THE NATIONAL

BILLIARD NEWS

DEDICATED TO BUILDING BETTER SPORTSMANSHIP

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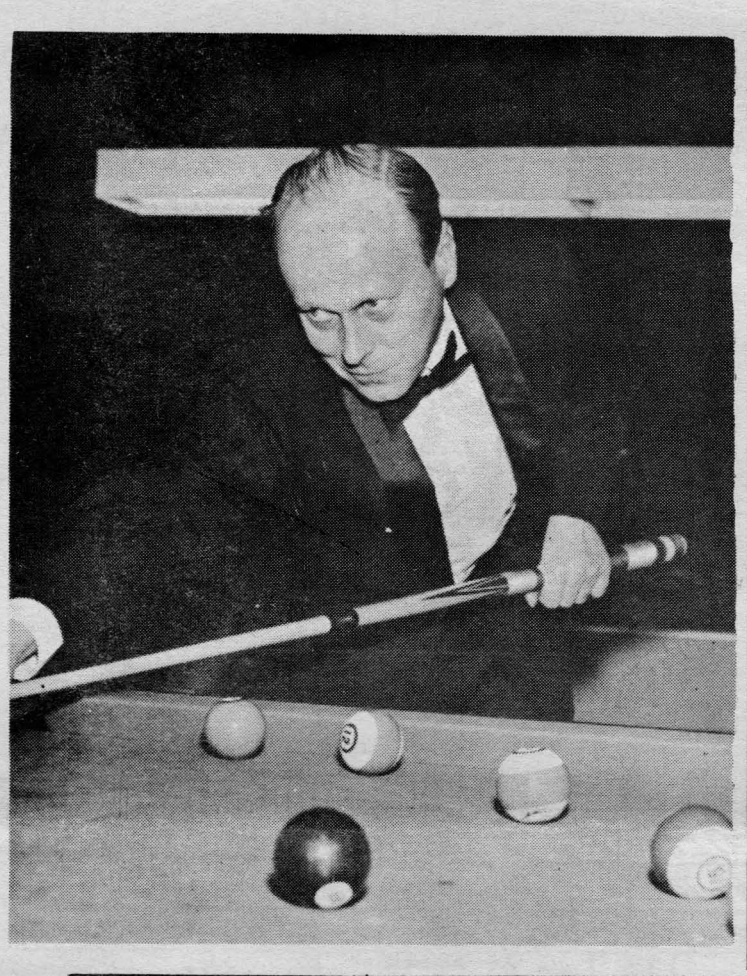
Jansco New World Champion, Eddie Taylor



Two World Champions; Art Cranfield, Eddie Taylor

NEW YORK (UPI) - Art Cranfield of Syracuse, N.J., celebrated his 47th birthday last night by winning the world pocket billiard championship from Luther Lassiter of Elizabeth City, N.C.

Cranfield built up a strong lead by winning five straight blocks of 200 points each and he coasted to a 1200-730 victory over the defending champion.

Cranfield had a high run of 112 during the Thursday afternoon block and took a lead of 1001 to 510 into the final block.

Lassiter will get a chance to regain his title in the World Championship tournament here next March.

The Boy Wonder Story

"I Turn Professional and Meet My First Real Test."

At length, in the year 1901, there came a time when my billiard skill had to meet a real test. Up to that time I had been a prodigy in short pants, a smart youngster whom people came to watch more because of his diminutive size and clever antics than for serious professional skill.

It was easy enough in my matches against Frank and my mother to make runs of fifty and a hundred. It was easy enough to make fancy masse shots and four cushion gathers before a small-town audience that sat, wide-eyed and open-mouthed, waiting to be astonished and eager to applaud. It was easy to climb all over the table and make shots from all angles when there was nothing at stake.

But now came the real test; could I play sound, consistent billiards against the recognized professionals? Could I hold my own against an opponent who depended on billiards for a livelihood, who was eager to win as I and to whom each button on the wire meant dollars and cents?

In October, 1901, a few days

(Continued on Page 8)

Madison Recreation's "Boy Wonder"

STEVE MIZERAK, JR.

Young Steve Mizerak, Jr., is now 11 years old, but is at least as advanced as a 25-year old in the skillful game of pocket billiards. He's getting better and better, day by day as many of the older players will admit as they have been defeated by young Steve. Look for his name in the galaxy of billiard stars in 10 years.

If you ever stop at the Madison Recreation Center in Perth Amboy and happen to see an 11 year old boy pocketing pool balls like a polished professional, you can be certain it is one of the current boy wonders, Steve Mizerak, Jr.

Young Steve has been playing pool since he was no higher than the proverbial Tom Thumb and he's good at it too. Ask present World Champion, Willie Mosconi, who says he has a good chance to provide some real competition in the next few years.

In recent play Steve Jr., has runs on a 41/2 x 9 of 48-41- and 40. This is as good and in many cases better than many players are able to do after five to ten years of play. Like the late great Ralph Greenleaf, young Steve is a south-paw, but he has real style.

In dedicating a book to Steve written by Mosconi, Willie made

(Continued on Page 4)

Eddie Taylor, all around World's Champion, Sponsored and Promoted by JANSCO. BROS. CUE CLUB BILLIARD ACADEMY, Johnston City, Illinois.

