



January 2024



Guest Column

There's no doubt Jane Linton is an accomplished pickleball player, but she's also a kind and generous person.

Jane asked if she could submit a column she revised from an earlier tennis publication and target it to pickleball. I said "sure". After all, this applies to any sport, and to everyday life itself.

I'm in favor of anything that helps advance the sport of pickleball and brings people together, so read this and give Jane kudos for putting herself out there.

I love everything pickleball, but most of all, I love complementary pickleball. Let me explain why.

While switching sides in mixed doubles several years ago, my male opponent said to me, "Jane, you're just like one of the guys." He said it in a friendly and positive way. I smiled and said "thanks."

I felt complimented. I was playing well and knew he wasn't challenging my femininity. I recognized the compliment from his perspective and acknowledged it by thanking him. Had I not understood his intent or approach to communication, I might have been confused, embarrassed, maybe even insulted, which seems to happen many times in mixed doubles.

Take, for example, the otherwise socially adjusted couple who decides to play an occasional Sunday morning game of mixed doubles together. What happens many times is that they start out on friendly terms but with no regard as to which method of communication or approach to pickleball each will be using. Typically, one partner is playing with a masculine or more competitive approach to communication and pickleball, while their partner may be playing and communicating with a more feminine or social approach. By the end of the game they're arguing over whose ball it is, whose side of the court it is, and whose idea this was in the first place. Their communication is mixed up, definitely not complementary! So, what is it that determines complementary pickleball?

It helps to look at the dynamics that play out on the court. First, there are two approaches in any communication: feminine and masculine. Each is effective and

men and women use both. It's important, however, to use the same approach as those with whom you want to communicate.

It's the same on the pickleball court. In order to have a mutually fulfilling game, all partners and opponents must be using the same approach.

So, exactly, how are these approaches different?

The masculine approach is task-and goal-oriented: you work hard, and win or lose. It is competitive and non-emotional; not much chit chat on the changeover. Someone using this approach will joke, jab, and expect this type of response in return: "You're just like one of the guys, Jane." He was complimenting my competitive, masculine approach to pickleball. I acknowledged his compliment with "Thanks." A masculine approach and return, resulting in a win-win situation—a complement.

By contrast, the feminine approach is group-oriented, not task-oriented. It is social in nature, such as a little catching up among friends, while switching sides.

There is laughing and talking between and during points. This approach is not as competitive and not as concerned with finishing the game.

It helps to understand where these two approaches are learned. Driving by any elementary school playground during recess gives insight as to where these behaviors start. Children playing competitive games involving rules, like softball, soccer, and football are practicing masculine approaches. Children playing hopscotch, jumping rope, and swinging are obviously socializing.

It is possible to achieve complementary pickleball, tennis, or any sport by combining approaches.

Years ago, on a tennis court, I watched my then eleven-year-old daughter play a singles match against her best friend. The match lasted three hours and my daughter's friend finally won in a third set tie-breaker 9-7. They walked off the court giggling and bouncing, and my daughter said to me, "I'm glad Katie won, Mom, because it was her turn to win." Not only was she being a good sport, but the girls' reason for playing complemented each other. They both wanted to compete—playing three hours, which is masculine behavior—but the friendship and feelings for each other seemed more important than the actual game—feminine behavior. They were competing with the same approach to the game. Their approach was complementary.

Knowing both approaches gives you the advantage of being able to enlarge your circle of pickleball friends. If you've had the chance to play with people using both the feminine and masculine approaches, you will have that advantage. If you haven't, this might be a good time to take a drill on a new approach:

Drill No. 1—Recognize the masculine versus feminine approach to communication. Masculine is competitive, goal oriented, quick one liners, with no emotional attachment, winning versus losing. The feminine approach is group-oriented, social, non-competitive, more concerned with adjusting the game to protect feelings of others and isn't as concerned with finishing the game.

Drill No. 2—Remember neither one is more effective, just different. Women use both. Men use both.

