

BWF TECHNICAL OFFICIALS' RESOURCES
**UMPIRES' GUIDE TO
INCLUSIVE EVENTS**

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UMPIRES' GUIDE TO INCLUSIVE EVENTS

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01. INCLUSIVITY IN BADMINTON

The BWF understands the importance of making our educational resources inclusive, meaning that they apply to ALL those who practice our sport, as well as those who support them. The integration of Para badminton into the BWF gave rise to our philosophy of “One Sport, One Team”, and our practice is aimed at ensuring that the same opportunities and support systems are available from “grassroots to podium” for not only able-bodied enthusiasts, but also those with physical impairments and those with intellectual disabilities. This includes our resources for players, coaches, technical officials, and others, and is reflected not only in our inclusion of Para badminton, but also in our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Global Development Strategy Plan with Special Olympics International.

When we refer to “inclusive badminton”, we are talking about making the sport accessible to all players, which encompasses:

- Para badminton (for players with physical disabilities)
- Badminton for players with intellectual disabilities
- Badminton for the deaf

As we also emphasise in our grassroots (Shuttle Time) and coaching resources, inclusive badminton is, first and foremost, still badminton. The most important part of inclusive badminton is remembering that you are dealing with *players*, some of whom happen to have different challenges. This means that everything that you already know and do in your practice (as a teacher, as a coach, as an umpire, as a referee, as a person) still applies. Throughout our programmes, the aim is that:

- Shuttle Time teachers use their group management skills, their experience in education, and their knowledge of badminton to ensure that ALL pupils have a positive experience with badminton.
- Coaches use their interpersonal skills, their ability to plan and to assess progress, and their knowledge of badminton to help ALL players advance.
- Technical officials use their solid people skills, their expertise in court management, and their knowledge of the regulations to ensure that ALL players are guaranteed conditions that allow them to focus on the competition at hand.



This supplement to the Umpires’ Manuals builds on the sound principles and practices covered throughout the manuals. As such, those ideas will not be repeated here, but rather umpires are expected to apply them as part of their officiating, no matter who the players are. The idea of this section is simply to highlight the additional information that umpires need to know in order to effectively officiate matches with players who happen to have disabilities. Naturally, umpires should always employ clear communication, effective court management, and a solid understanding of applicable regulations, in any match they are officiating. This is exactly what we mean by “inclusive”.

The guide will be divided into two main parts, each focusing on the additional information that umpires need in order to officiate matches for:

- Para badminton players (from grassroots to Paralympic Games)
- Players with intellectual disabilities (from grassroots to Special Olympics)

Finally, there is also a mention of some of the best practices to ensure optimum conditions for deaf players, who follow standard BWF regulations. These practices are mainly aimed at encouraging smooth communication between umpires and players, whether or not these happen at competitions specifically for the deaf (up to and including Deaflympics).

Remember, an umpire's main role is to ensure that matches run fairly and smoothly for the players, the spectators, and the team of technical officials, and these pages are simply aimed at examining the details needed to do that with a wider circle of players.

02. PARA BADMINTON

With the inclusion of Para badminton in the Paralympic sport programme, beginning with the 2020 Paralympic Games, there is a more and more interest in Para badminton tournaments. This means that in addition to the Para Badminton World Championships, held every two years, there are numerous international tournaments, as players seek to gain greater experience and ranking points towards Paralympic qualification. This, in turn, raises the profile of the various continental championships, as well as national and local tournaments that form part of the competition pathway.

In the interest of promoting fair and just competition, where success is determined by athletes' abilities rather than their disabilities, Para badminton is broken down into six sport classes, as briefly outlined below. Note that the higher the number of the sport class, the less disabled the athlete.

- **Wheelchair 1 (WH 1)** – athletes who tend to have more limited core function and use wheelchairs with higher backs
- **Wheelchair 2 (WH 2)** – athletes with greater core function and trunk mobility, who tend to use wheelchairs with lower backs
- **Standing Lower 3 (SL 3)** – athletes with impairments in their lower limbs (including, but not limited to, those with above-knee amputations)
- **Standing Lower 4 (SL 4)** – athletes with impairments in their lower limbs (lesser than those in SL 3, including those with below-knee amputations)
- **Standing Upper (SU 5)** – athletes with impairments in their upper limbs
- **Short Stature (SH 6)** – athletes with short stature due to a genetic condition known as "dwarfism"



For more information on the sport classes or on Para badminton in general, please click [here](#).

