

Settling Disputes

Disagreements between players on line calling and scoring are common within competitive tennis. When disputes occur within official competitions it's important that they are handled in a fair, consistent and efficient manner. The following steps detail how to settle disputes.

Line calls

This involves a player making a subjective decision which ultimately could have a big affect on the outcome of the match. This a hot issue particularly for Juniors who for many reasons, often do not accurately see the ball in relation to lines.

Dealing with line call disputes (non-clay courts):

- Ask the player whose call it was, if they are sure of their call.
 - If yes, the call stands.
 - If no, then the point should be replayed.
- If you think it would be beneficial to have the match supervised (and this is possible), have the Supervisor stay on the court for the remainder of the match. Advise players that he/she will correct any **clearly** incorrect calls.
- If it is not possible to allocate an adult to supervise the match, you should watch the next few points from off the court and then keep a discreet but watchful eye on the rest of the match.
- If you see a **blatant** incorrect call, you should tell the player making the call that their incorrect call was a 'Hindrance' and the point has to be replayed. The player should be informed that if you see any further **blatant** incorrect calls they will lose the point and may receive a Code Violation for Unsportsmanlike Conduct
 - see below.

Dealing with line call disputes (clay courts):

- Ask the player if they 'have the mark' and ask the opponent if they agree on the mark.
 - If there is no mark, deal with the dispute as above.
 - If they agree on a mark, you should "read it" to decide whether the ball was in or out.
- If they do not agree on the mark, ask what type of shot was played (ie. smash, crosscourt shot, down the line shot, etc).
- If a mark in the vicinity tallies with the shot description, you should accept it and award the point accordingly.
- If you are unable to find a mark, then the original call stands.

Code violations

A code violation should be issued in extreme or persistent cases of bad calling when you are absolutely sure the call is incorrect. See the LTA Competition Regulations for full details.

Score disputes

Scoring disputes are either a genuine mix up or a deliberate act. In both situations you should use the same procedure:

1. Establish what each player thinks the score is. If the dispute is:
 - a. over the score in a game, work through the game, point by point.
 - b. over the score in a set, go through the set game by game.
2. Establish which point(s) or game(s) the players cannot agree on. These point(s) or game(s) should be disregarded and the score adjusted to include the points or games they agree on.
3. Play resumes from the station according to the new score.
4. Following all disputes remind the players that the server should call the score clearly before every point.

Eg. Player A (serving) says score is 40/30, Player B says is 30/40. They agree they have each won 2 points. Play should resume from the score 30 All.

Eg. Player A (serving) says she won the game, Player B says score is 40/30. They agree that Player A won the first 2 points of the game, then Player B won 1 point, they disagree on who won the next point, and agree that Player A won the last point. Your decision is that play resumes from 40/15.

NEW HANDLING PROCEDURE:

The ITF have made a change to their procedure of how Officials should handle a blatantly incorrect line call, however this is only for instances where it is judged by the Official that a player has hit a point ending shot, e.g. a clean winner where the player who made the blatantly incorrect call did not have a play on the ball.

In these cases then the point would stand and a let would not be played.

ITF CLARIFICATION OF LINE CALL DISPUTE HANDLING

In the 2017 ITF Duties and Procedures for Officials the ITF had clarified a change in the handling of blatantly bad line calls when the call has been made on a point-ending shot. If the player confirms their call the point will now be awarded to the opponent.

Further details on this will be found on page 40 of the [ITF Duties and Procedures for Officials 2017](#)

Blatantly Incorrect Calls If the Referee is off-court watching a match when a player makes a blatantly incorrect call, the Referee can go on-court and tell the player that the incorrect call was an unintentional hindrance to his/her opponent and the point will be replayed, unless it was a point-ending shot and therefore the point will be awarded to the opponent.