



# North Suburban Tennis Association Code of Conduct

(based on Tennis Australia Code of Behaviour)

## Purpose of the Code

The purpose of the Code of Conduct to preserve the reputation of the North Suburban Tennis Association (NSTA), and promote appropriate behaviour during all of its activities including competition matches. This Code of Conduct also provides a framework for dealing with breaches of the Code of Conduct in a consistent manner.

## Scope of the Code

The Code of Conduct applies to all who have responsibility for, participate or attend NSTA activities, including meetings; the conduct of communications for the NSTA's business and Saturday afternoon competition matches, including finals matches.

## Players Code of Conduct

As a player, you should:

- ◆ Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit.
- ◆ Acknowledge all good plays whether they are made by your team or the opposition.
- ◆ Treat all participants as you like to be treated. Do not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor or spectator.
- ◆ Cooperate with your team mates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.
- ◆ Control your temper. Verbal abuse or sledging of officials, spectators and other players, and deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent are not acceptable or permitted behaviours.
- ◆ Always respect the use of the facilities and equipment provided, particularly when visiting other clubs.
- ◆ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

## Spectators Code of Conduct

As a spectator, you should:

- ◆ Acknowledge good performance and efforts from all individuals and teams, congratulating them regardless of the game's outcome.
- ◆ Where necessary, encourage players to play according to the rules and support officials and other efforts to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence.
- ◆ Actively support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- ◆ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

## Code of Conduct violations

The following violations amount to breaches of the Code of Conduct.

### 1. Physical abuse

An official, player or spectator must not physically abuse any official, opponent, spectator, or other person at an NSTA meeting or function, or within a venue being used for NSTA competition. For the purposes of this rule physical abuse is the unauthorised touching of an official, opponent, spectator or another person. In certain circumstances the matter may also be referred to the police for further investigation and subsequent possible action.

## **2. Verbal abuse**

Officials, players or spectators shall not at any time directly or indirectly verbally abuse any official, opponent, spectator, or other person at an NSTA meeting, function or competition venue, or in the conduct of NSTA business. For the purpose of this rule, verbal abuse is using words to intimidate, humiliate, harass, insult, embarrass or severely criticise another person. It is treating a person, their opinions, life choices, culture, physical attributes, accomplishments or rights to personal privacy and space with disrespect and disdain..

## **3. Audible or visible obscenity**

Officials, players or spectators shall not use an audible or visible obscenity at an NSTA meeting, function or competition venue, or in the conduct of NSTA business. For the purposes of this rule, obscenity is defined as the use of words, actions or gestures commonly known and understood to be profane and are clearly directed at other players, court officials or spectators.

## **4. Unsportsmanlike conduct**

An official or player shall not during any competition engage in conduct that damages the image and integrity of tennis. Players shall at all times conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and give due regard to the authority of officials and the rights of opponents, spectators and others. For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as any misconduct by a player, prior to, during or subsequent to a match that is clearly abusive or detrimental to the sport, including, but not limited to blatant cheating, but does not specifically fall within other violation categories.

## **5. Unreasonable delays or failure to complete a match**

A player must not unreasonably delay a match. A player shall commence the match after the expiration of the established warm-up period. Thereafter, play shall be continuous as provided in the Rules of Tennis and a player shall not unreasonably delay a match for any cause other than a legitimate medical condition. Failure to return to the court within the specified injury period will result in the player forfeiting the set. A player must complete a match in progress unless he/she is reasonably unable to do so.

## **6. Abuse of racquets, balls or equipment**

A player or any other person at an NSTA competition venue shall not violently or with anger, hit, kick or throw a racquet, ball or other item of equipment, or in any way unreasonably interfere with any court fixtures and equipment. For the purposes of this rule abuse of racquets, balls or equipment is defined as intentionally and violently throwing, destroying or damaging racquets, balls or equipment or intentionally and violently hitting the net, court, umpire's chair or other fixture during or after a match out of anger or frustration. Intentionally hitting a ball out of the enclosure of the court, hitting a ball dangerously or recklessly within the court or hitting a ball with negligent disregard of the consequences is also counted as abuse under this violation.

## **7. Coaching**

A player must not receive any type of coaching from any person while a match is in progress, except where special provision is made for a tournament/competition. Communication of any kind, audible or visible between a player and any other person may be construed as coaching. Coaching shall be permitted where there is an off-court break between sets or during interruptions to play caused by bad weather where players leave the court. Coaching is not permitted during a toilet break.

## **8. Interference**

A spectator must not disrupt or interfere with the proper conduct of a match, including through excessive cheering or any other unsportsmanlike conduct as defined above, whether directed towards a player, another spectator or an official.

## **9. Failure to comply with direction of home club official or captain**

Where a match is disrupted or interfered with by the action of a spectator who is part of a player's entourage (i.e. parent, family member, coach or friend) a home team official or the home team captain shall first warn the player and the interfering spectator, including advising that any further interference by the spectator may result in the spectator being required to leave the venue. Should further interference occur, the host club official or home team captain may direct the spectator to leave the venue and may report the circumstances that led to the person being directed to leave as a breach of the Code of Conduct. Failure to leave the venue when directed to do so, also constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct.

## **Reporting of breaches of the Code of Conduct**

Alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct can only be reported to the NSTA by a Delegate or the Secretary of an affiliated Club.

Reports must be made in writing to the Secretary of the Association using the Code of Conduct Complaint form. The report must clearly identify any players or spectators alleged to have breached the Code.

The Delegate from the Club of the player /spectator against whom the complaint has been made will be notified as soon as practicable that a report of a breach of the Code of Conduct has been made.

## **Investigation and determination of breaches of the Code of Conduct**

A Disciplinary Committee shall be appointed each year comprising three (3) members, being two (2) members of the Match and Permit Committee nominated by the Match and Permit Committee, and one (1) independent member who is not a member of the Match and Permit Committee, appointed at the NSTA AGM. The Disciplinary Committee shall consider all alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct reported to the NSTA Secretary and determine whether a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred.

The Delegate from the Club of the player /spectator against whom the complaint has been made must respond in writing to the complaint within seven (7) days. If the Club Delegate fails to respond within the required timeframe, the Disciplinary Committee may proceed to determine the matter based on the information contained in the original complaint. At the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee, further information may be sought by and considered by the Committee, including speaking to the parties involved.

## Penalties

Where, in the opinion of the Disciplinary Committee, a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred, the Committee shall impose the following penalties on the player/s and/or spectator/s involved —

- (a) for the first breach, a formal warning;
- (b) for the second breach, a one match suspension;
- (c) for the third breach, a suspension of up to five matches; and
- (d) for the fourth breach, the player shall be expelled from the Association.

In the event of a serious incident involving multiple breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Disciplinary Panel may suspend a player without first issuing a warning. There shall be no right of appeal. The Disciplinary Committee's decision will be final and binding on all parties.

The decision of the Disciplinary Committee will be sent in writing to the player/s and/or spectator/s through the Club Delegate or Secretary.