



# Pickle Juice

## Words from the Editor

Joanne Griesser

Happy New Year! December and early January provided us with some wonderful weather. The Owen Brown Tennis Club courts saw a lot of activity. I hope you were able to take advantage of the warm, sunny days.

In the short time I have been playing Pickleball, the most frequent argument is about the proper serve. Here is a short uTube video about the correct way to serve. [Correct Way to Serve](#) by Mark Renneson of 3<sup>rd</sup> Shot Sports.

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](mailto:Joanne.Griesser@verizon.net).

## Featured Articles

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Words from the Editor</b> .....        | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>From the President's Desk</b> .....    | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Duane's Court</b> .....                | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Webmaster Tidbits</b> .....            | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Upcoming Events</b> .....              | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Where to Play</b> .....                | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Travel Log</b> .....                   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Social Events</b> .....                | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Humor</b> .....                        | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Interview with Charlie Brown</b> ..... | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Pro-Corner</b> .....                   | <b>11</b> |
| <b>Goodbye Joe Beitz!</b> .....           | <b>14</b> |

**Classified & Websites (Future- if you would like to advertise your business) ..... 15**

**From the President's Desk**

The weather has been so different from last year. We have been fortunate to continue to have 40- and 50-degree days among the colder ones. Once again Columbia Association has been very generous at Owen Brown Tennis Club; both in keeping the lights on till early January and in deciding to keep the PB nets in place. The cold is coming, we just don't know when. At the moment we are not organizing any playtimes at OBTC so you're on your own for outdoor play.

Our association has arranged for some indoor venues to cover us for the next few months. We were lucky to be able to reserve Lake Elkhorn Middle School's gym and cafeteria along with the adjacent Cradlerock Elementary School cafeteria to have 5 courts on Saturday mornings. We changed the approach to a week by week basis depending on if we get enough members to register ahead of time to cover the higher rates of the custodian that we must pay for. Our first use of this facility was a big success and we filled it with 29 players. Unfortunately, due to a recent decision to enforce a policy for nonprofit adult organizations to be charged a facility fee, the cost to use these facilities both during the week and on the weekend skyrocketed and priced us out of the use for indoor PB. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make this possible.

The association is considering setting up three skill level venues come this spring. We are planning to provide a Beginner/Novice site (B/N), an Intermediate Player (IP) site and an Advanced Player (AP) site. We will be looking for volunteers to help us with the setup. We are looking to use the Ice Rink for B/N, Locust Park for IP and Vantage Park for AP. Please let me or one of the board members know if you would be willing to assist in setup and which skill level.

We have lost our tournament director. We are grateful for the find job that Joe Beitz did in organizing our ladder league and various tournaments. If anyone is interested in replacing Joe, please let me know. I would also like to thank all those who assisted Joe in the endeavor, especially Steve Orr who assisted Joe with the computer work. It helps to have a team of people to work with.

Finally, the fall has been very busy for several members of our association with the development of the Pickleball Master Plan Report that the association spear headed. Duane StClair led the effort with the assistance of Steve Orr, Cathy Spain and me. It was quite an effort and Duane provided more details in this newsletter. We are extremely grateful for the hard work and diligence shown by these members in organizing and leading these multiple meetings with various Pickleball organizations around the county. This gives us a guide and resource to work with in planning for the future of Pickleball in our county and within Maryland. Once again, our organization is leading the way within the State. You can find the plan as one of the menu items on our website.

## Duane's Court

Howard County Pickleball Master Plan now complete

# Game On Pickleball

A Plan for Promoting the Development and Growth of  
Pickleball in Howard County, Maryland



The Association has just finished 4 months of work with members of the Howard County Pickleball Master Plan Committee to develop a 5-year Master Plan to prepare Howard County for the growth of pickleball over the next 5 years. The past 5 years has seen a rapid growth in the number of players and the number of lined courts for pickleball and a few permanent pickleball courts. The growth of the sport in Howard County will only continue to grow at an

accelerated pace. The Working Group met in Fall 2019 to develop the Pickleball Master Plan, which is the basis of this report. This group shared a clear and concise vision: to make Howard County a leader in the development of pickleball in Maryland. The Working Group identified three goals. These goals are to:

1. Develop facilities that expand play and limit barriers to play.
2. Develop a comprehensive set of pickleball programs.
3. Foster ongoing collaboration among pickleball and other groups.

