

the national

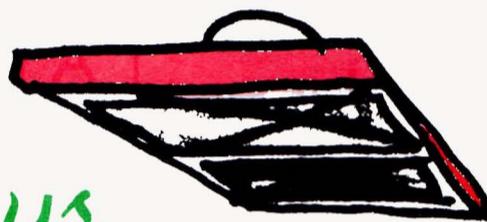
Billiard News

The world's largest pool, billiard and snooker publication

DECEMBER, 1977 75 CENTS



*Wishing you the
happiest of holidays*



and peace throughout the year

The staff and families of

The National Billiard News

Mail . . .

Book delayed

Gentlemen,
For those who have been kind enough to inquire as to the progress of **Mastering Pool** the book I've been excerpting in the NBN, my thanks and apologies at the same time. We've hit a few production snags. The details are boring, but if you've read my work at all, you'll understand that I'd much rather have my book come out a

little later than have it be wrongly done.

Mastering Pool will be published by Contemporary Sports Books right around the end of the year. Thanks very much again for your interest.

Best regards,
George Fels
Chicago, Illinois

Women forgotten

Dear Sir:

In your November issue, your correspondent for the World 9-ball tournament in Maryland failed to mention there was a women's 6-ball division in that event.

Gloria Walker won it in a close game defeating Lori Shampo who came up from the losers' side after a previous loss to Walker. First prize was \$1000.

Eileen van Buren was third, Carla Johnson fourth.

Mike Seidel deserves a lot of credit for putting in a women's division, with a good prize list. He worked closely with the Women's Professional Billiard Alliance (WPBA) in doing it.

Sincerely,
Charles Walker
Cheyney, PA

What? A profit?

November 17, 1977

Letter To The Editor:

I wish to congratulate the promoters of the 8-Ball Bash for Easter Seals that took place at the Pontiac Silverdome. I heard nothing but praise from both players and spectators on how efficient the event was. It was also called to my attention that this tournament showed a profit of \$10,000. Come on fellas! How could this be? Do you realize the BCA lost \$30,000 in Dayton?

Signed,

Joseph F. Farhat

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On the road . . .

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Cushion 'n' Cue Billiards
Oak Park, Mich.
313-541-1608

Every Thursday, every
week...
Jackpot 9 Ball
Velvet Rail Billiards
Lansing, Mich.
517-487-3528

February 10-19
1978 Invitational World Series of Pool
Jack & Jill Cue Club
Claremont Shopping Center
Arlington, Va.

December 2-4
Tacoma Elks Lodge
Tacoma, Wash.

February 24-25-26, 1978
Billiard News
National Open
3-Cushion Tournament
Cushion 'n' Cue
Oak Park, Mich

December 10-11-17-18
S.F. Elks Lodge
San Francisco, Ca.

West Regional
January 12-14
Calif. Billiards
San Jose, Ca.

May 1 thru 6, 1978
1978 World's 3-Cushion
Tournament
Del Webb's Sahara Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada 89114
P.O. Box 14337
Tel. 702-735-2111

Midwest Regional
January 20-22
Cushion "n" Cue
Oak Park, Mich.

U.S.A. National
February 9-12
Calif. Billiards
San Jose, Ca.
10 player-top 4 each
Regional plus Allen Gilbert &
George Ashby

September 1-2-3-4, 1978
Billiard News
National Open
Straight Pool Championships
Men's & Women's
Cushion 'n' Cue
Livonia, Mich.

FABULOUS

Trick Shots

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by *Willie Jopling*
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FOR THE ADVANCED PLAYER THE SECRET OF SETTING UP TRICK SHOTS CONSISTENTLY.

GROUP B.	 HOW TO MAKE THE BLACK BALL	 CUE THREE BALLS IN ONE SHOT IN ROTATION	 THREE BALLS IN ONE SHOT IN ROTATION	 ALL FOUR BALLS IN ONE SHOT IN ROTATION	 MAKE THE CENTER BALL IN ANY ONE OF THE FOUR POCKETS	 FIVE BALLS IN ONE SHOT IN ROTATION OR SIX BALLS IN ONE SHOT IN ROTATION	PLUS 2 SHOTS FROM BELOW for only \$5.00
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FOR THE PROFESSIONAL YOU'VE SEEN THESE SHOTS BUT CAN YOU SET THEM UP?

GROUP C.	 ONE BALL IN EACH POCKET THREE WAYS TO SET UP THIS SHOT	 CALL THE BLACK BALL IN THE LEFT CORNER POCKET	 MAKE THE BLACK BALL FROM OTHER SIDE OF RACK	 SIX BALLS IN ROTATION ON ONE SHOT	 MOVE ALL 15 BALLS AND MAKE ONLY THE BLACK BALL IN THE LEFT SIDE POCKET	 MAKE THE BLACK BALL IN THE RIGHT SIDE POCKET	PLUS 2 PROPOSITION SHOTS for only \$5.00
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9-ball at the Velvet Rail

Jimmy Reid wins in Lansing



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To the victors go the spoils. In this case, crisp \$100 bills. Jimmy Reid, right, got 10 of them, Mark Beilfuss, left, got 6. Joe Farhat, the man in the middle, made it all possible.

Times are changing and Joe Farhat is changing with the times.

November 11-13, 96 players and hundreds of spectators crowded into the Velvet Rail Billiards in Lansing, Michigan for a weekend full of 9-Ball. There was something for everybody.

The main event was a full field of 32 players vying for the \$2600 purse. The \$1,000 first prize attracted the likes of Mark Beilfuss, Tom Kollins, Larry Hubbard, Louie Roberts, Jimmy Reid, Tom Spencer and local hero come home, Jim Mataya. Twenty-five other skillful shooters rounded out the field with a waiting list as long as your arm.

Friday night at 8:00 the first round got under way. Scott Kitto threw Mataya into the loser's bracket early by defeating him 11-9. Vicki Frechen, lady-pro at the Velvet Rail, made her 9-Ball debut by defeating Bill Vandebrook of Anderson, Indiana 11-8. Larry Hubbard snuck past Scott Hatton 11-9, while Jimmy Reid crushed Steve Cusick 11-3. Mark Beilfuss buried Bob Ritter 11-1 and Willie Munson made an early trip to the losers bracket by losing to Blaine Sell 11-6.

In the winner's bracket, round No. 2 pitted Kollins against Beilfuss with Beilfuss coming out on top 11-7. Hub-

bart scored another win by downing St. Louie Louie 11-3. Beilfuss went on to destroy Greg Hatch 11-5 and Hubbard followed with an 11-5 win over the tournament dark-horse Danna Hallet.

At Saturday's end, the winner's bracket was down to Beilfuss, Reid, Hubbard, and Frank Piasecki of Buffalo, New York. The loser's bracket was weighted down with Mataya, Munson, Kollins, and Roberts — each displaying their own versions of "fight for your life." Louis Roberts was overheard saying that his name was going to streak through the loser's bracket like a flash of light.

He got off to a nice running start, but short-circuited against Mataya in the final rack, losing 11-10 to take 6th place.

Sunday saw the advent of a Reid-Hubbart match with the winner playing Beilfuss who had defeated Crazy Frank Piasecki 11-4. Reid arose to the occasion by beating Hubbard and Beilfuss 11-7 each to cinch himself a spot in the finals.

Meanwhile, Mataya left Hallet in 5th place by a score of 11-8. The fight for third place between Hubbard and Mataya was voted by the "sweaters

Continued on Page 14

Cattrano defeats Hallon for Jersey 3-cushion title

By MILT GOLDRING

A field of twelve assembled on Oct. 15, 1977 at the Hi-Cue Billiard Lounge, Elizabeth, N.J., to battle for the title of 1977 N.J. State Three Cushion Billiard Champion.

The contestants, besides the N.Y. regulars, included Vince Sbarbati, the 1976 N.J. State Champion, Tony Jerome from Cherry Hill, N.J., representing Cherry Hill Billiards, Sam Pascual owner and lastly your correspondent Milt Goldring, representing Hi-Cue, Elizabeth, N.J.

After drawing for the two preliminary flites of 6, games played to 35 pts., the 6 man round robin final was comprised of Cattrano (5-0), Garcia (4-1) and Hallon (3-2). Goldring, Calderon and Jerome were the casualties in flite "A". From flite "B" came Maloney (5-0), Waldman (3-2) and Sbarbati (3-2), where Hirsch, Sikorski and D'Amato were the victims. High point of the preliminaries was a 12 run by Jimmy Cattrano.

The games in the finals played the next day, Oct. 16, were to 16 pts. Jimmy Cattrano continued his

This was a very fine exhibition of championship billiards and credit goes to Carlos Hallon who put up a

The Second Front Page

THE NATIONAL BILLIARD NEWS

December, 1977

winning ways by defeating Waldman in 54 innings and Maloney in 48 innings. Meanwhile Carlos Hallon swept through his games without a defeat.

The game for the championship between Cattrano and Hallon seasawed back and forth. After 42 innings the score was tied at 39. By the 50th inning they were both at 44. Then the experienced Cattrano closed Hallon out and final score read Cattrano 50 - Hallon 44 in 55 innings. Cattrano went undefeated throughout the entire tournament.

great battle and was never really out of it. Let it be said here and now that claims that Cattrano wins tournaments only on his tables is just a lot of nonsense as his showing in this tournament proved he's got to be the man to beat no matter where he plays.

The final standing with prize money was as follows:

1. Jimmy Cattrano — \$280.00;
2. Carlos Hallon — \$175.00;
3. Bill Maloney — \$105.00;
4. Marvin Waldman — \$70.00;
5. Vince Sbarbati — \$42.00;
6. Nester Garcia — \$28.00.



Zzzzzz

Tournament play is not all fun and games. Players are on their feet for indeterminable amounts of time and the pressure takes its toll too. Here Tom Spencer catches a quick snooze between matches.

Bull Shots



By **BOB MULLEN**

Immediately after Eddie Robin won the Brandes Open in Milwaukee, he and Jose Luis Campos tangled in a head on match of 200 straight points, no blocks. The prize money, \$2,000.00, was put up by two anonymous billiard fans and Luis Campos took the match. It was a test of endurance as well as skill and with two such evenly

matched players it could have gone either way.

Just a thought to some of the pool players that the three cushion boys still play for the bread and not always the crumbs.

Bill Pooke of Calgary, Alberta in Canada, was in our locale (greater Detroit, Michigan) for the International Snooker Tournament and made a number of friends for himself and his chosen game. Bill uses a counter-balanced jointed cue with a weight placed just above the joint on the shaft, with a 10½ mm tip with a black ferrulle.

This congenial fellow stopped in my shop for a visit of over 6 hours, but took a break and went out for lunch at a local Hungarian restaurant. The town of Berkley, where my shop is located, is a small community just north of metro Detroit and peopled

by the average type individual. But the proprietors of this Hungarian eatery were not average since they had just obtained thier citizenship.

