

Pickleballs! – The Movie

This adventure/comedic buddy movie was inspired by *Blades of Glory*, *Talladega Nights*, *Wedding Crashers*, *Stepbrothers* and *Dodgeball*. The story is about transformation of two men who, based on ignorant assumptions, despised each other. They will learn trust and team work on the road competing in pickleball tournaments across the United States.

According to USAPA, Pickleball is among the fastest growing sport in America with a 650% membership increase in the past 6 years. It has over 3 million active players in the United States. The National Championships in November every year at Indian Wells Tennis Center draws 2,300+ competitors. It also has a very silly name and has lots of interesting, quirky personalities, making it ripe for comedy.

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Logline: When a toupee-wearing former tennis champ loses his job and his mother on the same day, he must travel the country in an old RV with his former rival hustling for enough cash to pay off gambling debts by playing in pickleball tournaments.

Synopsis:

The comedic plot comes from differences in the main characters 40 years after they met. These two are now in their 60's. One is a brash, cocky, jingoistic, arrogant American from California named Chip Cox. The other is an introspective, philosophical, brooding, shy, Russian named Boris Baryshnikov. Both are caricatures of men from their respective countries.

Now, in 2021, they are yearning for something that is missing in their lives. They have been living on opposite coasts of the United States, trying to make up for past mistakes, erase debts and find happiness though their stubborn and rigorous adherence to their ideologies.

Chip is kind of a mashup of a youthful John McEnroe and Andre Agassi with a random, weird, southern accent that he created for himself as a child. He was deeply tanned and heavily muscled. Now, he is pale, flabby and a single, sex-craved, gambling-addicted, ignorant, capitalist. His maturity level remains in his adolescence – as a star who gets whatever he wants whenever he wants, since he has been enabled by so many for so long. He has been semi-oblivious to the dimming of his star wattage and desperately trying to stay relevant in the time of so much change in a technological, social media world. Yet, he is a Luddite and stuck in the past.

He has tried to ignore but has seen the rise of pickleball on the courts next to where he taught tennis at his country club. His once flowing blond hair is now replaced by a massively receding hairline that he is desperately trying to hide with hats and wigs. He lives in Van Nuys, CA in an old, run-down RV in his mothers' driveway. He has just been fired as a teaching pro at his local club and his beloved, religious, dedicated mother just passed away.

He needs to create a buzz to sell his, about to be released, self-published, autobiography that he "wrote" using a portable, digital tape recorder that he carried everywhere. With no job and no living family, he needs to reinvent himself.

He has an idea: recruit his old, communist doubles partner to travel with him across the country competing in pickleball tournaments and promoting his autobiography.

Boris is an old school communist-loving, deep-thinking, skinny, Russian who loves to quote Marx, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. He came from nowhere to “win” the 1980 French Open singles due to drug test failure by Chip (the reigning, six-time champion) and quickly disappeared after it. He has been living in a failing commune in upstate New York for 30 years. He has been learning the marijuana growing business while trying to manage a lazy staff. He struggles with the hypocrisy of his interest in profit despite his antipathy for capitalism.

He is in a rut and struggling every day to earn money so he can save the commune and regain his self-pride. He misses the rush of competition and takes it out on everyone at the commune on the ping pong table where he is undefeated.

Chip, upon being fired from his teaching pro job at the club where he grew up, reaches out to Boris, who he has not spoken with since the dramatic finish of their match in 1980. He calls the commune and says he is in the area and wants to help secure donations for the commune.

He won't tell Boris that he is in California living in his RV, unemployed and broke or of his plan to help them reclaim their glory – on the road playing pickleball for money. He doesn't tell him about the fact that they will also be promoting his book “The Greatest Singles Tennis Champion – It Takes Balls to Play”, by Chip Cox.

He hopes they can recreate their magical tennis chemistry through pickleball as partners. He hopes to pay back his gambling losses. He tells Boris that he can help save his commune with winnings in this new, crazy sport.

They will live together out of his RV, traveling to qualifier tournaments across the country.

This is the story of their adventure together. They play in tournaments such as the US Open in Naples, FL, The Beer City Classic in Grand Rapids, MI and The Sun City Seniors event in Arizona and others as they journey from New York to California. On the road, they have many adventures together discovering and debating their differences. The adventure culminates during the National Pickleball Championship week at Indian Wells, CA

This final week ties the movie together - how they perform on and off the court, people they see and what they do. Cameo appearances by Agassi, McEnroe, Gizmo, Golden Boy, the Unicorn, the Shark, The Walrus, Kyle Yates, Morgan Evans and more.

Can they trust each other to win the big cash prize? Do they throw the match for even more money? Do they bet on themselves? Do they get the sponsor? Do they save the commune? What happens next?

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