



Loretta and Ron Harralson

THE CALIFORNIA SHUFFLEBOARD HALL OF FAME

Induction Ceremony Honoring

Ron Harralson

Presented at

Exeter Eagles Lodge
Exeter, California

July 6, 2013

I started playing shuffleboard at the *Happy Hour* in San Jose, CA. Mickey Gomes started me playing. I played with many good players, among them were Bill and Bob Jennings (owners), Pee Wee Ramos (my mentor in life and shuffleboard), Firestone Dick Voss, Glen Davidson, Bill Melton, Bobby Goldsmith, Don Henry, Richie Ray, The big 'O' and his sons Ron and Rich Selfridge, Billy Mays, AZ Turnbo, Jerry and Sheila Webster, Bud Broka, Homer and Wanda Edgemon, Jerry, Three Fingered Curly and the Sacramento Rat Pack; Hal Perry (my idol), Freddie Thumann, Bob Hunt, Nick Chaffin, Joe Hudson and Don Cox. I also played with Bob Miles, Norm Phillips, TA Adams, Freddie Johns, Rod Cameron, DK, Nelson Jennings and the gang from Southern California: Karl Spickelmier, Joe Muniz, Ted Z, Tommy Workman, Sparky S, Rich (Bubba) Warren, Billy Childs, Troy Tolbert and Bellflower Bruce just to name a few.

After playing in San Jose, I moved to Portland, Oregon to be a drywall taper. I played shuffleboard at the *Black Cat* owned by Gene and Shirley Johnson. I played with Mac and Trish Mackaronis, Gary Thompson, Galen Gaunce, Gar and Irene Malde, Gary Singer, Charlie (the Tuna) and Libby Gates, Ruthie Miles, Ron Benches, Mike De Angelo, Bill Conklin, Bill

Nesbitt, Lonny Folger, Doug Buel, Chuck (the Puck) Kempton, Bill English, Darrol Nelson, Billy Mays, Ed Graves, Glen Davidson, Fred Thumann, Bud Broka, Truman Adams, Hal Perry, Leroy Ledford, Jim and Clara Bunyard, Jimmy Allis and Gary Isaccson.

After a few years, I made it back to California and started working for Pee Wee Ramos in San Martin. I played shuffleboard at *Rockin' Robin* in San Jose, the *133 Club* in Manteca, *Northstar* in Rio Linda, *Dowers* in Yuba City (owned by the lovely Rose), *Ace of Clubs* in Marysville (owned by Jerry and Sharon), *Courts* in Cupertino, *Pink Pony* in Brawley, *Rodeo Room* in Lemon Grove and *Stagger Inn* in Bell Flower. Others not listed above that I played with are Rich Chapp, Bob Burns, Joe and Brenda Lavin, the two Ski(s) Bob and Ken, George Camera, Stevie and Paul Parks, Pat Bayliss, Rick and Kathy Thomas, Chris Wayt, Eddie Brayman and Dan and Jane Mourgos.

I had some interesting and memorable experiences over the years playing the wonderful game of shuffleboard. Once at the *Happy Hour* in San Jose, I played with Mickey Gomes and Firestone Dick. It was a round robin and Mickey and I were yelling at each other. He finally just punched me in the mouth. We wrestled on the floor for a while. I was wearing my yellow leisure suit (a la Bob Miles), at the time. After that we were still good friends. I found out later that Mickey had a brain tumor and I took care of him after his surgery. In shuffleboard, once a friend always a friend.

I took Billy Mays and Bob Miles to Longview Washington in my van. I don't remember what year, but WHAT A TRIP! They told stories on the way, one was that Billy hit a weight so hard it knocked the end of the cradle right off and made sparks out the front door and across the street. Another was that Bob hit a weight so hard it went straight up and knocked a tile right out of the ceiling!

After getting to *Costingans*, I had to play against Truman Adams. Did pretty well, but the tourney was pretty much the Hal Perry and the Rat Pack weekend. They took it all. While playing with Darrol, he nicknamed me "The RH Factor."

