



HATS OFF!

Technical officials celebrate their participation at the 2017 Yonex Canada Open in July.

Seated are (left to right): BWF Referee Assessor Jane Wheatley; Tournament Referee Federico Valdez; and Deputy Referees Monique Bastien and Susana Maldonado.

Also pictured are the 13 umpires who officiated during the recent Grand Prix tournament.

MAJOR REVISION FOR RTTO NEW INSTRUCTIONS COMING FOR REFEREES

By **Torsten Berg**

The Badminton World Federation is undergoing a thorough review of the Recommendations to Technical Officials (RTTO) which has been deemed necessary as the current version has undergone many minor but important changes to resolve specific problems that have arisen with the development of the sport during the last 30 years since the last major revision.

This move stems from a proposal which was passed in Gold Coast, Australia, in May. A Working Group (WG) was established comprising of BWF Technical Officials Chair and Umpire Assessor Gilles Cavert, BWF Umpire Assessors Sandie Zheng and Malcolm Banham, BWF Referee Assessor Torsten Berg and BWF Referee Chris

Lawrence as well as senior staff, Darren Parks and Chris Trenholme from the BWF Events Department.

The Group's focus will be on weeding out overlaps, simplifying and improving the language and making the RTTO more consistent with the new General Competition Regulations (GCR). Moreover, the current RTTO contains recommendations only concerning umpires, service judges and line judges, but no clauses assisting referees. That will be changed with the addition of a section for referees.

Finally, a revision of the Vocabulary, Annex 4 to the Laws, was included in the Working Group's agenda to improve communication from the umpire to the players and the audience.

The most important changes will be:

- An expanded vocabulary
- A new section in the RTTO covering the referees' duties and responsibilities
- Revised and updated sections in the RTTO on umpires, service judges and line judges

VOCABULARY

There is an obvious need to improve the communication between umpires and players, and between umpires and the audience. Far too often the players – and the television commentators representing the large majority of the fans outside the stadium – do not understand the umpire's calls and, in particular, the reason for the call.

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FROM THE CHAIR BY
**GILLES
CAVERT**



NEW TOUR BRINGS HIGHER EXPECTATIONS

A new BWF World Tour is on track, starting in 2018 – one which will be more professional, more spectacular and more attractive for all badminton stakeholders.

Of course, this has some consequences for the technical official community on the ethical side.

As expectations of technical officials increase, BWF will strive to support its technical officials in a very professional manner such as:

- Supporting travel, accommodation, food expenses, and daily allowance
- Appraisals/evaluations
- Assessments
- Workshops
- Regular guidance and direction on standardisation
- Planning towards a professional workforce in the medium to long term

High performance is the ultimate goal for every BWF technical official during his/her assigned tournament. This requires the

highest level of commitment, concentration, and alertness.

The time when a referee, umpire, or line judge asked a top player to sign an autograph, take a photo, give a shirt, or when they engaged in other personal or professional activities while assigned and working at a tournament, has ended.

The respect for, and acceptance of, the BWF Code of Ethics is vital for all BWF technical officials, and a prerequisite for all subsequent BWF nominations.

HEARTY CONGRATS!

BWF wishes to congratulate the following technical officials on various achievements:

- Steven Ong Swee Khai (MAS) has been upgraded to the BWF Accredited Umpire level.

- Cleopatra Monco (ITA) has been upgraded to the BWF Accredited Referee level.

- Current BWF Umpire Assessment Panel Chair, Malcolm Banham (pictured with BWF President Poul-Erik Høyer), has received the BWF Distinguished Service Award for 2016, for his many years of service to BWF as a Certificated Umpire and Assessor.



INTERVIEW WITH JANE WHEATLEY

FORMER BWF CERTIFICATED REFEREE AND CURRENT BWF REFEREE ASSESSOR

How long have you been refereeing?

My involvement in refereeing came about through my interest in umpiring.

In 1979, I started playing badminton at the local Denmark (Western Australian country town) Scout Hall with the other mums and their little ones. I thoroughly enjoyed the sport and moved on to become an Australian National Umpire and, as is often the case, umpiring leads to helping with tournaments.

In 1988, I moved to Perth and Greg Vellacott, a former BWF Certificated Umpire and current BWF Umpire Assessor, gently pushed me into running events and encouraging me in the public speaking that comes at the conclusion of the tournaments. The humble beginnings at local events with help from my mentor, Don Stockins, a former BWF Accredited Referee, through to refereeing National Junior team events, led to an invitation to attend a BWF Referee Workshop in Kuala Lumpur.

