

PART 1—ITF RULES OF TENNIS

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Explanatory Note

The following Rules of Tennis and Cases and Decisions are the official rules of the International Tennis Federation (ITF), of which the United States Tennis Association (USTA) is a member. USTA Comments have the same weight and force in USTA tournaments as do ITF Cases and Decisions.

When a match is played without officials, *The Code* shall apply in any situation not covered by the Rules of Tennis.

Except where otherwise stated, every reference in the Rules of Tennis to the masculine includes the feminine gender.

THE SINGLES GAME

1. THE COURT

The Court shall be a rectangle 78 feet (23.77 m) long and 27 feet (8.23 m) wide.

USTA Comment: See Rule 34 for a doubles court.

It shall be divided across the middle by a net suspended from a cord or metal cable of a maximum diameter of one-third of an inch (0.8 cm), the ends of which shall be attached to, or pass over, the tops of two posts, which shall be not more than 6 inches (15 cm) square or 6 inches (15 cm) in diameter. These posts shall not be higher than 1 inch (2.5 cm) above the top of the net cord. The centres of the posts shall be 3 feet (.914 m) outside the Court on each side and the height of the posts shall be such that the top of the cord or metal cable shall be 3 feet 6 inches (1.07 m) above the ground.

When a combined doubles (see Rule 34) and singles Court with a doubles net is used for singles, the net must be supported to a height of 3 feet 6 inches (1.07 m) by means of two posts, called “singles sticks”, which shall be not more than 3 inches (7.5 cm) square or 3 inches (7.5 cm) in diameter. The centres of the singles sticks shall be 3 feet (.914 m) outside the singles Court on each side.

The net shall be extended fully so that it fills completely the space between the two posts and shall be of sufficiently small mesh to prevent the ball passing through. The height of the net shall be 3 feet (.914 m) at the centre, where it shall be held down taut by a strap not more than 2 inches (5 cm) wide and completely white in colour. There shall be a band covering the cord or metal cable and the top of the net of not less than 2 inches (5 cm) nor more than 2½ inches (6.35 cm) in depth on each side and completely white in colour. There shall be no advertisement on the strap, band or singles sticks. Advertising is allowed on the net as long as it is placed on the part of the net that is within 3 feet (.914 m) of each net post and is produced in such a way that it is still possible to see through the net. The advertising may not contain white or yellow.

The lines bounding the ends and sides of the Court shall respectively be called the base-lines and the side-lines. On each side of the net, at a distance of 21 feet (6.40 m) from it and parallel with it, shall be drawn the service-lines. The space on each side of the net between the service-line and the side-lines shall be divided into two equal parts called the service-courts by the centre service-line, which must be 2 inches (5 cm) in width, drawn half-way between, and parallel with, the side-line. Each base-line shall be bisected by an imaginary continuation of the centre service-line to a line 4 inches (10 cm) in length and 2 inches (5 cm) in width called "the centre mark" drawn inside the Court, at right angles to and in contact with such base-lines. All other lines shall be not less than 1 inch (2.5 cm) nor more than 2 inches (5 cm) in width, except the base-line which may be not more than 4 inches (10 cm) in width, and all measurements shall be made to the outside of the lines. All lines shall be of uniform colour. If advertising or any other material is placed at the back of the Court, it may not contain white, or yellow. A light colour may only be used if this does not interfere with the vision of the players.

If advertisements are placed on the chairs of the linesmen sitting at the back of the court, they may not contain white or yellow. A light colour may only be used if this does not interfere with the vision of the players.

ITF Note 1: *In Davis Cup, Fed Cup and the Official Championships of the International Tennis Federation, specific requirements with regard to the space behind the baseline and at the sides are included in the respective Regulations for these events.*

ITF Note 2: *At club or recreational level, the space behind each baseline should be not less than 18 feet (5.5 m) and at the sides not less than 10 feet (3.05 m).*

USTA Comment 1.1: *How do you tighten the net to the proper tension?* First, loosen the center strap. Next, tighten the net cord until the center of the net is approximately 40 inches above the ground. Finally, tighten the center strap until the center of the net is 36 inches above the ground. These measurements should always be made before the day's first match and when possible before each match.

USTA Comment 1.2: *What happens if a singles stick falls to the court during a point?* The point stops immediately and is replayed.

2. PERMANENT FIXTURES

The permanent fixtures of the Court shall include not only the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap and band, but also, where there are any such, the back and side stops, the stands, fixed or movable seats and chairs round the Court, and their occupants, all other fixtures around and

above the Court, and the Umpire, Net-cord Judge, Footfault Judge, Linesmen and Ball Boys when in their respective places.

ITF Note: For the purpose of this Rule, the word "Umpire" comprehends the Umpire, the persons entitled to a seat on the Court, and all those persons designated to assist the Umpire in the conduct of a match.

3. THE BALL

Balls that are approved for play under the Rules of Tennis must comply with the following specifications:

a. The ball shall have a uniform outer surface consisting of a fabric cover and shall be white or yellow in colour. If there are any seams they shall be stitchless.

b. The ball shall conform to the requirements specified in Appendix I (Regulations for making tests specified in Rule 3.), Section iv for size and be more than 1.975 ounces (56.0 grams) and less than 2.095 ounces (59.4 grams) in weight.

c. More than one type of ball is specified. Each ball shall have a bound of more than 53 inches (134.62 cm) and less than 58 inches (147.32 cm) when dropped 100 inches (254.00 cm) upon a flat, rigid surface e.g., concrete. Ball Type 1 (fast speed) shall have a forward deformation of more than .195 inches (.495 cm) and less than .235 inches (.597 cm) and return deformation of more than .265 inches (.673 cm) and less than .360 inches (.914 cm) at 18 lb. (8.165 kg) load. Ball Types 2 (medium speed) and 3 (slow speed) shall have a forward deformation of more than .220 inches (.559 cm) and less than .290 inches (.737 cm) and a return deformation of more than .315 inches (.800 cm) and less than .425 inches (1.080 cm) at 18 lb. (8.165 kg) load. The two deformation figures shall be the averages of three individual readings along three axes of the ball and no two individual readings shall differ by more than .030 inches (.076 cm) in each case.

d. For play above 4,000 feet (1219 m) in altitude above sea level, two additional types of ball may be used.

i. The first type is identical to Ball Type 2 (medium speed) as defined above except that the ball shall have a bound of more than 48 inches (121.92 cm) and less than 53 inches (134.62 cm) and the ball shall have an internal pressure that is greater than the external pressure. This type of tennis ball is commonly known as a pressurised ball.

ii. The second type is identical to Ball Type 2 (medium speed) as defined above except that the ball shall have a bound of more than 53 inches (134.62 cm) and less than 58 inches (147.32 cm) and shall have an internal pressure that is approximately equal to the external pressure and have been acclimatised for 60 days or more at the altitude of the specific tournament. This type of tennis ball is commonly known as a zero-pressure or non-pressurised ball.

The third type of ball which is recommended for use for play on any court

surface type above 4000 feet (1219 m) in altitude is Ball Type 3 (slow speed), as defined above.

e. All tests for bound, size and deformation shall be made in accordance with the regulations in Appendix I.

f. The International Tennis Federation shall rule on the question of whether any ball or prototype complies with the above specifications or is otherwise approved, for play. Such ruling may be taken on its own initiative, or upon application by any party with a bona-fide interest therein, including any player, equipment manufacturer or National Association or members thereof. Such rulings and applications shall be made in accordance with the applicable Review and Hearing Procedures of the International Tennis Federation (see Appendix III).

ITF Note 1: *Any ball to be used in a tournament which is played under the Rules of Tennis must be named on the official ITF list of approved balls issued by the International Tennis Federation.*

Case 1. Which ball type should be used on which court surface?

Decision. Three different types of balls are approved under the Rules of Tennis. However:

- a. Ball Type 1 (fast speed) is intended for play on slow pace court surfaces (See Appendix I).
- b. Ball Type 2 (medium speed) is intended for play on medium/medium-fast pace court surfaces (See Appendix I).
- c. Ball Type 3 (slow speed) is intended for play on fast pace court surfaces (See Appendix I).

USTA Comment 3.1: *May a player cause a ball to become wet by using the ball to wipe perspiration from the player's body? No. A player may not take any action that materially changes the condition of the ball; therefore, a player may not use a ball to wipe off perspiration.*

4. THE RACKET

Rackets failing to comply with the following specifications are not approved for play under the Rules of Tennis:

a. The hitting surface of the racket shall be flat and consist of a pattern of crossed strings connected to a frame and alternately interlaced or bonded where they cross; and the stringing pattern shall be generally uniform, and in particular not less dense in the centre than in any other area. The racket shall be designed and strung such that the playing characteristics are identical on both faces.

The strings shall be free of attached objects and protrusions other than those utilised solely and specifically to limit or prevent wear and tear or vibration, and which are reasonable in size and placement for such purposes.

b. The frame of the racket shall not exceed 29 inches (73.66 cm) in overall length, including the handle. The frame of the racket shall not exceed 12½ inches (31.75 cm) in overall width. The hitting surface shall not exceed 15½

inches (39.37 cm) in overall length, and 11½ inches (29.21 cm) in overall width.

c. The frame, including the handle, shall be free of attached objects and devices other than those utilised solely and specifically to limit or prevent wear and tear or vibration, or to distribute weight. Any objects and devices must be reasonable in size and placement for such purposes.

d. The frame, including the handle and the strings, shall be free of any device which makes it possible to change materially the shape of the racket, or to change the weight distribution in the direction of the longitudinal axis of the racket which would alter the swing moment of inertia, or to deliberately change any physical property which may affect the performance of the racket during the playing of a point. No energy source that in any way changes or affects the playing characteristics of a racket may be built into or attached to a racket.

The International Tennis Federation shall rule on the question of whether any racket or prototype complies with the above specifications or is otherwise approved, or not approved, for play. Such ruling may be undertaken on its own initiative, or upon application by any party with a bona-fide interest therein, including any player, equipment manufacturer or National Association or members thereof. Such rulings and applications shall be made in accordance with the applicable Review and Hearing Procedures of the International Tennis Federation (see Appendix III).

Case 1. Can there be more than one set of strings on the hitting surface of racket?

Decision. No. The rule clearly mentions a pattern, and not patterns, of crossed strings.

Case 2. Is the stringing pattern of a racket considered to be generally uniform and flat if the strings are on more than one plane?

Decision. No.

Case 3. Can vibration dampening devices be placed on the strings of a racket and if so, where can they be placed?

Decision. Yes; but such devices may be placed only outside the pattern of crossed strings.

Case 4. In the course of play, a player accidentally breaks the strings of his racket. Can he continue to play with the racket in this condition?

Decision. Yes.

Case 5. Can a battery that affects playing characteristics be incorporated into a racket?

Decision. No. A battery is prohibited because it is an energy source, as are solar cells and other similar devices.

USTA Comment 4.1: *What happens if it is discovered after play has begun that a player has been using an illegal racket or an illegally strung racket? All points played stand. The player must find another racket before continuing play. A player is subject to code violations for delay under the Point Penalty System. If the discovery occurs after the match is over, the match still counts.*

5. SERVER & RECEIVER

The players shall stand on opposite sides of the net; the player who first delivers the ball shall be called the Server, and the other the Receiver.

