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Seminar for umpires

GOOD ROUTINE
for a
GOOD PRACTICE
Routine

**Bad connotation:** “stupid” automatism without reflection about and without differentiation or adaptation to a situation

**Positive aspects:** organized preparation and standardized procedures (“always the same”) allow

- gaining and maintaining confidence and respect of participants (players and coaches)
- consistent awareness for and concentration on the items requiring specific attention and actions, (i.e. on match conduct)
Preparation before and upon arrival

*Check list* before departure: relax and confident

*Information* about tournament and hotels: helpful also to others

*Umpire briefing* (sent out & day before): adequate questions and actions, contact with umpire partner

*Locations* in venue and field-of-play
Preparation before match (1)

*Umpire* uniform and *utensils*?

*Cards*: always same place, nothing else added

*Team work*: arrival at venue, organization of jobs before, during and after match, walk-in and -out

*Time keeping*: Typically A-U except time-out and injury → U, Time-keeper calls loud “time”

*Communication during match*: eye-contact, discrete signs
Preparation before match (2)

**Walk-in:** Who carries what to playing area? Typically: U match ball, match sheet, rackets of (first) single, A-U other balls and rackets of team-match. For doubles: to be decided by team or R (≠ routine). For final stages: to be decided by R (≠ routine).

**During match:** Who manages rackets during team match and keeps and delivers spare balls? Typically A-U.

**Walk-out:** Who carries empty bags during walk out? Typically A-U. How to organize walk-out?
Call area

Locations, dimensions, organization, referees are different (≠ routine)

Many racket inspections are “pretending”

Thorough visual inspection: damages, also blades, dimensions, then LARC

**Flatness**: 2 directions, gauge decides if flat

**Thickness**: gauge incision decides

If gauge tells “not flat”, “too thick”, report to referee
At table (1)

Go *directly to working position* (Presentation if instructed ≠ routine)

*U* takes rackets out of bag, looks at them, puts them next to and on the same side of net (“Side next to coaches, one red up other black up” ≠ routine)

*A-U* checks, adjusts net tension and height and if needed cleans table, then checks floor and surrounds, keeps empty racket bags
At table (2)

**Before match:**
As soon as both players arrived or after finishing jobs, A-U marks 0-0 game score, U tosses.
U starts practice period once A-U is ready for time-keeping.

**During match:**
Hand signals, and announcements or calls with audible voice: all always the same (if R instructs differently ≠ routine).
At table (3)

During match:
Time-out and time calls: always loud ! voice
A-U: always rotates manual score-board after 6 points by 45° (never 90°!)
Between games: A-U always goes around table and verifies table and floor on both ends
At table (4)

During match:
After game (and match): U points to winner’s side immediately after last point signal, and observes players going to corner, then starts writing.

After match:
Proper (standing) hand shake, then U starts writing Signatures as instructed by R (% routine). Before winner signs, ask “Can you please check before signing?”
Next to R desk: U and A-U verify match sheet.
Net tension and height

With finger, then with **heavy net gauge** in the **middle of the net check tension**, **no use of light gauge**. Tension adjustment approximate by increments (chain balls or limbs).

With **light net gauge**, about 15 cm inside of table sides (not in the middle) **check height**, **no use of heavy gauge**. Start at U’s side.

Always use simple, efficient, quick and unfussy **method** described in next slides.
Position of net gauges
(do not use together!)

① = heavy net gauge at middle of the net
② = light net gauge at 25–30 cm from net post
**Step 1:** The net gauge is put on the net keeping its **plane diagonal** to the plane of the net and the **fingers are taken off** it.

**Step 2a:** If the net gauge plane **by itself** does not swing to vertical (“gauge does not stand up”) the tension or the height is too low. Adjustment is required.

**Step 2b:** If the net gauge **by itself** stands up (fig 6),

- the **tension is OK** if the heavy net gauge touches or nearly touches the table surface
- the **height is OK** if the light net gauge touches the table surface

By **slightly tipping with a finger on** the top of the **net gauge** the match official can safely find out if the bottom of the gauge does not touch the table surface: in that case (the tension or) the height of the net is too big and adjustment is required.
Net tension gauge swings to vertical: tension ok or too high?

N.B. If heavy gauge does not swing to vertical, tension is too low!
Net height gauge swings to vertical: height ok or net too high?

N.B. If light gauge does not swing to vertical, net is too low!
Routine: conclusion

*Good* routines (good practice) should

- be understandable, simple and observable
- stay unchanged (like “winning team”)
- be achieved with accuracy and skill
- be applied ALWAYS (as frequently as possible).

Actions or announcements used rarely or often neglected cannot become (good) routine. Regular auto-evaluation requested!!