

**TENNIS****TENNIS**

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Tennis shall govern all Special Olympics competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon International Tennis Federation (ITF) Rules for tennis found at <http://www.itftennis.com/>. ITF or National Governing Body (NGB) rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Tennis or Article I. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Tennis shall apply.

Refer to Article 1, <http://resources.specialolympics.org/article1.aspx>, for more information pertaining to Codes of Conduct, Training Standards, Medical and Safety Requirements, Divisioning, Awards, Criteria for Advancement to Higher Levels of Competition, and Unified Sports.

SECTION A — OFFICIAL EVENTS

The following is a list of official events available in Special Olympics.

The range of events is intended to offer competition opportunities for athletes of all abilities. Programs may determine the events offered and, if required, guidelines for the management of those events. Coaches are responsible for providing training and event selection appropriate to each athlete's skill and interest.

1. Individual Skills Competition
2. Singles
3. Doubles
4. Mixed Doubles
5. Unified Sports® Doubles
6. Unified Sports Mixed Doubles

SECTION B — RULES OF COMPETITION

1. Divisioning

An athlete shall be divisioned on the basis of their rating in accordance with Tennis Rating Form. A Tennis Rating Form must be submitted for each athlete with the registration package for the event. The Tennis Rating Form is provided in Section C of the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Tennis.

2. Match play

- a. A match will consist of one of the following.

- 1) One six game No-Ad set with a margin of two games with a 7 point tie-break played at six all.
- 2) Two out of three short sets. 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 tie-break game shall be played. When the score in a match is one set all, one 7 point tie-break game shall be played to decide the match. This tie-break game replaces the deciding final set.

- 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, with the seventh point of a game becoming a game point for each player.

For Singles matches: The receiver has the choice of advantage court or deuce court, the service on the seventh point, is to be delivered to the nominated court.

For Doubles matches: The receiving pair has the choice of advantage court or deuce court, the service on the seventh point, is to be delivered to player playing in the nominated court.

For Mixed Doubles matches: The player of the same gender as the server shall receive the deciding point. i.e. male to male or female to female



TENNIS

For Unified Doubles matches: The service on the seventh point is to be delivered athlete to athlete or partner to partner.

NOTE: The score calling may be either in the conventional terms or simple numbers, i.e., "zero, one, two, three, game."

- c. One designated Special Olympics coach may sit on court, (off the playing surface, in a chair located at the net post next to the umpire's chair) and may coach a player when the players change ends at the end of an odd game, but not after the first game of each set and not during a tie-break game.

3. Unified Sports Doubles

- a. Each Unified Sports doubles team shall consist of one athlete and one partner.
- b. Each team shall determine their own order of service and selection of courts (ad or deuce).

4. Individual Skills Competition

NOTE: Competition Managers must specify the type of ball to be used at each ISC competition. These may be a traditional tennis ball, low compression ball, or foam ball. The preferred ISC ball is the SpeedBall, distributed by the Professional Tennis Registry (PTR).

a. Forehand Volley

- 1) The athlete stands approximately one meter from the net with the feeder on the other side positioned halfway between the service line and the net. Each athlete is given five attempts to hit a ball safely over the net. The feeder underhand tosses each ball to the athlete's forehand side.
- 2) The athlete scores 10 points for hitting into the backcourt on or between the baseline, service line and singles sidelines. The athlete scores five points for hitting into either service box.

b. Backhand Volley

Same as forehand volley except feeder sends the balls to athlete's backhand side. Each athlete is given five attempts.

c. Forehand Groundstroke

- 1) The athlete stands on or behind the baseline. The feeder, positioned halfway between the net and service line on the same side of the net, underhand tosses the ball so it bounces once before reaching the athlete's forehand side. Each athlete is given five attempts.
- 2) The athlete scores 10 points for hitting into the backcourt on or between the baseline, service line and singles sidelines. The athlete scores five points for hitting into either service box.

d. Backhand Groundstroke

Same as forehand groundstroke except the feeder sends the ball to the athlete's backhand side. Each athlete is given five attempts.

e. Serve — Deuce Court

Each athlete is given five attempts to hit a legal serve from the right court to the deuce service box. A ball landing in the correct service box will count 10 points. A zero (0) score is recorded if the athlete commits a foot fault or fails to get the ball in the service box. A foot fault occurs when the athlete steps on or over the baseline or the imaginary extensions of the center mark or sideline.

f. Serve — Advantage Court

- 1) Same as serve to deuce court but from the left court to the advantage service box. Each athlete is given five attempts.

g. Alternating Groundstrokes with Movement

- 1) The athlete is positioned at the center service mark on or behind the baseline. The feeder, standing halfway between the service line and net on the same side, alternates tosses to the

**TENNIS**

athlete's forehand and backhand sides. Each toss should land at a point which is both halfway between the service line and baseline and halfway between the center service mark and singles sideline. The athlete must be allowed to return to the center mark before feeding the next ball. Each athlete is given ten attempts.

- 2) The athlete scores 10 points for hitting into the backcourt on or between the baseline, service line and singles sidelines. The athlete scores five points for hitting into either service box.
- h. Final Score

A player's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of the seven events which comprise the Individual Skills Competition.



TENNIS

SECTION C – 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