The organizations involved on the Committee were the following:

- Columbia Association (CA)
- Howard County Commission on Aging
- Columbia Association Senior Advisory Committee
- Columbia Association Tennis Advisory Committee
- PlayPickleball.org
- Howard Community College (HCC)
- Howard County Pickleball Association (HCPA)
- Howard County Public School System (HCPSS)
- Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks (HCRP)
- The Dancel Y in Ellicott City (Dancel Y)

The Master Plan Committee will continue to meet semiannually as the HoCo Pickleball Network so that the work described in the Plan becomes implemented. To read the Master Plan go to this link:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1MdD6mbpCaYFEnZRsh6oKk8zUQgZFnKcC>

## **Webmaster Tidbits**

By Earl Sneeringer

I am grateful for the assistance provided by Mary Pagan & Brian Bowman, who are working with me in managing our web site. We have provided more pictures over the last year (Mary) and attempted to keep our local places to play table updated (Brian). Thanks also to Ira Franckel for monitoring the member forums under Member Discussion. My hope was to provide the Member Discussion forum as a way for our members to communicate with each other. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem to be used or viewed very much. I intend to continue to provide this and request that people give it a try and subscribe to a post you are interested in to

Winter 2020

see when something gets updated. At a minimum please use this for lost and found items. The more it gets used the more useful it will become. If you have any additional feedback or suggestions please let me know.

## Upcoming Events

Diamond State Pickleball Open March 21-22, 2020

You are invited to sign up for the newest tournament to come to Delaware. Register at pickleball [tournaments.com](http://tournaments.com)

Harold Holeman

DSPO tournament Director

302/598-6123 [hdholeman@gmail.com](mailto:hdholeman@gmail.com)

## Where to Play

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) notified us that the policy for facility use by a nonprofit adult organization will be charged a facility fee. The new costs for the school facilities prohibits our use of these facilities to offer indoor pickleball. As a result, we have cancelled our reservations for all of the school facilities for the remaining sessions.

At this time, we have no other alternatives. The Association will look for other venues. Suggestions are welcome and should be directed to Earl.

## Travel Log

### Sea Colony Resort, by Earl

During August, while vacationing in Bethany Beach, at the Sea Colony Resort, my family took the opportunity to play pickleball at their Tennis Center. Sea Colony has two sets of tennis courts with pickleball lines painted on either side of the tennis nets. Two of them are adjacent to the indoor Tennis Center and two others are just south of the Tennis Center within one of the many residential areas. The two near the Tennis Center have lights so you can play into the night as well. They have portable nets that they leave up and off to the side so that they can be positioned on to the tennis courts for Pickleball. The second day we were there, my son Greg and his girlfriend Kate play my son-in-law Matt, my grandson Xavier and I rotating so the extra person just sat out one game.

Winter 2020

Later that week, I happened to pass Dorothy Boulton, our association Secretary, while biking down a path and I stopped to chat with her. I told her we were playing at the Tennis Center and suggested she come join us sometime. A day or so later, she joined up for a late night session playing with Greg, Xavier, Matt, Stephanie my daughter and I. It was great fun and nice to know that Pickleball is starting to be included in the offerings by the Sea Colony Tennis Community.

In late October, while visiting my son Greg in Sommerville Massachusetts, just north of Boston and east of Cambridge. I found a YMCA gym using the USAPA Places to Play web site. They were offering pickleball on Saturday mornings for a small fee. I took an Uber to the gym and got to play with some locals for about an hour and a half before the program changed. Luckily, they had some spare paddles to use since I did not bring my equipment. It was nice to get a little exercise in while visiting my son.

#### **Columbus Ohio, by Don Schmidt**

In early September, we travelled to Columbus, Ohio for a family wedding. We stayed at a hotel in a suburb of Columbus I believe was Westerville. We brought our paddles and balls with us intending to play if possible. The HCYP members in our family were Don, Rob & Steve Schmidt & Dave Fontana.

On Friday evening, we found six dedicated PB courts nearby on the Places to Play App and we were pleasantly surprised that three courts were available and only four other players were at the facility. As it grew dark, lights came on and we were able to play after dark intermingling with the other players.

The following Sunday morning Rob & I found a different facility with four dedicated courts. We played with some new people and two players that we had met Friday night.

It was a pleasure to find courts so easy to find and conveniently located. HOCO Parks & Recs should take a lesson from Columbus and strive to provide more courts in our area.

