



Photos submitted

Above: The winning teams were, from left to right, 1st place: North/Friedl, 2nd place: Elite, 3rd place: Cucumbers.

Pickleball Palooza was a 'winna'

First annual pickleball event a success despite rainy curveball

The Verona Area Chamber of Commerce organized its first annual Pickleball Palooza earlier this month, held July 15-17 at Harriet Park and the Verona Athletic Center, although the latter wasn't originally part of the plan.

Some clinics and the Pro Exhibition Match were moved indoors to the VAC on Friday due to the anticipated rainy weather, but the Saturday and Sunday events remained at Harriet Park, as scheduled.

Dave Weinbach, a nationally recognized player who is also a Madison native, hosted the clinics and Pro Exhibition Match on Friday.

Saturday offered free lessons, a DJ, and food trucks with a tournament held on Sunday.

Pickleball is one of the fastest growing recreational sports in the United States.

Community members were welcome to come spectate even if they didn't play.

"The event went really well and I am excited to take what I learned this year and use it to make the second annual Pickleball Palooza even better," organizer Allison Plumer and tourism coordinator for the Verona Area Chamber of Commerce told the Press. "The attendance was fantastic and all of the programs were full."

There were 32 clinic attendees on Friday and 32 lesson attendees on Saturday.

"Prolite Sports coach Neil did a fantastic job," Plumer said.

There were 20 teams for afternoon round robin play and 20 teams for the Sunday tournament.

"Wow, what a weekend," the Verona Area Chamber of Commerce wrote on Facebook. "It was an absolute blast meeting all of the amazing players that came out for our first Pickleball Palooza. After a rainy start that moved us indoors on Friday, the rest of the weekend was beautiful and ended with some really incredible matches on Sunday at Harriet Park."

Reporter Neal Patten can be reached at npatten@wisconsinmediagroup.com



Above, right: Clinics were held indoors at the Verona Athletic Center on Friday due to the bad weather, but the lesson attendees still learned how to play – or play better – the increasingly popular sport of pickleball.



Above: After a rainy start that moved the event indoors on Friday, the rest of the weekend was beautiful and ended with some sunny matches on Sunday at Harriet Park.