

## PLAY, PLEASE!

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) wants to reduce the time between rallies in matches through a coordinated effort involving umpires, referees and players, to ensure continuous play remains in effect.

This decision stems from the realisation that there have been increasing delays between rallies, with players taking more and more time in recent years to resume playing. This assertion is supported by statistics.

BWF is unhappy with this development, which goes against a fundamental aspect of the sport – that stamina is part and parcel of a player's skills – and also reduces the attraction of badminton to spectators and television viewers.

The Laws and RTTO (Recommendations to Technical Officials) are clear and give the umpire the necessary tools to address this issue. In particular, Law 16 – describing this important aspect of the spirit of the game – is abundantly clear.

"Play shall be continuous from the first service until the match is concluded..." and "Under no circumstances shall play be delayed to enable a player to recover strength or wind or to receive advice."

RTTO 3.5. also addresses this matter, stating it is the umpire's obligation to "ensure that the players do not deliberately cause any delay in, or suspension of play. Any unnecessary walk around the court shall be prevented".

Well-trained BWF and CC umpires, possibly using a step-wise approach (described elsewhere in this edition), should be able to take the necessary action on court for BWF international events, and to handle the serving situation in a reasonable manner, bearing in mind that the game is for the players.

They will be aware that BWF recently introduced the little word "unduly" into RTTO 3.5.4.3, so it now reads:



Evelyne Maton (France)

***During the game, if play is not unduly held up, the players may be allowed to have a quick towel and/or drink at the discretion of the umpire.***

This should be understood so that a necessary towel-down will be allowed, while efforts to disrupt the opponent's game or to get additional rest between rallies should be prevented.

The example of the BWF umpires should serve to guide national umpires in following the same line on the domestic level.

Umpires are experienced in administering Law 16, including handling more challenging situations that may arise, when one player is more tired than their opponent. They are of course aware that late in the game, it is only natural and reasonable that it may take a few seconds more to concentrate than early in the match. No problem.

It is the unnecessary and unreasonable walkabouts which BWF wants to eliminate, thus ensuring play shall be continuous – in the spirit of badminton.

FROM THE CHAIR BY  
**TORSTEN  
BERG**



# TOWARDS A BETTER 2015

Having had our budget proposal for 2015 accepted, the TOC is well placed to provide an even better new year for BWF Technical Officials.

**For our Referees:** We plan a workshop with theory examination for new candidate referees to become BWF Accredited. We expect seven to eight candidates from four continents to come to Kuala Lumpur at the end of March for a three-day exercise. Those who pass the theory exam will have to take a practical refereeing test.

As a new measure to improving the performance of younger BWF Referees, we will introduce referee appraisals in 2015. We trust this will be a major step in ensuring uniform and high standards.

## FOR BWF UMPIRES

There will be Certification testing in August in Jakarta at the World Championships and Accreditation, both in China during the Sudirman Cup and additionally in Germany during the Bitburger Open in October. We hope for more successful performances than we had in recent years – preparation is surely the key word.

## FOR BWF LINE JUDGES

The first four-year cycle is coming to an end, and new nominations and

re-nominations for another four-year period (2015 – 2018) are underway. It appears that many wish to continue, and we are grateful for their time and commitment, as well as for the newcomers.

The TOC will be busy in 2015. BWF will review its general strategies, and that includes the TO area. We have started the exercise, expecting evolution rather than revolution. Key words will likely be “better” and “more”, as we both need more solid performances from our current BWF TO and need to recruit more TOs. Closer co-operation with the Continental Confederations will definitely be a key to succeeding.

Finally, on behalf of BWF TOC, may I cordially thank all our BWF TOs, their ‘entourage’, and our administrative support in KL for a fine year, and wish everyone a happy and successful 2015.

# 2014: YEAR OF LANDMARKS

In several ways, 2014 marked a breakthrough in areas in which the BWF longed to progress. Among the year’s most significant achievements were:

## INSTANT REVIEWS

The introduction of the IRS technology and its development heralded a new era for players, giving them added assurance that they will get fair decisions on line calls, in the most high-profile events. Disputed line calls – the source of eternal pain for players and officials since the sport was introduced – have gone forever,

at least on the TV court. Nevertheless, BWF line judges and their colleagues will remain relevant and useful, and the IRS has generally given additional credit to their eyesight and neutrality.

## SYSTEMATIC APPRAISALS OF BWF UMPIRES

For our BWF Umpires, 2014 meant the introduction of systematic appraisals in a series of BWF Major Events as well as the BWF World Superseries. The TOC and the Umpire Assessors Panel have long wished to provide this service to our umpires, and fortunately the BWF Council in 2013 gave us the necessary budget.

