

Message from the President



Karen Rust

It almost went unnoticed, but shortly after the July meeting of the Pickleball Canada Board of Directors, I realized that I have been serving as the President of this organization for one year! That is worth noting as over the past few years we have had frequent changes of Presidents. And after being in the role, I can begin to understand why. There are many, many hours spent in meetings, on my computer, reviewing material and dealing with conflicting opinions and personalities, and I have neglected other parts of my life (just ask my husband). However, I have also had the privilege of working with some really wonderful people who are committed to advancing pickleball in Canada; something that is very important to me. And we have accomplished a lot this past year!

Very recently, my home club – Pickleball Regina Inc. – hosted the first Western Canadian Regional Championship. After the Central Regional Championship is held on the upcoming weekend, this will be the first year in Pickleball Canada’s history that a National and three Regional Championships are held. It is very rewarding to see these milestones achieved for the sport of pickleball.

There is clear evidence of growth in the numbers of recreational pickleball players and I hear every week of new courts being constructed as community leaders recognize that pickleball is not a fad, but a healthy, fun, accessible sport that all ages and abilities can enjoy.

The growth of our sport is demonstrated by another milestone recently being achieved with our membership count surpassing 37,000! This is a 9,000 (32%) increase since the end of 2021! This explosive pace of growth is going to create new challenges but by working collaboratively at levels – national, provincial/territorial, and club – I am confident we will rise to meet them. Change is happening and change can be hard, but properly managed, we will continue to thrive as organizations dedicated to “Advancing pickleball for all, for life.”

Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Sincerely,
Karen Rust
President, Pickleball Canada



Speakin' with Deakin



Steve Deakin

How is your recovery from wrist surgery going?

After my second surgery on my playing wrist on April 25 to repair a torn ligament, I knew recovery would be a long, demanding, and dedicated process. I was completely thrilled to have the best of the best for a medical team guiding me through this journey. I was given the green light by my surgeon to put a paddle back in my hand July 13 for low impact shots like dinking, drops, etc. I am working hard with my therapist (Trevor Fraser) to rebuild my strength in my playing arm and the all-important range of motion in the wrist. In my opinion, Trevor is one of the best hand and wrist specialists I have seen. I am wanting to return to the PPA tour for August 18 but that will be entirely his call. I have to listen to the professionals this time around. Haha.

What has been the biggest challenge for you during this time?

The biggest challenge by far for me has been finding balance between training, rehabilitation, and teaching. I have to be ready to compete when the time comes. I have all this self-doubt swirling around in my head. Will my wrist repair stand up to tour play? Will I be able to compete at the level I was at pre injury? The list of questions goes on and on but my medical team is confident I will return to play better than ever and I am going with that!

What have you learned about yourself during this time?

I have learned that there is more to life than pickleball. A pro athlete can sometimes lose themselves during a time where their identity is challenged through a substantial injury. Being able to balance all aspects of life is so important to me now even though I earn my living through Pickleball.

Has there been a silver lining to your break from competition?

I think the silver lining to this break from tour play is that I have been able to focus a great deal of time on my teaching business. Steve Deakin Pickleball (SDP) has flourished during this time and will continue to bring exciting new programs to the growing pickleball community in Canada. Stay tuned.

Has your therapy gone well?

Yes, I feel therapy is moving in the right direction. For me, it is understanding that it gets worse before it gets better quickly. I will simply hand this over to my medical team who takes incredible care of me. Trust the process is my philosophy here!

Was it difficult to follow your brain, rather than your heart, and not go back sooner than your therapist's plan?

100% accurate. An athlete's brain wants to return to full duties ASAP. This has always been the case with me in all the sports I have played. In some cases, it sets me back. I think with the extent of this injury and the fact I am full of hardware now, I must do as I am told and for me this is a very hard thing to do haha.

What have you been doing to stay in competition shape?

Two days after surgery, I spent 6-7 days a week in the gym. Working legs, core, and cardio. I have slowly added an upper body strengthening routine. Unfortunately, with a heavy teaching schedule this summer and rehab responsibilities, I have had to cut back a tad in the gym.

Have you picked up a paddle and done light drills?

Yes, my surgeon gave me the green light for low impact contact and drills July 13. Slow and steady for me on this.

When do you expect to be able to compete again?

I am hoping to be back on tour August 18. However, this is entirely up to my therapist. I need to be sure I am confident physically and mentally to compete at the PPA tour caliber.

What would you say to someone going through recovery of a sports injury?

