delectare*: to instruct and amuse.

As usual, all feedback is welcome. Send comments and money to me at symingto@uvic.ca.

Rod Symington

Appointment/Re-appointment of WSF Referees 2006

WSF-approved referees are initially appointed for a one-year term. If they are renewed, they usually receive a three-year appointment. The candidate must submit an activity log for the past three years and be nominated by the relevant National Association. This activity log and the assessments of the candidate's refereeing that are on file at the WSF Office are sent to the members of a Review Panel (approximately 25 people), who vote on the acceptability of the candidate. The results of the Review Panel's deliberations are forwarded to the WSF Management Committee, which makes the final appointments.

As a result of the regular review of WSF-appointments in early 2006, the following referees have been re-appointed/appointed either as World or International Referees:

Reappointments:

1. World Referee:

Ian Allanach (Scotland)
Chris Sinclair (Australia)
Graham Waters (Canada)

2. International Referee:

Harvey Bowlt (Australia)
Dean Clayton (England)
Wendy Danzey (England)
Damien Green (Australia)
Mohammed Fayyaz (Hong Kong)
Yogi Singh (India)

New Appointment as International Referee:

Paul Ansdell (USA)

We congratulate all of the above on their success!

Retirements:

In addition, we have to report a number of retirements from the International Refereeing community. Both Tony Parker (World Referee, England) and Peter Lawrence (International Referee, Wales) have retired. Tony Parker will be continuing as WSF Referee Assessor.

Also, Graham Horrex, a former WSF World Referee and long-time Referee Assessor has retired.

We thank all three of these colleagues for their many years of service to the WSF and to squash. They have all made invaluable contributions to the game, and we hope that their happy memories of their involvement with international squash will be as long-lasting as ours will be of their many contributions and their friendship.

Peter Kramer (1948—2005)



The International Referee community lost a dear colleague with the death of International Referee Peter Kramer in December 2005. His passing caused an outpouring of sadness and a remarkable expression of appreciation for all of his efforts on behalf of squash. Many prominent members of the squash community attended his funeral, and the many statements from squash players, coaches and officials testify to his popularity and to the great respect in which he was held by everyone who knew him. Below are a few comments about Peter from friends and colleagues:

“His attitude toward the game and his respect for colleagues and players was a lesson to everyone associated with the game. It only took a couple of minutes talking with him after a game to pick up on his positive thoughts and his appreciation of the skills of the players, no matter what 'verbals' had been directed toward him while marking.

I will remember him as someone whose greatest attribute was his ability to take pleasure from the success of others. We could do with a lot more of it in this often sad and self-centred world.” (David and Catherine Tranfield)

“What shone through though was that this was a man, without malice, dignified and unpretentious, beloved by his family and all who were lucky to touch upon him. In his all too brief 57 years he has left a mark of which many of us would be proud.

Much as he was respected as a referee, it was as a man that he stood out. Civil, mannered and affable he was what the word gentleman implies. He never had a bad word for anyone and no-one ever had a bad word to say about him.” (Malcolm Willstrop)

“He was one of nature’s gentlemen, a great character and a good friend. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him in the squash world.” (Jack Flynn)

It was with great shock and sadness that I received the news last December of the passing of Pete Kramer. He will be sorely missed by the squash community, not only as a referee at many events in his native England and around the world, but also as a true gentleman and character who was admired by all. I have only had the privilege of working with Pete at a few events, but I did get to know him quite well and I feel that I am much the better for those experiences. My sincere condolences to Pete's loved ones. (Graham Waters)

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Editorial

Noblesse Oblige

(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).

WSF Referees have reached the pinnacle of the refereeing community, and they have the privilege of travelling all over the world on their refereeing assignments. Lesser-ranked and inexperienced referees look up to them in awe and amazement, for they are the demi-gods of squash officiating.

However, membership in this exclusive club not only has its benefits, it also brings with it responsibilities. WSF Referees, as the representatives of the highest standards of squash refereeing, have a duty not only to perform to the best of their considerable abilities, they also bear the obligation of

acting to squash referees everywhere as teachers and mentors. The sport of squash expects every referee to do his duty, and that duty for WSF referees includes transmitting their expertise to others who aspire to get better. Of course, not all of the top referees are necessarily good teachers in a formal setting, but all of them can and should answer questions about refereeing (and there is a never-ending supply of questions!) from local referees with whom they come in contact.