Athletes must be classified prior to competing internationally, and more information on this process can be found [here](#).

The specific rules and regulations applicable to the different sport classes (many of which will be mentioned in this section) can be found in the Laws of Badminton. The most notable feature, perhaps, is that the court size sometimes varies according to the sport class.

Note: It is expected that umpires will review the latest versions of the Laws of Badminton and the Instructions to Technical Officials (ITTO), available on the Statutes page of the BWF website, prior to any tournament at which they officiate, to ensure that they are up to date on any changes. Naturally, umpires who will officiate at Para badminton tournaments will need to do the same, paying particular attention to the points related to Para badminton. It is worth mentioning that a Para badminton version of the ITTO will be developed in 2022.



OVERVIEW OF COURT INFORMATION FOR SPECIFIC CLASSES

Umpires should always check the most updated version of the Laws of Badminton, but the idea here is to offer a handy reference to the different court sizes.

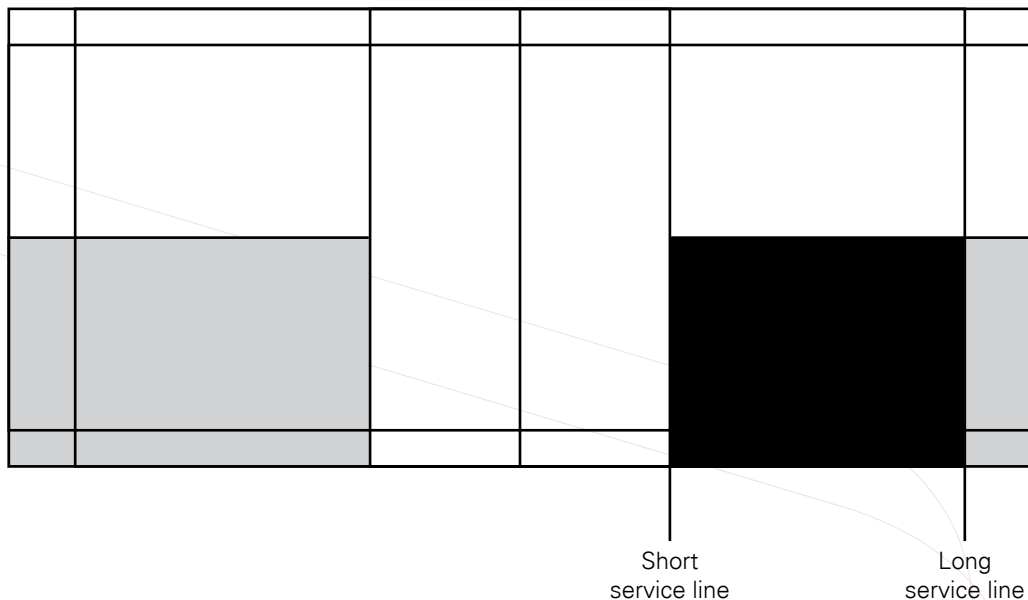
In addition to the court dimensions illustrated below, it is important to keep in mind that wheelchair matches should be played on a hard surface (such as a wooden floor), to avoid the wheelchairs sinking into court mats.

The diagrams below are taken from the Laws of Badminton and correspond to:

- Wheelchair singles (DIAGRAM D)
- Wheelchair doubles (DIAGRAM E)
- Standing Lower 3 singles (DIAGRAM F)

