

Understanding the Tournament Environment

Welcome to competitive junior tennis. Tennis Canada's goal is to provide a healthy and positive competitive environment for all participants. To this end, it is important for all parents, players and coaches to understand the tournament environment including basic officiating and tournament rules. A few key rules/definitions are highlighted below:

Role of the Officials

There are three types of Officials used during these events: **Referee**, **Roving Umpires**, and **Chair Umpires**. Overall, the Officials' mandate is to ensure **fair play**, resolve disputes and supervise all aspects of play (i.e., time warm-ups and change-overs). The Referee is the final authority on all questions of tennis law and the Referee's decision is final. The Referee is in charge of the Officials, rules on questions of law and works in collaboration with the Tournament Director on making the draw and scheduling matches. Roving Umpires are responsible for monitoring 4 to 6 courts and making judgments on questions of fact (e.g. whether a ball is in or out, did a foot fault occur, etc.). Chair Umpires are responsible for the management of a particular match.

Calling Lines/Keeping Score

Players must call their own lines **clearly** and **immediately**. Officials standing on the court or in direct observation of a line from off-court may overrule a line call. It is the server's responsibility to call the score before each point. If there is a disagreement about the score, this is the appropriate time to resolve it. Players may request the help of an Official in a scoring dispute, however, they must accept the Official's decision.

Ball marks on clay courts may be checked by either an Official or a player, however, permission must be granted to inspect a mark on the opponent's side of the court. Point ending ball marks on clay courts may be checked.

Punctuality Rule

Players are responsible for being dressed and **ready to play** when their match is called. If players are not ready to play when their match is called, the following penalties will be assessed:

Late 5:00 minutes or less: loss of toss and 1 game
Late 5:01 – 10:00 minutes: loss of toss and 2 games
Late 10:01 – 15:00 minutes: loss of toss and 3 games
More than 15:00 minutes late: default

The lateness penalty clock will be started by the Referee after the match is called and a court is available and it is judged that one or both of the players is not present or available to start the match. The Referee is not required to keep a court open while awaiting a player.

Foot Faults

Foot faults **will be called** by Officials when they are present on court. A foot fault occurs when a player's foot touches the baseline or the imaginary extension of the centre line before the racquet hits the ball during the service motion. They are called immediately and the player loses that serve.



Proper Tennis Attire

Every player shall dress and present himself/herself for play in clean and customarily acceptable tennis attire. Proper attire includes appropriate shoes with non-marking soles.

Sweatshirts, gym shorts, dress shirts, T-shirts or any other inappropriate attire shall not be worn during a match (including the warm-up).

Considered as inappropriate attire:

- Spandex shorts or yoga pants, unless worn under a skirt or dress
- Tops or bottoms that have the appearance of beach attire
- Shorts with cargo pockets
- T-shirts, polo shirts or caps with cartoons or text (e.g., “Just Do It”)

Leaving the Court

Players must ask **permission** from an Official before leaving the court. Girls are permitted two toilet breaks during a match and boys are permitted one. In doubles, each team is allowed two toilet breaks. Toilet breaks should be taken at a set break. Players are not to talk to anyone including parents and coaches during these breaks. Doing so could result in a Coaching Violation.

Coaching

Players shall not receive coaching during a match. Communication of any kind, audible or visible, between a player and a coach/parent shall be construed as coaching and the player will be penalized.

Receiver to follow pace of Server

The server has 25 seconds from the time the ball goes out of play until he/she strikes the ball. The receiver must play to the “reasonable pace” of the server (generally considered to be a minimum of 15 seconds after the ball has gone out of play on the last point). Unreasonable delays in either serving or receiving will result in Time Violations being issued.

Schedule of Play

The schedule of play will be determined by the Referee in collaboration with the Tournament Director. The following day’s schedule will be released and posted after the majority of matches have been completed each day.

Point Penalty System

Officials enforce the Code of Conduct as well as Time Violations. Specific violations can be seen in the *Rules of the Court*. The first offence for Code Violations is a **warning**. Second offence is the loss of a **point**. After the second offence, **games** are awarded to the opponent. It is up to the Official to decide if defaulting the player is necessary at any point in this process.

Time Violations occur when a player takes too long between points or during a changeover. The first offense is a warning. Points are awarded after the first infraction.

Code of Conduct/Suspension Points

The Code of Conduct is in effect at all times and in all places on the tournament site, not just on-court during a match. This may include **on and off the court** after matches, at the hotel, restaurant, player lounge, etc. During a match, players will receive Code Violations for different offences. Serious offences may result in the assessment of



Suspension Points. Officials may assign Suspension Points for any inappropriate behaviour. If the behaviour is serious enough, this could result in a player being defaulted from the tournament and sent home. Three Suspension Points earned within 12 months will lead to a 3-month suspension from all tournaments at both the national and provincial levels.

Harassment/Electronic Communication

In the tournament environment, no form of harassment – physical, verbal, gestural or electronic – will be tolerated, either between players or by family members, coaches or other spectators. Any individual found to have harassed another person will be immediately required to leave the tournament and will be subject to the sanctions of the Code of Conduct as well as those of Tennis Canada's Harassment Policy. Note that players will be held directly responsible for any inappropriate communications sent from their mobile phones, blackberries, computers or other communication devices.