Squash is played in one hundred and fifty-three nations (126 of them are members of the WSF), but very few of those nations have formal programmes for the training and development of referees. Thus when WSF International Referees visit one of those countries, they are inevitably received with the respect that is their due; and that respect includes the expectation that they will do what they can to advise and encourage local referees in their aspirations.

The use of local referees as markers is a common practice (and in some instances there may be local referees who are qualified to referee an early-round match). These local referees greatly appreciate the chance to rub shoulders with the refereeing nobility and to listen to any words of wisdom they may wish to impart. While a formal clinic may not be possible (for a variety of reasons), informal question-and-answer sessions, or even informal chats after the day’s matches are over, are examples of activities that will leave behind a positive impression.

WSF-approved Referees are never “off duty”. As representatives of the WSF they must abide by the highest standards of integrity and behaviour. And as befits their status as the best referees in the world, they have the opportunity to make important contributions to the development of squash officiating worldwide.

Rod Symington

The Windy City Open (Chicago)

I was at the Windy City Open in Chicago in January with Graham Waters and Peter Lawrence. (This was the first time the

Tournament had used WSF-referees, by the way.)

The first two mornings Thursday and Friday we had breakfast on the third floor in the staff canteen at the very fine Chicago Athletic Club where we were staying. Breakfast was very good except there wasn't any orange juice of any description.

On the Sunday when the staff canteen was closed we went to breakfast at the restaurant on the fifth floor. I was first in line with Graham Waters and Peter Lawrence in file behind, and wow! there was orange juice and bread -- but alas, no cereal. "There is no cereal in this restaurant," I was told. "Go to the one on the seventh floor."

Off we went (there was a big queue at the lift, as the second one was out of service). At the seventh floor restaurant there was orange juice and cereal -- but no bread. Very frustrated, we confronted the headwaiter, dressed in full regalia, about the whereabouts of bread. He replied excitedly and a little aggressively, repeating several times that he didn't have a contact for bread in the seventh floor restaurant. James Willstrop was standing next to me and said: "Is he kidding, John?"

We were flabbergasted! We were beaten that morning, yes, but I spent the next four mornings scooting between all restaurants on all three floors gathering everything in order to have a "full breakfast".

Mad things happen to squash referees, so I suppose it's a good job we are all mad anyway.

John Massarella

From the Director ...

I am delighted to see the *Referees' Review* revitalised under our new editor, Rod Symington. It will mean that he will be asking me for updates more frequently, but so be it. It will also mean that he will be asking many of you for reports from the events to which you are assigned. So please drop Rod a note after returning from an assignment and tell him about your

experiences, both serious and humorous, the off-beat personalities you encounter, and the bizarre incidents that take place. This newsletter can only be as good as the contributions you send in. (Chas. Evans, where are you?)

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Paul Ansdell on his recent appointment as an IR and welcome him to our ranks. Paul is a former level IV coach in England, where he coached Peter and Philip Barker and Bradley Ball in their formative years. More recently, Paul has been the squash professional at the Concord-Acton Squash Club, just outside of Boston.

As part of the most recent IR appointment process, Graham Horrex has decided to step down as a WSF Assessor, and Pete Lawrence and Tony Parker have retired from the refereeing ranks. I would like to thank them all for their many, many years of contribution to the WSF programme and to squash refereeing in general. They have all been good friends to me and very active Referees and Assessors, both in the UK and around the world. I am very pleased that Tony has agreed to stay on as a WSF Assessor.

The review of the entire WSF International Refereeing Programme is well under way. Some of the recommendations were implemented immediately, while others needed some further work before implementation. To all of you who volunteered your time and expertise to one or more of the working groups, thank you very much. By spreading the workload, we can achieve so much more. The groups chaired by Ian Allanach (Quality Control), Roy Gingell (Player Collaboration), Tony Parker (revised Referees' Code of Conduct), and Rod Symington (Conduct on Court guidelines), have completed their tasks and their recommendations implemented. I will keep you all posted on further developments from the other groups.

