



PAK President's Report December 2022

NEWS

-President's Report

-December 2022

2022: IT'S A WRAP!

It's December. The year has passed so quickly. Pickleball continues to grow exponentially in the world and on Kauai. We welcome the new players but are finding that court space is becoming more critical in order to handle the demand for play. In Kalawai, the large number of

players are overwhelming the four courts available. This has caused players to find alternative sites to play. Some players have chosen play at Kalena Park on Saturdays. The three temporary Kalena courts are on a basketball court, face the wrong way, are windy, and too short for safe play. Yet, players flock there to play with waiting lines 16-20 people deep while 12 play. At the Lihue courts next to Wilcox School, the Lihue Pickleball Ohana has 78 people on its Team Reach message list to play on what may be the worst surfaces of any tennis court on Kauai. They get a steady stream of visitors because of their famous hospitality, including monthly pot lucks for players having a birthday that month. Players at Hanapepe and Kekaha overwhelm the available courts with their numbers. All the venues require that someone who owns a portable net show up so others may play. In Kalaheo gym, a PAK member has taken it upon himself to shepherd newbies into the game. He has grown the players from an initial four to more than 30 and will be hosting a fun tournament for them this month.

We know that the game is low barrier, easy to learn, and fun to play. We know that numbers are growing and will continue to grow. Sadly, we also know that growth will cause normally friendly picklers to protect their playing time by being less inviting to locals and visitors, and newbies wanting to learn the game. A good example happened in Kapaa recently. There are four temporary courts there, and one day there were thirty plus picklers. Two tennis players showed up, and the picklers gave up a tennis court (two pickleball courts) for them to play on as a courtesy. (County rules say first come-first served for 45 minutes of play.) This resulted in the picklers all playing on two courts, with a 45 minute wait time before they could play another game. Plain and simple, we need more courts and we needed them yesterday.

In November, after 11 months of internal negotiations, we discovered that our prime location target for our alpha courts were classified conservation, making it impractical to pursue a permit for construction on. We are now in active pursuit of state, county, or private venues to improve or construct courts on. We have the assistance of our elected officials in navigating the governmental maze and hurdles, but we know it is a long, tedious process. Nadine Nakamura and Jimmy Tokioka have been very helpful with State facilities. Addison Bulosan and Mel Rapozo have stepped forward with pledges of their support on the Kauai County Council side. We continue to monitor opportunities wherever they may be found to fulfill our mission. We know that some players will die before they get to play on crack-free surfaces, with clear white boundary lines, and dedicated nets. And yet we push on. Our dedicated Board of Directors continue to meet and stay the course. I am so thankful for their work and commitment to our cause. I look forward to the day we can all be at our ribbon cutting ceremony on our pickleball facility. It certainly has been, and will continue to be, something worth fighting for. Please take the time to thank our board members for their tireless efforts on your behalf.

As for me, we will end the year celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary with all of our children and grandchildren in Palm Springs. We hope to play pickleball at Indian Wells nearby. I have to thank my wife Jennie for letting me play pickleball as often as I do, and attend to my duties as President of PAK. Mahalo for a wonderful fifty years.

Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year! See you in 2023!

Nolan