

# **Coachable Pickleball**

**10 Drills to Improve Your Pickleball Game**

**By Brett Noel**



# COACHABLE PICKLEBALL'S STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

**THIS FREE E-BOOK IS DESIGNED TO GIVE YOU 10 EASY PICKLEBALL DRILLS THAT YOU AND ONE OTHER PERSON CAN DO TOGETHER TO DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE YOUR PICKLEBALL GAME**

As I travel across the United States training Pickleball players, I am often asked if I could provide some easy drills that can dramatically improve their skill sets to become better Pickleball players. This **FREE E-Book** provides you with 10 easy to follow Pickleball drills that is guaranteed to improve your game and make you a better Pickleball player.

## My Philosophy of Pickleball

**First rule of Pickleball:** Have fun. What a great sport we get to play. The fact that you are on the courts with great people is a gift. Enjoy the gift. It is a great workout, you get to play with, meet and socialize with some the nicest people on the planet. Pickleball players.

**Implementation Curve:** All the new skills, techniques, and strategies you learn will take time to implement effectively in your game. In fact, it might seem like you are getting worse before you get better. This is called the implementation curve. When you experience it, just know your improving and growing as a player. Enjoy the process that it will take for you to become a better player.

**Drills are cooperative and Competitive:** Each drill should benefit all the players. The key is to be cooperative, so your partner has a chance to implement the new skill and competitive to keep it challenging and fun. If the drill is easy for your partner, start making it more difficult until they feel the pressure of growth. In every drill each person has a role to play.

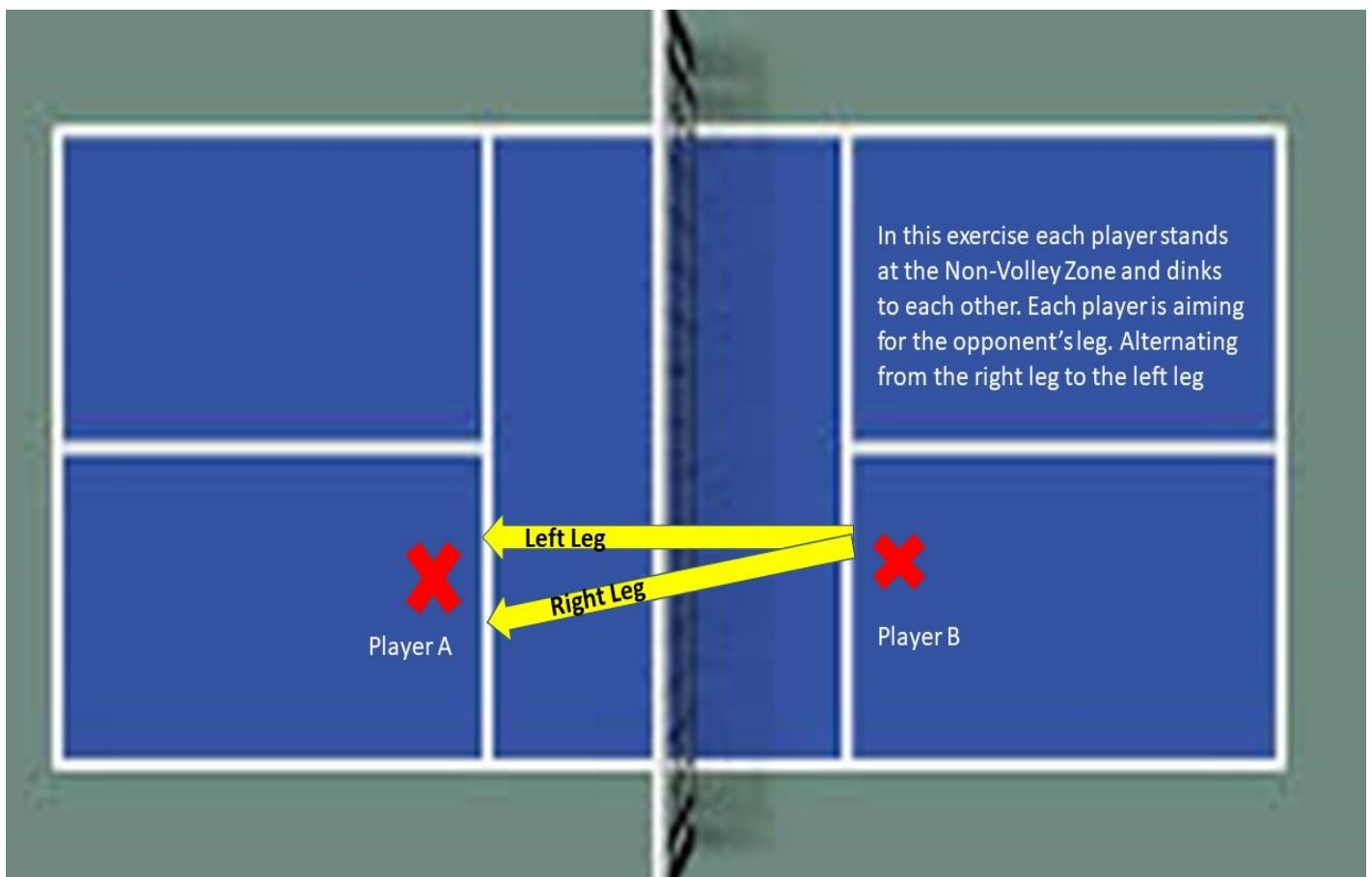
**My way is not the only way:** One of my favorite players, Tyson McGuffin taught me the term "Range of acceptability" There are a variety of ways to do something on the court and my way is not the only way. It is one way. If it works for you and resonates, apply it to your game. If it is not for you, toss it out. Be open for growth. Also understand that change can cause discomfort. That discomfort can be growth.

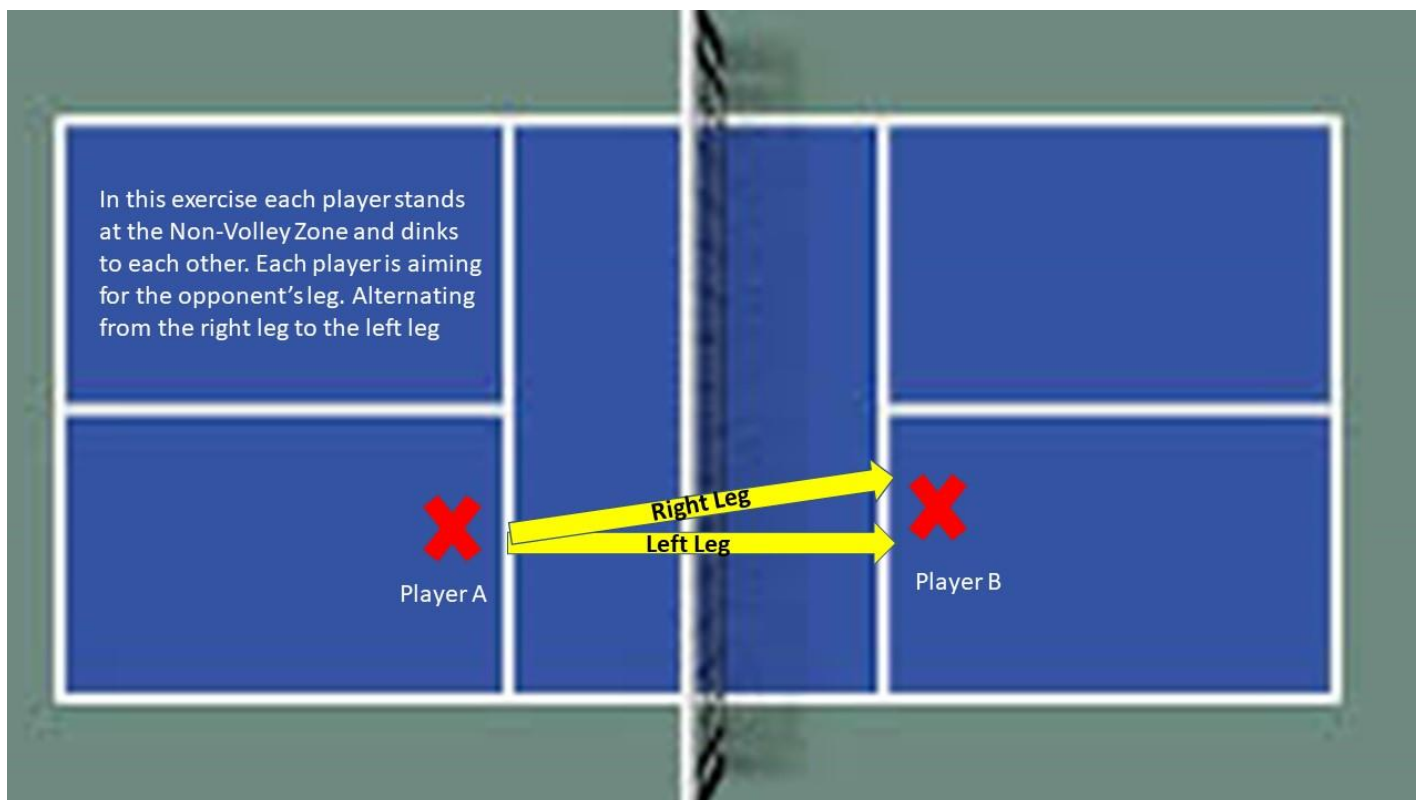
**Warm Up before you play:** One of the easiest ways to injure yourself is to start playing Pickleball without warming up. I often see players jump on the courts, hit a few dinks back and forth until someone say's "Are you ready to start"? Are you one of those players? To stay safe and get the most out of your pickleball game, you must always warm-up before you begin. Warmups are critical to a better performance and fewer injuries.

