

The 2021 Canadian National Pickleball Championships were held in Red Deer, Alberta on August 10 to 15, 2021.

The tournament was well attended, with 789 players in 86 categories. Our PoCoMo club was well represented, with 2 referees, 10 players and 6 medal winners.

The tournament produced some interesting pickleball shots to say the least, with winds up to 50 kph dictating much of the play.

Special thanks to referees Rod and Barb Dueck. They acquitted our club well, refereeing over 100 matches between the two of them.

PoCoMo club medal winners are:

1. Robin D'abreo – Gold medal, Mixed Doubles, 4.5, Age: 35-49
2. Dana D'abreo – Gold medal, Mixed Doubles, 4.5, Age: 35-49  
– Gold medal – Women's Singles, 4.0, Age: 10-49
3. Irene Mah – Gold medal – Mixed Doubles, 4.5, Age 60+
4. Barry Mah – Gold medal – Men's Doubles, Senior Open  
– Silver medal – Mixed Doubles, Open, Age: 17-49
5. Steve Deakin – Gold medal, Men's Doubles, Open  
– Gold medal, Mixed Doubles, Senior Open
6. Kaila Chekosky – Bronze medal, Women's Doubles, 4.0 Age 17-49

Following are pictures of the medal winners and some of their comments and advice:

## Robin and Dana D'abreo – gold medal – Mixed Doubles, 4.5, Age: 35-49



**Highlight for Robin:** Playing and winning with Dana was the highlight of the tournament. We have both enjoyed a lot of success in high performance sport but never on the same team. Competing together is very different, challenging and exciting for us.

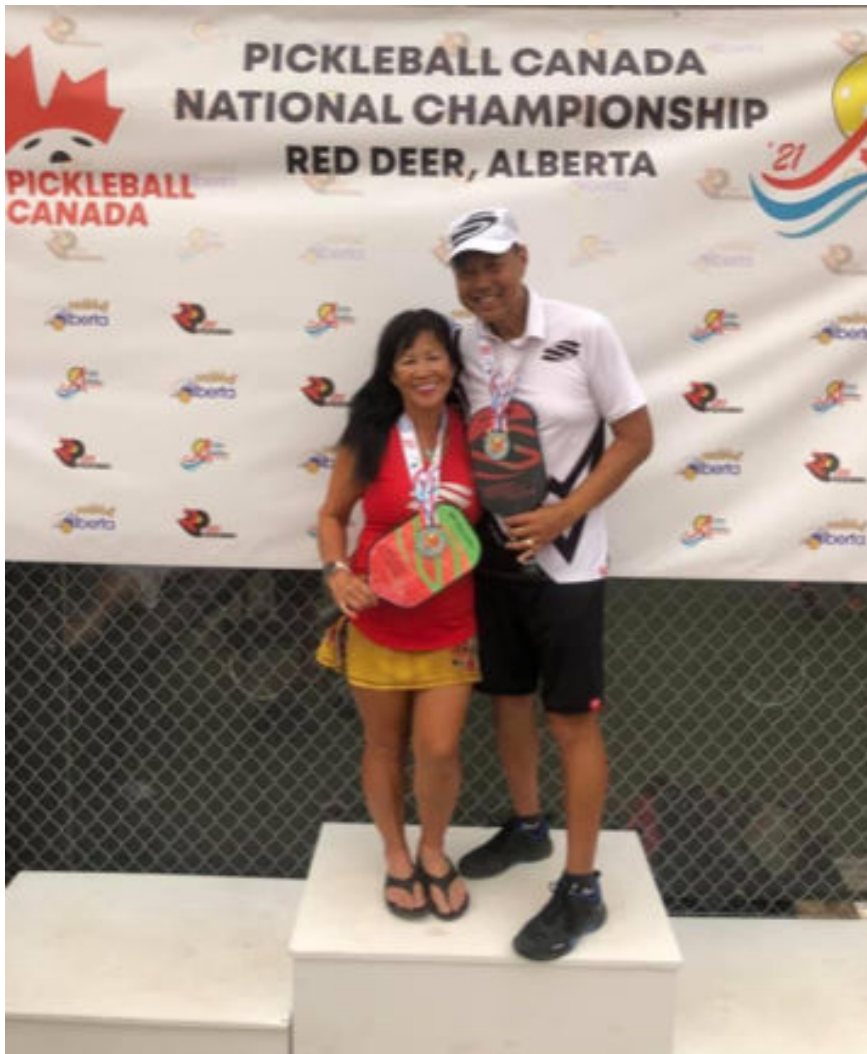
**Advice:** Be intentional with building your skills. Make the most of every opportunity you have regardless of the game or practice situation you find yourself in.... But most of all, make sure you have fun while doing it. That more than anything else will keep you coming back for more!

**Dana's Highlights:** The first was probably winning the singles, as I had the switch up strategies depending on the strengths and weaknesses of my opponents and it felt like every game was different. The second highlight was playing through the nerves in mixed doubles and having Robin and I dig in and work together to get the results!

**Advice:** to beginners is don't let the last point negatively influence the next point. If you make a mistake, let it go as dwelling on it, doesn't get you playing any better for the next point!

Irene Mah – gold medal – Mixed Doubles, 4.5:60+ division (with Jeff Whipple)

Barry Mah – gold medal – Senior Open Men’s Doubles



**Highlight for Irene:** Winning Gold medal 4.5:60+ Mixed Doubles

**Advice to new players...**

- Keep practicing against different people.
- Try to fit in doing drills.
- Don't get frustrated when you play.
- It does help to take pickleball lessons.

**Highlight for Barry:** Winning gold medal in Senior Open Men’s Doubles

## Kaila and Michael Chekosky



**Kaila's highlight:** My highlight from Nationals was getting to complete in mixed doubles with my dad (who is 70+). There isn't a lot of sports where you can have such an age gap and still remain competitive.

**Advice for beginners:** The third shot doesn't have to be perfect. It's more important to keep the ball in play than trying to make that perfect kitchen shot.

# Our very own Refs - Rod and Barbara Dueck



Julie McRitchie and partner



PoCoMo players and spectators  
Darlene Yoo and Tim Macvinnie



Barry, Irene,Dana,Robin,Julie,Steve and Stacey.

Thank you Irene for all the great pics.





## Steve Deakin and partner



**Steve's Highlight:** Returning home to Canada to play in an all Canadian Nationals was very special to me. I was thrilled to come away with a couple of National titles but more importantly the atmosphere and energy at the venue was incredible. I met so many new friends. At the end of the day, this is what Pickleball is all about. This shows that the sport we all love is growing in Canada and will continue to flourish in the upcoming years.

**Advice to beginners...** I am asked this question a lot and my answer is always the same. Work on and understand why the soft, patient game is such an important foundation to the sport. More importantly, have fun out there.

Crowds of spectators watched and cheered everyone on.



If you weren't playing you were watching.



Tournament was delayed a few hours on the first day and the winds were crazy.



Darlene yoo and her partner.



PoCoMo member Irene and Dana stacking.



All about the Nationals. Note all the food services at the bottom – players were well looked after!



Steve Deakin playing and Stacey Deakin enjoying a moment.

