

Frisko Eddie's Revenge: The Return

A series by Balboa Ron Schweikert

(In the last episode, Frisco Eddie and Long Beach Lil had arrived in Longview, Washington, at a place called "O'Brian's Pub." Lil had warned Eddie that "The Man" might be there and she wasn't sure he was ready for him.)

After they made their way through the entrance to O'Brian's Pub, Eddie and Lil selected a couple of stools which gave them the best view of the two shuffleboards, both of which were being used. There were actually a number of patrons, considering it was a late Sunday afternoon. Eddie mentioned this to Lil and she replied: "Most of these guys aren't in here to play shuffleboard, Champ. They're here to get well from the Sunday morning blues and to nurse their hangovers. They'll drink just enough so they can still make it into work on Monday morning. The place will be practically empty by 8 o'clock tonight."

The bar was pretty large and very well kept. Lil didn't recognize the bartender, a good-looking blond girl who was also quite young. She was wondering if the place may have changed hands. Eddie introduced himself and Lil when they ordered and found out her name was Candice, but that everyone called her "Candy." Lil didn't appreciate the sly look in Eddie's eyes when they made contact with hers.

Lil canvassed the area and then said: "Well, Eddie, there doesn't seem to be any of the real hustlers here now, but that's probably good though. What we'll do is challenge these 'fish' on the board to the right and get in a little practice. You're going to need it, Hot-Shot."

Eddie kind of resented that remark (maybe because his confidence level was higher now -- and maybe because the big-time shooters weren't there yet). He had downed his second shot of Wild Turkey with a water "wash" before they were able to start on the board they had challenged.

After Eddie put the quarters in, they introduced themselves to their opponents. It was a younger man, about Eddie's age, and a much older woman. They learned that these two had held the board all afternoon. The kid's name was Randy and the older lady was called Annie. She laughingly remarked that most of the players called her "Annie Oakley" because she was from Oklahoma.

The board was in excellent condition. When Lil asked what they were playing for, Annie said: "It's usually for \$10 an end for a challenge around here, unless we have a round robin or some really good players show up." Lil said: "It's a little steep, but we'll go for the \$10 an end."

By now Eddie knew what she was up to. They would

get in their practice but make the win very close so they would keep the board. The pair didn't look too shabby during their last game.

They started out weight-for-weight for several frames and their opponents were turning out to be pretty darn good. They knew this table like the backs of their hands and were giving Lil and Eddie a real run for their money. A gathering of customers had formed now to watch the action. Ironically, the game ended up 15-13 with Lil and Eddie as losers!

There were other challengers but they backed off so they could watch another game between these four. The tide began to change in the second game. Lil and Eddie won it 15-12. While they were playing their third (or rubber) game, Annie asked Lil: "Could you be the gal from L.A. they call Long Beach Lil?" Lil said that she was. Then Annie asked her if they had come to go up against the "pros" that came in there.

Lil answered: "Well, now, my partner there is hell-bent on playing whoever may come through that door." Annie replied: "The way you guys shoot, you should be able to mix it up with just about anyone -- except the player who comes in here the call 'The Man.' I don't think your kid there can take him. If he shows, you'd be smart to leave. He knows every inch of this board and all the rest of them in this whole state."

A man entered the door then. He was about 5' 11" tall with a chunky body and graying black hair. Lil knew him. His handle was "Portland Pete." He was a tough customer and good hustler -- but not as good as "The Man."

He came up and shook hands with Lil and gave her a warm greeting. When she introduced Eddie, he said: "So you're the young man that caused all the excitement in Seattle yesterday. Nice to meet you, Frisko Eddie." They shook hands then, both of them with knowing twinkles in their eyes.

The second board was empty now and Portland Pete walked over and began to throw some weights. After a short while, he remarked: "Well, Eddie, want to get your feet wet over here? I'd like to give you a spin if you're up to it." Lil and Eddie's game had just ended. Eddie looked over at Portland and responded: "Frisko Eddie's my name and shuffleboard's my game. Let's get it on!"

