

Evolution of Pickleball

What's the big "dill"?



Informational presentation by Reading Recreation to the
Select Board on 11.15.22

What is Pickleball?

An indoor or outdoor racket/paddle sport where two players (singles), or four players (doubles), hit a perforated hollow polymer ball over a 36-inch-high (0.91 m) net using solid-faced paddles. Opponents on either side of the net hit the ball back and forth until one side commits a rule infraction. Pickleball was invented in 1965 as a children's backyard game on Bainbridge Island, Washington, USA.





Pickleball Growth in the USA

- ▶ A 2022 report from the Sports & Fitness Industry Association called it the fastest growing sport in America, with 4.8 million players nationwide (a near 40 percent increase from 2020).
- ▶ Growth of total participants from 2020 to 2021 was the fastest among players under 24 years of age (21%)
- ▶ 60% of total participants are men and 40% are women; with a slightly faster rate of growth among women
- ▶ There are now an estimated 35,000 dedicated pickleball courts in the U.S., more than double the number from five years ago.

Reading Recreation and Pickleball



- ▶ Reading Recreation first began offering Pickleball in 2014
- ▶ Since 2014, Reading Recreation has offered 239 Pickleball Programs in addition to the usage of Free Play at Memorial Park through Play Local. Recreation also has purchased 2 Douglas Premier PPS-22SQ Heavy Duty Pickleball Net Systems to keep on the outdoor courts at Memorial.
 - ▶ Memorial Court bookings - courts are consistently booked out two weeks in advance
- ▶ Programming began at the Courts behind the playground @ the HS and eventually programming demands expanded and also occurred at the Tennis Courts @ Memorial Park, in the Coolidge Gym, Joshua Eaton Gym, Birch Meadow Gym, RMHS Field House & Parker Gym
- ▶ There have been a total of 2,141 program enrollments (these are not unique participants - there are duplicates)
- ▶ Due to lack of indoor play space - we often have extensive waitlists for our indoor offerings

Town of Reading current pickleball facilities



**Memorial Park
4 Courts**



**RMHS
4 Courts**

Staff & Rec Committee ideas for expansion

- ▶ Sturges Park (multi-use or dedicated facility)
- ▶ Barrows (multi-use or dedicated facility. Game play cannot happen during school hours.)
- ▶ Washington Park (explore half-court basketball area for 1 pickleball court. Already another full-court basketball facility on site.)
- ▶ “Friends of Reading Pickleball”
- ▶ Phase II of Birch Meadow Master Plan dedicates 8 pickleball lighted courts (already outlined on the conceptual and design plans)



Existing conditions at Barrows

Currently 2 tennis courts and 1 basketball court



Existing conditions at Sturges

Currently 1 tennis court and 1 basketball court

Looking ahead to another facility



Half-Court Basketball, 2 Pickleball Courts (1 multi-use)



8 dedicated Pickleball Courts
(already in Birch Meadow Master Plan)



Full-Court Basketball, 1 Pickleball Court