PEM Pickleball Club (PEMPC)

TRAINING/RATING POLICY

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01-21-25

Amended 12/01/25

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GENERAL INFORMATION

- All players new to PEM must attend an **Orientation** to establish an account on LivePickleball.club, to learn PEMPC rules, and to be trained to use the LivePickleball.club system.
- Players who want to play in a purely social environment and do not want to move up in rating level, or are injured or returning to PEM after an extended absence, should select Round Robins with the term 'SOCIAL' or 'LITE' in the title, or in Mini Round Robins.
- Players may move up in rating by three methods:
    - IPTPA assessment evidence of rating level
    - PEMPC Pro 'spot evaluation'
        - **Players may not request an evaluation.**
    - PEMPC Club IPTPA assessment (with variance)
- The PEMPC Pro, Rob Davidson has the authority to move any member up in rating as he observes and determines best for that player.
- Players may test once per quarter - quarters are defined as October - December, and January- March.
- First-time testers will take priority over re-testers.
- The last assessments will be administered the last full week in March.
- Skills assessment instruction videos can be found at PEMPickleball.com, Training Tab; Facebook PEMPC Group, and YouTube-

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLr9ebxrsyvwPGmDUewTo730zktZNa1IRW

NEW AND TEMPORARY PLAYERS

- Players who come to the club for a period shorter than one (1) month will be labeled in the LivePickleball.com system with a 'T' (for temporary player) and will be placed in the level at which they identify for the time the player is at PEM. The PEMPC Pro may relocate the player based on evaluation. Players labeled 'T' will not be allowed to play in the Skills and Drills, the Competitive Ladder, or FREE PEMPC Pro Clinics.
    - Temporary players may participate in Mentoring Round Robins.

- When a new player comes into PEMPC, the player will be rated at one-half rating level lower than he/she requests. The Orientation Team will label the player in the LivePickleball.club system with an **'E'** (for evaluate) and notify the Club Pro to request an evaluation.
    - A valid IPTPA assessment result will void the above evaluation requirement.

- New Members' names are automatically emailed to pempc.newmembers@gmail.com; received by a board member and routed to the appropriate evaluation person/team.
    - The board member will write an email to the new member requesting specific information from the new member and forward that information to the appropriate evaluation person/team.
    - If an evaluation results in a rating change, the new player will be notified and assigned board members will record the change in rating in LivePickleball.club.
    - New members placed at 2.5E may be evaluated by the Club Pro or assessed using the 2.5 Assessment. New members placed at 3.0E must be assessed by the Club Pro.
    - Members placed at 2.0E will be administered Lesson #5 in the 2.0-to-2.5 training. If they pass, they will be moved to 2.5. If they fail, they will be enrolled in the complete 2.0 lesson-plan

SKILLS LEVELS UPWARD MOVEMENT

Upward movement in rating from 1.0-3.0 will be done following the PEMPC's Skill Level Progression and Training System with IPTPA assessment criteria as the training pattern.

- From 1.0 - 2.5, as players show proficiency in their current rating level, they will be progressed to the next skill assessment, using IPTPA standards, by the group Coaches (who will be 3.5 or above.)
- Players wishing to move to 3.0 must successfully complete the 2.5 Training lessons. When the Coach/es in that level feel the player is ready to play at the 3.0 level, the player will be recommended to the Pro for final approval.
    - *Skills Assessment Forms can be found in the Appendix or at www://IPTPA.com.*

To move beyond 3.0, the player must formally test through an assessment administered by the Club Pro; either an informal Club Rating Assessment using IPTPA standards, or a formal IPTPA Test.

- Formal and Informal Club Rating Assessment will offer the following:
    - The player will pay the IPTPA testing fee (The Club will reimburse $25.00 to the player once per year and once per level.)
    - For example,
        - *If a player tests for 3.5 and succeeds that player will be reimbursed $25.00 IF that player tests for 4.0 in the same season, that player will NOT be reimbursed for the 4.0 test.)*
        - *If a player tests for 3.5 and fails, the player will be reimbursed for the attempted test, but that player will NOT be reimbursed for future 3.5 tests regardless of which year the assessment is administered.*
    - For Informal Club Rating Assessments:
        - If a player misses the first ball-feed, it won't count against him/her. The second ball will be considered your first scored shot.
        - At the completion of the skills assessment, if a player has failed one skill by ONE point, that player will be given a 5-10 minute break and then will be retested on only the failed skill.
            - If a player fails two skills, the assessment will be considered failed and that will end the assessment.

