

PICKLEBALL IS FOR EVERYBODY!

THE VANCITY PICKLER

July - September 2025 Newsletter



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PRESIDENT'S GREETING

*Janet
Martini*



The past few months have brought important changes to pickleball in Vancouver. Three new pop-up locations have opened at Andy Livingstone, Memorial South, and Rupert Park, while activity at Brewers Park has been reduced due to vandalism and noise complaints.

Despite these additions, Vancouver still lacks standardized courts with proper spacing, permanent nets, dividers, and safe surfaces. Many courts remain rough enough to damage shoes and balls, and tennis nets left in place create hazards. Compared to other Lower Mainland municipalities, only Richmond has fewer outdoor courts.

The Vancouver Pickleball Association continues to work with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation to improve facilities and advocate for permanent, accessible courts. A major milestone will be the launch of the Park Board Sport Court Planning process next spring, a step we have awaited for six years.

In this newsletter, you will find details on what is changing, what is new, and what is ahead. We encourage you to explore the updates, enjoy the new play opportunities, and stay engaged as we move forward together.

Thank you for your enthusiasm and commitment. It truly makes a difference.

MORE

More Courts. More Play. More Community.

*Susan
Willett
Vice President, VPA*



The Vancouver Pickleball Association (VPA) Board launched the MORE Campaign this summer to raise awareness about the shortage of pickleball courts in Vancouver.

As part of the campaign, letters were sent to city officials, a petition was circulated, and the initiative was showcased at National Pickleball Day events across the city on August 9. To date, we've gathered 1,300 petition signatures—a clear sign that Vancouver's pickleball community is strongly behind this effort.

The VPA continues to work closely with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation to expand play opportunities throughout the city. This summer, we gained new courts at Andy Livingstone Park and celebrate the upcoming pop-up spaces at Memorial South Park and Rupert Park this September. Our focus

remains on advocating for more permanent court development, improving existing facilities, and expanding indoor play options.

How can you help?

- Encourage players to join VPA—there's strength in numbers.
- Support the campaign. Sign the petition on VPA website.



- Write a letter of support to city officials ([email list on VPA website](#)).
- Like, share, and comment on our social posts to spread the word.

The [MORE Campaign](#) ends on September 30th.

Thank you for your support!



More Courts. More Play. More Community.

PETITION: SUPPORT MORE PUBLIC PICKLEBALL COURTS IN VANCOUVER

To:

Mayor Ken Sim, Vancouver City Council, Park Board Commissioners and Staff
City Hall, 453 W 12th Ave
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

We, the undersigned, are calling on the City of Vancouver to invest in more public pickleball infrastructure.

Vancouver has built a reputation as a leader in wellness, sport, and active living. From cycling paths to community centres, the city has shown its commitment to healthy lifestyles. But when it comes to one of the fastest-growing sports in North America—pickleball—Vancouver is falling behind.

Pickleball promotes physical activity, mental health, and social connection for all ages. However, the demand for public courts in Vancouver far exceeds supply. Courts are overcrowded, wait times are long, and access is limited.

To bring our infrastructure in line with both public interest and Vancouver's wellness goals, we respectfully urge the City to:

- Build more dedicated public pickleball courts across Vancouver
- Create or expand multi-use sport spaces to include pickleball
- Include pickleball in future recreation planning and the 2025 city budget

Let's ensure Vancouver continues to lead in promoting active, healthy, and connected communities.

Together, let's rally for MORE: More courts. More play. More community.

VANCOUVER PLAY

Changes at Brewers, New Pop-Up Courts

As we adjust our presence at Brewers Park, we're also excited to share new opportunities for play across the city. Here's what's changing—and what's coming next for VPA members

Brewers Park Update

Due to recent vandalism and on the recommendation of the Vancouver Park Board, VPA will be reducing its presence at Brewers Park. In September, the nets, signage, and lock box will be removed.

Brewers remains a public park, so players are welcome to bring their own nets and continue to play. Because of the park's proximity to nearby homes, VPA members are asked to follow the VPB's recommended play hours of 9:00 am–6:00 pm and to use noise-reducing equipment when possible.

More Courts, More Play!

Thanks to our ongoing partnership with the Vancouver Park Board, players can enjoy:

- [Andy Livingstone Park](#) – the popular downtown pop-up continues with 4 courts
- [Memorial South Park](#) – 3 pop-up courts now available
- [Rupert Park](#) – brand-new play opportunities with 4 courts

These additions expand access to outdoor play and support our growing community. We remain committed to working with the Park Board to enhance existing facilities, explore new locations, and advocate for more permanent courts citywide.



