



San Diego County Tennis Umpires Association



Roving Umpire Procedures

The Roving duties are basically covered in Friend At Court.

Assignments

The Referee or Field Referee will advise the Roving Umpire of the details of that tournament, what is, the scoring system, ball use, ball change, time of warm-up, rest periods and number of sets. Ideally a Roving Umpire should be assigned to no more than 6 courts.

Equipment

The Roving Umpire must have:

- Tape measure
- Stop watch
- Pencils
- Note pads
- Coin to toss
- Extra balls, new and used
- Visor
- Sunscreen
- Water
- Sweater or vest
- Lunch (if not provided)

Pre-Match

For the first match of the day, arrive at court site at least 30 minutes early to set up courts. Check net height (36 inches). Set singles sticks as needed (36 inches from outside edge of the singles sideline to center of stick). Place sticks on opposite sides of net to offer maximum support. Time permitting, measure the nets at reasonable intervals during your shift, especially before each match.

Time warm-ups

See that all matches are started promptly and are kept moving. Note when players arrive on court. Enforce the time warm-up. Announce "two minutes", "one minute", and "time". Use judgment if not position to time the entire warm-up. For example: you have been occupied with one court and notice one of your other matches has been warming up 4-5 minutes and the players have not started hitting serves. It is better to advise the players to take their serves ("two minutes") than to demand they start play immediately. Be polite but firm, to get the match started.

Player Briefing

The Tournament Desk should advise the players that they are playing under "The Code", the Point Penalty System (PPS) is under effect, and that footfaults will be called by the Roving Umpire. Players should be advised that Roving Umpires are available for assistance and will be moving from court to court.

Footfaults

Roving Umpires must know the definition of a footfault (Rule 18). Do not warn players that they are footfaulting. During warm-ups, observe players to see if any have a tendency to footfault. When you observe footfaulting from a distance, you must approach the court so you can make a closer observation, and if a footfault occurs, call it. Announce "footfault" loud enough to be heard at both ends of the court. After calling the footfault, remain at that court to observe other servers.

Settling Score Disputes

Listen to both sides. (1) Try to reconstruct the score and get the players to agree. (2) Replay points or games the players cannot agree on, counting all points and games agreed on. (3) Resume at a mutually-agreed upon score; (4) Flip a coin to make the decision.

Settling Other Disputes

If players are disputing a call, be sure the correct player made the call by "The Code". If so, the call stands. Remember, it is a "let" when a player corrects a call and keeps the ball in play. If you feel this match is a problem, remain at the net or close by and watch several games.

Note: Avoid taking over a match as a Solo Chair Umpire unless you have a replacement as a Roving Umpire. The Referee should be advised if you do become a Solo Chair. Standing at the net will often be sufficient to settle most problem courts. When the match is back on track, go back to observing all of your courts equally.

Overrules

A Roving Umpire may overrule a player's call only when in direct observation of the court. Never ask a spectator for an opinion.

Point Penalty System

Code Violations must be handled quickly. Stop play and go directly to the player involved. Give the Code Violation to the player. Determine the new score and stand by to see that players resume play in the correct position.

Leaving Court

Player may not leave the court during a match without permission, except to find an official. The Roving Umpire may give the permission to leave the court for a reasonable time to replace or repair clothing, shoes, or equipment, but not a racquet. A player leaving the court without an official's permission is subject to the PPS. Players may be allowed a toilet visit. If possible, have an official accompany the player to the restroom to insure that no coaching occurs.

Rest Periods

When a third set is necessary, there may be a 10 minute rest period. Rest periods must be strictly enforced. Start your watch as soon as the second set ends. Penalties for lateness after the rest period are: Up to 5 minutes, one game, more than 5 minutes, default.

Girls' and Boys' 12, 14, 16 Mandatory 10 minute rest period

Girls' and Boys' 18 No test

Medical Time-Out

Should you see an on-court accident occur, or see a match stopped for what might be a medical condition, immediately start your stopwatch. In fairness to the other player, there is a 15-minute limit to the amount of time for stoppage from the time you start your stopwatch. The Referee must be advised immediately. The responsibility for the treatment time and any Code Violations is with the Referee. Any bleeding entitles the player to a Bleeding Time-Out. (See Medical Time-Out Procedures for more info.)

Remember

- You are responsible for all courts assigned to you. Move around to observe all of them.
- Be alert for problem players and problem matches. If you see players in a discussion instead of playing, go to the court to be available. Should the discussion continue beyond a reasonable time, take the initiative. Go on court to help resolve the issue.
- Interfere with play as little as possible, but be there when you are needed.
- Know "The Rules of Tennis" and "The Code".
- Apply the rules fairly to all players.

Ten Tips on Roving

1. Get specific instructions from your referee (warm-up times, ball changes, etc.) and carry a stopwatch, scorecards, rulebook, draw sheet, match schedule, pencils and extra balls.
2. Make yourself a visible presence on your courts. Don't spy from the stands or from behind a windscreen. Get in a position where you can hear and see everything on your assigned courts, near the net post when possible.
3. When briefing the players, keep it "brief" and to the point. Discuss only relevant rules and procedures, such as under The Code.
4. Anticipate problems and stand near the court. Your presence can defuse potential problems. Notify the referee of situations that may keep you on one particular court. Communicate situations with other rovers when rotating (code violations, footfaults, slow play, questionable calls).
5. Beware of casual overrules. If you see a call that is blatantly wrong, you should overrule. When making overrules, calling footfaults or giving code violations, be courtside in plain view and watch both players from the best position to make a call. Be 100% sure.
6. Know the rules that govern the event and apply them fairly. Keep in mind the level of the event you are officiating when resolving issues.
7. Don't be officious. Interfere with play as little as possible. Allow players reasonable time to sort out a situation. Be available to take charge when you see no resolution.
8. Don't call a shot for a player from off court, even if asked. Confirm close calls quickly. Remind players that they make the calls.
9. While roving, don't fraternize with players, coaches, parents or spectators. It's unprofessional and you might do something on court.
10. Look sharp and be alert. Move briskly between your assigned courts.

Tips on what NOT to do when Roving

1. Do NOT shorten the warm up.
2. Do NOT walk across the court while ball in play.
3. Do NOT call across courts in play, and do NOT talk loudly next to a match court.
4. Do NOT issue penalties without using each step, 1-3 of PPS: Point, Game, Default.
5. Do NOT forget to issue a "caution" for borderline behavior.
6. Do NOT forget to stay to watch for footfaults on second player when you have called them on the first player.
7. Do NOT make negative remarks of any kind in the presence of players, parents, relatives or spectators.