



- 1. Membership Numbers:** The popularity of pickleball continues to explode. As of February 11, we have 160 members. We had 119 members on January 31, 2024 and 153 members on January 31, 2025, an increase of 29%. Across the country the growth was 24%, year to year. Memberships are renewed every January 1. Almost certainly by mid-summer we will have at least 200 members. This has significant Implications regarding access to courts, which will be discussed in this newsletter.
- 2. Note to new members:** When new members join, we are supposed to automatically be notified by Pickleball Canada. This feature is not working. Consequently, we only become aware of new members when we see an unfamiliar name signing up for an event. Often, they are signing up for a group booking and are not aware of what that implies. We have a FAQ button on our website, that explains many of the policies regarding court bookings, etc. If the Pickleball Canada's software was functioning properly we would be informed of new members and then be able to welcome them and provide them with some basic information on bookings, on facilitated round robins, etc. So, apologies to new members. Please check out the FAQ section. And a belated welcome.
- 3. Winter passes:** We currently have 106 members with a winter pass. At the January open house members did not wish to see a cap on the number of passes. To try to satisfy the interest in playing indoors this winter/spring we have requested and received access to new school gyms.
- 4. Expanded indoor court options:** We have access to the following school gyms:
  - Tuesdays, Hidden Valley (6-8 pm)
  - Tuesdays, University (8-10 pm)
  - Thursdays, Golden Horn (6:30-8:30 pm)
  - Thursdays, Christ the King (8-10 pm)
  - Fridays, Elijah Smith (5-9 pm)
  - Saturdays, Hidden Valley (10 am-noon)
  - Saturdays, Takhini (2-10 pm)
  - Sundays, Takhini (8:30 am -4:30 pm) reserved for ladder league

Not all gyms are available each week. Check the weekly "indoor events signup" on our webpage. Bookings for the following week start each week at 7 pm on Sunday. You are asked to make a maximum of 2 bookings, prior to 7 pm on Tuesday. If there are still vacant spaces then you are welcome to book additional times. We ask players to respect this protocol, to allow as many of our members as possible to play at least once a week.

**5. Outdoor court options:** We will be sharing the tennis courts at Mt. Mc. for the 8<sup>th</sup> summer in 2025. Tennis Yukon (TY) has a lease with the City for the use of these courts. We meet annually to negotiate access to the courts. We collect the court fees on behalf of TY and pass these fees on to TY at the end of the summer. Sharing of the courts has always been considered an interim solution pending the construction of dedicated outdoor courts. This year, for the first time ever, pickleball courts became a line item in the city's budget. They have budgeted \$15 K for 2025 (for site assessments) and \$600 K for 2026 (for construction). However, the money in the budget is in "Appendix B". Budget items identified in Appendix B are "pending additional funding". We will be meeting the City Parks Manager soon to explore this further. We have also been approached by the business arm of KDFN to consider possible use of a lot in a subdivision they own near the intersection of Robert Service Way and the Alaska Highway. Lot E is leased to Yukon Energy for battery storage. We will be visiting the site (Lot A is already cleared) to look at suitability.



**6. AGM:** The date for the AGM is March 26, at 6:30 pm in the lobby of Sport Yukon. As mentioned at our January 9 meeting (at the same venue) we need more of our members to step up and join the board. Several of the board members have been on the board for many years and, frankly, are burning out. It is time for others to get involved.

**7. Ladder League:** We have reserved Sundays at Takhini for our ladder league. The ladder league is intended to offer competitive games regardless of skill level. Players were asked to select their starting rating (either 2.0, 2.5, 3.0, or 3.5) when they joined the Whitehorse Pickleball Club (in pickleball.com). The first matches were on February 2. All went well until we saw the DUPR (Dynamic Universal Player Rating) results coming in. In December Pickleball Brackets merged with DUPR and created pickleball.com. We had expected that a player with a start rating of, say, 3.0 could after playing that day end up with a new rating of perhaps 3.05 or 2.95. We did not expect what happened, namely players, for example, starting the day at 3.0 and ending at 4.108. And players starting at 2.5 ending up at 3.7. **Upon investigation, we learned that DUPR had made a huge blunder.**

For reasons that defy logic, the algorithm paid no attention to the initial self-rating and declared that all new players have a starting rating of 3.5. This blunder is directly related to the merger in December of Pickleball Brackets and DUPR and caught everyone, including our consultant, by surprise. She has a working relationship with the former owner of Pickleball Brackets and contacted him right away. This blunder impacted numerous clubs. However, we reported the issue first. DUPR says they will change their program to accept initial self-ratings and will not automatically use 3.5 as an initial rating. In the meantime, we have pivoted to another way to rank players in the various leagues, by considering the number of wins and losses, and points for and against. Once we are convinced that DUPR will provide useful data we intend to return to DUPR. In the meantime, we ask players to be patient.

We have 91 members in the Club (in pickleball.com) with 20 in tier 1, 30 in tier 2, and 20 in tier 3. Thus 70 have registered in one of the three tiers, and 21 have not yet registered in a league. Interest is greater than expected. We decided to create a second opportunity to play at the tier 2 level, since there is space for only 15 to play in a 2-hour time slot (5 per court). We hope that several of the 21 club members who have not yet joined a league will self rate at 3.0 and thus join tier 2A and 2B. With only 30 in tier 2, there is space for many to play twice on Sundays. We encourage tier 2 players to “opt-in” to both 2A and 2B to have a viable number of players in each, ideally at least 12.

**Waitlist:** Last Sunday, February 9, we found ( to our dismay) that waitlisted players were not notified by email when spaces opened due to two active players opting out on Saturday. Fortunately, one of the players checked and saw that he was no longer on the

waitlist and showed up. The lesson: **if you are on a waitlist, check your junk mail folder. Or, even better, check the “game day” on pickleball.com to see if you have been promoted to the active list.**

**8. Custodians and hosts:** Now that we have numerous venues for indoor play we need to have several custodians. Custodians are responsible for opening and closing the school, bringing nets and equipment bins. As a “thank you” the board has agreed to allow the custodian for that day a chance to register in advance at that venue. Similarly, each ladder league requires a host. Hosts will also be able to opt-in prior to the 7 pm Sunday start time.

**9. BC Championships July 24 – 27, 2025 Vernon:** Richard Chambers, the tournament director, and former Yukoner, lobbied to have Yukon players be allowed to play in the BC Championships next summer. The board of Pickleball BC rejected this suggestion. Thanks, Richard, for thinking of us.