



Message from the President Val Vollmin

For new Pickleball Canada members, this is my first chance to introduce myself to you. For long-term members, we may have crossed paths in the pickleball world along the way.

My pickleball journey started back in 2010, and I was a founding member of the Red Deer Pickleball Club, where I served as president from 2014-2019. I was pleased to serve as the president of Pickleball Canada (PCO) as well from late 2015 to early 2018, when we started the journey to become a National Sport Organization (NSO). I'm an avid player myself, as well as a Certified Referee having served as Head Referee for the 2021 Pickleball Canada National Championships in Red Deer, and recently officiated at the Pickleball Canada Western Regionals in Medicine Hat, and I was happy to have the opportunity to speak with so many pickleball players.

In my early days as President of PCO, I remember a relatively small national organization with just 2,000 members, and the early conversations with the provinces on why affiliation with the national organization would be good for pickleball in Canada. When I left, several provinces had joined the larger pickleball family, bringing PCO to 10,000+ members.

It is incredible to see the continued growth since, with now just over 55,000 PCO members. It is also wonderful to see how many people care about the continued growth and good governance of the sport in Canada, with many passionate voices on the PCO Board of Directors. The full list of current Directors since the Annual General Meeting in late June, can be found further down in this newsletter. While the incoming Board is looking forward to accomplishing the key priorities ahead of us, we also acknowledge that Pickleball Canada has accomplished a tremendous amount in the last few years, from the collective efforts of many volunteers, and we thank them all.

Since the last edition of PC Scoop, there have been three regional Championship Tournaments. A big thank to you to Pickleball Nova Scotia (Atlantic Regionals), the Medicine Hat Pickleball Club (Western Regionals), and the Kingston Pickleball Club (Central Regionals) for doing a superb job to create new pickleball memories and competitive experiences for our members.

Officiating: We appreciate the progress that the Officiating committee has made over the last couple of years. This committee was first led by Walter Knecht and currently by Alan Thomson. We now have 120 Level 1 referees, 111 Level 2 referees and 23 Certified referees.

Coaching: The Pickleball Coach Education Program, which is part of the Coaching Association of Canada's National Coaching Certification Program, NCCP, was introduced in 2021. The program was originally spearheaded by former President of Pickleball Ontario, and Pickleball Canada, Jim Parrott. Jim Parrott and Kirk Jensen led months of detailed discussions and negotiations to structure the agreement, a partnership with Tennis Canada, and Karen Rust diligently worked on the final details of the agreement when she became President of PCO in 2021. PCO now has more than 800 NCCP certified coaches.

Governance: A great deal of work was done over the past two years to develop modern bylaws that are consistent with the Canada Not for Profit Act and the Canadian Sport Governance Code. This was led first by Karen Wallace in 2021-2022, and then Dave Best in 2022, along with many other volunteers from the Board and the provinces. I would like to thank them all for their time and commitment. The bylaws continue to be a work in progress and something that the new Board will be working on.

Sponsorship Assistance: Last year, PCO did much research in selecting a partner to assist with obtaining sponsorship funding. The successful firm was Sponsorship Canada, who work with the PCO staff to ensure new partners are in line with the direction of PCO. Since the agreement was signed in January 2023, PCO has received significant dollars from three major sponsors, which will help PCO continue to grow with new programs and benefits to our members.

In addition to Skechers being the official footwear of the 2023 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championships, two new national partnerships have recently been announced:

- *Franklin®*: the official ball and paddle of Pickleball Canada, with Franklin® balls exclusively used at our National and Regional championships, and;
- *Myoflex®*: the official topical pain relief of Pickleball Canada, and title sponsor for our National Championships.

I am excited by the possibilities that come with corporate support for pickleball in Canada, and what this could mean for the game we all love.

Opportunities beyond Canada's borders are exciting too. As previously announced, the Pickleball Federation of the Americas (founded by U.S.A., Pickleball, Pickleball Canada, and Liga Profesional de Pickleball Mexico) promises to bring new collaboration and growth opportunities for pickleball within the Americas, and I look forward to leveraging this new federation to further support Pickleball Canada members and the growth of pickleball north of the border.

