

2023 Ball Crew Manual

UK's Hillary Boone Tennis Center

July 30th – August 6th

Warmups & Beginning of a Match

Ball Crew should be near the fence of their court during warmup. You should be paying attention and be ready to head to your position when the players sit down.

Ball Changes

Ball changes (new Balls) occur after the first 7 games of a match (since it includes warm-up), and every 9 games thereafter. The chair umpire or the linesperson will remind the ball crew when a change will occur, but each ball crew should already be expecting this. When announced, the net persons are responsible for promptly collecting all of the used balls and taking them to the lines person who will be under or near the umpire's chair.

Baseline Position

Stand in the corner, well outside of the court sidelines. Stand as close to the back fence as possible, but DO NOT lean against it or the post. Stand straight and motionless with your feet slightly apart FACING FORWARD. Keep your hands behind your back, holding any balls not in use during the point. Never bounce a ball.

Baseline Duties on Server's Side

Retrieve balls landing in the baseline area. The net person will retrieve balls that land in the net and roll them in your direction. You will receive balls from the net person at the end of each point. You are to supply the server with balls, using a

gentle overhead throw with ONE bounce. We recommend you practice this at home.

Each baseliner should be aware of how many balls the other person has. You should have at least 2 or 3, but no more than 3 or 4 balls at a time. It all depends on the match. If one has too many balls, they should carefully roll a couple of balls to the other baseliner, but DO NOT roll near the player or when the player steps up to serve. All movement STOPS when players are ready to play.

Watch the server carefully and give him/her a ball only when he/she indicates he/she wants one. Take note of each player's particular signal for requesting a ball and whether he/she wants only one ball, or more, before each serve. Do not rush the server.

Ball Crew is not to handle player's towels, drinks, etc.

If the server does not want a particular ball, he/she will send it back to you. When this happens, simply throw him/her a DIFFERENT ball. Most players do not want the ball they just used. As you catch or release a ball that has just been used, switch it with a different ball if you have one. Most players will inspect the balls and send back the one they don't want. Some players will only take the balls from one baseliner or one side.

At the conclusion of a point and before the next point begins, you should hold one ball in your throwing hand, ready to toss it to the server when they request it. If you don't have any balls, hold your hands up showing that they are empty.

Baseline Duties on Receiver's Side

Retrieve all balls landing in the baseline area. If the first serve is called long, retrieve all the balls ASAP (as fast as you can), returning to your original position, holding the ball until the end of the point. If you have a ball, once the point is over, roll the ball parallel to the side of the court to the net person, who will receive the ball and roll it to the ball person (baseline) at the server's end.

Do Not attempt to catch the serve of an out ball until it has hit the fence.

Baseliners hold umbrellas for players providing them shade from the sun during changeovers. Stand still behind the players, making sure to cover the player's head and body. Open umbrellas slowly, with care, paying close attention to those around you to avoid poking anyone.

Net Person

While standing, remain motionless, ready to take off instantly to retrieve balls falling into the net. Although you need to be continually aware of the balls during each point, keep your head still and follow the ball by moving your eyes only. Stand outside the court sidelines, beyond the net posts.

ONLY THE NET PERSON, ON THE SIDE OF THE BALL will run in between first and second serve, but if a ball is **clearly** closer to the net person on the other side of the net, they may retrieve it. After the point is over, make sure that one net person is on each side of the net, opposite each other. DO NOT rock while in standing position. Never touch the net.

Run quickly and quietly across the court and pick up any balls landing in or around the net. After picking up the balls, keep running to the opposite side, unless the ball landed LESS than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the way across the court. In this case, return to your original position. Hold the balls until the conclusion of the point.

First service faults that hit the net and roll towards the baseline are the responsibility of the net person. If a ball is near the baseline by the time you get it, you should retrieve it and run to a baseline position. At the end of a point, hand off the balls to the baseliner you are standing next to and quickly return to your position.

Be aware of the location of the balls at all times and the need to get them to the servers' end as quickly as possible.

During changeovers, net persons must stand in the alley facing the players who are resting in case they need a drink or a towel.

General Rules During a Match

Never allow a loose ball to remain on the court in between serves or after the conclusion of a point. The most frequent mistake occurs when a ball stops near the service line and no one goes after it. It is better for two ball crew to go after it than none.

Except for retrieving first service faults, never touch a ball until the point is over.

Roll balls low, as close to the ground as possible, without any bounce, almost like bowling- Practice makes perfect!

Except Tie breaks- when players change sides, balls stay. When players stay, balls change sides.

If a ball bounces out of the court and into the stands, make eye contact with a nearby spectator to get the ball at the end of the point and have it thrown back to you. They CANNOT keep it. All 6 balls must stay in play for the allotted time. All balls are given to the lineperson at the conclusion of a match.

Do not move once the server steps up to the baseline and ready to serve OR when the point is going on.

You only have time to get a drink for yourself and tend to the players at changeover. If the chair umpire needs something, you should get it for them.

Never become involved in the line disputes. Do not give your opinion about the line calls.

Never applaud, use facial expressions or react in any other way to match play.

Never bounce or juggle balls at any time before or during a match.

Never touch a ball in play until it has bounced twice.

Do not talk while waiting to go on court. You may NOT chew gum on the court. If you have a hat or a visor it should be worn facing forward AT ALL TIMES. Do not

roll the sleeves on your uniform or the top of your shorts (girls). You may not wear any visible shirt underneath your uniform.

If you are feeling shaky, faint or sick, tell the umpire or linesperson and leave the court as soon as possible. We will get a replacement to the court. The other 5 ball crew will be fine until the replacement arrives.

You must know your court assignment and be early for your rotation.

When the umpire calls time, you must return to your position immediately.

The umpires are very helpful. Make sure to keep an eye out as they might suggest something or want you to grab something for them.

Tiebreaker Procedures

Men's and Women's doubles use no-ad scoring (except for tiebreakers).

The regulation tie-breaker is called a 7-point tie-breaker (The first player to reach seven points by a margin of two points wins the tie-breaker).

The net person plays a key role in maintaining the speedy interchanging of balls during a tie breaker.

At the start of each tie-break, there should be 4 balls on the server's end and two balls at the net, with each net man holding one ball for the entire tie-breaker, which they roll first before retrieving the other balls on switches. This system speeds up relay of the balls to the baseline.

At the beginning of the tiebreak, the first server serves one point; next, his opponent serves two points; thereafter, each player serves alternately for two consecutive points. Players switch ends every 6 points. Remember that in each series of six points the pattern of serving is 1-2-2-1.

During tie-breakers, unlike normal games, when the server switches sides the balls switch with them.

You must understand the scoring and side changes in a tie-breaker to move the balls quickly to the right spot so that play is continuous.

Super tie-breakers are now used instead of a 3rd set in men's and women's doubles. The winner of a super tie-breaker is the first one to 10 points (must win by 2).

Other Reminders

You should let Johan or Vance know when you arrive and leave.

No one is allowed to go inside the Hillary Boone Tennis Center unless told by Johan or Vance.

You may leave your bag in the ball crew tent. There will be water, Gatorade, snacks, lunch and dinner.

You are not allowed to have your cell phone on court, it must stay in your bag in the ball crew tent turned off or on silent.

You are highly visible representative of the tournament; inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Running, rudeness, childish behavior, bad language, or incomplete uniform will not be tolerated.

Your goal is to get chosen to work the night matches and the finals of the tournament.