

SOO PICKLEBALL SPRING MEETING - MAY 14, 2024 – SUMMARY

1. WELCOME

Soo Pickleball Volunteer Members
Linda Marasco, President
Gene Santoro, Vice President
Shelagh Yanni, Communications
Patty Greve, Membership
Judy Luzzi, Financials
Andy Krumins, Ladders/Tournament
were introduced and welcomed the attendees.

2. REVIEW OF LAST SEASON

Review of Last Season up to the end of December 2024 was presented and is summarized below. Your executive also spent hours planning, organizing, monitoring and marketing. We estimate 90 volunteers gave at least 1900 hours of their time to help this year happen.

| From | To | Activity | Location | Players | Volunteers |
|--------|-----------|---------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Jan 1 | May 15 | Winter Play | Tech | 71 | 7 |
| Jan 1 | Jun 20 | Winter Play | Clergue | 75 | 4 |
| Jun 10 | Jun 11 | Lessons | Elliott | 43 | 7 |
| Jun 21 | Sep 27 | Round Robin | Elliott | 32 | 3 |
| 06-Jun | 12-Oct | Ladder | Elliott | 32 | 3 |
| Jan 1 | Aug 11-13 | PBOnt Tournie | Rhodes | 100 | 40 |
| Sep 14 | Sep 19 | Lessons | Tech | 70 | 5 |
| Oct 15 | Dec 31 | Winter Play | Tech | 162 | 15 |
| Oct 6 | Dec 31 | Winter Play | Clergue | 143 | 4 |

THANK YOU TO ALL VOLUNTEERS!

3. FINANCIALS 2023

Please sign into your Pickleball Canada account, and click on the Members Only website to view our Financial statements!

4. CLERGUE MERGER OF FUNDS

Gene ran Clergue by himself from 2016-2022. Soo Pickleball started helping. Now that Soo Pickleball is a well established club with a bank account, an executive, and bookkeeper in place, he is depositing the Clergue residual funds into the club account. Total deposited is \$3405.

PLANS FOR THIS SEASON

5. LESSONS

We planned 4, 2hr lesson sessions for May 16 and 23 5:30-9:30 at Tech (18 per session - 72 beginners). Invited all those on our waitlist first and then opened it to the public. Sold out fast. More lessons will be planned for the fall before our winter play begins.

April McBride, Program Manager at Big Brothers Big Sisters approached us for **Bigs and Littles Lessons**. We are all excited about the concept. Linda always envisioned having Grandparent/Grandchild sessions and April would love to have Grandparents volunteer for her program also. There are only 5 sets interested at the moment. Linda and Gene will be handling this on their own.

6. JUNIOR NETWORKING

Many teachers in the Sault Area are starting pickleball programs with their kids and last June there were many field trips to WAC. Linda taught a couple Science North groups. Pickleball Ontario's Lesson Plan for Teachers has been distributed to both School Boards.

Let's **START** by helping all those kids who know how to play get together to play all summer. WAC has a discounted membership for kids and will let us book Social Play for kids during off hours. We can also use Elliot in the afternoons. Andrea and Ryan have volunteered to organize a group of Parent volunteers to monitor the kids. We will draft a handout for all Schools. A child can sign up with a parent sponsor by joining Soo Pickleball. At our first two sessions, the program will be explained and playtimescheduler will be taught. A parent must host and be present each session. The 3 year goal is a Junior Academy of promising 10-14 years olds for tournament play. Linda's inspirations are: Daniel Zavitz, 10 years old, a 3.25 player, his Mom and Dad, Andrea and Ryan, and Aimee Bishop, a teacher in Wasaga Beach who has a similar program.

7. TRY A SPORT DAY – JUNE 7, 7-9PM AT ELLIOT

Jari Pihelgas, City Supervisor of Recreation, has asked us to provide 8 volunteers to man each court and provide mini lessons to all who show up. 20 minute sessions and Jari's staff will handle sign up and sending them to a court. We have a lesson plan and will go over it with the volunteers an hr before hand. If you'd like to volunteer, please sign up on our website under events starting next week.

