

15. TENNIS — BOYS AND GIRLS

A. GENERAL REGULATIONS

1) Interscholastic Participation

- 1.1) Dual competition consists of three singles matches and two doubles matches using seven different players. OHSAA regular season dual contests must be played using this format, and not all doubles competition or all singles competition if the appropriate number of competitors are available to participate.
- 1.2) Each individual dual match is best two out of three sets. The 12 point tie-breaker rule shall be used when necessary.
 - 1.21) During a regular season contest, when the winner has been determined (3 points scored), coaches may mutually agree to utilize a “super tiebreaker” in lieu of the 3rd set.
- 1.3) During invitational and/or conference tournaments, each individual may play three, two out of three set matches or up to five eight-game pro sets per day. In those tournaments that include both two out of three set matches and pro sets, a combination of no more than three 8-game pro sets and one two out of three set matches may be participated in one day.
- 1.4) Prior to a contest, coaches may mutually agree to use no advantage scoring during the season.
- 1.5) Maximum number of regular matches per individual per day is three. Maximum number of pro sets per day (eight games each), tournaments only, is five. Each match played in dual competition counts as one contest in the season limitation. If a player participates in more than three matches, five pro sets, or a combination of pro sets and two out of three set matches as indicated above in one day, the player shall forfeit the additional match, and it shall count as two contests for the school and the individual in the season limitations.
- 1.6) There shall be a two-minute rest period between each set.
- 1.7) If weather or darkness interrupts a contest before either team has won three points (and thus the contest), incomplete matches shall be resumed at the exact point where suspended. The match(es) shall be rescheduled at the earliest possible date agreeable to both coaches. Players not appearing for a rescheduled match shall forfeit their respective match. Unfinished contests where a winner cannot be determined shall not count toward the 22-contest season limitation.
- 1.8) The warmup period for all matches shall not exceed 10 minutes.
- 1.9) All warmup serves in both singles and doubles shall be taken prior to the start of play.
- 1.10) Play shall be continuous as defined within the U.S.T.A. Handbook. In case of injury or illness, after evaluation by a coach or trainer, a player will be allowed a maximum of five minutes for treatment after which the player must resume play or forfeit the match.
- 1.11) Singles players must play in order of team rank. The better doubles team must play No. 1 doubles. This rule also applies to injury or illness preceding a match. Forfeiting a point for a missing player’s position is not allowed. If the No. 1 player cannot compete, the regular No. 2 player plays at No. 1, the regular No. 3 player plays at No. 2, and the substitute is placed at No. 3. “Stacking” is not allowed under any circumstances.

Note: This does not mean that the best player on the team must play first singles. However, if he/she is going to play singles, he/she must play at the No. 1 position. Any lineup which places a more skilled player above a less skilled player, and a more skilled doubles team above a less skilled doubles team is appropriate.
- 1.12) Continuous coaching is permitted. In addition to coaching at the ends of games 3, 5, 7, etc. and the end of each set, a coach may coach their own player(s) any time during the 25 seconds between points as long as the coach does not interfere with actual play on the court.
- 1.13) A coach shall not initiate a conversation with an opposing player or coach.
- 1.14) During a regular season dual contest, only one coach from each team may sit or stand near the net post and must stay within the area where the players’ chairs or benches would be located if not provided, or be outside the court.
- 1.15) All team members must wear an appropriate school uniform or proper tennis attire, preferably in school colors. Proper tennis attire is defined as clothing specifically manufactured for tennis wear. Any lettering or pictures on clothing, and/or headgear must pertain to the school name or logo, the student’s name, a tennis racquet and/or tennis ball, or be patriotic in nature (e.g. the United States flag). No phrases, quotes, or “slogans” shall be permitted. Manufacturer’s names or logos are permitted provided they do not exceed one and a half inches in height. Girls have the option of tennis dress or school uniform. “Doubles” team players shall wear colored tops that are of school color(s). Any visible undergarments that extend below the uniform shorts, dress, or skirt shall be the same color of the shorts, dress or skirt or represent school colors or, be all white or all black, or all gray. This dress code shall be enforced by the home coach or tournament director. Any clothing deemed to be “reflective” or “distractive” in nature shall not be permitted. Failure to comply will result in a player being denied the right to participate.

Note: Headgear/wraps which are worn for religious and/or medical reasons are permitted.

Note: Doubles players do not have to wear the exact same clothing as long as they are wearing school clothes and/or undergarments that fit the above requirements.

- 1.16) The home school coach shall serve as the referee, enforcing all OHSAA regulations as well as regulations expressed in the U.S.T.A. Handbook that have not been modified by the OHSAA.
- 1.17) School Representative: No team or individual participant will be permitted to compete in an interscholastic contest unless accompanied by a properly certified school coach or person authorized by the Board of Education or similar governing body. Teams or individuals unaccompanied by an authorized school representative shall be disqualified and removed from competition. The school's representative shall be present throughout the contest. Also, only an individual who is authorized by a Board of Education or similar governing body, or a member of the school team, may participate in interscholastic match/contest activities (e.g. warmups).
- 1.18) Any girl who has not participated on the girls' team in the fall, either in a scrimmage or match, may participate on the boys' team in the spring of that school year.
- 1.19) A team/individual that exceeds the regular season participation limitation (maximum number of contests permitted) or participates in a regular season contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests shall be removed from the OHSAA tournament.

