

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT NTRP

### GENERAL

#### 1. What is NTRP?

National Tennis Rating Program is a classification system developed in 1978 that identifies and describes the general characteristics of thirteen levels of tennis-playing ability.

**2. What is a self-rating?** A self-rating is an entry rating level determined by the new player based on questions asked in the TennisLink registration process. All players must enter league tennis with a valid computer rating or self rate using TennisLink. (See #18)

#### 3. What is a Dynamic rating?

A dynamic rating is the result of your current match averaged with up to three of your most recent dynamic results generated. A dynamic rating is calculated after each match. A dynamic rating may change with each match played.

#### 4. What is a year-end rating?

A year-end rating is a NTRP level assigned at conclusion of the league championship year that reflects level of ability. A player's year-end rating shall be used to enter leagues during the following year and will be valid for up to three years or until another rating is generated.

#### 5. What is an early start rating?

An early start rating is a tentative rating for exclusive use by players who register for an early start league prior to publication of year-end ratings. The rating is based on the most current dynamic at the time of publication. Early start ratings are replaced by year-end ratings. If you play in an early start league with an early start rating, please check with your section to see if you may continue to compete on your team if your year-end rating goes up.

#### 6. When are dynamic ratings calculated?

Dynamic ratings for local play are calculated nightly for the Adult and Senior Divisions. During championships, dynamic ratings are run instantly as match results are entered.

#### 7. Is there a difference between a dynamic rating and a year-end rating?

Yes, there are several.

- Dynamic ratings are not disclosed to players, where year-end ratings are published annually at NTRP levels.
- Dynamic ratings are expressed to the one-hundredth of a point, where year-end ratings are expressed only to the one-half point.
- Dynamic ratings are calculated regularly and based on an average of the

current match plus the previous three dynamic ratings, whereas year-end ratings are based on a combination of one's cumulative dynamic rating during the season and a comparison to an appropriate benchmark player.

**8. Can my rating level change during the championship year?**

Yes.

- If you receive the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike and are dynamically disqualified at your present level.
- If a Self-Rate Eligibility Grievance is upheld, this may also result in raising your level. (see Disqualification Process #24-30)

**9. If my rating changes with every match played, can I see it?**

No. Ratings are only published at year end.

**10. Does the dynamic calculation treat doubles partners differently?**

Dynamic calculation maintains the rating differential between doubles partners that existed before a match. For example if a 3.3 and a 3.5 player are paired together, specific match results are applied to each player equally and the two partners will maintain the .2 differential.

**11. Does the dynamic calculation apply to Mixed Doubles League play?**

Yes, for players who participate exclusively in the Mixed Doubles Division. Mixed Doubles results will not be part of generating a player's year-end rating except for those players who play exclusively mixed doubles.

**12. How does a mixed exclusive player get a rating?**

The last dynamic rating generated with a minimum of two matches calculated in mixed exclusive is the year-end rating that will be used as the NTRP start level for the next year.

**13. Can I use my mixed exclusive rating to play in other divisions?**

Yes. Mixed exclusive is a minimum NTRP start level only. A mixed exclusive rating is not supported by any NTRP calculation data and is subject to self-rate grievance.

**14. Do USTA sanctioned tournaments count in the dynamic rating system? If so, can a tournament win be used as one of the three "strikes"?**

Each section has the option of including tournament results for year-end calculations. If your section includes sanctioned tournament match scores, they will not be calculated into the system until after the USTA League national championships. Sanctioned tournament results do not generate strikes; however, they will impact your year-end rating.

**15. If my NTRP level of play is not available in my local league, what are my options?**

- File an appeal to determine if you are within the appeal range
- Work with your local or district league coordinator to establish a new division.
- Play in a league that offers combined ratings.
- Play USTA sanctioned tournaments.

**16. How can I appeal my early start or year-end rating?**

Appeal on TennisLink under “FIND A RATING”

Who Can appeal?

- 1) Computer rated players—Up or Down
- 2) Mixed Exclusive players—Up or Down
- 3) Self-rated players—Up

Appeal on TennisLink when “Registering for a team”

- 1) Early Start dynamic ratings—Down
- 2) Computer rated players—Down
- 3) Mixed Exclusive players—Down

What must be referred/heard by the Section or their designee?

- 1) Self-rated players who wish to move DOWN
- 2) All medical appeals
- 3) Already APPEALED ratings
- 4) Early Start dynamic ratings—Up

Each section also provides directions, deadlines and any related fee on their web site.

**SELF-RATING**

**17. When and how do I get a self-rating?**

If you do not have a computer rating you must self-rate before entering a USTA league program. Go to [national.usta.com](http://national.usta.com) and you will be connected directly to TennisLink. You will need your membership number, your team number, and a major credit card. Click on “Register for a Team” and follow the prompts which will lead you through the registration and self-rate process. Click on the NTRP Self-Rate Help Mentor figure for further information and a demo.



**18. What if I think a self-rated player has not rated himself or herself accurately?**

On any given day, a player may play above or below his or her rating. If you truly feel a self-rated player is significantly above level, you may file a self-rate grievance. Contact your local league coordinator.

**19. Can I declare a different self-rating for different League Divisions (e.g., 3.5 for Adult and 4.0 for Senior)?**

No. Once you declare an initial self-rating, you are bound by it for one year or until you generate a computer rating. So if you plan to play 4.0 Senior but also want to play 3.5 Adult later in the year – be certain that you select 3.5 if an option.

**20. What if I have self-rated and played four matches in the Adult Division and then sign up for the Senior Division. Will I use my self-rating or will the system generate a computer rating for me?**

The system will have a Dynamic NTRP number on you from your adult play. However, you will continue with the self-rating you selected until the year-end computer ratings are published; unless of course, you are disqualified and you then must immediately move up.