8. ROUND ROBINS (ALL LEVELS)

We plan to run all level Round Robins on the 8 courts at Elliott (Soo Pickleball will rent out the courts) on Tuesdays and Thursdays 5pm-7pm June to August.

Tuesdays will be a "partner" round robin (where you sign up with a partner, and play other partners in a balanced round robin). The "all levels" works because the volunteer organizer will use playtimescheduler ratings that each player assigns to themselves to group players together each round robin.

Thursdays will be an "individual" round robin, but still play doubles (sign up as an individual, play a balanced round robin over the 2 hours).

Cost will be \$20/player plus an up to date Soo Pickleball/PB Canada membership. REGISTRATION WILL OPEN SOON but we still need VOLUNTEERS to run the Round Robins. You will be taught how to run it!

9. LADDERS

We plan to run Ladders on the 8 courts at Elliott (Soo Pickleball will rent out the courts) on Tuesdays and Thursdays 7pm-9pm June to August.

Tuesdays will be a "sign up as an individual" ladder but still play doubles.

Tuesdays will be a "partner" ladder (where you sign up with a partner, and play other partners).

Cost will be \$20/player plus an up to date Soo Pickleball/PB Canada membership.

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN SOON but Andy would like a volunteer or 2 to help him.

All Ladder participants must have a DUPR account. Andy will be using an app (SWISH) to calculate scores, the next week's ladder, etc.

10. PALOOZA

Soo Pickleball Palooza - presented by RBCDS specifically Justin Comeault and Sean Dwyer Advisory Group. Sat/Sun Jun 22/23 at the YNCU Soo Pee Wee Arena. Big Shout out to **Pat Bitonti**. Pat asked RBCDS to sponsor our PBO tournament last August and they said no ... because they wanted to fully sponsor our own tournament next year, the demographics match, it's a fun new sport, they want to be involved. Justin, Sean and Kevin from the Pee Wee have been great to work with. It's going to be a fun event with nice prizes ... and a free lunch!

How many of you were at the Tech Wrap Up? It will run like that. You'll play 7 games in your group of 8 players, with everyone once, against everyone twice in your level (Rec/Int/Adv). Individual points count. You can sign up to just play with women, or just men or mixed or both. We have 77 registered, our goal is 100 ... help us surpass our goal! On the event page you can see who's already signed up and what level ... so pick your skill level accordingly.

REGISTER BEFORE THE END OF MAY!

<https://secure.pickleballcanada.org/event/soo-pickleball-palooza/36904/>

11. SOCIAL PLAY – BY LEVEL

Social Drop in Play is literally the best part about pickleball. You have maximum utilization of all courts, and you come as strangers and leave as friends (the amazing social aspect of pickleball). Pickleball is always more fun when all 4 players have similar skill levels. Most current players know the unwritten rules of social play. We will attempt to write them and post them at the courts. There will be 3 or 4 levels, depending on who shows up. We might start with courts divided by 2 adv, 2 int, 3 rec, 1 novice. You line your paddle up in the group that best suits your skill level. As crowds grow and shrink, the courts assignments might also. Let's say by 10:30 there's only 3 waiting on Adv and Int courts but there are 12 waiting to play on the rec courts. The Adv and Int will both give up a court and those two will now become available for Rec players. A white board will be installed for court usage. See examples below.

The white board can also be used all day long as a way to identify how the courts are being used. If there are lots of people waiting, you should always share the courts. Maybe approach the people waiting and say you'll share your court, one game each.

