The Sport of



Kines 362

By: Beth Berger

**History**

Squash developed from at least five other sports involving racquets, gloves, and balls having roots in the early 12th century in France. It is stated that “Squash, with its element of hitting balls against walls, was for entertainment. For example, boys and girls slapped their balls in narrow alleys and streets”. Religious institutions in France, such as monasteries, developed a similar game. Monks used gloves that were webbed to hit balls against a fishing net strung across the middle of the courtyards of the monasteries.

The racquets have changed in much the same way as those used in tennis, and in the 20th century the game increased in popularity with various schools, clubs and even private citizens building squash courts. In April 1907 the Tennis, Rackets & Fives Association set up a subcommittee to set standards for squash. Then the sport soon formed, combining the three sports together called “Squash”. It was not until 1923 that the Royal Automobile Club hosted a meeting to further discuss the rules and regulations and another five years elapsed before the Squash Rackets Association was formed to set standards for squash in Great Britain. The sport has evolved over the years and is now one of the most popular sports world-wide.

**Equipment**

****

** The Racquet** is made of composite materials or metals (graphite, kevlar, titanium, boron) with synthetic strings. Modern rackets have maximum dimensions of 686 mm (27.0 in) long and 215 mm (8.5 in) wide, with a maximum strung area of 500 square centimeters (90 sq in), the permitted maximum mass is 255 grams (9.0 oz), but most have a mass between 110 and 200 grams (4-7 oz.).

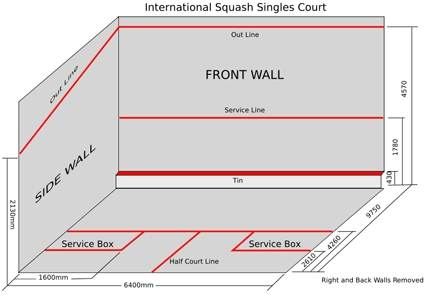
**The Ball** is between 39.5 and 40.5 mm in diameter, and have a mass of 23 to 25 grams. They are made from a rubber compound and depending on the color of the dots indicated on the ball (orange, double yellow, yellow, green or white, red, or blue), have different dynamic levels (speed and bounce).

**The Eye Protection** is mandated by many squash venues and some association rules require all juniors and doubles players to wear eye protection called goggles.



**The Shoes** are used by serious players designed strictly for the Squash. The shoes allow the player to have great foot traction on the court surface.

**The Court** dimensions are the same for singles and doubles.



**Terminology**

**Angle** A shot played to the front off the side wall - also referred to as a boast.

**Appeal** A player's request to the referee to consider an infringement that may result in a "let" or "stoke" being awarded.  The correct form of appeal is "Let, please".  If there is no referee, the player may stop and appeal in the same manner to his or her opponent.

**Backhand** The opposite direction of swing to that in which you would normally through a ball.

**Backswing** The space taken by the racquet in preparing for a shot

**Board** The lowest horizontal marking on the front wall of the court, usually a red line drawn across the top of the Tin.

**Boast** A shot played to the front off the side wall - also referred to as an angle.

**Cross Court** A shot played directly off the front wall to the side that is furthest from the striker.

**Cut Line** The middle line on the front court, six feet from the floor, also referred to as the service line; the serve must hit the front wall above this line.

**Down** The expression used to signify that a ball has hit the "board" or "tin".

**Drive** A shot to the front corner, directly off the front wall.

**Drop** A soft shot to the front corner, directly off the front wall.

**Downswing** The area of swing from the start of its downward journey until the point of impact.

**Follow Through** The area of the swing after impact with the ball.

**Forehand** The direction of the swing after impact with the ball.

**Half Court Line** A line set on the floor parallel to the side walls, dividing the back of the court into two equal parts and meeting the short line at its midpoint to form the "T".

**Hand Out** The situation when a change of server occurs

**Kill** A hard shot to the "nick"

**Lob** A soft shot struck with enough height to clear the opponent and his or her racquet and finish in the back corner of the court.

**Nick** The corner between the side, or back wall and the floor.

**Out** Indicates that the ball has hit the wall above the cut line.

**Rally** A series of strikes of the ball - a rally commences with a serve and concludes when the ball ceases to be in play.

**Short Line** A line set out on the floor parallel to the front wall and 18 feet from it.  The serve must clear the short line before bouncing.

**Striker** The player whose turn it is to hit the ball after it has hit the front wall.

**Stroke** The gain achieved by the player who wins a rally, either in the course of play or on award by a referee, which results in either a point or change of hand.

**Tin** The "tin" is situated between the board and the floor and is constructed in such a way to make a distinctive sound when struck by the ball.  The ball is "out" when it strikes the "board" or "tin".

**Trickle Boast** A soft boast at the front of the court.

**Volley** A ball that is struck before bouncing on the floor.

**Wallbanger** A squash or racquetball player.

**Rules/ Regulations**

**THE SCORING**

* 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 SERVICE**

* 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**

* 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 outline, 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**

* 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 PENALISED.