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Peter Ganes jumped on a plane to Seoul in January and successfully kick-started the appraisals. Even local umpires wanted Peter to watch their performance and sought his advice. As could be expected, this new step needed a little adjusting along the way. After the TOC, in a letter to all BWF Referees and BWF Umpire Assessors making clear to everyone what they should expect from each other and how best to collaborate, the BWF umpire appraisals have been successful, contributing to better and more uniform umpiring worldwide.

### BWF REFEREE WORKSHOPS

The BWF workshops for referees in Paris in October marked the first time all BWF Referees came together to discuss how they could contribute to refereeing standards worldwide. Three consecutive workshops: one for BWF Referee Assessors; one for Certificated Referees focusing on BWF Major Events, World Superseries, and Grand Prix Gold; and finally, a two-day workshop for all BWF Referees, took up a large number of pertinent issues to improve the quality of performance and provide answers to several questions that may occur during our events. Comprehensive notes were carefully taken from the discussions and decisions, and these will serve as a blueprint for the standards we want in future. On a few

issues, such as delays and advertising on clothing, advice will be sought on how strictly we should apply the regulations.

An invited table tennis referee, Werner Thury of Austria and ITTF, inspired us through a presentation on how his sport organises refereeing and umpiring. There are issues where we need to catch up, such as documentation of our requirements and standards, but there are other issues where they envy our system (e.g. daily allowances and retirement age).

### RETIRING GREAT

The end of the year also marks the end of career for some of our most experienced referees and umpires. They will all get a personal letter with thanks from BWF for their contribution over the years.

One very special person merits mention here. Twenty-five years ago, during the first Sudirman Cup in Jakarta in 1989, Juniarto Suhandinata started refereeing for BWF, and ever since he has been one of our best and hardest working BWF Certificated Referees.

Moreover, Juniarto serves as a true role model for his peers: always fair, discreet, approachable, knowing – as a former

international player – how best to cater to the players' best interest; strong and adamant, if necessary, but hardly ever needing to raise his voice.

In 2009, Juniarto received the BWF Meritorious Service Award for his achievements as a BWF Referee.

Juniarto, your referee colleagues will miss you at the table, and we will have to do the long hours without your sense of humour. We thank you for your enormous contribution to badminton and BWF over many years, wish you well in your retirement, and we are pleased that you will continue as a BWF Referee Assessor.

### STRONGER ADMINISTRATION FOR TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

In late 2013, the BWF Council accepted a much improved budget proposal from our Events Chairman Peter Tarcala for the TOC. This budget allowed us to do the things we mentioned above and more. Peter, while we miss you courtside as an excellent BWF Umpire and Referee colleague, we are most grateful for what you have achieved in the boardroom for your colleagues. We are pleased to have a chairman who understands perfectly what is necessary to develop the Technical Officials for the benefit of the game. And we are very happy that, once again, you have ensured a budget for 2015 that will enable us to continue the progressive trend started in 2014.

The arrival of Chris Trenholme as Technical Events Manager in February 2014 has made our Kuala Lumpur team considerably stronger. Now that Chris has gone through a steep learning curve – and with Noridah still going strong – we are well equipped to further improve our standards in years to come.

By Torsten Berg



**ON THE JOB:** Juniarto Suhandinata (right) in discussion with Danish player, Jan Jorgensen.



# DELAY OF GAME – ‘THE UMPIRES LADDER APPROACH’

BY PETER GANES  
BWF UMPIRE ASSESSOR

In several places in the Laws of Badminton, it is mentioned that delay of game is not allowed:

**Law 9.1.1:** “Neither side shall cause undue delay to the delivery of the service”.

**Law 16.1:** “Play shall be continuous....”

**Law 16.4.1:** “Under no circumstances shall play be delayed....”

**Law 16.6.1:** (“A player shall not”)...“deliberately cause delay in, or suspension of, play”.

But despite this, and the fact that the umpire has several tools at his disposal, the time that the shuttle is actually in play during matches is dramatically decreasing.

Based on a few matches, here are some statistics:

- From 1986 to 1992 the actual playing time in Men’s Singles was 48%
- From 2008 to 2010 it dropped to 32%;
- In the Men’s Singles final at the London Olympics, 2012, the playing time was only 24%

The following are some examples of how players can delay a game:

- a) Walking towards his/her coach/back boundary line/side line (it doesn’t matter if both sides are doing it)
- b) Talking/giving signs to his/her partner
- c) Asking for a change of the shuttle
- d) Asking to drink or wipe off sweat
- e) Asking to get the court mopped
- f) Asking to change the racket

So what can umpires do to minimize these types of delays?

The answer could be the “Ladder Approach”, where the umpire, in a simple way, tells the players that he/she is getting more and more concerned about delays in the match. The suggested steps are the following:

1. The first time a side/both sides delay game, the umpire could repeat the score; this will normally attract the players’ attention and get him/her/them to resume play.
2. The second time the umpire could say “Peter, play please”, or “Denmark, play please”. The player should now know that the umpire is more “unhappy” than the first time.