There has been one development this year that has troubled me. There have been several incidents where a referee has been assigned to an event, but has not shown up to it and has not notified anybody. There have also been occasions where a WSF-appointed

Referee has arrived late for an event or has left before its conclusion. This is unacceptable. I understand that last minute emergencies can come up, but please make sure that you inform both the event organisers and Lorraine Harding, in Hastings, if they do. I would like to remind everybody that the promoters and organisers are depending on the assigned referees to attend and provide a service for the *entire* event. They have signed a contract with the WSF for those services and are paying a fee (in the form of expenses plus a per diem) for those services. When we don't live up to our end of the deal, we are technically in breach of contract, and that reflects negatively on the WSF and all of the other WSF Referees who do complete all of their assignments.

The WSF DVD, entitled "Calling the Shots", has been well received and has been used at clinics in many countries. Please let as many people as possible know about it and suggest that they obtain a copy through Lorraine at the office <lorraine@worldsquash.org> or direct from the website at: <http://www.worldsquash.org/cts.html>

Lorraine has been quite busy in the first half of 2006, assigning Referees to events. Assignments for the first half of the year are as follows:

World Doubles (Melbourne)	January	Harvey Bowlt, Mohammad Fayyaz, Damien Green
PACE Canadian Classic (Toronto)	January	Barry Faguy
Windy City Open (Chicago)	January	Pete Lawrence, John Massarella, Graham Waters
Asian Championships (Taiwan)	February	Tony Parker (Assessor)
Tournament of Champions (New York)	February	Graham Waters
Commonwealth Games (Melbourne)	March	Ian Allanach, Harvey Bowlt, Michael Collins, Wendy Danzey, Roy Gingell, Damien Green, Ayaz Khan, Pete Lawrence, John Massarella, Yogi Singh, Graham Waters
Iran Fajr (Tehran)	March	Tahir Khanzada
PSA Masters (Bermuda)	April	Dean Clayton, Roy Gingell, John Massarella, Graham Waters
European Teams (Vienna)	April	Jack Flynn, John Massarella (Assessors)
Junior Men World Championships (Palmerston North, N.Z.)	July	Jack Allen, Mike Collins, Damien Green, Chris Sinclair

The line-up for the second half of the year is even busier with all of the events traditionally held during that period (English Open, British Open, the two World Opens, the Women's World Teams, the World Masters, the U.S. Open, the 2nd Hedonism II WISPA event in Jamaica, Hong Kong, Qatar, Pakistan, Hungary, and Saudi Arabia). In addition, we are hoping to have referees assigned to a brand new event to be held in New York City called the Village Open (a PSA/WISPA tournament scheduled for October with prize money of \$82,500) and the St. Louis Open in September (a PSA event which has been steadily growing and will offer \$50,000 prize money this year). There is also a strong rumour that another PSA Super Series event is about to be announced for the second half of the year, also to be held in the USA. Stay tuned for that. Lorraine is already busy with the assignments for some of these events, with others still to come.

Here's wishing all of you a wonderful summer (and a great winter for those in the southern hemisphere), and I hope to meet up with many of you at future events.

Graham Waters

A revised Code of Conduct for WSF Referees and Assessors, developed by a Working Group chaired by Tony Parker, has been approved by the Management Committee of the WSF. (Ed.)

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REFEREES & ASSESSORS

The WSF expects and requires a high standard of professionalism and conduct from its Referees and Assessors. The points below should be observed by all WSF Referees and Assessors, wherever they might be refereeing, whether or not they have been assigned to that event by the WSF or not. All WSF Referees must realise that they reflect not only on themselves, but also on the WSF, even when not on officially assigned duties.

General

1. WSF Referees must be in good physical condition.

2. WSF Referees must have natural or corrected 20-20 vision and normal hearing.
3. WSF Referees must have a full knowledge of the current Rules of Squash and their correct interpretation as laid down by the WSF.
4. WSF Referees must not gamble anything in any manner in connection with any squash event.
5. WSF Referees shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner and give due regard to the authority of any WSF representatives, other Referees and the tournament personnel.
6. WSF Referees shall, at all times, maintain complete impartiality with respect to all players and shall not enter into any relationship or take any action which casts doubt on their impartiality as referees.
7. WSF Referees must maintain an up-to-date activity log, which will be reviewed by the WSF Review Board upon re-nomination by their National Associations

Dress Code

1. When on duty as a referee at any event, a WSF Referee is expected to wear either:
 - if provided by the event, the shirt or sweater of that particular event with navy blue/black/grey trousers or skirt, or
 - a WSF World or International Referee white shirt with navy blue/black/grey trousers or skirt and black shoes. The grey WSF sweater is optional.
2. When travelling to an event, WSF Referees must wear the full uniform including a shirt and WSF tie. Obviously, if the weather is hot, the jacket can be carried rather than worn.
3. When attending a social event in connection with a championship, a WSF Referee is expected to conform to the dress code indicated by the tournament organisers. The Referee should be prepared to wear a jacket (with WSF World or International Referee badge), WSF tie and co-coordinating trousers or skirt, if required.

