

Guidelines for Assessing Line Umpires

At all ITF World Tennis Tour events, some major non-professional events and all ATP/WTA/Grand Slam tournaments line officials are marked based on their on-court performance. The way in which these marks are received depends on the level of event, some may require marks per match whilst others are one mark for the week. These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the Assessment Scale set out by the governing bodies of the ITF/ATP/WTA/Grand Slams to help provide consistency.

- When assessing line umpires, it is important to remain objective and fair. An official will start on a grading of 4 and can move up or down the scale as appropriate.
- Do not have pre conceived ideas of an official's ability, and the grade of the official should also not be taken into account when giving marks. All officials are evaluated equally based on their performance on court in terms of accuracy of line calls, techniques, how calls are sold, how they performed in pressure situations, the length of time spent on court and any extra tasks which are required such as communication on toilet breaks.
- As the chair umpire it is your job to rate the line umpires appropriately, and that means giving an honest grade. Everyone is human and makes mistakes, chair umpires included. However, if an official has a below average session it is important this is graded as so. Statistically, officials are more likely to give a 5 than they are a 3, which when seen as weighing scales these grades are equal in terms of above average and below average marks.
- Some officials are afraid to give marks of 3 or below as they fear this will have an adverse effect on the Line Umpire involved, however it is vital in ensuring everyone worldwide is being graded the same and so the empathy side should be pushed to one side. Instead of seeing the officials name, who you may know well or know they just had an uncharacteristically poor session and so want to be kind, see it as 'Official on LB' to help achieve objectivity.
- Equally, any official who does a good job, warrants a grade to reflect this, there should be no bias for any individuals as to their pre conceived ability from any chair umpire.
- It is expected that an assessment will be given for every match using the 1-7 scale. However, there are times when an official did not spend enough time on court or have any calls and so the grade N/A should be awarded. If a full session has been completed with very little happening then it would likely be a grade of 4.
- Any marks of 7, 6, 3, 2 or 1 must have a comment written alongside them. Make sure this is detailed enough so that if the mark is queried in future the explanation is clear, so rather than writing 2xOR, something like "two clear overrules and no player complaints" is more suitable. You can also check the assessment scale to see whether your comments match the description for the grade.
- Marks of 1 or 7 are very unusual, and in these instances, it is always a good idea to discuss with the chief as to why these are being awarded.
- For consistency, everyone should ensure that they do not over mark or under mark an official. For example, if someone is on court for 3 games and has 1 clear overrule which causes an issue then this can be graded as a 3. In contrast, if someone is on court for 90 minutes on a long line calling through the net with no mistakes, and balls hitting the line consistently, this will probably warrant a 6.

- A Chair Umpire must not give a mark to family members and/or partners. This is to maintain impartiality, and any circumstances which may affect this should be discussed with the chief umpire as soon as the issue arises.