They got the board all set up and it was decided to start for \$100 a game. Lil kind of sat back on the sidelines while all this was going on. After all, she did that Eddie could "steer the ship" on this one.

They played six games, and the only winner was the quarter slot. It was level at three games each. They were evenly matched and the games were close. As they were

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Mike Denny of Oregon and Dean Mako of Washington finished third at the Shamrock.

Fourth place went to Vic Johnson and Dick Hanly of Washington.

May 3rd was also the birthday of Jim Foran of Washington, a member of the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame Board of Directors. "He said he was 60 years young, but I think he meant 16," said Ralph. "As always, he did a fine job on the sale of the players. This guy is strictly Hall of Fame material."

Wetlands 2nd Annual Mixed Weekend is a "First"

The 2nd Annual Mixed Weekend, April 18-20, was a typical Wetlands (Royal Oak, Michigan) tournament in that there were three events, which is the norm there. What made this one unusual is that, for the first time in more than 20 tournament weekends, there were no players/teams that came out of the losers bracket to win an event. Even though there were no double dips, all three events went the distance, with the winner of the losers bracket winning the first game of the finals to force a sudden death game.

The lead-off event was the mixed doubles, in which Claudia Goszczynski and John McDermott successfully defended their title by beating Sher Blessing and Jeff Cottrell. This was a rematch of the 1996 State of Michigan mixed doubles finals, with a different winner this time. Both teams are looking forward to the rubber match. Third place went to Roland Metivier and Linda Mitchell who defeated Bonnie and Sonny Morgan (who manage to do something most people cannot -- play successfully with their spouse).

The ladies' and men's singles were played simultaneously. Sher Blessing continued her tough shooting to take first place over Penny Cottrell after two extremely tough games with many lead changes. Third place finisher Linda Mitchell beat defending champ Kim Parrish, who finished fourth.

In the men's singles, a miracle frame kept John McDermott from being double-dipped for the second year in a row, as he beat Jeff Cottrell in the finals. Jeff forced a second game by lagging a four to go out after being down 14-11. In third place, it was Roland Metivier avenging a previous loss by beating fourth place finisher, Alonzo Cottrell, before bowing out.

"Special thanks to Claudia Goszczynski and Tracey Stanley for their help with the entries and sales, and to Dave Willett, owner of M.J. McCabes (Saginaw) and all of the players from McCabes for their support," said John McDermott.

Oklahoma Visitors Winners at Sportsman's, Muncie, Indiana

Following the Bourbon tournament, Billy Melton and Glen Davidson of Oklahoma stopped at the Sportsman's Lounge in Muncie, Indiana, and participated in the doubles event there on May 10. The visitors came out of the loser's bracket to capture first place in a field of 20 teams. Second place went to Larry Vance and Danny Clausen, with Terry Dowell and Glen Ingram in third, and Ady and Orris Hughes in fourth place. The total purse was \$4,100.

"NOTE TO BILLY AND GLEN AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES: We want a chance to get even! Come back to Muncie for our July 26 tournament," said Marcia Brown.

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contemplating whether or not to either "jack it up" or give it up, the door opened. Eddie looked over to see a man in his early 50's enter. He was about 5'10 or 11" tall with black hair and a slim build. He had a weight case in one hand.

The imposing looking man put on a smile after he entered. He made a visual sweep of the room and it was obvious from the glint in his eyes that he knew exactly who was there -- and what his task would be.

Lil leaned over to Eddie then and whispered: "Well, Champ, your time has come. That guy you're looking at is.....The Man."

--TO BE CONTINUED--

How will Frisco Eddie fare against the likes of "The Man"? Will Lil's fears that Eddie is not yet ready for this challenge prove true? Don't miss the next exciting episode by Balboa Ron Schweikert. Again, we encourage you to let Ron know you enjoy his monthly contributions: Ron Schweikert, 1140 Coral Desert Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89123.