

Relish Pickleball

Tallahassee Pickleball Players

August 31, 2015

Volume 1, Number 4

Pickleball celebrates its 50th year as a great “new” sport

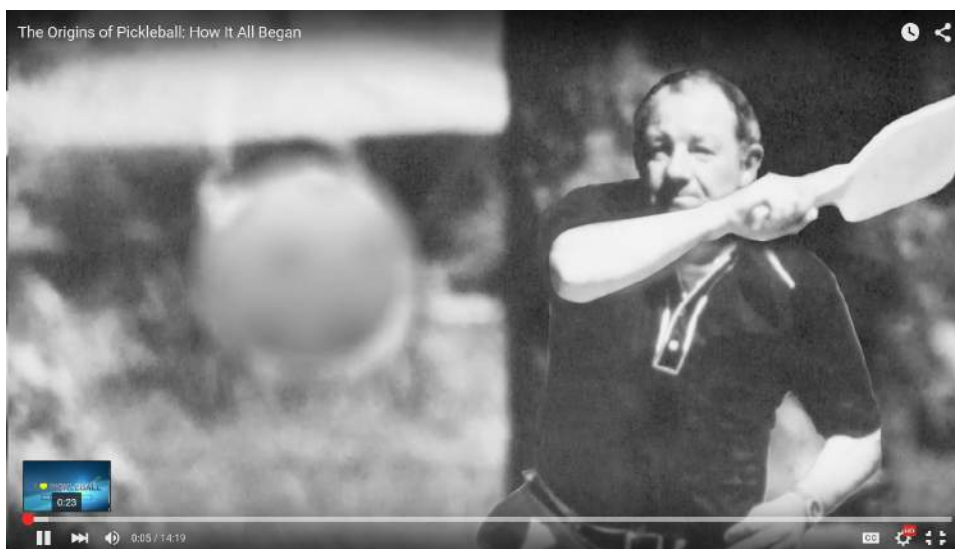
Admit it: When you first heard of the game of pickleball, did you think it would be as much fun and competitive as it is? And did you think it was something that had just been invented?

As it turns out, pickleball was invented 50 years ago on Bainbridge Island off the coast of Washington State by parents trying to come up with something to keep their children occupied during the summer. It soon took off and spread across the country.

There’s a wonderful video titled “The Origins of Pickleball: How It All Began,” which you can find on the Pickleball Channel on YouTube. This 14-minute video includes interviews with one of the founders and several of the early players, plus photos and videos from 50 years ago. This video does a great job of explaining how the game, rules, and equipment evolved.

Another great set of videos about the history of pickleball can be found by going to the USAPA site and clicking on “About USAPA” and then on “History of the Game.”

Opinions vary on the origins of the



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kPJDi4LF1o&feature=em-subst_digest

sport. According to the USAPA site, two possibilities exist. Joan Pritchard, the wife of one of the founders, Joel Pritchard, is quoted as saying she “started calling the game pickleball because ‘the combination of different sports reminded me of the pickle boat in crew where oarsmen were chosen from the leftovers of other boats.’”

But one of the early players, Barney McCallum, is quoted on the USAPA site as saying that the game is named after the Pritchards’ dog, which was named Pickles. So maybe there’s some truth in both versions. In any event, happy birthday pickleball!

See you on the court.

September pickleball hours in Tallahassee

To be safe, call the venues before you arrive to make sure schedule changes have not occurred.

Premier (431-2348) 3521 Maclay Blvd. S. (Members free; guests \$7)

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 9-12

Saturdays: 8-12 (beginner instruction 8-9) (closed Sept. 2-9)

Lafayette Park (891-3946)

501 Ingleside Ave.

Open daily outdoors

Hilaman Golf Course (891-2560)

2737 Blair Stone Road

Open daily outdoors

Sue McCollum (891-3946)

501 Ingleside Ave.

Mondays & Fridays: 9-10:30, 10:30-

12, reserved play (\$10/time slot)

Wednesdays: 10-1 (open play)

Lawrence-Gregory Community

Center (891-3910) 1115 Dade St.

Tuesdays: 6:30-9 p.m.

Lincoln Neighborhood Center

(891-4180) 438 W. Brevard St.