#### **Florida, Marathon and Key West, by Duane St. Clair**

A few years ago it might have be hard to find permanent pickleball courts on our yearly trip to the Florida Keys but now the sport has been recognized by towns all along the Keys as being essential to attract "snowbirds" to their communities. Jan and I have found a second pickleball community in Marathon, the middle key. It is always nice to see old pickleball friends and competitors there every year.

Winter 2020



The pickleball community in Marathon used to play on courts with lines on a basketball court but the number of players petitioned the community to have permanent courts and grants were obtained. The new courts accommodate the 25-30 players who now play there. In talking with the players, it is clear that many of us choose Marathon over other Keys because of the pickleball.

A trip to the Keys is not complete without playing a couple of times at the 6-pickleball courts in Key West.



The courts are broken down into four courts for rotation play and two courts are challenge courts for intermediate and advanced players. This is a good way to mix players of a variety of skill levels. We usually play pickleball until 11:30 then have lunch at a favorite beach restaurant and then snorkel after lunch. Only in Key West can you do those things only 20 yards apart!

## **Social Events**

### **Association Social and Meeting:**

**February 19th at 6 pm**

**East Columbia Library**

HCPA is hosting an association social & meeting providing pizza and drinks. This will be held at the East Columbia Library. We will share our work on the Howard County Pickleball Master Plan and be available for any questions. A doodle poll will be sent out to identify how many members will be attending so we can plan for the refreshments.

### **Tino's Fund Raiser:**

**May 19, All Day**

**Tino's Bistro and Wine Bar,**

**8775 Centre Park Drive, Columbia, MD 21045**

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Tino's set that date for the HCPBA fundraiser. The food is good, you will not be disappointed. Bring your friends and family on May 19<sup>th</sup> and the Association will receive 10 % of their proceeds. We have received over \$500 each of the past 2 years for this event.

Winter 2020

## **Humor**

Never underestimate an old man with a pickleball paddle.

Dink responsibly.

Life without Pickleball is possible, just pointless.

## **Interview with Charlie Brown**

I grew up in Brooklyn, New York, rooting for the Brooklyn Dodgers and playing stickball, football and basketball in the local schoolyard. Sports has always been a very big part of my life. I graduated from Long Island University (BS), Brooklyn College (MS) and Springfield College (Ph.D.). All my degrees are in Physical Education—with my Ph.D. concentrating in Athletic Administration and Sports Psychology. At LIU, I was a varsity wrestler.

I started my professional career as a New York State certified Physical Education teacher in an elementary school in Harlem, NY. In 1970, I became the wrestling coach and instructor at Hunter College of the City University of NY. Eventually, at Hunter, I became the Athletic Director and a tenured Associate Professor.

After 20 years at Hunter College, I accepted the position of Director of Athletics, Chair of the Physical Education Department, and Director of Recreation and Intramurals at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). The move to Maryland was a major upheaval for my family-- my wife, Linda, and two teenage daughters, Melissa and Michelle. But, for all of us, it turned out to be the best thing that could have happened! We settled in Ellicott City and the girls went to Centennial High School where Melissa played varsity tennis and Michelle played both varsity tennis and basketball.

During my career, I was inducted into three Athletic Halls of Fame—those of Sheepshead Bay High School, Hunter College and UMBC. After 25 years at UMBC, I retired in 2014 as an Associate Vice President. Also in that year, I was chosen as the National Athletic Director of the Year for NCAA IAAA schools by my national organization.

I have taught and coached a wide array of sports in my 50+ years in the field. My 3 favorite sports are wrestling, track and Field, and, now, PICKLEBALL! After my family, which now includes 4 grandchildren, sports has been my life.

Upon my retirement in 2014, I was looking for a good, recreational sports activity that I could really get into and would not cause too much harm to my already much overused body parts. I had stopped running, jogging, playing basketball and softball, and needed a replacement

Winter 2020

pursuit. Just by chance, my friend who was visiting from Florida asked me if I had heard anything about a sport called pickleball. I had not. On a whim, we took a ride over to the Howard County Parks and Rec facility at Meadowbrook, and my life took a whole new turn!! I began playing there and found that pickleball was a fun, inexpensive, and very social sport.

Soon after, while working out at the Dancel Y, I approached the administration and suggested they start a Pickleball Program. To my amazement, the then Y Director, Jill Black, asked me to start the program. Jill and I had gotten to know each other when I was at UMBC and she was at the Catonsville Y. When I began, we had 3 players, two 3-hour sessions/week and 3 courts. We now, 5 years later, have approximately 210 participants, 6 courts, and a total of 23 hours/week over 6 days, including early bird hours and Sunday evening play in addition to our regular weekday hours.