Drill No. 3—And the final drill is to decide which shoes fit your feet.
Check out who's crosscourt and down the line.
Decide which paddle to use.
I guarantee you'll be complimenting your partner well before the timer goes off.

Arizona Peoples Pickleball League News

The New Year kicks off season league play for 27 women and one man from the Highlands. Following are the teams, their players and January schedule. Friends and fans are welcome to watch all games, but especially home matches!

Highlands Hotties

50+ 3.0 level Home games are played at Oro Valley Community Center

1/12	Prickley Pairs	Home	11:00 am
1/19	Legally Brined (18+)	Away	10:00 am
1/26	Dinkbats	Home	11:00 am
1/31	Dinkin at Abe's	Away	1:00 pm

Highland residents who are members of Hotties: De Hamann and Gail Epperson captains, Kimberly Bowman, Barbara Farr, Joni Hansen, Mo Larmour, Darlene Lawson, Katri Noid, Cyndi Thalman

Highlands Red Hots

65+ 3.0 level Home games are played at Oro Valley Community Center

1/12	Everything but the Kitchen Dink	Away	11:00 am
1/18	Paddle Up 2	Away	1:00 pm
1/22	Volley Llamas	Home	1:30 pm
1/31	Dill Me In	Away	2:15 pm

Highland residents who are members of Red Hots: Laurie Grossman and Shelly McDowell captains, Lisa Flesher, Daphne Hetherington, Joyce Krebill, Mo Larmour, Lisa Leiffer, Robin Levy, Shelly Maki, Barbara Olsen, Nicolette Smith, Cyndi Thalman

Highlands Hot Shots

Women 50+ 3.5 level Home games are played at The Gallery

1/5	The Pickle Pack	Away	2:00 pm
1/12	Paddle Up	Home	12:30 pm
1/15	Picklicious	Away	11:00 am
1/26	Hot Shots (65+)	Home	12:30 pm
1/28	Sun City Blazers	Away	3:00 pm

Highland residents who are members of Hot Shots: Marissa Buell and Helen Yarmoska captains, Cheryl Antognoni, Amy Haugen, Jane Linton, Melinda Norris and former Highlands resident, Coco Law

Classy Vlassics

50+ 4.0 level, Home games played at Oro Valley Community Center

1/3	Kitchen Heat	Home	1:30 pm
1/8	Dezert Gilas	Away	11:30 am
1/20	Soft Server 65+	Away	2:00 pm
1/31	Gallery GALS	Home	1:30 pm

Highland residents who are members of Classy Vlassics: Tara Macari

Oro Valley Tribe

Mixed 50+, 4.0 level, Home games played at Oro Valley Community Center

1 /4	Mixed Dinks	Away	2:00 pm
1/8	Gallery G N G	Home	11:00 am
1/15	Tubac Mixed	Away	1:00 pm
1/22	Mixed Dinks	Home	11:00 am

Highland residents who are members of Oro Valley Tribe: Tara Macari and Mike Frere.

Down the Hatch

Mixed 4.5 level, Home games played in Peoria, AZ, Away games in greater Phoenix area.

1/4	Mixed Nuts	Away	1:00 pm
1/8	Drivn U2 Dinking	Home	noon
1/15	Game On	Home	noon
1/12	Mixed Nuts	Home	noon

Highland residents who are members of Down the Hatch: Veronica Davis.

Best of Luck to all teams. Watch the newsletter for standings or go to the APPL website www.arizonapickleballplayersleague.org.

Shirts For Sale!



Recognize this? It's our Prickly Pickle logo adapted for T-shirts, hats, sofa cushions, beach towels - wherever you want this cool logo.

We're going to order T-shirts with this logo, but we still have to locate vendors, establish pricing, etc. We should have this info available in early January, so look for an email soon.

Anyone who's interested in coordinating sales would be a godsend, and Melinda Norris would be forever in your debt. If you'd like to take this on, contact Melinda at mjn616@hotmail.com.

