Sword Art Online Tennis

I. Intro

Tennis, as it's played in the world of Sword Art Online, can be described as a comfortable adaptation of its real world counterpart. To describe both variations in a few words, tennis is a racket sport in which players positioned on opposite sides of a net will rally a ball until one side is unable to complete a return. When one side (either a single player or a team of two players) is unable to make a successful return, the opposing side will gain a point and the rally will come to an end. The game is decided once one side has reached a pre-specified number of points.

While some of the differences between the two are on the more superficial side, SAO Tennis equipment typically being closer to medieval aesthetic than to modern constructions, SAO Tennis ultimately differentiates itself primarily through its numerically-based gaming mechanics.

II. Stats and Dice

SAO Tennis features three stats within its framework: **Attack**, **Defense** and **Energy**. Each of these stats is represented primarily by one of three corresponding dice: BD, LD and CD, respectively. MD, the most sparingly used of the dice, is reserved for deciding ties.

    A) **Attack** is the total between a player's BD roll on any given turn in addition to all relevant bonuses. It is re-rolled on a turn-by-turn basis and is one half of the process which determines when a point has been made. If the Attack of a shot is higher than the Defense of a return, then the rally will end and a point will be awarded to the attacking player. An unmodified BD of 10 will result in a **Critical Hit**, which will award an automatic

point unless countered by a **Critical Return**. The Attack stat represents a combination of placement, spin and power.

B) **Defense** is the total between a player's LD roll on any given turn in addition to all relevant bonuses. It is re-rolled on a turn-by-turn basis and is one half of the process which determines when a point has been made. If the Defense of a return is higher the Attack of a shot, then the returning player will respond with a counter shot with their own Attack and the rally will continue. An unmodified LD of 20 will result in a **Critical Return**, which will allow the returning player to automatically return any shot, including **Critical Hits**. The Defense stat represents a combination of agility, reach and reflex.

C) **Energy** is a resource gained on a turn-by-turn basis, with the amount of Energy gained being equal to sum of a player's CD roll and all relevant bonuses. Energy is gained only at the beginning of a player's turn. It is both expendable and conservable, meaning that all unused Energy will be carried into following turns. Energy is capped to a maximum of 20 and a minimum of -1. If a player's Energy is maxed prior to the start of their turn, they will receive passive bonuses to both Attack and Defense for the duration of that turn. **Max Energy Bonus**: **+1 Attack**, **+1 Defense**

III. Flow of the Game

A) All participants on both sides will first equip and declare their rackets of choice, with in-character declarations being unnecessary so as to allow surprise tactics. They may also choose to declare a specific number of points or games required for a win.
In a departure from real world tennis, SAO Tennis automatically determines the initial server using RNG once all racket-equipped players have taken their positions on the court. Prior to the start of the match, all participants will roll for BD. The player will the highest BD will serve first. If this should result in a tie, substitute BD for MD in this check instead. If this should result in another tie, compare the sum total of each player's BD and MD rolls. A ball will automatically spawn into the serving player's free hand.

B) **Serves** in SAO Tennis begin with the serving player rolling for and declaring their CD, BD and MD. The serving player will calculate their total **Energy** for the turn. From there, the serving player may use Energy in order to perform a Racket Art. Alternatively, they may also opt for an unassisted serve instead. In both cases, the **Attack** of the serve will be calculated and declared.

C) **Returns** in SAO Tennis begin with the returning player rolling for and declaring their CD, LD and potentially, BD and MD. The returning player will calculate their total **Energy** for the turn. From there, the returning player will compare their **Defense** to the **Attack** of the shot being returned. If the Defense of the return exceeds the Attack of the shot, then the returning player will make a successful counter shot of their own. Counter shots make use of the returning player's BD roll and may also be enhanced by Racket Arts using Energy. They may also be unassisted. In both cases, the Attack of the counter shot will be calculated and declared.

