

Rules Clinic

(version 3)

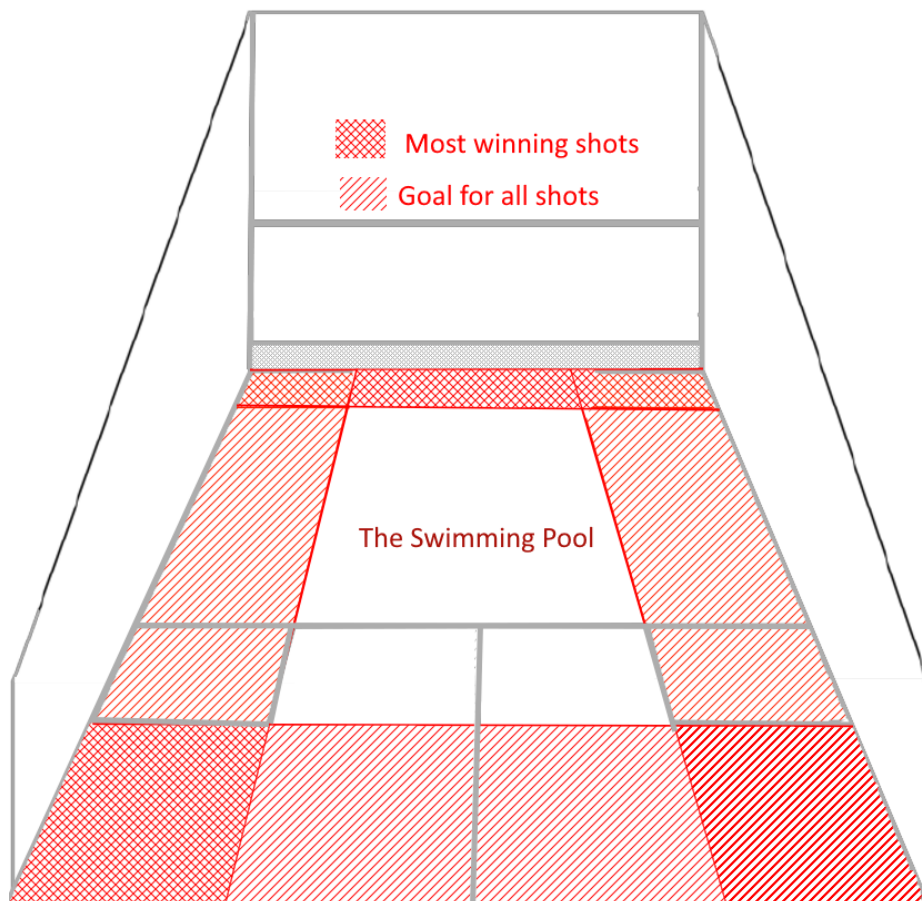
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Squash is a game where players occupy a relatively confined space moving around each other, often at a fast pace. Two principles are essential for enjoyable play:

