

Special Olympics Northern California

Tennis



2026 Rules & Guidelines

Unified Sports® Doubles, Singles and Individual Skills Contest

(There are No Rule Changes for Tennis)



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SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide athletic opportunities to children and adults with intellectual disabilities which instill the confidence needed to succeed in life.

Preparing for life through sports

SONORCAL PLAYS BY THE RULES...

All Special Olympics competitions will be conducted in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules and the National Governing Body of rules for each sport offered in our program. These rules are designed to protect the Athletes, provide equitable conditions of competition and promote uniformity so that no competitor shall obtain an unfair advantage over another.

Special Olympics Northern California

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Northern California (SONorCal) volunteer coaches are models whose behavior should serve as a positive example for their athletes. Their behavior should reflect a concern that the fairest and most positive competitive experience is equally available to every Special Olympics athlete in each training or competition. The coach has the unique opportunity to influence the development and personal growth of many individuals. For this reason, it is important that the coach adhere to the standards of ethical decision making and teaching. In addition, it is the position of SONorCal that each volunteer coach shall agree to:

HAVE RESPECT FOR OTHERS

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONorCal staff members, and friends and spectators in Special Olympics.
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- I will be a positive role model for the athletes I coach.

ENSURE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

- I will ensure that for each athlete I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is a positive experience.
- I will respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.
- I will be fair, considerate and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.
- I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.
- I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the athlete's ability at all preliminaries/heats and finals in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

ACT PROFESSIONALLY AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS/HER ACTIONS

- My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will dress and act in an appropriate manner at all times.
- I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in Special Olympics, including to the athletes, other coaches and volunteers, opponents, officials, administrators, SONorCal staff members, parents, spectators and the media.
- I will encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions or during competitions.
- I will not engage in any form of personal abuse towards, or inappropriate contact or relationship with, athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONorCal staff members, family members, or spectators in Special Olympics, including verbal, physical or emotional abuse.
- I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes or others in my care.
- I will abide by the Special Olympics policy that prohibits coaches/volunteers from dating athletes.

PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE TO THE ATHLETES

- I will seek continued improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will be knowledgeable about the Sports Rules and skills of the sport(s) I coach.
- I will provide a planned training program.
- I will keep copies of the registration, training, and competition records for each athlete I coach.
- I will follow the Special Olympics and National Governing Body rules for my sport(s) coached, as well as all SONorCal policies and procedures as amended.

ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE ATHLETES

- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities for my sport(s) coached are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training and the environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
- I will review each athlete's registration form and be aware of any limitations on that athlete's participation noted on that form.
- I will encourage athletes, coaches and volunteers to seek medical advice when needed.
- I will report any emergencies to the appropriate authorities after first taking immediate action to ensure the safety and well-being of those involved.
- I will maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.

Should the behaviors and/or abilities of any volunteer coach or other faction of a school/organization violate either the principles stated above (including the SONorCal policies and procedures as amended) or the philosophy of the Special Olympics movement, then any of the following actions may be taken by SONorCal in its sole discretion:

1. The coach may be notified by official warning of the undesirable behavior and be requested to remedy the situation immediately in order to continue his or her participation in Special Olympics;
2. The coach may be requested to withdraw personally or with his/her team from the remainder of any Special Olympics event or competition;
3. The coach or sponsoring school/organization may be suspended from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events for a specified period of time; and/or
4. The coach or sponsoring school/organization may be permanently prohibited from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events.

Special Olympics Northern California

ATHLETES CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Northern California (SONorCal) is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All SONorCal Athletes and Unified Partners agree to the following code:

SPORTSMANSHIP

- I will practice good sportsmanship.
- I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team, and Special Olympics.
- I will not use bad language.
- I will not swear or insult other persons.
- I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers, or staff.

TRAINING AND COMPETITION

- I will train regularly.
- I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.
- I will listen to my coaches and the official and ask questions when I do not understand
- I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.
- I will not “hold back” in preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals competition division.
- I will follow the International Federation and the National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport(s).

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

- I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions, competition, or during Games.
- I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.
- I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules.

Special Olympics Northern California

PARENT AND SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Northern California (SONorCal) is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all parents and spectators to honor sport and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics parents and spectators should observe the following code:

- Remember athletes are participating for their enjoyment. Encourage participation, but do not force it.
- Applaud good performances and efforts from all individuals and teams. Congratulate all participants on their performance, regardless of the event's or game's outcome.
- Focus on the athletes' effort and performance, rather than whether they win or lose.
- Encourage athletes to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence.
- Never ridicule or yell at participants for making a mistake or losing the competition.
- Remember that athletes learn best by example. Appreciate good performance and skillful plays by all participants.
- Respect the decisions of officials, Games Management Team and Staff, and teach athletes to do the same.
- Show appreciation for event volunteers, coaches, and officials and staff. (Remember, without them there would be no opportunities for athletes).
- Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Show respect for your team's or individual's opponents. Without them, there would be no event or game.
- Encourage athletes and coaches to follow the rules and the officials' decisions.
- Swearing and/or inappropriate language will not be tolerated at SONC events
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- Abide by all posted and written policies, including SONC's Animal Policy for Practices, Competitions and Events.