Case 1. Does a player, attempting a stroke, lose the point if he crosses an imaginary line in the extension of the net,

- a. before striking the ball,
- b. after striking the ball?

Decision. He does not lose the point in either case by crossing the imaginary line and provided he does not enter the lines bounding his opponent's Court (Rule 20(e)). In regard to hindrance, his opponent may ask for the decision of the Umpire under Rules 21 and 25.

Case 2. The Server claims that the Receiver must stand within the lines bounding his Court. Is this necessary?

Decision. No. The Receiver may stand wherever he pleases on his own side of the net.

6. CHOICE OF ENDS & SERVICE

The choice of ends and the right to be Server or Receiver in the first game shall be decided by toss. The player winning the toss may choose or require his opponent to choose:–

- a. The right to be Server or Receiver, in which case the other player shall choose the end; or
- b. The end, in which case the other player shall choose the right to be Server or Receiver.

Case 1. Do players have the right to new choices if the match is postponed or suspended before it has started?

Decision. Yes. The toss stands, but new choices may be made with respect to service and end.

USTA Comment 6.1: *When should the toss be made?* The toss should be made before the warm-up so that the players can warm-up on the same side from which they play their first game.

USTA Comment 6.2: *Can the choice a player made be changed?* The choice cannot be changed unless the match was postponed or suspended before the first point was played. In this case new choices may be made with respect to service, end, or requiring the opponent to choose first.

7. THE 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 (i.e. further from the net than) the base-line, and within the imaginary continuations of the centre-mark and side-line. The Server shall then project the ball

by hand into the air in any direction and before it hits the ground strike it with his racket, and the delivery shall be deemed to have been completed at the moment of the impact of the racket and the ball. A player with the use of only one arm may utilize his racket for the projection.

Case 1. May the Server in a singles game take his stand behind the portion of the base-line between the side-lines of the Singles Court and the Doubles Court?

Decision. No.

Case 2. If a player, when serving, throws up two or more balls instead of one, does he lose that service?

Decision. No. A let should be called, but if the Umpire regards the action as deliberate he may take action under Rule 21.

USTA Comment 7.1: *May a player serve underhanded?* Yes. There is no restriction in the rules on the kind of service motion that a Server may use.

USTA Comment 7.2: *Where may the Server stand?* In singles, the Server may stand anywhere behind the baseline between the imaginary extensions of the inside edge of the center mark and the outside edge of the singles sideline. In doubles, the Server may stand anywhere behind the baseline between the imaginary extensions of the inside edge of the center mark and the outside edge of the doubles sideline.

8. FOOT FAULT

The Server shall throughout the delivery of the Service:

- a. Not change his position by walking or running. The Server shall not by slight movements of the feet which do not materially affect the location originally taken up by him, be deemed "to change his position by walking or running".
- b. Not touch with either foot any area other than that behind the base-line within the imaginary extensions of the centre-mark and side-lines.

USTA Comment 8.1: *What does the rule mean when it says that the Server may "not change his position by walking or running"?* One key to understanding this rule is to realize that the Server's feet must be at rest immediately before beginning to serve. The delivery of the service then begins with any arm or racket motion and ends when the racket contacts the ball (or misses the ball in attempt to strike it).

To define walking or running with precision is difficult. This rule is

intended to prevent the Server from taking advantage of the Receiver by serving while “on the move” and requiring the Receiver to guess the position from which the serve will be launched, and the rule should be enforced with that intent in mind.

- A Server who takes more than one step with either foot after the “feet at rest” position described above is at risk for being called for a foot fault. The serve becomes a foot fault when, in the judgment of an experienced official, the Server has materially changed position before or during any racket or arm motion.
- A Server whose footwork changes significantly from one serve to the next is at risk for being called for a foot fault.
- Serves that look like the running volleyball serve violate the rule. Serves in which the Server runs or walks from a point well behind the baseline to the baseline are also illegal, as are serves in which the Server walks or runs along the baseline before choosing a spot from which to deliver the serve.

USTA Comment 8.2: *When does a foot fault occur?* A player commits a foot fault if after the player’s feet are at rest but before the player strikes the ball, either foot touches:

- the Court, including the baseline;
- any part of the imaginary extension of the center mark; or
- beyond the imaginary extension of the outside of the singles sideline in singles or the doubles sideline in doubles.

USTA Comment 8.3: *Is it a foot fault if the Server’s foot touches the baseline and then the Server catches the tossed ball instead of attempting to strike it?* This is not a foot fault as long as the Server makes no attempt to strike the ball.

USTA Comment 8.4: *May a player ask an official how he foot faulted?* Yes. The official should then give a brief answer.

USTA Comment 8.5: *When may the Receiver or the Receiver’s partner call foot faults?* In a non-officiated match, the Receiver or the Receiver’s partner may call foot faults after all efforts (appeal to the Server’s request for an official) have failed and the foot faulting is flagrant as to clearly perceptible from the Receiver’s side.

9. DELIVERY OF SERVICE

a. In delivering the service, the Server shall stand alternately behind the right and left halves of the Court beginning from the right in every game. If service from a wrong half of the Court occurs and is undetected, all play re-

sulting from such wrong service or services shall stand, but the inaccuracy of station shall be corrected immediately it is discovered.

b. The ball served shall pass over the net and hit the ground within the Service Court which is diagonally opposite, or upon any line bounding such Court, before the Receiver returns it.

10. SERVICE FAULT

The Service is a fault:

- If the Server commits any breach of Rules 7, 8 or 9(b);
- If he misses the ball in attempting to strike it;
- If the ball served touches a permanent fixture (other than the net, strap or band) before it hits the ground.

Case 1. After throwing a ball up preparatory to serving, the Server decides not to strike at it and catches it instead. Is it a fault?

Decision. No.

Case 2. In serving in a singles game played on a Doubles Court with doubles posts and singles sticks, the ball hits a singles stick and then hits the ground within the lines of the correct Service Court. Is this a fault or a let?

Decision. In serving it is a fault, because the singles stick, the doubles post, and that portion of the net or band between them are permanent fixtures. (Rules 2 and 10, and note to Rule 24.)

USTA Comment 10.1: *Is it a fault if the Server catches the toss or lets it drop to the ground?* No. It is not a fault as long as the Server makes no attempt to strike at the ball.

11. SECOND SERVICE

After a fault (if it is the first fault) the Server shall serve again from behind the same half of the Court from which he served that fault, unless the service was from the wrong half, when, in accordance with Rule 9, the Server shall be entitled to one service only from behind the other half.

Case 1. A player serves from a wrong Court. He loses the point and then claims it was a fault because of his wrong station.

Decision. The point stands as played and the next service should be from the correct station according to the score.

Case 2. The point score being 15 all, the Server, by mistake, serves from the left-hand Court. He wins the point. He then serves again from the right-hand Court, delivering a fault. This mistake in station is then discovered. Is he entitled to the previous point? From which Court should he next serve?

Decision. The previous point stands. The next service should be from the left-hand Court, the score being 30/15, and the Server having served one fault.

12. WHEN TO SERVE

The Server shall not serve until the Receiver is ready. If the latter attempts to return the service, he shall be deemed ready. If, however, the Receiver signifies that he is not ready, he may not claim a fault because the ball does not hit the ground within the limits fixed for the service.

USTA Comment 12.1: *Does this rule apply to the first and second serve?* Yes. This rule applies separately to both the first and second serve.

USTA Comment 12.2: *Once ready, can the Receiver become unready?* The Receiver cannot become unready unless outside interference occurs.

USTA Comment 12.3: *May the Server hit the serve just as the Receiver looks up after getting into the ready position?* No. The Receiver is not ready until the Receiver is in the ready position and has a second or two to make eye contact with the Server.

USTA Comment 12.4: *What happens if the Server hits a good second serve and the Receiver makes no effort to return the serve because the Receiver was not ready?* The second serve is replayed unless the Receiver was not ready because of outside interference, in which case the whole point is replayed.

13. THE LET

In all cases where a let has to be called under the rules, or to provide for an interruption to play, it shall have the following interpretations:—

a. When called solely in respect of a service that one service only shall be replayed.

b. When called under any other circumstance, the point shall be replayed.

Case 1. A service is interrupted by some cause outside those defined in Rule 14. Should the service only be replayed?

Decision. No, the whole point must be replayed.

Case 2. If a ball in play becomes broken, should a let be called?

Decision. Yes.

USTA Comment 13.1: *What happens when the Server is interrupted during delivery of the second service?* The Server is entitled to two serves.

USTA Comment 13.2: *What happens when there is a delay between the first and second serves?* If the delay is caused by the Receiver (such

as a broken string or contact lens problem), an official, or outside interference, the whole point is replayed. If the Server caused the delay, such as when the Server breaks a string, the Server gets one serve. Note that a spectator's call ("out," "fault," or other), a spectator's ringing cell phone, or grunting on an adjacent court is not basis for replaying the point. Action should be taken to prevent further spectator interference.

USTA Comment 13.3: *What happens when a ball from an adjacent court rolls on the court between the first and second serves?* The time it takes to clear an intruding ball between the first and second serves is not considered sufficient time to warrant the Server receiving two serves unless this time is so prolonged as to constitute an interruption. The Receiver is the judge of whether the delay is sufficiently prolonged to justify giving the Server two serves.

USTA Comment 13.4: *May the Receiver claim a let if the Server loses control and grip of the racket and it lands during the service in the Server's court?* No. Such an occurrence is not sufficiently unusual to justify a let.

USTA Comment 13.5: *What happens if during a point the ball loses compression or becomes unfit for some other reason?* If it is clear that the defective ball was the one in play, then the point should be replayed.

14. THE "LET" IN SERVICE

The Service is a let:—

a. If the ball served touches the net, strap or band, and is otherwise good, or, after touching the net, strap or band, touches the Receiver or anything which he wears or carries before hitting the ground.

b. If a service or a fault is delivered when the Receiver is not ready (see Rule 12).

In case of a let, that particular service shall not count, and the Server shall serve again, but a service let does not annul a previous fault.

USTA Comment 14.1: *What happens if the serve hits the net and then hits the Receiver or the Receiver's partner before the ball hits the ground?* A Let is played.

15. ORDER OF SERVICE

At the end of the first game, the Receiver shall become Server, and the Server Receiver; and so on alternately in all the subsequent games of a match. If a

player serves out of turn, the player who ought to have served shall serve as soon as the mistake is discovered, but all points scored before such discovery shall stand. A fault served before such discovery shall not stand. If a game shall have been completed before such discovery, the order of service shall remain as altered.

16. WHEN PLAYERS CHANGE ENDS

The players shall change ends at the end of the first, third and every subsequent alternate game of each set, and at the end of each set unless the total number of games in such set is even, in which case the change is not made until the end of the first game of the next set.

If a mistake is made and the correct sequence is not followed the players must take up their correct station as soon as the discovery is made and follow their original sequence.

17. THE BALL IN PLAY

A ball is in play from the moment at which it is delivered in service. Unless a fault or a let is called it remains in play until the point is decided.

Case 1. A player fails to make a good return. No call is made and the ball remains in play. May his opponent later claim the point after the rally has ended?

Decision. No. The point may not be claimed if the players continue to play after the error has been made, provided the opponent was not hindered.

