Tennis Rules

Any rule and situation not specifically covered are subject to the current version of the United States Tennis Association (USTA) rules and the judgement and discretion of the TN Tech Intramural sports staff.

All rules are subject to change at the discretion of the Intramural Sports Office, and the Intramural Sports Office has the final decision on all situations covered and not covered by the rules. When there is a rules-related conflict, the TN Tech Tennis Rules shall take precedence.

Rule 1: Player Eligibility & Registration

Player Eligibility

- ✓ Currently enrolled (at least half-time), fee-paying Tennessee Tech University students as well as faculty and staff of the University with a current, active membership to the fitness center may participate in intramural leagues, tournaments, and contests.
- ✓ Prior to each contest and event, participants must check in with a member of the IM staff.
- ✓ **Players can compete for only one (1) team in each single-gendered league** and, if applicable, **one (1) co-rec league.** Once he or she checks-in for one (1) team, that player **CANNOT** transfer to another team in that league for the duration of the season.
- ✓ **For postseason eligibility, a player must have participated in at least one (1) regular season game.**
- ✓ Current varsity athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport. Former varsity athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport for one calendar year (365 days) after their official affiliation with a college or university team has ended.
- ✓ Current professional athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport. Former professional athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport for five (5) years after their official affiliation with a professional team has ended.
- ✓ Intramural Sports Professional staff shall make the final decision on eligibility issues.

Registration

- ✓ Teams should register by the deadline by registering on the Fusion Play App.

Rule 2: League Format & Team Composition

League Format

- ✓ A pool play section shall precede the postseason tournament. The overall number of registered teams will determine the number of pools and number of teams in each pool.

Divisions

- ✓ Doubles' Open
  - o No Gender Restrictions
    - ▪ **Any teams with less than two (2) players will be considered a forfeit**

Match Format

- ✓ Each match shall be best three-out-of-five sets.
- ✓ Individuals and teams shall switch sides after each game.

Team Composition

- ✓ In the doubles open league, there are **NO** gender restrictions. Teams may consist of two (2) males, two (2) females, or one (1) male and one (1) female.
- ✓ **For the doubles' leagues, no more than one (1) tennis sport club member may appear on the team's roster**.

Rule 3: Playing Area & Equipment

Playing Area

- ✓ All matches will be played on the TN Tech Tennis Courts.

Racket & Tennis Balls

- ✓ Players shall provide their own tennis racket and balls for each match.

Clothing & Equipment

- ✓ All attire and equipment are subject to the approval of Intramural Sports staff. Any clothing or equipment that is deemed unsafe or illegal must be removed prior to competition.
- ✓ IM staff reserves the right to ask participants to remove or conceal clothing that, in the opinion of IM staff, displays offensive or demeaning language or imagery.
- ✓ **Proper athletic attire is required.** Non-athletic clothing including but not limited to jeans, dress pants, dresses, khakis, and blouses is prohibited.
- ✓ Footwear
  - Players are required to wear athletic shoes (e.g. basketball shoes, running shoes, tennis shoes).
  - Footwear including but not limited to boots, cleats, open-toed shoes, crocks, and sandals is strictly **PROHIBITED.**
- ✓ Jewelry
  - Religious or medical jewelry is permitted and must be taped down against the body.
  - Participants must remove all watches and necklaces prior to each contest.
  - **All Air Pods/Ear Buds/Headphones are PROHIBITED during IM Contests.**
- ✓ Headwear
  - Players may wear knit or stocking caps, headbands, and hair control devices made with soft and non-abrasive material.
  - Headwear including but not limited to baseball caps, bandanas with knots, hard plastic hair devices, bobby pins, and safety pins is strictly **PROHIBITED.**
- ✓ Pads/Braces
  - Leg & knee braces covered with soft, pliable material and free of any sharp edges are allowed.
  - Compression sleeves and wrist sweatbands are permitted above the waist.
  - Casts and other equipment made of hard, unyielding materials may not be worn above the waist.
- ✓ Blood
  - Participants that are bleeding, have an open wound, and/or have an excessive amount of blood on the uniform must leave the field. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound must be covered, and/or the bloody uniform must be changed before the player can return to the game.

Rule 4: Forfeits, Defaults, Protests, Scoring, & Reporting Scores

Defaults

- ✓ A default is a game not played without penalty (e.g. dropped from the league).
- ✓ To receive a default, the team captain or representative must notify the Intramural Sports Office by **2:00 PM on the day of the contest.**
- ✓ Sportsmanship Rating will be as followed:
  - Winning Team = 8
  - Defaulting Team = 5

- ✓ In order to verify that the request is legitimate, the team captain or representative must notify the Intramural Sports Office via e-mail or in person. Phone calls are not accepted.

Forfeits

- ✓ A forfeit is defined as one (1) of the following:
  - Failing to field a team for an intramural contest without contacting the Intramural Sports Office before 2:00pm on the day of contest.
    - The final score shall be 3-0.
  - Receiving three (3) or more conduct warnings before, during, and after an Intramural contest.
    - If the forfeiting team is ahead, the final score shall be 3-0 in favor of the opposing team.
    - If the non-forfeiting team has the higher score, the game shall end with the existing score.
  - Defaulting two (2) games during pool play.
- ✓ If a team forfeits its first (1st) game of the season, that team may be dropped from the league and replaced with a team on the waiting list.
- ✓ Sportsmanship Rating will be as followed:
  - Winning Team = 8
  - Forfeiting Team = 2
- ✓ A second (2nd) forfeiture may result in removal from the league.

