



Rules of Tennis 1999



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To give effect to the changes in these Rules and your membership of ITF please note:

References to the International Tennis Federation or ITF shall hereafter mean ITF Limited;

References to Full Members shall be Class B Members of ITF Limited;

References to the Rules of the Federation shall mean the Memorandum and Articles of Association together with the Bye-laws of ITF Limited (collectively known as the Constitution of ITF).

The Board of Directors may resolve any dispute, controversy or other questions of interpretation (as from 1st January 1998) in accordance with the Constitution of ITF Ltd.

THE SINGLES GAME

1. THE COURT

The Court shall be a rectangle 78 feet (23.77m.) long and 27 feet (8.23m.) wide. It shall be divided across the middle by a net suspended from a cord or metal cable of a maximum diameter of one-third of an inch (0.8cm.). the ends of which shall be attached to, or pass over, the tops of the two posts, which shall be not more than 6 inches (15cm.) square or 6 inches (15cm.) in diameter. These posts shall not be higher than 1 inch (2.5cm.) above the top of the net cord. The centres of the posts shall be 3 feet (.914m.) outside the Court on each side and the height of the posts shall be such that the top of the cord or metal cable shall be 3 feet 6 inches (1.07m.) above the ground.

When a combined doubles (see Rule 34) and singles Court with a doubles net is used for singles, the net must be supported to a height of 3 feet 6 inches (1.07m.) by means of two posts, called "singles sticks" which shall be not more than 3 inches (7.5cm.) square or 3 inches (7.5cm.) in diameter. The centres of the singles sticks shall be 3 feet (.914m.) outside the singles Court on each side.

The net shall be extended fully so that it fills completely the space between the two posts and shall be of sufficiently small mesh to prevent the ball passing through. The height of the net shall be 3 feet (.914m.) at the centre, where it shall be held down taut by a strap not more than 2 inches (5cm.) wide and completely white in colour. There shall be a band covering the cord or metal cable and the top of the net of not less than 2 inches (5cm.) nor more than 2 ½ inches (6.35cm.) in depth on each side and completely white in colour. There shall be no advertisement on the net, strap band or singles sticks.

The lines bounding the ends and sides of the Court shall respectively be called the base-lines and the side-lines. On each side of the net, at a distance of 21 feet (6.40m.) from it and parallel with it, shall be drawn the service-lines. The space on each side of the net between the service-line and the side-lines shall be divided into two equal parts called the service -courts by the centre service - line , which must be 2 inches (5cm.) in width, drawn half-way between, and parallel with, the side-line. Each base-line shall be bisected by an imaginary continuation of the centre service-line to a line 4 inches (10 cm.) in length and 2 inches (5cm.) in width called "the centre mark" drawn inside the Court, at right angles to and in contact with such base-lines. All other lines shall be not less than 1 inch (2.5cm.) nor more than 2 inches (5cm.) in width, except the base-line which may be not more than 4 inches (10cm.) in width, and all measurements shall be made to the outside of the lines. All lines shall be of uniform colour. If advertising or any other material is placed at the back of the Court, it may not contain white, or yellow. A light colour may only be used if this does not interfere with the vision of the players.

If advertisements are placed on the chairs of the linesmen sitting at the back of the court, they may not contain white or yellow. A light colour may only be used if this does not interfere with the vision of the players.

Note 1: In Davis Cup, Fed Cup and the Official Championships of the International Tennis Federation specific requirements with regard to the space behind the baseline

and at the sides are included in the respective Regulations for these events.

Note 2: At club or recreational level the .space behind each baseline should be not less than 18 feet (5.5m) and at the .sides not less than 10 feet (3.05m).

2. PERMANENT FIXTURES

The permanent fixtures of the Court shall include not only the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap and band, but also, where there are any such, the back and side stops, the stands, fixed or movable seats and chairs round the Court, and their occupants, all other fixtures around and above the Court, and the Umpire, Net-cord Judge, Footfault Judge, Linesmen and Ball Boys when in their respective places.

Note: For the purpose of this Rule the word "Umpire" comprehends the Umpire the persons entitled to a seat on the Court and all those persons designated to assist the Umpire in the conduct of a match.

3. THE BALL

The ball shall have a uniform outer surface consisting of a fabric cover and shall be white or yellow in colour. If there are any seams they shall be stitchless.

The ball shall conform to the requirements specified in Appendix I (Regulations for making tests specified in Rule 3) Section iv for size and be more than two ounces (56.7 grams) and less than two and one-sixteenth ounces (58.5grams) in weight.

