



Statistical Review of England Squash Masters Matches Played 2021-22

1. Introduction

The following statistical review is of match data collected at ESM events run between October 2021 and April 2022 – three regional tournaments, two British Open Championships and one National Championships. All matches in this data were scored under PAR-11.

The data has been left as close as possible to its original form however there are two points at which data has been aggregated for the purpose of this analysis:

- In regional tournaments there is a single WO35/40 category whereas the WO35 and WO40 are separated in the Open and National Championships. To be consistent across all events the WO35 and WO40 results from the Open and National Championships have been aggregated.
- Data within each age group includes both main draw and plate matches.

2. Matches

Across the six events, ESM staged a total of 1281 matches, split 570 in the regionals and 711 in the majors. The following table shows the breakdown of matches played by age group and event type.

Age Group	Majors	Regionals	Total
MO35	42	31	73
MO40	50	46	96
MO45	66	59	125
MO50	49	51	100
MO55	98	78	176
MO60	81	69	150
MO65	79	54	133
MO70	66	49	115
MO75	46	30	76
MO80	4	0	4
WO35/40	42	31	73
WO45	22	18	40
WO50	16	14	30
WO55	17	18	35
WO60	20	22	42
WO65	6	0	6
WO70	3	0	3
WO75	4	0	4
Grand Total	711	570	1281

For reference, roughly 84% of the total matches were played in the main draw and 16% in the plate. The maximum theoretical proportion of plate matches in the total for a tournament is 33% so there is a clear possibility that the number of match slots required for plates can increase further.

Matches	Regional	Major	All
Main Draw	470	602	1072
Plate	100	109	209
Total	570	711	1281

3. Results by Player Ranking

The tables below show the match results broken down by the relative seeding positions of the winner and loser in each match. For example, in all competitions, there were 40 matches where a 5-8 seeded player beat one of the seeds ranked 1-4 and 147 matches were a 5-8 seed beat a 9-12 seed. Overall, 51% of all matches were won by a seed ranked 1-4, 21% by a 5-8 seed, 13% by a 9-12 seed, 8% by a 12-16 seed and 7% by a 17-32 seed. A lower ranked player beat a higher ranked one in only around 10% of the total matches played.

All Competitions						
Winner Seed Range	Loser Seed Range					Total
	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-32	
1-4	220	229	48	123	33	653
5-8	40	35	147	8	37	267
9-12	7	44	26	26	61	164
13-16	3	2	8	11	77	101
17-32	-	5	9	18	64	96
Grand Total	270	315	238	186	272	1,281

Regional Competitions						
Winner Seed Range	Loser Seed Range					Total
	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-32	
1-4	98	114	20	58	11	301
5-8	19	20	72	3	8	122
9-12	5	21	17	14	21	78
13-16	-	1	6	7	26	40
17-32	-	1	-	7	21	29
Grand Total	122	157	115	89	87	570

Major Competitions						
Winner Seed Range	Loser Seed Range					Total
	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-32	
1-4	122	115	28	65	22	352
5-8	21	15	75	5	29	145
9-12	2	23	9	12	40	86
13-16	3	1	2	4	51	61
17-32	-	4	9	11	43	67
Grand Total	148	158	123	97	185	711

4. Results by Games Played

The main determinant in the length of a squash match is the number of games played to reach a result. The tables below show a breakdown of the match data by the number of games played and player age group for all events and for the regional and major events separately:

All Competitions							
Age Group	Match Result by Score				Match Results %		
	3-0	3-1	3-2	Total	3-0	3-1	3-2
MO35	57	10	6	73	78.1%	13.7%	8.2%
MO40	51	30	15	96	53.1%	31.3%	15.6%
MO45	77	34	14	125	61.6%	27.2%	11.2%
MO50	49	32	19	100	49.0%	32.0%	19.0%
MO55	106	43	27	176	60.2%	24.4%	15.3%
MO60	85	43	22	150	56.7%	28.7%	14.7%
MO65	72	35	26	133	54.1%	26.3%	19.5%
MO70	62	30	23	115	53.9%	26.1%	20.0%
MO75	44	22	10	76	57.9%	28.9%	13.2%
MO80	3	1	0	4	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
WO35/40	42	19	12	73	57.5%	26.0%	16.4%
WO45	26	9	5	40	65.0%	22.5%	12.5%
WO50	16	6	8	30	53.3%	20.0%	26.7%
WO55	22	7	6	35	62.9%	20.0%	17.1%
WO60	23	12	7	42	54.8%	28.6%	16.7%
WO65	4	1	1	6	66.7%	16.7%	16.7%
WO70	2	1	0	3	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%
WO75	3	1	0	4	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Total	744	336	201	1281	58.1%	26.2%	15.7%

