



Player Grading System

Several fundamental changes to the player Grading system were implemented on August 1st 2014. The changes have been carefully considered by Tennis NZ and the Regions because the current grading system within Configure Rankings has been performing very well for 8 years. There is no doubt it has become a cornerstone of interclub competition and also excelled at seeding players for tournaments. However, there is also concern that the emphasis on **points** can cause players to fear losing and thus avoid playing certain matches.

The changes detailed below aimed to address these concerns by putting more **emphasis on what Grade a player is rather than exactly how many points they have**. The Grading System is not intended to be a points race. Rather its main purpose is to **establish playing standards for all players** so that they can play in competitions and tournaments at a level that gives them the most enjoyment. Of course a by-product of the system is that the **mountain of results** ensures that most players' grades are accurate and therefore excellent for seeding and for comparing relative player performance.

The basic concept of 12 grading bands is unchanged however;

1. There is a change to the **grading formula for promoting players to the next Grading band**.
2. All **Mixed gender matches** can now count for grading points. This will benefit players in the many parts of the country that have too few players to provide plenty of good competition.
3. **Doubles and Mixed Doubles** matches have new rules for calculating points adjustments. These should improve doubles gradings and remove the angst that some players feel when playing with an unequal partner.

Grading Bands

There are **12** grading bands but the points ranges have changed. The **S1 grade** are exclusively for ATP and WTA ranked professional players.

A Cutover at the end of July 2014 converted all players to their new points position. Basically all players stayed in their same grades and **kept their current points position within a grade**. Each active player was **granted from 0 to 4 Grade Wins based upon their current position in the band**.

Grade	New Points	Old Points	Notes
S12	0-299	1-200	Old Grade 12 extended by 100 points
S11	300-599	201-400	Old Grade 11 extended by 100 points
S10	600-899	401-600	Old Grade 10 extended by 100 points
S9	900-1199	601-900	Old Grades 9-2 are shifted up 300 points
S8	1200-1499	901-1200	
S7	1500-1799	1201-1500	
S6	1800-2099	1501-1800	

S5	2100-2399	1801-2100	
S4	2400-2699	2101-2400	
S3	2700-2999	2401-2700	
S2	3000-3499	2701-3000	Current S2 players plus all current S1 players without WTA or ATP ranking. Promotion from S2 to S1 is by manual adjustment only.
S1	3500-3999	3001-4000	Reserved for WTA and ATP ranked players. A player who loses his professional ranking will drop to S2.

Grading formula

- From August 1st – **wins** based grading
 - A player moves up a grade after a nett **5 wins** against players at the same or a higher grade. These will be known as **Grade Wins**.
 - Points within a grade band are based on Grade Wins plus bonus points for any other wins.
 - Players are not penalised for losing to higher graded players
- **Why wins based ?**
 - To encourage participation by emphasising the reward for winning, rather than losing.
 - To switch emphasis to what Grade you are, rather than how many points you have.
 - To be fairer on adult players – no longer heavily penalised for a loss to a junior
 - To enable good juniors to move up the grades faster

Grade Promotion

Number of wins required for promotion = **5 against own, or higher, grade players.**

- A win against the same Grade player counts as **1** win
- A win against a higher Grade player counts as **2** wins (singles only).
- For a loss against a same, or lower, Grade player, deduct **1** from the win count. However, the win count can never drop below zero.
- A player is promoted as soon as the 5th win is gained, even if they have a subsequent loss at the same tournament or in the same grading period (2 weeks).
- A player does not need to be at the top of the points band to get promoted.
- A player cannot be promoted on points alone.
- Wins over 12 months old are discarded.
- Players can only be **downgraded** during an **annual review** in July. Juniors will not be downgraded.

Points within a Grade

Although more emphasis is being placed on '**what Grade you are**' it is also necessary to have a way of positioning players within each Grade, particularly for seeding at tournaments.

Points are gained for each match win as below, and added to the **base** points for the Grade.

- Grade Wins are worth **50** points each
- Wins against next lower grade players earn **10** bonus points
- Wins against other lower grade players earn **5** bonus points

- Bonus points are discarded after **12** months, or after a player is promoted to a higher grade.
- The maximum points in a Grade cannot be exceeded. If necessary a player will remain at the maximum points until a Grade Win gets him/her promoted.

Losses.

- If you **lose** against a player at your **own or a lower** grade, then you drop a Grade Win and therefore 50 points. However you cannot drop below **zero** Grade Wins so your points will never drop below the band base. You can also get back 50 by winning against someone at your own level. This wasn't possible previously.
- No points are deducted for losses against **higher** graded players

Example. An S8 player with 2 Grade Wins and 3 wins against S9 players and 1 win against an S10 would have 1335 points. Formula = $1200 + (2 \times 50) + (3 \times 10) + (1 \times 5)$

The Grading List shows the Grade, points and number of Grade Wins for each player in the List. Example: Larry Lobber S8-1335-W2

Mixed Gender matches

All mixed gender matches, in competitions and tournaments that **allow mixed gender**, will be counted for grading purposes for both the male and female.