In the Neighbourhood

Eleven new, dedicated, outdoor pickleball courts were opened at Willoughby Community Park in **Langley**. The space includes a practice area, meeting areas, paddle rack and lighting. The city's mayor, Eric Woodward, was on hand for the opening ceremony.



In **Richmond**, indoor playing options increased with the opening of Dink Pickleball in August and Zero Zero Pickleball (Fall 2025). For outdoor, lines were added to create four pickleball courts on a tennis court at South Arm Park.

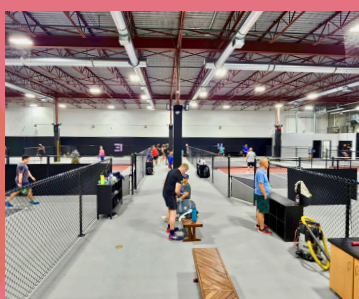


Photo credit::Michael Lee

SPONSOR SHOUT-OUT

After almost 2 years of seeing such a heavy emphasis on power paddles, the industry is finally trending back toward control. Check out [R&R's list of the 5 best control paddles](#) on the market right now.



Photo courtesy: R&R

Remember, VPA members get a 10% discount at R&R

MEMBER NEWS

Huge shout out to VPA members, Mackonner D., Soo-Mi C., Phillip W., Joyce T., and Francesca F. who took home 4 or more medals in July and August tournaments!



Photo credit: J. Clarke

PICKLEBALL CANADA ADOPTS DUPR

All Pickleball Canada sanctioned events will use DUPR for seeding, providing fairness, transparency, and accuracy in competition. Read the annoucenemnt [here](#).



Photo courtesy: PCO

In the Neighbourhood (cont.)

Two more indoor locations are scheduled to open in Spring 2026: at [Capilano Mall](#) in **North Vancouver** and [adjacent to the outlet mall in Tsawwassen](#).



Photo courtesy: JThe Nest

The vote on redesigning the Gleneagles Adventure Park to include pickleball courts, amongst other changes, failed at a recent **West Vancouver** city council meeting. City staff submitted an amended plan for the site in response to community engagement. Councillors could not agree on the number of pickleball courts at the site. No date has been set for the matter to come back to council.



Photo courtesy: City of West Vancouver

AROUND THE POST

*Greg
Feehan
Past President, VPA*



Despite the warm, sunny day, or perhaps because of it, my regular group was not playing, so I decided to return to Andy Livingstone, where I had played frequently several summers ago when we briefly had access to the site.

It felt like a homecoming. Most of the players were people I knew from our earlier access. Those who were new had already achieved a tightknit social connection within the always welcoming group. In the few short weeks since we were given re-access to it, they had already created a family, with everyone swapping players and courts after every game, playful banter, and gentle, or occasionally not so gentle, competition. It was heartwarming to see the pickleball community come together so quickly and to do so under less than ideal conditions – taped lines, rickety nets and an uncertain future for the site.

When I got home, I checked the WhatsApp group they had started only weeks earlier. They already had more than 120 members.

That evening illustrates both the need for more courts and the social value of our sport. What other sport would have spontaneously formed a camaraderie group so quickly? What other sport would have filled all four available pickleball courts within days of their availability?

CONGRATULATIONS

Sandra
Franke
Secretary, VPA



In these parts, Summer is also pickleball tournament season! Many VPA members have distinguished themselves by winning medals at events held in the Lower Mainland and elsewhere around the province. Warmest congratulations are extended to:

Andrew P., Angela B., Anatares L., Benny L., Blair F., Bob H., Brad E., Brandon L., Brent H., Calvin J., Carol C., Catherine T., Cathy J., Chuck J., Claire F., Colin W., Corrine H., Debra E., Derrick L., Diane C., Dominic A., Elizabeth D., Francesca F., Dary A., George T., Gilbert C., Gordon H., Heather J., Helen C., Ian C., Irvin S., Jalen F., Janey L. Jance C., Jay B., Jeanine Y., Jennifer H., Jeremy P., Jessica T., Joceline H., Joyce T., Julie R., Julie L., Justin L., Katherine A., Katherine C., Kazuko Y., Keith B., Lacey G., Leonie P., Lou B., Mackonner D. Maria P., Maricar A., Mariko W., Mario Ba., Mario Bo., Maureen L., Michelle N., Mike S., Olivia P., Patrick T., Penny U., Philip W., Randy G., Ray L., Roberto F., Ruth J., Shaída N., Shannon O., Shannon W., Shellen C., Sherman T., Soo-Mi C., Sylvie X., Sylvie B., Teresa S., Todd, D., Tracey R., Tracy D., Velisia G., Vincent L., Wai Lung David W., Yancy V.