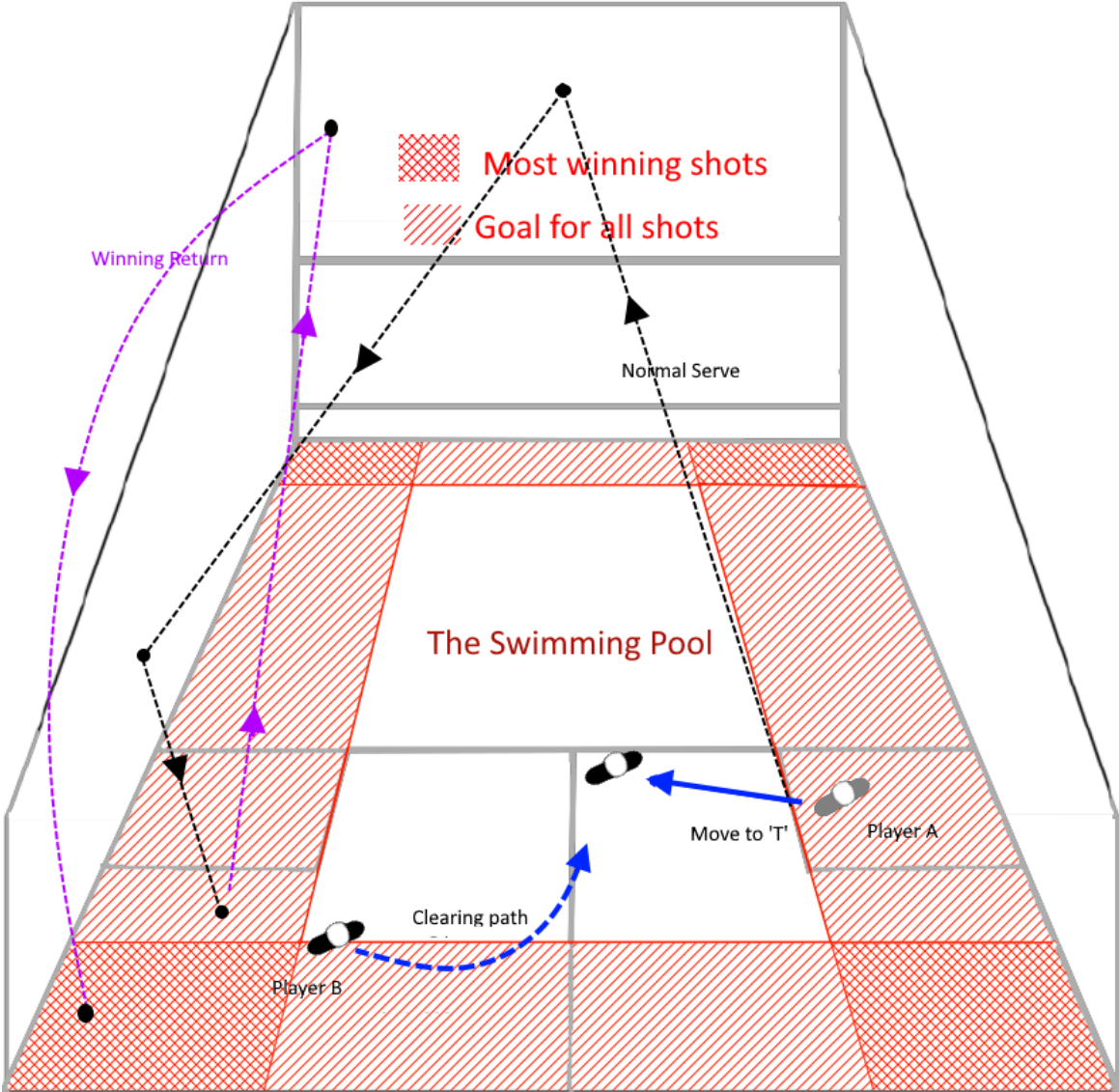
Safety: Players must always place safety first & not take any action that could endanger the opponent.

Fair play: Players must respect their opponent & play with honesty to make the game fun and enjoyable.

To keep the game safe & make it challenging for the opponent, a player should aspire to hit their shots so that the ball bounces in the most winning shot zones shown in the illustration below. This will minimize interference incidents between players making the game enjoyable for both.



A number of questions have been raised about the “swimming pool”. A few people have interpreted the “pool” area as the one in which most play is to be conducted. This was not the intent. A ball which is returned into the “pool” area is deemed to be a weak return, in that it gives the returner too many possibilities to make a winning shot. A ball placed into the red areas raises the degree of difficulty for the return. The following illustration indicated a possible sequence of shots for a winning point.



RULES YOU SHOULD KNOW

A. KEEP THE GAME SAFE

Stop and play a let (IE. play the rally over again) if any dangerous situation arises.— for example, where you risk hitting your opponent with the racket or ball, or risk barging your opponent. The rules provide penalties for dangerous and unsporting play.

