



NEWS RELEASE

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Hoover Presidential Foundation challenges presidential candidate fitness

WEST BRANCH, IOWA – July 27, 2015 – The Hoover Presidential Foundation is offering an open challenge to all presidential candidates: show your stamina for the long campaign ahead by playing a round of Hoover-Ball!

“We challenge all presidential contenders to play at least one game with us during the Hoover-Ball National Championships to show the world they are (physically) fit for the long road ahead,” said Jerry Fleagle, executive director of the Hoover Presidential Foundation. “Being a successful President involves strong leadership, building a strong team around you and being competitive – all the traits of a successful Hoover-Ball team. I urge the candidates to come out and show America what they’ve got!” he added. The Hoover-Ball National Championship occurs each year in Hoover’s birthplace of West Branch, Iowa during Hoover’s Hometown Days. This year the event is on Saturday, Aug. 8.

Hoover-Ball was developed in 1928 by President Hoover’s doctor, Admiral Joel T. Boone, to help him achieve a strenuous workout in a short amount of time. Hoover would play the game with Supreme Court justices, Cabinet members and other high government officials on the south lawn of the White House. The sport was without a name until *New York Times Magazine* reporter William A. DuPuy christened the name “Hoover-Ball” for his 1931 article “At the White House at 7 a.m.”

Back then, the game was played by teams of two to four players with a six-pound medicine ball over an eight foot high net on a court similar to one used for tennis. The server throws the ball and the opponent must catch it on the fly and immediately return it. Hoover played every day except Sundays while at the White House, in all types of weather, forced indoors only two or three times due to heavy downpour. The average age of the players was 53.

“Stopping a six-pound ball with steam back of it, returning it with similar steam, is not pink-tea stuff,” DuPuy wrote. “Dr. Boone estimates that as much beneficial exercise is obtained from half an hour of Hoover-Ball as from three times as much tennis or six times as much golf.” A four pound ball is used today.

To learn more about this exciting sport, visit HooverPresidentialFoundation.org and click the Hoover-Ball link under the News & Events tab. Candidates wishing to accept the challenge should contact the Foundation office. “President Hoover played rain or shine while at the White House, never asking his opponents to take it easy on him, and they never did,” added Fleagle. “Don’t you wonder if today’s candidates have the same fortitude?”

(cont.)





About the Foundation

The Hoover Presidential Foundation is a private nonprofit organization for the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum and Hoover National Historic Site in West Branch, Iowa. The Foundation fosters the collection, interpretation and preservation of historical resources relating to the life, ideas, values and times of Herbert Hoover, 31st President of the United States.

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