

TENNIS RULE INTERPRETATIONS

SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

- A-1. In cases not covered by these interpretations, United States Tennis Association (USTA) rules will govern. Rules can be obtained at www.usta.com. The SOI rules that will be released in January 2014 will have very specific guidelines regarding unified play that will be enforced at all levels of competition for Special Olympics COLORADO.
- A-2. The Games Rules Committee will make all final decisions.
- A-3. No advertising or sponsorship is allowed to be worn on competition uniforms and warm ups.
- A-4. At all times athletes are expected to compete to the best of their ability to ensure a quality competition at all levels. Coaches are expected to provide accurate and honest scores of their athlete's ability.
- A-5. Athletes and Unified Partners must wear shorts or sweat pants and tennis or gym shoes. Jeans, jean shorts and street shoes will not be allowed for athletes and Unified Partners in Tennis events.
- A-6. Athletes will not be allowed to wear jewelry or awards during competition.
- A-7. Athletes must qualify from a Regional event to attend the State Tennis Tournament.
- A-8. Athletes competing in skills can also compete in Short Court doubles.
- A-9. Athletes in Singles match play (Levels 2 – 5) can participate in either Traditional Doubles Match Play or Unified Doubles Match Play.

SECTION B - AGE GROUPS AND DIVISIONS

- B-1. Age groups and divisions will be determined based on the number of entries received by the registration deadline.
- B-2. A match play tennis rating score must be submitted at the time of the postmark entry deadline on the individual entry forms. NOTE: A match play rating score is valid for a 2-year period. If assistance is needed to determine the match play rating, contact the Special Olympics Colorado Manager of Competition and Training.

SECTION C - THE GAME - PLAY

- C-1. The choice of sides and right to be server in the first game will be decided by a flip of a coin.
- C-2. Traditional Match Play will consist of the best 2 of 3 short sets being played. In a short set, the first player/team who wins four games wins that set provided there is a margin of two games over the opponent(s). If the score reaches four games all, a 7-point tiebreak game shall be played. When the score in a match is one set all, one 7-point tiebreak game shall be played to decide the match. This tiebreak game replaces the deciding final set.

- C-3. Players will change ends of the court at the end of each odd number game.
- C-4. A player may receive coaching from their designated coach when the player changes ends at the end of game, but not when a player changes ends during a tiebreak game. Ninety seconds are allowed for end changes, play must resume. A coach may not hold a player longer than those 90 seconds. If a coach continues to delay play, the coach will receive 1 warning; a second delay will cause the coaching privileges for that match to be revoked.

SECTION D – SHORT COURT MATCH PLAY

- D-1. Singles and Doubles competition will be available in Short Court Match Play.
- D-2. A tennis rating score will be required for Short Court Match Play.
- D-3. All tennis rules will apply except for the size of the court and the tennis ball.
- D-4. All play will be conducted within the service box area. The serve shall begin from behind the service line (not the baseline).
- D-5. A player or team who is the first to win a total of 6 games by a margin of two wins a set. At 6-All, a tiebreaker is played to 7 points.

SECTION E – FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT and LEVELS

- E-1. All matches should be played on regulation tennis courts with the court size adapting to the below levels. All Doubles play will include the alleys on the court.*
- E-2. All tennis balls will be in accordance with the USTA standards adapting to the levels below.*
- E-3. The racket's strung surface will not exceed 15 1/2 inches in overall length and 11 1/2 inches in overall width. Racket must conform to all other USTA standards.*
- E-4. Levels*
- *Level 1 – Skills Competition*
 - *Court – adapted as needed for competition*
 - *Ball – Red Foam Balls*
 - *Level 2 – Short Court Competition*
 - *Court – Service box*
 - *Ball – Red Foam Balls*
 - *Level 3*
 - *Court – 60-foot court*
 - *Ball – Orange dot ball*
 - *Level 4*
 - *Court – Full court (78 feet)*
 - *Ball – Green dot ball*
 - *Level 5*
 - *Court – Full court (78 feet)*
 - *Ball – Yellow traditional ball (high altitude balls will be used at competitions)*