From The Committees

Scheduling Committee

Important Announcement

The scheduling committee will be losing a member at the beginning of the year. Don't ask why.

If you're interested in working on this committee please contact:
scheduler@highlandspickleball.com or president@highlandspickleball.com

This is your chance to be important, help your fellow pickleball players, and generally do a good thing. Everyone will like you and thank you for your effort.

Another important announcement, this time regarding the upcoming HPA election!

Please note that we will vote electronically for the February 2024 election.

This will be the first of three notifications you will receive regarding the election process. Specific instructions on how to vote will be included in emails.

IF YOU WISH TO BE PLACED ON THE BALLOT FOR ONE OF THE THREE AVAILABLE VACANCIES YOU MUST SUBMIT YOUR NAME TO THE SECRETARY@HIGHLANDSPICKLEBALL.COM no later than 1 FEBRUARY, 2024.

The positions opening will be president, VP and member at large. Duties and responsibilities for each position can be found on our website under the bylaws section. The term for each position is two years.

You will also have the opportunity to write in candidates of your choice if they are not listed on the ballot.

To vote you will be notified to access a link and state your preferences. This link will accept ballots from 8 to 15 February, 2024. You will not be able to vote prior to or after these dates except as noted below.

Electronic voting will also be available onsite for 30 minutes prior to the annual meeting.

When voting we ask that you include your lot number to help us track the voting process. You do not place your name on the ballot for privacy reasons.

Just Regular Announcements

Social Committee

HPA Social Committee Events

- January 17, 2024, 3 PM - Annual event for New Members (2022 - 2023)
- February 18, 2024 - HPA Annual Meeting/Voting of new Officers
- April 10, 2024 - Migration north annual Pizza party
- July 4th celebration - Member breakfast potluck to celebrate the holiday
- November 6, 2024 - Welcome back snowbirds potluck

Competition Committee

Competition Committee - NEW Ladder League Coming

With the opening of the new pickleball courts, everyone in the Club is welcome to join us once a week as we trial a new HPA Ladder League in December and early January.

The purpose of Ladder League is to match players with others in the community with similar skill levels, making it more fun for everyone. Using the scores from the previous weeks' play, the Club will be able to match you more closely with similar players each and every week.

The first ladder will be Mixed play, including both men and women. Subsequent ladders will be Mens only then Womens only. The level of play scheduled first will depend on the number of sign ups received in the various categories. We hope to have enough court time and enough participants to trial 2 different levels of ladder play for approximately four weeks.

The following play categories should encompass everyone in the Highlands who is interested in participating.

1. Leisure (Beginner or just for fun)
2. Recreational (Looking to improve)
3. Competitive (wanting to play with better players)

4. High Competitive

More details on where and how to sign up will be coming once the scheduling committee has put the new courts into Court Reserve. Please plan to join us for this fun and exciting new event.

Marketplace

Reminder: This is the catchall section of The Prickly Pickle, and readers are encouraged to submit tournament results, stuff for sale, photos, etc. Submit your contributions to newsletter@highlandspickleball.com.

Tournament News

The Pickle-icious Jingle Jam tournament was held at The Gallery on December 2-3, 2023. Several teams from the Highlands competed.





Boys and Girls Clubs

Players from Pasqua Yaqui Boys and Girls club enjoying Taco Bell dinner at **ALL IN** Youth Pickleball event.



ALL IN is a volunteer organization that teaches children how to play pickleball. After learning, earning, and passing a test, they receive their own Gearbox donated paddle and were able to come to the year end celebration. Highlands Pickleball Association recently donated about 50 used balls to the Pasqua Yaqui group.

If you would like to volunteer contact Helen Yarmoska or Tom Harris.

Manchester City Update

I don't think it's much of a stretch to say that Man City is the best football team in the world. In 2023 they became the first English side to win the FA Cup, Premier League, Champions League, Super Cup and Club World Championship.

