

TENNIS

GENERAL RULES

The Official Special Olympics sports rules shall govern all Special Olympics tennis competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon International Tennis Federation (ITF) rules for tennis. ITF rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Special Olympics sports rules. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics sports rules shall apply. For more information, visit www.itftennis.com.

OFFICIAL EVENTS OFFERED

1. Singles
 - a. Tennis competition is not offered at the district level. All tennis athletes are automatically eligible to advance to the State Outdoor Sports Tournament. If the number of tennis participants changes in the future, a determination will be made regarding the number of events offered.

SECTION A – RULES OF COMPETITION

1. Match-Play
 - a. A match will consist of one six-game, no-ad set with a margin of two games with a seven point tie-break played at six all.
 - b. The no-ad scoring system will be used for all match play. The no-ad procedure is simply what the name implies: The first player to win four points wins the game – the seventh point of a game becoming a game point for each player. The receiver has the choice of advantage court or deuce court to which the service is to be delivered on the seventh point. If a no-ad set reaches six games all, a seven point tie-break shall be used. **NOTE:** The score shall be called with conventional terms: love, 15, 30, 40, game. Tie break scoring shall be one, two, three, four, etc.
 - c. A tie-break will be played when the set reaches six games all. Player “A”, having served the first game of the set, serves the first point from the right / deuce court. Player B serves points two and three (ad/left and deuce/right). Player “A” serves points four and five (ad/left and deuce/right). Player “B” serves point six (ad/left) and after they change ends, point seven (deuce/right). “A” serves points eight and nine (ad/left and deuce/right). “B” serves point 10 and 11 (ad/left and deuce/right). “A” serves point 12 (ad/left). The player who reaches seven points with a two point margin during these first 12 points wins the game, set, and match. If the score has reached six points all, the players change ends and continue in the same pattern until one player establishes a margin of two points which gives him the set/match. Note that the players change ends every six points and that the player who serves the last point of one of these six-point segments also serves the first point of the next one (from the deuce/right court).
 - d. A player may receive coaching from a designated Special Olympics coach when the player changes ends at the end of the third, fifth, seventh, ninth, eleventh games, but not after the first game, or when a player changes ends during a tie-break game. The coaching must be brief and not impede the progress of competition. Players will be allowed 90 seconds for a changeover.
 - e. Uniforms/Clothing – Athletes must be neat in their dress and wear proper tennis clothing and soft-soled athletic shoes. No blue jeans, cut-off shorts, loud sports shirts or street shoes are allowed. Athletes wearing improper uniforms will not be allowed to participate.

f. The Service

- 1) The service shall be delivered in the following manner: Immediately before commencing to serve, the server shall stand with both feet at rest behind (i.e. further from the net than) the base-line, and within the imaginary continuations of the center-mark and side-line. The server shall then project the ball by hand into the air in any direction, and before it hits the ground, strike it with the racket and the delivery shall be deemed to have been completed at the moment of the impact of the racket and the ball. A player with the use of only one arm may utilize his racket for the projection. The player may use an underhand or overhand service at their discretion.
- 2) The service is a fault if the athlete misses the ball in attempting to strike it. The ball shall not bounce before being struck or it is a fault. The server receives two attempts to serve a good serve.
- 3) A serve hitting the net and landing in the correct service box is called a let and is replayed.

g. Continuous Play

- 1) As a principle, play should be continuous, from the time the match starts (when the first service of the match is put in play) until the match finishes.
- 2) Between points, a maximum of 20 seconds is allowed. When the players change ends at the end of a game, a maximum of 90 seconds are allowed. However, after the first game of each set and during a tie-break game, play shall be continuous and the players shall change ends without a rest.
- 3) If a tie-break is necessary, there shall be a set break of a maximum of 120 seconds before the tie-break starts.
- 4) The maximum time starts from the moment that one point finishes until the first service is struck for the next point.

