

## **USTA Southern Section Fair Play Grievance Protocol**

Any league captain, coordinator or member of a championship committee has the right to file a Self-Rate NTRP Grievance against a player and/or captain who commits or condones entering at one NTRP level when his/her actual skill level is at the top of the next NTRP level or higher. However, league administrators are not required to accept such filings unless the grievance claims meet certain standards. While these standards may be subjective, there are certain conditions that generally must be met in order to offer credibility to the claim(s) of a Self-Rate NTRP violation, in the context for which the rule was intended. It is not possible to define all such conditions but the below listed items suggest a framework for administrators to use to judge the admissibility of such filings.

### **Conditions Which Must Be Present:**

1. The Grievance must be against a self-rated player. (Grievances filed against players with computer ratings will not be accepted.)
2. The complainant must state that the player has self-rated at one NTRP level when his/her actual skill level is at the top of the next NTRP level or higher.
3. The complaint must provide specific and tangible information regarding the player's tennis history.

### **Conditions Which Would Give Credibility to a Self-Rate NTRP Violation Claim:**

- The player participated on a college team at a significant NCAA level (note: age of player, injuries, position on team, strength of tennis team at particular school could affect a significant change in rating over time).
- The player participated at the professional level.
- The player has earned national, sectional or state rankings that would reflect a difference in the player's self-rating and actual skill level at the top of the next NTRP level or higher.
- The player has a history in league tennis that would substantiate a claim that the player has misrepresented their current skill level (example: a player with a 4.5 rating from 2000 has self rated 3.5) Note: this claim by itself does not confirm that a player who had a 4.5 rating in 2000 cannot play 3.5 in 2004.

**Contentions or claims that would NOT be accepted as evidence in a Self-Rate NTRP Grievance when presented WITHOUT additional tennis specific information that clearly suggests a rating violation:**

***Statements of supposition and opinion, which do not have substantive backup, that argue a player is participating at a level significantly below his capability.***

- I haven't lost a match all year and he beat me like a drum!
- My player is at the top of his level and the opponent beat him easily!
- I have a strong kick serve out to my opponent's backhand, but this opponent returned it with ease!
- I see NTRP skills two levels above mine!
- That player is a teaching pro!

***Arguments that match results, in themselves, are a clear indication that player is playing at top of next NTRP level or higher.***

- This player won all his matches by a significant margin in straight sets!
- My player is very strong and was beaten 6-0, 6-0!
- This player won all matches played in the local league!
- This player is playing one level higher than his self-rating and is winning at that higher level.

***Claims of specific stroke skills without demonstration of actual conditions related to NTRP mismatch.***

- I have a strong kick serve out to my opponent's backhand, but this opponent returned it with ease!
- This player was returning my serves with winners!
- This player's forehand/backhand was so strong that it could hardly be returned!
- This player used a split step approach to the net so he can't possibly be a 2.5 player!

***Claims of athletic prowess without any direct tie of player history to tennis.***

- This person played basketball at the University of Tennessee.
- This individual has played professional baseball.
- This player went to college on an athletic scholarship (in a sport other than tennis) so he/she obviously can't be a 3.5.