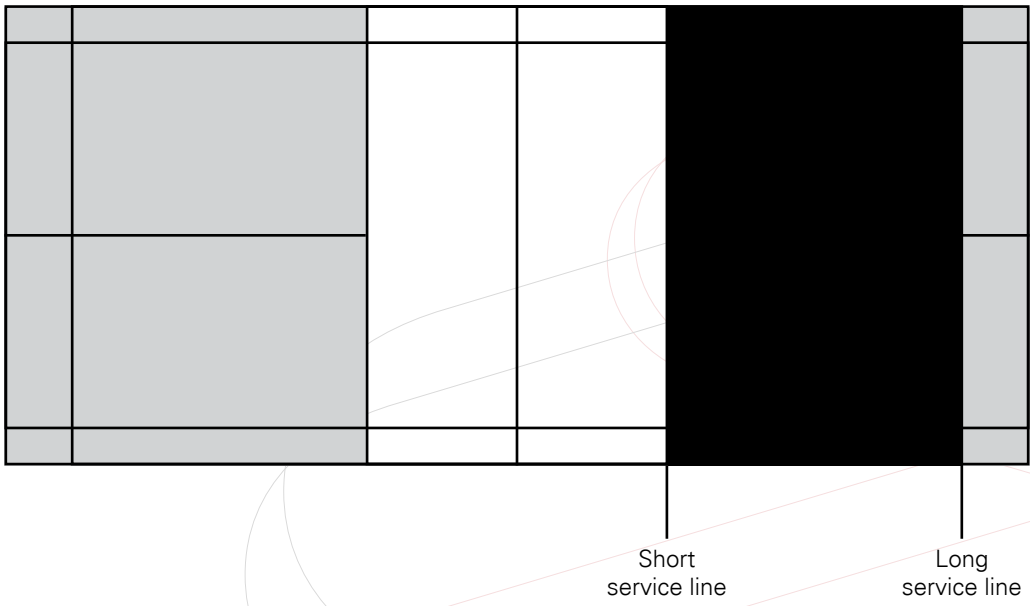
Note: In all diagrams that follow = court area for play and = service area

DIAGRAM D



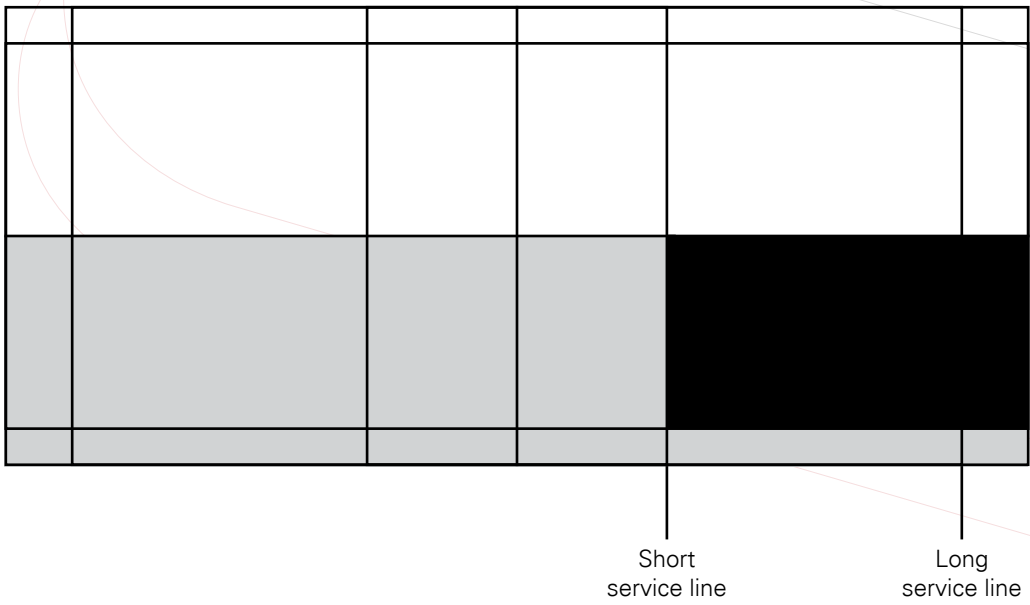
Court and service court for Para badminton wheelchair Classes singles.

DIAGRAM E



Court and service court for doubles Para badminton wheelchair Classes doubles.

