

Frisco Eddie's Revenge: The Return

A series by Balboa Ron Schweikert

(In the last episode, Lil's and Eddie's teams were in the final game of the Pro-Am event in Reno. The score was 12-13 in Lil and her partner's favor. Lil was shooting the final weight and it looked like the 2 she needed to win. One of the very interested spectators was Dollar Dan -- the Money Man, who had earlier sent a warning to Eddie.)

Just an instant after someone had hollered out, "She made it...she lagged a deuce" on Lil's lag, it suddenly slowed very slightly, and her hammer made contact with the left side of Eddie's weight, which was positioned in the 2-zone, but barely touching the 1-line, and about 6 to 8 inches off the left rail. As a result, the two weights split, leaving both of them in the 2-zone -- and so evenly matched that no one could visibly tell exactly which weight was in front! Lil's weight was also partially hanging off the left side of the board.

The call went out for an official after it became obvious that it was too close to determine who was ahead any other way. The crowd was busy speculating now as to who was closest to the end of the board. Dollar Dan -- the Money Man -- was starting to form a look of concern on his face when he saw the lie on the board. Lil looked over at him and they made eye contact. It was now Lil's turn to get a little gleam of satisfaction in her eyes as she watched Dan and his "Ape Man" start to sweat a little when the official (along with Max Dermmot, the tournament director) entered the scene to make the official call on these two weights.

The official took extreme care with his T-square as he made the measurement. There was a hush now while they all awaited his call. Finally, he shook his head, looked at Max Dermmot, then at the crowd, and announced: "These weights are even. I call it a tie. There will be no score for this frame -- and the hammer will be switched. Play will resume on this end of the table."

After hearing that, Eddie had a big smile on his face, and Lil had a hint of one on her face, too. The opposite was occurring on the other end. Dollar Dan, the Money Man, was audibly complaining about the call. He was hollering out: "The blue (Eddie's weight) is ahead; the game is over!" He continued with his antics until Max Dermmot came over to him and the Ape Man, and simply told him to "shut up!"

Things happened pretty quickly then. First, the Money Man responded with "Up yours, Director Man." Upon hearing that comment, Max laid his glasses on the table and replied: "Dan Goldman (he knew his real name) -- you and your Ape are out of here...Now!" Then, just about the time the Ape Man started to

make a move toward Max, a strange thing happened. The same scar-faced man (who worked for Lil's ex, Tony and who had almost blown Lil and Eddie's friend, Tim, away in Seattle) appeared right behind Dollar Dan. He softly whispered something into Dan's ear. He had two other men with him, and then almost like magic, the whole thing was over! Dollar Dan and his Ape Man allowed themselves to be quietly escorted out of the tournament room.

No one (except Lil and Eddie) understood what was going on, but when Max saw that all was clear, he picked up his glasses and announced: "The official has made his ruling. Let the play resume!" Lil, Shelli and Eddie looked at each other then with twinkles in their eyes. The good thing was that the physical threat had been removed, which was a relief to all of them; but almost as good was the fact that the ultimate fate of the game was probably taken out of Lil and Eddie's hands! The weights were now under the control of the two "3" rated players and Eddie's partner had the hammer due to the switch.

The play got underway rather quickly now that the excitement settled down. It was obvious that the less-experienced players were very nervous, and understandably so. They knew they had been close to a potentially dangerous situation, plus the outcome of the whole event was on their shoulders. They actually played pretty good, though, in spite of things. The frame went weight for weight. Eddie's partner hit-and-went on this third weight, which left the board open.

Lil couldn't restrain herself from hollering out to her partner at this point: "Try for a short deuce, or a deep one in the center, but don't go too deep so he can stick it. O.K.?" Her partner had a look of confusion on her face as she let her weight go. The weight ended up being a deep one, with the forward edge touching the 2-line and about 3 inches off the left side of the board. Lil hollered out once again: "That's fine, dear, this guy will never lag the deuce!"