We offer weekly clinics for beginners and intermediates as well as private and small group lessons. We have pickleball parties, novice and advanced tournaments with the proceeds going to either the Y's Parkinson's Program, summer camps, or back into the pickleball program. We also provide a pickleball demonstration each year for the Parkinson's Symposium held by the University of Maryland Hospital.

Last winter, I decided to get my certification as a pickleball instructor. While in south Florida, I took a course offered by the Professional Pickleball Registry, a partner of the USA Pickleball Association. This consisted of a skills rating, a teaching rating, and a written exam that demonstrated an understanding of pickleball skills, rules, teaching techniques, etc. In addition, 3 years of experience teaching either pickleball or tennis was required for the certification. A study guide was provided to candidates in advance of the course to help in preparation.

While in Florida, Linda and I went to a 3-day pickleball camp run by Engage at their headquarters and manufacturing plant in Oxford, Florida. I was the only camper who was taking copious notes, as I planned to use what I learned not only to improve my personal pickleball skills, strategies, etc. but also to add to my instructional sessions at the Y. After the first 8-hour day, Linda and I returned to our hotel, but neither of us could climb out of the car!! By the second day, our 70+ year old bodies had gotten used to the pace.

My pickleball experiences have been outstanding whether with the Howard County Pickleball Association (of which I am a founding member and former VP), the Play Pickleball.com leagues, the venues we go to in Florida, or with the Dancel Y. Even on a road trip to Mount Rushmore, my wife and I stopped to play pickleball in Sioux Falls, South Dakota thanks to a tip from Duane St. Clair. (You can find out where play is in each state on the USAPA website) Of course, I consider the Y the best option in Howard County for learning and playing pickleball, as it is a

Winter 2020

comprehensive program for all levels of players at an affordable price with reduced rates for seniors and families.

As stated above, we at the Y provide group instructional clinics that occur on Monday and Wednesday mornings for a nominal fee. Registration is at the front desk in the lobby. Private and small group lessons are also available. There is a morning set aside for advanced play and we have instituted a “skinny court singles” time on most Friday mornings. For further information about any aspect of the Y pickleball program, I can be contacted at 410-960-9438 or [chbrown1945@gmail.com](mailto:chbrown1945@gmail.com).

My overriding advice to pickleball players is to have fun but to watch out for overuse injuries. Get lessons from a qualified instructor. Don't just play games, but find a partner and drill to practice the skills you want to improve. To test your proficiency, join a league or enter a tournament from time to time. Work on fitness, as it helps your game and prevents injuries. Finally, pay “forward” what you have learned by welcoming newcomers to the great sport of pickleball. WARNING: pickleball is addictive.

## Pro-Corner

Written by: Marc Austin, PPR Certified Professional Pickleball Instructor and USAPA Ambassador for Howard County  
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Is anyone confused about your position on the court when playing? Do you hear things like, “that was mine”, “this is my area”, etc. If so, Coach Marc has a few suggestions!

We all love to play this cool game called pickleball and some of us play several times a week. It allows us to get good workouts (both mentally and physically), be competitive, continuously improve on something and meet great people.

When playing doubles we often find ourselves playing as partners with players we do not know or have not played as partners before. This is truer when we venture out of our regular playing areas and play somewhere else, where we can meet new people and perhaps create new friendships. This is another great aspect of the sport.

Most of the time people are friendly and cordial when playing with someone new but sometimes the sports gets us into situations that are confusing about who should get to the ball to hit it back over the net. We hear or even say things like, “that was mine, that was yours, this is my area, stay on your side, don't cut in front of me, why didn't you get that one, etc”. Other times the confusion leads to silence and neither player goes for the ball, which results in a lost

point or a side out. In either case, both players move on to play the next point perhaps even more confused than they were before the situation came up. Although in pickleball there are few things that are absolutely right or wrong during a rally. There are things that partners can do to help mitigate situations that tend to be confusing.

Last summer, I had the opportunity to run a special "playing as partners" clinic for our association members. We had a full house and it was great fun. I want to pass along some of the points we talked about and worked on during the clinic. I hope that this will help make all members aware of some important hints to increase the level of coordination when playing as partners. My intent is to help you address some of those pesky and confusing situations. One additional point I will mention is as you move up in levels of play in pickleball, you will often notice better-coordinated teams that will purposely create these confusing situations.

