Intramural Team Tennis Rules

Any rule not specifically covered will be governed in accordance with the USA Tennis Rules Book. Modifications have been made to suit Ohio State Recreational Sports programs.

Rule 1: Eligibility
A participant may be an Ohio State student taking a minimum of four credit hours. The Department of Recreational Sports defines a student as any individual who is currently enrolled at The Ohio State University and is registered with the University Registrar. Students taking four or more credit hours automatically pay the Recreational Sports student fee and therefore, do not need to purchase a membership.

The following people are eligible to participate after purchasing the appropriate Recreational Sports membership through the RPAC Welcome Center for the semester in which they intend to participate.

A participant may be:
- an Ohio State student taking less than four credit hours
- the spouse of a student or a faculty or staff member
- a faculty or staff member of The Ohio State University. The Department of Recreational Sports defines faculty and staff as all current faculty and staff, and visiting professors at The Ohio State University who are paid through the university payroll department.
- an affiliate of the department (alumni, member of the President’s Club, other recognized affiliate groups)
- a member-sponsored adult

To participate in any intramural activity, all participants must show a valid Ohio State issued photograph identification card. Acceptable identification cards are limited to BuckIDs, Ohio State Medical Center identification cards, and Recreational Sports membership cards. An Ohio State identification card must include the following information and be clearly visible to be considered valid: the individual’s name, photograph, and identification number. Identification cards that do not have one or more of these requirements will not be accepted and the individual will not be allowed to play.

Misuse of an identification card (borrowing, lending, counterfeiting, altering, etc) is a violation of the Ohio State University Student Code of Conduct. The identification card will be confiscated and the individual attempting to use the card will be ineligible to participate. If the card belongs to another student, that student must meet with a professional staff member in order to regain possession of their identification card.
**Professional Athlete Rule**
Any individual who has been paid to participate in tennis, under contract with a professional team, included on a professional team roster, practiced with a professional team, and/or compensated for trying out for a team is not eligible to participate in Intramural tennis.

**Intercollegiate Athlete Rule**
Intercollegiate tennis athletes are not eligible to participate in an intramural tennis game, activity, or event until a period of one year has passed following completion of all activities with the team. After the period has passed, former intercollegiate tennis athletes must participate in the Premier League. Intercollegiate tennis athletes are defined as individuals who are practicing with or competing with a team recognized as a varsity sport. Included in this rule are red-shirt athletes and practicing proposition 48 athletes.

**Sport Club Rule**
No more than two members of the club tennis team may participate on an intramural team tennis team. Sport club members must participate in the highest level offered in each league. A sport club member is defined as an individual who has practiced or played in a contest for a registered sport club during the academic year.

**Rule 2: Levels of Play**
**Co-Rec (CO)**
Play once per week. You may play with a maximum of either three females or three males at one time. Teams with positive point total and 3.0 sportsmanship rating will make the playoffs. You may only play on one Co-Rec team per sport.

**Rule 3: Equipment**
- Jewelry is not allowed. Medical or religious medallions must be removed, taped, or sewn under the uniform.
- A head sweatband is permitted; however, hats, bandanas and do-rags are not permitted.
- Rubber, cloth, or elastic bands may be used to control hair. Hard items such as beads, barrettes, and bobby pins are not permitted.
- A guard, cast, or brace made of hard and unyielding leather, plaster, pliable plastic, metal, or any other hard substance, even though covered with foam padding, is not permitted on the finger, hand, wrist, forearm, or elbow.
- Knee and ankle braces that are unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design/production shall be permitted and do not require additional padding.
- Knee and ankle braces that are altered from the manufacturer’s original design/production shall be permitted as long as they are soft and yielding or all exposed metal and other hard parts are padded with at least ½-inch foam rubber (or ¼ inch closed cell, slow recovery foam rubber).
- Each player will receive a can of balls at the player’s meeting at the beginning of the season. Each participant is responsible for an individual racquet container.
Rule 4: Team Captain Responsibilities
• Ensure team members follow all eligibility requirements. Team captains are also advised to seek clarification on special eligibility requirements, if necessary.
• Communicate game time, location, and ID policy to teammates.
• Ensure that all teammates sign a Release of Claims form, located on the back of the scorecard before participating in their first game.
• Ensure teammates have a valid Ohio State ID at game time to check in.
• Representing the team and communicating with the officials. The captain is the only player permitted to discuss the game with officials.
• Ensure good team sportsmanship among teammates.
• Submit team conflict sheets reflecting any scheduling problems for the members of your team.
• Cooperate with the intramural supervisors at the game site concerning any protests, incidents, or accidents that may occur, as well as with the intramural sports staff the day following such occurrences.

