

THE GAME

Squash started as a derivative of the earlier game of Rackets, around the middle of the last century. Rackets required a vast barn like structure for a court, and so only players from the upper classes, and a few old schools and universities could actually afford a court. When squash arrived, with its much smaller court, it rapidly overtook Rackets in popularity. In more recent times it has seen explosive growth in the number of players, this is due to the fact that being played indoors, and with a relatively short playing time, it is always possible to play a game of squash, no matter what time of the day or night, and in all weather. The advances in material technology, have led to new types of court, including the modern perspex goldfish bowls, which allow the audience to see in, while the players cannot see out. This allows many more people to view the match, and allows television to get a good view of the play.

So how is the game played? Well like most games of this type, play takes place as a series of rallies, starting with a serve, and continuing as long as the players make valid shots, until one player is unable to return the ball and loses the point. The difference with squash is that unlike the other games of this type, where a net separates the players, both players are on the same piece of court.

THE COURT

The court is enclosed, and instead of playing over a net each shot must bounce off the front wall though it is allowed to hit the side walls on the way there or back. It must not hit the floor before it reaches the front wall. Replacing the net is the tin, this is the bottom nineteen inches of the wall, and any ball hitting this is dead. Around the top of the walls there is the Out of Court Line. This is fifteen feet from the floor on the front wall and seven feet high on the back wall, sloping down along the side walls. Any ball striking the walls above this height, or hitting the ceiling is dead, though a lob that goes higher than this without hitting the walls is still in play.

The other lines on the court are only there for the service, and will be explained later.

SCORING

The ball is good as long as it is played on the volley or after the first bounce, and hits the front wall without hitting the floor. If you miss the ball as it goes past you, you can catch it after it has bounced off the back wall, as long as it has only hit the floor the once. The ball is allowed to bounce off the walls any number of times on the way to and from the front wall, as long as it remains within the Out of Court Line and does not hit the floor twice.

The player that makes the last valid shot wins the rally. However only the server can score points. If the server loses the rally, he loses the serve, this is called as Hand Out, the receiver becomes server and has his chance to score if he holds serve. A series of rallies with the same server is called a hand. It is possible for play to continue with the serve changing several times without a point being scored.

The only other complication is that you are not allowed to obstruct your opponent, this is covered in more detail later.

Game is nine points, unless the score reaches eight all, when game becomes ten points. A match can be played over one, three or five games. Serve only changes when a point is lost, so a five game match could be one in twenty seven rallies, if the receiver never wins a point. This would be very unusual and normally serve will change many times in the match.

OBSTRUCTION AND "LETS"

Because both players are on the same piece of court there is plenty of opportunity for them to get in each other's way. To cope with this problem there is the obstruction rule. It is your duty as a player to get out of your opponent's way. If you impede him accidentally and then go on to win the rally, it will be declared a let, i.e. it will not count and will have to be replayed. If you impede deliberately the point can be awarded against you, however the computer will take a lenient view and normally awards a let.

BEING HIT

As it is your duty to get out of your opponent's way, if he plays a shot that hits you on the way to the front wall, then you must have been obstructing and lose the point. If you are hit by the ball going to the front wall by a round about route, then a let will be awarded as you cannot be expected to be able to predict everything your opponent does.

THE SERVE

As with all games of this type, there are special rules about the serve, the shot that starts each rally. It must be taken from the Service Box, from alternate sides of the court. At the start of each hand you technically get the choice of which side to serve, though as it is normal to start from the forehead side as this is easier we assume that you will do this in this game. The serve must hit the front wall above the cut line and it must bounce in the rear quarter of the court on the opposite side to the serve. That is it must land behind the short line and on the other side of the half court line to you. The receiver can volley the serve, which removes the need for it to bounce correctly.

FAULTS

A bad service can either count as a single or a double fault. If you serve a single fault you then have a second chance to serve. However if you really get it wrong and manage to serve a double fault you automatically lose the rally and your opponent gains the serve.

With a single fault the receiver has a choice, he can either play the ball, which makes it good and completely cancels the fault. As it will probably be a weak serve this is often a good idea.

If the rally that follows a second service ends in a let, it does not cancel the original fault and the server is still on his second serve.

SINGLE FAULT

It is a single fault if the ball hits the front wall below the cut line and above the tin, or a ball that fails to land in the right place. Footfaults are also single faults but the program will not allow you to footfault.

DOUBLE FAULT

It is a double fault if the ball hits the tin, or it fails to reach the front wall, or it hits the side wall on the way, or finally if it goes Out of Court.

TACTICS

Starting with the serve, as this is where rallies start. Unlike tennis you cannot serve an ace, as your opponent can always catch the rebound. Therefore you need to make it as difficult as possible for him to return the serve. Try to keep the serve as close to the wall as you can to limit the scope for the receiver. Also try to force him to take the return as far back in the court as possible.

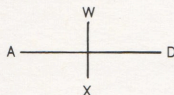
Moving on to the return. You need to be correctly positioned to receive the serve, so that you can get to any serve that is played. Obviously you want to make your return as difficult to return as possible. You ought to be able to play a stroke along the wall, so that the server has to come across the court to reach it.

In open play the strongest place to be on the court is stood on the T formed by the Short and Half Court lines. Try and get to this point, as it then enables you to cover all of the rest of the court. Play your shots to try and force your opponent away from the T and into the corners of the court, where the walls will impede the range of strokes that he can play. Whenever possible draw your opponent in such a way to enable you to have a free run towards the T.

CONTROLS

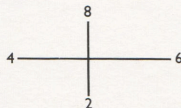
Joystick or keyboard control as set in loading routine. The keys are as follows:

Player 1



TAB to Fire

Player 2



RETURN to Fire.

TO SERVE

Press fire to start the service action and again to time the shot.

To play a stroke you must be stationary, i.e. the joystick must be central or no keys pushed. Press Fire to start swing. You will need to time your swing to aim place your shot.

At the end of the game you will be offered the chance to change the control options.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Switch your computer on.
- 2) Insert the disk into drive A: with the label facing upwards.
- 3) The game will now load and run automatically.
- 4) You will be offered a menu of machines, select the correct machine by pressing the appropriate number.

OPTIONS

- 1) Select game speed. One is fast, nine is slow.
- 2) Select match length, either one, three or five sets.
- 3) Select level of difficulty. 1 is easy, 4 is very hard.
- 4) Select player one as computer or human. Press y for a computer player, n for human control.
- 5) Select player two as computer or human. Press y for a computer player, n for human control.
- 6) If you have selected to play you will be asked to enter your name.
- 7) Select keyboard or joystick control for each player by pressing enter or fire.
- 8) If you have selected joystick option then you will be asked to move your joystick to the four corners and press fire. Follow these instructions as they appear.
- 9) Play will now start.

THE COURT

