



Winter 2024 Newsletter

December 12, 2024

President's Message

—Kirk Foster, President

Winter is here! The mountains are blanketed in snow, and while some of our snowbird friends have headed south, many of us are embracing the elements to play outdoors—or finding fun indoors. Wherever you are, it's the perfect season for pickleball!

2024: A Year to Celebrate

This year has been incredible for the Bend Pickleball Club! Together, we've achieved some amazing milestones:

- Our membership reached an all-time high of 1,450, with 487 new members joining us through November!
- We hosted a variety of clinics and organized play events, keeping the community active indoors and out.
- The **2024 Pacific NW Classic tournament** was our largest yet, with record-breaking participation.

Fundraising for the Future

Bend is known for its world-class pickleball facilities set against the stunning backdrop of Central Oregon. This reputation wouldn't exist without the strong partnership between Bend Pickleball Club and BPRD. Over the years, BPC and its members have been pivotal in funding the development and upkeep of the PNP courts.

Now, we're looking to the future. As reported in the summer newsletter, our agreement with BPRD to add eight new courts at PNP requires us to raise \$400,000. This aligns with our mission: *"to facilitate the growth of pickleball in Central Oregon."*

- Thanks to BPC's efforts, Bend now boasts its first lighted outdoor pickleball courts—a huge win for local players.
- A new camera at Pine Nursery Park (PNP) provides remote visibility of the courts, adding convenience for members.
- Our partnership with Grouper is helping many members get their dues covered by health insurance providers.
- A recent agreement with Bend Park & Recreation District (BPRD) means **eight new courts** are coming to PNP!
- And of course, we played *a lot* of pickleball, contributing to a global pickleball economy worth over \$1.5 billion annually.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Board this year, helping to bring these opportunities to life. Looking ahead to 2025, I'm excited for the new challenges and opportunities that will continue to put Bend at the forefront of pickleball in the Pacific Northwest.

We hope every member will consider supporting this effort. Donations made directly to the BPRD Foundation will be tax-deductible. We'll be sharing details soon on how you—and even non-members—can contribute. Together, we can ensure Bend remains a top destination for pickleball enthusiasts everywhere.

Court Views

Have you checked out our new PNP camera? I peek at it often and am amazed by the number of players braving the cold—especially at night! Seeing folks rallying under the lights when the “feels-like” temperature dips to 28° warms my heart. Your passion for the game inspires us all.



The Fun Couldn't Happen without Them

Throughout the year, a handful of volunteers contribute so much to the day-to-day operations of Bend Pickleball Club. This dedicated group always ensures the courts are clean and safe.

A special shoutout goes to our round robin captains, who arrive early, stay late, keep play running smoothly, and ensure everything is locked away at the end of play. Their behind-the-scenes efforts make your games possible, rain or shine. Next time you see them, take a moment to give them a word of thanks and recognition for helping make your event possible.

We're equally grateful for those who help organize and run our special events. From tournaments to socials, your efforts help to create memorable experiences for everyone.

Thank you, Members,
for being part of this incredible community.
Here's to another year of fun, growth, and great pickleball ahead!



Best “Cruise” Ever!

—Janet Davis, Director, Training & Player Development

WOW—what an incredible season we've had! If you've seen me greeting members at our events, you know I can't help but get a little choked up when I think about the amazing opportunities we've created under the umbrella of Training & Player Development. I often feel like Julie from *The Love Boat*, seeing our members enjoying themselves—whether it's at a training clinic or a social event, bringing everyone together fills me with joy.

This season has been a standout for growth and connection. We offered over **16 opportunities every month** for members to sharpen their skills through our incredible clinics! Our Pros, including Rob Davidson and Wes Gabrielsen, led sessions that were both engaging and effective. Many of you reached new milestones by participating in CORE testing and Eye Rating opportunities. Your progress has been nothing short of inspiring!



I give a **special shoutout to our teaching Pros, Jared Davis and RJ Petershagen**, for their dedication to your success.

"My experience with the members of the Bend Pickleball Club has been nothing but amazing. Every clinic was a joy, and I loved watching participants grow their skills. The improvement was remarkable, and I can't wait to see what's next!"

— Jared Davis

"What I found most rewarding was seeing members apply what they learned in clinics. Catching a glimpse of someone executing a new skill during a game always gave me that 'proud coach' feeling. This game, this club, and this community are about passing on knowledge and making a difference in each other's day."

— RJ Petershagen

Although our season's "cruise" has come to an end, we're excited to announce **Indoor Winter Play opportunities** coming your way! Keep an eye on your inbox for details, and let's keep the momentum going through the colder months.

Thank you all for being part of this incredible community. It's been a privilege to share this journey with you, and I look forward to seeing you back on the courts!



Pacific Northwest Classic Hits New Heights

—Kirk Foster, President

What an incredible event! Bend Pickleball Club hosted our annual **Pacific Northwest Classic by Thump Coffee** from July 25–29, and it was a record-breaking success. With **610 registered players**—our largest turnout ever—the tournament was a true celebration of pickleball and community spirit.



The excitement started early with a special Tuesday evening MLP-style exhibition match, featuring local pros versus west-of-the-Cascades stars. It was the perfect way to kick off the week and set the stage for five days of exhilarating competition.