# 10 drills to become a Better Pickleball Player

## Drill #1

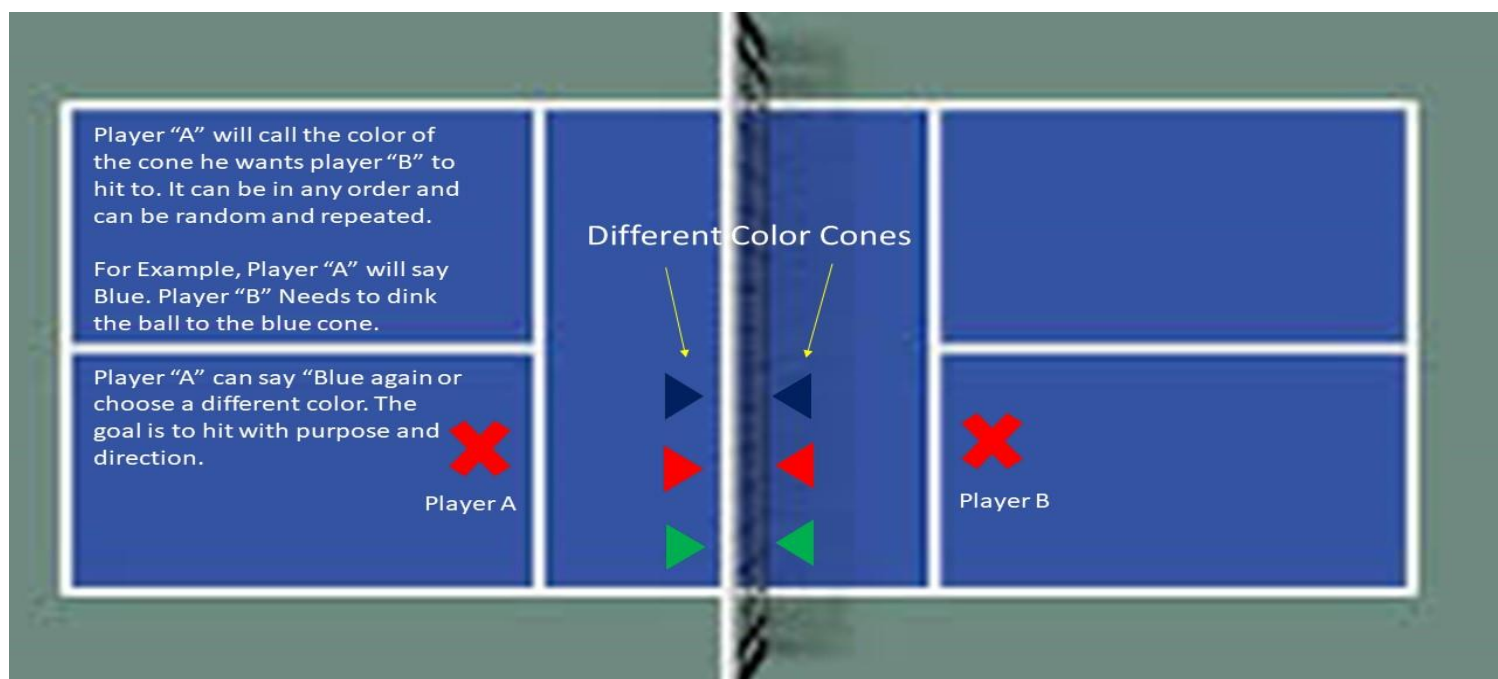
We start off facing each other with simple dinking back and forth. Instead of just hitting the ball and praying that it goes over the net, we need to hit with purpose. Start by hitting the ball to your partner's right leg. They will in turn hit the ball to your right leg. Your next shot is to their left leg. They will return the ball to your left leg as well. Continue hitting back and forth to your partner. Left leg, right leg, left leg, right leg etc.

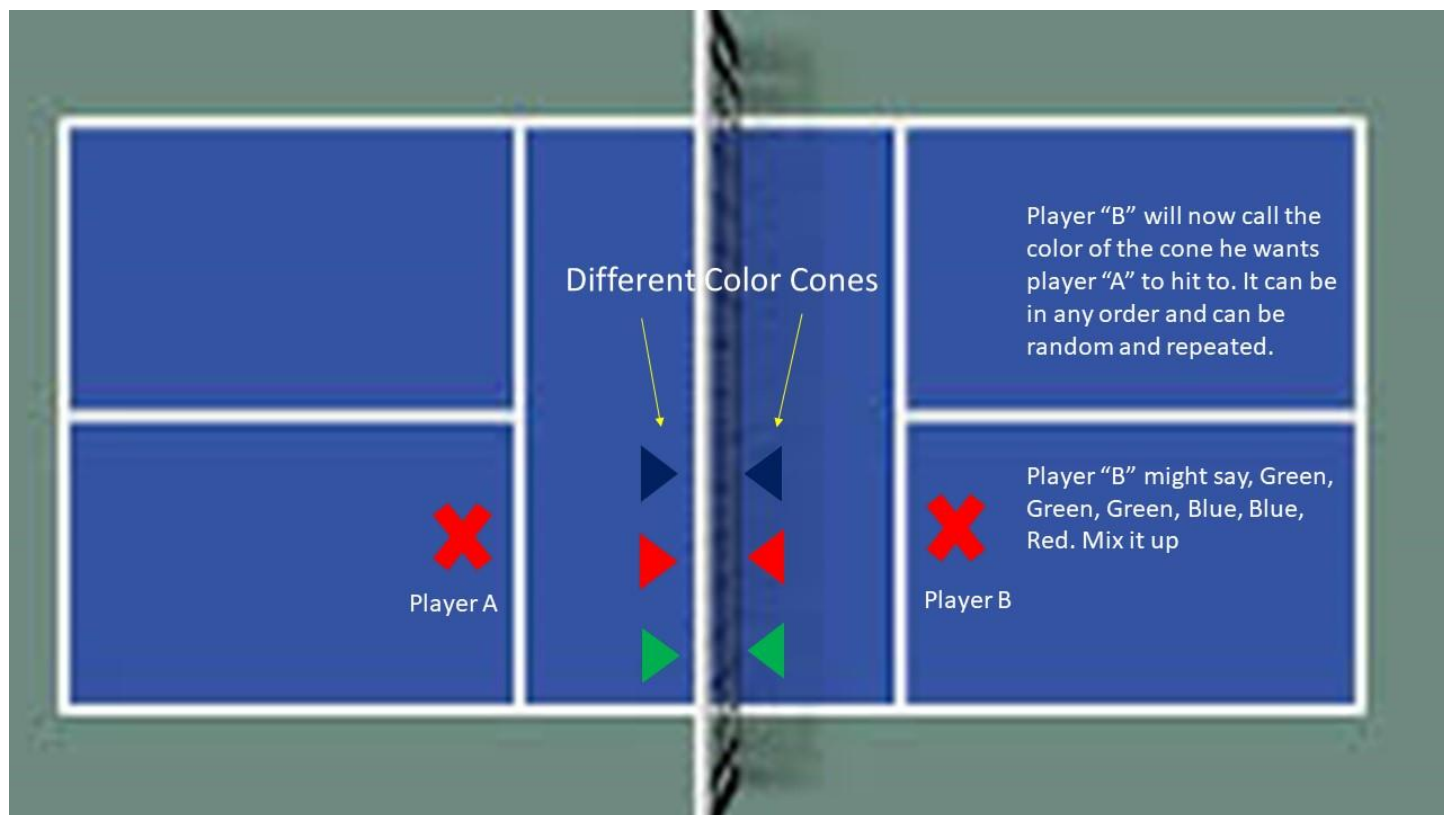




## Drill #2

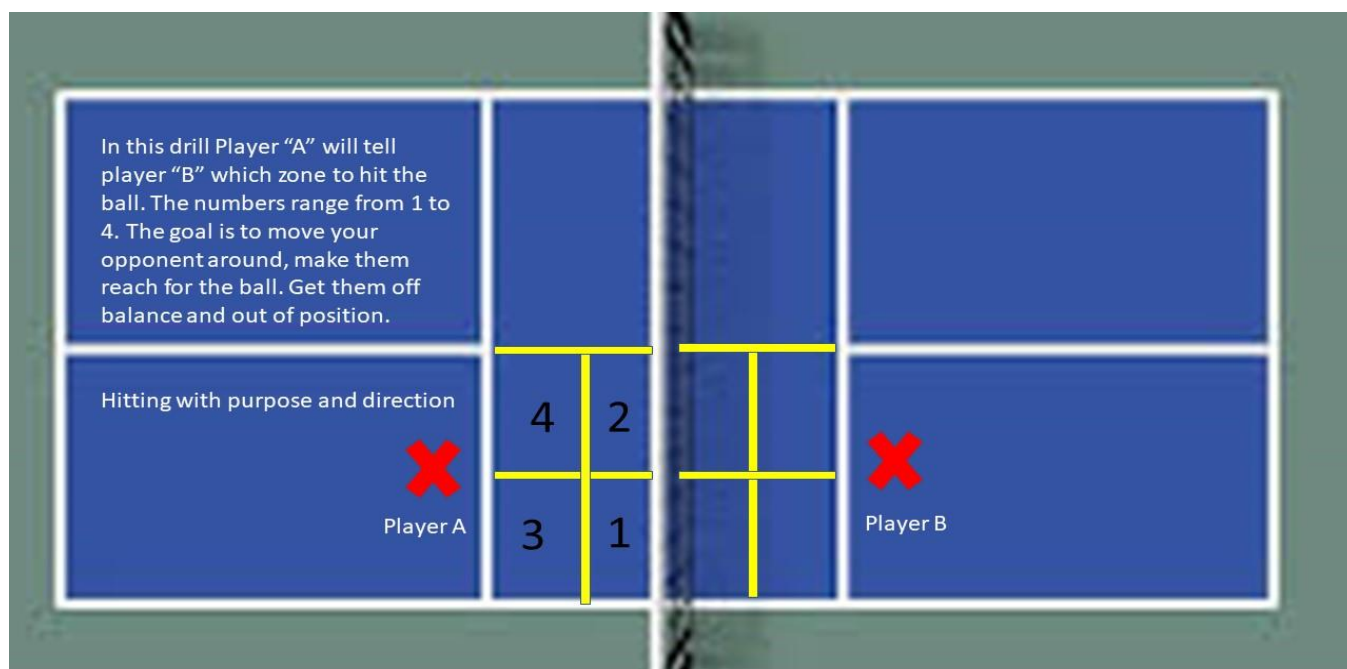
In this drill we place three different color cones on each side of the net. One player will start by calling any color and your opponent needs to return the ball to the color of the cone you shouted out. Make sure you shout out the color of the cone before you hit the ball over the net. After a while change sides and your partner now calls out which color cone, he wants you to hit to.

