

Club News

November 2020



John Schowalter's Firetruck



Fall Fun Tournament at
Belknap Park (Not This Year!)



Happy Thanksgiving!



News & Events

President - Steve Elzinga
Vice-President - John Frizzo
Secretary - Cari Brooks
Treasurer - Hub Capes

Play Safe ... Stay Safe

Director of Advance Play - Paul Richards
Director of Open Play - Tom Miller
Communications - Suzanne Schmieder
Social Events - Lori Mann

Local News

COVID-19 STRIKES!

During November, club players have reported multiple instances of COVID or have been exposed to COVID. This seems to go along with the increasing number of reported COVID cases in Kent County, which is growing exponentially.

Whether you have COVID or have been exposed to COVID, the results are the same - usually quarantine for fourteen days. Not only will the respective player be isolated, but any players he/she may have played with should also be quarantined for fourteen days or the number of days as prescribed by qualified medical personnel.

Players are cautioned to play with masks, use antiseptic wipes frequently, social distance, wash your hands, etc.

Due to the extreme contagiousness of COVID and if you're playing with a group, you may want to consider playing with only that group and no others. Then, if any member of your group becomes ill with COVID, only your group members will need to be quarantined as opposed to every player you played with in an "Open Play" environment.

The question frequently arises that
(Continued on page 4)

Women's Ladder League - Some Great Play!

By: Jean McArthur

Last month we presented the mixed ladder league run by Jim Price. This month we focused on the women's ladder league at MSA Fieldhouse.

Women's play actually began before the current ladder league started. Kathy Anderson, who now lives in Arizona, headed women's play at Belknap Park in 2014. Because of her efforts, she was recognized with the Draigh Award in 2015, the second female recipient. After Kathy left Michigan, Susan Farver started indoor play, then Suzanne Schmieder held the reigns, and currently, Jean McArthur. This is Jean's second year running the league.

Jean started playing pickleball in southeast Michigan after she retired five years ago. When she moved to Michigan's west side (approximately four years ago), one of the first things she did was find a place to play pickleball. The Grand Rapids Pickleball Club attracted her attention and she soon found out about women's ladder league where she signed on as



(Continued on page 3)

Board Actions at Work!

Due to the new COVID restrictions, the GRPC Board of Directors decided to leave the nets up at Belknap Park until further notice.

If you decide to play outside during cold temperatures you might consider using the Wilson Tru 32 Pickleballs. They will probably still break, but should last much longer than the Franklin or Dura in the colder temperatures. Other good options for cold weather Pickleballs

might be the Onix Fuse or Pure 2 or even the Penn Pickleballs.



Wilson is a sponsor of the 2021 BEER CITY OPEN Pickleball Championships.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 2) **Women's Ladder**

a player. As Jean explained, "The WEST side is truly the BEST side for so many reasons, especially pickleball."

The women play at MSA Fieldhouse on Thursdays, 11:00 – 1:00 pm. Prior to COVID, the league had close to 120 regular players. Since the League restarted in October, they currently have approximately 70 players. Jean explained that all skill levels are welcome, and the League is always accepting new players.

There are no special rules to playing pickleball on the Ladies Ladder. The League is a little different than the Tuesday Ladder in that they use TrackitHub to manage play, which means they do not have substitute players. Every person on the league has an equal chance to play each week.

The first 64 people to respond to the invite (electronic invite) on Sunday night will play the following Thursday. If they have an odd number (not divisible by four)



responding, they play with five people on some of the courts. Four person courts play three games to 15 points. Five person courts play four games to 11 points.

After each week's play, Jean inserts the scores into TrackitHub. The

program provides an average for each player by dividing the accumulated points by the total possible points. The program will assign players to the courts based on these averages. You can go up, down, or stay on the same step of the 'ladder' as the weeks progress.

Not every lady can play each week (and is not required to play). The first 64 to respond, do play. Currently, the League has been averaging six playing courts.

Jean was emphatic when she said, "We have a great group of ladies and we welcome all new players. Come join us!" MSA does require a face mask or face shield to be worn in the facility at all times, including during play. As Jean said, playing Ladder is really a great way to meet wonderful people! Contact Jean at jtmcarthur30@gmail.com.

Finding Tournaments with Software

Two years ago we were going to visit Portland, OR. Obsessed with pickleball, I tried using the USAPA site (Places2Play) to find a place to play. Sadly, I was unable to find any good play information at the time. I spoke with one of our local ambassadors and got the name of someone to call. When I called that person he informed me his venue was being sold. I was out of luck.

