

2024 Nanaimo Pickleball Club Director's Reports

Court Director

Charles Ku

The main duty of the Court Director is to find, set up, and manage playing opportunities for Club members. Key Responsibilities include the following:

Venue Management:

- stay connected with Oliver Woods Community Centre and SD #68 and explore other potential venues;
- submit seasonal requests for gym time and keep an eye out for extra space when it becomes available; and
- handle any issues that come up with gym use and work with the city on bookings for events, tournaments, and special activities.

Session Coordination:

- work with the Play Session Committee to create a variety of play format to meet member needs;
- set up and manage sessions in CourtReserve and keep an eye on waitlists to track demand; and
- cancel unused sessions on time to ensure refunds from the City.

Member Support:

- process refund requests as per Club policy.

Challenges to this position include balancing high demand for indoor sessions during the fall and winter season with limited court availability, while pushing for better access to community facilities.

CourtReserve

Charles Ku

The main duty of the CourtReserve Director is to manage and improve the system for members, play sessions and Club operations. Key Responsibilities include the following:

System Maintenance:

- keep the CourtReserve system updated and organized in line with direction from the President, Court Director, and Play Session Committee.
- create and update play sessions, set fees, and adjust membership settings as needed; and
- make sure new members meet club policies, including age requirements and membership with Pickleball BC/Canada.

Training and Support:

- train coordinators and executive members on how to use CourtReserve effectively; and
- work with CourtReserve support to resolve issues and explore new features that could benefit the Club.

Reporting:

- generate reports to help the executive make decisions about memberships, session attendance, and player assessments; and
- monitor unpaid fees and ensure accounts stay up-to-date.

Member Assistance:

- help members join or renew their memberships and share important info with the New Member Liaison; and
- monitor player assessments and send weekly updates to ensure accuracy.

Communication and Monitoring:

- keep an eye on session attendance and notify coordinators if any sessions need more players; and
- share recommendations with the Executive on system upgrades or process changes.

Membership Management:

- manage the annual membership fee structure, including overseeing fee changes and ensuring a smooth transition during the annual renewal period;
- monitor and ensure all member renewals are completed, including verifying compliance with Pickleball Canada (PCO) and Pickleball BC (PBC) requirements; and
- update member statuses in CourtReserve based on renewal completion and maintain accurate records.

Correspondence

Monte Niver

The Correspondence position involved responding to inquiries made to the Club through its Gmail account. The inquiries covered a range of topics such as the availability of pickleball lessons and orientation, pickleball machine rentals, player ratings, buying and selling of equipment, drill sessions and skill improvement, outdoor and indoor play options and their locations, apparel and payments. Other inquiries included topics like drop-in play, people new to the sport, people from other parts of the country wanting to play in our area, and ratings assessments.

My focus in this position was to respond to all inquiries in a warm and welcoming way to best represent our Club. I tried to clearly answer all inquiries and point people in the direction to best solve their inquiries. I also worked towards maintaining a level of quality of play insisting that new players be directed to orientation and/or lessons, even if they were inquiring about drop-in play with the City's Parks & Recreation Department. I also directed other inquiries to other Directors where appropriate, and generally tried to maintain the Gmail account.

Grants and Funding Proposals

Kim Brunt

As the Club's Funding Application Coordinator, I applied to two funding sources in 2024:

- Provincial Community Gaming Grant funds were pursued to provide additional equipment for the Club's school-based training program. This grant was denied as it did not meet the criteria of the program; and
- A Municipal application to purchase an AED for the new outdoor facility at Beban Park was also not funded as the City decided to just purchase the AED rather than provide our Club the funds to do so.
- Harvey was successful in obtaining a \$500 grant from Pickleball BC for equipment for the School Program the Club supports.