B. GET OUT OF YOUR OPPONENT'S WAY

The incoming striker has the right of way. The outgoing player must get out of an opponent's way. That is, after hitting the ball, a player must provide an opponent with the 'three freedoms', namely:

1. To be able to move directly to the ball without obstruction
2. The space for an unrestricted swing
3. To be able to strike the ball to any part of the front wall.

A player must make every effort to avoid interference and provide an opponent with the above three freedoms. There are penalties against a player failing to do this.

No. 1 means: The incoming striker should not have to run around an opponent to get to the ball. The outgoing player must not move back into the path of the incoming striker. After hitting, a player may have to circle back to position on the T to allow an opponent straight direct access to the ball.

No. 2 means: The outgoing player must provide room for the striker to have a reasonable swing and for the striker to play any shot.

No. 3 means: A player must allow the striker to play to any part of the front wall. That is, the player cannot stand or recover in such a way that the striker's shot is restricted to just part of the front wall.

C. NO BLOCKING, CROWDING OR RESTRICTING

The incoming striker has the right of way. An opponent may not block access, crowd the swing or restrict returns to just part of the front wall.

LET, NO LET, STROKE - HOW TO DECIDE?

LET

A let is where the rally is played again.

A let should be allowed when:

1. A player stops for safety reasons
2. The incoming striker suffers accidental interference and could have got to and returned the ball
3. The result of a rally is undecided or a shot in it has been appealed and is undecided. Lets are also played if officials are undecided or (when there are no officials) when players can't agree whether a let or a stroke should be awarded.

NO LET

No let is where a player appeals for a let but the appeal is refused.

This happens when the player could not have got to and returned the ball, or where there was no interference.

STROKE

A stroke is where the rally is awarded to a player as a penalty against the opponent.

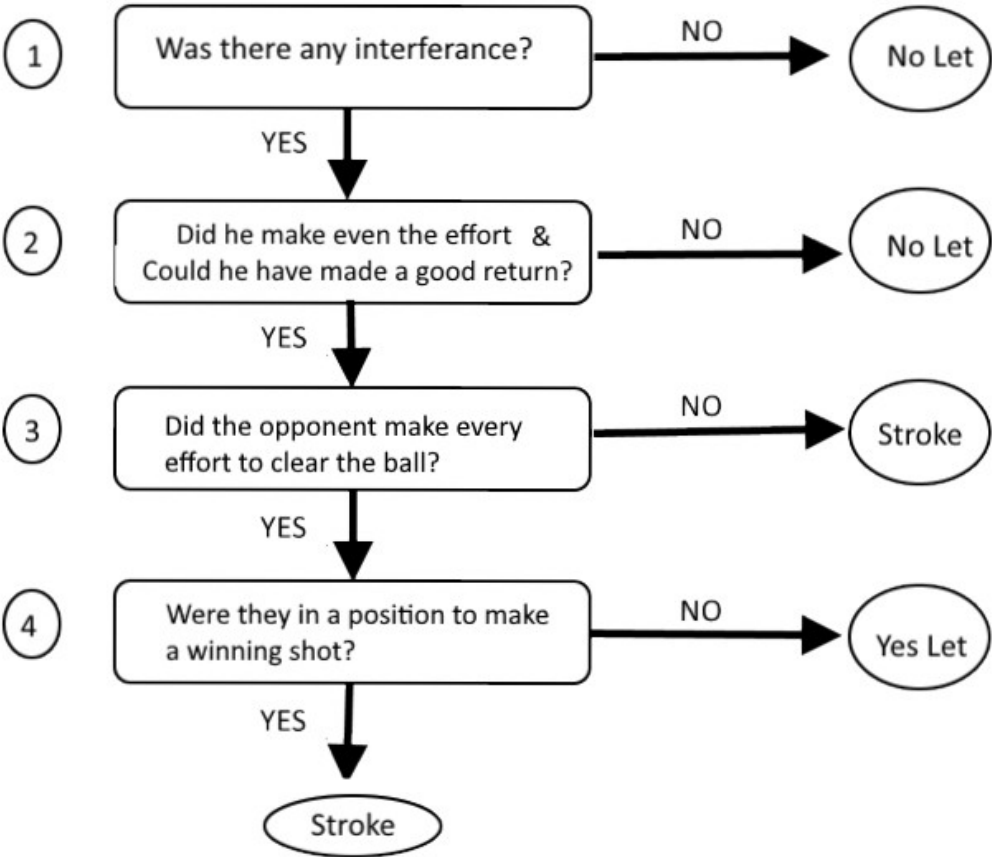
A stroke is awarded or given when:

1. The incoming striker is in a position to win the rally but suffers interference
2. The incoming striker would clearly have struck the opponent with the ball going directly to the front wall
3. The outgoing player did not make every effort to clear.

A stroke is awarded if the interference was the fault of the outgoing player; for example, if the player has played a weak shot back to himself and is in the opponent's way.

Where there are no officials; players must agree when a stroke should be awarded. Normally the offending player makes a sporting acknowledgement that he/she is at fault and agrees to give the opponent a stroke.

Decision making process



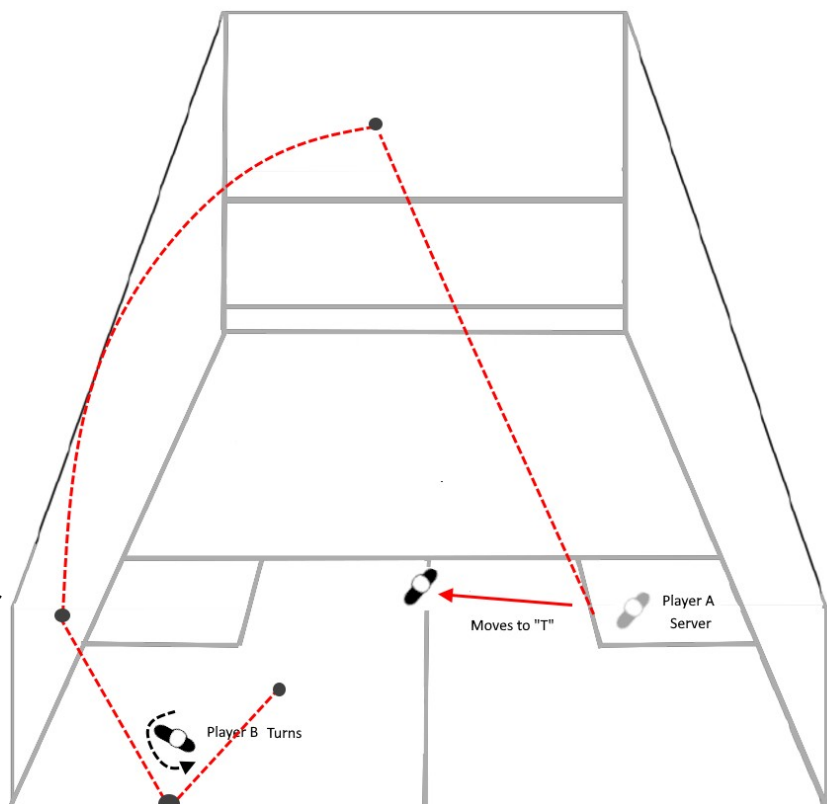
TURNING CLARIFICATIONS

If the striker has either followed the ball round, or allowed it to pass around him or her - in either case striking the ball to the right of the body after the ball had passed around behind the striker from the left (or vice-versa) - then the striker has "TURNED"

If the striker could have struck the ball without turning, but turned in order to create an opportunity to request a let, no let is allowed.

If the striker turns and strikes the ball and the ball hits the non striker on the way to the front wall, a stroke is awarded to the non striker.