Have a great rest of your summer and enjoy some pickleball!

Val Vollmin
President, Pickleball Canada



Franklin – the Official Paddle and Official Ball of Pickleball Canada

On June 22, 2023, it was [announced](#) that Pickleball Canada and Franklin® Sports are entering a partnership agreement that, among other things, will make Franklin® (with its wide assortment of paddles, and its signature X-40 and X-26 balls) the official paddle and ball of Pickleball Canada.

Franklin® balls will be exclusively used during Pickleball Canada's National and Regional Championship events from 2023-2027.

Take a peak at some of the Franklin® pickleball product line at: <https://franklinsports.com/sports/pickleball>



Myoflex® unveiled as title partner of Pickleball Canada National Championships

On July 18, 2023 it was [announced](#) that Myoflex® will be the title partner of the Pickleball Canada National Championships from 2023 through to 2025. The announcement took place in Markham, ON (home to Exzell Pharma Inc., parent company of Myoflex®) with national and local media, elected officials from the City of Markham, and local pickleball players in attendance.

Watch the full announcement (in English) at: <https://fb.watch/ISTxkyFDu6/>

Learn more about the pain relief products offered by Myoflex® by visiting myoflex.ca



Steve Deakin

For this issue, we thought we'd check in with Steve on how his summer is going and his thoughts for his upcoming return to Canadian pickleball competition for Nationals in Regina.

We are now in the peak of summer. Is it difficult to find a balance between enjoying all that summer has to offer and ensuring adequate time for practice and competition?

My life is consumed with pickleball, especially in the summer. It's a very busy time for training, practice, tournaments, and teaching opportunities. Finding balance for me is extremely

challenging. I put all my eggs in the pickleball basket four years ago and have been very fortunate to call a sport a career. However, I have difficulty not thinking about it 24/7. I guess you can say pickleball all encompassing. I have too many projects on the go at the moment and do my best to not get overwhelmed.

What has been your favourite non-pickleball experience so far this summer?

I suppose throwing out the first pitch at the Toronto Blue Jays game, but I guess that had something to do with pickleball. Haha.

The 2023 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship tournament is just around the corner in Regina, Saskatchewan, a city you enjoy competing in. For first time visitors to Regina, do you have any "must dos" (i.e., places to eat, sightseeing)?

I am definitely looking forward to competing in this event. I am playing in four events there, so it will be busy. I have been fortunate enough to have some of the very best host housing in this city. The Iron Dog and his significant other (they will know who they are, haha) have fed me very well while I visited for work. They know I prefer home cooking since I am on the road most of the time. Chateau Iron Dog is the place to be for the best food in town. Just Google it.

Unfortunately, I have not had a ton of time for sightseeing in Regina. I will simply enjoy the summer time heat, good friends, and amazing Canadian competition!

For players who may be participating in their first ever National Championship tournament this year in Regina, do you have any tips for their final few weeks of preparation?

Competing in a National Championship is definitely a special time. It's a tournament that allows you to see how you stack up against the best in the country in your particular skill level. At this point, I would continue to work hard (80% drill, 20% play). One week before the event, swap those training percentages and be mindful to eat and sleep well leading up to the tournament. Especially if you plan on playing multiple events. Most importantly, have some fun out there!

Do you have a favourite memory from the Canadian National Championships in recent years?

I competed in my first Canadian National Pickleball Championship in 2017 in Kelowna, BC. I had only been

playing pickleball for a couple of months or so and had no idea this sport was established enough to have an event of this size in Canada. A friend of mine from the US came up to play the event and his partner had a last-minute injury. I had no plans to play the event as registration had closed before I had even held a paddle for the first time. They allowed him to find a last partner and I stepped in. We won the 4.5 division and that was my first Canadian National Pickleball title. Without a doubt my most special.

On the lighter side; thousands of Canadians saw you throw out the very accurate first pitch at the Toronto Blue Jays pickleball day on May 20. Are you giving any consideration to getting back into baseball as a professional pitcher?

Although the pitch was accurate, I am sure it was clocked at 33mph and that is being generous. I had much more in the tank but I did not want to show up the Blue Jays pitching staff in front of all their fans. My agent has been fielding calls from other MLB teams but I thought I would stick with pickleball. It was a tough decision but the right one. Ha ha.