One of my best memories was when Hal Perry and a partner played against me and someone else (I don't remember who) 2 out of 3 for \$200. I made a kiss off of a weight and stayed on the table to win the game. I WON!!! Hal was a little upset and threw \$200 in 10's and 20's all over the board. There might have been some 1's in there.

I met Loretta (Retta) at *the Rockin' Robin* in San Jose in 1986. The love of my life and we're still together after going on 27 years. Time does fly. After getting married in 1987, we spent our wedding weekend at the *Ace of Clubs* at the Labor Day tournament. I'm pretty sure Lagging Loren and I came in 3rd.

Don Mitchell and I drove to Spokane Washington from Portland Oregon and we didn't even place. To make matters worse, Don stayed for 7 days and I had to drive back by myself. Talk about a LOOOOOONG trip.

Another memory is when I lagged 5 straight 3's on Darrol Nelson at the *Black Cat* in Portland. Darrol remembers it as the score being 15 to 13, so I probably needed all 5 to win. After all that I had to beat Galen Gaunce two out of three twice on two different boards. I won!

An interesting weekend was spent in *Stevinson Bar and Grill* in Stevinson California, owned by Ma and Fish (Homer and Wanda) Edgemon. We were on our way to a tournament at Ted Z's and the radiator in the motor home decided it didn't want to go. I called Homer and he helped find us a repair but it was too late to go on, so we stayed at Stevinson and had a really good time, just no shuffling.

One of my best partners and friends was Steve Wilson. He and I won at the *Ace of Clubs* against Billy Childs and AZ Turnbo. Our theme song was "Like a Rock" by Bob Seager and it was played often that weekend.

In the later years in San Jose, I played a lot with Nelson Jennings, one of my best friends. We were tough to beat.

It's been an interesting journey. Galen G and Don M were not only shuffleboard players, but also my partners as drywall tapers along with my

wife at the time, Ardy, and her daughter DeeDee. Ardy and I made 9 trips to Portland and stopped at the *Tolos* in Rogue River to play Ardy's brother Lyle Larson.

I played at the *Hot N Tot Tavern* in Portland against Jimmy Allis. I won the first game (I skunked him, actually). It was the worst thing I ever did, he didn't ease up on me and beat me like a drum.

I am now almost 72 and live in Nebraska. I play in a weekly league of 40 6-man teams on Tuesdays. I just started a new league on Wednesdays that consist of 10 4-man teams. We have some very good players and some young up-and-comers.

Thanks to all of the supporters of shuffleboard like Jim Marin, the TSA and past and present Boardtalk publishers. Sorry if I left some names out. Lots of good memories. I still love to play!

Love and miss you all,

Ron Harralson



Ron has three daughters, Debbie (Washington state), Leah (New Mexico) and Michelle (California). His son Brent is deceased.

Ron currently lives in Nebraska with Retta, his wife of over 25 years and Stevinson, a cat he found at the Stevinson Bar and Grill 14 yrs ago.

TRIBUTES

I met Ron Harrelson about the time I started to play shuffleboard, 1990 or so at *TG's* in Santa Clara, Ca. I think he may have been playing doubles with Paul Parks in a tournament at that time

Me being a new player and only at the 2 buck level, one Sat afternoon Ron asked me to play as his partner in a small money game (large to me LOL) We played Rick Boyer and Bob Patten, held our own pretty good thanks to Ron...I think it was the first deep double I ever made, especially in a \$10 game...Ron laughed so hard as he said my face was really red! Hell, I told him I wasn't any good and he still took me and laughed at me the whole time even when we were getting beat. Can't remember the final outcome but did I convince Ron to walk the board I would put up my share of the \$.

We hung out when he was in town and he stayed at my place a time or two and I at his. Ron is surely deserving of this induction and if I had better health I would be there for it.

