

PICKLEBALL IS FOR EVERYBODY!

# THE VANCITY PICKLER

November-December 2021 Newsletter



## PRESIDENT'S GREETING

*Greg Feehan*



Few other sports have this spirit of interaction across the normal barriers of society. The name pickleball itself was chosen to emphasize the centrality of this inclusiveness. In rowing, a pickle boat crew is composed of leftover oarsmen from other boats and is often comprised of coed teams, something that is not usual in rowing.

I have lived in the Lower Mainland for some 35 years now. As with most of you, my social and work circles were circumscribed – I worked and played with people like me. Although I played basketball for many years, and latterly squash, my fellow players were largely male, majority white, generally from the same socioeconomic strata and tended to be about the same ability level as me. It was only with pickleball that I was welcomed into this new world where everyone played with everybody. I prefer this new world. Pickleball gives us a rare gift, one worth fighting to protect.



## COULD VANCOUVER'S LAST CHANCE AT ACTUAL LIVABILITY BEGIN ON PICKLEBALL COURT?

*Chris Koentges*



Vancouver is what happens when you graft unrelated cultural kernels from far away onto some breathtaking geography. Only in Vancouver could Robbie Burns Day and the Chinese Lunar New Year become Gung Haggis Fat Choy. And yet only in Vancouver—the most livable city in the world—do we [commission municipal plans to combat “social isolation”](#).

I moved to Vancouver just before the Olympics, eager to find the synergy between so many different cultures. However, like most outsiders, I ended up falling into a convenient network of friends my own age from my hometown—and work colleagues. At the time, I was working as a sportswriter, covering oddball games like pinball, feather bowling and Finnish hockey goalies. Pickleball was inevitable—but in a way I never imagined.

They played it at Trout Lake, just down the street from my home. They'd arrive an hour before the session to reserve a spot. I was entire decades younger than the youngest people waiting in line. Nothing about the scene looked like the pickleball revolution I'd seen on the USAPA website, which featured photos of a singular demographic giddily whacking balls in gated Sunbelt communities. At Trout Lake, different languages were spoken. There was no unifying style of dress. This was everybody I'd been hopelessly trying to get to know since I moved to the city.

These were the city's outsiders.

In my first game, a Vietnamese woman patiently showed me where to stand and move. I'd try my best to get out of her way as she drove heavy topspin through the other team's seemingly impenetrable defense. The group reluctantly shifted me from one foursome to the next. My presence was tolerated, but not embraced.

Everything changed the second time I showed up. They began calling me by my first name. Between games, they'd share a cup of tea or a slice of layered sticky rice cake. They shared advice on the game. As I learned to communicate more intuitively on the court, they began sharing their life stories. After a month playing



pickleball at Trout Lake, I had Vietnamese friends who grew up in the neighbourhood. Older Chinese friends. Russian. Thai. Every culture. Different ages. Male. Female. Gay, straight. From every kind of career. Trout Lake pickleball was the purest thing I'd ever encountered in Vancouver.

Some of the more active players would take me to other courts, where a whole new set of comrades would take you to even further flung spots. Pickleball became a shibboleth that took its practitioners into what felt like a secret parallel Vancouver universe. It was Gun Haggis Fat Choy with a paddle and a whiffle ball.

When Covid hit, little pickleball bubbles began to form throughout the city, among people who would NEVER otherwise know each other under. These circles became tighter than the families they weren't allowed to visit that year. We helped each other through the grating uncertainty. And as the pandemic fueled a rise of hate crimes, pickleball hubs like QE became a safe place for everybody to gather. A reminder of the city that had once drawn so many outsiders.

In the endless progressive chatter about rebuilding a denser, more livable and equitable city for everybody, the Vancouver pickleball court represents a place to begin. It's also a glimpse of the game's global future.

## THE VPA NEEDS YOUR HELP

Do you have an experience that illustrates Pickleball's inclusivity? Please share it with us to support our lobbying efforts for more pickleball courts, more pickleball playing times and space conversions in Vancouver. Click [HERE](#) to send us an email.

## Upcoming Events

[2021 Margaritaville USA Pickleball National Championships](#), December 6-14, 2021 Indian Wells CA

[2022 Pickleball Canada National Championship](#) (the Nationals), June 20-26 2022, Kingston ON

[2022 Western Canadian Regional Championship](#), July 20-24, 2022, Regina SK

*Happy Hanukkah!*





# CREATING A SPACE FOR EVERYONE

We believe that "pickleball is for everybody" but we know that the lack of venues and time slots can be a barrier to everyone being able to participate. The VPA and its members continue to create playing opportunities for our members all over Vancouver, for all age groups and for all playing levels. We hope to see you at one of these sessions/locations.

## NEW INDOOR LOCATION (TRIAL RUN), 7 & 14TH DEC

The VPA arranged for intermediate play sessions at Badminton Vancouver (on Mitchell Island) on December 7th & 14th. The first session was a great success. This was an opportunity for the VPA to "try out" this venue, and for Badminton Vancouver to "try out" the VPA as a customer.

