COCTALES

THE NEWSLETTER OF BWF TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

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Technical Officials at the DAIHATSU Japan Open 2026.

HEAD OF TECHNICAL OFFICIALS UPDATE

By Lynne Nixey, Head of Technical Officials

Having just finished the VICTOR Denmark Open 2026, I am reminded of the benefits of a great team. We always highlight 'Teamwork' but when it all comes together, it makes everyone feel part of something big and people go home with that enjoyment. Congratulations to all of you who contribute in your own way to being part of the 'team' of BWF Technical Officials.

I also want to acknowledge that other 'team' – your families. Without their grace and patience, most of us would be unable to make the commitment to the sport that we do – so don't forget to thank them for holding the fort while you are away being involved in the sport that we all love.

I know that referees and umpires are all eagerly awaiting their appointments for 2027. These have been held up because of a requirement to have our Semi-Professional positions approved by Council which, by the time you are reading this will have happened. Once these are approved, you will receive the suggested appointments.

A different process for umpires this year – with the BWF office now making those appointments as opposed to your confederations. This will (in time) streamline the process for all of us.

While most of us are good at adhering to the timelines set for obtaining airfare quotes and making bookings, there is still a few repeat offenders out there who march to the beat of their own drum. I know as well as you all that it is quite a process that we have to go through; get two quotes from CWT, a personal quote if you want to use that process, send to Selena for approval, receive approval, book flights and then claim. This is a process that all BWF Staff, TOs and Council must go through – it is not special just for us. At the BWF end, for every tournament, Selena is receiving all your quotes, checking they fall within budget, dealing with queries/changes/other requests daily. If you can do your part and stick to the timelines (yes – I know they are often quite short), then that would really help.

The BWF Events Committee and the BWF Council met during the week of 20 October to consider all recommended new regulations. Once approved, there will be some online workshops to update you all on these. Details will be sent once these are finalised.

Christmas is rapidly bearing down on us and this will be the last COC Tales this year. For those of you who celebrate the season, I hope that this is a good one. If you don't celebrate the season, I wish you all the best for the end of the year.

REFEREE UPDATE



BWF Referee and Doctor team with Sven Serré (BWF Acting Chair – Events Committee) at the BWF World Championships 2026.

FROM THE CHAIR BY

GRETHA PRINSLOO

As we enter the final quarter of the year, it is timely for us to take stock of all the events and challenges we have encountered so far during the year.

You have all worked hard to maintain a professional standard in the BWF Referee position, and you are to be commended for that. Let us not lose our passion for our sport and continue to act accordingly.

The challenges encountered differed from tournament to tournament, but the one common factor is still the withdrawal process. It is very difficult to receive several seed withdrawals just as the Team Managers Meeting is about to start. Therefore, it is imperative that the referee team is prepared for this by working together as a team. It is ideal that the deputy take charge of the process while the referee continues to move the meeting along. The referee can then choose to either allow the deputy to present the withdrawals process or continue with this themselves – either way is acceptable and it shows the managers present that you are united as a team working together.



Liu Pingping (CHN) receiving her BWF Referee Certificate from Richard Perot (BWF Vice President – Para Badminton) at the Brazil Para Badminton International 2026.

