



Referee Handbook 2023



INTRODUCTION

This document, titled Referee Handbook, is the guiding material for both Referees and Line Judges with respect to following Best Practices when officiating any game or match. It is the basis of all training programs.

This Handbook, along with the completion of a PCO Referee training course, will help you learn the proper completion of the score sheet as well as the standard Referee procedures that Players have come to expect.

The other half of learning to become a Referee is using the rules and putting procedures from this handbook into practice. When practicing, it is a good idea to have experienced Referees shadowing you while working on the court.

All material and references are current and in compliance with the *2023 USA Pickleball Official Rulebook*.

Comments and corrections are welcomed anytime at:
officiating@pickleballcanada.org.

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All Appendices are available on the PCO website as standalone downloadable documents.

1. GETTING STARTED AND MOVING AHEAD

Your journey to becoming a qualified Referee began when you opened this Handbook. You will find this Handbook, along with classroom training, on court training and practice, very valuable tools to help you on your journey.

There is a Referee Assessment Form (RAF) for Candidate Referees, Referees, and Referee Assessors. The RAF lists some of the performance objectives that the Referee needs to complete their duties as the Referee of the game. This Form is available as part of the Online Support Materials and lists the tasks and responsibilities of the Referee.

Remember, as a Referee, we are here to serve the game and the Players. Understand that you may make mistakes and errors. Apologize, correct the error, and move ahead.

2. THE ELEMENTS OF OFFICIATING

A. PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY

The primary responsibility of a pickleball Referee is to facilitate the match in an orderly and expeditious manner while, at the same time, enforcing the rules in a fair and equitable manner. It is the responsibility of the Referee to stay current with the rules by reviewing the rules, the Referee Handbook and taking the on-line tests frequently, especially before each tournament. Taking the on-line test frequently is suggested for ongoing maintenance of Referee credentials.

B. CODE OF CONDUCT

It is important that the Referee maintain a professional demeanor of respectful courtesy towards other officials, the event organizers and the Players as specified in the Code of Conduct.

Refer to [Code of Conduct](#)

C. MATCH DUTIES

- Stand at the center line, 3 to 5 feet back from the net post
- Be attentive at all times
- Have the clip board with the scoresheet, pencils, server bands, server clips, tournament balls and timing device
- Hold the clipboard at your side and out of the way when NOT actually marking the scoresheet
- NOT comment on play or coach the Players
- Watch for service faults, NVZ violations and hinders. Should a Player step on the NVZ line while volleying the ball, call a fault and indicate left or right foot
- Take possession of the ball by collecting it at the end of each game to ensure that the game ball remains the same
- Take possession of the ball for games that are delayed (e.g. rain delayed)

D. THE TOOLS OF REFEREEING

There are a few simple tools or aids that a Referee should either carry themselves or be certain they are supplied by the Tournament Director prior to each match.

- Stopwatch or other timing device
- Extra Server bands
- Numbered Server clip, 2 suggested
- Pencil with eraser, 2 suggested
- Scoresheet and clipboard (if practicing skills outside of a tournament)
- Pre-match instruction notes, sometimes sent ahead of time by the tournament director
- Two tournament balls
- Measuring device for measuring net height

E. SCORESHEET MARKINGS PRE-MATCH

There are many things that the tournament desk should have filled out on the scoresheet prior to giving it to the Referee:

- Event description - e.g., Men's Doubles 3.5
- Format - best 2 of 3, win by 2 or other
- Players' names
- Court #
- Referee's name

As the Referee in charge, you must ensure the following is recorded:


- Any of the above information if not on the scoresheet already
- #1 or #2 on back of the scoresheet
- Change of end marks (if it's not pre-printed) 
- Circle each Team's starting Server, add unique identifier if needed
- Team with first serve in a single game or games 1, 2 and 3 as applicable
- Adding a compass direction is suggested in case a game has to resume at a later time/ date. This way the Teams play on the same court direction

Figure 1 – Pre-Match Scoresheet Marking Best of 3 Match

PICKLEBALL CANADA North

Match: 39 A
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2

Event: Mixed Doubles Blue top
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
MTO ☐ MTO ☐

Server Score

→ X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
→ X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17

Timeout TW/TF

Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown
Red Cap South

Server Score

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17

Timeout TW/TF

Figure 2 – Pre-Match Scoresheet Marking One Game to 15

PICKLEBALL CANADA North

Match: 39 A
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 1 game, 1st to 15, W by 2

Event: Mixed Doubles Blue top
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
MTO ☐ MTO ☐

Server Score

X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

Timeout TW/TF

Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown
Red Cap South

Server Score

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

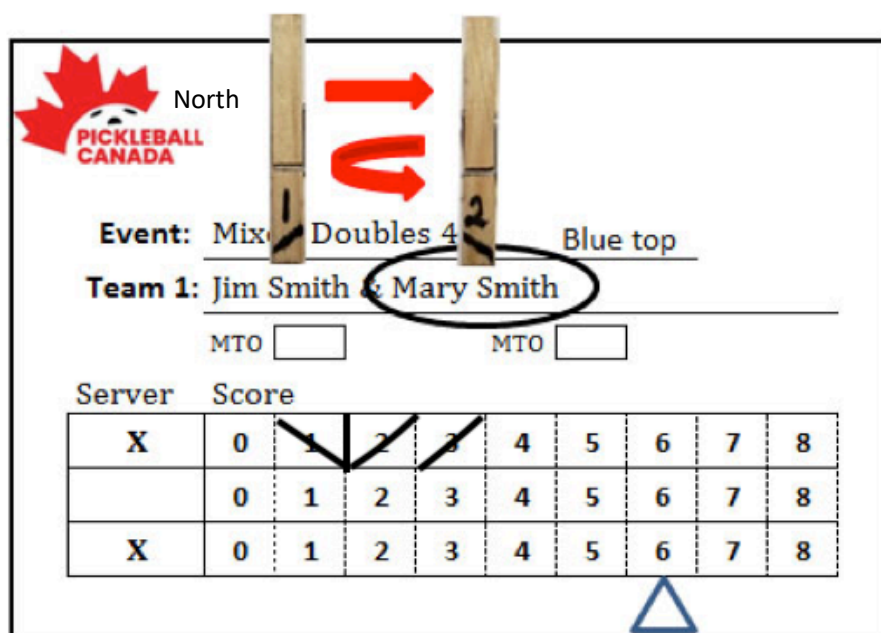
Timeout TW/TF

F. KEEPING TRACK WITH A SERVER CLIP

There are several types of clips that can be used as an aid to track the current Server. However, clip must be large enough to fit over the clipboard and easy to manipulate with one hand. It needs to have space to write both the Server number (1 or 2) as well as the diagonal line indicating Server 1 or 2.

The clip, with the appropriate number face up, is to be attached to the clipboard directly above the current Server's name. When the serve changes, due to loss of rally or side out, the clip must be flipped and repositioned to be directly above the new Server's name.

Figure 3 – Rotate the Server Clip



G. RECORDING POINTS BY "SERVER"

Based on Server # when point scored

- Forward slash (/) for Server #1 in current score box
- Backward slash (\) for Server #2 in current score box

Figure 4 – Recording Points by First Server

North
PICKLEBALL CANADA

Event: Mixed Doubles 4.0 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MTO MTO

Server	Score
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Figure 5 – Recording Points by Second Server

North
PICKLEBALL CANADA

Event: Mixed Doubles 4.0 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MTO MTO

Server	Score
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

H. RECORDING THE LOSS OF SERVE OR SIDE OUT

- Loss of first serve – no marking
- Loss of second serve – indicate “side out” with a vertical line after current score
- If current score is ZERO, make a vertical line on the right side of the zero score box

Figure 6 – Recording Side Out – Team Has No Points

North
PICKLEBALL CANADA

Event: Mixed Doubles 4 2 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MTO MTO

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Figure 7 – Recording Side Out – Team Has Points

North
PICKLEBALL CANADA

Event: Mixed Doubles 4 2 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MTO MTO

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

I. RECORDING TIMEOUT

- Do NOT flip the scoresheet - regardless of who called the timeout
- In timeout area / box for Team calling the timeout, place a diagonal slash corresponding to current Server number
- Write the score of the serving Team above the diagonal slash
- Write the score of the receiving Team below the diagonal slash