By attending an event, parents and spectators have agreed to abide by this Parent and Spectator Code of Conduct. SONorCal reserves the right to dismiss parents and/or spectators from any SONorCal event for violation of this Parent and Spectator Code of Conduct.

DIVISIONING CRITERIA

Individuals and Unified Sports® Doubles Teams will be divisioned within Level by high, mid and low.

| | Understanding of Rules & Concepts | Groundstrokes (Fore/Backhand) | Service and Service Return | Net Play | Movement |
|---------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| Advanced | High understanding of rules and strategies. Understands game and match scores. | Ability to maintain moderate to long rallies with opponent. Ability to hit shots with depth and direction. Moderate to high consistency with added pace and direction of shots. | Ability to hit 1 st serve with pace and control with regular success. Ability to hit 2 nd serve with spin, control and depth with regular success. Ability to aggressively return 1 st and 2 nd serves of opponent. | Ability to go to the net for volleys and net play with moderate to high frequency. Ability to aggressively hit forehand and backhand volleys and some overhead shots, with regularity to win points. | Reacts quickly to most balls. Ability to cover most of the court and recover after most shots. Comfortable moving to the net for volleys and does so frequently. |
| Intermediate | Basic understanding of most rules and some basic strategies. Understands game and match scores at most times. | Ability to maintain short rallies with opponent with occasional longer rallies. Moderate consistency in shots with normal pace, but has difficulty when shots are high or hard. | Ability to hit 1 st serve with pace and control with moderate success. Ability to hit 2 nd serve with control and depth with moderate success. Ability to consistently return 1 st and 2 nd serves of opponent. | Ability to go to the net for volleys and net play with moderate frequency. Ability to hit forehand and backhand volleys with regularity to continue points. | Reacts quickly to most balls within general vicinity. Ability to cover most shots hit from within the singles lines. Can moves to the net for volleys and does so on occasion. |
| Beginner | Limited to no understanding of basic rules and very little or no strategy. Limited to no understanding of game and match scores. Needs assistance at most times with game and match scores. | Limited to very limited ability to start and maintain rallies. Low to moderate consistency with weak shots that have little control and little to no depth. | Limited to very limited ability to hit 1 st serve with success. 1 st serve is weak and at a slower pace. Pushes 2 nd serve. Double faults are common. | Limited to very limited ability to go to the net for volleys and net play with limited to no success. Avoids net play at most, if not all, times. | Maintains a stationary position at most, if not all, times. Takes a few steps towards ball at times. Court coverage is limited. Has mastered Individual Skills Contest events and are ready to transition to match play. |

SONORCAL TENNIS RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Tennis competitions. As an international Sports Program, Special Olympics have created these rules based upon the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and the United States Tennis Association (USTA) rules for tennis. ITF and USTA rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Special Olympics Sports Rules. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall apply.

SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

1. Each Special Olympics Athlete is required to have a current Application for Participation on file in order to participate. Also, each Unified Partner must have a current Unified Partner Application and Release Form on file in order to participate. This is in accordance with Special Olympics General Rules.
2. Each athlete must qualify by playing in a SONorCal Regional Competition prior to the participation in the Program Championship (Summer Games).
3. SONorCal has a strict Animal Policy for Practices, Competitions and Events, which must be followed by all athletes, volunteers, parents and spectators at all times. Please visit sonc.org/resources/coach-athletes-resources/ for the full policy.

SECTION B - OFFICIAL EVENTS

1. Singles
2. Unified Sports® Doubles – one Special Olympics athlete is paired with a player without an intellectual disability, where both players have similar skills.
3. Individual Skills Contest (ISC)

SECTION C - DIVISIONS

1. Singles – Based on gender, age group & ability:
 - a. Gender:
 - i. Male
 - ii. Female
 - b. Age Group
 - i. 8-11
 - ii. 12-15
 - iii. 16-21
 - iv. 22-29
 - v. 30+
 - c. Ability
 - i. Advanced
 - ii. Intermediate
 - iii. Beginner
 - iv. Refer to Leveling Criteria (Page 6) & Evaluation Sheet (Page 16) for correct placement.
2. Unified Sports® Doubles – Based on gender & ability.
 - a. Gender:
 - i. Male
 - ii. Female
 - iii. Co-ed (“Mixed Doubles”)
 - b. Ability
 - i. Advanced
 - ii. Intermediate

- iii. Beginner
 - iv. Refer to Leveling Criteria (Page 6) & Evaluation Sheet (Page 16) for correct placement.
3. Individual Skills Contest – Based on gender, age group & ability.

