

From The Picklehood

June, 2023

Lots happening in and around the picklehood. For your information.....

.....If you don't subscribe (free) to The Dink Newsletter, you should do so. A wealth of information in 5 minutes. Three times a week to your email. Did I mention FREE.

.....Did you know that our city of Honolulu ranks 4th (in the United States) in number of pickleball courts per capita? Seattle, Washington ranks first.

.....Have you played at our brand new facility in Koloa? Opened a month ago. I hope the County is going to finish the project with windscreens on the fences. Wind is a big factor and a solid dark color background will aid in seeing the ball better.

.....Looking for a better pre-game warm-up drill? A drill that is more game like? Try the walkaway drill. Five minutes total. You and your opponent directly across the net begin dinking. One of you starts to walkaway from the net (moving backwards, one step each time) working on dropping the ball in the kitchen. When you get to the baseline, do a couple of third-shot-drops and then start moving forward one step at a time. The partner across the net stays at the kitchen line continuing to hit you the ball you have returned. Anytime a shot is not executed, resume the drill from where you were standing. Once the person doing the walkaways has finished the circuit, his/her rally partner will do the same on the other side of the net. Your doubles partner and his/her opponent are doing the same drill on their half of the court. Much better game preparation. Five minutes.

.....You know I'm always going to write about the lob. This month's tip (from The Dink newsletter). The **safest spot to aim your lob** is over your opponent's backhand shoulder, preferably along the sideline. That way if your lob comes up short, you're not feeding them an easy overhead. If you can get the ball to bounce behind them, you have forced them back to square one, the need to hit a drop shot from deep on the court.

.....Former Hawaii resident, good friend and excellent player Jeaney Garcia visited the 'hood' last week. She currently lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Jeaney also has a pickleball travel company that is worth taking a look at. Her tours go to Costa Rica, Madrid (Spain—for the Spanish Open), Argentina and other future locations. Google pickleballlyfe.com

.....I taught a “Mental Side of Sports” class for 10 years at Saddleback College. I had men and women athletes from most every team sport (and regular students as well) in my class. On day one of the semester, I would walk in and write this on the board. “_____ doesn’t guarantee success, but without it you don’t stand a chance.” Know what one word filled in the blank? “Preparation.” The premise for the semester was set. If you’re prepared, you’re ready. You’re confident. May not guarantee a win, but you know where you stand based on your preparation. So prepare. Practice. Drill often. Drill strengths and weaknesses. I guarantee one more thing.....you’ll have more fun as well.

.....piggybacking on the above paragraph, a couple of other things to remember. You play to exercise, have fun and enjoy this game with friends. That in itself can be enough. If you also play to get better, than remember, you are responsible for your pickleball ‘game.’ If you allow it, you encourage it. Allow yourself the opportunity to improve. Read, watch videos, practice and play often. You will be encouraged by the results.

.....I end this column in remembrance of friend and fellow pickleball player Alan Fujikawa. Alana passed peacefully in late May. So many wonderful memories of her time on the courts. One, in particular, stands out. Alana and fellow Kauaian doubles partner Judy Honda won the gold medal in women’s doubles 60+ at the 2015 Aloha State Games Senior Olympics played in Kona. These medals were the **first EVER awarded in pickleball** at the Hawaii Senior Olympics. Will never forget that medal ceremony. Our Pickleball ‘Ohana condolences to husband Dean. You two were a pickleball force to be reckoned with.

Happy June, 2023.

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