Figure 8 – Serving Team Timeout

Timeout		TW/TF
5	4	





Figure 9 – Receiving Team Timeout



	5	4

TW/TF Timeout

J. END OF GAME – SCORESHEET AFTER GAME 1, BEST OF 3 MATCH

- Circle final scores
- Make horizontal line through unused score and timeout areas for both Teams

Figure 10 – Scoresheet after Game 1, Best of 3 Match

North
PICKLEBALL CANADA

Event: Mixed Doubles 4.0 Blue top
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
MTO: MTO:

Match: 39 A
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2

Server	Score	Timeout	TW/TF
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17		
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17		

South
Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown
Red Cap

K. END OF MATCH – SCORESHEET AFTER ONE GAME TO 15

- Keep the scoresheet with winning Team names right-side up
- Circle winning Team names - clearly
- Write WINNERS within circle
- Circle final scores
- Write final score in the space allocated
- Have the winning Team verify and initial near final score summary

Figure 11 – Scoresheet After One Game to 15

North
PICKLEBALL CANADA

Event: Mixed Doubles 4.0 Blue top
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
MTO: MTO:

Match: 39
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 1 game, 1st to 15, W by 2

Server	Score	Timeout	TW/TF
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21		
X	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21		

South
Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown
Red Cap

Winners

15-14

L. END OF MATCH – SCORESHEET AFTER BEST OF 3 MATCH

- Keep the scoresheet with winning Team names right-side up
- Circle final scores
- Circle winning Team names clearly
- Write WINNERS within circle
- Write ALL final scores in space allocated
- Have winning Team verify and sign near final score summary

Figure 12 – Scoresheet After Best of 3 Match

North
PICKLEBALL
CANADA

Match: 39 A
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2

Event: Mix Doubles 4.0 Blue top
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

WINNERS

Server Score

X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17

Timeout TW/TF

11-5 5-11 11-7 MS

Server Score

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17

Timeout TW/TF

Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

South

3. GAME MANAGEMENT

A. PRE-MATCH TASKS & INSTRUCTION

- Tasks prior to pre-match briefing
 - Make sure you have your tools and know how to operate them properly
 - Make sure you are aware of the local court abnormalities
 - Review the scoresheet, making sure you understand it and that it is correct
 - Check that the Players are not related to you or are your playing partners. If so, have the Tournament desk reassign the match
 - Start timer for specified pre-match time
 - Check court and net area
- Pre-match Briefing
 - Call the Players to the net to conduct pre-match briefing
 - The Tournament Director may have sent an email to all the Players indicating the responsibilities of Players and Referees. If not, be prepared.
[Refer to [Appendix A – Pre-Match Briefing](#)]
 - Highlights
 - Check for and ask for the removal of 'recreational' ear buds. Be aware of hearing-impaired conditions
 - Identify Players
 - Identify starting Servers
 - Inspect paddles and confirm the Player's paddle is USA Pickleball approved
 - Continue warm up if time permits
- During warmup
 - Complete any scoresheet notes required
 - For reference pay attention to Players' serve style
 - Ensure the clip of the clipboard points towards the serving Team
 - When stopwatch reaches 1 minute (T-1) remaining announce "1 minute"
 - Allow time for the Player to choose the game ball, announce "15 seconds"

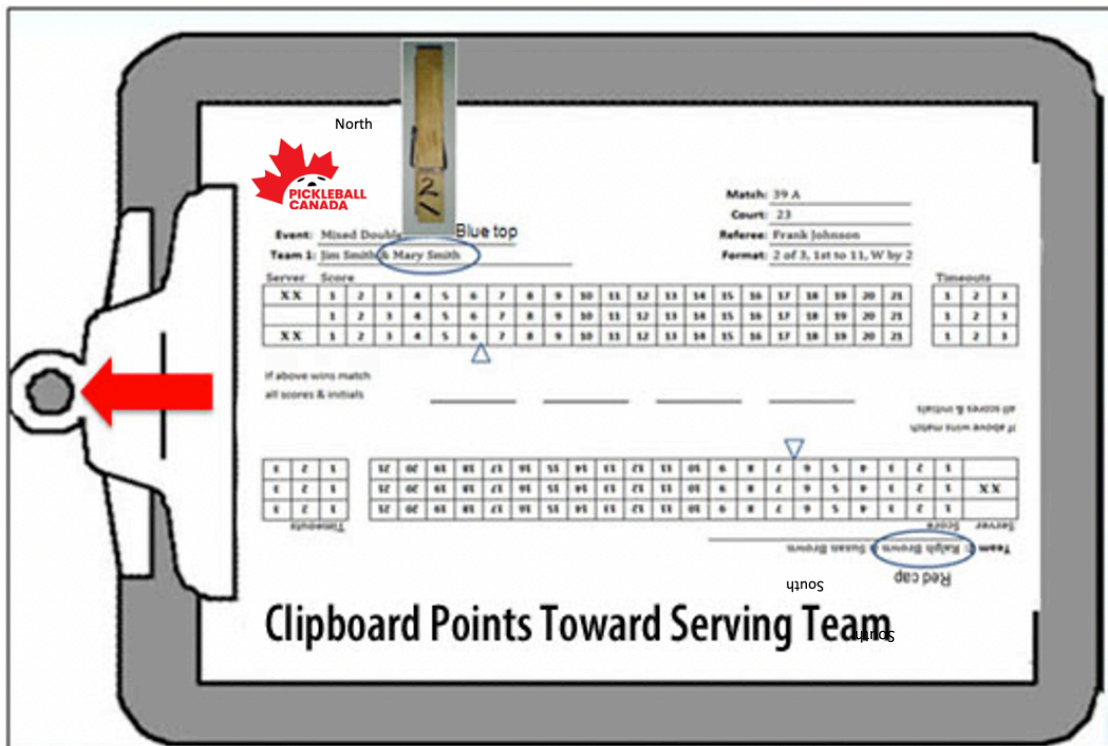
Note: Allow Players to warm up for the designated warm-up time or the remainder of the established time to start the match. If the Players are ready to play prior to the established start time, begin play early. If circumstances beyond a Player's control prevent the Player from reporting promptly to the court (e.g., non-receipt of match assignment text message due to wi-fi issues) refer to the head referee or the tournament director and follow his instructions.

- At time equals T-0
 - Make sure you are in your Referee position
 - Clear stopwatch
 - In the first game of the match, you may address each Team by name as one last confirmation of identities. **Note:** Do not identify the starting Server or starting Receiver by name

- Be aware of all Player's readiness
- Call "Game 1, Time in, the score"
- Start 10 second count

Note: After calling "Time in", if the Players are not ready but are making an effort to get into position, allow a reasonable number of extra seconds for the Players to get into position before announcing the score.

Figure 13 – Clipboard Orientation



B. REFEREE CORRECTION

Should you make an error:

- Raise your hand
- Step forward
- Announce "Correction". Explain the error and, if applicable, what will be done to correct it
- Step back
- Lower your hand
- Call "Point", "Side out", "Second serve" or "Replay" as appropriate to resume play

C. CALLING THE GAME: GAME PACE AND CADENCE

- Call scores clearly, loudly and with consistency. Players will develop a rhythm following your cadence
- Make all your scoresheet markings during the time the ball is being retrieved - be ready when the Players are ready. Do not chase the ball, that is not your responsibility
- Enforce all time limit conditions
 - Warm up time
 - Nominal time to get ready to serve or receive
 - Ten second serve time
 - Timeout durations
 - End change duration
 - Enforce all time limit conditions
- Be cognizant of equipment and Referee timeouts

D. SCORE CALLING PROCEDURE

- Check that all Players are ready or should be ready
- Call score clear, loud and with consistency
- Mentally start 10 second count after calling the score
- Timeout may be called any time prior to the paddle making contact with the ball to initiate the serve
- No Player can become not ready after the Referee starts to call the score
- If the Server hits the ball before you begin calling the score, there is no fault to be called since the ball is dead at the time

Note: *It is good practice to look at the Receiver when you start calling the score to ensure the Receiver is ready, then, rotate your head as you continue calling the score so by the time you say the last number you are looking at the Server*

E. WATCHING THE SERVE

Carefully watch for service violations. Know what to look for based on the type of serve being used. It is important to understand the rules for each serve to effectively determine whether the serve is legal. If you are not 100 % certain the serve was legal, request a re-serve.