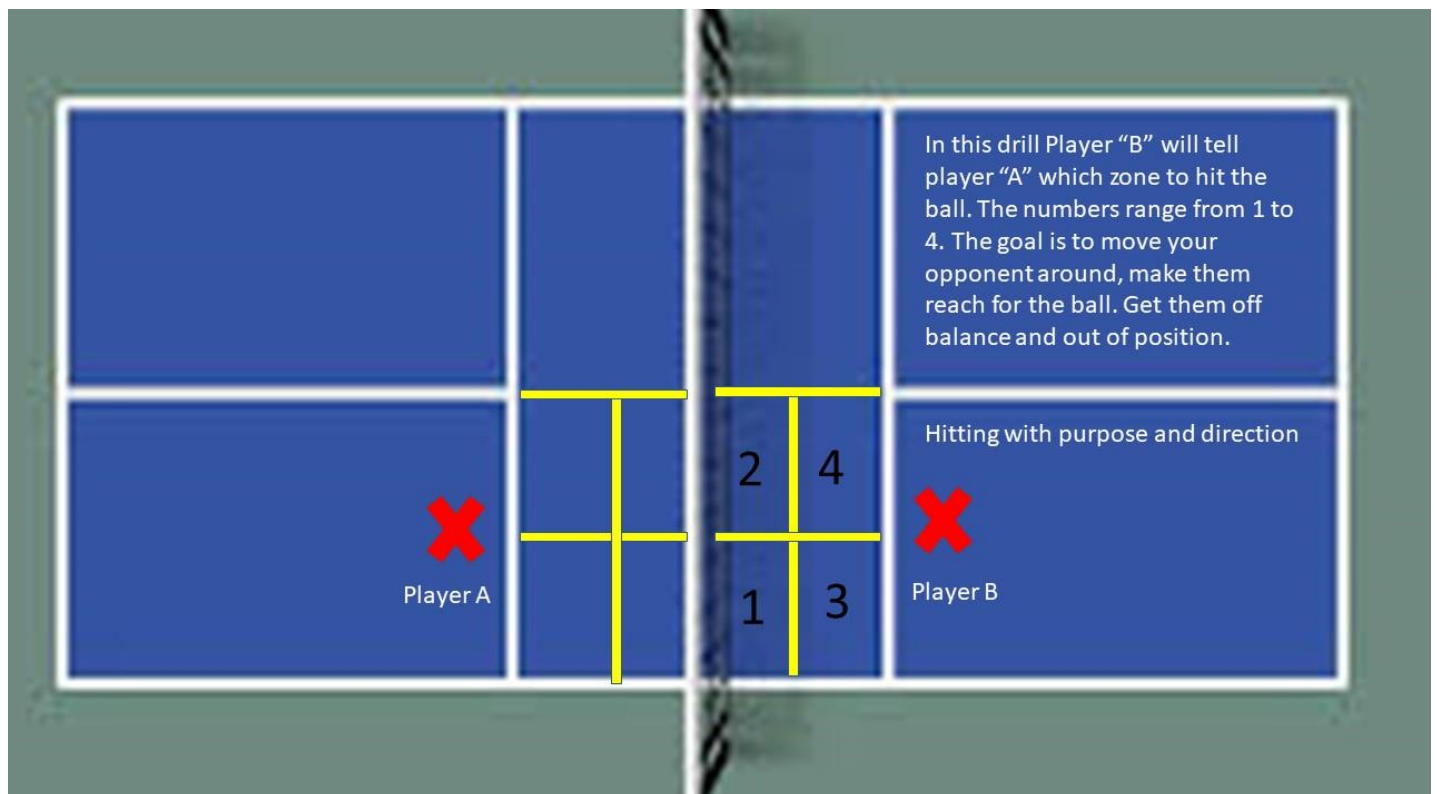




## Drill #3

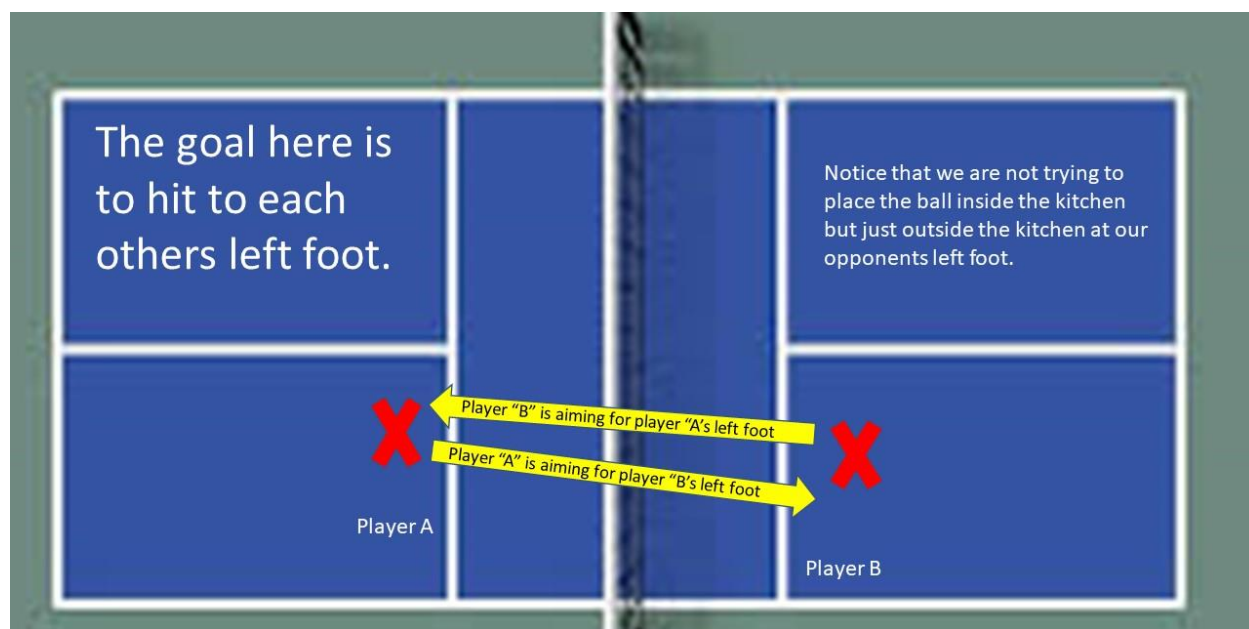
Both partners face each other at the Non - Volley zone. We tape our side of the kitchen into four sections and label them 1-4. Just like the previous drill where you called out the color of the cone you wanted your partner to hit to, you will call out which section of the kitchen you want them to hit the ball to. Hit with purpose and direction.