SECTION D - COACHES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Coaches are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules of the game, not only the modified rules in this manual, but also the International Rules of the game. The National Governing Body of rules for Special Olympics Tennis is the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and the United States Tennis Association (USTA). To download your own USTA Rules Book, please visit:

www.usta.com

2. Coaches are not allowed to coach (direct or guide) players/teams from anywhere inside or outside the court during match play, but may talk with them during changeovers at the net.
3. No individuals other than registered athletes and Unified Partners (in Unified Doubles), and match officials are allowed on the court during competition.

SECTION E - UNIFORMS

1. Collared Shirt (Recommended, unless required by venue), athletic shorts or pants, tennis sneakers (cannot wear shoes with black soles). Shorts or pants must be neat and clean (no rips, holes, tears, etc.). Jeans are strongly discouraged.

SECTION F - RULES OF COMPETITION

1. Match Play – Singles
- a. A match will consist of one six-game, No-Ad set, with a margin of two games with a 12-point tiebreak played at six games all (see Section G – Tiebreakers).
 - 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, 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.
 - i. The score calling may be either in the conventional terms or simple numbers, i.e., “zero, one, two, three, game.”
 - c. In the Beginner level, the server is allowed to bounce the ball on the serve.
2. Match Play – Unified Doubles
- a. A match will consist of one six-game, No-Ad set with a margin of two games with a 12-point tiebreak played at six games all (see Section G – Tiebreakers).
 - b. Each team shall determine its own order of service and selection of courts (Right (Deuce) or Left (Ad)).
 - c. The No-Ad Scoring System will be used for all match play. The No-Ad procedure is simply what the name implies: The first team to win four points wins the game, the seventh point of a game becoming a game point for each team. The service on the seventh point is to be delivered athlete to athlete or partner to partner, even for Co-ed (Mixed Doubles) divisions.
 - i. The score calling may be either in the conventional terms or simple numbers, i.e., “zero, one, two, three, game.”
 - d. In the Beginner level, the server is allowed to bounce the ball on the serve.

SECTION G - TIE BREAKERS

1. For Tiebreakers during Match Play

a. Singles

- i. A 12-point tiebreak will be played whenever a set reaches six games all in match play.
 1. Player A, having served the first game of the set, serves the first point from the right court.
 2. Player B serves points two and three (left and right).
 3. Player A serves points four and five (left and right).
 4. Player B serves point six (left) and after they change ends, point seven (right).
 5. Player A serves points eight and nine (left and right).
 6. Player B serves point 10 and 11 (left and right).
 7. Player A serves point 12 (left).
 8. A player who reaches seven points during these first 12 points wins the game and set.
 9. If the score has reached six points all, the players change ends and continue in the same pattern until one player establishes a margin of two points which gives him/her the game and set (the margin of victory may be changed to one point at the discretion of the Tournament Director).
 10. Note that the players change ends every six points and that the player who serves the last point of one of these 6-point segments also serves the first point of the next one (from the right court). For a following set the players change ends and Player B serves the first game.

b. Unified Doubles

- i. A 12-point tiebreak will be played whenever a set reaches six games all in match play.
 1. Player A, having served the first game of the set, serves the first point from the right court.
 2. Player B serves points two and three (left and right).
 3. Player C serves points four and five (left and right).
 4. Player D serves point six (left) and after they change ends, point seven (right).
 5. Player A serves points eight and nine (left and right).
 6. Player B serves point 10 and 11 (left and right).
 7. Player C serves point 12 (left).
 8. A team that reaches seven points during these first 12 points wins the game and set.
 9. If the score has reached six points all, the teams change ends and continue in the same pattern until one team establishes a margin of two points which gives it the game and set (the margin of victory may be changed to one point at the discretion of the Tournament Director).
 10. Note that the teams change ends every six points and that the player who serves the last point of one of these 6-point segments also serves the first point of the next one (from the right court). For a following set the teams change ends and Player D serves the first game.

