

La version française suit



Message from the President Val Vollmin

As another summer of pickleball draws to a close, I hope you have all been able to get out on the courts and enjoy some games. Since the last newsletter, Pickleball Regina hosted a terrific Nationals tournament from Aug 23-27 with approximately 635 players from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland. Thank you to Pickleball Regina Inc., and their amazing group of volunteers!

We are saddened to inform you that Carla Anderson, the Executive Director of Pickleball Canada is leaving PCO at the end of September, as she is moving on to a new challenge. Carla was hired as the first PCO staff person in April of 2021 as a part time employee. Carla brought to PCO 35 years of experience working in the Canadian sport community, first with the Canadian Olympic Committee, as Director Games, and then as the Executive Director of Taekwondo Canada. Carla's knowledge, experience, and work with others in the sport community helped PCO become more recognized as a strong emerging sport within the community. Carla's role moved from part time to full time in 2022 and new staff were hired to assist the organization with the tremendous growth we were experiencing. Also under Carla's leadership, PCO now has four new sponsors, who are a great addition to PCO, with more to come. I wish to thank Carla for her dedication, hard work, and passion for the sport we all love.

I would also like to introduce you to two new PCO staff. First, we have Elizabeth Werner who started in August of this year as the Communications & Project Coordinator. Elizabeth recently graduated with her Master of Human Kinetics Concentration in Sports Management from the University of Ottawa. Her recent work has been with Ottawa

Sports Entertainment Group Foundation where she supported community impact events with a focus on youth in the Ottawa area. For those of you who follow our website and social media, you can thank Elizabeth for the postings. Welcome to the team Elizabeth!

The second person is Gloria Wipf, who is our new Sport Manager who was hired in mid-September. Gloria has a wealth of pickleball experience, including being the President of the Parkland Pickleheads Pickleball Club, the first Canadian referee to be certified in Canada, a Level 1 Pickleball certified coach, a Tournament Director for six PCO sanctioned tournaments and is a 4.5+ pickleball player. Gloria's professional experience started with earning a Diploma in Criminal Justice and Corrections at Lethbridge Community College, which continued into a long career in law enforcement. Some of Gloria's areas of responsibility include, sanctioning tournaments, Pickleball Coach Education Liaison, key contact to the Chair of Host Committee for the PCO Championships, and much more. Welcome to the team Gloria!

For those who have not heard the 2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National tournament will be held in beautiful Bedford, Nova Scotia from August 20-24. We hope to have you join us for this exciting event!

Val Vollmin
President, Pickleball Canada



Steve Deakin

As we near the end of the summer, we wanted to check with Steve on how his summer went, and in particular, his return to Nationals in Regina, and his plans for Fall.

Steve, you recently played in the Myoflex® 2023 National Championship in Regina. How did it feel to be back at Nationals? And lol, can you give us a bit of a play by play on those

shots, first from the floor and then behind your back?

I had played Nationals in Red Deer in 2021 and what many didn't know (not even my partners) was that I was being held together with cortisone and pain pills. I was able to manage a very patient and slow game to get the job done but it was not a comfortable experience. It is always nice to compete in my home country but I could not enjoy the event as much as I was in substantial pain. I missed the 2022 Nationals in Kingston as I was recovering from multiple wrist surgeries. It was surreal to be back for the 2023 Nationals in Regina and this time around I was healthy and able to play with not too much discomfort. I think for me it was so refreshing to connect with not only the Canadian PB fans but my peers who many I would call friends. It was a very nice change of pace to the week in and week out grind of the professional pickleball tour.

I was so surprised how this point took off on social media. I am asked about it all the time. Watching it back, there were so many things that had to happen in order for it to unfold the way it did. It started with my partner Brad Chapman running down a let cord to keep the point alive while I was attempting to get off the ground. I made the decision to stay on the ground as my opponent hit the ball back to me. If I didn't do this, I would have not been able to retrieve the first ball. However, the behind the back shot as I got to my feet was a last resort attempt to keep the ball alive. I was anticipating my opponent to attack middle and when he went behind me, I knew I was beat and threw the paddle behind me in desperation. I felt solid contact and knew it had a chance. I mess around in practice sometimes with these types of shots and it came in handy in this situation haha. We were fortunate to win that point and having it be match point for us in a winners bracket final at a National Championship in the main event was unreal.

