



**Complete Transcript: HALO Talks with Lynn Cherry  
Posted October 27, 2021**

Pete Moore:

This is your host, Pete Moore. And I am pleased and humbled to announce the launch of my one and only book titled *Time to Win Again*, 50 takeaways from playing and watching team sports to guarantee your business success. Those of you who know me personally, and then when it was listed on Halo Talks or any length of time, know that I am an avid sports fan and a big believer in the value of team sports. What I've seen over the past 25 years, helping businesses grow raising capital, being an entrepreneur myself in coaching and mentoring executives in the sector. It's the lessons learned on the field perfectly apply to business entrepreneurs, executives, managers, you name it. Every company that's a strong company has got a good team. So quick read. There's also illustrations in there from our good friend Market Cruelty Free Cartoons. We go to [integrity.sq.com](http://integrity.sq.com). Enter your email address, and we will send you information on the book and the entrepreneur wars survival kit as well. Be great. Take names go halo.

Pete Moore:

This is Pete Moore at HALO Talks, NYC. Today, we are going to talk about pickleball and pickleball only blend coming to us from Connecticut, who is an avid pickle baller. And she is going to wow. Us on pickleball being the future of outdoor racket sports. So welcome to the show.

Lynn Cherry:

It's great to be here. Thanks for having me.

Pete Moore:

Great. So you obviously come from a more professional and corporate environment and now you're diving in as first it to pickle ball as a passion and a profession. So why don't you give us your personal background and tell us what kind of brought you to this? Life's changing points.

Lynn Cherry:

You know, it's interesting things began to change for me when I moved from Texas where I'd lived for 25 years to Connecticut and I'm moving from a Southern climate to, you know, having some pretty good winter as I was looking for something to do indoors. And I always had a racket sports background. I played, you know, open level racquetball when I was young. And I wrote a lot of sports for magazines, sports articles for magazines and whatnot. So I got to Connecticut and I'm looking for something to do in the winter. And I looked at the local recreation center and they had something called pick a ball, which I

had never heard of in my life. And I know other people kind of might be there, but I looked it up on YouTube, but I'm like, I'm, I know I'm going to love it.

Lynn Cherry:

So what's great about pickleball is I show up to the gym just to check it out. And as soon as they see me peeking around the corner, looking through the door immediately, somebody comes up to me and says, Hey, you want to give it a try? And I'm like, wow. You know, these people are really welcoming. I mean, they don't know me from Adam, so got in the gym and somebody loaned me a paddle and I hit the ball a couple of times. And from there, you know, it was something I absolutely positively knew I was going to love. So pretty much maybe a month after I started the sport, I started the pickleball fire website, which has kind of morphed into a podcast and Adam digital magazine also.

Pete Moore:

Great. So I went to the us open a pickleball down in Naples cause it was about four years ago. And it felt like going to a tennis center, you know, 30 years ago where it was on a loud speaker and I felt like I was a camp also because they said you know, Murray Feinstejn, please report to court 36 before you'll be disqualified for the over 80. So it seems like it's fans, you know, age, age segments. But for those who haven't played difficult ball, I've done some research on it. So it started back in, I guess, the sixties and seventies. And it was basically a couple of guys tinker around with their badminton shed and some wiffle balls and, you know, kind of turned it into a, a global sport down. So, you know, what, w what kind of comradery, or, you know, how, how is your skill level and you know, how seriously are you taking your typical ball?

Lynn Cherry:

Well, I, I learned a long time ago, you know, I did play college sports and played high level racquetball, but, you know, honestly I do sports because I enjoy them. And if, if I wasn't on the court enjoying myself, I wouldn't be on there. And that's actually, what's so great about it is that, like you had mentioned, anybody can get on the court and play. It's not like tennis, which can be kind of difficult to learn, regardless of I've, I've talked to, I've met so many people who have never played any other sport in their life. They get on the pickleball court, they can immediately hit the ball. They immediately have fun. And so you don't need to have a sports background or a racket sports background. And you mentioned kind of the inner generational component, you know, it's that people, I often see grandmothers showing up with their grandsons and they both get on the court and you know, they, everybody can play together. I mean, even people who are very high level players are happy to take a beginner on the court, show them the game, give them some tips and then, you know, play, play a couple of games. So, you know, me personally, I love the sport, you know, I'm somewhat decent at it because I've got that racket sports background. But yeah, it's just such a great game.

