



NEWSLETTER

Boule Dreams

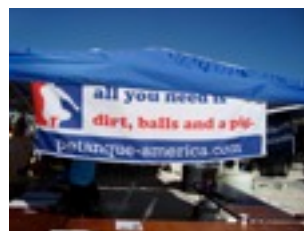
By Erin McTaggart



Thinking of buying new boules? We have first hand experience of Petanque America's warehouse. Located a few minute's drive from anywhere on Amelia Island, chez Philippe has many sets of balls, as well as

other petanque and Ricard paraphernalia (tapes, jacks, shirts, etc.). We arrived to the mother lode of petanque stuff- AKA the Petanque America office and warehouse. It was fun to feel the slick new balls, try

different diameters and patterns - a very tactile experience. So many boules, it boggled our minds! Mike and I tried out our new balls that night - down at the marina in Fernandina Beach, at the courts that the city agreed to leave for public use following the



Amelia Island Open. Fernandina Beach now has seven harbor-side courts, complete with lighting and convenient parking. Cheers to Philippe and the City of Fernandina Beach for creating the newest set of public petanque pistes in the U.S.!

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Inter Club Tournament

by Barbara Hall

The weather gods could not have provided a more picturesque autumn background for the 3rd annual Bay Area and Beyond Inter Club Tournament: cool (yet not cold), crisp temperatures surrounded by handfuls of beautiful fall leaves from the trees around the courts of the host club, San Rafael's La Pétanque Marinière.

The tournament format, the brainchild of **Gilles Karpowicz** (VOMPC associate member), is essentially a panache.....but a most competitive one. Six Bay Area clubs, totaling 56 players, arrived to do battle on the dirt.

The VOMPC suited up a strong force of pétanquers: **Mike Cooper, Narin Garrett, Barbara Hall, Hans Kurz, Wolfie Kurz, Peter Mathis, Erin McTaggart, Mike Menefee, Holly Sammons, & Patrick Vaslet.**

After qualifers were played, the 4 clubs with the best win-loss record, comprised the semi-finals. From within these 4 clubs, the top 3 winning players would be the representatives for the play-offs. The semis were contested by San Rafael's La Pétanque Marinière v. Sacramento's Club de Français and San Francisco's La Boule d'Or v. Sonoma's VOMPC. The victors were Sacramento and Sonoma, setting the stage for a final showdown.

Sacramento's finalists, Alain/Helen/Reed and Sonoma's Mike Menefee/Barbara/Wolfie began the game and for the first half, it was a nail biting close one. The spectating crowd witnessed some wonderful displays of pointing and shooting. However, Sonoma began to lose momentum and could never really recover. In the end, the victory went to





BOARD OF DIRECTORS



NARIN GARRETT

Hi all, back for my second year on the board. I think I've been playing now for about 7 years. I love this game, and I'd love to introduce to others so they too could share this love with me. It's one of my greatest wishes. Aside from that I'll try to do my best for the club, be that by raking the courts, directing tournaments, or putting out tardy newsletters (insert sheepish grin).



MIKE MENEFEE

I feel most honored to have been elected to the Valley of the Moon Petanque Club's Board of Directors, and bestowed with the responsibilities expected of me as your Vice-President. Thank you for holding such faith and trust in me. I do not accept these roles without a strong sense of commitment, vision, sportsmanship and friendship to, and with you.

I look forward to helping guide this esteemed organization through the next two years...two years which certainly guarantee to hold many good times in store. With a little hard work, and a lot of good cheer, on all of our parts, we can't help but have a grand time! Please consider taking the time to help one of our hardworking committees to in order for our club to continue offering what it has for all of us these past several years. And, come down to the courts and participate in our various leagues and tournaments. You, after all, are what make the courts come to life!

Again, I thank you. I look forward to representing one of the most talented petanque organizations in the country, on a board replete with focused and devoted Officers and Directors. Au petanque!



DEBBIE KING

I moved to Sonoma, after a truly wonderful 32 year career in advertising in SF, about 4 years ago. I love this town, and have dreamed about living here since I first visited about 30 years ago. I was so excited to discover the game of petanque and this fabulous club this year. I wanted to participate & help out however I could. Low & behold, I am now the Board Treasurer. I'm looking forward to seeing you at the courts for club events and casual play.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



RENATO SOTTILE

I have been playing Petanque in Sonoma for a quarter of a century and I have been having fun on our Sonoma courts for that period of time and I look forward to another quarter of a century of good wholesome fun. Sine cera!