I think it was during the weekend of Hal Perry's induction into the California Hall of fame that Ron and his wife Loretta came to *Blinky's*. I helped him a little to get into the singles and he really had not played for quite a while. I remember watching him play Karl Spickelmier (who I had in the calcutta) and lag a four in the 3rd game to win 15 to 14 with ALL of the weights on the board....pretty tight shot too...Ron always had a way to win and never gave up.

Congratulations Ron! You are very deserving of this recognition, I love ya man, hope to see you later on. Your friend,

J Chris Wayt

I never really got to know Ron Harralson. But through some of the greatest players in the country, I have come to know him. I heard about all of the great tournaments he has won and all the great players that he's competed against. It is my honor to welcome Ron into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. Congratulations Ron on an honor that's totally deserved.

Jim Martin

Ron and I met in Portland, Oregon in the 1970's after Ron had played for a while in California. We met in the singles at the *Black Cat Tavern*. Ron lagged five 3's – game over!

Later, Ron and I went to *Dowers* in Yuba City California. We won the doubles, it was one of my earliest career wins.

Ron is a great player and a really nice man. He deserves the honors bestowed on him and I am happy to know of his induction. Well deserved.

Darrol Nelson

I think the first time I met Ron Harralson must have been at the *Happy Hour* in San Jose probably sometime in the early seventies. They had eight or ten very good players there, and Ron was one of them. They played every weekend for good money.

Over the years I met Ron other places and I never saw him play badly. He played tournaments and sessions equally well. His board play and lag were both very good. He could play any body. Without a doubt Ron Harralson belongs in the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame.

Nick Chaffin

I first met Ron and his wife in the 90's at Blinky's. He was funny and we always had a good time talking about the old days.

Ron, the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame should welcome you with open arms!

Little George Stockton



Bob Hunt and Ron

Ron Harralson. What a guy -- tough competitor, great partner, good guy who always plays hard with a lot of heart. Congratulations on your induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. It's a well-deserved honor. You and I have been friends for over 30 years and I expect us to be friends for at least 30 more years.

Bob Hunt

I met Ron Harralson in 1968 at my father's lounge, the *Happy Hour* in San Jose, California. I was a shuffleboard orphan and Ron became one of my adopted shuffleboard parents almost immediately. Along with some more folks you might have heard of, Hal Perry, Fred Thumann, Glen Davidson, Fred Johns and Jim Allis.

These were some of the people that Ron was playing at the Happy Hour at the time; he was a good player then but probably a notch below the top level in the place.

I started playing seriously about 1973 and by the time I was 21 in 1977, Ron and I had bonded and become friends outside of the world of shuffleboard. We remain great friends to this day and I am very happy to see him get recognized in the California Hall of Fame.

Ron played at the *Happy Hour* in San Jose until it was sold in the early 1970's, then he played at a place called *the Rockin' Robin* in San Jose. This place was frequented by the likes of Darrol Nelson, Pee Wee Ramos, Doug Buhl, Firestone Dick, Billy Mays and a host of others. This is probably where Ron excelled at his game; he was a frequent after-work player and took on everyone and anyone. This lasted for a few years and then Ron moved to Portland Oregon for a period of time and played people like Galen Gaunce, Mackaronis, Darrol Nelson, Truman Adams, Eddie Graves, Don Mitchel, Jim Allis and the rest.

By the time he returned to California he was at the top of his game, and there was no longer any place to play in San Jose. Ron helped change that just by being here. Eventually we found a place to play and Ron and I played partners in several tournaments here in town as well as in Yuba City and Marysville. We had a lot of fun and won some money, but we could never get over the hump and take a first place trophy home together.

Ron is my friend; he is an honorable man and deserving of this recognition. I am very happy for him and glad I could add a small slice of his credentials to this.

