



Pétanque Times

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March-April 1995

Wine Country Classic in April

New Select Triplets Tournament Picked For Season Opener

The VOMPC premieres its 1995 tournament series next month with the new 'Wine Country Classic,' a *Select Triplets* competition set for Sunday, April 23, in Sonoma.

Registration will be open 10-11 a.m., with tournament play starting at 11:30 a.m. Cash prizes go to the winners. And the entry fee of \$15 per team includes complimentary *pastis*.

In what may be a preview of the national playoffs in May, several of California's strongest triplet teams are expected to compete in this inaugural 'Wine Country Classic.' As one savvy, out-of-town player put it, "It's the same town. Same playing field. We're looking ahead to this one as a good warm-up for the championship playoffs." Byron Mayo and Mike Norton will coordinate the event.

Membership Renewals Breaking All Records

When Garrick Clayton rejoined our Valley of the Moon Petanque Club last month, it brought the number of paid members for 1995 up to 61. That's the largest first-quarter total in club history. *Welcome back, Garrick.*



Cash Prizes!

(Photo by Tom Noonan)

Pre-Season Pétanque Saturday, March 25

Our pre-season pétanque party coming up on Saturday, March 25, at the new 'Little' Switzerland pétanque courts, will start about 11 a.m. Yves Casabonne says he will have the giant barbecue fired up -- for all party-goers who want to use it. The picnic tables will be set. And the courts will be freshly groomed, ready for action.

Planned as a simple, low-key, afternoon with good friends, good food and good pétanque, club directors are limiting this potluck, pétanque party to *1995 VOMPC members and spouses or dates, only*. No children. No dogs. It's all happening on Saturday, March 25, at the 'Little Switzerland' pétanque courts, Riverside and Grove -- in El Verano.

From the president:

Final Research Results

During January, we conducted a survey to see if there are more activities or new directions that would be of interest to our members. Twenty-three people responded to the questionnaire. That was half of the 1995 membership at that time. So it represented a good sampling of the club's most interested and most active members.

The findings indicate that, overall, we are pursuing the right direction in 1995. There was no mandate for change. A few new ideas did gain some genuine interest, however. And we are now considering these in our future plans.

There's an interest in regularly scheduled play, for example; and in scheduled mixed doubles. The idea of more social events and potluck picnics also drew good response. But the real surprise was the strong appeal of incorporating 'doubles' into Summer League competition. Summer League 'doubles' and 'singles' were at the top of the findings.

If you'd like to review the entire research study, yourself, let me know.

-- BYRON

New Bylaws Available

Our VOMPC bylaws have been updated to incorporate the revisions adopted last November during the club's annual election. New sets of the bylaws are now available to any 1995 member who wants one. If you'd like a copy, just write the club at Box 863, Sonoma, 95476. We'll promptly get one to you.

Playing Times Now Regularly Scheduled

More than half of the respondents in our recent survey said they would be interested in 'regularly scheduled playing times'. The idea was discussed in depth by VOMPC directors at the February board meeting.

Finally, the board recognized that in our very active club, *every weekday-afternoon from 4 p.m. on -- from now well into November -- you'll find club members out playing on the Valley of the Moon pétanque courts.* That's also true on Sunday afternoons from about 2 p.m. until dusk. So those broad and popular time periods are now designated 'regularly scheduled playing times' for our Valley of the Moon Pétanque Club. Come on out and enjoy.

News Note -- 1995 FPUSA licenses are required for play in federation-sponsored tournaments, including the U.S. national playoffs May 27-28 in Sonoma.

Time is Running Out For Unpaid Members

This is the last issue of *The Pétanque Times* for any members who do not pay their 1995 dues by March 31. That's the cutoff date, when any remaining unpaid members will be dropped from the club's membership rolls.

Due each year in January, VOMPC club dues help cover the cost of upkeep and improvements at the pétanque courts -- the bi-monthly newsletter -- flyers and other mailings -- all postage -- club tournaments -- partial cost of club social events -- plus membership in both the Federation of Pétanque/USA and the *Federation International de Pétanque et jeu Provençal*.

Countdown Begins For National Championship Tournament In Sonoma

By Mike Norton
Task Force Chairman

In less than three months, the Valley of the Moon Pétanque Club will proudly host the FPUSA's National Pétanque Championship Tournament. A special VOMPC task force began planning for the event in early January. Thanks to the efforts of committee members Louis Toulon, Barbara and Ken Steiper, Annick and John Bouldt, Jacques Mathieu, Frank Pipal, Jean Markson and Susan and Mike Norton, the vision of this first-ever national tournament in Sonoma is gradually coming into focus.

A preliminary notice has been forwarded to clubs throughout the United States. Registration packets will be available for all interested FPUSA members starting March 13. We expect as many as 40 to 50 teams to register, including several VOMPC entries.

Cost is \$60 per select triplet team. That includes Saturday lunch. Registration deadline is Friday, May 19. Tournament draw will be on Sunday, May 21.

Preliminary Schedule of events:

Friday, May 26. Welcoming party. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wine and cheese at the courts.

Saturday, May 27. Opening rounds of the championship. 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sunday May 28. The final day --

Morning. Consolante tournament for those not qualifying for the final rounds of the championship.

Afternoon. Final rounds of this national championship playoff tournament..

Evening. Special awards banquet and presentations. \$30 per person.

Time to Assemble Teams

If you haven't already started, now is the time to put together your team. We hope to demonstrate to the foremost players from around the country that the game of pétanque is alive and well in the Valley of the Moon.

If you're not entering the event, mark your calendar anyway and plan to attend. This is your opportunity to witness the best pétanque this country has to offer.

The winning team will proudly represent the USA at the 1995 *Championnat du Monde* in Brussels, Belgium, next fall.

The Umpire's Box...

Q. "Opening the round, I threw the cochonnet out a legal nine meters. But then, the first boule I tossed hit the cochonnet -- pushing it on out to 12 meters. Should play continue at that point? Or, do I bring the cochonnet back and throw it again?"

A. The throw was valid, even though the cochonnet was hit beyond 10 meters by the first boule tossed. Play continues at the point where the cochonnet landed after being hit by the boule -- *unless* the cochonnet was knocked outside the defined boundary, or *unless* it landed in a pool of water where it's floating freely, or *unless* it cannot be seen from the starting circle.

(The Umpire's Box is a popular new column in our club newsletter. If you have a question on pétanque rules or procedures that you would like answered, send your query to the Umpire, PO Box 863, Sonoma, CA 95476. All answers are certified by our Director of Sports and FPUSA umpire, Pierre Joske.)

A Game of Pétanque on the Côte d'Azur



(Traverso photo ...courtesy of Pierre Joske.)

Cannes...circa 1960: Pétanque was a favorite pastime of French film stars on the Riviera even in the '60s. That's a young Claudia Cardinale and Charles Aznevoir on the right. Can anybody identify the kneeling couple on the left?

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Officers and Directors: Byron Mayo, president -- Jacques Mathieu, vice president --
Mike Norton, treasurer -- Steve Katz, secretary -- Pierre Joske, director of sports --
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