## **DISQUALIFICATION PROCESS**

**21. Can I be disqualified if I have a valid computer rating?**

No, however players who's year end ratings have been reduced through appeal actions, players who have Mixed Exclusive ratings, players who have tournament produced ratings, or players with published dynamic ratings in early-start leagues are subject to dynamic disqualification.

**22. Who can be dynamically disqualified?**

Year-end computer (C) and benchmark (B) players are **not** subject to dynamic NTRP disqualification. All other players (S, A, M, T, D) are subject to NTRP disqualification.

**23. Why would I be dynamically disqualified?**

When a player receives three strikes, they will be notified that they have been dynamically disqualified. This happens because you, your captain, or your tennis professional indicated an NTRP level much too low for your ability on your self-rating.

**24. What is a strike and how do I get one?**

Each time a player's dynamic rating exceeds the maximum tolerance for the level, he or she automatically earns a "strike."

**25. How high can my dynamic rating go before I earn a "strike"?**

The Dynamic NTRP system allows a certain tolerance for player improvement—more for lower level players where rapid improvement is more likely; less for higher-level players. The specific improvement factor is not published because of concerns that individuals, captains or others may attempt to manipulate their ratings.

**26. If I receive a third strike while participating in another division, but following the conclusion of our section championship for a given year and division, will I be allowed to advance to Nationals if otherwise qualified.**

Yes.

**27. What are the consequences of disqualification?**

In all cases, the player is disqualified from participation at that NTRP level. Each USTA Section will determine which of two methods the section will follow at the local and the championship level. The effect on Team Standings may vary, depending on when the DQ occurs:

During local league:

In all cases, the player is disqualified from participation at that NTRP level. Each USTA Section will determine what matches, if any will be reversed for the local season.

During Championships:

Each Section must state before the event one of two methods for NTRP disqualification.

1.) Following completion of Championship play:

The player is disqualified from participation at that NTRP level for the balance of the year and the succeeding year. If the section elects to run the computer ratings following completion of the championships, match scores by the DQ player will stand.

2.) Throughout Championship play:

If the section elects to run calculations throughout the championship event, the player will be disqualified from participation at that NTRP level for the balance of the year and the succeeding year.

- Round Robin format: Throughout the championship, any player reaching the DQ criteria will have all matches at that NTRP level reversed to 0-6, 0-6.
- Single Elimination format: Throughout the championship, the last match played by the player at that NTRP level will be reversed to 0-6, 0-6.

**28. Will I be notified if I earn a “strike”?**

No. Notice occurs only after three strikes are accumulated. Many players receive one or two strikes and never get the 3<sup>rd</sup>. To needlessly worry or prevent a player from participating based on the possibility of getting a strike is not fair to the player or the team.

**29. Will I be told exactly which matches earned me “three strikes”?**

Yes, if you ask, a copy of your matches can be provided but these are already visible on TennisLink.

**30. Who is notified in the event of a disqualification? By whom? How quickly?**

Responsibility for monitoring dynamic ratings lies with the Section League Coordinator. When a “third strike” situation arises, the SLC will first notify (a) the player’s Team Captain, using the Captain’s e-mail address as reported on TennisLink; (b) the affected player, by telephone, e-mail or voicemail message and (c) the relevant District and Local League Coordinator. Notification is made as soon as possible once a third strike has been received. Hard copy will be mailed to player’s address as it appears on the team roster.

**31. Are all players in a given NTRP level equal in ability?**

No ...The NTRP system identifies general levels of ability, but an individual will be rated within those levels at 50 different hundredths of a point. For example, a 3.5 player can fall anywhere between a 3.01 and a 3.50. That is the reason many people feel they are playing sandbaggers – they are closer to the bottom of that range while their opponents are closer to the top of the range. A typical match result for a player, for example, with a 3.01 rating versus a 3.49 player, both of whom are 3.5s, would be 6-0, 6-0 in favor of the higher rated player.

**32. The rules state that NTRP disqualification is not part of the Mixed Doubles Division. If I am disqualified at the Adult or Senior Divisions, am I allowed to participate at the disqualified level in Mixed Doubles Division for the remainder of the league year?**

No. Even though the Mixed Doubles Division does not allow disqualification, it must follow the rules in relation to playing at the correct level. A player who has been moved up as a result of a disqualification in the Adult or Senior Divisions must immediately adjust his/her NTRP level of play in the Mixed Doubles Division. The player will have two options:

- If a combined NTRP level team, he/she may continue on that team by adjusting the levels. (9.0 combined team—dq’d 4.5 player now at 5.0 must play with no greater than a 4.0 player)
- If a single NTRP level team, he/she must move up to the appropriate NTRP level or sit out the balance of that season depending on the section’s regulations. (A player on a combined NTRP level team may also choose to move up if the section allows.)

In the Mixed Doubles Division, all matches played up until the notification of the disqualification will be counted. Any match played at the disqualified level following notification of the disqualification will be counted as defaults for the individual team match of the disqualified player and 6-0, 6-0 wins for the opponents in those individual matches.

**33. If I am NTRP disqualified during the Adult Local league, what happens to my matches in other Divisions?**

- If a local NTRP disqualification occurs during concurrent Adult and/or Senior local league seasons, the disqualifications shall affect the matches played by the disqualified player in both Divisions.

- If the seasons are not concurrent or over-lapping, the NTRP disqualification shall affect the matches played by the disqualified player in the season in which the NTRP DQ occurred.
- The Section determines the penalties to be imposed for NTRP disqualifications.