- The Server may use either the volley serve, or the drop serve interchangeably. The Server is not required to declare which serve will be used: therefore, you will not know in advance
- Watch how the Server releases the ball for each serve. If the Server does not hit the ball on the first release, the Server can retrieve the ball and start the serve again within the 10-second count
- Intentionally manipulating the ball to add spin during the release of the ball is not allowed.
- The release of the ball must be visible to the Receiver and the Referee

- Watch the Server for service foot faults [Rule 4.A.4.]
- Watch the served ball to see where it lands. The ball must land beyond the NVZ line in the correct service court to be legal [Rule 4.A.2.]
- **For a volley serve** [Rule 4.A.7.]
 - The ball must be released using only one hand. Player who has the use of only one hand may use their paddle to release the ball to serve
 - The ball must be hit before it bounces on the playing surface
 - The three service motion components must be met [Rules 4.A.7.a – 4.A.7.c.]
- **For a drop serve** [Rule 4.A.8.]
 - The ball must be dropped from one hand or dropped off the paddle face
 - The Server is not allowed to impart any force to the ball before hitting it to make the serve. The ball cannot be propelled or spun in any manner during its release
 - There is no restriction on the number of times the ball may bounce before the Server hits the ball to make the serve
 - The Server may use any service motion to hit the ball

F. CALLING FAULTS FOR SERVICE TIME

- Call "Fault" for service time violation at 10 seconds
- When it is necessary to stop play for a fault or a hinder, raise your hand, step forward to announce the situation. Announce "I will recall the score" if applicable. Step back and then resume play
- If the Server hits the ball before you begin calling the score, there is no fault to be called since the ball is dead at the time, order a re-serve
- If the Server hits the ball while you are calling the score, call "Service Fault"
- If your change in cadence may have contributed to a service fault, then state you are recalling the score, and the Server serves again

G. RE-SERVE

The referee has the authority to immediately stop play and order a re-serve if the referee is not 100% certain that one or more required elements of the serve are satisfied. [Rule 4.A.6/4.A.8]

- The Referee will say: "Stop Play. Questionable whether (and state the issue) Re-serve. I will recall the score."

H. WRONG SCORE CALLED

If the wrong score is called, the Referee or any Player may stop play **before the return of serve** to correct the score. It is a **fault to stop play after the return of serve** to identify or ask for a score correction.

- If there is confusion or disagreement on the score, call the Players to the net to explain the score
- Use your scoresheet to replay the previous points to determine how the score in question came about
- If the disagreement continues, trust your scoresheet, and announce “15 seconds” to prepare the Players for the game to resume
- **BEFORE the RETURN of the serve is hit**
 - Stop play
 - Rise your hand
 - Step forward on to the court
 - Call “Correction”
 - Re-call the score.
 - Mentally start 10 second count.
 - Player question
 - Any Player can stop play to ask for a score correction before the return of serve
 - Referee will announce “Correction” and recall the correct score as per the procedure just above.
- **AFTER the RETURN of serve is hit**
 - Do not stop play, let the rally continue till the end
 - **Fault**
 - Call a fault against a Player who stops play to challenges **only** the incorrect score call
 - Do not replay the rally
 - Correct the score for the next rally
 - **Replay**
 - If a Player correctly challenges a Server, Receiver or position that is **INCORRECT** according to the **CORRECT** score.

***Note** A replay is appropriate since a Player **will** be the incorrect Server, incorrect Receiver or out of position based on either the incorrectly called score or the correct score. Both conditions are a result of the Referee error.*
- **AFTER the rally**
 - Rally **stands**
 - If the Players played the rally in their **correct** positions according to the **correct** score.
 - Announce the result of the rally
 - Correct the score for the next rally.
 - **Replay**
 - If the Referee realizes, or a Player challenges, that the Players were in an **incorrect position or incorrect Server/Receiver according to the CORRECT score. Note: In this situation, the Players are correctly positioned based on the incorrect score call, therefore, there is no**

fault against any Player for incorrect Server, Receiver, or position due to the Referee error.

Note: *Don't let the game be delayed by debates. If the debate continues after announcing "15 seconds", consider giving out a verbal warning, technical warning or technical foul as appropriate.*

I. CALLING THE CORRECT SCORE – ALLOWABLE QUESTIONS

- If there is confusion or disagreement on the score, call the Players to the net to explain the score
- Use your scoresheet to replay the previous points to determine how the score in question came about
- If the disagreement continues, trust your scoresheet, and announce "15 seconds" to prepare the Players for the game to resume

- **BEFORE SCORE has been called**

- Players may question positioning, correct Server/Receiver or the score
 - What is the score?
 - Am I the correct Server/Receiver?
 - Am I in the correct position?
 - Am I good?
 - Any variant of the above.
- The Referee is obliged to address each and every question.
 - Answer simply and factually
- Proceed to call the score

Note: *If a player asks a generic question, (e.g., Am I good?) consider that the question relates to server/receiver **and** positions*

- **AFTER CORRECT SCORE is called**

- **BEFORE** the serve
 - A Player may question the score, correct Server, correct Receiver, or correct court position, without penalty. Questions are all to be answered by the Referee
 - Step into court, arm raised
 - Announce "I will re-call the score" (could also be said after answering question.)
 - Answer question(s)
 - Step back to position, lowering arm
 - Call the score and start the 10 second count again
- **AFTER** the serve
 - Questions **only** about the score
 - Ignore the question if none of the Players had stopped play
 - Allow the rally to carry on
 - Address the question at the end of the rally

- Call a fault if a Player **stops play** to ask a question **only about the score** when the **correct** score was announced
- Questions about **position or wrong Server/Receiver**
 - A Player can stop play, without a fault, to **challenge** a Server/Receiver or wrong position that is **incorrect** according to the **correct** score if the challenge is correct
 - Call a **fault** against the offending Player if there was a **wrong** Server/Receiver or position according to the **correct** score
- **AFTER A RALLY** has ended
 - Players may also question the score and effect a correction in score if required
 - Referee to confirm correct score (acknowledge error if one made)
 - Players may question correct Server, correct Receiver, or correct court position and effect a correction if applicable
 - Call a **fault** against the offending Player if there was a **wrong** Server/Receiver or position according to the **correct** score and that the **correct** score was called
 - No penalty for “wrong” challenge and no replay
 - Continue the game

Note: *Don't let the game be delayed by debates. If the debate continues after announcing “15 seconds”, consider giving out a verbal warning, technical warning or technical foul as appropriate.*

J. LINE CALLS

An audible out call by the Players, if Line Judges are not in place, is required at the end of each rally that ends with a ball going out of bounds. The standard used by officials to make line calls is different from the criteria Players must use when making line calls. Officials do not need to clearly see a space between the line and the ball as it hits the ground in order to call a ball “out.”

Officials must make impartial judgment calls based on whether or not they see that the ball contacted the playing surface in or out of the court bounds. [Rule 6.D.]

Also see Section 5.D. Handling Disputed Calls for more details.

- You must **wait for an appeal** before ruling on any other line calls [Rule 13.F.]
 - Players must appeal line calls made at the end of a rally before the Server hits the ball to start the next rally [Rule 6.D.5.]
 - Players are not required to make a line call on a ball before appealing to the Referee to make the call. [Rule 6.D.3.]
 - Do not overrule a call unless you are certain the Player's or Line Judge's call was incorrect. If you clearly saw the ball land in or out of bounds, when appealed, give that ruling and that ruling stands

- Respond to the question asked and be definitive in your response. Do not say, “I think the ball was...”, say: “The ball was [in/out]”
- If you are not able to make a definitive call, state the reason followed by: say: “By rule, the call stands” or “By rule, the ball is [in/out]”
 - If asked, you may explain that you did not see the ball clearly from your angle or that your view was blocked
- You cannot make an accurate call when the ball landed between you and the line and prevented you from seeing whether the ball actually touched the line
- Make the following line calls **without an appeal** by a Player
 - Service foot faults [Rule 4.A.4.]
 - Short serves [Rule 4.A.2.]
 - NVZ infractions [Rules 9.A. – 9.H.]
 - Line calls at the end of a rally when the view of the responsible Line Judge is blocked, but only if you clearly saw where the ball landed. You must canvass the other Line Judges if you cannot make the line call [Rule 13.E.3.]

