

## La version française suit



### Message from the President Val Vollmin

Time flies and so does our pickleball community! Our clubs are gearing up for spring pickleball. The snowbirds are heading home and pickleball will soon be out in full swing again in Canada.

We are very excited to see that registration for the Myoflex® 2024 National Championship presented by Think Turkey opened on March 20 and had over 660 competitors in the first 24 hours! Hopefully we will see many of you in beautiful Halifax in August for this tournament. For our tournament players, we would encourage you to play in PC sanctioned tournaments as this will help to move your CTPR.

We know that the vast majority of our members do not play tournaments, and consider themselves recreational players. Pickleball Canada wants to hear from you! What would you like to see from your National organization? What can we do to help you or your Club? I would like to encourage you to send us your ideas for what you would like to see from us. Send your suggestions to me an email at [val.vollmin@pickleballcanada.org](mailto:val.vollmin@pickleballcanada.org)



### Steve Deakin

As winter turns into spring, we check in with Steve to see how he is doing on the PPA tour.

#### 1. What do you like most about being a professional athlete? What do you like the least?

Those are two very good questions that I am asked a lot. I definitely like that I can play a sport to give me a comfortable lifestyle. I was a Monday-Friday 50-hour work week guy for 20 plus years. Playing professional pickleball since 2018 has given me the

flexibility to work my own hours. Although I most definitely work more hours now than my previous career, at least I am doing something that I love.

What I like the least about playing professional pickleball is living out of hotels, eating out, and navigating through different airports weekly. This can wear a person down mentally and physically over the course of a long tournament year that doesn't really have a designated off season.

**2. Do you have a favourite stop on the PPA tour? Do you have a favourite venue?**

I have a few favourite places to play on the PPA tour. I have always enjoyed travelling to Palm Springs to play the Masters, Atlanta, Cincinnati for one of the majors, and Vegas at the Darling Tennis Center. I would say my favourite venue is the Darling Tennis Center in Las Vegas. Easy to get around and an amazing stadium court. Plus what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas haha.

**3. What skill on the court would you like to improve this year?**

This is an easy question for me to answer. I want to improve my backhand roll into the body of my opponent from the kitchen line. This was one of my weapons pre wrist injury and one of the last shots to come back to me post injury. I have been working more on mixing up spots, trajectory, and pace to compensate for the lack of range of motion in that wrist. I am unable to penetrate opponent with power with this shot anymore but I can certainly be more crafty with when and where to initiate it from to set up an easy 2nd ball put a way.

**4. What emotions do you feel when you play well on the court?**

I just finished an amazing event at the Lakeville PPA stop in Minnesota and was very happy with my play. It definitely gave me confidence that I am still able to compete with the world's best and that the results are following. It makes me feel energized, confident, and optimistic.

**5. What's one thing not a lot of people know about you?**

One thing that not a lot of people know about me is that I had substance abuse and mental health issues and that I have been clean and sober for 16 years. For anyone that struggles with these things, I am living proof that you can get through it and have a great life.

Paddle up and have fun!

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



## Think in Themes

### Mark Renneson

If you're a pickleball coach, there's a good chance that you have to plan and name your clinics. While it might be tempting to describe the target audience, this is probably not your most effective approach for stimulating interest in what you have to offer. .

Calling the session things like: novice clinic; Intermediate training; or advanced pickleball doesn't do a whole lot to generate excitement in the mind of your potential players. Well, you might be a fantastic teacher, the lessons sound, well, boring!

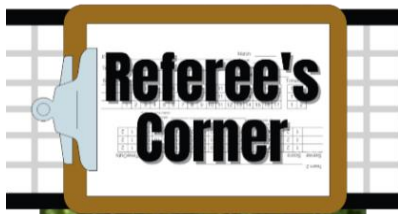
It's not much better to call your program based on the skill rating of the players you intend it to serve: 2.5 training; 3.0-3.5 clinic; 4.0+; etc.. Again, boring!