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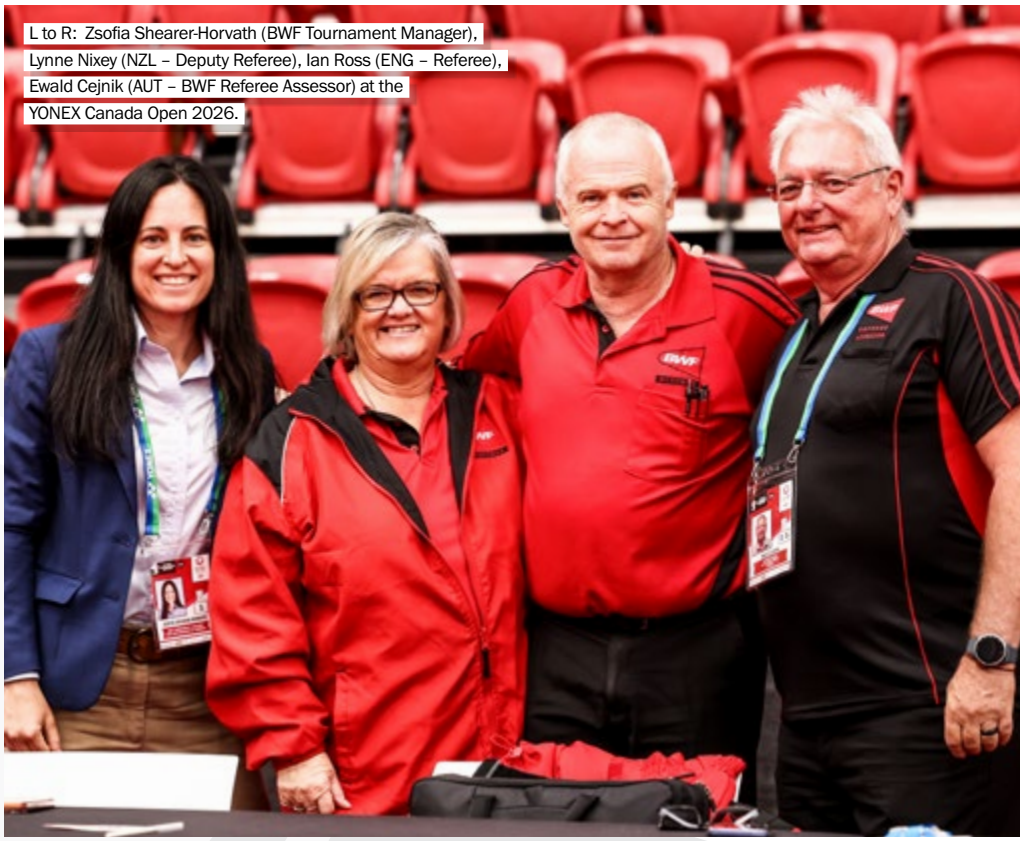


Technical Officials at the Brazil Para Badminton International 2026.

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On court incidents are always a consideration and our different personalities mean that we handle situations in different ways. One thing that is not different for us all is to be on top of your tournament specific regulations, and act accordingly. Do not shy away from going on court; this is experience that everyone needs and make sure you know Laws and Regulations to enable you to make on the spot decisions.

Withdrawal from a tournament appointment was a major occurrence this year. Late visa applications, sudden health concerns, the Middle East war and flight disruptions all contributed and were not in anybody's control. Look after your health and apply for visas in advance where possible. While we all experience frustration in waiting for a confirmation that we can go ahead and book flights - remember Selena cannot send an appointment document until the prospectus has been approved and published due to the information required. Until then, nothing is confirmed and you cannot proceed with any travel arrangements. We understand that this is particularly frustrating if you need this information to proceed with visa applications and, if this is the case, please contact Selena and ask for an interim appointment letter – purely to assist with obtaining a visa.



L to R: Zsofia Shearer-Horvath (BWF Tournament Manager), Lynne Nixey (NZL – Deputy Referee), Ian Ross (ENG – Referee), Ewald Cejnik (AUT – BWF Referee Assessor) at the YONEX Canada Open 2026.

The referee team dynamics are of the utmost importance. Ensure that you do a debrief after the day's play and plan for the next day, make sure your team knows what their responsibilities will be for the next day so you can hit the ground running.

Thank you to you all utilising your annual leave to referee so many duties and assisting with extra duties. I believe it should be better in 2027. With all the new changes due to be implemented, make sure to familiarise yourself with the procedures as to brief your TOs well.

I wish you all a wonderful festive season with rest and peace.

UMPIRE UPDATE



By Kelly Hoare,
Chair – BWF Umpire Assessment Panel

BWF Umpire Alexander Olennikov (SRB) at the BWF World Championships 2026.

Thank you Gilles

On behalf of all of the Umpire Assessment Panel, I want to say thank you for everything you have contributed over the years. Your dedication, commitment, and tireless work have left a lasting impact on this team and on everyone who has had the privilege of working alongside you. Your work has helped shape not only this panel but also umpires around the world.

Throughout your years in the role, you have dedicated an incredible amount of time, energy, and passion to developing umpires — across the world. Through your leadership, guidance, and commitment to excellence, you have helped shape the standards of umpiring internationally, and countless officials are better because of your support.

Your understanding of the game is second to none, as is your willingness to share that knowledge. No matter who asked for your help—whether it was an experienced BWF Umpire or someone just beginning their journey—you always had the time to listen, encourage, and offer thoughtful advice. You have made everyone feel valued, and that is greatly appreciated. This is what we call soft skills. And you are an expert in this field.

On a personal note, I want to thank you for everything you have taught me. I have learned so much from your experience, your insight, and your ability to see the game from every angle.

