



*"It is the goal and responsibility of every player and referee to make each game we participate in, flow to the best of our ability, helping to improve the image and spectator enjoyment of our uniquely exciting, dynamic and demanding sport" – PSA Refereeing mission statement*

## Update #9

Dear Player/Referee/Coach,

Re: September 2018 Refereeing Update

This is an important update in an effort to continue to clarify the application of the rules and improve the flow of the game. Specifically, this is not a change to the rules but an update to provide information on how the game is to be officiated at PSA events, non-PSA events may use a different interpretation in some instances, so it is always advisable to check with the relevant person.

### 1. **Stroke being awarded after a ball rebounds off the back wall:**

It has been noticed that strokes are very rarely awarded if a ball bounces off the back wall, even when the opponent is encroaching preventing a shot straight or cross court.

Moving forwards:

- A player encroaching will be penalised with a stroke if the position is preventing a cross court or straight option.
- In addition to assessing the non-striker's position, the referee has to be sure that the player can hit the ball when awarding a **stroke**. This can be judged by how far the ball has bounced off the back wall, as well as the striker's swing and position in relation to the ball.
- **If a player stops and appeals for a let and the opponent is not encroaching or there is not sufficient interference or the risk of injury, then a no let will be awarded.**

Please note that this is a clarification of the interpretation, rather than a rule change.

### 2. **Hitting the opponent with the ball:**

If point 1 above is applied, then a player should stop before hitting an opponent.

Rule 9.1.2 essentially states that if the ball is travelling towards the front wall and hits the opponent, then the referee will award a stroke, unless it is deemed as dangerous play.

Moving forwards:

- If the non-striker is encroaching and limiting options, then a stroke will still be awarded. If a stroke is awarded, then the referee can ask both players to be careful but should not warn the striker.
- **If the referee feels it is necessary to warn the striker, then a stroke should not be awarded.**



- In addition, if the referee assesses that it is dangerous play, then a code of conduct must be awarded against the striker.
- If the striker is looking to gain an advantage by deliberately hitting the opponent, then a code of conduct must be awarded.
- Players can still refuse the stroke and opt to play a let should they not wish to be awarded a point for hitting an opponent but this must not influence the referee's decision with regards to dangerous or deliberate play.
- **Successful application of point 1 above should reduce the number of times players are hit with the ball.**

### 3. Hitting the opponent with the backswing:

This is always a very grey area, so to help clarify when it is a no let, a let and when it is a stroke here is a brief description:

- No interference at all.....**No Let**
- No contact but a justified fear of hitting the opponent.... safety – **Yes Let**
- No contact but the striker is unable to complete a reasonable swing, including the backswing or the follow through, because of the opponent's position... **Stroke**
- Interference which **affected the swing by slight contact** (which is not severe enough to prevent the swing but sufficient to have some slight effect on the swing or flight of the ball) ...**Yes Let** ....unless the striker would have made a winning return, (there are a few instances when this situation would be obvious such as when both players are right up at the front corner and all the striker just needs to do is hit a cross court drive)....in which case a **Stroke** is awarded to the striker.
- Interference which **prevented the swing** (which is obvious as the non-striker has moved directly into the swing preventing it, or there is an obvious effect on the flight of the ball into the tin or out).....**Stroke**

### 4. Opening the door:

A brief reminder that players are to refrain from opening the door unless they request permission from the referee due to communication difficulties. We understand that awarding a conduct point is a severe penalty for opening the door, but it is significantly reducing discussions between players and referees which is an area that has been highlighted for improvement within the game.

The main points to remember are:

- A conduct point awarded immediately is a severe reprimand but does prevent players from opening the door and does reduce discussions.
- If there is difficulty for the player or referee to communicate, then a player may request or be invited by the referee to open the door.
- If the referee sees the player going to open the door, then they should intervene and ask the player not to do so.



We hope the above helps to provide further clarity and understanding in relation to the rules this season.

### **PSA Initiative – Diving and stopping the rally after a dive**

After much deliberation, it has been decided that going forward, the PSA will adopt the following **only** for PSA events:

- Any player who chooses to dive loses the right to stop the rally and ask for a let as they have altered the condition of the court and therefore accepted the playing surface.
- The striker must either stop immediately (before the next shot) and ask for a let or play the ball. Once played, the rally must continue as the conditions are deemed to have been accepted by both players.
- If the diving player hits a winning return, then a no let can still be awarded, even if the striker stops for safety.
- The referee has the right to intervene and stop play at any time should the conditions be deemed as unsafe.

**Important:** The process surrounding diving, described above, is a PSA initiative that will be reviewed by PSA on an ongoing basis, and is not part of the WSF process or included in the rules.

We hope this helps to provide an understanding of what is constantly being discussed at events.

Kind Regards,

Lee

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