



NEWS RELEASE

USA PICKLEBALL ASSOCIATION

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USA PICKLEBALL NAMES MARK PEIFER AS ITS NEW REFEREE COORDINATOR

SURPRISE, Az. (April 16, 2019) – The USA Pickleball Association ([USAPA](http://usapa.org)) recently announced the addition of Mark Peifer as the organization’s new Referee Coordinator.

The USAPA is continually looking for ways to enhance the playing experience for all pickleball players. Under Peifer’s direction, the sport’s governing body will upgrade the consistency, user friendliness and accessibility of the association’s referee program and officials-related training and educational initiatives. Peifer will be evaluating the current certification process and look for new ways to get more people engaged and comfortable with refereeing in general.

“Challenges exist to find good quality referees. There are several groupings of referees -- those who want to learn how to referee, but don’t know how to find a trainer in their area, those who are currently refereeing and would like to pursue certification, and then a large group of players who would enjoy being a referee but just don’t know it yet. The challenge of those involved in training referees is to address the needs of each grouping,” said Peifer who, after nearly two decades of playing tennis, picked up a paddle one month after retiring in 2015 and has been hooked on the sport ever since.

“The USAPA is continually faced with the prospect of attracting and maintaining quality referees for many of our matches. Mark, aside from being an outstanding certified referee himself, knows what’s necessary to facilitate a successful referee certification program, adhering to our rules and regulations. He’s an excellent leader and will do a great job in leading this important function of our organization,” said Justin Maloof, Executive Director of the USAPA.

As pickleball continues its rise in popularity across the globe, so is the inherent need for quality referees. Peifer knows all too well the process that needs to be implemented. “There are two important elements inherent in the better referees. The first is to know the rules and what we commonly refer to as ‘referee best practices’ – the process of refereeing” added Peifer, a graduate of the US Naval Academy with

service in the nuclear submarine force. "There is just no getting around knowing the rules and the information in the referee handbook." Good referees strive to know the rules and enjoy challenging others with 'what would you do if?' scenarios. The second most important element is being able to quickly recall the correct rule for what has just happened on the court. That ability comes from experience – from being exposed to many different court situations and many different players. Finally, good referees can control a match without being overbearing. When a match is over, we consider it a success when the players don't remember our name."

As with most pickleball enthusiasts, Peifer sees nothing but steady and continual growth of the sport. "Recreational players will be the strength of pickleball. Tournament play will continue to grow and prosper with smaller qualifying tournaments leading to the USAPA Regional Tournaments, and then to the National Championship. A more robust professional tour with higher cash prizes will emerge while international growth will surprise no one, leading eventually to an Olympic sport in the near future."

For more information on USAPA Pickleball, visit www.usapa.org.

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About USAPA

The United States Pickleball Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) was established in 2005 to further the advancement of the sport on a national level. As the official governing body of pickleball in the United States, the USAPA promotes the growth of pickleball by maintaining the rules, setting player ratings, advancing the sport through its national network of @1,800 ambassadors, and sanctioning tournaments. Over the past five years, the USAPA has realized a growth of 650% in its membership which now totals @34,000. The USAPA is divided into 11 regions across the country with all 50 states being represented. The extensive group of volunteer ambassadors oversees the sport in their respective states. For more information, visit www.usapa.org.