

Nationals Tournament Report 2014

Photos by Leticia Brambila, Lala Climaco, Keith Chapman

The following are my recollections of the USAPA

Nationals held November 2-9, 2014 in Northwest Phoenix.

There were 730 players from all over the US and Canada.

Each player could play up to 6 events (Age Doubles, Mixed Doubles, & Singles & Open/Senior Open Doubles, Mixed Doubles, & Singles) in 8 days. The Open/Senior

Open(50+) divisions offered prize money: \$500/\$250/\$125 per player per event and required a 4.5 or 5.0 rating to enter. Matches were played at two locations: Sun City

Festival had 8 permanent and 20 temporary courts set up on tennis courts. For the Age Mixed on Tuesday, the 8

Surprise City Courts were also used. Sun City Festival has been host of all of the 1st 6 USAPA Championships. In

2015, Nationals will be in Casa Grande, AZ about 45 minutes south of the Phoenix airport. The Age events will take place at Robson Ranch and then all play will move to

Palm Creek for the Open & Senior Open events. Most of the courts will be permanent courts next year and Palm Creek has 4 “Stadium Courts” that will be used for the medal matches.

Northern California Nationals participants included:

Grass Valley: Matthew Blom, Mitch & Debbie Fitzhugh,
Doug Koch

Johnson Ranch: Ian & Kim Dickson

Heritage Park: Gloria Acuna, Anita Barber, Leonard Freitas

Folsom: Lyle Grondin

Laguna Del Sol: Martin Gonzalez, Mel Meinert

Lake Tahoe/Reno: Greg Siomiak, John Fontius

Fresno Area: Jeff McFall, Frank & Lola Benneyan, Hank Palmer, Jim Wainscott

Pre-Tournament:

Flew from Sacramento to PHX and drove a rental car 45 minutes Surprise on Saturday morning. Mitch & Debbie Fitzhugh, Ian & Kim Dickson, & I rented a 4 bedroom house in Surprise Farms which was 2 traffic lights and 10 miles from Sun City Festival. Made it out to Festival around lunchtime for some practice games with my Men's Age & Men's Senior Open Ian. We played for about 2 hours. The highlight of the session was playing 2 games against Phil Bagley & Brian Staub, the defending Open Men's doubles champions from "The Villages" in Florida. We had a ton a great rallies in the 1st game so Phil & Brian wanted to play another and Ian & I managed to get 9 points

against “The Champs” in game 2. Super fun playing with Phil & Brian – great players, great guys. My next stop was a trip to Sun City Grand and their 12 court complex to try to get some practice games in with my Age Mixed partner Leticia Brambila(Lydia’s mom) from San Diego and my Senior Open Mixed partner Betsy Lawson of Phoenix. I arrived to see a “Who’s Who” of pickleball women – about 25 5.0 players in a practice session organized by Mona Burnett who is from Grand. Betsy had to leave but I did get 4 Mixed games in with Leticia. Leticia has super quick hands and feet, powerful returns and volleys, and has greatly improved her soft game in the last year.

Sunday(Men’s Age Doubles):

Ian & I had a late start in the Men’s 50-54 Doubles so we went to the City Courts to warmup. We played a few practice games including one with Larry Moon & Darrin Hurdman of Utah before heading out to Sun City Festival. Ian & I won our 1st match 11-5, 11-0. In the 2nd round we played Rodney “The Rocket” Grubbs, the founder of “Pickleball Rocks”, and JT Schulze of Kentucky. Ian & I played a lot of soft shots early in the 1st game. At 7-7, we decided to hit mostly 3rd shot drives and won 11-7. We continued banging away in game 2 and won 11-1. After the match, our ref Ken Porter of Grass Valley (who did his usual great job singing the National Anthem each morning), sarcastically complimented Ian & I on our “Soft

Game". Our 3rd match was against Ken Curry of Colorado Springs and his brother Dan Curry of New York. Ian & I got down 9-4 in the 1st game but had a good comeback to win 12-10. The Curry's started targeting me early in game 2. I missed a few too many shots, the Curry's hit some great reflex volley winners, and they won the next 2 games and the match.

Jeff McFall and Mitch Fitzhugh were also in the Men's 50-54. They won their 1st match 11-3, 11-5. In the 2nd round they played the seeded team of Ron Chang & Mike Gates of Southern California. Jeff & Mitch played well. There were a bunch of great rallies and the 2nd game was very tight but Ron & Mike won 11-5, 11-8. Jeff & Mitch took their 1st losers bracket match 15-2. In their next match, Jeff & Mitch played Alex Jackson and Tom Morrison and his famous "Cheese Board" paddle (which has no handle). Jeff & Mitch took awhile to get used to the "Cheese Board" spins but prevailed 15-13. Jeff & Mitch had a long wait during our long match with the Curry's before playing Ian & I in our 1st losers bracket match. Ian & I started fast before Jeff & Mitch were fully warmed up and then hung on for a 15-5 win to move us to the "Game to Go to Bronze". Jeff & Mitch finished 5th in a tough 16 team bracket, a great result in their 1st Nationals!