To move from 4.0 to the advanced designation of 4.0A, the player must be assessed by the Club Pro.

- The cost for testing to this level will be $40.00, paid directly by the player to the Club Pro and is not eligible for reimbursement.

SKILL LEVEL PROGRESSION AND TRAINING

1.0-1.5 PLAYERS:

- Players who are new to Pickleball must attend the 1.0/1.5 Training and Mentoring Round Robins.
    - The lessons include (but are not limited to) the following:
        - Score Keeping
        - Serving
        - Ball placement
        - Court positioning
- When the 1.0-1.5 Coaches (who will be 3.5 level or above) feel the player is ready to play at the 2.0 level, they will be progressed to the 2.0 skill assessment using IPTPA standards.

2.0 PLAYERS:

- The 2.0 players must attend 2.0 Training and Skills and Drills events in order to advance to 2.5:
    - The lessons include (but are not limited to) the following:
        - Dinking
        - Ground strokes; Serve, Return of Serve
        - Punch Volley/Drop Volley; Drop Shots
        - Overheads; Lobs; Game Preparation and Game Strategy
- When the Coaches (who will be 3.5 level or above) feel the player is ready to play at the 2.5 level, the player will be progressed to the 2.5 skill assessment using IPTPA standards.

2.5 PLAYERS:

- The 2.5 players must attend 2.5 Training and Skills and Drills events in order to advance to 3.0:
    - The player must demonstrate all 2.0 skills with enhanced:
        - Sustained dinking softly and under control
        - Forehand and backhand groundstrokes with medium pace and some control
        - Punch volleys both forehand and backhand with some control and direction
        - Overheads; Lobs; Game Preparation and Game Strategy
        - Proper footwork and mobility
        - Good eye/hand coordination
- When the Coaches (who will be 3.5 level or above) feel the player is ready to play at the 3.0 level, the player will be referred to the Training/Ratings Coordinator.

APPENDIX

SKILLS ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – 1.5-2.0

PEM Pickleball Club
Skill Assessment for 1.5 Players

Player's name _____ Evaluation date _____
Site # _____ Trainer _____

		Observations	PASS
Serve	50% success both sides, deeper is better		
Return	50% success both sides, deeper is better		
Forehand	Knows simple pendulum swing, transfers weight back to front foot, makes effort to dink		
Backhand	Knows simple pendulum swing, transfers weight back to front foot, makes effort to dink		
Volley	40% success forehand/backhand, makes effort to dink		
Dink	40% success forehand/backhand, makes effort to dink		
Basic rules Score keeping	Accurate in/out calls, calls out proper score, knows 2 bounce rule		
Footwork Preparation	90% ready position, in position to strike ball, stands in proper position, uses proper form backwards, good mobility		
Foot faults	Avoids NVZ and serviing violations		

Advancement recommendation

Player wants to attend 2.0 training YES or NO

SKILLS ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – 2.0-2.5

IPTPA Skill Assessment 2.5 Players

2.5 Skill level should also possess all 2.0 skills

- Knows the basic rules including two bounce rule, scoring and player position relative to scoring
- Demonstrates basic pendulum swing on the forehand & backhand side
- Working on consistency while dinking down the line forehand & backhand
- Working on consistency while dinking cross court forehand & backhand
- Demonstrates proper side step movement while staying balanced at NVZ line
- Demonstrates a punch volley
- Is developing 3rd shot drop by long dinking from the transition area
- Attempting to hit 3rd shot drop during match play on the short court
- Moving forward to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Demonstrates an overhead with the proper sideways turn, arm positioning and backward movement
- Has good mobility and can move forward in a safe and balanced manner
- Has good eye-hand coordination
- Beginning to demonstrate control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Uses a backhand ground stroke
- Keeps ball in play during short rallies

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- Forehand down the line 6/10
- Forehand cross court 6/10
- Backhand down the line 6/10
- Backhand cross court 6/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand 4/10
- Backhand 4/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys

- Forehand Punch Volley 5/10
- Backhand Punch Volley 5/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Overhead