3. The third time the umpire could say “Peter”/“Denmark”, wait for him to look at you, and then say “Play now”/ “You must not delay the game, play now.”

4. The fourth time the umpire can call one side/both sides to the chair and in a very clear and short way tell the side/sides, that the game is being delayed, and the next time a yellow card will be given. At the same time, consider pointing at/lifting the yellow card just a little from the chest pocket. This should be followed by “Play” – meaning that this is not a subject for discussion among the players.

After that it is just going by the cards.

First a yellow and then two red cards, and then call for the referee. Remember: Don’t forget to always give your recommendation to the referee.

No two matches are the same, so please don’t go strictly by the above approach. These are just suggestions for you to build your own “ladder”.

Remember RTTO 1.3: “The game is for the players”.

## CERTIFICATES FOR BWF TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

BWF is proud to reintroduce a certificate program to show appreciation for the great work and achievement of our BWF Referees and Umpires.

Each current and newly accredited Referee and Umpire (and those moving up to the Certificated level) will be issued a certificate acknowledging their respective certification or accreditation level. Certificates will be circulated by mail.

# REFEREE WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS



BWF officials and BWF Referees at the workshop in Paris.

BWF Referee Assessors, Certificated Referees, and Accredited Referees came together for a series of workshops in Paris, France, last October.

The Referee Assessors workshop on 18 October focused on refining the terms of reference of the assessment process, the added roles of mentoring, educating, and appraising referees — both at the continental and BWF levels — and discussion of some of the 'big-picture' issues facing BWF referees, including the identification, recruitment, and development of referees at the national level and beyond.

The assessment team joined the Certificated Referees on 19 October for a workshop on issues and challenges facing referees at BWF Major Events as well as World Superseries and Grand Prix Gold tournaments. These included the understanding and cooperation needed between them, BWF Tournament Series staff, television broadcasters/contractors, and the host organiser to meet the objectives of the host contract agreement; clothing regulations; team managers' meetings; and the overall goal of greater standardisation and consistency in how they do their jobs on site. Lastly, all groups, including Accredited Referees, came together to continue examining the goal of standardisation and consistency of their roles, with the emphasis on Grand Prix and Level 4 events. These discussions (20-21

October) included anti-doping, Tournament Planner/Tournament Software and draw management, and further discussion on clothing regulations.

The sessions were led by TOC Chair Torsten Berg and Events Committee Chair Peter Tarcala and featured a presentation by Referee Committee Chair and International Level Referee for the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF), Werner Thury, on 20 October. He spoke about the development and implementation of refereeing and umpiring in his sport.

BWF would like to thank the board and staff of the Federation Francaise de Badminton for their support in hosting the workshops during the busy week of the Yonex French Open. Thanks also to Referee Assessor and Certificated Referee, Isabelle Jobard, and to the ITTF for Thury's participation.



Referee Committee Chair and International Level Referee for the International Table Tennis Federation, Werner Thury (centre), received a token of appreciation from the BWF, represented by BWF Events Chair, Peter Tarcala (left), and Chair of BWF's Technical Officials' Commission, Torsten Berg.

## TO MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS IN 2015

The following is the tentative schedule for meetings, workshops, and assessments in 2015:

- Referee Assessment Workshop: 28-30 March — Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Umpire Assessor Workshop: May — Dongguan, China, during the week of the Sudirman Cup 2015
- BWF Accredited Umpire Assessments #1: 10-17 May — Dongguan, China, during the Sudirman Cup 2015
- Technical Official Commission: August — Jakarta, Indonesia, during the week of the World Championships 2015
- BWF Certificated Umpire Assessments: 10-16 August — Jakarta, Indonesia, during the World Championships 2015
- BWF Accredited Umpire Assessments #2: 27 October to 1 November — Saarbrücken, Germany, during the Bitburger Badminton 2015 (BWF Grand Prix Gold series event)
- Certificated Referee and Referee Assessor Workshops: last quarter of 2015 (location TBC).

Umpire Assessors will be holding workshops and performing appraisals at the following MetLife BWF World Superseries and BWF Grand Prix Gold tournaments:

- Yonex All England Open Championships
- Maybank Malaysia Open
- Yonex US Open
- Yonex Japan Open
- Yonex Denmark Open
- Hong Kong Open

## CHANGES IN LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The BWF Council recently approved the recommendation of several proposed changes to the Laws of Badminton. These will be brought to the membership for approval at its Annual General Meeting in May.

If approved, these will be circulated to all Member Associations and Technical Officials, and updated on the BWF website. Any consequential changes (i.e. renumbering of sections) will be made at that time to the General Competition Regulations (GCR) or other event regulation sections.

For the most recent changes to the BWF GCR and other event regulations, please refer to the recently circulated update, or the BWF website at the following URL:

<http://www.bwfbadminton.org/page.aspx?id=14915>

The 2015/16 version of the Handbook II will be printed early this year for distribution to all BWF Technical Officials.