4. The following are considered inappropriate attire when attending any match or event function: shorts, jeans, t-shirts, caps, trainers, sandals etc. If there is any doubt as to what dress is appropriate (or inappropriate) for any particular aspect of the event, WSF Referees are advised to discuss the matter with the Tournament Referee and/or Tournament Director.

When refereeing at an event

1. If invited to attend an event by the WSF, the WSF Referee must agree to be present for the entire event.
2. Referees shall attend all meetings required by the Tournament Referee.
3. Referees must adjust their own schedules to the match schedule and the assignments they have been given.
4. Referees should arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of any session and must be prompt for all matches assigned to them.
5. Referees must not drink any alcoholic beverage until all of their duties for the day are complete and they have checked with the Tournament Referee that they are released. Consumption of alcoholic drinks must be in moderation so that referees' behaviour at the time and their decision making early the next day remain consistent with their professional image and is not adversely affected in any way.
6. Referees must not officiate in any match where their participation may cast doubt on their impartiality. Any real or perceived relationship whether it is family, business, or other conflict of interest will render an official unsuitable for such an assignment. Unless the Tournament Referee decides otherwise in exceptional circumstances, referees should not expect to officiate in any match involving their own Country or Team. It should be noted that a player competing in a championship such as the Pakistan or British Open is not directly representing his/her country.
7. Referees must not criticise or attempt to explain any calls or decisions by another Referee to anyone other than that Referee directly or to the Tournament Referee privately. Where Referees agree to

conduct assessments on each other, these should be done discreetly and should be co-coordinated through the Tournament Referee.

8. Referees shall not participate in a media interview or meeting with a journalist, where any statement relating to squash refereeing can be printed or broadcast, without the approval of the Tournament Referee.
9. Referees must attend all tournament functions, if invited. It is imperative that all members of the squash community support the game of squash, the event and the sponsors of that particular event.
10. Referees must at all times respect players right to privacy. On no account should any match referee attempt to talk to any player whilst the player is physically and mentally preparing for their match nor immediately after the match. However, the majority of players want referees to perform well and are willing to discuss any "difficult,, match with the match referee so that players and referees are working together to improve the total picture thereby insuring that Squash is presented in the best possible light to spectators, the media etc. It is most important referees do not intrude when players are otherwise occupied and wait for an appropriate opportunity to ask politely if they have a moment to discuss the match. Most will agree but remember it is a time to listen to players' views. It is not a time for recrimination. Remember always to be polite and courteous and thank the player for giving up their time.
11. Referees must not address players by their nicknames or otherwise attempt to embarrass them.
12. If present at an event venue at a session where they have no appointed duties, referees must be attired and behave as if they were on duty.
13. Whilst WSF referees present at any Team Championship (Country or Club) will be interested in the progress of their respective teams they must not be seen to be support that team in a partisan way. They may well socialise with their fellow countrymen during the event, but they must not be seen to be talking to the players, coaches, managers of their

respective teams during any match in which their team is competing.

- All communication between referees and Tournament Directors and Organisers must be routed through the Tournament Referee. Tournament Directors find it very annoying when approached individually by four or five referees, especially when they are airing their grievances over any issue from expenses to accommodation

The Bermuda Experience



Wes Barlow (Canada), Roy Gingell (Wales), Graham Waters (Canada), Sheldon Anderson (Bermuda), Dean Clayton (England), John Massarella (England)

The idyllic island of Bermuda provided a perfect setting for the Bermuda PSA Masters in April 2006. Messrs Waters, Gingell, Massarella and Clayton were assigned to this event. Aply supported by Wes Barlow from Canada and “local” Sheldon Anderson from Canada/USA/Bermuda. The Bermuda squash club and Jessie Vesey high school for girls were the venues.

With the weather on the change for the better and the superb hospitality shown by all the Bermudans we were made to feel as comfortable as possible in order to referee this end-of-season showdown.