Paddle up everyone and have fun out there!

Pickleball Canada Referee Certification Program

**Evaluation to Certified Referee
Now Available in Canada
Alan Thomson**

For all those in the Pickleball Canada (PCO) Officiating Program and perhaps those thinking about becoming a credentialed Referee, this will hopefully come as welcome news!

PCO is announcing that the Officiating Program will now include ***Evaluation to Certified Referee!*** This will be a reciprocal program between Pickleball Canada & USA Pickleball, for all those who are members in good standing, with both organizations.

The Pickleball Canada Officiating Program – Overview <https://pickleballcanada.org/officiating-program/> provides all the information you need to know about becoming a credentialed Referee from Trainee to Certified Referee.

NOTE: This information has been revised and the updated version will be on the PCO website in both languages once translate has been completed.



There will be a \$150 application fee to apply for evaluation. This fee will cover the cost of the Evaluator for the on-court evaluation, and if successful, two (2) Pickleball Canada Certified Referee Shirt (shipping not included), and Picture ID badge with magnet for displaying on a shirt or coat.

2023 Pickleball Canada Regional Championships

Having just returned from the Atlantic & Western Regional Championships, I thought it appropriate to report that both of these tournaments were a great success! Much credit for that success goes to the two dedicated Tournament Directors, Donald Johnson (Atlantic) and Brenda Lea MacPhail (Western) and their very hard-working volunteer groups!

The tournaments were different in a number of respects, with the Atlantic's being held at the Sobeys Atlantic Tennis Centre in Bedford N.S., with indoor temporary PB courts and very warm conditions. The format was round robin leading to medal matches, which players seem to enjoy due to the number of matches played. The volunteers did an excellent job of moving people to courts, with very little down time – albeit, with long days for volunteers. Refereeing was not available for all matches, but was done for all medal match games, and the majority of pre-medal matches, by a small group of very well trained (Angela Weld) and motivated Referees... three Certified Referees, seven Level 2 officials and eleven Level 1 officials.

This year's Western Regionals were held in Medicine Hat, AB at their newly constructed 20 court complex with an additional 6 indoor courts used for singles play. Again, extremely well organized and run, by Brenda Lea MacPhail (tournament director), Wanda Lazar, (Co-chair) and Don Knutson (Referee Coordinator), with warm to hot weather, which I mention as we will need to discuss how Referees should be handling the issue of player hydration during a match.

With the introduction of the Per Diem program, there was an excellent group of Credentialed Referees in attendance and available throughout tournament: 16 Certified Referees, 23 Level 2 officials and three Level 1 officials, allowing ALL 518 matches to be Refereed.

NOTE: The 16 Certified Referees in attendance represent 75% of all Canadian Certified Referees. An outstanding feat to have them in attendance at a single tournament!

Many comments were made by the players on the quality of the Refereeing and the appreciation of their attendance

during some extreme conditions and long days. This is a very important issue. If we are to successfully grow the Referee group in Canada, we need the players' recognition and endorsement that major tournaments such as Pickleball Canada's National and Regional Championships need to have every match refereed by Professional Referees - working towards all Sanctioned events having Referees for all games. Thanks to Garand Jones (Alberta Head Referee) for canvassing and coordinating the Referee group!

Hydration Concerns

Hydration was an issue at both tournaments and again should be reviewed. Hydration breaks per se were eliminated from the rule book several years ago. This does not mean players are not allowed to consume liquids during a match, nor does it mean they can only do this during requested time outs. Referees have a responsibility to continually monitor the flow of a game ensuring that the opposition is not interfering with the pace of the game, which is usually established by the serving team.

NOTE: Referees should NEVER allow all four players to stop play to take on liquids at one time. This is a hydration break and no longer authorized by the rules!

A receiver may take a quick drink when the ball is being returned to the serving team, as long as it does not slow the game. Remember, Referees are to call the score when all players are ready or SHOULD be ready! Therefore, if a receiver is off the court taking a drink when the serving team is in position to serve the ball, the Referee is to call the score when that player should have been or could have been in position. Pretty easy to see that as the receiving team you are in jeopardy of being served on if you are taking too much time. However, if you are the serving team and are quickly taking a drink when the ball is returned and the Referee believes you should have been in position, they may call the score, but as per the rules, the serving team still has 10 seconds to get the ball into play... far less jeopardy!

