



Pickleball - the Art of Social Play

Pickleball has developed as a social physical activity and a social camaraderie opportunity. Conventions have developed to enhance these aspects. Pickleball is also a fast paced game, one that does not take long to 'finish' - games are normally first to 11 points, often lasting less than 15 minutes.

The primary convention established to achieve these social aspects is one of team/player/court rotations. Games are short, there usually is an abundance of players courtside looking to participate and quite often looking to participate with others at a similar skill level.

Pickleball players quite often just go to the courts - they know others will be there. Sometimes but not often do they come with a playing partner, they seek others to play with and against.

Various methodologies are used depending on the player mix, the number of 'extra' players, the number of courts. Everyone off after each game, two players off, winners stay, runners up stay - one thing is common - some of the player on each court change after every game.

Who gets to play next is partially decided by how many are coming off the court, and what method is used court side to ensure everyone gets a fair rotation, decent games, a chance to play with known people - again a host of variants decided by those available to play usually. Local conventions develop and become known and the norm.

Again the one overriding norm is changes happen after every game. Staying on the court for multiple games is seriously frowned upon - there are others waiting that deserve a turn. Everyone that comes to play - came to play not to wait. Time based play allocation would deny many an opportunity.

In recent months COVID-19 has changed some of the practices and norm - social and physical distancing issues. These concerns may control who one plays with but has not changed the fact that after my game it is another team or groups turn. We recognize that many people (bubbles) can come and share the courts without long waits.