

TENNIS INTERPRETATIONS

USTA RULE CHANGES FOR 2012

- USTA CODE 33--NEW** A player who claims a hindrance must stop play as soon as possible.
- USTA CODE 34**
- Singles players should not talk during play.
 - Talking between doubles partners when the ball is moving toward them is allowed.
 - Doubles players should not talk when the ball is moving toward their opponent's court.
 - When talking interferes with an opponents' ability to play a ball, it is a hindrance.
- USTA CODE 37**
- Players should avoid grunting.
 - Only an official may rule grunting to be a hindrance.

Corporate Logos

- QUESTION:** **Can the new Prince shirts with the extra "P" on the sleeve of the tennis shirt be allowed during competition?**
- INTERPRETATION:** Yes, the new WIAA regulation approved at the January 2010 WIAA Board of Control meeting now allows for two manufacturer's logos/trademarks on each piece of attire. Just as we have allowed the Under Armour tennis shirts and uniforms to be worn, the new Prince shirt will also be allowed along with other clothing that has two logos.

Out-of-Season Coaching Contact

- QUESTION:** **Can a school tennis team allow "Challenge Matches" to be held outside of the school season?**
- INTERPRETATION:** No, WIAA Rules at a Glance, I., 1. And 2., indicates: Further, Coaches may not:
1. Mandate athletes participate in non-school competition, or determine who may not participate in non-school activity.
 2. Require involvement in out-of-season activities as part of the requirements for making a school team, earning a school letter award, etc. Student-athletes are allowed to play tennis in the off-season against one another. However, play of this sort must be done for recreational purposes only. Using scores from out-of-season play by the coaching staff and then having the coaching staff adjust the "Challenge Ladder" can only be viewed as Coaching Contact. In addition, use of the "Challenge Ladder" to identify student-athlete's positions during out-of-season periods violates the regulations found above.

- QUESTION:** **I am a varsity coach and have just gotten a job at a local racket club. When can I have contact with my players outside of the season?**
- INTERPRETATION:** WIAA Rules of Eligibility, Article VI--Nonschool Participation, Section 2--Out-of-Season, A., 3) The person who will be coaching a student in the following

school season shall not be permitted to coach that student other than during the designated school season and Board of Control approved coach contact days in the summertime. Board of Control approved summertime coach contact is as follows:

- c. Coaching contact beyond the five unrestricted days is permitted to continue throughout the summertime (when school is not in session) in the sports of baseball, cross country, golf, gymnastics, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field and wrestling, in accordance with the Bylaws and as described in Section 2—A and C-1) of this section.

The fundamental issue of this rule is that if a coach works with varsity (Varsity, Varsity Reserve, JVa, JVb, JVC, sophomore) athletes during the school year, out-of-season, they are NOT able to coach varsity level programs during the WIAA regular or tournament series seasons. If freshmen have been instructed by a coach during the school year, out-of-season, that coach is not able to work with the freshmen team.

QUESTION:

A coach from my area and I were having a discussion about out of season contact rules. He was asking if it was OK for a coach to play with (on the same tennis court) but not coach his players. I told him that it was not allowed in any way during the school year (non-summer). However, I could not find a specific statement of that in the WIAA bylaws or Sport Regulation book. I'm pretty sure I am right about there being no contact of any form during the school year and outside of the season. Am I right? Where can I look to find the written statement of this rule?

INTERPRETATION:

First, you are correct, coaches are not allowed to have contact outside of the season of play, during the school year in tennis. The best language for this can be found in WIAA Rules at a Glance.

Below I have provided an additional interpretation from Eligibility Interpretations found on the WIAA website:

Though WIAA rules and interpretations prohibit a coach from competing on the same team with their student athletes the interpretation does not prevent a student or students from being on a team in a bona fide league and/or coaches from being on another/different team and those two teams competing against each other in a structured nonschool league. Coaches may not compete "with" their students/on the same team, but rules do not prevent a coach - as a member of an organized league/team from competing "against" another league team - even though the other team may have a student athlete/athletes on its roster. This interpretation does not apply to pick-up games and "open gyms."

