

USTPA Rider Rating System

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated December 01, 2017

What is the Rating System of the USTPA?

The USTPA has 8 Adult Rating Classifications and 2 Youth Rating Classifications. Any youth who desires to ride in non-youth classes must also have an Adult Rating Classification. Riders have separate ratings for Team Penning and Sorting and those ratings could be different. Of the 8 adult ratings, "N" is a rating reserved for truly beginner riders with rider ratings increasing through a rating of "7" for the best riders.

How does the USTPA Determine what my initial rating will be if I am new to the USTPA?

When a new member joins the USTPA by applying on-line, or by mail or e-mail, that new member will fill out a membership application. The member will then be assigned a rating classification by the National Ratings Committee, after conferring with the Regional Ratings Committee in the Region where the new member resides.

When a rider joins the USTPA at a Sanctioned event, the rider will complete the membership application, and in this case the Director-In-Charge will be responsible for giving a rating evaluation and classifying (rating) the rider that day. Every effort will be made by the Director-In-Charge to collect as much information about the rider's ability when assessing the rating.

After receiving my new membership and rider rating, will my rating change after my first USTPA show?

New members that are competing in their first show with their initially-assigned rating will be reviewed during and after the show. If the Director-in-Charge believes the initially-assigned rating is in error (too high or too low), the Director may 1) immediately re-rate the rider before they compete in the next class at that show, or 2) contact the Regional Ratings Committee after the conclusion of the show and provide a recommendation that the rider's rating be changed. Typically, a new rider rating would not be changed during the show, but it is possible if it becomes obvious during the show that the rider's initially-assigned rating is too low or too high.

How does the USTPA Determine what my rating should be if I am an active member with an established rating and riding history?

The four basic criteria that will be used by Regional and National Ratings Committees to determine a rider's ratings are:

1. Win/Loss ratio based on previous two years of competition, or in the case of a rider that has been consistently moved up in the rating system, the review period will be one year.
2. Horsemanship skills, as well as the rider's overall ability to ride.
3. The quality of steed to be used.
4. Arena awareness and cattle reading skills.

I ride in other Team Penning and Sorting associations. Do my ratings in those associations have any bearing on my rating with the USTPA?

A rider's rating in another association may or may not impact the rating that will be applied by the USTPA, and it certainly will not be a primary consideration as with the four criteria listed above. However, a rider's rating in another association can be considered as a part of the overall review process.

I am a former USTPA member, but I haven't been active for the past year and a half? What will my rating be when I come back to compete in a USTPA show?

Any individual rejoining the USTPA after a year or more absence will re-enter competition initially at the ratings they had when they last competed with the USTPA. Their rating may then be reviewed by their Regional Ratings Committee and changed with the approval of the National Ratings Committee.



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When does the Regional Ratings Committee and the National Ratings Committee review ratings to determine if any rider ratings need to be changed?

Rider rating reviews will be conducted twice annually, once in the Spring of each year, and the second review will be conducted after the World Championship Show in the fall. The new ratings will be published after each formal review, generally by May 1st and then again by December 1st. Once posted the new ratings will take effect at the next show in which the rider competes.

How often can my rating be increased or decreased during the year?

A rider with a rating of 1-7 could typically only have their rider rating increased or decreased a maximum of twice annually (spring review, by April 30th and fall review, after the World Championship Show), and that would only occur as appropriate and after a detailed review by the Regional Ratings Committee and National Ratings Committee. Except for "N" rated riders, no rider can have their rating number increased after April 30th of the competition year unless approved by both the National Ratings Committee and the Executive Committee.

Can my rating be increased or decreased more than one rating point at a time?

The USTPA Regional Ratings Committee and National Ratings Committee make every effort to assign consistent and fair ratings to every rider, and the twice-annual review process helps alleviate the likelihood that a rider's rating would ever change more than one rating point with a single change. However, while unlikely, there is no rule prohibiting such an increase or decrease.

What if I disagree with my rating. Can I protest the rating and ask it to be changed, and if so, how often can I do it, and how do I file the protest?

Any member who believes he/she is incorrectly rated may appeal their rating in writing to the USTPA Administrative Office, and rating appeals will be reviewed by the National Ratings Committee during scheduled reviews.

All rating appeals must be submitted in writing via mail or e-mail (receipt confirmation recommended) to the USTPA Administrative Office. The USTPA Administrative Office will forward rating appeals to the Vice President/Chairman of the National Ratings Committee. Faxes and verbal communications will not be accepted. Members may appeal their rating one time each year.

Rating decreases typically only occur following a specific written request by the member, and after a review by the Regional Ratings Committee and National Ratings Committee, during scheduled reviews. Once a rider's rating has reached a 2 rating, only in medically documented and observed cases of changes in physical ability will a rating reduction below a rating of 2 be considered.

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