2. For Tiebreakers within Divisions

- a. For divisions at a competition where, at the discretion of the Competition Director, places do not need to be determined for advancement purposes (in final division play), the following procedures will take place:
 - i. Head to Head: counting only matches between the players/teams that are tied; if still tied, proceed to ii.
 - ii. The remaining tied players/teams will receive the same award (double, triple, etc.) and subsequent places will be skipped.
 - iii. Forfeit Rule:
 1. If any player/team involved in a tie has forfeited a match (not including divisioning, leveling, or play-in matches), he/she/it will be placed in the lowest position of the players/teams involved.
 2. If any player/team involved in a tie received a win as the result of a player/team forfeiting to them, ALL matches involving the player/team that forfeited will be omitted and the resulting records will be used in the foregoing tiebreaker procedures.
- b. For divisions at a competition where, at the discretion of the Competition Director, places need to be determined for advancement purposes (to final divisions, medal or placement games), the following procedures will take place:
 - i. Head to Head: counting only matches between the players/teams that are tied; if still tied proceed to ii.

- ii. Lowest total games lost, counting only matches (not including divisioning, leveling, or play-in matches) between the players/teams that are tied; if still tied, proceed to iii.
- iii. Highest game differential (difference between games won and games lost in each match), counting only matches (not including divisioning, leveling, or play-in matches) between the players/teams that are tied; if still tied, proceed to iv.
- iv. Highest total games won, counting only matches (not including divisioning, leveling, or play-in matches) between the players/teams that are tied; if still tied, proceed to v.
- v. Lowest total games lost, counting all matches (not including divisioning, leveling, or play-in matches) between common opponents; if still tied, proceed to vi.
- vi. Highest game differential (difference between games won and games lost in each match), counting all matches (not including divisioning, leveling, or play-in matches) between all common opponents; if still tied, proceed to vii.
- vii. Highest total games won, counting all matches (not including divisioning, leveling, or play-in matches) between common opponents; if still tied, proceed to viii.
- viii. If all of the tiebreakers described above still do not decide the outcome of a tie, a coin flip will be used, where the winner will be given the higher placement.
- ix. Forfeit Rule:
 - 1. If any players/team involved in a tie has forfeited a match (not including divisioning, leveling or play-in matches), he/she/it will be placed in the lowest position of the players/teams involved.
 - 2. If any players/teams involved in a tie received a win as the result of a player/team forfeiting to them/it, ALL matches involving the player/team that forfeited will be omitted and the resulting records will be used in the foregoing tiebreaker procedures.

SECTION H – SPRING COMPETITIONS AND SUMMER GAMES

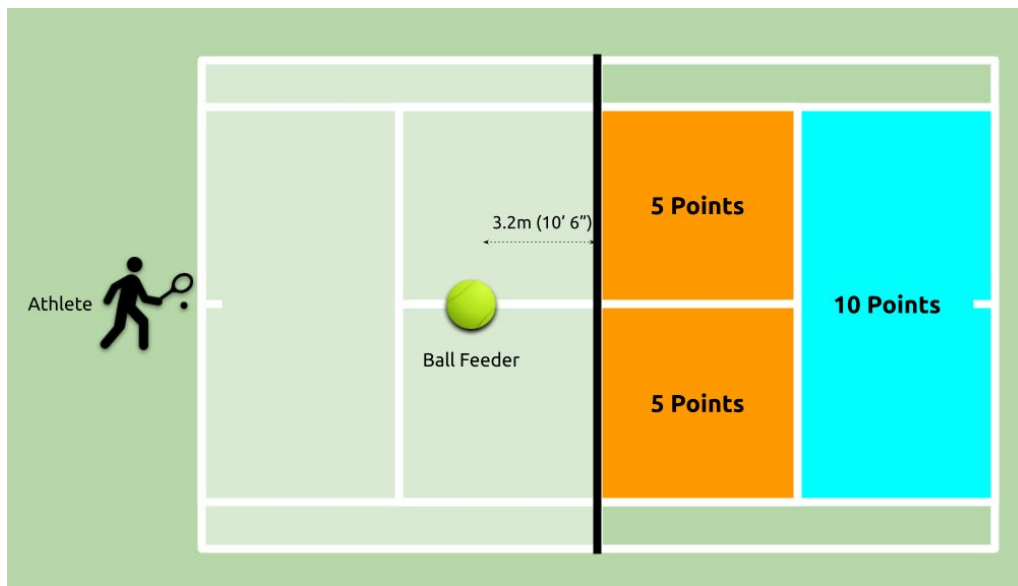
- 1. Athletes may train in as many Spring sports as desired and allowed by practice schedules, given the athlete is only training with one team for a given sport.
- 2. Athletes cannot compete in more than one Spring sport at the Same Regional competition (i.e., Spring Games) or in two different competitions on the same day. Athletes may compete in more than one Spring sport at the Regional level, given the competition for each sport takes place on a different day and location.
 - a. For Example: A program is attending a Spring Games where Swimming, Tennis and Track & Field are all offered on the same day at the same location and the following day there is a Bocce competition. Athletes MUST pick ONE sport to participate in for the Spring Games and may also compete in Bocce.
- 3. Athletes who train and compete in more than one Spring sport in the same year and who are on the roster of a four- or five-person Bocce team that is selected to advance to Summer Games MUST be registered for Bocce for Summer Games. NO members of the four- or five-person Bocce team may forfeit their spot on the selected Bocce team to register for any other sport for Summer Games. Athletes may only be registered for ONE sport for Summer Games.