Play Session Committee

Harvey Hall

The Play Session Committee must work very quickly over a very short period of time once the City has put out their schedule for gym use. Each season, Parks and Recreation give us our allotment of play sessions for the season. We then ask for any sessions that may not have been filled within their gym schedule for that given season. We call these "one-off sessions". They may only exist once in the season or they may have a number of days that we can string together to create a better offering. Once we receive this list, we look for a few consistencies - time (how many sessions we can find that are long enough for PB), consistency of days in a row, and do they fit into our schedule. Within this grouping of "one-off sessions" we then try to allot the sessions appropriately for all levels of play. We have not been given as many regular sessions by the City this year due to limited space and demand on the Oliver Woods Community Centre. It has been a challenge to book these sessions for the members, but we continue to strive to put a schedule together. We will continue to pursue opportunities for more club sessions as they come available in hopes of providing more variety in the sessions offered.

The club rented two evenings at Aspengrove School in Nov. and Dec., 2024. They were very well received with 4 spacious courts and a lovely playing surface. Unfortunately there is little to no access to this facility during the winter/spring period, but there may be a chance to get time in the fall if desired. We will keep this on the horizon and put in a request to see what is available in late spring or early fall.

I also checked the facility at Holy Trinity Church. They have a 3-court facility with a similar layout to elementary schools. They provide a bit more room between courts compared to most elementary schools, but they have about the same clearance at the rear of each court. Two courts are also lined perpendicular to the other courts with lots of room. They do have various times available both in afternoon and evening during the week.

Both Aspengrove and Holy Trinity are more expensive than Oliver Woods or other elementary schools. We need to look at all the sessions that have been booked at Oliver Woods through the City, and then we can make recommendations based on that information.

Junior Program

Harvey Hall

A team of NPC members represented the Club at the February 5 Professional Development Day at Dover Bay. These were full sessions touching some 30 teachers.

Two school In-service sessions were also presented by NPC executives to Ecole Hammond Bay Elementary School and Island Connect Ed K-12. An overwhelming response from Ecole Hammond Bay school resulted in a 3 way cost splitting effort to buy 24 paddles for the school. (\$500.00 grant from BC Pickleball, \$300.00 from NPC and \$300.00 from Ecole Hammond Bay Elementary School)

Although the direct instruction and coaching is not materializing as totally imagined, we are continuing to make gains into the schools. Reports of Ladysmith students and PE teachers loving the sport have filtered back to me. Also, the Principal of Ecole Hammond Bay Elementary School is reporting that the paddles which we and BC Pickleball sponsored last year are in full use.

For 2025, we have been asked again to provide two 2-hour sessions to Physical Health and Education teachers and regular classroom teachers. Educators are provided with a 3-day lesson plan & drills to introduce pickleball to their classes.

The club would really like to directly support junior pickleball players in Nanaimo but because of lack of indoor facilities there is little court time available for this venture. However, this year feedback from schools where class sets of paddles were donated, show a huge increased interest in the game of pickleball.

City Liaison/NPC Facilities

Wayne Overton

The NPC City Liaison group (Dave Eaton, Lyle Evans, Caron Knight, and Wayne Overton) met with the City of Nanaimo several times in 2024. The focus of this group is to support improved access to quality playing facilities in Nanaimo and to provide a strong pickleball presence with the City of Nanaimo recreation team. In 2024, this effort directly led to the new 8-court outdoor facility at Beban Park along with the closure of the Beaufort courts. The negative publicity that pickleball had in the Beaufort area was gaining traction with City Council and so overall, we believe that this is a win for our sport. We continue to work on additional opportunities which have, for instance, led to the re-surfacing of the Harewood facility. We are working with the City to see if lights could be installed at the Beban courts, to add more safety wall padding at Oliver Woods, and to determine if additional indoor facilities could be made available for our use. We are also providing pickleball support for the BC 55 Plus Games which will be held in Nanaimo in September, 2025.

Facebook Page

Wayne Overton

The Club's Facebook page sees relatively light traffic. Most inquiries are from visitors in our area wanting to know where they could play some pickleball, where they might get some lessons and how they could join the club. I also like to post pictures of events and to let our members know about things that are happening in our pickleball community. If the opportunity arises, I post the occasional bit of humor (pickleball related) that I happen across.

Website

Wayne Overton

The Club's website contains a lot of information including news, play locations, club policies and bylaws, minutes of Executive Meetings, tournament information, event pictures, links to membership and guest memberships and a whole lot more. Annual costs to maintain the site are \$314.