I then went to pickleballtournaments.com (often referred to as pt.com*) to check on any scheduled tournaments in Oregon to possibly find a local tournament. I was in luck as I found a park where I could participate.

*pt.com is used because the full name is too long. Not recommended you go there on the internet.

If you have never gone to the pt.com website, there are many options there. You can find clinics, camps, tours, cruises, destinations, pickleball items, and Pickleball Central. If you wish to find out a player's record and how good he/she might be, it has a record of all tournaments that person played in (that used the pt.com website). The site allows you to create and access multiple tournaments throughout the United States.

If you wish to travel and play in a tournament in a specific area, pt.com likely has one to fit into your schedule. However, most tournaments now fill up fast. For example, there is a well-known

By: Neil Johnson



tournament in Utah called the Huntsman, which is extremely popular. Looking it up, you can find when, where, and how to register. A couple of years ago the registration opened up at midnight which is 2:00 a.m. our time. It filled up in 7 minutes with 500 teams.

If you are interested learning how or have questions about pt.com, our club has experts who can assist you in the software's usage. Simply contact me at grpclub@gmail.com. We'll likely be able to help!

Editor's Note: *pt.com is just one tournament software among many. This is not a club endorsement of pt.com but simply an example of how you can use software to help find that special vacation.*

(Continued from page 2) COVID STRIKES

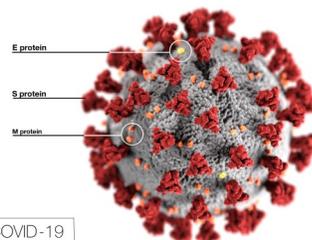
if we were wearing masks while playing, do we still have to be quarantined if we show no symptoms? The cautious answer is "YES"!

Wearing a mask effectively accomplishes two purposes. First, it helps to protect you from others who may have been exposed to COVID and second, if you're asymptomatic, the mask helps to stop the spread of the COVID virus when you interact with others. With this also being the flu season, wearing a mask even makes more sense to further help reduce the flu spread.

Now, are masks 100% effective? No they are not. However, from an article found on the CDC website dated July 14, 2020, wearing a mask significantly help in reducing the spread of COVID to others.

In an editorial published today in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), CDC reviewed the latest science and affirms that cloth face coverings are a critical tool in the fight against COVID-19 that could reduce the spread of the disease, particularly when used universally within communities. There is increasing evidence that cloth face coverings help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others.

So what can you do to help your fellow pickleball players? Simply follow the guidelines previously published by the Club . Those include wearing a mask, staying a safe distance from your fellow player, washing your hands, sanitizing your paddle and pickleballs, and keeping informed about corona virus activity.



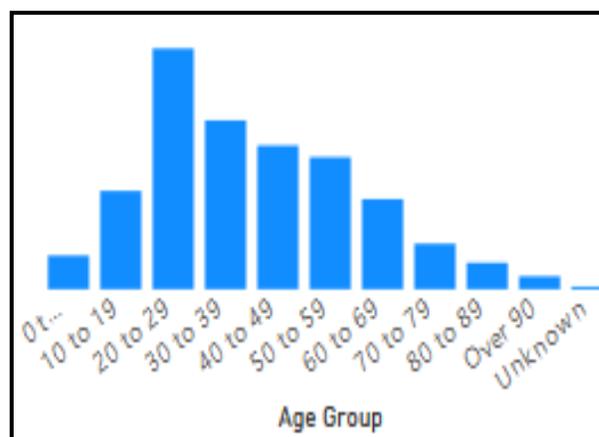
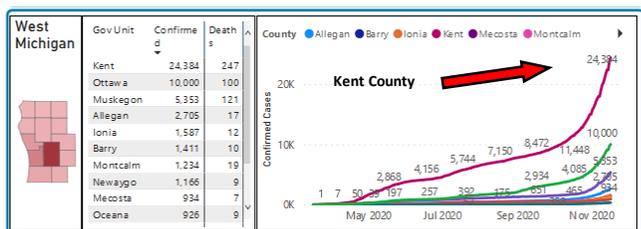
If you have COVID-19 or have been exposed to another person who has it, take the recommended steps from your health specialist and notify the Club if you have played pickleball with any members.

Contact Steve Elzinga at 616.893.7516 or send email to covid@grpickleball.com. Letting the Club know of your infection or exposure allows everyone to do the necessary steps to help control this infectious disease.

Play SAFE and Stay HEALTHY!

