

## **BPC Pickleball Club – Etiquette, Safety & Sportsmanship Guidelines**

### **[Code of Conduct]**

While there are official rules for the play of the game, there are many other aspects of Pickleball that can, and regularly do, affect play and the personal interactions between the members of our club. What follows here is mostly common sense. Sometimes, however, simple things can be overlooked or underestimated for their contribution towards a positive and safe environment.

We want our Club to be a place within our community, where we can gather, socialise, and play with others who enjoy the game of pickleball. The purpose of this guide is to help everyone to be aware that, **how we treat other members within the club shapes and defines the Club**. No matter what level of skill, whether you are playing for recreation or competitively, keeping these guidelines in mind will help everyone to have a more enjoyable, and safe time.

### **ETIQUETTE:**

**Socialising** – Socialising and having fun are encouraged as part of the BPC Pickleball community. Where possible, congregate together when not on court. Mobile phone use during sessions is discouraged. In the Pickleball setting, it is anti-social. Apologise to fellow participants if you **MUST** use your mobile device and go **OUTSIDE** the venue to conduct your non-pickleball activities.

**Harassment & Vilification** – Sexual harassment or objectification will not be tolerated. Nor will any vilification based on race or gender. Any such proven instance may result in membership cancellation.

**Positive recognition** – Acknowledging great Pickleball play is always welcome ... and is encouraged.

**Roles** – The successful conduct of Pickleball sessions depends on participants ***playing their roles***. If ALL participants understand and play their role, sessions will be 'uneventful' in a positive sense. **The Pickleball will be what shines**. The roles are clear and simple and can be described as follows:

1. Players, play;
2. Hosts, host;
3. Venue Managers manage the venue.

In extraordinary circumstances, the venue manager **MAY** interrupt a Pickleball session where the **venue code of conduct has been breached**.

In **ALL** other circumstances, any grievance should be addressed to the Committee or President **AFTER** the session. This ensures that the matter can be evaluated, and remedied if necessary, in a calm, professional manner.

**Introduce yourself** – Once on the court for a game, acknowledge the other players and introduce yourself if you don't know the other players. Call players by name during the game.

**Court Play: rotating in** – Normally, rotation is done with longest waiting player(s) entering open courts first. Some formats vary, but all players should understand the format rules **and be ready**.

If you are waiting to play and you are next up, make sure you are ready to play when the next opportunity presents. Do not dally getting onto court. Socialising is an important part of our club, but if you are not ready to play this can be frustrating for other players.

**Announce the score** – Please announce the score, clearly and loudly, and gain acknowledgement that it is correct **before** serving the ball – **EVERY TIME**. It is both a rule & etiquette ... and helps to reduce conflict on the courts.

**Line calls** – Line calls are ONLY MADE by the team on the side where the ball landed. **If the players on the side where the ball landed disagree (or both are unsure), the decision goes in favour of the other team.** In **ALL other circumstances**, positive line calls made by the team on the side where the ball landed, will prevail.

**Returning a dead ball** – If you return a ball to your opponent or your partner for service, please either 1) hand it to them directly; 2) “bounce” it to them; or 3) identify who it is going to, make eye contact, and hit as accurately to them as you can so they don’t have to go chasing the ball. Do not kick it under the net, across the court, or hit it indiscriminately.

**Friendly Banter/Language** – Some players like to have friendly banter during a game, but please ‘read the room’ (NO foul language & ensure that any banter is **two-way**). If you begin to banter with a player and they do not respond ... **STOP** (even if you have had fun banter with that player in the past). People are not constants. Under no circumstances is it polite to trash talk, goad or do anything to distract your opponents during a game.

**Advice & Instruction** – Many players appreciate advice and tuition from players who are more advanced. Many will actively seek such advice. DO NOT give advice or instruction to another player during or after a game unless it is asked for. *Some BPC sessions will be conducted with Advanced Players present for the express purpose of providing guidance and development. Players can approach the designated Advance Player at those sessions and request to play alongside that Advanced Player and receive on-court feedback.* In game play within these designated sessions, it is appropriate to ensure that the opponents are made aware of this special circumstance. In short, be helpful where you can, if asked.

**End of Game** - At the game finish, approach the net and acknowledge/thank your fellow players. Move off the court quickly and help to facilitate the start of the next game.

**Last Teams/Game Standing** - If you are the last players leaving the pickleball venue, please make sure that balls are collected and put away, and that the venue is left neat & tidy. Wherever possible, acknowledge venue management or staff and thank them.