My first BWF appointment was as Deputy Referee to Ian Williamson at the Malaysian Open held in Kota Kinabalu. I was assessed at this tournament but from a refereeing point of view, it was a disaster for me as I did not make the grade.

Fortunately, in 2005, I was given another chance at the Singapore Open and passed to become a BWF Accredited Referee. In 2011, I reached the level of BWF Certificated Referee.

What are some highlights of your experiences?

One of my favourite memories is having the opportunity to watch Lee Chong Wei play as an up-and-coming youngster in the hothouse of the Malaysian Open in Kota Kinabalu. It was an amazing experience with the badminton crazy supporters enjoying wonderful matches as he made his way through to the quarter-finals.

Other highlights of my refereeing career include the controversy of the London 2012 Olympic Games, the Macau Open with the great team of technical officials and fantastic hotel, fun times dancing with great friends at the welcome party of the Scottish Open, working with Leon Tolner, LiveScore Technician, at so many tournaments and his patience with me and my lack of computer knowledge!

I also had the pleasure of enjoying a great working relationship with the excellent BWF Events staff.

As the job of referee at times is not easy and can be lonely, many experiences were better for being able to share them with my husband, Michael, who often travelled with me, providing support at events around the world.

What do you love about refereeing?

The friendships made with our badminton family.

What have you learned from your practical experiences?

- That refereeing is not black and white. We have to be "grey";
- To take time to reflect before tackling problems;
- Being prepared to say you don't know;
- To treat people as you wish to be treated; and
- To respect one another.

What advice can you give to aspiring referees at national and continental levels?

- Work at local tournaments as much as possible with referees who are prepared to teach you and pass on their experience;
- Be prepared to ask questions;
- Follow BWF events on the web as this will help you understand the preparation of events at this level;
- Seek advice from senior referees in your continental zone; and
- Find yourself a mentor.

Any other guidance, tips, advice, ideas that may help a referee?

I am a firm believer that the job of a referee is one of people management. From your first contact with the event organisers, the way you write to introduce yourself sets a tone.

Be very aware of the bylaws and competition regulations pertaining to that particular tournament. Make sure the event prospectus is checked thoroughly and that all the information is correct. The preparation is most important so that when you arrive for the event you have covered all bases. It is important that team managers feel confident that you know what you are doing, that you are



Jane Wheatley served as Deputy Referee for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

approachable, and you are there to ensure a successful event for their players.

Once the tournament begins you can then put on your "people management hat". Remember that many of the people helping to run the tournament are volunteers and have more than likely given up a week of their family time, usually a week of their yearly holidays and may have even taken leave without pay. Take time to talk to these people, as everyone is important to the success of the event. Thank them at the end of the day.

The job of a referee is challenging but rewarding at the same time. On-lookers see us sitting at a desk for a week, chatting, drinking coffee/water and think we have a cushy job. The time spent travelling from Australia (my home country) is long, the hours at the stadium are long, and you can be dealing with coaches and team managers whose job it is to get the best for their players.

I must admit that I am very happy to have reached retirement age. To a lesser extent I continue to have a finger in the pie by mentoring, appraising and assessing fellow referees. This is not an easy task but we need to work together to ensure we are a team all on the same page.

The best advice I believe I can give to aspiring referees is to remember that family must come first. Make sure you keep in touch with your family whilst you are away. Set aside contact times so there is less conflict of interest.

Being a good referee is all about time management. If you love the tournament and love your family, the tournament will be a success.

I wish all our new referees success and, as with everything in life, you get back what you put in.

EXPECTATIONS FOR BWF UMPIRES

By Michael Walker

At a recent tournament, I was asked what I expect from a BWF Umpire and my reply was:

“I expect the umpire to be able to umpire or service judge any match at any time with no prior notice and to perform in all matches consistently in a highly professional manner.”

In hindsight, I realize that this is too vague to be of much help to a junior umpire aiming for the top echelon of umpiring. So, how does someone achieve that level of professionalism?

First, and most obviously, you need to have comprehensive knowledge of the Laws of Badminton, the RTTOs and the standard vocabulary and you are ready, willing and able to apply them to all of the matches you officiate, in a fair and non-officious manner.

As the umpire, you are the leader of the team on court. You establish a bond with the service judge and the line judges.

How?

- By meeting them before the match in the gathering area before proceeding on to court. When you get into the chair you have a quick look around the court and, hopefully, make eye contact with each of them.
- You visibly acknowledge their calls. You should try to develop the habit of making eye contact with your service judge at least twice per rally: immediately following the serve and when you are calling the score at the end of each rally.
- As a service judge, you should be backing up your umpire by discretely confirming line calls and lets and faults, timing the intervals or other stoppages of play for injuries, etc.
- You protect your team members from players who try to influence their calls or intimidate them. You do this proactively – don't wait for a player or coach to complain.