Rule 5: Players
• Each team shall consist of nine players, with a maximum of five males or females per team.
• All players must check in using a valid Ohio State issued ID – OR – government issued photo ID
• Substitutes will only be allowed for injured participants. If a supervisor feels a participant is faking an injury, the set will end in a forfeit (6-0).

Rule 6: Forfeits/Defaults
Forfeit Policy:
• All late teams shall start the game with a “B” sportsmanship rating.
• Teams ready for play may choose to decline any and all points.
• Not ready for play at game time: Team ready for play gets to choose sixth set.
• 5 Minutes late or less: In the first three sets the late team will start down one game.
• 10 Minutes Late: Forfeit, recorded as 36-0 and the forfeiting team will receive an “F” for its sportsmanship rating.

Sets will only be forfeited if two men or two women are not present for the doubles match, at which point the score would be 6-0.

Exception: If there is a lack of a gender present, the mixed doubles may be substituted at the supervisor’s discretion.

There are three situations that will result in a forfeit:
• Not enough players – Team does not have the required number of players to participate by 10 minutes after the scheduled game time.
Eligibility – One or more of the players participating is ineligible and therefore may not participate. Ineligibility may be due to the player being a roster violator, being previously ejected, ruled ineligible for sportsmanship-related issues, etc.

Sportsmanship – Game is ended by staff for sportsmanship-related issues.

Any team knowing in advance that they will be unable to play a regularly scheduled contest is provided the opportunity to default the contest. This will result in the team receiving a loss and “A” sportsmanship rating for the contest. To receive a default, the captain must call the intramural office by 4 p.m. on the day of the contest with their request. For teams playing on Sunday, the deadline is Friday at 4 p.m.

The opposing team will then be contacted by the intramural office to let them know they do not need to arrive for their scheduled contest. A team is allowed one default per sport per season. Any request after the first default will be counted as a forfeit.

If a team has been granted a default and the contest is then cancelled due to weather or scheduling issues, the default will be removed and the contest will be played normally if it is rescheduled.

Rule 7: Protests

Rules Protest
Questions pertaining to interpretation of rules on the part of game officials must be addressed by the intramural supervisor at the time the interpretation occurs and prior to the next live ball. The procedure shall be:

1. If a team feels the official has made a misinterpretation of a rule, the captain shall calmly and immediately request a “time out” and inform the official that he or she wishes to have a ruling on the interpretation by the intramural supervisor in charge.
2. No protest, which involves the judgment of the official(s), shall be upheld. The judgment of the official(s) is final. This also includes intramural staff when necessary.
3. If corrections are necessary, the intramural supervisor shall rule immediately and the team shall not be charged with a time out; however, if the official’s interpretation was correct, the team will be charged with a time out.
4. If the participant still does not agree with the decision at the game site, a protest form should be obtained from the intramural supervisor on site and completed. The contest will continue from this point “under protest.”

Eligibility Protest
Protests involving player eligibility must be called to the immediate attention of the intramural supervisor prior to the completion of the contest while the protested individual is present. Eligibility protests may not be made by participants after the completion of the contest. A Protest form should be obtained from the intramural supervisor and completed. The contest will continue from this point “under protest.”
Rule 8: Play
Start of Game
The choice of sides and the right to be server or receiver in the first game shall be decided by toss. If the winner of the toss chooses the right to be server or receiver, his opponent shall have the choice of sides. If the winner of the toss takes the choice of sides then his opponent shall have the right to be server or receiver.

Timing
Each team match shall consist of the following sets:
• 1 set of men's singles
• 1 set of women's singles
• 1 set of men's doubles
• 1 set of women's doubles
• 2 sets of mixed doubles

NOTE: The supervisor may make adjustments to the match sets based on player and gender availability.

