

Conduct on Court

(created by Ian Allanach)

Conduct on court



- Using the code of conduct
- Anticipating the need to use the code of conduct – defusing situations (where possible)
- You cannot defuse a serious incident of indiscipline – deal with it

What is defusing about?

- Aware of the potential for more difficulty
- Not quite at conduct rule stage
- Early intervention
- Being alert, not “afraid” to come in
- Match management – your responsibilities to the players, the spectators, the sponsors, the game.

When is defusing useful?



- You are not always refereeing professionals
- You have a responsibility to educate
- **Defusing applies to all** but may be more effective with juniors, developing players

Abuse of equipment

- Low key instances : throwing racket in air or tapping it on side wall
- Striking ball unnecessarily at end of rally (low level of force)
- Hitting glass wall with hand (low level of force)

Referee comment

- “Stop – Mr Smith– that’s twice you have struck the wall with your racket (or equivalent statement). Don’t do it again please”.
- **Usefulness – medium** : situation may warrant immediate Conduct Rule

Verbal or visible dissent



- Arguing, trying to analyse positions on court – “I was here, he was there”, saying “no way”, “you’re joking” or similar
- Shaking head, laughing at referee, making pointing gestures with racket, standing and staring at referee with hands on hips.

Referee comment



- “Stop – Mr Smith – You have now argued with a number of decisions – no more dissent on court please.”
- “Stop – Mr Smith – there have been a number of situations where you have shown your dissent on court – no more please”.
- Either of the above could be after **one** incident if **high** level
- **Usefulness – very high** – should stop debates

Abuse of official, opponent, spectators

- Saying “rubbish” or “poor decision” or “that’s bad refereeing”, etc
- Glaring at opponent, making comments such as “Get out of the way” or “Watch it – no need for that”, not returning ball courteously
- Telling audience to “Shut up “ or making pointing gestures at them.

Referee comment

- “Stop – Mr Smith – I need to see more respect for others when you are on the court. No further comments to (your opponent, etc)”
- **Usefulness – medium** : necessary in some contentious professional matches

Time - wasting

- Could be late back on court. Amount dictates action but if 15 seconds or so “Mr Smith – you were 15 seconds late – on court on time please”
- Could be tiring player. “Mr Smith – play must be continuous”. (Careful if both players tired)
- **Usefulness – low** – not many incidents that warrant defusing as opposed to the use of the conduct rule

Physical contact

- Barging into opponent, pushing off opponent, hefty contact, etc
- “Stop – Mr Smith – I see you making the effort to play the ball – but watch the physical contact with your opponent.”
- **Usefulness – medium** – but useful early in some games

What is the follow up?

- You have attempted to prevent a deteriorating situation
- Any more and Conduct Rule is applied (allowing for time-lapse)
- The players should get the message
- The spectators appreciate your actions

Defusing summary

- The previous guidelines are for minor lapses in behaviour
- You are dealing with this behaviour at an appropriate level
- You are not coming in too early, you don't wait too long, you monitor, you manage

Applying Rule 17

- A “Guidelines” handout is being made available
- These “Guidelines” are also on the WSF website
- Summary of Offences with Minor and Major categories
- Minor = Conduct Warning
- Major = Conduct Stroke

Abuse of equipment

- Minor – throwing racket on floor after losing game, hitting ball hard at end of rally
- Major – deliberately breaking racket, smashing racket against wall, hitting ball out of court, throwing racket out of court

Dissent

- Minor – questioning a decision
- Major – prolonged or repeated questioning of or disagreement with decisions
- (Defusing appropriate)

Audible or visible obscenity



- Minor – muttered expletive, blaspheming
- Major – audible obscenity
- Defusing inappropriate

Abuse of official

- Minor – unflattering comments about official or decisions
- Major – pejorative comments about ...
- **But**
- Severe – hitting ball at official or spectators, throwing racket at..., = Conduct Game or Match depending on severity and danger

Time wasting

- Minor – a few seconds late to court, taking excessive time to serve
- Major – very late back to court, prolonged discussion with referee

Excessive physical contact



- Minor – running into opponent
- Major – physical abuse of opponent
- **But**
- Severe – injuring, dangerous play which injures = Conduct Game or Match depending on severity and extent of injury

Unsporting conduct

- Minor – negative comments to opponent
- Major – repeated negative comments, any attempt to intimidate opponent
- Defusing appropriate

Coaching



- Minor – first occurrence
- Major – second occurrence – expulsion of offending person in addition to Conduct Stroke

Repeated and excessive bad conduct



- Second occurrence – referee can apply same penalty or a more serious one
- **But**
- Third occurrence – a Conduct Stroke is mandatory – this assumes the first two penalties were both warnings

Referee tone

- The Conduct Rule is part of decision-making
- Not apologetic or aggressive or emotional
- Decisive, controlled, clear
- Make sure player hears – “(Stop) Mr Smith – Conduct stroke for.....”

Importance

- It is essential that conduct be managed successfully
- This is a key factor in distinguishing good referees from very good referees