

*The
Horseshoe Pitcher's
News Digest*

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**THE NATIONAL HORSESHOE PITCHER'S ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA**

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Volume 2

APRIL

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A SALUTE TO OUR EVER FAITHFUL LADIES

"My endeavor to get my wife to write a few lines this month was unsuccessful but may be more fruitful soon. I felt that she has a message to the ladies that could get their husbands out of the house and into the fresh air. Of course this would be to give him his horseshoes and tell him to get over to the courts and get some practice.

"We officers of the NHPA sincerely appreciate all the help rendered by the ladies. Many of them keep score, assume offices in clubs, fix refreshments at club functions, write letters and in general make themselves a valuable asset in promotion of horseshoe pitching. Therefore, this month I am saluting the ladies and hoping that they will continue to be so generous with their time and efforts.

"Those players who are planning on going to Murray this summer and have never had their wives with them should give them a real treat this year and take them with them to the World Tournament, July 23rd to 30th. They will enjoy the beautiful Utah scenery and Utah hospitality, as well as watch their husbands participate in the largest tournament yet held. So start planning now to take her along and she will tell you that this is one vacation she will remember for a long time to come. Take the advice of one who knows."

Cletus Chapelle, President

In Memoriam

George Monast

Fall River, Mass.

Donald French

Berkeley, Calif.

*"and I shall duell in the house
of the Lord, forever."*

Word has been received of the passing of two of our ardent supporters.

Mr. George Monast of Fall River, Mass. who was one of our first subscribers and Mr. Donald French of Berkeley, California. Their warm handclasps and close fellowship will be sadly missed by all those who knew them.

To those from whose family circle they were taken, we extend our deepest sympathy.

WALTER HORNER NEW FLORIDA CHAMPION

By R. B. WOODROW

Walter Horner of Bradenton and Terre Haute, Ind., won the first Florida State Open Horseshoe Championships held in more than 25 years. Horner won all seven games of the round robin. The two-day contest was held at the Sunshine Shuffleboard Pleasure Club.

A tie for second place between Ben Farmer and W. O. Maxwell, both of the Sunshine Club, was unsolved as the late afternoon rain halted play. Each had won five games, lost two. Joe Wilkinson of Sunshine took fourth place.

Fifth-Place Tie

Hallie Ehmke and Charles Stephens of Bradenton tied for fifth place. Roy Bisnett and Bill Costello of Sunshine completed the field of eight in the "A" (championship) division.

In the "B" division, which was made up of the second eight highest qualifiers, Wilson Hubbard, defeated Joe Ruggles, both of Sunshine, Friday in a two-out-of-three game playoff. Both had tied with six wins against only one loss.

Ford Fourth

Denver Ford of Bradenton finished fourth; and Roy Gravink and H. M. Kemp of Bradenton, tied for fifth. Henry Graham of St. Petersburg and Ray Middleton of Bradenton completed the field in the "B" division.

Ties in both the "A" and "B" division will be played off Monday.

The tournament was under the direction of Raymond B. Woodrow, vice president of the Sunshine Club. Woodrow hopes that the state horseshoe championship tournament can be made an annual affair.

1958



The 1958 Spin-On Horseshoe is rolling off the production line, it is a tried and true shoe, used by many in championship pitching. Get the shoe that has made great in-roads of success to many pitchers.

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THE GORDON HORSESHOE COMPANY

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MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN OF REGIONAL DIRECTORS

By HOWARD J. WHITE

Judging by those advance notices on the big tournaments for 1958, (World's Championship), July 23 thru the 30th and (Eastern National), August 3rd thru the 9th in the January issue of the News Digest, it looks as though we will not be late for '58; so my motto goes. Here is a little advance notice on another big one.

The 1958 New England Championship tournament will be held in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, August 30th through September 1st. The eight (8) clay courts are located at the Junior High School Field in back of the Parrott Avenue Armory. Sanction for it has been received from our National Secretary-Treasurer, Elmer O. Beller of Bellflower, California and it will be for Class A, B, & C pitchers. There is every indication that it will be a huge success judging from reports of the many New England pitchers who will be here over the Labor Day week-end.