**HITTING AN OPPONENT WITH THE BALL**

* 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**

* 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, while turning, 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**

* 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**

* 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**

* 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 touches any article lying on the floor, 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**

* 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.

**CONDUCT ON COURT**

* 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).

**Lead-Up Activities**

**Activity 1: Forehand Swing.** Have the students spread out around the gym. Instruct the students to use their forehand swing to pass the ball off of the wall. Be sure to allow the ball to bounce one time before hitting it. VARIATION: Have a timer to see who can do it the longest.

**Activity 2: Backhand Swing.** Have the students spread our around the gym. Instruct the students to use their backhand swing to pass the ball off of the wall. Be sure to let it bounce one time in the floor before hitting it again. VARIATION: Have the students count to see how many they can do in a row.

**Activity 3: Partner Volley.** Have the students pass the ball off of the wall like Activity 1 and 2. Allow them to choose which hand swing to use according to where the ball is hit to. VARIATION: Have the students use either forehand or backhand so that they have to move their feet to get in the right location to hit the ball.

**Activity 4: Squash “Tip-Drill” Volley.**  Have the students (2-4 per group) get into a straight line leading to the T Formation. Have the first student drive the ball off the wall using either the forehand or backhand swing, and then run to the end of the line as the student behind them plays the ball. Emphasize going back to the T formation.

**Activity 5: Lob Serve Control.** Set up a bulls eye in the opposing corner of the server. Each server has 5 serves to get as high of a score as he/she can. The player with the highest score after all serves have been served wins.

**Activity 6: Drop Shot Practice.**  One student serves to another. The receiving student attempts to do a drop shot. The points go to out to each player for each hit. Points go as followed:

* Successful drop shot above Tin and below Service line= 1
* Successful pick up of drop shot/ drop shot completed= 1
* Winner of the point= 1

The student that wins the most points at the end of the point serves.

**Activity 7: Cut Throat.** 3 Players compete against each other. Standard rules apply with the following exception: One player serves to tow players who are both competing against him. If the server loses serve he rotates into one side of the court and plays with a partner against the server. Therefore, the server is playing singles against a doubles team.

**Activity 8: Two on One.** 3 Players compete against each other. Standard rules apply, with the following exception: The same two players compete against the same one player for the entire game. The singles player plays singles and has one service opportunity. The other two players play as a "doubles team" and as always get two service opportunities. This is a very difficult game for the singles player to win. It is a game that calls for good conditioning and stamina, especially if you are the server. This is also and excellent game to play if one player is significantly better than the other two players.

**Activity 9: Straight Drive Singles.** Starting with a service or straight shot, both play good length straight drives into a target area the width of half- court, service box, or less, from short line to back wall. Move to T after each shot. Aim for up to 50 shot rally.  
As above, but score to 15, winning point if play winner, force boast, or opponent's shot goes out of court or misses target area. Stay in same half court for whole game.

**Activity 10: Run and Gun.**  (Three players; A, B, C) A on T plays straight drives, B and C with a ball each feed alternate short straight shots from behind, so that A has to move as fast as possible from side to side. Either count the number of shots that land behind the short line in two or three minutes or check time taken to hit 100 shots into the target area. Alternatively, the players can do a forfeit of shuttle runs or an exercise when they have made three mistakes.

**Lesson Plans**

**Lesson 1 of 5**

**Objectives:**

* Students will demonstrate proper application of equipment safety.
* Students will demonstrate proper technique for gripping the racquet.
* Students will demonstrate the proper form and positioning for hitting the ball.

**Equipment:** Racquets, balls (variety), and goggles.

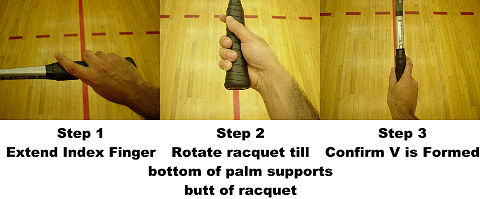
**Lesson Content:**

1. Students will demonstrate space awareness.

* Safety protocol- Spacing from other students.
* Safety protocol- Always wear eye protection.

1. The Grip

* “Shake Hands” with the racquet.
* Form “V” on the racquet with index finger and thumb.



* Straightening of index finger controls resistance of racquet movement.

1. Hitting the ball (Forehand and Backhand)

* DEMONSTRATE forehand and backhand.
* Backhand- “Frisbee Throw”, Turn into the hit.
* Forehand- Swing early.
* Key points: Keep body perpendicular to the wall, Keep wrist cocked, Keep racquet face open.

**Activity #1**

**Activity #2**

**Activity #3**

**Safety Considerations:** Goggles will be worn at all times. Use large space for class while learning the forehand and backhand swing so that no one gets injured.

