

Yukon Pickleball Association's President's Report for 2022-2023

The year 2022 has been another extraordinary year. Although COVID restrictions have been relaxed I believe it had an impact on participation, especially last summer. It's been another year of challenges and accomplishments. It has been a delight to work with the other YPA board members: Sue Staffen, Brenda Dion, Walter Brennan, Erik Hoenisch, Hector Campbell and Gord Clark. They have all worked hard in our efforts to advance pickleball.

Outdoor Pickleball at Mt. Mc. tennis courts

We received another extension from Tennis Yukon last summer to allow us to play in the mornings at Mt. Mc. For the last three years TY has initially indicated that they were not interested in having pickleball played at the Mt. Mc. courts the following year. Each year we ask TY to reconsider. So far, each year TY has then decided that we can stay, under restricted times, mornings until 1 pm.

We were informed that the courts would be resurfaced sometime during the summer of 2022. We were allowed to continue playing until it was time to resurface. After an approximate two week construction period we were granted permission to re-establish court lines-using tape not paint. Due to the shorter season a reduced fee was charged. Note: YPA members pay the same season pass fee as Tennis Yukon members. We collect the fees from our members and transfer the entire sum to TY at the end of the season.

Ian Love continued to administer Sign Up Genius (SUG) -our court booking system- throughout last summer. Activity at Mt. Mc. waned considerably last summer. We had well over 80 members during the summer and ended up with 98 members by the end of the year. Yet, bookings on SUG were way down compared to the previous summer. One possible explanation is that many people were now able to travel due to reduced concerns/restrictions regarding COVID 19. We offered a range of programming including round robins and shot clinics.

TY has agreed to allow YPA to continue using the courts next summer (2023). However, so far, they have not agreed to allow us to paint lines. They think taped lines would be better. Discussions continue. Stay tuned.

Indoor Programming:

1) CGC: At the CGC we have no control over “drop-in” times. Several members wanted to be able to arrange for pickleball activities at the CGC such as round robins or drills and to be able to invite whomever they wished. So, the YPA developed a policy to facilitate this in 2021, which still applies. Since there are many new members, it is worth repeating. An organizer simply needs to a) contact the CGC to find an available time slot to rent, then b) vet the proposal with YPA (to ensure that it would not conflict with other YPA activities), c) ensure that all players invited are YPA members, d) be responsible for collecting fees, and e) pay the City for the rental. Thus, the group is covered by our insurance. Many have taken advantage of this program. We are fortunate that there are several time slots available for rental, especially mid-day during the work week. For more details go to our webpage and click on the “Rental Booking Form” button.

2) Takhini: We were able to secure weekend use of the Takhini Elementary school gym for a second consecutive year. This year we have access starting the first weekend of September 2022 and ending June 10-11, 2023. We have 4 hours of court time on Saturdays and 6 hours on Sundays. This has allowed us to deliver programming: round robins on Saturdays, a ladder league on Sundays, and several court times for “private” bookings.

Event Bookings: Starting this fall, we migrated from Sign Up Genius to the booking options available to us through Pickleball Canada. Hector Campbell is now our webpage master and is continuing to make improvements as he becomes more familiar with the capabilities of the program. You can now purchase a Takhini pass and then sign up for the various events being offered by going to the YPA webpage.

Ladder League: There seems to be less interest in ladder league this year. We can accommodate up to 30 players in 6 levels. In the fall we only had enough interest to support 3 levels. This winter there was a bit more interest shown. The first ladder (January) started with 5 levels but was reduced to 4 levels due to players dropping out for various reasons. The second ladder (February) only had 4 levels. Several players who have normally played were either out of the territory or injured. The board wonders if asking players to make a 4 or 5 week commitment

may impede participation. We are initiating a new strategy, whereby players can sign up each week to the next Sunday's ladder, starting March 12. We will evaluate this to see if needs either tweaking or total revision.

Round Robins: These have been very successful, filling up quickly each week. Initially we had just one round robin, from 2-4 on Saturdays. Given the large number of new members (and new players) we initiated a second round robin now called a facilitated round robin, from 4-6 pm, primarily intended to give new players an opportunity to get some instruction and to play others at close to their skill level. This new round robin is quickly also becoming quite popular.

Shot Clinics: These are being offered twice a month now on Sundays from 1-3 pm. Details on this, and all the other great programs that Brenda Dion has promoted (with assistance from a host of volunteer trained instructors) is available in her report.

Strategic Plan (2023-2027) The board realized that YPA is in its infancy and wished to develop a long-term vision, along with specific short-term objectives to help develop our sport and our organization-in other words a strategic plan. We were able to access funding from CDF to hire Sue Meikle as a consultant to assist the board in developing a plan. We sought input via a survey and prepared a draft for your review. It has been ratified by the board and is now available on our webpage.

