

Wheelchair Tennis Tips

USTA MIDWEST

- The only different rule in wheelchair tennis is that the wheelchair players are allowed two bounces compared to one by the able-bodied player.
- Wheelchair tennis is the fastest-growing wheelchair sport and is the only competitive sport where players can compete with and against able-bodied players.
- One up/One down or otherwise called run/roll tennis (one able-bodied player and one player in a wheelchair) allows for integration, family and friends to play together and levels the playing field. Provides both recreational and competitive opportunities for all levels of players to enjoy the game.
- Players can compete for National and International rankings, and advanced players can compete on USTA league tennis teams, high school tennis teams, mixers, world team cups and Paralympics.
- Wheelchair tennis is played at the four major Grand Slam events (Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon and US Open) inviting the top wheelchair players in the world to participate in these events showcasing the elite world-class players.
- There are 173 tournaments held in over 45 countries around the world that are a part of the UNIQLO Wheelchair tennis tour.
- There are four USTA-sanctioned tournaments in the Midwest (Grand Rapids MI, Chicago IL, Michigan State in East Lansing MI and Indianapolis IN).
- There are up to 14 different targeted areas of wheelchair tennis programs in the Midwest throughout the five states.
- There are three programs in the state of Michigan (Grand Rapids, Lansing and Ann Arbor)
- USTA Midwest section has a wheelchair tennis committee that advocates for growth, helps promote wheelchair tennis, offers grants for individuals and programs and assists with program development and growth and offers assistance to tournament directors.
- High school athletes can compete on their HS teams playing wheelchair tennis in either singles or doubles. The wheelchair player gets two bounces and their partner still gets only one.
- The average new tennis sportschair will cost approximately \$2,500; some insurance companies will assist with this and some won't.
- Keywords to use: push (not run), roll (not walk), mobility patterns, get to know the person first, people first language, they are an individual who happens to use a chair, never ask them about their disability or reason for using a chair until they open up to you and you establish boundaries. Some people don't like to talk about it and you have to respect it.
- When coaching you can ask them questions like what level injury they are, or ask them what they can do? (lean forward, lean to the side, pull themselves up, do they have abs/core strength or not, etc ...) which will help you determine what they can do.
- Keywords to avoid: wheelchair-bound (players are not bound to their chairs), disabled, so what happened to you, get to know the person first, let them tell you when they are ready, they are not crippled they are not handicapped players ... they are simply individuals who happen to use a chair to play tennis, individuals who are athletes who like to compete just like everyone else.

For information on how you can get involved, please contact:

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