



Special Olympics Minnesota **Tennis Handbook**



CONTENTS

Tennis Rules	3
Divisioning	5
Individual Skills Scoring and Competition	5
Competition	7

Practice ideas, skill assessment and development, and rules can be found in the SOI Quick Start Guides and SOI Rules for each respective sport at www.specialolympics.org/sports.aspx.

Special Olympics Minnesota Tennis Handbook

TENNIS RULES

Match Play Rules

Competition will be governed by the Rules of Tennis from the official code of the ITF. Please note items of particular interest below.

- **Serving** - The serving motion may be underhand or overhand. Coaches should work with their athletes to avoid bouncing the ball prior to a serve.
- **Scoring** – One six-game, no-ad set will be used, with a set tiebreak, first to seven points by a margin of two, at six games all. Traditional scoring of love, 15, 30, 40, etc. or simplified scoring of 1, 2, 3, 4 may be used. At deuce (or 3–3), the server serves into the side of the court chosen by the receiver.
- **Continuous Play** – Court Monitors allow 20 seconds between points and 90 seconds on changeovers. There is no break after the first game.
- **Coaching** – Since there is no break after the first game, coaching should not be allowed until the changeover after the 3rd game.
- **Balls** – Three new balls should be used for all matches.
- **Court Monitors** – Are used on each court to ensure each match runs fairly and in good faith. Applications of the ITF Rules of Tennis will be made based on the level/ability of the athlete. Court monitors will assist with the management of the match including line calls, scoring and placement of the players.
- **Medical Timeouts and Toilet Breaks** – A medical timeout for each new medical condition, or aggravation of a pre-existing condition, may be taken during the warm-up or match for a treatable medical condition. Treatable medical conditions include, but are not limited to, injury, illness, and heat-related conditions and cramps. Once the court monitor is notified and the trainer, medical personnel or person treating the athlete has reached the court and made a diagnosis that the condition is treatable, the three-minute treatment time begins. A player may request one or more toilet breaks during the match. Coaching is not allowed during medical time outs or toilet breaks. Players will be escorted during toilet breaks.

Short Court

- The short court competition is done on a 42 ft. court (service line to service line). Athletes competing in a short court competition must register in advance.

Unified Sports® Rules

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

DIVISIONING

Complete individual skills at practice and include the athletes individual skills score on the registration form. Athletes are divisioned using their individual skills score.

INDIVIDUAL SKILLS SCORING & 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).

Forehand Volley

- 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.
- 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.

Backhand Volley

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

Forehand Groundstroke

- 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.
- 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.
- Special Olympics Minnesota Tennis Handbook 6

Backhand Groundstroke

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

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.

Serve—Advantage Court

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

Alternating Groundstrokes with Movement

- 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.
- 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.

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.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS MINNESOTA TENNIS COMPETITION LEVELS


The Competition Levels listed below will be used as guidelines in the divisioning process and will indicate which ball and court size will be used in competition. Please consider which type of ball and court size has been used in an athlete’s training when determining which Level is appropriate. An athlete may participate in an Individual Skills OR a Singles event, and one Doubles event.

Athletes may register for ONE of the following events:


- Individual Skills Short Court (42’x27’ Court)

ISC Level 1: Low Compression Ball 25% (ITF approved Red Ball)	
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- Individual Skills (60’x27’ Court)

ISC Level 2: Low Compression Ball 50% (ITF approved Orange Ball)	
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- Individual Skills (78’x27’ Court)

ISC Level 3: Traditional Tennis Ball (ITF approved Yellow Ball)	
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- Singles Short Court (42’x27’ Court)


Match Level 2: Low Compression Ball 25% (ITF approved Red Ball)	
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- Singles (60’x27’ Court)

Match Level 3: Low Compression Ball 50% (ITF approved Orange Ball)	
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- Singles (78’x27’ Court) – please indicate appropriate level

Match Level 4: Low Compression Ball 75% (ITF approved Green Ball)	
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Match Level 5: Traditional Tennis Ball (ITF approved Yellow Ball)	
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Athletes may register for ONE of the following events:


- Doubles (60'x27' Court)

Match Level 3: Low Compression Ball 50% (ITF approved Orange Ball)	
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- Doubles (78'x36' Court) – please indicate appropriate level

Match Level 4: Low Compression Ball 75% (ITF approved Green Ball)	
Match Level 5: Traditional Tennis Ball (ITF approved Yellow Ball)	

- Unified Doubles (60'x27' Court)

Match Level 3: Low Compression Ball 50% (ITF approved Orange Ball)	
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- Unified Doubles (78'x36' Court) – please indicate appropriate level

Match Level 4: Low Compression Ball 75% (ITF approved Green Ball)	
Match Level 5: Traditional Tennis Ball (ITF approved Yellow Ball)	

COMPETITION

Area Competitions

Area	Date	Location	City	Register By	Contact
Area 3	June 7	Quad City Tennis For All	Virginia	May 24	ben.swarts@somn.org
Area 11&12	May 22	Fred Wells Tennis Center	St. Paul	May 8	sam.leidholt@somn.org

State Competition

Date	Location	City	Quota Due	Register By
June 24 & 25	Eastview High School	Apple Valley	May 20	May 31

Competition Details

- Athletes may participate in Individual Skills, or Singles and one Doubles Event
- Unified Partners must be Level 1 certified in order to compete
- Athletes must participate in the same events at the State competition as they did at the Area competition
- Doubles and Unified doubles events at state will be on Friday, June 24
- Singles and skills events at state will be on Saturday, June 25

Events

- Individual Skills
- Singles
- Doubles
- Unified Doubles
- Short Court Individual Skills
- Short Court Singles