While Bill Pooke was sitting there waiting for his lunch, and waiting an uncomfortably long time, two policemen rushed in the door and confronted him. They insisted on looking at this strange leathertype case that was lying at his side.

The restaurant proprietors had been suspicious of this ever smiling fellow with the suspicious long case and had summoned the police. Needless to say, the error, obvious to you or I, was quickly acknowledged and apologies were in order, but Bill Pooke still paid for his late Hungarian lunch.

Pooke is an extremely interesting man and a student

of snooker. He spent some of his time at the International Snooker Tournament in Oak Park as a player and as a scorekeeper for the championship matches. Pooke also qualified as an official Snooker referee after passing the test given by Graham McDonald.

Big news about the Fischer Div. of Questor being bought out by Fuqua's Ebonite Division. The present plan is to move the Fischer operation from Missouri to Florida, home base of the Ebonite pool table manufacturing.

This past year has brought about some dramatic changes in the pool table manufacturing line-up. Brinktun, Frederick-Willys and Armac discontinued their individual operations nullifying the marketing of thousands of potential pool tables. It's getting to be like

the white mouse with the temporary position in a cancer testing lab.

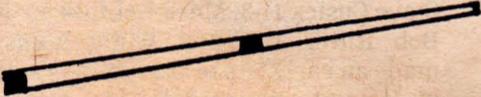
As promised, I went through the National Billiard News for the past 12 months and totaled the prize money given for tournaments in the U.S. I leafed through 8 issues and came up with a partial total of \$987,460 and that did not cover coin table tournaments or many of the tournaments that we have not received word about.

In discussion with a professional pollster, a man in the business of taking a segment of information and making a projection, I learned that the approximate total of prize monies presented to pool and billiard players in this country alone was well over \$2½ million.

I am going to accumulate

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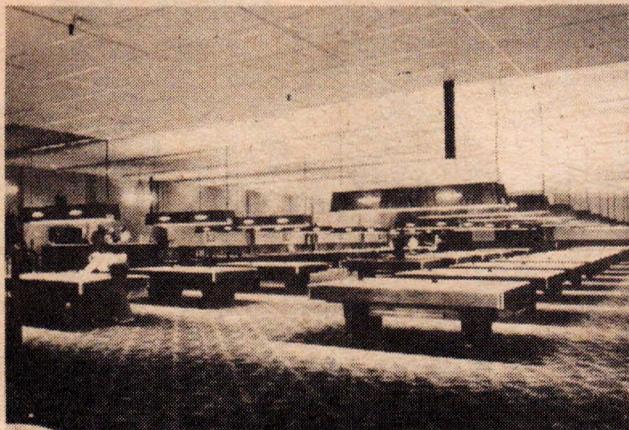
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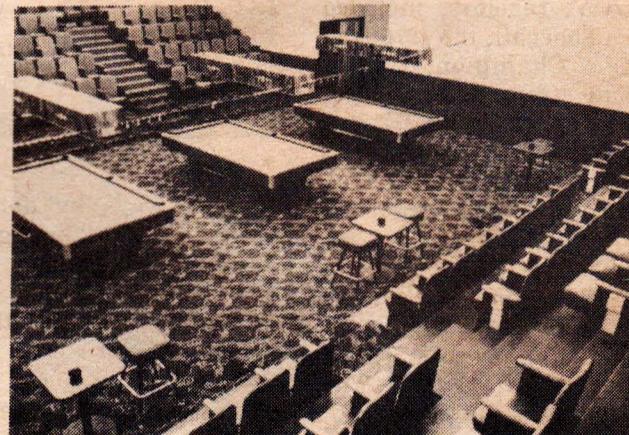
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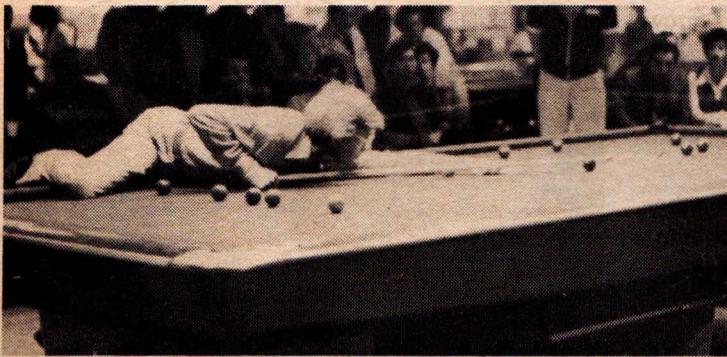
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Budge, Connelly tops in U.S. Open snooker



Eric Connelly, first U.S. Open Snooker Champion



Ervin Budge, winner of the International Division



Jim Hausman, left, of the International Snooker League, and Ray Abrams, sponsor of the first U.S. Open Snooker event

Early this year during the International Snooker League Tournament in England, the United States Snooker Control Council was born. After several years of meetings, correspondence, and study the United States received its sanction from the international body.

It seemed fitting to hold the first meeting of the U.S.S.C.C. at the U.S. tournament. Detroit was picked as the site as the Cushion N' Cue Recreation center in Oak

Park, owned by NBN Co-publisher Ray Abrams, had six (6) Canadian made Brunswick, 6 x 12, snooker tables. This may will be the largest bunch of 6 x 12's in the entire country.

The tournament would be completely new to the United States, played by English rules and using English made 2 one-sixteenths inch Super Crystalate balls.

The field was split into two groups, the Americans and the International players. At

the conclusion of the two open tournaments a playoff would be held between the two winners.

This format would allow the United States to rank its players for the first time based in order of finish and also produce an American winner.

Even though the format worked fairly well, it was perhaps a bit unfair to the foreign players who would like to play in both tournaments. Americans were allowed to play in the foreign side as it was felt by sponsors that the Americans would be no match for the stronger international players. This line of reasoning proved to be very wrong as the Americans really came to play.

Next year's format will be changed to allow the players from all countrys into the same field.

The tournament was action packed almost from the start as Gerry Kapchinsky, who many felt would win the international side, was beaten by Tom Kollins for the first major upset of the tournament. This gave an inkling of the things to come.

The caliber of play was fantastic by the players in both divisions and the spectators were treated to truly fine play throughout the weekend.

Eric Connelly, from Miami, Florida, became the first United States Open winner nipping ISL teammate, Tom Kollins on the black to edge out a victory in the final.

Kollins had really come to play and seemed to gain strength with every match. His approach and game never

Continued on Page 14



Tom Kollins, 2nd in the American Division

TAKE A LOOK AT THE WINNING LINE.

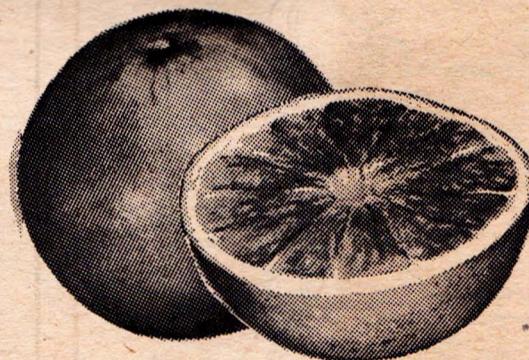


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A. G. Baker

Venzke's View from the bleachers

As the BCA's Statistics Committee Chairman (a title that really means "US Open Record Keeper"), I find myself at this time of the year completing the compilation of the up-dated stats I keep on all US Open play and players. This year the results are perhaps more interesting than usual.



By BRUCE VENZKE

The 1977 Open saw 27 individual records or tied (24 broken, 3 tied). The men's division, played for the first time with 16 players, accounted for eleven new marks, five of them created by virtue of the smaller-sized field.

Tom Jennings garnered all five records predicated on the 16-man field: most balls, 1235; most games, 8; most games won, 7; most innings, 165; and fewest innings by champion, 165.

Dallas West and Joe Balsis increased their joint record for most Opens played from 11 to 12, both having appeared in all Opens since the 1966 men's inaugural.

West jumped ahead of Luther Lassiter for the lead in career innings played, with a 983 total. (Balsis also moved up to 3rd here, with 959, only 18 behind Lassiter.)

The remaining four new men's records are all

Balsis', with three of them being up-dated marks of standards he held after the '76 Open: most games played, 77; most games won, 55; and most balls, 10,026 (making Joe the only man to have sunk over 10,000 balls in Open play).

And finally, Joe jumped ahead of Steve Mizerak for the top spot in career money winnings, now leading that category with \$27,625.

In all, of the 40 U.S. Open men's division records we keep, Joe Balsis holds (or co-holds) ten. No one has more, and for good reason: Broadway Joe is one of the all-time best.

But how about that other J.B. in that other division??!! 1977 was the year that Jean Balukas merely tied three existing records and set 13 other new ones. Ol' Mean Jean now holds (or co-holds) 17 women's division records (out of 37), including every single purely superlative record there is. Her onslaught on the record book in 1977 was astounding.

The one record that threatened to withstand her attack had stood firmly for 10 years: high run in the money — 40 by Dorothy Wise in 1967. But the women's division was only in it's second round when the 01' Meanie cracked off a solid 51 against Vicki Frechen. It's not exactly easy to crack that 50 barrier when playing 75-point matches.

Of course, the tournament wasn't even that old when J.B. set a new best game standard that might last for as long as there are U.S. Opens: 3 innings (75 points), against Belinda Campos in the first round. Jean merely ran 37, 15, 23-and-out.

Her championship match win also set a best-game record for 100-point games: 19 innings (versus Gloria Walker).

Such scoring also set a new BPI average record for a tournament: 4.71 (previous best was her own 3.54 of 1975). The next best BPI in this Open was Gloria Walker's 2.57. Quite a differential there.

Jean also naturally shattered the old mark for fewest innings by a champion (8-woman field), the 87 posted by Dorothy Wise. Balukas took just 69 innings to put the '77 championship away.

Two other Wise-held records that Jean wrenched away were those that were undoubtedly paramount in importance to her: most Open titles, and most consecutive Open titles: 6 in both cases.

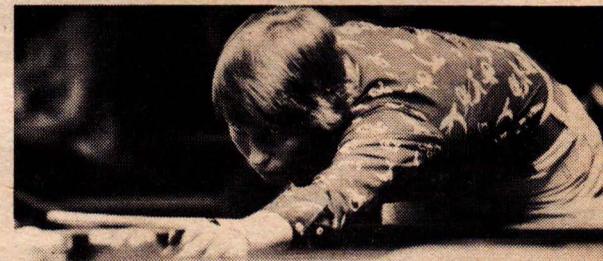
She also displaced Mrs. Wise as the best career winner (minimum 3 Opens or 10 games) by running her record to 35-6, for an amazing .854 winning percentage. Strong.

Almost as strong as Jean's new record for con-

secutive match victories; 29 straight, from 1972-1977. When you ponder that a bit, it's virtually unbelievable.

