



# Singles/Doubles Tennis Rules

Revised: August 2014

## ASSUMPTION OF RISK STATEMENT

All Intramural Sports participants are responsible for their own medical expenses. Any participant unsure of his/her physical condition should check with their physician or the University Clinic before participating in an Intramural Sports contest.

Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of participants, coaches or spectators can result in an unsportsmanlike penalty, ejection or forfeiture of the game. Team Captains will be held responsible for spectator, team and sideline misconduct. Two ejections from any contest will result in an automatic forfeiture.

## RULE 1: ELIGIBILITY

- 1. PARTICIPATION:** Participation is limited to currently enrolled, fee-paying University of Southern Mississippi students and faculty/staff members with Recreational Sports Memberships.
- 2. SOUTHERN MISS ID CARD:** A current Southern Miss ID must be presented to the supervisor to participate at each Intramural Sports activity.
- 3. NUMBER OF TEAMS:** Players can compete for only one single sex team and one Co-Rec team, regardless of league classification (example: participants cannot play for a men's recreational team and a men's competitive team).
- 4. SIGNED IN:** Once a participant has signed in for a team, he/she may not transfer to another team.

## RULE 2: TEAM COMPOSITION

- 1. TEAMS:** Depending on the type of league/tournament, each team will consist of the following number of players:
  - a. Doubles – 2 players
  - b. Singles – 1 Player
- 2. PARTICIPANTS:** Team representatives including players, coaches, spectators, and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to these sport rules and all Intramural Sports policies.

### **RULE 3: DEFAULTS, FORFEITS AND PROTESTS**

- 1. FORFEITS:** If a team fails to appear with the required minimum number of players, ready to play, at the scheduled location at the scheduled start of the game, a member of the Intramural Sports staff will declare the contest a forfeit. Teams that forfeit will receive a 'C' for sportsmanship and will be required to pay \$15 to the Recreational Sports Office. The team captain of that team will be suspended from play until that payment is made. Teams are only allowed one forfeit per sport per season. If a team forfeits twice, it will be removed from the league for the remainder of the season.
- 2. DEFAULTS:** If a team knows that they will be unable to play a scheduled game, the team captain must contact the Intramural Sports Office by 12:00 PM the day of the contest to declare a default. The defaulting team will receive a loss and a 'B' for sportsmanship. Teams are allowed one default or forfeit per sport. Upon the second infraction that team will be dropped from the league.
- 3. PROTESTS:** Protests involving rule interpretations will be considered immediately following the incident in question. Play will be suspended until an Intramural Sports supervisor rules on the protest. If a team continues to play without calling the supervisor to the game site, then that team forfeits its right to a protest. Protests will not be honored after play has resumed. Judgment calls cannot be protested. If the protest is not approved, the protesting team is charged with a time out. If the protest is upheld, the delay shall count as an official's time out. Official's judgment calls cannot be protested.

### **RULE 4: PLAYING AREA AND EQUIPMENT**

- 1. PLAYING AREA:** Games will be played at either the Tatum Park or the Kamper Park Tennis Courts.
- 2. COURT PERIMETER:** Singles play will use the inside perimeter of the court. Doubles play will use the outside perimeter of the court.
- 3. RACKETS:** Players may use their own rackets or check them out from the Payne Center equipment checkout.
- 4. BALLS:** You may use your own tennis balls or check them out from the Payne Center equipment checkout.
- 5. SHOES:** Athletic, close toed shoes are required.
- 6. ATTIRE:** Players must wear athletic attire.

## **RULE 5: LENGTH OF THE GAME AND TIMING**

- 1. SELF-SCHEDULING SPORT:** It is the responsibility of both parties to contact each other to schedule a play time and place to play. This match must be scheduled and played prior to the deadline of posted for the round.
- 2. LENGTH OF THE MATCH:** The first player to win 8 games is declared the winner. There is no tie breaker and teams must win by 2 games.

## **RULE 6: PLAYING THE GAME**

- 1. BEGINNING THE MATCH:** To determine the serve in the first game of the first set, the sides will volley, once the ball has legally crossed the net three times, the ball will be "live." The person who wins the volley has choice of serve/receive or side. At the end of the first game the receiver shall become the server, and the server shall become the receiver. This order is repeated throughout the match.
- 2. SCORING:**
  - a. **Server Wins Point:** The server wins the point if the ball is served, not being a let, touches the receiver or anything which he/she wears or carries before it hits the ground, or if the receiver otherwise loses the point as described below.
  - b. **Receiver Wins Point:** The receiver wins the point if the server serves 2 consecutive faults, or otherwise loses the point as described below.
  - c. **Player Loses Point:** A player loses the point if:
    - I. A player fails to return the ball directly over the net before it has hit the ground twice consecutively.
    - II. A player returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, any permanent fixture (other than the net, posts or singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band), or other objects outside any of the boundary lines.
    - III. A player volleys the ball and fails to make a good return even when standing outside the court.
    - IV. A player deliberately carries or catches the ball in play on their racket or deliberately touches it with their racket more than once.
    - V. A player's racket touches the net, post or the ground within their opponents court an any time while the ball is in play.
    - VI. A player volleys the ball before it has passed the net.
    - VII. The ball in play touches the player or anything that the player wears or carries other than the racket.
    - VIII. A player throws their racket and hits the ball.
    - IX. A player deliberately commits any act that hinders their opponent in making a stroke.

