

## How it began....



Wheelchair Tennis was founded in 1976 when Brad Parks, from St. Clemente, California, first hit a tennis ball from a wheelchair and realized the potential of this new sport. Still one of the fastest growing wheelchair sports in the world, wheelchair tennis integrates very easily with the able-bodied game since it can be played on any regular tennis court, with no modifications to the size of the court or the size of racquets or balls.

Wheelchair Tennis also has an international tour. The NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour follows the same rules as able-bodied tennis as endorsed by the ITF, with the only exception being that the wheelchair tennis player is allowed **two bounces** of the ball.

The sport originated in 1992 with 11 international tournaments but has grown in size and popularity with currently over 170 events taking place all over the world. Click [here](#) to view the full and 2012 schedules.

## How Do You Get Started?

It's easy! Just call a friend, pick up a racquet and some balls and head down to your local park. Or just contact your local provincial wheelchair sports association for information on beginner programs. You will find the contact info in the links section of this website. You can also contact us directly at [wheelchairtennisinfo@tenniscanada.com](mailto:wheelchairtennisinfo@tenniscanada.com).

## Who can play?

Very simple. Anybody with a permanent mobility related physical disability can enter a sanctioned tournament. For full eligibility rules click [here](#) . *Please link to "Eligibility Rules" document*

## Get a racquet and some balls

Any sporting good or department stores carry inexpensive racquets (around 20\$) and balls (\$5) for a can. That's all you need! No shoulder padding, no face masks, no team jersey required.



The beauty of wheelchair tennis is that you can play with your able bodied family and friends as well as other wheelchair players. Under the rules of tennis the wheelchair players are permitted two bounces and the able bodied players one but when you are practicing you can play to your own rules to suit the standard of the players on the court.



### **Find a court**

You can contact Tennis Canada or your Provincial Wheelchair Sports Association to find out which facilities are accessible. Or you can go along to your local courts and discuss with whoever runs them how they could be made accessible for you to play. You can even play at your local gym on a basketball or volleyball court! Portable tennis nets make tennis a truly mobile sport that can be enjoyed virtually anywhere. If you want advice on access you can contact us at [wheelchairtennisinfo@tenniscanada.com](mailto:wheelchairtennisinfo@tenniscanada.com).

### **Find a coach**

A coach will help you improve and will be able to advise you on how to get what you want from your tennis whether you want to play with your family or if you want to compete in a local event or even on the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour. Contact us to get the contact details of a coach with wheelchair tennis experience. If you are with a coach who has not worked with wheelchair players before, do not worry, you will have a lot of fun learning together. Tennis Canada and the International Tennis Federation produce a lot of material to support coaches working in wheelchair tennis. For some more information for coaches, click [here](#).



## **The Wheelchair**

When you start playing you do not require a sports wheelchair. You can play in a day chair. You may wish to strap yourself into the chair to improve your stability. Straps can be used around the waist, knees and ankles, depending on the player's balance. Many tetraplegics and quadriplegics play tennis by strapping/taping the racquet to their hand.



## **Play with your friends and family!**

The beauty of wheelchair tennis is that you can play with your family and able bodied friends as well as other wheelchair players. Under the rules of tennis the wheelchair players are permitted two bounces and the able bodied players one but when you are practicing you can play to your own rules to suit the standard of the players on the court.



