



## **VHSL TENNIS DIRECTOR'S GUIDELINES**

These Guidelines do not supercede any regulations in Section 82 of the VHSL Handbook.

### **TIME LIMITS**

1. Players are expected on the court at the designated time. A default may result for any player who is more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled match.
2. A player shall have up to 10 minutes warm-up with his/her opponent after the Director presents the game balls. Practice serves are part of the warm-up.
3. No rest periods during the match, except after split sets when players have a 10-minute break.
4. A player may participate in a maximum of 3 "traditional" (best of 3 w/tie-breaker) matches or four 8-game pro sets in one day. The minimum rest period between "traditional" matches is 45 minutes. The minimum rest period between 8-game pro set matches is 30 minutes.
5. In team matches there should be a 30-minute break between singles and doubles for two-set matches; and a 45-minute break for three-set matches.
6. No time-out allowance for natural loss in physical condition (fatigue, winded, etc.). Consideration may be given by the Director for accidental loss of physical ability (fall, running into fence, broken racket, etc.). The player may be given a maximum of 5 minutes to recover after medical assistance is provided. A bandage or racket must be brought to the player at the court; the player cannot leave the court for such purpose. If the injury continues and causes a delay, the Director will default the injured player.
7. PLEASE NOTE -- A player may request a suspension of play for a toilet visit one or more times during a match. The official in charge shall decide if it is a genuine toilet emergency. If the request is granted, it is not treated as a natural loss of physical condition. If the request is denied, play continues. No coaching is permitted during the suspension.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

1. All coaches and players are expected to follow the rules in Sections 27-13-1 through 27-13-13 and Section 82 of the VHSL Handbook and the USTA game rules.
2. Only participating players are allowed within the playing area during matches.
3. Interference during the match shall not be permitted. Interference includes a spectator, coach or parent talking to and/or signaling a competitor; sitting too close to the court and/or walking behind the courts to instruct the competitor; or reacting to play in an unsportsmanlike manner.
4. Coaching or instructing the competitor is not permitted while the match is in progress, except within the 90-second break during the exchange of courts and within the 10-minute break between sets. Players may not leave the court, except during the break between sets.
5. Coaching is permitted by the designated employed high school coach(es) and VHSL-approved volunteer coaches only.
6. Players shall adhere to the rule of continuous play during the match.
7. Team tennis matches in the State Tournament are considered completed when one team wins five matches.

**TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR** -- The Director shall direct the tournament in accordance with Section 82 of the VHSL Handbook and these Guidelines. The Director (in consultation with the Tournament Referee) shall have the authority to:

1. Decide all points of questions pertaining to the tournament.
2. Determine whether a player is stalling and by stalling is gaining an advantage. Director shall warn stalling player; and if stalling continues shall default the player.
3. Determine whether interference is occurring and remove offender from vicinity of court. If offender refuses compliance after a warning, offender shall be barred from the premises and the player shall be defaulted.
4. Default a match for unsportsmanlike conduct of team members, coaches and identifiable team spectators.
5. Suspend a match if the court becomes unplayable. A match shall not be suspended for faulty player equipment.
6. Default a player for failure to appear promptly for a scheduled match.
7. Penalize a player for misconduct as defined in 82-1-2 of the VHSL Handbook and the "USTA Point Penalty System For Tennis."

**TOURNAMENT REFEREE** -- An impartial referee should be hired to resolve questions which arise pertaining to the USTA Rules. USTA officials should be used whenever possible.

**SUBSTITUTION RULES** -- The purpose of the VHSL substitution rules is to prevent "stacking" team line-ups. These rules are not meant to prevent a player who has been injured/ill from returning to the line-up.

**Example 1** -- West High School's #1 singles, Mary Jones, is substituted for in a match held two days prior to the district tournament. West's coach substitutes her alternate at #6 singles and moves each player up one slot for the team line-up in the district tournament. West High School wins the team championship and advances to the regional tournament. May Mary Jones compete in the regional tournament?

**Ruling** -- Yes, if the district tournament director verifies to the regional tournament director in writing that Mary Jones did not play in team division during the district tournament but that during regular season she played #1 singles for West High School.

**Example 2** -- East High School is playing its last regular season home match and the coach would like to play his/her seniors, but is concerned about having to carry the last regular season lineup into the district or region tournament. Is there a way for a coach to play the seniors and still submit the team's regular ladder/lineup for the beginning of tournament play?

**Ruling** -- Yes. Prior to the start of the last home match, the East High School coach should exchange lineup cards with the opposing coach. The East lineup card should show all players in their proper positions in the ladder (e.g., best player is #1, 2<sup>nd</sup> best player is #2, etc.). This is the East High School lineup. The East H.S. coach may now substitute at any position provided the substitutions comply with VHSL substitution rules.

**TEAM LINE-UP** -- A school's official team line-up for the VHSL playoffs shall be the same line-up used for the last regular-season district contest, or, if a district tournament for team tennis is held, the same as entered in the district tournament. Refer to VHSL Handbook Section 82-3-1. Such line-up shall reflect the school's best player playing at #1, the second best player at #2, and so forth, with the weakest player in the #6 position. Any school that questions an opposing school's team line-up shall not allow the match to start until the line-up issue is resolved. (See example 2 above)

**DOUBLES TEAM** -- VHSL regulations permit a school to substitute one of the two doubles players in all district, regional and state doubles team playoffs. This means that a #1 doubles team which qualifies to the state doubles tournament and which has one of its players drop out (for whatever reason) may substitute any member of the school's tennis team to the position of the lost player. A school that loses both players of its doubles team would have to forfeit its place in the state doubles tournament. You can substitute one player, but never both players.

Unless there is a district ruling to the contrary, this interpretation further means that a school which used its #1 and #2 tennis players on separate doubles teams during the regular season may combine the #1 and #2 players to enter them in the district's doubles tournament. So it is possible for a school to have its team in the district team tournament with #1/#4 playing at first doubles, #2/#5 at second doubles; plus have #1/#2 playing together in the district doubles tournament.