**Lesson 2 of 5**

**Objectives:**

* Students will demonstrate control over backhand and forehand ball placement.
* Students will demonstrate proper technique while volleying in a game-like situation.

**Equipment:** Racquets, balls, goggles, cones.

**Lesson Content:**

1. Students will demonstrate controlled ball placement.

* The students will need to understand how hard to hit the ball to have it land behind the service box and where on the front wall to hit the ball to have it land deep in the back corner.
* ACTIVITY: Set up cones to make “Zones. Make the students aim for certain zones on the court.

1. The Rally: Volley

* Rally Rules intro.
* LETS discussed.
* “T” Formation (defense)
* Use previous cues for form and accuracy.
* Key Point: Lunge towards the ball. This allows the player to get to the ball quickly and get back to the T.

**Activity #4**

**Activity #9**

**Safety Considerations:**  Have students abide by LET rules. They must be aware of where the other player is on the court to be able to play the ball properly and have the game play continue smoothly and safely.

**Lesson 3 of 5**

**Objectives:**

* Students will demonstrate proper form and technique for serving the ball.
* Students will demonstrate the ability to return the serve correctly.

**Equipment:** Racquets, balls, poly spots, goggles.

**Lesson Content:**

1. The Serve: Lob

* Remind students to serve diagonally to a point high and approximately half way across the front wall to allow the ball to strike the side wall near the back of the court.
* Aiming high off the front wall creates a steeper angle on the side wall as it drops; this creates the better, harder to return serves.
* Key Points: Do not use arm and shoulder- pops the ball straight to the ceiling (“golfing” the ball). Look at serve as “Giving a HIGH FIVE”.
* Activity: Players in teams of four: Each player has three serves to a target (large targets in different parts of service area). Other players on the team count how many balls land in target area. Add scores together for the team. The team with the highest score in a certain time wins.

**Activity #5**

1. The Serve Return

* Be prepared to use forehand and backhand.
* Key Point: Stay in the middle of service box so that moves forward or backwards are quick and the students are still able to recover back to the T formation.
* Reaction Speed Activities:
* Chase: In pairs, one player turns his/her back to her partner and stands with legs shoulder width apart. The partner then rolls a ball through the partner's legs and the player has to run and stop the ball as soon as possible. (The ball should be rolled so the player has to run to stop it)
* Ball Drop: In pairs facing each other, one player with arms extended at shoulder height and with a tennis ball in each hand. The player drops one of the balls at random. The other player has to catch the dropped ball after one bounce.

**Lesson 4 of 5**

**Objectives:**

* Students will demonstrate proper technique for drop and drive hits.
* Students will apply prior techniques covered to game like situations..

**Equipment:** Racquets, balls, goggles.

**Lesson Content:**

1. Hitting: The Drop Shot

* Demonstrate Drop shot to students.
* Key Points: Hard or Soft shot, RIGHT ABOVE TIN.
* Have students practice drop shot individually before group practice.

**Activity #6**

1. Hitting the Drive Shot

* Demonstrate Drive shot to students.
* Key Point: Strong and Controlled.

**Activity #9**

1. Real Game Situations

* Tie in service practice to hitting styles, bringing the game more full circle.

**Activity #7**

**Activity #10**

**Safety Considerations**: Safety protocols from all previous lessons apply.

**Lesson 5 of 5**

**Objectives:**

* Students will be able to play an exhibition game of Squash by applying all previous techniques of hitting and serving with the forehand and backhand hit.
* Students will display knowledge of the game by applying rules to the real game situations.
* Students will display sportsmanship by calling LETs and faults honestly.

**Equipment:** Racquets, balls, goggles.

**Lesson Content:**

1. Review skills taught

* Quick review of forehand and backhand.
* Review more in depth of drop shots, drives, and serves.

1. Rules of Squash

* Explain game rules (abridged version)
* Have students play in singles (1 on 1)
* Any conflicts that are not covered in the rules are DO-OVERS.

1. Have students play exhibition games of Squash; monitor and contribute when needed.

**Activity #9** (IF odd numbers)

**Safety Precautions:** Inforce previous rules- NO CONTACT, people or racquets. If students are out of control and possibly harming themselves or others, stop the game and remove the students from the situation.

**PA and National Standards**

PA 10.5.12. A: Apply knowledge of movement skills, skill-related fitness and movement concepts to identify and evaluate physical activities that promote personal lifelong participation.

PA 10.4.9. A: Analyze and engage in physical activities that are developmentally/individually appropriate and support achievement of personal fitness and activity goal.

NPH. K-12.1 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.

NPH. K-12.5 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.

**References**

**Websites:**

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squash\_%28sport%29

http://www.ussquash.com/functions/content.aspx?id=2644

http://www.squashplayer.co.uk/squash\_drills.htm

http://www.squashclub.org/main/e-lessons/

**Resource Person:**

Dane Aumiller. Squash Instructor. The Pennsylvania State University. (814) 865 5401.