



THE ITF OFFICIATING PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

The world of tennis officiating has changed enormously in the last 30 years. In that time, the Code of Conduct has been developed and a standardised approach to the application of the Rules has been established. This has been thanks to emphasis on the concept of professional officiating, which started with the Men's Tennis Council and which has been significantly expanded by the ITF, ATP, Grand Slam Tournaments and WTA.

In 1999, a Joint Certification Programme for Officials was created by these organisations. For the first time in the history of tennis officiating, each tennis official's education, ability and experience are acknowledged by a certification that all four organisations recognise.

The need for good officiating at all levels of the game is widely accepted and it is for that purpose that the ITF has developed a global programme to improve the quality of officiating from grass roots to Davis Cup, Fed Cup and the Grand Slams Tournaments.

SCHOOLS

The education and training of Officials is a crucial part of the ITF Officiating Programme. Success in this area helps meet our aim of raising standards worldwide and ensuring that there is a consistent approach to the Rules of Tennis, Code of Conduct and procedures.

There are Schools for four levels of officiating:

National Officiating Schools

These Schools are administered by the National Associations and are for new entrants to tennis officiating and concentrate on the Rules of Tennis and the basic techniques and procedures of Chair and Line Umpiring.

Level 1 Schools

ITF Level 1 Officiating Schools provide the opportunity to obtain a Green Badge in Officiating and become ITF Certified. This project started in 2011, following the demands from National Associations from regions such as South and Central America, and Africa to teach our Officiating Schools in French and/or Spanish, official languages of the ITF. They are taught and examined in French or Spanish by professional officials. These Schools are intended for those officials who have built up experience of officiating at Professional and/or Non-Professional events. These Schools are for Chair Umpires only. Those who successfully pass the written and practical examinations will be certified as a Green Badge Chair Umpire.

Level 2 Schools

ITF Level 2 Officiating Schools provide the opportunity to obtain a White Badge in Officiating and become ITF Certified. These Schools are taught and examined in English only. They are held all over the world quite frequently and are taught by professional officials. These Schools are intended for those officials who have built up experience of officiating at Professional and/or Non-Professional events.

Those who successfully pass the written examination in English, and the practical examination (Chair Umpires only) will be certified as a White Badge Chair Umpire, a White



Badge Chief Umpire and/or a White Badge Referee according to modules completed and passed.

Essentially the Level 1 and Level 2 Schools are the same in content, but Level 1 Schools are taught in French or Spanish and are for Chair Umpires only. In order to apply for a Level 3 School, you must hold a White Badge Certification. However, you do not need to hold an ITF Green Badge Certification to apply for a Level 2 School.

Level 3 Schools

These Schools are administered under the Joint Certification Programme between the ITF, ATP, Grand Slam Tournaments and the WTA. Level 3 Schools are for those Chair Umpires, Referees and Chief Umpires who have considerable experience of officiating in professional tennis. The Schools focus on advanced techniques and procedures and prepare the students for the pressures of International officiating. Those who pass the combination of written and oral examinations become International Officials, certified by the ITF, ATP, Grand Slam Tournaments and WTA.

EVALUATIONS

Evaluations are designed to help each official improve. They help in the continuing education of an official throughout his/her career. The ITF, ATP, Grand Slam Tournaments and WTA use one Evaluation Form at all professional tournaments. All evaluations are reviewed and are used in determining an official's certification and in selecting officials for Schools and tournaments. These evaluations combined with a solid work record will enable you to be considered for promotion to Silver or Gold Badge. These promotions are discussed annually at the recertification meeting.

CONCLUSION

As a participant in a Level 1 or 2 School, you have the potential of joining the elite group of certified officials all over the world. Those who work hard, pass the School and receive an ITF Official's Badge will continue to learn through active officiating and evaluations. White Badge Officials who gain a lot of experience, including outside their own country, will have the opportunity to attend a Level 3 School.

However, to improve as an Official, you have to officiate as much as possible at all levels of events and you have to learn from your experiences. To progress through the ITF Officiating Programme is not automatic - it requires ability, commitment and the capacity to put what you learn into practice.

The ITF Officiating Programme is committed to raising standards all over the world and to helping National Associations improve officiating in their country. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

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