Chart of Line Call Appeals

<i>Results of Player Line Call Appeal</i>	<i>Without Line Judges</i>	<i>With Line Judges</i>
Referee makes call	Referee’s call stands	Referee’s call stands
Referee cannot make call	Player’s call stands	Line Judge’s call stands
Referee overrules “out” call	Fault against player	Replay *
Referee overrules “in” call	Referee’s call stands	Referee’s call stands
Player overrides “in” call	Opponent wins rally	Opponent wins rally
Player overrides “out” call	Opponent wins rally	Replay *
No call by players, Referee, or Line Judges	Ball is “in”	Replay

***Note:** An officiating error occurs when an official’s “Out” call is overruled or overridden resulting in the opponent being given an opportunity to replay the rally. Thank you to USAP Handbook for the use of the chart above.

K. AT THE END OF EVERY RALLY

- Announce clearly
 - “Point”, or
 - “Second serve”, or
 - “Side out”

- Mark the scoresheet if required
- Move Server clip if required
- Rotate clipboard if required

L. STANDARD TIMEOUT

- Timeouts may be called
 - Before the serve is initiated (ball contact with paddle)
 - Between rallies
 - Between games of a multiple game match (this timeout is recorded as 0-0-2 of the following game)
 - A timeout may be waved off if no time has been taken and therefore no timeout will be recorded
- Call “Timeout Receiver (or Server) – [Score] – One minute”
- Start timer
- Move to center of court
- Avoid conversing with Players
- Mark the scoresheet appropriately
- At T-15 seconds, announce “15 seconds”
- Move to your Referee position
- Advise both Teams of number of timeouts remaining
- If Line Judges are present, check each for readiness
- At time equals T-0
- Clear stopwatch
- Be aware of all Player readiness
- Call “Time in” and call the score
- Start 10 second count

Note: The Referee will announce when there are 15 seconds remaining. If after the 15-second warning if the Referee notices that Players are not making their way back to the court, the Referee may remind Players, that play needs to continue. The Referee may issue a verbal warning or a technical warning for delay of game if the Referee determines a Team is causing an avoidable delay.

Refer to [Appendix B – Standard Timeout Procedure Script](#)

M. CHANGE OF END TIMEOUT PROCEDURE

- End changes
 - In a best of 3 games match, in the third game, first Team to reach 6 points
 - In a best of 5 games match, in the fifth game, first Team to reach 6 points
 - In a single game match to 15, first Team to reach 8 points
 - In a single game match to 21, first Team to reach 11 points
- On reaching any of the above conditions, call “Timeout – [Score] – Change ends – One minute”
- Start timer

- Move to center court
- Before removing the clip
 - Write the current Server number below/beside current Server's name
 - Write complete score beside change of end delta (optional)
 - Shade in the appropriate delta marker
- Re-orientate the scoresheet and the clipboard to reflect Team's end change
- Reposition the clip according to the current Server # noted above
- At T-15 announce "15 seconds"
- Play may resume early if all Players are in agreement.
- Move to your Referee position
- If Line Judges are present check each for readiness
- At time equals T-0
 - Clear stopwatch
 - Be aware of all Player readiness
 - Call "Time in" and call the score
 - Start 10 second count

Note: Once the end of change point has been scored, a technical foul resulting in the loss of a point for the serving Team will have no impact on the completion of the end change.

In the third game of a 2 out of 3 match and in the fifth game of a 3 out of 5 match, no end change occurs if the first game was forfeited due to a late arrival.

Figure 14 – Change Ends

Match: 39
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2

Team 1: Jim & Mary Smith (Blue top)
Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown (Red/Orange)

Timeout TW/TF

Server Score

Timeout TW/TF

South

N. TIMEOUT BETWEEN GAMES IN MULTI GAME MATCH

At the completion of the rally to end a game between a multi game match, call a timeout. Calling “Timeout” at the end of the game, allows the referee to call “Time In” to start the next game. At or before two minutes, as appropriate, promptly start the next game if the Players are in position and ready to play.

- Call “Point – Game – [Score] – [Winners Last Names] – Timeout – Change ends – Two minutes”
- Start timer
- Move to center of court
- Avoid conversing with Players
- Finish any end of game scoresheet work
- Reposition the scoresheet on clipboard
- Check for Starting Server changes
- Reposition the Server clip
- If a Player leaves the court with their paddle, re-inspection is required
- At T-15 seconds, announce “15 seconds”
- Give ball to serving Team
- Move to your Referee position
- If Line Judges are present, check each for readiness
- At time equals T-0
 - Clear stopwatch
 - Be aware of all Player readiness
 - Call “ Game # – Time in – [Score]”
 - Start 10 second count

Note: After calling “Time in,” if the Players are not ready at two minutes but are making an effort to get into position, allow a reasonable number of extra seconds for the Players to get into position before announcing the score.

O. REFEREE TIMEOUT [RULE 10.H.2]

A Referee timeout may be used to address extenuating circumstances, such as active bleeding, a potential medical situation, any foreign substance on the court.

Note: There is no time limit for a Referee timeout.

- Allow the rally to complete and then hold up your hand and stop play and call a Referee timeout if no Player calls a timeout
- Announce the reason for the timeout and the score
- If the situation involves a potential medical issue with a Player (e.g., heat exhaustion, excessive panting, dizziness), summon Medical Personnel (or the Tournament Director in the absence of Medical Personnel) to determine if the player needs medical treatment [Rule 10.H.2.a]
 - Allow medical treatment as necessary and resume play if the Player is able to continue

- If the Player is not able to resume play, call a match retirement in favour of the opponent.
- Advise the Tournament Director of a retiring Player so the PCO Report of Accident or Incident form can be appropriately completed and filed
- If the situation involves active bleeding that can be controlled without medical assistance (e.g., minor cut, nosebleed), do not summon Medical Personnel and allow the Player to control the blood using personal resources
- No timeout will be charged to the affected Player
- If the situation involves blood, debris, water, fluids, or other foreign substances on the playing surface, seek assistance as necessary and have the substance removed or cleaned up [Rules 10.B.5.a, 10.H.2.c]
- Collect the ball if the ball has not been placed on the court under one of the Player's paddles
- No annotations are required on the scoresheet for a Referee timeout.
- When the situation has been resolved and it is safe and appropriate to resume play, give a 15-second warning, check the readiness of the officiating Team (if applicable), followed by announcing "Time in" and calling the score

P. EQUIPMENT TIMEOUT [RULE 10.D]

Players are expected to keep all clothing and equipment in playable condition. If you determine that a clothing or equipment change or adjustment is necessary for fair and safe continuation of play, call an equipment timeout for a reasonable duration to correct the issue. Players are not required to use a regular time out for equipment adjustments or changes necessary for fair and safe continuation of the match.

- Equipment timeouts are not required to be annotated on the scoresheet
- There is no restriction on the number of allowable equipment timeouts
- Valid reasons for an equipment timeout include broken paddle, broken shoestring, ripped shorts, dislodged contact lens, etc.
- When the situation has been remedied, resume play by giving a 15-second warning, checking readiness of the Officiating Team (if applicable), followed by announcing "Time in" and calling the score

Q. MEDICAL TIMEOUT

- **Player initiated medical timeout**
 - Call "Medical timeout – [Player's name] – [Score]"
 - Arrange for onsite Medical or Tournament Director to be called
 - A Player may rescind the request before Medical Personal arrives
 - Start 15 minute timer when Medical or Tournament Director arrive on scene
 - Make scoresheet notes
 - Write MT under Player's name or check MT box if on the scoresheet

- On the back of the scoresheet note nature of incident : MT, player name, game # if applicable, score, cause, validity?
- If Player is able to continue before time is up or at time equals T-0
 - Announce “Resume play – 15 seconds”
 - Move to your Referee position
 - If Line Judges are present, check each for readiness
 - Clear stopwatch
 - Be aware of all Player readiness
 - Call “Time in – [Score]”
 - Start 10 second count
- **If player cannot continue**
 - Declare a retirement on favour of the opponent
 - Complete scoresheet marking following retirement procedure
 - Ask Team if they are also withdrawing
 - Advise the retiring Team to confirm their withdrawal with the tournament desk
 - If the Players cannot advise the tournament desk themselves, report the withdrawal when you return the scoresheet.
 - The final scores should be written in the middle of the scoresheet
 - Write “Retirement” under the scores
 - Have winning Team verify the scores and initial
- **Referee to stay with the Player**

The Referee is to accompany the Player if medical attention needs to be rendered off-court at another location at the venue

 - Pause your timer while you are moving to the other location
 - Resume your timer upon arrival at the place where medical attention will be provided.
 - Bring the game ball with you as you would with rain delays
 - Advise Medical Personal if a Player’s head had forceful contact with a hard object, such as the court, a paddle, the net post, etc., to determine if the Player may have suffered a concussion
 - In accordance with the Pickleball Canada Concussion Protocol, such a Player must be immediately removed from play and not permitted to return until a written release from a licensed Health Care Professional is provided to the Tournament Director

Figure 15 – Medical timeout

PICKLEBALL CANADA North

Event: Mixed Doubles 4.0 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MTO ☒ MTO ☐

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Timeout TW/TF

MTO Jim Smith
Game 1, 6-4-1
hurt ankle, valid MTO

back of scoresheet

R. HYDRATION

Any Player may quickly towel off or take a drink between rallies providing the flow of the game is not adversely impacted.