Leadership is about more than making decisions; it's about inspiring others to grow, creating opportunities, and leaving things better than you found them. You have done exactly that. The respect you have earned has come not simply because of your expertise, but because of your integrity, humility, and the genuine care you have shown to everyone you have worked with.

Although today marks your retirement as Chair, I think we're all delighted that this isn't really goodbye. We are incredibly fortunate that you will continue to be involved as a BWF Umpire Assessor. Your experience, wisdom, and mentoring will continue to benefit umpires for many years to come, and I know many of us will still be looking to you for advice.

On behalf of everyone here, thank you for your outstanding service, your unwavering dedication, and the countless hours you have given to the umpiring community. Thank you for your mentorship, your friendship, and for everything you have done to help so many people reach their potential.

To you my friend I say THANK YOU!

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Undue Delay

I know this has been raised previously; however I am going to reiterate the importance of enforcing **Law 9.1.1 - Undue Delay in Service**. I continue to receive correspondence indicating that some umpires do not fully understand the application of this Law, particularly in relation to the sideways serve.

It is important to note that it does not matter whether the server remains stationary for a period of time or moves the racket sideways, provided there is no forward movement of the racket head. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the server is taking an unreasonable amount of time to deliver the service in accordance with Law 9.1.1, then a fault for undue delay should be called.

The key consideration is not the movement of the racket itself, but whether there is an undue delay before the service is delivered.

Furthermore, ITTO 5.4.8.2 states:
"A fault during service is called by the umpire. The umpire shall announce the service fault or receiver fault using the appropriate vocabulary (BWF Statutes, Section 4.1.5, Section 4): 'Fault server, undue delay'."

Please ensure that this Law is clearly understood and applied consistently during matches. Where an umpire considers that a player is deliberately or unnecessarily delaying service, the appropriate call is **"Fault server, undue delay."**

Uniforms

As a reminder, all umpires and umpire assessors are required to wear their official uniform when attending:

- Managers' Meetings
- Umpire Briefings
- Umpire Workshops

The approved uniform consists of:

- **BWF Umpires**: BWF black/red shirt or BWF blue shirt.
- **Non-BWF Umpires**: CC Umpire shirt or the tournament host shirt with black dress pants.



BWF Umpire – Sudip Barve (IND) at the LI-NING China Masters 2026.


BWF Umpire – Chrysanthi Larou (GRE) at the DAIHATSU Japan Open 2026.


BWF Umpire – Justyna Krych (POL) at the YONEX Canada Open 2026.

Please ensure you present yourself in a professional manner at all official functions. Attending in shorts, casual t-shirts, beachwear, or other inappropriate attire is not acceptable.

As representatives of the **Badminton World Federation (BWF)** and the umpiring community, it is important that we maintain a professional image at all official functions. Wearing the correct uniform reflects the professionalism, credibility, and standards expected of our role.

Thank you for your cooperation and professionalism.

SP Appointments

I would also like to congratulate the eight semi-professional umpires who have been appointed for the 2027-2029 cycle. This is a significant achievement and reflects the hard work, commitment, and dedication each of you has shown to the sport. Well done to all those selected.

For those who were not successful on this occasion, please do not be discouraged. There was a high level of interest and a very strong field of applicants for these appointments, which made the selection process particularly challenging. I encourage you to continue developing your skills, seeking opportunities to gain experience, and applying again in the next cycle.

The standard of applicants continues to improve, and your ongoing commitment to officiating is greatly appreciated. I wish all appointed umpires every success over the next cycle and look forward to seeing the continued growth of all our officials.



BWF Referee – Rohana de Silva (SRI) receiving training from BWF Technical Delegate Carmen Martinez (ESP).

PARA BADMINTON UPDATE

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS ON THE HORIZON

By Carmen Martínez, BWF Referee

Almost without realising it, the year is drawing to a close, and in just a few months, the road to our third Paralympic Games will begin.

2027 will bring a number of regulatory changes and promises to be a year full of excitement, with the qualification process for Los Angeles 2028 getting underway alongside the Continental Championships.

While we await the publication of these new updates, in this edition we will take the opportunity to discuss some minor changes introduced over the past few months, as well as a few developments to round off 2026.

New Scoring System

As no trials of the new scoring system have previously been conducted in Para badminton, and with the aim of allowing athletes to become progressively familiar with it, before the Road to LA begins, the final competitions of the year — Thailand Para Badminton International and Polytron Indonesia Para Badminton International — will be the first to implement the new scoring system.