DIAGRAM F



Court and service court for Para badminton singles standing Classes playing half-court.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

As the Level 1 Umpires' Manual provides a step-by-step examination of what umpires should do before, during and after the match, the idea here is to run through a similar sequence, highlighting only the additional information that umpires may need to apply, depending on the sport class in question. This outline is meant as a handy reference and should be used:

- as part of the general review of documents and procedures that umpires normally undertake prior to arriving at any tournament at which they will officiate, and
- as a quick review at the beginning of each day or session of the tournament, to keep the details fresh in their minds.

BEFORE THE MATCH – OFF-COURT

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
<p>When you are assigned a match, check which sport class it is. Also, check if any of the players has been classified with additional comments (such as, "has to play with the right hand"), and if so, and inform the service judge.</p>	<p>Do a quick mental check of any key details relevant to the class. Any additional limitations for specific players should also have been mentioned during the umpire briefing.</p>
<p>At the meeting point, inform your team of technical officials of the sport class, as well as whether the match is singles or doubles.</p>	<p>Remind them of any of the key details that may affect their roles and answer any questions they might have.</p>
<p>Check the players' equipment:</p> <p>WH 1 & WH 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • players' feet must be fixed to the footrest • the seat of the wheelchair must be horizontal or angled backwards (not forwards) – see diagram in right column <p>SL 3 & SL 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a crutch may be used <p>SU 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no upper-body prosthetics are allowed in badminton (in any sport class) 	<p>See the "Laws of Badminton, Additional Equipment for Para Badminton" for more detail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • players may also be strapped to the chair at the thighs, at the waist, or both <div data-bbox="901 1310 1332 1456" style="text-align: center;"> <p>The diagram shows three side-view icons of a person in a wheelchair. The first icon has a horizontal seat and is labeled 'Horizontal = correct'. The second icon has a seat angled backwards and is labeled 'Backwards = correct'. The third icon has a seat angled forwards and is labeled 'Forwards = not allowed'.</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the crutch shall not exceed the player's natural measurement from the armpit to the ground • the non-racket arm may be strapped to the body, if desired
<p>Observe the players during your interaction and try to get a sense of their pace for marching on. It is important to be in sync with the players' pace.</p>	<p>The service judge should alert the umpire if it is necessary to slow down. At no point should the players feel pressured to keep up the pace.</p>



BEFORE THE MATCH – ON-COURT

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
<p>When you do your court check, keep in mind that for SL 3 and SL 4 matches, there should be extra chairs at the side of the court for players to use when they need to dry/ adjust their prostheses. Also, for wheelchair matches, the bottom of the net should not be fixed to the posts. This is to enable the players to pass under the net when they change ends.</p>	<p>Chairs should be located next to the players' boxes, near the umpire's chair. The service judge can assist in checking the net, in the case of wheelchair matches.</p>
<p>When carrying out the coin toss, it is important to ensure that the players can clearly see the result. Pay particular attention to this in WH and SH matches.</p>	<p>You may need to bend forward a little so that players can see the result of the toss. This will also allow them to clearly communicate their choices to you.</p>
<p>Observe the players and their movements (including any practice serves) as they warm up.</p>	<p>Get familiar with their style, just as you would with able-bodied players.</p>



AT THE START OF THE MATCH

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
Make the announcement without mentioning the sport class.	

DURING THE MATCH

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
Keep in mind the court dimensions in accordance with the sport class.	This is especially important for WH 1, WH 2, and SL 3 classes.
A wheelchair or crutch is considered part of the player's person.	
In a wheelchair match, it is a fault if, during play, any of the following occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the player's feet are not fixed to the footrest. at the moment the shuttle is hit, no part of the player's trunk is in contact with the seat of the wheelchair. the player touches the floor with any part of the feet. 	You should check the players' feet from time to time to make sure the strapping to the footrest has not come undone. It can be difficult, from the umpire's chair, to see if the player's trunk is in contact with the seat, but a fault must be called as soon as it becomes clear.
If a player falls over (even a wheelchair player), it is neither a fault nor a let.	
If a wheelchair player tips over or falls out of the wheelchair, or if a player is struggling to get up, allow the coach or another person to come onto court immediately to help the player up.	No referee is required for this. You can allow a quick towel-down for both sides, and you should check if the court needs to be mopped, but then it is important to concentrate on continuing the match after the incident.
Prosthesis wearers may also fall over. They can usually get up on their own. The player may then need to remove the prosthesis and put it back on.	This is usually done quickly (in less than two minutes). While you should be alert for any obvious abuse, there is generally no need to press the player for time. You may allow a quick towel-down, depending on the situation, and again, you should be aware that the court may need to be mopped.
If a player loses a crutch or prosthesis (or parts of it), this is not a reason to call a "let". Depending on the situation, you may either allow the rally to continue or decide to call a fault.	
Deliberate delays are rare, but you must always keep an eye out for them, just as you would with any other match.	Endurance and athleticism should always be maintained, and you will need to use your feel for the game, always keeping an eye on both sides.

