



Changes to Para TT ranking system 2022

Since the last adjustments done in 2019 to the Para table tennis rating system, there has been different concerns expressed by players and coaches. The recently appointed Para table tennis committee has met to discuss them, and they agreed to send the proposals to the ITTF Executive Committee for approval.

1. To change the rule for new rated players

It was noticed that beginner players found it very difficult to enter the ranking with the current rules. This could lead to discouragement from participation and to difficult the development work that many Member Associations were doing. Statistics show us that approximately 30% of current active players are unrated.

Therefore, the proposal is to change the rule to add one more pathway to be able to enter the ranking so a player will enter the ranking if he or she attains two wins against rated players (current pathway) OR participates at least in four events (alternative pathway)

2. To modify the rating change table

We collected many statements from athletes expressing that the possibility of losing many points (if they had one bad tournament) was putting too much pressure on them and, in some cases, discouraging from participation. Statistics show that, on average, about 40% of players who participate at every event are losing points

To mitigate this, the proposal is to increase 50% the number of points received for winning a match and to reduce 50% the points lost for losing a match.

We cannot forget that we are using a rating system (contrary to ranking systems where the points expire) so, if there are no point loss at all, the top players would become unreachable for the rest in a very short time and that, again, will discourage development of new athletes.

3. Adjust the percentage of rating reduction for each year of inactivity.

With the new rating change table, there will be a natural inflation in the overall number of points. To mitigate this, the reduction of points due to inactivity should be 8% per year. However, this change should not be applied for players who become inactive in 2022 and it would be effective as of 2023.



4. Adjust the percentage of periodic compression.

With the inflation created by the new rating table, the periodic compression of 5% would also not be enough. The periodic compression affecting all players (active and inactive) should be of 10% and would be applied every other year just after the World Champs and the Paralympics.

5. Inactivity rule moratorium.

With the ongoing pandemic, it is not easy for many athletes to travel and play international competitions. The current moratorium to the inactivity should be extended until June 2022.

6. Exemption of the inactivity rule for pregnancy reasons

Pregnant women should be allowed to request the freezing of their ranking points from beginning of the pregnancy up to 1 year after the delivery.

7. Ranking for doubles competition

The introduction of the doubles and mixed doubles into the competitions brings the need of a specific ranking to be used as part of the qualification process for major events like the World Championships and Paralympic Games. As we all know, a player can have a very good ranking in singles and not so good in doubles (and vice versa) so we should have two separate rankings for singles and doubles and two separate qualification pathways.

However, it is not realistic to think that we can have a fair ranking before the 2022 Worlds Championships because we will have a very short qualification period with pandemic uncertainty on the way.

Nevertheless, we will start calculating and publishing a doubles ranking as soon as the first double events are held in 2022. This way, we encourage the athletes to start taking part in the doubles and we can see how it evolves. That ranking should not be used for qualification purposes for the Worlds 2022, but it would be used to qualify pairs for Paris 2024. By that time, we will have a higher number of results and players will be a fairer position in the ranking.

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