Mondays & Fridays: 9-12

Senior Center (891-4000)

1400 N. Monroe St. (\$2 donation)

Wednesdays: 11:30-4 (beginner instruction 11:30-12)

Fridays: 11:30-1:30 (closed Sept. 11)

Jack McLean Community Center

(891-2505) 700 Paul Russell Road

Mondays: 10-1:30 (beginner

instruction 10-11) (closed Labor Day)

Player spotlight

Each issue, we will highlight two Tallahassee pickleball players so that we can get to know one another better. This month, we feature two lifelong competitive athletes.

Chuck Finkel

Chuck Finkel, 72, has been an athlete his entire life, playing high school baseball, enjoying golf and tennis, running a marathon in his 30s, competing in Ping-Pong at the Senior Center upon retiring, and finally discovering pickleball – thanks to Ken Loewe and Barry Powers. Chuck is a fierce competitor on the pickleball court, surprising many an opponent by his speed and court smarts.

However, his “court smarts” are not limited to pickleball. In addition to his private law practice, Chuck has worked as a prosecutor for the City of Chicago, as the Assistant City Attorney of Hollywood and the City Attorney of Hallandale. Also, he served twice as an Assistant Attorney General, Chief Counsel for the Department of Children and Families in District 2, and as General Counsel for the Florida Elections Commission.

Chuck is also a great sports fan ... being oh-so-close to star athletes for decades. As a long-suffering Cubs’ fan for nearly 65 years, Chuck remembers throwing packs of chewing tobacco from the bleachers of Wrigley Field to star left fielder Hank Sauer during batting practice. While at the University of Illinois, Chuck saw Dick Butkus lead the Illini to the Rose Bowl. While at Florida Law School, Chuck cheered as Steve Spurrier ran plays as the quarterback for the Florida Gators. For 17 years, Chuck attended almost all of the home Miami Dolphins games. And he was at the Orange Bowl when Joe Namath and the Jets beat the Colts in the Super Bowl. If only he had gotten all of their autographs

Chuck’s advice to players is to “keep your eye on the ball, and don’t sweat the small stuff.” Yes, sir, your honor!



Jodi Yambor

Jodi Yambor, 59, knows a thing or two about what makes athletes do their best. As a psychological consultant for the athletic department at Thomas University, Jodi uses visualization to help athletes focus not on winning but rather on doing their best as individuals and communicating effectively as a team. She was the first sports psychological consultant ever hired full-time at a major Division 1 school (the University of Miami). And she performed a similar role for 20 years for USA Track and Field.

Jodi’s love of sports includes playing softball, tennis and soccer, plus competing in track and field. Also, she has been a swimmer all of her life, earning a swimming scholarship to the University of Miami. Her children have followed in her athletic footsteps. Daughter Alyssa swims for the University of Florida, and Jodi’s son, John, competes for Chiles. While at Miami, Jodi was part of the team that set an American record in the 200-yard medley relay. She was a 16-time All-American in college and was inducted into the University of Miami Sports Hall of Fame the same year as NFL quarterback Vinny Testaverde. Not bad company!

Because she had injured her Achilles tendon, Jodi took a break from tennis and was working out at Premier. That’s when USAPA ambassador Carolyn Allaire approached her – multiple times – and suggested that she give pickleball a try.

“I’m a competitive person,” Jodi says, “and pickleball fits my need to compete.”

Jodi says she wishes the City of Tallahassee would build real pickleball courts and take the sport more seriously, as other communities have done. She would also like to see a pickleball pro in town who could teach lessons.

“If I had it to do over again, I would start by taking pickleball lessons so that I could learn the game the right way,” Jodi says. “That way, I wouldn’t have to unlearn bad habits.” During the summer, she tries to play four times a week, but during the school year, she usually averages once a week. “What we don’t do enough of,” she adds, “is do drills and practice skills. Just playing games won’t help us improve our competitiveness.”





Ask the Ref

If you have questions about pickleball rules or etiquette, email your questions to "Ask the Ref" at larae.donnellan@gmail.com. Answers will be dictated by the International Federation of Pickleball "Official Tournament Rulebook."

Q: Are there any tricks for remembering who should be serving and what the score might be?

A: Yes. Be sure to remember on which side of the court you start the game – in tennis parlance, either the deuce court (right side) or the add court (left side). Then whenever you are on the side of the court where you started the game, your team's score **MUST be even** (0-X, 2-X, 4-X, etc.). Conversely, your team's score **MUST be odd** (1-X, 3-X, 5-X, etc.) whenever you are on the other side from where you started.

