

The Board Talk

News and Views
from the World
of Shuffleboard

Vol. 1 No. 3

The Board Talk is published by George & Donna Wilber, 3206
Alfred Avenue, Lansing, Michigan 48906; phone 517-321-0008.

March 1984

The Hammer

Being in Las Vegas for the world championship shuffleboard tournament was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The opportunity to see the nation's top shuffleboard players in action was something I'll never forget and I was glad we could bring you an eye-witness report for the February issue of *The Board Talk*.

As with all worthwhile experiences, there were positives and negatives that, in retrospect, surface in mixed emotions, and I'd like to share them with you.

Certainly, it was a thrill to meet people from other states who share the same burning interest in the game of shuffleboard, who talk the same language even though with a slightly different accent. What impressed me the most, besides their mastery on the boards, was their professional conduct. There were no childish tantrums when the pucks didn't go exactly where they wanted them to, no profanity, no excessive drinking that might dull their accuracy. They were professionals and acted accordingly.

The same held true for the large gallery. They extended the same courtesy to those players vying for the title (and the purse) as you witness on nationally-televised golf tournaments during a crucial shot. They rooted for "their man" but they also recognized the abilities of his opponents.

On the negative side, I'm concerned that, like me, for a lot of dedicated shuffleboard players, this was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The trip to Las Vegas itself, the expenses involved in being in a city that teases the last quarter out of your pocket, and the \$800 entry fee to participate in the tournament, had to lock a lot of players out of even considering such an investment.

There's no doubt that, even though the players who participated can't be classified as professionals because shuffleboard is not their major means of livelihood, they definitely are in a classic league. They'd probably get bored competing against average players like me, so it's certainly appropriate for the best to bump heads in a championship tournament.

I am concerned, however, what that leaves for the thousands of players who love the game, the competition of tournaments, and the chance to "put their names in lights" even though maybe not as bright as those in Las Vegas. Financially and competitively, those thousands who are largely responsible for the rising popularity (and profitability) of the sport across the nation, don't have a chance.

So, what's the answer? Is it a regional tourney with winners advancing to a state tournament and those winners participating in national competition? Are there establishments that would sponsor these competitors to help defray expenses? What formula would be used to determine who belongs in a classic league and who would be eligible for the "average" tournament?

If you've got a viewpoint on this issue, share it with *Board Talk* readers. Who knows — that viewpoint could impact on our World of Shuffleboard!

George Wilber, Editor

Tourney Talk

Stober's Lounge, Lansing, Mich. — Feb. 10

Elly Canterbury and her sharp-shooting Union Lake women's team met the Lansing women's team at Stober's Lounge in Michigan's capital city Feb. 10 for a best 5 of 9 team match. Union Lake was the victor in this first meeting, 5-3. The Lansing team provided some excitement by coming from a 3-1 deficit to tie the match 3-3; highlights of those two wins were Mary Lisle's 9-point frame and Jenine Amon's 10-point frame. The two teams will meet for a return match at the Lakeside Lounge, Union Lake, in the near future.

Art's Bar, Lansing, Mich. — Feb. 18-19

Seven teams entered the first 4-person team event, sponsored by Lansing's Art's Bar on Feb. 18-19. In the double elimination, best 4 of 7 event, first place honors went to the Detroit team of John McDermott, Bud and Greg Broka, and Lou Herfi. The Lansing team of J.R. and Bobby Lopez, Jerry Siebert, Lee McDonald and Ceylon Davis took second place, and the Detroit-Lansing combo of Jimmy (the cop) Kumpula, Phil Skover, Mary Brakora and George Wilber, took third.

Lakeside Lounge, Union Lake — Feb. 25-26

Twenty-six teams entered the mixed doubles, double elimination tournament at the Lakeside Lounge, Union Lake, Feb. 25-26. John McDermott and Cheryl Collins repeated their winning ways to capture first place; they also were champs of the Wagon Wheel (Lake Orion) mixed doubles tourney in January. Gail Crane and Jerry Bryant took second place and the brother-sister team of Butch Bone and Toni Mancogna took third.

Dublin House, Detroit, Mich. — March 10-11

Let's welcome the Dublin House to the World of Shuffleboard with good participation in their first annual open

(continued on inside)

Win a Trip to Vegas Tourneys

Attention Board Talk Advertisers! We're looking for establishments to sponsor qualifying tournaments to play off for three open slots in the USSA World Championship Doubles Tournament, April 19-22, at the Showboat Casino in Las Vegas (see ad this issue).

Each qualifying tourney will be a best 2 of 3 double elimination. Winners will go to Las Vegas under the sponsorship of the establishment where they win.

All *Board Talk* advertisers interested in holding a tournament will be given every consideration, but arrangements must be made soon. Call George Wilber today: 517-321-0008 evenings, 517-482-8328 or 517-487-9790 days. If not in, leave name and number to call.

Wanted: Ugly, Flat-Chested, Female Shuffleboarder to Play Mixed Doubles With Husband

By Donna Wilber

It's a tense moment. . . . He meets her halfway, puts his arm around her and whispers in her ear. It's a triumphant moment. . . . He gives her a hug and (almost) a pat on the buns as they share a special joy.

