



Spring 2021 Newsletter

Welcome to our first newsletter for the 2021 playing season. I have a lot to cover with you in this newsletter, so be sure to read it all! Here is a list:

- ☒ COVID-19
- ☒ Playing schedule for this year
- ☒ 2021 Pacific Northwest Classic tournament update
- ☒ Updated website plans
- ☒ Board member elections
- ☒ Reminder: Badges and guests
- ☒ Public court usage policy
- ☒ Ball machines
- ☒ Court maintenance
- ☒ Training
- ☒ Social events

COVID-19:

First, let's talk about the undeniable elephant in the room... COVID-19. Last year was tough, there is no question about that. However, with good policies in place and your cooperation, our club avoided the worst of the pandemic. So, are we back to normal? Well, no. However, we are definitely in a better place than last year. Many of you have chosen to be vaccinated and hopefully, more will do that as the year progresses. Deschutes County is in the moderate risk category now and I hope we soon move to the low risk rating. When playing at the courts you need to comply with the Bend Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) requirements as posted at the courts. So, continue to be safe and smart out there.

New playing schedule (attached):

We have some great news to report. We have received approval to start our season on Monday, April 5th. Court reservations will open five days in advance at 6 am on Wednesday, March 31st. That is about one month earlier than usual. I am also very happy to report that we asked for and received approval to extend our playing season to a twelve (12) month schedule! I know many of you played regularly this last winter, but had difficulties getting a court due to crowding. We will keep our reservation system running all year to help ensure that you get a court at the times you want. The winter schedule is not out yet, but on November 1, 2021 the reservation times will shift to 9am-3pm. The Bend Parks and Recreation District has been a great partner and we appreciate their support of our programs.

So, what have we changed in the playing schedule for 2021. Last year we had two days each week for drop-in play. This year that will expand to three times a week. Also, we are bringing back round robin (RR) play! This is for the 3.5 level only. They expressed a strong preference for this type of play. The other skill levels will continue to have the drop-in play format. As a reminder, for drop-in play, you sign up and come out to play on any of your assigned courts. You can leave whenever you want. The RR play will need captains, for every match players are assigned to a court/partner and everyone will need to stay for the entire session to ensure the matches can continue. There is flexibility in the schedule to modify the play format to meet each group's needs, so this is not locked in stone. Finally, as last year, all of the non RR/non-drop-in club court time (7am – 2pm, Mon-Sat) will be by reservation.

2021 Pacific Northwest Classic Tournament:

In December, our Board decided to proceed with this year's tournament. Of course, we have been keeping a watchful eye on the COVID-19 situation. I am happy to report that all is going well at this time. We have over 500 signups for the tournament. Also, we have many enthusiastic sponsors. Deschutes County is in the moderate risk category and if we are able to move to the low risk category, the tournament (with appropriate COVID precautions) will feel almost normal. This tournament is a very big event for our club and we will need many of you helping during it's five day (Jul 28-Aug 1) schedule. Be part of this great club event by playing and/or volunteering!

Updated website:

The club has a good website. But at nearly eight years old, it is starting to fray a bit at the edges. We have been hard at work to update and refresh the website. It is not yet done, but I can say it is looking great and I think you will be impressed. One of the most challenging tasks is to make sure the content is up-to-date and many of the board members are working on this. I hope we can roll it out in April.

Board member elections:

By design and for continuity, our board member terms are set to end on July 31st of different years. This year we have four board members whose terms expire and one unfilled vacancy from last year. So, that is five of the nine board members that need to be filled. That's a lot. Most of the board members have been in their positions for three or more years. A number of them do not intend to run again for their position.

The positions are Operations, Membership, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications. They are all crucial to the club's continued operation. Simply said, if we cannot fill these board member positions, the club may not be able to operate going forward. Last year when we were not able to fill our Communications position, I ended up having to take over that role too. That is not sustainable for me.

When I took over as president in Sept. 2019, we were at another of these "do or die" situations. The club (and I) was very lucky to have a group of dedicated members step up to help the club. With a club as large as ours (750-800 members), it can be easy to think, "Well, I don't have time for that work, but I am sure somebody will step up." Yeah, well I am here to tell you that doesn't always happen. We are not a business and we can't hire new staff. It has to be YOU, a club member that agrees to help. I will send out a separate email describing duties of the positions and the timeframes for the election. Please consider volunteering to be a board member. We will help you at every step of the way.

Reminders:

Badges: All new BPC members may pick up their beautiful club name tags at the Pine Nursery Park shed. The shed is locked, however, it can be accessed by round-robin captains and any BPC board member. If players are at the courts during organized play, the shed will probably be accessible. All members need to wear or bring their badges when you are playing at the courts. Until new members have a name tag, they can print their membership card (or put a copy on their phone) from their BPC profile page on the club website. As we get more people on the courts, we will be enforcing the badge policy to make sure non-members aren't taking your playing times.

Guest policy: You may want to invite guests to play at the courts during the club time. Some of you may be new to the club or are members who don't recall the guest pass policy. You can read it here ([guest pass policy](#)). Please review it and request your pass(es) if you need them. Remember, providing your guest passes to non-members is to allow occasional play with those individuals. If your guests want to play regularly, then they should become a member of the club. Of course, the public courts (1-4) are always available for play if you don't have a guest pass and want to play with non-members.

Another point to remember is if you are playing during club time on the club's assigned courts (5-16), you must play on the same court as your guests during our COVID-19 modified playing format.

Public court usage policy:

The BPRD has established a policy to limit playing time on the public courts. The policy will be posted at the courts and at the kiosk. Basically, it gives you 1 hour of play from the time that a person/group announces they want to play on your court. This will ensure that any person(s) playing will not monopolize the court for hours. I will send this policy out once I am sure the signage has been posted.

Ball machines:

The club is buying two new and sophisticated ball machines that will provide many great features that we do not now have. These will be put in operation early this season and you will have an opportunity to reserve their use.

Court maintenance:

We have been informed by the BPRD that they will be resurfacing courts 9-15 this spring. We are still working out the details. I am not sure if they will close all of these courts during the resurfacing or if they will do it in stages. We appreciate your patience while this long overdue maintenance is completed. I will let you know when this is scheduled to happen as soon as I know.

If you would like to become a member of our elite court cleaning crew, Jim Stone, our Director of Court Operations would love to hear from you. We really need your help and it is satisfying work. You can email Jim at jimstone47@gmail.com

Training:

We don't have any specific plans to announce at this time. However, I wanted you to know we are looking to conduct training for most of our skill levels this year like we did last year. I suspect we will do a fair amount of training at the Pickleball Zone Bend, but I also plan to have training conducted at Pine Nursery Park. Like last year, the cost of the training will be a very low (or no) cost to you.

Social events:

Again, I don't have any specific plans to announce at this time. However, I wanted you to know we would like to restart social events in the club. Our ability to do that hinges on where we are with the pandemic. IF we can get back to some sense of normalcy, then we want to create some fun events for you to enjoy. Whatever, we do will be as safe as we can possibly make it.

Congratulations, you have reached the end of this newsletter (dare I say book?). Thank you for reading this far. There was a lot to cover and we are very excited for this season to start. Hope to see you at the courts!

Bill Brown, BPC President