Pete Moore:

Awesome. Awesome. And, you know, from a standpoint of where you think pickleball can become, or kind of what inning is kind of a baseball term, you know, w where are we in, how do you see the professionalism of the industry, or do you think this becomes like, you know, in five years, we're going to kind of joke about this podcast where people didn't know about it, and now it's kind of on, you know, NBC sports, you know, instead of Wimbledon Sunday, it's, you know, pickleball Sunday.

Lynn Cherry:

Well, yeah, I mean, actually, or it already is on ESPN and CBS network that really just happened this year. Well, actually the nationals that probably happened a couple of years ago, but in terms of that, any analogy, you know, we're, we're definitely in the, in the top of the first honestly in the three years I've been involved with pickleball, it's come such a long way because in 2020, there was probably 3 million people playing the sport. There was no prize money for people playing in it. So even if you're at the highest level of the sport, you know, these pros weren't earning any money. Now that changed in 2020 when, actually not one, but two professional tours were launched. So of course, with the Olympics, actually, you know, just recently here finishing up, you know, everybody's like, well, w you know, w wants pick a ball to become an Olympic sport, but there's a fair amount to that.

Lynn Cherry:

But I, I personally know of a couple of different organizations, you know, people I've talked to on the podcast that are working towards that goal, and it's not going to happen in 2024 because it's, it's just too soon. They don't have enough prep time. We'll say to even be an exhibition or a demonstration sport, but by 2028, the LA Olympics, I do, I do believe that that's probably everybody's goal is to get it in by then. I mean, if you think about it, pick a ball, you know, in 2020, it, it grew about 20%. And granted it's as the New York times called it, it's like the best, you know, pandemic sport you could ever even imagine because it's largely played outdoors. And

Pete Moore:

Sure. You know an investor asked me a couple years ago after we went through this event, you know, whereas if you put kind of your business hat on, you know, where is the, the, the money to be made, because he, obviously you got a wiffle ball and you got a paddle or a racket, I guess those are customizable to pick a ball. But there's really not much else that you can, you know, places to, to make money, you know, in the space and the recreation side, DC leagues popping up. Do you see, maybe there's like a billing software, maybe what you're doing on the, you know, the content and information side and, and data, maybe that's where play, or have you seen any interesting you know, business channels that are starting to evolve or training or whatever you,

Lynn Cherry:

You know, there's actually a ton of business channels. The biggest business channel at this point are the restaurant concepts, which are now involving pickleball. So they'll build, you know, 4, 6, 8 pickleball courts as a part of that restaurant, you know, so it's definitely more of that lifestyle experience. And there's some, probably the best known one is called chicken and pickle, which is out of Kansas city. And they must have a half dozen locations either with the restaurants now or in development, pretty much all over the country at this point. And there's other like businesses similar to them. I mean, honestly, the concept that type of concept is popping up all over the country. I mean, the development is just absolutely amazing. So that's definitely where the most money is.

Pete Moore:

Gotcha. And this chicken and pickle do you know if that's a chain or if that's a franchise or

Lynn Cherry:

Yeah. Yeah. They, they it's, it's a small chain now. So I do believe they probably franchise.

Speaker 4:

I want to take a minute and tell our audience about two awesome workout recovery products I've been using for the last 18 months from higher dose.com leader in infrared technology for athletes. Like all of us are, we're an investor in the company. That's not why I'm telling you this. I'm telling you this because it works. You got an infrared sauna blanket. I hop in there, I'll listen to some podcasts, burn 800 calories, get a mad detox and a PEMF, which is a pulsed electromagnetic field crystal mat that I lay on and our recalibrate my cells to denormalize level, the earth you got. So you like, and you're looking for a pretty awesome gift. They will love it. You could use this code halo seven five, get \$75 off, and you will not be disappointed higher dose.com, promo code halo 75. And now let's get back to our regularly scheduled program.

Pete Moore:

So from a standpoint of, of your personal lifestyle, how often do you play a week? You know, talk about some of the friends you made and, you know, is it more recreational or is it getting even more and more competitive?