SECTION I – INDIVIDUAL SKILLS CONTEST (ISC)

- 1. These events provide meaningful competition for athletes with lower ability levels and/or need to use a walking device. It is not for athletes who can already play in a match.
- 2. Athletes who receive assistance with any movement towards the ball (guided, pushed or otherwise moved) and/or any movement of the racquet to contact the ball (placing, swinging or other movement) will receive a “Non Score” for the event. Athletes who score “Non Score” in all of the events will only be eligible for a Participation award. In order to receive a placement award (Gold through 8th Place), athletes must perform at least one of the events below without receiving assistance in the portion of the event that determines the score.
- 3. Seven events comprise the Individual Skills Contest: Forehand Volley, Backhand Volley, Forehand Groundstroke, Backhand Groundstroke, Serve (Deuce Court), Serve (Advantage Court), Alternating Groundstrokes. Events are listed in the suggested competition order.
- 4. The athlete’s final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of these seven events.

5. Athletes will be pre-divisioned according to their total scores from these seven events.
6. Each event is diagrammed with the suggested number and placement of volunteers who will administer them. It is also suggested that the same volunteers remain at an event throughout the competition so that consistency is provided.
7. Athletes advancing to Summer Games in the Individual Skills Contest will also qualify to play in a Unified Doubles division, at the coach's discretion, at Summer Games.

**ISC Event #1: Forehand Groundstroke
&
ISC Event #2: Backhand Groundstroke**



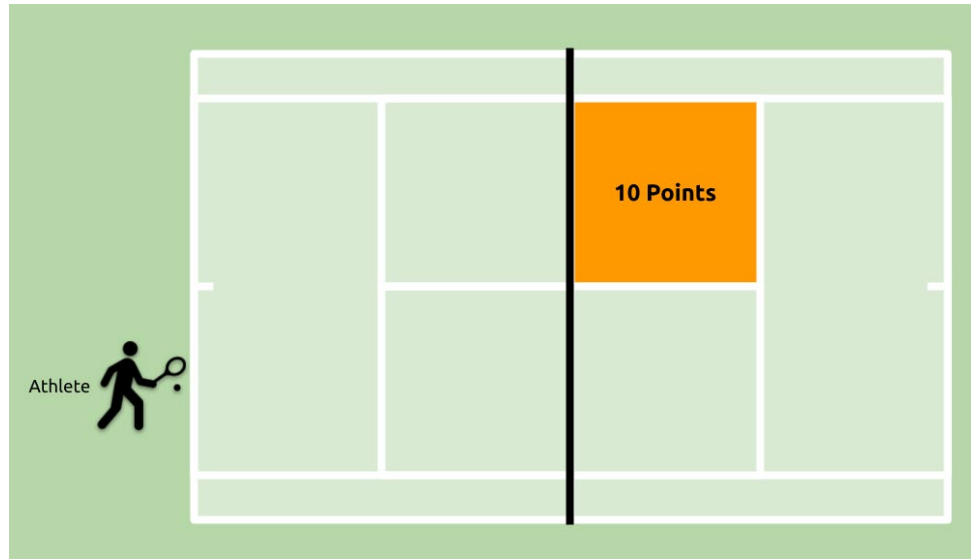
ISC Event #1 – Forehand Groundstroke

1. Purpose: To measure the athlete's ability in accurately hitting a forehand groundstroke.
2. Equipment
 - a. Racquet
 - b. Tennis Balls – at least 5 (a hopper of balls is recommended)
3. Description:
 - a. The athlete stands on or behind the baseline at center mark.
 - b. The feeder, positioned halfway between the net and service line on the same side of the net in line with the center mark, underhand tosses the ball so it bounces once before reaching the athlete's forehand side.
 - c. The athlete is given five attempts.
4. Scoring
 - a. The athlete scores 10 points for hitting into the backcourt on or between the baseline, service line, and singles sidelines.
 - b. The athlete will receive 5 points for hitting it into either service box.
 - c. The athlete will receive 0 points for any other hit as well as complete misses.
 - d. The maximum score that can be attained is 50. The minimum score is zero.