You are tasked with the presentation of the match to best sell our product (the badminton match) to the spectators, television and other media. As an umpire, you will be officiating the most important matches at the highest profile tournaments! This means you get to the gathering area early enough before the commencement of your match to get wired with a microphone and you know how it works.

Check if there are any special instructions concerning television. Will they give you the cue to start the match? You confirm the players are present and they are wearing uniforms which comply with the BWF clothing regulations. You confirm the pronunciation of their names. When calling the match, you are loud enough to be heard by the players and spectators. When making your introductory announcement you don't start your announcement when another umpire is making his/her introductory announcement. You have the experience to time your announcements around crowd noise and PA announcements so you can be heard, if possible, but without delaying the game. You develop your voice to sound interesting without being theatrical. You maintain a professional bearing while sitting in the chair throughout the match.



A flashback to Mike Walker's days as an umpire.

You are in charge of the court. When you first get into your chair you look around the court to confirm that everything, and everyone, are where they ought to be. You ensure the court is dry and safe for the players. You control delay of the game by the players whether they are delaying to regain their wind or tactically to upset their opponent. You ensure the scoreboards are working properly. You keep the court tidy. Players' gear should be in the boxes provided and those boxes should be near your chair. All of these things, and more, should occur seamlessly – without anyone knowing it is happening.

An old expression in English is that “a child should be seen but not heard”. I would adapt this for umpiring to be: “An umpire should be heard but not seen.” It's normally a good sign if no one knows who the umpire was at the end of a match.

You control misbehavior by the players on court. This requires heads-up umpiring. You pay attention to why players are getting frustrated and deal with the underlying problem before the player explodes. Is the opponent fist pumping or yelling in their direction to intimidate them? Is the opponent trying to influence the line judges? Is the player upset because they think the opponent is committing receiver faults which you are not calling? I have seen the most experienced umpires deal with a situation before the other team has arrived at his chair to complain about it. Usually, if you are paying attention, you can resolve the problem without going to your cards but you must have the confidence to use the cards when it is necessary.

So, what am I looking for in a BWF Umpire?

Quite a bit!



HOT SEAT: Jacob Syndberg in the umpire's chair.

TIMELY TIPS AND REMINDERS

By Malcolm Banham
Chair, BWF Umpire Assessment Panel

COCTales is a great platform for sharing information towards maintenance of a uniform and consistent standard of umpiring.

The workshops held at many events over the last couple of years have been a great success in standardising the presentation of our sport, and more are planned for future tournaments.

With growing television coverage, it is vitally important for us all to keep ahead of the sport.

WALKING ONTO COURT: The mobile television camera focuses frequently on the umpire. Bearing this in mind, please remember that anything carried onto court could be seen by millions of viewers. Therefore, try to keep your score sheet in your pocket until required.

SCORING TABLET: The efficient use of the scoring tablet is also of great importance so please ensure you are very familiar with its different functions. An online manual is available to assist you.

CONTINUOUS PLAY: Continuous play is a topic you will hear about frequently from the assessment team. Although we have seen improvement lately, delays must be controlled. Always remember that the

sport is for the players. Learn how to deal with delays, tell players that play must be continuous, and work out simple steps for controlling delays before you have to resort to cards.

THROWING SWEAT: The throwing of sweat by players has been controlled very well, although it is something we must not allow to slip back. Keep a watchful eye on this.

PLAYER CLOTHING: We are asked by the referees to check players' clothing in the marshalling area which is now becoming standard at all major events. Please ensure you are familiar with the clothing regulations before arriving at the tournament.

BEST EFFORTS ON COURT: Players should always give their best effort. If you suspect that is not the case, please inform the referee who can then assist.

REFEREES ONTO COURT: There has been some discussion regarding the referee coming onto court without being asked. If it is apparent that a mistake in Law has been made, the referee must be allowed to correct this for the benefit of the players.

HELP FROM THE SERVICE JUDGE: There have been instances where the umpire, for whatever reason, has made an incorrect decision. My first question would be: "Where was the service judge?"

Please remember as a service judge you are also there to umpire the match – not just to give out shuttles. You should be totally aware of all that is happening on court. Help your umpire by always being alert.

TIMING THE WARM-UP: Television officials have been in consultation with BWF and it has now been agreed that the timing of the two-minute warm-up starts as soon as the umpire is seated in the chair. The BWF Umpire and Service Judge Instructions will be updated accordingly on the website to reflect this updated procedure.

REFEREES AND UMPIRES FOR TOKYO

It has been decided that, as far as possible, international TOs for the Paralympic Games in Tokyo shall have both a BWF qualification and acknowledged experience in para-badminton.

