

Guidelines for Umpire Assessors

Introduction

Whether assessing or appraising, you should have:

- read the up-to-date Laws, ITTO, Vocabulary and Umpire and Service Judge Instructions so that you are totally familiar with all the current changes that may have taken place.

When you are at a tournament as an assessor looking at someone for upgrading:

- you need to know the rules for that assessment
- are you able to give feedback for the first day, two days or not at all?
- make sure you know the criteria for this upgrading

Assessment (as applicable)/ Appraisal Considerations

- get to know the umpire you are assessing/appraising
- make them feel comfortable with what you are trying to tell them
- give them credit for the things that have been done right
- provide them with constructive feedback on their performance, including giving them things to work on; but not too many things as this can have an adverse effect and they will not remember all of what you have told them
- start with the things you consider are most important, then in your next appraisal you can move on until you manage to move their standard onto the next level
- appraisal is as much a person management situation as the management of players on court
- make them feel you want to help them improve.

The following points should be looked for when assessing/appraising:

Pre-match

- how well do they check clothing and adverts in the marshalling area?
- how do they interact with the team of line judges? are they motivating them?
- how do they walk onto the court?
- how do they stand and do they stand in the correct place?
- are they talking?
- how is their appearance?
- how do they greet the players?
- do they take a step into the court to do the toss?
- how do they do the toss? do they hold the coin so the TV cameras can see it and do they signal clearly who won the toss?
- how quickly do they get into the chair?
- how do they look in the chair?
- do they have any presence?
- do they check the court and surroundings?

- do they check the line judges and their positions and have they acknowledged the service judge?
- how accurate is the two-minute warm up?
- how good are they at getting the players on to court to start the match?
- how good is the announcement? (clarity, accuracy, speed of delivery, correct terminology and pause in the right places)
- do they use the word "play" as part of the announcement or leave a space and use it as an instruction?
- is their head up during the announcement?
- are they looking at the tablet/score sheet when they say "play"?

During the Match

- are they showing good court awareness?
- are they in control of the little situations on court? (towelling, change of racket, drink)
- do they have eye contact with the players?
- do they have eye contact with the service judge?
- are they alert/ready when a player asks for the shuttle to be changed?
- how do they handle the shuttle change?
- do they stop the player going to the service judge after service fault called?
- do they look at the line judges and/or do they actually acknowledge them?
- do they remember there are times when they should look at two line judges?
- how do they handle challenges to line calls?
- where IRS is in use, was the correct terminology used?
- are they aware of coaching and the conduct of coaches?
- how do they handle intervals and do they get the court wiped in these intervals?
- how is the timing of the intervals? do the intervals run over too long?
- what are they doing during the intervals?
- how do they handle getting the player/s back on court and coaches off the courtside?
- do they use the correct terminology?
- how do they handle any misconduct of players/coaches?
- was their action appropriate given the circumstances?
- how discreetly do they use their stopwatch? is it still running from the warm-up?
- have they missed part of the last rally sorting their stopwatch?
- when there is a tablet, do they use the stop watch on it? They should.
- how quickly do they call obvious faults?
- do they watch for faults around the net or do they follow the shuttle in the air?
- have they gained the respect of the players even in an easy match?
- do they watch for flash points at the end of a rally or do their eyes go straight to score sheet/tablet?
- are they showing confidence in all their decision making?
- do they see delay in the game, do they deal with it and how?
- how many times do they say "play" without doing anything else?
- was the closing announcement clear? (accurate and used the correct terminology)
- how well did they exit the court? (speed, smartness and still as a team)

Remember that there does not have to have been any problems in a match to appraise all the above points

Post-match

- all appraisals should be followed by a debrief as soon as possible after the match, ideally straight away before they go back on court
- it is important that you don't rush the debrief
- if the umpire has to go back on court, continue the debrief when they have more time
- in a difficult match, there may be times when it is beneficial to debrief the umpire and service judge together
- the debrief should not be just a report on the match
- it should be about discussing situations that happened and how you can help
- this help might be to provide them with different ideas that they may wish to try - you can tell them "this is how I got over that situation but that may not work for you"
- the umpire needs to find their own words that can help them control a situation

If during discussion there is a question you do not have the answer to, tell them you will find out and get back to them. You need to keep the respect of the umpire you are appraising. Giving the wrong answer, especially in Law, does not look good to the umpire and you will lose credibility.

Service Judging

Most of the above is still relevant to the service judge. In addition,

- do they walk around the net after shaking hands?
- do they have the warm up shuttles ready to issue after the toss?
- they should not sit down until the umpire is in the chair
- did they appear to have assisted the umpire by checking the court and surroundings?

The service judge should still umpire the match so they are ready to respond/help if there are any problems on court.

They should know what is happening at all times.

During the Intervals

- do they walk over and stand by the umpire?
- are they chatting?
- are they looking to see if there are any possible problems? (change of shirt, coaches, line judge needs help, or have they switched off)
- do they stand at the end of the match to shake hands?
- are they still aware of player behaviour?
- do they leave the court with the umpire and other technical officials professionally or are they chatting?

The above considerations can be adapted for any level of tournament.

You should advise the umpire to look at the Umpire and Service Judge Instructions on the BWF Corporate website. These instructions are for all umpires and assessors; not just BWF. COC-Tales can also contain information that may be useful for all umpires.