



Referee Training

Recent Questions - 18/5/26

Learning Culture

1. Is there a formal procedure for refs to review games and iron out mistakes?

Whilst we do not have the capacity to arrange watch-alongs where referees are critiqued, we do have some processes referee can use to develop themselves and others. These are:

- **Informal:**
 - **WhatsApp Discussion:** Share a clip of something you aren't sure about or ask for feedback. If using clips of others officiating, be respectful and focus on the learning opportunity.
 - **Self-assessment:** Complete a [self-assessment](#) to determine your strengths and areas which require improvement.
- **Formal:**
 - **Referee Feedback Form:** Fill out the [referee feedback form](#) to ask for a formal evaluation of refereeing performance or to give feedback of another referee's actions at specific points during a match. This is fed back to referees so they can refine their practice in future. This is also the place to ask questions as a referee so we can get answers back to you from the technical committee.

Game Management

1. What should we do if a team is scheduled to play/allocated as referees on our court, but they are playing, allocated to referee or acting as retrievers on another court which is running behind?

- **Playing on another court:** It is necessary that the other fixture finishes. Wait until they have finished. Speak to your event coordinator if you have any concerns about your court timings.
- **Refereeing/allocated referees on another court:** It is necessary that the other fixture finishes. Wait until they have finished. Speak to your event coordinator if you have any concerns about your court timings.
- **Retrieving or coaching on another court:** Do not wait to begin, other than giving players on the offending team a quick nudge and waiting perhaps a minute for enough players to make their way over to you - it is on the team to ensure they are not delaying matches by retrieving for (or coaching) other teams. Having 2 retrievers is not optional, so notify the team in question that they must play short-handed (e.g. a team of 6 individuals would line up with 4 on court and 2 as retrievers) if the team does not have enough personnel.
 - **Forfeits:** A team must begin a match with at least 4 players on court if it is the first match of an event day, and 3 for the start of subsequent matches. This means that they may in fact need 6 players for their first match of the day (4 on-court, 2 retrieving) and 5 players (3 on-court, 2 retrieving) for subsequent matches if they cannot get other teams to retrieve for them. Make sure to follow **Rule 4.6.2 - Late First Match Start Procedure** if this is a team's first match of the day.

2. False starts - can we remind allocated referees of their role during the opening rush of each set?

- Allocated (line) referees must watch for false starts on the team on their side of the court. This is a player who moves forward before the referee starts the set.
- The offending player may pull up and slow down so they do not compete for balls by stopping before they reach the ball return line. Allocated referees should therefore wait to see if the player pulls up before declaring a False Start.
- The penalty for a false start is a turnover.
- If both teams false start, the team which was deemed to have begun the false start will be classed the offending team. If the match officials are unable to determine which team initiated the false start, the match officials will reset for another opening rush.



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Rules Knowledge

1. Can line retrievers step on the court lines as long as they don't step onto court?

Relevant rules include:

- "A retriever may not enter the court at any time during live play."
- "The court boundary is marked by two side lines and two back lines. They are drawn outside of the dimensions of the court, as they are not part of it."

Looking at this wording, retrievers can indeed step on the lines as long as they don't step on court. This will likely be reviewed for next season to align to WDBF so please ensure you remain updated at all times.

2. Player A is hit by ball 1, blocks ball 2 using a ball in their possession and then catches ball 1 before it touches a dead object. Is this a catch or are they out for the 'contact' with ball 2?

Relevant rules include:

- "The player may be hit and immediately deemed out by any contact made with other activated, live balls before completing the catch."
- "The hit player must not do anything to eliminate an opponent until they have caught the deflected ball which initially hit them."

Blocking a ball is **not** classed as contact on the hit player, and therefore this play is successfully deemed as a catch. Under the wording of the current rules, if the player made a block-attack and eliminated an opponent with ball 2, they would be deemed out and the catch would not be successful. This also aligns to WDBF wording, where they also state that nothing can be done to eliminate an opponent, but clarification has been sought with WDBF and changes may be made in future.

3. Player A block-traps ball 1 in their body and arms. They are in control of ball 1 but have not put a hand on it. At this point, they are hit by ball 2. Is this a catch on ball 1 or not?

Relevant rules include:

- "For a catch to be considered complete, it must be fully in control of the catching player."
- "Full control is established once the ball is stable and at least one hand has been placed on the ball to secure the catch by the player (i.e., A ball caught between a player's knees, must have a hand on the ball while it is under the player's control to be considered caught)."
- "In cases of multiple ball catches, the player must maintain continuous contact with the first ball to hit them in order for the catches to be considered successful."

By this wording, ball 1 has NOT been caught before player A was hit by ball 2, and should be refereed as such for the remainder of the season. A discussion is tabled to amend this rule for next season to focus more on control and lesson specific body parts, so please ensure you stay up to date with next season's rulebook amendments so you can officiate this confidently.

4. Can 'friendly fire' happen in dodgeball? A ball is live when thrown in the general direction of opponents.

Relevant rules include:

- "A live ball is a ball which has been previously activated and thrown by a player in the general direction of an opponent."
- "A player who is hit by a live ball is out at the moment of contact and classed as a hit player until their status is resolved as outlined in Rule 6.2. Hit Players. "

According to the current wording of the rules, friendly fire could technically be possible. This is not the intent of the rule however, and this will be reviewed in the off-season so that there is no way for a player to directly eliminate a teammate with a thrown attempt (ricochets from blocks of balls thrown by opponents are of course covered separately). Do **not** call players out for friendly fire in the meantime.