From ACCESSKENT.COM

Kent County is experiencing a significant increase in COVID cases. Accordingly, take extra precaution in interfacing with others. For indoor play, seriously consider wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands, using sanitizer, etc. (Data as of 11/17/20 accesskent.com)



From the top 10 questions about COVID in accesskent.com:

I have been exposed. When should I get tested? If you were in close contact with someone who tested positive, you MAY have been exposed. If you do not have symptoms, we encourage you to wait at least five days after the date of contact to get tested.

If I get a negative test, does my quarantine end early? Quarantine lasts for 14 days from your last contact with the person who tested positive, even if you test negative. The reason is symptoms may take up to 14 days after exposure to appear.

(Continued from page 2) **Board Actions**
Resurfacing Courts!

The Board has approved the patching of cracks and resurfacing of all 15 courts at Belknap Park. It will also include the common areas. This will be a substantial expense paid for by the Grand Rapids Pickleball Club. In addition, the club will be financing other smaller enhancements at Belknap in preparation for the 2021 Masters Games in June and the 2021 BEER CITY OPEN in July. This will bring the total dollars invested in Belknap Park to over \$100,000 by the GRPC in the last 4 or 5 years.

If you play at Belknap Park, please continue your membership and tell your pickleball friends to



Andrea Koop

Winning the Gold - Again!

Two of our club members, Andrea Koop and Lea Jansen, won gold medals at the APP Hilton Head Pickleball Open held October 22-25. Andrea and her partner, Corrine Carr, won in the Women's Pro Doubles and Lea won the Women's Pro Singles. Lea also won a bronze medal in the Women's Pro Doubles. Congratulations to both players for their outstanding play!



Lea Jansen

join. Your membership fees plus player donations help fund these major improvements.

Christmas/Holiday Purchases

To help you in your holiday shopping, Pickleball Central has a program where they give back 5% of the purchase expense to the club and give you, the shopper, a 5% discount when you use the club's discount code of "crGrandRapids".

Smile.Amazon.com also helps the club when you buy any qualifying items from the website. There is no additional charge to you and a small percentage of the expense is given back to the club on an annual basis. If you haven't signed up in Smile.Amazon.com, you'll need to do so and designate "Grand Rapids Pickleball" as the charitable organization you wish the donation to go to.

To get to either website location, simply click on the respective logo.






The Training Page

How to Really Improve your Games with Drills

By: Andrea Koop

A common theme amongst recreational players is that they need to get into the higher-level crowd in order to get better and progress amongst the levels of Pickleball. To some degree, I would agree with that thought process. But there are other and better ways to improve. I come from a tennis background, where 80% or more of my practice time was dedicated to drilling. In Pickleball, I often see higher level (4.5 and above) drilling, but I rarely observe it at the lower levels.

Drilling is important at all levels of pickleball. In fact, a good drill session can be as much fun or more than playing 4-person doubles. In drilling you can challenge yourself in different ways. For example, how many third shot drops can you hit in a row? Can you hit your serve 8 out of 10 times in a 4 square foot box at

the corner of the court? Can you and your drill partner hit 50 unattackable cross court dinks in a row? These are all mini drill challenges that I like to make myself do on a weekly basis in practice.

So how can drilling impact the game at each particular skill set? Thinking about the 3.0 level, a great starting point would be to have you and your partner at the kitchen line trying to hit 10 dinks in a row cross court. Once that is accomplished, move back and work on the third shot drops, while your partner hits them back to you. These exact same drills can be used by the 3.5 player, with the difference being that this player is trying to hit cleaner dinks and drops. The main difference I see between the 3.0 and 3.5 levels is consistency of dinks and drops or

even the willingness to hit a drop.

A wonderful drill challenge for the 4.0 level would be playing skinny singles with your partner and forcing each other not to drive or speed up the ball. This goes for mid-court range as well. Each partner should force themselves to drop all third shots and block all mid-court shots. A question I get asked by 4.0 players all the time, is "how to handle a banger?" The answer is you neutralize them. The only way to neutralize them is to soften the game up. Forcing yourself to drop and block is an excellent way to offset a banger.

In the December Newsletter, Andrea discusses 4.5 and 5.0 drills to help improve your game.



This picture is Lori Mann, a Club Director, drilling with a "Lobster". Lori is a firm believer in drills and strongly recommends drills to her pickleball friends! If you'd like more information about a "Lobster", contact her through the Club website.



