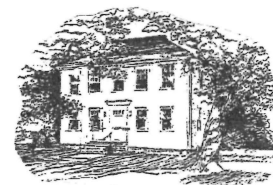


IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge
1861

Petanque Arrives in Indian Hill

The recently installed court at the western edge of Stephan Field is for residents to play the game of Petanque ("pay-TAWNK"), commonly known as Boules ("BOOL"). The current form of the game can be traced to La Ciotat, a small town in southern France. Because rheumatism was a hindrance when trying to run and throw a ball, in 1907 Jules Le Noir devised a game wherein players stay in a circle with a 2 foot radius when throwing a ball. The word Petanque comes from *pes tancats*, meaning feet anchored. The game is similar to bocce (Italian), lawn bowling (England) and horseshoes (USA).

It can be played on many terrains, but a hard dirt, hard sand, or gravel surface is most desirable. Indian Hill has 3 back to back courts which are 30 feet long and 10 feet wide. Singles are played with one player per side; doubles with two per side; and triples with three. Equipment for the game includes a small ball called a cochonnet ("ko-show-NAY"), 6 large metal balls called boules, and a measuring device.



After teams are established, a coin toss decides who goes first. The team that wins the coin toss draws the starting circle with a stick or some chalk, and then throws the cochonnet (or jack) on to the court. The object is to get one's boules closest to the cochonnet. After the first boule has been thrown, the second team plays until at least one of its boules is closer to the cochonnet than the opponent's boule. They continue play until they take the lead or run out of boules. The first team then resumes play until it is successful or has run out of boules. When all boules are played, that is the end. Points are determined at the end. The winning team receives one point

for each boule closer than any boule of the opposing team. The game ends when one team has scored 13 points.

Different techniques are designed with specific outcomes in mind. A point ("PWANT") is a boule rolled on the ground; and a boule portee ("bool por TAY) is one thrown in the air in an arc. These two shots are for placement. A tir ("TEAR") is a boule intended to knock a target in the court, and it is thrown. The game is simple, but mastering it is hard.

There are clubs and tournaments worldwide. There are national and international competitions. The first world championships were organized in 1959, and have been held annually since. In 2009 they will be held in Thailand. About 17 million people in France play petanque, and it is becoming very popular in Asia, South America, and North America. Many famous people enjoy the game, including Morley Safer (60 Minutes), Mick Jagger (Rolling Stones), Martha Stewart (hostess), Peter Mayle (author); Jaques Pepin (chef), Bill Cosby (actor) and Governor Bob Taft.

Games are often played with accoutrements: a beverage and some snacks. The French believe the game is not the game without pastis, an anise flavored liquor that is considered the Gatorade of the boules court. Petanque players enjoy the post game refreshments almost as much as the game itself.

Indian Hill's new court provides a place where anyone, no matter what their age or athletic ability, can participate in a fun, simple, and relaxing sport outdoors. Leslie and Buck Shiels contributed several sets of boules for residents to use. They can be borrowed from the Rangers Station. The game of Petanque has made it to Indian Hill, and the Village has the first officially recognized court in Cincinnati.

For additional information, visit www.usapetanque.org