LEE HASTINGS

I discovered petanque about 3 years ago through a friend who plays, and instantly fell in love with it. The people who play here are a fascinating and varied bunch of characters who made me feel right at home and taught me the basics. We have our beautiful park, always available for practicing, playing, tournaments and classy gatherings with great food. And of course, the best thing is the challenge of always progressing and learning to play the game better.



TOM BRICCA

Since 1992, I have enjoyed the quirky game of Petanque, puzzled out her mysteries, (in French, la Petanque is feminine), played against the best, won a few games and lost many more, and traveled in its pursuit. Most recently, my interests have shifted to introducing the game to as many folks as possible through the Picnic & Petanque format popular here in Sonoma. Helping to maintain our leased, citizen operated, City Park and participating in its improvements for all of Sonoma to enjoy has been the source of much satisfaction. I want to thank VOMPC for the opportunity to contribute my efforts and extend the same opportunity to one and all!



ERIN MCTAGGART

Hello fellow VOMPC members, I am proud to be a member of the Board serving for the next year. I have been playing petanque since the spring of 2001. This year I would like to help the club host more community events in order to get more people exposed to the game, keep them playing, and ultimately getting them to become members of the VOMPC. We as a board are here to facilitate the play of petanque among all members of our club, neighboring and national club members, as well as with the general community. See you on the courts



Valley of the Moon Petanque Club Members

Penny Bair
Karin Bartow
Jean Behse
Annick Bouldt
John Bouldt
Tom Bricca
Dave Brooks
Tracy Brooks
John Byrne
Augustin Cedeno
Michelle Clarke
Michael Cooper
Vaughn Dodge
Gray Douglas
Lynda Evans
Alwyn Falkenberg
Clifford Farrell
Narin Garrett
Barbara Hall
Jan Hansen
Adair Hastings
Lee Hastings

Jim Healy
Mary Healy
Cynthia Heinrichs
Gary Heinrichs
David Katz
Debbie King
Hans Kurz
Joe LaTorre
Jacques Mathieu
Peter Mathis
Byron Mayo
Erin McTaggart
Mike Menefee
Richard Menefee
Malcolm Misuraca
Sharon Modrick
Eldon Moilanen
Dick Nyquist
Mark Olivier
Patricia Parks
Bernard Passemar

Stephen Paulsen
Christine Piccin
Francois Piccin
Jean-Michel Poulnot
Dwayne Reed
Joan Robertson
Bleys Rose
Gary Seifer
Ingrid Sheets
John Sheets
Peggy Silversides
Claudia Sims
Joan Smith
Rick Smith
Renato Sottile
Bill Thomson
Gary Tremblay
Lisa Tremblay
Linn Vehling
Jurgen Weise
Cath Whistler
John Wright

PETANQUE - SPORT OR HABIT

by Mike Menefee

I've come a long way, baby...these past 10 months. Before January, I'd never heard the word 'petanque' muttered. Now, it seems I can't get enough of the game.

As I'm sure millions of other Americans had, I'd heard of the Italian bowling game of bocce. I'd had occasion to watch 'gli uomini' (the men) play on the wharfside courts in Monterey. I'd even been invited to play in the annual San Francisco Firefighter's Bocce Tournament, though I never followed through on it. But, petanque? Though learning it was French, in origin...it was Greek to me.

I stopped by the Petanque Mariniere courts behind the Marin Civic Center, while driving home to Sonoma following a 24 hour shift at the fire station in San Francisco's Chinatown, the morning of March 8. Erin McTaggart had invited me to watch her for a bit, as she teamed up with Tino Lafaro, as they competed in the Northern California Commemorative Cup Tournament. "It's a French game called 'petanque'", Erin exclaimed. Little did I know, before arriving that morning, exactly what the game entailed, just how well Erin plays, or the kind of profound effect this "French game called 'petanque'" would have on me.

On arriving at the courts, members of the Marin club were busy registering, raking and socializing. Erin took me to an empty court, emptied her boule bag, demonstrated 'pointing'

and 'shooting'...then handed the balls over to me. My first reaction related to the cold



heaviness of those little balls. Over the course of the next 20 minutes, I clumsily rolled balls back and forth, trying...without great success...to stop close to the target ball.

I was overwhelmed with many foreign terms being bantered about: 'Boule', 'Piste', 'Couchonne', 'Careau', 'Concours', 'Consolante', 'Plombe', 'Pastis', 'Bonne Chance'...

Intrigued, I sat back in Erin's folding camp chair throughout the day. Erin and Tino eventually won the 'Concours'. And, as much as I despise black licorice and anything anise or fennel...WOW, is Ricard wonderful!