It's not me who's the object of his attention. She's younger (Oh, God, is she younger!), she's prettier (if I had fingernails like that, my copy would look like this: \$\$\$ + @# ± % • ? &), and, comparatively speaking, her body makes mine look like the boy on the beach who gets sand kicked in his face.

I'm the one on the sidelines, cheering my heart out for my man and this younger, prettier, Dolly Parton-built woman who is my husband's partner in the mixed doubles tournament.

But, am I jealous, you ask? Well, maybe just a tiny little bit — but I want them to win — I really do! It could be me up there with him, you know. Today (Feb. 25) is our 35th wedding anniversary and I'm confident it's taken more than good cooking and clean socks to reach that landmark. I also know, after 35 years of sharing this man's bed and occasionally his toothbrush (when the grandsons use mine to clean their matchbox cars), that winning is important to him. My anniversary gift to him, therefore, is to graciously decline his equally gracious (but with his fingers crossed, I bet) offer to take me as his partner. Because I love him, I say no. So there they are, and here am I. . . .

It's not that he hasn't tried — to make an athlete out of me, I mean. Back in our pre-shuffleboard days, he was into golf. He decided the best way to get me involved (after all, it had worked in bowling) was to sign us up in the Friday afternoon Ma and Pa League. I was assured that other women in the league were also beginners. But after the first few weeks, when the female halves of the twosomes we played kept making par while I had so many strokes I had to tuck blades of grass in my sleeve to keep track of them all (by the time I got to the clubhouse, I looked like a green scarecrow), I started praying for rain on Friday afternoons. Sometimes my prayers were answered, but not often enough to save me from complete humiliation — and a vow to never try it again.

That traumatic experience didn't keep him from trying the same method to get me involved in shuffleboard. A nice, friendly, easy-going summer league with no pressure, no hotshots. Sure! So why was I consistently missing the two and three point pucks so smoothly placed down the board

by the top women players in the city? One frame, because of the same kind of fervant prayers that brought the Friday afternoon rains to the golf course, I think, I scored an incredible seven points! But did I know how to handle it?



No! I embarrassed that cool veteran I live with by screaming, jumping in the air and hugging my sour opponent for letting it happen. "I don't think you're quite ready for this game," he informed me, "and I don't think the game is ready for you."

So, here I am on the sidelines, cheering on my husband and the partner who is not me. My second anniversary gift to him is not running a classified ad under "Wanted: Ugly, flat-chested, sharp-shooting, female shuffleboard player with rotten personality to play mixed doubles tournaments with my husband. Send full-length photo and shuffleboard records for possible personal interview."

New Shuffleboards For Sale at Discount Prices

Contact George Wilber, 517-321-0008 evenings, 517-482-8328 or 517-487-9790 days.

If not in, leave name and phone number to call.

Tourney Talk

(continued from front page)

doubles tournament on March 10-11. The Dublin House, Detroit's newest shuffleboard bar, is located at 23906 Grand River. The double elimination tourney starts at 1 p.m. Saturday, March 10, but the board will be reserved for participants beginning at 7 p.m. on Friday night. For more information, or to sign up, call 313-531-5590.

Art's Bar-Stober's Lounge, Lansing — March 17-18

Qualifying tournaments for the USSA World Championship Doubles are scheduled for March 17-18 at Art's Bar and Stober's Lounge, Lansing. The best 2 of 3, double elimination event will have a limit of 20 teams, ten at each bar, so advance reservations are needed. \$80 per team donation with an auction. The tourneys start at 12 noon on Saturday. Winners will play in the April 19-22 World Championship Doubles in Las Vegas under the sponsorship of the establishment where they win. (See ad in this issue.)

Black Cat Tavern, Portland, Oregon — March 17-19

Celebrate Spring with a trip to Portland, Oregon, March 17-19, for the Black Cat Tavern's 8th World Series of Shuffleboard. Cost for entering the best 2 of 3, double elimination tournament is \$500 per team for the doubles and \$200 per player for the singles. Payoffs are 60%-30%-10%. For more information, call 503-235-3571.

A Word to Our Sponsors

Dear Shuffleboard Sponsor:

The reception to our first two issues of *Board Talk* has been terrific! Players from all over the state have expressed their appreciation for a newsletter that meets their unique interest needs. Many have indicated a willingness to pay a subscription fee to keep it coming.

That's a great tribute — but a last resort. We have the highest hopes that you will recognize the value of these particular customers enough to help us meet our goal of supporting *The Board Talk* with sponsors' advertising revenue. If you're placing your advertising budget elsewhere, consider that every one of the readers of *The Board Talk* is a current and/or potential customer. You won't get that guarantee with any other publication.

Advertising in *The Board Talk* is a wise business investment not just because it reaches your special target audience. Every player on the teams you sponsor, who responds to the tournament notices in the newsletter, serves as a representative of your establishment — a sort of traveling advertisement. That's a pretty good reason to encourage your players to participate in other tournaments. Remember — the favor will be returned. (If you decide to spread the word about your bar through your traveling sales people with shirts or jackets, contact Elly Canterbury; her ad is in the shuffleboard directory of this issue.)

