

## WELCOME TO PICKLEBALL AT THE COMOX COMMUNITY CENTRE

An informal group of experienced pickleball players have come together to help make your first steps in the sport an enjoyable experience. Part of that is this introduction to pickleball in Comox.

Pickleball is an easy sport to learn, but it is hard to master playing the game well. To help your transition from "novice" to "advanced" player, there are graduated levels of play (schedule valid until March 28, 2015.)

### STEP ONE: NOVICE PLAY 2.5 Players and Lower

- International Federation of Pickleball skill level 2.5 and lower
- These sessions are set aside to introduce the game to beginning players. You are encouraged to take advantage of this time to learn the basics of the game (scoring, serve, ground strokes and volley) and to meet other beginning players. Instruction will be available most Tuesdays and Thursdays.

### STEP TWO: GENERAL PLAY 3.0 Players and Up

- International Federation of Pickleball skill level 3.0 and higher.
- This time is for intermediate and advanced players, confident in serving, returning, volleying, and knowing the rules of the game. It is a great opportunity for novices who have learned the basics to test their game to see how far they have progressed. We use the "bench system" explained below.

### STEP THREE - ADVANCED PLAY 4.0 Players and Up

- International Federation of Pickleball skill level 4.0 and higher.
- Players who have worked hard and are graduating from the "Intermediate" level are welcome to have a go, but this time period is NOT for the novice or early stage intermediate player.
- Players must remember that advanced players are on the court to hone their competitive skills. If you cannot compete at their level and/or just want to have fun, please come to the GENERAL PLAY TIMES on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

**BENCH SYSTEM** -The first two players in line: EACH choose a partner from those sitting on the bench.

- 1:00-2:00pm, everyone mixes.
- 2:00-3:00pm, you may choose players of your own level. Please do not take offence if a stronger player passes to wait for someone of their skill level.

**Note:** Complete International Federation of Pickleball rating information on the reverse or at [www.ipickleball.org](http://www.ipickleball.org)

### If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

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Comox Community Centre	250-339-2255		general enquires re schedule, admission rates

### Session Cancelations:

From time to time, pickleball sessions are cancelled because of special events or programs changes. Contact the Comox Community Centre for the latest pickleball schedule.

There are no sessions on statutory holidays.

The IFP Rating System has been created to help describe differences in the various skill levels.

### **1.0 Rating**

New and have only minimal knowledge of the game and the rules.

### **1.5 Rating**

Limited to some rallies. Learning how to serve. Developing a forehand. Fails to return easy balls frequently and occasionally misses the ball entirely. Played a few games and is learning the court lines, scoring, and some basic rules of the game.

### **2.0 Rating**

Sustains a short rally with players of equal ability. Demonstrating the basic shot strokes – forehand, backhand, volley, overhead and the serve, but has obvious weaknesses in most strokes. Familiar with court positioning in doubles play.

### **2.5 Rating**

Makes longer lasting slow-paced rallies. Makes most easy volleys and uses some backhands, but needs more work on developing shot strokes. Beginning to approach the non-volley zone to hit volleys. Aware of the “soft game.” Knowledge of the rules has improved. Court coverage is weak but improving.

### **3.0 Rating**

More consistent on the serve and service return and when returning medium-paced balls. Demonstrates improved skills with all the basic shot strokes and shot placement but lacks control when trying for direction, depth, or power on their shots. Beginning to attempt lobs and dinks with little success and doesn't fully understand when and why they should be used.

### **3.5 Rating**

Demonstrates improved stroke dependability with directional control on most medium-paced balls and some faster-paced balls. Demonstrates improved control when trying for direction, depth and power on their shots. Needs to develop variety with their shots. Exhibits some aggressive net play. Beginning to anticipate opponent's shots. Learning about the importance of strategy and teamwork in doubles.

### **4.0 Rating**

Consistent and dependable strokes, including directional control and depth on both forehand and backhand shots. Reliable serves, lobs, overheads, approach shots and volleys and can use spin shots with some success. Occasionally can force errors when serving. Rallies may be lost due to impatience. Uses the dink shot and drop shots to slow down or change the pace of the game. Demonstrates 3<sup>rd</sup> shot strategies – drop shots, lobs, and fast-paced ground strokes. Aggressive net play and teamwork in doubles is evident. Fully understands the rules of the game and can play by them.

### **4.5 Rating**

Beginning to master the use of power and spin, can successfully execute all shots, can control the depth of their shots, and can handle pace. Beginning to master the dink shots and drop shots and their importance to the game. Beginning to master 3<sup>rd</sup> shot choices. Displays sound footwork and moves well enough to get to the non-volley zone whenever required. Understands strategy and can adjust style of play and game plan according to the opponent's strengths and weaknesses and court position. Serves with power and accuracy and can also vary the speed and spin of the serve. Understands the importance of “keeping the ball in play” and the effect of making errors. Making good choices in shot selection. Anticipates the opponent's shots resulting in good court positioning.

### **5.0 Rating**

Mastered all the skills – all shot types, touch, spin, serves, with control and can use them as weapons. Excellent shot anticipation, extremely accurate shot placement and regularly hit winning shots. Forces opponents into making errors by “keeping the ball in play.” Mastered the dink and drop shots. Mastered the 3<sup>rd</sup> shot choices and strategies. Uses soft shots, dinks and lobs to set up offensive situations. Mastered pickleball strategies and can vary strategies and styles of play in competitive or tournament matches. Dependable in stressful situations as in tournament match play. Athletic ability, quickness, agility, and raw athleticism are also qualities that are sometimes what separates the top players from those near the top.