

## JAYNE UNDERWOOD



Two hours, 6,000 Fitbit steps and a whole lot of fun — this is a snapshot of Jayne Underwood’s latest pickleball match.

The Edmond resident started playing about 4 years ago after a rotator cuff surgery in her dominant shoulder brought some friends to her bedside who couldn’t stop raving about the new game they had taken up.

“They kept saying, ‘it’s too bad you can’t play,’” Underwood said. “They told me how much fun they were having and I was determined to do it when I was better.”

Underwood made good on the promise to herself and immediately fell in love with the game. Now, she is an advocate helping promote the game and hook new players. She is a pickleball court monitor and hosts beginner lessons at Oak Tree Country Club, and recently competed in the Oklahoma Senior Games.

The 66-year-old placed third in women’s doubles at her first tournament last spring. Now that she has a taste for the competition, Underwood said she is looking forward to future tournaments.

Like many pickleball players, Underwood used to play tennis before an injury forced her out of the game. Pickleball was familiar, like tennis on a mini scale. Ten years after her knee replacement, after her doctors told her she’d never play tennis again, Underwood found solace on the pickleball court.

“It felt like the fun of being on the tennis court again,” Underwood said. “It was exhilarating.”

In May, Underwood went to “pickleball camp,” a clinic in New Mexico that she attended with a group of Oklahoma women.

When she’s not on the court, Underwood heads to the gym for some weight lifting or to build stamina on the elliptical, or to the golf course, which she said helps her pickleball game and vice versa.

Competition drives her. Underwood likes the challenge, striving to be better.

Growing up in the small town of Hobart, Underwood excelled. She never knew failure and she’d like to keep it that way.

“I’m obsessed with improvement,” Underwood said. “I’m a short woman so I guess you could say I have a small woman complex. You might better watch out.”

Oklahoma Senior Games competitions occur annually in September and October. This year, competitions will be held in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Shawnee, Norman, Yukon and Warr Acres.

Events include three-on-three basketball, track and field, golf, swimming, water walking, 5K and 10K runs, 5K power walk, 5K race walk, bowling, tennis, table tennis, golf croquet, shuffleboard, cycling, cornhole, badminton, archery, pickleball, racquetball, softball and triathlon. Participants age 50 and older will compete in categories by age and gender.

Oklahoma Senior Games qualifies athletes for National Senior Games competition held every two years. About 300 athletes who qualify in 2020 will represent Oklahoma in the National Senior Games competition November 5-18, 2021 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

For more information visit [www.okseniorgames.com](http://www.okseniorgames.com) or call (405) 821-1500.