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From the Picklehood

July 2023

By Jack Hodges

The Evolution Of A Pickleball Venue - Kalawai Park

Locals and visitors alike oftentimes ask how a particular location on Kaua'i became a pickleball venue. Kalawai Park in Kalaheo was the subject of such a question a few times these past few weeks, so for the record.....



The two tennis court facility at Kalawai Park was first used for organized pickleball play on the afternoon of March 31, 2017. Look closely and you will see makeshift chalked lines. We played for two hours. Eight players attended. Pictured: Barbara Howard, Theresa Della Lana, Dick Furtado (visitor) and Mike Folster. The tennis net was used. Slide the top of the center strap over ten net squares and you have 34 inches in height (locals measurement).



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After a month of play, we received permission to paint permanent lines. Date: May 3, 2017. Our work crew did a nice job (locals paint crew).



Job well done. By then, a few of us had portable nets. No need to slide over the center strap. Less stink eye from the tennis crowd (which, by the way, included most of us).



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County was going to resurface the facility and create four blended lines pickleball courts on the two tennis courts. A shared venue with the best pickleball playing surface on the island. Taken August 3, 2018.



The new facility was completed mid-October 2018. Beautiful shared facility with the tennis community.



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We enjoyed the new facility, welcomed players from all parts of the island as well as off-island visitors. Popular and crowded.



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We formed lasting friendships.



Played through the Pandemic.



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Hosted Important Pickleball People.
Top Row. Third from Left: Rusty Howes from Pickleball channel



Celebrated milestones.



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Hosted tournaments. Thanks [pakauai.org](https://www.pakauai.org) and Kaua'i Recreation Department.



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...and, maintained our own courts.
Thanks Stefanie and Jules
from www.sunsolutionskauai.com

Six enjoyable years of pickleball at Kalawai Park. I look forward to being able to recount the history of our other pickleball venues on Kaua'i and I thank our wonderful island pickleball ambassadors—Lucia Bartels, Mike Wellman and Nolan Ahn for their hard work on and off the courts. Let's also not forget the pickleball advancements we have enjoyed recently because of the efforts of the Pickleball Association of Kaua'i's Board of Directors as well as the support of the County of Kaua'i. Like the game itself, improved venues are a work in progress and we are progressing.

Happy July, 2023.

Jack Hodges District Ambassador - State of Hawaii
Kaua'i Resident

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