

JUST DEAF – NOT TOO DUMB!

“Hi! I’m Donna and I’m deaf.” Really! That’s how I introduce myself. Anyone who’s even partially deaf can confirm that this affliction affects our ability to keep score and communicate with our partners. And I’m sure that playing with a deaf person is as frustrating for you as it is for us so here are a few things players can do to help the situation all the way around.

1. Calling the score facing your opponent, enunciating each number and speaking slowly and loudly.

(Many of us rattle off the score while looking down at the ball we’re about to launch. The score gets buried. But it’s also good strategy to announce the score, take a deep breath then serve.)

2. You can also use hand signals when calling the score. Hold up 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 fingers for each part of the score you’re calling. When you get to 6, go back to 1 finger but hold it sideways, 2 fingers sideways, etc. Ex. If the score is 1-2-1, it’s 1 finger up, 2 fingers up, 1 finger up. If the score is 5-6-2, 5 fingers up, 1 finger sideways, 2 fingers up. **Of course, zero is what we all know – the thumb and forefinger making a circle.** It takes some practice but it works!
3. When calling an “Out” raise your arm as well.

Thanks for helping all of us “deafies.” Now if only I could use it as an excuse for bad playing! Happy Pickleball to all!

Donna Higgons