This is so simple. Be patient. Listen to your medical team. Do not return too soon (as hard as that can be) as it will lead to re-injury and potentially a longer, more serious issue. Trust me, I have learned this the hard way over the years. Haha.

Coach's Corner



Start the Point Like You Mean It

Mark Renneson

There are many times in pickleball that you'll need to improvise: when you are in a bang-bang exchange at the net; when your partner throws up a poor lob and you need to defend; when a set play breaks down and you find yourself scrambling. All of these are examples of moments when you might feel like you're just trying to survive – that you're reacting more than you are thinking.

One of the things that separates levels of players, however, is what they do when they *aren't* in one of these survival mode moments. When things are slower and less frantic, strong players are typically more thoughtful about what they are doing and why, than their less-skilled counterparts.

When serving, for example, everything is under your control. You get to decide where you stand (within the rules of course) and when you hit the ball. You're standing still and completely balanced. In a moment like this, when things are calm and nothing needs to be rushed, strong players are intentional; they consider where they are

hitting the serve and how they are getting it there. Are they aiming to move the opponent wide with a short angle? Are they driving the ball to the 'T'? How about a deep and high lob serve to throw off the returner's timing?

A similarly thoughtful approach should be used when returning serve. Rather than just hitting it back thoughtlessly, strong players make a plan. Are they going to return back to the server or to their partner? How about aiming for the middle of the court? Will they use sidespin to make the third shot tougher? Who do they want hitting the third shot anyway – and why?

Speaking of third shots...strong players make a plan about what they'll do with the third *before their team even hits the serve*. They make a plan (e.g. a crosscourt drop or a down-the-line drive) not once the ball is coming toward them but before they start the point. And while there is always the option to switch to Plan B – in case something unexpected happens and Plan A doesn't make sense anymore – a little bit of pre-planning makes things less stressful as the critical moment approaches.

No matter what your skill level, I encourage you to bring the strong player mentality to your game. Especially in moments where things are a little slower and you have time to think (e.g. the serve, return and third shot), take a moment to consider what you are going to do and why – even better, bring your partner in on the conversation! Deciding what you want to do doesn't mean the ball will always go where you want. But taking a moment to make a plan improves your chances of being successful.

Mark Renneson is Tennis Canada's Head of Pickleball Coach Education. He oversees Canada's National Pickleball Instructor Certification Program which is a joint project between Tennis Canada and Pickleball Canada. He can be reached at mrenneson@tenniscanada.com

Referee's Corner

Pickleball Canada Officiating Program – Update

Alan Thompson

If you are interested in starting in the Referee Training Program, or you are already in it, you will want to know about these updates!

The Pickleball Canada Officiating Advisory Council is comprised of Representatives from each Province/Territory plus others, as required. This group has been working in different committees to update the program documentation. The purpose of which, is to have a program that will be universally accepted by PCO and USA Pickleball, regardless of where the candidate starts or completes



the process. At the present time Canada has 21 Certified Referees, all evaluated and accredited by USA Pickleball. USA Pickleball started the Certification Program in 2016 and have set a very high standard. The challenge for Pickleball Canada is to ensure that successful candidates meet or exceed this standard.

The committees mentioned above have worked at producing or amending the following documents.

- [PCO Officiating Program](#) – (Explanation of how the program works and steps involved to achieve credentials)
- [Referee Assessment Form User Guide](#) (How to conduct an assessment and complete the RAF)
- [Referee Assessment Form and Worksheet](#) (Assessment form for Assessors use)
- [Eye Acuity Form](#) (Confirmation of having 20/30 vision – required to enter Officiating Program)
- [PCO Referee Coordinator Duties & Responsibilities](#) (Regional RTC & CRC)

NOTE: If you are a CR or Level 2 Referee and you might be interested in taking on one of these positions, please contact PCO's National Leader of Officiating – officiating@pickleballcanada.org

The most important of these documents is the **Officiating Program**. It details how a Referee Candidate can start in the program and work their way through the process, all the way to becoming a Certified Referee. However, it does explain that the Certification process is **NOT** yet ready to roll out in Canada. The program is issuing credentials to those who successfully pass an assessment to either Level 1 or Level 2 Referee and will even prepare a candidate for evaluation by conducting the Advanced Training Session (ATS).

Before we can start evaluating and granting Certified Referee Status in Canada we must attract and train a group of evaluators who will be willing to conduct these sessions in their areas across the country. The Evaluator's job is a difficult one in many aspects, and it is not going to be an easy process attracting qualified individuals to this position. This may mean that those interested in becoming a Certified Referee may have to travel some distance for their evaluation.