BWF referees and umpires who wish to be considered for the Paralympic Games should endeavor to acquire experience with para-badminton; para-badminton referees and umpires without a BWF qualification should seek to achieve BWF accreditation in time.

No TO can expect to serve in both the Olympics and the Paralympic Games.

By Torsten Berg

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

UPCOMING MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS AND ASSESSMENTS

- Umpire Appraisals, and BWF Accredited Umpire Assessments, TOTAL BWF World Championships 2017, 21-27 August 2017, Glasgow, SCO
- Technical Official Commission Meeting, in conjunction with the TOTAL BWF World Championships 2017, August 2017, Glasgow, SCO
- Referee Evaluation, TOTAL BWF World Championships 2017, 21-27 August 2017, Glasgow, SCO
- Referee Evaluation and BWF Referee Assessment for Certification, BWF World Senior Championships 2017, 11-17 September 2017, Cochin, IND
- Umpire Appraisals and Workshop, VICTOR Korea Open, 12-17 September 2017, Seoul, KOR
- Referee Evaluation and BWF Referee Assessment for Certification, BWF World Junior Championships 2017, 9-22 October 2017, Yogyakarta, INA
- Umpire Appraisals and Workshop, DANISA Denmark Open, 17-22 October 2017, Odense, DEN
- Umpire Appraisals and Workshop, YONEX French Open, 24-29 October 2017, Paris, FRA
- Referee Evaluation and BWF Referee Assessment for Certification, Bitburger Open 2017, 31 October – 5 November 2017, Saarbrücken, GER
- Referee Evaluation, 2017 Macau Open, 7-12 November 2017, Macau, MAC
- Umpire Appraisals and Workshop, Dubai World Superseries Finals 2017, 13-17 December 2017, Dubai, UAE

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We shall propose how to expand the official vocabulary to include short standard sentences to explain calls such as ‘fault’ and ‘warning for misconduct’, as well as general revision and update of the current Annex 4.

REFEREE’S DUTIES

There was always a need to standardise the referees’ performance, so that players, team managers and tournament organisers know better what decisions they can expect in a given situation, independent of who is the referee.

Several workshops for all BWF Referees over the years have contributed to this standardisation, and another one will come in 2018. We have come a long way, but more needs to be done. The new ‘360 degrees’ appraisals of referees are another major step forward in that direction, and we also expect the semi-professional referees (operational in 2018) will contribute.

The revision of the RTTO is yet another important step towards standardisation. The new RTTO - which may also be renamed - will contain a section describing in some detail the referee’s responsibilities and duties. The intention is to help the referees to better understand what is expected from them, and clarify to the other stakeholders - players, team managers, TOs, Organising Committee, etc. – what they can and shall expect from the referee.

Moreover, there is another important step underway to help standardise the referee’s performance. A set of instructions to referees is being developed; similar but much larger than the instructions to umpires which have served well to improve the standard of umpiring worldwide.

BWF Certificated Referee Carsten Koch is in charge of this effort, with BWF Referee Assessor Ernest Robinson and me as assistants. The reason why these instructions to referees will become much larger, and more complicated to produce and follow up, is that the duties of the referee are much more complex, though not necessarily more difficult than those of the umpire.

CHANGES FOR UMPIRES

The RTTO proposal will include two major changes in the umpire’s duties. As mentioned, if the BWF Council accepts, there will be standard sentences for the umpire to explain calls such as ‘fault’ and ‘warning for misconduct’.

Secondly, it is the intention to propose wording to help the umpire to control players better when they wish to take breaks to towel down and drink. In brief, it is the intention to introduce two different breaks: a quick one for a player to just towel down (and in order to reduce on-court sweat requiring mopping), and a longer one, where

both players are allowed to towel down and drink, where mopping also can be done, if required.

Moreover, we expect to propose several simplifications and clarifications to the wording of the RTTO in order to contribute to better understanding of the Laws and the RTTO among umpires, service judges and line judges.

THE PROCESS

It is indeed an ambitious project. The proposal shall go to BWF Council at its meeting in November 2017, for implementation on 1 January 2018 with the GCR and the new World Tour. This timeline demands that the Working Group must have a well-prepared draft ready for discussion in a meeting during the TOTAL BWF World Championships 2017 in Glasgow. A few days later, the BWF Technical Official Commission (TOC) will review the result, and then there will be a hearing process involving the continental confederations and their experts in September.

Several Working Group members have worked hard these past two months on the first draft and it looks like the ambitious timetable can be met. More importantly, there will be a better and clearer RTTO by year-end.