



Message from the President Val Vollmin

2024 has started off with lots of excitement in the world of pickleball!

Pickleball Canada is very excited to announce that Moncton, New Brunswick will host the Atlantic Regionals and Vernon, British Columbia will be the host for the Western Regionals.

There has also been some encouraging facility development news out of Alberta recently:

- The Cochrane Pickleball Club, (CPC) are among the most recent recipients of the Alberta Large Fund Grant of \$997,287 toward building new pickleball courts in the Town of Cochrane. In partnership with Entity One Inc. the developers of the Greystone residential community, the CPC looks forward to the construction of 20 new courts on the land designated as recreational in this development. Two of the twenty courts feature accessibility and can serve as a championship court during future tournaments. Construction will commence in the Spring of 2024 with completion planned in August 2024.
- The Parkland Pickleheads were also recent recipients of the Alberta Large Fund Grant and together with the City of Spruce Grove and Parkland County will be building a new outdoor 27 court facility! Every court will be championship sized and each will be wheelchair accessible. This facility will be in Parkland County at the Sand Hills Recreational Center, with construction beginning in May and a planned completion in September.

We appreciate the years of dedication and hard work that have gone into these accomplishments and look forward to celebrating with both of these clubs at the grand opening on these new courts.

If your Club is in the process of building new courts, please send us an email, so we can help keep our members informed as to what is working to keep up with the growth of our sport and the demand for facilities.

Have a great 2024 and I look forward to seeing you on the courts!

**NEAL BROTHERS AND CRANK® COFFEE CO.
ARE CURATING THE ULTIMATE GAME DAY
COMBO FOR PICKLEBALL PLAYERS**



Neal Brothers Brands through their master brand and Crank® Coffee Co. tag teamed with Pickleball Canada recently to bring pickleball players and attendees their better-for-you snacks, sauces, and condiments, alongside their flavourful, certified Organic and Fairtrade Crank® Coffee.



Steve Deakin

As we are now in the first month of 2024, we wanted to check with Steve to see if he made any New Years Resolutions and what his tournament plans are for the upcoming year.

Do you have any New Years Resolutions, Steve? Why or why not?

I started my New Years Resolution early Sept 2023. It was to work hard off court on my fitness. This has paid off substantially and am seeing some great gains with regards to footwork, reaction time, and shot strength. I think it is always a great idea to set a realistic and attainable resolution that is going help personal growth in the New Year.

How do you stay organized with all the up coming tournaments and events?

I have always been very methodical and organized with the way I handle my schedule. There is a lot to it. Whether it is booking flights, accommodations, figuring out the best partners for my game, etc. The travel schedule is tiring but I feel I have a good

handle on it. I have an old school wall calendar in my office where I keep track of everything along with a few notes in my phone. That's right, I said it. Wall calendar. Haha.

Is there any tournament that you are looking forward to playing in most this year?

I think my two favourites for 2024 will be The Myoflex[®] Canadian Nationals in Halifax this August and US Nationals this November which the PPA will attach themselves too again.

Now we turn to some of members for questions they have sent in:

Question #1: Steve ended the December 1, 2023 interview, "Speaking with Deakin" by saying, "It becomes a mental battle, and I like that part." I'm curious, how do you prepare mentally for a game, or a tournament? Why do you say that you like that part?

There are a couple of things I do prior to a match in an event that help me settle in. One is a visualization technique that I stole from my tennis days that works wonders in PB and another is a breathing technique I implement during pre-match warmup.

I like mental part of the game as I feel every player that calls themselves a professional should be able to execute every shot in the book. However, it takes a special athlete to be able to execute under high pressure scenarios. Along with that, dealing with poor weather, court, and lightning conditions, bad opposition line calls, and the pressure in playing in front of fans. All those things must be dealt with a strong mind to keep one's game solid from 0-0-2 to the end of the match (hopefully with a W beside your name).

Question #2: Is your mental preparation as structured as your physical routine on and off the court?

I am 80% focussed on physical routine and 20% mental at this point in career.