ISC Event #2 – Backhand Groundstroke

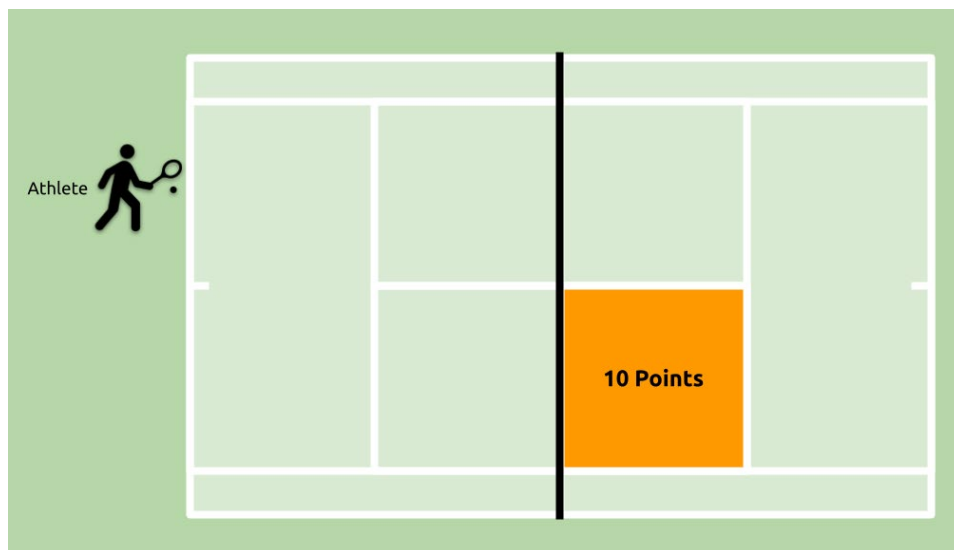
1. Same as forehand groundstroke except the feeder sends the ball to the athlete's backhand side. The athlete is given five attempts.
2. Equipment, Description and Scoring is the same as the Forehand Volley.

ISC Event #3: Serve (Deuce Court)



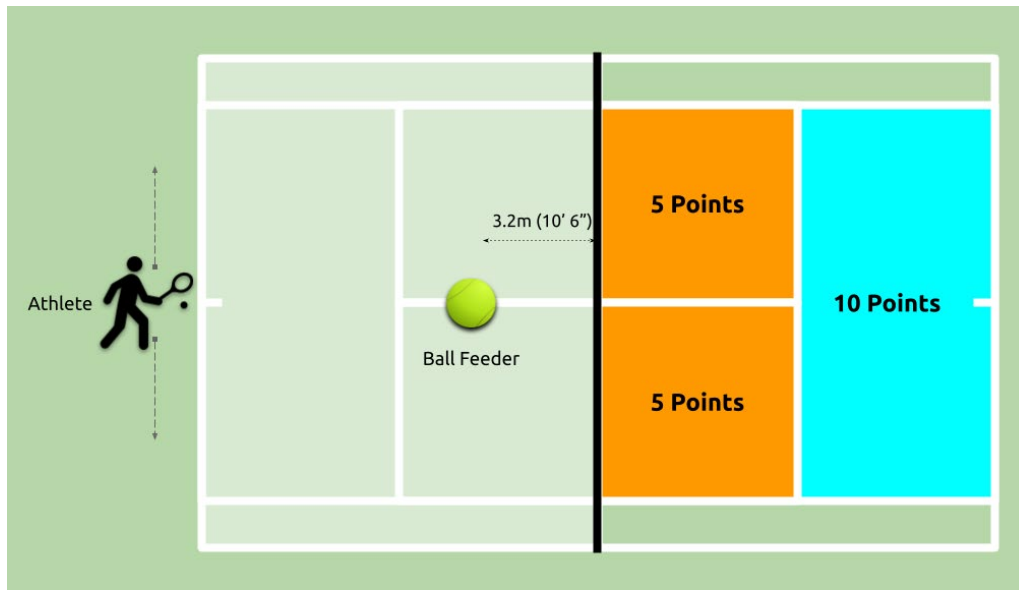
1. Purpose: To measure the athlete's ability in accurately hitting a serve into the deuce court.
2. Equipment
 - a. Racquet
 - b. Tennis Balls – at least 5 (a hopper of balls is recommended)
3. Description:
 - a. The athlete is given 5 attempts to hit a legal serve from the right court to the deuce service box.
4. Scoring
 - a. A ball landing in the correct service box will count as 10 points.
 - b. A zero (0) score is recorded if the athlete foot faults, fails to get the ball in the service box or swings and misses. A foot-fault occurs when the athlete steps on or over the baseline or the imaginary extensions of the center mark or sideline.
 - c. The maximum score that can be attained is 50. The minimum score is zero.