The first-class facilities at the Southampton Princess Hotel ensured that we were well catered for with spectacular views across the “little” and “great” sound as well as a health suite, golf course and practice areas. Waters and Barlow enjoyed the hospitality of the local sponsors by playing in the golf day organised – while the UK referees visited the

local horseshoe beach to top up their tan ready for the good old British summer.



The Ever-Alert Referee

Both the welcoming party and the end of tournament “wrap-up” party were superbly organised and the local hospitality was second to none.

With the refereeing position in between hospitality boxes there was plenty of banter between the VIPs and the Referees.

Indeed a rather drunken gentleman from the main sponsor Logic heckled us continuously one evening. After play had finished and while we were attempting to have a late dinner we unfortunately came across this person yet again – queuing for a taxi. Some more banter ensued and half hour later we were buying him drinks in our hotel. Not content with drinking, he attempted to make us food in the hotel kitchen before being supported off the premises by the very large night porter. Needless to say, the rest of the Logic VIPs were keen to get the full story off us -- as our new-found friend Andrew was rather under the weather the next day. And he also did not pick up the bar bill!

Roy Gingell

Quality Control Procedures

One of the “Working Groups” established as a result of the review of the WSF International Referee Programme was concerned with the maintenance of the quality of International Referees in the period between the triennial reviews. Below are some excerpts from the Report of the Working Group’s (chaired by Ian Allanach). This Report and its recommendations have

been accepted and approved by the Management Committee of the WSF. (Ed.)

The central debate: who is qualified to decide that a referee performance is below standard? How is that information communicated? Who receives and acts on the information? What action should be taken?

It is around these questions that discussion took place. The group was aware that key procedures are already in place to monitor performance and act on the unsatisfactory. Proposals seemed to centre around developing existing procedures as opposed to creating new but potentially less robust ones. There was also a key human factor to take into consideration. WSF referees are volunteers “ they are not professionals. Each aspires to be the best that he/she can be.

The reflective referee will accept constructive criticism provided it comes from a recognised credible source. Referees must never feel that they have been “hung out to dry,, or stabbed in the back by colleagues. Morale is extremely important - no referee seeks to have a “poor” match. Appropriate training and on going assessing/counselling should minimise such events.

A number of points follow:

1. The group has worked on the following premise: with effective selection, training and assessing/counselling, the problem should be minimised. The standards of training need to be as high as possible. This premise can also address the problem at a level lower than that currently being considered. The process for the initial approval of IR candidates needs to be robust, with stringent criteria for selection and approval.
2. WSF assessment is the accepted method for monitoring referee performance. WSF assessment should be expanded wherever possible and all matches in major tournaments from quarter-finals onwards should be assessed. There should be greater emphasis on constructive counselling. Referees need to be receptive to such counselling.
3. The availability of assessors should be increased. The cut-off dates after

retirement for assessors should be reviewed with a view to lengthening

4. An isolated poor performance is worrying, but of greater concern and requiring corrective action would be multiple reports of poor performance. Two or more negative assessments out of three assessments given, would constitute a multiple report. The information contained in assessments must be regularly monitored by the refereeing convenor. They must not accumulate, without action, until collated for the referee review committee in February. In this respect, the assessment need not necessarily be a fail: it could contain an area of concern, which did not necessarily result in a failed assessment.
5. For the reporting of sub-standard matches, the following mechanisms already exist
 - WSF assessments
 - Player feedback forms
 - Comments in press publications
 - Comments on videos of matchesOnly the first is truly objective. However it must be accepted that many of those playing the game, reporting on the game, or commentating on the game (often with another “expert,, alongside), have a fair knowledge of the game. They will have witnessed much top squash and much top refereeing. Their views cannot be ignored. They may not be entirely objective but taken together may indicate patterns in referee performance.
6. The increased use of video to review of matches, particularly where negative comment has been received, should be part of the quality assurance process. More matches are subject to videoing. These may be official e.g. commercial channels, private e.g. PSA, or amateur e.g. taken by a national team. Video allows a retrospective assessment. The whole match is there, the play and the decisions. Where concern has been expressed about referee performance, an analysis of an available video permits another objective view. It would be the task of the referee convenor or a nominated assessor to review the match and the performance.