This tournament is being held in New Hampshire for the 3rd straight year. It is estimated there will be quite a few more pitchers taking part this year. So that more will have a chance to play in the Class "A" Championship we are expanding it to a 16-Man Round Robin. (In 1957 it was a 14-Man Round Robin).

Classes B & C will also be expanded so that there will be two days and two nights of pitching. Qualifying starts at 9:00 A.M. Saturday, August 30th through Sunday, August 31st. Deadline for qualifying, Sunday morning 11:00 A.M.

Clarence Gill, 499 Main Street, Bridgewater, Massachusetts, my assistant Regional Director for the State of Massachusetts, tells me that Edgar Landry, the New England Champion won the Massachusetts State Championship last October at Moxie Grove Courts in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Joe Comeau of Lynn, Massachusetts, former State titleist was runner-up. One of Landry's games was 92.6% with 50 ringers out of 54 shoes.

Frank "Bud" Smith, 16 year old Amesbury, Massachusetts star, to my knowledge is one of the youngest players to ever qualify in the New England meet. He writes that he is starting to pitch this year and will again be down to our New England meet. He will bring around six other pitchers with him. Frank shows great leadership as well as pitching ability and is destined to become another great pitcher from New England.

I would now like to compliment on the article, "COMMENTS FROM SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL DIRECTOR" (appearing in the January issue) written and submitted to your magazine by Pearl "Pep" Pepple, regional director. I thought his article was very impressive and I am sure that the fellows will not let him down.

I received another long letter from Lee Davis, Regional Director for the New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania area. His letter stated that he has a definite program lined up for his area and is going all out to use his efforts to promote the game.

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NEWS AND NOTES OF HORSESHOE FOLKS

Mr. Lou Siebanaler of Kinball, Nebraska has been traveling through the western states during the last several weeks. One of his stops during his sojourn was at Mesa, Arizona where he participated in a tournament held there. He then went on to spend two days in sunny California with the National secretary, Elmer Beller of Bellflower, California. He then continued his visitations by stopping by to see Ira Allen at Oneals and then going on up north to visit with other friends and relatives in and around the San Francisco area.

Keeping Our Banner Flying In New England



Pictured above is a fine group of New England pitchers holding their trophies. Left to right, kneeling: Howard White, Portsmouth, N. H., Charles Gerrish, Kittery Point, Me., Peter Heroux, Providence, R. I., Lloyd Welch, Providence, R. I., Willie Paradis, Bristol, Conn., Jimmy Guyette, Dover, N. H. and Ralph Dow, Canaan, N. H. Standing: Joseph Comeau, Lynn, Mass., Harold Wrisley, Terryville, Conn., Edgar Landry, (Champion) Fall River, Mass., Ralph Hillburn, Meriden, Conn., Al Bourgeois, Smithfield, R. I., Porter Clark, Auburn, Me., and Basil Blackburn, Fairhaven, Mass.

MAIN NEWS FROM MAINE

By C. S. GERRISH

The Maine excitement to record in our horseshoe diary the past month was a letter from Porter Clark, and a copy of the current issue of the "News Digest." Clark is the Auburn gent who always makes such a string bid for the Maine ringer title each year, in spite of the fact that he lost his pitching fingers in a mill accident a few years ago. Clark has been the runner-up among some 60 Maine tournament pitchers to land second place in the state championship for the last eight years. Can anyone match that? That's persistency along with great frustration.

His letter concerned his 1957 effort at Brewer where he won every game in 11 game round robin, except the one to the champion. Not one of his games being below the 55 percent average that he maintained. He pitched 359 ringers and 101 doubles in 612 shoes. In his game against Gerrish he rang up 40 ringers to get 37 points.

'Sno Rime - - -

Winter is not for horseshoes,

But for their suspense.

However, you'll find them in the "Digest"

As well as other horse-sense.

HORSESHOE PITCHING MAKES BIG COMEBACK IN FRESNO, CALIFORNIA AND NATION

By OMER CRANE, Fresno Bee Sports Writer

They are throwing the shoes from Kennebunk, Maine, to Long Beach again — almost as many as they did in the depression years of the mid '30s.