Now it was time for Eddie and his partner to figure out their strategy. They met at the center of the board, which was the proper place for their discussion. Eddie again looked him in the eyes and asked: "How do you feel, Champ?" The reply was: "Really shaky. I'm nervous as hell!" Eddie solaced him by saying: "This isn't really too critical, you know. Almost anything you do will be O.K. as long as you don't boost her into a two or something. You do whatever you want to do. The only thing I'd suggest you be careful of, is making contact with her weight up there. O.K.?" He patted him on the shoulder then and said: "You're going to do alright, partner. Just try to relax and you'll do fine."

The shooter was really sweating now as he prepared to make his release. He shot almost all right-handed, so he decided to go down the right rail and try for a deuce or a three in the center of the board. It was a very jerky release, and he instantly knew he had gone too far to the left. In fact, his weight had actually become a right-cross. He yelled out: "Oh, no -- don't do that!"

His weight proceeded, though, and did indeed connect with the other weight. He not only hit the other weight, he boosted it.....

--CONTINUED NEXT MONTH--

Don't miss the next exciting episode to see how this event ends. And remember, Shelli and Eddie and Lil still have some adventures ahead in Reno.

Teacher/Promoter Yank Inducted in Pennsylvania Hall of Fame

By Louise Freer

In ceremonies conducted at J & C's Tavern in Philadelphia, friends, admirers, and family gathered to pay tribute to the first inductee to the Pennsylvania Shuffleboard Hall of Fame: Jim Yank Sr. Not only was Jim the first inductee, he was also the first inductee in what some might say to be the most important category -- that of teacher/promoter. He's been a well-known mainstay in the Philadelphia shuffleboard scene for many, many years. Quite a number of people gave testimony to Yank's accomplishments as a player as well as a person, and most were his students at one point, proving that this honor was indeed well-deserved. This is his story....

Learning the game of shuffleboard did not come easy for Yank. He started throwing weights in 1969 in various southwest Philadelphia taverns and clubs. Jules, now better known as Yank, learned the game by trial and error for the next eight years. In 1977 he joined the Southwest Shuffleboard League as a player for the Barrel Inn. There he continued to take his lumps and learn valuable lessons from the area's best shooters.

In 1981, Yank started spending time at J & C's Tavern and began a new way of playing the game. This new method was a teaching format that advocated equal opportunity for all players, both male and female (he became an avid supporter of women shuffleboard players way back in 1977). Yank believed that players should share their knowledge and experience, and that all players deserved respect. These concepts have not been evident in all the years he had been playing -- and probably had not been long before his time. So Yank spent most of his time working with players, showing them the basics, teaching strategy, and advocating respect for all players. It was a playing and teaching method that was not especially well-received by the older, better established players who felt Yank was taking away their "easy money."

Within a short time, the program had established itself as a winning formula. His ideas were promoted nationally with the article "Give the Novice a Break" published in *The Board Talk*. Again, his ideas were met with quite a bit of suspicion, but also a lot of praise. Under Jim's tutelage, the program really took off in the next 15 years.



A proud Yank Family: Jean, inductee Jim Sr., Rita and Jim Yank Jr.

Several dozen people taught under the original system continued to perpetuate Yank's format by teaching the game to hundreds of novice players. It continued to prove to be a winning formula as evidenced by the players taught and the championships won (30 or more league championships and 15 All Star victories in eight different leagues). Jim started promoting and attending tournaments as early as 1985, and got players from the Philadelphia and Delaware County leagues to re-enter the tournament scene, and his format proved to be successful on a regional and national basis as well. Yank has also set up and maintained the boards for every national tournament on the East Coast in the late '80s and early '90s.

To this day, Yank continues his mission, answering any and all questions asked of him, and goes out of his way to teach the basics of the game to anyone interested in learning and/or getting better at shuffleboard. He has been consultant to presidents from five different leagues and is known as "the goodwill ambassador of the East." He believes in the premise that the game comes first, leagues and tournaments are second, your team is third, and yourself and ego are last. Yank's only reward for his efforts is when he sees other players that have been taught the game teach someone else who wants to learn. Most days, this is what you will find Yank doing: teaching a new generation about shuffleboard.