D) The end of a rally will result in the system teleporting the ball to the next player in the serving rotation. The end of a game will trigger the ball's shattering animation along with

a declaration of victory above the head(s) of the winning player(s), much like in the case of a system-approved duel.

IV. Deciding Ties
If the **Defense** of a returning player is exactly equal to the **Attack** of an attacking player, substitute the attacking player's BD roll for their MD roll and determine the new Attack of the shot. If this should result in another tie, then add the Defense of the returning player to the Attack of the attacking player. If this resulting sum should be even, then the shot is successfully returned and the rally is continued. If the sum should be odd, then a point is awarded to the attacker and the rally is ended.

V. Racket Arts
Racket Arts (RA's) are system-assisted movements that allow players to maneuver at speeds which would otherwise be impossible. RA's require **Energy** and are activated by the use of pre-motions. When an RA is activated, the player's racket will glow a certain color for as long as the RA remains in effect.

Tier 1 Racket Arts (4 **Energy** Cost)
   - Your Choice (Serve/Return) | The attacking player receives a **+2 Attack** bonus for the duration of their turn.

Tier 2 Racket Arts (8 **Energy** Cost)
   - Your Choice (Serve/Return) | The attacking player receives a **+5 Attack** bonus for the duration of their turn.

Tier 3 Racket Arts (12 **Energy** Cost)
   - Slice (Serve) / Drop shot (Return) | The attacking player receives a **+5 Attack** bonus for the duration of their turn. In addition, the defending player's **Energy** will be decreased by an amount equal to the attacking player's CD roll.

   - Kick (Serve) / Lob (Return) | The attacking player receives a **+5 Attack** bonus for the duration of their turn. In addition, on their following turn, the attacking player's CD roll will grant a doubled amount of **Energy**.

   - Flat (Serve) / Smash (Return) | The attacking player receives a **+10 Attack** bonus for the duration of their turn.

VI. Choosing a Racket
Corresponding to the three major stats in SAO Tennis, there are also three major types of rackets which players may equip. Each type complements a different playstyle, and consequently, grants its own unique stat bonus.

- **Power** | A heavier frame lends this racket type a bit more impact. Grants a **+1 Attack** bonus to all shots.

- **Control** | A lighter frame lends this racket type a bit more maneuverability. Grants a **+2 Defense** bonus to all returns.

- **Technique** | Specialized strings lend this racket type a bit more spin. Grants a **+1 Energy** bonus each turn.

Rackets are the sole type of equipment capable of granting stat bonuses in SAO Tennis. Much like with weapons, note that **it's entirely possible to equip a second racket** in one's off-hand. However, unless the player possesses the *Dual Blades* Unique Skill, <u>dual wielding players are unable to activate Racket Arts</u>. In addition, due to enhancement limits, <u>dual wielding players may not double up on a single racket type</u>. Dual wielding grants no special advantages outside of allowing an extra stat bonus.

VII. Standard Rules
   A) **Singles** matches, by default, require four points for a win. If both players reach three points each, a **deuce** will be initiated. <u>Once a deuce has begun, a lead of two points will be required in order to win</u>. By default, singles matches consist of only a single game. Both the number of points and the number of games required for a win may be modified prior to the start of a match. If desired, players may also choose to play indefinitely.
   B) **Doubles** matches follow all the rules of singles matches, whenever possible.

   Pre-game, all four players will roll BD (as well as MD, if necessary,) in order to determine the initial server. <u>The initial server will then determine the posting order for the game's duration by serving at one of his two opponents</u>. Once the serve is completed, the defending player will be given the opportunity to return the shot at the serving team's <u>other</u> <u>player</u> (i.e., the player who did not serve).

   Essentially, <u>a player may never make a return at the player that gave them the ball</u> (or, in other words, no tag-backs). Once a game of doubles has begun, each player is locked into attacking the same opponent until the game's conclusion. This ensures roughly even and consistent participation for all participants.

   Once a point has been scored, the player whom that point was scored upon will roll a second time and proceed with their own serve (using the same post), with respect to the established posting order.