Not everyone will know to use the board ... but as we all learn, we can explain how it works. We'll try to keep dry erase markers available. People can also start carrying their own in their bags. It will help let all approaching players know where they can go. If there's a closed court of advanced, int and beginner players can use other courts. Sharing by all will be key ... and signs posted to explain.

| Court Sign Up – Enter Level and Closed or Open | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| This is what it might look like at 9am | | | |
| 1 REC OPEN | 2 REC OPEN | 3 REC OPEN | 4 NOVICE OPEN |
| 5 ADV OPEN | 6 ADV OPEN | 7 INT OPEN | 8 INT OPEN |

| Court Sign Up – Enter Level and Closed or Open | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------------------|
| This is what it might look like at 6pm | | | |
| 1 ADV CLOSED 6 of us rotating | 2 INT CLOSED 10 of us rotating Courts 2 & 3 | 3 INT CLOSED | 4 |
| 5 ADV OPEN Challenge Court | 6 | 7 NOVICE OPEN Coaches or newbies Welcome | 8 FAMILY CLOSED |

12. PICKLEBALL ETIQUETTE

Gene and Patty spoke to pickleball etiquette.

Here is a great summary of "level" play - without having to worry about a "number rating" - number ratings are only really relevant if players have played in tournaments, and have been rated!

GENERAL GUIDELINES TO HELP SELF RATE

You improve very little by watching the ball fly past you. If you are in that situation you are probably playing at too high a level.

Yes, you do get better by playing at a higher level but the only thing you learn if you don't return any balls is that you're playing at too high a level.

If you are consistently winning all your games at your level, concentrate on developing your weaker areas before trying a higher level. Placing the ball consistently at your target point, using your backhand, dinking etc. You'll develop these areas faster at your level than you will at the next level up.

ADVANCED

Good mobility in all directions including on lobs

Played or want to play in competitive tournaments

Comfortable in hard hitting fast games

Quick reflex and reaction

Consistent groundstrokes and dinks with both forehand and backhand

Strategically uses third shot drops

Can transition from hard game to dinking and vice versa as needed

Very mobile and can recover from scrambles

INTERMEDIATE

Fairly good mobility

Looking to play in competitive tournaments

Not afraid of fast hard hitting games

Slow reaction times due to strategic moves of opponents

Good forehand ground strokes, backhand noticeably weaker

Developing dinking accurately and transitioning from fast to slow

Beginning to use some strategies to affect the flow of the game

RECREATIONAL

Mobility an issue in some directions

Enjoy slower paced game and not comfortable with hard hit balls

Consistently gets serves in

Can maintain a rally when ball is within mobility range

Knows all the rules

Strategic play is secondary to focus on getting the ball over the net

BEGINNER

Mobility may or may not be an issue but is often caught flat footed because of lack of experience

Not sure of positioning on court

Learning to adapt the rules, kitchen line / 2 bounce rule infractions / scoring

Developing a consistent serve

Needs to develop proper footwork to avoid tripping or running all over court

Is developing knowledge of flow of the game

Tend to mainly use forehand and avoid using backhand

13. TECH AND CLERGUE WINTER PLAY

Soo Pickleball will open registration on a first come first serve basis for play at Clergue in late August. Tue, Thu, Fri times again.

We are very excited that we will be offering a monthly or seasonal membership option for Soo Pickleball players in the fall for play at Tech all winter! A draft schedule will be determined, and offer many different scheduled 2 hour play sessions by level, as well as an opportunity to book private courts (likely at a premium membership rate).

Details are still being worked out, but we will be using an online app for players to access the building with one-time code access for each session.

We are aiming for a regular monthly membership to cost \$50 (plus an up-to-date Soo Pickleball/PB Canada membership), for a lot of play sessions per week per player.

Drop-in memberships will also be available for visitors who have a Pickleball Canada membership.

Exciting times! Stay tuned!! Spread the Word!!

14. MENTORING

We will open registration soon for groups of 3 people to sign up to play with a Mentor for at least 2 sessions (game play) on a court and time convenient for all. The Mentor will offer coaching advice during play for players wishing to learn!

If you are interested in becoming a Mentor, please apply here:

<https://forms.gle/AWWzDZAhyCMDUeqU9>

15. BON SOO TOURNAMENT

Andy is looking into having a Soo Pickleball tournament during the week of Bon Soo. More details to come!

16. CLOSING REMARKS

STAY UP TO DATE BY REGULARLY CHECK OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES!

www.soopickleball.com

www.facebook.com/SooAreaPickleball

www.instagram.com/soo_area_pickleball

Check out our online store and wear our logo!