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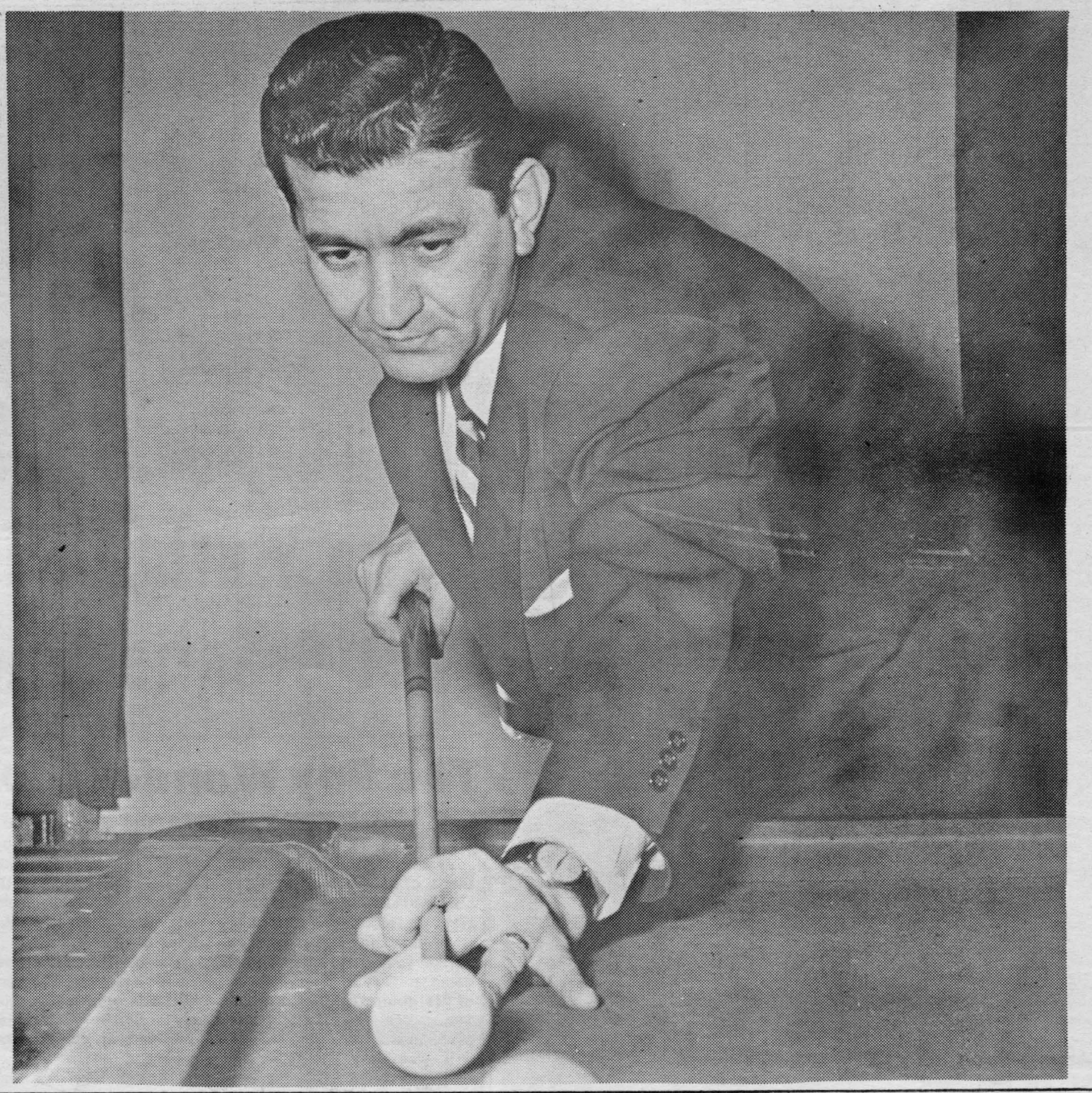
Joe Russo

Winner

New Jersey

State

Champion



1964 NEW JERSEY STATE POCKET BILLIARD TOURNAMENT

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AL LINDER - PRESIDENT & TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

	PLAYER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	WON	LOST	HIGH RUN	FINAL STAND.	PRIZE
1	COLAVITA (NORTH BERGEN)		73 125	125 125	125 125	125 125	125 125	125 125	125 46	78 125	125 110	125 125	100 125	125 125	19	5	*87	2	#250.00 TROPHY
2	MARGO (UNION CITY)	125 75		73 125	82 125	125 75	125 114	125 125	81 60	47 31	81 60	125 125	125 125	125 125	13	11	77	6	90.00
3	PLANTHABER (UNION CITY)	22 76	125 90		125 116	125 70	125 125	125 125	125 71	125 42	83 76	29 81	75 63	125 96	10	14	61	11	50.00
4	MC CARTHY (RAHWAY)	119 60	125 70	100 125		101 125	125 125	125 125	59 106	125 121	89 125	77 72	125 87	93 91	10	14	60	9	60.00
5	OLIVIERI (HOBOKEN)	118 76	66 125	117 125	125 95		125 117	125 125	125 125	125 83	125 125	42 55	125 116	97 66	12	12	48	7	80.00
6	NIELSEN (HILLSIDE)	45 59	55 125	111 45	76 74	45 125		82 125	125 125	93 22	97 112	0 84	109 78	94 120	5	19	49	12	50.00
7	ADAMO (BAYONNE)	45 55	61 49	112 31	96 55	66 87	125 108		69 53	61 47	76 6	84 28	81 0	67 86	1	23	28	13	50.00
8	CAROSELLI (JERSEY CITY)	37 125	125 125	90 125	125 125	24 108	56 115	125 125		125 120	64 35	125 98	125 68	66 125	12	12	*89	8	80.00
9	MIZERAK (JERSEY CITY)	125 88	125 125	85 125	114 125	125 110	125 125	125 125	79 125		91 101	57 125	125 125	125 125	16	8	68	3	200.00 TROPHY
10	RUSSO (TRENTON)	125 55	125 125	125 125	125 119	114 99	125 125	125 125	125 125	125 125		125 117	125 125	125 125	19	5	84	1	400.00 TROPHY
11	MARTIN (PARAMUS)	77 10	73 67	125 125	125 125	125 125	125 125	125 125	99 125	125 54	108 125		125 97	125 125	16	8	59	4	150.00
12	LAGER (TOMS RIVER)	125 75	85 107	125 125	42 125	98 125	125 125	125 125	79 125	97 98	54 101	18 125		125 125	13	11	71	5	100.00
13	SILVERMAN (EAST ORANGE)	91 111	37 71	54 125	125 125	125 125	125 125	125 125	93 125	96 100	81 59	63 87	77 109		10	14	44	10	50.00