Jean climbed into the lead for career games won, also, tying Geraldine Titcomb with 35.

She improved her career balls-per-game average mark to 73.56.



Jean Balukas



Joe Balsis



Dallas West

She raised her career BPI average record to 2.51. And she lengthened her lead in career money earnings (\$12,800) to virtually 3 times her nearest rival's total (\$4,300 by Gerry Titcomb).

Add to all that her new record for high balls-per-game average, tournament, of 81.25, plus her tying Wise for the most high run awards, career, 4 and what do you have?

You have a statistical profile, in brief, of an excellence and dominance by Miss Jean Balukas that is unrivaled anywhere in professional sport. It's truly a pleasure to document such activity.

Oh, yes. There's one other key statistic. How old is she now?? That's the one that really boggles my mind!!

That's the last look from the bleachers for 1977. Best wishes to everyone for the Holidays and the New Year. Be sure to come back and join me up here next year... I'll save you a seat.

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Kollins' Kolumn

Things your mother never told you

The jump shot has been responsible for its fair share of arguments (or at least heated discussions) over a pool table. The rule book, however, is quite clear in this area as to what is legal and what is not. If the cue ball is struck above its horizontal center, causing it to jump or bounce, the shot is legal. It is illegal to scoop under the cue ball in order to jump over an object ball that has you stymied. The same rule applies to billiards, as well as pool. In snooker, all jump shots are illegal.

Since the jump shot can be a very useful tool in certain situations, you might like to try



By TOM KOLLINS

your hand at it while practicing. But until you become adept at it, you'd better do it only on your home table. Most room owners regard the jump shot with the same trepidation that they ordinarily reserve for the masse.

To make the cue ball jump, all you have to do is raise the butt end of your stick about a foot higher than the tip, and strike the ball above center with a moderately hard stroke. You will not be able to jump over an entire object ball, but you will be able to avoid hitting the edges of any ball that might be partially blocking your path. The object ball also bounces when you strike the cue ball in this manner, so that it too can be played into pockets that are not apparently available.

When you shoot a ball into a rail with a jump stroke, a number of things could happen. The ball might bounce off the cushion onto the floor. It might bounce off the cushion back onto the table. Or if you're having a particularly bad run of luck, it could bounce back and hit you in the nose. Practice is the only thing that will enable you to predict the result.

Now that you know what happens when you raise the butt end of the cue, it is much easier to understand why you have been instructed to keep the cue as level as possible on all ordinary shots. You want the cue ball to roll, not bounce, resulting in an action that is predictable. Be especially careful to hold your cue level when shooting hard such as on a break shot (you could jump off the table), or when cutting an object ball very thin (you could jump over the edge and miss the ball completely).

You can test your own jump stroke by placing the triangle on end at the head string, put your cue ball about eighteen inches from it, and try to go through the rack without knocking it over.

In no time at all you'll be giving exhibitions of your own.

World Series of Pool slated for February

The 1978 Invitational World Series of Pool will be held February 10th-19th at the Jack & Jill Cue Club in Arlington, Va. The following players have been invited to compete in the black tie round robin nine ball and straight pool tournament:

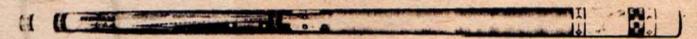
Defending champion Steve Mizerak, Jr., Irving Crane, Luther Lassiter, Jim Rempe, Larry Lisciotti, Mike Sigel

and Louie Roberts.

The winner of the tournament will receive, in addition to first place prize money, a gold signet ring engraved "1978 WORLD POOL CHAMPION".

For any additional information contact tournament director Bill "Weenie Beenie" Staton at the Jack & Jill Cue Club, 2707 S. Wakefield, Arlington, Virginia 22204.

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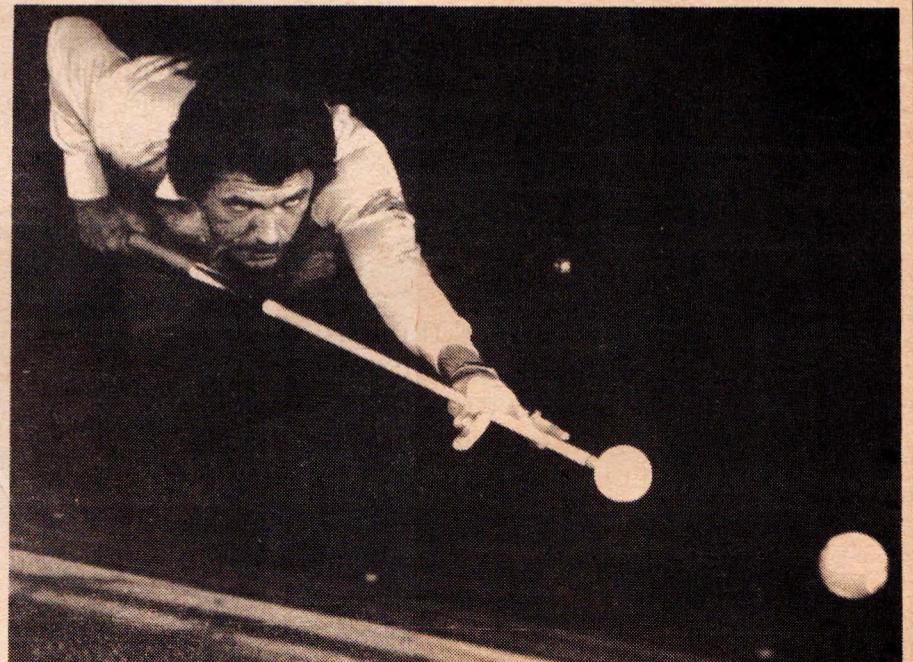
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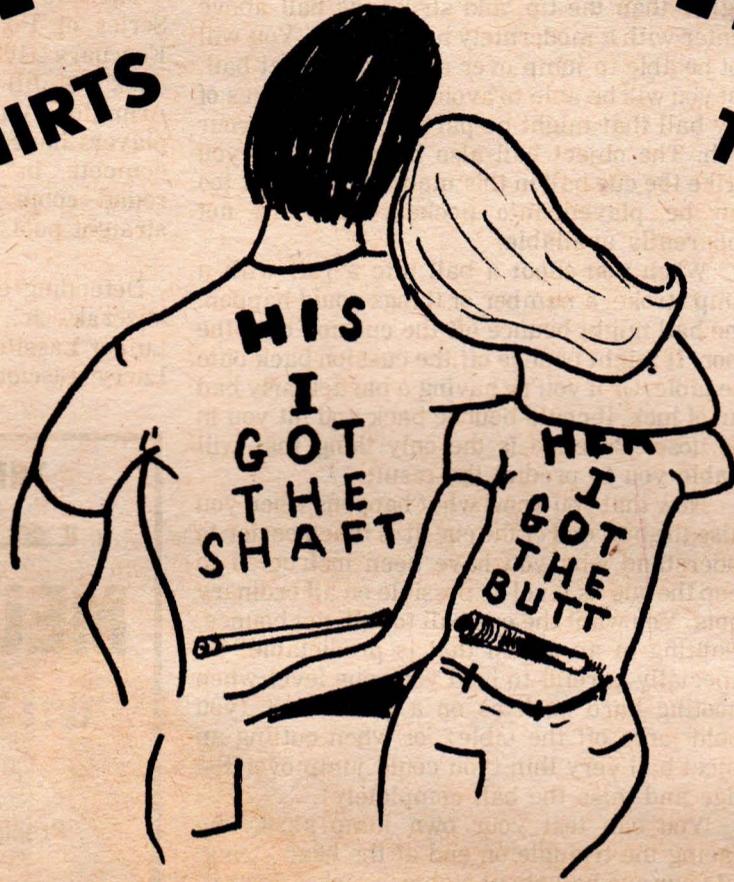
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Fats vs. 'Superstroke'



Outcome of the 'Match of the Century' comes as no surprise

October 22, 1977. In the ballroom of the New York Waldorf Astoria several hundred people have gathered to witness what has been billed as 'The Match of the Century.' Minnesota Fats and Bruce Christopher are going to play heads-up 8-ball for all the glory. Under the glaring lights of ABC's Wide World of Sports, the limber tongue of Howard Cosell, and the watchful eye of Willie Mosconi, Fatty polishes 'Superstroke' off, 9-6. So who didn't know that?

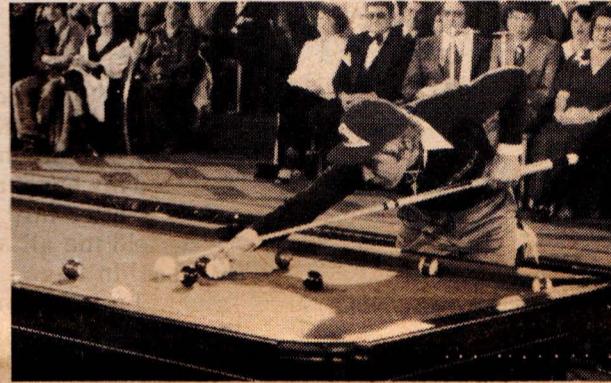


Photos by
Connie Falkiewicz

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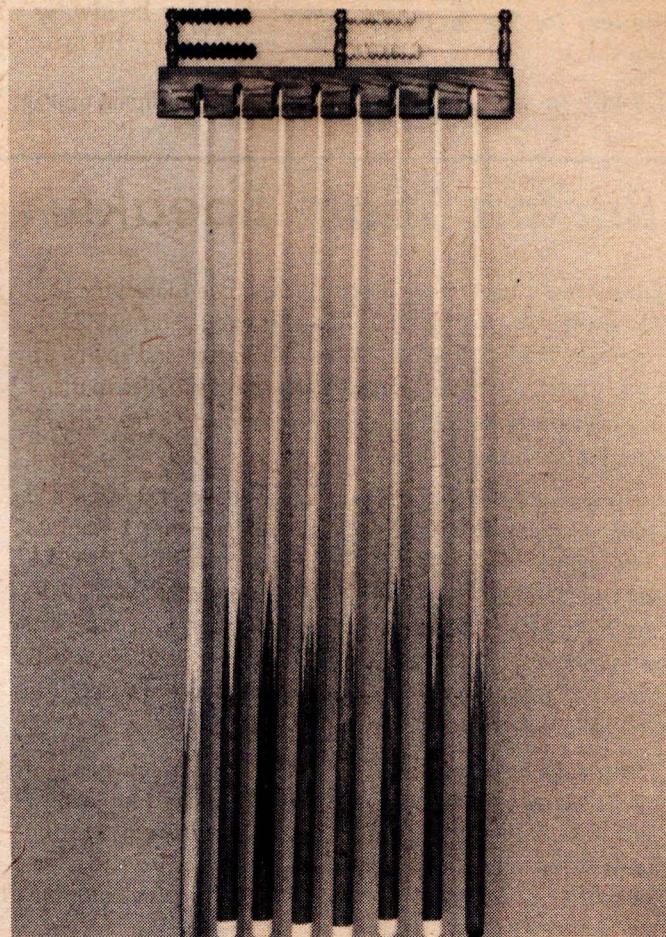
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Death ends Ernie Lager's last match

Reprinted from the Neptune City, New Jersey Press

By ED REITER
Press Staff Writer

NEPTUNE CITY —

Ernie Lager's long battle is over.

