

A few updates to share.

The June 21<sup>st</sup> Summer Solstice Play & Stay will begin with the round robin play at 4 pm. The “tournament” is full but there will be four courts available for drop-in play if you are not in the round robin. You do not need to participate in the round robin to join the after-party on the deck. More details on this event soon.

A new 3-day pickleball camp has been added by Engage for July 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>. See the attached flier for details. Sign up on the Engage Pickleball Camps website.

The various 1-hour skills clinics with Sylvain are attracting great participation. Get details and sign up at the clubhouse, 775.832.1235.

Wristbands at check in are now being used to better monitor participation rates. Check in every time you play even if you have a season pass.

### **Rule Review: Sez Who?**

Any player can, and should, call a service foot fault, a short serve, or a kitchen violation if you see one. Other than those calls, you have limited rights when calling balls out of bounds. Players may call balls out of bounds only when they see the ball hit the ground completely outside of the court lines on their own side of the net. You are not permitted to call a ball out - or good - on the opponent’s side of the net.

Suppose you hit a ball close to the opponent’s sideline. You see the ball hit the line, but your opponent calls it out. You say, hell no, that ball was good. Guess what, the ball is still out. That was a good call because the opponent called it as he saw it on his side of the court.

Suppose in that same situation, your opponent calls it out, but his partner says it was good. That ball is good. Whenever there is doubt or disagreement between the two players on their side of the court, the ball is good.

You are not always powerless. If the opponent did not see your ball land, or is unsure what he saw, instead of making a call he may ask for your opinion. Aha, the plot thickens, and you are now in charge. Whatever you say at that point prevails. If you say it looked good, then it was good. If you say you didn’t see it or aren’t sure, then there is doubt and the ball cannot be ruled out, so it is good. If you saw it out and admit it, then your out call prevails. You were invited by the opponent to make the call and he must abide by your answer.

Sometimes an opponent will call your ball out. Then, being a nice guy and all, one who likes to keep peace, he may ask you what you saw. Now it gets a bit stickier. He is asking you to accept or veto his original call. If you clearly saw it was good, you can say so and your good call stands because there is doubt. But if you did not see it clearly, you say so and the opponent’s original “out” call stands.

Suppose your opponent calls your ball out, then someone on the side bench who was watching your game says it was good. That ball is out. No spectator can override a call and really shouldn’t be invited to weigh in.

There are a few ethical issues in calling balls out. It’s a fast game and we don’t see every shot clearly. Good players aren’t looking at the lines so much as they are watching the ball and preparing for their next shot. Also, it is much easier to see a ball land out if you are standing

near the line and not looking across the court at the other side line. That's why the rules require that you make close calls in favor of the opponents.

There is no remedy for bad calls. Do-overs are not in the rules. Just suck it up and hit a better shot next time.

What kind of player do you want to be? One who everyone says makes fair calls, or one with a reputation for making bad calls? It's more rewarding to win a game with good shots than with bad calls.

### **Playing Tip: Poaching isn't just for Eggheads**

Poaching is when the forward player crosses in front of his partner to take a shot. It is a good tool for a partnership to have. It surprises the opponents and converts your partner's expected defensive return into your offensive shot. But it isn't easy to master and to know when to use it. And the poacher needs to put the shot away for a winner or risk losing the rally to the other team that sees half the opponent's court is now wide open.

What I see most often is that a very aggressive and impatient player gets paired with a partner who is more moderate in pace and shows patience for the soft game. The aggressive player can't help himself, poaching early and often. It works at the start, but it becomes predictable and, if not a mutual team strategy, could disenfranchise the moderate partner. The opponents catch on pretty quickly. You can be sure that any time the moderate player misses a shot, his partner will poach the next shot. Be ready.

A good time to poach is when you are forward, and the opponents are drilling at your partner, keeping her back near the baseline. The rally goes back and forth a bit and you become a spectator until, bingo, you make your move with quick feet and a good reach, and cut off the next shot, surprising the opponents and likely ending the point.

Regular poachers have a lot of tells. They show impatience in their behavior, they lean their weight toward the center preparing to spring across the court. They often hold their paddle a bit higher than usual, getting ready to reach while springing sideways. And they tend not to huddle with their partner about strategy, just taking the initiative to get control and put their team's fate in their own hands.

Use poaching wisely, sparingly, and with your partner's agreement for a better outcome.

**See you on the courts!**

*Bev and Doug Keil*

775-741-7208

[inclinepickleball@gmail.com](mailto:inclinepickleball@gmail.com)