4. PENALTY SYSTEM

Verbal warnings (VW), technical warnings (TW) and technical fouls (TF) are tools and may be assessed any time the Players are at the court, independent of whether the match is in progress. Warnings and fouls can be assessed before the match begins, this includes during warm up time.

The assessment of the warning or foul should be applied after rally has ended. Behaviour raising to the level of a warning or foul after the match is over shall be brought to the attention of the Tournament Director.

Refer to [Appendix D – Progressive Disciplinary Action](#)

A. VERBAL WARNING

A single verbal warning may be issued to each Team during a match as a pre-emptive measure to control any behaviour that could result in a technical warning.

Note: If a TW or TF have already been issued, the VW is no longer available.

- **Issuing and recording a verbal warning**

- Use the time at the end of a rally to advise the Players that you are issuing a verbal warning
- Call all Players together at the net. Inform Team of the verbal warning and give the reason

- Document a verbal warning on the scoresheet by marking “VW” under the TW/TF area of the offending Team. Do not rotate the clipboard
- Mark on the back of the scoresheet
 - VW
 - Names
 - Game #
 - Score
 - Reason(s)
- Announce "15 seconds"
- Move to your Referee position
- If line judges are present check each for readiness
- At time equals T-0
 - Clear stopwatch
 - Be aware of all Player readiness
 - Call “Time in” and call the score
 - Start 10 second count

Note: To avoid delaying the game, you can write your notes on the back of the scoresheet at the next timeout or at the end of the game.

Figure 16 – Verbal Warning

The diagram illustrates a pickleball scoresheet with the following details:

- Match Information:** Match: 39, Court: 23, Referee: Frank Johnson, Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2.
- Event:** Mix Doubles 4.0 Blue top.
- Team 1:** Jim Smith & Mary Smith (Blue top).
- Team 2:** Ralph Brown & Susan Brown (Red top).
- Scoresheet Structure:** The sheet has two main sections for Team 1 (top) and Team 2 (bottom). Each section includes a 'Server' column, a 'Score' column (0-17), and a 'Timeout TW/TF' column. A 'VW' (Verbal Warning) is marked in the 'Timeout TW/TF' column for Team 1.
- Verbal Warning Note:** A red box on the back of the scoresheet contains the text: "VW - M. Smith, Game 1, 6-4-1, takes too much time between rallies".
- Diagram Elements:** A clipboard is shown at the top left with a red maple leaf logo and the text "PICKLEBALL CANADA". A red arrow points from the 'VW' mark on the scoresheet to the 'VW' mark on the back of the scoresheet.

B. TECHNICAL WARNING


A Technical warning (TW) has no other penalty associated with its use. There is no loss of serve, side out, or no point adjustment. It is considered a single strike against the offending Team. A second TW is considered a second strike and automatically becomes a technical foul.

- **Issuing and Recording Technical Warnings**

- Announce a TW is being assessed at the end of the rally or between rallies
- Bring Players to the net to give a brief explanation
- Mark "TW" in the offending Team 's TW/TF boxes *without* rotating the clipboard
- Mark on the back of the scoresheet:
 - TW
 - Names
 - Game #
 - Score
 - Reason(s)
- Announce "15 seconds"
- Move to your Referee position
- If line judges are present check each for readiness
- At time equals T-0
- Clear stopwatch
- Be aware of all player readiness
- Call "Time in" and call the score
- Start 10 second count

Note: *To avoid delaying the game, you can write your notes on the back of the scoresheet at the next timeout or at the end of the game.*

Figure 17 – 1st Technical Warning



North

Event: Mix Doubles 4.0 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MT0 MT0

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	


△

Timeout	TW/TF
	TW

TW - Smith & Smith Game 1
6-7-1, coaching

back of scoresheet

Figure 18 – 2nd Technical Warning



North

Event: Mix Doubles 4.0 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MT0 MT0

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

△

Timeout	TW/TF
	TW
	TW
	TF

TW - Smith & Smith Game 1,
6-7-1, coaching

2nd TW = TF, Smith & Smith
Game 1, 7-10-1, coaching

back of scoresheet

C. TECHNICAL FOUL

A technical foul (TF) can be issued after a VW or TW has been given or can be issued without a first TW, based on the severity of the Player's behaviour or language. A TF is considered two strikes against a Team. Offending Team will have one point removed from their score. If the offending Team has no score, the non-offending Team has one point added to their score.

● Issuing and Recording Technical Foul

- Announce a TF is being assessed at the end of the rally
- Bring Players to the net to give a brief explanation
- Mark "TF" in the offending Team's TW/TF boxes **without** rotating the clipboard
- Erase the last marked point of the offending Team
- Write TF in the box with the new lower score
 - If the new score is now zero, write TF in the zero-point box
- Erase, if appropriate, any following side out mark from the score of the offending Team
 - Replace the side out mark with a new mark after the new lowered score
- If the offending Team has 0 points, add a point to the non-offending Team
 - Write TF in the score box
 - Write, if appropriate, a new side mark
- Mark on the back of the scoresheet:
 - TF
 - Names
 - Game #
 - Score
 - Reason(s)
- Inform players of their new score
- Announce "15 seconds"
- Move to your Referee position
- If line judges are present check each for readiness
- At time equals T-0
 - Clear stopwatch
 - Be aware of all Player readiness
 - Call "Time in" and call the score
 - Start 10 second count

Note: To avoid delaying the game, you can write your notes on the back of the scoresheet at the next timeout or at the end of the game.

Figure 19 – Technical Foul – Subtract a Point

North
PICKLEBALL
CANADA

Event: Mix Doubles 4.0 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MTO MTO

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Timeout

TW/TF

TF

TF - Smith & Smith, Game 1
7-0-1, excessive & directed profanity

back of scoresheet

Figure 20 – Technical Foul – Add a Point

North
PICKLEBALL
CANADA

Event: Mix Doubles 4.0 Blue top

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

MTO MTO

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	T8F
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Timeout

1	2
1	2
1	2

TW/TF

TF - Brown / Brown, Game 1
7-0-1, physical threat

back of scoresheet

If above wins match
all scores & initials

South

Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

Red Cap

MTO MTO

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Timeout

TW/TF

TF

D. EJECTION OR EXPULSION

If you observe any conduct by a Player that you judge worthy of expulsion or ejection, immediately notify the Tournament Director. If the Tournament Director decides to eject or expel the Player at that time:

- Follow the match forfeit procedure to end the match, as awarding the match to the opponent.
- Write “FORFEIT - EJECTION” or “FORFEIT - EXPULSION” under the final scores on the scoresheet and indicate which Player was ejected or expelled.

E. GAME FORFEIT

Game forfeit (GF) is issued by the Referee after accumulating a combination of warnings and fouls. If a Team receives one TW plus one TF, or three TW's (3 strikes) a game forfeit is to be assessed. Document a game forfeit by marking “GF” to the left of the zero-score box of the offending Team and make notes on the back of the scoresheet.

A game forfeit may also be directed to the Team arriving after 10 minutes late after the initial call of a multi game match.

Write the time of the forfeit beside the GF notation on the scoresheet. It is recommended that you validate the forfeit with the Tournament Director or the Head Referee before you declare it to be sure that there is no exceptional circumstances (traffic jam, communication problems, etc.) that can explain the delay.