The ball shall have a bound of more than 53 inches (134.62cm.) and less than 58 inches (147.32cm.) when dropped 100 inches (254.00cm.) upon a concrete base.

The ball shall have a forward deformation of more than .220 of an inch (.559cm.) and less than .290 of an inch (.737cm.) and return deformation of more than .315 of an inch (.800cm.) and less than .425 of an inch (1.080cm.) at 18 lb. (8.165kg.) load. The two deformation figures shall be the averages of three individual readings along three axes of the ball and no two individual readings shall differ by more than .030 of an inch (.076cm.) in each case.

For play above 4,000 feet (1219m.) in altitude above sea level. two additional types of ball may be used. The first type is identical to those described above except that the bound shall be more than 48 inches (121.92cm.) and less than 53 inches (134.62cm.) and shall have an internal pressure that is greater than the external pressure. This type of tennis ball is commonly known as a pressurised ball. The second type is identical to those described above except that they shall have a bound of more than 53 inches (134.62cm.) and less than 58 inches (147.32cm.) and shall have an internal pressure that is approximately equal to the external pressure and have been acclimatised for 60 days or more at the altitude of the specific tournament. This type of tennis ball is commonly known as a zero-pressure or non-pressurised ball.

All tests for bound, size and deformation *shall* be made in accordance *with the* regulations in Appendix 1.

The International Tennis Federation shall rule on the question of whether any ball or prototype complies with the above specification or is otherwise approved, for play. Such ruling may be taken on its own initiative, or upon application by any party with a bona fide interest therein, including any player' equipment manufacturer or National Association or members thereof. Such rulings and applications shall be made in

accordance with the applicable Review and Hearing Procedures of the International Tennis Federation (see Appendix II) .

Note: Any ball to be used in a tournament which is played under the Rules of Tennis must be named on the official ITF list of approved balls issued by the International Tennis Federation.

4. THE RACKET

Rackets failing to comply with the following specifications are not approved for play under the Rules of Tennis:

- a. The hitting surface of the racket shall be flat and consist of a pattern of crossed strings connected to a frame and alternately interlaced or bonded where they cross; and the stringing pattern shall be generally uniform, and in particular not less dense in the centre than in any other area. The racket shall be designed and strung such that the playing characteristics are identical on both faces.
The strings shall be free of attached objects and protrusions other than those utilised solely and specifically to limit or prevent wear and tear or vibration, and which are reasonable in size and placement for such purposes.
- b. For professional play, the frame of the racket shall not exceed 29 inches (73.66cm.) in overall length including the handle. as from 1st January 1997. For non-professional play, the frame of the racket shall not exceed 29 inches (73.66cm.) in overall length, including the handle, as from 1st January 2000. Until 1st January 2000, the maximum length of a racket for non-professional play shall be 32 inches (81.28cm). The frame of the racket shall not exceed 12½ inches (31.75cm.) in overall width. The strung surface shall not exceed 15½ inches (39.37cm.) in overall length, and 11½ inches (29.21cm.) in overall width.
- c. The frame, including the handle, shall be free of attached objects and devices other than those utilised solely and specifically to limit or prevent wear and tear or vibration, or to distribute weight. Any objects and devices must be reasonable in size and placement for such purposes.
- d. The frame, including the handle, and the strings, shall be free of any device which makes it possible to change materially the shape of the racket, or to change the weight distribution in the direction of the longitudinal axis of the racket which would alter the swing moment of inertia, or to deliberately change any physical property which may affect the performance of the racket during the playing of a point.
The International Tennis Federation shall rule on the question of whether any racket or prototype complies with the above specifications or is otherwise approved, or not approved, for play. Such ruling may be undertaken on its own initiative, or upon application by any party with a bona fide interest therein, including any player, equipment manufacturer or National Association or members thereof. Such rulings and applications shall be made in accordance with the applicable Review and Hearing Procedures of the International Tennis Federation (see Appendix 11).

Case 1. Can there be more than one set of strings on the hitting surface of racket?

Decision. No. The rule clearly mentions a pattern, and not patterns, of crossed strings.

Case 2. Is the stringing pattern of a racket considered to be generally uniform and flat if the strings are on more than one plane?

Decision. No.

Case 3. Can vibration dampening devices be placed on the strings of a racket and if so, where can they be placed?

Decision. Yes; but such devices may be placed only outside the pattern of the crossed strings.

Case 4. In the course of play, a player accidentally breaks the strings of his racket. Can he continue to play with the racket in this condition?

Decision. Yes.

Omissis

THE DOUBLES GAME

33. THE DOUBLES GAME

The above Rules shall apply to the Doubles Game except as below.