The Training Page

Jumpstart Your Game By Bob Trout

Watch, even study, the play of better players – Whether on YouTube or at the local courts, study games by both Pro players and good local players. Notice when and how they move, how they set their feet for shots, how big or small their swing is, and their shot selection and placement. Pick out two or three things you want to improve on and work on those things.

To work on those things, you actually need to PRACTICE them. That might mean drilling specific shots to specific spots or learning/improving your split step to have a better base. I know pickleball is meant to be fun from the start but isn't it also fun to get better.

Play in a tournament and/or play with a variety of people from different locations. We often get used to playing with a set group, which is fun and easy

but provides little opportunity for improvement.

In order to improve, you need to see different styles, tendencies of players. Believe me, not everyone around the country plays the same way we do in our small groups. Take your paddle with you on trips and drop in at local venues.

A side benefit of playing in tournaments is meeting people and becoming friends with players from around the region and across the U.S. Besides improving your game, it will also add to your social life and expand and enhance your travel opportunities.

Take a Lesson from a local Pro or Instructor. This spring I had a flat rear tire on my bicycle. I took it to the shop, and the gal had it off, fixed, and back on in less than 5 min. She obviously knew what she was doing. I could have gotten the job done, but it

would have taken me an hour or more to figure it out (I wouldn't have known how to take off the wheel with all the gears and chains connected to it.).

The same can happen with a lesson. A knowledgeable and experienced instructor has seen, practiced, and experienced more than most regular players. By pointing out one or two mental mistakes or physical technics, it could improve your game faster than if you tried to work it out yourself.

Bob, a PPR Certified Teaching Pro, has 3 years of teaching experience and has played for 7 years. He has won many medals at 4.0 and 4.5 skill level including 3 Gold medals at the US Open and 2 Silver Medals at the USAPA National Tournament, all in the 65+/4.5 skill level brackets. His teaching information can be found on his Grand Rapids Pickleball Academy Facebook page. He is a retired school teacher and currently a Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices.

Go to the Net or Stay with your Partner?

Where are the majority of plays occurring? That's correct – at the net. This is one of the first instructions you will likely receive when you begin playing. Get to the NET! But is it always true? The answer is no.

As a beginning player, you're frequently taught to rush to the net whenever you can. The reasoning behind this is that most of your points will be scored while you are at the non-volley (NV) line. At the NV line, you'll have a greater probability to hit the ball back into your opponent's court as opposed to hitting the ball into the net from the baseline. Staying at the baseline is a tennis technique that works for that sport but puts you at a handicap in pickleball if you consistently stay

there. It's not unusual for players through a 3.5 skill level to always rush to the NV line and forget about where their partner is.

As you begin to play at the 4.0 level, you'll find that staying with your partner is more important than rushing to the net. In fact, if you leave your partner back at the

baseline or fail to get to the net where your partner is playing, you're actually increasing your opponents' opportunities to hit the ball between or past you.

At the 4.0 level and above, staying with your partner is the basic rule to follow. There may be cases where this is not always true, but these are exceptions.

Lastly, you and your partner, if you stay together, usually within ten feet, can cover approximately two thirds of the court at any one time. This is what you should be attempting throughout your game. If your opponent hits that one shot that goes into the court area you're not covering, it's simply a good shot. Applaud them and move on.



National News

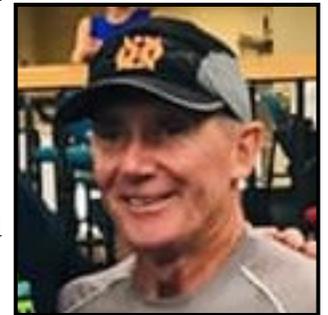
Jim Hackenberg - Pickleball Hall of Fame Inductee!

The following is taken from the Pickleball Hall of Fame announcement:

The Pickleball Hall of Fame, formed in 2017, recognizes individuals who have achieved exceptional results in pickleball play over the course of their careers, as well as those who have made exceptional contributions to the growth, development, and leadership in the game. All inductees must have also demonstrated a high level of character, integrity, sportsmanship, and consideration for others, earning the respect and admiration of their peers. To qualify for consideration, nominees in the Contributor and Competitor category should have impacted or dominated on a national or international level for a minimum of five years. Competitors must also have played at the highest level in major tournaments.

Jim Hackenberg, one of four inductee for 2020 and a Michigan resident, has amassed 52 gold medals at USAPA Nationals, US Open Pickleball Championships, and the Huntsman World Senior Games. Jim and his long time partner and wife

Yvonne Hackenberg were named Pickleball Rocks players of the year in 2013. He is a USAPA ambassador along with a member of the rules review committee. He is a Pickleball Magazine member of the advisory board and a founding member of both IPTPA and the Pickleball Hall of Fame. Jim is known as one of the fiercest competitors on the court, yet a humble gentleman off the court. He is admired and revered by all who are fortunate to play with or against him.