Figure 21 – Game Forfeit

Match: 39 A
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2

Event: Mixed Doubles
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

Server Score

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
X GF	0																		
X	0																		

Timeout TW/TF

Timeout	TW	TF

VW Game 1, 1-1-2

TW - Smith & Smith Game 1, 6-7-1 coaching

TF - Smith & Smith Game 1, 9-9-2 aggressive paddle throw, Game Forfeit

back of scoresheet

Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

Server	Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
X	0														
0	0														
11	0														
12	0														

F. MATCH FORFEIT

Match forfeit (MF) is issued by the Referee after four strikes have been assessed. It could be four technical warnings, two technical warnings and one technical foul or two technical fouls. A match forfeit may also be assessed to a Player whose behaviour continues to be deliberately aggressive towards their partner, the opponents, the Officials, or the spectators. This behaviour is as listed but not necessarily complete; to include reckless striking or throwing a ball or paddle that may endanger any person. The Tournament Director may also issue a match forfeit.

A match forfeit would also be directed to a Team arriving 15 minutes late for the first game of the match. If the match format is to 15 or 21 points, it is 10 minutes for a match forfeit. Write the time of the forfeit beside the MF notation on the scoresheet (and after the GF for the first game of a 2 out of 3). It is recommended that you validate the forfeit with the Tournament Director or the Head Referee before you declare it to be sure that there is no exceptional circumstances (traffic jam, communication problems, etc.) that can explain the delay.

- **Match Forfeit called due to TW or TF**

- Follow the procedure for the TW or the TF
 - However, do not make a point adjustment in the score since the score will be recorded as X-0 (where X is the winning score for the game format)
- Stop the game in progress
- Inform the Players
- Write "MF" to the left of the offending Team's zero score box
- For all games, circle or lightly shade the winning score for the non-offending Team
- Draw a line through all unused points and unused TO boxes for all games of the non-offending Team
- For all games, circle or lightly shade the zero score for the offending Team
- Draw a line through all points for the offending Team
- Position the scoresheet with the winning Team up
- Write all final scores in space allocated (winning Team with the winning score and offending Team with score zero)
- Circle the winning Team's names
- Write WINNERS within the circle
- Write FORFEIT under the scores
- Ask the winning Team to verify and initial

Figure 22 – Match Forfeit

WINNERS

Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

Server: X

Score: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

11-0 11-0 SB

FORFEIT

Game 2: MF 11-0

Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith

Event: Mixed Doubles

Referee: Frank Johnson

Count: 23

Match: 39

Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2

back of scoresheet

- **Match Forfeit called due to Player no show**

A no show condition is deemed when:

- A Player or Team is 10 minutes late to start a match of 15 points or 21 points
- A Player or Team is 15 minutes late to start games 2 or 3 of a match

Referee action

- Ask the Tournament Director or the Head Referee to validate the forfeit
- Circle winner's names
- Mark MF and the time to the left of the zero box (in a 2 out of 3 match, also write GF and the time of the GF of the first game at the left of the zero box)
- Mark score as 11-0 for game 1 and 11-0 for game 2 (15-0 or 21-0)
- Write FORFEIT under the final score
- Ask the winning Team to verify and initial

Note: The Referee must document these forfeits on the back of the scoresheet before handing into the tournament desk.

G. MATCH RETIREMENT

A match retirement may be called when a Team decides to retire from a match due to medical issues or other circumstances. The Player or Team that elects to “retire” from a match shall have the actual scores of the match recorded. A Team retiring from one match may play additional matches in their bracket if any are warranted. The Referee should ask them if they want to withdraw from the bracket. If the Team is withdrawing from all remaining matches, have the Players report their withdrawal to the tournament desk. If the Players are unable to inform the tournament desk themselves, report their withdrawal when you return the scoresheet.

- **How to Record a Match Retirement**

When the Team retires, the opponent will be awarded the match

- End the game in progress by awarding the match to the opponent
- A winning score will be recorded for the opponents for all games, which will be the actual score of completed games winning score (either 11 or 15 or 21) depending on the game format
- The retiring Team will retain all points scored in completed games and the game in progress
- The retiring Team scores 0 for any game not started
- Circle the non-retiring Team as the WINNERS
- Fill in the scores
- Write “Retirement” under the scores
- Ask non-retiring Team to verify and initial

Note: *The Referee must document the retirement on the back of the scoresheet before handing it in to the tournament desk.*

Example: The retiring Team won game one 11 – 5. By retiring in game 2, their score for game 2 went to 6 –11. Since they retired but won game 1, on the score sheet, show game 3 as played to a score 11 – 0 to the non-retiring Team. If a retiring Team is winning 10 to 9 but must retire, record the score as 12 – 10 to the non-retiring Team.

Figure 23 – Match Retirement

Match: 39
Court: 23
Referee: Frank Johnson
Format: 2 of 3, 1st to 11, W by 2

Event: Mix Doubles 4.0 Blue top
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

Server	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Timeout	TW/TF
X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		

RETIREMENT
 5-11 11-6 11-0 M.P.

Server	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Timeout	TW/TF
	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		

WINNERS
Team 1: Jim Smith & Mary Smith
Team 2: Ralph Brown & Susan Brown

H. MATCH WITHDRAWAL

Match withdrawal can be declared if a Player/Team has completed any matches, the Player/Team may request to be withdrawn from ALL upcoming matches prior to the initial score being called to start their next match. Inform the Player/Team to report their withdrawing to the tournament desk. If they are unable to do it themselves, report it when you return your scoresheet.

5. SPECIFIC RULES AND CIRCUMSTANCES

A. COMMON RULES TO KNOW AND ENFORCE

- It is a fault if the Server strikes the ball to initiate a serve while the score is being called
- There is no penalty for serving before the start of the score being called
- Know the details of what makes each serving type legal and illegal
- Service foot faults
- Correct Server/Receiver in correct court
- Where served ball lands – on lines
- Become familiar with conditions with ball striking the net, net supports or the temporary net structure and how ball contact is ruled
- Become familiar with conditions when Players may or may not cross the plane of the net for back spin balls, Erne's, and around the post attempts
- Accepted paddles and allowable modification

B. WHEN TO CALL A FAULT

- Faults may only be committed when the ball is live (exception: NVZ faults)
- Faults are usually enforced as soon as they are identified, or up to the next serve
- If you are late calling it is better to call rather than have the offending Team be given an advantage
- Fault may be call until the scoresheet is returned to the tournament desk, applying to an incorrect Server/Receiver or position on the last point of the match
- Call a fault if a Player deliberately carries or catches the ball on the paddle while performing the serve or during the rally
- Call fault, if after the serve, a ball contacts any permanent object before bouncing on the court
- Call a fault if a ball being carried by a Player, falls on the playing surface during the game
- If calling a NVZ violation fault, whether it involves stepping into, stepping through or pushing off from the NVZ, identify which foot or wheel contacted the NVZ

C. INAPPROPRIATE APPAREL [RULE 2.G]

- **Colour** If a Player complains that the colour of an opponent's apparel approximates the colour of the ball, summon the Tournament Director to address the complaint [Rule 2.G.1]
- **Depictions** If the Referee or a Player believe that the graphics, insignias, pictures, or writing on a Player's apparel are not in good taste, summon the Tournament Director to address the issue [Rule 2.G.2]
- Only the Tournament Director has the authority to require apparel changes
- Apparel changes required by the Tournament Director are handled as a Referee timeout
- Advise the Players of the reason for the delay
- The Tournament Director may declare a match forfeit if a Player refuses to comply with a request to change apparel. [Rule 2.G.4]

D. HANDLING DISPUTED CALLS

Line calls, except in the case where Line Judges are used, are the responsibility of the Players. The Referee must hear an OUT call or see an OUT signal. Assume the ball was IN unless it is obvious for the Referee and the Players that the ball is OUT. The Referee may remind Players they must make those calls either audibly or by visible hand signals.

- **If the Referee is questioned**
 - If you clearly saw the ball in or out, make the call
 - If you are not 100% certain, then the original call stands

E. STOPPAGES OF PLAY

Players can stop play for specific circumstances.

- **Before start of score call**
 - Not ready signal
- **Before the serve**
 - Score confirmation
 - Correct Server/Receiver or position request
 - Timeout request
- **Before the return of the serve**
 - Score correction request (wrong score called)
 - Release of the ball not seen by the receiver
- **Any time during the rally**
 - Hinder

6. LINE JUDGES

Line Judges are an integral part of tournaments and are a part of PC's Officiating development program.

Line Judges (LJ) are part of the Officiating Team and are in the best position to make line calls for their assigned lines. Determining to use Line Judges for medal games is within the jurisdiction of the Tournament Director. The PCO recommends all sanctioned tournaments employ a minimum of 4 Line Judges for all Gold medal games.

