

Open

continued

Seventy five percent of the stadium seating is open to the public, as well as the outer court matches. "That's the beauty of it," Lehman said. "I can't think of any other professional sporting event that you can walk right up for free." Leyman added that the size and scope of the event haven't changed much over the past several years, except for a slightly smaller bleacher configuration.

Cleary described the Open as the AVP's most expensive tournament, which makes it challenging to turn a profit while complying with state and city regulations. "I think that they're doing their best to try and balance the professionalism of the sport and the lifestyle and it's a tough balancing act," he said. "When you start to have bleachers and security and new rules it starts to take on a different feel."

For the City's part, Cleary said the Council has tried to find a balance of its own. "I think the City is a little bit torn," he admitted. "I think that they love the tradition of the event, they want to continue with the event, but they do have some reservations about the event getting too big."

Cleary, who will play in the Open for the 33d time this year, feels the tournament is part of the city's culture. "The Manhattan Beach Open has traditionally been the most prestigious event on the tour," he said. "I think in some ways it partly defines the city because beach volleyball is such a big part of this community."

Walmer called the six-man is an opportunity to enhance the value of the event by showcasing its history. "Beach volleyball is recognized as having come of age here at the Manhattan Open and I think the community really takes pride in it," he said. "This is the most prestigious tournament on the tour, it always has and it always will be."





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Petanque

from front page

with flowers of all colors and fragrances. The whole scene is quite genteel and appealing. Quiet, too. The players communicate through hand signals. But I did not give it any more thought until not long ago, I learned of lawn bowling in Hermosa Beach. Stopping in to check it out, my impression was that it was more "Hermosa Beach" than "New Zealand." The grass is scruffy with no gardens, and nary even a potted geranium. And no one dresses in white, except for tournaments, I was told. And they claim to be too chatty for hand signals. But the people were having fun and were most welcoming. "Come on and join in," they said. And get this, the club has been going on right there on Valley since 1936.

If I found Hermosa Beach a bit scruffy compared to New Zealand, I was really taken aback at the sight of petanque played in the dirt along the baseball field at Live Oak Park in Manhattan Beach. The program for seniors at Joslyn has expanded dramatically in the last two years, and on the schedule is petanque. I had never heard of the sport before, but soon learned that dirt is the recommended surface (and a little uneven at that) for this French version of boule. It seems that while lawn bowling has been played for centuries in England and other English-speaking countries, bocce ball in Italy, and la boule Provencale in France, petanque evolved early in the 20th Century. A champion player of la boule Provencale, suffering from arthritis, hoped to play if all would accommodate to his condition. He suggested that everyone should throw the boules standing still, with feet together much like horseshoes, rather than running and jumping as in bowling, lawn bowling and bocce ball. The word petanque comes from "pieds tanqu" from the verb "to anchor" or "tie down."

Whereas lawn bowling and bocce balls are larger, made of wood and weighted on one side, thereby adding a dimension of skill, petanque boules are smaller, heavier and made of metal. There are some minor differences in rules, but they are essentially the same. A target is tossed and you have to get as close to it as possible while your opponents try to best you and knock your boule away. All are a combination of skill and luck, equally fun for beginners or advanced players.

The long-established Hermosa Beach Lawn Bowling Club has about 60 members, men and women of all ages, with maybe a dozen showing up on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and Saturdays at 9:45 a.m. at 861 Valley. Several tournaments with other clubs are offered. Lessons are both free and recommended.

Petanque is the new kid on the block in Manhattan Beach, just getting off the ground with about eight regulars playing. Officially, games are on the second and fourth Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., though they often play every Thursday. Come with a partner or just yourself and get in on the

ground floor when others are just learning. They will be thrilled to show you how and to have you join in on the fun. The "field" is between Joslyn Center and the baseball diamond.

Should you really get into it, the major petanque courts of the LA area are in Rancho Park, with an annual tournament held each spring in San Pedro next to the cruise ship terminal. Or who knows, maybe Manhattan Beach will evolve into playing a major roll in petanque.

For other ball games, senior men are playing slo-pitch baseball at Dorsey Field, Thursdays from 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., with additional practice time on Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon. And for those of you, like me, who love ping pong but have no room for a regulation table, Tom Allard is encouraging players to join him at the Scout Building next to the Joslyn Center on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. Tom is a good player, but friendly and encouraging. Or if that time does not suit you, the table and net are available for you to set up on your own.

The first annual Older Adult Game Day is planned for Tuesday, August 25. To be combined with the Tuesday Lunch Bunch, hot dogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers will be grilled, and the Young Professionals from the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce will organize petanque, ping pong, croquet, and horseshoes. So mark your calendar: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.



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