

10 PICKLEHOOD RESOLUTIONS.....or what would be nice to see more of in 2023.

1. The return of the Pickleball Handshake. It's a sign of respect and takes a whole five seconds longer!! Four handle ends meeting in one singular tap. At the net. End of a game. Covid played a big part in the transition away from the tapshake. So did laziness. It's a unique acknowledgment characteristic of a unique sport. Do it right....even if you're solo on this one.

2. A re-commitment to the third shot drop....or at least a better understanding of percentages. In a recent study of a particular PRO pickleball series of games, it was found that out of 563 third shots, 541 were kept in play. 41% dropped in the kitchen. 55% cleared the net and were volleyed back (return a little higher than desired). 4% were hit into the net. Only 22 of 563 third shots did not clear the net. The takeaway? It is much more advantageous to keep the rally alive. The opponent still has to return the third shot, which means you have a chance to hit another ball. The ball into the net....no chance. Remember: The net is not your friend.

3. Introduce others to the game. More to talk about in those gatherings with friends and family.

4. Warming up properly before your first game. Sixty seconds is asking for trouble. You all know what a proper five minute warm-up entails. In between games, get up when you know you are close to being next. Do a little bit of stretching. Same while you're on the court. Find time to stretch between points.

5. Indoor play is a plus-plus. Not perfect, but neither is outdoor play. The rainy season is upon us and the chance to exercise and have fun indoors during those rain days is paramount.

6. Piggybacking on the above comment, try playing at more than one venue. Become familiar with the other venues and groups of players who frequent those places to play. Yes, we've gravitated to certain skill levels at certain locations, but no one should be turned away. It's a Picklehood.

7. Study the Rule Book. There are new rule changes for 2023. Keep up to date.

8. Make a concerted effort to socialize with fellow players off the courts. Lunch after playing? You'll be surprised (and happy) with what you learn about fellow players. We have all lived interesting lives and have stories to share. I know, Covid has been a hindrance in this area as well.

9. Let's all lobby for more Kaua'i tournaments in 2023.

10. And finally.....Be thankful for friendships made, seeing yourself and others improve, our fellow players going off island and representing in tournaments elsewhere, the influx of visitors bringing their skills to our island and the wonderful new Koloa dedicated pickleball venue soon to open. Let's also give thanks for good health that keeps us on the courts playing this "fun sport with the funny name." It really has changed our lives.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

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