ISC Event #4: Serve (Advantage Court)



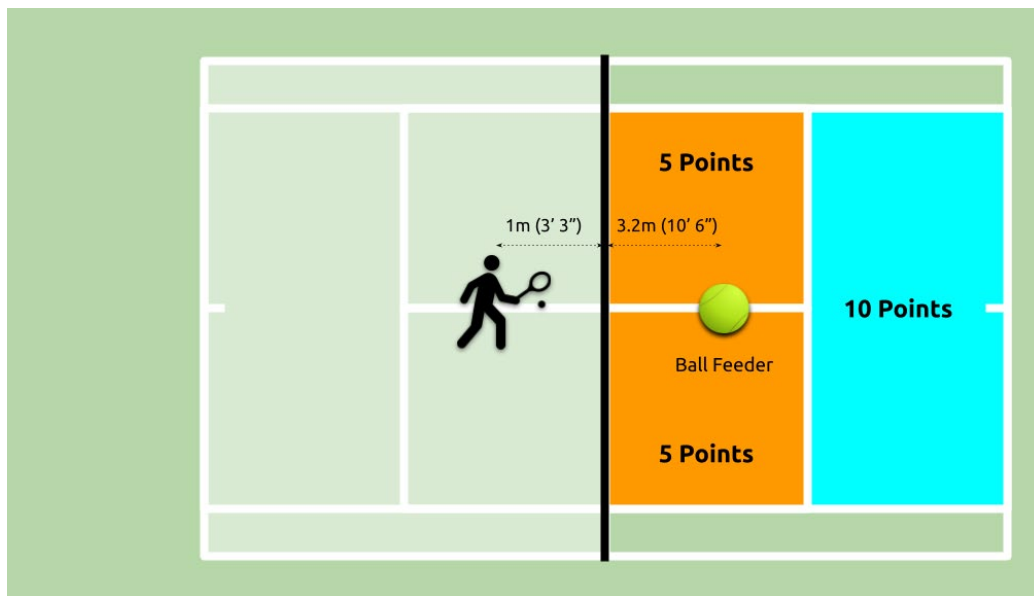
1. Same as serve to deuce court but from the left court to the advantage service box. The athlete is given five attempts.
2. Equipment, Description and Scoring is the same as the Forehand Volley.

ISC Event #5: Alternating Groundstrokes with Movement



1. Purpose: To measure the athlete's ability in accurately hitting groundstrokes with movement.
2. Equipment
 - a. Racquet
 - b. Tennis Balls – at least 10 (a hopper of balls is recommended)
3. Description:
 - a. The athlete is positioned at the center service mark on or behind the baseline.
 - b. The feeder, standing halfway between the service line and net on the same side, alternates tosses to the athlete's forehand and backhand sides.
 - c. Each toss should land at a point which is both half way between the service line and baseline and halfway between the center service mark and singles sideline.
 - d. The athlete must be allowed to return to the center mark before feeding the next ball.
 - e. The athlete is given 10 attempts.
4. Scoring
 - a. The athlete scores 10 points for hitting into the backcourt on or between the baseline, service line, and singles sidelines.
 - b. The athlete will receive 5 points for hitting it into either service box.
 - c. The athlete will receive 0 points for any other hit as well as complete misses.
 - d. The maximum score that can be attained is 100. The minimum score is zero.

**ISC Event #6: Forehand Volley
&
ISC Event #7: Backhand Volley**



ISC Event #6 – Forehand Volley

1. Purpose: To measure the athlete's ability in accurately hitting a forehand volley.
2. Equipment
 - a. Racquet
 - b. Tennis Balls – at least 5 (a hopper of balls is recommended)
3. Description
 - a. The athlete stands approximately one meter (3' 3'') from the net with the feeder on the other side positioned halfway between the service line and the net (3.2m or 10' 6'').
 - b. Both the athlete and feeder should be in line with the center mark.
 - c. The athlete is given five attempts to hit a ball safely over the net.
 - d. The feeder underhand tosses each ball to the athlete's forehand side.
4. Scoring
 - a. The athlete scores 10 points for hitting into the backcourt on or between the baseline, service line, and singles sidelines.
 - b. The athlete will scores 5 points for hitting it into either service box.
 - c. The athlete will receive 0 points for any other hit as well as complete misses.
 - d. The maximum score that can be attained is 50. The minimum score is zero.

ISC Event #7 – Backhand Volley

1. Same as forehand volley except feeder sends the balls to athlete's backhand side. The athlete is given five attempts.
2. Equipment, Description and Scoring is the same as the Forehand Volley.

FINAL ISC SCORE

1. A player's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of the seven events. The maximum final score possible for one round is 400. Athletes who score "Non Score" in all of the events will only be eligible for a Participation award.
2. A sample of the Tennis Individual Skills Contest Scorecard can be found on following page (Page 17).