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
<p>In wheelchair matches, the game may be suspended on the referee's instructions (in the sense of special circumstances) while a wheelchair is being repaired.</p>	<p>Make the appropriate announcement, along with the notes of "R" and "S" on the scoresheet, and record the time that play is suspended, just as you would for any other suspension.</p>
<p>Injuries may happen (especially to the hands of wheelchair players). As with any other match, bleeding abrasions must be treated immediately. As per standard BWF procedure, always call the referee onto court first. The referee has the sole decision as to whether the doctor can treat the injury and whether the coach is allowed on court.</p>	<p>During this time, the opponent may stand with the coach, or sit in the coach's chair, but must not leave the court area.</p>
<p>The 60-second interval must be observed during games. Be attentive and keep an eye on both sides, as you would in any other match. Do not lose sight of the shuttle during the interval.</p>	<p>The shuttle should not be kept in a player's hand, nor in a player's equipment box. Wheelchair players may be used to keeping the shuttle in their lap, but they should be asked to leave the shuttle on court, as other players do.</p>
<p>In wheelchair matches, players may be allowed to leave the court for one additional interval during a match in order to catheterise. The player shall be accompanied by a BWF-appointed technical official. There is no need to rush the player, but you must note the duration of the break on the scoresheet.</p>	<p>This is a normal procedure, so you simply remain seated in a relaxed manner. You may want to ask the opponent if he or she doesn't want to take the opportunity to do so as well. (Note "R" and "S" on the scoresheet, as well as the duration.)</p>
<p>Players who use prostheses (SL 3 and SL 4) may need to dry the sweat accumulated in the prosthesis and readjust it.</p>	<p>This is a generally quick but necessary process, so it is important not to assume that players are trying to delay the game. You should convey calm, always observing both sides. (An example of intent to delay the game would be if a player does not immediately start the procedure, but instead listens to instructions from his/her coach.)</p>



Photo credit: Alan Spink



AT THE END OF EACH GAME

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
<p>Wheelchair players typically need a bit more time to change ends, especially in doubles.</p>	<p>In the event of a third game, you should use sound judgment and a feel for the game, as players will also need to change ends during the interval.</p>

AFTER THE MATCH

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
<p>As in any other match, players should engage in the specified formalities with the umpire and the service judge. This may mean a handshake or other show of mutual respect.</p>	<p>In the case of a handshake with SU 5 players, try to anticipate which hand a player will want to shake.</p>

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
<p>For WH 1, WH 2 and SH 6 matches, the referee may instruct umpires to vary the protocol as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announce "Game" • Come down from the chair • Shake the players' hands (or use alternative gesture, as applicable) • Announce the final score while standing on the floor 	<p>Follow any instructions given by the referee at the initial umpire briefing, or otherwise the standard procedures.</p>
<p>At Para badminton tournaments, there have traditionally been quite a number of handshakes. Coaches will often come onto court to shake hands, and players will often shake the hands of all the technical officials, including the line judges.</p>	<p>While this is not a problem, umpires should be mindful of the time, as well as of the other courts, and should ensure that the march-off protocol is followed (for example, coaches should follow at the end). The service judge should assist as needed.</p>
<p>Para badminton players often like to have photos with their opponents after the match, and umpires and service judges may be asked to be part of the group photos.</p>	<p>This is fine, but it is advisable for this to happen after marching off to avoid holding up other matches. Also, umpires should balance this courtesy to the players with the need to turn in the scoresheet, so as not to hold up match control.</p>
<p>In Para badminton, players and coaches have historically been fairly relaxed in their interaction with technical officials, so it is sometimes necessary to exercise restraint and keep the necessary distance.</p>	<p>If it has not been specified during the umpire briefing, check with the referee to see if on-court photos before/after the match should be allowed or not.</p>