The grand old sport of horseshoes is making a grand comeback. The larger communities have organized clubs. In the mild climate of sunny California, action and tournament play is the year around.

Fresno's Roeding Park Horseshoe Club, with Les Sage as president, does not stack up with such centers as Murray and Salt Lake City or Long Beach in quantity. But the RPHA does have a dozen new, regulation courts, lighted, and always busy.

Ira Allen, brother of champion Ted Allen, is Fresno's foremost exponent. He is just getting back into the swing after a long layoff and has won three of four tournaments this year, including the San Joaquin Valley title. Now 49, Ira won his first title, the Colorado state, when he was a stripling of 13.

In such hot spots as Long Beach where thousands of midwesterners have come to retire, the tossin' goes on from dawn until the lights go out at midnight. The climax comes when the aces of the clan gather for the world championships at Murray, Utah, being the host the last two years.

"I'd guess we're almost back to the 1935-36 level on clubs and the numbers of shoe men," contends Guy Zimmerman, a Danville (Contra Costa County) plumber and one of the top men in the game for three decades.

"There's more leisure time now, especially for the workingman. It's no longer just a sport for the retired oldsters, we've got lots of younger men."

Zimmerman, now 49, had his best year since World War II in 1954 when he won the world tournament at Murray, Utah.

But he was something of a phenom at shoe tossing two decades ago. He made his living from 1931 to 1940 giving exhibitions around the country and following the tournament trail from Florida to California.

One of Guy's tricks which still brings ohs and ahs is to drape the stake with a blanket, blindfold himself, then toss three or four ringers.

"Nobody makes it a full time business today," Zimmerman continued, "although Ted Allen (current world champ from Boulder, Colo.) does pretty well, mainly because he manufactures shoes."

All it takes to start are a couple of pairs of shoes—two shoes a person, at \$4.50 or \$5 the pair, two steel stakes and a plot of ground, roughly 46 feet by 6 feet. The stakes are 40 feet apart, 30 feet for women. A concrete slab around the 3 by 6 foot stake area, foul boards, and more courts is about as complex as the pitching court problem gets.

Technique is almost standardized: Either the shoe makes one and one quarter or one and three quarter turns from the time it leaves the hand until the ringer—you hope—clanks around the stake.

Zimmerman just this year is getting back into form after a near fatal automobile accident in 1955, the year after he won the world title. Just to prove it, he gave 32 year old Don Titcomb a 50 to 28 lesson in an exhibition game on Fresno's Roeding Park courts.

Titcomb, a southpaw, is no slouch, either. He has been runnerup the last two years in the world competition in Murray, Utah.

Just how good can a shoe tosser get? Zimmerman had a 84.9 per cent ringer average when he won 22 consecutive games in the 1954 tournament. He won a California tournament several years ago with an amazing 88.9 average.

Training? "It's just a spare time hobby with most of us," Zim admits. "I try to throw about 100 shoes a day, and maybe I'll play a half dozen tournaments a year.

"It's just a matter of timing, rhythm, follow through, practice—and inherent ability, as in most sports."

LONG BEACH CLUB TO HAVE NEW HORSESHOE COURTS

Long Beach, a few years back, was one of the main horseshoe pitching centers of the country. Since September 1956, when they lost their courts at the location of the old Union Pacific depot, they have practically been out of a place to pitch horseshoes.

At time of this writing, the concrete has now been poured for eight new courts, at east end of Long Beach's amusement Pike, a short distance from water front. These courts are not lighted. Aside from that they are the very finest in all respects. Plans drawn up under the direction of National Horseshoe Pitchers Association secretary. Adequate locker room will be provided when complete.

Long Beach Club is very proud of these courts. We invite all horseshoe pitchers to visit these courts when in this area, from in or out of State.

Waldo Hagy is carry-over President from old Union Pacific Club. We hope to reorganize and elect officers for a new Club very soon. Mr. Hagy has worked hard in promotion of these new courts.