2) Non-Interscholastic Participation

- 2.1) A member of an interscholastic tennis squad (any student who has played in a scrimmage or regular season/tournament match) sponsored by the Board of Education or similar governing body shall not participate in a non-interscholastic contest or in non-interscholastic competition as an individual or a member of a team in the sport of tennis during the school's season (Sports Regulation 7.2.2).

EXCEPTIONS:

- A student who has participated for the school team this season, may be granted permission to participate in **TWO non-interscholastic** contests/events as an individual and/or member of a doubles team, provided the participation does not violate any coach's, school, or school district/system policy.
- Each contest/event shall have a clearly defined start and end date not to exceed one week (7 days) for each respective contest/event.
- A waiver from the Executive Director's office is required **PRIOR** to participation in a non-interscholastic contest/event once a student has participated for the school team.
- This exception may not be used to grant school "teams" additional contests. Any student who participates in a non-interscholastic contest/event on or after the non-interscholastic date indicated below, without receiving an OHSAA approved waiver, shall not be eligible for the OHSAA postseason tournament. In addition to this denial of participation, other penalties may be prescribed.

- 2.2) Participants who have not competed for their school during the season:

A tennis athlete *who has not participated for the school in tennis* that season must cease non-interscholastic tennis competition six weeks (42 days) prior to the Monday of the week of the State Tournament in tennis *in order to be eligible for OHSAA Tournament competition*. For the 2023, 2024, 2025 girl's tennis season, the non-interscholastic date has been extended to Tuesday due to the Labor Day Holiday.

This non-interscholastic date(s) is indicated below. Thus, a student who wishes to join the school team "late" AND participate in the OHSAA state tournament must join the school team and stop non-interscholastic participation by the non-interscholastic date indicated below. Once a member of the school team (e.g. the student has participated in a school contest), the student is subject to tennis regulation 2.1. Any student who participates on or after the non-interscholastic date without receiving an OHSAA approved waiver, which must be approved prior to any non-interscholastic competition as indicated under 2.1 above, shall not be eligible to participate in the OHSAA tennis tournament. In addition to this denial of participation, other penalties may be prescribed.

Non-Interscholastic Dates:

- Girls: September 5, 2023
- Boys: April 8, 2024

Note: Non-interscholastic participation WILL ONLY be permitted on or after this date with a pre-approved waiver prior to the non-interscholastic event date.

Interscholastic tennis coaches may coach athletes from the school where employed outside the interscholastic season of the sport. No coach may require participation until the official start of the interscholastic season.

3) Penalties

The maximum penalty for violation of Sports Regulation 7.2.2 (participation with a non-interscholastic tennis squad or in non-interscholastic competition while a member of the school's interscholastic tennis squad) or any OHSAA regulations for any member of the school squad, EXCEPT a senior, may be ineligibility for the remainder of the interscholastic tennis season or the ensuing tennis season. For a senior, the maximum penalty may be ineligibility for the remainder of the school year.

A school team/individual that violates the out of state travel restriction (Bylaw 9-2-1) shall also be removed from the OHSAA postseason tournament.

4) Transfer Bylaw

While all questions regarding the transfer bylaw should be addressed to the appropriate school administrator, information regarding the transfer bylaw can be found on the OHSAA website at this link, <http://www.ohsaa.org/Eligibility/Transfer>. Note that students who transfer and do not meet an exception to the transfer bylaw, and who participated in high school tennis within 12 months of the transfer date, are ineligible for all regular season contests, and the OHSAA postseason tournament beginning with varsity regular season contest #12 in tennis.

5) Other OHSAA Bylaws and Sports Regulations

For information on Ejection for Unsporting Conduct, see *Ejection Policies for Coaches and Players* under Section 13 and 14 of the General Sports Regulations, which are also posted on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org). For information regarding OHSAA Out of State Travel Regulations, see Bylaw 9-2, which is also posted on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org). In addition, this information can also be found in the Tennis Coaches Manual that is located in the “Boys or Girls Tennis” section of the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org).

B. SPECIFIC REGULATIONS — GRADES 9-12**1) Coaching, tryouts and instruction may begin:**

Girls — **July 31, 2023** Boys — **March 4, 2024**

2) First Match:

Girls — **August 4, 2023** Boys — **March 22, 2024**

3) Deadline date for OHSAA Tournament:

Girls — **September 11, 2023** Boys — **April 15, 2024**

4) Tournament draw/seeding date:

Girls — **September 24, 2023** Boys — **April 28, 2024**

5) Coaching and Season end:

Girls — **Saturday after State Tournament – October 28, 2023**

Boys — **Saturday after State Tournament – June 1, 2024**

After the conclusion of the sectional tennis tournaments, participants who qualify for further OHSAA tournament competition may practice with tennis players from other schools who have similarly advanced.

