

Geelong Pickleball Club

AUGUST 2026 Newsletter



Summary of Member feedback via WhatsApp

Please find below summary of member feedback from the recent What's App chat and email.

The question

"Why are so many sessions emptying out within hours of starting and some being cancelled due to poor numbers" was posed to members and a very productive discussion ensued. It gives the committee a great starting point from which to try new formats and tweak old ones.

Executive Summary of Member Feedback

1. Rating Anxiety & The PIRAT System

- **Fear of Lowering PIRAT (FOLP):** Many players avoid scored sessions to protect ratings or prevent letting down partners. Some find little reward to their PIRAT if they win all their matches. The PIRAT system was explained clearly by Pat as to its objective and as a player ranking system to ensure players are playing with like skilled players.
- **Predictive Scoring Frustration:** Some Players dislike "predictive scoring". Players were reminded by Pat that they have the opportunity to turn off the predictive scoring and other player PIRAT ratings within the 002 app.
- **Player Retention:** High-rated players often play on invite-only or private courts to protect ratings but also to play with friends and choose with whom they play. Some lower-rated players feel trapped or under-supported in progressing to a higher PIRAT.

2. Demand for Format Variety & Less Pressure

- **In-Demand Formats:** Strong desire for non-scored social sessions, gendered play, team events, and drills.
 - **Skill & Dynamic Imbalances:** Examples were given by stronger players who feel "iced out" on court if they are the strongest on the court, while lower-rated players get targeted, creating a frustrating experience for both.
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Summary of Member feedback via WhatsApp Continued..

3. Access, Booking, and Infrastructure

- **Evening Demand:** Full-time workers need more evening scored options beyond Friday nights and Sunday afternoons.

We will have the chance to offer more evening sessions at Tarratarra Tuesday night & potentially Thursday night at GC, but numbers at GC on Friday remain poor. Numbers for unscored the Wednesday night session at GC remain strong.

- **Booking System Concerns:** The tiered "pay-to-play" early booking model is seen by some members as unfair/discriminatory. But it could be argued that, over the last month, only the Thursday Round Robin session is consistently booked out. Most sessions are no longer full.

- **Private Court Usage:** Great for friend groups, but members warned that overusing them risks excluding newer/unconnected players.

A more transparent booking system is needed to offer all members the opportunity to book a private court. Filling listed sessions and providing coaching has priority over offering private court bookings.

4. Player Development & Training

- **Lower PIRAT Support (2-3 Range):** High demand for structured coaching and small-group clinics beyond initial induction.

- **Drilling Interest:** stronger players expressed the value of drilling in between play for improvement. There is interest in access to a ball machine and for more coach run drilling sessions.

Recommended Formats to Trial:

- **Gendered & Mixed Formats:**

- **Women-Only / Men-Only PIRAT Nights:** Reduces matchup imbalances and eliminates feeling "smashed at."

- **"2-and-2" Sessions:** 1 hour of gender-based doubles followed by 1 hour of mixed doubles.
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Summary of Member feedback via WhatsApp Continued..

- **Dynamic Social Formats:**

- **King of the Court (Up/Down Courts):** Paired courts (e.g., Courts 1 & 2) where winners move up and split, and losers move down and split to mix up 8 players without fixed-partner strain.

Playing this format over more than 2 court groups for example 5 or 6 courts, leads to players playing with and against players they may never play in other formats.

- **"PIRAT-Free" Weeks:** Periodic unranked weeks where players remain grouped by skill level to practice shot-making pressure-free.

- **Structured Leagues & Tournaments:**

- **Division-Based Seasons:** 6-week leagues across divisions (8 players per division) using a ladder system with promotion and relegation rather than algorithmic PIRAT scoring.

- **Fixed-Partner & Team Leagues:** Revive team-based competitions for structured social play. Both these formats have been v successful but interest in the flex doubles sessions appears around tournament times.

- **Skill-Bracketed & Coaching Sessions:**

- **Tier-Restricted Nights:** Narrow-band sessions (e.g., PIRAT 2–3, 6–7, 7–9) to ensure balanced courts.

Targeted Clinics & Ball Machine Rental: Group clinics for post-induction to ensure players are game ready and competitive are needed.

A formal rental program for member-owned ball machines has been suggested and needs to be explored.



Summary of Member feedback & Action Plan

Action Plan for the Committee

- 1. Optimize Schedule with New Venue (Tarratarra):** Use new evening court allocations at Tarratarra to introduce midweek competitive slots, gendered sessions, and lower-tier clinics. keeping in mind we only have 4 courts at Tarratarra.
- 2. Address App & Rating Settings:** Educate members on 002 app settings to hide PIRAT ratings and predicted scores to reduce mental pressure.
- 3. Review Booking Policies:** Re-evaluate early-booking fee structures to ensure equitable access.
- 4. Draft Ball Machine Policy:** Establish guidelines and liability terms to allow member-owned ball machines to be rented for club drilling.

In addition to the above it is clear that because of PIRAT and the commitment of the committee and volunteer Duty Managers, GPC does most things better than other clubs. It is welcoming, inclusive and innovative.