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1958 SCHEDULE OF TOURNAMENTS FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION

	1957 Champ
April 20—Class "C" Open — Harvard	Goodrick
April 27—Class "D" Open — South Gate	D. Schneider
May 4—Class "E" Open — Harvard	Lowe
May 18—Class "A" Added — Redlands	Dean
June 1—Class "B" Added — Harvard	Nottingham
June 8—Class "C" Added — Baldwin Park	Wendt
June 22—Class "D" Added — South Gate	Gaston
June 28—Special Class "A" (Night) — Ontario	Weeks
July 5—*Semana Hautica—Open "B" — Santa Barbara	Weeks
July 6—*Semana Hautica—Open "A" — Santa Barbara	Weeks
July 13—60 years and over — Montebello	Beller
August 3—Class "E" Added — Harvard	Durr
August 10—Amateur — Pomona	Esperanza
August 16-17—(2 days) Western "Open" (16 Man R.R.)—South Gate	Allen
August 24—Championship "E" — South Gate	Shipley
Sept. 7—Championship "D" — Harvard	Durr
Sept. 14—Championship "C" — Baldwin Park	Metcalf
Sept. 28—Championship "B" — Ontario	Bonaly
Oct. 4-5—(2 Days) Victorville Open — Victorville	Weeks
Oct. 12—Championship "A" — South Gate	Moefield

*Open Class "B" Santa Barbara may be non-sanctioned tournament — July 5th.

Western Open will be 16 Man R.R. (2 days). All other tournaments will be 8 man Round-Robins, unless there are 12 or more qualifiers. In that case the top 12 will be divided into two groups each for R. Robins. Then the top two of each group will play a 4 man R. R. for championship of that tournament. Percentages in all groups will decide ties, except for 1st place, one game playoff.

Deadline for qualifying, one hour before starting time of any tournament.

All tournaments start at 1:00 P.M., except Class "A" Special, Ontario June 28. It starts 4:00 P.M. All tournaments start 12 noon, one hour earlier after daylight saving time goes off.

Entry fee, \$1.50, to be paid before qualifying. Those who qualify and pitch in tournament will pay \$1.00 more; a total of \$2.50.

Class "A" Special will require 200 shoe qualifying. All others 100 shoes. Players must qualify on courts where match is to be played forenoon of match or the day before if qualified score keeper is present. Any official of

association may qualify any player. Other scorekeepers must be from other than home club of qualifier. Qualifiers must notify scorekeeper when ready to make first pitch. He must then pitch consecutive shoes to end of qualifying.

Pitchers will be divided into class according to previous percentages thusly: Those above 60% Class "A". 52 to 60% Class "B"; 45 to 52% Class "C"; 35 to 45% Class "D"; all below 35% Class "E". If any pitcher should win a tournament with a percentage above his class he must move up in class for any future tournaments. All "Open" tournaments are open to all pitchers holding National cards. To be eligible to play in any SCHPA tournament pitcher must have resided here three months prior to tournament. All players must be NHPA members. Dues are \$5.00 which includes National and State dues, also subscription to "News Digest."

An amateur is defined as one who has not received money prizes the last two years and has an established record of less than 60%.

There will be 3 trophies and one medal for each tournament. Victorville is a money tournament.

Court locations: South Gate—Southern Ave., two blocks off Atlantic Blvd. Harvard—between Normandie & Western on 61st St. Montbello—Taylor St., in Park just off Whittier Blvd. Ontario—Emporia & Lemon. 1 block east of Euclid, 1 block So. 99 hyway. Baldwin Park—in a park at San Bernardino Rd. & Sierra Madre Ave. Redlands—in the Park northeast part of town.

* * * * *

INDIANA DIVISION OF THE N. H. P. A.

By BOB PENCE

The Indiana Association will again stage a Newcomers Tourney to provide competition for new members and players in the lower ringer percentage brackets in order to stimulate membership and participation by players who would otherwise be reluctant to get their feet wet in tournament play for fear of bumping into such top notchers as would normally be encountered in Hoosier horseshoe events.

The only players who will be eligible for this tourney will be new members, players who did not play in the 1957 Indiana State Tourney or those who averaged under 50% ringers in last year's State Tourney. This rules out 62 of the top pitchers in the State.

