



USTA Phoenix Captains Meeting Q & A

1. I heard you are not publishing year end ratings for 2020. My rating will expire in December 2020. What happens to my rating?

Once your rating expires, you will be prompted to self-rate again before you play in any league matches. As an "S" player, you will at that point be eligible to earn level promotions by having results that are clearly above level.

2. I was a Self-Rated player for 2020. Now that we are not getting year end ratings, do I still have to play 4 matches before advancing to any championship?

Yes. All self-rated "S" and computer-rated appeal "A" rated players must play in at least 4 matches for each team in each session of play in each championship year to be eligible to advance to District, Section, and National Championships.

3. What is the cutoff date for players to sign up for a team, i.e. how long after the date of the start of the season for a team ?

Typically, our early start (fall) session of play has a cut off date in late November (prior to publishing of year-end ratings.) But because year-end ratings will not be published this year, there is no player registration deadline. All players must be registered on the roster prior to playing in a league match.

4. Why did you stop having Pros evaluating new players with prior experience?

USTA hasn't had USPTA professionals evaluate player NTRP levels for about 15 years. Even with standards and training, the process was subjective. Pros would vary widely in their assessments. USPTA or PTR accredited professionals are not required to take any NTRP classes, therefore they are not up to date on NTRP level descriptions or videos. For consistency across the nation level assignments for self-rated players are based on their tennis history and/or rankings.

Having self-rated players, in general, is a headache as they usually self-rate themselves lower than they should.

USTA National revamped their self-rate questionnaire a few years ago to more accurately assess the ability of new players. While the system and questions are much better, it relies on the answers provided by the player. The possibility of an inaccurate rating still exists, the chances are much smaller. All "S" and "A" rated players are eligible to earn strikes and be promoted to the next level. Self-rated players are also subject to NTRP grievances if a captain believes a player has self-rated at a lower level than their skill reflects.

5. The ranking calculation is a total mystery in recreational tennis. There must be an explanation to help us understand how it works.

Ranking and Rating: two vastly different things. Ratings are your National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) skill level assignment for participating in USTA leagues or USTA sanctioned tournaments (if section "opts in.") Rankings and standings are determined by points earned and your results at USTA-sanctioned

tournaments. We held a webinar with NTRP Expert and Sr Manager for Ratings, Heather Hawkes in August. We have uploaded to video to our [captains corner](#). I also invite everyone to read through our [NTRP FAQs here](#).

6. Will new rankings come out in December?

Year-end **ratings** will not be published this year. All computer rated "C" players will remain the same until ratings are published December of 2021. Self-rated "S" players will remain self-rated and subject to strikes and promotion/DQ. Mixed exclusive rated players "M" will remain at the same level if they only play in mixed doubles leagues. An "M" rated player must self-rate prior to registering for an adult league (men's or women's) team.

7. Since NTRP ratings are not being planned to be released Dec 1, when will next ratings be released? Seems unfair to wait another year?

Year-end ratings will be published run Dec 1, 2021.

8. Will there be championships in 2021?

District, Section and National Championships have not been cancelled for the 2021 championship year. We are certainly planning on running nationals for 2021, it will remain TBD until we get much closer to those events. With Covid-19 not under control yet, we cannot guarantee anything at this point. But hopes are that we can and will run all these events.

9. Regarding the freezing of ratings computations for 2020. This means for A or S players in the Fall they will not convert to C players and thus will have to continue to play 4 matches to qualify for section/district teams instead of the typical 2 matches which is the national standard. Why do we have to diverge from the national standard?

We do not diverge from the USTA National standard. National requires 4 matches for all "S" and "A" players. National allows each section to impose this same requirement prior to District Championships if they choose. Southwest Section has elected to follow the National requirement of 4 matches per team per session of play.

Who makes these decisions? The section league committee makes this decision.

Who are they benefiting? The league committee feels this 4 match requirement for all "S" and "A" rated players benefits fair and level play for all.

10. Updated Status and Qualifiers of Self rated and Appealed team players to participate in league or invitational Sectionals and Nationals for fall 2020 and entire 2021 Fall/ Winter seasons.

All self-rated "S" and computer rated appeal "A" rated players must play in at least 4 matches on each team in each session of play prior to advancing to District, Section, and National Championships.

11. Does an appeal player have to play a total of 4 matches in any division to become computer rated or is it 4 matches each division?