Ratings Committee

Lyle Evans

It has been my pleasure to serve as Chair of the Ratings Committee (L. Evans, D. Marshall, H. Hall, K. Brunt) over the past year. The Committee met on a quarterly basis to carry out the following activities:

- review novice members' ratings in Pickleball Brackets and promote any novice members to 3.0 who met the criteria;
- review and modify the Ratings Policy as necessary.

As part of these reviews, the Committee developed and implemented an objective Novice Challenge-Up Program as a means to move Novice players up to a 3.0 rating. Over the course of 2024, 4 of these Challenge-Up sessions were held with a total of 16 challengers participating. The committee also worked on the development of a Challenge-Up process for 3.0 members to move up to a 3.5 rating. This work is not complete and will continue into 2025.

The Committee also dealt with ad hoc member requests to adjust their ratings to a higher level. All of these requests were reviewed and if the member met the established criteria, their rating would be changed.

In early January 2025, Pickleball Brackets and Pickleball Tournaments merged their software platforms and the functionality we were using to score the novice bracket games was no longer available. As a result, the Club has suspended all bracket sessions, and the Rating Committee proposes that we now use Challenge-Up sessions for members to advance their rating to the next level. The novice Challenge-Up was already in place and a recommendation was made to develop a process for 3.0 members to move to the 3.5 level. This process, as well as one for 3.5 players to achieve a 4.0 level rating will need to be developed and approved by the new Board in the coming months.

New Member Liaison

Ruth Dougan

For all new members of skill level 2.5 and under, Lyle would send me an email that there was a new member. I would then send them an email welcoming them, and letting them know they needed to register for Pickleball Brackets, with instructions. I would wait a couple of days and then phone them to see if they needed help signing up for Brackets or if they had any questions about the Club, CourtReserve or Brackets. This above work is now being done by Mary Turner-Ross.

If a new member of skill level 3.0+ registers for a Pickleball Brackets session, and they are not signed up for Brackets, I send them an email with instructions to sign up in order to play in the session. If they need help, I phone them and walk them through the sign-up process. When a member signs up for Brackets and they have not entered the information correctly, Lyle gets a message from Brackets. He then forwards the message to me and I correct and approve all members that have signed up that have not entered all their information correctly. When Sue runs a Bracket session for 3.0+ skill level, I set up the session in Brackets, for her to enter the scores.

Coordinator Locator

Ruth Dougan

When new sessions are added in CourtReserve, I go through the list of Coordinators I have, and email or phone people to get Coordinators of the appropriate level for each session. I then let Charles know, and he updates CourtReserve. If a designated Coordinator cannot coordinate a session and cannot find a replacement, they let me know and I then find a replacement for that session.

Orientation/New Player Training

Caron Knight

With the help of the School Board which gave us gym time at Park Avenue School, we were able to do 4 New Player Orientation sessions over 4 weeks in 2024. No outdoor sessions were held this year.

Tournaments

Caron Knight

The Nanaimo Indoor Tournament – which took place July 13-14/'24 – was a great success that included players rated from 3.0 to 4.0+. The 2025 tournament has already been booked for July 12-13/'25.

Our Mexicana Madness Fun Tournament was played on Aug. 10/'24.

The 'Paddles in the Park' 90-Minute Tournament occurred Aug 16th (for 55+ players) and for all ages on Aug. 17th. Men's, Women's and Mixed Doubles events took place. With the new outdoor courts now open at Beban Park, we are hoping to be able to accept even more teams for this event in 2025.

Social/Media Director (Events/Volunteers)

Sally Morten

We had a couple of events this past year that required an army of volunteers and once again our members stepped up to help. Our tournament in July is a huge undertaking and we had approximately 40 of our members volunteering in a variety of positions including administration, registration, refereeing, maintaining the nets, policing the gym doors and most importantly, feeding all the hungry players.

Another event requiring not only lots of organization but also lots of hands-on help was the Christmas Social and Wacky Games that took place on December 23rd. Our volunteer team captains did a brilliant job of managing their players although the words 'herding' and 'cats' were often heard.

At our social gathering after the games we were treated to an array of treats provided by Caron and her sister Donna, and special thanks go out to them both.