7. In the search for additional mechanisms, it was agreed that feedback from other referees should *not* be included. This was felt to be highly damaging for morale. However comments from tournament referees could be used: a standardised method of reporting would be necessary.
8. The WSF referees statement is useful in bringing a consistency of interpretation among referees and a consistency of understanding among players. At every tournament there must be a tournament referee and/or a referee coordinator i.e. the referee with overall responsibility. That person will identify and clarify the expectations with his/her team. There should be a pre-tournament meeting of referees at which relevant issues are raised. Remembering that referees are amateurs it may have been some time since an individual refereed at the top level: indeed it may have been months. It is unacceptable that referees need time to get up to speed. A pre-tournament meeting should be mandatory. Issues such as player behaviour and the categories of play covered in the recent training DVD would form the agenda. The tournament referee must commence monitoring as soon as the tournament starts i.e. first matches. He/she must lead daily seminars where necessary, highlighting issues of concern. He/she must adjust match scheduling as appropriate.
9. Poor decision-making is one aspect of poor performance. Lack of control, especially inappropriate handling of bad behaviour, is more obvious and quantifiable. By quantifiable we mean the number of instances where bad behaviour was not penalised or penalised inadequately.
10. Mechanisms are already in place to monitor referee performance and act as a quality assurance system. The assessment system is becoming more structured and this document proposes that all matches from quarter-final stages onwards should be assessed. Where an assessment is failed, the referee should undergo a reassessment within six months.
11. Player assessment cards can lack objectivity but, as previously mentioned, can indicate a trend in performance.
12. The referee's reaction to feedback is important. Many will be reflective practitioners, willing to self evaluate and be self-critical. Many referees indeed are their own worst critics and will, given the opportunity, inform the assessor of areas where, on reflection, they could have performed better. This is an extremely important part of the learning and analysis process and it is essential that during feedback, the candidate is initially given the opportunity to identify such areas. Difficulty for an assessor comes when the candidate fails to identify a problem or, worse, argues once it has been highlighted. A willingness to accept criticism must be present.
13. The general assumption is that if a WSF referee gets it wrong it will be marginally rather than disastrously. Tournament referees however should be advised that they must not take risks at the highest levels of the game. The tournament referee has a responsibility to use his/her most experienced and consistent referees in the potentially contentious games. This should minimise the possibility of negative reporting on the officiating in high profile matches.

Summary

With rigorous procedures for the selection of referees in place, quality candidates should come through. With a rigorous assessment programme, there will be ongoing monitoring to ensure that consistency and quality are maintained. An on going programme of education and discussion further assists in the quality assurance programme. The issue of guidance memos from the WSF and the existence of referee seminars are essential components in this continuous education process.

Yes, New York, the Microphone is Out

It's Grand Central Terminal, it's early March, and it's the 2006 Tournament of Champions. It's semi-final day and Gregory Gaultier, the flamboyant Frenchman, is playing Nick Matthew, the steady Englishman from Yorkshire. The stands are full and the New

York spectators are, as ever, not at all shy to show their feelings and let everybody know just what is on their minds.

Fast-forward to the 4th game and it's very close, about 8 all. Gaultier retrieves a Matthew drop shot in the front left corner and lofts a magnificent lob straight down the left wall, clinging to, but not touching, the wall as it arcs gracefully above the out line towards the back corner. And then, it happens!

On top of the walls, at least 6 feet above the out lines on the sidewalls are microphones, mounted to capture the on court sounds. They protrude about 4 inches in from the side wall but well above the out lines.

As Gaultier recovers from the front corner towards the T, the ball hits the microphone on top of the left wall. "Out", says Marker Graham Waters, rather matter-of-factly. "No" screams Gaultier, the comment directed more at the offending microphone than at the officials. "Out", confirms Referee Mike Riley. Gaultier is most upset, but more because the microphone interrupted what otherwise would have been a brilliant retrieval that would have put Matthew under pressure. However, his displeasure was nothing compared to the mood of the audience, who were most irate, sending a Bronx Cheer (i.e. boos) reigning down on the officials. One leather-lunged voice from the back informed all of Grand Central Terminal that "the ball hit the effing microphone – it wasn't out!" With no sign that the turmoil was about to subside, Marker Waters offered "Yes, we know it hit the microphone, that's *why* it's out." After many more mutterings, peace was restored and the match continued.