In the “Game to Go to Bronze”, we played Dan Gabanek, a many time prize money winner and the legendary Yoda Friedenbergl. I guess Ian & I spent too much time in the sun because we somehow managed to start the match with me receiving serve and Ian wearing the red 1st Server wristband which cost us a point. We got down 3-0 but rallied to tie the score at 5-5. Over the course of 4 sideouts, Dan & Yoda increased their lead to 13-5 and we went on to lose 15-8 to finish 4th.





Dan & Yoda beat the Curry's in the Bronze medal match and then lost to Ron & Mike in the 15 point game of the Gold medal match.

Martin Gonzalez & Mel Meinert played the Men's 35+ and played Phil Bagley & Brian Staub the #1 seeds in the 1st round. In their 2nd match, they lost a 16-14 nailbiter to Ed Krick & Leon Gordon. Mathew Blom also played in the Men's 35+ with Chris Miller of Seattle. Matthew & Chris won their 1st 2 matches in straight games to advance to face Scott Lennan of Seattle and Tony Tollenaar of Oregon. The 1st game went to overtime but Matthew/Chris prevailed 13-11. They then cruised 11-1 in the 2nd game which put them in the winner's bracket final again Phil Bagley/Brian Staub. Matthew & Chris started strong and took the 1st game 11-4, dropped the 2nd game 11-2, but came back to win the 3rd game and the match 11-4 to advance to the Gold Medal match. Phil & Brian beat Scott & Tony in the Bronze match to earn a rematch with Matthew & Chris. Phil & Brian were in top form, Matthew & Chris a little cold after a 2 ½ hour

break, and Phil & Brian won 2 straight games and the 15 point game to take Gold, Matthew & Chris got Silver.



Monday(Women's Age and Men's 70+ Doubles):

Lyle Grondin played with Ron Stiers of AZ in the Men's 70+ Doubles. In their 2nd match, they saved 9 match points and narrowed a 14-3 lead to 14-9 before their opponents finally converted on their 10th match point.

Debbie Fitzhugh played with Cathy Parkhurst of San Diego in the Women's 50+ Doubles. In their 1st round match against Dee Rochel & Carolyn Stevens, Debbie & Cathy got off to a slow start and lost the 1st game 11-3. They started warming up and won the next two games 11-4 & 11-3. Kim Dickson played with Rachael Kroog of Minnesota. Kim & Rachael won their 1st match 11-0, 11-0 to advance to play Debbie & Cathy. In a tight 1st game with many sideouts, Kim & Rachael won 11-8 and then won game 2 11-4. Leticia Brambila & Leslie Anderson of San Diego dropped their opening game 13-11 before taking 4 games in a row to win their 1st two matches and advance to play Kim & Rachael in the winner's bracket semi's. Kim & Rachael repeated their score in the previous match and won 11-8, 11-4 to advance to the winner's bracket final against the "Twin Towers" of Orange County – 6 foot plus Kris Anderson and Tracy Worley-Hagen. Both are outstanding tennis players – Tracy played at Wimbledon. They have huge groundstrokes and returns and love to poach. There were a lot of great rallies but Kris & Tracy won the majority of the reflex volley exchanges and took the match 11-6, 11-3. In the Bronze medal match, Kim & Rachael played Jill Lewis & Lori Orth of AZ. Kim & Rachael started strong and won the 1st game 11-2. Jill & Lori rallied to take a tight 2nd game 11-9. The 3rd game started very tight with many sideouts and points tough to come by. At 5-5, Kim & Rachael won a point to take the turn 6-5. Kim

& Rachael had the wrong server on the other side but the ref told them they were correct so they got to re-serve. On the re-serve, Lori & Jill hit a net chord shot that trickled over the temporary net, hit the crossbar (which is in play), and then bounced on the center base (which causes a replay). After a short debate, the ref called for another re-serve. Kim & Rachael won the 2nd re-serve to take a 7-5 lead and went on to take the game & match 11-6 to earn a Gold medal rematch with the “Twin Towers”. Kim & Rachael got plenty of advice on how to “Slay the Giants” (mine was deep returns, get to kitchen line quick, squeeze the middle, and try to get in dink rallies). With a big crowd cheering them on, Kim & Rachael played great in the Gold medal match, making amazing get after amazing get to extend rallies. Kim & Rachael battled to tie the score at 7-7 in the 1st game and saved multiple match points in game 2 but Kris & Tracy won the Gold 11-7, 11-6.





