

SFN Team · Nov 29, 2024

# Final Results Revealed: Best Practices for Choosing the Right Squash Ball for Beginners



Students from the University Witten /Herdecke in Germany testing the various balls

In December, as part of our "Best Practice of the Month" series, the SFN hosted a webinar on the topic *"Choosing the Right Squash Ball for Beginners."* The goal of the webinar was to provide guidelines for squash facilities to ensure that beginners play with the appropriate ball, maximizing their enjoyment of the game. The event was moderated by the SFN experts Vincent Bradley and Markus Gaebel.

## The Result: A Practical Checklist

As a result of this event, the SFN developed a comprehensive checklist to guide squash facilities in selecting the right balls for different player needs. The checklist incorporates the key points discussed during the webinar.



What Are the Key Factors to Consider When Choosing the Right Squash Ball for Beginners?

Selecting the right squash ball is pivotal in enhancing the game experience for beginners and fostering player retention. Tailored practices can elevate facility standards and drive squash's popularity forward.

FACTOR	WHAT TO CONSIDER	SUMMARY
Ball Bounce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Different manufacturers provide varying levels of bounce.</li><li>- Bounce affected by factors like temperature, altitude, and court walls and flooring.</li></ul>	<b>Test various balls</b> in your facility's specific environment for optimal selection of balls <b>for beginners, intermediates</b> , and for <b>club players</b> .
Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ball colour influences visibility on court.</li></ul>	Consider <b>blue or black balls</b> for better visibility on light-coloured (white) walls.
Ball Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Larger, more bouncy balls are generally seen as "too lively"</li></ul>	Select only balls with the <b>standard size</b> of squash balls.
Staff Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Staff knowledge impacts player experience.</li></ul>	<b>Train reception staff</b> to be able to recommend balls tailored to their skill levels.
Informational Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Information improves player autonomy.</li></ul>	<b>Display posters or brochures</b> detailing ball types and their ideal use cases.
Trial Options for Starters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Beginners benefit from trying different options.</li></ul>	<b>Offer trials</b> with beginner-friendly balls to help players find their preferred choice.
Recommendations for Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ensure that beginners, intermediates, and advanced players all enjoy an optimal playing experience.</li></ul>	Organize events with a <b>range of ball</b> types to suit varying skill levels

If you have further questions on this topic, please write to [team@squashfacilities.net](mailto:team@squashfacilities.net) — we are happy to answer your questions.

This checklist serves as a concise summary of the webinar's insights and highlights the most important factors to consider. Each item reflects a key aspect covered in detail during the event.

The Importance of the Right Ball for Beginners

A central theme of the webinar was the critical role of using the correct squash ball for beginners. An unsuitable ball can lead to frustration and reduce player motivation, often discouraging further participation. Selecting balls that align with the skill level and needs of beginners ensures a positive and enjoyable playing experience.

Factors Affecting the Ball's Bounce

Several factors influence the bounce of a squash ball, making it essential to account for these when selecting the right ball:

- **Manufacturer:** Differences in production processes can result in variations in ball characteristics.
- **Temperature:** Both the ambient temperature and the ball's temperature impact bounce performance.
- **Flooring:** The court surface affects how the ball behaves during play.
- **Altitude:** The geographical location and its air pressure significantly influence ball behavior.

These factors underline the importance of testing various balls within a facility's specific environment to identify the most suitable options for players at different skill levels.

### Results from a Study with University Students

Vincent Bradley presented findings from a study conducted with 12 students from the University of Witten. Participants tested various squash balls and provided feedback on their bounce behavior, visibility, control, and fun factor. Key observations included:

- **Visibility:** Black balls were easier to see on white courts, enhancing gameplay.
- **Bounce Behavior:** Colored balls, especially blue ones, offered a higher bounce but were sometimes visually distracting.
- **Control:** Classic balls provided better control, while double yellow dot balls proved challenging for beginners.

The study concluded that blue balls from Dunlop and Decathlon were the most beginner-friendly options due to their optimal balance of visibility, bounce, and control.

### Recommendations for Squash Facilities

The discussions and findings from the webinar led to the development of several practical recommendations for squash facilities:

1. **Diverse Ball Selection:** Offer at least three types of balls to cater to players of varying skill levels.
2. **Customized Testing:** Test which balls work best for beginners, intermediates, and advanced players in your specific facility.
3. **Staff Training:** Train employees, particularly reception staff, to recommend the right ball based on skill level and court conditions.
4. **Informational Materials:** Provide posters or brochures explaining the different ball types and their recommended uses.
5. **Trial Options for Beginners:** Allow beginners to try different balls to find the most suitable option for their needs.

### The Role of the Yellow Double Dot Ball

A thought-provoking discussion during the webinar came from Kim, an experienced coach from Barcelona, Spain. Kim challenged the traditional view of the yellow double dot ball as the standard for advanced play. He emphasized that enjoyment and quality of play should take precedence, regardless of a player's level. For older players or those in Masters events, Kim suggested using single yellow dot balls to promote longer rallies and a more engaging experience. He argued, *"Why not use the tools squash offers to make the game more enjoyable—not only for beginners but also for experienced players?"*

### The Bigger Picture

Selecting the right squash ball is a crucial step in enhancing the playing experience, particularly for beginners. By implementing the checklist and the recommendations discussed during the webinar, squash facilities can significantly improve player satisfaction, foster long-term engagement, and ultimately attract more people to the sport.especially for beginners. Through targeted measures, squash facilities can enhance the joy of the game and, in the long term, attract more people to the sport.

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