Regional Competitions							
Age Group	Match Result by Score				Match Results %		
	3-0	3-1	3-2	Total	3-0	3-1	3-2
MO35	25	3	3	31	80.6%	9.7%	9.7%
MO40	28	11	7	46	60.9%	23.9%	15.2%
MO45	34	19	6	59	57.6%	32.2%	10.2%
MO50	26	17	8	51	51.0%	33.3%	15.7%
MO55	48	20	10	78	61.5%	25.6%	12.8%
MO60	40	17	12	69	58.0%	24.6%	17.4%
MO65	28	12	14	54	51.9%	22.2%	25.9%
MO70	28	13	8	49	57.1%	26.5%	16.3%
MO75	18	8	4	30	60.0%	26.7%	13.3%
MO80	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
WO35/40	16	10	5	31	51.6%	32.3%	16.1%
WO45	14	3	1	18	77.8%	16.7%	5.6%
WO50	9	4	1	14	64.3%	28.6%	7.1%
WO55	9	3	6	18	50.0%	16.7%	33.3%
WO60	15	5	2	22	68.2%	22.7%	9.1%
WO65	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
WO70	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
WO75	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	338	145	87	570	59.3%	25.4%	15.3%

Major Competitions							
Age Group	Match Result by Score				Match Results %		
	3-0	3-1	3-2	Total	3-0	3-1	3-2
MO35	32	7	3	42	76.2%	16.7%	7.1%
MO40	23	19	8	50	46.0%	38.0%	16.0%
MO45	43	15	8	66	65.2%	22.7%	12.1%
MO50	23	15	11	49	46.9%	30.6%	22.4%
MO55	58	23	17	98	59.2%	23.5%	17.3%
MO60	45	26	10	81	55.6%	32.1%	12.3%
MO65	44	23	12	79	55.7%	29.1%	15.2%
MO70	34	17	15	66	51.5%	25.8%	22.7%
MO75	26	14	6	46	56.5%	30.4%	13.0%
MO80	3	1	0	4	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
WO35/40	26	9	7	42	61.9%	21.4%	16.7%
WO45	12	6	4	22	54.5%	27.3%	18.2%
WO50	7	2	7	16	43.8%	12.5%	43.8%
WO55	13	4	0	17	76.5%	23.5%	0.0%
WO60	8	7	5	20	40.0%	35.0%	25.0%
WO65	4	1	1	6	66.7%	16.7%	16.7%
WO70	2	1	0	3	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%
WO75	3	1	0	4	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Total	406	191	114	711	57.1%	26.9%	16.0%

Apart from age groups with only a very small number of matches played, the profile of the number of games played in a match is consistent, 58% of matches finish 3-0, 26% finish 3-1 and 16% finish 3-2.

It is possible to check whether this effect is caused by the quantity of “easy” first round matches where players have significantly different rankings. The following table breaks down games played per match against the tournament round. Typically, regional tournament draws are 8 or 16 player knock out and these remain in line with the overall result. The difference in player ranking only contributes to a noticeable increase in 3-0 results in 32-player draws, which are more relevant to the major events.

All Competitions							
Round	Match Result by Score				Match Result by %		
	3-0	3-1	3-2	Total	3-0	3-1	3-2
Final	69	42	31	142	49%	30%	22%
Semi-Final	125	77	37	239	52%	32%	15%
Quarter	180	78	60	318	57%	25%	19%
L16	200	89	41	330	61%	27%	12%
L32	125	34	23	182	69%	19%	13%
Pool	45	16	9	70	64%	23%	13%
Total	744	336	201	1,281	58%	26%	16%

5. Results By Games Played and Points Scored

The following table shows the average number of points played per match, the minimum played and the maximum played separated out by the result in games and the age group for all competitions. For example, in the MO55 age group matches that finished 3-0 required an average of 49 points to be played. The minimum number of points played in a MO55 match that finished 3-0 was 37 and the maximum was 66. It can be seen there is no significant effect on the points played from age group and there is limited overlap across the results by games, i.e., the minimum points played in matches with a 3-1 result is higher than the average number of points played in matches finishing 3-0 and similarly for matches finishing 3-2 over matches finishing 3-1.

All Competitions									
Age Group	Match Result								
	3-0			3-1			3-2		
	Average Points	Minimum Points	Maximum Points	Average Points	Minimum Points	Maximum Points	Average Points	Minimum Points	Maximum Points
MO35	48	37	68	74	62	84	92	86	97
MO40	50	40	61	75	65	95	91	85	102
MO45	51	36	74	73	60	87	92	82	111
MO50	48	33	61	70	62	87	92	82	109
MO55	49	37	66	72	57	92	91	82	101
MO60	52	37	79	74	60	91	89	79	98
MO65	50	39	65	74	61	90	94	75	113
MO70	51	37	69	72	63	83	93	79	110
MO75	52	42	63	74	67	86	91	80	97
MO80	48	43	50	69	69	69			
WO35/40	50	39	62	74	57	84	93	83	106
WO45	51	40	73	75	66	90	98	92	103
WO50	53	44	70	68	63	74	93	85	103
WO55	51	39	64	71	66	77	98	89	108
WO60	50	41	61	73	63	87	98	90	102
WO65	53	48	56	88	88	88	98	98	98
WO70	51	48	53	84	84	84			
WO75	51	43	57	73	73	73			
Grand Total	50	33	79	73	57	95	92	75	113

6. Results By Games Played and Match Time

Note: there were 102 matches for which a duration was not recorded. These are not included in the match time averages.