Tuesday (Mixed Age):

Gloria Acuna and Leonard Freitas won their 1st Mixed 65+ match against Marcia Dalton & Bill Barbuto 11-6, 11-3. Gloria & Leonard lost their 2nd match to the 5.0 team of Hoagie Hoggatt & John Grasso (who would eventually win Silver medals). In their 1st losers bracket match, Gloria & Leonard edged Laurel & Larry Branen 17-15. In the next match, Gloria did a great job hitting shots to their opponents feet to set Leonard up for putaway shots and they won 15-10. Gloria & Leonard lost their next match to local players Cheri & Jack Cavanaugh but finished in the top half of a very tough bracket.

Matthew Blom played with Alex Hamner of San Diego in the Mixed 35+ bracket. Matthew & Alex won their 1st match 11-1, 11-0, their 2nd match against Chad Williams from Utah & Jamie Knoph of Colorado 11-7, 11-4, their 3rd match against Joy Leising & Tony Tollenaar of Portland 11-4, 11-4 to advance to a 4th round match with GiGi LeMaster & Enrique Ruiz. GiGi & Enrique have won

\$5000 in the Tournament of Champions Open Mixed in the last 2 years (1 Gold, 1 Silver) but Matthew & Alex took the match 11-6, 11-4. In the winner's bracket final against Steve Wong of Surprise, AZ and Stephanie Lane of Nashville, Matthew & Alex won the 1st game 11-1 but Steve & Stephanie won 2 tight games and the match 11-8, 11-9. Matthew & Alex played Jen Lucore and Phil Bagley in the Bronze medal match. Matthew & Alex won the 1st game 11-9 but Jen & Phil came storming back to take the next 2 games and the match. In the Gold medal match, Jen & Phil continued their hot play and beat Steve & Stephanie 11-2, 12-10, 15-6.



Jeff McFall teamed up with Robbi Chiappini of Surprise, AZ at the last minute to play in the Mixed 50+. Despite not practicing together at all before the tournament, Jeff & Robbi won their 1st round match 11-6 in the 3rd game. In the 2nd round, they had a tight 1st game before losing to the #1 seeds Luba Zhekhovskaya of Vancouver, British Columbia and Dan Gabanek. In their 1st loser's bracket game, Jeff and Robbi edged Margie Davenport & Steve Valiant 16-14 before losing to local players Carolyn & Sidney Stevens.

Mitch & Debbie Fitzhugh played Marne Smith & Joe Gilmore in their opening match. They started slow and lost the 1st game 11-5 but came storming back to win the next 2 games and the match 11-2, 11-7. Their 2nd round match was an "Instant Classic" against Rachael Kroog and Andy Gensch of Kansas. Rachael & Andy took the 1st game 11-7 but Mitch & Debbie stepped it up to take game 2 11-8. They continued their strong play in game 3 and were up 10-8 but couldn't convert their match points and Rachael & Andy came back to take the match 12-10. In their 1st losers bracket match, Mitch & Debbie played Gwen Chew & Dave McNeill. The match was close throughout but Mitch & Debbie squeaked it out 16-14. Their next match was against a very tough Mixed team of Christie Borne of Arkansas and David Redding of Dallas. It was another cliffhanger but Christie & David prevailed 16-14. The Fitzhugh's have improved immensely in 2014 and proved

at Huntsman & Nationals that they can hang with anyone in their Age Group. Kim & Ian Dickson cruised through their 1st 2 matches giving up only 8 points total to advance to the 3rd round against Rachael & Andy. The Dickson's continued their fine play and won 11-2, 11-1 to advance to the winners bracket semifinal against Luba & Dan. The Dickson's played very well but Luba & Dan made very few errors and won 11-9, 11-6.

Leticia & I beat Mari Brace and Mike McKeough of Michigan in the 1st round 11-2, 11-2. Mari & Mike have only been playing a short time but you can tell they really have the "Pickleball Fever" – they are both very friendly and very enthusiastic, I would be surprised if they don't improve a lot by Nationals next year. In our 2nd match Leticia & I played Dan (who beat me the day before) & Donna Curry of New York. In the 1st game, Donna had a nice putaway on a ball we barely got back but hit the net on the followthrough so we won the point. Leticia & I had a slight lead most of the match and won 11-6, 11-7. Our next match was against Lori Orth & Mark Clark of AZ. The 1st game was very tight with many sideouts. Lori & Mark hit some nice volleys and half-volleys of our 3rd Shot Drops, placing the ball near the sidelines and forcing us to hit awkward 5th shots. When Lori & Mark took an 8-7 lead, we called a timeout and decided to try to hit hard drives when they were at the net. The drives worked and we won the 1st game 11-8 and the 2nd game 11-2 to advance to the winners

