



# THE RED BARON SPEAKS

August 2009– Larry Creakbaum

I just returned from the 110 degree temperatures of Nevada after attending the event at the La Piazza (Best Western). Whoever plans the event needs to understand Midwesterners are not going to come in that kind of heat and to return to the earlier times when the Vegas event was held the weekend between the end of the football season and the super bowl. We can stay here in the mid west at ninety degrees with 80 % humidity and be even more miserable.

Otherwise it was a good event with five boards in a ten sided room with a column in the wrong spot on the second floor and a single board in the water cooler area on the first floor. For me pushing my walker, it was a trip through a heavy door with a strip at the bottom to cross, into an elevator, out over a lip the elevator never seemed to get flush, thru the hotel lobby, into the entrance to the restaurant, and into the water cooler. To able bodied with good legs you went out a back door, into the heat, down a stairway, and in the back door of the water cooler where when you opened the door the players on the opposite end of the board got hit with sudden light from the outside. Back upstairs, beverages were served from a store room with a table at the entrance of double doors. A trip to the restroom met abandoning my walker and depending on where I was, staggering across the end of all five boards at one end or the other, using the shoulder of an unsuspecting player or the end of the board to stay upright. Everyone seemed to accept the fact and even helped me up when I fell.



The boards were good and pretty even with the normal dead or slick spots you have with a multi board event. At least the track of a weight did not change as the crowd came and went from the room or I had to use a coke case on one end while my partner shot from his knees on the other end. The crosses would walk to the center just as the weight stopped and I stole a few hammers after missing three straight. Once I came up against my opponent's duce and we called for a tee square call only to find the only tee square was too long to fit the board.

The restaurant was good and handy so if you slept late you could pretty easily grab something after your first match. They even found my cell phone after it was missing for two days.

The events started pretty much on time even though the computer crashed shortly before the start and every thing was done manually. Nineteen teams were drawn out for the AB on Thursday and thirty six players entered the four-person draft. The doubles had seven teams in one division and eight in the other with thirty two players in the four-person bring. I estimate there were forty five or fifty registered players. It easily could handle sixty or more if they had shown up. Although the date was fine with me, I think a different time might bring more players.

And now the rules. I have played in three different four person events at Kansas City, Del City and Las Vegas and the sheets handed out had the rules in a different order or not worded the same, although in my opinion they say about the same thing. You note I underline, about. One sheet said you flip for hammer and color, and another says you flip for hammer and flip a second time for color. My seventy four year old, disease infected mind cannot read and comprehend at the speed I used to. Let's get one set of written rules and if someone wants to change something, do it by addendum for your location or event. This has nothing to do with the flair up in one of my team matches at Las Vegas when I forgot who had played which board only one game before. Let us get rid of this "it's my tournament, I will do it the way I want" and start being co-operative. TSA has a good set of rules. SF has a good set. If they could get together and agree on the minor differences, it would be a start for the rest of the continent. Some times I feel no one is listening. Next time you go to an event, ask to see a copy of the printed rules.

Will I go back? Yes, but I would like some others from the mid west go to.