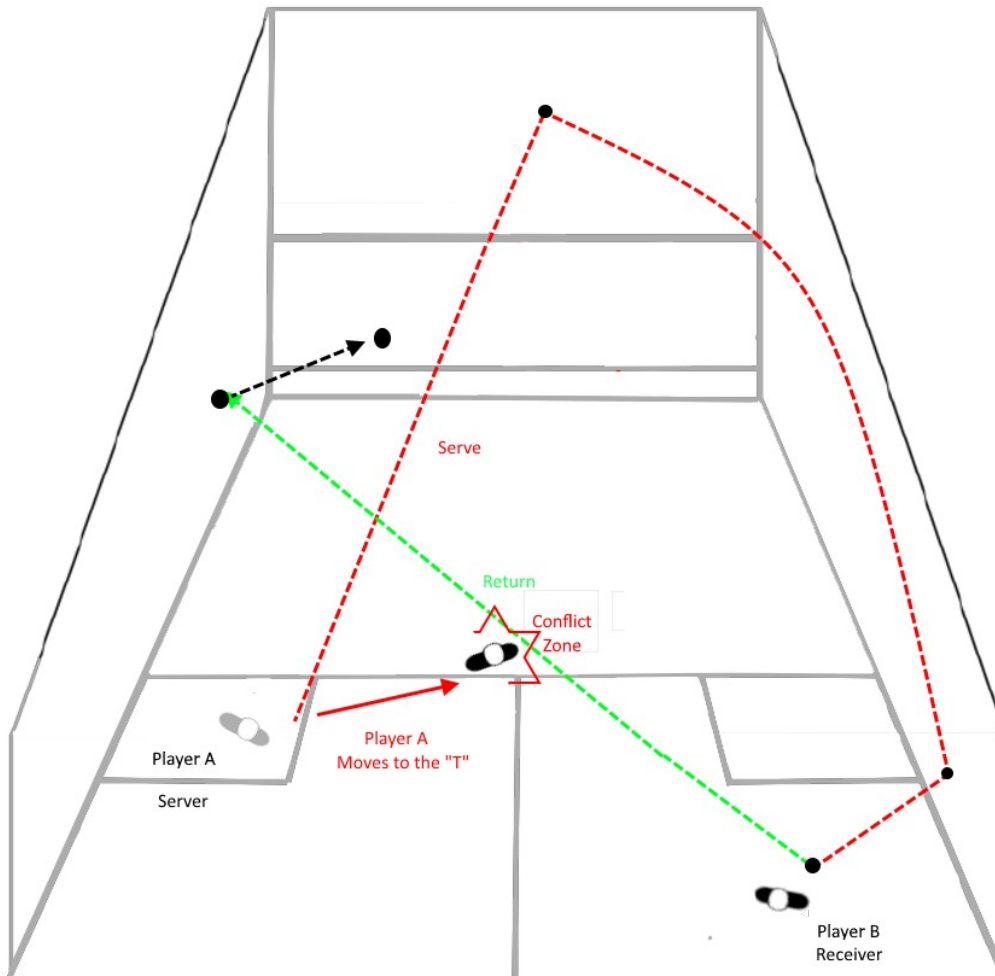
If the striker makes a further attempt to play the ball by turning and stops play for fear of hitting his opponent and requests a LET for interference; then a LET is played, provided the striker could have made a good return. (This is the recommended course of action in situations where a player wants to turn but is unsure of the opponent's position).



When the striker turns and there is a referee, the referee must always consider whether the action was dangerous & rule accordingly.

Legal but Dangerous

Occasionally a shot can be legally played but is deemed to be a dangerous shot. The most common is the reverse boast when the striker is in the back of the court and the opponent is moving to the "T" area (shown in the illustration below). The reverse boast from the back of the court often results in the opponent getting hit by the ball. Hence in the spirit of fairness and sportsmanship this shot should not be played. This shot is perfectly safe to play when the striker is in front of the opponent. The striker turning and hitting the ball (as described in the previous section) is also considered a dangerous shot to play.