Sport Yukon

The board renewed its membership with Sport Yukon. This gives us a permanent home address, a meeting place and access to the sport administrative system, which will be helpful as we proceed towards becoming a Sport Governing Body. This allowed us to run a virtual AGM last year with the support of Sport Yukon's (Lisa Vowk). She will be hosting the meeting again this year via zoom. The zoom link details are: Topic: Pickleball Meeting

Time: Mar 15, 2023 05:00 PM Yukon

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87648171069?pwd=U2FoanFBdjd0MXNqZ3dsZU1lWTlSQTO9>

Meeting ID: 876 4817 1069

Passcode: 578048

The AGM date is Wednesday, March 15, at 5:00 pm Yukon Time

Fund Raising

Again, this past summer many volunteers helped pick up litter from sections of highway right of way. Sue Staffen coordinated this activity. We cleaned up the highway right-of-way from Robert Service Way to Lodestar (near the airport) received \$500 from YG. As well we cleaned up a section of Mountain View Drive between 12th and Range Road and received an additional \$300 from the City. We would like to say a big thank you to the many volunteers who help pick up litter. It was greatly appreciated. We have decided to participate in only the City cleanup next summer.

Relationship with Pickleball Canada (PCO)

Hector Campbell, our VP, represents YPA on the National Pickleball Advisory Council and keeps the board informed of policy issues at the national level. We intend to use national policies as we develop our own as we work to become a Sport Governing Body-one of the goals articulated in the Strategic Plan

Officiating Committee

Jim Gilpin represents the Yukon on PCO's Officiating Committee which focuses on training and standards for Canadian officials. He participated in developing a Concussion Protocol to be used in nationally sanctioned tournaments/events.

New Outdoor Courts

Having dedicated pickleball courts is paramount to the growth of the sport. There is interest in both outdoor courts-many love playing outdoors when the weather is nice, and indoor courts, given the reality of our climate. At this point we have some indoor access for over 8 months of the year. And players can drop in to play at the CGC. An ad hoc committee has been set up with representatives of all the racquet sports to promote a multi-use indoor racquet facility. Jim Gilpin represents pickleball on this committee. Regardless of what this committee achieves the board is still interested in developing outdoor courts.

Since we own no land, we will need to locate on public land, owned by either YG or the City. Ideally, we would propose a long-term lease agreement, like the agreement TY has with the City. This agreement is for 10 years, at a nominal fee

of \$1. TY is responsible for the O&M. Also, we would seek public funding for their construction-just as happened with the tennis courts.

We have proposed a number of options to the City and to YG. So far, no site has been agreed to. Meetings continue.

Information to City Council

Since we have seen little progress in finding land for new courts we wrote to the Mayor and Council in January to present our position. They are now aware of not only our request, but of what is happening in other municipalities to support pickleball. The mayor has asked us to contact the planning department. Again, work in progress.

Summer indoor court options:

As long as we have access to the Mt. Mc. tennis courts, we will continue to use them until single purpose courts are built. If we lose access to the outdoor tennis courts before our own courts are built we will need to consider other options. Thus we looked at the possibility of using the curling rink. Although there is space for 6 courts, the board did not support this option given that the floor is concrete, and hard on the body. We have also looked at the broomball facility. It too has a concrete surface. So far we haven't found a suitable indoor facility that could be used in case we have no outdoor option.

Promotional Programming

Brenda and Sue worked with the Keri Rutherford at the CGC to develop a “**Yukon Pickleball Day**” at the CGC, which was held on May 1, 2022. Planning and organizing this event was a major undertaking. It was a great success. So, another **Pickleball Day** is planned for Sunday May 7, 2023. If you would like to help Brenda Dion organize this event, please contact her.

Training / Lessons: See Instructors' Group report, also attached.

Ball Machine

We purchased a ball machine with financial support from Yukon Lotteries. We have been training our instructors in it's use and use it in our shot clinics.

NCCP coaching program: See Instructors' Group report.

Plans for 2023

We will try to renew our agreement to use Takhini school next year. We will continue in our efforts to find a location for new outdoor pickleball courts. We need to modify our by-laws to conform to the requirements of the new Societies Act. We will use the outdoor courts at Mt. Mc. for as long as possible. We will continue to look at options for raising funds. And we will work towards becoming a Sport Governing Body which requires developing, among other things, a host of policies.

Being a registered society, which we are, opens certain funding opportunities. Becoming a recognized Sport Governing Body will open more options.

We welcome members interested in pursuing any of these initiatives to support the YPA and becoming a director on next year's board. If this interests you, you can inform a board member in advance of the AGM or declare at the AGM. Thanks everyone for contributing to make 2022 a successful year.

Jim Gilpin

President, YPA, 2022