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Anderson pickleball tournament relishes success

Club wants to introduce more people to the sport

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Gene Silver, playing with partner, Sue Carr, returns the ball during an intense pickleball game at Julifs Park. They were among the 24 participants who played in the Anderson Pickleball Club's first invitational tournament. / Lisa Wakeland/The Community Press



Written by Lisa Wakeland

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There was a strange clicking noise coming from the Juilfs Park tennis courts in Anderson Township on a recent sunny Saturday.

It was the sound of a small, perforated plastic ball being hit by lightweight paddles as the Anderson Pickleball Club conducted its first invitational tournament.

There were 24 players signed up for the round-robin games, and all the spots were taken less than a month after the club announced the tournament.

“We’re really glad we had such a great turnout,” said Mike McCalmont, who helps run the club. “There were some people who never played the game before, and they wanted to come out to see what we were doing.”

VIDEO: Check out some of the tournament action

Pickleball is one of the fastest-growing sports in the country and is a combination of badminton, Ping-Pong and tennis.

When the Anderson club was founded in 2009 there were a handful of enthusiasts who gathered to play wherever they could. Now more than 50 members meet weekly to play on local tennis or racquetball courts.

VIDEO: Learn how to play pickleball

Club member Dave Brostrom learned the game from a friend more than two decades ago in Portland, Ore. He stopped playing for years and then found the Anderson Pickleball Club.

“We’ve gotten more competitive and we have a larger group of people who are getting a little bit younger,” he said. “It’s a lot of variations of several games and the ball moves a little slower.”

Brostrom said pickleball is very easy to learn, and beginners can have a great game even if everyone is new to the sport.

“You can have a fun game if all four people are fairly new,” he said. “Or you can get four people who are really good and you can play a really crazy game of pickleball, which is a blast.”



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