



Santa Fe Pickleball Newsletter

February 2021



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Message from the Board

One of the tasks of the Santa Fe Pickleball Club is to create a strong voice that can have influence on decisions made for pickleball players in the Santa Fe area. We are now using our voice with the Santa Fe Parks Department to help the city see what kind of facilities are needed for our area. Progress updates will be available in the March newsletter.

On a larger scale, what are your visions for outdoor recreation in the state? How does the state know what our vision includes? Getoutsidemn.org currently has the task of gathering information from the public as to what kind of outdoor recreational facilities are needed. It is interesting to note that in this survey, pickleball is never mentioned.

I urge you to take the following community survey, found on the website www.getoutsidemn.org, giving your voice to the idea that pickleball is a big part of our lives and more facilities are needed to meet the growing demand. Feel free to pass this survey to other residents and visitors.

For more information about this statewide effort to come up with a comprehensive outdoor recreation plan for New Mexico, visit <https://www.msn.com/en-us/travel/news/nm-seeks-public-input-while-developing-statewide-comprehensive-outdoor-recreation-plan/ar-BB1cT7vr?ocid=hlocalnews>

On another note, we'd like to recommend two new members to the Santa Fe Pickleball Club. Chuck Stein will be our new Treasurer, replacing Denise Hurtado. Gaby Loy will be our new At-Large member, in charge of Membership, replacing Mary Collins. Find out more about the outgoing and incoming board members in the March newsletter.

Jeff Holbrook
SFPBC President

A Family Affair

The Collins Clan

By Nancy Mroz



Diane Reynolds Mary Collins

On a breezy but sunny December afternoon I met up with Mary Collins and her daughter Stephanie and granddaughter Lucy on the pickleball courts at Las Campanas. There were several players that day and we played a casual round robin format. I was so impressed with Mary's daughter and granddaughter; both avid about many sports and now pickleball? I wanted to find out more! Joined by two of her granddaughters via Zoom, I sat down with Mary, Roger and their daughter Stephanie to get to know more about Mary. This is what I found out about one of our own...

When Mary retired and moved to Santa Fe in 2015, she saw an article in the Santa Fe New Mexican about pickleball play at Genoveva Chavez Community Center. Off she went to the center to watch this 'new' game being played. We had another pickleball player! Having played a great deal of tennis in her younger days, prior to two knee replacements, she soon developed into a serious pickleball player. Mary started to play many local and regional tournaments with Mike and Carolyn Jackson, among others. Mary spoke of the welcoming attitude at Panowski, Diane even when she brought her young grandchildren to play especially with Bruce Reynolds and Gail Brown.

In 2019 Diane Reynolds counseled Mary that we really needed a pickleball club in Santa Fe to promote the sport of pickleball, enhance player experiences and advocate for public dedicated pickleball courts. Mary ran with this idea, organizing a core group to found The Santa Fe Pickleball Club. Thanks Mary!

Mary was the youngest of four siblings. She was ten years younger than athletic, three-sport brother Bob who made sure that she learned how to play all sports with vigor. Thus, a true competitor for life was born!

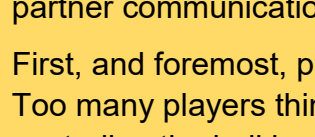
Her family moved to Washington DC in 1954 and Mary attended National Cathedral School where she was able to play multiple sports including field hockey, softball, basketball and tennis varsity sports all through high school. She attended Connecticut College for Women in the early 60's, which did not have any varsity, club, or organized intramural sports. Unfortunately this was typical at the time...way before Title IX.

Mary moved to Tulsa in her mid-twenties with husband Roger. She played tennis, winning with her partner the Missouri Valley championship as well as many other state and regional tournaments. All play in those years was strictly by age group, not rankings.

Their growing family, including a boy and two girls, was always involved in sports including basketball, football, tennis, field hockey, and soccer. Notice the trend! Ball handling sports has definitely been a mainstay in the Collins' households through their lives. Daughter Stephanie says all sports were encouraged and yes, they were expected to pick something in which to participate. Sports during those years all ended before 6 pm and the family was home for dinner and the evenings. Not always true for young families today.

Mary loves to organize and spent many years in Tulsa running Festivals and Special Events. She was the Executive Director of Tulsa Zoo Friends in charge of all activities in a zoo pertaining to people and dollars. Again organizing and obtaining support for a better zoo. In 1999 Mary moved on to become the State Director of the Nature Conservancy for Oklahoma.

