

AskTheExperts



There are no specific rules about spreading a thin coating on the strings, as long as there are no "protrusions."

wrong string or tension for the client's racquet or game, even after you have stated your case, you should complete the job as requested. But also be sure to let them know what they should expect—and that they can come back for a better string installation, and an adjustment in string tension.

For cases like yours, though, you need to consider how providing your client with their request could impact both them and your business. I would first explain that this would definitely void the warranty on their new racquet, and that it is likely to stress the frame to the point of breaking or deforming.



If you decide to proceed, I would make sure the client knows these issues and has signed off on paying you regardless of the outcome, since you will be out your string and your time whether the racquet is playable or not. Also, make sure the client knows that you will not be responsible if the frame breaks or deforms. In this extreme example, if you do end up stringing the frame as asked, proceed cautiously, and make sure to use eye protection.

But consider this, too—is this particular player worth keeping as a customer? If he insists on these types of requests, it may be best to simply refuse, and have him find another stringer.

We welcome your questions. Email them to bob@racquettech.com.

Sticking It to the Strings

Q: I have a player who paints a thin coat of Super Glue over his string jobs, which he says increases the strings' durability. Is this legal for sanctioned play?

A: I suppose the coating could improve durability by providing an extra layer to wear through, and it will probably be more effective in decreasing the movement between crosses and mains that usually leads to most breaks. But for those same reasons, it will also have an adverse effect on the playability of the string bed.

As for its legality, if the glue is applied in a very light coat and is evenly spread, leaving no protrusions, it would be legal. The rules state that, "The hitting surface of the racquet shall be flat and consist of a pattern of crossed strings connected to a frame and alternately interlaced or bonded where they cross; and the stringing pattern shall be generally uniform, and in particular not less dense in the center than in any other area. The racket shall be designed and strung such that the playing characteristics are identical on both faces. The strings shall be

free of attached objects and protrusions other than those utilized solely and specifically to limit or prevent wear and tear or vibration, and which are reasonable in size and placement for such purposes."

Strange Requests

Q: A new client of mine, who happens to be an engineer, asked me to string his racquet with the cross strings 24 pounds tighter than the main strings. I told him that this would likely damage the frame, but he insisted. What should I do?

A: The customer is not *always* right—at least when it comes to racquet service.

It is always a delicate situation when a client makes a request that you know is not the best decision. More often, this is a client simply asking for a string or tension that you, as an experienced technician, know would not be the best for them. In all cases, my recommendation is to take the time to listen to the client, and then provide him with your advice as to why you think their request may not be a good idea.

In some cases, such as choosing the