34. THE DOUBLES COURT

For the Doubles Game, the court shall be 36 feet (10.97m.) in width, i.e. 4½ feet (1.37m.) wider on each side than the Court for the Singles Game, and those portions of the singles side-lines which lie between the two service-lines shall be called the service side-lines. In other respects, the Court shall be similar to that described in Rule 1, but the portions of the singles side-lines between the baseline and service-line on each side of the net may be omitted if desired.

Omissis

APPENDIX I

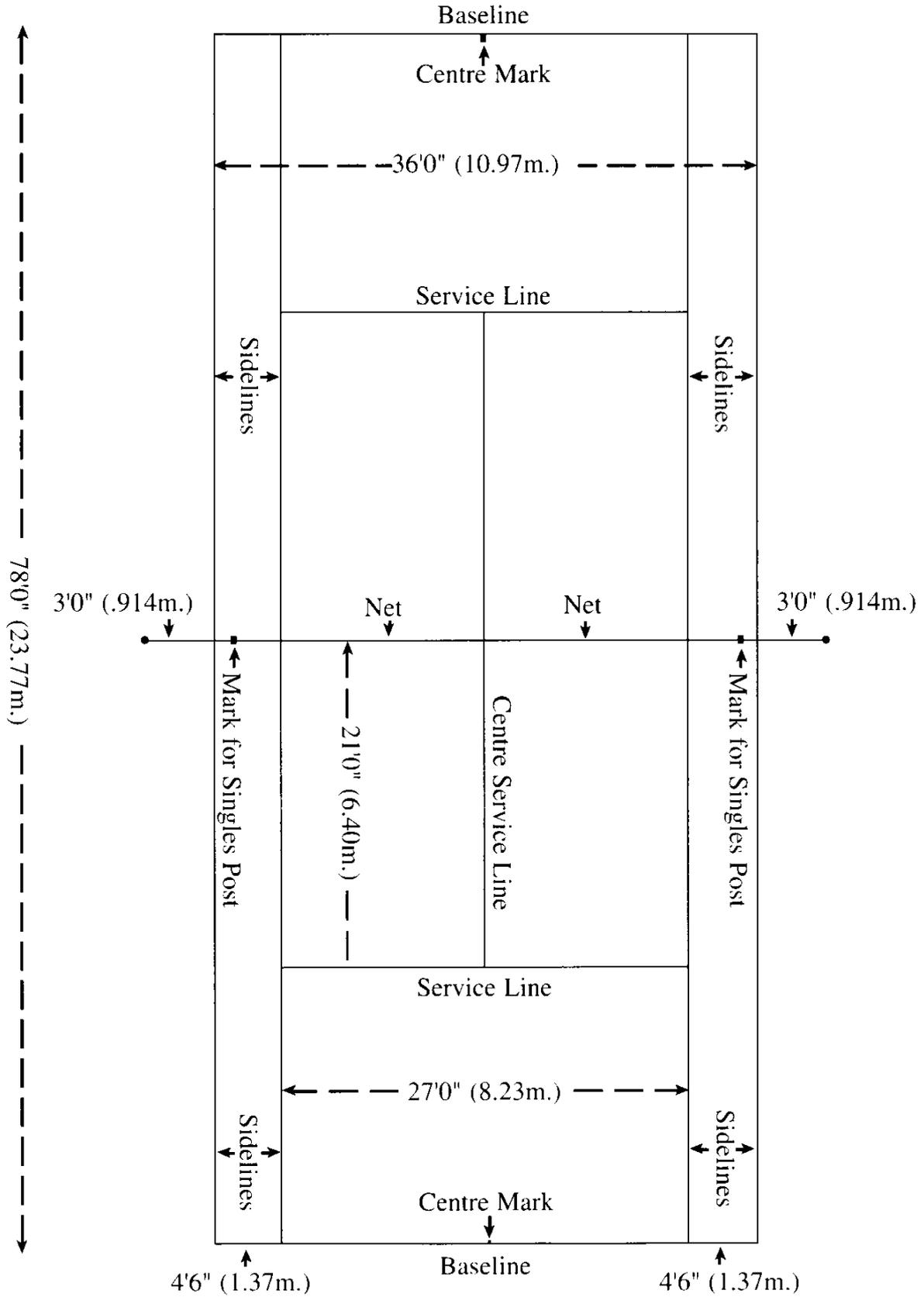
REGULATIONS FOR MAKING TESTS SPECIFIED IN RULE 3.