Photo credit: J. Clarke

THE INSIDE DROP

The Story Behind Pickleball at KitsFest

This summer, the pop of pickleballs rang out at KitsFest for the very first time — but the road to get there was more than a year in the making.

It started when Tim Cowley, co-owner of Elevate Pickleball, pitched the idea to KitsFest organizer Howard Kelsey. The concept was exciting, but it faced hurdles: approval from the local residents' association (concerned about noise) and the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. After months of discussions — and with Kelsey's track record of financially investing in the courts — the event got the go-ahead last fall.



With no permanent pickleball courts at the site, Elevate Pickleball taped and assembled nets for 19 temporary courts. Sponsors included Babolat, Lululemon, and, new to KitsFest, CRBN Pickleball. The focus of the tournament was on emerging competitors — 2.5 to 3.5 skill level. “We wanted to introduce tournament play to new players,” said Cowley.

The result? Vancouver's first-ever pickleball tournament, enthusiastic crowds, and a clear message: pickleball has a place at KitsFest — and it's here to stay. “We'll definitely be back next year — maybe with singles — but this event will always be for the grassroots player,” said Cowley. Check out the event video [here](#).

By the Numbers:

17 events

242 registered players

283 total registered in events

58% female, 42% male

Ages 19-78

WHERE COURAGE MEETS COMMUNITY

The sound came first — a soft pop-pop of a wiffle ball skimming across the court, punctuated by laughter. At one end, a player leaned forward, paddle ready, determination in her eyes. Across from her, her care partner grinned, gently lobbing the ball back.

It was the first of two Pickleball for Parkinson's sessions at the Vancouver Curling Club this July — and the room was already buzzing with energy.

An Idea Becomes a Movement

The sessions were the brainchild of Catherine Pezarro, who wanted to give people living with Parkinson's Disease (PD) and their care partners a chance to experience the joy, movement, and connection that pickleball brings. She teamed up with the Vancouver Pickleball Association's own Chris Koentges to make it happen.

With the help of four volunteer coaches led by Chris, the sessions were tailored to be friendly, adaptable, and encouraging. Some participants had never held a paddle; others were brushing up on skills they'd once known. Everyone found a place to belong.



Why Pickleball Helps

It turns out pickleball isn't just fun — it's therapeutic. Research shows that the sport's blend of movement, coordination, and social connection can benefit those with PD in surprising ways, from improving balance and agility to lifting mood.

The Michael J. Fox Foundation and Selkirk Sport have both highlighted pickleball's potential as part of PD wellness initiatives. As one recent

Pickleball for Parkinson's

- Therapeutic benefits: Pickleball can improve balance, agility, and mood in those living with Parkinson's.
- Backed by research: The [Michael J. Fox Foundation](#) and [Arizona State University](#) have highlighted promising results from PD pickleball studies.
- Industry support: [Selkirk Sport](#) has launched initiatives to grow PD-friendly pickleball programs across North America.
- Social connection matters: Group play offers emotional support and motivation — two key ingredients for sticking with an exercise routine.

wellness initiatives. As one recent study noted, it's a rare mix of cardio, camaraderie, and cognitive challenge — and that combination is gold for people managing Parkinson's.

A Warm Welcome to the Court

The sessions weren't just about drills or rallies. They were about making people feel truly welcome. Players were matched with others of similar skill levels, and every win — no matter how small — was celebrated.

Some participants enjoyed it so much that they've already signed up for more classes and drop-in sessions. The

feedback spoke volumes.

- *"It was a great experience. The coaches were kind and patient, and we had a ton of fun."*
- *I felt welcomed despite my disability... You've changed that for us with your welcoming attitude."*

More Than a Game

What began as Catherine's idea became proof that pickleball can be so much more than a sport. For these players, it was about courage, connection, and the joy of discovering what's possible.

And for everyone on the court — coaches included — it was a reminder of why we play: because the game has room for everyone.

VPA Board Members

Janet Martini

President

Susan Willett

Vice President

Randy Egan

Treasurer

Sandra Franke

Secretary

Andre Plourde,

Sponsorship & Member-at-Large

Victoria Ueland

Social Media Coordinator

vancouverpickleball.ca/about-us

1, 2, 3 BOX!

