

Tournament Weekend BBQ Fires Up Pickleball Season

By Bob Zyontz

You cannot pin the label “inactive” on the Regency Pickleball Club. This group is always in perpetual motion and May 16 through May 18, 2025, was no exception.

Friday evening, May 16, marked the start of tournament weekend, one of the most eagerly awaited events of the pickleball season. That night, over 160 club members and their guests filled ballroom 3 and the upper patio for a barbecue bash that officially welcomed in the club’s fourth season and its two-day tournament scheduled for May 17-May 18.

While the crowd socialized inside, the air outside was filled with the unmistakable scent of meat on the grill. The grilling crew of Jay Gummic, Bob Zyontz, Barry Citron, Bill Shuzman, and Bruce Nyman, cooked up hundreds of hotdogs, hamburgers, and beyond burgers on the patio using grills provided by the HOA.

With perfect weather, it was a great night for eating, socializing, and discussing the pickleball league draft held the day before, and the excitement surrounding the men’s and women’s doubles competition set to begin the next day.

Saturday, May 17 saw the tournament open with men’s doubles. That morning, however, Mother Nature woke up on the wrong side of bed. The weather looked ominous, and it started to drizzle, but the pickleball Gods, afraid to incur the wrath of Gary Ramella, bent the knee and turned the skies a bright blue enabling all the day’s matches to be played.

The tournament was set up in a round robin format with teams divided into four brackets. The men battled all morning until the winners from each bracket emerged. The gold medal winners included David Berkowitz and Norm Goldman (South bracket), Paul Trinkoff and Isaac Levy (North/South bracket Champions), Russ Goldberg and Stan Wainberg (East/West bracket champions), and Mozey Ghaffari and Maurice Ben’Ous (West bracket).

The decisive, championship match pitted Trinkoff and Levy against Goldberg and Wainberg. Considered two of Regency’s top players, Trinkoff and Levy proved to be the best of the best by defeating their opponents in an exciting match.

By mid-afternoon, the women were in full swing, and their matches turned out to be just as exciting as the men's competition. When the dust settled, Ellen Shuzman and Georgette Bruno were crowned queens of the South bracket while Arlene Goldberg and Judy Azoulai duked it out with Eva Nyman and Ellen Levy for women's pickleball supremacy. Ultimately, Goldberg and Azoulai played a strong game and secured the overall women's doubles championship.

That night, many of the players attended a concert in the ballroom and sang along to the iconic sounds of the Beach Boys performed by professional tribute band Still Surfin'. It was a welcome, but short-lived break from pickleball.

As the players awoke on Sunday morning, they were greeted by some of the heaviest winds seen in recent years that would no doubt affect the day's mixed doubles play. Wind is the wolfbane of pickleball and it can ruin a game faster than you can say dink. Undeterred, the teams prepared to battle the gusts and each other.

The mixed doubles tournament was set up in four brackets similar to the men's doubles the previous day. And despite the adjustments players made, the wind wreaked havoc with their shots. Joe Manber, who slams the ball harder than most, saw many of his shots corkscrew out of bounds and could only laugh in frustration. Other players had the same results, but somehow the games went on until only the bracket winners were left standing. These included Stacy and Rick Chusid from the East, Tom and Alice Bury, the East/West Bracket champions, Manber and Phyllis Greenberg from the South, and Marina Volpe and Paul Trinkoff, the North/South Bracket champions.

The stage was now set for the final confrontation between the underdog Burys and Volpe and Trinkoff. After a strong offensive performance that gave Volpe and Trinkoff a comfortable lead, the Burys came alive. In the middle of a spirited volley, Alice caught her opponents off guard at the kitchen line with a perfect lob that fell just out of reach for a much needed point. That, however, was the high watermark for the Burys as Volpe and Trinkoff pulled away for the win and were crowned the overall gold medal recipients in mixed doubles play.

This event was a resounding success for the Pickleball Club thanks to the organization, management, and communication skills of Gary Ramella, Board chair for leagues and tournaments. Gary, and his army of volunteers, created a blueprint for all future tournaments.

With league play already under way, clinics in full swing, and themed social events scheduled throughout the year, Regency pickleball club members have much to look forward to. That includes the Club's Annual Celebration scheduled for Friday, October 17, 2025. It's an evening of great food, music, and fun. So, mark your calendars because you don't want to miss the biggest and best party of the year.



[Caption]
Stan Wainberg returns a serve while partner Russ Goldberg stands ready in the men's doubles tournament. Photo by Tom Cullen.



[Caption]
Lisa Citron and Shari Nisenson (top left) face off against tough competition from Alice Bury and Sue Cannata in the women's doubles tournament. Photo by Tom Cullen.