For any Referee assessors reading this notice, we will be holding a Zoom Training Session to review and discuss the assessment process, and the use of the Referee Assessment Form. This session will be open to all CR's and Level 2 Referees. A Sign-up Genius invite will be sent directly to your email address in the near future (August/September).

On a separate note, thanks to the hard work of two Level 2 Referees and Barbara Dueck, resident of Canada and one of the 8 USA Pickleball Certified Referee Evaluators in North America, we

now have two more USA Pickleball/Pickleball Canada Certified Referees. This brings our Certified Referee count to 22 in Canada.

It was during the recent Pickleball Alberta Provincial Championships in Medicine Hat that, Barbara evaluated Bob Philip, Red Deer, Alberta and Elizabeth Folk, Comox, BC. Both Bob and Elizabeth were successful in achieving their Certification. Please join me in congratulating Bob and Elizabeth and in thanking Barbara for her time and efforts in completing these evaluations. Soon we hope to be capable of Certifying Canadian Referees in Canada as Canadian Certified Referees recognized by USA Pickleball.



The Third Shot Drop

Opinion by Wayne Kerr

Almost everyone who has played pickleball for a while has heard the term: Third Shot Drop. What is it and why do you need to possess this skill?



Because the rules state that the serving team must let the returning ball bounce before they hit it, the third shot is often played from mid-court or deeper. Since the fourth shot can be volleyed the return team usually gets to the kitchen first, AKA the non-volley zone (NVZ), thus giving them the stronger court position. This basically leaves the serving team three options when hitting that third ball:

1. Driving it - the ball can be driven hard to try and cause an error or weak reply. The risk is driving the ball into the net, sending it beyond the baseline or the returners hit a great volley.
2. Dropping it - the ball can be softly dropped into the kitchen allowing the serving team to advance to the NVZ erasing the positional advantage enjoyed by the returners. The risks are

hitting the drop shot too short and into the net or hitting it too deep giving the returners an attackable shot.

3. Lobbing it - the ball can be lobbed over the return team to push them back. The risks are providing an attackable ball or sending it too deep.

The first two options are generally the most used of the above three. In my opinion, the third shot drop is usually the best option. However, it takes the most skill and/or a lot of practice to execute successfully. Is it worth the effort? If you are trying to improve or when playing with higher skilled players the simple answer is yes. All things being equal, the team that has control of the net will win the point more than 50% of the time. You and your partner must get to the NVZ to at least even your odds of winning the point. A good third shot drop will accomplish this.

The third shot drop is essentially dinking the ball from further back in the court. Since there are probably fifty or more Youtube and FaceBook videos on the subject I won't go into too much detail on how to properly perform the shot. The third shot drop can be played with underspin (slice), topspin, sidespin or no spin. I suggest that however you prefer to hit your dink shots should be the same method you should use to hit a third shot drop, especially while you are developing the skill. If you usually add some slice when dinking do the same with the third shot drop. Be prepared to move your feet. For better control, position yourself in front of the oncoming ball so that you don't have to reach out to either side. Try to make contact with the ball 30 to 60 cms in front of your body with your paddle travelling upward. Don't be afraid to add some extra loft to the ball. The further you are from the net the more arc you should put on the ball. Let the ball fall into the kitchen.



Nobody, not even the top pro players hit perfect third shot drops all the time and that is okay. They are prepared to hit a fifth or seventh (or even ninth) shot drop to get one that will allow them to get to the NVZ. Pros understand that the main purpose of the third shot drop is providing an unattackable ball. They also know that

the most important aspect of the third shot drop is that it clears the net.

This is worth repeating: The third shot drop does not have to be perfect, but it must get over the net or the point is over.

How do you know if you or your partner has hit a good third shot drop? Watch how your opponent prepares to receive the ball. If their paddle is raised above the net or higher, you and your partner should stay back and be ready for a downward hit ball. If they drop their paddle below the net and must hit the ball upward, move in. You only have a moment or two to decide whether or not to move in, so be ready.

As your third shot accuracy improves you may want to start aiming the ball toward a weak backhand or targeting a specific part of the NVZ. It is best to do this when you have an easy return to work with or have gotten yourself into the perfect position to play the ball.

Good luck adding this invaluable skill to your game. Always keep in mind the main purpose of the third shot is to get an unattackable ball over the net, even if it takes two or more attempts and you won't go wrong.