Skill Testing Requirement: Serves

- Right side of the Court 3/5
- Left side of the Court 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Return of serves

- Right side of the Court 3/5
- Left side of the Court 3/5

SKILLS ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – 3.0

IPTPA Skill Assessment 3.0 Players

3.0 Skill level should also possess all 2.5 skills

- Attempting to consistently dink while changing directions from cross court to down the line forehand & backhand
- Does not back up unnecessarily from NVZ
- Punches volley to the back ½ of opponent court
- Sustains a short volley exchange at the net
- Can perform 3rd shot drop by long dinking from the transition area
- Using 3rd shot drop during match play on the short court
- Moving forward as a team to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Can perform an overhead with better control while maintaining proper position
- Has good mobility & quickness
- Demonstrates improved control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Better control on backhand groundstrokes
- Keeps ball in play during short rallies
- Attempts offensive lobs during play
- Demonstrates placement & depth on serves
- Demonstrates placement & depth on return of serves
- Attempting to adjust to different ball speeds (serves, groundstrokes, volleys)

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- Forehand down the line 7/10
- Forehand cross court 7/10
- Backhand down the line 7/10
- Backhand cross court 7/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand 5/10
- Backhand 5/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from baseline

- Forehand 2/5
- Backhand 2/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys (A-Ball lands in the back half of opponents court/B-Ball lands within a foot of the opponents NVZ.)

- Forehand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 6/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court 3/5
- Left side of Court 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Return of serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court 3/5
- Left side of Court 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Overhead

- Overhead 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Offensive lobs from NVZ line

- Offensive lobs 3/5

IPTPA Skill Assessment 3.5 Players

3.5 Skill level should also possess all 3.0 skills

- Can consistently dink while changing directions from cross court to down the line forehand & backhand
- Punches volley to the back ½ of opponent court, to keep opponents at the baseline
- Sustains a controlled volley exchange at the net
- Performs 3rd shot drop from the baseline
- Is beginning to dink with a purpose
- Moving forward as a team to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Developing directional control while performing an overhead
- Demonstrates control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, speed, depth, height)
- Demonstrates control on backhand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height
- Keeps ball in play during rallies and is aware of minimizing errors
- Able to communicate effectively with partner & utilize different strategies to expose opponent weaknesses
- Using deeper and higher returns to approach the net quicker
- Uses offensive lobs effectively
- Demonstrates better placement and depth on serves
- Demonstrates better placement and depth on return of serves
- Improved control when adjusting to different ball speeds (serves, groundstrokes, volleys)

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- 14 out of 20 windshield wiper dinks

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand down the line 8/10
- Forehand cross court8/10
- Backhand down the line 8/10
- Backhand cross court 8/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from baseline

- Forehand down the line 3/5
- Backhand down the line 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Overheads

- Overheads 3/5

IPTPA Skill Assessment | 3.5 Players

Skill Testing Requirement: Offensive lobs from the NVZ line

- Offensive Lobs 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys (A-Ball lands in the back half of opponents court/B-Ball lands within a foot of the opponents NVZ.)

- Forehand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 7/10
- Backhand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 7/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court 4/5
- Left side of Court 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Return of serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court Forehand 4/5
- Left side of Court Backhand 4/5

Ghost Doubles – 3 Games to 11 – Rally Scoring

IPTPA Skill Assessment 4.0 Players

4.0 Skill level should also possess all 3.5 skills

- Sustains a volley exchange at the net and beginning to use directional control
- Can demonstrate a block volley
- Able to hit winning volley when a ball is popped up
- Better consistency when performing 3rd shot drop from the baseline
- Can hit 3rd shot drop from baseline during match play with greater success
- Moves effectively with partner, easily switching sides, and communicates when required
- Controls play at the NVZ line, by keeping their opponent back if they're at the baseline
- Dink with a purpose to elicit a put away shot
- Can demonstrate an effective poach, and understands when it's appropriate
- Able to change a fast paced strategy to a slow one and vice versa
- Can consistently perform an overhead and beginning to place the shot for winners
- Demonstrates control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height, spin)
- Demonstrates control on backhand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Understands proper shot selection to minimize errors
- Able to adjust to differing ball speeds consistently
- Uses offensive lobs effectively
- Beginning to use spin effectively on a variety of shots
- Maintains greater patience in dinks & rallies
- Beginning to anticipate shots more frequently (watching opponents paddle face)

