

USA Pickleball JUNIOR SPOTLIGHT

MADDIE TOREN

By Hope Tolley



Maddie Toren, 17, of Phoenix, Arizona, is making her mark in the pickleball community both as a player and as a referee. Since being introduced to the sport in 2021, Maddie has played in six tournaments and won gold in 3.0 19+ mixed doubles, become a certified line judge and level one trained referee, and reached more than 600K views on her pickleball-related TikTok videos.

Maddie first started playing pickleball in February, 2021, when she was introduced to the sport by her uncle. Her initial experience of playing pickleball led her to further explore the sport. As her family's interest grew, they invested in equipment, learned the rules, put a portable net in their garage and have plans to purchase an RV to travel to tournaments throughout the year.

After playing for only a few months, Maddie was falling in love with the sport and the community. She worked with her local pros, Ryan Trefry and Dave Furman, which led to new skills and improved abilities. In May of 2021, Maddie entered her first tournament at the National Pickleball Celebrity Tanning Open playing 3.0 19+ doubles with her mom, Crystal, and mixed doubles with her dad, Adam. She and her mom finished one game away from the medal matches, and she and her dad won gold in their bracket.

After that tournament, Maddie was determined to learn more and improve her game by drilling, watching YouTube and Pickleball 360 videos, and pushing herself by playing with skilled players.

In addition to playing pickleball, Maddie has become a certified

level one referee. Based on guidance from her regional referee trainers, she took an online refereeing course. She was also introduced to Leslie Shaunessy, a referee from Gilbert, Arizona, who was able to guide Maddie through the process to become a referee, which included self-study, online tests, an eye exam, and becoming a certified line judge. Following that, she shadowed referee Bill McManus at a local tournament. After watching him for four games, she decided to give it a try. Bill stood with her as she called out the score, watched for faults, and kept track of the score on her clipboard. Maddie's goal is to become a certified level two referee in early 2022.

Off the court, Maddie is equally impressive. She is a successful entrepreneur and CEO of an eco-friendly clothing business, OM Warrior. Also, she has been working behind the scenes on a new pickleball apparel brand she is launching with her brothers (Jacob, 13 and Cash, 11) called PKLD. Additionally, she is a certified kids and teen yoga instructor and has an online animated yoga video series for kids, which provides a fun way to practice yoga poses and mindful breathing.

Maddie's goals as a pickleball player are to continue to share her knowledge and tips on social media (@maddietoren) so others can learn from her experiences. She wants to reach a younger

audience to grow a younger pickleball community. Her goals as a pickleball referee are to referee honest and fair matches, grow with the sport and contribute to the evolution of the rules, guides, and overall professional pickleball playing experience. •

