

**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. The receiver has the choice of advantage court or deuce court to which the service is to be delivered on the seventh point.

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.



TENNIS

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 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 Form

Level 1

(Athletes at this level should complete the Individual Skills Competition (ISC)Skills Testing)

Player just started to play tennis (1)

Appropriate competition would be ISC (1)

Score []

A. Forehand

(One choice—should be the most representative of the athletes skill level)

Has difficulty hitting FH shots (2)

Hits inconsistent weak FH shots (3)

Hits FH shots with little directional control (4)

Sustains a short rally using FH and BH shots (5)

Sustains a rally with directional control (6)

Sustains a rally with consistency and depth (7)

Sustains an extended rally (8)

Score []

B. Backhand

(One choice—should be the most representative of the athletes skill level)

Has difficulty hitting BH shots (2)

Hits inconsistent weak BH shots (3)

Hits BH shots with little directional control (4)

Has directional control of BH shots, but shots lack depth (5)

Returns difficult shots defensively (6)

Has difficulty with high and hard shots (7)

Controls FH and BH shots with direction, pace and depth (8)

Score []

C. Movement

(One choice—should be the most representative of the athletes skill level)

Stationary position; does not move to ball to hit shots (2)

Moves only 1–2 steps toward ball to hit shots (3)

Moves towards ball; but court coverage is poor (4)

Movement allows sufficient court coverage of most shots (5)

Exceptional court coverage (6)

Exceptional court coverage and hits defensive lobs and inconsistent overheads (7)

Exceptional court coverage and hits offensive lobs and consistent overheads (8)

Score []

D. First Serve

(One choice—should be the most representative of the athletes skill level)

First serve is weak (2)

First serve faults are common (3)

Hits first serves in at a slower pace (4)

Hits first serves with pace (6)

Hits first serves with pace and control (8)

Score []

E. Second Serve

(One choice—should be the most representative of the athletes skill level)

Double faults are common (2)

Pushes second serve with control (4)

Hits second serve with control (6)

Hits second server with control and depth (7)

Hits second serve with spin, control and depth (8)

Score []

F. Return of the serve

(One choice—should be the most representative of the athletes skill level)

Has difficulty returning serve (2)

Returns serve occasionally (3)

Returns second serve consistently (4)

Returns some first serves, returns second serves consistently (5)

Returns first and second serves consistently (6)

Aggressive return of second serve; weak return of first serve (7)

Aggressive return of first and second serves (8)

Score []

G. Volleys

(One choice—should be the most representative of the athletes skill level)

Avoids net (2)

Does not hit volleys; avoids net (3)

Hits inconsistent volleys; avoids net (4)

Hits consistent FH volleys; BH volley inconsistent (5)

Hits aggressive FH volleys; hits defensive BH volleys (6)

Hits aggressive FH and BH volleys (8)

Score []

Total Score []

Divide Total Score by 7 to determine the overall rating (Round off to the nearest tenth i.e. 4.97=5.0 or 3.53=3.5)

Overall Rating []



TENNIS