



Pickle Juice

Letter from the Editor

Joanne Griesser

“In a world where you can be anything, be kind.” Anonymous

There are a couple of articles in the newsletter that deal with levels of play and how important it is to be kinder to new or less experienced players. It is good to remember that we all had to start somewhere and its practice, practice, practice that gets us to USP Open.

This Newsletter is for our members. If you have a story, a helpful tip, pictures, travel information, an event or you just want to have your voice heard, send your article to Joanne.Griesser@verizon.net. Your input could appear in the next newsletter.

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From the President's Desk

By Earl Sneeringer

The weather is starting to cool off, the leaves are changing color and pumpkins are all over....must be Fall. With cooler temperatures comes more opportunities for us to play. It also signals that we will lose some of our players (Snow Birds) as they head south for warmer temperatures.

Speaking of snow birds, I would like to recognize Don and Kathy Plasses before they hit the road for Florida. Their contributions as volunteers for our summer drop-in sessions are greatly appreciated. They took the burden of seeking volunteers for the Ice Rink courts setup away making it much easier for our organization. We wish them well as they prepare to head south.

While I am recognizing key volunteers, I would also like to give a big thanks to Joe Beitz and Steve Orr for their efforts to put together our tournaments and league sessions. These events provide some good competition and great fun as well as some variety in our association's offerings.

Many thanks to the other members who step up to volunteer in the setup and takedown of the nets before and after the drop-in sessions, assisting in the administration of our PB Potluck Socials and assisting with the running of the large tournaments held in August. These contributions to our organization and the sport itself help make a good impression on the pickleball community at large. As a non-profit organization, we rely heavily on our volunteers for the association's administration and establishing playing opportunities. I hope that as we continue to grow, others will step up to contribute to the organization.

Our association membership continues to grow and we are embarking on a new effort to in planning for our future, both short term and long term. Our public relations committee of Duane StClair, Steve Orr and Cathy Spain have initiated the development of a Five-year Master Plan for Pickleball in Howard County. This team is diligently working to solicit as many key organizations as possible, such as Columbia Association (CA), Howard County Recreation & Parks (HCR&P), Howard County Public Schools System, the YMCA, PlayPickleball.Com and some additional members of the CA committees, to collectively plan how we will be able to get ahead of the growing number of players in our community. We held our first meeting on Tuesday, September 17th, and will be continuing to meet monthly till the end of the year to develop a plan on how to expand the pickleball venues available. The team did a great job of planning for the first meeting which resulted in some good discussions and great ideas. We look forward to the final product which is due the beginning of 2020.

During our first planning meeting, we learned that HCR&P is exploring the addition of more permanent pickleball courts around the county. They have four locations in mind that they will repurpose existing infrastructure into new pickleball courts. As you probably heard, they are conducting a public hearing on Oct. 16th and our association hopes to have many of our members in attendance. The tentative plans include adding one more court to Atholton Park by converting the remaining racquetball courts into one pickleball court, building three courts at both Rockburn Branch Park and Centennial Park North and

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proposed building a six-court complex at the Alpha Ridge Park. This should provide our pickleball community more venues and it will likely attract players from other counties looking for playing opportunities. When I asked when they anticipated to have these in place, they said by the summer of 2020 for Atholton, Rockburn and Centennial parks. The Alpha Ridge facility may take longer due to the amount of work required. We are excited to hear this and look forward to the ribbon cutting on these facilities. As always, plans may change based on the feedback they get from their public hearing; so we will be monitoring this effort to see if it goes through as planned or not.

Finally, our summer playing sessions have been very popular with a variety of offerings to help cover some of the missing indoor venues due to summer camps in the school gyms. The number of weekly drop-in sessions increased to cover all weekdays and some evenings, our holiday gatherings have been well received and enjoyable and our new Pickleball Potluck Socials have been very popular. In addition to those official offerings, other groups of players have been organizing picnics and ad hoc playing via informal texting groups. Also, our instructional sessions have been very popular, and we are seeing many new players participating in our drop-in sessions. Because of our growth, we have expanded our offering of drop-in locations to three locations on Saturday mornings. As with any growth, there will be growing pains, so please be patient as we work to accommodate the growing number of members with multiple playing venues and skill oriented locations. Additionally, we are currently planning for indoor venues as winter approaches. Although indoor facilities are limited due to the large and popular basketball program, we will try to secure some alternative locations to help offer playing opportunities as the weather changes. Stay tuned!