USTA Comment 17.1: *Is a point decided when a good shot has clearly passed a player, or when an apparently bad shot passes over the baseline or sideline?* No. A ball is in play until it bounces twice or lands outside the Court, hits a permanent fixture (other than the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band), or hits a player. A ball that becomes imbedded in the net is out of play.

USTA Comment 17.2: *What happens if a player hits a ball into the net and the opponent, thinking the ball is coming over, strikes at it, and hits the net?* The opponent loses the point if the opponent touched the net while the ball was still in play.

USTA Comment 17.3: *Must an out call on a player's shot to the opponent's court be made before the opponent's return has either gone out of play or been hit by the first player?* Yes. See Case 3 under Rule 29 regarding this situation in an umpired match.

18. SERVER WINS POINT

The Server wins the point:—

- a. If the ball served, not being a let under Rule 14, touches the Receiver or anything which he wears or carries, before it hits the ground;
- b. If the Receiver otherwise loses the point as provided by Rule 20.

19. RECEIVER WINS POINT

The Receiver wins the point:—

- a. If the Server serves two consecutive faults;
- b. If the Server otherwise loses the point as provided by Rule 20.

20. PLAYER LOSES POINT

A player loses the point if:—

- a. He fails, before the ball in play has hit the ground twice consecutively, to return it directly over the net (except as provided in Rule 24(a) or (c)); or
- b. He returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, a permanent fixture, or other object, outside any of the lines which bound his opponent's Court (except as provided in Rule 24(a) or (c)); or
- c. He volleys the ball and fails to make a good return even when standing outside the Court; or
- d. In playing the ball he deliberately carries or catches it on his racket or deliberately touches it with his racket more than once; or
- e. He or his racket (in his hand or otherwise) or anything which he wears or carries touches the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, or the ground within his opponent's Court at any time while the ball is in play; or
- f. He volleys the ball before it has passed the net; or
- g. The ball in play touches him or anything that he wears or carries, except his racket in his hand or hands; or
- h. He throws his racket at and hits the ball; or
- i. He deliberately and materially changes the shape of his racket during the playing of the point.

Case 1. In serving, the racket flies from the Server's hand and touches the net before the ball has touched the ground. Is this a fault, or does the player lose the point?

Decision. The Server loses the point because his racket touches the net whilst the ball is in play (Rule 20(e)).

Case 2. In serving, the racket flies from the Server's hand and touches the net after the ball has touched the ground outside the proper court. Is this a fault, or does the player lose the point?

Decision. This is a fault because the ball was out of play when the racket touched the net.

Case 3. A and B are playing against C and D, A is serving to D, C touches the net before the ball touches the ground. A fault is then called because the

service falls outside the Service Court. Do C and D lose the point?

Decision. The call “fault” is an erroneous one. C and D had already lost the point before “fault” could be called, because C touched the net whilst the ball was in play (Rule 20(e)).

Case 4. May a player jump over the net into his opponent’s Court while the ball is in play and not suffer penalty?

Decision. No. He loses the point (Rule 20(e)).

Case 5. A cuts the ball just over the net, and it returns to A’s side. B, unable to reach the ball, throws his racket and hits the ball. Both racket and ball fall over the net on A’s Court. A returns the ball outside of B’s Court. Does B win or lose the point?

Decision. B loses the point (Rule 20(e) and (h)).

Case 6. A player standing outside the service Court is struck by a service ball before it has touched the ground. Does he win or lose the point?

Decision. The player struck loses the point (Rule 20(g)), except as provided under Rule 14(a).

Case 7. A player standing outside the Court volleys the ball or catches it in his hand and claims the point because the ball was certainly going out of court.

Decision. In no circumstances can he claim the point:–

- i. If he catches the ball he loses the point under Rule 20(g).
- ii. If he volleys it and makes a bad return he loses the point under Rule 20(c).
- iii. If he volleys it and makes a good return, the rally continues.

USTA Comment 20.1: *Who wins the point if a player hits a ball that hits an object attached to the net or post (such as the scoring device) and then lands in the proper court?* The player who hit the ball loses the point because it hit a permanent fixture before landing in the Court.

USTA Comment 20.2: *Does a player lose the point if the player’s hat hits the net?* Yes. A player loses the point when any part of the player’s body, equipment, or apparel touches the net.

USTA Comment 20.3: *What happens if the ball hits a player’s hat that landed on the Court earlier in the point?* The ball remains in play because the opponent did not ask for a Let. When play continued after the hat landed on the Court, the hat became a part of the Court. Therefore when a ball hits the hat, it is treated in the same manner as if the ball had hit the Court.

USTA Comment 20.4: *If a player’s hat falls off during a point, may the opponent stop play and claim a let?* Yes. The opponent’s immediate request should be granted. A let should not be granted after the point nor should a request from the player who lost the hat.

USTA Comment 20.5: *What happens if a player’s dampening device comes out and hits the net or the opponent’s court?* The player loses the point unless the ball went out of play before the device hit the net or court. If the device is not discovered until after the point is over, the point stands as played.

USTA Comment 20.6: *Does a player lose a point if the ball hits his racket twice during one swing?* No. Only when there is a definite and deliberate “second push” by the player does the shot become illegal. “Deliberately” is the key word in this rule. Two hits occurring during a single continuous swing are not deemed a double hit.

USTA Comment 20.7: *Does a player who touches a pipe support that runs across the Court at the bottom of the net lose the point?* Yes. The pipe support is considered a part of the net *except* when a ball hits it, in which case the pipe support is considered part of the Court.

USTA Comment 20.8: *Does a player lose the point if a ball touches the player before it bounces?* Yes. The loss of point occurs regardless of whether the player is inside or outside the bounds of the Court when the ball touches the player.

USTA Comment 20.9: *What happens if a player in stretching to hit a ball allows the racket to fall to the ground and the ball then goes into the Court for a winner?* The player wins the point unless the racket was not in the player’s hand at the instant the ball was struck.

21. PLAYER HINDERS OPPONENT

If a player commits any act which hinders his opponent in making a stroke, then, if this is deliberate, he shall lose the point or if involuntary, the point shall be replayed.

Case 1. Is a player liable to a penalty if in making a stroke he touches his opponent?

Decision. No, unless the Umpire deems it necessary to take action under Rule 21.

Case 2. When a ball bounds back over the net, the player concerned may reach over the net in order to play the ball. What is the ruling if the player is hindered from doing this by his opponent?

Decision. In accordance with Rule 21, the Umpire may either award the point to the player hindered, or order the point to be replayed (see also Rule 25).

Case 3. Does an involuntary double hit constitute an act which hinders an opponent within Rule 21?

Decision. No.

USTA Comment 21.1: *What is the difference between a deliberate and an involuntary act?* Deliberate means a player did what the player intended to do, even if the result was unintended. An example is a player who advises the player's partner in such a loud voice that their opponents are hindered. Involuntary refers to an act over which a player has no control, such as a hat blowing off or a scream after a wasp sting.

USTA Comment 21.2: *Can a player do something that entitles the player to call a let based on a hindrance?* Nothing a player does entitles the player to call a let. For example, a player is not entitled to a Let because the player breaks a string, the player's hat falls off, or a ball in the player's pocket falls out.

USTA Comment 21.3: *What happens if a player's cell phone rings while the ball is in play?* Because the player created the disturbance by bringing the phone to the Court and not turning it off, the player is not entitled to a let. If the Referee did not notify the players that cell phones should be turned off and if this is the first time that the phone has rung, then the opponent is entitled to a let. If the Referee notified the players or if the phone has rung more than once, the opponent may claim the point based on a deliberate hindrance.

USTA Comment 21.4: *Does the Server's discarding of a second ball constitute a hindrance?* Yes. If the Receiver asks the Server to stop discarding the ball, then the Server shall stop. Any continued discarding of the ball constitutes a deliberate hindrance, and the Server loses the point.

22. BALL FALLS ON LINE

A ball falling on a line is regarded as falling in the Court bounded by that line.

USTA Comment 22.1: *If a player cannot call a ball out with certainty, should the player regard the ball as good?* Yes.

23. BALL TOUCHES PERMANENT FIXTURES

If the ball in play touches a permanent fixture (other than the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band) after it has hit the ground, the player who struck it wins the point; if before it hits the ground, his opponent wins the point.

Case 1. A return hits the Umpire or his chair or stand. The player claims that the ball was going into Court.

Decision. He loses the point.

USTA Comment 23.1: *What happens if a ball hits the top of the net outside the singles stick and then lands in the Court?* The player who hit the ball loses the point because the ball hit a permanent fixture. In singles the area outside the singles stick is a permanent fixture "other than the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band." See also ITF note under Rule 24.

USTA Comment 23.2: *During a rally in a singles match played on a doubles court without singles sticks, a player hits a shot that was going out until it hits the doubles post and careens into the proper court. Who wins the point?* Every effort should be made to provide singles sticks for a match that is played on a doubles court so that this situation does not occur. If it does occur, the player who hit the shot wins the point because the entire doubles net and doubles posts are respectively the net and the net posts for this match.

USTA Comment 23.3: *Does a player lose the point if the opponent's ball touches a pipe support that runs across the Court at the bottom of the net?* No. The pipe support is considered a part of the Court *except that* it is considered part of the net when a player, or anything the player wears or carries, touches the pipe support.

24. A GOOD RETURN

It is a good return:—

- a. 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; or
- b. If 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 he does not contravene Rule 20(e); or
- c. If the ball is returned outside the posts, or singles sticks, either above or below the level of the top to the net, even though it touches the posts or singles sticks, provided that it hits the ground within the proper Court; or
- d. If a player's racket passes over the net after he has returned the ball, provided the ball passes the net before being played and is properly returned; or
- e. If a player succeeds in returning the ball, served or in play, which strikes a ball lying in the Court.

ITF Note: In a singles match, if, for the sake of convenience, a Doubles Court is equipped with singles sticks for the purpose of a singles game, then the doubles posts and those portions of the net, cord or metal cable and the band outside such singles sticks shall at all times be permanent fixtures, and are not regarded as posts or parts of the net of a singles game.

A return that passes under the net cord between the singles stick and adjacent doubles post without touching either net cord, net or doubles post and falls within the court, is a good return.

Case 1. A ball going out of Court hits a net post or singles stick and falls within the lines of the opponent's Court. Is the stroke good?

Decision. If a service: no, under Rule 10(c). If other than a service: yes, under Rule 24(a).

Case 2. Is it a good return if a player returns the ball holding his racket in both hands?

Decision. Yes.

Case 3. The service, or ball in play, strikes a ball lying in the Court. Is the point won or lost thereby?

Decision. No. Play must continue. If it is not clear to the Umpire that the right ball is returned a let should be called.

Case 4. May a player use more than one racket at any time during play?

Decision. No. The whole implication of the Rules is singular.

Case 5. May a player request that a ball or balls lying in his opponent's Court be removed?

Decision. Yes, but not while a ball is in play.

USTA Comment 24.1: *If a ball in play strikes a ball that was lying on the Court at the start of the point, should a let be played?* No. However, if a ball came from another court after the point started, a let should be played.

USTA Comment 24.2: *Is it a good return if a ball passes under the net cord and inside the post without touching either in a doubles match?* No. This is a "through."

USTA Comment 24.3: *Must a request to remove a ball that is lying in the opponent's Court be honored?* Yes. Additionally, a request to remove a ball that is outside the Court but reasonably close to the lines also must be honored.