MUSTARD FESTIVAL RECAP

by Tom Bricca

Well, the dust has settled and my suit is hung once again towards the darker end of my closet. Never having run the volunteer staff effort at this event I want to extend my hand in thanks to each and every one of the volunteers that made this event successful at every level. Because of your initiative, creative problem solving, and fun based attitudes in the face of uncertainty I personally benefited because I came off appearing more than I actually do thank you very much.

Yes, I had fun, ate really well and connected with many of you guys but the real beneficiary is the VOMPC...in more than one way. Certainly the "wages" you earned will attribute to the VOMPC Treasury but I think this particular grouping is a harbinger of more good times to follow at the courts. The schedule was finalized last night and will be posted on www.vompc.org within a week.

I was impressed as was the management of the Napa Valley Mustard Festival and I am lucky to know you.

COURT CLEAN UP

by Mike Menefee

Firstly, I want to thank those stalwart individuals who showed up at the courts for the annual VOMPC Court Clean-up Day this past Saturday. Kudos to Lee and Adair Hastings, Joanie Robertson, Dick Menefee, Jacques Mathieu and his daughter Montana, Erin McTaggart and Tom Bricca. I'd also like to thank Tom for getting the word out to the membership...and for making sure the shed was open, and the rakes were warmed up and ready to go. The courts look absolutely BEAUTIFUL now! Another once over later in the Spring...and the place will look AWESOME! Thank you!

This effort is pivotal to presenting our Park to our City Electorate, especially in our bid to install solar LED lighting financed entirely by us, the VOMPC members. In a word or two, VOMPC runs a beautiful City Park. Have you seen it lately? Wednesday afternoons are heating up as are Wednesday mornings.



AMELIA ISLAND OPEN

BY ERIN MCTAGGART

It was a dark and stormy Thursday when Mike and I arrived on the island. We donned our warmest garments to walk out to the newly arranged petanque piste located on most of the Fernandina Beach Marina parking lot. I was freezing, the wind was blowing the remains of Hurricane Ida over northern Florida. I lasted a half-hour and had to go inside to warm-up my ears. Thank goodness that the next few days were wonderfully sunny.

There are some things about traveling for petanque: Firstly, the great thing about traveling to play petanque is that you get to meet wonderful people that are just as crazy as you are. You not only get to play petanque with these people, you get to learn about their clubs, their region, and discover their "real life" occupations. Secondly, you get to meet old "petanque friends" and catch up with them, discuss the game, and get updated about "real life" stuff. It always puts a smile on my face, thinking about seeing these friends. Honestly, they are proof that the petanque world is a slice across all of life- all ages, all walks of life, all strata of income and education, political bents, and senses of humor (I think having a good sense of humor is key, but there are those that seem to survive regularly without one).

Thirdly, the tournament itself... you get exposure to many techniques, strategies, and playing styles. In the course of

playing the games, you have a supreme learning opportunity. Some styles of play leave one thinking, "How can that possibly work? They're just hucking the boule out there!" and scoring some points from doing so. Other times, as with



watching the semifinals and the final of the tournament, with



Xavier and Claudy (the 2009 Men's Precision Shooting Champion of Europe), you sit in awe of repeatedly well placed and shot boules and wonder what, besides dedicated practice, would ever allow a commoner like you or me, to play so well and so consistently.

Going to tournaments provides us with the opportunity to not only firm up the skills we already possess, but to also adopt new "tools" or "tricks" and try them out as well, either during subsequent games in the tournament, or in casual play. We all have moments of brilliant play during practice and games. The key to becoming a force in

the petanque world is to be CONSISTENT. Once you are consistent in placing, then in shooting, you can become a force to be reckoned with. I recommend trying new things in casual play or just when practicing on one's own. People may wonder why you're trying something new, but that is the only way to grow your skills, and add to your bag of "tricks".

Back to The Petanque America Open-Amelia Island- 2009. The VOMPC had a player in contention-Peter Mathis along with Willits member Mickey Coughlin, came in 8th over all. Also Frank Pipal and Ed Porto got into the second Consolante before losing to a South Florida team (that could not miss a shot!). Two Marin teams were present; the Craggs, & Ellen and Ken. Also Peggy and David from Healdsburg travelled for the event. The Krauers represented SF and Boule 'd Or. Mike and I ended up 4-4 for the tournament. Our first game was against Xavier and Claudy-talk about intimidating! Everything Mike put close to the jack was short-lived, as Claudy would step in and with a flick of the wrist, "CLACK" a carreau!

