

Guidelines For Roving Referees

This is a type of refereeing duty that has become more prevalent in recent years especially for early rounds of competitions or where tournaments involve a round robin phase.

The rules specify that where no official referee is appointed that the non-striker shall be the referee for that game. It is unfortunate but a fact that not all players know the rules of the game as well as perhaps they might. Tournament Directors (TDs) will therefore use referees on roving patrol covering a number of tables who will provide the expert rule advice as necessary. This use of referees can only be effective if the referee is diligent in his duties and understands the requirements of the role.

It is the duty of a roving referee to assist all players in the execution of playing according to the rules.

The roving referee should:

- Be available to assist but can only make a decision when asked and is a witness to the shot(s) in question.
- Be aware of the location of any spare equipment that may be required e.g. spiders or swan necks.
- Be observant of all matches over which he has control. Move and observe a particular table where they believe that the situation may exist or is developing where a decision may be required. e.g. where a Foul and Miss situation has occurred or is developing, the roving referee should feel free to give his opinion ***whether asked for or not***.
- Clean any ball on request
- Assist with resetting balls at the end of a frame whenever possible, but not to the detriment of any other match that is in progress where a decision may be required.
- Ensure that match sheets are completed correctly and signed by both players.
- Block tables at conclusion of a match (do not brush unless absolutely essential) and prepare the table for next match
- Advise the TD of the availability of any table that has not been used for some time.
- Advise players of rules as necessary, with due regard for the following:
 - If one player is aware of the rule relating to a situation then the referee shall not tell the other player as this may be perceived as giving an advantage to that player.
 - If neither player is aware of the rule relating to the situation then the referee may, if both players consent, advise them of the rule and ensure that it is applied correctly.



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- Be observant of any coaching taking place (either verbally or by head or hand movements) and immediately bring this to the attention of the Tournament Director.
- The referee shall ensure that all matches are played in good spirit. The TD will have advised the players on standards of behaviour and will have briefed his referees or had them present during the player briefing. The referee should take his lead from this briefing and warn players where their conduct becomes unsuitable. A roving referee who believes that a player's conduct can be considered ungentlemanly shall advise the TD of the situation immediately and the TD shall make a decision about awarding of a frame, game or match.
- The referee may wish to remove excessive amounts of balls from ball carriers during play, but must be aware that they do not interfere with the flow of play on any table or engage in excessive movement in the eye line of a striker at an adjacent table.

Each TD may have their own specific requirements in addition to the above. Where such requirements exist the TD shall brief the roving referee prior to the commencement of play.

The demeanour and standards expected of a roving referee are no different from normal refereeing duties. Roving referees should wear gloves at all times as they may be handling balls. They should carry a ball marker and pen as a minimum. Roving referees should not be sitting down during their duties unless specifically allowed by the TD.

It is well-known that this type of refereeing duty makes it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time. TDs should therefore ensure that adequate breaks are afforded each referee on roving patrol and that they should not be engaged in that duty for excessive periods of time. (90 minutes per session is a guide).

Revised July 2010.