- i. Unless otherwise specified all tests shall be made at a temperature of approximately 68° Fahrenheit (20° Centigrade) and a relative humidity of approximately 60 per cent. All balls shall be removed from their container and kept at the recognised temperature and humidity for 24 hours prior to testing, and shall be at that temperature and humidity when the test is commenced.
- ii. Unless otherwise specified the limits are for a test conducted in an atmospheric pressure resulting in a barometric reading of approximately 30 inches (76cm.).
- iii. Other standards may be fixed for localities where the average temperature, humidity or average barometric pressure at which the game is being played differ materially from 68° Fahrenheit (20° Centigrade), 60 per cent and 30 inches (76cm.) respectively.
Applications for such adjusted standards may be made by any National Association to the International Tennis Federation and if approved shall be adopted for such localities.
- iv. In all tests for diameter a ring gauge shall be used consisting of a metal plate, preferably non-corrosive, of a uniform thickness of one-eighth of an inch (.31 8cm.) in which there are two circular openings 2.575 inches (6.541cm.) and 2.700 inches (6.858cm.) in diameter respectively. The inner surface of the gauge shall have a convex profile with a radius of one-sixteenth of an inch (.1 59cm.). The ball shall not drop through the smaller opening by its own weight and shall drop through the larger opening by its own weight.
- v. In all tests for deformation conducted under Rule 3, the machine designed by Percy Herbert Stevens and patented in Great Britain under Patent No. 230250, together with the subsequent additions and improvements thereto, including the modifications required to take return deformations, shall be employed. Other machines may be specified which give equivalent readings to the Stevens machine and these may be used for testing ball deformation where such machines have been given approval by the International Tennis Federation.
- vi. Procedure for carrying out tests:
 - a. Pre-compression. Before any ball is tested it shall be steadily compressed by approximately one inch (2.54cm.) on each of three diameters at right angles to one another in succession; this process to be carried out three times (nine compressions in all). All tests to be completed within two hours of pre-compression.
 - b. Bound test (as in Rule 3) . Measurements are to be taken from the concrete base to the bottom of the ball.

- c. Size test (as in paragraph (iv) above).
- d. Weight test (as in Rule 3).
- e. Deformation test. The ball is placed in position on the modified Stevens machine so that neither platen of the machine is in contact with the cover seam. The contact weight is applied, the pointer and the mark brought level, and the dials set to zero. The test weight equivalent to 181b. (8.165kg.) is placed on the beam and pressure applied by turning the wheel at a uniform speed so that five seconds elapse from the instant the beam leaves its seat until the pointer is brought level with the mark. When turning ceases the reading is recorded (forward deformation). The wheel is turned again until figure ten is reached on the scale (one inch (2.54cm.) deformation). The wheel is then rotated in the opposite direction at a uniform speed (thus releasing pressure) until the beam pointer again coincides with the mark. After waiting ten seconds the pointer is adjusted to the mark if necessary. The reading is then recorded (return deformation). This procedure is repeated on each ball across the two diameters at right angles to the initial position and to each other.

