



Santa Fe Pickleball Newsletter

August 2020

WELCOME ALL SANTA FE PICKLEBALL CLUB MEMBERS

Enjoy our first expanded newsletter! Our mission is to bring members up to date on the latest club news, help folks evaluate and choose equipment, clarify rules, honor the Pickler of the Month, recognize players who go above and beyond, and just have fun with trivia and other nonsense. It is a work in progress, so we appreciate all suggestions and contributions. Santa Fe Picklers are bound together by the love of this crazy, wonderful game. Play on!

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Message from the Board



In the Spring of 2019, a small group of pickleball diehards met to discuss the possibility of creating a pickleball club for players in the Santa Fe area. By the Fall, the Santa Fe Pickleball Club (SFPBC) was created, bylaws were established, and a temporary slate of officers was formed. We are now a 501(c)(3) non-profit with the main goal to *“promote the sport of pickleball and the value of physical exercise in the Santa Fe area”*. We envision promoting this sport by keeping people informed through the amazing website,

www.santafepickleballclub.com

and further through monthly newsletters. We hope to hold clinics, ladders, and tournaments as soon as conditions allow. We envision promoting the sport by having a large membership that can use its voice to encourage policy makers to create more pickleball facilities. We planned on having our first SFPBC membership meeting in late March 2020, only to be postponed by the pandemic.

In the meantime, the board is working on the most critical issue for Pickleballers in the Santa Fe area: creating public designated pickleball courts. The SFPBC board of directors sent a proposal along with a bid, to convert the two tennis courts at Larragoite Park into eight designated pickleball courts. This proposal asks permission from the city of Santa Fe to approve this idea, knowing that the funding would have to come from private sources. On Wednesday, July 22, some of the board members had a Zoom meeting with administrators in the Santa Fe Parks and Recreation department. It was agreed by all that a better venue for public designated pickleball courts would be the old tennis courts at Santa Fe High School. This process will take

months and hopefully lead to new courts in 2021. In the meantime, we proposed that we paint pickleball court lines on current tennis courts in town and are waiting to hear which courts they will allow this to happen. More information on the results of this meeting can be seen on our website,

www.santafepickleballclub.com

Alongside converting present tennis courts into designated pickleball courts, we soon hope to be meeting with the mayor and city council representatives to promote pickleball courts as a part of the vision of the Santa Fe Midtown Campus project. We would like to expand the idea that recreation there goes beyond creating more walking/biking trails and include public designated pickleball courts.

We also will be following up with the County on the proposed Romero Park improvement plan, which included 5 public designated pickleball courts, and was slated to begin construction Spring 2020. Originally, feedback we've received so far has been that it “might still happen” so we will pursue what that means.

And lastly, let's talk about money. Creating a club run by volunteers still has expenses. We have used funds to create a website, incurred administrative costs to become a non-profit, etc. and will continue to have expenses (promoting tournaments, buying equipment, etc.). We want the club to be open for everyone, so club membership is free, but a minimum \$20 fee is HIGHLY encouraged.

Thank you to everyone that has helped in the creation of the SFPBC and to the present membership that is the future voice of a strong pickleball community in the Santa Fe area.

Be safe.

Jeff Holbrook President SFPBC



Christine Wantuck *Ambassador Extraordinaire*

This column, which will be part of each month's newsletter, is for recognizing our members who go above and beyond, whether as tournament victors, doing good deeds for our pickleball community, or just plain special people.

Pickleball, how I love this sport and all it has to offer socially, physically and mentally. I have met so many wonderful people whose paths I would have never crossed without this sport. Players have such a variety of stories of how they came to the sport and mine, like many, was due to an injury which sidelined me from tennis. I was bemoaning the fact that I could no longer play tennis with the young Title IX women when my Spanish tutor at SFCC introduced me to badminton and encouraged me to play in the local Senior Olympics.

In 2012 while signing up for the Senior Olympics, the gentleman at the desk encouraged me to check off pickleball, even though I had never heard of it. Well I played badminton, had a blast and was invited to join the Albuquerque badminton players team.

The next week a wonderful, passionate pickleball player, Joyce Montoya, called to notify me that the pickleball competition was going to be on Friday. When I informed Joyce, I did not even know what pickleball was, she said "come out on Wednesday and I will teach you." Two days later, she had me playing mixed doubles with an extraordinary player, John Crowley. I had so much fun I kept playing both sports.