1ST PLACE PLAYOFF

TOTAL POINTS SCORED IN 2 GAMES

	1ST GAME	2ND GAME	TOTAL POINTS
RUSSO	125	119	244
COLAVITA	20	125	145

*HIGH RUN

89 CAROSELLI #35.00

87 COLAVITA 15.00

ALL TIES, EXCEPT 1ST PLACE, RESOLVED BY TOTAL POINTS SCORED IN 2 GAMES

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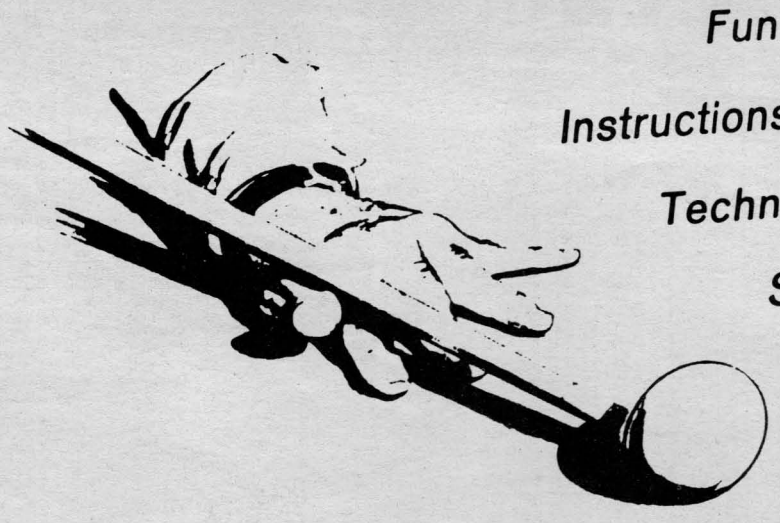

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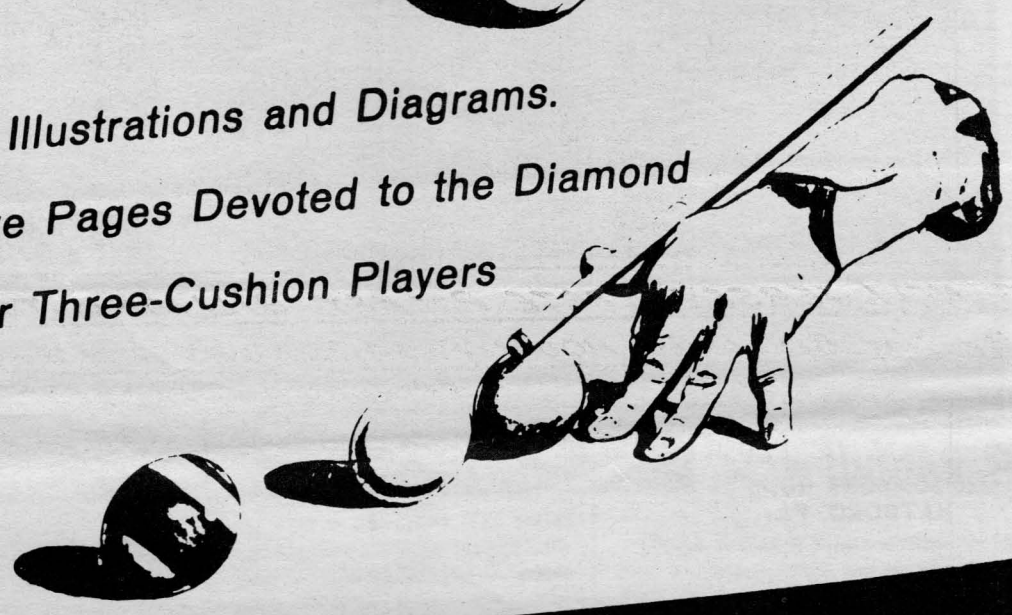

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"BOY WONDER"

(Continued from Page 1)

this inscription: "Keep practicing champ, and you can take my place."

For some indication as to how Steve, Jr., played seven years ago, here is a clipping from the Perth Amboy Evening News:

"Throw the kid out! What do you want him to do-tear up the table?"

That's exactly how little Steve Mizerak Jr. was welcomed about five months ago when he toddled into the Madison Recreation Center to play his first game of pocket billiards.

But things have changed since that October day when young Steve and his father, Steve Mizerak, of minor league baseball fame, dropped into the billiard parlor to talk baseball and billiards with the boys until the afternoon performance at the theatre.

Little Steve soon had other ideas. He picked up a cue stick and went to work on the nearest table, much to the anguish of Jim Crover, proprietor of the establishment, who immediately ordered the youngster out.

Before a bystander had a chance to stop young Steve, he neatly stroked the seven-ball into the side pocket, and oddly enough, never hurt the table one iota.

Well, from that day on little Mr. Mizerak was as welcome at the billiard parlor as World Champion Willie Mosconi, Jimmy Caras, Irwin Crane or Willie Hoppe.

That first shot convinced Crover and others that the kid had possibilities. They stood in amazement as he walked nonchalantly to the other side of the table, drew a bead on the 11 ball and lined it into the corner pocket.

At this point the elder Mizerak introduced his four-year old offspring to Crover, whose face took on the hue of a well boiled lobster as he apologized for wanting to throw the kid into the street.

Crover then concluded that the youngster must have inherited this natural ability from his father, who is without question the best pocket billiards player in the city-with the exception of Lou Russo, the state champion.

But Steve Sr. was quick to explain that he never gave the boy a lesson. He had his own toy table to be sure, but up until that visit to the Rec young Steve was rather cold to the game. Evidently the sight of the big tables changed his mind.

From then on young Steve made almost daily visits to the Rec, giving up the movies, canday and everything else just for the pleasure of playing a while and watching players like his dad and Russo tangle in a hot 125-point match.