Paddles Up!

Duane's Court

By Duane St. Clair

On August 28th Jan St.Clair, Rob Schmidt, Marc Austin, Sonny Tannan and I conducted a session on pickleball to just over 50 Howard County physical education teachers at a preschool in-service session at the Oakland Mills High School. We used the equipment that the Association donated to the school system. Most of the participants were enthusiastic about trying pickleball and many picked up the game quickly. A few were able to play a very competitive game even keeping score. I guess that should not have been surprising with many of the teachers having extensive athletic experience. Some expressed an interest in having students play pickleball in their classes. I indicated that I could find instructors to come and assist any of the teachers to learn about the game rules and playing techniques.



Pickleball Association to Host the Development of a Howard County Pickleball Master Plan

Our Association has been advocating for the development of pickleball courts and play opportunities the past 4 years with many County organizations. We have been successful in getting lines on tennis courts, providing indoor play at schools, getting courts built at Atholton Park and Owen Brown Tennis Center. We have decided that the time is right to try to bring all the groups that we have approached to consider pickleball to a planning effort to determine where pickleball moves forward to meet the growing demand for courts. We now represent the interests of over 300 members and want to insure that pickleball gets the attention it deserves as a growing sport.

Our Association will be meeting with over a dozen organizations from September to December to produce the Pickleball Master Plan for Howard County. With this plan, we will have a roadmap to create the necessary resources to make Howard County a leader in meeting the growing activity with pickleball in the future. Stay tuned for more information on the Plan development. If you have any suggestions for areas, we should consider addressing email me at duanestclair@gmail.com

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Webmaster Tidbits

By Earl Sneeringer

I have added a topic to the Member Discussion forum for Lost & Found. This can be used to post anything that was left at the PB courts. Just leave your name and contact information and when someone forgets something, they can go to that topic to see if it was posted.

Under the Members menu, you can access the new USAPA Self Rating guide. USAPA has revised this document to provide a clearer way to define these levels. When you get a chance, check them out.

Mary Pagan has agreed to assist me in working on the website. I am in the process of training her. She is starting out by posting some pictures to our website. I appreciate the assistance.

If you have any suggestions for additions or corrections please contact me via email at sneeringere@gmail.com.

Interview with a Pro

**Erica Winton,
PPR & IPTPA Certified Pickleball Professional**

It was my pleasure to meet Erica Winton at the Ambassadors Tournament earlier this year. I would like to thank her for taking the time out of her busy schedule to answer a few questions.

Would you mind telling us a little about yourself? Family, area where you live and play. Do you have another career outside of Pickleball?

I live and play Pickleball in Annapolis Md with my husband, Greg, who is a brilliant aviation attorney. For the past 2 summers, I have had the pleasure of being the Pickleball teaching pro at Mears Marina in Annapolis. I love Pickleball! Those who play will understand when I say, "I'm addicted"! There is something very special and unique about this game! I also do a bit of interior design and was a Faux-Finish artist for almost 30 years and a hairstylist before that.

What caught your interest in Pickleball and how long have you been playing?

We moved from Rockville MD and I found myself trying to meet people and stay active. I was struggling with back issues and trying to play golf and do Bar Method (Barre Exercise). Someone told me about Pickleball, which I had never heard of. I was a national junior tennis player, so the concept of Pickleball was very intriguing. I had given up tennis a few years earlier due to four (4) herniated discs. Once I tried Pickleball at the PIP Moyer Rec Center with the Annapolis Pickleball Club, I was hooked! I was still having back problems though. I found a wonderful chiropractor, Dr. Ryan Shakley, in Annapolis and things changed for the better. I was playing five (5) days a week and traveling for tournaments.

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I understand you are a certified instructor. Where did you get your certification and was it difficult to acquire?