h. Additional rules

- 1) A ball landing on a line is considered good.
- 2) A point is called after the ball has touched the ground.
- 3) Touching the ball before the ball touches the ground on a serve awards the point to the server. Only on the serve must the ball bounce before the opponent hits it. If the ball touches any part of the opponents clothing, body or racquet, the point is awarded to the server.
- 4) No cell phones on the courts.
- 5) Athletes should receive a five-minute warm-up on court prior to the start of the match.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS TENNIS RATING SHEET

Athlete's Name: _____

Delegation: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Level 1 (athlete's at this level should complete the ISC Skills Testing)	Level	E. Second Serve	Level
Player just starting to play tennis		Double faults are common	2
Section A through G do not need to be completed		Pushes 2nd serves	4
A. Forehand	Level	Hits 2nd serves with control	6
Hits inconsistent weak FH shots	2	Hits 2nd serves with control and depth	7
Hits FH shots with little directional control	3	Hits 2nd serves with spin, control and depth	8
FH has directional control of shots, but shots lack depth	4	F. Return of Serve	Level
FH has sufficient control to sustain a short rally and is developing depth	5	Has difficulty returning serve	2
Rallies with control and depth, but has difficulty when shots are high or hard	6	Returns serve occasionally	3
Rallies consistently with depth, becomes inconsistent when adding pace	7	Returns 2nd serve consistently	4
Sustains an extended rally with direction, pace and depth	8	Returns some 1st serves, returns 2nd serves consistently	5
B. Backhand	Level	Returns 1st and 2nd serves consistently	6
Hits inconsistent weak BH shots	2	Aggressive return of 2nd serve and consistent return of 1st serve	7
Hits BH shots with little directional control	3	Aggressive return of 1st and 2nd serves	8
BH has directional control of shots, but shots lack depth	4	G. Volleys	Level
BH has sufficient control to sustain a short rally and is developing depth	5	Hits inconsistent volleys; avoids net	3
Rallies with control and depth, but has difficulty when shots are high or hard	6	Hits consistent FH volleys; BH volley is inconsistent	4
Rallies consistently with depth, becomes inconsistent when adding pace	7	Hits consistent volleys; has problems approaching the net	5
Sustains an extended rally with direction, pace and depth	8	Has ability to approach the net and hits consistent volleys	6
C. Movement	Level	Comfortable moving to net, moves laterally well for both FH and BH volleys	7
Stationary position; does not move to ball to hit shots	2	Hits aggressive FH and BH volleys	8
Moves only 1-2 steps toward ball to hit shots	3	Section	Category
Moves toward ball; but court coverage is poor	4	A	Forehand
Movement allows sufficient court coverage of most shots	5	B	Backhand
Has good court coverage, reacts well enough to sustain a short rally	6	C	Movement
Reacts quickly to the ball and has very good court coverage	7	D	First Serve
Exceptional court coverage, reacts quickly to the ball and recovers after each shot	8	E	Second Serve
D. First Serve	Level	F	Return of Serve
1st serve is weak	2	G	Volleys
Hits 1st serves in at a slower pace	4	Total of Sections A through G	
Hits 1st serves with pace	6	divided by 7	
Hits 1st serves with pace and control	8	FINAL RATING	

Rater's Name: _____

Suggested Competition level for athletes

Tennis Rating of 1.0 – 1.9
 Tennis Rating of 2.0 – 2.9
 Tennis Rating of 3.0 – 3.9
 Tennis Rating of 4.0 – 4.9
 Tennis Rating of 5.0 – 8.0

Athlete should compete in:
 Athlete should compete in:
 Athlete should compete in:
 Athlete should compete in:
 Athlete should compete in:

Level 1 – Individual Skills Competition
 Level 2 – 42' Court – Red foam ball
 Level 3 – 60' Court – Orange ball
 Level 4 – 78' Court – Green ball
 Level 5 – 78' Court – Yellow ball