Nelson Jennings (with the help of Jim Allis)



Ron and Retta – TG's Place early 1990's

What can I say! I knew before I married him how much shuffleboard meant to him. After all, I spent my honeymoon in Marysville, CA at *The Ace of Clubs* in September 1987 at a Labor Day tournament. Ron is my ROCK. I'm so proud of everything he has accomplished and I'm happy to be his wife and partner in everything he does. Ron is a special person that takes care of his family and friends. I'm soooooo very happy he's getting inducted to the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. You have made my day and most importantly, HIS day. THANKYOU ALL!!!!

Your wife forever,
Retta

Congratulations Ron, on your induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame.

I first met Ron around 1980 at the Auburn Club in Auburn, CA or Dowers Tavern in Yuba City, CA or The Black Cat Tavern in Portland, OR. Those were some of my first competitive tournaments. Then I would see Ron a couple times every year at tournaments. He always seemed to cash or be just out of the money. Great player.

Congratulations,
Karl Spickelmier

I played shuffleboard with Ron at the *Ace of Clubs* in Marysville and at *TG's* and *Blinky's* in Santa Clara. We always had a great time.

Congratulations on your induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame Ron!

Bubba Warren

Rick and I met Ron and his wife Loretta at *TG's* in the late 1980's. Ron was already one of the legendary shooters of the former *Happy Hour* days and was a force to be dealt with at any West Coast tournament. The two of them were a lot of fun to hang out with and very nice people.

Congratulations Ron!

Kathy Thomas

Ron went from a top pool player to a top shuffleboard player in the middle 1960's at the best bar in the state, Bill Jennings' *Happy Hour* in San Jose, CA. Here are a few of the names that called the *Happy Hour* home at that time:

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| San Jose Ron | Mountain View George | Chuck the Barber |
| Big Norm Phillips | Frisco Gene | Cable Car Dennis |
| Roy Prince | Tom (Jim) Beam | Neal (Singer) Rose |
| Mickey Gomez | Richie Ray | Firestone Dick |
| Pee Wee Ramos | California Hal | Don Cox |
| Joe Hudson | Fred Thumann | Little George |
| Bill Jennings | Bob Jennings | Gene Jennings |
| Big George Sheirs | Ted Berger | |

The almost-weekly road players were:

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Billy Mays | Glen Davidson | Glen Young |
| Rod Cameron | Kansas City Chuck | Bob Miles |
| Truman Adams | Bob Perry | Leroy Ledford |
| Mel Currie | | |

Many of these names are already in various shuffleboard halls of fame, and several others should be.

Well, it didn't take long for Ron to become one of the better players in the state, and like most of us he played in most of the tournaments in California and Oregon for the next twenty years or so. He won his share, playing such top players as Fred Thumann, Darrol Nelson, Billy Mays and others. He won a tournament with Billy once and all of the headlines went to Mays, but the best player from start to finish was Ron.

The second part of Ron's shuffleboard career started when he moved to Oregon. Things didn't change much. He fit right in as a top player right away. One of Ron's biggest fans was a fellow named Darrol Nelson. It was in a game against Darrol that Ron did something I have never seen in my

53 years of playing; he lagged five 3's in a 15 point game. A perfect game! Try topping that! That alone should have gotten him into the hall of fame. But, like most great players, he gave us much more.

Here is something else that Ron has done through the years that most players can't. He controls himself in a gentlemanly way, no matter the outcome of the game. I have never seen him raise his voice or make a scene or show his ass in all of these years. A great player and person. Now that's a great combination.

Welcome, old friend, to the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame
Hal Perry



TG's place circa 1992

I met Ron over 40 years ago during the *Happy Hour* days in San Jose, CA. He was a fierce competitor and great lagger. This honor is well deserved. Welcome to the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame
Ron!