My first Pickleball certification was through IPTPA, International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association. The practical and written exam was challenging but I was prepared and it was important to me to achieve. Last winter I traveled to Florida to take the PPR (Professional Pickleball Registry) certification course, similar to tennis' PTR. I was very fortunate to have the great Sarah Ansboury teaching the class. I was thrilled, she is well known and has a great professional teaching and successful playing history in the game and I knew I was lucky that she was teaching the PPR course. She used me for demos during the course and I learned so much that it only made me more passionate for the game, I wanting to teach others!

You have played in several tournaments, where is the best place that you have played and why?

I have played in many tournament with much success since beginning Pickleball almost 3 1/2 years ago. Probably my favorite has to be the US Open Pickleball Championship in Naples FL. I have played the past 2 years and in 2019 I won Silver in Women's Doubles and Bronze in Singles. You really feel as if you are participating in something big when you are at the US Open! I have also won Gold in the Maryland Senior Olympics in both Women's Doubles and Mixed Doubles (50-54) which qualified me to play in Senior Nationals in Albuquerque NM this year where I earned 6th place in the country, Women's Doubles with my partner.

Would you mind telling us about a not-so-good time that you had on the court?

Pickleball's such a great game it's hard to think of a time on the court when I haven't enjoyed it! Last winter I was not properly hydrated when I went to FL to play in a tournament with a new mixed doubles partner. I became sick and tried to push through it so I would not disappoint him. Lesson learned about playing in the heat!

Do you do any volunteer work in the community that you would like to discuss?

I volunteer a few times a month for the Annapolis Pickleball Club, teaching beginners the game. I would love to teach kids, and hope to make that happen moving forward. This summer I ran a successful member/guest tournament at Mears Marina with three (3) different playing divisions.

Can you tell us how we can get in touch with you about taking lessons with you?

I teach in the Annapolis area and at Mears Marina. Email is the best way to get in touch with me, erica824@me.com

If you could only give one piece of advice to a Pickle Ball Player, what would it be?

"Paddle In Front"!

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Anything else you would like to share.

I feel as if I am reliving my youth as an athlete. I was a Wilson sponsored junior tennis player and now in my early 50's I am a sponsored player for HEAD Penn Pickleball! Recently HEAD Penn Pickleball asked me to be the Atlantic Regional Marketing Coordinator. It is such an honor to be on this great supportive team, so passionate about Pickleball!

I enjoy teaching Pickleball to all ages and athletic abilities! Pickleball is truly a game for all! It is not all about winning, it is about the amazing people I meet and the many new friends I have made. There is so much laughter on a Pickleball court, something that does not seem to happen in other sports. Pickleball has such momentum, that to be part of this history is humbling. When I am not teaching, I am playing!

“Pickle, No Sauce”!

Travel Report

Ken Greco

Pickleball on the Adventure of the Seas.

One month ago, 15 of my friends took a cruise on Royal Caribbean's Adventure of the Seas. It left from Bayonne, NJ and sailed to the Bahamas. I had a chance to ask the sports director if we could play pickleball on the top of the ships basketball court. It has become so popular that many ships offer it on a regular basis. He was happy to set up the nets; the lines were already there. Five (5) of my friends had never played the game but they picked it up quickly. There was no or little wind even though we were at sea. As it turns out, they have three days where the sports people offer it to any passengers. So if you are planning to go in a cruise, find out if the ship has a sports court and you may have the opportunity to play. I would advise you to bring your own paddles and balls. Just in case you're interested I found that there are specific cruises for pickleball players.

Earl in Hawaii- Playing Pickleball of course!



Social Events

The YMCA has invited our association to join in on the next Pickleball party. Please consider attending this worthwhile fundraiser event in support of the Y's Parkinson's program.

Date- Saturday, October 19th

Time- 7 til 10pm (Be there at 7 pm due to doors locking)

Cost- \$15 plus bring a desert or appetizer

Registration- Front Desk in the lobby

Limited to the first 60 people who sign-up.

The typically have three courts set designated as beginner to intermediate and three courts for intermediate to advanced players.

In support of the Ellicott City Y's Peddling for Parkinson's Program located on Montgomery Rd in Ellicott City.