Young Steve soaked up every bit of billiard knowledge he could, and by Christmas time he had advanced enough to get a two piece champion's cue stick as a gift from his father. In the ensuing months Russo took the boy under his wing and explained bank shots, combinations, position play, the tricky draws and spins of the cue ball and the rules and regulations of the game.

By mid - February he was playing regular games with others and running anywhere from four to eight balls, a feat for even a veteran pool player. In a recent match, he defeated an 18 year old pin boy who is rated one of the better teen-age stars in the city.

When he engages older, more experienced players, he stipulates that they must bank all their shots, and in that way he wins about eight out of ten matches.

At the table, young Steve is cool and collected. After he makes one shot, he usually stops to watch a player at another table, scratch his blonde locks or tug at his socks. Nothing seems to bother him.

He has marvelous control even on long shots. He bridges his tiny hand like an expert and often stands on the ball box at the end of the table to shoot from the middle. Like a true champion, he plans his shots so that he'll always have a good follow-up.

A southpaw, he is now learning how to stroke with his right hand, too. A champion has to be ambidextrous, he's been told, and a champion he's going to be.

A few weeks ago Crover took young Steve to the New York offices of the Brunswick-Balke Collener Company for a demonstration of his abilities. There he wowed the professionals and company executives, who promised to feature him in several movie shorts and in future television programs. Like Crover, these men also predict a brilliant future for young Mr. Mizerak.

Now that Pop Mizerak is off to the baseball wars as manager of the Goldsboro, N.C., team of the Coastal Plains League, young Steve will have to do most of his practicing at home on a large table recently installed by his father. But he does not expect to spend all his time at the table. Like his father, he also wants to be a big league baseball player.

And he probably will be that too."

With this story it is easy to see that young Steve must have some of the Magic Touch and no one seems more convinced of that than his pop who has this to say:

"To my way of thinking, Junior is as good as any other boy his age in pocket billiards and to back up my statement, I am willing to accept any challenge with a $1,000 purse posted by anyone"

In other words Pop Mizerak says, "Put your money where your mouth is."

And he means it too.!!

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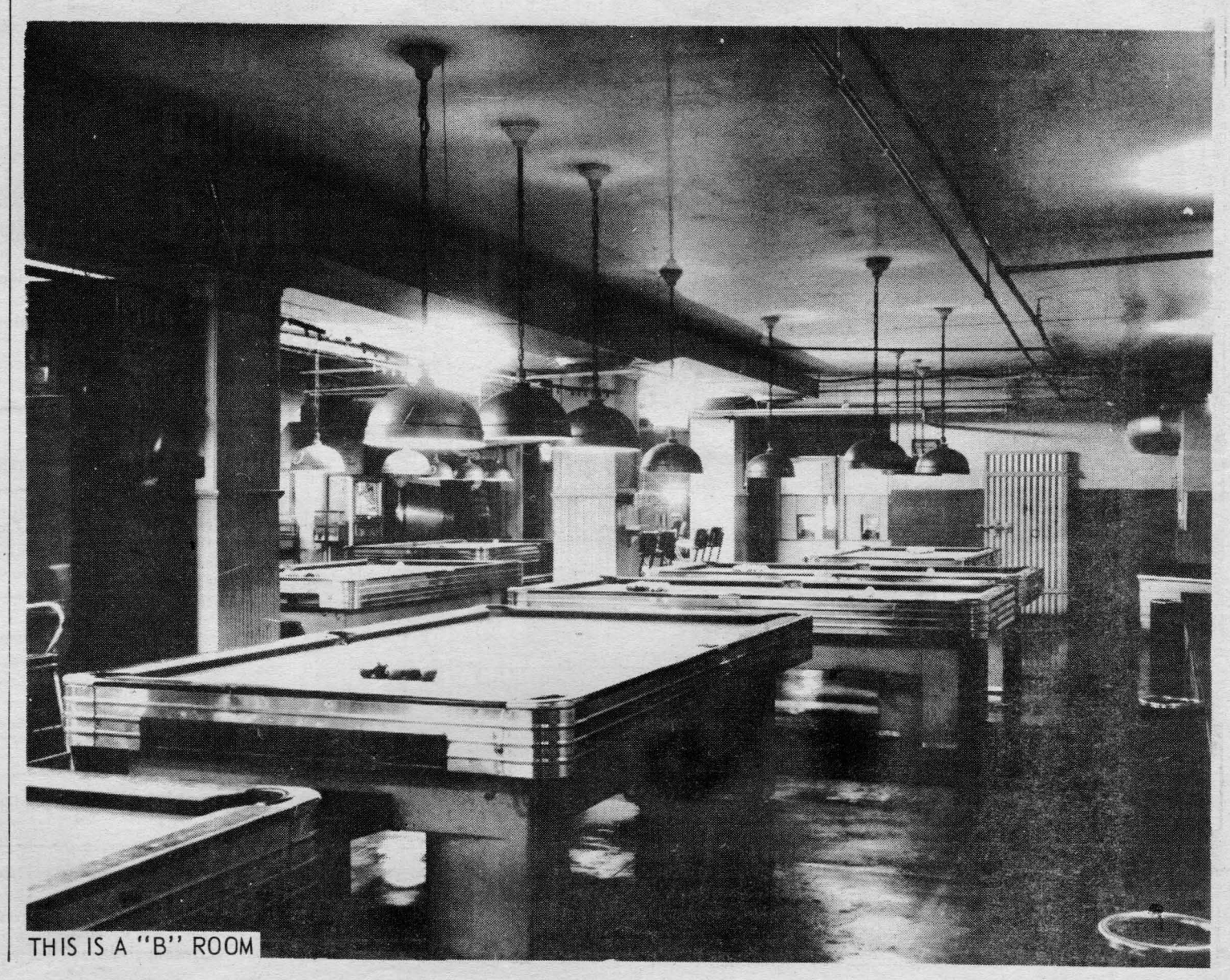

THIS IS A "B" ROOM

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

"What Does National Billiard News Think About Hiding A Pool Room Behind A Cyclone Fence And Shruberry?