To continue with Nationals, you received incredible support at these Nationals You even got a standing ovation during the semi-finals of the Men's Doubles Pro. How does all that support make you feel?

I think the fans do not realize fully how support like that feels to a player. That standing ovation was a top 3 moment in my pickleball career for a variety of different reasons. (And I have been grateful enough to have countless special moments on court) Firstly, it was at the end of a high light reel point. Secondly, it was a match point. Thirdly, it was on Canadian soil at our National Championships in a match to advance Brad and I to the gold medal match. Lastly, it allowed me to feel alive again on court and my emotional explosion was proof of that. My comeback after a near career ending injury has been nothing short of "challenging". Many are not aware of the let downs and disappointments I have endured along the way but I continued to work hard and fight in the face of adversity. So, I would like to say thank you to the fans of Canadian Pickleball who have been supporting me throughout this comeback. Each and everyone of you have helped me.

You mentioned in the July issue of SCOOP that one of the places you wanted to visit while in Regina was the Iron Dog restaurant. Did you get a chance to go there and how was it?

The Iron Dog Restaurant has always been my favourite place to eat while in Regina. Not too many people know of this fine establishment. It's a home cooked meal vibe and I am happy to call the chefs my friends.

Regina Pickleball Inc. did an amazing job as the host for Nationals. Can you share with us your overall thoughts of this Championship event?

You are absolutely correct when you say the Regina PB Club did an amazing job as host for

this year's Nationals. I play in many venues across North America on the biggest stages and this event in my humble opinion was run very professionally. For me, I like events to run on time with minimal wait times in between matches. This is where I think PB Regina did a great job. There will always be hiccups at tournaments but minimizing those hiccups is what matters. I don't think tournament directors and volunteers get enough recognition for what they do. In fact, I feel they are the first to have the finger pointed at them when something doesn't go right. Oversights can happen in big events like this but I feel the tournament did a fantastic job in adapting on the fly. Great job PB Regina!

Since summer is coming to close, what were a few of your favourite pickleball moments?

I have a few that stand out to me personally. Getting back on a podium on the PPA tour was a massive accomplishment for me. Secondly, securing gold medals in both the gender and mixed doubles main events at Canadian Nationals was very special to me and my partners. Lastly, throwing out the first pitch at a Blue Jays game was something I will never forget.

And moving forward, what are you plans for the fall?

I have a jammed packed fall planned. I recently received a very nice contract extension from the PPA that will allow me to play professional pickleball at the highest level until the end of 2026 season. So, I will be training extremely hard off court the next 3 months to ensure I am at my best physically for the 2024 season. I am very excited for what lays ahead for pickleball.

Paddle up everyone and have fun out there!



Comfortable Discomfort in Coaching Mark Rensson

When working with pickleball players an instructor has to wear many hats: leader; organizer; safety monitor; cheerleader; etc. They also need to wear the hat of teacher. After all, while people go to pickleball sessions to have fun, be active and make new friends, they are also there to learn new things and improve their skills. We must not lose sight of this.

How does that saying go? *You have to break a few eggs if you want to make an omelet.* I interpret this maxim as pointing to the fact that learning is often messy and disruptive. Whether you are figuring out a better way to work, developing stronger muscles, or learning to master that third shot drop, there are going to be some struggles along the way. Some eggs are going to get broken!

We as coaches should communicate this to our players. We should talk to them – preferably before it happens – about the fact that learning is sometimes uncomfortable. We should warn them that over the course of their lesson(s), they might get frustrated or annoyed with themselves. They might even feel like they are regressing and 'getting worse'. This is normal.

