

Rating Questions, Answered

The E.H. Player Rating. Everything people actually ask.

Somebody is going to hand you a number between 1 and 9 and you are going to have questions about it. Fair enough. Here are the ones we get.

THE BASICS

So what is this number, really?

It is a shorthand for where your game is right now, so we can put you on a court with people who make for a good game. That is the whole job it does. It is not a grade and nobody is ranking you against the room.

Do I have to get one?

Nope. Plenty of people just show up and play. But if you have ever finished a session thinking “that was way too easy” or “I got wrecked and did not learn anything,” the number is how we stop that from happening.

How do I get mine?

Come to a morning open play block and play. That is it. A coach will watch, and you will leave knowing your number and why it is that number. No test, no sign-up, no standing in a line.

I already have a DUPR or a USAP rating. Does that carry over?

It gives us a good starting guess and the crossover chart is on the rating sheet. But we will still want to see you play once. Ratings travel strangely between systems, and we would rather look than assume.

Who sees my number?

Us, and you. It is not posted, not on a leaderboard, and not something anyone is going to announce at the door.

THE ONES PEOPLE FEEL WEIRD ASKING

What if I get a number I do not like?

Say so. Really. The number is our read on one session, and we have been wrong before. Tell a coach you think it is off and we will look again next time you play. Nobody has to wait for a review window or fill anything out.

I have played for fifteen years. In a driveway. What am I?

Come find out, and do not pre-judge yourself. Driveway years count for more than people think, and they also leave gaps in strange places. That is normal and it is fixable.

I am worried about being judged.

Everybody on this floor was a 1 at some point, including the coaches. A 1 is not a bad thing to be, it is just the day you started. The only thing we care about is that you keep coming back.

I have not played in years. Or I am coming back from an injury.

Tell us. We will rate you where you are today, not where you used to be, and we will move it as you come back. There is no penalty for being honest about a body that is still healing.

Am I stuck playing only my level now?

No. Skill-arranged courts are one thing we do, not the only thing. Mornings and Saturdays stay open to everybody on purpose, and you can always play whoever you want on an open court.

My spouse is a 6 and I am a 3. Can we play together?

Of course. Nobody is going to stop you, and honestly, that game is good for both of you. What the rating protects is the sessions where close games are the point — league nights, skill-banded evenings, Coached Open Play. Everything else is yours.

I am a 7 and there is a 3 on my court. Now what?

Play the game in front of you. Some of the best pickleball anybody plays here is a strong player deciding to make a newer player look good for an hour. If that sounds like a chore, it is worth asking why you started.

HELPING OTHERS

If you want to help newer players, tell me. Seriously — this is one of the most useful things you can do here, and I keep a list of people willing to do it.

You do not need to be a 9. A 4 helping a 2 is often better than a 9 helping a 2, because the 4 remembers what it felt like to not know. You are close enough to the problem to explain it.

You do not need to be a coach, either. Rally with somebody who is nervous. Explain the kitchen one more time. Ask a person sitting alone if they want to hit. That is the whole ask.

What is actually the best way to help somebody?

Give them one thing, not five. Pick the single change that would help most right now and let the rest go. People can hold one idea in their head mid-game. They cannot hold five, and trying makes them worse.

And if I want to get better myself?

Come to Coached Open Play, play people slightly above you, and pay attention to the shots you miss — and to what your opponent does right after. Patterns are the whole game. Also: teaching somebody else will do more for your own understanding than another hour of drills.

MOVING UP

How long until I am a 5?

Depends how often you play and what you work on. Most people move a full number in a season rather than a month. The bands are spaced so the work between them is real, which is also what makes it mean something when you get there.

Does my number cost me anything?

No. Ratings have nothing to do with pricing, membership tier, or what you pay for anything. It is purely about who you end up across the net from.

A Place For All. That is not a poster in the lobby. It is the reason this rating exists in the first place.

A number that sorted people into who matters and who does not would be worth throwing out. This one does the opposite job. It means a brand new player gets a game they can actually play, and a 9 gets a game that pushes them, and both of those people are in the building at the same time on purpose.

Show Up. Connect. Take Care of Each Other. The number is just a tool for the middle one.

Still have a question? Grab any coach on the floor, or call or text me directly at **860-917-4251**. There are no dumb ones.

Gratefully,

Taylor Heal

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A Place For All

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