

# PebbleCreek Pickleball

Bimonthly Newsletter

June / July 2023

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## New Court Update



Parking lot and entrance to new courts.  
Pavement and curbing complete.  
Waiting for lights to be installed.



Ramada, storage and bathrooms.  
Floors are ready for concrete.  
Materials on site.



Pads have been poured.  
Fencing framework is almost complete  
View down walkway connecting courts.



Electrical and lighting conduit has been completed

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### May and June New Members

- Alison Sanchez
- Dale Sies
- Janet Huston
- Joe Lorino
- Julie Sies
- Karen Olafson
- Luci Eblin
- Mary Margaret Henson
- Melinda Artz
- Rick Germaine
- Stan Turner
- Teena Lorino
- Wendy Fulks

# Fourth of July Celebration



Volunteers (L to R): Pam Leeming, Judi Johnson, Kathy Delaney, Cathy Adkins, Chris Jimenez, and Lisa Kellis.  
Not Shown: Shirley Seymour

There was plenty of Red, White and Blue at the courts on July 4th as everyone came together to celebrate in our great Nation's independence. Food was also in abundance, creating a brunch feast that was fit for a king. Thank you to all the members brought food to share. Left over food was donated to Goodyear Fire Dept. They were grateful for the goodies.



A huge thanks to Kathy Delaney and her wonderful crew of volunteers that set up, served and clean up for this event. They were all on hand to ensure everyone got plenty to eat and enjoy the festivities. Music was provided by Indy Rebhun.

As usual, the courts were packed with enthusiastic play, shouts of laughter and lots of friendly banter.





## NUMBERS ARE COMING BACK

57% of members responding to the April 2023 survey stated they prefer the standard numeric system vs colors to denote skill level. The chart below approximates the numeric equivalent to our color levels. We will be referring to events with both colors and the numeric equivalent during the winter season to aid with the transition back to numbers.

### Ratings Transition Chart

Club Rating	Color
4.5+	Aqua
4.25	Burgundy
4.00	Green
3.75	Indigo
3.50	Maroon
3.25	Orange
3.00	Purple
2.75	Red
2.50	Teal
Novice B	Novice B
Novice A	Novice A

As you can see the colors translate nicely to numbers in .25 increments. We are going to use the numbers in the .25 increments as with over 1,700 members now we need the extra levels of stratification.

Starting this fall, you will see both a color rating and the club rating numeric equivalent in your player profile. You will also see events reference both a color and a club rating. For instance, Mixed 3.0 (Purple) Round Robin.

Sharon Hadley  
PCPB Club, Treasurer  
[treasurer@pcpickleball.org](mailto:treasurer@pcpickleball.org)

## Thursday Morning Ladies Skills & Drills



The Thursday Morning Ladies Skills & Drills group of 68 ladies, would like to express our sincere thanks to the 19 Volunteer Coaches that showed up over the last 4 months and worked with us sharing their experience, skills and knowledge. The ladies raised over \$900 for Coaching for Courts on behalf of these great Coaches. Thank you!



Marty Braden, Kim Ballew, Sean Weaver, Keith McDonald, Chris Johnson, Dave Trimble, Jeff Gauvin, John Stiepel, Jeff Antrican, Joe Sagorsky, Mike Meline, Kevin Hillstrom, Mike Crabtree, Steve Cain, Andrea Dilger, Dalonna Cooper, Tammy Dana-Bashian, Sharon Hadley and Sandy Crabtree. Not all Coaches pictured.

### Upcoming Club Events

Zoom Board Meeting	3:00pm 8/30/2023
New Courts Grand Opening	TBD
Women's Final 4 Tournament	11/16/2023
Men's Final 4 Tournament	11/17/2023
Mixed Final 4 Tournament	11/19/2023
December Toy Drive	TBD

## How do you rate?

We've searched far and wide for the perfect pickleball rating system, and we finally found it! Just kidding...unfortunately, no rating system is perfect.

Why do we spend so much time talking about ratings? Because **pickleball is more fun when the players on the court are of similar ability**. The purpose of any rating system is to group players based on their ability - resulting in balanced, competitive, and more enjoyable matches.

