

Frisco Eddie's Revenge: The Return

A series by Balboa Ron Schweikert

(In last month's episode, "Tacoma Tim" shared the story of the "Mystery Shuffleboard Man" with Frisco Eddie and Lil at his home in a little town outside of Tacoma called Puyallup.)

The war stories, coupled with the scotch whiskey, were beginning to take their toll. Tacoma Tim said: "I suggest we think about maybe going out for a good dinner." But then he added: "Before that, though, I want to show you guys something I'm pretty proud of. Follow me!"

They went through an adjoining door and entered a wonderfully-appointed Game Room. In the center of the room was its focal point -- a magnificent looking shuffleboard! The walls were decorated with a wide variety of sporting items. They included framed photos of sports figures (some of which were autographed), many trophies, and a whole bunch of other memorabilia. Eddie's response was: "Wow! I've never seen a set-up like this before! Would you show us around a little, Tim?"

Eddie and Lil were both very impressed and they spent some time looking around the room and asking questions. It took a while because Tim had to give a little rundown on each item they asked about. There were several shuffleboard trophies, many of which had Tim's name on them. Obviously, he had been quite a competitor in his day (Eddie assumed that he couldn't play too well now due to his age).

After they had a good look around, they began to check out Tim's board. He had several sets of weights on one end of the table, so you could practice without having to go back and forth so often. They found that the table was in really good shape, and was also a good "lagging" board.

They were still drinking and laughing as they casually shot the weights back and forth. Then Eddie made a remark: "Yo, Tim, by the looks of it, you used to shoot a pretty good game in the old days. Do you still play any?" Tim replied: "Well, I can still shoot a little; I'm not completely washed up yet, young man." Then Eddie laughingly said: "I'll tell you what. I'll spot you five points, and even give you the first hammer, and we'll just try a game. O.K.?"

Tim was smiling as he replied: "Young man, I think the scotch whiskey is talking louder than you are right now. Why don't we just save it for later." Eddie came back with: "I thought you wanted to see me in action. Well, here I am -- ready to go!"

Now, Lil was taking all of this in. She was cracking up inside! She knew Eddie was quite smashed after drinking so heavily. She decided to just sit back and watch this thing run its course.

Over Tim's objections, Eddie proceeded to wipe the board down, while making remarks like "don't worry, I won't go too hard on you, and you don't have to be concerned about being embarrassed or anything like that."

Tim's shuffleboard setup was complete, with a scoreboard and all. He even had a little can of quarters by the scoreboard. After Eddie had waxed the board, he put two of them in the slot and then said: "O.K., my man, let's get it on!" He marked up five points for the blue and without hesitating lagged a very deep 1 right-cross, which was a few inches off the left rail. Then he said: "O.K., it's all yours, Mr. Tim. How about we play to see who pays for that dinner we're gonna' have later on?"

Before he made his first shot, Tim once again asked Eddie: "Are you really sure you want to go through with this?" Eddie laughingly said: "You better believe I do, Mr. Tim" (and gave Lil a little wink with his right eye as he said it).

On Tim's first weight, he shot a right-cross lag, which wrapped around Eddie's 1 into a short 3. Eddie hollered: "What a lucky shot; that's not going to happen again!" Eddie didn't think he had room to go around and follow Tim's weight, so he went for the combo. He caught his own weight on the right side -- it was a hit-and-go. Eddie laughed again, then mumbled something about "that'll never happen again either."

On Tim's second weight, instead of covering up, he lagged a left-cross which rode the rail and was also a short 3. Eddie was getting a little baffled now. He slammed down another shot of scotch before he approached the board. He announced: "I'm gonna' stick that left cross, my man, and give you something to shoot at!" He sized it up and then gently shot the left-cross. It looked good at first, but he barely missed the spot where the rail carried straight, and the drift took it to the left -- and he was off the board!

Now Tim had two 3's on the table. On his third weight, again, instead of covering, he lagged a deep 3, which was dead-center. It was almost a four! Eddie wasn't laughing now, but Lil was. She commented: "What do you plan to do now, 'Mr. 5-Point Frisco'?" Eddie sneered at her and said: "I will stick the deep one in the center." He shot a "thumber" this time and, indeed, he stuck it head-on. It appeared that Eddie's weight was barely in front of the other two 3's. Eddie was laughing again then as he said: "We know about your lag, Mr. Tim, but let's see if you can hit a weight."

Tim was very casual throughout this whole thing and he just smiled back at Eddie. He sized up the weight and then let go a left-hand thumb shot. Tim's weight

caught Eddie's on its left side, taking it off the board...then sliding into a 4! That was it! With the 5-point spot, and the 10 points on the table, it was over!

Eddie had a look of total disbelief on his face. He was actually sick to his stomach. He sat down then and reached for another drink. Lil and Tim came over then, and Tim gave him a few words of wisdom: "Three things were wrong here, Eddie. The first is that drink you have in your hand. Lil told me you learned how to play this game sober. You have to keep it that way. On the other hand, someone who learned to shoot while he was drinking can't hardly hit a weight when he's sober! The second thing is that you never spot someone you haven't seen shoot any points and especially, and this is number three -- on his own board! I'll admit that I shot a little over my head, too, but you can expect that. I know every inch of this table!"

Eddie nodded his lowered head then. He wasn't feeling too good. Then Lil remarked: "You just went to school, Champ. Remember what you've learned." She turned to Tim then and asked: Is that good steak house that was near here still there?" Tim told her it sure was and as they started for the door, he added: "The steaks are great and so is their coffee." He put his arms around both of them after they got out the door and said: "I think I'll have that giant fillet they serve there. It's pretty expensive, but who cares? Right, Eddie?"

They all got into the rental car, but Tim took the driver's seat as he had the least to drink. As they drove off from the house, they were all too "mellow" to notice a pair of headlights that turned on behind them. They were busy laughing and talking -- as those headlights stayed right with them on every turn.....

Who's tailing them? Maybe someone from their recent past who vowed revenge....Don't miss next month's episode of "Frisco Eddie's Revenge" by Balboa Ron Schweikert. If you have comments/story ideas, or just want to tell Ron you're enjoying his monthly contribution to this newsletter, write him at 8301 W. Charleston Blvd.# 1050, Las Vegas, NV 89117. Your positive feedback is the only "pay" he receives.

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expand on the ideas and points mentioned in this article in future issues. As always, your comments and suggestions are valuable to us and we encourage you to share them with us.

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