Appendix

ABBREVIATED RULES OF SQUASH

(Courtesy of Squash Ontario)

THE SCORING (Rule 2)

A match is the best of 3 or 5 games.

Each game is played to 11 points. The player who scores 11 points first wins the game except that if the score reaches 10-all, the game continues until one player leads by two points.

Either player may score points (PAR – point–a–rally). The server, on winning a rally, scores a point and retains the service; the receiver, on winning a rally, scores a point and becomes the server.

THE WARM-UP (Rule 3)

Before the start of a match, the two players are allowed up to 4 minutes (2 minutes on each side) to “warm-up” themselves and the ball on the match court.

When a ball has been changed during a match, or if the match has been resumed after some delay, the players warm-up the ball to playing condition.

The ball may be warmed up by either player during any interval in the match.

THE SERVICE (Rule 4)

Play commences with a service. The player to serve first is decided by the spin of a racket. Thereafter, the server continues serving until losing a rally, when the opponent becomes the server and the server becomes “hand out”.

The player who wins the preceding game serves first in the next game. At the beginning of each game and when the service changes from one player to the other, the server can serve from either service box. After winning a rally the server then continues serving from the alternate box. To serve a player stands with at least part of one foot on the floor within the service box. For a service to be good, it is served directly onto the front wall above the service line and below the out line so that on its

return, unless volleyed, it reaches the floor within the back quarter of the court opposite to the server's box.

GOOD RETURN (Rule 6)

A return is good if the ball, before it has bounced twice on the floor, is returned correctly by the striker onto the front wall above the tin and below the out line, without first touching the floor. The ball may hit the side walls and/or the back wall before reaching the front wall.

A return is not good if it is "NOT UP" (ball struck after bouncing more than once on the floor, or not struck correctly, or a double hit); "DOWN" (the ball after being struck, hits the floor before the front wall or hits the tin) or "OUT" (the ball hits a wall on or above the out line).

RALLIES (Rule 8)

After a good service has been delivered the players hit the ball in turn until one fails to make a good return.

A rally consists of a service and a number of good returns. A player wins a rally if the opponent fails to make a good service or return of the ball or if, before the player has attempted to hit the ball, it touches the opponent (including racket or clothing) when the opponent is the non-striker.

NOTE: AT ANY TIME DURING A RALLY A PLAYER SHOULD NOT STRIKE THE BALL IF THERE IS A DANGER OF HITTING THE OPPONENT WITH THE BALL OR RACKET. IN SUCH CASES PLAY STOPS AND THE RALLY IS EITHER PLAYED AGAIN ("A LET") OR THE OPPONENT IS PENALIZED.

HITTING AN OPPONENT WITH THE BALL (Rule 9)

If a player strikes the ball, which, before reaching the front wall, hits the opponent, or the opponent's racket or clothing, play stops.

- ◆ If the return would have been good and the ball would have struck the front wall without first touching any other wall, the striker wins the rally, provided the striker did not "turn".

- ◆ If the ball either had struck, or would have struck, any other wall and the return would have been good, a let is played.
- ◆ If the return would not have been good, the striker loses the rally.

TURNING (Rule 9)

If the striker has either followed the ball round, or allowed it to pass around him or her - in either case striking the ball to the right of the body after the ball had passed to the left (or vice-versa) - then the striker has "TURNED"

.If the opponent is struck by the ball after the striker has turned, the rally is awarded to the opponent.

If the striker could have hit the ball without turning, but turned in order to create an opportunity to request a let, no let is allowed.

If the striker, while turning, making a further attempt to play the ball, stops play for fear of striking the opponent, then a let is played. This is the recommended course of action in situations where a player wants to turn but is unsure of the opponent's position.

FURTHER ATTEMPTS (Rule 10)

A player, after attempting to strike the ball and missing, may make a further attempt to return the ball.