It seems that a misconception exists in the minds of a few people regarding the new Cue & Cushion Center to be operated in the Northeast section of our city. Some of these people are fine respectable citizens, and certainly not to be ignored are the clergymen who needless to say are very fine people. But still, a mystery exists which I will try to explain in this column. First of all, we know that a license was obtained in the 2000 block of Cottman Ave., but was not passed by the License Bureau. After checking, we learned that resentment existed most likely, from the people in the area who were directly concerned. We will seek the truth and write the truth about any bad publicity against our sport. I know, Mr. Ralph Wolfman, and know of his wonderful reputation, and of his chain of restaurants. Mr. Wolfman owns a plush Cue and Cushion Center, a Bowling Alley, not to mention the many other fields he is known in, and I quote from a recent newspaper in which Mr. Wolfman said, "There will be many housewives, visiting this new cue and cushion center in the Northeast, many with children who will be seeking fun and relaxation in a quiet, refined atmosphere." The decor, atmosphere and facilities, the rules etc., all will blend to make a Billiard Center just as refined a place to visit and as much fun to enjoy as a bowling center, which also was condemned publicity 20 years ago." "We're really an asset to any community. We permit no overcrowding, noise, demonstrations, no corner lounging inside or outside our place. Our investment in these centers is $100,000 each and we can't afford to let them turn into delinquent hangouts. Kids won't be able to pay the prices we charge. To prove his point. Mr. Wolfman invited any doubters to visit the Billiard Centers Cue and Cushion ,Inc. operating at 15th and Walnut Sts. 19th & Cheltenham Ave. and 25 S. Easton Rd. Glenside. He added, "We are so sure you'll be convinced, we'll even provide free transportation."

In my opinion, I can honestly say, that I have been all over the U.S. and can vouch that these "Cue and Cushion Centers" are the finest I have ever come across. In addition, I would like to mention that till now, no formal complaint or protest has been made and I truthfully can't see why there should be."

BILLIARD NEWS for Billiard People

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This is Strictly A Billiard Paper

A Great Billiard Story

There were many Americans, who were sportsmen, in the large audience in the Palace Hotel, in Paris, France, when the blond youngster lagged for the first shot with the World Champion, Maurice Vigmaux, who was truly a great cue star at the age of 73. He held the Balk Line Billiard Title of the world for 25 years. He told Hoppe, the young teen-age cue star, "Go out, and get a reputation." Hoppe had done just that by defeating the champion of England. There was Willie's father, who had taught him to play at the age five, Eddie Foy an impetuous member of the famed vaudeville family, and Charles M. Schwab, a great sportsman. Schwab, was a wealthy steel industralist from the states. The French Sportsmans had the oldds at 7-1, that their champion would massacre the teen-age cue star. Foy, a great sport, went through the audience, taking bets until he ran out of money. Then, he turned to his good friend, Schwab, and told him not to sell America short. The great sportsman, Schwab, handed over a fistful of notes to back the teen-age cue wizzard. The match went badly for the teenager, and his backers at the beginning. However, the old master, had lost none of his finesse. The years had steeled his nerves and confirmed his judgement. He led the youngster 130-48, the odds were rising like the Mississippi River. They were climbing until they went to 15-1 cover all bets. Schwab told Foy, "We have three days of this, if they beat us tonight, we will catch up with them tomorrow, and the third day we'll cash those tickets." The partisan audience was hushed and reverent. Whenever the old master was at the table there was silence. However, it became noisey and boisterous when the young American cue star would take his turn at the table. Matches flared constantly, as the Billiard fans lit up cigars and pipes. The sound of matches striking and the sudden flare of light in the darkness can distract a cue champion sufficiently to cause him to miss a shot. This was not so in the case of the young teenager. He calmly perserved against the champ and evened the score during the second day of the series.

"Gee Dad," Willie confided to his father, "I think I can really win, he is great, but I feel like David must have felt when he went out to meet Goliath."

On the third day, the crowd was in a ferment, betting odds dropped to 8-1, against the challenger, but the betting was in ten and twenty-thousand dollar amounts. The French Sportsmen were eager to bet with Schwab because they knew his money was good. Foy had long since dropped out for the betting pace was too hot for him, but that rich Schwab continued to bet on his young teenage cue artist American, and saying "Win or lose. I'm enjoying every moment." The American went out in front despite the distraction of the unruly fans. The referee finally obtained silence from the fans by threatening to award the match to the American, unless the nonsense stopped. In a sudden rush of respect, the boy wonder, completed the contest with a run of 68 and quietly laid his cue on the table. Vignaux, his eyes wet with emotion was a gallant loser. My boy, he told the grinning youngster, "You are the greatest player in the world." This was the start of a Billiard Champion the greatest of all times, for over 50 years, he was title holder of Different Billiard Titles. 18-1, 18-2 Balk Line, Three Cushions. The great sportsman, Charles Schwab gave the new champ a $50,000 gift.

Spot Shots

by Russ Maddox

POOL PARLOR PORTRAITS . . . There must be hundreds of various types of characters in the billiard rooms scattered throughout the nation. Each one is different from the rest, but all are bound together in a common cause—their love for billiards. For identification's sake, let's classify them under the following names and see how many you recognize in your own room.

THE OUTSIDE MOVEMENT MAN . . . This guy considers himself a top player and when he is stroking and executing right, all is cream and peaches, but just let him miss a shot and he comes up with these remarks . . . "Did you see that? Just as I shot someone walked behind me. It threw me off." . . . (Off is right. The someone who walked behind was the local tennis star who was wearing sneakers and he was six tables away.) . . . This character never misses a ball because he dropped his shoulder or pushed the shot . . . The real reason for his miss was because the sweater sitting six chairs down and in back of the griper blinked his eyes at the exact moment of the shot. It's always the same. "Some talked to loud . . . Did you hear that horn outside blow? . . . Turn off the radio. It breaks my concentration . . . You're breathing to loud . . . He flicked a butt just as I shot. It was a Camel. I know. I saw it out of the corner of my eye . . . The one trouble with these guys is that they never seem to know that all this movement occurs when they win the same as when they lose. Truth of the matter is they have to have an excuse for losing.