Lynn Cherry:

You know, because I've had a chance to play more often than I used to when I was working my full-time job, you know, things are definitely getting more competitive. And sometimes I, I go play out, I go out and play and I just want to have a fun match where I can work some things. And then other times I'll go to like another park where I know it's very, very competitive when I'm like, okay, I'm confident. You know, I can definitely get out there and compete, but, you know, there are, there's tons of tournaments, tons of leagues, obviously 2020 with COVID was a down year. But you know, it's just huge in 2021. And there's a number of juniors programs coming up where you've got people who are developing the junior leaks and, you know, there's always the tournament options to.

Pete Moore:

Gotcha. Interesting. So, you know, with your background, did you play tennis before? Are you ping pong player? You know, what, what kind of guys you into this?

Lynn Cherry:

I played a little bit of tennis growing up and kind of, you know, some of the USTA leaks, but my real sport from a racket perspective was actually racquetball which is definitely a dying sport. Interestingly enough, one of the biggest differences between racquetball and pickleball is that there's really a very small percentage of women who played the sport of racquetball currently. And historically, you know, it was probably 80 to 90% men where pickleball is a much more even mix. In fact, when I was playing yesterday and probably right now, I'm playing about, I practice probably a couple of times a week, and then I play maybe three times a week. But yesterday when I went to the courts to play, it was probably 70% women. Now, I think the overall statistics are a little bit more, still, a little bit more slanted towards men, but it's definitely something that, you know, everybody can do.

Lynn Cherry:

And, and, you know, one of the things that I think people always, when they hear the name of the sport pickleball, you know, I've talked to people on the pot by podcast to didn't even want to play the sport because of the name of it. Now there's actually people who even said to me, you know, I, I think that when I first started playing, you know, the sport would do so much better if they got rid of the name and

just replaced it with something else, but now, now people have really kind of bought in, bought into the name and you know, kind of like the history of how all of that occurred.

Pete Moore:

Yeah. We worked with a with a group called massage envy and after 200 locations, they said, you know, should we try cheese name? And then it decided, you know, it's just too late. Let's just which is trying to support it in further explained that it's a, you know, it's a massage clinic for everyone. So, you know, as you look at you know, some of these over 55 communities, you know, I know very well that villages, which is probably one of the larger active lifestyle communities has got a huge pickle ball presence, you know, how do you see, you know, the older market kind of gravitating towards this? Do you think that there's any kind of injury issues, you know, where do you kind of see this? Cause this is probably one of the better sports, you know, if you don't play golf where you know, you can have a lot of community.

Lynn Cherry:

Yeah, absolutely. And, you know, I honestly, I think any, anybody who's built a community that's 55 and over now always has ball in it. You know, it's obviously you need a much smaller space than, you know, like a, a golf course or something like that. So that's certainly a no brainer, but yeah, I mean, that's, I fit kind of right into that age group. And when I was 50, I completely tore my ACL and did not have it surgically repaired. So I really never thought I was going to play another court sport. But when I went and looked at, you know, pickleball ball, I'm like, it's a much smaller court. It's actually a super-fast game. That's much faster than, than tennis or racquetball, especially when you're kind of at that kitchen line. So, but it does not require as much movement now, granted at, at competitive levels, the amount of movement that's required is tremendous.

Lynn Cherry:

And the pro athletes now are, you know, just the more athletic you are, the more you're going to do in the sport, because it's just changed so much just in the last couple of years. But on the over 55 side, you know, with the older population, what's really common now too, is that they tend to combine RV parks and, you know, people driving their RV around the country with pickleball. So I know there's over 200 RV parks right now that actually do have pickleball courts. So that's, that's a huge draw. As a matter of fact, I've got my sister-in-law's sister is actually going to be retiring soon. They're going to get in their RV and they're going to travel around from RV parked RV park to play pickleball

Pete Moore:

Well, okay. I don't think I fully appreciated the inertia of this Ford and chicken and pickleball now, RV parks, and pickleball. So this is like the groundswell of what, what creates a real industry you know, and you can else that if you're a health club operator you know, and they're thinking about where they're putting pickleball courts in, you know, maybe from a, you know, kind of did, can they still charge similar prices to what they charged for tennis courts or, you know, what have you seen there as kind of, you know, maybe, you know, is there a, is there a psychological price point? You know, it says, oh, it was sort of a ball, like I'm not playing tennis or, you know, w what have you seen there?