In our search for a new pickleball rating system...**the objective was to remove subjective evaluation and focus on performance on the court**. However, we have some limitations on accomplishing that goal. To do so means we must keep score. Do we subject everyone to scorekeeping or only those interested in moving up? To be objective it must be over a greater number of games.

The board developed a **draft** of a new rating process a couple of months ago. It is objective. This draft focuses on the traditional club rating.

*The original draft rating process includes:*

- **“multiple paths”** for advancement to the next level (competitive round robins, tournament play, ladder results). All require scores to be recorded and tracked;
- a **“winnowing process”** - with objective criteria for each path, that qualify members to play at the next level.
- **“provisional status”** at the next level - players get on the court with higher level players for a defined period of time;
- **“play to stay”** - performance on the court at that next level would determine whether a member would stay at that level. You don't just get there - you need to show you belong at the next level! Also, requires scores to be recorded and tracked.

Around that time, we also began contemplating whether a **Computerized Rating system (CRS)** might fit within the club. It also requires scores to be recorded and tracked.

**Could CRS be an even simpler approach and accomplish the same thing? We decided to conduct a summer pilot.**

First which CRS to use. CourtReserve has an algorithm under development, we explored DUPR, and Kevin Hillstrom has developed a third alternative, modeled after UTPR. We are currently using Kevin's algorithm we have affectionately called KPR.

NOTE: Once we embarked on the CRS pilot the original draft of the rating process put on the shelf. It may or may not be picked up later - post pilot.

**(Continued on Page 9)**

# Computerized Ratings Pilot

This summer more than one-hundred-and-twenty club members have participated in a pilot program to determine if a computer rating could be used to segment our club members into reasonably equal groups for competitive purposes.

There are many different computerized ratings systems in use across the United States. If you watch PPA pickleball tournaments on television, you've likely seen the term "DUPR", or "Dynamic Universal Pickleball Rating". This is the most popular system, in part because players can play matches at Pebble Creek, enter their results into their phone at the end of the match, and immediately observe how their rating changes.

In general, the spirit of a computer rating is this: If two equal teams play each other (say two teams rated 3.00), the winning team takes 0.05 ratings points from the losing team. At the end of the match, the winning team has a 3.05 rating, the losing team has a 2.95 rating. If one team is highly favored to win the match, the highly favored team will only take 0.01 rating point from the losing team (going from 3.00 to 3.01). If the team expected to lose pulls off an upset, that team takes 0.09 ratings points from the favored team, going from 3.00 to 3.09. Over the course of 15-30 games, your computer rating should arrive at a reasonable measure of your ability in comparison to similar players.

Though all ratings systems have pros and cons, a computer rating has three appealing positives. First, a computer rating gives you some control over your rating. If you win games, regardless of who you are playing with or against, your computer rating will increase. You will have to win games, and eventually you will have to upset teams you should not beat, but your rating will improve if you win games.

Second, a computer rating eliminates the need for volunteer raters who give their time and energy to make sure our club members are evaluated properly. Third, a computer rating is dynamic, not static. In other words, if a player is "Maroon (3.50)" in our current system, it is hard for that player to get better competition, and it is hard for that player to move down when not performing at a "Maroon (3.50)" level. Computer ratings are dynamic. Think about it this way. If a Maroon (3.50) player has a good week in a computerized rating system, the player could essentially become an Indigo (3.75) player the following week. If the new Indigo (3.75) player is not competitive against other Indigo (3.75) players, the computer adjusts the player back to Maroon (3.50). In this world, colors wouldn't really exist, from a competitive standpoint. There would be a computer rating in Court Reserve, and the computer rating would adjust up and down each week (3.54, 3.67, 3.58, 3.49, 3.55).