This will be achieved by converting the female player's grade to an **Equivalent Male Grade (EMG)** according to this table.

Female Grade	EMG	Points
12	12	0-299
11	11	300-599
10	11	300-599
9	10	600-899
8	10	600-899
7	9	900-1199
6	8	1200-1499
5	7	1500-1799
4	6	1800-2099
3	5	2100-2399
2	4	2400-2699
1	3	2700-2999

This change will particularly benefit players who currently struggle to get enough matches to improve their grading because of the lack of suitable opponents .

Examples.

An S7 woman (EMG 9) beating an S9 man will count one Grade win.

An S7 woman (EMG 9) beating an S10 man will not get a Grade win but will still earn 10 bonus points.

An S6 man beating an S4 woman (EMG6) will count one Grade win.
An S6 man beating and S3 woman (EMG5) will count two Grade wins.

Doubles Grades

Doubles grades have the same bands as for singles.

If the doubles partnerships **are equally balanced** then the winners will both get a Grade Win and the losers will both drop a Grade Win. Equally balanced means either all payers are the same grade, or each pair has the same combination of grades (e.g. a D6 and a D8 versus another D6 and D8).

When the partnerships are not balanced then results are processed in a way that **does not penalise unequal partners** (i.e. a higher grade player with a lower graded partner).

1. Calculate **the average Grade** of each pair by dividing their **combined grades** by 2.
2. **If the favourites win** (i.e. winners average Grade is less than the losers) **then no Grade Wins, or Losses, are awarded**, however bonus points can still be gained by the winners. E.g. If a D7+D8 (avg 7.5) beat an D7+D9 (avg 8) then no wins are awarded.
3. **Otherwise** (i.e. the pairs are equally graded or underdogs win),
 - A Winning player with **same or lower** grade as the **opposition average grade** will earn **1** Grade win.
 - A Winning player with **higher** grade than the opposition average will only earn bonus points.
 - A Losing player with **lower** grade than the opposition average will **not** lose points.
 - A Losing player with **same or higher** grade as the opposition, and whose **partner's grade is the same or higher grade than the opposition**, will lose a Grade win.
4. Bonus points – for a winning player who does not get a Grade win.
 - a. 10 points if winners own grade is same or one grade better than the opposition average.
 - b. 5 points for all other wins.

Examples...

A D5/D7 team wins against D6/D6. Average of both teams is D6 therefore use step 3 above.

- The D7 gets a Grade Win because her grade is lower than the opposition's (3a).
- The D5 does not get a Grade Win because her grade is better than the opposition's (3b), but will get 10 points.
- The losers, who are both D6, lose a Grade win (3d).

Now for the reverse case.

A D5/D7 loses against D6/D6. Average of both teams is D6 therefore use step 3 above.

- The D6 winners both get a Grade Win (3a).
- The D7 does not lose a Grade Win (3c).
- The D5 does not lose a Grade Win (3d) because her D7 partner is not as good as the opposition's average of D6.

Mixed Doubles

In mixed doubles matches all females will use their **EMG** (Equivalent Male Grade) before the average grade of each side is calculated. This will also compensate for situations where there is any imbalance in the gender pairings such as 2 women versus 1 woman and 1 man.

Example.

Side A is D7 man and D7 woman with EMG D9. Side A average grade of $D7+D9 = 8$

Side B is D8 man and D7 woman with EMG D9. Side B average grade of $D8+D9 = 8.5$ rounded to **9**

If Side A wins then neither winning player gets a Grade Win because Side A are better graded, but they get bonus points. The losers do not lose wins or points.

If Side B wins then;

Winners:

- the D8 man gets a Grade Win as he has the same grade as the opposition's average of 8.
- the D7 woman gets a Grade Win as her EMG of D9 is less than the opposition's average.

Losers:

- The D7 man loses a Grade win as he has a better grade than Side B's average and his EMG D9 partner also has an equal or better grade than Side B.
- The D7 woman loses a Grade win as her EMG of D9 is the same as Side B's average.

Annual Performance Review

In July each year a review process will downgrade **Adult** players as follows...

- **Inactivity** –players who have no activity for 12 months will be dropped a grade
- **Poor performance.**
 - Players who have remained in the **same grade for the last 12 months**. Current idea is to drop a grade if the player has zero wins within their own grade
 - except if the player has not played any matches against own grade, in which case a minimum number of wins against lower grade players will be needed to avoid a downgrade.
 - This formula will be reviewed in July 2015 **before any downgrading takes place**.