



Message from the President Val Vollmin

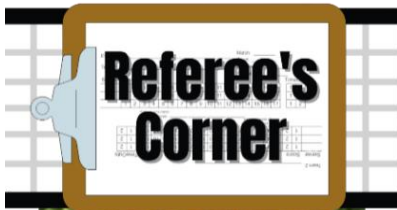
As another summer of pickleball comes to a close, I hope everyone has been able to get on to the courts and enjoy the summer sun.

This summer Pickleball Canada held some incredible events with some amazing hosts. Most recently Pickleball Nova Scotia hosted an astounding National Championship from August 20th – 24th in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This event brought together over 800 participants from all over Canada. Thank you to all the volunteers who worked hard to put this event together!

Our membership has also grown immensely over the course of the summer and we now have over 75,000 members last September around this time we had 58,504 members. Thank you to everyone who helps to facilitate this incredible growth!

Val Vollmin





REFEREES: WHO ARE THEY, AND WHY DO THEY DO WHAT THEY DO?

Alan Thomson

I was sitting in my seat on the plane on my way back home from the PC/Myoflex ® National Championships in Halifax. The guy in the middle seat indicated that he would like to use the washrooms so up I got and while up, decided that I would find something in my Pickleball bag, so brought it down to my seat to rummage through it to find what I was looking for. This gave the gentleman at the window the opportunity to ask if I had been playing at the Nationals in Halifax. I said not playing, that I was the Head Referee for Pickleball Canada. We went on to discuss a number of issues with me of course asking how he found the event, and did he enjoy it. Happy to report he had, but that is not the topic for this article. He got around to asking about Refereeing and why I did it and ended up suggesting that it may be a good idea for someone to write an article so that players had a better understanding of the Referees and the job that they perform. I thanked him, and said perfect, as I'm now struggling a bit to find interesting content for this column in the PC newsletter... SCOOP!

I would suggest that most Referees gain their interest as a result of having played in or watching tournaments where Referees are obviously most often found. USA Pickleball started the Officiating Certification program in October of 2016. At that time the only reference material available was a much thinner rule book, and a newly written handbook, which quickly became known as the "Best Practices." Training was new and being done in the Pheonix area by Lynn and Linda Laymon who were the authors of this early manual. It's amazing to think that this program has only been in existence for 8 years since it has developed so far in that time. All you have to do is take a moment to explore the Officiating pages of both PC and USA P to get an appreciation for the continual development and changes.

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

A timely question might be, “is it difficult to become a Pickleball Referee?” There is obviously a myriad of ways to try and answer that question, as it depends on the trainee, and their background. Not scientifically proven, but we do see people coming from structured backgrounds as having an advantage, Military, Police, Nurses/Doctors, Teachers etc. would appear to have a leg up on the average person due to their exposure to similar training material and the need for “attention to detail!” in their daily lives. Getting back to the question, is it difficult? Yes, more than most think! “Is it more difficult than it should be?” Perhaps, but as you have heard many times before, these are early days for Pickleball and things are moving fast to keep pace with the sport’s growth. The pendulum may have swung too far left, but it will probably self-correct, given time.

As you can imagine, every Referee regardless of level, needs to have a thorough understanding of the Rulebook! Interestingly, there is very little formal training conducted on the rulebook. I suggest this is due to the fact that every word in the book plays an important part in interpreting the actual rule, and it is best reviewed with a specific situation in mind. There are aids for trainees to utilize and to gain the understanding they need to be able to instantly apply a rule during an officiated match. That is the various tests that can be found online. They are great at reinforcing the rule, while others provide situations that you will encounter while refereeing any match. This concept is so important in the learning process that a Casebook has been developed to highlight situations that may not be completely covered by the Rulebook, so they are written up with the correct process to be followed whenever encountered on the court.

The Best Practices have also been refined over the past eight years but interestingly, the same scoring system and mechanics are taught as they were in 2016. If USA Pickleball should endorse the Rally Point scoring system, (now an approved trial for singles plays) this will drastically change those processes and procedures. Again, I have often equated the best practices to learning to drive a standard transmission car. All your attention is focused on the clutch pedal and gear shifter, and not where it should be... looking out the window and steering the car correctly! Once the Referee masters the scoresheet, scoreboard and starting server clip they can then pay closer attention to what is happening on the court and focus on those items with the scoresheet and pin being second nature. Depending on the

person, this can take anywhere from 50 – 100 matches before one gets comfortable and more like 500 – 1000 so that it becomes a completely seamless operation.

Now that we have some idea of what it takes to get started in the program, you might ask, “why would anyone want to take this on?” and “who are these people?” I canvassed a few of our Certified Referees and asked them these questions. As suggested earlier, most were players and at some point, where coheres into Refereeing or Line Judging to help out at a tournament, others have taken it up because their spouses/partners became Referees and they quickly discovered if they wanted to see them again, they would have to join the ranks. And also interestingly, of the replies received, 2 were nurses, 2 managers, 1 policeman, 1 with a background refereeing in another sport, and one double world champion curler who was also an MLA and a Cabinet Minister. Again, most indicated that it was the challenge of learning the processes and the need to stay mentally active as we age that caught and has held their interest. Another common theme was the camaraderies found amongst the Referees and their individual desire to assist those coming through the program. This is a very important element that speaks to the health and vitality of the program! Great news for the future of Pickleball Refereeing in Canada!