As mentioned earlier, more than 120 club members volunteered to play in a pilot program this summer. Because USA Pickleball publicly publishes their "UTPR" formula used in tournaments, we applied UTPR to our club members, using a "King of the Hill" format. We also tested DUPR

*(Continued on Page 10)*

## Mark Friedenber, Pickleball Hall of Fame Inductee

If you were at the courts on May 29th, you were in for a big treat. Pickleball Hall of Fame Inductee Mark Friedenber was looking to have some fun at PebbleCreek. Mark teamed up with Howard Mendel in a match against Jim Barbe and Greg Wellington and some amazing Pickleball ensued. Jeff Gauvin refereed the game that ended in a 12-10 score with Mark and Howard as the winners. The large crowd that gathered to watch was hungry for more great Pickleball and the players rotated for a second match. Mark paired up with Greg against Howard and Jim. After some incredible shots and plays, the game ended with an 11 - 9 score and Howard and Jim brought home the win. What a great opportunity to watch these amazing athletes.



Howard Mendel, Greg Wellington, Mark Friedenber, Jim Barbe

Mark was still looking for more fun on the courts and if you wanted to play a match with him, you were asked to put your name in a hat. The lucky names drawn, were: Din Chin, Mike Mitchell, Barb Wellington, Ray Henson, Sherri Kuk and Cookie Kuk; each of these players experienced firsthand his skills and talents while the crowd provided a background of cheers, applause and lots of fun laughter.

Between games, Jeff Gauvin was able to interview the Pickleball Master and Mark shared his approach to returns of serve and working his way forward through the transition area. He said Pickleball is a lot like baseball. To a number of quizzical looks, Mark demonstrated taking balls off the short hop or half volley, not unlike a shortstop fielding a ground ball. He keeps a light grip pressure, doesn't give up any ground, he takes the ball out front and by doing that, is also moving forward toward the no volley zone line.

Mark also shared how he got the nickname "Yoda". He beat a 25 year old quite handily in a tournament singles match. His opponent threw his paddle against the wall out of frustration for losing to an "old man"; a friend of his opponent said "Well look at Mark, he's like Yoda and knows all the tricks". The nickname stuck!

As a National Champion, Mark wrote *Winning Pickleball* to share fundamental skills and strategies necessary to play winning Pickleball and move your game to a higher level. With books available, he was willing to autograph a copy for anyone that asked.

Mark was inducted into the Pickleball Hall of Fame in 2017, its inaugural year, with a group of gentlemen known as the Pickleball "Founding Fathers", Joel Pritchard, Bill Bell and Barney McCallum. For more information about the Pickleball Hall of Fame (PHOF) visit their website at <https://pickleballhalloffame.com>.

**The Evolution of the Pickleball Paddle:** Initially, pickleball paddles were made entirely of wood, however in recent years, lightweight materials like graphite and aluminum have been incorporated to lessen the weight of the paddle. The typical pickleball paddle is larger than a ping-pong paddle, but smaller than a tennis racket.



## Useful Information:

### Name Badges:

When members order a new name badge, the timeline to receive your badge is generally 2-3 weeks. Currently, the Club collects and submits the badge orders once every 7-10 days. The engraving takes a few days to complete each batch. Our volunteer, Dotti Kirkpatrick, then picks up the finished badges, emails each badge member and places the new badges on the whiteboard in the ice room. If you have ordered a name badge and have not yet received your badge, please contact me, your Club Secretary, Pam Cagle, at [secretary@pcpickleball.org](mailto:secretary@pcpickleball.org).

### Guests:

Guests STILL must have guest cards to play on the courts. This remains true for those guests who are from our surrounding neighborhood cities as well as out of state guests.

### Pickleball Central

When ordering from Pickleball Central use code: **crpcpbclub** for a 5% discount on your purchases.

**Thank You to Marty and Kathy Aalto** for all the work they put into designing, taking orders, delivering and donating to the New Court Fund. Their most recent donation was \$2,100.