Members acknowledge that the committee has members' interests at heart and continue to make changes in response to members' needs.

Thank you all for your responses and if you were not involved in the chat you can always add comments via the Secretary.

Leonie Amerena Secretary on behalf of Committee

Geelong Pickleball Club



We're Ready to Rumble!!!



Our paddles are packed, and GPC representatives are ready to hit the road this Saturday, 12th September. Player selections are listed below.

Spectator support would be much appreciated! If you have a spare afternoon, please head to Ballarat and cheer your fellow GPC members on against the Highlanders.

Everyone is welcome—the Rumble starts at 12.30pm sharp and will continue until approximately 5:00 pm.

Venue:

Damascus College
1412 Geelong Road, Mount Clear 3350

Division 1:

Julius Busch, Jozef Horvat, Damian Tom, Lisa Smith, Caroline Jordan, Jarrod Batup, Zac Potter, Mellissa White, Blake Clark, Bree Gorman, Jacque Sacdpraseuth, Michael Robertson

Division 2:

Konnar Lue-Kim, Lisa Crough, Belinda Lee, Ricardo Silva, , Simon Dickson, Amelia McCallum, Kerry Anthony, Leonie Amerena, Wendy Smith, Marieke De ruijter, Jhen Thoo, Todd Riddiford

Team Support: Ingrid Castricum



Trying to find a tournament to play in?

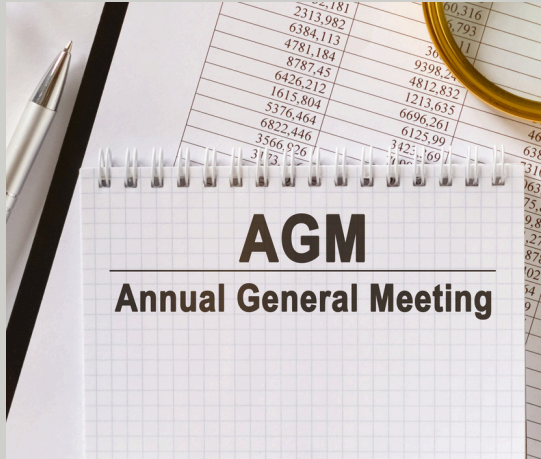
Simply log onto

<https://pickleballtournaments.com/> and start searching your preferred locations.

Geelong Pickleball Club



Social Event & Announcements



Save the Date:

Upcoming GPC Annual General Meeting

Date: 20th October 2026

Venue: Bareena Bowling Club, 89 Noble Street, Newtown 3220

Time: 6.00pm to approx 8.00pm

Further information will be sent via email over the coming week.



Interclub Competition – Are You Interested? 🍓
Next EOI against Northside 3rd October @ YMCA now open on 002

Keep an eye on your inbox, and currently open on 002. Expression of Interest for our upcoming Interclub Competition. This is a fantastic opportunity to represent GPC in a series of matches against Northside Pickleball Club. Interclub is a competitive team event that showcases our club across multiple divisions, and we're looking forward to putting together teams that will proudly represent GPC on and off the court.

Geelong Pickleball Club



Pickleball Tip

The 11 O'Clock Backhand Cheat

- **The Problem:** Many players keep a neutral paddle grip at the kitchen line, leaving them vulnerable to fast body shots ("speed-ups") aimed directly at their chest. Reacting with a forehand in the middle of your body often jams you up.
- **The Fix:** Tilt your paddle slightly toward your backhand, pointing it around the 11 o'clock position.
- **The Advantage:** This covers your core and body automatically. If you accidentally pop a dink high and expect an attack, committing entirely to the backhand side removes the need to guess in a split second

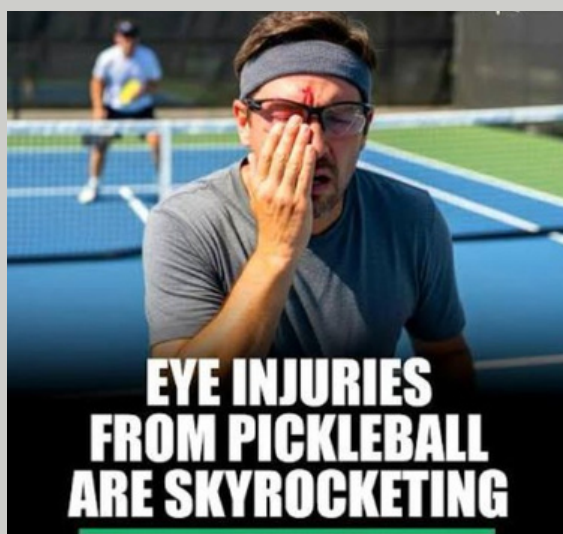


🧢 Interested in trialling protective eyewear?

With the growing popularity of pickleball, there has also been an increase in reports of eye injuries caused by fast-moving balls and close net play. While serious injuries are uncommon, a pickleball can travel at high speed and an unexpected impact can cause significant damage.

Wearing appropriate protective eyewear is a simple way to reduce the risk and help keep players safe while enjoying the game. Whether you're playing casually or competitively, protecting your vision is an important part of staying on the court and enjoying pickleball for years to come.