However, the following week when I arrived for my badminton lesson in ABQ I found a pickleball tournament happening. When I informed the tournament director, Bill Marshall, why I was there he said; "Why would you want to play badminton when there are only 20 competitive players in the whole state? I have 200 players in my club you should play pickleball." Having been a competitive tennis player, 20 vs 200 the

choice was easy. It was in that moment I knew I needed instruction to help me quit playing tennis on the pickleball court.

Ray Padilla and his wife, Renee,

were giving free pickleball lessons in ABQ so I joined that group. First day in, Ray recruited me to teach. I then joined his traveling team of instructors; Ray & Renee generously gave group lessons all over the state. Bonus was I became a member of the ABQ pickleball club and started playing at their various venues and meeting tons of players as their club was growing leaps and bounds. Albuquerque had venues all over the city where I could play morning, noon or night seven days a week and they were opening more venues thanks to what I learned was the best Senior Service Center in the nation.

At first, members of the ABQ Pickleball club encouraged me to promote pickleball in Santa Fe and that is when I first began to hear about being an ambassador. It was not until 2016 when Gigi LeMasters and her husband, John, were visiting that John explained how being an Ambassador would offer me the opportunity, I had been looking for, to give back to the sport.

The main prerequisite, to be an Ambassador, is a love of the sport and the desire to share the game with others of all ages. When I started playing there was very limited pickleball being played 2 days a week on 3 courts at the GCCC. We have come a long way since then, before the pandemic GCCC was playing 3 days a week on up to 6 courts. Pickleball courts are now found in so many private housing developments. Several new players have built



courts in their backyards. The community college began to offer not only classes but open playtime, the city opened a second gym at Fort Marcy, and then gave us permission to line four courts on one of the outdoor tennis courts. One of the oldest and most established tennis clubs in Santa Fe added 2 courts, cannot begin to tell you how extraordinary that was.

I have played too many tournaments to name or even count. The one I loved best and competitive players fondly remind me of frequently is the one and only pickleball tournament ever held in Santa Fe. We had 91 players from all over the nation come in and play on nine courts that were painstakingly lined and set up by our local players. It was not only a well-run tournament, with compliments galore from players but the Santa Fe city marketing team reported that it was the first time in their history that a tournament was put on without spending so much as one penny in advertising. That speaks to the pickleball family, you only have to send out an invite and they will come. So many players from ABQ came up and volunteered to referee, it was truly a joyous 3-day event that was incredible for that moment in history.

What I love best about being an Ambassador is teaching not only skills but strategy. I love watching the smile on the faces of students when they execute a well-played point. I love hearing the enthusiasm my students demonstrate for the game and how they cannot

wait to get back out on the courts. The pleasure is in paying it forward, giving people an enjoyment that they never knew existed until I have gotten them thoroughly addicted, begging for more.

The biggest challenge of being an Ambassador would be the politics. Players sometimes look to you to be an authority figure in areas outside the boundaries of an ambassador's role. Our role is to promote the sport, we are not venue coordinators. Lastly, ambassadors are surveyed as to how many people in our area joined the USAPA, I do not feel it is necessary that any player report back to me on their decision to join or not. I encourage people to give back and support the USA Pickleball organization, but I want their decision to be free choice, I understand and respect that each of us has different financial priorities.

My personal hopes for the Santa Fe Pickleball Club in the years to come is to be a positive force in bringing families and the community together. Our sport is intergenerational, Northern NM is about families that go back to a time before we were part of the United States. I want to see extended families out on the courts playing, laughing and bonding with the community. This sport has so much to offer, pickleball can bring all of us together with the goal of leaving our worries behind as we strengthen the bonds of friendship while having fun.



Cindy Lawton – *New Ambassador*

Cindy writes:

I have truly enjoyed playing pickleball in Santa Fe and Albuquerque over the last 3 years. My interest in becoming an ambassador was initiated by the Southwest regional director Larry Lite. He told me about the program and felt that I could be an asset; One of the ambassadors from Santa Fe was stepping down and they needed someone to fill his shoes.

Once I learned more about the roles and responsibilities of the ambassador program, I knew it was for me. I had already been doing some of the work (help form the Santa Fe club) and have always enjoyed networking with others.

What I want to get done: My main objective is to really work with the city to get dedicated pickleball courts. I want to bring to Santa Fe many fun events that I have seen work well in other cities as I travelled such as ladder tournaments and round robin play. These are fun ways to improve skill level as well as meet new people. I am also interested in working with the public schools to help bring this sport to the younger generations as well as keep us older folks active. As a physical therapist, I find this sport absolutely perfect for senior citizens helping with balance, strength, and agility. Mainly, I just like to play, improve my skills, help others improve their skill, and encourage and teach new folks to get out there and give it a try.