So far so good. All the players came away happy. The only downside to the venue is that the space behind the baselines is quite short - but that didn't impede the fun. It might not be the venue for high-level, competitive play. But for intermediate and below it is more than adequate.

The only other problem was that the players thought we should allow more people per session. With the cap of 20 people for four courts, it meant that people rarely got a break from playing. So in the future we'll allow more people to attend.

Based on the first day's experience, things are looking good. If the second day goes as well, we'll arrange for regular sessions there throughout the winter. (We'll definitely try to accommodate beginners more when we make this a regular arrangement in the new year -- perhaps by having dedicated beginner / 2.0 sessions in addition to dedicated intermediate sessions). Register [HERE](#).



Photo credit: Bill Dorfmann



Photo credit:  
[https://www.yelp.ca/user\\_details?](https://www.yelp.ca/user_details?userid=W0n1HpZw1bZ19C-5n7-q54A)

[https://www.yelp.ca/user\\_details?userid=W0n1HpZw1bZ19C-5n7-q54A](https://www.yelp.ca/user_details?userid=W0n1HpZw1bZ19C-5n7-q54A)

## ROUND ROBIN FOR "2.5'IVERS"

Cyndi Boado started a special kind of round robin a few weeks ago. In early November she "borrowed" a clinic slot from Catalin Costea and began offering game play time and mentorship to 12 pickleball beginners.

"After I met a few players who told me that they were having a hard time finding people to play with at QEP, I felt I had to do something", she said. Participants cover the cost of the rental (St. Marys Church in Kerrisdale) and Cyndi donates her time.

Each weekly session includes alternating game play, drills and tips, and suggestions from Cyndi. After the session, she sends each player an email with a summary of the week's learning points and personal feedback.

This unique combination of instruction, practice and mentorship has made a big difference to her 12 beginners. "Awesome", "loved it", safe and supportive environment", "warm-hearted" are just some of the kudos the participants enthusiastically shared about the sessions.

Cyndi hopes to start a new round robin in January with another 12 beginners. If you're a VPA Member and you're interested in participating, she can be reached via email at [bcyndi92@gmail.com](mailto:bcyndi92@gmail.com).

Thank you for your dedication to the sport, Cyndi!



Photo credit: Jacqueline Clarke

Know someone who's new to pickleball?  
Give the gift of a VPA membership to help take their game to the next  
level. Click [HERE](#)



## **LGBTQ PICKLEBALL DROP-IN, DEC 18TH**

The VPA is hosting a free Pickleball Drop-in event at Hillcrest Community for the LGBTQ community on Saturday December 18th, 2:00-3:45 PM. This free event is an opportunity for members of the LGBTQ community to learn and/or just play pickleball. Register [HERE](#).



## **PLAY IN EAST VAN**

In real estate, its "location, location, location". In pickle-ball, its "options, options, options". Good weather? Two locations in East Van, Pandora Park and Brewers Park, are outfitted with "net boxes". The boxes contain pickleball nets for anyone's use. Follow the instructions on the storage boxes for access and net set-up or learn more [HERE](#).

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## **VANCOUVER CURLING CLUB LOUNGE WELCOMES PICKLERS**

While its not a venue for playing pickleball we think its a great location to continue the fun. The Last Draw Lounge is located at Hillcrest Community Centre (the entrance is on the left, just past the Blue Parrot Cafe) and can accommodate up to 200 people. The Lounge offers a regularly-rotating menu of different appetizers, entrees. local beer and wine. The lounge is open to the public from 5:30 pm to 12 am Monday to Friday during the curling season. Stop by for a beer and snack after play. We hope to use this venue for future VPA social events and a possible "Intro to Curling" for VPA members in early 2022.



## Pros and Cons: *Yellow vs. the Others*

Pickleball might be for everyone but some picklers are not quite as welcoming when it comes to the colour of the ball we'll play with!



**Preference:** Orange

**Why:** Reminds me of summer!

*Ani Terton, Member for 1 day*



**Preference:** Anything but yellow

**Why:** Can't see them and they're boring!

*Kevin, Member for 3 months*



**Preference:** Yellow

**Why:** Kevin can't hit them

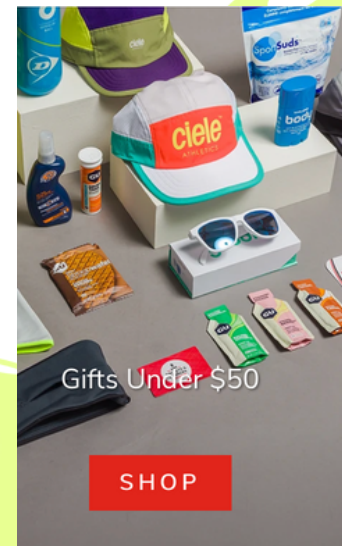
*Greg, Member for 1 day*

### HAVE YOUR SAY:

Which do you prefer and why? Tell us what you think by posting on our Facebook page. Click [HERE](#).

