

Mono Pickleball Club

Newsletter #13 – August 20th, 2023

Save the date – MPC's Annual General Meeting

Date: Saturday October 21st, 2023

Time/Venue – TBD

Plan to attend this year's Mono Pickleball Club Annual Meeting of the membership. It has been a busy first year of growth and learning. The agenda and proposed amendments to the Constitution/By-laws will be posted on the website (MonoPickleballClub.com) before October 1st, 2023 for your review. In addition, there are openings on the Board of Directors. If interested contact a member of the Board.

MPC Indoors at the Athlete Institute

Registration for the Full Season Package (Oct 16 – May 3, 2024) was emailed to members on August 6th. All 55 available spaces were filled as of August 18th and registration is now closed. However, registration for the Fall session will open on August 23rd at 6 pm. Registration information and more details will be emailed to members 48 hours prior to this date.

NOTE: Our original contract with AI is at capacity, therefore all further registrants for the Fall session will be placed on a wait list. By completing the registration, you are committing to complete your registration and are obligated to make the payment of \$130 + HST should 18 new registrations be reached. For every 18 additional registrants, MPC will contract an additional court and the fee will come directly from the payment from registrants. Fees will be prorated based on the start date of extra courts. Winter and Spring registration at AI will open October 1st, 2023 and is available to all present members who have renewed their 2023 MPC membership for 2024, and follows the same conditions noted above for the Fall session.

2024 Membership Fees for MPC

Membership fees for 2024 are:

- MPC member **renewal** - early bird October 1st until December 1st 2023 \$50**
- MPC member **renewal** - after December 1st, 2023 - \$60**
- PAO (Pickleball Ontario) - \$10 (required for membership)
- PCO (Pickleball Canada) - \$10 (required for membership)

** MPC membership fees have been increased to cover expenses that include equipment purchase, a court replacement fund, pickleball balls, annual software fees, special activities, etc.

Saturday Pickleball at Westside Secondary School / ODSS

If there is enough interest from members for Saturday afternoon pickleball at ODSS or WSS, MPC will contract the time and space with the UGDSB. Times will likely be similar to last year. Please contact Judy Lichty no later than Wednesday August 30th to express your commitment to this or if you have additional questions. The cost for 10 Saturdays would be \$40 (includes tax & balls).

Email: judyl@exposoft.ca

Phone: 647-962-7001

MPC Fun Day 2023

Thank you to all our members who supported the second annual MPC FUN Day and MPC's 1st Birthday party. It was an excellent day of pickleball, laughs, songs, stories, treats and FUN! Your feedback would be appreciated by completing a short survey by following this link:

<https://forms.gle/juCAfPpL7PPjRkDX8>

Thoughts on the Soft Game:

A common question is: why would I want to play a soft game?

After all, most players with a drive seem to be winning more often. No one at my level plays soft so why do I need it?

To answer these questions, let's look at different matchups between hard hitters and soft game players.

Before our matchups, let's talk about the court itself and how its design dictates strategy.

The most important part of a pickleball court, by a country mile, is the Non-Volley Zone. This is the area that defines pickleball as pickleball and makes it different than, say, mini-tennis. Frankly, were there not a Non-Volley Zone, we would not be having this conversation about the soft game.

The hard game completely ignores this part of the court – as if it weren't there. Thus, playing just a hard game is a unidimensional approach to pickleball that foregoes this critical area of the court. That is why when a hard game player meets a soft game player (or a hybrid player who can play both hard and soft), the hard game player is at a disadvantage.

The reason why the hard game – alone – appears to work at rec play is because there is a disparity in level between these players.

First, let's consider a hard game player who can play the hard game at a 3.5 level against an opponent who plays the hard game at a 3.0 level and has no soft game. In this scenario, the 3.5 player will win.

Now place two 3.5 hard game players opposite each other. It is a bloodbath out there, but, in

any event, it is a toss-up.

How about a 3.5 hard game player against a 3.5 hybrid player. The hybrid player will win, and it will not even be a contest.

And I will give you one more. Our 3.5 hard game player against a 3.5 soft game player. This second player has no hard game but is at a 3.5 level with the soft game. I would put my money on the soft game player here.

The fact that hard-hitting players are able to overpower other players at your local courts should not be seen as a vindication of the style of play.

Rather, it should be seen as the underdevelopment of the soft game among your local players. If those players ever learned the soft game, the weakness of a single-dimension, hard-hitting approach would be exposed.

One last point, the best players on the planet – the pros – all rely primarily on their soft games to win. It is not the Erne, or a big serve, forehand, or even smash putaway that these players lean on. It is their third shot drops, dink game, and resets – all soft game shots and strategies – that these players use to come out on top. If the hard game was the optimal approach, don't you think these players would use it all the time?

CJ Johnson and Tony Roig