Sweet Pickles



Member Recognition

A big shout out to the movers and shakers who provided leadership and enthusiasm to fire up the Santa Fe Pickleball Club: Mary Collins, Christine Wantuck, Mike Jackson, Kiki Hummel, Cindy Lawton, Bruce Panowski, Nancy Mroz, Jeff Holbrook, and Dee Givens.

A bow to Mike Jackson for his work on the logo.

Cindy Lawton and Jeff Holbrook have approached the city to get permission to increase our court numbers---thanks to them both--it will take a while and lots of work, but it WILL happen.

Ft. Marcy courts were striped by a lot of willing picklers spearheaded by Cindy Lawton. Great job!

When we can be safe again, the sky is the limit for our club. Move over, Albuquerque Picklers!

Here's to the players who have purchased nets, lugged them to the courts several days a week, set them up, and taken them down. Without them, Ft. Marcy pickleball would not exist.

Kudos to: Sandy Arrighi, Cindy Lawton, Ron Romero, Adam Wasserman, and Martha Applegate. If we missed anyone, we will catch you next month. Thanks!

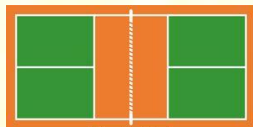
Appreciation also for the players who have donned masks during play and on the sidelines to help send this virus to oblivion.

Kudos to: EVERYONE!

Ins and Outs of the Pickleball Kitchen

By Christine Wantuck

Pickleball courts are divided up into three main parts. One of these parts is the non-volley zone, NVZ, commonly referred to as the kitchen. This area has its own set of rules, unique to the sport.



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The non-volley zone is the area, on the court surface, between the net and the non-volley line (located 7

feet behind the net) it includes the lines around it and not the space above it. In this area, a volley may not be hit. Any contact in this ground surface area, as the result of a volley, is a fault.

What is a Volley? Why and how to use it?

A volley occurs when a [pickleball](#) is hit out of the air, rather than waiting for it to bounce. Hitting a volley can increase the speed of the ball and is useful for high balls that would require a good deal of backing up in order to let them bounce, as well as to defend a ball hit hard and low over the net.

The opposite of a volley is a groundstroke; the act of hitting the ball after it has bounced. These shots often land deep into the court and are used to sustain long rallies. Understanding these two [pickleball terms](#) is critical to understanding the rules of the kitchen.

Kitchen Rules

1. No volleying

The simplest rule of the kitchen is that it is a non-volley zone. A player in the NVZ cannot hit balls out of the air. The ball must bounce before it is struck. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the non-volley zone.

Volleys may only be hit by a player positioned outside the non-volley zone, aka kitchen.

2. Over the line rules

The non-volley line and the lines around it are considered part of the non-volley zone. Because of this, if any part of the player touches any part of the NVZ during the act of volleying, it will be considered a fault.

Anything the player is wearing or carrying also can not touch or cross the non-volley line. This includes your partner if they are standing in the non-volley zone, you cannot touch them or their paddle, and they cannot touch you until both their feet are planted outside the non-volley zone.

Even after the ball has been struck for a winning shot, momentum from the volley and the follow-through of the pickleball paddle must not cause the player to cross the non-volley line.

Even once the ball is dead on your opponent's side, the momentum from the volley must not take the player into the non-volley zone or have them touch anything or anyone in the non-volley zone or it is a fault.

3. Partner rules and specifics

When volleying near the non-volley line, the partner can actually hold the player hitting the volley back to prevent them from crossing over the NVZ line due to momentum, if the feet of both players are planted outside of the non-volley zone upon player contact. If your partner is in the non-volley zone, it is a fault if they touch you or you touch them.

However, even if you do not cross the line, it will still be a fault if something you are wearing touches the NVZ. For instance, something the player was wearing fell in the zone, or their paddle was used for balancing themselves, a fault would be called.

4. When to enter the kitchen

The kitchen can be entered at any time, as long as a volley is not being hit. Remember

groundstrokes, a ball that has bounced, may be hit from behind the kitchen and the momentum rules do not apply.

A player moving out of the non-volley zone to hit a volley, must have both feet established outside the zone before the ball is struck out of the air. If a player is in the NVZ and jumps up into the air to hit a volley, that is a fault, as both feet must be outside of zone before initiating the volley. If a player, attempting to jump over the NVZ, to hit an around the post shot accidentally touches the NVZ line they must have both feet outside the zone and on the ground before contacting the ball.