I would say I have been always been strong mentally. However, coming back from a near career ending injury and a changing landscape in professional PB has forced me to deal with a little more adversity in the mental part of the game. My confidence of 2021 shattered with my injury but I am feeling so much better physically since starting my new routine and this has translated to a much more positive outlook mentally. Dealing with bad losses and disappointment is now part of my reality and feel I have a very good handle on this in 2024.

Question #3: What tips, can you share with someone who's new to pickleball competition?

I think first and foremost pick partners that you have fun with. Don't jump to the best player that may not necessarily be the best partner. I made this mistake early in my career and it doesn't always work out the way it should on paper. I find if I am relaxed and comfortable with my partner I will perform better.

Secondly, be humble. You may take some losses early on in your journey. Learn and grow from them. It took me a good year to feel comfortable competing on tour.

Question #4: In the December issue Steve talked about eating a big breakfast and meal after play in preparation for the next day. What sort of things do you eat?

Typical post match dinner

Steak, chicken, pasta, sweet potatoes, salad of some sort followed by yogurt, blueberries, protein powder, drizzle of honey for my sweet tooth dessert.

Typical pre match breakfast

Eggs, bacon, hash browns, sour dough toast, avocado, yogurt, granola, apples, bananas, and coffee.

Question #5: Thank you for your inspiring article. As an intermediate 69-year-old female player in good health I play 3-4 times a week and drill a couple of times but believe the best way for me to improve my game is to do some off court training. I have access to a gym but have not been able to find any specific training recommendations for pickleball. My goal is to compete in the 3.5 level in the June tournament. What would you recommend for off court?

That's a very good question and I love the fact that you have set a goal for yourself. I am not qualified to offer this type of advice and would suggest you contact a personal trainer that can assess you, any injuries you may have, your goals, and how to become more PB fit. They can then craft an appropriate plan that is customized just for you. For me, I was astonished at how much work goes into putting together a blueprint that caters to each individual's abilities and goals on and off court. All I can tell you is that being PB fit on court has improved my game substantially. I still have a long way to go but it definitely builds confidence as I can move faster, react quicker, hit harder, and not gas out. Best of luck on your journey and let me know how it goes for you!

Paddle up and have fun!

Do you have a question for Steve Deakin? If so, send it to scoop@pickleballcanada.org and you could see your question in the next issue of the Scoop.



Effective Communication as a Pickleball Instructor

Mark Renneson

Effective communication is the backbone of successful pickleball instruction. As a pickleball instructor, your ability to convey information clearly, concisely and with a tactical connection can make an important difference in the learning experience for your students. Let's talk about three key aspects of effective communication that can help you be more effective when talking with your players.

Be Clear

When explaining drills or games, demonstrating technique, or providing feedback to help your players improve, it's important to use simple and straightforward language. If you can explain a concept in twenty words rather than thirty – do it! Even better, show your players what you want from them rather than only discussing it. The concept of **say and show** is prominent in our coach education program for exactly this reason. A great demonstration communicates messages to your players far more effectively than does a soliloquy!

Be Concise

As an instructor, being concise with your instructions is key to maintaining engagement, focus and giving your players more time to practice. Since every minute you're speaking is a minute they aren't hitting balls, avoid unnecessary details and get straight to

the point. A helpful way to do this is to think about what you are going to say (to an individual or to the group) *before* you say it. Nobody wants to watch their coach try to figure out how to explain something – go through it in your head before letting it escape your mouth!

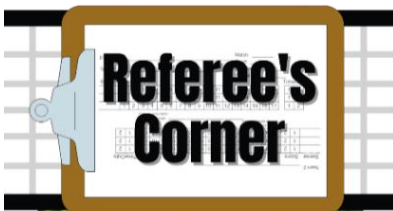
Include the Why

Whether you are introducing a new drill, providing tips during games or demonstrating a new technical skill, make sure your players understand why it is important. For example, instead of saying to your players: “You want to have a small backswing when playing a dink”, include the line “...because that will make it easier for you to hit the ball slowly and avoid a pop up”. Instead of advising: “You should try to hit your return to the backhand...” add “...because most players have weaker backhands and you’re more likely to get a poor return”. Connecting the *what* with the *why* is a good way to get buy-in from your players and make it more likely they do what you want.

