

## **Background on the rating process**

Of the 168 members evaluated in our rating clinics this year, a small number of members have been dissatisfied. There is a sense by these few that our current rating evaluators are biased and seem to have a monopoly.

Connected to this, there have been a handful of incidents of members challenging the assessment of their skill level, some of which has been abusive. As a result, the SAPC board and other clubs have asked the rating evaluators to stop giving verbal feedback, and instead rely entirely on the written assessment to communicate the strengths, weaknesses and overall rating evaluation to those being rated. Some of the challenges culminated in heated arguments, nastiness and push back to the extent that our current rating evaluators at one point considered to stop providing this service.

The club contracts with trained rating evaluators to do independent player ratings, which are based on a formal process. Rating evaluators do not evaluate whether you can beat people at a given level, they evaluate whether you have the skill set that is expected at a given level, as per the International Pickleball Teachers Professional Association. Refusal to accept the rating assigned is, in the board's opinion, akin to not accepting a ruling given by a referee or other official present during sports events.

The rating given by a trained rating evaluator is not negotiable. However, any member has alternate ways to achieve a club rating, through choosing different trained rating evaluators, achieving a sanctioned tournament play rating, or transfer their rating from another club that has a rating system recognised by SAPC.

Questions by, and feedback from Rosemary regarding our SAPC rating policy and process, have highlighted that the rating standard from the International Federation of Pickleball (IFP), referenced in our policy, is substantially different from the rating criteria used by both the United States of America Pickleball Association (USAPA) and the International Professional Teachers of Pickleball Association (IPTPA). (see below for some examples)

Our current rating sheets are actually based on the IPTPA criteria, not the IFP. The vast majority of pickleball clubs in Canada and the USA are also using either the USAPA or IPTPA ratings criteria, which are more quantifiable.

In view of the above, Rosemary Pon moves (Motion wording is in bold cursive):

### ***To have the St. Albert Pickleball Club consider seeking alternate Pickleball evaluation service***

Comment: The board has already posted a newsletter article to find additional rating evaluators.

### ***and establishing a more fair and quantifiable method for participant rating clinics through:***

- ***reviewing and ensuring current evaluation form criteria matches the rating definition established by the International Federation of Pickleball***

Comment: Rather than changing the evaluation sheets, the board recommends that we align with the other clubs, and change the policy, removing the reference to the IFP and replace it with IPTPA.

- **ensuring rating clinics are video-taped for replay and reviewed by a club mediator/arbitrator**

Rosemary's clarification:

The club mediator/ arbitrator can overrule a rating given by IFP, USAPA or IPTPA trained rating evaluators.

A mediator will work at negotiating a compromise. An arbitrator can overrule disputes.

The Alberta Arbitration and Mediation Society (AAMS) can provide training and certification.

Comment:

The proposal to videotape and provide review of the play is more suited to a coaching session, rather than an evaluation session. Videotaping would substantially increase costs to participants in rating clinics for the extra time involvement of the evaluators and the videotaping persons.

Regarding feedback to the rating clinic participants, the current evaluation sheet detailing strengths and weaknesses is provided to the player, so that the player can seek out mentoring or coaching to improve on their weak areas.

Club arbitrators overruling formally trained evaluators would open a whole new set of challenges and a lot of work for our Club. As listed above, there are other and simpler ways to achieve a club rating. We should also keep in mind that we are talking about "just" a club rating.

- **ensuring rating clinics for 2 different levels are not set at the same time and date**

Comment: It is sometimes efficient and expedient to run a clinic with, say, 4 candidates being rated at the 3.0 level and 4 others being rated at 3.5. This practice, albeit rare, could be ended entirely, but members need to be aware that they may then have to wait three to six months for a given rating clinic to fill.

#### **Examples of differences between our evaluation sheet and the IFP standards:**

<https://www.ifpickleball.org/skill-rating-definitions>

	IFP (Int'l Federation of Pickleball)	USAPA / Club Rating Sheet
Serves/Return – 3.0	able to hit a medium paced shot. Lacks depth, direction and consistency.	"serves deep into the court with placement"
Dink – 3.0	Not able to consistently sustain a dink rally. Not yet developed the ability to control this shot.	"maintains a sustained dink exchange at the net"