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- 16 out of 20 windshield wiper dinks

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand down the line 4/5
- Forehand cross court 4/5
- Backhand down the line 4/5
- Backhand cross court 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from baseline

- Forehand 7/10
- Backhand 7/10

IPTPA Skill Assessment | 4.0 Players

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys (Ball lands in the back one third of opponents court)

- Forehand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 4/5
- Backhand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 4/5
- Forehand Block Volley 3/5
- Backhand Block Volley 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Overheads

- Overheads 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Offensive lobs from NVZ line

- Offensive lobs 4/5

Ghost Doubles – 3 Games to 11 – Rally Scoring

PEM Pickleball Club (PEMPC) Rating Policy and Procedures

Performance/Skills; Skills – 4.0A Description

Skills Assessment Description

1) Dink proficiency: 3/5 attempts (DTL 2x, XCT 2x) – a successful attempt includes hitting 4 consecutive non-attackable dinks alternating to the feeder's FH and BH. This will be no less than 12 successful dinks per position, for a total of 48 successfully placed and executed dinks

2) Low volleys from the NVL: 7/10 attempts – a successful attempt lands in the NVZ (utilize 4 ball low volley drill)

3) Drive and Drop approach (DTL): 7/10 – a successful drive and drop is comprised of two parts: a) a good drive (the feeder will not volley a drive that is clearly going out), and b) a follow up drop shot that gets the player to the MCL (if the volley is deep) or to the NVL (if the volley lands mid court); a drop shot that can be taken as a high volley by the feeder is a "no success"; feeder is at the NVL

4) Return to Punch volleys (FH and BH): 4/5 – a successful punch volley will land in the back half of the court (feeder hits a serve and slides to the side of the court in front of returner, returner hits return DTL and comes to NVL, feeder hits a drive, and returner must hit a successful volley)

5) Return to Drop volleys (FH and BH): 4/5 – a successful drop volley will land near the opposite NVZ (feeder hits a serve and slides to the side of the court in front of returner, returner hits return DTL and comes to NVL, feeder hits a drive, and returner must hit a successful volley)

6) Counter-punch volley: 3/5 (DTL 2x, XCT 2x) – feeder hits dinks until they initiate a speed up; a successful counter-punch volley lands in the court (direction and depth do not matter)

7) "Quick Hands" assessment: 3/5 attempts – a successful attempt has a volley rally of 10 total volleys (5 from the feeder, 5 from the player)

8) Foot speed assessment 1: (must complete in under 5 seconds) the player must start at the baseline and run to the NVL, split step, then turn (as if going for a lob), and return to the baseline

9) Side steps:(must complete in under 10 seconds) center T to outside sideline, back to center, twice.

10) Foot speed assessment 2: 2/3 attempts: the player must start at the center line, move to the sideline, hit a successful dink (success being determined as landing in the NVZ without being "volley-able"), return to the center line and hit another successful dink, then move to the opposite sideline and hit another successful dink, and return to the center to hit a final successful dink. 3 attempts are allowed, but if the less than 3 dinks are successful on each attempt, it is not successful. (Feeder tosses balls from opposite center T of NVL)

Following the successful completion of this skill assessment, there will be 1 game of skinny singles to 11, to complete the evaluation.

DEFINITIONS AND EDIT LIMITATIONS

Training:

- Skills program to prepare players for the next level of play at PEMPC. The current training program is First Class.

Rating:

- The skill level to which a player is assigned; Classification and ranking of players.

Assessment:

- Assessment of players to determine the appropriate PEMPC skill level rating.

These three terms are distinct, but are often used interchangeably within discussions at PEMPC.

2025-2026 TRAINING SCHEDULE

GENERAL TRAINING COORDINATOR – BERNIE BILLINGSLEY

TRAINING

Beginner Training	Jan Lutz Kim Beam, backup
2.0 Training	Bob Hughes Clara Hughes, backup
3.0 Training (for 2.5s)	Steve Lutz Judy Jameson, backup (scheduled)

MIXED SKILLS AND DRILLS

1.5 Drills and Play	Bill Gagnier
2.5 Skills and Drills	Paul Baker
3.0 Skills and Drills	Kim McGuire
3.5 Skills and Drills	Jeff Tomlinson
