

Skill Assessments

The goal of a Skill Assessment is for you to “find your place” in our club where you will enjoy competitive games with players of similar skills. As your skills improve and your play becomes more consistent you may feel it is time to advance to the next skill rating. **To help you prepare for an assessment we recommend the following:**

- Practice and drill to ensure you are comfortable performing the skill listed below and including these skills in a game situation
- Play on the Challenge Court (see description below) on a least two occasions to help you sense how you “fit in” at the next level
- Sign up and play in the Tuesday Ladder Play (ladder start date TBD) to help you get a sense of the strength of your game
- If you have taken classes here, discuss your decision with your instructor to help gauge your readiness

The skill assessment itself will consist of you playing 2-3 games with a partner at your current skill level who also wishes to be assessed. You do not need to find a partner, someone who also signs up for an assessment will be partnered with you by the Ratings Committee. The Ratings Committee will also arrange for you to play against a team of current players at the skill level you are desiring to advance to.

The Ratings Committee members (usually 3) will observe the games played, discuss the results privately after, compile a list of your strengths and things you should focus on for future improvement. You will be notified by email in 4-5 days if you are best served continuing to play at your current skill level or advance to the next skill level.

The Ratings Committee’s assessment is based on USAP and ITPTA skill assessment standards. These are the skills you should be prepared to demonstrate in game play during the assessment.

3.0 skill level

- Consistent serves and return of serves with depth and direction
- A general understanding of rules and scoring
- A good understanding of proper positioning, especially in getting up to the kitchen line (Non Volley Zone)
- The ability to sustain a rally using both forehand and backhand with some consistency
- An ability to sustain volley and dink rallies

3.5 skill level

- High majority of serves and return of serves with depth and direction
- The ability to sustain a rally using both forehand and backhand with consistency and control
- An ability to sustain volley and dink rallies
- Ability to do resets and drop shots to get to the Non Volley Zone
- A solid understanding of proper positioning, especially in getting up to the Non Volley Zone
- Understanding of strategy and exploiting opponent's weaknesses
- A broad knowledge of rules and scoring

4.0 skill level

- High majority of serves and return of serves with depth and direction
- The ability to sustain a rally using both forehand and backhand with consistency and control
- Ability to sustain a dink rally with control and the patience to elicit a "put away" shot
- Know what balls are "attackable"
- An ability to sustain a volley rally
- Ability to hit and block hard drives effectively
- Ability to do resets and drop shots to get to the Non Volley Zone
- Ability to hit an overhead with direction, depth and placement
- A solid understanding of proper positioning, especially in getting up to the Non Volley Zone
- Ability to work with a partner via positioning and communication
- Understanding of strategy and exploiting opponent's weaknesses
- A broad knowledge of rules and scoring

Challenge Court

The purpose of the challenge court is to:

- Allow advanced players at each ratings level the opportunity to play competitive games.
- Provide players desiring to advance their rating level the opportunity to test their game at the next skill level.

Challenge Court Guidelines

- Paddles are queued up for play on one of the three Challenge Courts, 3.0, 3.5 or 4.0.
- Players may only play on the Challenge Court for their current skill rating unless they are preparing for an assessment.
- Players electing to play on a Challenge Court should understand that all players on the court are expecting a challenging game and will not be expected to 'go easy' on anyone.
- Queue up with a partner at your same Ratings level.
- No team plays more than two consecutive games on the Challenge Court.
- When a game ends, the winning team stays on and stays together after their first win, and a new team comes in to challenge them. The losers come off the court.
- If a team wins a second consecutive game, then they exit the court as well and 2 new teams come on.

Find a partner at your same skill level and play a few games on the designated Challenge Court (3.0, 3.5 or 4.0) that you desire to advance to. This will give you an opportunity to evaluate your game and readiness for play at the next skill level before scheduling an assessment with the Ratings Committee. You do not need to win the game on the Challenge Court. It is simply a way to gauge how you play at this level. (Can you meet the level of play?)

For example: A 3.0 level player desiring to advance to a 3.5 skill level rating will find a 3.0 level partner and queue up together on the 3.5 Challenge Court. Playing against a 3.5 level team will provide a challenging game to test and self-evaluate the player's game at the higher 3.5 skill level.