And my boules followed Mikes-"Crack"- my boule out the back, Claudy's or Xavier's replacing mine. During the midday break, Christophe Chambers, the Tournament Director, stopped by to facetiously ask how I liked our "draw for the pool!" Knowing we played Claudy and Xavier- I just had to respond that we were lucky to have "the opportunity" to play against world class players like them, and that we learned a lot (in the five rounds it took for them to win 13-0). What an opportunity-!! I encourage you all to try to participate in any events you can, involving traveling or not, to broaden your experience and exposure to the game of petanque, and more importantly, to make some great memories and gain some wonderful friends.

P.S. Due to the success of this tournament, Philippe of Petanque America, is already planning next year's Amelia Island Open. It is hoped that there will be more teams and even more community involvement as the event evolves.



Calendar

Saturday, March 27

rain date Sunday, March 28
Soup and 3 Ball Singles

Saturday, April 17

rain date Sunday, April 18
Bocce and Petanque Lunch

Saturday, April 24

Battle of the Sexes Singles

Saturday, May 22

Court Clean Up

Sunday, May 30

Wellington Vineyards BBQ Lamb Picnic

Wednesday, June 23

Doubles League Begins

Saturday, June 26

Winemakers Picnic and Petanque

Sunday, June 27

Sonoma Cup, Select Triples

Sunday, July 11

Ravenswood Bastille Day
Random Triples

Sunday, August 22

Sonoma Doubles Melee

Sunday, September 26

Wine Country Classic
Select Doubles

Saturday, October 3

Sonoma OktoberFest
Mini Tourney after Lunch

Sunday, October 24

VOMPC Club Championship &
Annual Meeting
Select Triples

Saturday, November 27

Post Thanksgiving Potluck
Random Doubles

Board of Directors Meeting

January 20, 2010 – La Casa Restaurant

MINUTES

- I. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 by Vice President Mike.
- II. Present were Board members Mike, Erin, Debbie, Renato and Lee. Also present were club members Jean Michel Pulnot, Bernard Passemar, Jacques Mathieu, Mike Cooper, Hans Kurz, and Mal Misuraca as advisor.
- III. The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.
- IV. President's Report – Narin was absent so there was no report.
- V. Secretary's Report – Tom was absent so there was no report.
- VI. Treasurer's Report – Debbie reported that we took in \$245 from renewed memberships and \$78 went out in expenses, leaving a balance of \$3330.00.
- VII. Committee Reports
- VIII.
 1. Calendar – Jacques presented the proposed calendar for 2010. Costs and possible prizes will be discussed later. Two court clean up days were added.
 2. Communications – Erin is collecting articles for the newsletter. Board members were asked to resubmit short self-blurbs.
 3. Facilities – Mike noted the recurrent vandalism of the sign. Renato reported that the Bocce Club has not, and probably will not, come up with a new plan. Mike said meanwhile he will get a thicker plastic cover. Renato, Jacques and Mike Cooper will work on a plan and a sketch to show the City. Renato said the Bocce Club is not interested in the lighting, and that he plans to write a letter to Dave Katz thanking him for his lighting donation.
 4. Membership – 11 of the 34 renewed members would have preferred to be able to join FPUSA through VOMPC.
 - VIII. Narin arrived and New Business was called for.
 1. Non-profit status – Mal brought up the problem of our proof of non-profit status having been canceled, and offered to contact the state and rectify the situation.
 2. Lease – the rent of \$1 per year needs an accompanying letter, which Mal offered to write, and both must be presented to the City Council by April 1.
 3. Club insurance – Renato moved that we obtain insurance immediately and the motion was passed. Mal said he would contact Tom and find out who the agent is, get a copy of the proposed insurance, and keep on it until the insurance is secured.
 4. At this point Hans expressed his dismay and being unable to join FPUSA through VOMPC.
 - IX. Old Business
 1. A motion was made and passed to do away with the \$5 late fee for renewing memberships.
 2. The FPUSA sanction was discussed at length. Erin said the letter to FPUSA regarding our position on our expulsion had only gone to Joe Martin and needed to go to their entire Board. Mike suggested that all our letters and Martin's responses should be sent to their entire Board to demonstrate our intent to rectify our situation with FPUSA. Mal again discussed the illegality of our suspension by the FPUSA and the possibility of a suit against them. He said a Sonoma Petanque Club is being organized but it probably won't work, and that people who want to join FPUSA can join through Willits. Mal said he had asked Martin for evidence in their suspension of Raymond Nielsen, and he found out their Board's original vote had been against suspension but that Martin had worked on them to vote in favor of suspension. Narin moved, and it passed, that we now send Mike's letter to the entire FPUSA Board with the addition that we need a response by February 1.
 - X. Announcement – Renato asked if the Club would like to make a donation for relief in Haiti. Mike made a motion to send \$100 to Doctors Without Borders, and it passed.
- XI. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10.