



## From the Picklehood

August 2023

By Jack Hodges

### Ten Magical Minutes

We're known as the Garden Island. Mother Nature on steroids. Unsurpassed beauty in the middle of the Pacific. A couple of weeks ago, when I arrived at the courts early, I decided to take some time to really appreciate the surroundings and gifts we tend to overlook when focusing, instead, on fading blended lines, soiled courts, lack of shade, loose windscreens and aging portable nets.

First things first. I set up our net. It definitely had seen better days. Psithurism, defined as the sound of wind whispering through the trees, came to mind as a ten-mile-an-hour breeze was doing a drying number on pickleball court rain puddles. Squeegees would finish the job. Just not right away. I was in appreciation mode.

The early morning sun flooded the courts with golden light and in the distance, Albezia trees caught that sunlight and held on tight. White puffy clouds scraping across that same Albezia tree line made me realize what a great numerator the sky can be. Cloud Nine kind of stuff.

I tuned in to the songs of our red crested cardinal friends perched somewhere in the nearby trees. Oftentimes, the wind just whips those songs away. Not that morning. Soon our pickleball bags would be inspected for snacks. Small price to pay for a serenade.

I come from a time when dads didn't play catch with their sons. In the distance, a man and young boy were doing just that. They looked connected and happy. Mom was my catcher. Great instruction on throwing the four-seam fastball



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My takeaway.....I was fully present and appreciative of my surroundings for ten magical minutes. No concerns about court conditions, equipment issues, the sun and wind. No worries about aches and pains. No thoughts about what part of my game needed work that morning. When our first game started, I was already prepared to appreciate the little things that make this game of pickleball so great.....genuine smiles, game and sideline banter, sharing stories between matches, welcoming visitors, the thwack of balls off paddles, good playing advice and, not necessarily in order of importance, what we were going to have for lunch. Sometimes just thinking of a chorizo breakfast burrito is enough to get you through that last game of the day.

Anyway, a day of pickleball can start off any way you want, but will always end with the genuine sound of people having fun. That's my theory and I'm sticking to it.

Happy August, 2023.

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## Previous Month's Articles:

- [Jan '23](#)
- [Feb '23](#)
- [Mar '23](#)
- [Apr '23](#)
- [May '23](#)
- [Jun '23](#)

[Jul '23](#)

- [Jan '22](#)
- [Feb '22](#)
- [Mar '22](#)
- [Apr '22](#)
- [May '22](#)
- [Jun '22](#)

- [Jul '22](#)
- [Aug '22](#)
- [Sep '22](#)
- [Oct '22](#)
- [Nov '22](#)
- [Dec '22](#)

[Dec '21](#)

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