This year's Newcomers Tourney will be held in four geographic divisions in order to cut down on the amount of traveling necessary to compete.

The Northern Division of the Newcomers Tournament will be held at Highland Park in Kokomo with a 100 shoe qualifying round on Saturday, June 7 and Sunday, June 8. Finals with eight men to a class will be held two weeks later, June 14 and 15 at Kokomo. The number of classes will depend upon the number of entries. Bill Dunn, Claude Fewell, Bill Hobbs and Ed Jamison will be in charge.

The Western Division will be held at Dorner Park in Frankfort on the same dates with Curt Day, Oris Harshman and Joe Schilling in charge.

The Southern Division will be held at Garfield Park in Indianapolis with Paul Van Sickle, Lewis Bollinger and Marvin Chrisman in charge.

The Eastern Division will be held at the ten new courts being constructed at the Geneva High School. Clyde Green, Red McClain and Marvin Craig will be in charge.

The winners of the various classes in each of the four divisions will meet in the grand finals on Sunday, June 29 at Highland Park in Kokomo with the officers of the Indiana Division of the N.H.P.A. in charge.

All entrants must be members of the Indiana State Association and an entry fee of \$1.50 per player will be used for trophies and prizes.

Last year's Newcomer Tournament was a highly successful one with 64 entries, most of whom were entirely new members, which helped materially in the state's 1957 membership drive. Fourteen of last year's entries are not eligible to play in the 1958 tourney.



Introducing . . . *the PERSONALITY* *of the Month*

BERNIE TROLLEN — MINNESOTA STATE PRESIDENT

Try it sometime . . . 44 ringers out of 50 tosses! It can be done and Bernard L. Trollen proved it to turn in the high ringer game of the season in the St. Paul Horseshoe league.

Behind that performance are many years of shoe pitching. Starting at the sport as a youngster at Pine City, Bernie (he's known as Ben in horseshoe pitching circles) kept it up when he moved to St. Paul, where he is now completing 20 years as a player in the local league. He served as vice president of that group in 1942 and 1949 and as president in 1943. The Minnesota Horseshoe association this year chose him as its president for 1957-58, the second time he has held that office.

During his long career as a horseshoe pitcher, Bernie has won 10 trophies, 1 plaque and 3 medals for outstanding performance here and about the state. He is the 1957 St. Paul champion, averaging 63.66 percent for the season and losing only six games out of 60.

When not tossing horseshoes, Bernie likes to take part in another sport in which he excels — bowling.

Bernie lives in Roseville with his wife, Margaret, and their son, Lawrence, 21, and a daughter, Susan, 17.

BEN FARMER, HOOSIERITE, WINS SUNSHINE CLUB MEET

On February 22 the annual Sunshine Club tournament was held on the club courts in St. Petersburg, Florida. Stepping into the winner's circle at the conclusion of the meet was Ben Farmer of Union City, Indiana. Having pitched the highest qualifying score of 244 points with 76 ringers out of 100 shoes to start the day's ringer barrage, he continued on to average over 70 percent ringers to win the tournament. Close behind for second position was Joe Wilkinson who will be remembered as one of the participants in the Winter National meets when they were held in St. Petersburg thirty-five years ago. W. O. Maxwell, that grand old pitcher from Hicksville, Ohio (77½ years young) gave a very good account of himself. He also averaged a little over 70 per cent ringers. Walter Farmer of Terre Haute, Indiana was very steady with an average of 73.2.

Maxwell, Stephens, Ford, Hubbard, Farmer, Middleton, Wilkinson and Horner have all been National tournament figures either during the present day or in years past. All in all it was one of the toughest meets held even though none of the players reached the 80 percent mark. It can be said that it was equivalent to many state tournaments held in other parts of the nation.

SEND IN THOSE BITS OF NEWS

To all of our readers who have any news such as might be of interest to members of the association please send it to the editor. Items such as weddings, births, special celebrations, personality stories, etc. Season's schedules listing tournaments also results of matches, are also requested as soon as they are completed.

THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS PERTINENT TO THE HORSESHOE GAME

By H. G. BOWMAN, Hebron, Maine

As serious thought is given to our modern and unique game of horseshoes with its many phases, several interesting and important questions come to mind. One is, "What to-day shall be considered, or what in reality is, the main objectives of most horseshoe organizations — local clubs, state associations, and others up to and including the recognized head of all, the National Horseshoe Pitchers' Association of America? It seems very probable that Dale Dixon, President of the National a few years ago, gave the correct answer to this question when he said in "The Horseshoe Pitcher" of November, 1953, "The National exists only for the purpose of holding World Tournaments." The same can be said of our Maine State Assn. of members a year is held and that mainly for election of officers and for deciding the time, place of tournament, and other matters pertaining thereto.

Assuming that this may be the general situation, the need for properly conducted tournaments appears very apparent, if they are to serve as an efficient medium for the promotion of the game in all possible ways, especially in securing public approval and in inducing more to become interested players. Neither time nor space will permit mention or discussion of the many things that can be done to make a tournament a success. However, it is hoped that no harm will be done by giving two of the many, some attention in this article. They are scoring methods and qualification, or classification, methods for tournament entrants.

Very likely the proponents of the Ohio Non-Cancel, or Total-Point System of scoring will argue that this method is the one and only one best adapted to tournament play and probably to most horseshoe contests. Though it is readily admitted that the system does have a few very commendable and desirable features, among which are alternating first pitch and the ending of games in tournaments and matches at nearly the same time, what about some of the essential things the Cancellation System has that the Non-Cancel does not offer? Here are some of its distinctive features that evidently make a strong appeal to all pitchers who are real sportsmen.

1. Its 50 point game that gives a poor player as well as a good player opportunity to come from behind and win, when under the limitation of a 50 or 80 shoe game much less opportunity is afforded.

2. Its defensive feature in the cancellation of opponents' ringers. This no doubt stimulates many players to do their utmost by furnishing a thrill and incentive that is lacking in any other method. It intensifies competition, something all should appreciate. Baseball, football, and basketball have both a defense and an offense. But where can the Ohio System show the former? Does the accumulation of a few extra points while an opponent is speeding along unchecked toward the 50 shoe goal satisfy a player more than the chance to slow him down from time to time by cancelling some of his ringers? The answer depends on the type of player.

3. A 50 point game never ends in a tie. A 50 shoe game can, and if continued to a decision, it will not end with the other games.

Many pages could be written in answer to arguments advanced by several writers in condemnation of the Cancellation Scoring System. Since at present this is not possible, suffice it to say that we (I feel sure that I speak for many others) who are strongly in favor of the Cancellation System would experience a feeling of great relief to hear no more about our sport being confined to the barnyard because of a scoring method that has been widely used since May 10, 1921. If it is so bad, how happens that the country's top pitchers who play in World Tournaments year after year have not protested and brought

about its discontinuance? I say most emphatically that the horseshoe sport emerged long ago from a position that could rightfully be called a barnyard stage. Probably no players of any sport, unless it be the modern baseball pitcher, have shown greater skill or scientific progress than have our expert horseshoe pitchers shown in throwing ringers. It should be deplored by all fair-minded persons in any way connected with the game that some have evidently extended themselves to about their limit in an effort to have the Cancellation System discarded. Apparently it has been a wasteful use of their time and it is here predicted that this system will continue to be used extensively as long as horseshoes are pitched. One may as well try to abolish one of our major political parties, which have, we know, and will, we believe, continue to assure the stability and permanence of our political structure. Let those who prefer the Total-Point, or Count-All, use it and make no further attempt to replace a system that has stood the test for thirty-seven years and is still satisfactory to many. The National has given the Ohio method official recognition. What more need its advocates ask?

Strange as it may be regarded, it may well be said that the writer's enthusiasm for and support of the Cancellation System of scoring are surpassed only, if at all, by his dislike of and opposition to the long practiced method of qualifying, or more accurately called, elimination method applied to deserving candidates for admission to tournaments. A few years ago one of Maine's ablest pitchers gave it the name of "cut-throat elimination," after stating the experience of a one-time New England champion, who with a fine pitching record for a season was eliminated from a New England tournament of that year by this illogical, inaccurate, and unfair method. Is not one incident of the kind enough to condemn such a practice and bring about a change in that section at least? Yet, it has been in use ever since. May the dawning of a brighter day for Northeast tournament players be not far distant!