bracket semi's against Laura and Dave Kovanda of Columbus, Ohio. Laura & Dave are excellent tennis players who started playing pickleball in April. The winds were the strongest of the day (~13 mph). Leticia & I started game 1 with the wind at our back and won it 11-0. Game 2 into the wind was tight throughout and Laura & Dave won it 11-8. We started Game 3 with the wind and built a 6-1 lead at the turn and finished strong into the wind to win 11-2 and advance to the winners bracket final against Dan & Luba. Despite Leticia & I more than holding our own in reflex volley exchanges with everyone else in the bracket, Dan & Luba seemed to win almost all of them. We tried to get into dink rallies, but Dan is 6'5" with tremendous reach which enables him to get a lot of balls in the air. Luba was a Russian badminton champ in the 80's and her strokes are textbook. Dan & Luba beat us 11-5, 11-4. Leticia & I grabbed some dinner waiting for the losers bracket to finish and hit for 15 minutes to stay loose for our Bronze medal match.

In Kim & Ian's 1st losers bracket match, they beat Lori Orth and Mark Clark 15-8 to get a rematch with Rachael & Andy in the "Game to Go to Bronze". It was a great match with Rachael & Andy playing much better than the 1st time and the score close throughout. With the score 12-12, Rachael & Andy finished strong and won 15-12 to advance to the Bronze match.

Although I played medal matches at Nationals with Matthew 2 years ago and Ian last year, this was my 1st chance to play a Nationals medal match under the lights with linesman and a big crowd – what an Electric Atmosphere! Rachael & Andy continued their fine play, won most of the dink rallies, and took the 1st game 11-7. Down 3-0 in game 2, Leticia & I started really going for our serves and returns and I started poaching on everything I could. Leticia's returns were deep and hard which made it tough for Rachael & Andy to hit behind me to keep me honest. We had a nice run and took game 2 11-4. We started strong in game 3 and built a 10-3 lead. Rachael and Andy cut it to 10-6 before we finally got the last point to get a rematch with Luba & Dan in the Gold medal match. Luba & Dan's long wait did not seem to bother them at all. At 0-10-2, I hit a hard serve that skidded off the sideline and Dan returned it wide to avoid the shutout but Luba & Dan won game 1 11-1. It was more of the same in game 2. We got down 8-0 before losing 11-3 for Silver medals.



Wednesday (Men's and Women's Age Singles):

Jeff McFall won his 1st match in the Men's 50+ singles 11-5, 11-5 over Ed Krick. He lost his 2nd match to JT Schulze 11-0, 11-5. Jeff won his 1st losers bracket match against Craig Schaper 15-11. In his next match, Jeff lost to Steve Valiant 15-8.

My 1st match was against Christopher Wolff of Oregon. He is deceptively quick and can hit accurate shots even when fully stretched out. Christopher beat me 11-4, 11-2. I won my 1st 2 losers bracket matches 15-2 & 15-1. My next match was with JT Shulze. I got down 8-2 at the turn against the wind. With the wind at my back, I cut the lead to 8-6 but JT had a run to lead 14-11. I scored the next 3 points to tie the score 14-14 but JT won the last 2 points to take the match 16-14.

Greg Siomiak won 3 matches in the Men's 60+ Singles to finish 4th.

John Fontius won 2 matches in the Men's 70+ Singles before losing to Tim Gleason (the eventual Silver medalist) of Boise 16-14.

Leticia Brambila got revenge against Luba in the 1st round of the Women's 50+ Singles winning 11-2, 11-6. Leticia won her 2nd match 11-0, 11-0 to advance to the winners bracket final against fellow San Diego player Kim Bennett. Kim won in 3 games. Leticia's Bronze medal match was a real barnburner but Luba won 11-8 in the 3rd game so Leticia got Bronze. In the Gold medal match, Luba led 8-2 in the 3rd game but Kim Bennett finished strong to take the game and the Gold 11-9.





With an off-day on Thursday, Chad Williams, Jamie Knoph, Mitch & Debbie Fitzhugh, Ian Titus, Deli, Dale, & me closed Brookside Sports Bar playing pool and darts.