Hint, take a drink when you are the serving team not the receiving team, but remember, the rules permit you to take on liquids at any time during a match!

Alan Thomson is the National Leader of Officiating and chairs Pickleball Canada's Officiating Advisory Council.



Better Footwork, A Three-part Series

Opinion by Wayne Kerr

With the addition of younger and more skilled players from other racquet sports such as tennis, badminton and squash the game of pickleball is changing. To keep up with additional power and more spin we need to improve or get left behind. Better footwork will help us get to more balls and hit higher quality shots, plus improved footwork might even be the easiest way to move up a level.

Most of us can dink the ball, hit decent dropshots and put the ball away when we get the opportunity. How will moving my feet differently help me hit the ball better? The answer is better preparation and improved court coverage, which includes transitioning from the baseline to the kitchen. Better, more efficient, footwork will help your game no matter what your level.

How you are moving on the court probably isn't incorrect or wrong but there may be more efficient methods you can add to your game. In this series I'll discuss three footwork methods we can all employ to help us with better court coverage: the Split-step, the Lunge (the better way), and the Shuffle-step.

Part 1 - The Split-step

Most of us were taught to get to the kitchen as fast as possible (and stay there). While it is true that being at the kitchen line is the most effective place to be on a pickleball court, getting there fast at the expense of hitting a low-quality shot or making an error is not the answer. Any extra motion, such as running, while you're striking the ball can cause mishits, outright errors and is generally less accurate. Adding a split-step to your movement can pay big dividends.

What is a split-step? It is a method of getting into the optimal balanced and ready position: paddle out front, knees slightly bent, feet roughly shoulder width apart and heels off the ground. No matter where you are on the court or where you are moving to, just before your opponent hits the ball you want to be in this position - balanced so that you can easily react to any shot that comes across the net.

Practice getting into this position by taking a couple steps forward, then for just a moment stop and assume the ready position, then continue forward. Do this over and over until it becomes comfortable and you can maintain your balance throughout the process.

Many top players hop into the ready position, whether or not they are moving, each and every time the other side is about to hit the ball. This is a great habit as it gets them off their heels and ready to react in whatever direction is needed to prepare for the incoming shot. This early preparation gives a player the best opportunity to be as balanced and as steady as possible so that they can strike the ball cleanly and accurately.

You will find the sweet-spot on your paddle and become more accurate when your head and body are stationary while hitting the ball. A split-step gives us the best opportunity to be as prepared as possible to strike the ball well.

Rather than rushing through your shots on your mad dash to get to the kitchen line, employ the split-step and hit high quality balls, before continuing to your destination. This simple change will immediately result in fewer unforced errors and help get you to the next level.

Next time we will discuss a better, more efficient way to lunge for difficult to reach balls.

Party on, my pickleball friends!



Saturday, August 12 is National Pickleball Day

Although most of us don't need a special reason to organize a game of pickleball, [National Pickleball Day](#) on Saturday, August 12 is a darn good excuse!

Share this special date among your pickleball friends, clubs, and on social media to garner excitement and incentive to organize special pickleball events on August 12, such as:

- Introduction to pickleball sessions for new players
- Fun tournaments
- Play and social activity (e.g., BBQ)
- “Bring a friend” day

Share your pickleball activities on Saturday August 12 with your social media ([#NationalPickleballDay](#)) networks, and tag Pickleball Canada.

If you have a particularly special or unique success story that you think would make an interesting feature in the September issue of Scoop and/or a Pickleball Canada social media post, please share it with us at: scoop@pickleballcanada.org



Pickleball Federation of the Americas

Tony Casey, Global Affairs, Pickleball Canada

Since the fall of 2021, Canada has been actively working with the United States and many other countries to get pickleball unified at the continental and global levels.