25. HINDRANCE OF A PLAYER

In case a player is hindered in making a stroke by anything not within his control, except a permanent fixture of the Court, or except as provided for in Rule 21, a let shall be called.

USTA Comment: See Rule 13 and its USTA Comments regarding lets.

Case 1. A spectator gets into the way of a player, who fails to return the ball. May the player then claim a let?

Decision. Yes. If in the Umpire's opinion he was obstructed by circumstances beyond his control, but not if due to permanent fixtures of the Court or the arrangements of the ground.

Case 2. A player is interfered with as in Case No.1, and the Umpire calls a let. The Server had previously served a fault. Has he the right to two services?

Decision. Yes. As the ball is in play, the point, not merely the stroke, must be replayed as the Rule provides.

Case 3. May a player claim a let under Rule 25 because he thought his opponent was being hindered, and consequently did not expect the ball to be returned?

Decision. No.

Case 4. Is a stroke good when a ball in play hits another ball in the air?

Decision. A let should be called unless the other ball is in the air by the act of one of the players, in which case the Umpire will decide under Rule 21.

Case 5. If an Umpire or other judge erroneously calls "fault" or "out", and then corrects himself, which of the calls shall prevail?

Decision. A let must be called unless, in the opinion of the Umpire, neither player is hindered in his game, in which case the corrected call shall prevail.

Case 6. If the first ball served—a fault—rebounds, interfering with the Receiver at the time of the second service, may the Receiver claim a let?

Decision. Yes. But if he had an opportunity to remove the ball from the Court and negligently failed to do so, he may not claim a let.

Case 7. Is it a good stroke if the ball touches a stationary or moving object on the Court?

Decision. It is a good stroke unless the stationary object came into Court after the ball was put into play in which case a let must be called. If the ball in play strikes an object moving along or above the surface of the Court a let must be called.

Case 8. What is the ruling if the first service is a fault, the second service correct, and it becomes necessary to call a let either under the provision of Rule 25 or if the Umpire is unable to decide the point?

Decision. The fault shall be annulled and the whole point replayed.

26. SCORE IN A GAME

a. If a player wins his first point, the score is called 15 for that player; on winning his second point, the score is called 30 for that player; on winning his third point, the score is called 40 for that player, and the fourth point won by a player is scored game for that player except as below:—

If both players have won three points, the score is called deuce; and the next point won by a player is scored advantage for that player. If the same player wins the next point, he wins the game; if the other player wins the next point the score is again called deuce; and so on, until a player wins the two points immediately following the score at deuce, when the game is scored for that player.

b. Optional Alternative Scoring system

The No-Ad System of Scoring may be adopted as an alternative to the traditional scoring system in paragraph (a) of this Rule provided the decision is announced in advance of the event.

USTA Comment: USTA Regulation I.V.11. *authorizes the Referee to switch to No-Ad scoring before the start of any round without prior notice in all tournaments other than national junior championships after inclement weather or other factors cause the tournament to fall behind its published schedule.*

In this case, the following Rules shall be effective:

If a player wins his first point, the score is called 15 for that player; on winning his second point, the score is called 30 for that player; on winning his third point, the score is called 40 for that player, and the fourth point won by a player is scored game for that player except as below:

If both players have won three points, the score is called deuce; one deciding point shall then be played. The receiver shall choose whether he wishes to receive the service from the right-half of the court or the left-half of the court. The player who wins the deciding point is scored the game.

Doubles

In doubles a similar procedure to that for singles shall apply. At deuce the Receiving Team shall choose whether it wishes to receive the Service from the right-half of the court or the left-half of the court. The team who wins the deciding point is scored the game.

Mixed Doubles

In mixed doubles, a slightly different procedure will apply as follows: At deuce, with the male player serving, he shall serve to the male player of the opposing team irrespective of which half of the court he is standing, and when the female player is serving, she shall serve to the female player of the opposing team.

USTA Comment 26.1: *Is the Server required to call the score at the beginning of each game and the point scores as the games go on in matches without officials? Yes. This is required by **The Code § 31.***

USTA Comment 26.2: *The Server states that the score is 40-15;*

the Receiver states that the score is 30-30. The players agree on who won every point except for the second point. What should they do? They should replay the second point from the advantage court. If the Server wins the point, the score becomes 40-15; if the Receiver wins the point, the score becomes 30-30. The next point is played from the deuce court.

USTA Comment 26.3: *What happens in the same situation as USTA Comment 26.2 except that the disputed point is the third point? Everything is done the same except that the disputed point is played from the deuce court.*

USTA Comment 26.4: *The players agree that they have played six points in the game but disagree over the score because they do not agree on who won the second point. The Receiver acknowledges that the Server called the score after each point and that the Receiver did not express disagreement with the score until now. What should happen? The score as announced by the Server should prevail because the Receiver did not object. Note, however, if the Receiver denied hearing the score, then an official would have to be called to go through the normal 3-step process to settle the dispute.*

27. SCORE IN A SET

a. A player (or players) who first wins six games wins a set; except that he must win by a margin of two games over his opponent and where necessary a set shall be extended until this margin is achieved.

b. The tie-break system of scoring may be adopted as an alternative to the advantage set system in paragraph (a) of this Rule provided the decision is announced in advance of the match.

USTA Comment: USTA Regulation I.V.3. *requires that a Tiebreak be played in all sets.*

In this case, the following Rules shall be effective:

The tie-break shall operate when the score reaches six games all in any set except in the third or fifth set of a three set or five set match respectively when an ordinary advantage set shall be played, unless otherwise decided and announced in advance of the match.

USTA Comment: USTA Regulation I.V.4. *authorizes the use of the 7-point or 10-point Match Tiebreak in lieu of the deciding final set in selected tournaments.*

The following system shall be used in a tie-break game.

Singles

- i. A player who first wins seven points shall win the game and the set provided he leads by a margin of two points. If the score reaches six points all the game shall be extended until this margin has been achieved. Numerical scoring shall be used throughout the tie-break game.
- ii. The player whose turn it is to serve shall be the Server for the first point. His opponent shall be the Server for the second and third points and thereafter each player shall serve alternately for two consecutive points until the winner of the game and set has been decided.
- iii. From the first point, each service shall be delivered alternately from the right and left Courts, beginning from the right Court. If service from a wrong half of the Court occurs and is undetected, all play resulting from such wrong service or services shall stand, but the inaccuracy of station shall be corrected immediately it is discovered.
- iv. Players shall change ends after every six points and at the conclusion of the tie-break game.
- v. The tie-break game shall count as one game for the ball change, except that, if the balls are due to be changed at the beginning of the tie-break, the change shall be delayed until the second game of the following set.

Doubles

In doubles the procedure for singles shall apply. The player whose turn it is to serve shall be the Server for the first point. Thereafter each player shall serve in rotation for two points, in the same order previously in that set, until the winners of the game and set have been decided.

Rotation of Service

The player (or pair in the case of doubles) whose turn it was to serve first in the tie-break game shall receive service in the first game of the following set.

Case 1. At six all the tie-break is played, although it has been decided and announced in advance of the match that an advantage set will be played. Are the points already played counted?

Decision. If the error is discovered before the ball is put in play for the second point, the first point shall count but the error shall be corrected immediately. If the error is discovered after the ball is put in play for the second point the game shall continue as a tie-break game.

Case 2. At six all, an advantage game is played, although it has been decided and announced in advance of the match that a tie-break will be played. Are the points already played counted?

Decision. If the error is discovered before the ball is put in play for the second point, the first point shall be counted but the error shall be corrected immediately. If the error is discovered after the ball is put in play for the second point an advantage set shall be continued. If the score thereafter reaches eight games all or a higher even number, a tie-break shall be played.

Case 3. If during a tie-break in a singles or doubles game, a player serves out

of turn, shall the order of service remain as altered until the end of the game?

Decision. If a player has completed his turn of service the order of service shall remain as altered. If the error is discovered before a player has completed his turn of service the order of service shall be corrected immediately and any points already played shall count.

Alternative scoring methods approved can be found in Appendix II.

28. MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SETS

A match can be played to the best of 3 sets (the player/team needs to win 2 sets to win the match) or to the best of 5 sets (the player/team needs to win 3 sets to win the match).

29. ROLE OF COURT OFFICIALS

In matches where an Umpire is appointed, his decision shall be final; but where a Referee is appointed, an appeal shall lie to him from the decision of an Umpire on a question of law, and in all such cases the decision of the Referee shall be final.

In matches where assistants to the Umpire are appointed (Linespersons, Net-cord Judges, Foot-fault Judges) their decisions shall be final on questions of fact except that if in the opinion of an Umpire a clear mistake has been made he shall have the right to change the decision of an assistant or order a let to be played. When such an assistant is unable to give a decision he shall indicate this immediately to the Umpire who shall give a decision. When an Umpire is unable to give a decision on a question of fact he shall order a let to be played.

In *Davis Cup* matches or other team competitions where a Referee is on Court, any decision can be changed by the Referee, who may also instruct an Umpire to order a let to be played.

The Referee, in his discretion, may at any time postpone a match on account of darkness or the condition of the ground or the weather. In any case of postponement the previous score and previous occupancy of courts shall hold good, unless the Referee and the players unanimously agree otherwise.

Case 1. The Umpire orders a let, but a player claims that the point should not be replayed. May the Referee be requested to give a decision?

Decision. Yes. A question of tennis law, that is, an issue relating to the application of specific facts, shall first be determined by the Umpire. However, if the Umpire is uncertain or if a player appeals from his determination, then the Referee shall be requested to give a decision, and his decision is final.

Case 2. A ball is called out, but a player claims that the ball was good. May the Referee give a ruling?

Decision. No. This is a question of fact, that is an issue relating to what actually occurred during a specific incident, and the decision of the on-court officials is therefore final.

Case 3. May an Umpire overrule a Linesman at the end of a rally if, in his

opinion, a clear mistake has been made during the course of a rally?

Decision. No. An Umpire may overrule a Linesman only if he does so immediately after the mistake has been made.

USTA Comment: See Rule 17, Case 1, regarding non-officiated matches.

Case 4. A Linesman calls a ball out. The Umpire was unable to see clearly, although he thought the ball was in. May he overrule the Linesman?

Decision. No. An Umpire may overrule if he considers that a call was incorrect beyond all reasonable doubt. He may overrule a ball determined good by a Linesman only if he has been able to see a space between the ball and the line; and he may overrule a ball determined out, or a fault, by a Linesman only if he has seen the ball hit the line, or fall inside the line.

Case 5. May a Linesman change his call after the Umpire has given the score?

Decision. Yes. If a Linesman realises he has made an error, he may make a correction provided he does so immediately.

Case 6. A player claims his return shot was good after a Linesman called “out”. May the Umpire overrule the Linesman?

Decision. No. An Umpire may never overrule as a result of a protest or an appeal by a player.

USTA Comment 29.1: *What is the difference between a “question of fact” and a “question of law”?* “Questions of fact” involve whether a specific event happened. Examples include whether a ball is in, whether a ball touched a player, whether a ball bounced twice, and whether a Server’s foot touched the baseline before the serve was struck. “Questions of law” involve the application of the rules or regulations to facts that have already been determined. Examples include determining whether an act was a hindrance; whether a player should have been assessed a code violation for misconduct; and the procedure for correcting errors in serving order, serving and receiving position, and ends.