Instead, consider organizing your clinics according to a specific theme. Some examples I've used in the past include: How to Beat Bangers; Defence Wins Championships; All About Spin. All of these do a better job of giving your potential players an idea of what they will be learning about and that makes it more enticing for them to sign up. Of course, you still need to indicate the skill level you're serving, but you can put that into the description or as an additional callout on the flyer.

Feel free to play around with subtitles too! Other themes I've used that we have found effective include: Starting Strong – How to Make the First 3 Shots Count; Turning the Tables – Transitioning from Defence to Offence; Super Third Shots — Everything You Need to Know About Drops, Drives and Lobs.

By organizing your lessons according to themes, your students will have a better idea of what they're getting themselves into. It will also help you as the coach offer distinct lessons that hang together in the systematic way. There's lots of room to be creative here, so have fun playing around with different concepts and different titles. But whatever you do, start thinking thematically!

**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](mailto:mrenneson@tenniscanada.com)



## **Pickleball Canada Officiating Program Proposed Changes for 2024**

**Al Thomson**

Pickleball Canada's Officiating Program is driven by the Officiating Advisory Council (OAC) which is comprised of Representatives from each of the Provinces and Territories across Canada, with other's named as required. This group continues to review established practices and recommend changes when deemed necessary and is also driven by our relationship with USA Pickleball. Having a reciprocal program with USA Pickleball means that we accept and recognise each other's Credentialed Referees. This requires that our program be up to standard so that when a Referee obtains their Credentials their on-court performance meets or exceeds expectations in both countries.

While these proposed changes have not been officially approved by the Council, I thought it would be worthwhile to communicate what is being considered and what changes you may well see during this 2024 Officiating year.

All levels of credentials will expire after three years from the date of issue, and will have to be renewed prior to the date of expiry.

To ensure that Referees are keeping themselves practiced and current, Referees will be required to complete an annual maintenance program.

- Record the number of matches Refereed throughout the year, distinguishing between tournaments and recreational matches.
- Review all on-line documentation, especially the Rules, and Best Practices.
- Complete on-line tests achieving minimum results as established for each level.
- Annual Observance of on-court performance – Casual review by equal or higher credentialed Referee.

All credentialed Referees will be required to complete a re-credentialing program from 3 months prior to and up to one month past the credential expiring date, comprising of;

- An official & documented on-court review.... Not an assessment nor evaluation... an observed performance review. (OPR)
- Correctly answer 5 questions, scoring will be dictated by the level of credential being renewed.

The assessment program will be amended to ensure that those conducting assessments are trained to do so and are documented as 'Trained Assessors' in the PC Officiating Database. The

current Referee Assessment Form (RAF) and process will be changed to encapsulate a broader range of performance objectives and will see a tightening in the number of mistakes allowed to achieve each level of credential.

USA Pickleball has recently changed their Advanced Training Session (ATS) program (1 March 24) with the main objective of improving a Level 2's chances of passing their Evaluation for Certification. The process will ensure that only a trained ATS Assessor (ATSA) can complete and submit the approved documentation. The process further defines who can initiate the ATS request, and who and how the ATS is to be conducted. As a result of the OAC March Meeting, this new process will be followed and instituted as soon as documentation and training are completed;

As you can see some significant changes being considered and proposed for the Officiating Program in 2024. The sole intent is to ensure that Canada's Referees are up to date and current in all aspects of Refereeing wherever they are in North America.

Two other items of note;

- Congratulations to two new PC Certified Referees, Ross Priebe of Surrey BC, and Doug Hill, Penticton BC. Both passing their evaluations in Phoenix Arizona in January 24.
- The National Leader of Officiating (NLO) conducted three Referee Zoom Training Sessions in February, which were recorded and are now accessible on the PC website under Officiating and Training Material.
  - These 3 videos are an excellent starting point for someone interested on Refereeing, but you must be prepared to do a fair amount of studying and lots of on-court practice before being considered for assessment to become a Level 1 Referee, which is the first step towards being a fully Certified Referee.