Pam Cagle  
PCPB Club Secretary  
[Secretary@pcpickleball.org](mailto:Secretary@pcpickleball.org)

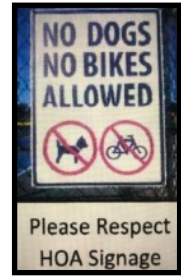
## School Supply Drive is a Success



Many thanks to our wonderful Pebblecreek Pickleball Club Members! On Saturday, July 15th, the Club held a very successful School Supply Drive for the Elisio C. Felix School in Goodyear; a Title 1 School. Our generous members donated 2 car loads of school supplies plus numerous gift cards from Target, Walmart, Amazon and many cash donations. These gifts will go a long way in helping these students start the school year right! A big THANK YOU to volunteers Kathy Delaney, Virginia Coffee, Michelle McKee, Cathy Adkins and Michelle Devine for helping distribute delicious Arriba's breakfast burritos!



## Maintenance Report



### 1) Work Orders

#### Ongoing / Update

- a) Trim trees back from perimeter wall
- b) Repair patio stone near water fountain by court 4
- c) Replace expansion joint filler near court 8

### 2) Projects

- a) Shade over Fountain by court 4 - Still waiting on Contractor
- b) Shade over area between courts 1 & 12 incorrect fabric, Contractor re-ordered
- c) Quote to address rock area west of court 20  
Received approval from Pickleball Club
- d) Address rock area on east side of court 8

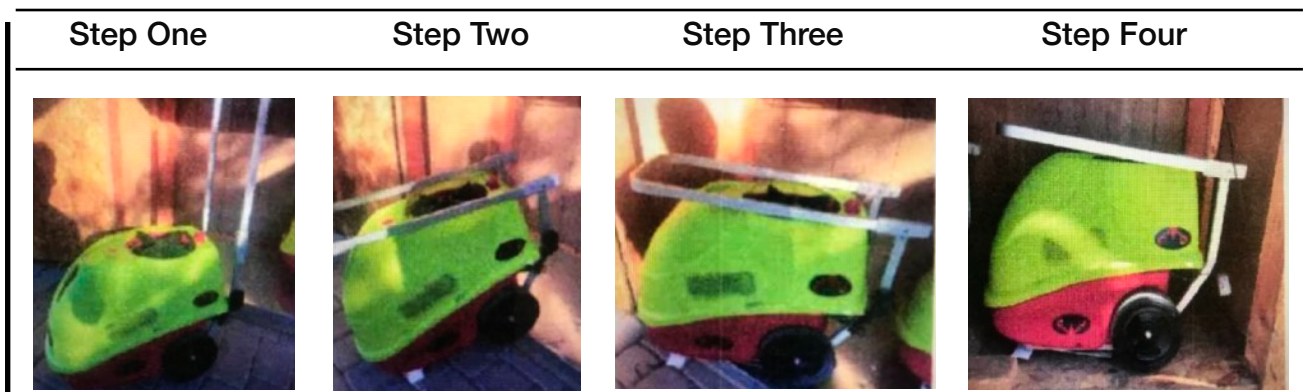
### 3) Maintenance Committee Projects

- a) Paint touch-ups ongoing
- b) Adjusting & repairing gate hinges ongoing  
Reminder, Please push or pull gates into courts
- c) Repaired both Pickleball machines  
Reminder, Please treat machines as if they were your own
- d) Tightening up permanent speaker wire & painting speaker masts
- e) Having 38 chairs re-slung - new fabric (complete)

### 4) Thank you to Volunteers

- Thank you Jeff & Judy Gauvin, Pam & Bill Cagle and Wendy & Rick Langhals for straightening furniture for June
- Thank you Karen & Jimmy LaFever for assuming these duties for July
- Net adjusters- June - Thank you Joe Sagorsky & Dave Poppe  
July - Thank you Kit & Daryl May
- Thank you - John Stiepel for clean-up around sheds

## How to store PickleBall Machines



Marty Braden  
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## How Do You Rate? *(Continued from Page 4)*

Why a CRS? Players advance at different rates - just because you and your friends started at the same time doesn't mean you advance at the same rate. And, you may not end up in the same level. With a CRS, players will see "**real time**" results on their individual pickleball journey. The player controls their advancement (or not) based on performance on the court. CRS generally covers a relatively large body of work, requiring 20 to 30 or more games to be accurate.