His five-year fight with cancer ended Wednesday when Lager, of 94 Riverview Ave., an Asbury Park businessman and professional pool player, died at Jersey Shore Medical Center, Neptune.

This was one match the 47-year-old Lager knew he couldn't win; he held off the disease for several years — but then, last December, it struck with greater fury than ever, and from that point on he never really had a shot.

Right to the end, though, he fought with all the strength his pain-wracked body could muster.

"He fought all the way — to the minute he died," his wife, Joan, said yesterday, her grief no less for the fact she had months to prepare.

And right to the end, his

greatest concern was not that he was dying, but how well his wife and five children would live when he was gone.

"The thing he wanted most," Mrs. Lager said, "was to see me get myself together and go on with my life. And I really think this is what kept him alive so long: I don't think he felt I was capable of getting by, so he fought for time to help me get prepared."

She feels she was ready when the end did come — and she thinks Ernie felt that way, too.

"The last thing I said to him Wednesday afternoon was, 'Ernie, are you OK? If you are, squeeze my hand.' He squeezed my hand, and just a moment afterward he died.

"He told me all along that he wouldn't go until he thought I was OK, and I think that squeeze told him I'd be all right. He died peacefully, knowing that I would be OK."

A. Ernest Lager was the name he was born with in Bayside, N.Y., but to those who knew him, he always was just plain Ernie. He spent his

Continued on Page 23

Burton Spain Speaks:

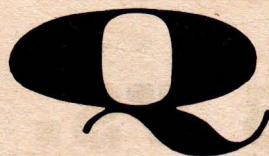
Since 1965 I have made 4-prong inlaid cue blanks for such top cue-makers as Frank Paradise, George Balabushka, Craig Petersen, Viking, Palmer, Dick Helmstetter and many others. I have also provided shafts and other supplies to many cue-makers. During these years I have made a few custom cues for local players only.

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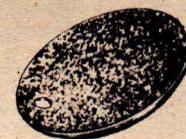
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U.S. Snooker Control Council looks to future

During the International Snooker Tournament and the U.S. Snooker Open there was a meeting of the minds responsible for the resurgence of championship snooker in the United States.

Executive Director Jim Hausman feels certain that this meeting was most successful as a step towards the Snooker Control Councils glowing future. The group is looking forward to increased interest and participation in the game of snooker throughout the States.

Snooker is a game which deserves to become a favorite of Americans as exposure to and knowledge of this intriguing and skillful game is slowly and carefully developed throughout the USA. Director Hausman is working on prospects of development and interested players and participants in council work in the Far West and the Mountain States.

You may contact him through the National Billiard News.



The board

U.S. Snooker Control Council: L to R — Jim Knisley, Ray Abrams, Eric Connelly, Connie Falkiewicz, Herb Lehmann, Conrad Burkman, Tom Kollins, Jim Hausman

Jack Spoerl sparkles in Wisconsin tournament

By BRUCE VENZKE

Jack Spoerl of Madison, shooting a steady game of nineball, won the West Allis Pool & Supply-BCW State championship qualifier held October 23 at Ebony Cue Billiards in Milwaukee.

Sanctioned by the Billiard Congress of Wisconsin, this 6th tour stop out of 10 monthly events drew 20 players to battle for the qualifying points that will determine the field for the BCW's Wisconsin Nineball Championships to be held in April, 1978.

There were four round

robin brackets of five players for the preliminaries, and Spoerl was the only undefeated shooter in the bracket play. Behind him in bracket no. 1 came this writer, surviving a double-playoff with Mark "Whoosh" Wilson and Don Brucker (both play-offs were 4-3). (Two top finishers in each bracket comprised the finalists for the single elimination races to 10.)

Bracket no. 2 was likewise a Madison-first, Milwaukee-second finish, as the smooth-stroking Jim Fitzpatrick won the bracket on points over Bill

Mielke, as they both went 3-1. Eliminated with 2-2 records

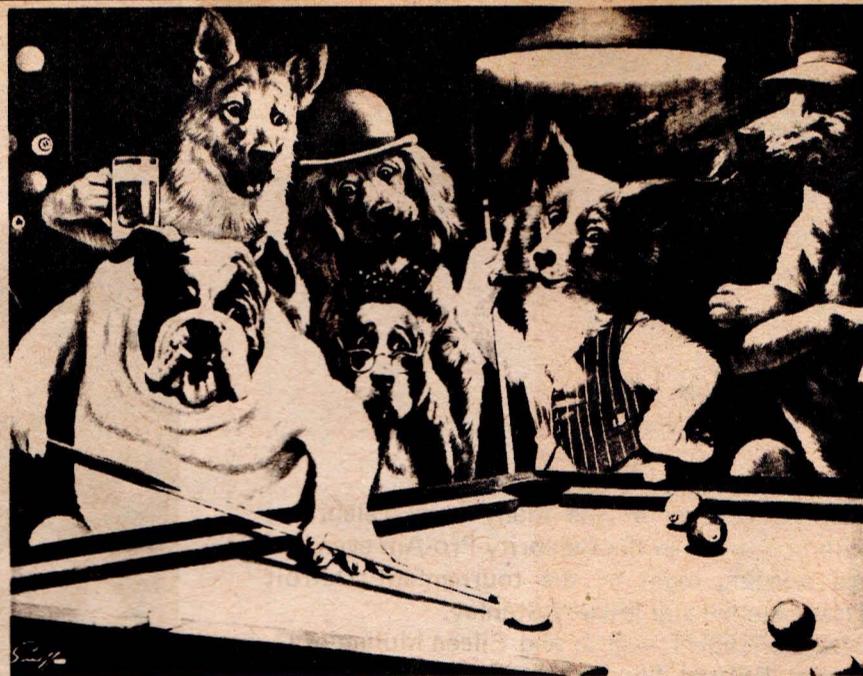
Continued on Page 15

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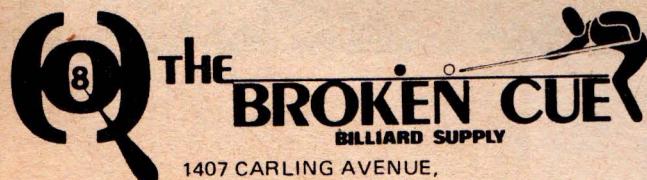
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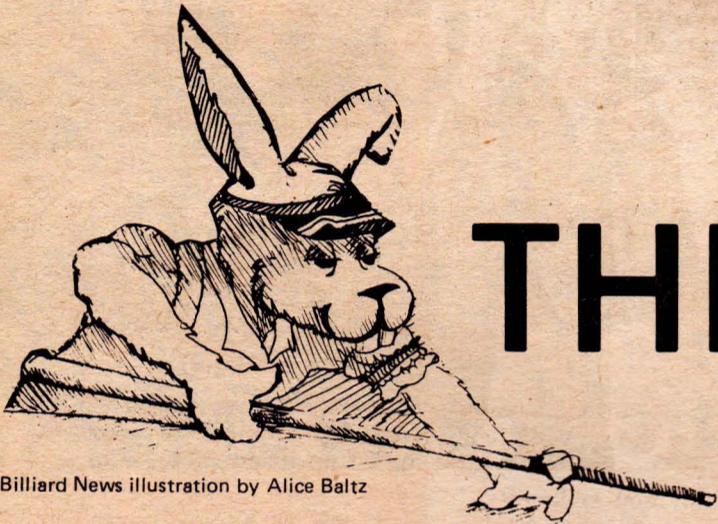
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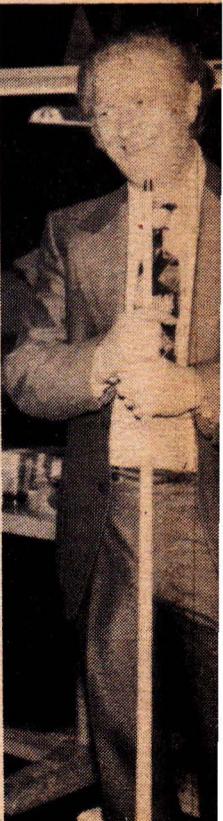
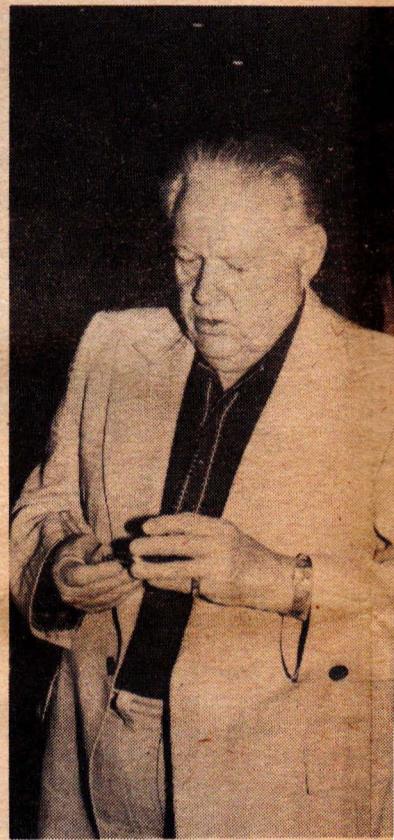
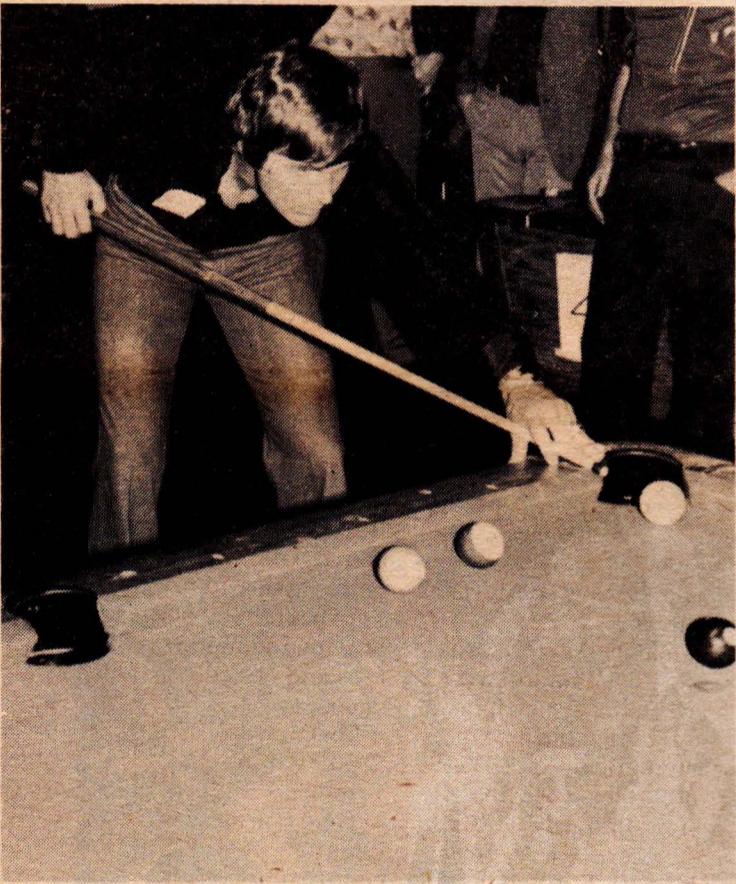


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Billiard News illustration by Alice Baltz

THE GREAT EASTE



ABOVE — One of the many local celebrities who competed in the Celebrity-Pro-Am event on the opening night of the tournament, Detroit Tiger baseball star Mickey Stanley.

