

## Duration of Games (Time)

*Rule 1(c):* The basic assumption is that games are to be untimed (time unlimited).

However, when this is not the condition of the event there are other options available to Managers.

### Time-limited games

Appointing an independent timekeeper is desirable to avoid conflicts as it is very difficult for a referee to also be the timekeeper. Players in time-limited double-banked games will often assert their right to the full '60 minutes' by frequently stopping the clock themselves. So it is better for the referee to avoid this task and responsibility, because a referee cannot discharge this function as well as the normal refereeing duties.

Some of the variations are to:

1. stop on the call of time ("stop on the bell"), or
2. stop after one more turn for each ball, or
3. stop after the next hoop is scored, or
4. some other variation, such as playing to a 2 point advantage, depending on the game played, if the first player to four, seven or ten points is not 2 points ahead, play continues for a maximum of six more hoops or until one player has a 2 point advantage (this usually takes much longer than untimed games).

Referees ought to avoid becoming timekeepers particularly for variations 3 & 4 above. Whichever method is to be used it is to be clearly stated in the Tournament Conditions that accompany the entry form or before the game commences. Whichever method of stopping play is used, the management may allow (or require) play to continue, if the scores are tied when play is stopped. Time limited games should **not** normally be used where two games are double-banked on a court.

The TM ought to arrange for an independent person to be the timekeeper or, failing that, one of the players to be responsible for announcing audibly that the time limit has been reached. This avoids any misunderstandings. However it sometimes falls to the referee to perform this function and this is acceptable only if the referee has to control one court only.

**How is time kept?** The use of the electronic timer is now almost universal, except when the players, as timekeepers, use their personal stopwatch. A wall clock may be on display but it is for general information and nowadays is never the official timer.

Often the players will start the game themselves by activating the timer. If you are acting as a RoC, what should you do at this point? If possible, write down the time the game started and record the order of the first four balls played, and at some point enquire who is the timekeeper – if the players have expected the referee to assume this duty, then take responsibility if you have only one game to control.

**Where should the timer be?** Where the players can see it if they want to (but see below)

**The procedure as time draws to a close.** The referee (when acting as a timekeeper) should not obviously look at the timer and certainly not pick it up as this could be an indication to the players that the time limit is approaching. This is almost the same as giving advice. Preferably the referee ought to be able to see the time 'out of the corner of their eye' without looking directly at it. The referee (when acting as timekeeper) is never to state the time remaining unless asked.

**For stop on the bell if the timer rings before the ball is actually struck, then the game is over** (unless the scores are tied in which case the management may allow (or require) play to continue for one more hoop in order to produce a winner). **If the timer rings after the ball is actually struck the game is not over until the ball comes to rest and any hoop run (in order) scores the hoop** (if the scores are then tied, the management may allow (or require) play to continue for one more hoop in order to produce a winner)