This will help us fine-tune match scheduling for the first competitions of 2027, using the statistics collected, to improve the efficiency of competition scheduling.

The initial approach is to allocate 20–25-minute time slots for group-stage matches, followed by slots of up to 35–40 minutes during the knockout stage. We are all keen to try out the new system and see how well it works for our athletes.

Umpires appointed to these competitions will have the privilege of being the first to apply the new Laws of Badminton and the corresponding vocabulary.

Small Steps Forward in the Re-entry Process

Another small development introduced over the past few months has been the use of an online re-entry process.

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Although this procedure can only be used in competitions at certain levels where no classification takes place, it could save us a considerable amount of time and effort throughout the overall process.

Once the deadline for online re-entry has passed, a few hours before the Team Managers' Meeting, the online process will close, and players will appear in their respective events alongside their partners.

Some minor adjustments will, of course, still be necessary. There may be players who are still looking for partners, in which case we will need to arrange draws with other players in the same event. Alternatively, we may need to move players to other events to create suitable combinations or form pairs in other classes, etc.

In any case, the system can help the TD and MAs speed up the process of finding new partners, avoid having to put together most pairings manually, and simplify the overall procedure.

This is still a work in progress, and we hope it can be gradually implemented more widely.

Practical Technical Delegate tips for BWF Referees

Meanwhile, the training programme for BWF Referees on the Technical Delegate role moves forward, and we hope that those of you who have already completed the training have had a positive experience.

Having recently had the opportunity to deliver my first training session to a fellow colleague, I have gained a better understanding of the areas where further knowledge and guidance are needed.

In upcoming editions, we will therefore introduce a dedicated section featuring practical guidelines. Together with the *Para Badminton Draw Management* document and the *Competition Regulations*, these guidelines will provide a straightforward way to follow all the key steps before and throughout the tournaments.



BWF Referees – Rohana de Silva (SRI) and Sandie Zheng (CHN) scheduling a Para badminton tournament.

Reminders

Finally, I would like to highlight a few general points that we should keep in mind to ensure that we all follow a consistent approach.

- Scheduling: It remains important to establish clear time slots for athletes, bearing in mind that many of them compete in two or even three events. Having a reference time helps them manage their rest periods more effectively. This is particularly important during the group stage.
- Meeting point management: Carefully assess the available space at the meeting point and put the necessary measures in place to ensure a smooth flow of players. Possible solutions include setting up two meeting points or introducing time slots staggered by five or ten minutes to prevent overcrowding.
- Players with specific medical conditions affecting the serve: Check the special medical conditions of certain players that may affect how they serve. There have been instances of some players attempting to take advantage of this provision despite not being entitled to do so. If in doubt, we can consult one of the classifiers, if available, or contact an experienced colleague for advice.

Let's keep growing together!



Line Judges at the BWF World Championships 2026.

LINE JUDGE UPDATE

By Marisa Baird,
Badminton Scotland Line Judge Coordinator/BEC Line Judge Representative

Sachin Anand Kinnoo (MRI)

The tournament was scheduled in mid-August but my preparations started months before. As I was responsible for covering my own travel expenses, I had to look for the cheapest options through my travel agency. Visa applications were also at our cost, but the organising committee arranged these rapidly and at no cost. Not making any advertisement but having a credit card nowadays comes with loads of advantages. Having purchased my air ticket with it, I got complementary travel insurance and lounge access in the airports. This made my trip more hassle-free as I had to transit through Mumbai both to and from Delhi, and I was doing the trip alone. An eSIM is also essential.

I reached India on the 15th of August 2026, that is on their Independence Day, everywhere from the airports to the hotel was decorated with the “Tiranga”, the people working in the airport also wore orange, white and green, such that you could feel the patriotic heart of all Indians. Moreover, there was an outpost at the Delhi airport, welcoming all officials and players, presenting them with a token, and more importantly, guiding them to their respective hotel transfers.

Our hotel was quite far from the venue, about 45 minutes away with the anarchic Delhi traffic. However, the room was comfortable and the breakfast was okay, as the remaining meals were provided at the venue. All BWF Line Judges were supposed to be sharing their rooms with a fellow colleague, but unfortunately, my roommate did not turn up due to some issues on his side, and lucky for me, I got the room for myself.

The venue, the Indira Gandhi Arena (officially Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium), was immense. Not only in terms of surface area, but also in terms of investment, decorations, technology, staff, security, amongst others. There were security checks at all entries, for players, officials, public; no one was spared. As for the decoration, you would know from the setup itself that you were in India, with a replica of the India Gate for the entry of the players, bordered on each side by replicas of Indian elephants. The mascot, Peacko, embodied the peacock, rooted in Indian culture.