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**SAFETY:**

**Stretch** - Stretch before and after playing, it helps to minimize injuries.

**Hydration** - This is so important in our climate ... drink plenty of water before, during and after you play. Drink before you are thirsty. If you see someone who displays signs of dizziness, weakness or lack of concentration ask them if they are OK. Help other players to make smart decisions for their own welfare.

**One more game** - Do not overplay your current physical condition. Be self-aware and do not be cajoled by others. "Come on, one more game" ... can cause avoidable injury.

**Wet Courts** - Do not play on wet courts ... courts can get slippery and therefore dangerous when wet. Hosts and Venue Management are responsible for rectification & decision making in these circumstances.

**Runaway Ball** – If a ball strays onto your court during play you should immediately call, "BALL ON COURT" and stop play. Once the ball has been returned to the correct court, replay the point. This is a safety issue.

**Entering/Exiting/Passing thru Courts** – Entering, exiting, or passing through court(s) should ONLY be done during breaks between points, not during play. Requesting permission or announcing your actions is a practical courtesy.

**Objects on courts** - If anything falls on the court, **Stop all Play** and quickly remove it. [refer also 'Runaway Ball']

**Lobs and overheads** - When going backwards for a lob, turn and run back, **DON'T TRACK BACKWARDS**. This is a primary source of falls and concussions which can be avoided. Any more than a couple of shuffle steps to prepare for an overhead is too much. Do not attempt to 'smash' off-balance. In circumstances where one player is significantly more agile than another, the more agile player should agree with their partner to cover all lobs.

**Do not dive for balls or overexert** – Do NOT dive for any shot. Do not run into a wall/fence, run into the net, run unwarily into your partner, or run onto another court in the follow-thru of a shot or in order to retrieve a ball.

**Falls** - If someone falls on the court, **ALL PLAY STOPS**, until their needs have been assessed. The session host will know where a First aid kit is located. **If a medical emergency is determined, call 000 and advise the Venue Manager immediately.** AFTER all assistance has been provided to the participant/member, the President should be notified on 0410 567 041.

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### **"GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP"**

Many of the guidelines listed above fall into being a "good sport" on the courts. Here are additional examples of displaying good sportsmanship on the Pickleball court during **social** play:

- Play your strongest game against equal or better opponents, focus on **developing your skills** if your opponents are obviously less advanced in skill level. Examples include, practising placement, practicing difficult or low percentage (non-aggressive) shots, deliberately putting yourself in difficult positions on court from which to recover;
- If you are in a game with opponents where one player is more advanced than another, don't avoid hitting the ball to the more advanced player. They are wanting to play too!
- The opposite is true as well, if you have a less advanced player in the game, always give them an opportunity to do their best. **Advanced players (4.0 and above), in recognition of their BPC grading, are obliged to facilitate rallies and promote the BPC game style when choosing to play in any session designated 3.0 or below.**

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## **“DUTY OF LOYALTY”**

### **Potentially detrimental activities or behaviours**

Members shall not engage in any venture, transaction, or behaviour, that might be detrimental to the activities and reputation of the Brisbane Pickleball Club. For the elimination of doubt, a member should self-report any potential conflict of interest, or aberrant behaviour, to the President in writing so that the matter can be considered, minuted, and appropriate advice given.

### **Social Media & Public Commentary**

Members shall restrain from making comments in public forums e.g. Facebook, Instagram etc. that denigrate the sport of Pickleball, the Club, or the Associations that BPC are affiliated with (PAQ & PAA). Members are encouraged to raise concerns through the Club Committee. We accept that there will always be differences of opinion, but club membership requires respect for the welfare of the collective. We welcome open dialogue and encourage, ‘the right conversations with the right people’.

### **Monetisation/commercialisation of Pickleball activities by members**

Any member who generates an income from services related to Pickleball must register details of that activity with the BPC Committee. The club does not intend to endorse or employ the services of any member, nor will it seek to prevent any member from conducting commercial activities related to Pickleball.

If a member feels intimidated, coerced, or compromised by any activity or behaviour from another member related to services as described above, then they should report those activities or that behaviour to the President or a committee member without delay.

For clarity, activities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing paid coaching or tuition to other BPC members;
- Sale of merchandise or equipment to BPC members;
- Conducting Pickleball sessions (including tournaments, events, or promotions) for the purposes of generating a profit;
- Interfering in, or undermining, commercial relationships between BPC and BPC venues;
- Promoting or implying that services are endorsed or approved by BPC

Membership is a privilege and should be respected.