Putting it All Together

Effective pickleball coaches are effective communicators. By being clear, concise and connecting the *what* and the *why*, you will find that your players better understand what you are asking of them and that they are more likely to try to do it well. And since you’re getting to the point nice and quickly, they’ll probably also have more time to work on these new skills!

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



2024 Rule Changes

Alan Thomson

I’m writing this just in case there is still one person out there that has not yet heard of the Rule Changes for 2024, and has been waiting for this article to appear in the January edition of SCOOP! There were 27 changes approved for 2024, most of which are minor edits and changes. We will discuss the more significant changes in this article.

I feel I must start with one of more significant rule changes that has come into effect, but not in 2024, this was introduced in August of 2023. While it is unusual for USA Pickleball to put a rule change into effect mid-year it is not unheard of.

Most people will now be aware of this change but, let's review it for that one person!

Player Position 4.B.9

“The Referee will confirm and correct, if necessary, that all players are in the correct position and the correct server has the ball before calling the score.”

- If the Referee or a player stops play to correctly identify a player position or wrong server issue a REPLAY shall be called.
 - Players can call this at any point during the rally, as long as they are correct, and a REPLAY will be given.
- If a Player incorrectly stops play to correct a player position error, it is a FAULT.
- If the Referee incorrectly stops play to correct an error, a REPLAY will be called.
- If a Player/Position error is identified after the rally has completed, the rally will stand as played.

Draping Net (2.C.6/11.L.5.b.)

Rule 2.C.6. called for a replay when a ball goes over the net and hits a net that is draped on the ground (except on the serve) but only if the referee determined that the ball was affected by the draped net. This rule, and Rule 11.L.5.b. for temporary nets, now call for a REPLAY without qualification. A determination that the ball was affected by the draped net is now not required in officiated or non-officiated play.

Catch or Carry Ball on the Paddle (7.L)

Rule 7.L now makes catching or carrying a ball on the paddle a FAULT without having to determine that the catch or carry was deliberately done.

There has been considerable discussion and questioning on this issue since coming into effect. I have been asked to explain what a catch or carry is and when should it be called.

Al's comments;

We have all probably played a ball that has been a carry but may not have identified it as such. It is when the ball stays on the paddle for an extended period and all in one motion the paddle quickly comes forward with the ball staying on the paddle face to be sling-shotted across the net. The other example is when the opposition hits a lob to the back of the court and a player returns the ball over their shoulders by scooping the ball back to the other

end of the court. Both FAULTS! Note: In recreational games, player's should be calling FAULT on themselves or their partner! This is no different than seeing your foot on or in the NVZ when volleying the ball.... Make the FAULT call.

Conceding a Rally (13.E.4/13.E.5)

Rule 13.E.5 calls for a replay when a player overrules to their detriment a line judge's 'out' call as 'in.' The player or team may now choose to concede the rally to their opponent if they determine they would have been unable to return the 'in' ball. Similarly, Rule 13.E.4 calls for a replay when the referee overturns a line judge's out call as in. The player or team who benefitted from the referee's ruling may now choose to concede the rally to their opponent if they determine they would have been unable to return the 'in' ball.

Medical Time-Outs (10.B.2.c)

A player is now allowed to use available standard time-outs after the 15-minute medical time-out has expired to allow more time before the player must retire from the match.

NOTE: Related to medical time-outs; Case 5-23 in the USA P Casebook established how and when a player can rescind a requested medical time-out, and that the medical time-out would NOT be charged to the player. The ruling has been revised to require that the requested medical time-out be charged to the player, if a player rescinds the requested MTO after requesting it, but before medical personnel arrive... the MTO will now be charged against that player.

Paddle Specifications (2.E.2/2.E.5.a/2.E.5.c)

Paddle specifications have been updated to address new and emerging paddle technology and features and to clarify the alterations that players are allowed to make to certified paddles.

2.E.2 – Surface shall not contain, delamination, holes, cracks rough textures or indentations that break the skin or surface, allowing players to impart excessive spin on the ball.

2.E.5.a – Alterations or additions to paddles may include; edge guard tape/replacements, weighted tape, weights for an OEM integrated weight system, changes to grip size via inserts, grip wraps, OEM interchangeable grips, OEM replacement paddle faces, and name decals and/or other identification marking on the paddle face.

