

**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 D 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 10 point tie-break game shall be played to decide the match. This tie-break game replaces the deciding final set. Not recommended for athletes with a rating below 3.0
- 3) Two out of three six game sets with a margin of two games, a 7 point tie-break is played at six games all. When the score in a match is one set all, one 10 point tie-break game shall be played to decide the match. This tie-break game replaces the deciding final set. Not recommended for athletes with a rating below 6.0
- 4) In the best of 3 set matches, there will be a 3 minute rest period prior to the deciding 10 point tie-break.

- 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.



## TENNIS

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

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 and during the 3 minute rest period prior to the deciding tie-break, but not after the first game of each set and not during a tie-break game.
- d. When two or more athletes or teams have the same final point score, the tie shall be broken as follows:
  - First: the fewest number of sets lost in all matches
  - Second: the most games won in all matches
  - Third: the fewest number of games lost in all matches
  - Fourth: (other than for teams) head to head results

### 3. Unified Sports Doubles

- a. Each Unified Sports doubles team shall consist of one player with an intellectual disability and one player without an intellectual disability, who have similar skills as defined by their SO rating (or ITN).
- b. Each team shall determine their own order of service and selection of courts (ad or deuce).

### 5. Individual Skills Competition

NOTE: Competition Managers must specify the type of ball to be used at each ISC competition.

Level 1 ball is the red foam ball.

- a. Forehand Volley
  - 1) The athlete stands approximately one meter from the net with the feeder on the other side of the net, 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 5 points for hitting into the service box 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 1m behind the center (T) of the service line. The feeder is on the other side of the net, positioned half way between the service line and 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 5 points for hitting into either service box
- d. Backhand Groundstroke

**TENNIS**

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 service line.

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 begins 1m behind the center (T) of the service line. The feeder is on the other side of the net positioned halfway between the service line and the net., alternates underhand 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 the net and halfway between the center service line 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 5 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 - LEVELS

The following is a guide to levels designed to provide competition opportunities to athletes of all abilities. Competition events for Levels 2-Level 5 are; Singles, Doubles, Mixed Doubles and Unified Doubles.

1. Level 1	<b>Individual Skills Competition</b> Tennis Rating of 1.0 – 1.9	ITN 10.3-10.2	42' Court – Red foam ball
2. Level 2	<b>Matchplay:</b> Tennis Rating of 2.0 – 2.9	ITN 10.1	42' Court – Red foam ball
3. Level 3	<b>Matchplay:</b> Tennis Rating of 3.0 – 3.9	ITN 10	60' Court – Orange ball
4. Level 4	<b>Matchplay:</b> Tennis Rating of 3.0 – 4.9	ITN 9	78' Court – Green ball (Yellow ball with green dot)
5. Level 5	<b>Matchplay:</b> Tennis Rating of 5.0 – 8.0	ITN 8,7,6	78' Court – Yellow ball

**Notes:** Level 3 is intended as a transitional level for training purposes. It can be used for competition if sufficient entrants at this level are expected. The SO Tennis Rating above are for singles, the range of rating should be doubled when athletes are playing doubles matches, i.e. Level 4 would become 6.0 – 9.9

**Note: References:**

Tennis Rating Sheet - [http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/resources/Sports-Rules-Competitions/Tennis/Tennis\\_Rating\\_Sheet\\_2012.docx](http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/resources/Sports-Rules-Competitions/Tennis/Tennis_Rating_Sheet_2012.docx)

Levels Court Diagram - [http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/resources/Sports-Rules-Competitions/Tennis/Levels\\_court\\_diagrams.docx](http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/resources/Sports-Rules-Competitions/Tennis/Levels_court_diagrams.docx)

**SECTION D – 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
<b>Section A through G do not need to be completed</b>					
<b>A. Forehand</b>		<b>Level</b>	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	<b>F. Return of Serve</b>			<b>Level</b>
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>B. Backhand</b>		<b>Level</b>	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	<b>G. Volleys</b>			<b>Level</b>
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
<b>C. Movement</b>		<b>Level</b>	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	<b>Section</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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		
<b>D. First Serve</b>		<b>Level</b>	F	Return of Serve	
1st serve is weak	2	G	Volleys		
Hits 1st serves in at a slower pace	4	<b>Total of Sections A through G</b>			
Hits 1st serves with pace	6	divided by 7			
Hits 1st serves with pace and control	8	<b>FINAL RATING</b>			

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 3.0 – 4.9

Tennis Rating of 5.0 – 8.0

Athlete should compete in:

Athlete should compete in:

Athlete may train 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