Grace Period

- ✓ If at least **one (1)** team member is **checked-in** at game time, the team will be granted a **five-minute (5:00)** grace period.
- ✓ Once a team reaches the minimum number of players to start the game, the game will start.
- ✓ A team may not wait for additional players once the minimum number of players have arrived.
- ✓ If the team has not reached the minimum number of players required to play at the end of the grace period, a forfeit will be declared.

Protests

- ✓ Intramural Sports Graduate Assistants and Professional Staff will consider eligibility protests.
- ✓ When protesting player eligibility:
  - *Regular season*: The eligibility of any player may be protested at any point during the regular season (e.g. before, during, and after the contest; anytime during office hours)
  - *Postseason:* Player eligibility must be protested before the start of the match. **Protests made after the start or end of the game will be not recognized.**

Rule 5: Timing & Scoring

Game Length

- ✓ The match shall be played until a player or team wins three (3) sets.

Scoring

- ✓ Scoring shall proceed as standard tennis (15-30-40-Game).
- ✓ Each game will end when a player or team scores four (4) times before their opponent.
- ✓ If either players or teams are tied at 40-40, the first (1st) player to score two (2) consecutive points shall win the game.
- ✓ To win a set, a team or player must have at least a two (2)-game advantage. If both teams/players have six (6) games each, a super tie-breaker shall be played.
- ✓ During a tie-breaker game, the first (1st) team to ten (10) points shall be declared the winner of the set. The winning team must have at least a two-point (2pt) lead.

Reporting Scores

- ✓ Once the game has been completed, the winning individual or team's captain is responsible for reporting the score to intramural sports staff via the group text.
- ✓ Any scores not reported prior to the game deadline will be declared a double forfeit.

Rule 6: Playing Rules

TN Tech Intramural Tennis is self-officiated. Players should review the rules prior to play and honor the legitimate calls of their opponents. The Intramural Sports Office will settle disagreements that cannot be resolved in a reasonable time.

Please click the following link to view Part Two of Official USTA rules.

Determining the First (1st) Serve

- ✓ To determine the serve in the first (1st) game of the first (1st) set, players/teams will volley. Once the ball has legally crossed the net three (3) times, the ball will be "live."
- ✓ The person or team that wins the volley has choice of serve/receive or side

Service

- ✓ Serving Method
  - Before the server begins to serve, the server must stand with both feet behind the baseline within the center mark and sideline. The partner must give a clear view of the server.
  - The service always begins to the right of center mark and is made to the opponent's right service court. After each point is played, service courts are changed for the next service in alternating fashion. Teams shall alternate server.
  - Once the server and receiver are ready, the serve shall commence. The server shall project the ball by hand into the air in any direction and strike it with his racket before it hits the ground. The server has two (2) attempts to put the ball in play without committing a fault.
  - The ball must clear the net and land within or on the proper service court lines before being hit by the receiver. After the service, the ball may be hit before it bounces.
- ✓ Serving Order
  - At the end of the first (1st) game, the receiver/receiving team shall become the server/serving team, and the server/serving team shall become the receiver/receiving team. This order is repeated throughout the match.
- ✓ Serving Violations
  - Foot Fault
    - The server changes his position by walking or running.
    - The server touches the baseline with either foot.
  - Service Faults
    - The server assumes the wrong position before serving.
    - The server misses the ball while attempting to hit it.
    - The server fails to hit the ball into proper service court.
    - The served ball hits a permanent structure other than the net, strap, or band.
    - The server hits his/her partner or anything he wears or carries with the served ball.
  - Double Fault
    - If the sever omits two (2) consecutive foot faults and/or service faults, he or she shall lose the point.

The Return

- ✓ Some examples of legal returns:
  - The ball touches the top of a net post or net and falls into play in the proper court.
  - If the 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.
  - If the ball is returned outside the post either above or below the level of the top of the net, even though it touches the post, if it hits the ground within the proper court.

The Let

- ✓ A let service shall be called when a served ball touches the net, band or strap and lands within or on the proper service court lines.
- ✓ A let service is called if a service is delivered before the receiver is ready. However, if the receiver tries to return the ball, he/she is considered to have been ready.
- ✓ When a let occurs on a service, only that service is repeated. If it occurs during play, the point is replayed
- ✓ A let may be called when a player is unable to play the ball due to circumstances beyond his control, such as interference by a ball or player from another court.

During the Rally

- ✓ A player loses the point if the following occurs:
  - A player or team fails to return the ball directly over the net before it has hit the ground twice consecutively.
  - A player or team returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, a permanent fixture (other than the net, posts or singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band), or other object outside any of the lines which bound their opponent's court.
  - A player or team volleys the ball and fails to make a good return even when outside the court.
  - A player or team deliberately carries or catches the ball in play on their racket or deliberately touches it with their racket more than once.
  - A player's racket touches the net, post, or the ground within their opponent's court at any time while that ball is in play.
  - A player or team volleys the ball before it has passed the net.
  - The ball in play touches the player or anything that the player wears or carries other than the racket.
  - A player or team throws their racket at and hits the ball.
  - A player or team deliberately commits any act that hinders their opponent in returning the ball.

Ejections

- ✓ When one (1) member of a team is ejected, that team shall forfeit the contest.
- ✓ Ejected players must leave the Fitness Center, Intramural Fields, and/or TN Tech Tennis Courts immediately and cannot return to play **ANY** sport until he/she has been cleared for participation by a professional staff member of the Intramural Sports Office.