- ◆ If a further attempt would have resulted in a good return, but the ball hits the opponent, a let is played.
- ◆ If the return would not have been good, the striker loses the rally.

INTERFERENCE (Rule 12)

When it is his or her turn to play the ball, a player is entitled to freedom from interference by the opponent.

To avoid interference, the opponent must try to provide the player with unobstructed direct access to the ball, a fair view of the ball, space to complete a swing at the ball and freedom to play the ball directly to any part of the front wall.

A player, finding the opponent interfering with the play, can accept the interference and play on, or stop play. It is preferable to stop play if there is a possibility of colliding with the opponent, or of hitting him or her with racket or ball.

When play has stopped as a result of interference the general guidelines are:

- ◆ The player is entitled to a let if he or she could have returned the ball and the opponent has made every effort to avoid the interference.
- ◆ The player is not entitled to a let (i.e. loses the rally) if he or she could not have returned the ball, or accepts the interference and plays on, or the interference was so minimal that the player's access to and strike at the ball was not affected.
- ◆ The player is entitled to a stroke (i.e. wins the rally) if the opponent did not make every effort to avoid the interference, or if the player would have hit a winning return, or if the player would have struck the opponent with the ball going directly to the front wall.

LETS (Rule 13)

A let is an undecided rally. The rally does not count and the server serves again from the same box.

In addition to lets allowed as indicated in the paragraphs above, lets can be allowed in other circumstances.

For example, a let may be allowed if the ball in play **making a further attempt to play the ball**, or if the striker refrains from hitting the ball owing to a reasonable fear of injuring the opponent.

A let must be allowed if the receiver is not ready and does not attempt to return the service, or if the ball breaks during play.

CONTINUITY OF PLAY (Rule 7)

Play is expected to be continuous in each game once a player has started serving. There should be no delay between the end of one rally and the start of the next one.

In between all games an interval of 90 seconds is permitted. Players are permitted to change items of clothing or equipment if necessary.

BLEEDING, INJURY AND ILLNESS (Rule 16)

If an injury occurs which involves bleeding, the bleeding must be stopped before the player can continue. A player is allowed a reasonable time to attend to a bleeding wound.

If the bleeding was caused solely by the opponent's action, the injured player wins the match.

If the bleeding recurs no further delay is allowed, except that the player can concede a game, using the 90 second period between games to attend to the wound and stop the bleeding. If unable to stop it, the player must concede the match.

For an injury not involving bleeding, it must be decided whether the injury was either caused by the opponent or self inflicted or contributed to by both players.

- ◆ If caused by the opponent, the injured player wins the match if any recovery time is needed.
- ◆ If self-inflicted, the injured player is allowed 3 minutes to recover and must then play on, or concede a game using the 90 second rest period between games to recover.
- ◆ If contributed by both players, the injured player is allowed an hour to recover.

A player who is ill must play on or can take a rest period by conceding a game and using the 90 second interval to recover. Cramps, feeling sick and breathlessness (including asthma) are considered illnesses. If a player vomits on court, the opponent wins the match.

DUTIES OF PLAYERS (Rule 15)

Rule 15 provides guidelines for players. For example 15.6 states that deliberate distraction is not allowed.

Players should read this rule in full. Some of the 8 sub-sections deal with situations related to matches under the control of officials (Referee/Marker). The use of officials is not covered in this abbreviated version.

CONDUCT ON COURT (Rule 17)

Offensive, disruptive or intimidating behavior in squash is not acceptable.

Included in this category are: audible and visible obscenities, verbal and physical abuse, dissent, abuse of racket, court or ball, unnecessary physical contact, excessive racket swing, unfair warm-up, time-wasting, late back on court, deliberate or dangerous play or action and coaching (except between games).

Full updated set of rules can be seen on this UK site:

http://squashplayer.co.uk/rules/latest_rules/Rules-of-Singles-2020.pdf