Pickleball is the most fun you can have on a court.

Party on, my pickleball friends!

**National Pickleball Day
– August 13, 2022**



Pickleball Canada is inviting all Pickleball players to join us on **Saturday, August 13, 2022**, to mark National Pickleball Day in Canada! This is a special day to showcase the sport we all love, and there are so many ways to celebrate. How about hosting a tournament, providing free lessons, holding skills competitions, or inviting friends and family to join you in a day of play. It just has to be Fun!

National Pickleball Day is an excellent opportunity to spread awareness of the sport and introduce the game to new players across the country. Show your friends and family why pickleball is the fastest growing sport in North America.

If you do take part in, or organize a National Pickleball Day event, make sure to tell us about it! We would love to share your stories with our members on our social media, website, and PC Scoop newsletter.

You can send your pictures, videos, and stories to Kaitlyn Green, Project Coordinator at kaitlyn.green@pickleballcanada.org.



Pickleball Community Contributors

Local pickleballers among Special Olympians making history

Contributed by Garry Morehouse, Written by Erika Engel

June 7, 2022

Sports history was made in Collingwood on Sunday with the first-ever Special Olympics Ontario pickleball tournament. The growing sport is new for Special Olympics Ontario (SOO), with only two teams registered so far – one in Meaford/The Blue Mountains, and one in Midland/Penetanguishene.



Thornbury Thunder and the Huronia Power Picklers met on the court at Swing Courts in Collingwood for their first-ever tournament on June 5.

John Baird, who oversees the Huronia Power Picklers, said the team currently comprised 10 registered Special Olympic athletes, split evenly between men and women. "We started with five athletes in the summer of 2019, continued during COVID-19 indoors wearing masks, abiding with all SOO restrictions," said Baird, who also credited coach Helen Robertson for her dedicated work with the team. "Our collective

spirit, energy and love of the sport is to grow Pickleball into a SOO-sanctioned discipline."

Shelley Higginson, founder and program director at Events for Life, is one of four coaches for the Thornbury Thunder team, which includes eight athletes who practice together once a week at the Beaver Valley Community Centre. Now an avid pickleball player herself, Higginson said the team first came together in March this year with women's, men's, and mixed doubles teams. "The athletes are doing really well," she said. "It's not a recognized competitive sport yet with the Special Olympics, but we're trying to get it out there that this is a wonderful sport ... we're hoping other coaches will step up and start a team."

The match-ups from Sunday will be rematched on August 22 at the North Simcoe Rec Centre when the Thunder heads to Midland/Penetanguishene for a second tournament.

"It was great to see the fun, the laughter, and the enthusiasm of the community," said Higginson, who noted the volunteers from Swing Court's membership to help run the tournament and the games. "We'd like to encourage other communities to get involved in Special Olympics and be inclusive and get some athletes on their team," said Higginson. "The message we would really like to get out to people is to get it started in their community."

To find your local Special Olympics clubs for volunteer or participation opportunities, visit <https://www.specialolympics.ca/>

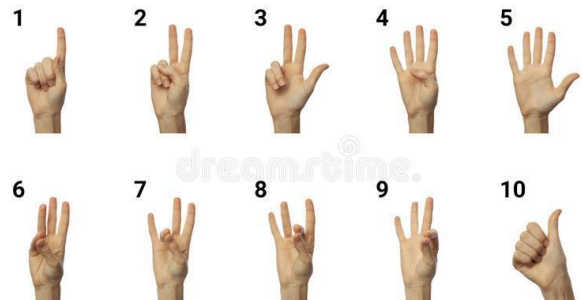


Deaf Pickleball – Scoring with ASL

Paul and Pauline Landry

My husband, Paul Landry, former Deaf elite runner, and I, took up Pickleball a few years ago in Rincon de Guayabitos, Mexico. Many more Deaf players are continuing to join this fast growing sport. To facilitate play we post a sign showing the numbers one to ten in ASL, American Sign Language.

The spin-off benefit for Canadians, Mexicans, and hard of hearing players is to more easily understand the scoring. It is our hope that more players use this easy visual scoring method.



Some Deaf Canadians regularly compete in Deaf and hearing tournaments. The Canadian Deaf Games, which includes Pickleball, took place in Laval, Quebec, July 5 - 8, 2022, and was organized by the Association Sportive des Sourds du Québec. For more information on the Canadian Deaf Sports Association, click here <https://assc-cdsa.com/en/>

The US National Deaf Pickleball Tournament 2022 will take place in The Villages, Fla. November 4-6, 2022. For more information contact Rob Cundy at lob7627@icloud.com.