Photo credit: Badminton Oceania

SERVICE JUDGING INSTRUCTIONS

The same Laws of Badminton apply to Para badminton matches, but there are a few things that umpires will want to keep in mind, as mentioned below.

- A) For sport classes playing a “half court”, the server and receiver shall serve from and receive in their respective service courts.
- B) For wheelchair players:
- From the start of the service, and until the service is delivered, the wheels of the server’s and receiver’s chairs must be stationary, except for the natural counter-movement of the server’s chair
 - The whole shuttle shall be below the server’s armpit at the instant of being hit by the server’s racket.



For visual examples of wheelchair service, see [Video Clip CE1M13V3](#).

- C) In the case of SU 5 players, while they are still subject to the same service laws, their styles of service may differ. Some typical variations include the following:
- players who are missing part of their non-racket arm may use the stump to drop or toss the shuttle;
 - players with an underdeveloped non-racket arm may still use their hand to drop the shuttle;
 - players may hold both the shuttle and racket in the racket hand, dropping the shuttle to hit it.

This list is not exhaustive, and the idea is simply to give umpires an idea of what kind of serves they might see with SU 5 players. Again, as long as their serves do not violate any of the Laws of Badminton, there are no restrictions.



03. SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Badminton has been part of Special Olympics since 1995, and today there are thousands of Special Olympics athletes competing in badminton. There are competitions that range from local community or schools competitions on up to Special Olympics World Games. For more detailed information on Special Olympics, please visit their [website](#).

Special Olympics has different mechanisms to ensure fair and enjoyable competition for all athletes. This means there are different types of official events, including:

- Individual Skills Competition (*such as Target Serve, Return Volley, Return Serve*)
- Singles
- Doubles
- Unified Sports® Doubles (*where each doubles pair consists of one Special Olympics athlete and one partner*)

Furthermore, athletes in each event are grouped by age, gender and ability, in order to give everyone a reasonable chance to win. This process is called “divisioning” and it is carried out by a team of experts who have both an understanding of intellectual disability and technical knowledge of badminton. For more information on divisioning, please click [here](#).

APPLICABLE RULES AND REGULATIONS

There are Official Special Olympics [Sports Rules for Badminton](#), which are based on the BWF's Laws of Badminton, but with a few key differences. Where there are differences, the Special Olympics rules shall apply.

Umpires who will officiate at Special Olympics competitions should review the most updated version of the Special Olympics rules in detail, just as they would prior to any other competition. However, some of the most noteworthy differences are pointed out below.

- **Wheelchair service:** See the Special Olympics rules for the modifications that are permitted, including an overhead serve.
- **Individual skills competitions:** See the Special Olympics rules regarding the procedures and scoring for the individual skills competitions to be included in the particular tournament.
- **Delegation names:** Special Olympics delegation names do not always correspond to country names. The Special Olympics delegation names should be used for match announcements and results.

GENERAL GUIDELINES / INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is an especially important part of making Special Olympics matches a positive experience for all those involved. First and foremost, this means approaching the athletes in a respectful, calm, friendly and courteous manner, just as you would for any other match. Special Olympics athletes do not want to be treated like children, so it is important to use an age-appropriate style of interaction. Perhaps one notable difference is that it is acceptable, and even advisable, to involve the coaches when communicating with the players. Players are generally most comfortable when their coaches are around and involved.

Following are some tips that may be useful in communicating with Special Olympics athletes:

- **Be patient and understanding:** Special Olympics athletes often need extra time to process information and understand instructions. It is important to speak slowly and clearly in simplified language and to give them time to process one bit of information before moving on to the next.