Mary's eight grandchildren are amazed at her energy and focus. They expressed how impressed they are with her dedication and passion for the sport. They think that she is the active Senior that they will strive to be. She has now taught three generations in the family to play pickleball. Everyone loves the inclusive and fun nature of this sport. Win or lose, everyone is laughing and enjoying themselves. The family plays pickleball on vacations and now have even set up pickleball courts on their driveways during COVID. Mary's dedication to sports and family is such a wonderful legacy!



Have you got something you'd like to share with the group either about pickleball or yourself? Would you like to contribute an article to the Newsletter or just submit some ideas? Contact Nancy Mroz at 505-660-4600 or nancymroz@gmail.com

COACHES CORNER

The Middle Riddle— Whose Ball Is It?

By Christine Wantuck

Pickleball doubles is an awesome team sport. As a team you must both agree on who is responsible for returning each shot executed by the opposing team. A general rule of thumb is to let the forehand take the majority of shots. However, the directional angle at which the ball is travelling toward the receiving team can effect application of this general rule. Geometry and partner communication are key aspects to deciding 'whose ball is it'.

First, and foremost, players must understand that the centerline is only relevant on the serve. Too many players think that "who should take the shot" is determined by which side of the centerline the ball lands on. As a cohesive team covering the court together, you both need to be in the correct position so that the player who has the optimal shot takes the ball while their partner gets ready for the next one.

Tony Roig, of In2Pickle, does an excellent job explaining the importance of court geometry for helping to decide who plays the middle ball with his 'Respect The X' concept. Imagine a large X being overlaid on the court with the middle of the X positioned at the center of the net with the players positioned along the X lines. The player who should hit the middle ball, whether they are at the baseline or the net, depends on the trajectory of the ball after it is struck by the opponent. If the middle ball is on a crosscourt or diagonal trajectory, the receiving player positioned on the same diagonal (along the X line) should hit it. A middle ball struck with a more "up-the-line" linear trajectory should be taken by the "up-the-line" receiver as opposed to the diagonal receiver. Obviously, there are many shades of grey to this guidance (e.g., the player who has more time to hit the ball may be the optimal player to take the middle ball, etc.). I recommend watching Tony's video as he provides several team position scenarios explaining who has the optimal shot and why.

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

Player communication is a key element for returning a middle ball. If you are in the best position to take the shot be assertive and say "mine". If you hear "yours" from your partner, do your best to handle the shot. Watching the trajectory of the ball coming off your opponent's paddle should give your team ample time to effectively communicate who is taking the ball, before the ball crosses the net.

On the court you will experience a variety of middle ball scenarios. Approach each with the intention of playing the best shot for your team. Have fun!

THE INNER GAME

By Jimmy Parker, USPTA Master Pro

(Parker holds the men's all-time record of 150 USTA National Championships, has won 27 ITF World Championships, and has been coaching players from beginners to WTA and ATP Tour players for more than 50 years.)

We all hear voices, whether we admit it or not! In fact, we are barraged by a constant stream of voices emanating from our own heads. If you never stop! "Wasn't I supposed to call Ellie back? I've got to save time to go to the grocery store. OMG, that article I'm supposed to write is due in two days! What did Ellie want to talk about in the first place?" Etc.

As soon as we walk on the pickleball court, those voices call out: "Today I'm gonna remember watching the ball better, and I'm gonna remember to get ready sooner and move my feet. And exhale when I hit! Oh crap, another error – I forgot to decide where I was going to hit the damn ball! I can't even remember seeing it! What an idiot I am! If I keep playing like a dog, no one is going to want me as a partner! I think I mighta pulled a muscle!" Etc.

By contrast, there is a mode in which you can play that Jim Boehr, a mental toughness coach, calls the Ideal Performance State. He found that you perform better when, among other things, you are mentally calm, focused, physically relaxed, and optimistic. Duh! Don't we all already know that from our own experience? It's simple, but not easy!

If you ever doubted that thoughts are creative, you need look no further than the pickleball court. What you hold in your mind, you get more of. Negativity, anger, frustration, discouragement, all have subtle effects on your ability to play your best. They cause phytochemicals to be released in your body that literally prevent you from doing so. And thus the downward spiral takes hold! The mind/body/spirit are so interconnected that we can't really separate them!