ABOVE RIGHT — Bob and Eileen Mullen of Q-Master Billiard Supplies in Berkley, Michigan. The Mullen family initially proposed the idea of a pool tournament for charity to Easter Seals, and then worked double overtime to help put the tournament together.

ABOVE CENTER — Joyce Thomas, Special Events Chairperson for Easter Seals. Joyce was responsible for coordinating all the different facets of the event.

ABOVE FAR RIGHT — The one and only Minnesota Fats, who, for five days gave his time and talents for the benefit of Easter Seals.

Minnesota Fats is the man.

Fatty is one of the players that the public relates to and his popularity was never greater than during the Easter Seals Eight Ball Bash held at the Pontiac Silver Dome November 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th. The last count is not in yet but well over \$12,000.00 was raised for a very good cause.

Bob Talbert, a columnist for the Free Press and extremely popular in the state, was amazed at the popularity of the game. The first night featuring the celebrities in a single elimination eight ball tournament drew a packed house.

The fans and players alike were contributing monies to Easter Seals for the enjoyment of playing a game with

ER SEAL BILLIARD BASH

Fats was not alone, for his supporting cast included the many volunteer workers of Easter Seals, the pool players of Michigan and some great playing by Jim Christopher, Mike Sardelli, Cornbread Red, St. Louis Louis Roberts, Jim Reid, Vickie Frechen, Bernie Schwartz, Harry Soo, Chuck Tipton and Chuck Edson.

There was so much happening in four days that it will be difficult to record on these pages in the proper order of importance.

Easter Seals signed up 48 players in the "A" division from taverns, clubs and fraternal organizations. These players qualified through tournaments held in their respective play sites. Entry fee to this division was \$3.00. Prizes were given to all the players who qualified.

Easter Seals was able to accomplish this with assistance from many of the dealers of home and commercial billiard equipment in the greater Metropolitan Detroit area: Bel Air Pools, Triangle Pools, Viscount Pools, Saffron Billiard Supply, The Cushion and Cue Billiard Centers, Wolverine Wood Products, La Baron Sports and Billiards, and Q Master Billiards.

Through these dealers some of the manufacturers and distributors were contacted for contributions and many responded: Imperial Industries, Mali Co., Tweeten Fibre Co., D&R Industries, and the tables were contributed by Champion Billiards of Bay City, Michigan. It was a team effort.

The whirlwind hit with Fatty coming into town a day early, November 1st, to help with the promotion. Needless to say, in the field of promotion and public relations Minnesota Fats has no equal. In the short space of time (36 hours) prior to kick off of the Eight Ball Bash Fatty appeared on 5 radio programs, 4 TV shows and would cheerfully have knocked doors to insure the success of the project.

The first night was set aside as Celebrity Night with the presence of representatives from all of the media in town. Sports celebrities such as the Tigers' Mickey Stanley and Hall of Famer Dick "Night Train" Lane, members of the Detroit Lions, Lynn Boden, Craig Hertwig and Doug English joined into the fun.

The ladies of the press, TV and Radio, Robbie Timmons and Margaret Strom, played pool for the very first time in a tournament setting. The gentlemen of the press, TV and Radio were a bit more experienced and some showed a great deal of talent with the cue.

Minnesota Fats, Cornbread Red, and many of the celebrities. They were lined up to put their money up for a good cause.

It cost \$50 to play a game with Fatty and he was busy all night. A game with Cornbread Red and other celebs cost the donor \$20 and all contributions were gratefully accepted.

The last night of the tournament, after all the trophies were handed out, a charitable soul contributed \$100 to see Fats and Red play best out of three eight ball. The winner, a lot of crippled children.

Everything started that Celebrity night with a cocktail party for the press at the estate of Mike Glime, sponsored by the Strohs Brewery.

Mike has a billiard room, as everyone should, and Paul Gerni entertained everyone with his fancy shooting. Gerni also attended the Celebrity Event at the tournament, contributing his time for the cause.

It all started in the billiard room at the Glime home and it was a festival in pool for the Greater Detroit fans. What could be more successful than a tournament that drew record crowds, kept pool in the news media for 5 days, provided an entertaining event for the fans and raised a good sum for a great cause?

There were two big winners, the "pool game" and The Easter Seals Crippled Childrens Societies.

The tournament director for the event was Conrad Burkman, the coordinators were Ray Abrams and Bob Mullen. These names may be familiar to you as the publishers of the National Billiard News.

This had been a project we have been interested in for many years and through Easter Seals' Joyce Thomas we were given the opportunity to put some of our ideas into practice. True, there was some confusion to start with because of the lack of preparation time, but with the help of many kind people we were able to put this show on the road with more to come.

We have a commitment from the Stroh's Brewery for a minimum of \$15,000 for next year's Eight Ball Bash. We have the potential use of a hall for next year with over 10,000 square feet and we are planning on 4 days of tournaments for over 1000 players. Easter Seals will be working closely with the VFW, the Moose, American Legion, the Elks and many other fraternal organizations as well as



ABOVE — A happy James Christopher proudly displays the enormous trophy he earned for winning the Open Division of the tournament. Christopher also received \$750 for his victory.

LEFT — Billy 'Cornbread Red' Burge, one of the all time great players who donated his time for the charity event.

FAR LEFT — Dennis Geer of Drayton Plains, Michigan, plays a game of 8-Ball with Minnesota Fats. The going rate to play Fatty was a \$50 donation to Easter Seals, but Fats played this one on the house.

Reid

Continued from Page 3

poll" the most exciting of the event. See-sawing back and forth, each executing unbelievable shots, Hubbard tied up the match 10-10 with a 9-Ball on the break. In the final rack, Hubbard let Mataya back to the table and Mataya looked unbeatable. After pocketing three seemingly impossible shots, the 5 ball hung on a long cut off the end rail and Hubbard was out from there.

Hubbart finally succumbed to

Beilfuss by a score of 11-8. to put Beilfuss in the finals against Reid.

In the finals, Reid operated on the principle that if you don't let your opponent have a shot, you can't lose, and ended the tournament undefeated with an 11-4 win over Beilfuss.

As a side event for the night owls, there was a mini-midnight single-elimination tournament. This proved a huge success with a full field of 32 players both nights. Friday night's tourney was won by Tom Spencer of

Des Plaines, Illinois and Saturday night first place went to Blaine Sell of Grand Rapids, MI.

On hand exhibiting their wares were Bill Stroud of Joss West Cues; Larry Hubbart with his Hubbart Originals; Willie Munson of Willie's Beads; and Joe Farhat's display of Viking Cues.

Final standings are as follows:

1st—Jimmy Reid, \$1,000; 2nd—Mark Beilfuss, 600; 3rd—Larry Hubbart, 400; 4th—Jim Mataya, 300; 5th—Danna Hallet, 200; 6th—Louie Roberts, 100.

Snooker

Continued from Page 5

varied. Players in the know credit his finish with this fact.

Herb Lehmann ended up third in a tie with hometown Jimmy Reid. Herb, who had been playing very well throughout, ended up on the short end of his match with Kollins, perhaps because of the disruption caused by Australian, Richard Thacwray, who showed possibly the worst sportsmanship ever witnessed at a tournament.

Local favorite Jimmy Reid did very well converting to the big 6 x 12 and finished in a tie for third place with Herb Lehmann. Reid will be a definite threat in the 1978 tournament.

The International side was captured by another ISL player, Erwin Budge, of the Broken Cue Billiard Supply in Ottawa. Budge, playing his usual strong game, edged out Mario Morra for the International title.

Windsorite, Bob Pare and American Tom Kollins finished in a tie for third. Kollins finished in the strong international field was a welcome surprise.

Canadian, Mario Morra took tourney hi break money put up by Connie Falkiewicz. Sponsors put up a trophy for the playoff between the American winner, Eric Con-

nelly and International winner Erwin Budge. Rick Harrigan Sr. came to the rescue and shelled out \$100.00 for the winner. Young Rick Jr. officiated the match just to make sure everything was on

the up and up.

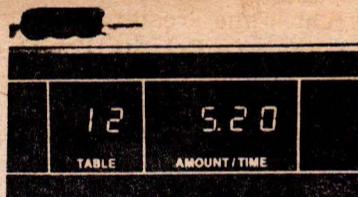
Young Harrigan is the youngest licensed referee in Canada and did a fantastic job of handling the matches.