- **Try to understand the players' strengths and weaknesses:** Some will have hearing difficulties and will rely on reading lips, so it is important for the umpire and service judge to subtly make this as easy for the athlete as possible. Some of the athletes will have physical impairments as well. Observe the athletes to see what they can and can't do, and ask their coaches as necessary.
- **Build trust with the athletes:** This will make the match and the interaction in general much more enjoyable for everyone. Eye contact, your facial expressions, and your body language will go a long way towards making athletes feel comfortable.
- **Involve the interpreter and/or coach:** For athletes who use sign language, this will help you communicate more effectively and put them at ease.
- **Use hand gestures when appropriate:** In addition to the standard BWF vocabulary, the umpire and service judge can use accepted hand gestures to help athletes know when to start play, change courts, pass the shuttle, etc.

The spirit of inclusive communication is to encourage umpires and service judges to do everything they can, within the limits of the Laws of Badminton, to help Special Olympics athletes perform their best. For more tips on working with people with intellectual disabilities, please click [here](#).



Photo credit: James Varghese

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

As mentioned above in the Para badminton section, the Level 1 Umpires' Manual provides a step-by-step examination of what umpires should do before, during and after the match. Once again, the idea here is to run through a similar sequence, highlighting only the additional (or alternative) information that umpires may need to apply in the case of Special Olympics competitions.

The information here will serve as a handy reference for umpires prior to arriving at the tournament, as well as for a quick review at the beginning of each day or session of the tournament.

BEFORE THE MATCH – OFF-COURT

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
Make sure to identify the players beforehand and learn how to pronounce their names correctly.	While this is standard practice, it is important to note that the coaches can be of great help here.

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
Check player clothing for compliance – Special Olympics regulations do not allow national flags, commercial markings, or signs with commercial names (other than that of the manufacturer) on any clothing worn during play and ceremonies.	Refer to instructions from the referee during the initial umpire briefing. In the case of any non-conformity in terms of clothing, be sure to inform the coach first.
Since the coaches also march together with the technical officials and players, it is better to communicate any instructions to the coaches while at the assembly point.	Inform the coaches as to the procedures for marching on and off, the protocol during the toss, and what the policy is on photos before or after the match.
Observe the players during your first interaction and try to judge the pace of their walk. While marching on, it is important to be in sync with the athletes' pace.	The service judge should alert the umpire if it is necessary to slow down in order to ensure harmony. At no point should the players feel pressured to keep up the pace or to slow down.

BEFORE THE MATCH – ON-COURT

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
It is advisable to allow the coaches to be with the players during the toss.	This will help the players exercise their choices wisely and without inhibition.
Players and coaches often like to have photos with their opponents before or after the match, and the umpire and service judge may be asked to be part of the group photos.	Refer to instructions from the referee on this.



Photo credit: James Varghese

AT THE START OF THE MATCH

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
For match announcements, the Special Olympics regulations suggest that the full Special Olympics delegation names are to be used instead of country names.	Refer to instructions from the referee during the initial umpires briefing. The scoresheets will be printed with the correct Special Olympics delegation names for reference.
Make sure the coaches are present.	Special Olympics competition cannot start without the coaches.

DURING THE MATCH

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
It is also essential to look out for anything that affects the players' safety and well-being during the game and to take any necessary action.	For example, an untied shoelace can pose a danger to the player.
The umpire and service judge should be aware of the condition of the shuttle and proactively offer to change it as needed.	Be aware that the players may be unaware or feel shy to ask for shuttle changes.
There are rules around "Meaningful Involvement", which means that during Unified Doubles, the Unified Partner must support the Special Olympics athlete meaningfully to perform his or her best, without any dominance.	Court officials do not monitor or determine meaningful involvement: there are dedicated observers assigned to this role. However, the umpire and service judge should be aware that they may be asked to give their input, so they should keep an eye out for any potential violations. Additionally, umpires should keep close track of which member of the pair should be serving, to ensure service court errors do not result in an unfair advantage.
World and Regional Games will have a Unified Sports Evaluation Committee (USEC). If there is a violation of meaningful involvement during a Unified Doubles match, a USEC member will alert the technical delegate and the referee. They shall in turn inform the umpire about the necessary procedure.	The referee may instruct the umpire to stop the match in progress to issue the warning. The warnings to the team follow the same progression as in able-bodied badminton, from a verbal warning on up to disqualification. Umpires should follow the procedure as instructed by the referee, marking the scoresheet as appropriate.
It is important to remain alert and aware of what is happening on your court. This will help you anticipate any potential problems and take action before things get out of hand.	For example, a player who loses several points in a row may get upset and refuse to play. Remaining calm and getting the coach to help handle the situation will ensure the best possible outcome.
If you need any assistance from the referee, the technical delegate, or the interpreter/coach, you can raise your right hand, and the referee team will come on court.	