This Line Judge section of the Referee Handbook works with Line Judge training programs, along with the Line Judge Test to keep training fresh between tournaments.

A. GAME MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY

The assigned match Referee oversees all aspects of officiating and managing the match, including:

- Managing the Officiating Team
- Briefing the Officiating Team
- Positioning of all members of the Officiating Team
- Ensuring all members of the Officiating Team are ready

B. LINE JUDGE CODE OF CONDUCT

As part of the Officiating Team the Line Judge assumes certain higher levels of responsibility.

- Stay current with your duties & the rules by frequently taking the online tests
- Be fair, impartial, and consistent
- Exhibit professional demeanor
- Avoid excess friendliness with Players and spectators

- Silence all personal electronic devices
- Recuse yourself from conflicts if friends, partners or relatives are to play in the match to be assigned to you
- Devote 100% of your attention to the match before you
- During rallies, Line Judges should follow the ball so they can anticipate when they may have to make a call, at which point their focus should be on the outside of the line. This is a critical aspect of any line calls...where the eyes of the Line Judge need to be on the line before the ball arrives
- Be ready to make calls with confidence and without hesitation

C. PRE-MATCH BRIEFING WITH LINE JUDGES

Prior to the start of each match the assigned Referee will conduct a briefing with the Line Judges to review:

- Line assignment responsibility and signals, including faults on serve
- Positioning, sit or stand, to avoid the sun and spectators
- Verbal and nonverbal calls
- Obstructed view situations
- Role of Players in calling lines to their disadvantage
- Role of spectators in calling or influencing your calls – none

D. LINE JUDGES SIGNALS

- **OUT calls** (calls clearly landing OUT)
 - Immediately call "OUT"
 - Raise one arm pointing in the out-of-bounds direction
 - Hold the arm position until the Referee positively acknowledges the out call you made
 - Make out calls for all balls landing out of bounds, even those obviously out. A non-call is an indication of IN.
- **IN balls** (close enough that a question may arise)
 - Signal with both hands, palms down, pointing to the playing surface at a downward angle
 - NO verbal call is to be made - silence is mandatory
- **View blocked** (you cannot make the call)
 - Hold both hands covering your eyes
- **Service foot faults**
 - Immediately announce "foot fault"
- **Incorrect Server/Receiver or position**
 - Wait until the rally ends
 - Raise both hands clasped above head
- **Illegal coaching**
 - Wait until the rally ends
 - Raise both hands in an outward shaped "V"

- **Other potential rule violations**
 - Wait until the rally ends
 - Raise one arm to a vertical position

Note: *It is important to hold the hand signal for a few seconds and wait for the Referee to acknowledge your signal.*

E. OTHER LINE JUDGE RESPONSIBILITIES

Line Judges should be ready to answer Player positioning questions and follow the play on the court in case the Referee is required to ask for their opinion of what happened on the court. Should the Referee start to poll the Line Judges, be ready to respond if you have clearly observed the event.

Some examples: net contact violations, double bounces, ball contact with Players' clothing/hair, NVZ violations during attempted around the post shots or Erne's, as well as momentum contact into the NVZ between the partners.

Line Judges should be ready to response to an "Are you ready" call at a game start and after each break in play.

F. APPEALS AND QUESTIONS

- The Referee may ask Line Judges or Players to assist in determining a call
- The Referee may request a Line Judge to repeat their call for confirmation if the original call was not clear or heard plainly
- If a Player appeals to the Referee, and the Referee clearly sees the ball IN or OUT, your call may be overruled. Do not worry or get upset. Look forward, and prepare for the next rally
- Players may overrule a Line Judge line call to their own disadvantage. This call will be accepted by the Referee
- If neither the Line Judge nor the Referee can see clearly enough to make a call, a replay will occur

G. DUAL REFEREES OPTION

In the continuing pursuit to *make accurate calls at the net*, the use of a two Referees might be in place for higher level play. The use of the Dual Referee Option does not alter any of the responsibilities of the Lead Referee in officiating and managing the match. The Lead Referee will make all final decisions regarding the resolution of any disagreements and the assessment of penalties.

Refer to [Appendix E – Dual Referee Option](#)

APPENDIX A – PRE-MATCH BRIEFING

This document is an example only. Specific tournament guidance will come from the Tournament Director (TD). The information is intended for you to become familiar with this procedure.

Take under two minutes for pre-match briefing, keeping in mind that once the Players have their first match, they need not have to hear repeated information unless it is new. For matches later in a tournament, try for a less than 1 minute pre-match briefing.

It has become more common for Players to be electronically sent the rules/procedures for the tournament. Just ask the Players if they have any questions, rather than taking the time to recite them again. The TD may request that significant rule changes be briefly reviewed.

1. After you have checked the court and the net, introduce yourself
2. Confirm with the Players, the event and their names on the scoresheet.
3. Confirm game format – 2/3 match or 1 game to 15
4. Point out court abnormalities
5. Remind Players who is responsible for line calling
 - Base line and service lines on the serve – the Referee
 - NVZ line during rally – the Referee
 - Other Line calls including the center line on the serve – the Players or Line Judges (LJ : except the center line on the serve)
6. Review process for appeals – to come to the Referee only
7. Check for Players wearing ear buds. Only medically required hearing aids allowed.
8. Inspect paddles at all sanctioned tournaments. Paddles should be free of dents, signs of delaminating, or foreign substances that might add more ball grip. Ask the Players if their paddle is approved and be observant of a USAP Approved Sticker or Writing.
9. Have one Player choose # 1 or 2, to determine Serve, Receive, End or Defer – (defer the choice to the opposing Team)
10. Handout starting Server bands
11. Allow Players to finish their warmup with the time remaining
12. Notify Players when there is 60 seconds remaining
13. Allow time for the Player to choose the game ball
14. Announce “15 seconds”. If you have Line Judges, ask if they are ready (allow serving Team the choice of game ball)
15. At the start of the first game of the match, you may announce the names of the ***Last names*** of the Players to verify you have the correct scoresheet and ensure that the clipboard is pointing towards the serving Team
16. At time equals T-0
 - Make sure you are in your referee position
 - Clear stopwatch
 - Be aware of all Player readiness
 - Call Game # (if applicable) and “Time in”
 - Call the score
 - Start 10 second count

APPENDIX B – STANDARD TIMEOUT PROCEDURE SCRIPT

Besides the calling of the score, how we conduct the timeout procedure is arguably the most visible thing we do.

What follows is a script that should be memorized so that it flows smoothly:

A rally has just ended. Complete your scoresheet notations.

“Timeout [Receiver/Server] – [Score] – One minute”

Start stopwatch.

Move to center court.

At center court, record the timeout in the appropriate box.

At 15 seconds remaining, call:

“15 seconds”

Move back to position and announce:

“Receivers, [number] timeouts remaining. Servers, [number] timeouts remaining.”

Check readiness of Line Judges (if applicable)

At time equals T-0

- Make sure you are in your Referee position
- Clear stopwatch
- Be aware of all Player readiness and call
“Time in – [Score] ”
- Start 10 second count

APPENDIX C – ABBREVIATED STANDARDIZED CALLS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. START OF SINGLE-GAME MATCH (4.B.5)

After 15 seconds has been called and time has expired

“Time in – 0 - 0 - 2”

2. START OF A GAME OF MULTIPLE-GAME MATCH (4.B.5)

After 15 seconds has been called and time has expired

“Game [Number] – Time in – 0-0-2”

Examples: “Game 2 – Time in – 0-0-2”

3. STANDARD TIMEOUT (4.H.1)

“Timeout [Receivers/Servers] – [Score] – One minute”

Example: “Timeout Receivers. 4 - 6 - 1. One minute”

4. REMAINING TIMEOUTS (4.H.7)

“[Receivers/Servers] – [Number] timeouts remaining. [Servers/Receivers] – [Number] timeouts remaining”

Example: “Receivers, no timeouts remaining. Servers, one timeout remaining”

5. RESUMING PLAY AFTER TIMEOUT (4.H.9)

After 15 seconds has been called and time has expired.

“Time in – [Score]”

Example: “Time in. 8 - 4 - 2”

6. END OF GAME WITH GAME TO FOLLOW (4.I.1)

“Point – Game – [Score] – [Last names] – Timeout – Change ends – Two minutes.”