## Drill #4

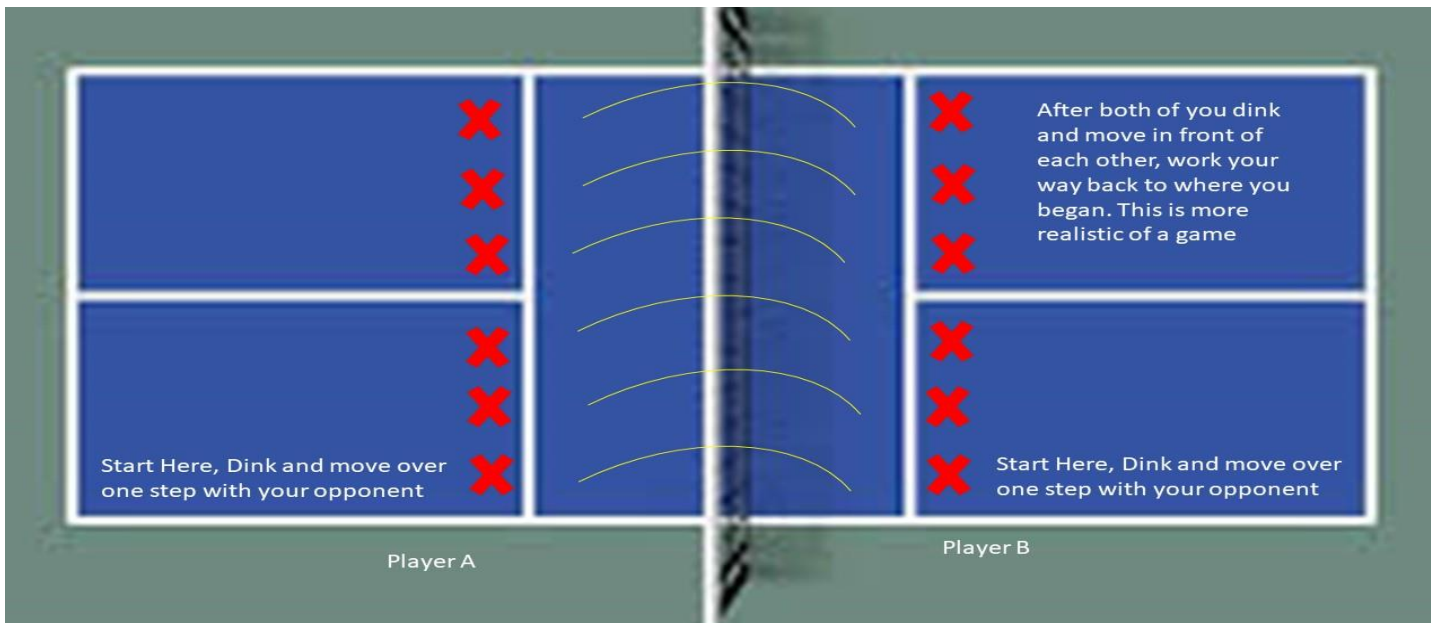
This drill teaches us to go beyond the kitchen and attack our opponents backhand left foot adding pressure to our opponent causing them to miss the ball or pop it up for an easy attack.



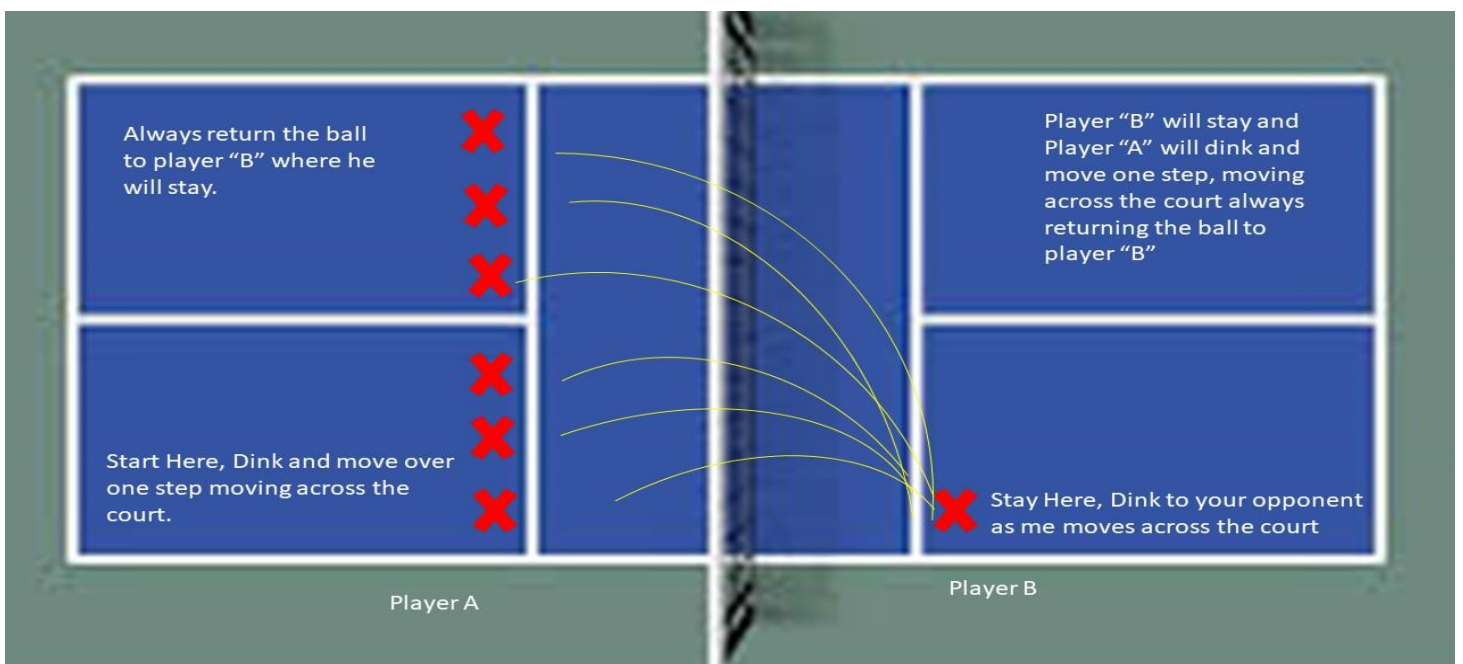


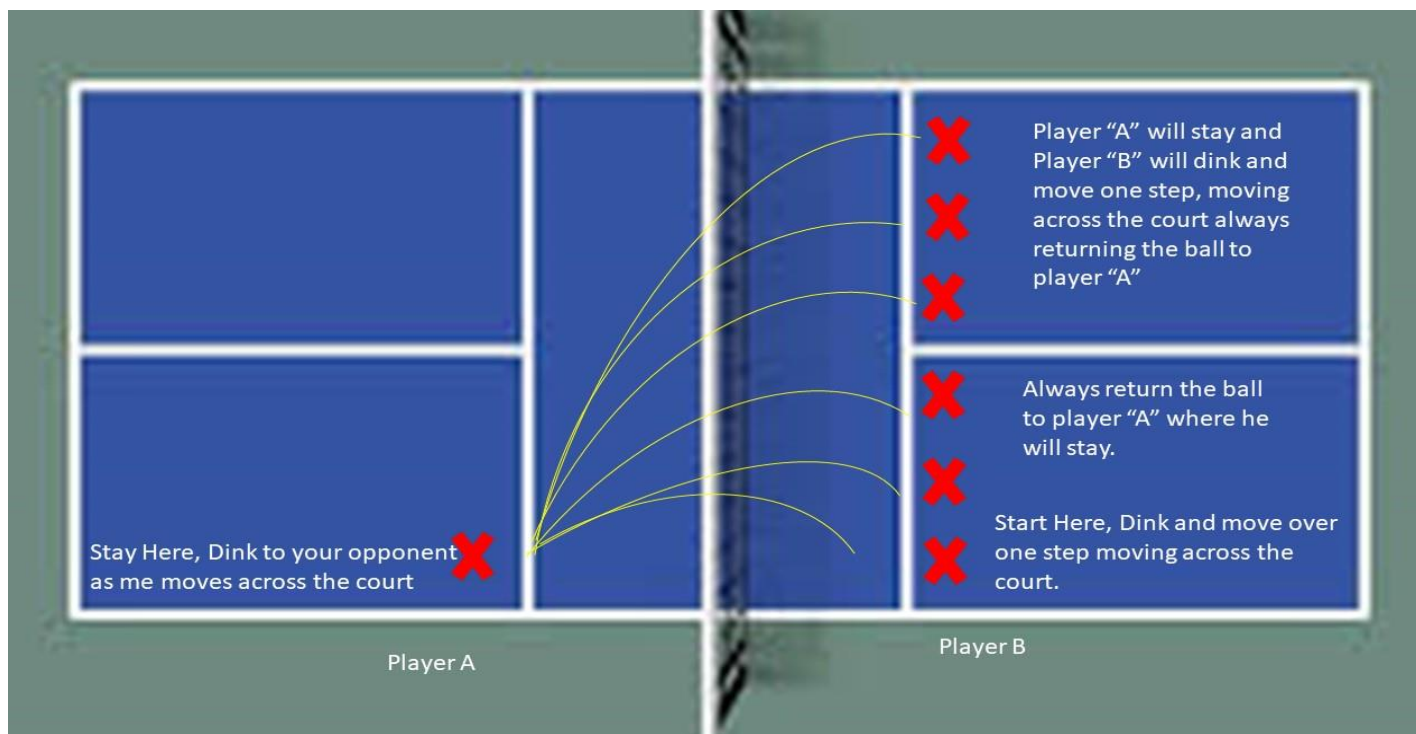
# Drill #5

This drill is more realistic of real game dinking. Each player will start at the side-line and dink to each other. After you dink the ball you both move in unison across the court to the other side and then work your way back.