This season they're 4th in the real time Premier League table. Having won the Premier League three consecutive years, City are showing why it's hard to stay on top. This year their time of possession is down, scoring is down, and goals against are up. Their defense, which should be the best in the world, has become susceptible to counterattacks. Goals are lacking. Their midfield play has been loose and they're making lots of mental mistakes.

All is not lost, however. Today (12/27) they beat Everton at Goodison Park. Three mistakes on one possession led to an Everton goal and City were down 1-0 at the half.

But Pep Guardiola isn't the best coach in the world for nothing. City dominated the second half with 3 goals. City played with fire and determination and showed they're still a force to be reckoned with. There's still hope for a fourth title.

What's In A Name?

How would you like it if your name was Rambo, but everyone insisted on calling you Rodney? Now you know how the Byzantines and the Aztecs felt.

The Byzantines never called themselves anything other than Romans. "Byzantine" was a name foisted on them in the 16th century by Hieronymus Wolf.

Same with the Aztecs. They always called themselves "Mexica" (Meh-SHEE-ca). A Prussian by the name of Alexander von Humboldt (he of the Humboldt Current, Humboldt County, Cal Poly Humboldt, ad infinitum) decided to combine the words "Aztlan" (the Mexica homeland) with the Nahuatl word for "people", **tecatl**. Aztec.

Why did Humboldt do this? Why do people call Rambo Rodney? Unknown to me, but then neither the Byzantines nor the Aztecs existed as cultures by then, so who was going to complain?

Anyway, and I'm calling them Mexica from here on, the story of the Mexica and their collision with the Spanish is an extraordinary story that had enormous consequences worldwide, yet is little known, at least in this country.

When Hernan Cortez arrived on the Mexican coast, he was told not to do more than explore Mexico. He was specifically instructed not to spend a night away from his ships. So the first thing he did was attack the local coastal tribes and claim the territory for Spain. It was here that Cortez met and freed a Nahua slave girl who the Spanish named Malinche.

Malinche's importance cannot be overstated. She was apparently gifted in languages and became Cortez's translator, advisor, and later, lover. Her hatred of the Mexica also cannot be overstated. It's an open question about how much Malinche influenced Cortez and the Spanish against the Mexica, but let's be fair. It's hard to overstate how much Cortez in particular, and the Spanish in general, wanted the gold they thought the Mexica had.

The clash of cultures was never going to be peaceful. There's a reason Malinche hated the Mexica, and that was because the Mexica ruled an empire with extreme violence.

For example, there's the account of Tlacaxipehualiztli ("Flaying of Men").

Every year during the second month of the Mexica year - every year - prisoners of war had their hearts torn out, their bodies drained of blood, limbs chopped off, their thighs eaten, and best of all, the skin flayed from their bodies. This was done to appease their god Kvasnicatl.

So what did the Mexica do with the flayed skins? What anyone would do, of course. They wore them for 20 days. I mean, what else is there to do?

Finally, the Mexica took the hair of their victims, stuffed it in balls made of natural rubber, and played a game where two teams batted the ball over a net with a paddle or racket-like tool. We know little of this game other than the losers might have been sacrificed to Kvasnicatl.

The Spanish witnessed this and were horrified. Cortez and his men had recently massacred the city of Cholula, so it took a lot to horrify the Spanish. Bernal Diaz del Castillo wrote about the ceremony:

“After 20 days, the priests of Kvasnicatl removed the filthy, rotting skins from their bodies and buried the abominations at the base of their pagan temples. One of our number, a certain Garsea de Kvasnendez, swore that he would bring down the wrath of God on people such as these. Indeed, on la Noche Triste, de Kvasnendez volunteered for the rear guard and slew great numbers of the pagans, may they burn in hell forever.”

The Spanish, other Mexican nations and smallpox eventually destroyed the Mexica culture. Tlacaxipehualiztli is no more. Skins are safe. Now we eat chicken thighs, and hair is no longer used as ball filling. De Kvasnendez was killed by Maya on a gold hunting expedition to Honduras, which puts a fitting conclusion to the tale.