THE EQUIPMENT MAN . . . Here is a guy who walks into a room, grabs a cue and rolls it over the table to see if it's straight. He steps to the table and rubs his hand to see which way the nap runs. He picks up a ball and flicks a mite of dust from it. He checks the spot to be certain it is in line with the diamonds. Next he picks up a file and dresses the tip. Powder is a must and he uses it in large portions—most of it on the table. He calls for a cue ball and holds a rack atop it and two playing balls to be sure they are all the same size. He rubs his hand on the cloth to see if it is stretched tight and then shoots the cue ball the table length to see if the table is level . . . His next action seldom changes with this guy. He places the cue ball 18 inches from the rail at the head of the table, bridges off the rail and then jams his cue under the ball, sending it jumping off the table . . . When he finally gets into action the truth comes to light . . . This guy has been watching too many movies, because he can't run two balls. Know anyone who fits this player?

THE OLDTIMER . . . There's always one of these in any room. He's the player in his late sixties who at one time was "the best player in these here parts." This character is a whiz at analyzing each and every shot of the local players. He can tell you why you missed one shot and made another. He can inform you what shot you should have played and what your next shot should have been. He knows every angle of the game and is quick to tell you he'd "show you how to play, but my eyes just ain't what they used to be. You just wait 'til you get to be 60. You'll find out?" . . . This story seldom varies since he's been saying the same thing for the past 20 years and it's an even money bet he never could play the game. I know there's one of these guys in your room.

THE ANGLES MAN . . . Here's a guy who sits up nights thinking of ways to beat his opponents . . . He believes he's a sharp cookie and if he is outclassed by a player, the way to beat him is to shoot all the angles he knows . . . If he can't win on one table, he takes the game to another . . . If this fails, he changes cue balls . . . If he still is beaten, he wants to go to another room . . . Or he wants to change the game . . . The biggest kick he ever got was once in a game of eight-ball when he had no possible shot except the Black Beauty hanging in the pocket, he bet his opponent that he'd come out of it and not give him another shot . . . After getting a bet down, he then shot in the eight ball thereby not giving his opponent another turn . . .If he can't win on the square he starts "sharking" his man . . . He'll take out his handkerchief and mop his brow while his opponent is shooting . . . He bangs his cue on the floor . . . He tries to claim unscored points . . . Anything to win . . . Often he comes up with "trick games." . . . Sportsmanship means little to him . . . He claims he never takes a bad hit, but is quick to proclaim bad hits against his competitor . . . Nice Guy?

THE GORGEOUS GRIPER . . . Here's a real dilly . . . This prince of a chap is the one who gets on his opponents nerves merely by the manner in which he continuously belly-aches . . . His last shot didn't pan out right, even though he made the shot and continued to run more than 100 . . . Nothing seems to please him . . . When he is losing, he lays down the gripe as strong as red onions, but when he is winning, then is the time that he really beefs . . . He pockets the balls cleanly, but his cue ball is out of position a hair . . . Two balls ended up close together . . . This requires him to break them up and his cue ball is laying just right to do it . . . Still he's not pleased . . . Yes, above all, this character gets on his opponents nerves so bad it turns him into a griper too . . .

American Billiard News — June-July, 1956

NE Residents Protest Hidden Poolroom Play

Does hiding a poolroom behind a cyclone fence and shrubs make it acceptable to area residents who are opposed to it?

"We would definitely oppose it," said Rabbi Wachtfogel.

"The neighbors would be very unhappy if a poolroom was opening up in this area."

Concerning the Northeasts residents protest. Hidden Poolroom Play. We will start first with the word Pool. How many kinds of Pool are there? (Many) How did this word pool get tacked on to billiards? According to the dictionary the definition of Pool is: 1. The stake played for in certain games. 2. A kind of billiards. 3. In a joint gambling venture, the total amount staked; the combination of persons in such a venture. 4. A combination of the interests of different persons made to further a joint undertaking; also the persons to contribute to a common fund, on the basis of a mutual division of profits or losses. To combine with others in a pool.

In one library there are 65 published books on Billiards and pocket billiards, also, in nearly every college they have copies of a billiard book.

Throughout the States and different areas there are pool rooms without any pocket billiard or billiard table. Some of them are licensed and some are not. In other words, poolroom saying is nothing more than a slur, against an A billiard room and a B billiard room. There is a picture on page 3 of these two different types of billiard centers.

The chain of plush, family type cue & cushion is one of the finest well organized and finest managed in the country.

They have three family type plush cue & cushion centers, one at 15th & Walnut Sts., Nineteenth and City Line, and Easton Road, Glenside. Total number of tables is fifty.

Did you know that if you got into any one of these three Cue & Cushions and don't play you will soon have the manager politely ask you to leave. In one of these places two executive officers of the second largest billiard manufacturers were asked to leave. It seems the manager did not know who they were.

I do not know how many people they employ in the bowling lanes, restaurants, there family billiards set up. I can say this, the amount of income tax and taxes of all kinds and number of employed is great for the City of Philadelphia or any other City where they are located.

Johnny Layton . . . The Smiling Irishman

Johnny Layton is dead!

Yes, Genial John, the Smiling Irishman has run out his score, but the memory of his artistic ability with a cue stick and his friendly manner will live on with those who best remember him as the one time world pocket billiard champion and also three cushion master.

It's 20 years since billiard stars were great men about town. Johnny Layton, who died recently was one of the most popular on Broadway. He wasn't the outstanding "name." Ageless, stylish Willie Hoppe, the balk-line master, and theatrical temperamental Ralph Greenleaf, the "home-run" pool slugger, outranked him.

