

PICKLE JUICE

A newsletter from Fresno Area Pickleball



Board of Directors

Randy Mehrten - President

randymehrten@yahoo.com

Randy Dockum - Treasurer

dockrx@sbcglobal.net

Jeri Stubblefield - Secretary

jeristubblefield@gmail.com

Chris Martin - Director

Christophermartinbiz@gmail.com

Gary Battles - Director

gmbattles@gmail.com

Dr. Leslie Hoyt - Director

piglet111@msn.com

Melissa Sample - Director

melissasue007@icloud.com

Newsletter Contents

President's Message	1
Pickleball Ambassadors	2
Dink Tank	3
Pickleball Injuries	4
Pickleball FAQs	5



Rotary East Permanent Court Construction - 4/29/25

President's Message

Hey Fresno Area Pickleballers,

If you haven't driven your ebike by Rotary East Park lately, you really need to turn that hog around and see for yourself what everyone is talking about. Yes it's happening, Fresno will finally have its first public permanent Pickleball courts. Eight works of art, going in just north of the temporary courts we have toiled on for years.

USA Pickleball Ambassadors

Tina Quillen - Clovis
tinaquillen@gmail.com
Cirilo Medina - Fresno
cirtio@comcast.net
Ken Robison - Selma
kenrobison@sbcglobal.net
Mark Babiarz - Fresno
babiarz.mark@gmail.com
Mike Nolan - Oakhurst
mjjnolen.fam@gmail.com

Over several funding cycles we've heard rumors, listened to innuendo, and we've watched budget shortfalls bring us so close, but still short. Now Pickleball's time has come!

In past newsletters we have lauded Fresno Pickleball heroes like Bill Schultz, John Browning, and Hank Palmer for putting this game on the map for all of us X-40 crazies.

But our latest legend that has to go down in our often quoted Pickleball Legacy Book (Gary did I lend you the book, maybe it's in my backpack) is Alan McCuen.

You would think that in order to get government to listen to someone about a new concept, mobilize themselves, and finally allocate over \$1.2

million to start construction, that person would need to be loud, maybe a little obnoxious, and unrelentingly persistent. That's just not a good description of our boy Alan. And that is no doubt a good thing.

Persistent? You bet. Alan along with former FAP President Emma Sultan, went to many, many City Council meetings, Planning Department meetings, and did countless knocks on the doors of City Parks and Recreation Officials as well as City Staffers.

Loud and inappropriate - not this guy. In talking with City Staffers, while they were sometimes weary from so many of Alan's visits, they were never, ever offended as he carried himself with unparalleled dignity and class.

The long time, wise City Staffers know that government moves with the speed of a 75 year old pickleballer running down an attacking lob (hey I can use this analogy, I'm almost there). It's usually not pretty, and while they might get there, they most likely won't. Alan was the perfect voice at



May 7th 2025



an imperfect time in government: never enough money and too many unfunded liabilities and competing interests from a diverse Fresno to make everyone happy. Yet Alan McCuen persisted - politely, continuously, and harmoniously knowing that the best response was not to be labeled a loud mouthed Class A Clown. Many issue advocates that do war at City Hall get labeled just that to their ultimate demise. Alan is a hero to local Pickleball - not just for getting the nearly impossible done, but for doing it with tremendous integrity.

When you see him on the courts (his primary venues are Rotary and Vinland), go out of your way to thank him. I'm pretty sure we wouldn't be anywhere close to a completion date without Alan's custodial ownership of this issue. I wouldn't have done it and chances are neither would you, and quite rankly we'd have probably messed it up. Alan McCuen got it done, and our list of legends grows by one. From the entire Fresno Pickleball Family, thank you my friend.

Dink Tank

Pickleball Mindset - The Blueprint for Peak Performance

By Mark Babiarz
teaching pro, USA Pickleball Ambassador

The title above is an excellent book via softcover or Kindle that can be purchased on Amazon. The authors are Dayne Gingrich (Senior pro and outstanding teacher) and Jill Martin. The book is an outstanding resource and narrative on perhaps part of the game that intermediate and advanced players sometimes have not considered. This book is not an analysis on shot techniques related to the game but instead is an excellent review of the many areas of the mental mindset to improve your Pickleball game. The book is an easy read with each of the authors giving their perspective of topics that include the following: Stop Chasing the Win, Pre-accept What you Can't Control, See and Feel Your Game, Choose Confidence, Welcome the Make-or-Break Moments, Find and Become a Great Partner, Maximize Your Tournament Performance and Conclusion with next steps.



One area that I have looked to work on starts with the Pre Accept What You Can't Control chapter. This looks to allow me to get all those thoughts and/or conditions that we face playing Pickleball "out of the way" before starting a match regardless if the game is a rec game or tournament game. Things like wind, sun, cold, heat, court conditions and more are factors that you want to consider and put to rest before starting a match. For example, when it is windy, I look to recognize that condition and then no longer worry or complain about the wind and instead play the game and adapt to the wind as needed.

Another area I work on is the Choose Confidence mantra throughout a match. This is always hard to put into action so for me this is a work in progress probably until I no longer can play the game. I look to avoid all of those tendencies one has after hitting a poor shot, losing a point and/or any other negative part of the game that occurs. Dayne has steps you can use to develop Choosing Confidence and again, this is a great area to focus on when playing or practicing.

My brief summaries above of two chapters are hardly comprehensive in nature but I hope allows readers an idea of what the book offers any player. You can find a million articles and videos on the many techniques used in playing Pickleball, but very few coaches focus on the perhaps even more important mental side of the game. I encourage you to get the book and start to explore ways to improve your game by thinking about the mental side of Pickleball. As always, have fun and enjoy the journey on the court.

