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From the Picklehood

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By Jack Hodges

"A good day of pickleball is inspired by, and fueled by, love and knowledge of the game. There are no limitations except the ones you put on yourself."

Sorry for the late submission. This has been a busy month. Actually more like two months. On going house improvements continue. One wrong sized window delivery slowed the process. Don't even get me started on the new front door replacement and the on and off scheduling. Add in rehab for an arm and foot injury, dealing with other health issues, serving on a couple of committees not connected with pickleball and, finding time to enjoy pickleball again after not playing for eight weeks—well, you get the picture.

Sometimes life just gets in the way.....

To be honest, I write more for myself than for others. I'm a very literal person and literal doesn't disguise itself well as creative, clever or even entertaining. So, in actuality, I'm a beat reporter and my beat is the Garden Island. Thusly, this column. I report the pickleball news and if I make an attempt—on the courts—to discuss your mental approach to a game, or, adjustments you might make technically or strategically, please understand that said advice comes rarely. I understand how unwelcome advice can leave you feeling judged and criticized, but also understand we learn by our mistakes and sometimes it's good to have them pointed out. More on that at another time. Best to leave the technique, strategy and philosophy to this column.

Most of us play for the fun and exercise. A good pickleball day means we got ourselves to the courts. We look at our surroundings and smile. We're with friends and they are smiling too. A few dad jokes are circulating and everyone's laughing. We forget the game score at least two or three times—each game. Who cares!! That one low percentage drive shot down the line was netted again, but we'll try it again knowing percentages don't matter in a fun game. We are outside with friends, the Tylenol is working, somebody brought snacks and the exercise is good. Very good. These are the things that, to me, give special value to this fun game with the funny name.

Being injured and not able to play has its advantages. These past two months I've had a chance to sit and observe. Really observe. You all are doing a tremendous job. Our venue ambassadors and coordinators are the best. The individual improvement—technically and mentally—has been wonderful to see. Social interaction is a "10". It's rewarding to see locals drive a good distance just to play in a different Hood. Visitors continue to be welcomed. Some players remember what a rally "reset" means. Some still dink. Imagine that!! Most know the rules. We're thankful for the venue improvements and others on the books. The dad jokes continue to get better. And, we're all doing our best to insure that everyone leaves the courts having had a good pickleball day.

Jack Hodges

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