Don Cox

A Partial List of Tournament Wins

| | | |
|------|---|-------------------------------|
| 197? | Black Cat Tavern | 1 st place singles |
| 1977 | Dowers, Yuba City Labor Day w/Darrol Nelson | 1 st place doubles |
| 1977 | Black Cat Tavern-World Series of Shuffleboard w/Billy Mays | 1 st place doubles |
| 198? | Ace of Clubs w/Steve Wilson | 1 st place doubles |
| 1985 | Ace of Clubs Memorial Day w/Don Mitchell | 3 rd place doubles |
| 1987 | Ace of Clubs Labor Day tournament w/Loren Maxham | 2 nd place doubles |
| 1988 | Ace of Clubs mini-tournament w/Loren Maxham | 3 rd place doubles |
| 1989 | TG's Place – Holiday Doubles w/Paul Parks | 1 st place doubles |
| 2012 | Norfolk Area Shuffleboard Assn. league | 1 st place team in |
| 2012 | Norfolk Block Party w/Jason Lozier | 2 nd place doubles |
| 2013 | State Eagles' Tournament The Psychedelic Sliders | 2 nd place team |



With Jason Lozier (Omaha, NE)



The Psychedelic Sliders, Nebraska State Eagles' Tournament - 2013

World series Big stakes mark shuffleboard tilt

By RON OLSON
of The Oregonian staff

Upon entering the Black Cat Tavern Monday night, one might have thought Minnesota Fats was taking on all comers.

The scene was waiting people,

money changing hands faster than beers and the heavy aroma of smoke not uncommon to neighborhood watering holes.

But the featured attraction was not pool or foosball or pinball. It was shuffleboard, and the stakes were far

from nickel-dime. The purse totals more than \$5,000 and a calcutta (buyin part of a team) offered almost as much.

People came from many walks of life and many parts of the country, contingent arrived from Denver, a large group migrated from California as there was even one competitor who showed from Oklahoma.

All came for the sole purpose of competing against the best in a tournament labeled the "World Series of Shuffleboard," the second annual event at the Black Cat.

The best turned out to be the team of Portlander Ron Harralson and Bill Mays of Sacramento, who defeated Lonny Folger and Doug Buhl of Seattle in the best-of-seven game, three-hour plus marathon that was decided on the final two points (15-13) of the seven game.

The end result was of little surprise. Mays is regarded as one of the "masters" of the sport — sometimes a synonym of "hustler." He's a soft-spoken native of Texas whose nerves are cold than beer on tap. And the nerves, perhaps more than anything else, carried Harralson and him to the title.

"I felt confident we could win when my partner made four points (one turn) when we were trailing 5-6 the final game," said the 40-year-old Mays, who pointed out he is blind, one eye and deaf in one ear.

Despite the physical handicap Mays possesses a fine touch, a technique he has honed almost to perfection over the last 16 years. He has trick shots he saves for exhibitions at "highly skilled" shots he uses on opponents.

"People tell me all the time that use a lot of my trick shots during games," said Mays with a smile. "But actually I have only two trick shots. The rest are highly skilled, and I would like to emphasize that. They are trick shots."

"The competition is very close this level, so there's no room for trick. This type of shuffleboard is like Bob's Fisher-type chess, or golf, or bowling. You have got to use a lot of moves on the other player all of the time."

Unlike chess, golf or tennis, though etiquette is absent in shuffleboard. The jukebox can be heard blaring over the conversation, customers yell for more beer or hot dogs and spectators even walk in front of the players during match.

It doesn't seem to deter from the concentration of pushing a heavy metal disc along a waxed table 20-feet, eight inches long to marks where points are scored.

During the 16 years in which Mays has competed in an average of 10 tournaments per year, he has won \$10,000 "in the money" only twice.

A record commensurate to that of Mi-



Winners of \$4,900 in prize money for first place in a Sellwood shuffleboard tournament were Ron Harralson of Portland (left) and Billy Mays of Sacramento, shown accepting prize from tavern owner Gene Johnson. The second

annual World Series of Shuffleboard tournament, sponsored by the Black Cat Tavern, drew 21 teams from all over the West. Prize money totaled \$9,625, and hundreds watched the two-day event. —Bee photo

From the Oregonian, Feb 1977