Scoring
Server Wins Point
The server wins the point if the ball served, not being a let, touches the receiver or anything which s/he wears or carries before it hits the ground or if the receiver otherwise loses the point as described below.

Receiver Wins Point
The receiver wins the point if the server serves two consecutive faults or otherwise loses the point as described below.

Player Loses Point
A player loses the point if:
• she/he fails to return the ball directly over the net before it has hit the ground twice consecutively,
• she/he returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, a permanent fixture (other than the net, posts or singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band), or other object outside any of the lines which bound his/her opponents court.
• she/he volleys the ball and fails to make a good return even when standing outside the court.
• she/he deliberately carries or catches the ball in play on his/her racket or deliberately touches it with his/her racket more than once.
• she/he or his/her racket touches the net, post or the ground within his/her opponent’s court at any time while that ball is in play.
• she/he volleys the ball before it has passed the net.
• the ball in play touches him/her or anything that s/he wears or carries other than the racket in his/her hand.
• s/he throws his/her racket at and hits the ball.
• s/he deliberately and materially changes the shape of his/her racket during the playing of the point.
• s/he deliberately commits any act that hinders his/her opponent in making a stroke.

A Game
If a player wins his/her point, the score is called 15 for that player. On winning his/her second point, his/her score is called 30. On winning his/her third point, his/her score is called 40; and the fourth point won by a player is scored a game for that player/team. In intramural team tennis scoring is no advantage. If both players/teams have won three points, the receiving team chooses which side to receive the serve. In the mixed double set, the serve must be gender to gender. The player/team who wins the next point, wins the game.

A Set
A player who first wins six(6) games wins a set. There will be no tiebreaker if both players/teams have won five(5) games.

A Match
The winner of the match will be the team that wins the most games, not the most sets.

Overtime
There will be no overtime in the regular season. Ties will be allowed. In post-season play however, if both teams have won the same amount of games at the conclusion of the match, overtime will be played. The tie will be broken by another set of mixed doubles play. The first team to win six games will be determined the match winner. The players participating in this mixed doubles set do not necessarily have to be the same players that participated in the first mixed doubles set.

Mercy Rule
Team tennis does not use a mercy rule.

Delivery of Service
• The service shall be delivered in the following manner: Immediately before commencing to serve, the server shall stand with both feet at rest behind the base line, and within the imaginary continuation of the center mark and side line of the singles court in singles play, or the side line of the doubles court in doubles play.
• The receiver may stand wherever she/he pleases on his own side of the net. However, she/he must allow the ball to hit the ground before returning service.
• The server shall then throw the ball into the air and strike it with his/her racket before it hits the ground. Delivery shall be deemed complete at the moment the racket strikes the ball.
• Two serves are allowed if first serve is unsuccessful.
**Service Delivered From Alternate Courts**
In delivering the service, the server shall stand alternately behind the right and left courts, beginning from the right in every game. The ball served shall pass over the net and hit the ground within the service court that is diagonally earlier, or upon any line bounding such court, before the receiver returns it. If there is any doubt, it is customary for the receiver to determine whether the service is good or not. If the ball is erroneously served from the wrong half of the court, the resulting play shall stand, but service from the proper court shall be resumed immediately after discovery of the error.

**Receiver Becomes Server**
At the end of the first game, the receiver becomes server and the server the receiver; and so on alternately in all the subsequent games of a match. The players change ends at the end of every four games. If a player serves out of turn, the player who ought to have served shall serve as soon as the mistake is discovered. All points scored before such discovery shall stand. If a game has been completed before such discovery, the order of service remains as altered.

**Doubles Order of Service**
The pair that must serve first in the first game of each set shall decide which partner shall do so, the opposing pair shall decide similarly in the second game. The partner of the player who served the first game shall serve in the third game. The order of service having been decided shall not be altered in the set.

**Doubles Order of Receiving**
The pair that has to receive service in the first game of each set shall decide which partner will receive the first service. Partners shall receive the service alternately throughout each game and the order will not be altered during the set.