Kinder

Mottus

Box League Coordinator, VPA



By the time you are reading this article, we will have been through ten rounds of full-court singles, ten rounds of Individual Round Robin and four rounds of Team Doubles which means Box League 2025 is almost a wrap!

- Strong interest in Full Court Singles saw over 60 participants. King **Richard Xiang** dominated Pod 1 but did share with **Edwin Lee** and **Owen Rogers**. Four players participated in all the Rounds: **Edwin Lee**, **Karissa Marazzi**, **Ciaran Robinson** and **Richard Xiang**. **Mike Church** stands out as being "most

- improved player", steadily learning from his peers and climbing the ladder.
- Skinny Singles started with ten pods and was down to three by mid-September. **Richard Xiang** was the top seed in the first eight rounds with **Owen Rogers** and **Hafiz Thobani** joining him at the top of the ladder. 30 participants made this league a great success. **Joe Steyn** had a perfect record, signing up to play all of the Rounds.
- Men's Round Robin had 71 different participants. **Ciaran Robinson** was the Ironman playing in all ten rounds to date. The most consistent players in Pod 1 have been **Juan Sasco** (9), **Sam Barudin** (6) and **Glenn Matsui** (5). **Clark Lin** hit perfection most often scoring 33 points in three different Rounds.
- **Tori Routtenberg** was our 100th player to enter Women's Round Robin. The Queen of WRR was **Karissa Marazzi** who played all ten rounds in Pod 1; consistent and strong! **Abby**



Photo courtesy: K. Mottus

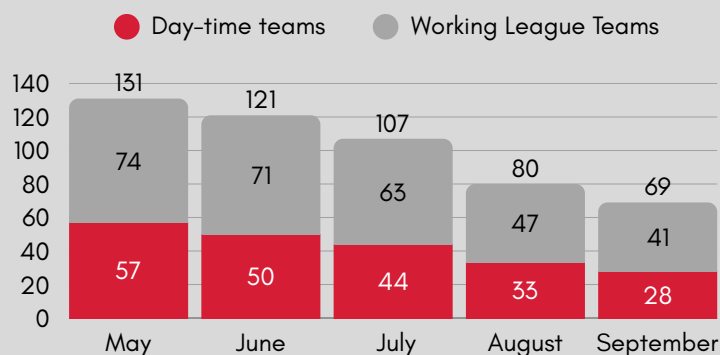


Photo credit: J. Clarke

- **Chan** hit perfection the most scoring 33 points in three different Rounds.

The switch in Team Doubles to separate Day Time and Working League saw a major increase in our numbers.

2025 VPA Box League Participation



This second year as Coordinator has been a challenge due to growth in numbers and changes to the DUPR algorithm which potentially deducted ranking points even for a win. During the offseason we will revisit our use of DUPR. If you have a strong opinion one way or the other, [please drop me a note](#).

Planning for Box League 2026 will begin in earnest over the Fall. We will look at the feasibility of splitting Round Robin into a Day Time and Evening League. Keep your eye out for a poll. Until next season...

Huge, huge thanks to:

Sandra Wilkins who stepped in and ran our Singles Division this year which saw full-court and skinny versions offered to the membership. Sandra did a great job keeping Singles running smoothly this season.

Lisa Yang who helped behind the scenes. Lisa kept us all organized with her electronic forms, updating the website and entering scores into DUPR.



PICKLEBALL KIDS IN PICKLEBALL SCHOOLS

Andre
Plourde



A Whole Lotta Slammin' Going On!

The East Vancouver Elementary School (EVES) Pickleball Initiative celebrated its third year with two June “Slamborees” that captured the program’s growing momentum.

Student Slamboree — 12 June

Eighty-three students from nine East-Side elementary schools converged on David Thompson Secondary for an afternoon of spirited pickleball, learning and laughter. With teacher input, organizers sorted players into 12 ability-based groups, each anchored to a single court. Games lasted seven minutes, three gyms buzzed simultaneously, and 11 rounds were finished in just over two hours. Volunteer

court managers handled timing, scoring and encouragement; every participant left with a prize, and the top three in each group earned certificates. The smiles said it all.

Teacher Slamboree — 23 June

Thirty-seven teachers packed all nine courts at the Vancouver Curling Club for the first-ever educator-only event.

Experienced players quickly formed level-appropriate pools, while newcomers enjoyed on-the-spot coaching from volunteer pro Justin Liao. Pickle-themed key rings—and actual dill pickles—served as light-hearted prizes. Between games, teachers swapped ideas for noon-hour ladders, before-school clubs and PD-day clinics, laying the groundwork for even more student-centred opportunities next year.