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



## The Three Ds of pickleball - Dink Drop Drive Wayne Kerr

**Dinking** - The easiest shot in pickleball is the dink shot. Maybe, but there is a lot more to dinking than you might think.

Grab a partner and a ball, let's hit some dinks.

The mechanics of dinking.

- a) Start with a continental grip (neutral shake hands grip), allowing for both forehand and backhand dinks without grip adjustments.
- b) Move the entire arm from the shoulder, keeping the wrist still while striking the ball.
- c) Face the net at all times when dinking. Take as many balls as possible without leaning sideways or fully extending your arm. In other words, move your feet rather than reaching for balls (using a shuffle step or lunge step).
- d) Set your feet, then stroke the ball.
- e) The paddle face should be more horizontal rather than vertical at impact.

What is a good dink?

1. The ball goes over the net, into the kitchen and your opponent can't attack it.
2. The ball bounces before your opponent can hit it. Why?
  - a. It gives you time to reset your ready position.
  - b. A ball taken out of the air (volleyed) is easier to redirect to a gap or directly into your partner.
  - c. A ball that bounces can cause mishits (bad bounce or bounces lower or higher than expected).
3. A well placed dink can cause an error or pop up from your opponent.
  - a. Move the ball around, at the very least aim at one of your opponent's feet and then the other.
  - b. Making your opponent move, even a little, can cause errors and may open up the court.
  - c. As you get better, adding spin can cause difficulties for your opponent.
4. Drills
  - a) Dink balls straight ahead, directing them at one of your practice partner's feet then the other, careful to make the ball bounce each time.
  - b) Dink balls crosscourt practicing good movement to wide balls and quickly recover back to the ready position.

**Drop Shot** - What's the hardest shot in pickleball? Most will answer 'The Third Shot Drop'. It's actually pretty easy. Hitting the perfect drop shot can be difficult. A lot of errors are the result of trying to be perfect. Don't try to be perfect. Pickleball isn't meant for perfection. Getting more balls in play is fun and rewarding!

1. What is the 3rd Shot Drop?
  - a) It is basically a dink from a longer distance away from the net.

- b) The goal is the same as a dink. Get the ball to bounce into the kitchen without being attacked.
  - c) The technique is also very similar to the dink. However, we now add some leg action to go with the arm and shoulder motion.
  - d) Use the same technique as your most reliable dink. If for example, you like to slice the ball when dinking do the same with the drop.
  - e) Drill - dink a couple, move back one step, dink a couple more, move back a step and drop a couple more, etc. until you are behind the baseline. Switch with your partner.
2. What is the purpose of the 3rd Shot Drop?
- a) When executed, it is a slow shot which will allow us to get up to the kitchen line.
  - b) If it doesn't work the first time, try again. The worst shot is one that falls short into the net.
  - c) If it isn't a great drop shot, maybe you can still move in one or two steps.
3. Drill - one person up, one back. The back court player tries to move up to the net while the net player tries to keep them back (no attack balls).

**Drive** - This is usually one of the first shots we can do when we start playing. Especially the forehand drive. Ironically, it is often poorly executed at most levels of play.

Drives are usually struck anywhere from behind the baseline, to the midcourt.

What is the purpose or point of driving the ball? Ultimately to cause an error by your opponent. A good drive might set you or your partner up for an attack ball. Another great reason to hit a drive is to get an easier ball to drop into the kitchen.

The drive is used as a return of serve. In this case, getting the ball deep is more important than hitting it hard.

1. There are three types of drives, flat, slice or topspin. All can be effective.
2. There are lots of techniques for hitting the drive. Being comfortable is important. The biggest cause of errors that I see on the court is reaching for balls and letting the ball get behind the optimal striking position. Hit the ball while it is in front of your body.
3. Move to the ball, don't let it come to you.
4. Whenever possible, strike the ball at the highest point of its bounce.

Drill - Feed three balls one at a time to the players FH, if possible making their partner move to the ball (gently at first). The feeder



should watch their partner and comment on late movement, letting the ball drop before striking it and/or not making contact with the ball ahead of the body.