In seemingly close connection with what has already been written on the subject of qualifying, or classifying, it is hoped that it will not be thought out of order to give an account of the changes that have taken place in Maine tournaments during the past seven years. Some agitation against the 100 shoe pitching test was begun late in the summer of 1951, but not in time to bring about any change that year. The number of players determined by the elimination process at that year's tournament was 12 for Class A, 8 for Class B, and 8 for Class C — 28 in all, with no refund to eliminated players of \$1.50 paid for the experience. The writer in this, his first attempt, had the fortune to get only 22 ringers in the test, but the next morning under neither stress nor strain easily threw 42—a standing for him of minus \$1.50 and a chance to play in a tournament and plus a most helpful experience for himself and for the good of many other players in later tournaments, he believes.

Several others were relegated to the role of spectators by the same questionable process, so he did not feel too lonely. In 1952 there was a decided change. It was voted at the April Annual Meeting to allow all, who might wish to enter a tournament, to do so in one class or another, and to classify players who kept a seasonal record of a certain number of their games on that basis, with the result that not all had to be placed by the 100 shoe test. For the following five years, this method has not been used in a single instance. In 1954, tournament rules were drawn up that prohibit the use of the 100 shoe method with no known complaint against its abandonment. In a very few cases, a game has been played between a player who is unable to furnish much information about his ability and one competent to decide his proper class from his score and playing form. Players have been very satisfactorily classified by past tournament records, by seasonal records, and often by means of a close acquaintance with them by tournament officers. In 1953 a Class D was added, especially for young players who had never played in a tournament. It has never had less than eight entrants. By admitting all wishing to play, and without the time wasting and objectionable 100 shoe affair, the number of entrants has been increased from 28 in '51 to 60 in 1957, a

(Please turn the page)

gain of 32. At combined membership dues and a tournament entrance fee of \$2.00 each, the Assn. finds itself in much better circumstances to pay its expenses and procure suitable prizes for the three highest place winners in all classes. Some of our players say they would not attempt to enter a tournament, if they had to pitch 100 shoes. This would likely be true of most beginners.

If the number of tournament entrants in Maine can be more than doubled in a period of five years by doing away with a method that has outlived its usefulness, is there any reason to believe that a substantial increase cannot be realized in other tournaments, whether state, sectional, like the New England, or even the National, if only they will put themselves to the trouble to keep the necessary records of their players and will trust prospective entrants in the information they can give of their ability? There need be little question that most players are honest and don't want to enter classes where they are likely to lose all their games or maybe to win all in a walk-over.

There is a very true saying that, "Where there is a will, there is a way." Another, that "There is no time like the present." If increasing the number participating in tournaments by fairer methods is not promoting the game, then one of the main objectives of tournaments is far from being realized and much of the incentive and motive for holding them would seem to be lacking. This should be an admitted fact by anyone who will give the matter serious thought. Some may argue that pitching a certain number of shoes is necessary to establish positions in tournament play, but to this it can be said that, if this is not reliable for the purpose of qualifying, as has been shown many times, how can it be depended on for another? Here, we have designated classes by percentage figures with a rule that, should a player exceed the maximum percentage limit of his class by more than five percentage points, he has disqualified himself for securing any of the first three positions of the class or their awards. Such a player has the privilege of entering the higher class, for which he qualifies, in the same tournament without payment of another fee or, if not, to enter that class in his next tournament. This rule may be regarded as, and in fact is, a corrective measure for wrong classifications. In the four years that this rule has been in effect, only two such cases have occurred, which seems to indicate that our classification methods are fairly accurate.