## SPONSOR SHOUT-OUT

Need a gift for the pickleball player in your life? Check out these [Gift Ideas](#) at Racquets and Runners. Don't forget to let your recipient know VPA members get 10% off at Racquets and Runners. (Not a member? Well....there's the [perfect gift!](#))



## MEMBER NEWS

The VPA wishes a fond farewell to stalwart member, Charles Neufeld. His many efforts to bring pickleball to everyone will be sorely missed. From the van to the lessons as well as his support of the VPA. We wish him well in his future endeavours and competitions in the US.

## SPOTTED AT QEP

If you've been watching [Yellowjackets](#), Showtime's latest teen drama, you may have noticed a familiar face. Steven Krueger (as Coach Ben Scott), played a few pickleball games at QEP while he was in town filming the series. His "rating"? "A genuinely nice guy", said Bill Dorfmann.

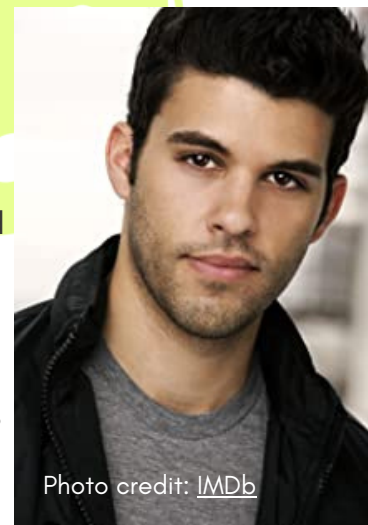


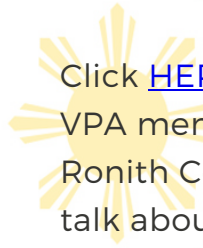
Photo credit: [IMDb](#)

## CALLOUT FOR INTEL

Where do you feel most comfortable playing pickleball and why?

Send us your recommendations for publication in the January newsletter (click [HERE](#)).

## ★ PICKLE FOR THE PEOPLE



Click [HERE](#) to see VPA member

Ronith Cogswell talk about her passion for

pickleball in Taglish (Tagalog + English!).



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

We are stronger together!

Any VPA memberships that were purchased prior to October 1st will expire at the end of December. Therefore, you will need to renew your membership for 2022 as soon as possible to remain in the VPA. The VPA charges \$5 for membership, but membership in Pickleball Canada and Pickleball BC is required for membership in

the VPA. Pickleball Canada charges \$10 and Pickleball BC charges \$2.50. So if you are only registering for the Vancouver Pickleball Association, the total charge will be \$18.92, which includes the processing fee on top of the membership fees. If you have already registered for another club, you will not be charged again for Pickleball BC or Pickleball Canada. Renew your membership [HERE](#).



[Photo credit](#)

**The VanCity Pickler is the Vancouver Pickleball Association's monthly newsletter publication:**

*Building and keeping our community connected*

**Have an idea for a future edition? Have a question?**

**Email: [newsletter@vancouverpickleball.ca](mailto:newsletter@vancouverpickleball.ca)**



# THANK YOU, PICKLEBALL

*Bill Dorfmann*



Percentages ... The other day someone was discussing what pickleball paddle to buy, and I told them that the paddle probably only makes a 5% difference in helping win a game. My belief is that 95% of one's success in the game is due to ability, technique, patience, strategy, and luck.

We can argue about that point. But then I started thinking about percentages related to what is special about pickleball. I'm going to go out on a limb here: My belief is that about 20% of the enjoyment of pickleball is playing the game, and 80% is what happens between games and off the court. Think about it.

While waiting between games, you probably have some great chats with your friends. Or you learn new things about people you meet (there are so many interesting people playing). Also, I don't know of any other sport where you spend so much time analyzing the way others play, and performing post-mortem analyses of the games that you just finished playing – but generally in discussions with other players.

Here's another characteristic of the game: You're out shopping, or you're out for a walk on the beach or in the endowment lands, whatever – but you're not anywhere near a pickleball court – and you meet someone you recall playing pickleball with. They introduce their partner, and you introduce yours. The “vector of friendship” has extended a little further. (Thank you, pickleball)

Also, why do we even play pickleball? Do we do it for the fitness? Fitness is a factor, for sure. My guess is that generally less than 20% of peoples' motivation to play is to get more fit. And unlike winter sign-ups for fitness centres, pickleball sticks. People play the game and, yes, they get more fit. But it is fun fitness, not drudgery. Fitness is the by-product of fun in pickleball. (Thank you again, pickleball)

Pickleball makes you feel like part of a community. I've made friends & acquaintances with, at this point, probably hundreds of people I never would have met playing another sport. They include me in their games, between-game banter and sometimes even their off-court social circles. I try to do the same. Thank you, pickleball. I'm 100% on-board.