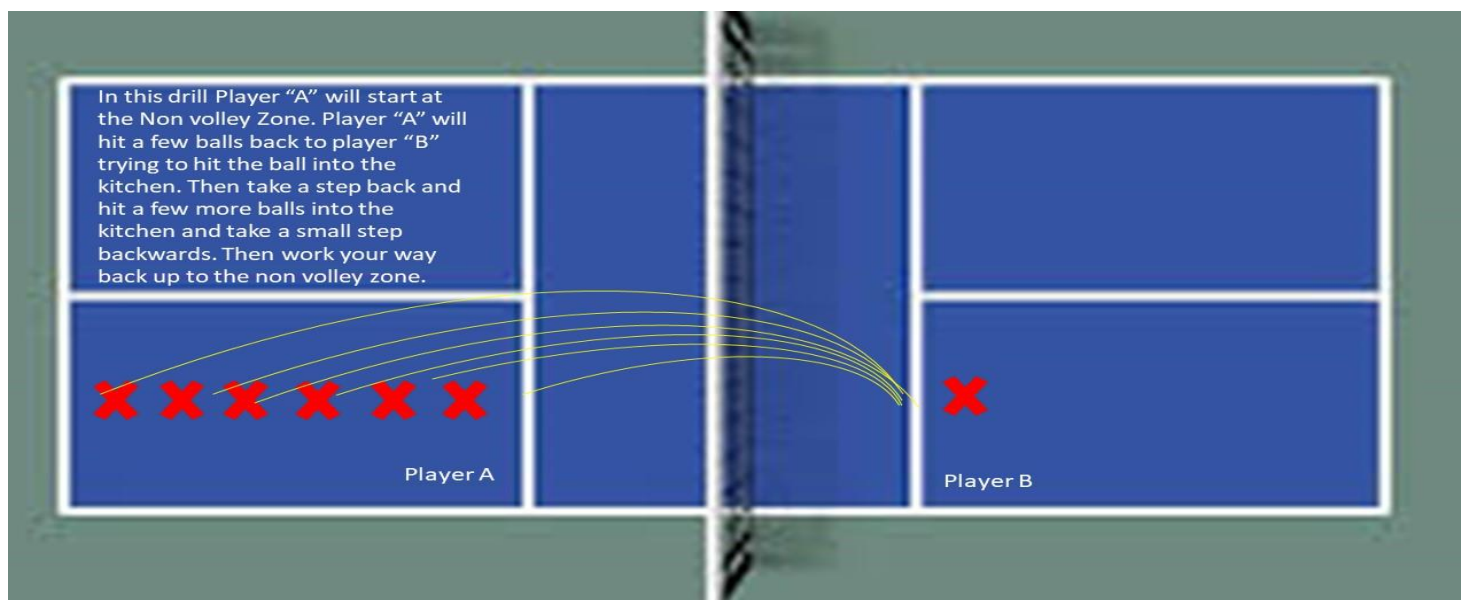
After both of you move in unison together back and forth across the court. One of you will stay as the other moves across the court. Both sides will have the opportunity to stay as the other crosses back and forth across the court always returning the ball to the player standing. This teaches you to place the ball anywhere you are at the kitchen line.



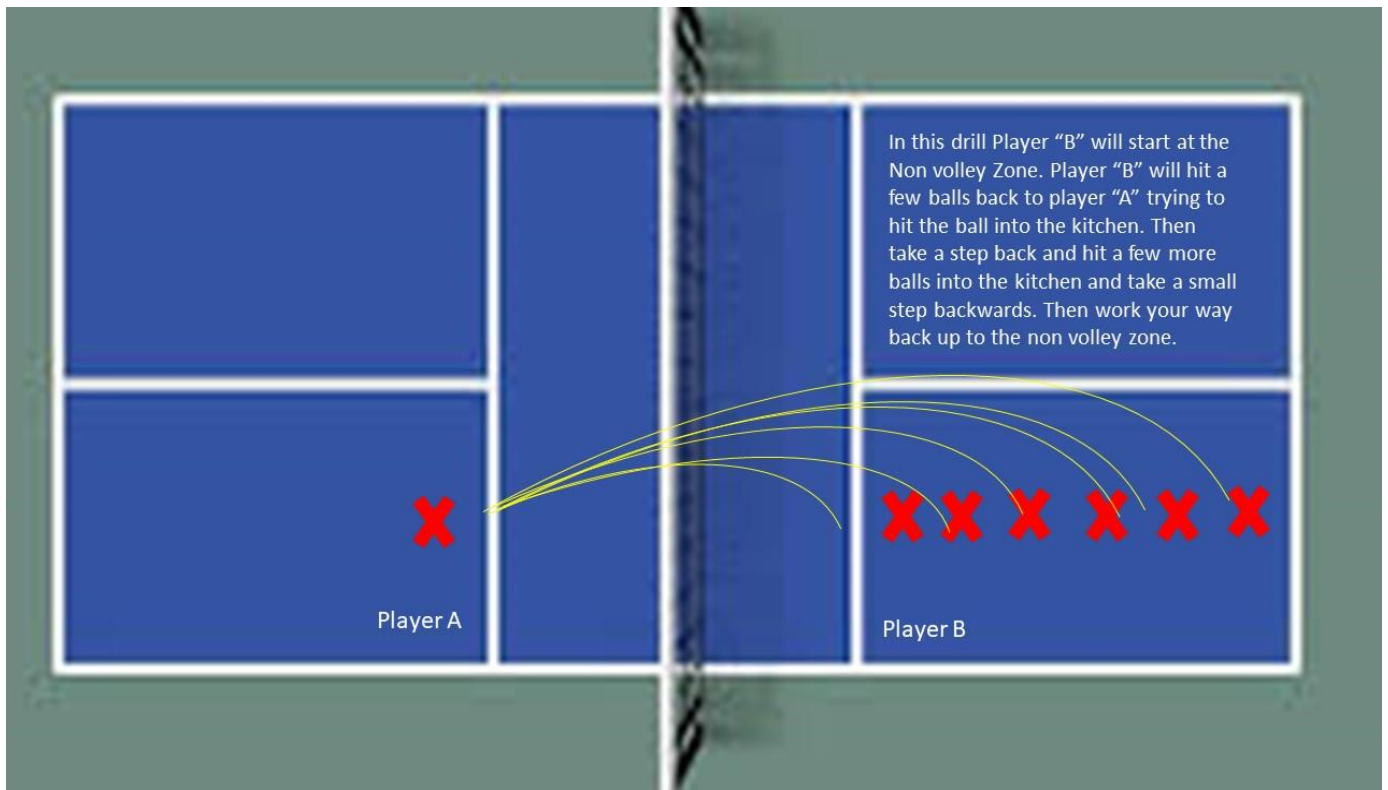


## Drill #6

I call this the "Slinky Drill" Remember the slinky where you would hold one end in each hand and go back and forth. One person will stay at the non-volley zone and the other player will hit a few dinks into the kitchen then take a small step backwards. Always returning the ball into the kitchen. The person staying at the non-volley zone is always hitting the ball back to the other player no matter where they are on the court. This teaches one player to always keep their opponent back. It is practicing the 4<sup>th</sup> shot of the game. It also trains your partner to hit a soft shot into the kitchen anywhere on the court. Your partner will slowly work their way back to the baseline and then back to the non-volley zone. Then it is your turn to slowly work your way back to the base line and back up to the kitchen line Here you are practicing drop shots from anywhere on the court and your partner is practicing their fourth shot keeping you back.