Thursday(Clinic Off/Day):

Woke up early to get to the City Courts for practice at sunrise (actually 10:45am). Got in a few practice games with Betsy Lawson, my Senior Open Mixed partner. Betsy has a tennis background and prefers her backhand to her forehand. I kidded Betsy that after she hits a great backhand topspin winner, I expect her to bang her shoes with her paddle to knock the red clay out of them. We played against Yvonne Hackenberg and Hillary Marold (1st time I have been on the same court as Hillary). Yvonne &

Hillary are awesome players and awesome people. Betsy & I also played a couple of games with Pam Jensen of San Diego and Eddie Contreras of Yuma, AZ. I also got some practice games in with Ian Dickson against local player Justin Rodgers and Dave Weinbach of Wisconsin. Dave won the Men's 35+ Singles the day before and has incredibly quick hands. Ian & I challenged Dave with hard shots many times but Dave got pretty much everything back. I also got to play a game against Wes Gabrielsen who eventually won 5 medals at Nationals.

Thursday night we went to a party at John & Leslie Anderson's rental house. Great food, Great Company.



Friday(Men's and Women's Open and Senior Open Doubles): Matthew Blom played in the Open Men's Doubles with Billy Jacobsen of Seattle. Matthew & Billy won their 1st 2 matches 11-3,11-6 & 11-5, 11-0 to advance to play Steve Wong & Glenn Griffin in the 3rd round. Matthew & Billy beat Steve & Glenn 11-7, 11-2. Next up was the defending champs Phil Bagley & Brian Staub. Phil & Brian won 11-7, 11-3. In their 1st losers bracket match, Matthew & Billy lost to Robert Elliott & Kyle Yates of Florida. In a father/son Bronze medal battle, Chris Miller/Matt Staub beat Phil Bagley/Brian Staub. Wes Gabrielsen/Enrique Ruiz beat Chris Miller/Matt Staub in the game to 15 in the Gold Medal match.



Jeff McFall & Mitch Fitzhugh won their 1st round Senior Open Men's Doubles over Al Hager & Paul Porch 11-6 in the 3rd. In the 2nd round, Jeff & Mitch lost to legends Pat Kane and Yoda Friedenberg. Jeff & Mitch won their 1st losers bracket match against Bill Marshall & Don Simmons 15-12. In their next match, Jeff & Mitch lost to Rodney Grubbs and JT Schulze 15-9.

Tony Brambila (Leticia's husband) & Steve Dawson of San Diego lost their 1st round match but then won 6 losers bracket matches in a row, allowing none of their opponents to score more than 8 points in the 15 point matches.



Ian Dickson and I won our 1st match against Eddie Contreras & Ford Roberson of Texas 11-2, 11-5. In the 2nd round, we beat locals John Grasso & Troy Horton 11-5, 11-3. Next up was Larry Moon & Tyler Sheffield the 50+

Tournament of Champions & Fall Brawl winners. Tyler was slowed by a knee injury and looked like he might not be able to make the walk between the parking lot and the courts. We hit most of the balls to Tyler in game 1 but he seemed to be moving fine during the points and Larry & Tyler won 11-3. Ian & I played it straight up in game 2 and won it 11-4. The 3rd game was tied at 5-5 but then Larry & Tyler had a run and won the game and the match 11-6. Our 1st losers bracket game was against Rodney Grubbs and JT Schulze. Ian & I got up 14-3 and Rodney called a timeout. I don't know what "The Rocket" had to drink during the timeout, but I sure would like some of it. Rodney started playing like a man possessed, hitting great shot after great shot and winner after winner and they rallied to 13-14. We got a sideout and converted on our 11th match point to win 15-13. Our next match was against Steve Paranto and Randy Bither of Oregon who won the 55+ Men's doubles earlier in the week. The match was tight throughout but at 12-12, Ian & I had a 3 point run to win 15-12 and advance to play against Yoda Friedenberg & Pat Kane. Ian & I built up a 12-6 lead but Yoda raised his game 2 levels and they beat us 15-12. We were really hoping for an Open medal and some prize money – maybe next year. Yoda & Pat then beat Tony Brambila & Steve Dawson of San Diego in the "Game to Go to Bronze" so Tony & Steve finished 4th. Pat & Yoda won Bronze, David Redding and Scott Lennan Silver, and Tyler and Larry Gold.

In the Women's Open, Jen Lucore & Alex Hamner won 5 matches without giving up more than 8 points in any game won their 4th straight Open Women's Doubles title!!! Christine Barksdale and Joy Leising won Silver, and Marsha Koch and Jessica LeMire Bronze.



In their 1st Senior Open Women's Doubles, Kim Dickson & Rachael Kroog had a rematch of the 50+ Women's Bronze match against Jill Lewis & Lori Orth and won 11-7, 11-7. In their 2nd match, they lost to the #2 seeds Luba & local player Mona Burnett. Kim & Rachael had a great run in the losers bracket beating Che Chu & Sheila Schoonover 15-5, Cookie Drake & Gail Dacey 15-13, Betsy Lawson & Roxanne Pierce 15-7, and Denise Boutin & Alison Fulton 15-8 to get to the Bronze medal match. Leticia Brambila &

Leslie Anderson won their 1st round match in straight games to advance to play the #1 seeds and TOC Gold medalists Yvonne Hackenberg & Hilary Marold. In a terrific match, Leticia & Leslie won a cliffhanger 12-10 in the 3rd game. They won their next match in straight games to advance to the winners bracket final against Luba & Mona. Luba & Mona won to advance to the Gold medal match.