In tennis, this means that if a coach plays in a bona fide tennis league and players from his/her team are also in this league and they have to play each other in singles or doubles, the coach can compete against student-athletes he/she will be coaching in the upcoming season. Unless a player is a child of the coach, this is the only situation where a student-athlete can have contact with a coach. In this situation, a coach could be on the other side of the court competing against a student-athlete he/she will be coaching in the upcoming season.

QUESTION:

I just heard that there is a rule allowing coaches to participate with their athletes in out of season "open gyms". I understand no "coaching" contact is still the rule but specifically as it relates to tennis, can I play with one of my

players out of season? This has never come up before, but I would like a clarification before it does.

INTERPRETATION:

In order to be thorough and clear, there are several possible responses to the question as posed:

In the summer, yes! Tennis coaches are still permitted to have coach contact in the summertime in non-school settings above and beyond the 5 unrestricted contact days.

During the school year – outside the school season – in a local tournament, or other non-school event, e.g., Outside of a school sponsored Open Gym environment – **NO!**

In school sponsored /Open Gyms, coaches are now able to recreate along with students. Given that determination as made by the Board of Control and only from that perspective, the response to the question could be - ‘yes’.

The new interpretation does not alter or affect any other interpretation relating to coaching contact – it only addresses Open Gyms.

QUESTION:

Can a coach or parent feed balls into a ball machine during a Tennis Open Gym?

INTERPRETATION:

No, WIAA Open Gym regulations as found in WIAA Rules At A Glance, D., indicate there is no instruction during the open gym by a coach or anyone else. Machines can be put out and set up by a coach or supervisor; however, students are the only ones allowed to feed balls.

QUESTION:

Can a coach teach stretching exercises to tennis players during a Tennis Open Gym? Isn't this the same thing as teaching stretching in a weightroom setting?

INTERPRETATION:

No, there is no other way to view teaching of stretching exercises during an open gym than as providing instruction during an open gym and having coaching contact.

A weight room workout is allowed, but not during an "open gym" session. In this case, instruction of stretching exercises must be considered to be coaching contact/instruction during an "open gym." If a coach wants to teach stretching or use of weights, that needs to be scheduled through the school administration with a weightroom coordinator/stretching specialist or by the coach once the season begins. Some coaches do get hired/approved as weightroom coordinators--these coaches are allowed to have contact for weight training purposes. Prior to providing any instruction, always best to check if it is OK to provide--especially when open gyms are off of school premises.

QUESTION:

Our tennis booster club wants to hold a mixer for members of both teams and their parents on Mar. 23. The plan is to meet at an indoor club, organize 20-minute rotations of mixed doubles on 4 courts, provide a potluck meal, and draw tickets for some small door prizes (on the order of a can of balls, wristband, etc.) A small registration fee will be charged to defray cost of court time, soft drinks, etc. Coaches are invited, but will not play with team members, provide coaching/instruction, or be on-court at any time. (This is envisioned purely as a team-building, social event.) As described, does this event meet WIAA regs. for out-of-season contact and non-compensation of student athletes? It sounded okay to me, but I wanted to check with you to be sure. Please advise.

INTERPRETATION: An event as described above is best scheduled after the regular season has begun. There is no other way to view coaches associating with parents and students at a tennis club than as out-of-season coaching contact.

The best way to remedy this event is to not have the coaches attend this year and in future years schedule the event after the season has begun.

Student-athletes can accept prizes so long as they are distributed through a random drawing. They may not accept like those listed for performance.

QUESTION: **Can a student-athlete compete against their coach in a tennis match?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, so long as the coach does not provide instruction, a student-athlete is able to compete against their coach. Though WIAA rules and interpretations prohibit a coach from competing on the same team with their student athletes the interpretation does not prevent a student or students from being on a team in a bona fide league and/or coaches from being on another/different team and those two teams competing against each other in a structured non-school league. Coaches may not compete "with" their students/on the same team, but rules do not prevent a coach - as a member of an organized league/team from competing "against" another league team - even though the other team may have a student athlete/athletes on its roster.