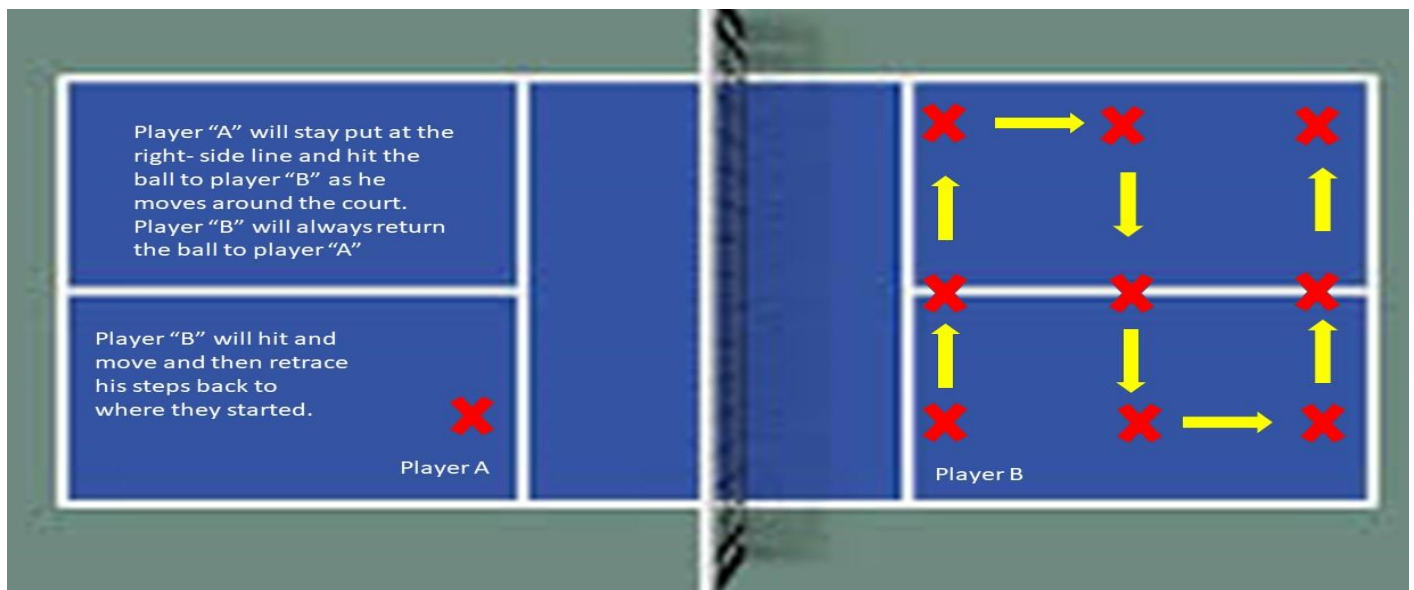






## Drill #7

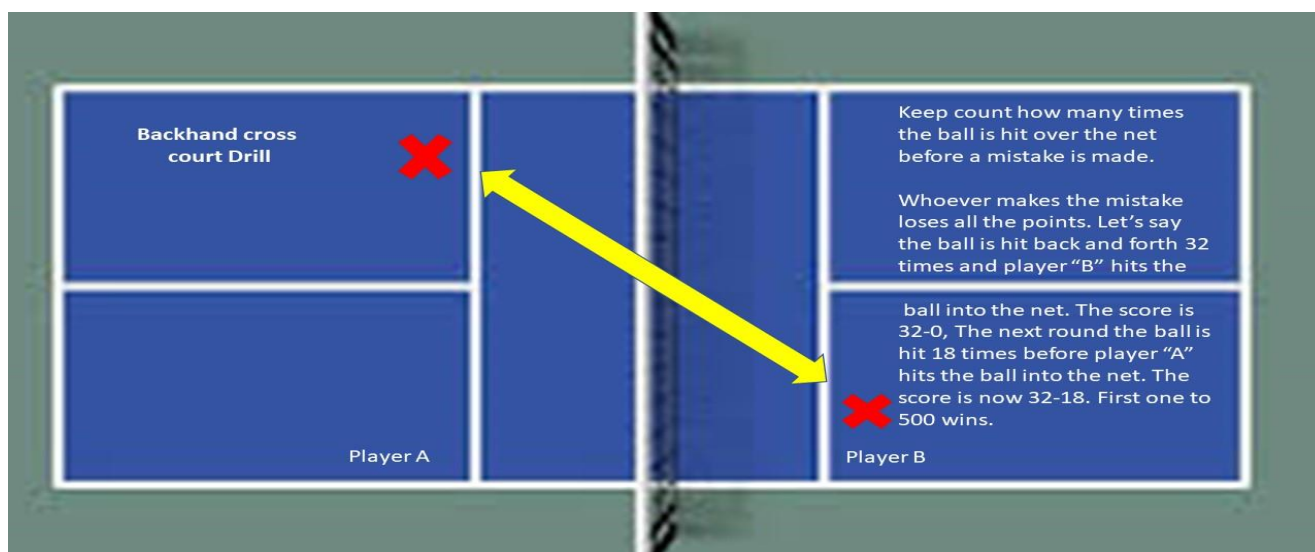
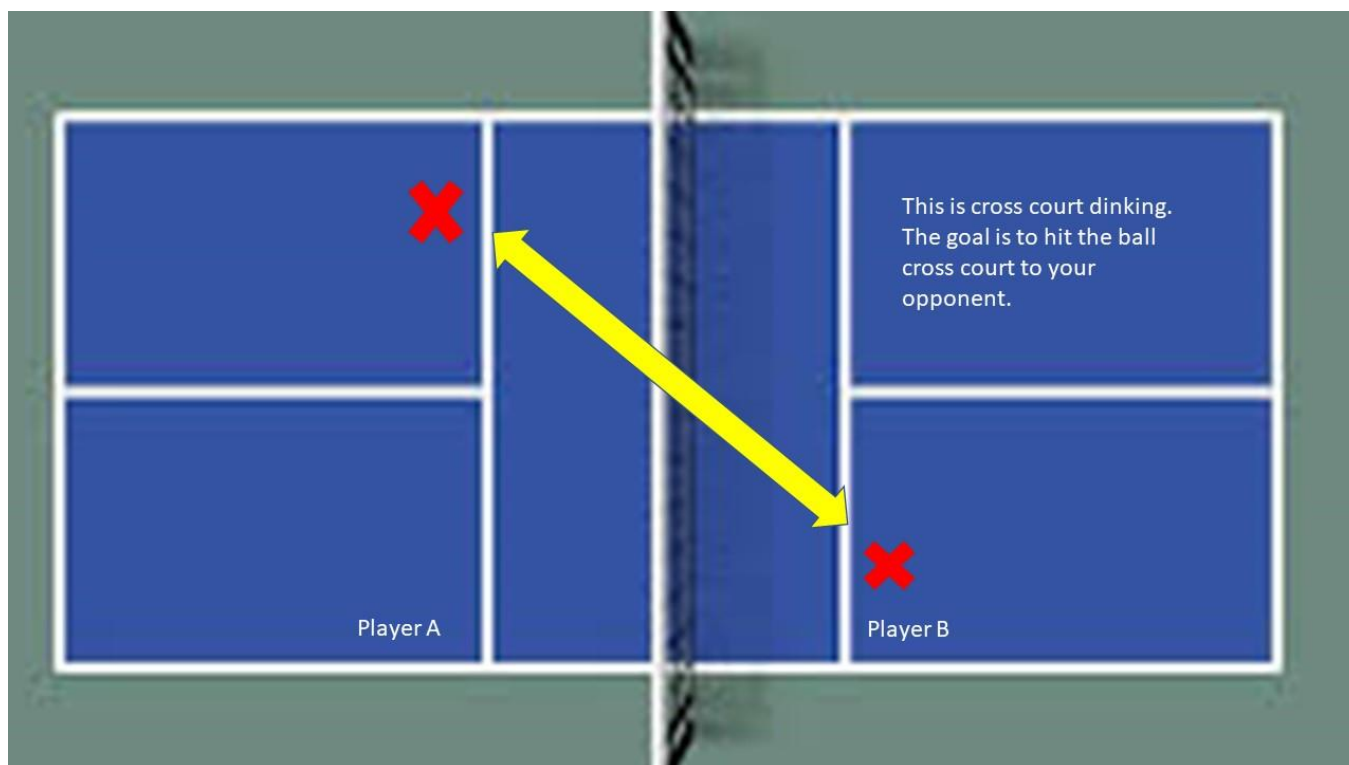
I call this drill **"Around the World"**. One player will stay at the non-volley zone hitting the ball to his partner as they move around the court. This allows the person at the kitchen line to practice hitting with purpose and direction as well as depth. The player moving around the court gets to practice hitting a soft return shot to a specific area in the kitchen. Round one is the right side of the court into the kitchen. Round two is to the center of the court and round three is the opposite side of the court. This drill benefits both the person at the non-volley zone as well as the player hitting from nine different spots on the court. Complete your pattern and work your way back up to where you started.





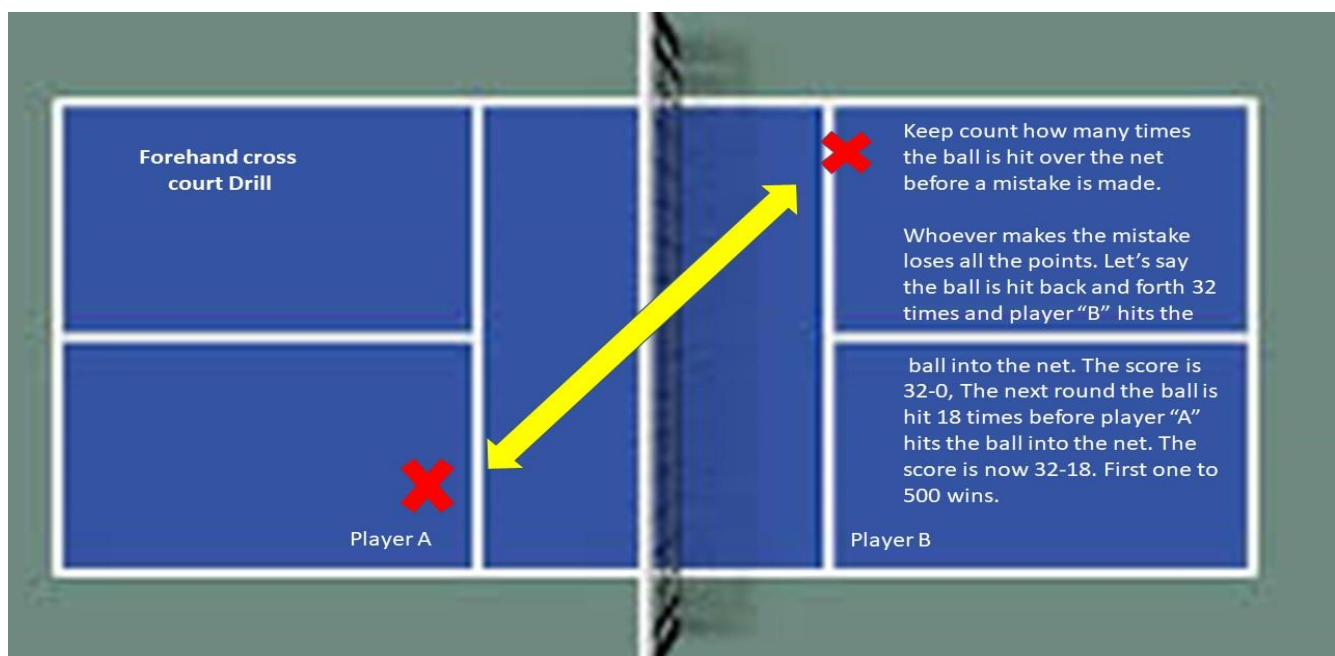
# Drill #8

One of the best skills you can learn is cross court dinking. You are hitting the ball over the lowest part of the net. You have ten more feet for error. 14 feet vs 28 feet. You are placing the ball in front of your partner. **In this drill you and your partner practice back and forth hitting cross court.** Each of you are hitting with your back hand. After warming up for at least ten minutes you will play a backhand cross court game. Start counting how many times the ball goes over the net. The person that makes the mistake and does not get the ball over the net loses the points. If you cross court back and forth 23 times and your partner hits it into the net the score will be 23-0 in your favor. Play to 500. The person that gets 500 points first wins.