The unification of our great sport will:

- help pickleball gain entry into the Olympics, Pan Americans and other major games.
- result in the sharing of resource materials, best practices and tournament opportunities among nations
- strengthen & formalize the critical relationship between Pickleball Canada and the USA Pickleball Association.

On April 20, 2023 Canada, the US and Mexico launched the Pickleball Federation of The Americas. The PFA is growing steadily and has now added Peru, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Panama, as well as “Caribbean region”. Discussions are underway with Argentina, Brazil, and other countries as they prepare their applications for PFA membership.

The Americas Championship is taking place from November 26 to December 2nd in Los Cabos, Mexico. Details on this open tournament will be shared through Pickleball Canada to as they are released in early August. It is the first sanctioned event of Pickleball Federation of the Americas with an anticipated 350 players.



Announcement of 2023-2024 Pickleball Canada Board of Directors

The election of the 2023-2024 Pickleball Canada Board of Directors took place as part of the Annual General Meeting on June 28, 2023.

Newly elected Board members include David Edwards, Rod Hamilton, Eileen McClean, Bryan Merritt, Jason Mohrbutter, Brian Rychlicki, Steve Sagal, Val Vollmin, and Beverley Walker.

The 2023-2024 Board of Directors is as follows:

- Val Vollmin, President
- Beverley Walker, Vice-President, Operations
- Rod Hamilton, Treasurer
- Bryan Rychlicki, Secretary
- Leigh Bradwell, Director-at-Large
- Deanna Christie, Director-at-Large
- Cynthia Clark, Director-at-Large
- David Edwards, Director-at-Large
- Eileen McClean, Director-at-Large
- Bryan Merritt, Director-at-Large
- Jason Mohrbutter, Director-at-Large
- Steve Sagal, Director-at-Large
- Garth White, Regional Director (British Columbia and Yukon)
- Hirsch Greenberg, Regional Director (Prairies)
- Daphne Micallef Reid, Regional Director (Ontario)
- France Emery, Regional Director (Quebec)
- Pat Morrison, Regional Director (Atlantic)

Registration for Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship

Players have until **August 9, 2023** to register for the Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship tournament, being held in Regina, Saskatchewan from August 23 to 27, 2023 and hosted by Pickleball Regina Inc.

Events are broken down by disciplines (women's doubles, men's doubles, mixed doubles, and singles) as well as various skill and age groupings that offer players many options to compete at the national championship tournament.

Players can find out all the details and register at the following link:

[Pickleball Brackets - Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship](#)

Steve Deakin Pickleball Clinics are also being offered on Tuesday, August 22 in Regina. Information and registration is available at: <https://stevedeakinpickleball.com/register/>

Volunteers: if you plan on being in Regina during Nationals and are interested in volunteering, the local organizing committee would love to hear from you. Expressions of interest are being accepted now!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080949aaad2ea7f85-volunteer4#/>

Myoflex® Road to the Championships: keep an eye on our social media channels for stories leading up to the national championships over the course of August. If you have an inspirational story in your own community (e.g. players driving across the country to Regina, players who have overcome major health obstacles, a fun training group for local players heading to Nationals), let us know at: tournaments@pickleballcanada.org



2023 Regional Championships

More than 1,100 Pickleball Canada members participated in three regional championship tournaments earlier this summer. Thanks to all local host committees, volunteers, referees, and player for making these tournaments so memorable in 2023.

To view the full lists of Regional Championship medalists, visit:

[Atlantic Regional Championship \(June 23-25 in Bedford, Nova Scotia\)](#)

[Western Regional Championship \(July 6-9 in Medicine Hat, AB\)](#)

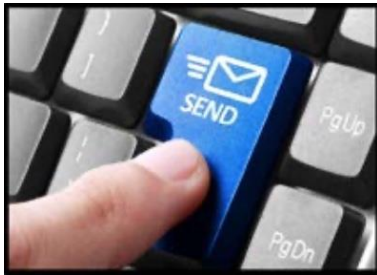
[Central Regional Championship \(July 13-16 in Kingston, ON\)](#)



Contributors:

Val Vollmin
Steve Deakin
Alan Thompson

Wayne Kerr
Tony Casey
Carla Anderson
Dave Harris



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 us at scoop@pickleballcanada.org

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