But Layton won the pool title before Greenleaf, in 1916, and he held off Hoppe's belated bid for the three- cushion championship for several years, as late as 1934.

Johnny was the average guy's hero. He did not have the court of authentic bad men who idolized Greenleaf, nor was he the darling of the old gentlemen from the Racquet Club, as was Hoppe. In the racy, lawless, speakeasy days he was Honest John, the fellow who plugged along, always looking bad at the start of a tournament, always fighting grimly and generally successfully at the close.

When Broadway was more of a sports place, and Jack Doyle's was one of its capitals, Layton was one of its prolific story tellers, out of his background in carpentry, minor league baseball, boxing and wrestling. His best story was about the racket he had licked- wrestling. Layton wrestled back in Missouri under the management and promotion of Layton. As he pointed out, nothing could go wrong, and nobody got paid if he didn't.

Although Layton gave away in glamour to Hoppe and Greenleaf, he was the best at three-cushion in the Golden Age of 1920 -30. He won his final title in one of the game's most dramatic tournaments, in the twilight of the sport here. That was in 1934, in the Capitol rooms, against Algredo de Oro, grand old master who won titles from '87 through '19; Wetker Cochran and Hoppe, the balk-line nobles; and Augie Kieckhefer, Kinrey Matsuyama, Jay Bozeman and Otto Reiselt.

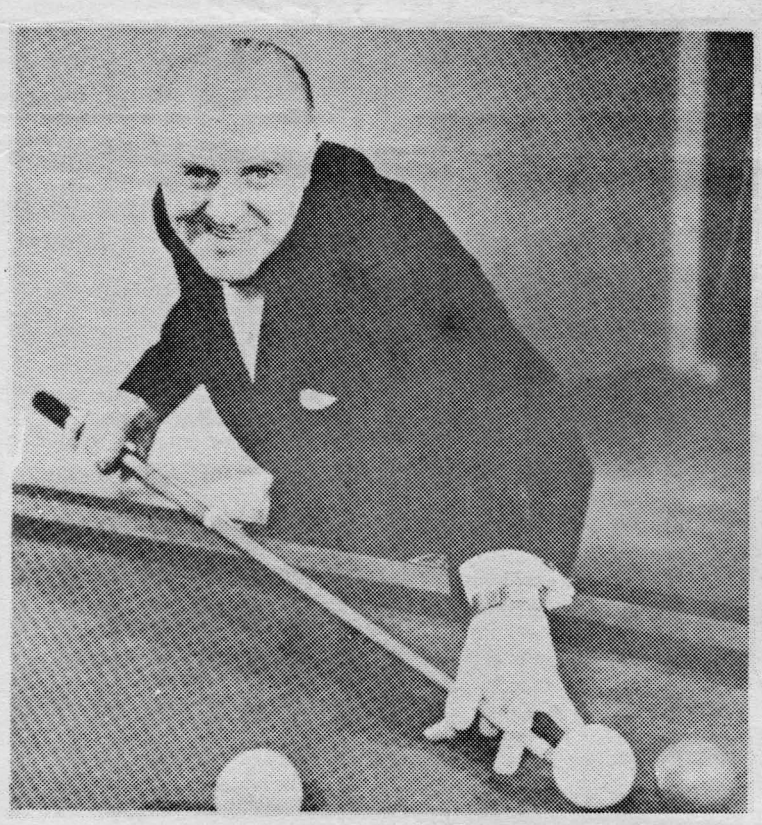
The drama was set up by the feud between Layton and flip, arrogant, gifted Cochran. Layton had been laid up by eye trouble in '33, and Cochran had won the title. Johnny returned in '34 with glasses, a squint and an "all through" label.

Cochran in interviews stated that "a blind, old pool player" had no business at the table with a balk-line expert. Layton burned, but also sizzled through the tournament to reach Cochran in the final match.

Johnny ran up a lead, muttering from time to time: "Just a blind, old pool player, eh?" Cochran, training 25-4 demanded a new cue ball. Layton snapped: "I'll be glad to lend you my cue, too." The 5 foot 2 Scotch-Irishman of 46 muttered Cochran into a 50-23 defeat, and while it was his last winning stand, it was probably his best.

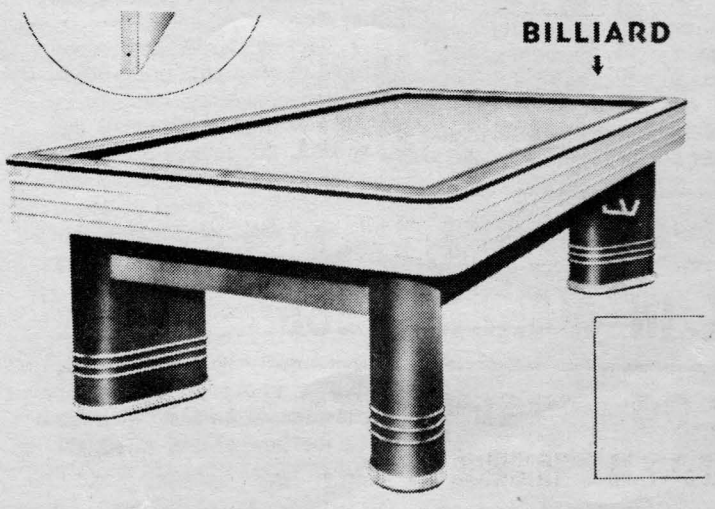
It was just such actions as this which made Johnny the average guy's hero, for he never seemed to know when he was beaten. Yes, Johnny was one of the greats in the billiard game.

A Billiard Star

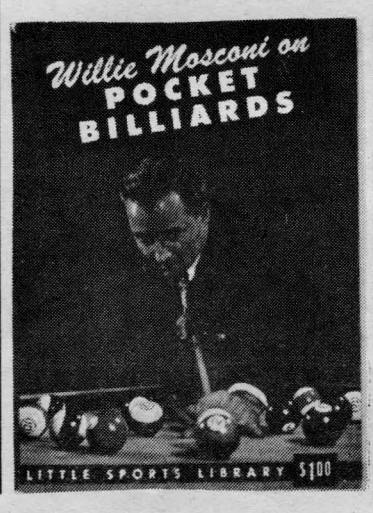


Holder of the Title longer than any other player of all time.