Meanwhile, on the PSALive web streaming broadcast, the "guest expert" was also berating the officials about this "travesty of justice" until IR Barry Faguy, from Montreal, was able to get through on the direct chat line and quote the pertinent rule, chapter and verse, to the PSALive commentators. Eventually, those watching on the web, including the "guest expert", were informed of the correct ruling. Thanks for the backup, Barry. Isn't technology wonderful?

Graham Waters

Commonwealth Games

The XVIII Commonwealth Games were held in Melbourne, Australia from the 16th to 25th March 2006. Most of the Squash Technical Officials arrived on either the 14th or 15th March in time to get their accreditation and uniforms, which consisted of brown trousers and green polo shirts, which were to be worn whilst officiating.

Also on the 15th was the opening ceremony, which was held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. This was a wonderful gala spectacular, which, mainly through the mediums of music and dance, depicted the life and culture of Melbourne, from its trams, its children and Australian Rules football. Outside the stadium on the nearby Yarra River were floats, which represented some regions of the participating countries. After the parade of athletes her Majesty Queen Elizabeth officially opened the games. The ceremony closed with a prolonged, spectacular firework display that lit up the Melbourne night sky with every imaginable colour and sound.

The Technical Officials' hotel was the Mercure Welcome situated in the centre of Melbourne, which was an ideal location as it was well positioned for exploring the city, easy access to restaurants and places to eat late at night (which we did often). All the officials, even those who lived in Melbourne, were accommodated in the hotel. This enabled us to get to know each other, to gel as a team and socialise together.

The Squash Championships which took place at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre (MSAC) commenced at 10am on the 16th with the Men's and Women's Individual competitions. In the Men's tournament there were 56 entries from 25 countries and the Women's had 32 entries representing 16 countries.

The wonderful spirit of the Games gives players from the smaller nations (Fiji, the British Virgin Islands, St. Vincent and the Grenadines) the opportunity to get on court and compete against some of the icons of the game. The squash may not be great but the

spirit and endeavour that the players put in and the experience and pleasure they derive from it is a joy to see. As the competitions progressed (main and plates) and the abilities and standards became more evenly balanced, the matches became more competitive and keenly contested and some good matches took place.

Thursday 21st March was a rest day before the start of the Doubles Tournament that consisted of Men's, Women's and Mixed competitions.

As with the singles, some of the early rounds were rather one-sided, and although matches were competitive they were comfortable and quick wins for the stronger nations.

Unfortunately, as the matches progressed they became longer and more attritional, especially the men's, whilst the mixed matches were played mainly between the women with the occasional interception by the male player.

I believe that if doubles is to be part of squash's participation in the Olympics we will need to find ways of making it more attractive to spectators. During matches where some *games* were taking 25 to 30mins spectators were leaving before the finish. In the men's final the 4th game took just on 60mins and the match was over 2hrs long, by which time a considerable number of what at the start was a reasonable crowd had left.

After the final medal presentations we made our way to the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the closing ceremony. This was another sensational, spectacular presentation including music, dance, a parade by some of the 15000 volunteers and a magical presentation showcasing New Delhi, India where the 2010 games will take place

Prior to the games being officially closed by Prince Edward, the Commonwealth Games flag was handed on to a representative of the New Delhi organising committee, after which the athletes flooded onto the ground to celebrate with new-found friends, under a Melbourne night sky again illuminated by another fantastic firework display.

We then returned to the hotel for a final get together and a couple of drinks before throwing our clothes into suitcases ready to depart the following day for various destinations around the world.

Conclusions:

I believe that most of the officials found these games an enjoyable experience, I certainly did. The organisation for something of this size and magnitude was first class. After a slight hiccup to start, transport to and from the hotel- squash complex was good, hotel accommodation adequate, information desks at the hotel and squash complex were always helpful and civil.

The very tight security was a bit of a pain but the searches were conducted courteously.

The volunteers responsible for the administration at the Aquatics Centre were on top of the job and although the officials room was a little cramped and times too warm it was kept clean (not by referees, volunteers again) and well stocked with tea, coffee, biscuits, and fruit. As there were a few of us, officials were not overworked, time off was available if requested and at times was rostered.

This was my 3rd and last Commonwealth Games and was an experience made more pleasurable by the friendship shown by the other officials.

Peter Lawrence

Another Working Group (chaired by Rod Symington) produced the following Guidelines that have also been approved by the WSF Management Committee. (Ed.)