### **3. TERMONOLGY:**

- a. If a player wins a point, the score is called 15 for that player
- b. On winning a second point, their score is called 30
- c. On winning a third point, their score is called 40
- d. The fourth point won by a player will result in winning the game for that player/team.
- e. In intramural tennis there is “advantage”, therefore you must win the game by 2 (deuce).

**4. CHANGING SIDES:** Players must changes sides after the first, third and every subsequent odd game played.

### **5. ORDER OF SERVICE:**

- a. If a player serves out of turn, any points made by the illegal serve shall be lost and the opposing team shall be awarded a point. The serving order should then be corrected immediately and the offending team shall lose that service turn.
- b. If the order of receiving the service changes during a game 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 the set in which they are receivers of service.

### **6. SERVE:**

- a. Before the server begins to serve, he/she must stand with both feet behind the baseline within the center mark and sideline.
- b. 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 altering fashion.
- c. 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 to attempt to put the ball in play without committing a fault.
- d. The ball must clear the net and land in the proper service court or on the lines of the proper service court before being hit by the receiver. After the service, the ball may be hit before it bounces.

**7. FOOT FAULT:** A foot fault on the serve will be declared when:

- a. The server changes his position by walking or running.
- b. The server touches the baseline with either foot.

**8. SERVICE FAULT:** The service is a fault when the server:

- a. Assumes the wrong position before serving.
- b. Commits a foot fault.
- c. Misses the ball while attempting to hit it.

- d. Fails to hit the ball into the proper service court.
  - e. The served ball hits a permanent structure other than the net, strap or band.
  - f. The server hits his/her teammate or anything he wears or carries with the served ball.
9. **LET:** 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 from another court. A let is called if the service is delivered before the receiver is ready. However, if the receiver makes an attempt to return the ball he is considered to have been ready.
10. **RETURN:** It is a good return when:
- a. The ball touches the top of a net post or net and falls into play in the proper court.
  - b. If the ball, served or returned, hits the ground within the proper court and rebound or is blown back over the net and he/she plays the ball, provided that neither he/she nor any part of their clothes or racket touches the net, posts, cord or metal cable, strap or band or the ground within his/her opponent's court and that the stroke is otherwise good.
  - c. 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.
  - d. If a player succeeds in returning the ball, served or in play, which strikes a ball lying in the court.
  - e. 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, provided that it hits the ground within the proper court.

## **RULE 7: SPORTSMANSHIP**

1. **RATING:** Each team will begin the contest with a 4 sportsmanship rating and shall be rated by the officials at the end of the contest. The authority of the officials' ratings exists prior to, during, and following all contests to which that official is assigned, and extends to all persons on, at, or near the playing site. Sportsmanship ratings shall be marked on the score sheet prior to captain signing off on the score and sportsmanship rating.
- A. (4.0) – Excellent Sportsmanship:** Players cooperate fully with the intramural sports staff and opposing team members. If necessary, the captain converses calmly with officials about rule interpretations and calls.
- B. (3.0) - Good Sportsmanship:** Team members verbally complain about some decisions made by the intramural sports staff and/or show minor dissent which may or may not merit a conduct warning (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.). Teams that receive one conduct warning will receive no higher than a "3" rating.

**C. (2.0) - Mediocre Sportsmanship:** Team constantly comments to the intramural sports staff or the opposing team. The team captain exhibits little or no control over teammates or him/herself. Teams that receive one ejection or two conduct warnings (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.) will receive no higher than a "2" rating.

**D. (1.0) - Below Average Sportsmanship:** Team constantly comments to the intramural sports staff or the opposing team. The team captain exhibits little or no control over teammates or him/herself. Teams that receive one ejection and one conduct warning or a combination of three conduct warnings (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.) will receive no higher than a "1" rating and the game will be forfeited.

**F. (0) - 1 - Unacceptable Sportsmanship:** Team is completely uncooperative. Captain has no control over teammates and/or him/herself. Any team that receives two ejections or four conduct warnings (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.) will receive a "1" rating and the game and season will be forfeited.

#### **RULE 8: COREC CLARIFICATIONS**

- 1. TEAM COMPOSTION:** Each double team will consist of 2 players (1 make and 1 female).