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The immensity of the arena ensured that the technical officials had a lounge and a seating area to enjoy both their meals and the matches, without ever being late on court to attend their duties. The setup also ensured that the umpires and line judges could get accustomed to each other, strengthening the spirit of camaraderie.

The food was mostly of Indian cuisine, including the desserts, which was a bit too spicy for some. Fortunately, the chefs were receptive to the feedback and did their best to provide some western dishes, as well as, less spicy food. Personally, being a Mauritian with Indian roots, I had no issues with the food, I blended right in, with some people mistaking me for a local.

The organisers had provided kits to all technical officials, for us to wear while performing our duties on court. These kits, though being our "work" uniforms, also represent a gift to us, reinforcing our commitment to the organisers, to the tournament. At the very first line judge briefing, I was pleasantly surprised to be awarded, along with two fellow colleagues, a certificate of our BWF Line Judge status in front of the big team of line judges, we were about 60 people. The organisers ushered empowering words on how BWF Line Judges are more committed to badminton as they bear much of the financial burden on their own.

Following the first briefing, we realised how big of a line judge family we were, coming from all over the world, and all over India, ensuring a great deal of variety among the faces and cultural backgrounds. I was amazed by the quality of the local line judges, as they were all national badminton umpires. Hence, we all shared experiences about high level badminton, having fruitful conversations.

The daily briefings showed how consistent and good we were, with a low level of IRS over-rulings, which infused confidence in the team. We kept on encouraging each other, on court through small hand movements and eye conversations, and off court through jokes and advice. And we needed that, as the first three days were the longest for us: breakfast at 6:30 am, bus leaving the hotel at 7:15 am, morning briefing at 8am, first matches starting at 9 am and last matches ending after 11 pm, implied that we were tired and short of adequate sleep. Piling on that was the sad fact that a couple of line judges fell ill on the first days, leading to less rest time in some of the line judge teams. Nevertheless, we relied on each other, and a kind coffee man, to keep us focused on court.

As the days went on, the level of the matches grew sharply. The Indian players were on home soil, with the local crowd making so much noise, some brought their dholaks (drums) to add to the folklore. More scrutiny came onto the line calls and the decisions of the line judges. I, particularly, felt the look of Antonsen on one of my calls, but his reaction halted at his gaze only, as he knew the technical official team was very capable. The swiftness and accuracy of our calls with the oversight of the umpire made most matches little to almost uneventful. No complaints of any "patriot" calls were heard. Moreover, the further down the stages we reached, the bigger the number of line judges was on court. And I have to admit that the seat of a line judge might be better than the umpire's to enjoy the match, as our responsibility reside only in the line call. Despite all the local support, no Indians reached the final stage in any category, but that did not discourage the crowd to come in numbers on the final day.

In between matches, when I had my rest time, I was able to move around the arena, in the area where all the stalls were. There were lots of fun games and goodies to be won, with many sales going on too on sportswear and badminton-related gear. It was nice to have some fun with the other TOs, while I was also doing some shopping, looking for souvenirs of the tournament to bring back home and share with my close ones.

Overall, the tournament was an amazing experience, a good learning step for me, an African technical official; it was my first time experiencing IRS in real life. I have made so many friends, whom I hope to see in future tournaments. The only downside was the schedule was so hectic that I could not properly visit Delhi, since it was my first time in India. Thanks to some of newly made friends, on the night after the finals, I got to see from far the real India Gate and got to experience the rickshaw and non-Indian cuisine in a local restaurant close to our hotel, which was delicious. The trip back home was a long and tiring one, though I had some company on the way back with friends on the plane.

A fortnight after the tournament had ended, I was invited to share my experience and all that I have learned from my trip, with all the BWF line judges in Africa, through a virtual meeting organised by our continental federation, the BCA. The meeting also served as a refresher course about line judging, the prospects, sharing of experiences, and any questions by our colleagues across the continent.

Suhas Ravindra Shikhare (AUS)

It was an honour and privilege to be appointed as a BWF Line Judge for this tournament in India. Being selected to officiate at an international event was a rewarding experience that provided valuable learning opportunities, strengthened friendships with officials from around the world, and reinforced my passion for badminton officiating.

