



## **Wilderness CC Holds Florida's First Ever POP Tennis Round-Robin Tournament**

Like many golf and tennis clubs in Southwest Florida, Wilderness has been exploring the addition of Pickleball courts. Pickleball is touted as one of the fastest growing sports in America, and Naples is home to the US Open Pickleball Championships.

One drawback to Pickleball is that it must be played on hardcourts, necessitated by its use of a small whiffleball with a low bounce. This can be challenging on a player's knees and back. A second drawback comes from the considerable sound made by contact of the ball to the racquet.

A few months ago, Spike Gonzales, the tennis professional at Wilderness CC, introduced a new game to the community called POP Tennis which is played with foam composite paddles several inches shorter than a tennis racquet and similar in size to a paddle or platform tennis racquet. The balls are low compression tennis balls which generate the "pop" sound when struck.

A standard tennis court is 78 feet long while a Pop Tennis court is just 60 feet. The beauty of the game is that you can take advantage of any tennis court surface, so at Wilderness players can continue to utilize their softer Har-Tru surface. The original POP Tennis court was a little less wide than the two service boxes (21 feet), but the United States Tennis Association and Tennis Industry Associations have adopted the full width of a singles tennis court as the accepted POP Tennis width. All that remains for a regulation court is to draw a new base line halfway between a tennis court's service line and base line.

Like Pickleball, players have only one underhand serve. Thereafter, the rules and scoring are identical to tennis. "And best of all," according to Spike, "players can continue to use their tennis strokes, as well as effectively use topspin and slice."

Pop-Tennis is just starting at Wilderness CC, but the reviews are very positive! For more information about this fun new sport, please send an email to Spike Gonzales at [tencapfl@aol.com](mailto:tencapfl@aol.com).