



Fall 2025 Newsletter

October 15, 2025

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President's Message

—Kirk Foster, President

The reds and golds of autumn are upon us, and another beautiful Central Oregon summer is in the rear-view mirror. As we bid farewell to our snowbird members fleeing to warmer climes, let's reflect.

It's been a memorable season for Bend pickleball. We've celebrated big wins, shared countless fun moments, and faced a few bumps in the road with resilience and heart.

New Courts Project – We began 2025 with the ambitious goal of raising 50 percent of the funding needed to build eight new courts at Pine Nursery Park, along with securing additional funds to add lighting to the new courts. Thanks to generous donations from Club members, the assistance of matching funds contributed from Werner and Susan Zehnder, a grant from the Bend Sustainability Fund, and accumulated Club funds, Bend Pickleball Club has contributed over \$585,000 for this project. It is now fully funded.

This is a significant accomplishment made possible through a strong collective effort. Construction is scheduled to begin soon, with progress dependent on winter weather conditions. Play on the existing courts should not be affected, as contractors will access the site from the east.

Catch Yourself on Camera - The new cameras at PNP have been a big hit for people who want to check out what is going on at the courts. A little-known feature of the new cameras is the ability for members to play back or download their recent game. Camera feeds can be accessed from our website along with current weather and air quality reports from PNP.

Pacific NW Classic - The summer tournament was a great success by most accounts. Attendance was off a little from last year, but players and spectators enjoyed great weather, clear air, and lots of good pickleball play. (Next page...)

Our tournament is one of the few that ties referees to almost every match; we missed only 2-3 matches this year. Having referees on courts elevates the game above everyday recreational play and levels the field for all players. Feedback from tournament players has been overwhelmingly favorable for our hospitality and support staff, cleanliness and quality of our facility, and especially our nice restrooms! Many thanks to our sponsors who helped make this possible; please be sure to support the people who always support us.

Remembering Werner - On October 5, Bend Pickleball Club and Pickleball Zone hosted a gathering to honor Werner Zehnder who gave so much to help grow pickleball in Central Oregon. The event was held at the beautiful Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Central Oregon facility in northwest Bend. Nearly two hundred people turned out to pay their respects; many shared memories. We also hosted a [memorial page](#) where anyone can post a thought or memorial to Werner. Many people, like me, have made so many friends and received so much enjoyment from pickleball. I am reminded that it isn't the game or how well we play that is important. It is treasuring the relationships we have with others that matters most.

“Known for his graciousness, warmth, and wonderful sense of humor, Werner touched countless lives through his love of the game and his gift for building community.”

Veteran's Cup 2025 – On Sunday, October 18, registered vets will be introduced to the fun and rewarding experiences that pickleball can provide. In advance of Veterans Day, November 11, we thank them and all veterans for their service to our country.

Get Involved - As usual, good winter planning delivers a great new season. We can use help from Club members who would like to be more involved:

- In addition to roles such as round-robin captains and CORE play-ins, we could use help with creating and planning Club events that enhance member connections.
- Our popular summer tournament needs planning assistance in areas such as publicity, sponsors, volunteer coordination, and overall event management.
- Are you a savvy operator who could maintain our audio and wi-fi systems at PNP?
- Three board positions will open mid-year 2026.

If you are interested in any of these activities, or if you have an idea for something new, please contact me through the [Membership directory](#). The Club needs your help if we're going to be about people making pickleball possible for everyone. Thanks for all you do, and I look forward to seeing you on the courts!



Tournament referees



Exuberant medalists



Critical support

Changes are in the Air

—Brian Firebaugh, Director of Membership

Schedule Changes for Fall and Winter - Members may have noticed that the BPC Fall Schedule for organized play at Pine Nursery began Monday, October 6 to accommodate the changing season. Start times for these events are an hour later than the Summer Schedule; adjustments will be made for daylight savings time starting November 3. All schedule changes will be reflected on the CourtReserve calendar.