By far, the most difficult part of any ratings system is dealing with the inevitable reality of a decline in ability - either due to illness, injury, age, playing less, etc. A CRS would reflect a change in skill levels as time goes on, all the while pairing you with players similar in ability. The question remains how to address a decline in ability for members that choose not to play in CRS events. That is still under consideration.

Kevin Hillstrom agreed to lead our CRS pilot over the summer. Check out Kevin's article in this newsletter. Though we are still early in the process, the board is VERY optimistic and hopeful the CRS pilot will be successful - and we will find a way to integrate CRS into our rating process.

The results of the pilot may also inform us of the types of club events we offer - we have opportunities for new events with 16 additional courts.

Our members play for a variety of different reasons, and a single approach to ratings may not work best for everyone. We are taking time over the summer to contemplate several approaches and situations.

It's been suggested we eliminate ratings - we quickly eliminated that idea!! We're also considering things like self-rating, peer ratings, competitive round robins, hiring outside raters, active UTPR and DUPR ratings, etc. We continue to evaluate the pros and cons of each, to determine whether and where they may have a place in our club.

We appreciate your patience as the board moves through this process. We also appreciate your patience as we take the summer off for changes in ratings. We do this every summer. We understand the desire to get on the court with players at higher levels. One way to do that is to participate in the pilot. At times you'll play up, and other times you'll play down. Another way to get on the court with better players is to ask better players to play with you. See you at the courts.

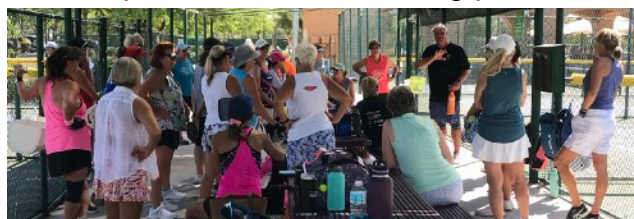
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## Computerized Ratings Pilot (Continued from Page 5)

this summer, but DUPR changed their rating system during our pilot, starting all new players at a 3.50 level. For obvious reasons, it would be hard to use DUPR and then classify a thousand players at a 3.50 level for starting purposes!

The goal of the pilot is not to test our players and move players up/down. The goal of the pilot is to test a computer rating. We used our current color system as a starting point, with each color adding 0.25 ratings points, starting with Teal at 2.50. From there, player performance determines whether your computer rating moves up/down from the starting point.



We have learned a lot so far this summer!

We learned that a computer can quickly fix problems. If a Teal player shouldn't be a Teal player, the computer can move the player to Red status or Purple status within 1-2 weeks. This is a very positive outcome. Imagine being a player who works during the day and cannot be evaluated in a round robin? A computer rating allows the player to play in occasional competitive events and be rated at an appropriate level.

We learned that most players, about 75%, are rated within +/- 0.25 rating point of their color level. This metric will change as the summer progresses. But as of now, we demonstrated that the color system implemented in 2022 was reasonably accurate. About 12% of players in our pilot have moved "up" a quarter of a ratings

point, about 13% of players in our pilot have moved "down" a quarter of a ratings point. Some of this is to be expected, because we haven't moved players to different color levels in three months. Did the color system misclassify some players? Absolutely. Can a computer correct those issues? Absolutely!

We learned that upsets happen, and often! The Oakland A's are a terrible baseball team. But earlier this spring, the A's waltzed into Milwaukee and swept my first-place Brewers in a three-game series. Just because the A's won three consecutive games against a first-place team doesn't mean the A's should become a first-place team. The A's simply upset the Brewers. In our pilot, we learned that if two Purple players play against two Orange players, the Purple players have a 20% chance of winning the game. This does not mean that the Purple players *are* Orange players if they win. It means that the Purple players "should" win from time to time against better competition. A computer rating thrives on upsets. If a player upsets better players 40% of the time, the computer moves the player up to the level of the players being upset. Upsets happen and are one of the primary ways a computer determines when a player is ready to tackle better competition.

We anticipate we will learn more through the summer. By the end of summer, we will know whether a computer rating can be used in a competitive environment to give our players more control over how they are rated versus other club members.

**Kevin Hillstrom,  
Computerized Ratings Commissioner**