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ESPN AND PROFESSIONAL PICKLEBALL ASSOCIATION TO AIR FIRST-EVER PPA TOUR BUBLY TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS ON ABC

Three Days of Professional Play Will Culminate in Exclusive Airing of Finals on ABC



ESPN and the Professional Pickleball Association (PPA) have signed an agreement for exclusive coverage of the first-ever PPA Tour bubly Team Championships. The one-of-a kind pickleball event will take place Sunday, Dec. 18, at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino's Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada, and air live and exclusively on ABC at 1:00 p.m. EST/10:00 a.m. PST.

Four world-class teams will begin competition Friday, Dec. 16, followed by the semifinals on the evening of Saturday, Dec. 17, and conclude with the airing of the two-hour finals on Sunday, Dec. 18, on ABC. Players will take the court in a series of doubles matches, with an exciting tiebreaker format to decide the victor in the event of a draw, and \$175,000 on the line in prize money.

"We are thrilled to offer fans coverage of the PPA's inaugural bubly Team Championships and give them an opportunity to watch what has become one of the country's fastest growing sports," said Tim Bunnell, senior vice president, programming, ESPN. "Our commitment is to serve sports fans anytime, anywhere with innovative content, and we are excited to be part of this sport's growth trajectory."

"The PPA Tour has a fantastic partner in ESPN, and we're very excited to showcase our sport at the national level," said Connor Pardoe, commissioner and CEO of the PPA. "We look forward to working together to tell the story of this exciting event and growing the fanbase of pickleball across the world."

Top pickleball pros Anna Leigh Waters, Ben Johns, Catherine Parenteau and Riley Newman are a few of the big names scheduled to play in the event. In addition to the professional competition, more than 1,000 amateur players are expected to take to the courts, with pickleball festivities and activities running concurrently during each day's competition.

Pickleball has seen a meteoric rise both domestically and internationally over the last two years, with the sport now featuring more than 5 million active players in the U.S. alone. A mashup of tennis,

badminton and table tennis, pickleball is easy and fun to play but offers the competitively minded a healthy challenge when it comes to mastery.

About ESPN

ESPN, the world's leading sports entertainment brand, features eight U.S. television networks, direct-to-consumer ESPN+, ESPN Radio, ESPN.com, endeavors on every continent around the world and more. ESPN is 80 percent owned by ABC, Inc. (an indirect subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company) and 20 percent by Hearst.

About PPA Tour

The Professional Pickleball Association is the renowned organization for the sport of pickleball, establishing special events, rankings, and ways to watch the world's top male and female pickleball players and awarding nearly \$3 million in annual prize money. With more than 20 events in 2022 at first-class facilities including Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles, The Lindner Family Tennis Center in Cincinnati and Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas, the PPA is the premier provider of professional and amateur events. Founded in 2018 and based in Salt Lake City, UT, the PPA is focused on elevating the game across the country and worldwide. For more event information, visit teampickleballevent.com.

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