SAMPLE TENNIS INDIVIDUAL SKILLS CONTEST SCORECARD

Special Olympics Northern California

Individual Skills Contest (ISC) Scorecard

TENNIS

Place Athlete Label Here

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|--|------------------|--|
| Athlete Name: | | Age Group: | | Division: | |
| Delegation: | | Gender: | | | |

| | ATTEMPTS | | | | | | | | | | SCORE |
|------------------------------|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
| 1. Forehand Groundstroke | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Backhand Groundstroke | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Serve - Deuce Court | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Serve - Advantage Court | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Alternating Groundstrokes | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Forehand Volley | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Backhand Volley | | | | | | | | | | | |

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. The athlete is given 5 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 5 points for hitting into either service box.

Backhand Groundstroke

Same as forehand groundstroke except the feeder sends the ball to the athlete's backhand side.

Serve - Deuce Court

1. The athlete is given 5 attempts to hit a legal serve from the right court to the deuce service box.
2. A ball landing in the correct service box will count as 10 points. A zero (0) score is recorded if the athlete foot faults 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 ad service box. Athlete is given 5 attempts.

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 half way 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. The athlete is presented with 10 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 5 points for hitting into either service box.

Forehand Volley

1. The athlete stands approximately 1 meter from the net with the feeder on the other side positioned halfway between the service line and the net. The athlete is presented with 5 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 5 points for hitting into either service box.

Backhand Volley

Same as forehand volley except feeder sends the balls to the athlete's backhand side.

SONORCAL TENNIS EVALUATION SHEET

Athlete's Name: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

| Forehand | Level |
|---|--------------|
| Rallies consistently with depth, becomes inconsistent when adding pace | Advanced |
| Sustains an extended rally with direction, pace and depth | Advanced |
| FH has sufficient control to sustain a short rally and is developing depth | Intermediate |
| Rallies with control and depth, but has difficulty when shots are high or hard | Intermediate |
| Hits inconsistent weak FH shots | Beginner |
| Hits FH shots with little directional control | Beginner |
| FH has directional control of shots, but shots lack depth | Beginner |
| Backhand | Level |
| Rallies consistently with depth, becomes inconsistent when adding pace | Advanced |
| Sustains an extended rally with direction, pace and depth | Advanced |
| BH has sufficient control to sustain a short rally and is developing depth | Intermediate |
| Rallies with control and depth, but has difficulty when shots are high or hard | Intermediate |
| Hits inconsistent weak BH shots | Beginner |
| Hits BH shots with little directional control | Beginner |
| BH has directional control of shots, but shots lack depth | Beginner |
| Movement | Level |
| Reacts quickly to the ball and has very good court coverage | Advanced |
| Exceptional court coverage, reacts quickly to the ball and recovers after each shot | Advanced |
| Movement allows sufficient court coverage of most shots | Intermediate |
| Has good court coverage, reacts well enough to sustain a short rally | Intermediate |
| Stationary position; does not move to ball to hit shots | Beginner |
| Moves only 1-2 steps toward ball to hit shots | Beginner |
| Moves toward ball; but court coverage is poor | Beginner |
| First Serve | Level |
| Hits 1 st serves with pace and control | Advanced |
| Hits 1 st serves with pace | Intermediate |
| 1 st serve is weak | Beginner |
| Hits 1 st serves in at a slower pace | Beginner |
| Second Serve | Level |
| Hits 2 nd serves with spin, control and depth | Advanced |
| Hits 2 nd serves with control | Intermediate |
| Hits 2 nd serves with control and depth | Intermediate |
| Double faults are common | Beginner |
| Pushes 2 nd serves | Beginner |
| Return of Serve | Level |
| Returns 1 st and 2 nd serves consistently | Advanced |
| Aggressive return of 2 nd serve and consistent return of 1st serve | Advanced |
| Aggressive return of 1 st and 2 nd serves | Advanced |
| Returns some 1 st serves, returns 2 nd serves consistently | Intermediate |
| Has difficulty returning serve | Beginner |
| Returns serve occasionally | Beginner |
| Volleys | Level |
| Comfortable moving to net, moves laterally well for both FH and BH volleys | Advanced |
| Hits aggressive FH and BH volleys | Advanced |
| Hits consistent volleys; has problems approaching the net | Intermediate |
| Has ability to approach the net and hits consistent volleys | Intermediate |
| Hits inconsistent volleys; avoids net | Beginner |
| Hits consistent FH volleys; BH volley is inconsistent | Beginner |

SECTION J - 2026 RULE CHANGES

1. There are NO rule changes for TENNIS in 2026.