2.E.5.c – The only permissible handwritten pen markings allowed on the paddle's playing surface must be for identification purposes

only (name, signature, phone #, email address.) No aftermarket graphics are allowed on a commercially made paddle.

Mini-Singles (12.0)

Mini-singles is currently an approved format. The specific rules governing mini-singles are now incorporated in the Rulebook.

While there are a lot of words, there is not a lot of change, but a few details that Referees certainly need to be aware of. Good luck and good skills on the courts in 2024!

Alan Thomson

PC National Leader of Officiating



The Three Ds of pickleball - Dink Drop Drive Wayne Kerr

The best, most effective place to be on the pickleball court is at the kitchen (Non Volley Zone) line. However, when serving or receiving we must move from the baseline through the court to get to the kitchen line.

The area approximately four feet from inside the baseline to four feet from the kitchen line is often called the 'transition zone', 'mid-court' or 'no man's land'. In the past players were told to rush through this area. Get to the kitchen as quickly as possible and stay put.

This strategy is flawed for many reasons. Here are two to start with. Rushing from the baseline to the kitchen line at the cost of properly setting up for and playing an incoming ball causes errors, mishits, and a loss of accuracy. Planting yourself at the kitchen line rather than moving back to defend against a ball that is about to be

attacked robs you of critical time needed to not just get a paddle on the ball but to control the response.

I tell students and players I mentor, that 'no man's land' should be known as 'the land of opportunity'. Hitting a successful drop shot from the transition zone is far easier than from the baseline. Defending and resetting an attacked ball from mid-court is preferable to standing at the kitchen line and hoping to react quick enough. If the incoming ball is slow and/or high, attacking from the 'land of opportunity' can be very effective. Whichever type of shot you play from this area it is important to be ready to move forward if your drop shot, reset or attack is well-played. Keep in mind that if the mid-court is the 'land of opportunity', being at the kitchen line is still 'paradise' for a pickleball player.

A key to hitting quality shots is to have your feet set prior to striking the ball. This is especially true when you are trying to get to the kitchen. Avoid running through shots. As your opponent is about to hit the ball, pause your forward movement, adjust to the incoming ball, get your feet set, stroke or block the ball and then resume forward. Repeat as often as necessary to get to the kitchen line.

Most of the good players I know, spend a lot of time practicing resets from the mid-court area. It is easy to do if you have a practice partner. To start, simply take up a position in the mid-court with your partner on the other side of the net hitting easy balls that bounce just in front of you. Your primary objective is to get the ball back over the net. Once you can accomplish this ninety percent of the time or more, try to drop the balls into the kitchen. As you become more skilled the feeds should become more aggressive. This drill can be done straight ahead or cross-court.

Another drill I quite like begins with both players dinking at the net. Designate one player as the attacker and one the defender. Every third or fourth ball is intentionally popped up by the defender, who then quickly moves backward and tries to reset the incoming ball. This can be a difficult drill to master, so the attacker should ease up the attacks until the defender can successfully return most balls. The goal for the defender is to get a ball back across the net that is not attackable, then quickly move back to the kitchen line and resume dinking. Aiming at the defender's feet makes the drill good practice for the attacker, as well.

To keep drills fresh and to add realism, make up games and keep track of points. A fun drill is for the defending player to start in the mid-court and move forward once they have made a successful drop into the kitchen, then play out the point. The defending player

earns two points when they win a rally, the offensive player one. Play to six or eleven points and then switch roles.

Once the mid-court area becomes your 'land of opportunity' the game will be even more fun and you'll win more points.

Party on, my pickleball friends!



Policy on Duplicate Player Profiles in Pickleball Brackets

On December 12, 2023 a policy was passed to ensure that its members have one personal player profile within the Pickleball Brackets software. It is imperative for the integrity of the player data in Pickleball Brackets (including the Canadian Tournament Player Rating (CTPR) and Pickleball Brackets Ratings [PBR] that duplicate profile for the same player do not exist within Brackets. Pickleball Canada will monitor and identify duplicate player profiles in Pickleball Brackets account, and take action to ensure each

Pickleball Canada member has only one player profile in the software.