The Bronze medal match under the lights was another terrific match. Leticia & Leslie won game 1 11-9 but Kim & Rachael rallied to win game 2 11-6 and then won game 3 11-8 to get a rematch in the Gold medal match with Luba & Mona. Kim & Rachael continued their great play and won game 1 11-5 but Luba & Mona rallied to take the next 2 games and the Gold medals. Kim & Rachael won a glass trophy, an award paddle, Silver medals, and \$250 each. Leticia & Leslie won a glass trophy, an award paddle, Bronze medals and \$125 each.



Saturday(Juniors, Open Mixed, and Senior Open Mixed):
The Junior divisions had 8 to 18 year olds participating in Singles, Doubles, and Mixed Doubles. Many of the Juniors were the children of Adult Nationals players and their level of play was very high as was their sportsmanship.



In the Open Mixed, Matthew & Alex got a forfeit in their 1st round match then beat Marsha Koch (no relation) of Toledo, OH & Josh Grubbs of Indiana 11-5, 11-6 in round 2. Matthew & Alex had a great win in the 3rd round, beating Jen Lucore & Phil Bagley 11-0, 11-7. In round 4, Matthew

& Alex lost to the Florida team of Lydia Willis & Kyle Yates. In their 1st losers bracket, Matthew & Alex beat Rob & Jodi Elliott of Florida 15-10 to advance to the “Game to Go to Bronze” against Tonja Major & Puppet Master Nelson. It was a close match throughout, but Matthew & Alex pulled it out 17-15. In the Bronze match, Matthew & Alex avenged their earlier loss to Lydia Willis & Kyle Yates, winning 11-5 in the 3rd game to advance to the Gold medal match against GiGi LeMaster & Enrique Ruiz. Matthew & Alex took the 1st game of the final 11-7 and had their chances in game 2 but GiGi & Enrique won the 2nd game 13-11 and the 3rd game 11-4 to take Gold.



In our 1st match in the Senior Open Mixed, Betsy & I played the unorthodox Lefty/Lefty team of Tim Frazee and Angela Luhman. Tim dove to get a low ball and then hit a nice “Butt Volley” on the next shot but his legs were in the kitchen so we won the rally. Betsy & I won the match 11-6 in the 3rd game. In our 2nd match, we lost to Kim Bennett & Yoda 11-9, 11-6. We won our 1st losers bracket match against Pam Jensen & Eddie Contreras 15-8 but then lost our next match to Randy Bither & LaLa Climaco of Oregon 15-12.

Kim & Ian Dickson won their 1st match in straight games. In the 2nd round, they lost to Tyler Sheffield and Sue Buerkens of Texas who were 2nd in the 55+ Mixed earlier in the week. The Dickson's won their 1st 2 losers bracket matches 15-4 & 15-6. Leticia & Tony Brambila won their 1st 2 matches in straight games before losing to TOC Gold Medalists Hilary Marold & Mike Stahl in the 3rd round. The Brambila's started quickly against the Dickson's in the next match and got up 7-0. The Dickson's had a great comeback to tie the score at 11-11 but the Brambila's took the last 4 points to win the match 15-11. In their next match, the Brambila's beat Ron Chang & Laura Kovanda Fenton 15-1 to advance to play Luba & Mike Gates. Luba & Mike won the match so Leticia & Tony finished 5th out of the 33 team bracket. Sue Buerkens & Tyler Sheffield won Bronze, Hilary & Mike Silver, and Luba & Mike Gold.

On Saturday night we went to Brookside Sports Bar for some more pool, darts, & dancing (I abstained from dancing to save myself for singles on Sunday) and left before closing time.

Sunday(Men's and Women's Open and Senior Open Singles): In honor of Veteran's Day, General Steve Boone, retired USAF gave a moving speech about his family's history of service and the origins of Veteran's Day at the conclusion of World War I.



In the Women's Open Singles, Doubles partners Christine Barksdale and Joy Leising played in the winners bracket final with Joy winning 11-2, 12-10. Jen Lucore then beat Christine in the Bronze medal match and Joy in the Gold medal match to win her 3rd Open Singles title in 4 years.