For more information talk to your Duty Manager



Are you on WhatsApp?

To help ensure consistent communication across all our platforms, the Committee encourages all players to join WhatsApp. As part of the setup process, **please make sure to include your email address.**

For step-by-step instructions for both Android and iPhone, please refer to the link below:

<https://www.whatsapp.com/download/mobile>

Once your WhatsApp setup is complete, go to "Browse groups you can join", search for Geelong Pickleball Club, and request to join.



WhatsApp

Geelong Pickleball Club



Session Scheduling

A quick note regarding our session scheduling: While we strive to accommodate everyone, balancing court availability with the schedules of our dedicated volunteers can be a challenge. Our priority is to provide a diverse range of options, including various times and both scored and non-scored sessions. We truly hope you find a slot that fits your needs and look forward to seeing you on the court!"



Reminders

Lost Property at the YMCA & Grovedale:

We currently have a collection of lost property looking for its owners! If you've misplaced something recently, this is a great place to start your search. Simply check in with your Session DM next time you're at the YMCA to view the items.



002 Club Credit Sharing

Did you know that you are able to share your Club credit with other GPC members?

If this is of interest to you, follow the steps below to find out how you can transfer your club credit.

Step 1 – Jump onto the GPC Website @ <https://002.net.au>

Step 2 – Open the menu and hit the “My Stuff” tab, the drop down appears and select “My Account”

Step 3 – Select the “My Membership” tab and scroll down until you see the option to “Transfer some of my Club Credit to another member”

Step 4 – Simply select the club beneficiary by typing their name and selecting the person as their name appears, then add the \$ amount you wish to transfer.

Step 5 – Hit the transfer tab and that's it; the nominated \$ amount will transfer to the nominated recipient.



Pickleballs – Recycling Efforts

GPC remains committed to being environmentally conscious by collecting and recycling damaged pickleballs. If you find a broken ball, please place it in one of the collection containers located at our venues. If you can't find a bin, just check in with the Duty Manager (DM) for assistance.



GPC Spotify Playlist

The response to our playlist has been fantastic! If you haven't contributed yet, now is the time to have your say. Add your favourite tracks and help shape the sound of GPC by **Clicking the link below**
[GPC Spotify Playlist](#)



Chris Rimmer - Player Advocate

If you have any questions, concerns, or positive feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out to Chris. Chris is here to support you and ensure you have the best possible experience at the club.

How to get in touch:

WhatsApp: Message Chris via the GPCI "All Players" group (please message him **directly** rather than posting in the main chat).

Website: Visit gpci.au and use the "Contact Us" dropdown menu. Please include **"Attention: Player Advocate"** in your message.

Email: Send a note to info@gpci.au with **"Attention: Player Advocate"** in the subject line.

In Person: If you see Chris at the courts, feel free to approach him for a chat!

Geelong Pickleball Club



GPC Memberships



Are you finding it hard to book your favourite time slot because sessions are already full?



Please take a moment to review the options below to see which membership works best for you.

Note: Creating an account on the GPC website does not automatically make you a club member. You are added to our official register only when you:

- Become a financial member by purchasing a **Happy Pickler** or **Totally Pickled** annual membership.
- Are a current member of **Pickleball Australia/Victoria** and have played at least 5 sessions with our club.

We offer three membership tiers to suit your needs. You can upgrade at any time (paying only the pro-rata difference), or downgrade during your annual renewal.

- **Annual Fees:** These support the club's equipment and operating costs.
- **Session Fees:** These primarily cover the hire costs for our venues.

Affiliation with Pickleball Victoria (PV):

You can also join via pickleballvictoria.org/registration.

This is a separate membership (\$60/year for adults). If you sign up through PV, please select **Geelong Pickleball Club** as your club; this will automatically create a casual GPC membership for you within 48 hours.

Refer to next page for membership types



Geelong Pickleball Club: Membership Types

● STARTER

- **Annual Fee:** \$0.00
- **Session Fee Discount:** None
- **Best for:** New players who are still trialling the sport. There are no annual fees, and you can book sessions **5 days** in advance. Under this option, you remain a "Guest" unless you register with Pickleball Victoria.

Note: Inactive guest accounts (no bookings for 3 months) are automatically deactivated but can be restored by booking a new session.

● HAPPY PICKLER

- **Annual Fee:** \$40.00
- **Session Fee Discount:** 10%
- **Best for:** Regular players (at least once a week). This tier offers a 10% discount on all session fees and allows you to book **one week** in advance.

Value: If you play just 3 sessions a month, the savings on session fees will cover your annual membership cost.

● TOTALLY PICKLED

- **Annual Fee:** \$120.00
- **Session Fee Discount:** 20%
- **Best for:** Dedicated players who want the best value. This tier offers our deepest discount (20%) on session fees and the highest priority booking at **two weeks** in advance.

Value: If you play 5 or more sessions a month, this plan is more cost-effective than the Starter or Happy Pickler options.

Note: Session fee discounts do not apply to coaching sessions.

We hope this helps you choose the right plan for your playing style. If you have any questions, please reach out to a **Committee Member** or **Duty Manager**.