Preparing for the trip required careful planning of leave at work to ensure everything was in place before departure. Since I had a valid visa for India, I only had to check my passport validity, I also familiarised myself with the tournament schedule, local weather, and BWF requirements. Packing BWF uniforms well in advance helped make the journey stress-free.

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The journey to India was smooth and well organised. Airport procedures and immigration were straightforward, and I arrived excited to begin the tournament. The organising committee provided clear instructions for airport transfers, making the transition from the airport to the hotel very convenient. It was also enjoyable meeting fellow officials during the journey and sharing the excitement of representing our respective Member Associations.

The hotel and tournament venue was excellent, with high-quality playing courts and facilities that supported the smooth running of the event. The organisers and volunteers were welcoming, professional, and always willing to assist officials whenever required. The hospitality throughout the tournament was outstanding, ensuring that officials were well looked after. I particularly enjoyed experiencing Indian cuisine, which offered a wonderful variety of flavours while also providing familiar food options when needed.

The tournament featured an exceptional standard of badminton, with many exciting and closely contested matches. It was inspiring to witness the skill, determination and sportsmanship displayed by the athletes throughout the competition. The enthusiastic spectators also created a fantastic atmosphere, bringing tremendous energy and passion to every match.

One of the standout moments of the BWF World Championships 2026 was the Mixed Doubles final between Feng Yan Zhe/Huang Dongping of China and Thom Gicquel/ Delphine Delrue of France. The match was one of the most thrilling and high-profile encounters of the Championships. Gicquel and Delrue made history by becoming the first French and European pair in 15 years to reach the World Championship Mixed Doubles final. The French pair challenged the Chinese top seeds throughout a tense and high-intensity three-game battle, pushing them to the absolute limit before the decider to claim the gold medal.

The atmosphere surrounding the match was incredible, and it was a privilege to be part of such a significant occasion in the Championships. Working alongside experienced BWF Officials and fellow line judges also provided valuable opportunities to learn, exchange experiences and further develop my officiating skills. The event reinforced the importance of concentration, consistency and teamwork, while giving me invaluable experience officiating at the highest level of international badminton.





BWF Line Judges
Back row: Jacqueline Myers (USA), Fernando Maduranga (SRI), Suhas Shikhare (AUS), Kamil Kyzlik (CZE), Tanapol Noymak (THA)
Front row: Seo Oklean (KOR), Rachel Bru (FRA), Lillian Kobben (NED), Sachin Kinnoo (MRI).

Overall, I was pleased with my performance during the event. I was able to maintain concentration and make clear and timely calls while dealing with the speed and intensity of international-level badminton.

One of my key learnings was the importance of maintaining the same level of concentration from the first point to the final rally, regardless of the score or importance of the match. I also learned the value of trusting my initial observation and making a confident decision without being influenced by the reactions of players, coaches or spectators.

Working at this level also helped me better understand the importance of positioning, body language, communication and teamwork within the line judging team. I identified that I can continue to improve my consistency and concentration during long matches and in high-pressure situations.

This appointment has given me greater confidence as a BWF Line Judge and provided valuable experience that I can take back to Australia and share with other officials. I look forward to continuing to develop my skills and contributing to future BWF and international events.

On returning home, I plan to share my experiences with fellow officials through our local umpire and line judge meetings and training sessions. I hope to encourage more officials to pursue officiating opportunities by discussing the valuable lessons I learned, the importance of teamwork, professionalism, and the high standards expected at BWF events. Sharing practical experiences from international tournaments helps strengthen the development of officials within our badminton community.



Shuttle change with Service Judge – BWF World Championships 2026.

SERVICE LAWS AND THEIR ENFORCEMENT

By Torsten Berg (DEN)

Second only to the line calls, Service Laws and their enforcement is probably the issue which has given rise to most discussions and conflicts on and behind badminton courts worldwide during badminton's 150+ years history.

The Laws were changed and made more specific several times over the years, and - as with line calls - some technology was introduced that has more or less solved the problem on the top level, but as the vast majority of badminton is played without the service judge's tool - or even without technical officials involved at all - the controversial issue has not gone completely away. Here we shall review the background and development throughout the history of badminton and try to peep into the future.

In the original Laws, there was no particular clause on the service like Law 9 today. Under the heading 'Faults', the first one named was the overhand service, which was, in brackets, defined as 'if the shuttle at the instant of being struck be higher than the server's waist'. The philosophy, that still in some ways holds good today, was that the service should be a defensive shot to get the rally going. However, already a 100 years ago or more, the badminton players were clever enough to test the limits of the Laws to obtain a tactical advantage at the outset of the rally.

