



## APPL June Letter From the Commish

June 30th wraps up APPL's first fiscal year as a nonprofit corporation. It certainly has been an exciting one. Becoming educated and complying with the administrative processes of incorporating with the state, the IRS, etc. was quite an experience and effort of its own. Over the past year, we have learned a lot as an organization and feel we have a good handle on our business going forward bringing the dynamic pickleball experience of team-based league pickleball to players throughout Arizona and other regions.

We start our second year of APPL, Inc. (our 9th year of team-based league pickleball) with some excitement right out of the gate. We have a "new look". When you have a moment, take a look at our new website home page at [arizonapickleballplayersleague.org](http://arizonapickleballplayersleague.org) (use your computer or laptop, the phone version is in development). We think you'll find that it does a much better job of presenting the super experience that APPL offers. In addition, you will soon find that processes such as team registration, roster management, score reporting and more have been made easier and more intuitive. This has been, and still is, a huge undertaking by Steve Manolis (our webmaster among other things). And he hasn't stopped there. As you scroll down the home page you will also notice a link to our new Facebook page. APPL hasn't had much of a presence in the social media area. Our priorities have been, and continue to be, largely focused on bringing APPL's team-based league pickleball to players looking for a fun and competitive play format that hasn't existed previously. Of course a Facebook presence and other social media tools will help us do that. Steve is busy bringing our smartphone version of the website current to the new website now. A big thank you to Steve for his contribution in this important area.

Having wrapped up Season 2020 (of course you can still view the 2020 results in the "2020 in Review" section on the website) our focus now centers on Season 2021. Here are a few key dates to keep in mind. Early Bird team registration is open now. General team pre registration opens August 1st. Team registration closes November 15th. Schedules will be published the first week in December and the season is planned to start the first week in January.

I would like to take a moment to share with you a couple of our Key Objectives for the 2021 season. The first of our seven Key Objectives for Season 2021 is concentrated on expanding and improving the APPL experience in our existing regions (Casa Grande's SAPPL and East Valley's Red APPL(RAPPL) and EVIL). We had Skill Group "vacancies" in SAPPL and RAPPL which we hope to fill. RAPPL has added a 4.0 Women's League Coordinator (Debbie Albert) who is already hard at work building a strong RAPPL Women's 4.0 Skill Group. Just recently Ruth Elliott was added as the RAPPL women's 4.5/5.0+ League Coordinator taking over for Missy Myers who will oversee the RAPPL Women's Division and take on the role of Substitution Pool Coordinator (a new process to help captains field teams for matches if they are short-handed). Missy hopes to fill the LC positions for the 3.0 and 3.5 skill groups soon. If you would like to get involved with APPL and help expand team-based league pickleball we hope you contact us and team up with APPL. The pay's not great but Team APPL is a fun group to work with.

Our second Key Objective focuses on starting up APPL in new regions. Our targeted new regions are the Southern Region (Tucson/Green Valley/Oro Valley areas) and the West Valley Region (Surprise, Goodyear, Buckeye areas). We have partnered with key contacts in these areas to bring APPL to their communities. With the addition of the two new regions it is our objective to have an APPL State Championship pitting the winners of each region in each skill group against the winners of the other regions in a semifinals followed by a State Championship finals! If you are from the Tucson area or the West Valley area and would like to help with the start-up of APPL in your area please contact us. We already have had inquiries about using the APPL format in other states and our roadmap includes expanding into other states in the next few years so perhaps it won't be too long before we have a National team-based league pickleball championship!

Lastly, I would like to share with you a summary of some feedback we have received recently. As you know we are intent on bringing a great team-based league pickleball experience to all pickleball players throughout Arizona and not just those who can qualify, afford or manage to get into tournaments. Our focus is as much on the beginning or lower skill level players as it is on the more advanced skill level players. The following summary encourages our team of dedicated volunteers to continue to put in the countless hours of hard work involved in making it all happen. Here it is: "APPL creates a community environment of like-skilled players wanting to improve their game. Because APPL is team-based, this environment encourages the sharing of new strategies or the learning of new skills. It is a good way to be introduced to a more competitive level of play while expanding your network of pickleball friendships." You can find other specific testimonials on our website from players at all levels but I felt this summary of recent survey data from the beginner/intermediate levels is an excellent one.

Take care and stay safe all,

Greg Mather