One last point of interest, USA Pickleball has recently had discussions with the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) and Pickleball Referees (US & CAN) have been invited to join that organization to truly become and be seen as “Professional Referees!” This is the same organization that administers the NHL, NBA, MLB, NFL and many more sports. This is an acknowledgement of the hard work and effort applied by all those that have become a credentialed Pickleball Referee.

If you are a player, please take a minute to acknowledge them and the effort that they have made to help progress the game across our country and around the world.

As we say, a game without a Referee is nothing more than a recreational game, and the outcome not truly known, as there is no one to call.... **“Foot Fault, Right Foot... Sideout!”**



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2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship Presented by Think Turkey

From August 20 – 24th Pickleball Canada held it's 2024 Myoflex® Pickleball Canada National Championship Presented by Think Turkey in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This event brought together over 800 participants from coast to coast. Thank you to Pickleball Nova Scotia for hosting a great event.

Make sure you check out Pickleball Canada's social media to see all the highlights from the event.

Don't forget to check out the official Pickleball Canada Photo Album from the event as well which can be found on our [website](#).

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2024 National Pickleball Day

Saturday, August 10, marked National Pickleball Day 2024 in Canada. The second Saturday of August each year is designated National Pickleball Day, an opportunity for the pickleball community to celebrate the sport that brings us together, also serving as an excellent recruitment opportunity for clubs across the country.

This year many communities across the country came together to celebrate the incredible sport of pickleball.

A few highlights of the stories received include:

- **Vernon, British Columbia** – The Vernon Pickleball Association was with the Downtown Vernon Association to host a Pickleball Day falling on National Pickleball Day August 10th. A portion of downtown Vernon's main street was completely closed down to accommodate four pickleball courts and a street party. Three courts were used for a 'Queen/King of the Court' style tournament, and one court was used as a demonstration court for people interested in pickleball. There was a DJ playing music, a few food trucks, Tourism Vernon & Pickleball Depot were on site, as well as tables and chairs for people to relax & enjoy the festive pickleball street party. All in all, it was a success and a great way to celebrate National Pickleball Day!
- **Newmarket, Ontario** – The Newmarket Pickleball Club was established and opened in May 2023. On August 10 of 2024 they suddenly had 560 members of which 170 people came to



their annual barbecue on August 10th to celebrate National Pickleball Day. The Newmarket Pickleball Club had four Canadian Professional Pickleball players put on a pros match for all the club members to see. Harvey's also attended the event and provided a complementary barbecue for all of their members.

- **Medicine Hat, Alberta** – The Medicine Hat Pickleball Club hosted an Under the Lights Play at their club. They started the evening singing O Canada to honour National Pickleball Day. Play was sportsmanlike but competitive! Everyone brought a shareable snack and a beverage of choice for after the play was done and they had a great 70s and 80s music playlist to make it even more fun.



- **Invermere, British Columbia** – Invermere Pickleball Club celebrated National Pickleball Day on Saturday, August 10th, with a great morning of pickleball followed by a potluck lunch. Fantastic turnout including players from other clubs in the area and visitors to the town. There were prizes awarded to the best dressed in Canadian clothes to celebrate the wrap up of the Olympics. Fun was had by all!!



- **Campbell River, British Columbia** – The Campbell River Pickleball Association planned a full day of activities to celebrate National Pickleball Day. In the morning club members began the day with specific pickleball warm-up exercises led by a highly skilled kinesiologist from the city. Club players were then divided into two teams and participated in a Mega Team Rally



Tournament. Rally scoring was kept after each round played. After every two rounds, Teams White and Red had to then complete fun challenges for additional points. This was the highlight of the morning with lots of laughs and friendly competition. Players shared food and the organizers drew participation prizes generously donated by various sponsors from the community. In the afternoon, drop-in 'Learn-to-Play' session for non-club members was organized and hosted by the Campbell River Pickleball Association. Participants were introduced to the game and its rules, practiced various skills and drills at different stations. This was followed by some game time with some of the clubs' volunteers. Overall, it was a great day for all!

- **Alma, Quebec** – The Alma Pickleball Club was very proud to participate in National Pickleball Day for the third consecutive year. The team at Alma Pickleball Club initiated around 20 new recruits during the event. They are more than happy to be added to the club's current 350 members.

Make sure to mark the date for Saturday, August 9th, 2025, on your calendars for National Pickleball Day 2025!



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Stay up to date with all of Pickleball Canada's news and updates by following Pickleball Canada's social media platforms.



Pickleball Canada



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Contributors

Val Vollmin
Alan Thomson
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!