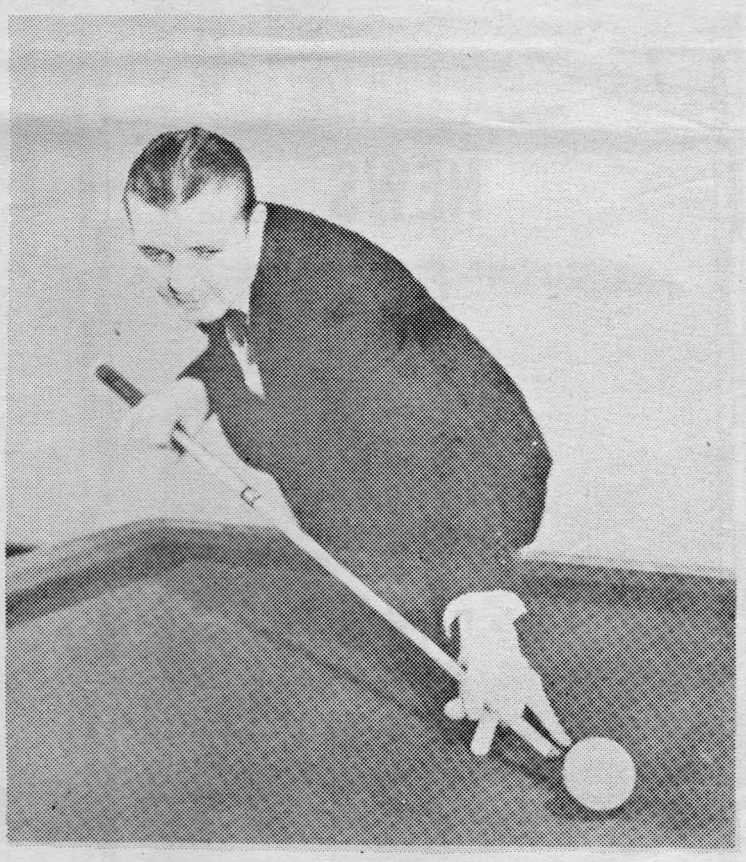
And A Billiard Table



Willie Mosconi On Pocket Billiards



A Pocket Billiard Star



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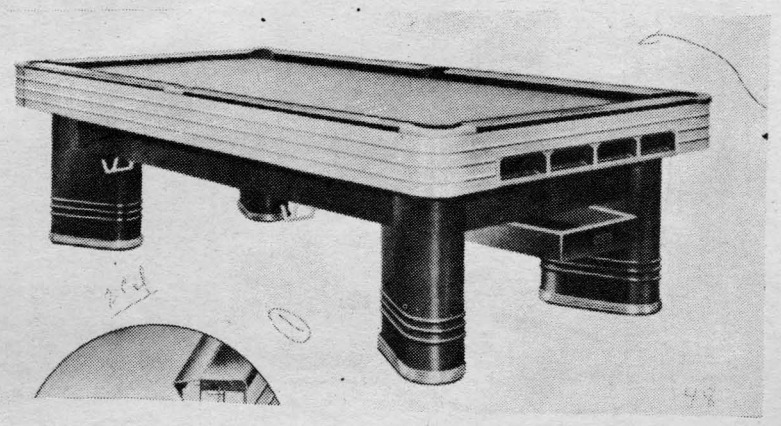

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BOY WONDER

Cont. From Page 1

after my fourteenth birthday, my father and I journeyed down from Cornwall Landing to New York City. Maurice Daly was arranging a "short-stop" professional tournament as a preliminary to the winter billiard season, and after a conference over handicaps, it was decided I should enter.

"He needs tournament experience," Mr. Daly told my father; "let's see what he can do in fast company."

The other players entered were Thomas Gallagher, Ed McLaughlin, Ora Morningstar and Jose Ortiz. The first two were widely known American professionals of the second rank, veterans of many a tournament and match. Morningstar was a young player in his twenties, who under the tutelage of Frank Ives had shown great promise. Those three were to play for 300 points. Ortiz was a newcomer from Spain. On the basis of his showing in practise matches Mr. Daly rated him at 225, while I had to play for 200.

Two weeks of constant practice under the watchful eyes of my father and Mr. Daly put me on keen edge for the fray. We were to play 18.1 a game that permits only one shot in the restricted spaces and practically bars close manipulation near the rails. But I had learned the trick of gathering them near the lines, and was confident of holding my own with any of them on 1-cushion shots and open table play.

Ortiz and I met in the first match of the tournament the night of October 21. After the formalities-- Mr. Daly always started his affairs with a flourish-- we stood at the table to bank for the break.

To my astonishment, my ball rolled back from the lower rail at a snail's pace and stopped just above the spot. I had lost the bank by about eighteen inches, and Ortiz had the first shot. As I went to my seat, I wondered why I had failed to miserably to gauge the speed of the table, and I looked toward my father expecting to receive a stern reproof. But he had lighted a cigar and settled himself comfortably in his seat. My mother gave me a reassuring smile.

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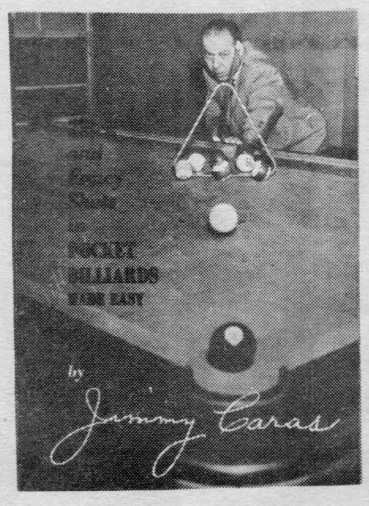

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