30. CONTINUOUS PLAY & REST PERIODS

Play shall be continuous from the first service until the match is concluded, in accordance with the following provisions:

a. If the first service is a fault, the second service must be struck by the Server without delay.

The Receiver must play to the reasonable pace of the Server and must be ready to receive when the Server is ready to serve.

When changing ends a maximum of ninety (90) seconds shall elapse from the moment the ball goes out of play at the end of the game to the time the ball is struck for the first point of the next game.

However, after the first game of each set and during a tie-break, play shall be continuous and the players shall change ends without a rest period.

At the conclusion of each set, there shall be a set break of a maximum of one hundred and twenty (120) seconds from the moment the ball goes out of play at the end of the game to the time the ball is struck for the first point of the next game.

The Umpire shall use his discretion when there is interference which makes it impracticable for play to be continuous.

The organisers of international circuits and team events recognised by the ITF may determine the time allowed between points, which shall be a maximum twenty (20) seconds from the moment the ball goes out of play at the end of one point to the time the ball is struck for the next point.

b. Play shall never be suspended, delayed or interfered with for the purpose of enabling a player to recover his strength, breath, or physical condition. However, in the case of a treatable medical condition, the Umpire may allow a one-time three minute time-out for that medical condition.

c. If, through circumstances outside the control of the player, his clothing, footwear or equipment (excluding racket) becomes out of adjustment in such a way that it is impossible or undesirable for him to play on, the Umpire may suspend play while the maladjustment is rectified.

d. The Umpire may suspend or delay play at any time as may be necessary and appropriate.

e. After the third set, or when women take part the second set, either player shall be entitled to a rest, which shall not exceed 10 minutes, or in countries situated between latitude 15 degrees north and latitude 15 degrees south, 45 minutes and furthermore, when necessitated by circumstances not within the control of the players, the Umpire may suspend play for such a period as he may consider necessary. If play is suspended and is not resumed until a later day the rest may be taken only after the third set (or when women take part the second set) of play on such a later day, completion of an unfinished set being counted as one set.

If play is suspended and is not resumed until 10 minutes have elapsed in the same day the rest may be taken only after three consecutive sets have been played without interruption (or when women take part two sets), completion of an unfinished set being counted as one set.

Any nation and/or committee organising a tournament, match or competition, is at liberty to modify this provision or omit it from its regulations provided this is announced before the event commences. With respect to the *Davis Cup* and *Fed Cup*, only the International Tennis Federation may modify this provision or omit it from its Regulations.

USTA Comment: *USTA Regulation I.T. sets forth provisions for rest between sets in different divisions.*

f. A tournament committee has the discretion to decide the time allowed for a warm-up period prior to a match but this may not exceed five minutes and must be announced before the event commences.

g. When approved point penalty and non-accumulative point penalty systems are in operation, the Umpire shall make his decisions within the terms of those systems.

h. Upon violation of the principle that play shall be continuous the Umpire may, after giving due warning, disqualify the offender.

USTA Comment 30.1: *How much time may elapse from the moment the ball goes out of play at the end of the point until the serve is struck to start the next point? When practical this time should not exceed 25 seconds. This limit does not apply if a player has to chase a stray ball. The ITF 20-second rule applies only to certain ITF international circuits and team events.*

USTA Comment 30.2: *Does the 25-second rule apply to the second serve? No. The Server must strike the second serve without delay.*

USTA Comment 30.3: *Should the Server be penalized for delay if the Server was not tossing the ball until about 20 seconds after the end of the previous point even though the Receiver was ready within 10 seconds? No. The Server is entitled to establish the pace as long as it is reasonable. This means that the Server has up to 25 seconds to put the ball in play.*

USTA Comment 30.4: *Should the Receiver be penalized for delay if the Receiver was not getting into a ready position until 23 seconds after the end of the previous point even though the Server was ready to serve within about 15 seconds? Yes. The Receiver is subject to a Time Violation. The Receiver must play to the reasonable pace of the Server. (A pace of 12 to 15 seconds is considered reasonable.)*

USTA Comment 30.5: *May the Server suddenly increase the pace from 20 seconds to 12 seconds? No. The Server may speed up the pace only so long as the new pace is reasonable and only so long as the change does not occur suddenly.*

USTA Comment 30.6: *Once ready, can the Receiver become unready? The Receiver cannot become unready unless outside interference occurs.*

USTA Comment 30.7: *May the Server hit the serve just as the Receiver looks up after getting into the ready position? No. Reasonable*

pace not only means allowing adequate time for the Receiver to get into the ready position but also allowing a second or two for the Receiver to make eye contact with the Server before the Server starts the service motion.

USTA Comment 30.8: *What happens when the Server observes that the Receiver appears to be ready and hits the second serve in, but the Receiver makes no attempt to return it? The Server wins the point if the Receiver had no reason for not being ready; if the Receiver was not ready because of something within the Receiver's control (broken string or contact lens problem), then the Server gets two serves; and if the Receiver was not ready because of some reasonable factor such as clearing the errant first serve or a ball from an adjacent court, then the Server gets one serve. If the time to clear the ball from the adjacent court is so prolonged as to constitute an interruption, good sportsmanship requires the Receiver to offer the Server two serves.*

USTA Comment 30.9: *May play be suspended to replace a lost contact lens? Yes. Whenever possible the player should replace the lens on the Court. If the weather, Court surface, or other conditions make it impossible to insert the lens on the Court, the player should insert the lens in the area closest to the Court where this task is possible.*

USTA Comment 30.10: *When the weather is misty, may play be suspended to allow a player who wears glasses to insert contact lenses? No. The player may change into contacts only on the Court and only during a changeover. This case is different from a lost contact lens because the player chose to begin playing the match with glasses.*

USTA Comment 30.11: *May a player who breaks a string in a racket leave the Court to get a replacement? A player who leaves the Court to get a replacement is subject to Code Violations for delays under the Point Penalty System. Rule 30c permits play to be suspended and a player to leave the court only in those cases where "clothing, footwear or equipment (excluding racket) becomes out of adjustment in such a way that it is impossible or undesirable for him to play on."*

USTA Comment 30.12: *If there are no ball persons, may the warm-up be extended beyond five minutes? Yes. The warm-up may be extended to ten minutes.*

USTA Comment 30.13: *When are the players entitled to another warm-up after their match has been suspended? The players are entitled to a re-warm-up of the same duration as the original warm-up if a match*

has been suspended for more than 10 minutes. They are not entitled to a re-warm-up after an authorized intermission. When possible, used balls other than the match balls should be used for the re-warm-up, and the match balls should be used only once play resumes. If match balls are used for the re-warm-up and balls are being changed after a designated number of games, the next ball change occurs two games sooner.

USTA Comment 30.14: *A best-of-five sets match with an authorized rest period after the third set is suspended because of darkness at one set all. The match is resumed the next day. When Player A wins a long set, Player B claims entitlement to a rest period. Is Player B entitled to a rest period?* No. Although this was the third set of the match, it was only the first set on that day. If there is a prolonged interruption, such as one caused by rain, and play is resumed on the same day, the players should be informed as to the point at which, if any, a rest period might later be taken.

31. COACHING

During the playing of a match in a team competition, a player may receive coaching from a captain who is sitting on the court only when he changes ends at the end of a game, but not when he changes ends during a tie-break game.

A player may not receive coaching during the playing of any other match. The provisions of this rule must be strictly construed.

After due warning an offending player may be disqualified. When an approved point penalty system is in operation, the Umpire shall impose penalties according to that system.

Case 1. Should a warning be given, or the player be disqualified, if the coaching is given by signals in an unobtrusive manner?

Decision. The Umpire must take action as soon as he becomes aware that coaching is being given verbally or by signals. If the Umpire is unaware that coaching is being given, a player may draw his attention to the fact that advice is being given.

Case 2. Can a player receive coaching during an authorized rest period under Rule 30(e), or when play is interrupted and he leaves the court?

Decision. Yes. In these circumstances, when the player is not on the court, there is no restriction on coaching.

ITF Note: *The word “coaching” includes any advice or instruction.*

USTA Comment 31.1: *Is coaching permitted during authorized rest periods?* Yes. However, an authorized rest period does not include a Toilet Visit, a Set Break, Medical Time-Out, when play is suspended

but the players remain on the Court, when a player leaves the Court seeking the assistance of the Referee, or when equipment or clothing is being adjusted.

USTA Comment 31.2: *Is coaching permitted in USA Adult and Senior League Programs?* No. Even though the USA Adult and Senior League Programs are team competitions, coaching is not permitted under league rules, except during authorized rest periods or as otherwise permitted.

32. BALL CHANGE

In cases where balls are to be changed after a specified number of games, if the balls are not changed in the correct sequence, the mistake shall be corrected when the player, or pair in the case of doubles, who should have served with new balls is next due to serve. Thereafter the balls shall be changed so that the number of games between changes shall be that originally agreed.

THE DOUBLES GAME

33. THE DOUBLES GAME

The above Rules shall apply to the Doubles Game except as below.

34. THE DOUBLES COURT

For the Doubles Game, the court shall be 36 feet (10.97 m) in width, i.e. 4½ feet (1.37 m) wider on each side than the Court for the Singles Game, and those portions of the singles side-lines which lie between the two service-lines shall be called the service side-lines. In other respects, the Court shall be similar to that described in Rule 1, but the portions of the singles side-lines between the baseline and service-line on each side of the net may be omitted if desired.

USTA Comment 34.1: *Where may the Server stand?* In doubles the Server may stand anywhere behind the baseline between the imaginary extensions of the inside edge of the center mark and the outside edge of the doubles sideline.

35. ORDER OF SERVICE IN DOUBLES

The order of serving shall be decided at the beginning of each set as follows:–

The pair who have to serve in the first game of each set shall decide which partner shall do so and the opposing pair shall decide similarly for the second game. The partner of the player who served in the first game shall serve in the third; the partner of the player who served in the second

game shall serve in the fourth, and so on in the same order in all the subsequent games of a set.

Case 1. In doubles, one player does not appear in time to play, and his partner claims to be allowed to play single-handed against the opposing players. May he do so?

Decision. No.

USTA Comment 35.1: *May a mixed doubles team switch its serving or receiving order at the beginning of any set or Match Tiebreak? Yes.* There is no requirement that any doubles team, mixed or otherwise, retain the same serving or receiving order for a new set or a Match Tiebreak.

36. ORDER OF RECEIVING IN DOUBLES

The order of receiving the service shall be decided at the beginning of each set as follows:-

The pair who have to receive the service in the first game shall decide which partner shall receive the first service, and that partner shall continue to receive the first service in every odd game throughout that set. The opposing pair shall likewise decide which partner shall receive the first service in the second game and that partner shall continue to receive the first service in every even game throughout that set. Partners shall receive the service alternately throughout each game.

Case 1. Is it allowable in doubles for the Server's partner or the Receiver's partner to stand in a position that obstructs the view of the Receiver?

Decision. Yes. The Server's partner or the Receiver's partner may take any position on his side of the net in or out of the Court that he wishes.