Do the same with back hands.

Practicing fundamentals will help you improve and have more fun during games.

Remember pickleball is the most fun you can have on a court.

Party on, my pickleball friends!



## Pickleball Canada is seeking volunteers interested in serving on its Nominating Committee

Attention All Members!

Pickleball Canada is seeking volunteers interested in serving on its Nominating Committee.

Operating at arms length from the Board of Directors, the Nominating Committee serves to assess the current Board member terms, upcoming vacancies or gaps that may exist, and to develop strategies to recruit candidates who can provide the Board with appropriate skills and knowledge.

If you have a background in Human Resources, personnel recruitment or Board Management and would like to contribute to our dynamic sport organization, then please submit a letter of interest, including a CV or summary of your pertinent experience, to: [hr@pickleballcanada.org](mailto:hr@pickleballcanada.org)

Deadline for submission is **April 15th at 11:59 pm ET.**





## Registration has opened for the 2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship Presented by Think Turkey

Pickleball Canada is pleased to announce that registration has opened for the [2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship Presented by Think Turkey](#). This event will be held from August 20<sup>th</sup> – August 24<sup>th</sup> in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Competition categories include men's and women's singles, men's and women's doubles, and mixed doubles. Events will take place at the Atlantic Tennis Centre. As a Pickleball Canada sanctioned tournament, current international rules will be in effect, and interested players must be members of Pickleball Canada at time of registration. \*Please note spots are limited\*



## Adjustment to the Tournament Sanctioning Process

Please note the following adjustment to our tournament sanctioning process aimed at streamlining the administration of applications.

Based on feedback on the process from our PTSOs, the following requirement has been added to the application procedure: Tournament Directors must now submit a letter of support from their respective PTSO when completing the application form on the Pickleball Canada website. This information is now a required field on the form, and will allow PTSOs a more timely method of monitoring applications to identify potential date/location conflicts etc.

If you have any questions regarding this new requirement, please contact [tournaments@pickleballcanada.org](mailto:tournaments@pickleballcanada.org)



## Steve Deakin Pickleball is hiring a Director of Pickleball

Full time, can be remote. Salary to be determined.

Manage all clinics across Canada, including coordination of instructors, booking courts etc.

Build relationships with key people in industry as you will be finding remote areas and courts to be booked. Running your own small business under the Steve Deakin Pickleball (SDP) umbrella.

Are you a great pickleball player? An awesome multi-tasker? We need you. Canada wants great pickleball instruction now more than ever and we can supply that with the right person in charge.

Send your resume to [stacydeakin@gmail.com](mailto:stacydeakin@gmail.com) and let's discuss.



## Volunteer Spotlight: Bruce and Manon Eburne

Bruce Eburne is a prominent figure in the world of pickleball officiating. Bruce has been a Certified Referee for the past four years and has officiated matches across the Western Canada, overseeing both professional and amateur players. Bruce's officiating duties extend to provincial, regional, and national championships. Bruce will be officiating at the 2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship Presented by Think Turkey in Halifax, Nova Scotia this year. For Bruce refereeing allows him to give to support his community while giving back to the sport he loves.



Bruce's wife Manon Eburne is also very involved in the pickleball community. She travels to every tournament with Bruce, and used to sit and watch all day while knitting, but now Manon has given up her knitting to get involved as a Referee Coordinator and working with Pickleball Desk in assigning and confirming the Referee Score Sheets after each match! This works out very well, as it is well known if there is a last match, Bruce will be the next in the queue, and last to go home!

Thanks to the EBURNE's for all they do to help make our tournaments successful, all across Canada! Bruce and Manon

were one of the first to register to Referee at the 2024 Pickleball Canada Myoflex® National Championships in Halifax Nova Scotia, 20 - 24 Aug 2024!



## Contributors

Val Vollmin  
Steve Deakin  
Mark Renneson  
Alan Thomson  
Wayne Kerr

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](mailto:scoop@pickleballcanada.org)

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