- Pickleball Canada will advise the player with the duplicate profiles that they will be merged in Pickleball Brackets, and, if appropriate, ask the player of their preferred email address to use the merged account.
- Pickleball Canada will then request that Pickleball Brackets merge the duplicate profiles.

When Pickleball Canada identifies members who create a duplicate profile for a second or subsequent time, PCO may impose consequences.

Potential consequences for the Pickleball Canada member include:

- A written warning;
- A temporary (3-month) suspension from Pickleball Canada sanctioned tournaments

The data integrity of the CTPR is enhanced by ensuring duplicate profiles in Pickleball Brackets do not exist, and that the performance history of each Pickleball Canada member is consolidated under one Pickleball Brackets profile.

Please make sure you read the full policy which can be found [online](#).



Pickleball Canada Announces the Location and Date of the 2024 Western Regionals

Pickleball Canada is pleased to announce that the Vernon Pickleball Association (VPA) has been selected to host the [2024 Pickleball Canada Western Regional Championship](#), which will run July 25 – July 28, 2024 in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia.

The tournament will be played on 12 indoor and 12 outdoor courts. Franklin will serve as the official ball for the 2024 Pickleball Canada Western Regional Championship, under their partnership as the official ball and paddle for Pickleball Canada.

Over the course of the four days, it is expected that over 600 players from all over Western Canada will be in attendance, with competition categories that will include men's and women's doubles, men's and women's singles and mixed doubles. The tournament will follow Pickleball Canada's sanctioning criteria.



Pickleball Canada's insurance page has a new look and feel!

Pickleball Canada's insurance page has gotten a new look. We wanted to make sure everyone had the full information on what they are covered for while making it more user friendly!

New Aspects:

- The insurance tab is right on the homepage for quick access
- Provides a summary of coverage for both the General Liability Insurance and Sports Accident
- Has new fillable form for the Sports Accident Claim form (no need to print)
- Has new online version of the incident report (no need to print)

All insurance inquiries please email insurance@pickleballcanada.org



Pickleball Canada's 2024 Atlantic Regional Dates and Location has been Announced

[Pickleball Canada's Atlantic Regional Championship](#) will be hosted by Pickleball Moncton with support from Events Moncton. The event will take place June 13th – June 16th, 2024 and look to unite pickleball players from all over Atlantic Canada.

The event is expected to bring over 400 players from all over Atlantic Canada. Competition categories will include men's and women's doubles, men's and women's singles and mixed doubles. The tournament will follow Pickleball Canada's sanctioning criteria.



Inaugural Women's Tournament in Victoria Connie McCann, President VRPA

Over the course of 2023 Connie McCann President of Victoria Regional Pickleball Association (VRPA) asked volunteers why women were not playing in tournaments ran by club. Many told her fears of not feeling ready enough to compete. McCann then looked at a way to better help women get ready for a tournament setting.



McCann took a look at the stats of the club's membership and found that 61% were women, however the registrants for each tournament the VRPA hosted over 70% of these registrants were men.

It was then identified the need for a women's only tournament specifically an entry level tournament that would help build the skills that women need to address the fears and intimidation of a 'big' tournament then led us to reaching outside the VRPA community. VRPA in



2022 and 2023 made a concerted effort to explore both financial and community support for the concept of a women's only tourney. This led us to local company, Berwick Retirement Communities, who came to attention during the 55+BC Games in 2022. They were the premier sponsor for the Games. Also, in 2022, VRPA went into discussion with the University of Victoria Vikes Club (UVIC Vikes Club) about social pickleball at their superb Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities (CARSA) gym facility. UVIC Vikes Club and VRPA now work together on several successful pickleball programs including the Women's Tournament.

Making local connections, supporting each other, and identifying where we can grow our sport in the best possible way is what this new tournament is all about. VRPA is excited about changing the numbers of women playing in tournaments.

On Saturday April 13th, 2024, the first **Berwick RC/UVIC Inaugural Women's Tournament**, 2.0-3.25 skill level, hosted by VRPA, will be held at University of Victoria's CARSA gym.



Contributors

Val Vollmin
Steve Deakin
Mark Renneson
Alan Thomson
Wayne Kerr

Connie McCann, President VRPA
Barry Petrachenko
Elizabeth Werner

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!