The fans were treated to some of the finest snooker

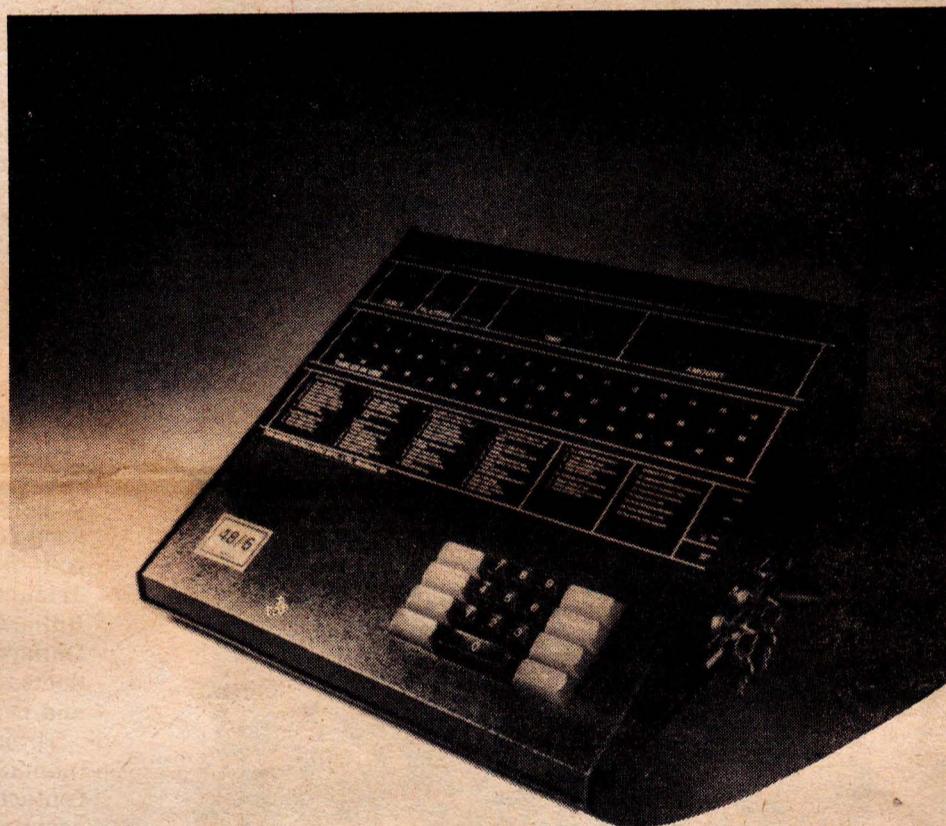
seen anywhere during the playoff as Connelly came from a 2.0 deficit to win the match four frames to three. Both players were superb in their shot selection and their execution. A real treat.

After the match the winner and the loser along with the tournament promoter adjured to the Hotel lounge for a victory drink. The loser bought. Have you ever seen that in a pool tournament?

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Spoerl sparkles

Continued from Page 11

here were Kenosha's **Ron Schneider** and Milwaukee veteran **Willie Munson**.

The no. 3 bracket's top two spots were taken in the same manner as no. 2's (3-1 records) by **Terry Romine**, currently the tour's steadiest player with four straight finishes in the top eight, and **Craig Powers**, who played an exceptional brand of fine nineball all day.

Chuck Olla, the only two-time winner on the tour, took the top spot in bracket no. 4, losing only one match to first time tour player **Jim Karamanis** by 7-4. The other finals' slot went to Green Bay's **Malcom Beu** after he triumphed over Karamanis and **Tom Pritchard** in a double-playoff, taking both playoffs by narrow 4-3 margins.

Tournament Director **Dave Batchelor** gave the eight finalists an hour's break for dinner and then drew them onto the single elimination board. At 7:00 p.m., the finals were underway.

Spoerl met Romine in their first pairing, and neither seemed at their best, as Spoerl got by Romine with a 10-7 victory. But it seemed to serve as a perfect warm-up

for Spoerl as he was sharp in his next match, a 10-3 victory over Fitzpatrick. Fitz had done exactly the same to Beu in their first round match. So Spoerl was in the finals.

Power met Venzke in the first round, and continued his fine play with an easy 10-4 win. At the same time, Olla emerged from a tough struggle with Mielke as the victor of a 10-8 decision. But the score was now to be reversed on Olla, as it had with Fitz, and Powers took a very nicely played 10-8 win from Olla to make the final match with Spoerl.

The difference in the final set appeared to be a matter of tournament pressure, and Spoerl's greater experience was probably the deciding factor.

Power's sharpness seemed to lose a bit of it's edge in the crucial situations that often seem to swing a match one way or the other, and after a couple such critical junctures, the momentum clearly swung in Spoerl's favor.

He took quick advantage to take home a 10-4 victory and his first championship. A well-deserved runner-up finish for Powers, with Fitzpatrick taking 3rd with a 4-1 playoff win over Olla.

The money winners and their qualifying points:

1. Jack Spoerl, (17) \$200;
2. Craig Powers, (13) \$110;
3. Jim Fitzpatrick, (10) \$60;
4. Chuck Olla, (8) \$30;
5. Bill Mielke, (6) \$25;
6. Terry Romine, (6) \$25;
7. Bruce Venzke, (6) \$25;
8. Malcom Beu, (6) \$25.

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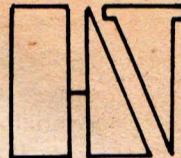
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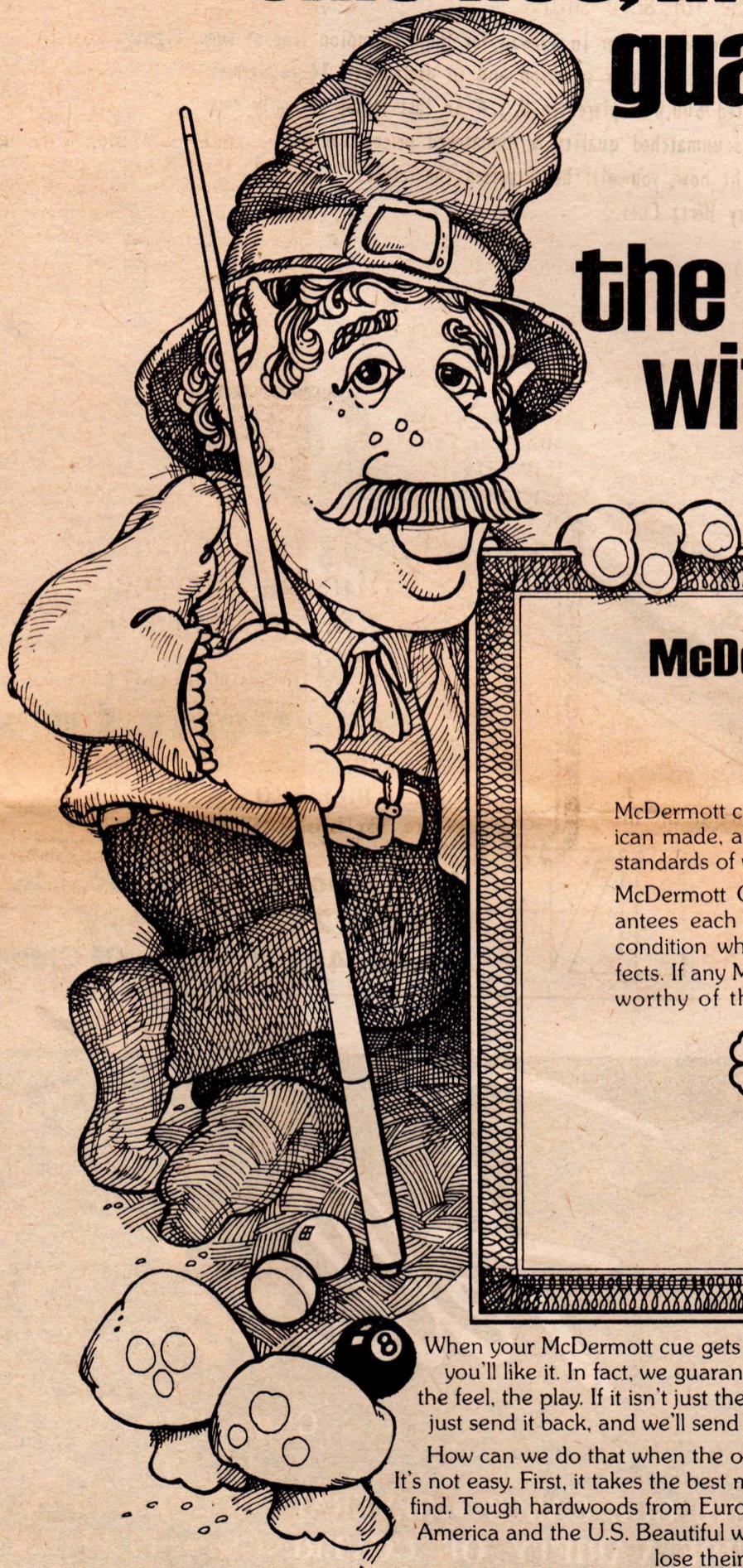
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Bash

Continued from Page 13

taverns where qualifying tournaments will take place.

The pilot tournament that was held in November, 1977 should be the shape of things to come and could possibly be the way to go all over pool land. Joyce Thomas has worked diligently for the past few years endeavoring to put this project into being and has never picked

up a cue stick. That's faith.

Preparations for November, '78's Eight Ball bash will being March 1st, 1978.

Since everyone connected with the Eight Ball Bash won and some won a little more we should mention the take homes.

Jim Christopher came in first in the Open with a \$750 pick up with Marvelous Mark Beilfuss 2nd, Tom Kollins 3rd and Chuck Edson 4th. High spot in the open was the play by Michigan's pretty Vickie Frechen with a fifth place finish.

Mark Beilfuss and dad Ron, of Grand Rapids, fresh from a victory over Luther Lassiter in Virginia were robbed their belongings the first night they were here but stayed to finish.

A most remarkable young man, Mark Beilfuss, with a great future in

pool. We predict that he will be world champion in less than three years.

The Tavern and Club Division of the Eight Ball Bash was won by Mike Sardelli with Chuck Tipton coming in 2nd. There were many other winners and a high degree of sportsmanship showed itself constantly throughout the games.

The last night of the tourneys featured the play-offs and the charitable match games with donors to Easter Seals. The microphone was handled by Ray Abrams for that night and he introduced Fatty with, words to this effect. "Many people give to charitable causes their money, time, and themselves but this man (Minnesota Fats) makes his living doing what he has done for Easter Seals this week. It takes a special kind of man to contribute what puts the bread on the table.

here is a special kind of man, Rudolph Wonderone, Minnesota Fats."

Editors Note: Fats has already made arrangements to come back next year to do the same thing. Only in 1978 Fatty wants to come in a couple of days ahead of time. National Easter Seals is talking of making this a National Project and Minnesota Fats the Honorary National Chairman.

Paul Secan was the chief referee of the event and volunteered his aid on very short notice. Paul represents the Veterans of Foreign Wars as did all the men who helped him with a tremendous task. VFW and Paul supplied a total of 80 men working 378 hours and they drove a total of 2760 miles to get the job done. A special group of men who were there when needed and have volunteered to supply any number of people for next year.

Mullen

Continued from Page 4

more information and then will put it in our computer for a more accurate figure. Remember that old bromide used so often by the media, "To err is human and so is blaming it on a computer."

The Allegedly Segment... Trouble in PPPA and a flight from the fold by Champion Steve Mizerak.

At a meeting of the PPPA in October there allegedly was a discussion concerning Barry Berman's 9 Ball Tournament in Norfolk the early part of November. It seems that the prize fund was not to the liking of the majority of the PPPA board and they were discussing the restricting of the player

members of their organization from participating.

Mizerak allegedly concluded that this was not the road to take and when his opinion was called for, stated just that. After all the smoke cleared Steve allegedly resigned his position on the board and may resign from the organization.

There will be a little different situation in the Mizerak split than in the Jennings fiasco.