In fact, I'd argue that if our players aren't feeling any discomfort, we probably aren't doing our job that well. We may be setting the bar too low and expecting too little from them. Don't get me wrong – we don't want our players demoralized and leaving the court in tears – but they should feel like they are being pushed and their boundaries are being expanded.

What about you?

Assuming you agree with the premise that discomfort is often (though not always) necessary for growth, I might ask the same question about you and your own coaching practices. What are you doing to grow? How are you expanding your boundaries? When was the last time you purposely made yourself uncomfortable as a coach?

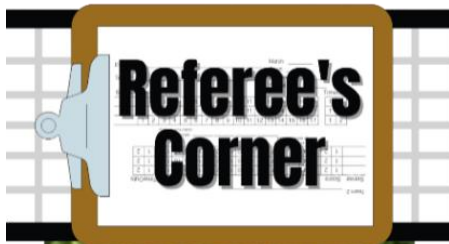
If you're looking for some ways to push yourself, I have a few suggestions:

- Give yourself little challenges (e.g. can you keep all of your demonstrations and instructions to under 60 seconds? How about under 45? 30?).
- See how precisely you can follow a lesson plan.
- What happens when you give yourself only the outlines of a lesson plan (or maybe just the themes) and then let your instincts and intuition take over?
- Can you get each player to hit 500 balls per hour? How about 750? Is 1000 possible?

These kinds of challenges – that might even be a little uncomfortable at first – can not only keep your lessons more interesting for you, but can prompt you to rethink and improve your own coaching practices. And after all, isn't that kind of what learning is?

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



PC Evaluation Program Update Alan Thomson

Last article we announced the commencement of the PC Evaluation program, and now we are very pleased to announce that we have two new Canadian Certified Referees! Having the distinction of being the very first in Canada, is Gloria Wipf, of Spruce Grove Alberta who was evaluated in Red Deer. Our second successful candidate is Dianne Hill of Penticton BC who was evaluated at this year's National Championships in Regina! Congratulations to both for putting in the effort to meet the demands of this difficult program!

Note: Both Gloria, and Dianne are now also USA Pickleball Certified Referees.



Taken after Gloria's Successful Evaluation
Left to Right:
Gerald Jones (Head Referee Alberta),
Barbara Dueck (PC/USA Pickleball Referee
Evaluator), Gloria Wipf (1st Canadian Certified
Referee), Roger Carrier (Certified Referee
Coordinator (CRC) Western Canada



**Dianne Hill following her successful
Evaluation**
Dianne Hill (Canadian Certified Referee)

2023 Myoflex® Pickleball National Championship – Regina Officiating

The Pickleball Canada 2023 Myoflex® National Championship was held in Regina SK, 23-27 August at two venues. The Viterra International Trade Centre and the Queen City Pickleball Hub! While in very close proximity to one another, each

venue was run as its own tournament. Both facilities were prepared and ready for some excellent Pickleball! The organizing committee was led by Randy Dove as Chair, with Karen Rust as Tournament Director. The whole team did an outstanding job at keeping everything and everyone moving along smoothly!

From an Officiating standpoint the tournament was very successful, especially when looking at the statistics. There were 624 players, 1686 matches, which were ALL refereed (by credentialed Referees) on 32 courts. Over the five days there were 45 different Referees. 5 level 1's, 20 level 2's and 20 Certified Referees including 4 from USA Pickleball! This was an excellent show of experienced Referees, which contributed significantly in making the 2023 Nationals a very successful event! The Pickleball Canada per diem program playing an important part in attracting the Referees and assisting them with expenses and in travelling to and from the tournament.

As you would expect from a National Championship the play was of an excellent calibre, attracting most of Canada's best players. Many outstanding rallies, requiring Referee's to be at the top of their game as things move very quickly at the top levels of Pickleball!

Now that Pickleball Canada's Officiating Program is fully up and running we are seeing more interest with people asking how to get started, and what they should do. If you are one of those, please have a thorough look through the PC website and the Officiating pages.