Photo credit: Sharon Hoy

Looking Ahead (2025-26)

- More students introduced to Canada's fastest-growing sport
- Expanded teacher professional-development events
- Additional community coaches and volunteers
- Pickleball BC has received a second \$30,000 grant from viaSport to replicate the EVES model in more communities across the province.
- And, of course, expect plenty more Slammin'!

To learn more about the EVES Initiative or to donate to the cause, please visit the VPA's [website](#).



Photo credit: Sharon Hoy

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

2025 Rally in the Valley Powered by Pickleball Depot, Sep 26-29, Vernon

WRC Club Championships, Oct 3-5, Whistler

Chilliwack Fall Tournament, Oct 17-19, Chilliwack

The Dink Minor League Pickleball West Regional Showdown @ IPOP, BURNABY (MiLP), Oct 25, Burnaby

WRC Fall Classic, Nov 14-16, Whistler

Abbotsford Fall Classic 2025, Nov 21-23, Abbotdford

For more information/ registration visit: pickleball.com

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

Building and Keeping Our Community Connected

Have an idea for a future edition?

Have a question? Email:

newsletter@vancouverpickleball.ca

NATIONAL PICKLEBALL DAY August 9 2025

Every August, National Pickleball Day brings Canadians together to celebrate the country's fastest-growing sport. Across Vancouver, courts come alive with welcoming, fun, and memorable activities thanks to our amazing volunteer court hosts.



Vancouver Curling Rink

Thank you so much for coming out to celebrate National Pickleball Day with us at the rink. The event was a huge success! We enjoyed an amazing charcuterie board & lots of cake!

Between the food, the laughter, the fun games & fabulous prizes, it was definitely a day to remember!

Huge congrats to our two grand prize winners, Helen Au & Pauline Lee, who took home the super limited-edition gold Kitchen Blockers! Can't wait to celebrate with you again next year!



Brewers Park

The 2025 National Pickleball Day at Brewers Park once again highlighted the welcoming vibe and camaraderie of the Brewers Park pickleball players.

By prioritizing half of the available courts for new player instruction and beginner play, the group made space for learning and fun in a non-intimidating environment. Certified pickleball coach John McLean conducted three sessions to introduce newcomers to the game, while several volunteers played alongside and coached beginner players to grow in their love of pickleball.

Meanwhile, volunteers, regulars and neighbourhood drop-in players engaged in competitive play, pickleball toss with prizes, photo booth, snacks, and great conversation.

The response to our call for volunteers was spectacular again, with everyone pitching in to

make light work of set-up, monitoring different locations, and clean-up. If we tried to list all the volunteers, with our deep thanks, we would have to list almost our entire pickleball group!

The community response to the VPA petition that we set out was significant and incredibly encouraging, with many new signatures.

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, many pickleball players went home with prizes, while everyone went home with great memories.



Long-time Brewers pickleball participant Sharon summed up her day and our day: "Fun, fun, fun!"

Champlain Heights

Inclusivity, community support, and overall love for the game made the 3rd Annual Champlain potluck / BBQ another huge success. With over 100 people attending this year's event our group has grown substantially with many new faces and players.

The VPA's involvement in National Pickleball Day, support by local businesses providing prizes and the many volunteers who helped prepare the event, has further strengthened our pickleball community.

Throughout the day, three scramble-format tournaments were held, with food and drinks generously provided. With the continued backing of the VPA and our community sponsors, we aim to keep growing the sport and creating more opportunities to play.

We were especially thrilled to welcome so many new faces this year, ranging from enthusiastic first-timers to seasoned players returning to reconnect. The energy and camaraderie on the courts were truly inspiring, turning the event into not just a competition but a joyful celebration of our shared passion for pickleball.





Pandora Park

The Pandora festivities was a tremendous success with physiotherapist Elliott Usher from Physioblab leading a 10-minute stretch session to start off the day.

Many thanks to over 50 plus volunteers coaching new players and providing food and drinks to everyone.

With sponsorships from the Vancouver Pickleball Association, Terra Breads and McDonald's, we were able to serve 90 omelettes from Chef Thierry, 105 BBQ chicken in the bun plus many food donations from players.

There was also a mini mixed scramble tournament with 24 players... Gold - Mabel, Silver - Alex, Bronze - Dorothy.

Capping off the day, 44 players went to Royal Palace Restaurant for a 10-course dinner and celebrate six August birthdays!