No one can say that the PPPA is wrong in their aims and goals for the player and the game but perhaps their methods of attaining those goals were a bit inconsiderate of the total picture. There are many pool promoters who are unselfish and overly generous in their prize money and expenses, just as there are many dealers and manufacturers who contribute mightily to the cause, and

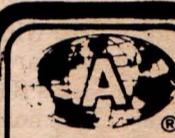
there should be some consideration for those people.

Not everything is black or white. There are a number of shades of gray in between that are acceptable to one and all.

Without flexibility any organization of this sort will die.

Dogmatic attitudes and an unchanging destructive policy towards the present poor conditions of the pool game may not be the best set of circumstances for the players, but until changes are brought about with funds supplied from outside the industry sources, it's the only game in town.

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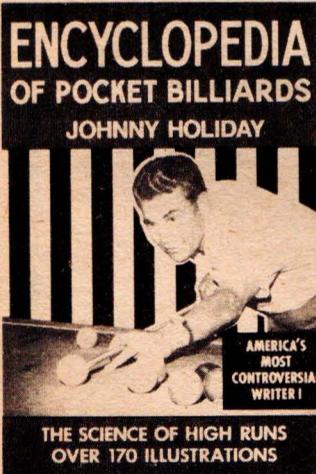
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Ronayne, Goepfel first in Milwaukee 9-ball events

By KATHY COLLARD

(MILWAUKEE) —

With the help of Terry Romine's bi-weekly tournaments, Milwaukee may well become the nine-ball capitol of the world.

As a part of his tournament series, on October 23 Romine's High Pockets housed a women's nine-ball tournament which was won by Debbie Ronayne.

A Milwaukee native, Ronayne is, in the opinion of many, the top woman player west of Brooklyn, or at least Cincinnati. This is in spite of the fact that her tournament finishes have not been as high as could be expected.

An important factor of Ronayne's game is that, for a power-to-pound ratio, she must have the strongest break around for her size. This and her all-around aggressive style go a long way to paralyze any would be opponent.

In the final match, Ronayne defeated Kathy Collard (Madison), the current Wisconsin State Women's Champion, by a score of 8-3. In the semi-finals, Ronayne defeated Ruth Dombrowski (Milwaukee).

Collard, in the semi-finals, defeated Orlana Schulz (Osh-

kosh), by an 8-1 margin. Schultz finished in 3rd place by winning the 3rd-4th playoff with Drombrowski.

On November 6, Dick Goepfel of Milwaukee won the "Class B" nine-ball tournament conducted by Romine's. Goepfel had, just weeks before on October 9, won Romine's "Class C" tournament and was forever barred from future class C competition by his victory.

Though Wisconsin's finest, like Willie Munson and Randy Lamar, are not allowed in the class B tournaments, Goepfel was not predicted as an early favorite by tournament director Dan McCann. However, the two particular favorites named by McCann were defeated by Goepfel. In the finals, it was Goepfel over Tom Pritchard (Milwaukee) by a score of 11-7; and in the semi-finals, Goepfel downed Craig Powers (Milwaukee) with an 11-8 score.

WOMEN'S — 1. Debbie Ronayne, \$100; 2. Kathy Collard, 70; 3. Orlana Schulz, 30; 4. Ruth Dombrowski, 20.

CLASS B — 1. Dick Goepfel, \$180; 2. Tom Pritchard, 100; 3. Craig Powers, 70; 4. Greg Ebert, 50; 5. Ned Mohr, 6. Wally Paetow, 20; 7. Bob Beyer, 20; 8. Larry Tenor, 20.



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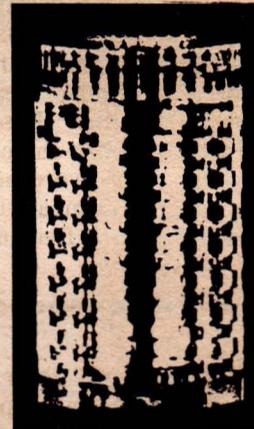
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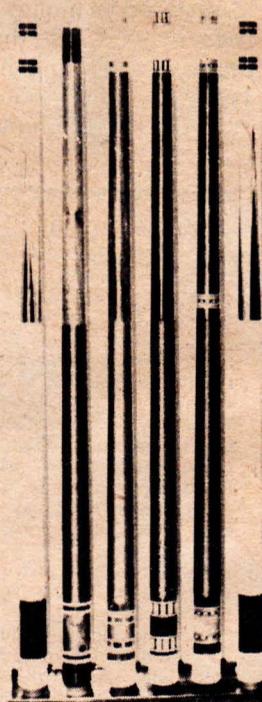
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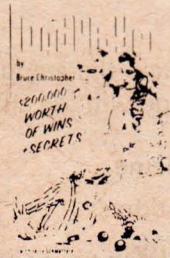
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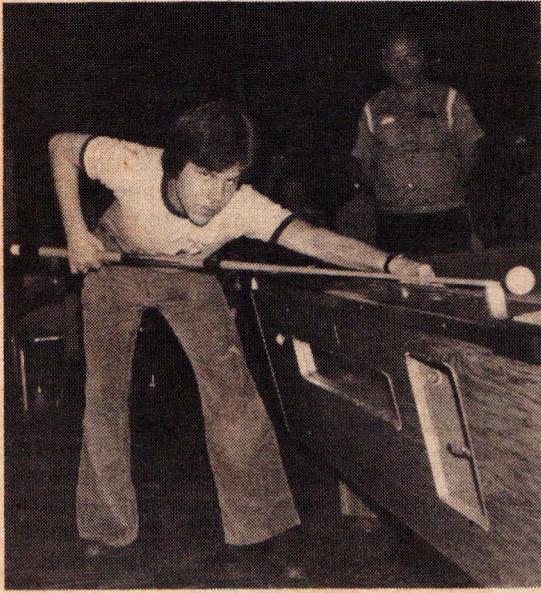
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Mark Beilfuss displays the form that wins tournaments . . .

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Aside from the fact that Mark Beilfuss has a '75 Monza and plans to treat himself to a brand new Corvette once the snow melts, and aside from the fact that he's promised a fee of at least \$500 simply for flying into town for the weekend, and

aside from the fact that he's acknowledged to be the finest young pool player known to humans, we have just another 17-year-old high school senior trying to get by.

Beilfuss has been furnished

Continued on Page 21



. . . and collects the 1st Place trophy from promoter Denton Gibbs, Jr.

Beilfuss bests Lassiter in challenge match

By DENTON A. GIBBS JR.

Young Mark Beilfuss and veteran Luther "Wimpy" Lassiter met in a three day 700 point match at Guys & Gals Family Billiards in Virginia Beach, Virginia, last month (catchup 14.1 & 9 ball). There were five sessions, each beginning with a race to ten in nine ball and 130 points or more of straight pool (catchup). The players were playing for \$1000 plus a trophy to the winner and the loser received \$500.

MATCH NO. 1—Friday night Oct. 28, 7:15 p.m.

Cueball Kelly has the crowd amazed with his vast array of trick and fancy shots. Kelly goes over last minute details with the players and wishes them good luck. The players are announced and the crowd is anxious to get under way.

The players lag with Beilfuss winning the lag for the nine ball match.

Beilfuss breaks the balls, pocketing none and Lassiter comes out stroking. Taking the first four games, Wimpy leads four to zip.

Young Beilfuss comes back and takes the next three. Lassiter wins one and the Jr. champ, playing very well, takes the next four and leads 7 to 5.

Lassiter making some tough shots ties the score at 7 apiece. The Michigan lad comes right back with three straight to win the first nine ball session.

Now the 14.1. The winning player has to reach 140.

Lassiter loses the lag and breaks. Beilfuss misses his first shot. Wimpy runs a very smooth 46 before missing. Mark comes back with a run of 25 and misses, closing the gap to 46-25. Lassiter misses a long shot, which proves to be costly, as Beilfuss gets off a near perfect 84. This was the

high run of the evening.

Wimpy puts together a run of 20 and hangs one. Beilfuss closes out the evening with a run of 21 and out. The nine ball score is added to the 14.1 and Beilfuss leads 140-73.

The crowd is now convinced this lad can play. Wimpy senses that this is going to be a tough three days.

MATCH NO. 2—Saturday afternoon Oct. 29, 2:15 p.m.

Cueball Kelly is at his best as he entertains the crowd with his shots and conversation. Kelly calls for the lag and we're back again. The winner of this session must go to 280 points.

Beilfuss wins the lag and Wimpy quickly takes the first 2 games of 9 ball. Mark ties it up. Lassiter wins 1 but Beilfuss notches the next 3. Wimpy comes back and reels off 5 straight to lead 8-5.

They swap the next 2 and its 9-6. Beilfuss narrows it 9-8. Lassiter runs out the last

game to win this nine ball session 10-8. This score is added to the previous total and Beilfuss leads 148-83.

For Wimpy its a long way to 280.

During this afternoon match Lassiter puts on a brilliant offensive and defensive exhibition. Lassiter opens with a safety completed and Beilfuss misses a long shot. Wimpy manages a 16 and gets out of position and misses a cut shot. Mark comes back with his high run of the day, a 36 and scratches.

Lassiter runs 19 and takes an intentional foul. The Michigan champ pockets 2 and misses. The former world champ puts together runs of 13, 5, 26, 24 and a match high run of 57. Beilfuss continues to play safeties and Lassiter, making some amazing shots, continues to pocket balls. The Carolina veteran closes out

the afternoon with a 21 and out unfinished.

Lassiter's experience has clearly out maneuvered young Beilfuss this afternoon, outscoring him 207 to 53. Wimpy leads the match 280-193.

MATCH NO. 3—Saturday night Oct. 29, 7:15 p.m.

Beilfuss wins the lag but, Lassiter takes the first game. They swap games with Wimpy leading after five, 3-2.

Beilfuss comes on to take 3 in a row and move ahead 5-3. The former nine ball king from Elizabeth City, playing like the Wimpy of past days, takes seven straight, running the last four racks to take the nine ball 10-5. He now leads going into the straight pool 290-198.

This evening match will end when one player reaches 420.

"The players lag and Lassiter wins one of his two lags of the matches. Beilfuss

completes the safety. Lassiter pockets two and scratches. Little did he realize how costly that foul would be. Beilfuss begins to pocket balls, rack after rack. The run reaches 50.

Beilfuss is playing flawlessly and the crowd is excited. The run reaches 112 before he misses. A brilliant display of skill.

Wimpy comments "he plays break shots like Mosconi, perfect."

Lassiter, up after a long sit, scores 13 and hangs one. The score is now Beilfuss 310-Lassiter 303.

Beilfuss takes up where he left off and puts on another spectacular performance, pocketing rack after rack with perfect position. An unfinished run of 110 and out.