Lynn Cherry:

What I, what I've seen with pickleball is most clubs even tennis clubs here in Connecticut, they generally don't require a membership for pickleball. So it's basically drop-in type play and people will just pay, you know, \$10 and some of the nicer dedicated facilities for pickup. Cause there are now dedicated indoor

facilities for pickleball throughout the country. You know, those might charge a little bit more during prime hours, but prime hours and pickleball is actually pretty much during, during the day, interestingly enough, but, but that's, again, the sport is you know, it's traditionally been an older population planet, but I think that's another thing that's really changing, but pretty much I had somebody on the podcast recently and they said, if, if you're a tennis club and you don't have pickleball, you're losing money.

Pete Moore:

Yeah. That's a great point. So the point about also actually having people come in and at regular hours, whereas the max peak in your health club is usually, you know, six to 9:00 AM and then, you know, 5, 6, 6, probably five to 9:00 PM. So that's a great point for being able to lever out level up your membership base and cater to the other people as well. So it's a great point. So, you know, it starting up your own business here you know, any takeaways for our or avid entrepreneurs here that are kind of grinding away, starting up new ventures and understanding that things take time.

Lynn Cherry:

You know, I've been at this for three years and honestly, I, even though I've been back and forth between being an entrepreneur and being in the corporate world, I did not start pick a ball fire with the intention of having it morphed into a business opportunity. I truly did it for the love of the sport. And that's why you actually see so many people in the sport. So, you know, again, you know, it's probably the first thing I've done as an entrepreneur that I have been passionate about. And it's certainly the first time that I've been a content creator. So it's just drawn so much in this last year. I mean, just tremendously.

Pete Moore:

Yeah. So the answer on that turned into a business opportunity you know, that last part, just talking about, you know, what you're doing on the podcast and what you're doing, you know, on your site, is there a really good pickle ball court locator function that's on the internet or something that you're doing and you know, who else the DDC, other, you know, whether a mall operators or, you know, a public parks, you know, really starting to, to add pickleball going forward?

Lynn Cherry:

Well, you've definitely hit on all the right questions because that was one of the things I put on my website early on was a locator for both pickleball tournaments and pickleball courts. Now, the number of new pickleball courts going on throughout the U S is, is absolutely amazing. And one of the things that I do on my site is that I basically check the news every day for pickleball court, which there are many, many of, and immediately put them on my site, you know, so people can have that opportunity to, you know, certainly go find a place to play.

Pete Moore:

That's great. And then do you have any business quotes or personal quotes that are in your in your archives that you could share with our illustrious audience?

Lynn Cherry:

Yes, actually, you know, it's interesting that I, I think this fits me and it fits pick up all the sports so well, and this was actually a quote by Mike Singletary. He said, do you know what my favorite part of the game is? And he said the opportunity to play. And I know that really fits me. And it, if, depending on

how well people are, he was a great Chicago bears linebacker, and also a coach. But I think that fits a ball to, to a tee. And yesterday I was having some difficulty on the court. I went through a really rough patch where it wasn't playing well. And I reminded myself with that quote of, you know, why am I out here? You know, it's the opportunity to play, just enjoy the people, the friends, the weather, even though it was a little hot, you know? So there we go.

Pete Moore:

Right? So for the love of the game, if you haven't heard about pickleball, you can't say you haven't heard after this halo talks to get island to the court land, thanks for your contributions with keeping people outdoors and healthy or one person at a time. And look forward to comparing notes and getting you into our universe gear of new pickle ball openings along the way. All right.

Lynn Cherry:

Well, thanks so much and be sure and check out. I also have a digital magazine, pickleball fire.com/magazine. It's really interviews from the podcast, but I write those up as articles. So there's a lot of great profiles of pros and instructional tips.

Pete Moore:

Perfect. Okay. You'll, you'll be hearing from our friends in Jersey very shortly, have a great week take care of. Thank you. Thanks.