Remembering the actual score can be trickier. The best thing to do is to call the score loudly before each serve so that the score is heard by everyone.

Q: Is it OK if my toes touch the kitchen line during a volley?

A: No, that is a fault, resulting in either a side-out or a point for your opponents. However, if the ball bounces first before you hit it (this is a "rally," not a "volley"), then your toes may touch the nonvolley (or kitchen) line.

Similarly, it is a fault if your toes touch the base line when you are serving.

Q: I've heard that it is illegal to wear bright yellow or green shirts that might camouflage the ball. Is this true?

A: No. According to Rule 2.F.1, "Clothing may be of any color." As of this point, the same rule applies to the color of paddles as long as the ink is "nonreflective." All paddles used in sanctioned competitions must be approved by USAPA.

Upcoming tournaments

One of the best ways to learn more about pickleball and to improve your skills is to compete in tournaments. If you qualify at any local senior game (Tallahassee's was in March), then you can compete in the Florida State Games in December. Here are a few tournaments you might want to enter (check www.usapa.org and www.flasports.com for more ideas).

Sept. 11: Pensacola Senior Games

Oct. 7-8: Jacksonville Senior Games

Oct. 23-24: "Pickled Pink" games in Daytona Beach Shores

Oct. 26-27: Ormand Beach Senior Games

Dec. 5-13: Florida Senior Games, Clearwater

Feb. 4-6, 2016: Emerald Coast Classic, Destin

The Art of Pickleball

By Susan Campbell



"Where Pickleballs Come From" – Susan's reimagining of a detail from "The Peasant Wedding" by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1547.

PickleMall

Do you have any pickleball-related items that you no longer need and that you would like to sell? If so, send them to larae.donnellan@gmail.com. Here are a few items she has for sale.

- Women's Nike Vapor Court Shoes, new, size 9, white with gray, \$25



- Paddletek Stratus, new, black, \$69

Large Tallahassee delegation competes in Destin tournament

For the third time, a delegation of Tallahassee-based players traveled to Destin for a pickleball tournament. The number has grown from five the first year to 13 this past weekend. First-timers included Carol “Zippy” Wartenberg, Jennifer Britt, Charlie Winterbottom, Barry Powers, Mike Donnellan, Mic Dottorelli, and Bob Rubanowice. Former Tallahassee-based players Helen Burgess and David Snyder, who have just moved to Bradenton, also participated for the first time. Returning players were Carolyn Allaire, LaRae Donnellan, Charlie Giblon, and Bob Moffatt.

Bob Rubanowice, 81, won a prize

for being the oldest competitor at the tournament. He quipped, “Remember, older is better ... unless you’re a banana.” The youngest player, 12, was Rachel Elliott. She and her 15-year-old brother, Josh, were the 2014 USAPA junior mixed doubles champions. Their parents, Rob and Jodi, are 5.0 (top-ranked) national champs, as well. All four Elliotts competed in Destin, putting on an amazing display for everyone.

Bob R. only started playing pickleball in late April, but he decided to enter the tournament after being challenged by Zippy to do so. “I went from Tai Chi, a mild form of exercise,

to pickleball, which is exhausting,” Bob said with a smile.

Another tournament newbie, Jennifer, said her tournament experience was “completely positive. I realize I have a long way to go to be competitive in pickleball.”

Carolyn, who has participated in all three Destin adventures, said that each tournament is more rewarding than the last. “If you want to participate but don’t have a partner, check the USAPA.org site for names,” Carolyn advised. “Another option is to ask the tournament director for other people who are looking for partners.”



Mic Dottorelli, Charlie Winterbottom, Bob Moffatt, Charlie Giblon, Barry Powers



*Back: Jennifer Britt, Barry Powers, David Snyder, Mike Donnellan
Front: Carolyn Allaire, LaRae Donnellan, Helen Burgess*



LaRae (center) placed first in women’s singles, open division, and third with Helen in women’s doubles, open division.



Carolyn (right) placed second in women’s doubles, 70+ division, and third in mixed doubles, 70+ division.



Mike (right) placed third in men’s singles, open division, and second with David in men’s doubles, open division.



Helen and David placed first in mixed doubles, 50+ division.



Bob & Charlie placed third in men’s doubles, 60+ division.



Bob R. (top right) and Zippy (right, in dark blue shirt) show their stuff.