Learning to control your inner environment is the sacred work of a lifetime. Your internal dialogue literally shapes the way the world comes to you! The pickleball court just happens to be a great place to experiment with it. Can you stay in the present? Can you forgive your errors? Can you catch yourself dwelling on negative thoughts and beating yourself up? Can you learn from your mistakes? It's all part of your ongoing journey of self-realization. So, embrace the process! What have you got to lose??

RULES & REGS

What's the Call?

By Christine Wantuck

Something I love about the tennis magazine is the way they handle educating players about the rules. They describe an on-court scenario that calls into question the rules of the game and then answers it with the rule. In a similar vein, consider this pickleball scenario:

Question: During our doubles match, a ball grazed my partner's head as he ducked out of the way for a shot he thought was going out. Luckily, it didn't change the trajectory of the ball and I was in the perfect position to hit a winner. Our opponents disagreed and claimed they won the point. Who is right?

Answer: Tell your partner, he needs to duck a little quicker next time. After the serve, it is a fault as soon as the ball contacts the player anywhere except below the wrist. (7.H.)

Dr. Mike's Summarization of the 'New Rules' for Social Play

By Mike Jackson

This summary reduces 125 rules to FIVE (not for tournament use)

- 1 - Service lets are discontinued. If the ball hits the net and lands in your court... play it!
- 2 - A new service type is added: the server may BOUNCE the ball with a drop, then hit it over. You may not throw the ball up or down, just drop it; then hit it without restriction.
- 3 - The 'old' serve is not changed. Remember to hit ball below your belly button (medical anatomic designation), paddle traveling upward, and paddle below your wrist. (These three standard rules do not apply to the new bounce serve).
- 4 - If ball hits the net, or is in even quite close ... PLAY it! We come to play, not call balls out; keep playing; you need the exercise.
- 5 - The other 120 rules mostly relate to tournament play. To summarize:
 - a. Be respectful of your opponents.
 - b. Don't cuss (any four-letter word you would not utter at your Mother's dinner table may cost you a point).
 - c. Don't throw anything or threaten anyone; you could find yourself playing tournaments in another state, or country.
 - d. Adopt the old Judeo-Christian adage: "Do unto others ...". It even works for us non-believers!

Most tournaments can be found at: https://www.pickleballtournaments.com/pbt_main.pl. Many tournaments fill up right away, especially regionals, so best to be ready to sign up the first day of registration.

Also most tournaments require you to be a USAPA member (<https://usapickleball.org/>) which costs \$20 per year. It is important to make sure your membership is still current during the tournament dates. Although the tournament will not allow you to sign up if membership expires, the registration process often has "glitches" without a current membership. For example, if you try to sign up today for a tournament in July and your membership ends in June, the process can get messed up. Best just to pay for the next year now, ensuring you will have a current membership for the July tournament.

Nationals are played in November in Palm Springs every year. In order to have an automatic bid, you must get a gold in an event in a regional tournament. If you play in a regional tournament, as well as a few other tournaments, you can apply for a lottery entrance into nationals. This is how I was able to play in nationals a few years back. Either way, playing or not, the nationals is an outstanding event and I recommend it. I went as both a spectator one year and a player another – had a blast both times.

PICKLEBALL PARAPHERNALIA

10 Unforgettable Pickleball Points

By Christine Wantuck

2020—an unforgettable year where pickleball was named, by the media, the 'Pandemic Sport'. Here are 10 unforgettable points that keep our addiction alive. Enjoy!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EWkY4TWmpc>

Some General Tournament Information

By Cindy Lawton

There are two types of pickleball tournaments; Sanctioned tournaments and non-sanctioned tournaments. What is the difference?

- A **Sanctioned Tournament** must meet specific tournament requirements as laid out by the USAPA-IFP rules and adhere to the sanctioning guidelines established by the USAPA. The goal is to provide a consistent and fair playing environment for the players participating in the event. Sanctioned events are covered under the USAPA insurance program and all players and referees participating in a sanctioned tournament have secondary insurance under the USAPA policy.
- A **Non-sanctioned Tournament** may follow the same guidelines or may stray from the guidelines for any reason, including not having referees or using a less formal match format/ game format for the event. Additionally, since non-sanctioned tournaments are not required to follow established equipment guidelines, players may use non-approved paddles (potentially giving players an unfair advantage).

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