Protect Your Eyes!

The Importance of Eye Protection

In the past few months, Pickleball Canada has received stories from two members sharing the severe eye injuries they have incurred after being hit in the eye with a pickleball. Read more about their stories and why eye protection is so important when playing pickleball.

Darlene Lainchbury – Williams Lake, British Columbia

On June 12th, Darlene attended a drop-in session to play with fellow members. After a fast-paced game with some higher ranked players, she played another game with similarly ranked players. This second game was very even and both teams were at the kitchen line volleying.



A hard hit came off of an opponent's paddle and hit Darlene directly on the open eyeball. In immense pain, Darlene knew it was bad as she felt her eye explode and was bleeding profusely.

At the hospital the doctor sent pictures of her ruptured eye to a surgeon in Vernon who said he was available to perform the surgery. After a 5-hour drive, Darlene made it to Vernon, but was not doing very well. She was rushed into surgery, where they tried to put her eye back together.

The surgeon explained that essentially everything that should have been inside her eye was on the outside. She was then sent to Kamloops to a specialist and is now being sent

to another surgeon to determine next steps.

Darlene had protective eye wear but never wore them because she felt they impaired her vision and were ugly. She also thought the chances of getting hit in the eye seemed low. While many people are shocked to hear a pickleball did this, it's not the slow game it

used to be. Darlene now believes we all need to keep up with the evolving game, including safety measures.

This injury has completely changed Darlene's life. She doesn't know if she will drive again, ride her bike or do a lot of other things. At 65 it's not easy to adjust. Darlene urges players to not be the next casualty by wearing eye protection and still having fun.

Rob Fahrlander – Sundre, Alberta

Rob suffered an eye injury on May 4th while playing pickleball in Sundre. While not as extreme of a case as Darlene's, he does have permanent vision impairment. The ball came into his court from a medium powered return. His partner on his left just caught the ball on the top of her paddle and it did a 45 degree turn to the right, directly hitting his open eye. It was a freak course for the ball, fortunately slowed down by his partner's paddle, or it could have been worse. Rob said he cannot imagine what a direct impact from a hard spiked ball would feel like.

His retina specialist in Calgary informed him that his vitreous has separated from the retina, causing a permanent cloudy patch in his vision. This may happen naturally as we age, but the separation was advanced by the pickleball's impact.

Since his accident, Rob has been conducting some trials to find what glasses work under fluorescent lights when playing inside and has found that either smoked tint or brown tint are the best. While the glare and fog that can occur with glasses is not ideal, Rob urges members to put their safety first and work together to find solutions to these issues.

NOTE: PICKLEBALL CANADA STRONGLY RECOMMENDS ALWAYS WEARING PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR WHEN PLAYING PICKLEBALL

Youth Pickleball

Youth Pickleball in Muskoka Lakes

Gloria Gardner, Ambassador

Muskoka Lakes Pickleball hosted a two hour pickleball clinic for a group of home schooled children in Muskoka on Friday, April 29th, 2022. Twenty-six children ages 6 to 14 years of age participated.

During the clinic, the children were led through warm ups, lead up skills, and basic start up skills to get them comfortable on the court, which they enjoyed. The clinic was a fun, active and social way to learn this popular game and have the kids start learning early the importance of being fit for life.

The group was assisted by some wonderful volunteers: a recently retired physical education teacher from Ancaster, Lyn Mastroluisi,

her friend Carol-Angela Orchard (an extremely accomplished gymnastics coach who also loves pickleball!), and parent Lockman Law.



The Township has followed up on the initial clinic by offering free pickleball for kids for one hour each week during July and August at two locations in the Township of Muskoka Lakes: Mondays 12-1pm in the Bala Arena and Thursdays 12-1pm in the Port Carling Arena. 29 kids participated in Port Carling on July 21st!



Contributors:

Karen Rust
Steve Deakin
Mark Renneson
Alan Thompson
Wayne Kerr
Garry Moorehouse
Erika Engel

Pauline Landry
Paul Landry
Darlene Lainchbury
Rob Fahrlander
Gloria Gardner
Carla Anderson
Kaitlyn Green



On the lookout for Contributors

We would love to share your stories, club events, photos, news, etc. Let us know if you have any ideas for content that would serve our membership.

We invite you to contact Kaitlyn Green at scoop@pickleballcanada.org

We know you are out there, and we are looking forward to hearing from you!