Example: “Point. Game. 11 - 9. Smith and Jones. Timeout. Change ends. Two minutes”.

7. END OF MATCH (4.L.1)

“Point – Game – Match – [Score] – [Last names]”

Example: “Point. Game. Match. 15 - 8. Smith and Jones”

8. END CHANGE TIMEOUT (4.K.2)

“Time out – Change ends – [Score] – One minute.”

Example: “Time out. Change ends. 6 - 4 - 2. One minute.”

9. END CHANGE TIME IN (4.K.2)

After 15 seconds has been called and time expired

"Time in – [Score]."

Example: "Time in. 8 - 7 - 1"

10. QUESTIONABLE VOLLEY SERVE (5.A.10)

"Stop play – Questionable whether [State the issue] – Re-serve – I will re-call the score."

Examples: "Stop play. Questionable whether the ball was hit above the waist. Re-serve. I will re-call the score."

"... whether the paddle head was above the wrist... "

"... whether the swing was upward..."

"... whether the ball was spun on release..."

"... whether the ball was visible on release..."

11. QUESTIONABLE DROP SERVE (5.A.11.b)

"Stop play – Questionable whether [State the issue] – Re-serve – I will re-call the score."

Examples:

"Stop play. Questionable whether force was added on release. Re-serve. I will re-call the score."

"... whether the ball was spun on release..."

"... whether the ball was visible on release..."

12. BALL RELEASE NOT VISIBLE, VOLLEY SERVE OR DROP SERVE (5.A.10.d, 5.A.11.c)

"Stop play – Ball release not visible – Re-serve – I will re-call the score."

13. 15 SECOND WARNING (5.F.3, 6.B.1.d, 6.B.2.f)

"15 seconds – Time in – [Score]."

14. LINE CALL APPEAL, DEFINITIVE CALL BY THE REFEREE (5.G.2.b.4)

"The was ball in."

"The ball was out."

15. LINE CALL APPEAL, NO CALL BY THE REFEREE (5.G.2.b.5) (5.G.2.b.6) (5.G.2.b.8)

"By rule, the call stands."

"By rule, the ball is [in/out]"

APPENDIX D – PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Verbal Warnings	Technical Warnings (TW)	Technical Fouls (TF)	Game Forfeits (GF)	Match Forfeits (MF) by Referee or TD	Ejection by TD only	Expulsion by TD only
<u>One per team/match</u> Any situation that could result in a technical warning may instead be addressed as a verbal warning	Objectionable language directed at person	* No TW previously issued	1 TW assessed & any TF listed in 13.G.2 (red italics)	Player fails to report for match 15 min after called	Flagrant & particularly injurious behaviour affecting tournament	From tournament venue
	Throwing paddle	<i>Aggressively or recklessly throwing paddle (not striking anything)</i>	After TF issued any other TW	NB: if match 1-15 or 1-21, 10 min after call. TD may permit longer	Using ethnic, religious, racial, sexist or homophobic slurs	TD discretion
	Aggressive arguing with official, player, spectator	<i>Extremely objectionable language or profanity</i>	Player fails to report 10 min after match called	2 TW + TF (red italics) or TF + TF	Injury through ball or paddle abuse	
	Ball abuse Profanity (audible or visual)	<i>Threats or challenges to any person</i>	NB: matches with 1-15 or 1-21 = MF	Refusal to wear starting server ID	Spitting or coughing on person	
	Disrupting flow of game	<i>Challenging referee rules interpretation & losing with no TO remaining</i>		IMMEDIATE MATCH FORFEIT	Not exhibiting best effort	
	Repeated appeals	<i>Extreme unsportsmanlike behaviour</i>		Deliberate, aggressive physical contact opponent, official, spectator		
	Challenging ref rules interpretation & losing = TW + loss of TO	<i>Requesting a MTO with no valid condition & no TO remaining</i>		Aggressively or recklessly striking ball or throwing paddle putting individual or property at risk		
	Request MTO not approved = TW + loss of TO	<i>Hitting/throwing ball not in play - hitting person</i>		TD MATCH FORFEIT		
	Minor actions unsportsmanlike behaviour, questioning line calls that are continually reversed			Failure to comply with tournament rules, improper conduct, abuse of hospitality, other rules & procedures		
	Receiving illegal coaching			Playing with a non approved paddle		Update 22-04-11

* A warning is appropriate for a behaviour that does not rise to the level for the next harsher level of penalty.

APPENDIX E – DUAL REFEREE OPTION

In an increasing number of tournaments, the Tournament Director or the Head Referee choose to use a Dual Referee Option, one acting as the Lead Referee and the other as the Second Referee.

Teamwork is essential to the success of the Dual Referee Option. This refereeing option can be used, with or without Line Judges.

A. Goals

- Increase the accuracy of calls involving the NVZ and Players crossing the plane of the net.
- Support the Lead Referee in officiating all aspects of the match.
- Assure the accuracy of Referee calls.

B. Lead Referee Responsibilities

The Lead Referee has the same responsibilities as usual and makes all final decisions regarding the resolution of any disagreements and the assessment of penalties. During the serve, the Lead Referee will concentrate on the Server's service motion and the proper ball release. He will also check the readiness of the Second Referee before resuming play after any time-outs or lengthy interruption.

C. Second Referee Responsibilities

The Second Referee's primary responsibility is to assist the Lead Referee in calling faults for non-volley zone and plane of the net violations occurring on both sides of the net. The Second Referee will also observe all other Player activity on and around the court and specifically during dead ball times. The Second Referee will focus on the placement of the Server's feet or wheelchair during the serve.

D. Calls

- The Second Referee will call immediately any of the following violations:
 - NVZ faults
 - Plane of the net faults
 - Service foot faults
 - Short serves
 - Player safety issues
 - Double bounces (triple bounces for wheelchair player)
 - Player hit by the ball
- The Second Referee will signal other violations, in particular any of the following, by a raised hand after the rally:
 - Out of position Players
 - Incorrect Server or Receiver
 - Paddle thrown
 - Unsportsmanlike behaviour
 - Ball deliberately damaged
 - Service motion violations
 - Server applying spin to the ball

E. Positioning

The Second Referee stands on the opposite end of the net from the Lead Referee and join the Lead Referee at the center of the court during all time-outs.

F. Scorekeeping

The Second Referee will not maintain a scoresheet.

G. Appeals

All Player appeals should be directed to the Lead Referee. If the Lead Referee did not clearly see the action being appealed, and cannot make a decisive call, the Lead Referee should solicit the opinion of the Second Referee. If the Second Referee can make a decisive call, the Second Referee's call will stand.

H. Conflicting Calls and Disagreements

If there is a simultaneous or conflicting call (e.g., Lead Referee calls crossing the plane fault on one Team and Second Referee calls touching of the net fault on opponents), or if the Second Referee makes a fault call with which the Lead Referee disagrees, the Lead Referee will call a Referee timeout. Both Referees will meet at the center of the net to discuss a solution. The Lead Referee has the responsibility to make the final decision and to notify the Players. Overruling of a Second Referee fault call is expected to be extremely rare and should be done only if the Lead Referee is absolutely certain that there was an error, in which case there will be a replay of the rally.

I. Pre-Match Briefings Referees

Prior to the pre-match briefing with the Players, the Lead Referee will brief the Second Referee on the expectations for how they will work together as a team. The Head Referee should observe this briefing to make sure both Referees (who may have never worked together) understand their respective responsibilities and their obligation to get each call correct and to uphold the professional reputations of each other and the Referee community as a whole.

J. Pre-Match Briefings Players

The Second Referee will attend the pre-match briefing with the Players. The Lead Referee will explain the role of the Second Referee and advise the Players to direct all calls and appeals to the Lead Referee.

APPENDIX F – TYPICAL SCORESHEETS

Event: _____

Team 1: _____

MTO ☐ MTO ☐

Serve


	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17

Match: _____

Court: _____

Referee: _____

Format: _____



Timeout

TW/TF

TW/TF

Timeout

17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	

Serve

MTO ☐

Team 2: _____

MTO ☐

Event: _____

Team 1: _____

MTO ☐ MTO ☐

Serve


	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Match: _____

Court: _____

Referee: _____

Format: _____



Timeout

TW/TF

TW/TF

Timeout

21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--

Serve

MTO ☐

Team 2: _____

MTO ☐