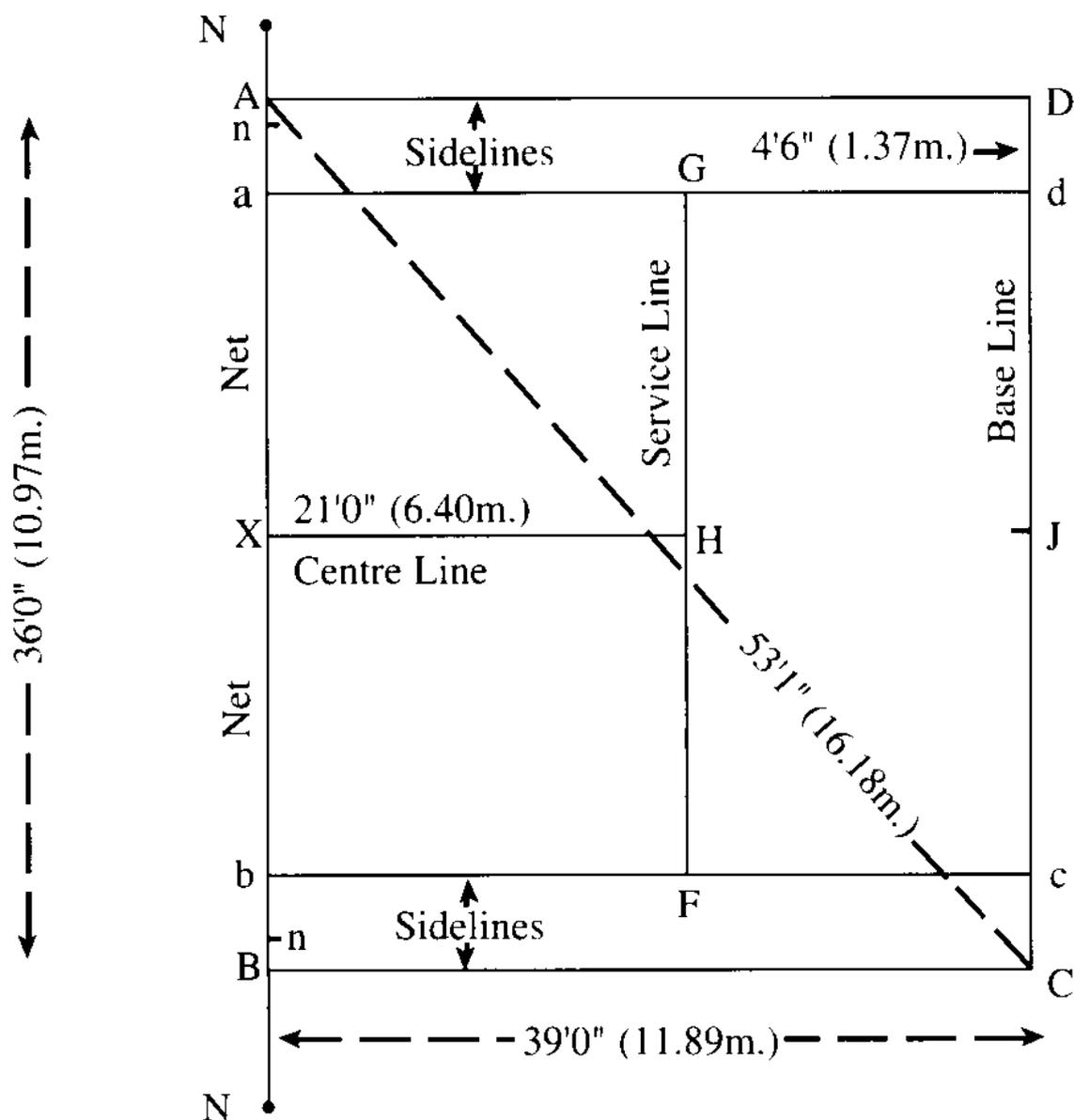
PLAN OF THE COURT

PLAN OF THE COURT



SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO MARK OUT A COURT

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO MARK OUT A COURT



The following procedure is for the usual combined Doubles and Singles Court. (See note at foot for a Court for one purpose only.)

First select the position of the net; a straight line 42 feet (12.8m.) long. Mark the centre (X on the diagram above) and, measuring from there in each direction, mark:

at 13'6" (4.11m.) the points a, b. where the net crosses the inner sidelines,
at 16'6" (5.03m.) the positions of the singles posts (or sticks) (n, n),

at 18'0" (5.49m.) the points A, B, where the net crosses the outer sidelines,
at 21'0" (6.40m.) the positions of the net posts (N, N), being the ends of the original
42'0" (12.8m.) line.

Insert pegs at A and B and attach to them the respective ends of two measuring tapes. On one, which will measure the diagonal of the half-court, take a length 53'1" (16.18m.) and on the other (to measure the sideline) a length of 39'0" (11.89m.). Pull both taut so that at these distances they meet at a point C, which is one corner of the Court. Reverse the measurements to find the other corner D. As a check on this operation it is advisable at this stage to verify the length of the line CD which, being the baseline, should be found to be 36'0" (10.97m.); and at the same time its centre J can be marked, and also the ends of the inner sidelines (c, d), 4'6" (1.37m.) from C and D.

The centre-line and service-line are now marked by means of the points F, H, G, which are measured 21'0" (6.40m.) from the net down the lines bc, XJ, ad, respectively.

Identical procedure the other side of the net completes the Court.

Notes:

- i. If a Singles Court only is required, no lines are necessary outside the points a, b, c, d, but the Court can be measured out as above. Alternatively, the corners of the base-line (c, d) can be found if preferred by pegging the two tapes at a and b instead of at A and B, and by then using lengths of 47'5" (14.46m.) and 39'0" (11.89m.). The net posts will be at n, n, and a 33'0" (10m.) singles net should be used.*
- ii. When a combined doubles and singles Court with a doubles net is used for singles. the net must be supported at the points n, n, to a height of 3 feet 6 inches (1.07m.) by means of two posts, called "singles sticks", which shall be not more than 3 inches (7.5cm.) square or 3 inches (7.5cm.) in diameter. The centres of the singles sticks shall be 3 feet (.914m.) outside the singles Court on each side.
To assist in the placing of these singles sticks it is desirable that the points n, n, should each be shown with a white dot when the Court is marked.*

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