



WFTDA Rankings Transition Plan to Address the COVID-19 Crisis

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This document describes the changes the WFTDA Rankings Theory group is proposing to adjust our WFTDA Rankings programs in light of the current worldwide COVID-19 crisis and shutdown and the plan for review and adjustment of our rankings program.

The proposed changes support the following goals:

- Reflect the values of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association in putting the health and welfare of our member leagues, skaters, officials and volunteers at the forefront of our organizational decisions surrounding this virus
- Protect the rankings of our membership from erosion due to the inability of leagues to compete in the COVID-19 environment
- Set up a system under which leagues can more equitably earn rankings points on what will be an uneven and likely regional return to play
- Transition our rankings system from these short-term changes back into our existing rankings system at an undetermined date in the next 12-18 months.

Special March 31, 2020 Rankings Release and Suspension of Rankings Releases

In order to protect the rankings of our member leagues while game play is suspended due to COVID-19, all games played starting in March 2019 will be retained in the rankings until further notice.

There will be a special March 31, 2020 rankings release to serve as a baseline for rankings moving forward. All monthly rankings releases are also suspended until further notice.

Managing the Algorithm And Game Decay In The 2020 Rankings Calculator And Transition Back To Our Current System in 2021

The WFTDA Rankings Theory Committee evaluated different decay scenarios and have settled with an option that focuses on simplicity, understandability, and fairness, with an easy to implement exit strategy back to our standard rankings system by July 2021.

The Rankings Theory Committee understands that social distancing has been implemented at different times in different countries, and will no doubt be relaxed throughout 2020 at different times too. They reviewed different decay scenarios and determined that the best system for our needs is illustrated below:

| Month | Fixed for 2020 Season | January 2021 | February 2021 | March 2021 | April 2021 | May 2021 | June 2021 | July 2021 |
|---------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 2021-07 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| 2021-06 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| 2021-05 | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2021-04 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2021-03 | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2021-02 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2021-01 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 |
| 2020-12 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-11 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-10 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-09 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-08 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-07 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-06 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-05 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-04 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-03 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2020-02 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | | |
| 2020-01 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | | |
| 2019-12 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | |
| 2019-11 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | |
| 2019-10 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | | |
| 2019-09 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | | |
| 2019-08 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | | |
| 2019-07 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | | |
| 2019-06 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | | | |
| 2019-05 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | | | |
| 2019-04 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | | | | |
| 2019-03 | 0.5 | 0.25 | | | | | | |
| 2019-02 | | | | | | | | |
| 2019-01 | | | | | | | | |

Explanation:

- The decay is fixed with all games from March 2019 through December 2019 set with a decay of 0.5 and all games played in 2020 set with no decay (decay factor 1).

- In January 2021, all games in 2020 will be given a reduced decay factor of 0.5, and all 2019 games will be given a decay factor of 0.25.
- Games played between January 2021 and June 2021 will be assigned no decay (decay factor 1).
- Jan through March 2021, there will be a rolling 23 month rankings period.
- In April 2021, we will reduce the rankings period down to 22 months.
- In May 2021, we will reduce the rankings period down to 19 months.
- In June 2021, we will reduce the rankings period down to 16 months.
- In July 2021, we will reduce the rankings back to a 12-month period, with our traditional decay model of 0.5 for games over 6 months.

By fixing the 2020 season at the start, the system ensures that anyone who cannot play in the 2020 season will not be at a disadvantage and can make the best possible decision for their return to play based on their regional and financial situations. Therefore 2020 should always be considered an anomaly when it comes to rankings, and decay factors must always take this into account.

The rankings system will continue to encourage new games taking place and better weight those recent games. However, WFTDA's Rankings Theory Committee is eager to make sure that teams that could not carry out sanctioned gameplay in 2020 are not penalized, as WFTDA's goal first and foremost is to protect the health and welfare of our participants and to avoid leagues rushing back to gameplay because they feel pressure to compete.

Given the current (and unsure) forecast for the trajectory of the virus and the high contact nature of our sport, WFTDA acknowledges that it is possible that there will be sporadic game play in 2020, with the possibility of having to shut down again should there be a resurgence in cases. This decay plan can handle that scenario by ensuring that teams who are currently ranked will not go into unranked status in January 2021. The roll-off of games will begin in February 2021. This scenario will allow membership to make preparation for the 2021 competitive season.

Moving forward into 2021, the decay factors have been designed to make sure there is no advantage to any games played at different points in the year 2020 that would lead to geographical disadvantage. The rankings period is initially expanded to 23 months to avoid teams falling off the rankings, and this is stepped back to a 12-month period in a few steps throughout 2021 to avoid drastic shifts in rankings.

Adjustments to the Strength Factor Challenge Program (SFC)

For teams who have an active boosted Strength Factor during March 2020, the Rankings Committee will reinstate the six-month boost period starting with the first sanctioned game played by the team with the SFC boost.

This will apply to the following teams:

| Team | Boosted SF |
|-----------|------------|
| AUCKLAND | 1.39 |
| OULU | 1.35 |
| LESQUADS | 2.30 |
| NAMUR | 3.34 |
| BARCELONA | 1.80 |

Rankings Committee will also waive the one SFC game in a 12-month period requirement for those teams that have already played within a 12 month period.

Return to Periodic Rankings Releases

The WFTDA Rankings Committee will need to assess the ability of our member leagues in multiple different regions and financial situations to return to rankings play in the coming year.

Once play resumes, we will determine when there is enough play in enough regions to make a rankings release viable and the appropriate frequency at which rankings should be released.

One option is to base a minimum number of games on historical data during low season months like January, February, November and December.

| Year | January | February | November | December |
|------|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| 2020 | 4 | 29 | | |
| 2019 | 5 | 21 | 61 | 7 |
| 2018 | 7 | 31 | 49 | 3 |
| 2017 | 5 | 22 | 56 | 9 |

The Rankings Committee will bring this discussion back to membership once we approach a time when we need to restart our releases.

Length of Rankings Adjustment and Periodic Review Process

The system is currently set up to freeze 2020 and to roll back to our current system in mid-2021, however with the uncertainty around the virus and medical treatment, this timeline may need to be extended.

In September 2020, WFTDA Rankings Theory will conduct the first assessment of any gameplay to date to determine if the proposed plan for January 2021 and beyond is still valid. Rankings Theory will post our evaluation and request feedback from WFTDA Membership.

Thereafter, there will be a bi-monthly review to assess the algorithm and global health climate and how it impacts our gameplay for the period of one year. Reviews will take place in the following months:

- November 2020
- January 2021
- March 2021
- May 2021
- July 2021
- September 2021

In addition to these reviews in late 2020 and 2021, WFTDA Rankings Theory will work with WFTDA Competitive Play to ensure that proposed structures for 2021 and 2022 will be supported by the rankings program. WFTDA Competitive Play's goal is to announce 2021 structures and locations by July 2020 and 2022 structures and locations by the end of 2020.