37. SERVICE OUT OF TURN IN DOUBLES

If a partner serves out of his turn, the partner who ought to have served shall serve as soon as the mistake is discovered, but all points scored, and any faults served before such discovery, shall be reckoned. If a game shall have been completed before such discovery, the order of service remains as altered.

USTA Comment: *For an exception to Rule 37, see Case 3 under Rule 27.*

38. ERROR IN ORDER OF RECEIVING IN DOUBLES

If during a game the order of receiving the service is changed by the Receivers it shall remain as altered until the end of the game in which the mistake is discovered, but the partners shall resume their original order of receiving in the next game of that set in which they are Receivers of the service.

39. SERVICE FAULT IN DOUBLES

The service is a fault as provided for by Rule 10, or if the ball touches the Server's partner or anything which he wears or carries; but if the ball served touches the partner of the Receiver, or anything which he wears or carries, not before it is let under Rule 14(a) before it hits the ground, the Server wins the point.

40. PLAYING THE BALL IN DOUBLES

The ball shall be struck alternately by one or other player of the opposing pairs, and if a player touches the ball in play with his racket in contravention of this Rule, his opponents win the point.

ITF Note 1: *Except where otherwise stated, every reference in these Rules to the masculine includes the feminine gender.*

ITF Note 2: *See Rule 26(b) with regard to the Optional Alternative Scoring System in Doubles and Mixed.*

USTA Comment 40.1: *Do the partners have to alternate making shots during a rally? No.* In the course of making a shot, only one partner may hit the ball. If both of them hit the ball, either simultaneously or consecutively, it is an illegal return. Mere clashing of rackets does not make a return illegal unless it is clear that more than one racket touched the ball.

RULES OF WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

The game of wheelchair tennis follows the ITF Rules of Tennis with the following exceptions.

a. The Two Bounce Rule

The wheelchair tennis player is allowed two bounces of the ball. The player must return the ball before it hits the ground a third time. The second bounce can be either in or out of the court boundaries.

b. The Wheelchair

The wheelchair is considered part of the body and all applicable rules which apply to a player's body shall apply to the wheelchair.

c. The Service

- i. The service shall be delivered in the following manner. Immediately before commencing the serve, the server shall be in a stationary position. The server shall then be allowed one push before striking the ball.
- ii. The server shall throughout the delivery of the service not touch with any wheel, any area other than that behind the baseline within

the imaginary extension of the centre mark and sideline.

- iii. If conventional methods for the service are physically impossible for a quadriplegic player, then the player or an individual may drop the ball for such a player. However, the same method of serving must be used each time.

d. Player Loses Point

A player loses a point if:

- i. He fails to return the ball before it has touched the ground three times.
- ii. Subject to rule e) below. He uses any part of his feet or lower extremities as brakes or as stabilisers while delivering service, stroking a ball, turning or stopping against the ground or against any wheel while the ball is in play.
- iii. He fails to keep one buttock in contact with his wheelchair seat when contacting the ball.

e. Propelling the Chair with the Foot

- i. If due to lack of capacity a player is unable to propel the wheelchair via the wheel then he may propel the wheelchair using one foot.
- ii. Even if in accordance with rule e) i. above a player is permitted to propel the chair using one foot, no part of the player's foot may be in contact with the ground:
 - a) during the forward motion of the swing, including when the racket strikes the ball;
 - b) from the initiation of the service motion until the racket strikes the ball.
- iii. A player in breach of this rule shall lose a point.

f. Wheelchair/Able-bodied Tennis

Where a wheelchair tennis player is playing with or against an able-bodied person in singles and doubles, the Rules of Wheelchair Tennis shall apply for the wheelchair player while the Rules of Tennis for able-bodied tennis shall apply for the able-bodied player. In this instance, the wheelchair player is allowed two bounces while the able-bodied player is allowed only one bounce.

Note: The definition of lower extremities is:- the lower limb, including the buttocks, hip, thigh, leg, ankle, and foot.

USTA Comments on Correcting Errors

USTA Comment E1: Errors as to Ends, Sides, Rotation, and Service Order, Etc. The general guiding philosophy regarding any mistakes made by players in failing to change ends, serving from wrong ends, serving to

the wrong court, receiving from the wrong court, etc., is this: Any such error shall be rectified as soon as discovered but not while the ball is in play, and any points completed under the erroneous condition shall be counted.

There are only three exceptions to the “rectify immediately” requirement. One is in the case of a doubles match where the players of one team happened to reverse their left court/right court receiving lineup in the middle of a set, and the switch is discovered in the middle of a game. In this case the players finish that game in the “new” positions, but resume their original lineup in all receiving games thereafter in that set.

The second is where a ball change has not taken place in proper sequence. Rule 32 now says that this mistake shall be corrected when the player, or pair in case of doubles, who should have served with the new balls is next due to serve. Do not change in mid-game.

The third occurs in a Tiebreak, either singles or doubles, in various situations. For details, see the ITF Cases under **Rule 27 and USTA Comments E2, E2.1, E2.2, and E2.3.**

USTA Comment E1.1: *The Server serves from the wrong court, loses the point, and then claims it was a fault because the serve came from the wrong court. What should happen?* The point stands as played. The Server must serve the next point from the proper court in accordance with the score.

USTA Comment E1.2: *In a doubles match it is discovered after a game has been completed that Partner A had served a game that Partner B should have served. What happens?* The game stands as played. Partner B serves the next game for their side, and the new sequence prevails until the end of that set.

USTA Comment E1.3: *Same situation as in USTA Comment E1.2, except that the error is discovered before the game is completed. What should happen?* Partner B takes over as the Server as soon as the error is discovered. All points stand as played, including a first-service fault by Partner A, if there had been one.

USTA Comment E2: Errors During a Tiebreak: When a player serves out of turn during a tiebreak, correcting the mistake can be confusing. The key to correcting the mistake is to think of each turn of service (other than the first point) as consisting of two points.

- If the wrong player serves only the first point of a turn of service, then the error is corrected immediately and the original order is not changed.
- If the wrong player serves only the second point of a turn of service, then the order of service is altered.
- If the wrong player serves both points, then the order of service is altered.

The diagram that follows shows the correct order of service in a Tiebreak and will help you understand **USTA Comments E2.1 through E2.3**.

Assume that Player A is serving first in the Tiebreak. This means that Player B should serve the sixth point and (after changing ends) the seventh point. Player A should serve the eighth and ninth points.

Change Ends							
Server	A	BB	AA	B	B	AA	BB
Point	1	23	45	6	7	89	1011

USTA Comment E2.1: *The first seven points are served by the correct Server. By mistake Player B serves the eighth point and serves a fault on the ninth point before the mistakes are discovered. What happens now?* The first eight points count as played. Player A should serve the ninth point. Player A is not charged with a fault. Player B serves the tenth and eleventh points. This means that Player B will have served five of the last six points.

Change Ends							
Server	A	BB	AA	B	B	BA	BB
Point	1	23	45	6	7	89	1011

USTA Comment E2.2: *The first seven points are served by the correct Server. By mistake Player B serves the eighth and ninth points before the mistakes are discovered. What happens now?* The first nine points count as played. Player A serves the tenth and eleventh points. The order of service continues as altered.

Change Ends							
Server	A	BB	AA	B	B	BB	AA
Point	1	23	45	6	7	89	1011

USTA Comment E2.3: *The first six points are served by the correct Server. By mistake Player A serves the seventh point before the mistake is discovered. What happens now?* The first seven points count as played. Player B serves the eighth and ninth points; Player A serves the tenth and eleventh points. The order of service continues as altered.

Change Ends							
Server	A	BB	AA	B	A	BB	AA
Point	1	23	45	6	7	89	1011

USTA Comment E2.4: *The tournament announced on its entry form that a Match Tiebreak would be used in lieu of the third set. Player A, who is serving, is leading 2-1 and 15-love in the third set when the mistake is discovered. What should happen?* The players should continue to play a full Tiebreak set unless the score reaches 2-2, 4-4, or 6-6. If the score reaches 2-2 or 4-4, the players should play a 7-point or 10-point Match Tiebreak depending upon which Tiebreak was designated on the entry form. If the score reaches 6-6, the players should play a 7-point Tiebreak even if the entry form stated that the Match Tiebreak would be used in lieu of the third set.

USTA Comment E2.5: *Same situation as USTA Comment E2.4 except that thereafter the score reaches 2-2, and Player A wins the Match Tiebreak 10-8. How is the score recorded?* The score is recorded as 3-2 (8).

USTA Comment E2.6: *The tournament announced on its entry form that the Match Tiebreak would be used in lieu of the third set. In the first game of the third set with the Server leading 15-love and having served a fault, the players realize that they have inadvertently been playing out the third set. What should happen?* Since only one point has been played, the first point served is treated as the first point of the Tiebreak. The fault is set aside, and the Server's opponent serves the next two points. If the Server had put the ball in play for the second point, the result would be the same as in **USTA Comment E2.4**.

USTA Comment E2.7: *Player A should have served the first point of the second set Tiebreak, but instead Player B served the first point. Pursuant to Case 3 of Rule 27, the order of service remained as altered. Who serves the first game of the final set?* Player B serves the first game. Rule 27 states that the player whose turn it was to serve first in the Tiebreak shall be the Receiver in the first game of the following set.

USTA Comment E2.8: *Same situation as in USTA Comment E2.7 except that a Match Tiebreak is to be played in lieu of the third set. Who serves first in the Match Tiebreak that is to be played in lieu of the final set?* Player B.

USTA Comment E2.9: *The tournament announced that the 10-point Match Tiebreak would be played in lieu of the third set. The players split sets. With Player A ahead 7-5 in the Tiebreak, Player A comes to the net to shake hands with Player B. Player B refuses to shake hands because*

Player B contends that the Tiebreak is not over. What should happen? The players should keep on playing because the Match Tiebreak is not yet over.

USTA Comment E2.10: *Same situation as in USTA Comment E2.9 except that Player B shakes hands. The players report to the Referee that Player A won the Tiebreak 7-5. Does Player A win the match? Yes. By shaking hands the players have acknowledged that they agreed the match was over. The 7-point Match Tiebreak was played in good faith so Player A wins the match, and the final set score should be recorded 1-0 (5).*

APPENDIX I

REGULATIONS FOR MAKING TESTS SPECIFIED IN RULE 3.

i. Unless otherwise specified all tests shall be made at a temperature of approximately 68° Fahrenheit (20° Centigrade) and a relative humidity of approximately 60 per cent. All balls shall be removed from their container and kept at the recognised temperature and humidity for 24 hours prior to testing, and shall be at that temperature and humidity when the test is commenced.

ii. Unless otherwise specified the limits are for a test conducted in an atmospheric pressure resulting in a barometric reading of approximately 30 inches (76 cm).

iii. Other standards may be fixed for localities where the average temperature, humidity or average barometric pressure at which the game is being played differ materially from 68° Fahrenheit (20° Centigrade), 60 per cent and 30 inches (76 cm) respectively.