### **1) The third shot, who should hit it?**

When the ball is returned to you and your partner after your team serves, it can be confusing as to who hits the third shot, especially if the return of serve (ROS) is deep and in the middle of the court. Since the third shot is such an important shot in the game I suggest working towards never letting who hits the third shot be confusing. If your team hesitates or lunges or you both go for the ball or both don't go for the ball it puts your team at a huge disadvantage to hit a good third shot so the point continues. In my opinion there should be very few second shot "winners" that cause your team to go to the second server or side out to the other team. My suggestion is to have one person call out "me" or "you" as soon as the ROS is hit by your opponent. The same person calls it every time and the call is made right after the ROS is hit. The call can be made very quickly because it is easy to see about where the ball is going to go.

Silent understanding "if it is on my side I will hit it" or "forehand gets the middle" is not good enough. When I started playing, I can't tell you how many times either of these two strategies did not work most of the time. To emphasize, it is just not the person who hits the third shot, it is knowing who is hitting the third shot as early as possible. Getting into the best position to hit a GOOD third shot (no hesitations, no lunging, no guessing, no hitting it going backwards, etc.) is key. The coordination, who is going to call it is done prior to the start of the game and you can reconfirm when your team is serving. This coordination can be picked up quickly. Not a lot of practice is needed to successfully implement this technique. Remember, better teams are going to try to cause this confusion and actually use it as a guide to how well you and your partner are coordinate. You do not want to show this "tell" in the sport.

I would suggest trying it a few times and see what happens. Once I learned this skill at the Level UP Pro camp, it quickly improved our game and now I use it as much as possible. I find it highly successful in eliminating confusion on a very important shot in the game. If you are playing in a league or tournament or want to grow with certain partners I would strongly suggest it.

### **2) Defending the lob, who hits it?**

Winter 2020

As you know, a well-timed and well-placed lob over your or your partners head can be a very effective offensive shot in pickleball. Who goes after the lob to try to return it can be very confusing. Hence, it is a big reason why opponents use it. I think we have all seen this. It is easiest to pull off a good lob when all four players are at or close to the Non-valley Zone (NVZ) or "kitchen". Two reasons for this, a.) the lobber has more open space to hit the lob and b.) the lobber is closer to the net so the ball does not have to be hit as far to land deep in the court.

Again, keep in mind there are very few absolutes and wrongs in this game but there are some suggestions that can be effective to help mitigate confusion. The lob is intended to cause confusion. For explanation purposes I will assume you and your partner are at or close to the NVZ and the ball is lobbed over your heads, deep but it will bounce in play on your side of the court. My suggestion to mitigate the confusion is; if the ball is hit over your head your partner should go back and get the ball. Your partner can shout out "me" or just go and get it as soon as it is hit. Then you would yell "switch" moving over to the other side of the court giving your partner an unobstructed path to hitting it back over the net. It would not be good for your partner to get it and then hit your back trying to get the ball back over the net.

Assuming your partner hits it over the net than that person takes your previous side for the continuation of play. The key reason why your partner goes to get it after it is hit over your head is your partner has the better angle to see and predict where it is going to hit the ground and has more time than you do to get back behind the ball.

It is similar to baseball when outfielders are going after a long fly ball. The toughest ones to get are hit right over the particular outfielders head. Always remember that if you and your partner switch sides during a rally you both must return to your original position prior to the next serve.

This is not as easy to implement as the third shot as stated above but practiced can be very effective and give you a better chance of getting one person in position to hit a good return shot off the lob. This action will significantly decrease the confusion the lob is intended to create.

The next few times you are out on the court, give it a try. When you see me I would love to hear your feedback and comments. This is one strategy to deal with the confusion the lob is intended to create. I will discuss another effective one in a future HCPA newsletter.

I hope to be able to hold a second "playing as partners" clinic this spring or summer so more folks can take advantage of that to get ready for the summer and fall leagues and tournaments.

In the next HCPA newsletter, I plan to talk about two other situations we find ourselves in and give you some suggestions on how to improve your game. Stay tuned.

Winter 2020

Happy Piklin from Coach Marc!

### **Goodbye Joe Beitz!**

It is with great sadness that we bid a fond farewell to our friend, Joe Beitz. Joe is relocating, leaving the HoCo area for xxxxx Beach.

Anyone who has played at any of the Howard County Courts has met Joe. He has been a wonderful asset to our Association. Joe has organized and hosted multiple tournaments. You can always count on Joe to play “one more game” or know the official rule when a weird situation occurs.

We will miss Joe and his many contributions. Goodbye Joe, Good luck in your new home.



Winter 2020



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