# Drill #9

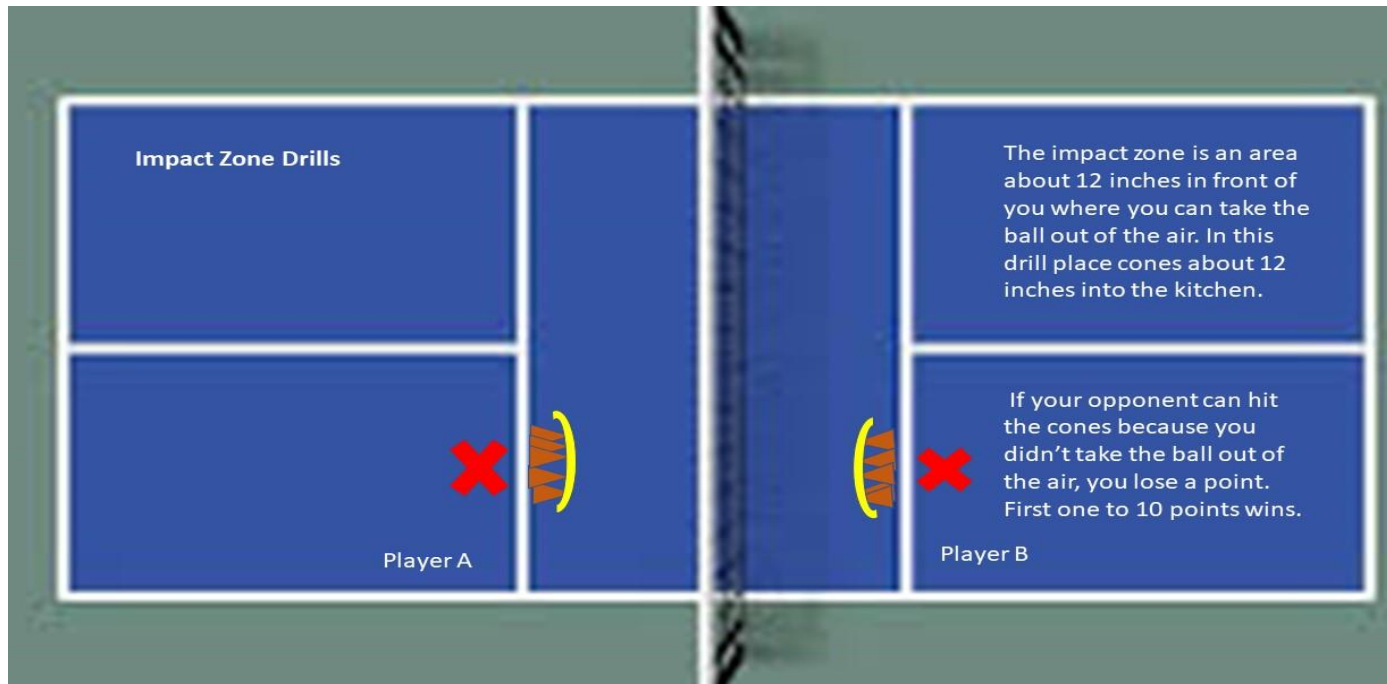
Just like the backhand dinking drill is the forehand dinking drill. You are hitting the ball over the lowest part of the net. You have ten more feet for error. Fourteen feet vs 28 feet. You are placing the ball in front of your partner. In this drill you and your partner practice back and forth hitting cross court. Each of you are hitting with your back hand. After warming up for at least ten minutes you will play a backhand cross court game. Start counting how many times the ball goes over the net. The person that makes the mistake and does not get the ball over the net loses the points. If you cross court back and forth 23 times and your partner hits it into the net, the score is 23-0 in your favor. Play to 500. The person that gets 500 points first wins.



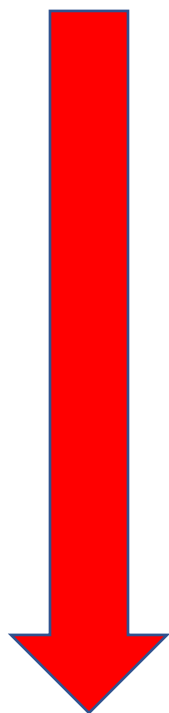
Brett Noel is a 3-time National Gold Medal winner in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Brett won Gold medal at Regionals men's 5.0 division in 2020, and Gold medal at Huntsman World games. Brett has over 100 Medals under his belt. He has been a professional Pickleball instructor for over five years working with such organizations as Level-Up camps, Boost Camps, and Coachable Pickleball Training Camps. Brett specializes in working with players fifty years and older. There is not just one way to teach pickleball. Every player has their own skill sets and abilities. Brett focuses on everyone's abilities promoting their strengths and teach them bring their game to a higher skill.

# Drill #10

One of the best skill- sets you can achieve is to be able to hit the ball out of the air. Especially if you are at the kitchen line. It takes away from your opponent's reaction time and begins the development for you to do offensive lobs from the kitchen line as well as attacks and fourth shot returns. Place a series of cones just inside the kitchen line. No more than twelve inches. Each of you dink to each other with the goal of hitting the other's cones. If the ball hits the cone, it means you let it bounce instead of taking the ball out of the air.



