

## **PICKLEBALL FOR 4<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADES**

The sport known as pickleball originated on Bainbridge Island in 1965, invented by Congressman Joel Pritchard and two of his friends. It is one of the fastest growing sports in the country. It can be a great equalizer for differences in age, gender, strength and athletic ability. The game is considered to be a combination of badminton, table tennis, and tennis. It stresses eye-hand coordination, agility, teamwork, flexibility, and quick reflexes. What are the rules and strategies? What are the basic skills and drills? How can I adapt this fun sport so that it works in my own program and p.e. facility? These questions and much more will be covered during this presentation. Thank you for joining Seattle Metro Pickleball Association members for this active and informative session.

*We are here today as ambassadors for the sport of pickleball. We would like to make some suggestions on how you can teach a three week unit to a class of 30 students.*

*In addition to the information shared today, watch youtube for more skill development and strategies. Youtube is a great source of pickleball information.*

### **Basic Rules**

*Rules found in the additional handout.*

### **Modifications for a physical education class**

- a : Play to seven or nine points. (due to time constraints)*
- b: Rally scoring (a point is scored every time a ball is put in play).*
- c: When serving, the ball can bounce on a serve before the server's paddle hits the ball. (a new rule)*
- d: Allow servers to double fault. (for lower grades)*
- e:: Use a ladder tournament so that teams will play against players of equal abilities (teams can challenge one or two teams above them on the ladder or be challenged by one or two teams below them). The two teams trade places on the board if the challenger wins. The game is more fun and competitive when teams of equal abilities play each other. Use a ladder tournament board with nametags.*

### **Basic Pickleball Strategy**

- a: Serve deep and in the middle.*
- b: Return the serve deep and in the middle*
- c: Third shot drop, (putting the ball low over the net and in the "no volley zone".*
- d: The team that controls the net controls the game.*
- e: Learn to play soft.*
- F: Risk vs Reward*

## **Basic Strokes**

- 1) *SERVE*: A serve is used to put the ball in play.
  - a) The serve must be made underhand, paddle making contact below the waist.
  - b) The serve is started with at least one foot touching the ground behind the baseline.
  - c) No foot may touch inbounds or on the service line until after the ball is struck.
  
- 2) *SERVICE RETURN*: A ground stroke deep and in the middle of the court.
  
- 3) *DROP SHOT*: Hitting the ball from the baseline, dropping it low, just over the net, landing in the "no volley zone". By successfully hitting the ball low into the "no volley zone", you make it difficult for your opponents to attack and allows your team to approach the "no volley line".
  
- 4) *DINK*: The dink is a short shot at the net, hit from your "no volley zone" to your opponents' "no volley zone".
  - a) Why dink? A player dinks to control the net.
  - b) Who dinks at the net? (high level players)
  - c) Good dinkers show patience.
  - d) Proper technique:
    - Bend at the knees.
    - Swing at the shoulder.
    - After a dink, bring paddle back to ready position.
    - Anticipate where your opponent will hit the ball.
    - Move to the bounce.
    - Try to hit your opponent's dink before it bounces when possible.
  
- 5) *DEFENSIVE VOLLEY*: Redirect a smashed ball before it bounces, returning it over the net.
  - a) Keep your paddle chest high when anticipating a volley at the "no volley line".
  - b) Push the ball forward upon contact.
  - c) Force the ball downward upon contact, toward your opponent's feet.
  
- 6) *LOB SHOT*: Lifting the ball high over the net so that it lands deep, close to the baseline.
  - a) This forces your opponent away from the net.
  - b) When hitting a lob shot, swing through the ball.

- 7) *OVERHEAD SLAM: Used to return a lob shot or errant high return.*
- a) *Move to the ball and get set (balanced).*
  - b) *Swing in a throwing motion using shoulder, elbow, and wrist.*
  - c) *Big swing with a follow through.*
  - d) *Hit with power.*
- 8) *GROUND STROKE: Forehand,*
- a) *Step toward the ball, planting the foot opposite your paddle hand.*
  - b) *Keep wrist firm.*
  - c) *Transfer weight forward as swing begins.*
  - d) *Make contact out in front.*
  - e) *Swing through the ball in an upward motion.*
- 9) *BACKHAND:*
- a) *Move feet to proper position (right foot forward if right handed).*
  - b) *Rotate right shoulder forward and paddle position back.*
  - b) *Follow through using shoulder and pelvis to meet ball.*
  - c) *Make contact with an upward swing and follow through with paddle.*
  - d) *Shift weight from back foot to front foot as contact is made.*

**IMPROVE BASIC SKILLS BY USING BASIC DRILLS**  
**AND THE FOUR RULES OF LEARNING A PHYSICAL SKILL**

**DEMONSTRATION**

**IMITATION**

**CORRECTION**

**REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION**

Serve: Players hit the ball against the wall. Next, have players serve the ball over the net aiming at the service court.

Drop Shot: Players stand at the baseline tossing the ball over the net using a big underhand swinging motion, aiming at the “no volley zone”. Next, drop and hit the ball from the “no volley line” aiming at the “no volley zone”. Finally, moving back, just in front of the baseline, this hitting drill is repeated.

Dink: Stress, using good dinking skills. Players hit the ball against the wall standing 7’ away. Now, hit the ball back and forth with a partner using the wall. Next, have players hit the ball with a partner over the net with the “no volley zone” as the target.

Volley: Have players volley against the wall standing seven feet away. Next, volley with a partner off the wall. Finally, volley the ball back and forth over the net with a partner.

Overhead Slam: Players stand 15’ from the wall as they toss the ball 8’ into the air hitting it in a downward motion. Repeat this drill but this time hitting the ball over the net from 15’ away.

Lob: Have students bounce and hit lob shots high off the wall from 10' away using correct form. Next, hit high lobs over the net from the "no volley line" aiming just inside the baseline.

Ground Stroke: Practice hitting both forehand and backhand groundstrokes, first against the wall without and then with a partner, followed by hitting over the net with a partner.

**Acquiring equipment:**

*a: Smash Pickleball*

*www.smashpickleball.com*

*b: Pickleball Central*

*Kent Washington*

*(888) 854-0163*

*pickleballcentral.com*

*c: Any thrift store near your home or school.*

*d: Badminton standards and nets can work well.*

**How can I make pickleball work at my school?**

Think about designing outside courts. Talk to your principal about placing outdoor courts in a corner of your parking lot or playground. They can be used in the fall and spring and be shared with students for lunchtime activities, after school sports, or recess. If you are successful with your request, make sure that you map out your courts taking into consideration safety concerns such as obstacles that might hinder play as well as the location of the sun in the sky hindering vision. Give your maintenance department a detailed map so that there will be no mistakes. Think big (8 courts). Pickleball can be played on tennis courts although net height and dimensions of the court using service courts are slightly different.

**Ideas to share after session:**

*1: Best grading system ever.*

*2: Using the community for support. (grocery stores, ice skating rinks, golf ranges, kayaking, curling clubs, fitness centers).*

*3: Health and Fitness Class in a health club setting using fitness trackers.*

*4: Challenge another class to a cross-country race.*

*5: Team teach*

*6: "College Bound Scholarships"*

*7: Every physical education program should include alternative activities so students understand that physical education is more than just hitting, shooting, kicking, running, catching, and throwing. Why not include dance? Come on, you can do it. Give it a try.*

*8: Create a brochure promoting your program.*

*9: Golden fist bumps no high fives during cold and flu season. LOL*