Guidelines for the Application of Rule 17 (Conduct on Court)

Rationale:

Rule 17 mandates that in the event of unacceptable behaviour on court the Referee shall penalise the player. However, the severity of the offence and the nature of the penalty are left to the discretion of the Referee. This has led over the years frequently to the imposition of different

penalties (or none at all) for similar offences, depending on who is refereeing. On the one hand, a harsh (inappropriate) penalty might be assessed for a single or mild offence; while on the other hand, a serious offence is penalised lightly, or not at all. The players do not know in advance what standards will be applied, and the referees are left individually to set their own standards.

The development of the Guidelines below is an attempt to bring some order to the existing chaos, and to offer both referees and players some guidance on the application of Rule 17. If referees follow these Guidelines fairly closely, then players will know in advance what the standards are in relation to Rule 17. This is, in effect, no different from the desirability of knowing what the standards are for the application of the rules concerning interference: a greater measure of consistency is the aim. The achievement of such consistency will greatly benefit the sport of squash.

Guidelines for the Application of Rule 17 (Conduct on Court)

Referees will apply the following Guidelines in the appropriate circumstances. While the Referee under Rule 17 retains discretion in deciding whether or not there has been an offence under that Rule, once the Referee has decided that an offence has occurred, the following actions must be taken:

Abuse of equipment (racquet or ball or other equipment):

Minor offence (e.g. throwing the racquet onto to floor after losing a game, hitting the ball hard after the rally is over): **Conduct Warning**

Major offence (e.g. deliberately breaking the racquet; smashing the racquet against the wall; hitting the ball or throwing the racquet out of the court): **Conduct Stroke**

Audible or Visible Obscenity:

Minor offence (e.g. muttered expletive; blaspheming): **Conduct Warning**

Major offence (e.g. audible obscenity): **Conduct Stroke**

Time-wasting:

Minor offence (e.g. a few seconds late back on court; taking excessive time to serve):

Conduct Warning

Major offence (e.g. very late back on court; prolonged discussion with Referee):

Conduct Stroke

Dissent:

Minor offences (e.g. questioning a decision):

Conduct Warning

Major offence (e.g. prolonged or repeated questioning of or disagreement with decisions): **Conduct Stroke**

Abuse of Official:

Minor offence (e.g. unflattering comments about official or decisions): **Conduct Warning**

Major offence (e.g. pejorative comments about official or decisions): **Conduct Stroke**

Severe offence (e.g. hitting ball at official or into spectators; throwing racquet at official or into spectators): **Conduct Game or Match** (depending on the severity of the offence and the danger caused)

Excessive physical contact:

Minor offence (e.g. running into the opponent): **Conduct warning**

Major offence (e.g. physical abuse of the opponent): **Conduct Stroke**

Severe offence (e.g. deliberately injuring the opponent; dangerous play that injures the opponent): **Conduct Game or Match** (depending on the severity of the offence and the extent of the injury caused)

Unsporting conduct:

Minor offence (e.g. making negative comments to the opponent): **Conduct Warning**

Major offence (e.g. repeated negative or pejorative comments to the opponent; any attempt at intimidation of the opponent): **Conduct Stroke**

Severe offence (e.g. extreme behaviour that brings the game into disrepute): **Conduct Game or Match** (depending on the severity of the offence)

Coaching:

First occurrence: **Conduct Warning**

Second occurrence: **Conduct Stroke** and expulsion of offending person

Repeated and excessive bad conduct:

When, in the Referee's opinion, the player is guilty of repeated acts of unacceptable conduct on court following the imposition of the penalties outlined above, the Referee may impose for the next occurrence of the offence either the same penalty for the second offence or a more severe penalty than the one already imposed. However, if a Conduct Warning has been given for both the first and the second offences, for the third offence of a similar nature a Conduct Stroke must be applied. (Example: If a player has received a Conduct Warning for Dissent, on the next occurrence of this offence, either a Conduct Warning or a Conduct Stroke may be imposed. On the third occurrence, however, a Conduct Stroke is mandatory.)

A sincere thank-you to all the contributors to this issue, Graham Waters, Roy Gingell, John Massarella and Pete Lawrence. The next issue of the *WSF Referees' Review* will be in November 2006. Please bear in mind the request to supply the Editor with suitable material from your travels and experiences on behalf of squash. In the meantime: Keep your eyes open and stay awake!