AFTER THE MATCH

ADDITIONAL / ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES	FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
Do not forget to congratulate and encourage both sides upon completion of the match.	It is customary for the coaches to join the greeting as well. The coach(es) from the losing side may congratulate the winning side, sometimes including the other coach(es) as well. This is acceptable in the spirit of the sport.
Some players go beyond handshakes to hugs, which is acceptable if both sides are comfortable.	The service judge should use his/her position on the ground to ensure that things do not get out of control.
Special Olympics athletes traditionally greet all the technical official after the match.	They will typically go around the court to thank the line judges, which is acceptable.
Some players might get frustrated by the failure and express their anger or agony. Keep calm and let the coach handle the situation amicably.	
Any one of the players might want to break loose and roam free in despair or jubilation. In any case, the umpire and service judge must collect the players and march out in the prescribed way.	The umpire may need to ask the coach to assist in collecting the player so that the march-off can be carried out smoothly. Do not forget to thank the players, coaches, and fellow technical officials once you exit the field of play.



Photo credit: James Varghese

SERVICE JUDGING INSTRUCTIONS

As always, the umpire and service judge should work as a team for better handling of the match. At times, it may be necessary for the service judge to get up from the chair and show the players from which court they should serve or receive.

As mentioned previously, there are some variations for wheelchair service, including allowing overhead serves. It is important to consult the Special Olympics rules for the most up-to-date details.

Athletes with severe intellectual disabilities may have difficulty with the tactical aspects of competition, and as such, service judges may need to use some discretion in determining to what degree service faults are intentional. Where players seem to be attempting to gain an advantage, service faults should definitely be called. However, some service faults will be more clearly recognisable as a player's best effort and will not result in an advantage for the serving side. Follow the referee's instructions from the initial umpire briefing around how to handle this. It will generally put the coaches at ease to see that the service judge is keenly aware of whether any advantage is being gained or not.

04. BADMINTON FOR THE DEAF

There are local, national and international badminton competitions for the deaf, and many deaf players also participate in mainstream clubs and competitions. As mentioned in the introduction, badminton for the deaf uses standard BWF regulations. As such, whether umpires are involved in a competition for the deaf or happen to be officiating a match that includes a deaf player, there are absolutely no differences in rules or procedures.

Badminton has been part of the Deaflympics since 1985, and competition includes singles, doubles, and team events. More information on the eligibility requirements for Deaflympics and other competitions sanctioned by the International Committee of Sport for the Deaf (ICSD) can be found [here](#). It is important to note that players are not allowed to use any kind of hearing aid or amplification device during official Deaf Badminton competitions.

The main considerations for umpires should be around effective communication with the players, which includes:

- articulating announcements clearly
- establishing eye contact and facing the players, which can help with lip reading
- being mindful of non-verbal communication
- supporting announcements such as "Fault" or "Let" with hand signals to ensure that players understand
- refraining from any unnecessary or distracting gestures

Scoring displays (TV screens or other) will help players follow the score more easily. In Deaf Badminton competitions there should be a sign language interpreter available, in case any additional assistance is required. All of these elements will help technical officials and players communicate successfully, without the players being treated any differently.

05. CONCLUSION

The preceding pages have aimed to provide umpires with a better understanding of the particular challenges that different players may face, as well as how this may (or may not) impact the match in question. Armed with a bit of knowledge, a bit of empathy, and the same passion for badminton as always, umpires are encouraged to feel confident and enjoy working with ALL badminton players.



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