Back to back 100's by a 17 yr. old high school student. This truly showed what

Continued on Page 20

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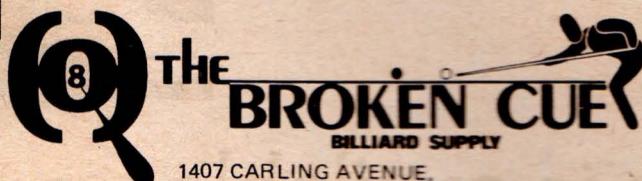
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Beilfuss

Continued from Page 19

Mark Beilfuss is made of, coming back from a sound beating the match before. Roland Beilfuss, Mark's father, is in the stands smiling proudly. Mark has outscored Lassiter in this session 227-23 and taken a commanding lead of 420-303.

MATCH NO. 4 — Sunday afternoon Oct. 30, 2:15 p.m. (Semi-Finals) to 560 points

The players lag and Beilfuss breaks. He takes the first two and Lassiter comes back to win the next three. Mark matches that with three straight. Lassiter not to be outdone reels off five in a row and leads 8-5.

The players split the last four giving Wimpy the semi-final nine ball session 10 to 7.

Beilfuss now leads 427-313.

Going into the next to last round of straight pool, Lassiter will have to contain Beilfuss to stay in contention.

Lassiter loses the lag and completes a safety. The Michigan champ runs 13 and scratches. Lassiter scores a 17, 7 and a 30. Beilfuss playing very steady puts together runs of 33, 42 and a match ending 45 and out. Lassiter trailing by 194 balls seems to be in an impossible position. The score, Beilfuss 560-366.

MATCH NO. 5 — Sunday night Oct. 30, 7:15 p.m. (finals) to 700 points

Lassiter wins his second lag of the matches. He breaks and runs to the five and misses. Beilfuss runs out to take the first game.

They trade games through four. The Jr. champ picks up 3 games and Lassiter takes 2 to trail 4-5. They split the next 4 and tie up at 8 games apiece. Beilfuss takes the next 2 to win the final nine ball session 10-8.

The nine ball scores, which were added to the 14.1 scores, favored Lassiter 47-38. Going into the final session of straight pool, Beilfuss leads 570 to 374. A very comfortable lead.

They must go to 700 points. Lassiter loses the lag and completes a safety. Beilfuss pockets 13 and scratches.

Wimpy takes an intentional foul.

Mark completes a safety. Lassiter pockets two and safes. They trade safeties for two innings until Lassiter gets what could be a hanger, rares back and fires it in.

Lassiter, looking like the old Wimpy, continues to pocket balls and Kelly announces "lets hear it for fifty." Wimpy is playing very well, pocketing balls with ease.

Kelly echo's "let's hear it for 100." The score Beilfuss 596-475. Lassiter is still in the match.

Scoring until the run reaches 137, Lassiter misses a very makable shot. The crowd gives a thunderous ovation for a great pressure run. Beilfuss is up immediately but can pocket but 1 and scratches.

Lassiter takes an intentional foul Beilfuss completes a safety. They trade safeties for four innings. Beilfuss has a tough shot the length of the table.

He pockets it and gets off a run of 37 and misses. Wimpy, still hanging on, runs 32 and scratches. Beilfuss, sensing victory, runs a perfect 28 and misses. Lassiter, trying desperately to pull it out, comes back with a 43 and gets sewed up and takes a foul. Beilfuss scores 7 and a miscue.

Lassiter takes another foul, Beilfuss takes his second. Lassiter sensing a trap takes his third.

Lassiter breaks and trails 665-571. Mark scores 3. The pressure is building.

Lassiter manages 9 and a safe. Beilfuss picks off 3 more. Lassiter comes back

with a 16 and a intentional foul. The Jr. champ takes a foul, Wimpy another, three in a row and breaks again

Young Beilfuss ekes out 3 and misses. Lassiter, not giving up, runs 20 and misses. Beilfuss comes to the table, the balls laying badly, and can pocket only 1 before missing a hanger.

Lassiter, with a 14 closes the gap to 61 balls. Both players are feeling the pressure.

The Michigan champ scores 7 gets sewed up and misses. Lassiter up quickly pockets 15 and hangs up a easy one from the left hand. The score 680-627.

Beilfuss, knowing that he might not get another chance, settles down and runs a final 20 to win the match. Final score Beilfuss 700-Lassiter 627.

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Whiz

Continued from Page 19

with two airline tickets — one for his sister and another for himself — and a few minutes after 9 o'clock tonight he's supposed to land at Norfolk International. His parents will follow tomorrow by car from their home outside of Grand Rapids, Mich., because mother doesn't like to fly but wants to see her 17-year-old in the spotlight.

Beilfuss and his family will stay at the Beach at some hotel with a kitchen and the works, courtesy of Denton Gibbs, who owns a billiard supply on Virginia Beach Boulevard and a billiard room next door. Which is where, beginning Friday night at 7:30, Beilfuss will play a weekend match with Wimpy Lassiter, a Hall of Famer quite a few decades past 17 who swears he's gonna beat this young kid.

"You know what I think," Beilfuss says with utmost confidence, as if Wimpy's dreaming. "This game is all psyche. All psyche."

The match, which will continue with freebie sessions at 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday at Guys and Gals Family Billiards, will furnish the winner with \$1,000 and the loser \$500 for his troubles.

Which, in a romantic sense to a 17-year-old's mode of

thought, ain't a bad way to pass the time. Beilfuss has been in 10 tournaments this year, won eight, and is putting together a nice bank account with enough left over for frivolous wants.

"I'm storing money away," says Beilfuss, whose father owns a tool and die factory in Wyoming, a suburb of Grand Rapids. "If a person can have a house and a car paid for, I figure he's got the world by the tail.

"I've given some money to my church. About five hundred dollars. I'm saving up a lot, though I bought that Monza this summer. Gets me around. Good on gas. Soon as the snow clears, I'm gonna get a 'vette."

He goes to school until 1 p.m., then is supposed to work for his father the other half a day. He has a \$2,500 tournament table in the family basement, two tables past the one he learned on when he was 11.

Beilfuss' grandfather saw the kid had a nice, natural stroke and as a pool player of some note himself, grandfather dragged over an aging, Depression-era table on which he taught grandson sundry fine points.

Grandson caught on. Beilfuss has been in tournaments since he was 11. He was the youngest player to ever qualify for the U.S. Open when he was 14 and finished 22nd. At age 15 he finished ninth, at age 16 he was sixth, and this year he finished eighth.

"The only reason this kid doesn't get as much publicity as many of the other players is because he's still in school

and can only play on week-ends," says Gibbs, who saw Beilfuss play three straight years in the U.S. Open and figured importing the young man would be natural business hype. "This kid can play with the best. I've seen it.

He's already taken money from some of the best. "The most I won was \$8,000 from some guys in a grudge match in St. Louis," Beilfuss says. "The most I've lost? To tell you the truth, I don't lose too much. Maybe a couple hundred if you add it all up. If you want to make money in this sport, you can't be dumb.

"You heard of St. Louie Louie? He came to Grand Rapids to play me. I beat him. I don't hustle. I gamble heads-up. That's when a guy knows who you are and you have to play beyond your natural speed. I like that.

"There's really not too much my parents can say. It's something I like to do. If they asked me to quit they'd be asking me to give up a part of my life."

Beilfuss, won't be 18 until Feb. 17, has already been accepted at the University of Miami. He plans to major in business administration and definitely find time for a cue ball.

"I'll play pool until it's not fun any longer," he says. "I'm going to college. I don't

want to get to the point where I'm eating hamburgers and drinking Cokes. I want something steady."

He is already committed to play in an exhibition at a shopping mall in Dearborn the second weekend of November, he has another job the following week in Pontiac, and around Thanksgiving intends to make the rounds in Florida.

"I have friends down there who've set up work for me," Beilfuss says. "I'll be in St. Petersburg, Tampa, Ft. Lauderdale. I don't even need an agent. People know who I am. They just give me a call and ask me if I want to show up somewhere.

"I know the older guys don't like playing me. When I was fourteen or fifteen they started calling me The Kid. I'd show up and I could hear them saying 'it's The Kid again.'"

"I was playing in a tournament a few years ago in Indianapolis and Alan Hopkins (the current world straight pool champion) was upset. I heard him make a remark that they shouldn't let kids play. He was shook up. He was serious. He wanted me out of that tournament.

"The older guys try to hide it all and not show their personal feelings, but you can tell they don't like playing a kid."

After this weekend's work, Beilfuss will fly back to Michigan Monday, in time for Halloween, he notes "I'll be out of school on Friday and Monday," he says "I have a 3.8. The teachers aren't going to flunk me for missing two days, do you think?"

"I hear gossip around school. They call me the pool shark. They talk, but I don't care. I don't want to take their babysitting money."

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Lager

Continued from Page 10

early years in Bayside, then moved with his family to Asbury Park just in time to graduate from the city high school.

He started playing pool at the age of 15, shooting for pennies with a buddy at the Shore Area YMCA in Asbury Park. And before too long he was one of the top players in the area. He never won any major championships at the national level, but he was good enough to compete in some of the biggest tournaments — including the 1976 World Open Pocket Billiard Championship at Asbury Park's Convention Hall, a prestigious event which came to the city largely because of his efforts.

His health had deteriorated badly by the time the 2nd annual World Open came to Convention Hall this August. Yet, despite his frail condition, he intended to take part in the event — and his doctors were helping him get ready. When the time came, however, his flesh couldn't equal his spirit.

Lager had inoperable can-

cer of the bladder, a type doctors told him was uncommon.

"I had to get a special kind," he remarked several months before his death. "But then, as my wife is always telling me, I never did anything that was common."

His life took him down any number of offbeat byways. Besides playing pool, and playing it well, he also excelled at various times in sports car racing and bowling. He earned his livelihood as co-owner of Coast Glass Service in Asbury Park. His son Chris, 20, has filled in for him there, helping his partner, Joe Ricci — but now that Lager's gone, Chris isn't certain he'll carry on.

The other Lager children are Kathy, 25; Robert, 23; Patty, 21, and Stacey, 18. There also are two grandchildren.

In keeping with Ernie's wishes, no funeral services were held.

"That was his firm wish," Mrs. Lager said. "He didn't want to put the children through it. He felt we had suffered enough, and he always said that funerals are barbaric."

He specified that his body should be given to the Rutgers Medical School, so some of his organs might live in the bodies of others — and this was done. I was doubtful, however, that any could be used, Mrs. Lager said, because he had deteriorated so much.

For Joan Lager, grief and relief are mingled now that Ernie's gone.

"For his sake," she said, "I prayed for the end. Seeing him waste away was heart-breaking. And yet, though you accept it in your head, I

don't think you ever accept it in your heart."

Ernie Lager didn't put much stock in a life hereafter. With death closing in on him, however, he did express one hope about that subject: that

if there is a heaven, he'll find a pool hall handy when he gets there.

"The only problem is," he said, "I don't have any money left to bet — so somebody's going to have to stake me."

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