<https://pickleballcanada.org/officiating/demo-officiating-program-information/>

It should go without saying that Referees need to know the Rules inside and out. Reading the rules and taking the online tests is an excellent way to become thoroughly conversant with them! The Officiating Handbook is the guide to what and how the Referee does at every point in a match! This

information is often referred to as the 'Best Practices' and knowing the Rules and following the Best Practices is key to being assessed to Level 1 & 2 Referee and ultimately in being evaluated to be a Certified Referee!

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Better Footwork, A Three-part Series Wayne Kerr

Part 2 The Lunge-step

Does this sound familiar? Our opponent somehow manages to hit a different shot or places the ball better than expected. We either watch the ball go past and say 'Great shot!' or end up lunging for the ball, paddle and arm outstretched, leaning as far as humanly possible. Sometimes we manage to get our paddle on the ball, sometimes we don't. Often when we do get the ball back over the net it is an easy return into an open court while we grab the fence to regain our balance. At least we made them hit one more ball. There is nothing else we could have done, is there? Well, maybe there is.

If you've watched Wimbledon or the US Open during the past few years you may have seen Novak Djokovic practically doing the splits as he hits a ball from well outside the sideline of the court. Then to our amazement he sprints along the baseline and does it again from the other side on

the very next ball. Incredible court coverage! He is employing a lunge-step to accomplish this.

Ten years ago, even the best players used to hit running forehands and backhands in these situations. Most of them were fast enough to get to the first ball. However, they couldn't stop and recover quickly enough to get to the next ball if it came back.

As you will learn, employing the lunge-step is very effective for pickleball, as well. It really isn't too difficult. Instead of leading with your outstretched paddle, lead with your foot. Yes, your foot.

Lunging foot first does several good things: keeps our body and head in a more upright position, frees up our paddle and arm to prepare for the required stroke, allows us to stay in a more balanced position and lets us recover more efficiently and rapidly.

When done correctly both feet play an important role in this method. Lift the nearest foot to the ball and take a large step toward it, leaving the trailing foot planted where it is (if it drags a bit, no problem). The planted foot is referred to as the anchor foot. Get as settled as possible and then dink, drive or reset the ball. Once you've contacted the ball, pull the lunging foot back to the anchor foot and you will be back in position ready for the next ball. I made that sound easy. It is, once you get the hang of it. With a little practice you can execute this technique easily.

The lunge-step can be done in any direction. Lunging to the side is the most common form, but lunging backward or forward can also be quite useful.

Imagine while dinking you or your partner accidentally pops up a ball. You can duck, turn your back, freeze in place or you can take one quick lunge-step back. A lunge-step lowers your paddle and your center of gravity, while giving you some space to defend the incoming attacked ball.

What if, the next time you chase down a very good dropshot, your final step is a lunge-step into the kitchen, drop the ball back over the net, then quickly pull yourself back to your 'anchor' foot and out of the kitchen ready for the next ball.

A great way to practice lunging in any direction is to imagine you are standing in the center of a clock face (you can put out a target at each number, if wanted). Take a lunge-step toward each number returning to your anchor foot each time. Your right foot lunges to numbers one through six while your left foot lunges toward numbers seven to twelve. This drill doesn't need a court, it can be done in your living room or basement.

When using your paddle during this drill, be sure to practice waiting until the lunging foot is planted before swinging the paddle. The order should be: Lunge and plant, stroke the ball, recover to anchor foot. As we discussed in the first part of the series, you will be far more accurate if your head and body are as stationary as possible during each stroke.

Have fun improving your game.

Party on, my pickleball friends!



withinUs™ – A Winning collaboration for Health and Wellness

This partnership launched during the 2023 Pickleball Canada National Championship taking place from August 23rd to the 27th in Regina, Saskatchewan. This strategic alliance marks a significant step forward in the realms of health, wellness, and sports. withinUs™ and Pickleball Canada are both ambitious and fast-growing, and this partnership is set to empower pickleball athletes and enthusiasts across Canada.