As an attempt to clarify and to contravene aggressive serving, a sentence was added in the 1950s: 'if, in serving, the shuttle at the instant of being struck, be higher than the player's waist, or, if any part of the head of the racket, at the instant of striking the shuttle, be higher than any part of the server's hand holding the racket'.

In the early 1980s, the famous - or, for the receiver, infamous - spin service, where the shuttle was struck on the feathers making it spin, was introduced by the Malaysian top men's doubles, the brothers Razif and Jalani Sidek. This specialty was banned by BWF in 1982, when a paragraph was added, saying that it is a fault if in serving, 'the initial point of contact with the shuttle is not on the base of the shuttle. The Sidek brothers, with lawful serving, nevertheless continued successfully and won among many other victories, a bronze medal at the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games and were a key element of the Malaysian victory in the Thomas Cup the same year.

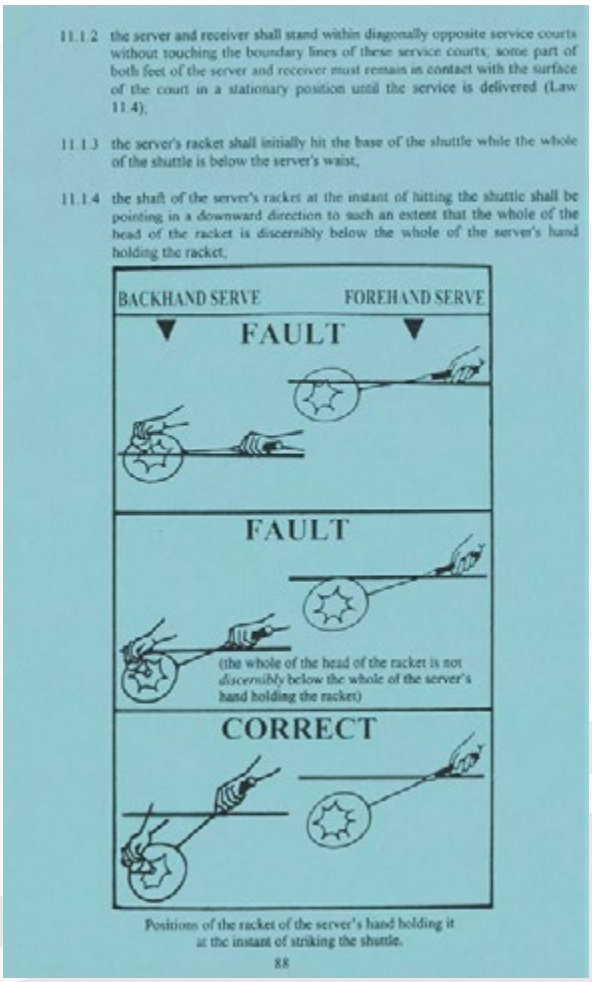
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Moreover, further wording was added to the regulation defining the overhead service fault, saying that 'at the instant of the shuttle being struck, the shaft of the racket be not pointing in a downward direction to such an extent that the whole of the head of the racket is discernibly below the whole of the server's hand holding the racket'.

Well, I confess to being part of this decade-long and not very successful attempt to write a clear regulation that might solve the issue, however, to little avail. Quoting Shakespeare and my countryman Hamlet: "Words, words, words!"

We made a bold attempt, turned the Law around and made it positive, so that the new Law 11.1 (now Law 9.1) started: 'In a correct service ... and added a Law 11.1.6:.. the flight shall be upwards from the server's racket to pass over the net so that, if not intercepted, it falls in the receiver's court. We also added instructive drawings by Council's own Cedric Baxter of Australia:



Finally, we tried to hit the key problem: to define the waist and put the wording: The waist shall be considered to be an imaginary line round the body level with the lowest part of the player's bottom rib.

Over the years, training of service judges helped somewhat to remedy the problem in the international game, but the thorny issue prevailed because the backhand service and the ever increasing pace of the men's and mixed doubles service situations put more and more pressure on the service judges.

In 2018, after experiments, BWF came up with a radical proposal and later decision to change Law 9 and replace all reference to the waist by a requirement that the service is delivered below 1.15 metres. The new Law 9.1.6 reads: In a correct service the whole shuttle shall be below 1.15 metres from the surface of the court at the instant of being hit by the server's racket.

The Law was accompanied by the introduction of an optical tool that defines a level of 1.15 metres and thus helps the service judge to give a correct call. This tool has since been further developed and seems generally to have helped to solve the problem on the top international level.