Preventing Pickleball Injuries: Pay Me Now, or Pay Me Later

By Randy Dockum, FAP Treasurer

The old Fram oil filter commercial proclaimed: “You can pay me now or pay me later.” The point being you can spend a little bit of money on a Fram oil filter now to prevent paying expensive engine repair bills later.



Preventing pickleball injuries has a similar dynamic. If you spend a little time before the games begin to properly stretch and warm-up, you may avoid the consequences of a serious physical injury.

The morning of January 8, 2024 is clearly imprinted in my mind. I was playing pickleball in 35-degree weather when I ran from the baseline to the kitchen to get a dink, I felt a pop in my lower right leg that dropped me immediately to the ground. I was out for eight weeks with a partially torn right calf muscle requiring a walking boot and physical therapy. I never want to repeat this or see it happen to anyone else.

In retrospect, there were two major contributors to this injury: 1) failure to properly warm-up and stretch before playing and 2) the cold temperature.

Pickleball continues to be one of the fastest growing sports in America, appealing to people of all ages and skill levels. But as its popularity rises, so do injuries and emergency room visits. A recent study estimates that in 2022 there were more than 17,000 emergency room visits in the U.S. for pickleball injuries, with more than 80% of those players being 50 years of age or older. Emergency room and sports medicine physicians encourage players that the number one method to prevent pickleball injury is to properly stretch and warm-up.

It does not require a complicated regimen, only a simple routine of stretching and warming up of the most commonly used body parts and muscle/tendon groups. This goes a long way in preventing injury.

In general, warm-up routines should be 5-10 minutes in length, depending on ambient temperatures. The colder the weather, the longer and more extensive your warm-up/stretch should be.

Most experts recommend calf, Achilles, and hamstring stretches as a mainstay of your stretching routine. Good additions to this are running in place, jogging back and forth, and side stepping. Warming up the joints (wrists, elbows, shoulders, and hips) is also very useful in preventing injury or pain.

There are a number of websites and You Tube videos that can help you develop a simple yet effective warm-up routine. A couple of these are:

- 1) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUYNbcFe-w&t=56s>
- 2) <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/jzhDhRs3PrM>
- 3) [Best Pickleball Warmup To Prevent Injury - This 5 Minute Pickleball Warm Up Works For All Ages](#)

This is not an extensive list, but I encourage you to view several videos (just type in “pickleball warm up” on You Tube) and develop a routine that you will utilize prior to playing.

Other recommendations from experts include knowing your physical limits and playing within them, using caution in extreme temperatures, and staying well hydrated, regardless of the temperature.

The next time you arrive at the pickleball court and there is an immediate opening to play, remember my cautionary tale (and that of many others who have sustained significant injury). Avoid the temptation to play immediately and go through your warm-up/stretch routine instead. Your muscles, tendons, and joints will thank you in the long run and help you to play pickleball injury free for a long time. Remember: “You can pay me now or pay me later.” Choose the less costly one.



Pickleball FAQ's

Does Fresno Area Pickleball provide free lessons for beginners?

Yes, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning at Vinland from 8:30 am to 10:30 am, and Mondays from 6pm to 8pm at Rotary East Park.

What time is the open play/drop-in play at Rotary East, Vinland, Orchid, and Fowler Parks?

**East Fresno Rotary - Cedar Ave. and Sierra Ave. - Eight new permanent courts
Four temporary courts and beginning approximately June 16th, eight new courts.**

MWF and Saturday - open play 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. All levels welcome, all 12 courts!

TH - advanced play, 3.5 and above welcome. 8:00 am to 12:00 pm

MWF and Saturday evening - 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, open play, all levels welcome, all 12 courts.

Fresno Area Pickleball will reserve the eight new courts in the morning and the evening, MWF and Saturday.

Orchid Park, Valentine just north of Herndon

Orchid park is open for Pickleball every day, Monday through Sunday. Play is at all levels, and everyone is welcome. Starting times vary during the year because of the weather. Currently play begins at 7:30am. The courts are typically open for 3-4 hours each morning. Evening play is also available at Orchid on Monday and Wednesday nights.

Vinland Park - Gettysburg and Hwy. 168

Monday through Saturday, Open play, all levels welcome, 8:00 am - 11 am. Beginners classes MWF starting at 8:30 am. MWF evening play beginning at 6pm. Most evenings we have access to all 8 courts and Monday and Wednesdays FAP reserves the courts specifically for all Pickleballers. Generally (based on crowd turnout) we run 4 advance play courts and 4 intermediate/beginner courts.

Fowler - Panzak Park, John Browning Pickleball Courts, Fowler, CA

Monday through Friday, all levels welcome, starting at 7:30 am.

Is there a fee to use the courts?

There is no fee to use the courts during the FAP sponsored times described above. Just show up, join our group, and play Pickleball. We hope though that everyone who plays with us regularly would feel compelled to support the efforts of FAP to supply balls, nets, and court reservation fees for Pickleball in Fresno by paying the \$35 yearly membership fee.

Can I schedule a private game for 4 players?

Fresno Area Pickleball does not provide nets or balls to folks that wish to play on their own. The management of reshelving the nets and opening and closing the facilities would simply become too cumbersome for a small board of directors. Please note the times we are open listed above.

Does Fresno have any permanent public pickleball courts?

We can finally say yes to that question! The eight new permanent courts at Rotary East Park on Cedar and Sierra should open about the third week of June. See the first FAQ above to see the days and times that will be reserved for FAP members.