Take a peek at what withinUs™ has to offer at: withinus.ca



The 2023 Americas Championship

[The Americas Championship \(TAC\)](#) is the first ever sanctioned continental hosted by the [Pickleball Federation of the Americas \(PFA\)](#) from November 26, 2023 – December 2, 2023 at the Cabo Sports Complex in Los Cabos, Mexico. Registration for the tournament is now open on [Pickleball Brackets](#) and will remain open until November 15, 2023.

The recommended lodging for the event is the Hacienda del Mar Resort and the Solaz Resort, both located within less than one mile from the tournament. The competition at the event will include Men's Doubles, Women's Doubles, Men's Singles, Women's Singles, and Mixed Doubles. The tournament will also include four different skill levels which are advanced (4.5 & 5.0), intermediate (4.0), beginner (3.5), and social (2.5 & 3.0).



2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship

Pickleball Canada is thrilled to announce that Pickleball Nova Scotia has been selected to host

the [2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship](#). Nationals will be held from August 20 – August 24, 2024 at the Sobeys Atlantic Tennis Centre in Bedford, Nova Scotia.

This is the first time that the Maritimes will be hosting Nationals and with Nova Scotia's previous success from hosting several provincial and regional tournaments, including the 2023 Pickleball Canada Atlantic Regional Championship this event is on track to be a huge success that you wouldn't want to miss.

Nationals will take place during one of the best times of the year to visit Nova Scotia. There are many amazing destinations to see within this province such as Peggy's Cove, Bay of Fundy, and Cabot Trail. Make sure to come out to Canada's Ocean Playground for the 2024 Myoflex® National Pickleball Championship. Stay tuned for more information.



Shediac, New Brunswick Celebrates National Pickleball Day

Debra Dowling

National Pickleball Day is about celebrating everything Pickleball. For Shediac this includes fun, inclusive, social, friendship and competition.

The Shediac Pickleball Club's National Pickleball Day event was held from 10:00am – 2:00pm on Saturday, August 18. While open play pickleball was played during the day, other fun games included walking an obstacle course with a pickleball on your paddles, hitting pickleballs in a bucket that was about 20 ft away, corn toss with pickleballs and a dinking challenge (winners had over 240 dinks). Participants got a ticket for every activity in which they participated and throughout the day we drew for pickle related prizes (jars of pickles, dill pickles chips etc.). Lunch was served during then event and it was a corn boil, which was a big success.

Members were encouraged to bring friends and any new folks who might be interested in pickleball. It is estimated around 60 members attended the event including some Shediac Town staff and councillors.



The St. Thomas Pickleball Club Celebrates National Pickleball Day Catherine Upfold, Secretary of the St. Thomas Pickleball Club

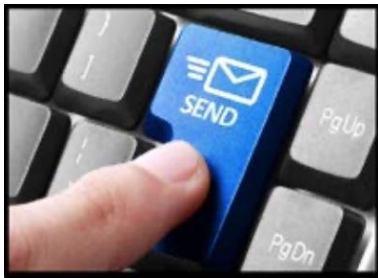
To celebrate National Pickleball Day in St. Thomas we, the St. Thomas Pickleball Club posted signs at our outdoor courts inviting any and all pickleball players to come out during our reserved time to play together.

We provided refreshments, including protein bars adorned with “National Pickleball Day” stickers.

To choose teams we drew cards – Red Aces played against Black Aces on Court 1, Twos against Twos on Court 2, etc. This way we mixed Club players with non-club players on a random basis, to create the social/fun side of the game.

Unfortunately, we did have rain during the night and the courts were wet when we were scheduled to play. However, some hard work by Club members resulted in courts being dry enough to play a couple of dinking game until the sun and wind completed the job so that regular games could commence.

It was a great opportunity to meet and play with other “Pickleballers” in the community in a relaxed, non-competitive manner.



Contributors

Val Vollmin
Steve Deakin
Mark Renneson
Alan Thomson
Wayne Kerr

Carla Anderson
Elizabeth Werner
Debra Dowing
Catherine Upfold

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 Elizabeth Werner at scoop@pickleballcanada.org

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