In 2023, innovative players had developed a spin service version 2.0, spinning the shuttle with the fingers just before the impact of the racket, hence making a return very delicate, as was the case with the Sidek service 40 years earlier. This time the Council reacted quickly, first by a provisional, experimental Law and then permanently adding Law 9.1.5 : In a correct service the server shall release the shuttle without adding spin, and the server's racket shall initially hit the base of the shuttle.



BWF Umpire Satiawan Mahadoo (MRI) at the Brazil Para Badminton International 2026.

What is next? If one looks at other sports, technological progress may make automatic service judging using AI a possibility in a not-too-distant future. Top level matches televised worldwide may be played with automatic service calling, without service judges at all. Likely, such a system may be expensive, even if there will be less need for skilled manpower. Surely, we have not seen the last development!

While enjoying the progress and the solutions emerging at the top level, we shall remember that - now and forever - the large majority of even the competitive national and international game is played without technology. There will always be a need for service judges - and there will always be a need for fair play in our own matches in the hall down the street.

CALL FOR SUPPORT

LET'S WRITE THE HISTORY OF BWF TECHNICAL OFFICIALS TOGETHER

By Bert Vanhorenbeeck – BWF Umpire

A reminder that Bert is co-ordinating a historical record of officials that served as Technical Officials at the highest level tournaments.

Your Help Is Essential

We're calling on all current BWF referees and umpires: help us rebuild our collective history. Think of your own journey, your former colleagues, and reach out to retired officials across all continents — no matter the era. Every name, every memory, every document helps.

How You Can Contribute

Please provide the available information preferably to your ***Continental Representative***, even if some details are incomplete:

- Full name and nationality of the official
- Year of accreditation/certification and the year they retired (ie. the last year the officiated as a IBF/ BWF official)
- Championships they officiated (ideally with dates)
- Roles held during each tournament (umpire or referee)
- Finals officiated (which final, tournament, umpire or service judge)
- Optional: photos, anecdotes, or memories

We will verify, organise and structure the information into a timeline that will eventually be made available to the BWF officiating community and wider badminton family.

Continental Representatives

Please contact Bert and he will assist you with co-ordinating this effort.



Current BWF Umpire Assessors Gilles Cavert (FRA) and David Turner (AUS) in action as Umpires at the Singapore Open 2007.

Contact & Contributions

Please send contributions to:

BWF: Lynne Nixey, l.nixey@bwf.sport
Africa: Diraj Gooneadry, dev120369@gmail.com
Asia: Yau Lin Na, lnyau@hotmail.com
Europe: Bert Vanhorenbeeck, bert.vanhorenbeeck@skynet.be
Oceania: Peter Cocker, petercwa@iinet.net.au
PanAm: TBC

CONGRATULATIONS!

To the following BWF Referees and Umpires who have been appointed as Semi-Professionals for the 2027 – 2029 cycle.

BWF REFEREES

Artur Zaluzhnoi (EST)
Carsten Koch (GER)
Chris Lawrence (USA)
Eric Lissillour (FRA)
Girish Natu (IND)
Jozef Kuprivec (SLO)
Nicos Vladimirou (CYP)
Pencho Stoynov (BUL)

BWF UMPIRES

Abdul Latif Jaohari (INA)
Andrea Chiappini (ITA)
Iris Metspalu (EST)
Ivo Kassel (SUI)
Jacob Syndberg (DEN)
Sunyoung Kang (KOR)
Sudip Barve (IND)
Trish Gubb (NZL)

To the following Umpires who were successful in their BWF assessment at the DAIHATSU Japan Open 2026 – welcome to the team.

Chrysanthi Larou (GRE)
Renna Unt (SUI)
Helen Purnama Sari (INA)
Afiq Danial Bin Zuraidi (MAS)
Kevin Yung (TTO)
Sheehan Lim (AUS)

2026 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS AND APPRAISALS

As of October 2026 – calendar subject to change

Date	Meetings, Workshops and Appraisals	Location	Country	Tournament
03 Nov – 08 Nov	Umpire Appraisals	Yeosu City	KOR	YEOSU VICTOR Korea Open 2026
17 Nov – 22 Nov	Referee Appraisals	Hong Kong	HKG	LI-NING Hong Kong Open 2026
17 Nov – 22 Nov	Umpire Appraisals	Hong Kong	HKG	LI-NING Hong Kong Open 2026
09 Dec – 13 Dec	Umpire Appraisals	Hangzhou	CHN	HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2026