In the Senior Open Women's Singles, Alex Hamner beat Kim Bennett in the winners bracket final in 3 games. In the Bronze match, Hilary Marold beat Kim Bennett in 3 games to get a rematch of the TOC Singles championship with Alex. Alex prevailed again to win Gold, Hilary got Silver, and Kim Bronze.

In the Senior Open Men's Singles, I played Yoda in the 1st round. He was considering defaulting because he was pretty beat up after playing 5 events already but decided to play to give me a warmup for the next match. When he started the match, Yoda looked like a "Human Question Mark" but started to straighten up as the match went on. In my 2nd match, I played the TOC Singles champ Glen Peterson of Seattle. By the start of the match, there was a big diagonal wind blowing and Glen used his big topspin shots to win 11-4, 11-1. My next match was against Dan Wheeler of Philadelphia who won Silver in the 60+ Singles earlier in the week. I led 13-10 but Dan finished strong and beat me 15-13. Scott Moore won Gold, Glen Peterson Silver, and Mike Gates Bronze.

In the Open Men's Singles, Matthew Blom won his 1st match over Swiper Titus of Indiana 11-4, 11-4. In round 2, Matthew edged his 35+ Doubles partner and former Open Singles champ Chris Miller 13-11, 12-10. Matthew lost his 3rd round match to Wes Gabrielsen. Matthew won his next match against Brian "The Beard" Ashworth 15-8, then beat Dalton Vavra 16-14 and Kyle Yates by forfeit. Matthew played Will Willson (who flew in from Michigan the night before just to play the Open Singles) in the "Game to Go to Bronze". Will won a tight match 15-13 so Matthew finished 4th a very talented field. Will won Bronze, Wes Gabrielsen Silver, and Scott Moore of Colorado Gold to

complete the father/son Moore Singles sweep. Colorado is the new Florida!!



Almost Recovered, Doug Koch aka “The Pickleball Pimp”

My Newcomer of the Year Award (1st Time Nationals
Participants that made the Biggest Splash):

2012: Matthew Blom, Adina Jones

2013: Wesley Gabrielsen, Jessica LeMire

2014: Daniel Moore, Joy Leising

Nationals Medal Count:

Player	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Jennifer Lucore	4	0	0	4
Alex Hamner	3	1	1	5
Luba Zhekhovskaya	3	1	0	4
Joshua Elliott	3	0	0	3
Meg Sheffield	3	0	0	3
Wesley Gabrielsen	2	3	0	5
Christine Barksdale	2	2	1	5
Hilary Marold	2	2	0	4
Yoda Friedenber	2	1	1	4
Chad Hamner	2	1	0	3
Enrique Ruiz	2	1	0	3
Gil Middleton	2	1	0	3
Mona Burnett	2	1	0	3
Lola Benneyan	2	1	0	3
Phil Bagley	2	0	1	3
Michael Gates	2	0	1	3
Kyle Stoddard	2	0	0	2
Lynn Carlson	2	0	0	2
Daniel Moore	2	0	0	2
Scott Moore	2	0	0	2
Larry Moon	2	0	0	2
Gail Dacey	2	0	0	2
Nancy Sass	2	0	0	2
Marty Trifonoff	2	0	0	2
Zoe Sheffield	1	2	0	3
Scott Lennan	1	1	1	3
Roxanne Pierce	1	1	1	3
Tyler Sheffield	1	1	1	3
Trevin Lindstrom	1	1	0	2
J.j. Stone Jr.	1	1	0	2
Rachel Elliott	1	1	0	2
Jaimi Foster	1	1	0	2
Daniel Gabanek	1	1	0	2

Bob Youngren	1	1	0	2
Yim Lee	1	1	0	2
Diane Bock	1	1	0	2
Linda Hoggatt	1	1	0	2
Juanita Vincent	1	1	0	2
Bev Krueger	1	1	0	2
Kyle Yates	1	0	2	3
Brian Staub	1	0	2	3
Fred Eggen	1	0	2	3
Jessica LeMire	1	0	2	3
Pat Kane	1	0	1	2
Dennis Dacey	1	0	1	2
Terry Dixon	1	0	1	2
Yvonne Hackenberg	1	0	1	2
Marsha Koch	1	0	1	2
Kimberly Bennett	1	0	1	2
Robert Elliott	1	0	0	1
Ron Chang	1	0	0	1
Steve Paranto	1	0	0	1
Randy Bither	1	0	0	1
Al Hager	1	0	0	1
David Gibbs	1	0	0	1
Pat McKenny	1	0	0	1
Earl Hill	1	0	0	1
Keith Bisel	1	0	0	1
Bill Purdy	1	0	0	1
Dave Weinbach	1	0	0	1
Brett Raymond	1	0	0	1
Bill Smith	1	0	0	1
Gigi LeMaster	1	0	0	1
Kris Anderson	1	0	0	1
Tracy Worley Hagen	1	0	0	1
Denise Boutin	1	0	0	1
Alison Fulton	1	0	0	1
Pauline Avery	1	0	0	1
Marilyn O'Connell	1	0	0	1
Babs Lester	1	0	0	1
Allison Griffing	1	0	0	1
Carolyn Bagley	1	0	0	1
Diane Keller	1	0	0	1
Joy Leising	0	4	0	4
Joyce Jones	0	3	0	3
Troy Hamner	0	2	1	3
Matthew Blom	0	2	1	3
Jim Wainscott	0	2	1	3
Rachael Kroog	0	2	1	3
Mills Miller	0	2	0	2
John Grasso	0	2	0	2
David Redding	0	2	0	2
Matt Staub	0	2	0	2
Kim Dickson	0	2	0	2
Barbara Wintroub	0	2	0	2
William Gardner	0	1	2	3
LeEllen Lane	0	1	2	3
Rena Han	0	1	2	3
Leticia Brambila	0	1	2	3
Peggie Francis	0	1	2	3

