

MEDICAL OFFICERS OF SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

Guideline Eye Wear in Sport

Eye wear is used in sport to **protect the eye, to improve vision**, or both.

Eye Protection in Squash

A standard squash ball is 40mm in diameter and weighs 24gm. It is just the right size to enter the orbit, and impact on the globe of the eye. Its deformability and contained air result in it exerting further force on the globe as it “bounces” back out. The eyeball may rupture on contact, or by transferred pressure, the floor of the orbit may be fractured. Bleeds into the anterior or posterior chamber are possible as is a detached retina.

Recommendations of England Squash (The Squash Rackets Association Ltd)

- England Squash recommends the use of eye protection especially for beginners
- The wearing of eye protectors for Doubles is mandatory, ref. Doubles Rules Appendix 10, effective 10.10.97
- Eye protection is also mandatory for specified events for junior players (i.e. up to U/19 level), effective 1.9.00. (full list available on England Squash web site)
- Eye protectors should meet “British Standard for Eye Protectors for Racket Sports – Part 1 Squash”, BS 7930-1
- The player should try always to watch the ball. Looking directly around however, it is dangerous *when the ball is struck by a player behind*.

MOSA Recommendations

- MOSA endorses the recommendations of England Squash on the wearing of eye protection for all squash players.
- MOSA recommends the wearing of eye protectors meeting BS 7930-1 for squash players at all times.
- Schools should make pupils and parents aware of MOSA’s recommendations on the wearing of eye protection for squash players.
- Reminders to wear suitable eye protectors should be present on the door to every school squash court.
- Schools should, in consultation with the School Doctor, agree and enforce a policy on the wearing of eye protection for squash, to include:
 - i supervised games sessions.
 - ii squash played in pupils’ free time.

Prescription Eye Wear in Sport

Wearing glasses can pose a danger both to the wearer and to the opponent.

Frames of non-specialist glasses are typically made of hard materials (both metals and plastics) and often have sharp edges. Cuts from the frame are therefore common when glasses come forcibly into contact with skin. These cuts are usually on the face where skin is more delicate and scars less acceptable. But abrasions and cuts are also possible to the eyes themselves.

The lenses of non-specialist glasses are often made of a material that can shatter on impact and cause further injury.

For most sports the use of glasses is not specifically recorded in the rules of the sport. Some, for example soccer, leave it to the discretion of the referee to decide what is or is not safe.

There is now a range of manufacturers producing eye wear specifically for use in sport.

MOSA Recommendations

- Wherever possible, pupils should be expected to use soft contact lenses to correct vision during sport.
- In sports involving direct contact (e.g. rugby football and martial arts) only soft lenses or nothing are acceptable.
- In other sports, and where contact lenses are not possible, pupils should be encouraged to use specialist sports glasses.
- Schools should, in consultation with the School Doctor, agree and enforce a policy on the wearing of Prescription Eye Wear in sport.
- Schools should be asked to consider their position in relation to the safety of their own pupils when playing sport with other institutions.
- School Medical Departments should make themselves aware of local providers of Prescription Eye Wear for sport.

Further Information

www.englandsquash.co.uk web site contains extensive list of eye protection suppliers. England Squash maintain an updated list which is available on request.

www.worldsquash.org site of the World Squash Federation

www.norville.co.uk suppliers of wide range of sports glasses for a large number of sports-from squash to hockey and from football to swimming.

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