Pickleball Rules

The following is a summary of rules and regulations for Intramural Pickleball. It is not the complete set of rules but includes those rules most frequently in question. All other rules are deferred to the International Federation of Pickleball rulebook. Some alterations may have been made specifically for WWU Campus Recreation. A complete list of our policies and procedures can be found in the Intramural Sport Participant Handbook. Questions can be directed to the Intramural Sports Office during normal business hours at intramurals@wwu.edu.

All participants must have their physical WWU ID in order to participate in any and all Intramural Sports. Please read the Intramural Participant Handbook for more participation policies.

Facility

All Intramural Pickleball games are played in one of the Carver Gym courts. Your game schedule on IMLeagues will indicate which court you will be playing on. Should you need assistance locating your court, please ask the on-duty Intramural Sports Supervisor in the blue polo. The address for Carver is: 516 High St, Bellingham, WA 98225

Teams

No Intramural Pickleball team can have more than 1 player that is on a sport club roster on their intramural roster. They also cannot have any players who are on the varsity roster for that specific sport. Please read the Intramural Participant Handbook for more participation policies.

Open

Teams consist of 2 players with a minimum of 2 required to start the game. A team can have a maximum of 4 players on their roster. There are no gender requirements for open games, all are welcome to participate together!
**Equipment**

A player wearing illegal equipment may not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the Intramural Sports staff, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment or substances which will always be declared illegal include:

- Jewelry
- Hats of any kind
- Exposed metal
- Hard plastic braces or casts
- Non-closed toed or non-athletic shoes
- Jeans or other non-athletic apparel
- Anything the onsite supervisor deems as unsafe

**Gameplay**

**Rules Summary**

- The ball is served underhanded and diagonally to the opponent’s service court without bouncing it off the court.
- Points are scored by the serving side only and occur when the opponent faults (fails to return the ball, hits ball out of bounds or into the net, etc.)
- The server continues to serve, alternating service courts, until the serving side faults
- The first side scoring 21 points and leading by at least a 2-point margin wins
  - You must win by 2 points
- Following the serve, each side must make at least one ground-stroke prior to volleying the ball (hitting it before it has bounced)
- Non-Volley Zone (also known as the kitchen): A player cannot volley a ball while standing within the non-volley zone.

**Serving**

- Serving must be underhand
- Paddle contact with the ball must be below the server’s waist
- You must start the serve with at least one foot behind the baseline and neither foot can contact the baseline or court until after you hit the ball
- The serve should be diagonal crosscourt and must land in the opposite diagonal court
- You only get one serve attempt unless you hit the ball into the net and it lands on the other side in the proper service court (known as a “let”)

**Serving Sequence**

- Both players on each team of a doubles game get to serve until they commit a fault
  - The exception is the first service of each game, where only one player from the initial serving team gets to serve before service passes to the other team
- Every time service changes sides, the first serve is from the right hand court
- Every time you score, you switch sides of the court for your next serve
- In doubles play, when the first server loses the serve, the partner moves to serve from the same side of the court their partner had last served from
- In singles play, the server serves from the right side of the court when their score is even and from the left side when their score is odd

**Scoring**

- Points are scored each rally, regardless of which team is serving
- Games are generally played to 21 and you must win by 2

Updated: 11/02/2022
● Each game will be the best 2 out of 3

**Double Bounce Rule**

● When the ball is served, the receiving team must let it bounce before returning it, and the serving team must let it bounce before returning as well.
● After the initial two returns, no bounces are mandatory. You may then hit the ball with a ground stroke where the ball bounces first or with a volley where no bounce occurs.

**Volleying**

● Volleys isn’t allowed within the non-volley zone, an area of the court within 7 feet of the net on both sides, marked with a line on pickleball courts. It is also known as the “kitchen”.
● Volleying isn’t allowed within the non-volley zone, preventing smashes from the net.
● It is a fault to step in the non-volley zone or even on the line when volleying.
● It is a fault when your momentum carries you into the kitchen or causes you to touch the line after a volley.
● You may be in the non-volley zone at any other time as long as you’re not volleying the ball.

**Line Calls**

● Balls contacting any line, except the non-volley zone line on a serve, are considered in.
● Serves contacting the non-volley zone line are short and cause a fault.

**Faults**

A fault occurs when:

● A serve does not land within the receiving court
● The ball is hit into the net on the serve or any return
● The ball is volleyed before a bounce has occurred on each side
● The ball is hit out of bounds
● The ball is volleyed from the non-volley zone
● The ball bounces twice before being struck by the receiver
● The player, player’s clothing, or any part of a player’s paddle touches the net or the net post when the ball is in play
● There is a violation of a service rule
● A ball in play strikes a player or anything the player is wearing or carrying
● A ball in play strikes any permanent object before bouncing on the court

**Determining Serving Team**

The first serve is determined by a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss will have the option to choose a side or to serve or receive.

**Injury and Blood Rule**

Campus Recreation does not provide accident insurance coverage for injuries received by Intramural Sports participants. Each participant should make sure they have their own coverage prior to participating. Injuries are a possibility. Campus Rec Intramural Sports assumes no responsibility for injuries. However, basic First Aid will be available.

A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has any amount of blood on his/her uniform or on the player shall be considered an injured player. No player will be permitted to enter or reenter the game as long as there is blood on his/her jersey or uniform.

Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.

Updated: 11/02/2022
*Intramural sports staff has the right to withhold a player from play*

**Sportsmanship**

The Sportsmanship Rating System is intended to be an objective scale by which teams’ attitude and behavior can be assessed throughout the regular season and the playoffs. Behavior before, during, and after an Intramural Sports contest is included in the rating. The team captain is responsible for educating and informing all players and spectators affiliated with their team about the system. Furthermore, the team is responsible for the actions of the individual team members and spectators related to it.

At the conclusion of each contest, the Intramural Sports staff present will assign each team a Sportsmanship rating based on a grading scale of “1-5”. These assignments are nonnegotiable and will not be changed after being entered into IMLeagues.

**5 pts- Above and Beyond Conduct and Sportsmanship:** Players work to create a fun, inclusive, and welcoming space for everyone on the field/court. They keep a positive attitude and ensure their pace is clean after their game. These teams embody what Intramural Sports strives to be through good sportsmanship and friendly competition. They show no descent towards any of the intramural sports staff or participants and go above and beyond what is asked of teams.

**4 pts- Good Conduct and Sportsmanship:** Players cooperate fully with the officials and Intramural Sports staff. The captain is the only player to converse about rule interpretations and calls and does so in a polite and respectful manner. The captain also has full control of their teammates. Team is respectful to their opponents, officials, scorekeepers, spectators and Intramural Sports staff.

*Teams who default will receive a 4-sportsmanship rating*

**3 pts- Average Conduct and Sportsmanship:** Team members complain about decisions made by the Officials and/or show minor dissention. Team members show minor disrespect to someone involved in the contest.

**2 pts- Below Average Conduct and Sportsmanship:** Team shows verbal dissent towards officials And/or the opposing team. Captain exhibits minor self-control and little or no control over their team.

**1 pts- Poor Conduct and Sportsmanship:** Players constantly comment to the officials and/or opposing Team from the playing area or sidelines. Team captain has no self-control and no control over their team's actions.

**0 pts- Very Poor Conduct and Sportsmanship:** Team is completely uncooperative. Captain has no Control over teammates and/or themselves.

*Teams who no show
*3 Unsportsmanlike infractions or game forfeiture.

Any player that is ejected during an intramural sports game will be removed from the game. Please see the ejection process outlined in the Intramural Sport Participant Handbook to review the process of returning to play.

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