



Pickleball Alberta Update on Referee Training and Player Development December 1, 2017

Pickleball Alberta (PA) was formed to take the first step towards becoming a Provincial Sports Organization (PSO) so that our sport can more readily qualify for funding from Alberta Sports Connection. There is much to do, but we are on our way and with the continued support of clubs and players will get there! ([Alberta Sport PSO requirements](#)).

Pickleball Canada Organization (PCO) is working towards becoming a National Sports Organization (NSO) and PA is committed to working with PCO on that initiative.

Two New Committees Reporting to the Board

PA has established two committees reporting to Mike Cooper, Director at Large to tackle two of the key areas we need to develop: referee training & development; and player development & coaching. The central purpose of these committees is to represent Alberta as policies and programs are developed at the national level, formulate provincial policy and standards, coordinate training and communications, liaise with clubs and players.

Many thanks to Walter Buehler and Trevor Burndred for agreeing to lead up the referee training & development and to Peter Walker for agreeing to lead player development & coaching for Pickleball Alberta at this early stage.

Reach out to these committees at RefereeDevelopment@pickleballalberta.org and PlayerDevelopment@pickleballalberta.org. Your ideas, offers of assistance and support are welcome!

Player Development & Coaching

To qualify as a PSO we will need a program that “complies with appropriate leadership and training standards for instructors and coaches as those exemplified in the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) or equivalent program”. It will take a few years to accomplish this in conjunction with national efforts.

In the interim there is a great demand for training and player development specific to pickleball and PA has been asked for some guidance and advice on appropriate qualifications for a pickleball instructor, in the absence of a Canadian pickleball coaching certification program.

There are a number of factors that make a great coach including knowledge and expertise in skills specific to pickleball, as well as, expertise in broader aspects of coaching.

For these reasons PA recommends that clubs and players consider:

- ***Has the coach / instructor completed NCCP training which applies to all sports?*** NCCP offers several training modules that apply to more than one sport and will at some point be requirements for a Canadian pickleball coaching certification program. ([Alberta Sport Coaching information](#))
- ***Has the coach / instructor completed a recognized pickleball trainers program?*** PA has reviewed the International Pickleball Teaching Professionals Association (IPTPA), which is a four step process (taking a coaching clinic, passing an online test, skills test and an observed lesson). IPTPA certifies its instructors on how to teach/coach, to understand the rules of play, have a thorough knowledge and progression of strokes, strategies and shot selections specific to pickleball. At this time, certification standards have been set for beginner through to skill level 3.5. IPTPA is recognized by USAPA and is evolving rapidly. ([IPTPA Certification](#))

PA strongly encourages individuals who are interested in teaching pickleball in Canada to take NCCP training modules, if they haven't already completed them for another sport. We will be setting up links on the PA website to facilitate access to this information.

PCO is currently pursuing the development of a Sport for life, Long Term Athlete Development Plan and specific skills for pickleball. PA is in discussion with PCO on this initiative as we want to be part of that process. If you have questions about player development and coaching please contact either:

Mike Cooper – Director@pickleballalberta.org or

Peter Walker – PlayerDevelopment@pickleballalberta.org