Keep in mind that a volley can only be hit after the two bounces that begin the game – one bounce from the serve and one bounce from the return of serve. After the ball has bounced

in each team's court, players may volley (hit ball before it bounces) or play it off a bounce, (groundstroke). Legally, a player can be in the non-volley zone any time they are not volleying a ball.

For visual learners please enjoy this fun video from Pickleball Channel they show it better than words can say: The Most Complete Pickleball Non-Volley Zone Rule Video - Pickleball 411

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGfLXDTzJck>

References:

<https://pickleballguide.net/kitchen-non-volley-zone-rules/>

<https://usapickleball.org/what-is-pickleball/ifp-official-rules/rules-summary/>

Pickleball Paraphernalia

Choosing A Pickleball Paddle



By Cindy Lawton

There are so many paddles out there sometimes it is a bit overwhelming to try to decide what to buy, how much to

spend, and what to look for. Hopefully, this will help you a bit:

1. Make sure it is USAPA approved paddle otherwise you won't be able to play in a tournament with the paddle. There are 106 manufacturers and 700 approved paddles. The list can be found here:

<https://pickleballrocks.com/2019/06/current-usapa-approved-balls-and-paddles/>

2. Size: The grip size is one of the most important features; usually range from 4 – 5 inches.

If you have access to some paddles to try grip each paddle with your normal grip, slide the index finger of your other hand between your fingertips and the heel of your gripping hand. If the paddle is the right size your finger will fit snugly without you have to move your fingers.

Second method: To measure grip size using the ruler test, first place the fingers of your racket hand together, then align a ruler's edge with the bottom horizontal crease of your palm. Next, measure to the tip of your ring finger, this measurement is your grip size.

3. Weight: This can be confusing because what one company says is light another may say is medium. The weight usually ranges from 6 to 14 oz with most common being between 7 to 8.5 oz. Heavier gives a bit more power, lighter a bit more control.

The only caution I have is that if the paddle is too heavy or if you have wrong size grip, then it can lead to tennis elbow (lateral epicondylitis).

Additionally, too light, same problems also occur but it is because you need more energy and swing to get same power. It's a balancing act but an important one.

4. Material: Pickleball paddles are made out of three main materials: wood, composite, or graphite. Wood is heaviest but least expensive. Graphite are most expensive but can be light and powerful. Composite are often a happy medium

Many companies rate their paddles on the following: Control, Power, and Forgiveness.

5. Other items: Some paddles grip length is shorter than others, some have rims and others don't, the amount of "sweet spot" varies, as well as the paddle surface length. Longer length helps if you have trouble bending your knees or a lot of mobility issues - increases your reach.

Top brand by the pros; remember they get paid to use these paddles:

Paddletek, Selkirk, Engage, Gearbox, Onix are a few.

Best thing to do: Most distributors are local (Santa Fe and Albuquerque for the top brands) and have demo paddles to try out before you buy. You can also borrow your friends' and see how you like it. (COVID cautions of course)

Best thing to do: Most distributors are local (Santa Fe and Albuquerque for the top brands) and have demo paddles to try out before you buy. You can also borrow your friends' and see how you like it. (COVID cautions of course)

My opinion: I don't think I noticed any difference in paddles until after I played for a year. Figure out your goal - don't rush into an expensive paddle if you are just out there to

get some exercise, meet some people, and enjoy the game. If you want to play tournaments, improve your game, work at

different types of shots, etc. then your paddle will make a difference.

Caught on the Courts

One day at Ft. Marcy...

When asked whether he was a dinker or a banger, Karl Cardenas quipped, "I am a lobber!". Karl also gets the nod for the most brilliant togs, spanning every primary color in one outfit.

Wanda Lobito confessed to being a dinker, and Mike Nava just loves that banging game. Are you a dinker or a banger or something else???

Statistics wise, of the 165 club members, 105 are over 65 years of age. The largest division, 70-74 encompasses 54 folks. A sampling of players one day at Ft. Marcy included Don Banas, 68, who has only been playing two months, Janet Sobien, 63, a five-year veteran, and John Cunningham, 74, two years on the courts. Pickleball is a phenomenal game for all ages, but especially seniors. We rock!



Trivia

The name game...

Pickleball has a wacky name. Rumor has it that a dog was involved. We would like to hear your origin stories. Some say it was connected to Hatch Chiles? Best explanation of how Pickleball got its name wins kudos in Sweet Pickles.

Send in your rendition ASAP to the Editor: dreyn1946@gmail.com