We will introduce a Winter Play Schedule when colder winter weather moves in. Winter Play is for those hearty souls who still want to play outdoors while we await Spring. Signups for Winter Play on CourtReserve are encouraged so others can get a rough headcount of expected attendance. Regardless, all members are welcome to join in with or without CourtReserve reservations.

As a reminder, a real-time visual of the Pine Nursery court conditions can be seen on the live camera feed on our website or at <https://livepickleballcourts.com/facilities/bend-pickleball-club>.

Mentor Support - An enthusiastic group of 2.0/2.5 members participated in round robins this summer. For their benefit, a mentor was on site every M/W/F to help these players as they began their pickleball journey. Players had the opportunity to have their level of play evaluated; those who qualified were moved up to the 3.0 skill level on the spot. Many players did just that! Congratulations.

Due to the success of this format, members can expect more of the same in the 2026 season.

Membership – Bend Pickleball Club member count continues to be in the low 1200s. We're glad you're here!



New Court Construction Underway



Construction fencing arrives



New signage posted 10/14/2025

What a Season It's Been

—Janet Davis, Director of Training and Development

What an amazing season! Our training and development calendar was full of opportunities to learn, grow, and connect—from skill-building sessions to CORE testing. Members benefited in many ways.

- Thank you to Jared Davis and RJ Petershagen for leading impactful clinics that helped so many members strengthen their game.
- Kudos to Brian Firebaugh for sharing his time and experience mentoring many new players.
- Heartfelt thanks go to all the CORE play-in participants for stepping up and providing many members with the chance to test and grow at a higher level.

From our rain-soaked but enthusiastic season opener to the lively season finale (see Alane's report), this year truly showed how dedicated Bend Pickleball Club is to building a strong pickleball community. The time, energy, and passion of committed members make our Club something special.

To help us stay connected, please log in to the [Membership page](#) on the Club website and check to see that your Personal Profile information is complete—especially your phone number. Having current contact information makes it much easier to reach you for scheduling, events, and last-minute updates.

Thank you for the honor of serving as your Director of Training and Development for another great season.



Recap of the End-of-Season Social

—Alane Harrold, Director At Large

On Saturday, October 4, 10:00am-12:30pm, 44 players gathered for the Club's End-of-Season Social. This number came about once Janet Davis and I checked in the registered members, identified the six registered-but-no-show members, and then accommodated the additional Club members who were either waitlisted or showed up with hopes of getting in. It IS a village!

Refreshments were yummy. Members enjoyed muffins, pastries, coffee, and juice on a chilly fall day that, thankfully, spared us from rain.

Group A and Group B, each with 11 teams, played across 8 courts. Each team pair had differently rated players (for example, a 4.0-rated player with a 2.5-rated player), who potentially had never played together. The combinations weren't perfect, and many teams had to endure two byes, yet I witnessed lot of supportive play.

A good poker hand made all the difference! Before each round of games, every team drew and recorded their poker card. The idea was to shift the focus away from winning solely through game points and add a fun twist—winning with the best poker hand. (Of course, competitive pickleballers still play to win!) At the end of the event, prizes were awarded to the teams with the highest and lowest 5-card hands in each group. One lucky team even pulled together four aces!

I could not have successfully orchestrated all this without the help of Mike Peebles and Ken Johnson, my new heroes. And thank you to all the participants for the great turnout, your patience, and your willingness to have a good time despite the hiccups. One can plan, plan, plan; this event was all about recalibrating and moving forward.

"Patience isn't the ability to wait, but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting."

Movin' on Up (No waiting here!) – For the period of July-September, many members tested and improved their CORE ratings. Twenty-four (24) members now have a 3.5 rating, and 20 have achieved a 4.0 rating. Congratulations to all!

Need to Lower Your Rating? If you have suffered an injury or illness that requires you to play at a lower rating level to follow your physician's guidelines, all is not lost. Just inform me, Alane, and Membership Director Brian Firebaugh of this necessity. Once recovered, inform us, and we can reinstate your higher rating; no re-testing required.