This year's event featured:

- **1,620 matches across 78 events** showcasing amazing pickleball for all skill levels.

- A **round-robin format for amateur matches**, guaranteeing every player at least five games. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and we're thrilled to carry this forward in 2025!
- **10 Pro categories with 121 competitors**, playing intense double-elimination matches and vying for **\$30,000 in cash prizes**. Spectators and players alike were on the edge of their seats!
- **30 dedicated referees** who officiated nearly 80% of the matches, ensuring fair play and professionalism.

Visit the BPC website to view [Rich Warner's tournament photos](#), and check out the results on [Pickleball Brackets](#).

The Unsung Heroes: Our Volunteers

Behind the scenes, the true stars of the Pacific Northwest Classic were the **100+ Club volunteers** who made this massive undertaking seamless. Their dedication and hard work, starting days before the event, created a welcoming, professional, and fun atmosphere for everyone.

These incredible volunteers managed tasks like:

- Setting up tents, bleachers, banners, and AV equipment (and securing everything against Bend's infamous windstorms!)
- Parking assistance, check-in stations, and SWAG handouts
- Keeping food tables stocked, first-aid stations ready, and the facility clean
- Running lost-and-found and answering countless questions.



Thanks to their tireless efforts—and the coordination of **Margaret Immink and Kathy Foster**—BPC has earned its reputation for hosting **one of the best tournaments around**.

Thank You, Christie Gestvang

A special note of gratitude goes to **Christie Gestvang**, our Tournament Co-Director since 2014. Christie has been the driving force behind the success of BPC's tournaments, helping to make them well-attended, well-organized, and loads of fun.

As Christie steps back from her co-director role, we'll miss her leadership immensely. But we're thrilled that she'll continue supporting the Club in other ways. Christie, thank you for everything—you've left an incredible legacy, and we hope you enjoy a well-deserved break!



On the Horizon

Bend Pickleball Club is already planning for the 2025 tournament. Whether you're a competitor, a spectator, or a volunteer, there's so much to look forward to as we continue to grow and celebrate this amazing sport. Thank you for being part of our community and making events like this possible!



Court Utilization: Making Every Game Count

—RJ Petershagen, Director of Court Utilization

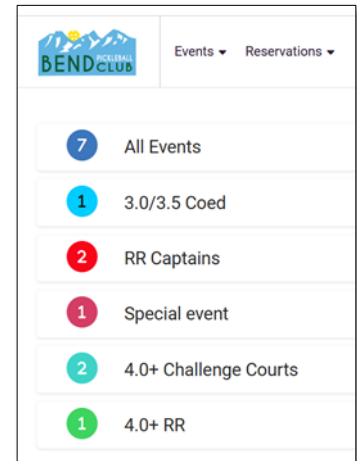
With 1,347 active pickleball players in the Bend Pickleball Club, we're a community as vibrant as the game itself! If everyone showed up at once for a doubles match, we'd need 337 courts—stretching all the way to Gilchrist! Thankfully, through a variety of offerings, we make it work every day with just 12 courts from 7:00am to 2:00pm.

Round Robin Fun and Flexibility

Our members love the camaraderie of round robin doubles, especially at the 3.0 and 3.5 levels. These popular round robins keep players buzzing during the peak periods of 9:00–11:00am and 11:00am–1:00pm. While the summer sun makes post-12:00pm play a bit toasty, the early birds at 7:00am are often scarce. Consider this: Could a flex start at 7:30am entice a few adventurous players to join the fun? Let me know.

Variety for Every Player

We know that some of you prefer organizing your own foursomes, and we're committed to honoring those preferences. Plus, our new "Challenge Court" option has been a hit! This drop-in format offers total flexibility—come late, leave early, and play at your preferred level (3.0, 3.5, 4.0, or higher). It's all about meeting members where they are.



Looking Ahead

Managing court time is like solving a fun puzzle, and our goal is to create opportunities for *everyone* to enjoy the game they love. With 8 new courts set to open in 2026, the future of pickleball in Bend has never looked brighter!

Thank you for being part of our incredible club. Together, we're making every serve, rally, and game an unforgettable experience.



Volunteers Needed for Pickleball Research Study

—Cynde Hargrave, VP/Director, Communications

Graduate students in OSU Cascade's Doctor of Physical Therapy program, working under guidance from program faculty, will be conducting a **first-of-its-kind research study involving pickleball**.



They plan to study lower extremity biomechanical factors and functional performance of pickleball participants. The goal is to **develop evidence-based prevention and treatment strategies for pickleball-related injuries**.

Participants must be current pickleball players. Screening for the study is occurring throughout December via emails and phone calls. Data collection would occur on campus starting mid-January 2025.

Interested? Say yes. —It could get you out of a pickle!

Who: Pickleball players

What: Eligibility screening

- Scan the QR code below to complete the interest form
- Anticipate contact by the study group for screening, eligibility, and availability
- You can also email the OSU-Cascades Pickleball Group at osupball@gmail.com

When: If selected, scheduling will begin mid-January. Your commitment entails just one 45-minute session on campus in the biomechanics lab; no follow-ups needed.

Where: Ray Hall, OSU Cascades campus, Bend, OR



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