We really need your ad support to continue serving your customers with *The Board Talk*. Please give me a call: George Wilber, 517-321-0008.

Showboat, Las Vegas, Nev. — April 19-22

There's room for 32 teams in the upcoming World Championship Doubles Tourney in Las Vegas, April 19-22. The first 31 will be determined by "first come-first served" paid entries; the spot for the 32nd team will be filled by the winner of a singles tourney on April 18, prior to the doubles. The winner of this event gets to choose his or her own partner.

The payoff is BIG: \$20,000 for first place, \$8,000 for second, \$4,000 for third, \$2,000 for fourth, and \$1,000 for fifth. Entry fee is \$300 for USSA members, \$500 for non-members. If you're not a member, sign-up in this tourney offers more than just a chance at the big purse. You'll also get a new set of weights and an opportunity to participate in other USSA national tournaments at the discount rate during the year following your sign-up. On tap are Las Vegas tourneys (in addition to the April event) in August, December and January. All will be held at the Showboat, where you'll get special group rates on rooms. Beginning in 1986, the schedule will be split with two tourneys in Las Vegas and two in Atlantic City.

The USSA is sweetening the pot for the April tournament by \$3,000. See the ad in this issue, respond and tell them you read about it in *The Board Talk!*

Win a Trip to Vegas!

Doubles Tournament to Qualify for USSA World Championship Doubles

Best 2 of 3

Double Elimination

March 17-18

at

Art's Bar, 809 E. Kalamazoo, Lansing
Phone 517-482-8328

Stober's Lounge, 812 E. Michigan, Lansing
Phone 517-487-9790

10 teams at each bar — limit 20 teams

Reservations have preference so call now!

\$80 per team donation — AUCTION

Winners will go to Las Vegas under sponsorship
of establishment where they win.

(See Tourney Talk and ad in this issue.)

Guess What? Women ARE Different!

By George Wilber

(and unsolicited comments by the copy editor)

I guarantee you — there's a lesson to be learned from managing and coaching a women's shuffleboard team! Lansing, Michigan, doesn't have a women's league so, on a challenge from Elly Canterbury during the Wagon Wheel's (Lake Orion) mixed doubles tourney in January, I organized one.

We played Feb. 10 at Stober's Lounge in Lansing and that's when the lesson started. First, Elly and her girls (*boys grow up to be men, but girls stay girls forever*) let me know in their own sweet way that they were from Union Lake — not Lake Orion/Pontiac as we had reported in the February *Board Talk*.

By game time, the bar was wall to wall people. No men's match ever drew a crowd like that (*the mystery of women is the unexpected; everybody wants to be there when the unexpected happens*). As the match progressed, I noticed a box of facial tissues on our table, something we men never have on our table. I was politely told that it was a normal prop for a women's team (*Kleenex, my love, is not just for catching sneezes. It's for blotting lipstick; wiping a team mate's brow — something you men aren't sensitive enough to do; wrapping up chewing gum — you guys stick it under the table, and mopping up the tears of defeat or joy. I bet tavern owners prefer Kleenex on the table to having holes punched in the wall*).

After that lesson, I watched our team come from a 1-3 deficit to tie the match 3-3. That's when I first noticed the difference between women cheering and men. Wow! It was deafening!

One of our team players had the sniffles and I had to blow her nose a couple times. Another had a dry throat and I had to throw a couple glasses of water down her. Then, we had to hold up the game while — yep! you guessed it — she had to go to the sandbox (*you men don't do this?*).

In the meantime, I was trying to convince my team that I, their coach, was giving proper instructions and making all the right moves, but I don't think it took, especially with the subs who got little or no playing time. A subtle suggestion was made that perhaps I could have used a little more intelligence in pairing them up (*women's intuition beats intelligence anytime*). How could I get across to them that winning isn't everything — it's the ONLY thing?

I congratulate the Union Lake team. They were gracious in their victory as they beat us 5-3. I was pleased and very proud of the way our team performed, too. A toast: Here's to women, without whom life would be impossible (*you said that right, baby!*)

I did say there was a lesson to be learned, but I'm so frazzled I forgot what it was (*how about calling it like it was — a character-building experience*).

The Lansing and Union Lake women will meet for a return match soon at Union Lake. Be there! If you didn't know it before, you'll find out — women ARE different!

Doubles Tournament

at

Walt's Bar

April 7-8

Starting Time — 1 p.m.

60% — 30% — 10% Payoff

Plus Trophies

Double Elimination

Walt's Bar

21346 Fenkell, Detroit Phone 313-534-6328

Doubles Tournament

at Detroit's Newest

Shuffleboard Bar

The Dublin House

March 10 & 11

Double Elimination

Starting Time — 1 p.m.

Pays three places —

60% - 30% - 10%

Board reserved for tournament players
beginning at 7 p.m. Friday night.

The Dublin House

23906 Grand River, Detroit 313-531-5590