Four matches on each team is required.

12. If a facility is checking temperatures and a player is denied entrance to the courts, should that court be rescheduled or defaulted.

We are asking that everyone be flexible and understanding in our strange new normal. If a player arrives at a facility, has a fever and is turned away from entering a facility for a league match, the court is to be rescheduled. See item 5.05 of our [USTA Phoenix regulations](#).

13. What are the details on post season, if any?

We plan to run District, Southwest, and National championships for the 2021 championship year. But final decisions are still scheduled for the 2021 championship year. We do not expect this to change, but if it does, all players will be notified.

14. Protocol for split times and contacting opposing captains beforehand.

The visiting Captain shall have the option of designating which lines (i.e. #1 singles, #2 doubles) play at which staggered match start times. The Visiting Captain shall notify the Home Captain, in writing, 48 hours or more before the first staggered match start time. If notice is not received prior to 48 hours before the first staggered match start time, the Home Captain shall immediately contact the Visiting Captain with such designations.

15. When requesting from the opponent's captain to reschedule all 3 courts, due to lack of players, is the opponent's captain able to decide that only two courts (instead of all 3) will play on the rescheduled date, with the 3rd court being a default (even though 3 courts could be fielded on a rescheduled date)?

A Captain is not obligated to reschedule a match at the request of opposing captain. I recommend the golden rule here – treat others as you would want to be treated. If a captain agrees to reschedule 2 courts and demands a default of one of the courts the captain requesting the reschedule can withdraw the request and play the match as originally scheduled.

16. Which of the players on the court is responsible for calling, and being the final, say when a double bounce occurs or is suspected?

The player hitting the ball must call a double bounce on herself. Others can ask if she is sure, but it is her call.

17. Hey any chance you can discuss the foot fault rule and if the opposing team can make a foot fault call.

All USTA Local league matches including district championships are un-officiated matches. Players call the lines on their own side of the court. 'Double bounces' and 'hitting the ball across the plane of the net' must be called by the player hitting the ball. However, regarding foot-faults, Friend at Court states in *The Code 24. Calling foot faults. The receiver or the receiver's partner may call foot faults only after all reasonable efforts, such as warning the server and attempting to get an official to the court, have failed and the foot fault is so flagrant as to be clearly perceptible from the receiver's side.*

Officials are not used for league matches, so technically, yes, a foot-fault could be called after repeat warnings. But good luck having a pleasant match after that. This issue calls for calm demeanor and excellent communication. I recommend make reasonable repeat efforts to call the player's attention to it so it can be corrected before calling a foot-fault.

18. Any chance of this league considering sportsmanship award. Very small token that recognizes superior sportsmanship.

Yes! This is something we plan to implement this year. Watch for more information on our website.

19. What are the main things that we need to do or change that we did not have to do previously?
Send me a specific question at ferris@southwest.usta.com and I'll be happy to answer.
20. If there is another shutdown after the new year, will there be a later time for playoff in the fall or in the summer?
We do not know how a potential shut down would affect our leagues and schedules. If any of our circumstances change all captains will be notified.
21. How will sectionals and Nationals work since not all regions will be participating?
Section Championships will run as usual and all regions will have the option to run local leagues determining a local winner up to 4 weeks prior to a Section Championships. Wild card offers are subject to regulations in the [Southwest Regulations](#) and are offered according to the rotation schedule when available.
22. Does playing with a lower rating player and losing, negatively affect your rating?
Simply winning and losing does not affect a players rating. The calculations are based on the dynamic rating of each of the players on the court and the [score of the match](#). For a more detailed answer, please view our NTRP webinar that has been uploaded to video to our [captains corner](#). I also invite everyone to read through our [NTRP FAQs here](#).
23. I know ratings won't change in December, but people are asking if their matches impact their rating. One person said the ratings are "frozen." I just assumed the dynamic rating was still being calculated and that matches still have impact. Can you clarify?
You are correct. NTRP ratings are not "frozen." They are still being calculated after matches. All matches played with and against players who have earned a dynamic rating will count in rating calculations. However, the 2020 *yearend* ratings calculations will not be published. A computer (C) rated player's NTRP ratings will not be subject change until ratings are published Dec 1, 2021. All matches with and against dynamically rated players will have an impact, but you will not see that impact until Dec 1, 2021.