Food, music, 6 Pickleball courts, lots of fun for an important cause.

Humor

Reprint permission from **The Crazy Pickleball Lady**.

Stop and close your eyes. Listen. What do you hear?

The other day between games in open play, another player suggested I stop and listen. And here's what I heard. Bam, bam, bam, bam, give or take one or two bams. What was I hearing, and what was to be made of it?

We continued to watch and here's what we saw. Serve, return, bam, bam, bam.....again, give or take a bam or two. Most rallies went from serve to attempted kill shot. There were mostly third shot drives, with very few third shot drops to help them get up to the NVZ line, or set up any kind of rally. Most often players never got past no man's land before the rally ended.

I can't say that those players weren't having fun, and isn't that what it's all about, ultimately? But it made me think.

Is the game really changing that much, or were they playing this way because it's all they know? Have those players not been offered enough help for them to improve past this type of aggressive, hard hitting play with no strategy at all? Or maybe they don't want help and just want to play that way?

I should add that these were not high-level players who set up opportunities for a kill shot that may have been returned by their opponent, and the point either reset or won. These were lower to intermediate players. And again, they were having fun. But, guess what happened when a couple of them went up against some better players. You guessed it. Those hard bam bam's were cut down with some off-speed shots and dinks into the kitchen..... game over.

Admittedly, I fought the hard banger game tooth and nail when first attacked by it! But over time, I've accepted that it's part of the game, and needed in your arsenal of shots if you're going to be a better player. This includes hitting the hard shot, and being able to receive and handle the hard shot.

BUT, when playing with or against beginner or lower intermediate players who ONLY hits the hard drive from anywhere on the court, is it appropriate to talk to them about expanding their shot selection and learning to hit a soft shot as well? Would they welcome suggestions to help understand when/why to use a drop shot, why a softer game would create longer rallies, how to set up scoring opportunities, and why having a variety of shots will improve their game?

Or, do we have a "win no matter what" culture, even during open play.

One thing I find, at least in my community (which has four local clubs and close to 500 players), is that there are beginner classes available, but after that, further training opportunities are scarce. Most players go right from beginner lessons into open play and have little or no more helpful attention going forward. They get no help with strategy or with reasons, they should slow the game down and keep

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their hard shots for surprise offensive attacks. (NOTE: I'm excited to say that this summer, two area clubs are offering skills and drills for the first time!)

I might be wrong, but I think if open play is going to mingle all levels together, we should speak up and offer suggestions. It might be the only instruction offered to help them at this point. I realize though, that not everyone wants to be helped. Some people are winning points by beating the ball past (or directly at) weaker players and are perfectly happy doing so. I know immediately when I am with an un-receptive player. When that happens, I make a mental note to bite my tongue and to have limited play with that person in the future.

I've heard players say they watch the pros play on YouTube, and in the US Open championship matches on CBS Sports and that they are playing a faster, harder hitting game. That's true. But we aren't pros, are we? And we aren't always playing against people of our same skill level. I assure you the pros know how to set up a strategic put away by keeping the ball slow until the opportunity presents itself, and that's when the pace of the game gets fast. If their kill shot doesn't get through and a quick flurry of fast, hard shots occurs, often someone is able to reset the point! Amazing to watch, but that ability didn't come without a lot of skill and practice.

There are all styles of play in the game of pickleball. There is a place for soft and hard shots, lobs and all kinds of other crazy shots. You need them all to be the best player you can be. But, when newer or lower level players are playing a one dimensional game, I am going to offer to help them understand that there are other ways to play, other shots to learn and try in order to succeed. If my help isn't welcome, I'll shut up.

What do you think? Should help be offered? Or just let people play the way they want?

What I discovered at a tournament...

by Sonny Tannan

I recently had the opportunity to play a variety of events at the USAPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Tournament in Myrtle Beach, SC. I also had the pleasure of travelling down with a group from various counties in Maryland, including Howard, Montgomery and Baltimore. Let me tell you how much fun this group was, and more importantly, supportive of each other as we competed throughout the weekend.