Applications for such adjusted standards may be made by any National Association to the International Tennis Federation and if approved shall be adopted for such localities.

iv. In all tests for diameter a ring gauge shall be used consisting of a metal plate, preferably non-corrosive, of a uniform thickness of one-eighth of an inch (.318 cm). In the case of Ball Type 1 (fast speed) and Ball Type 2 (medium speed) balls there shall be two circular openings in the plate measuring 2.575 inches (6.541 cm) and 2.700 inches (6.858 cm) in diameter respectively. In the case of Ball Type 3 (slow speed) balls there shall be two circular openings in the plate measuring 2.750 inches (6.985 cm) and 2.875 inches (7.302 cm) in diameter respectively. The inner surface of the gauge shall have a convex profile with a radius of one-sixteenth of an inch (.159 cm). The ball shall not drop through the smaller opening by its own weight and shall drop through the larger opening by its own weight.

v. In all tests for deformation conducted under Rule 3, the machine designed by Percy Herbert Stevens and patented in Great Britain under

Patent No. 230250, together with the subsequent additions and improvements thereto, including the modifications required to take return deformations, shall be employed. Other machines may be specified which give equivalent readings to the Stevens machine and these may be used for testing ball deformation where such machines have been given approval by the International Tennis Federation.

vi. Procedure for carrying out tests:

a. *Pre-compression.* Before any ball is tested it shall be steadily compressed by approximately one inch (2.54 cm) on each of three diameters at right angles to one another in succession; this process to be carried out three times (nine compressions in all). All tests to be completed within two hours of pre-compression.

b. *Bound test* (as in Rule 3). Measurements are to be taken from the concrete base to the bottom of the ball.

c. *Size test* (as in paragraph (iv) above).

d. *Weight test* (as in Rule 3).

e. *Deformation test.* The ball is placed in position on the modified Stevens machine so that neither platen of the machine is in contact with the cover seam. The contact weight is applied, the pointer and the mark brought level, and the dials set to zero. The test weight equivalent to 18 lb. (8.165 kg) is placed on the beam and pressure applied by turning the wheel at a uniform speed so that five seconds elapse from the instant the beam leaves its seat until the pointer is brought level with the mark. When turning ceases the reading is recorded (forward deformation). The wheel is turned again until figure ten is reached on the scale (one inch (2.54 cm) deformation). The wheel is then rotated in the opposite direction at a uniform speed (thus releasing pressure) until the beam pointer again coincides with the mark. After waiting ten seconds the pointer is adjusted to the mark if necessary. The reading is then recorded (return deformation). This procedure is repeated on each ball across the two diameters at right angles to the initial position and to each other.

vii. **CLASSIFICATION OF COURT SURFACE PACE.**

The ITF test method used for determining the pace of a court surface is test method ITF CS 01/01 (ITF Surface Pace Rating) as described in the ITF publication entitled "An initial ITF study on performance standards for tennis court surfaces".

Court surfaces which are found to have an ITF Surface Pace Rating of between 0 and 35 shall be classified as being Category 1 (slow pace). Examples of court surface types which conform to this classification will include most clay courts and other types of unbound mineral surface.

Court surfaces which are found to have an ITF Surface Pace Rating of between 30 and 45 shall be classified as being Category 2 (medium/medium-fast pace). Examples of court surface types which conform to this classification will include most hardcourts with various acrylic type coatings plus some textile surfaces.

Court surfaces which are found to have an ITF Surface Pace Rating of over 40 shall be classified as being Category 3 (fast pace). Examples of court surface types which conform to this classification will include most natural grass, artificial turf and some textile surfaces.

N.B. The proposed overlap in ITF Surface Pace Rating values for the above categories is to allow some latitude in ball selection.

APPENDIX II ALTERNATIVE SCORING METHODS (RULE 27)

1. “SHORT” SETS

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 tie-break game shall be played.

2. DECIDING MATCH TIE-BREAK (7 POINTS)

When the score in a match is one set all, or two sets all in best of five sets matches, one tie-break game shall be played to decide the match. This tie-break game replaces the deciding final set.

The player who first wins seven points shall win this match tie-break and the match provided he leads by a margin of two points.

3. DECIDING MATCH TIE-BREAK (10 POINTS)

When the score in a match is one set all, or two sets all in best of five sets matches, one match tie-break game shall be played to decide the match. This tie-break game replaces the deciding final set.

The player who first wins ten points shall win this match tie-break and the match provided he leads by a margin of two points.

APPENDIX III PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW AND HEARINGS ON THE RULES OF TENNIS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** These procedures were approved by the Board of Directors of the International Tennis Federation (“Board of Directors”) on 17 May 1998.
- 1.2** The Board of Directors may from time to time supplement, amend, or vary these procedures.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1** The International Tennis Federation is the custodian of the Rules of Tennis and is committed to:
 - a. Preserving the traditional character and integrity of the game of tennis.
 - b. Actively preserving the skills traditionally required to play the game.
 - c. Encouraging improvements, which maintain the challenge of the game.
 - d. Ensuring fair competition.
- 2.2** To ensure fair, consistent and expeditious review and hearings in relation to the Rules of Tennis the procedures set out below shall apply.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1** These Procedures shall apply to Rulings under:
 - a. Rule 1—The Court.
 - b. Rule 3—The Ball.
 - c. Rule 4—The Racket.
 - d. Appendix 1 of the Rules of Tennis.
 - e. Any other Rules of Tennis which the International Tennis Federation may decide.

4. STRUCTURE

- 4.1** Under these procedures Rulings shall be issued by a Ruling Board.
- 4.2** Such Rulings shall be final, save for an entitlement to appeal to an Appeal Tribunal pursuant to these procedures.

5. APPLICATION

- 5.1** Rulings shall be taken either:
 - a. Following a motion of the Board of Directors; or
 - b. Upon the receipt of an application in accordance with the procedures set out below.

6. APPOINTMENT AND COMPOSITION OF RULING BOARDS

- 6.1** Ruling Boards shall be appointed by the President of the International Tennis Federation (“President”) or his designee and shall comprise of such a number, as the President or his designee shall determine.
- 6.2** If more than one person is appointed to the Ruling Board the Ruling Board shall nominate one person from amongst themselves to act as Chairperson.
- 6.3** The Chairperson shall be entitled to regulate the procedures prior to and at any review and/or hearing of a Ruling Board.

7. PROPOSED RULINGS BY THE RULING BOARD

- 7.1** The details of any proposed Ruling issued upon the motion of the Board of Directors may be provided to any bona-fide person or any players, equipment manufacturer or national association or members thereof with an interest in the proposed Ruling.
- 7.2** Any person so notified shall be given a reasonable period within which to forward comments, objections, or requests for information to the President or his designee in connection with the proposed Ruling.

8. APPLICATION FOR RULINGS

- 8.1** An application for a Ruling may be made by any party with a bona-fide interest in the Ruling including any player, equipment manufacturer or national association or member thereof.
- 8.2** Any application for a Ruling must be submitted in writing to the President.
- 8.3** To be valid an application for a Ruling must include the following minimum information:
 - a. The full name and address of the Applicant.
 - b. The date of the application.
 - c. A statement clearly identifying the interest of the Applicant in the question upon which a Ruling is requested.
 - d. All relevant documentary evidence upon which the Applicant intends to rely at any hearing.
 - e. If, in the opinion of the Applicant, expert evidence is necessary he shall include a request for such expert evidence to be heard. Such request must identify the name of any expert proposed and their relevant expertise.
 - f. When an application for a Ruling on a racket or other piece of equipment is made, a prototype or, exact, copy of the equipment in question must be submitted with the application for a Ruling.
 - g. If, in the opinion of the Applicant, there are extraordinary or unusual circumstances, which require a Ruling to be made within a specified time or before a specified date he shall include a statement describing the extraordinary or unusual circumstances.
- 8.4** If an application for a Ruling does not contain the information and/or equipment referred to at Clause 8.3 (a)-(g) above the President or his designee shall notify the Applicant giving the Applicant a specified reasonable time within which to remedy the defect. If the Applicant fails to remedy the defect within the specified time the application shall be dismissed.

9. CONVENING THE RULING BOARD

- 9.1** On receipt of a valid application or on the motion of the Board of Directors the President or his designee may convene a Ruling Board to deal with the application or motion.
- 9.2** The Ruling Board need not hold a hearing to deal with an application or motion where the application or motion, in the opinion of the Chairperson can be resolved in a fair manner without a hearing.

10. PROCEDURE OF THE RULING BOARD

- 10.1** The Chairperson of a Ruling Board shall determine the appropriate form, procedure and date of any review and/or hearing.
- 10.2** The Chairperson shall provide written notice of those matters set out at 10.1 above to any Applicant or any person or association who has expressed an interest in the proposed Ruling.
- 10.3** The Chairperson shall determine all matters relating to evidence and shall not be bound by judicial rules governing procedure and admissibility of evidence provided that the review and/or hearing is conducted in a fair manner with a reasonable opportunity for the relevant parties to present their case.
- 10.4** Under these procedures any review and/or hearings:
 - a. Shall take place in private.
 - b. May be adjourned and/or postponed by the Ruling Board.
- 10.5** The Chairperson shall have the discretion to co-opt from time to time additional members onto the Ruling Board with special skill or experience to deal with specific issues, which require such special skill or experience.
- 10.6** The Ruling Board shall take its decision by a simple majority. No member of the Ruling Board may abstain.
- 10.7** The Chairperson shall have the complete discretion to make such order against the Applicant [and/or other individuals or organisations commenting objecting or requesting information at any review and/or hearing] in relation to the costs of the application and/or the reasonable expenses incurred by the Ruling Board in holding tests or obtaining reports relating to equipment subject to a Ruling as he shall deem appropriate.

11. NOTIFICATION

- 11.1** Once a Ruling Board has reached a decision it shall provide written notice to the Applicant, or, any person or association who has expressed an interest in the proposed Ruling as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 11.2** Such written notice shall include a summary of the reasoning behind the decision of the Ruling Board.

- 11.3** Upon notification to the Applicant or upon such other date specified by the Ruling Board the Ruling of the Ruling Board shall be immediately binding under the Rules of Tennis.

12. APPLICATION OF CURRENT RULES OF TENNIS

- 12.1** Subject to the power of the Ruling Board to issue interim Rulings the current Rules of Tennis shall continue to apply until any review and/or hearing of the Ruling Board is concluded and a Ruling issued by the Ruling Board.
- 12.2** Prior to and during any review and/or hearing the Chairperson of the Ruling Board may issue such directions as are deemed reasonably necessary in the implementation of the Rules of Tennis and of these procedures including the issue of interim Rulings.
- 12.3** Such interim Rulings may include restraining orders on the use of any equipment under the Rules of Tennis pending a Ruling by the Ruling Board as to whether or not the equipment meets the specification of the Rules of Tennis.

13. APPOINTMENT AND COMPOSITION OF APPEAL TRIBUNALS

- 13.1** Appeal Tribunals shall be appointed by the President or his designee from [members of the Board of Directors/Technical Committee].
- 13.2** No member of the Ruling Board who made the original Ruling shall be a member of the Appeal Tribunal.
- 13.3** The Appeal Tribunal shall comprise of such number as the President or his designee shall determine but shall be no less than three.
- 13.4** The Appeal Tribunal shall nominate one person from amongst themselves to act as Chairperson.
- 13.5** The Chairperson shall be entitled to regulate the procedures prior to and at any appeal hearing.

14. APPLICATION TO APPEAL

- 14.1** An Applicant [or a person or association who has expressed an interest and forwarded any comments, objections, or requests to a proposed Ruling] may appeal any Ruling of the Ruling Board.
- 14.2** To be valid an application for an appeal must be:
- Made in writing to the Chairperson of the Ruling Board who made the Ruling appealed not later than [45] days following notification of the Ruling;
 - Must set out details of the Ruling appealed against; and
 - Must contain the full grounds of the appeal.

