

PICKLEBALL – 9TH DECEMBER 2024

The opportunity to try Pickleball at Bath Leisure Centre proved to be immensely popular and was 'sold out' very quickly. Based on 4 players per court, 32 players seemed the maximum number that was manageable. Even after 2 reserves had filled places vacated by people who needed to back out, there were still 3 people on the reserve list who would have liked to play.

Two courts were booked for a four hour session, with 8 Adventurers attending for each one hour slot. Everyone arrived full of enthusiasm, keen to play and wearing appropriate outfits - the atmosphere was really positive, with everyone hoping to enjoy this new experience.

Once play started, the game was found to be more difficult than expected – the racquet sports players found the lack of a long handled racquet and the 'dead' ball meant that they were frequently wrong-footed. But everyone improved during their hour's play, finding ways of ensuring that the bat and ball met each other successfully! As a result, there were some extremely powerful and successful shots created by those oversized table tennis bats!

The overwhelming impression was that people were leaving with smiles on their faces, having really enjoyed it as a new and active experience - with a high percentage saying that they would like to play Pickleball again.

A Beginners Eye View of Pickleball It is definitely a very active adventure. I didn't know that this is a relatively new sport played on a life size badminton court with the net lowered down the posts to the height of a tennis net. Fortunately the inventor of Pickleball didn't design the game to be played on a tennis court or table. Each combatant has a bat best described as a mongrel of table tennis, badminton, squash and real tennis racquets. These bats are relatively light weight and made of dense sponge like material to deaden the sound on impact with the light weight plastic ball. It's not to protect your opponent or partner from injury when you come to blows. The rules of the game are relatively simple. These are mixture of all the racquet sports so adventurers threw caution to the wind and created a hybrid version of their own. Scoring, counting, serving and returning by the rules proved a little contentious and swapping partners at 15 minute intervals made little difference to the outcome of the games played. The benefit is exercise of the mind (interpreting simple rules made complicated), body (you have to hit the ball quite hard and run, lunge or swipe at it throughout) and spirit (you must make sure when to hit it and when to let it bounce. Don't get down hearted as the other players will remind you what you are supposed to do). It is easy to see how people get hooked on this game but you'll need to book early next time with the Adventurers.

PS My thanks go to Hester who managed to have her own "Escape Room" adventure in reverse to get us all into the room rather than out, and fully equipped with nets, bats and balls on the right sized courts. Well done everybody and glad you enjoyed yourselves.

from the Organising Team

(Pictures on next page)