It was not just all about pickleball though, we found time to visit the beach, enjoy some nightlife and bond over some late night conversations. At the end of the trip, I think it is safe to say that I know just a little bit more about these individuals that make me enjoy and respect their company even more. I wanted to provide a few thoughts on the tournament itself...so here we go!

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Pre-tournament

- The basics – a good ready position with both your paddle up and in front of you, as well good footwork is necessary to be best prepared to play out a point.
- Practice – if you are playing doubles and have the chance to do so, make sure you get in as many reps as possible to build chemistry between you and your partner.
- Nutrition – this includes hydration and diet...it's amazing that we don't really pay closer attention to our body, be sure to take care of yourself in preparation and during the tournament

During the tournament

- Social – be sure to make lots of friends...if you think this is a social sport, you are right! What a great way to make new friends and see old ones whenever you travel and have some fun!
- Adjustments – during every single game, in-game adjustments are so critical. This can include communication with your partner, tweaking your strategy and being mentally strong.
- Keep it in play – you would not believe how many points were won or lost by simply hitting the ball out or in the net vs going for a higher percentage shot and keeping the ball in play.

Post-tournament

- Review – be honest in your feedback with yourself as to what went well, what didn't and how you can approach improvement in your game the next time you step on the court.
- Follow up – stay in touch with your new friends and old ones because you never know when the next tournament might allow you to all cross paths again...you may even partner up!
- Thank you – be sure to let the tournament director and/or organizers know how appreciative you were of them and their volunteers and provide feedback so it can be even better next year.

It's a great time to be involved in this sport and even more amazing who you get to meet and see play on the courts. Be sure to share your thoughts on what you enjoy about tournaments as well as the ones you enjoyed attending most. Remember, have fun as well as continue to work on improving your game.

See you on the courts!

Pickleball Classic Tournament Results

By Steve Orr

The Howard County Pickleball Classic Tournament was played on the weekend of August 3rd and 4th at the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex facility in Ellicott City, MD. Contestants came from all around the region to participate in this tournament. It was a great opportunity to observe some superb players and learn a few new techniques. Steven Orr, of our organization was the Volunteer Coordinator who managed all volunteers including volunteers outside the organization to help assist in this two day tournament. A total of 27 members donated over 170 hours of volunteer time to support the event. The

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volunteers who donated their time were in charge of the check-in registration process, distribution of shirts to all players and providing court supervisors for all 14 courts. Several HCPA members also acted as line judges in several final games and Duane refereed several final matches. There was a large showing of HCPA members in the tournament and several members finished with medals. There were five (5) Gold medal winners and 3 Silver medal winners. Congratulations goes to the following HCPA members:

Gold Medals:

Sue DiSena (2 Gold Medals)
Teresa Compofelice
Sheree Shyu
Ji-Hyon Kim
Ray Farrar

Silver Medals:

Donna Moore
Bob Saunders
Cheryl Saunders

A special thank you goes to all the HCPA volunteers who helped with this event. Their assistance helped to make the event run smoothly and helped keep things on track. All volunteers will be eligible to purchase HCPA shirts at a discount when they are ordered next. Thank you to the following volunteers who were all a tremendous help.

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Joe Beitz | Kirk Mardock | Max Buffington | Jeanie Horner |
| Cheryl Saunders | Emily Downs | Sophia Thomas | Tanya Redcross |
| Patti Guzman | Jeff & Theresa Love | Nancy Hartka | Terri Downer |
| Kathy Markman | Ray Farrar | Janice Goodwin | Duane & Jan StClair |
| Ali Razeghi | Gary Bredthauer | Jeanette Cartron | Mary Roepcke |
| Joanne Griesser | Kathy Marianelli | Karen Robinson | Earl Sneeringer |

For Pictures of this event go to:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/hocorec/48527703486/in/album-72157710289052647/>

Classified & Websites

Erica Winton, Certified Pickleball Instructor erica824@me.com 301-717-9196

Sonny Tannan, Certified Instructor sonny_tannan@yahoo.com 443-473-9259

HEAD/Penn Pickleball Facebook post

<https://www.facebook.com/132718887391119/posts/404742573522081/>

USAPA Juniors Website

<https://www.usapajuniors.org/national-grandparents-day-celebration-equals-pickleball/>