QUESTION: **Can a student-athlete compete with their coach in a doubles match during the school year outside of the tennis season?**

INTERPRETATION: No, playing with a coach in a doubles match can only be viewed as instructional and jeopardizes the eligibility of the student-athlete (see above).

QUESTION: **Can a student-athlete compete with a coach who will be coaching another school's tennis team?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, so long as the coach he/she is partnering with will not be coaching this student-athlete or that players school team during the next school season, they can be allowed to partner with this student-athlete.

Guest Speakers/Instructors

QUESTION: **Can a community member come in and coach/instruct for more than one day?**

INTERPRETATION: School tennis teams can have a "special guest" provide instruction/advice/clinic for one day and one day only. Any instructor, clinician, volunteer, etc. who provides instruction/advice/clinics for more than one day is a coach. Once instruction takes place for more than one day, that individual is no longer allowed to have contact with high school tennis players outside of the regular season and allowed summer period.

Coaching Contact During a Meet

QUESTION: **During a dual meet that involves both a varsity and a JV competition, can two coaches instruct the varsity team and two coaches instruct the JV team?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, following discussions of the WIAA Tennis Coaches Advisory Committee meeting in November of 2005, the Committee unanimously approved of allowing two coaches per level to be used. This allows two coaches to instruct a varsity

team and two coaches to instruct JV teams when varsity and JV competitions are taking place at the same time.

Coaches should indicate to opposing schools who the designated coaches will be for each team. It is possible for the coaches designated for the varsity competition to be the same coaches designated to provide instruction to the JV players.

The designated coaches must be under contract with the school as tennis coaches. Improper use of the coaching privilege could result in dismissal of those coaching privileges and/or disqualification of the player. Parents are not allowed to coach while players are on the court.

QUESTION: **Can JV players now accept verbal and hand signal advice from their school's designated coach?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, WIAA Tennis Season Regulations, 15, c., (4), page 37, indicates, "JV players while playing in a JV competition may accept verbal and hand signal advice from their school's designated coach only. The designated coach is allowed on the court as identified by current rules."

Maximum Allowed Number of Meets

QUESTION: **Does a conference tournament count as one of the 14 maximum allowed meets during the WIAA tennis regular season?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, WIAA Tennis Season Regulations, 6., b., page 36, "Conference tournament must be included in count of regular season maximums."

In addition, WIAA Tennis Season Regulations, 6., f., page 36, further indicates, "Conference meets count as one multiple-school meet toward a school's maximum allowed meets."

Tennis coaches are encouraged to send a copy of their 2006 tennis schedule to Tom Shafranski, WIAA Assistant Director and Tennis Liaison for review.

QUESTION: **We have a tennis quad in May and one school has Prom on that date. If they come up Friday and they play their first tournament round against us...and then two the next morning and then book out for Prom...can we still count Friday's contest as part of the tournament?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, WIAA Spring Season Regulations, 6., d., indicates: "No meet may continue more than two days. A two-day conference, invitational or multi-dual meet counts as one meet."

This regulation allows tennis teams to participate in two-day meets. If a school team has to leave a meet prior to completion, this meet continues to count as one of six allowed multi-meets for each of the school teams involved in the meet.

QUESTION: **Can one school tennis team identify a multi-dual meet as a "dual" meet if they only play one school team while the other teams play multi-duals on the same day?**

INTERPRETATION: No, in scheduling meets, dual meets must be counted as dual meets by both school teams and multi-dual meets must be counted as one of the six multi-dual meets for all school teams involved.

Since WIAA tennis teams cannot play in more than one meet per day, the way to schedule this is to schedule the multi-dual one day and then schedule the dual meet the next day when possible.