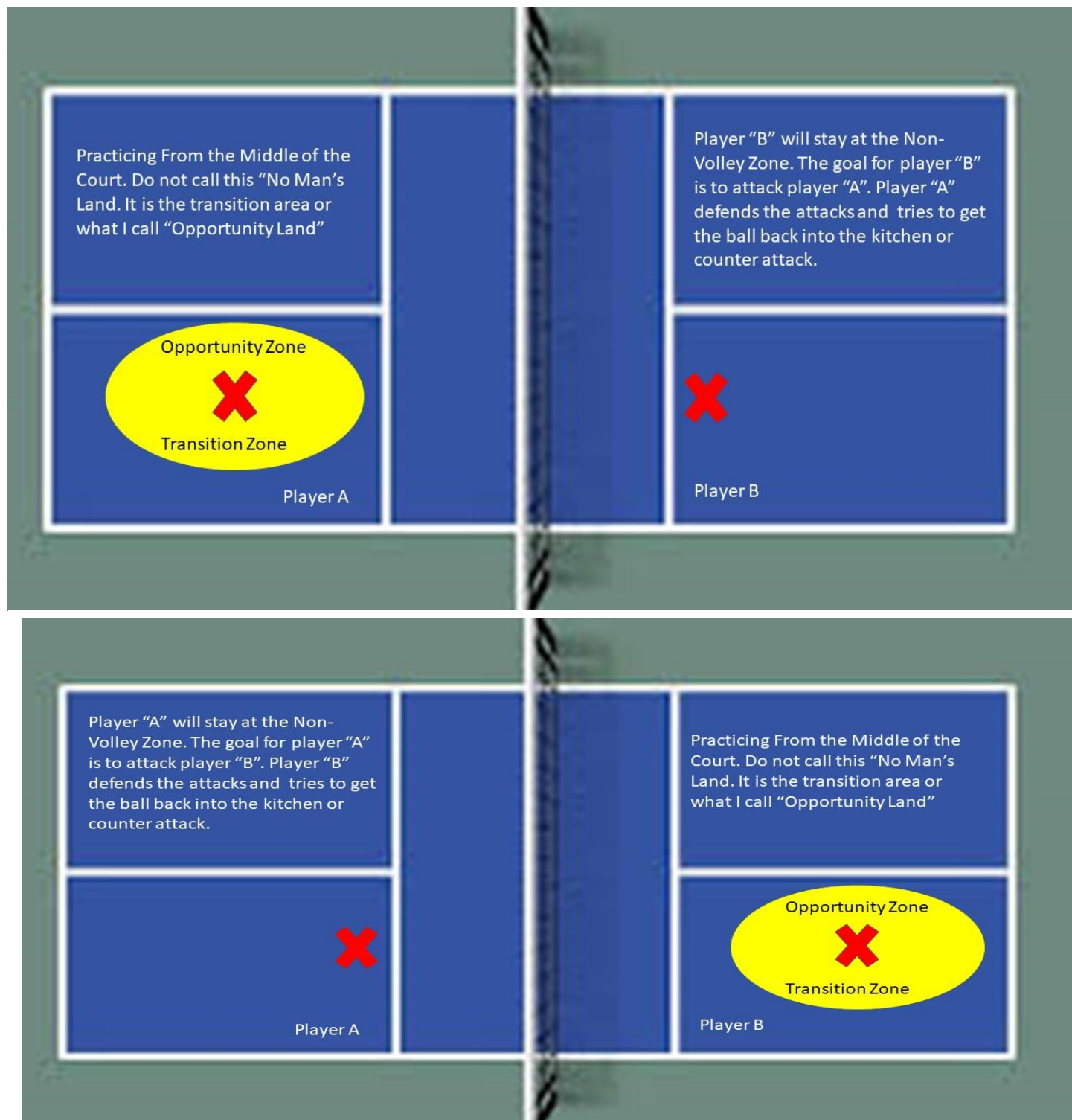
# BONUS DRILLS



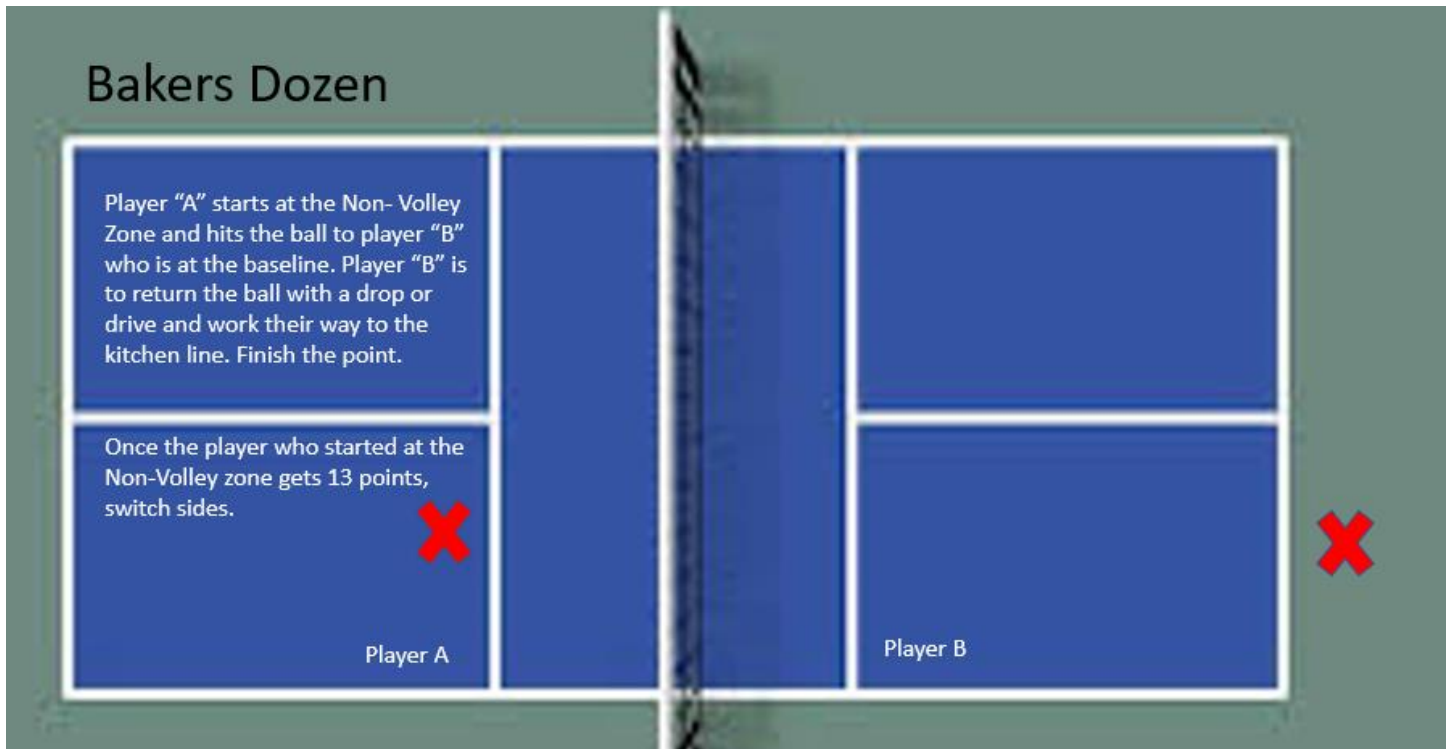


One area of the court that you “MUST” get comfortable in is the middle of the court. It has been called “No Man’s land” but we now call it “The Transition Area” or what I prefer “Opportunity Land”. I call it opportunity land because it is an area where we can do much more. We can defend attacks with blocks. We can return balls into the kitchen with soft drops and we can counter attack.

In this drill one person will stand at the Non-Volley zone and the other will stand in the middle of the court. The person standing at the kitchen line will feed balls to the player in the middle of the court. That player will return the ball with either a drop, drive, or lob and play out the point until the rally is over. The player that starts in the middle of the court stays there and does not move forward or backward. This is where you get comfortable hitting balls into the kitchen of your opponent or drive balls at them.



This is a great drill for both players. One person will stand at the non-volley zone and the other will stand at the baseline. The player at the non-volley zone will feed the balls. The player at the kitchen line will hit the ball to the player at the baseline. The player at the baseline will play out the point and try to work their way up to the kitchen line. When the player who started at the kitchen line wins 13 points (Bakers Dozen) switch roles. This drill is about the player starting at the kitchen line to keep their opponent back. They do not want the player at the baseline to work their way up. The player starting at baseline gets to practice, drops, drives, and lobs, what ever it takes to get to the kitchen line and win the point. Remember, drills should always benefit both players.



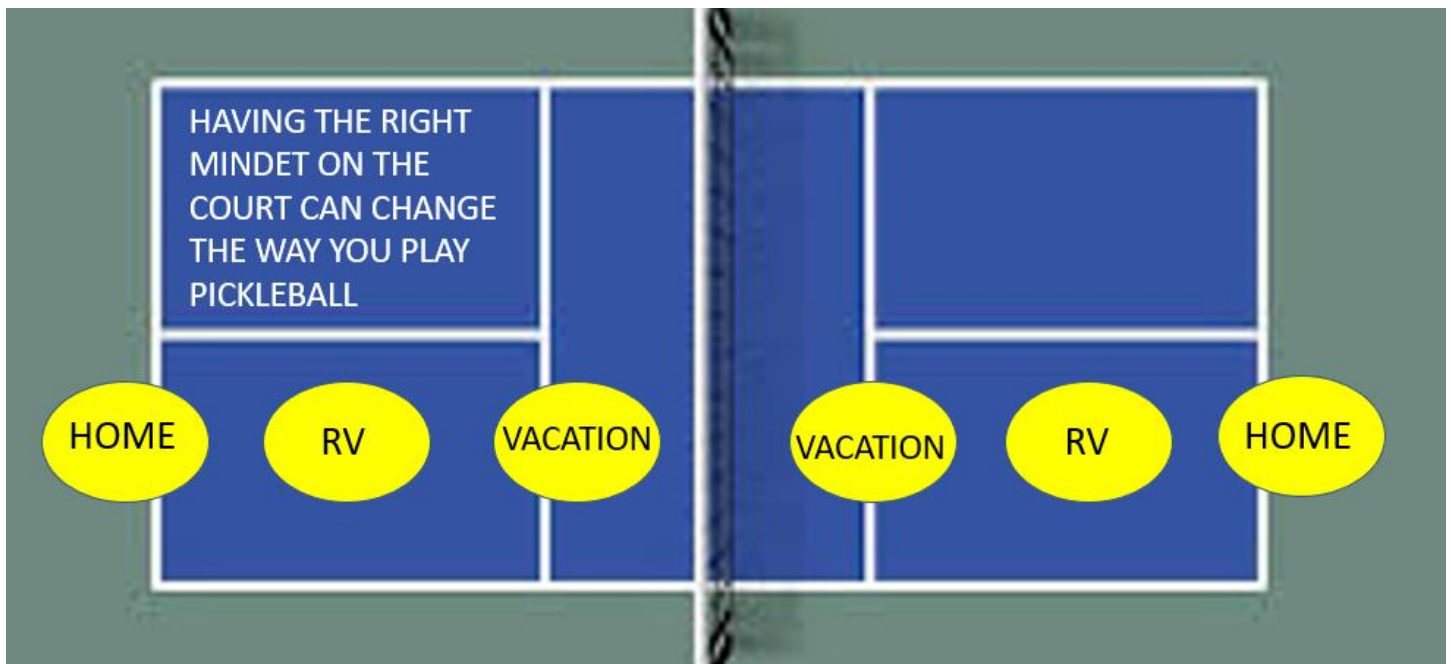
UNDERSTANDING COURT  
PHILOSOPHY THAT CAN  
CHANGE THE WAY YOU  
PLAY PICKLEBALL

I want you to think about three distinct areas of the court where you spend most of your time. The base line, the middle of the court and the non-volley zone (Kitchen line). The team that controls the kitchen line controls the game. The baseline is your home. The Kitchen line (Where you want to be) is your vacation spot, and getting to your vacation spot we must go through the middle of the court which is your RV.

Have you ever been told not to back up once you are at the kitchen line? Maybe your partner yelled at you asking, "Why did you back up" or "Don't back up". Is it ok to back off the line once your get there? Of course, it is. When danger arrives, you need to retreat until its safe again.

Imagine you left your home (Baseline), heading to your vacation spot (kitchen line) by traveling with your RV (Middle of the court). You are at the kitchen line and the ball pops up high to your opponent. That is a good time to leave your vacation spot, get back to the RV until the danger is over and then go back to your vacation spot (Kitchen line).

When I do my training camps, I share the following story. You leave home (Baseline) in your RV (Middle of the court) to Florida (Kitchen line) where you have always wanted to vacation. You are on the beach enjoying the sun when an alarm goes off in the city. Tsunami warning, danger. (Your opponent is about to attack a high ball). What is the first thing you do? You get back to your RV (Middle of the court) and get out of danger. When its safe to move forward again you go back to your vacation spot (Kitchen line).



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# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



**Final words:** I want to thank you for the opportunity to share these simple drills with you that helped me become a three-time national gold medal winner. I urge you to drill twice as much as you play. Make it a habit to find a drilling partner and drill consistently.

When you play a game, I want you to practice one specific skill set each game. Tell your partner what you will be practicing and ask them what they would like to practice during the game as well. It is not just about winning. It is about improving your skill sets. Winning will be a by-product of improved skills.

I would love to provide a Coachable Pickleball training camp in your area. If you would like a training camp please reach out to be. [BrettNoel2@gmail.com](mailto:BrettNoel2@gmail.com)

Or 805-975-5781. Please share this E-Book with your friends and follow me on Facebook.