A similar breakdown of average, minimum and maximum match time in minutes by games played and age group is set out in the table below.

All Competitions												
Age Group	Match Result											
	3-0			3-1			3-2			Total		
	Average Time	Minimum Time	Maximum Time	Average Time	Minimum Time	Maximum Time	Average Time	Minimum Time	Maximum Time	Average Time	Minimum Time	Maximum Time
MO35	22	11	34	33	20	43	46	38	59	25	11	59
MO40	21	13	35	35	22	55	46	31	70	29	13	70
MO45	21	11	33	30	15	42	41	27	60	25	11	60
MO50	18	8	34	28	17	46	38	30	50	26	8	50
MO55	18	10	31	29	19	43	37	22	55	24	10	55
MO60	18	11	29	28	17	43	34	27	47	23	11	47
MO65	16	11	23	25	17	33	32	19	45	22	11	45
MO70	17	10	30	23	18	31	32	22	45	22	10	45
MO75	16	10	21	24	18	37	30	20	34	20	10	37
MO80	14	11	17	22	22	22				16	11	22
WO35/40	17	10	28	26	18	34	33	25	44	22	10	44
WO45	16	11	25	25	22	31	33	29	36	20	11	36
WO50	16	11	22	19	14	21	28	25	34	20	11	34
WO55	17	12	25	26	22	30	33	27	43	21	12	43
WO60	15	10	20	23	20	29	33	27	40	20	10	40
WO65	17	14	21	26	26	26	36	36	36	22	14	36
WO70	16	15	17	26	26	26				19	15	26
WO75	17	14	20	23	23	23				18	14	23
Grand Total	18	8	35	27	14	55	35	19	70	23	8	70

Again, there is no significant difference looking at the regional and major data separately. There is a slight trend in average match length – although older male players typically play the same number of points to finish a match 3-0, 3-1 or 3-2 as younger ones, the older male players matches are shorter on average suggesting that rallies in older age groups do not last as long as in the younger ones. This trend is not observable in the data for ladies.

7. Conclusions

The number of games played is the main determinant of the length of a squash match. In this season, 58% of matches finished 3-0, 26% 3-1 and 16% 3-2. This pattern was observed across age groups, and tournament rounds. On average a match finishing 3-0 took 18 minutes with 50 points played. Matches finishing 3-1 and 3-2 took on average 27 and 35 minutes with 73 and 92 points played respectively.

The average, minimum and maximum points played and match duration were consistent across age groups when broken out by the number of games played. The data suggest that older male players are less able to sustain rallies than the younger ones.

This is the first season where ESM has been able to collect data on match duration for all events. The match time data does not include four minutes for the warmup and any time required between the warmup and the first point of the match being played, assume this is one minute so each match requires five minutes more than the actual time recorded. So, on average 58% of matches finish 3-0 and take $18+5 = 23$ minutes compared to an allocated slot of 30 minutes. Similarly, the matches that finish 3-1 and 3-2 require on average 32 minutes and 40 minutes respectively. With court utilisation for ESM events running at around 95% and no other source of slack, the offsetting effects of the shorter duration 3-0 results vs 3-1 and 3-2 on average are what keep ESM tournaments running close to schedule.

8. Changing Scoring to PAR-15

PAR-15 requires the winner of a game to score four more points than they would under PAR-11. From the data above it can be seen that on average this would add 6-7 points per game as the winner wins on average 1.5-2.0 times the number of points the loser does (this can be inferred from the average number of points per match and the fact that most games are won at 11 points). Assume that moving to PAR-15 adds on average six points to each game. That would take the average points scored per match up to 68, 97 and 122 for each of the possible game scores, a roughly 35% increase in each case. It is reasonable to believe that these extra points would take at least an equivalent proportional increase in time to be played, hence the average match time in minutes would change as shown below.

Average Match Time			
Format	3-0	3-1	3-2
Current PAR-11	18	27	35
Projected PAR-15	24	37	47

It is not possible to quantify a change to HIHO in a similar fashion given the fundamental difference in the nature of scoring under this system however experience suggests that while minimum match time would not be significantly different, the average and maximum match times would be considerably longer than under either PAR-11 or PAR-15.