The 2020 honorees will be added to the Pickleball Hall of Fame website and complete bios of each PHOF member can be found at the blogsite: <https://pickleballhalloffame.blogspot.com>. More information about the Pickleball Hall of Fame is available on their website: pickleballhalloffame.com.

Jim is a Kalamazoo resident and has helped our club on several occasions. Should you see Jim, please extend your Congratulations!



Association of Pickleball Professionals (APP)

APP's ranking of the top five players based upon Total Points. Two players are Club members! (Scores as of 11/11/2020)

Men's Pro Singles				Total Pts	Women's Pro Singles				Total Pts
Jay	Devilliers	KS	540	Michelle	Esquivel	OR	360		
Zane	Navratil	WI	420	Lea	Jansen	MI	310		
Ben	Johns	MD	300	Irina	Tereschenko	AZ	300		
Dekel	Bar	MD	300	Catherine	Parenteau	FL	240		
David	Seckel	OH	150	Simone	Jardim	FL	180		
Men's Pro Doubles				Total Pts	Women's Pro Doubles				Total Pts
Steve	Deakin	BC	660	Irina	Tereschenko	AZ	540		
Ben	Johns	MD	600	Simone	Jardim	FL	540		
Dekel	Bar	MD	600	Andrea	Koop	MI	540		
Tyson	McGuffin	ID	480	Jessie	Irvine	CA	480		
Riley	Newman	AZ	480	Michelle	Esquivel	OR	480		

Web: GRPICKLEBALL.COM
Facebook: Grand Rapids Pickleball Club

Club Information

Club Officers:

President

Steve Elzinga

Vice President

John Frizzo

Secretary

Cari Brooks

Treasurer

Hub Capes

Director of Advanced Play

Paul Richards

Director of Open Play

Tom Miller

Communications

Suzanne Schmieder

Social Events

Lori Mann

[Contact US](#)

Lessons / Equipment

The Grand Rapids Pickleball Club does not endorse or recommend any individual instructor or distributor. This is simply a list of GRPC members who offer lessons/equipment and is for the convenience of the GRPC membership and others looking for Pickleball Instruction or equipment in the Greater Grand Rapids area. (Alpha Order)

Jeffrey W. Howlett

dgfjeffb@gmail.com

616-299-2000

Distributor for: Engage Equipment

Linda Jirous

lindenvp@yahoo.com

616-238-4412

Distributor for: Paddletek Equipment

Larry Keefe

lkeefe@bmc-pos.com

616-446-4000

Ross Kornoelje

rosskornoelje@gmail.com

Bob Trout

<http://www.facebook.com/pickleballlessonandclinics>

bob.teamseirk@gmail.com

bob.teamseirk@gmail.com

616-240-1413

Distributor for: Selkirk Equipment

Larry VanderRoest

<https://www.facebook.com/PickleballCoach1>

pbcoach@comcast.net

pbcoach@comcast.net

810-923-8290

Equipment Distributors Only (No Lessons)

James Stokes

616-560-0405

imboldone@hotmail.com

Distributor for: Gearbox

Jamin Stokes

616-690-3111

jaminstokes@gmail.com

Distributor for: Gearbox

AED - This life-saving machine is located in the shed. If you're not familiar with its operation, please review the associated video.

[How to Use AED - Click Here](#)

Club Discount and Credits

Pickleball Central gives you a 5% discount on eligible purchases and gives another 5% back to the Club. Use "crGrandRapids" as the discount code. Click on image to go there.



Smile.Amazon.com provides a small percentage back to the Club for eligible purchases. There is no additional cost to you. You do need to set up "Grand Rapids Pickleball" as the charitable organization. Click on image to go there.



DONATE TO THE CLUB!

Your tax deductible donation significantly benefits the Club in so many ways. Your funding is used in court maintenance, equipment purchases, as well as a host of other expenditures. Consider donating today.

[Donate](#)

Renew Membership

[Click](#)

COVID-19 HOTLINES

Phone: **616.893.7516**

Steve Elzinga

Email: covid@grpickleball.com

USA Pickleball Ambassadors:

Paul Richards—Area Team Leader

John DeHoog

Linda Jirous

Larry Keefe

Ross Kornoelje