Ian Junatas	0	1	1	2
Braden Flynn	0	1	1	2
Kale Klein	0	1	1	2
Steve Wong	0	1	1	2
Paul Porch	0	1	1	2
Stephanie Lane	0	1	1	2
Susan Buerkens	0	1	1	2
Sally Dobson	0	1	1	2
Alice Tym	0	1	1	2
Marylou Furaus	0	1	1	2
Bev Parks	0	1	1	2
Bill Pardue	0	1	0	1
Craig Hauger	0	1	0	1
Lenny Chimino	0	1	0	1
Michael Johnson	0	1	0	1
Steven Miller	0	1	0	1
Dick Johnson	0	1	0	1
David Leach	0	1	0	1
Bob Robillard	0	1	0	1
Dominick Greco Jr.	0	1	0	1
Tom Tueller	0	1	0	1
John Edmonds	0	1	0	1
Dan Wheeler	0	1	0	1
Dave Kovanda	0	1	0	1
Tim Gleason	0	1	0	1
Ronald Lucas	0	1	0	1
Doug Koch	0	1	0	1
Frank Benneyan	0	1	0	1
Glen Peterson	0	1	0	1
Mike Stahl	0	1	0	1
Julie Haney	0	1	0	1
Laura Kovanda Fenton	0	1	0	1
Deb Arnold	0	1	0	1
Patricia Nissan	0	1	0	1
Audrey Phillips	0	1	0	1
Pat Carroll	0	1	0	1
Bev Schalin	0	1	0	1
Abby Grubbs	0	1	0	1
Dee Rochel	0	1	0	1
Sydney Hays	0	1	0	1
Camille Flynn	0	0	2	2
Del Kauss	0	0	2	2
Ronald Hohman	0	0	2	2
Margo Dragoo	0	0	2	2
Lydia D. Willis	0	0	2	2
Ethan Flynn	0	0	1	1
Glenn Griffin	0	0	1	1
Tony Tollenaar	0	0	1	1
Dan Curry	0	0	1	1
Ken Curry	0	0	1	1
Mario Najera	0	0	1	1
Byron Fresno	0	0	1	1
Troy Horton	0	0	1	1
Mike Wolfe	0	0	1	1
Jack Cavanaugh	0	0	1	1
Bud Stefanko	0	0	1	1
Charlie Robinson	0	0	1	1

Jim Frey	0	0	1	1
Donald Paschal	0	0	1	1
Christopher Wolff	0	0	1	1
Rocky Clark	0	0	1	1
Ron Robinson	0	0	1	1
David Miller	0	0	1	1
Andy Gensch	0	0	1	1
Linda Kauss	0	0	1	1
Vicky Noakes	0	0	1	1
Nabil Merhi	0	0	1	1
Daniel McLaughlin	0	0	1	1
Kenny Lewis	0	0	1	1
Will Willson	0	0	1	1
Leslie Anderson	0	0	1	1
MJ Shin	0	0	1	1
Sara Ash	0	0	1	1
Jodi Elliott	0	0	1	1
Jill Lewis	0	0	1	1
Lori Orth	0	0	1	1
Kathy Roberts	0	0	1	1
Kris Hatcher	0	0	1	1
Brenda Jmaeff	0	0	1	1
Judy Graves	0	0	1	1
Rita Weihe	0	0	1	1
Beverly Youngren	0	0	1	1
Rachel Thomas	0	0	1	1
Eva Recker	0	0	1	1
Natali Pouchet	0	0	1	1
Jan Cunningham	0	0	1	1
Sherril Kerr	0	0	1	1
Linda Pejchar	0	0	1	1
Harriet Kalin	0	0	1	1