QUESTION: School A is starting a boys' tennis team. They would like to play School B's JV team in a match. If School A counts this as a varsity match, does School B have to also even if we are playing our JV players?

INTERPRETATION: This is allowable and needs to be placed on the School B's JV schedule as one of their 14 allowed JV meets. Just as a friendly reminder, the key for these situations is student-athletes that play both varsity and JV. Keep in mind they are only allowed to compete in a total of 14 meets with six being multi-school meets.

QUESTION: We had a team cancel out of a large invitational at the last minute. Can we place our JV's in the tournament along with our varsity; however, we will not count any of the JV scores towards a team score or towards their individual record?

INTERPRETATION: WIAA Season Regulations, Maximum Allowed Meets, b., "A school may enter only one varsity meet per day."

The approval of this regulation prevents this type of "quick-fix" to tournament cancellations from being allowed. No, WIAA tennis teams may not play both their varsity and JV or any other varsity level program in the same meet.

Eligibility

QUESTION: Can a female foreign exchange student who is a junior at our high school hit with the boy's tennis team this spring?

INTERPRETATION: No, female tennis players are not allowed to practice and/or compete with boy's tennis teams in the spring of the year. Similarly, boys are not able to practice or compete with girl's teams during the fall season. This is due to the definition of these seasons as found in the WIAA Season Regulations and the school cannot make opportunities available outside the season. Swimming, soccer and golf are other sports with split seasons where these rules apply.

QUESTION: Can a female who is a senior act as our manager for the tennis team and practice with our boy's tennis team?

INTERPRETATION: One exception to the rule identified above is that WIAA Rules do not prevent is a senior girl who has completed her girl's tennis eligibility from hitting with the boy's team.

A senior girl can be a team manager for the boy's tennis team in the spring. In most cases, girls who are team managers are only allowed to provide water and towels for practice. In this case, since this young lady is a senior and her high school eligibility has ended, she does have more latitude.

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QUESTION: Can a tennis player provide lessons on their own to a young child in our community?

INTERPRETATION: No, WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, Rules of Eligibility, Article IV — Amateur Status, Section 1, 2), a., "A student may be employed (but not self-employed) on a part-time basis as an instructor on the playgrounds, game official, lifeguard, etc. A

country club can also employ a student to be an instructor. The fundamental issue here is that the student-athlete is not allowed to be self-employed.

QUESTION: **I run my own summer tennis camps as a tennis coach and would like to employ one of my players as my assistant. Is this legal?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, using the language found above, employing a player to assist a coach during the summer period is allowable. This is allowed as long as the player is an employee of the coach's business and coaching contact does not take place outside of the season during the school year.

QUESTION: **I have a student who attends School A, she was wondering if she could play tennis in School B because we don't have tennis and they do. I told her no, can only play in sports in the school you attend unless it's a coop with another school. Am I correct?**

INTERPRETATION: You are correct, she is only allowed to practice and compete with school teams that are provided at the school where she is a full-time student.

QUESTION: **Can wheelchair athletes compete in Tennis vs. "able-bodied" athletes?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, USTA does have regulations that we are able to use allowing wheelchair athletes to compete with and against able-bodied athletes. Normally, a wheel chair athlete will have been involved in a tennis program that teaches the techniques and skills of the game for them. In addition, there is normally an instructor in the area that can be utilized to assist wheelchair tennis athletes.

Scrimmages

QUESTION: **I have been asked to play the Barrington, Illinois Team. I told her it would be a scrimmage for us and she said it would have to be in their schedule as a meet. Does the same rule apply here? Does Barrington, Il., have to agree to a scrimmage? Does not sound like they have those?**

INTERPRETATION: This scrimmage issue has come up in the past and the simple answer is-- "Yes," both school teams involved, especially when the other school team is from another state, does have to be able to count it as a "scrimmage" and not one of their 14 allowed contests. There are state associations that do not allow scrimmages due to the numerous concerns and issues scrimmages can cause.

If you decide to compete against them, you will have to count it as one of your 14 allowed meets.