- 14.3** Upon receipt of a valid application to appeal the Chairperson of the Ruling Board making the original Ruling may require a reasonable appeal fee to be paid by the Appellant as a condition of appeal. Such appeal fee shall be repaid to the Appellant if the appeal is successful.

15. CONVENING THE APPEAL TRIBUNAL

- 15.1** The President or his designee shall convene the Appeal Tribunal following payment by the Appellant of any appeal fee.

16. PROCEDURES OF APPEAL TRIBUNAL

- 16.1** The Appeal Tribunal and their Chairperson shall conduct procedures and hearings in accordance with those matters set out in sections 10, 11 and 12 above.
- 16.2** Upon notification to the Appellant or upon such other date specified by the Appeal Tribunal the Ruling of the Appeal Tribunal shall be immediately binding and final under the Rules of Tennis.

17. GENERAL

- 17.1** If a Ruling Board consists of only one member that single member shall be responsible for regulating the hearing as Chairperson and shall determine the procedures to be followed prior to and during any review and/or hearing.
- 17.2** All review and/or hearings shall be conducted in English. In any hearing where an Applicant, and/or other individuals or organisations commenting, objecting or requesting information do not speak English an interpreter must be present. Wherever practicable the interpreter shall be independent.
- 17.3** The Ruling Board or Appeal Tribunal may publish extracts from its own Rulings.
- 17.4** All notifications to be made pursuant to these procedures shall be in writing.
- 17.5** Any notifications made pursuant to these procedures shall be deemed notified upon the date that they were communicated, sent or transmitted to the Applicant or other relevant party.
- 17.6** A Ruling Board shall have the discretion to dismiss an application if in its reasonable opinion the application is substantially similar to an application or motion upon which a Ruling Board has made a decision and/or Ruling within the 36 months prior to the date of the application.

PLAN OF THE COURT

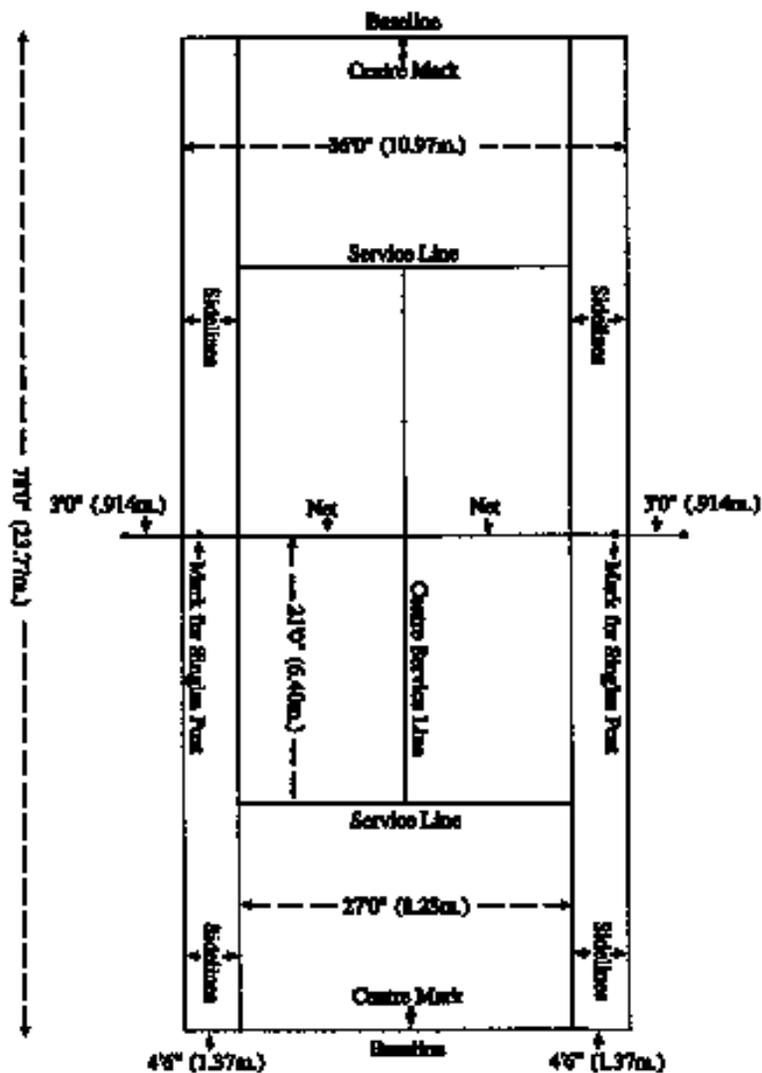


Fig. 1

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO MARK OUT A COURT

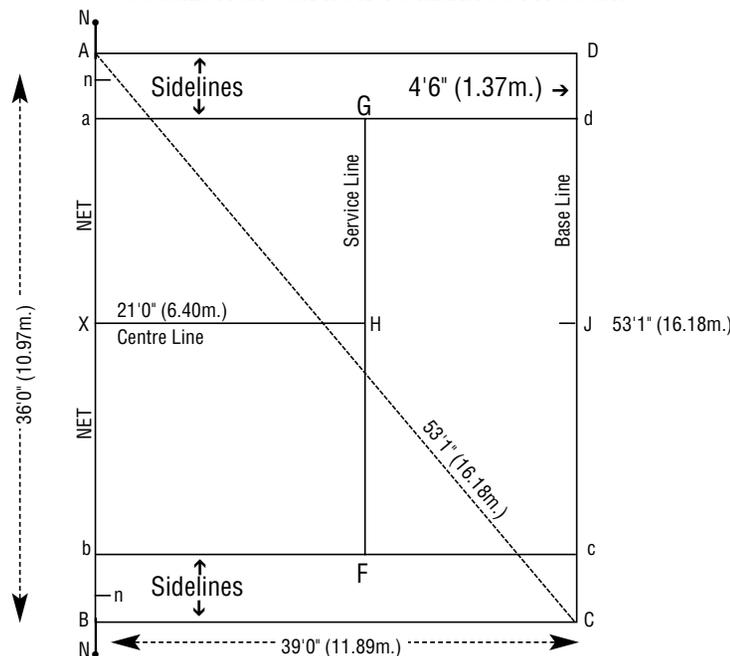


Fig. 2

The following procedure is for the usual combined Doubles and Singles Court. (See note at foot for a Court for one purpose only).

First select the position of the net; a straight line 42 feet (12.8 m) long. Mark the centre (X on the diagram above) and, measuring from there in each direction, mark:-

- at 13'6" (4.11 m) the points a, b, where the net crosses the inner sidelines,
- at 16'6" (5.03 m) the positions of the singles posts (or sticks) (n, n),
- at 18'0" (5.49 m) the points A, B, where the net crosses the outer sidelines,
- at 21'0" (6.40 m) the positions of the net posts (N, N), being the ends of the original 42'0" (12.8 m) line.

Insert pegs at A and B and attach to them the respective ends of two measuring tapes. On one, which will measure the diagonal of the half-court, take a length 53'1" (16.18 m) and on the other (to measure the sideline) a length of 39'0" (11.89 m). Pull both taut so that at these distances they meet at a point C, which is one corner of the Court. Reverse the measurements to find the other corner D. As a check on this operation it is advisable at this stage to verify the length of the line CD which, being the baseline, should be found to be 36'0" (10.97m); and at the same time its centre J can be marked, and also the ends of the inner sidelines (c, d), 4'6" (1.37 m) from C and D.

The centre-line and service-line are now marked by means of the points F, H, G, which are measured 21'0" (6.40 m) from the net down the lines bc, XJ, ad, respectively.

Identical procedure the other side of the net completes the Court.

ITF Notes:–

- i. If a singles court only is required, no lines are necessary outside the points a, b, c, d, but the court can be measured out as above. Alternatively, the corners of the base-line (c, d) can be found if preferred by pegging the two tapes at a and b instead of at A and B, and by then using lengths of 47'5" (14.46 m) and 39'0" (11.89 m). The net posts will be at n, n, and a 33'0" (10 m) singles net should be used.
- ii. When a combined doubles and singles court with a doubles net is used for singles, the net must be supported at the points n, n, to a height of 3 feet 6 inches (1.07 m) by means of two posts, called "singles sticks", which shall be not more than 3 inches (7.5 cm) square or 3 inches (7.5 cm) in diameter. The centres of the singles sticks shall be 3 feet (.914 m) outside the singles court on each side.

To assist in the placing of these singles sticks it is desirable that the points n, n, should each be shown with a white dot when the court is marked.

USTA Comment L.1: Tennis Court Layout

All courts should be laid out for singles and doubles play. The same lines—except for the sideline extensions for doubles play—are required for each.

Courts in the northern two-thirds of the United States should generally be laid out with the long axis north and south; it is advantageous, however, to orient the courts in the southern one-third of the country 15°-25° west of true (not magnetic) north in order to minimize the adverse effects of the afternoon winter sun.

Figure 1 indicates the exact dimensions of the lines as well as recommended side and back spacing. Note that the dimensions shown in the diagram are measurements to the outside edge of the lines. For regulation play, the space behind the baseline (between the baseline and fence) should not be less than 21 feet, for an overall dimension of 60' x 120'. For stadium courts, this perimeter spacing should be increased to allow space for line umpires without impeding the players. (See Rule 1.) Net posts should be located with their centers three feet outside the doubles sideline.

Most courts are laid out with lines two inches (2") wide. Lines may be one inch (1") to two inches (2") wide excepting the center service line which must be two inches (2") wide and the baselines which may be up to four inches (4") wide.

For more detailed information on the subject, *Tennis Courts*, a book containing United States Tennis Association and U.S. Tennis Court and Track Builders Association recommendations for the construction, maintenance, and equipment needs of a tennis court installation, can be obtained by contacting the USTA Bookstore, AT 888-832-8291.

USTA Comment: *The ITF, not the USTA, is responsible for the Rules of Tennis. Amendments to the Rules of Tennis are made through the procedures of the ITF. Rule 69 of the ITF controls the manner in which amendments may be made to the Rules of Tennis. Amendments to USTA Comments are made by the process described in USTA Regulation XII.H.*

International Tennis Federation Rule 69: Amendment to the Rules of Tennis

The official and decisive text to the Rules of Tennis shall be for ever in the English language and no alteration or interpretation of such Rules shall be made except at an Annual General Meeting of the Council, nor unless notice of the resolution embodying such alteration shall have been received by the Federation in accordance with Article 16 of the Constitution of ITF Ltd. (Notice of Resolutions) and such resolution or one having the like effect shall be carried by a majority of two-thirds of the votes recorded in respect of the same.

Any alteration so made shall take effect as from the first day of January following unless the Meeting shall by the like majority decide otherwise.

The Board of Directors shall have power, however, to settle all urgent questions of interpretation subject to confirmation at the General Meeting next following.

This Rule shall not be altered at any time without the unanimous consent of a General Meeting of the Council.

If you have a rules problem, send full details, enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope, to USTA Tennis Rules Committee, c/o Officials Department, 70 West Red Oak Lane, White Plains, NY 10604-3602.