**A Good Return**
It is a good return if:
- the ball touches the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band provided that it passes over any of them and hits the ground within the court
- the ball, served or returned, hits the ground within the proper court and rebounds or is blown back over the net, and the player whose turn it is to strike reaches over the net and plays the ball, provided that neither she nor any part of his/her clothes or racket touches the net, post, single sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band or the ground within his/her opponent’s court, and that the stroke is otherwise good
- the ball is returned outside the posts, or singles sticks, either above or below the level of the top of the net, even though it touches the posts or single sticks, provided that it hits the ground within the proper court
- a player’s racket passes over the net after s/he has returned the ball, provided that ball passes the net before being played and is properly returned
- a player succeeds in returning the ball, served or in play, which strikes another ball lying in the court
- the ball touches any other permanent fixture after it has hit the ground within the proper
Faults
The service is a fault if:
• the server swings at and misses the ball in attempting to serve it
• the ball does not land in the proper service court
• the ball touches a permanent fixture other than the net, strap, or band

Service After A Fault
After a fault (if it is the first fault) the server shall serve again from behind the same half of the court from which she/he served that fault, unless it was a fault because s/he served from behind the wrong half, when she/he shall be entitled to deliver one service from behind the other half. A fault may not be claimed after the next service has been delivered.

Foot Fault Rule
The server shall throughout the delivery of the service:
• Not change position by walking or running
• Keep both feet behind the baseline when starting to serve
• Jumping off the ground in hitting a serve is not considered a foot fault. Server’s feet may swing over the base line but not touch the ground before the ball is hit.

Service Let
During the service, a ball that touches the net but lands in the proper court is termed a let and counts nothing, another service is delivered. If the ball touches the net when going into the proper court during a rally, it is good. There is no limit to the number of let balls that may be made on the service, and the server continues serving in the same court until a good service is delivered or two faults are made.

Ball Not to Be Served until Receiver is Ready
The server shall not serve until the receiver is ready. If the latter attempts to return the service, he shall be deemed ready.

A Let
In all cases where a let (other than a service let) has to be called under the rules, or to provide for an interruption of play, the point shall be replayed. If a player is hindered in making a stroke by anything not within his/her control, except a permanent fixture or deliberate interference by his/her opponent, a let shall be called.

Ball Falling on Line - Good
A ball falling on a line is regarded as falling in the court bounded by that line.

Rule 9: Sportsmanship
The team captain is responsible for the actions of his or her team and their spectators. Additionally, the captain will ensure that his or her team is familiar with the rules of play and intramural policies and procedures contained in this handbook.
Sportsmanship is a vital component for success in every intramural contest. Participants and spectators are expected to display good sportsmanship toward opponents and the intramural staff at all times.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct
Participants and spectators shall not commit acts of unsportsmanlike conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, arguments with staff, flagrant fouling, fighting, etc. before, during or after a contest. No player or team shall:

• Use foul or derogatory language, threaten, or verbally abuse any other participant or intramural employee before, during or after the game
• Participate in a game for which he or she is ineligible
• Argue or talk back to the intramural staff. Only the captain should address an official and only if done so in a courteous manner
• Intentionally strike, push, trip, or flagrantly foul another participant, spectator, or Recreational Sports employee
• Mistreat the facility, equipment, or supplies of The Ohio State University and/or the Department of Recreational Sports.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalties
Any participant displaying unsportsmanlike conduct will be issued either a conduct warning or ejection by the game officials or intramural supervisors.

• Verbal warning resulting in incident report – conduct warning
• Ejection of participant with or without warning – ejection
• Two ejections or three verbal warnings – forfeit

Disciplinary Action
Any player receiving two conduct warnings in one game or ejected from a game is required to meet with professional staff. The player will be suspended from ALL recreational sports facilities and programs until the meeting occurs and for a minimum of seven days from the time of the meeting.

Rule 10: Co-Rec Modifications
There are no Co-Rec modifications.

Rule 11: Playoffs
The top two teams from each division will advance to playoffs, teams must also maintain a “3.0” or “B” sportsmanship average during the regular season to be eligible for the playoffs. Team’s averages will be formulated in the same way a student’s GPA. Each sportsmanship letter grade is assigned a numerical value:

• “A” – Four (4) points
• “B” – Three (3) points
• “C” – Two (2) points
• “D” – One (1) point
• “F” – Zero (0) point
The grades for each regular season contest will be added together and divided by the total number of contests held. This will equal the team’s sportsmanship average.

*For any questions or clarifications, please contact the Competitive Sports office at (614) 292-2732.*