Type of Contest		Counts as
Dual		1
League or Conference Tournament	Scheduled for one or more days	1
Invitational Tournament (Single or Double elimination, or Round Robin)	Scheduled for one day	1
	Scheduled for two days	2

Note: If a team participates in a round robin tournament, the tournament typically has a format in which a school team plays a different school team in a dual match format (three singles and two doubles matches). These matches may take place in a “Team A” vs “Team B” ... “Team A” vs “Team C” ... format **OR** in mixed/random order. As long as all other tournament rules are followed, a team's participation in this round robin tournament will only count as a **SINGLE** match towards the season limitation, **AND NOT** as multiple matches against their regular season contest limitation. It is assumed that there is but one league/conference tournament. For Invitational Tournaments, the number of contests applied to the contest limit is equal to the number of days the tournament is scheduled (2 day tournament = 2 matches towards contest limitation)

6) Scrimmages — Maximum of one prior to first contest**7) Regular season contests permitted:**

- a. Maximum of 22 contests for team and individual (plus the OTCA team tournament) or the equivalent calculated as follows:

Note: If three or more teams come together and play an invitational and/or conference tournament and these teams play head to head (i.e. one team against another team) it shall count as one contest for each head to head competition. It is assumed that there is but one league/conference tournament. For Invitational Tournaments, the number of contests is equal to the number of days the tournament is scheduled.

- b. A team is limited to four tournaments per season.
 - c. A player is limited to participation in a maximum of three matches per day or five pro sets (tournament only) per day. See Tennis Regulation 1.3 for tournaments that schedule both two out of three sets and pro sets.
- 8) **Rules — United States Tennis Association Association which may be modified in accordance with OHSAA Bylaws and Sports Regulations**
- 9) **Officials — No requirements**
- C. SPECIFIC REGULATIONS — Grades 7 & 8
 - 1) **Coaching, tryouts and instruction may begin:**
 - Girls — **July 31, 2023** Boys — **March 4, 2024**
 - 2) **First match:**
 - Girls — **August 4, 2023** Boys — **March 22, 2024**
 - 3) **Coaching and Season end:**
 - Girls — **October 28, 2023** Boys — **June 1, 2024**
 - 4) **Scrimmages — None permitted**
 - 5) **Regular season contests permitted**
 - a. Maximum of 16 contests for team and individual or the equivalent calculated as follows:
Note: If three or more teams come together and play an invitational and/or conference tournament and these teams play head to head (i.e. one team against another team) it shall count as one contest for each head to head competition. It is assumed that there is but one league/conference tournament. For Invitational Tournaments, the number of contests is equal to the number of days the tournament is scheduled.
 - b. A team is limited to four tournaments per season.
 - c. A player is limited to participation in a maximum of three matches per day or five pro sets (tournaments only) per day. See Tennis Regulation 1.3 for tournaments that schedule both two out of three sets and pro sets.

Type of Contest		Counts as
Dual		1
League or Conference Tournament	Scheduled for one or more days	1
Invitational Tournament (Single or Double elimination, or Round Robin)	Scheduled for one day	1
	Scheduled for two days	2

Note: If a team participates in a round robin tournament, the tournament typically has a format in which a school team plays a different school team in a dual match format (three singles and two doubles matches). These matches may take place in a “Team A” vs “Team B” ... “Team A” vs “Team C”... format **OR** in mixed/random order. As long as all other tournament rules are followed, a teams participation in this round robin tournament will only count as a **SINGLE** match towards the season limitation, **AND NOT** as multiple matches against their regular season contest limitation. It is assumed that there is but one league/conference tournament. For Invitational Tournaments, the number of contests applied to the contest limit is equal to the number of days the tournament is scheduled (2 day tournament = 2 matches towards contest limitation).

- 6) **Rules — United States Tennis Association which may be modified in accordance with OHSAA Bylaws and Sports Regulations**
- 7) **Officials — No requirements**

TENNIS CALENDARS

Girls Tennis	2023	2024	2025
Coaching and Tryouts Begin	7/31	8/1	8/1
Season Begins	8/4	8/9	8/8
Non-Interscholastic Date	9/5	9/3	9/2
Sectional	10/2-10/7#	9/30-10/5#	9/29-10/4#
District	10/9-10/14	10/7-10/12	10/6-10/11
State	10/19-10/20*	10/17-10/18*	10/16-10/17*
Season Ends	10/28	10/26	10/25
#Unless an earlier date is established by a District Athletic Board (no earlier than two days prior to the established date). *Dates subject to change.			

Boys Tennis	2024	2025	2026
Coaching and Tryouts Begin	3/4	3/10	3/9
Season Begins	3/22	3/28	3/27
Non-Interscholastic Date	4/8	4/14	4/13
Sectional	5/6-5/11#	5/12-5/17#	5/11-5/16#
District	5/13-5/18	5/19-5/24	5/18-5/29
State	5/23-5/24*	5/29-5/30*	5/28-5/29*
Season Ends	6/1	6/7	6/6
#Unless an earlier date is established by a District Athletic Board (no earlier than two days prior to the established date). *Dates subject to change.			