It certainly is not intended to advocate an attempt to overcome the time element by sacrificing fairness to any player. But there seems an opportunity to gain, or save, time and give players a fairer deal by abandoning a method that shows a player's ability for a short time only and under often unfavorable circumstances, entirely different than those in the competitive play of games. Surely, a short pitching session should not be expected to give definite assurance of what a player will do in tournament games. Therefore, my earnest suggestion is to place players in tournament classes on the basis of their past accomplishments as nearly as can be ascertained. "What man has done he can do again," should be kept in mind, though some exceptions are to be expected. As a first step in what is believed to be the right direction, would it not be wise to make it optional for players to be classified by the 100 shoe method or not, as preferred? The result might be more and better satisfied tournament players. Also, it might be than, if those who in the past have arrayed themselves with so much enthusiasm against the cancellation scoring system would enlist in an effort to help pitchers gain admittance to tournaments in such a way as to cast no further reflection on the game, then this unexcelled minor (?) sport would likely rise faster from that low down spot (in their minds) which has caused them so sorrowful lamentation.

This article, just a mild example of mental spontaneity, is now concluded in the belief that enough is as good or better than more. The hope is expressed that it may be accepted in as tolerant and co-operative spirit as possible and that some will rise to the occasion and express their convictions on the two subjects herein discussed.

"PUT YOUR SHOULDER TO THE WHEEL"

By PERL PEPPLÉ

Regional Director South Central States

"This is the time of year when in most sections of the colder parts of our country the horseshoe pitcher starts to stir and come out of his long hibernation of inactivity. So, I intend this letter for the attention of all horseshoe pitchers on a very vital, but too often forgotten, point. Our inability to "think" and then "act" is what causes most of our failures in our various endeavors of whatever type or form. If we but "think" we will realize the importance of paying our dues early in the current year. Too many pitchers wait until at the time of a tournament to pay them. This fault runs down from the National level on down to the small clubs or associations. We only hurt ourselves by so doing, because if these organizations had all member dues paid long before the tournaments that surely come up each year that particular organization would have a better idea of how much they could spend for prizes, etc. for the members who play. (And all members should try to play). By not paying dues early we hurt the organization for the reasons just mentioned. In order for an organization to exist, like ours, its only source of revenue is from members, principally. The officials of these organizations are badly handicapped when the dues come straggling in. They have no way on which to base their future financial obligations. Time and space prevent the numerous reasons for paying our dues early. The average Secretary of an organization is the guy who does a lot of hard work, often with no pay, and no "thanks." He is generally a "committee of one" who does most of the leg and head work for our benefit. Too many of us think an official is a guy who should do all the work but we as members reserve the right to blast him and tell him how wrong he did it. That is negative thinking. Let's be positive, and cooperative, and "put our shoulder to the wheel" and help him, and as a result we will all be inspired and enjoy the game more. Only by accepting our individual responsibilities and doing what those responsibilities demand will the great game of horseshoe live and survive for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations."

* * * * *

Coming Tournament Dates

- June 27-28 — Lakeside Open Tournament, Lakeside, Ohio.
- July 4-6 — "Ringer Round-Up", Dorner Park, Frankfort, Indiana.
- July 5-6 — Red River Valley Open, Fargo, North Dakota.
- July 23-30 — World Tournament, Salt Lake County Fairgrounds, Murray, Utah.
- July 26-27 — Northwest Tournament, Ramsey County fairgrounds, St. Paul, Minnesota.
- August 3-9 — Eastern National Tournament, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania.
- August 9-10 — Minneapolis Centennial Open, Loring Park, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- August 12-13 — Illinois State Tournament, State Fairgrounds, Springfield, Illinois.
- August 13 — Illinois Boy's Tournament, State Fairgrounds, Springfield, Illinois.
- August 17 — Indiana State Tournament Qualifying at Frankfort, Muncie, Wabash and Bethel, Indiana.
- August 31 and Sept. 1 — Minnesota State Tournament (residents only) Hibbing, Minnesota.



“From Out Of The Mail Bag”

Mr. F. Ellis Cobb, Editor
The Horseshoe Pitchers' News Digest
1307 Solfisburg Ave.
Aurora, Illinois

Dear Sir:

May we take this opportunity to commend you on the fine job being done on the “Digest”.

Also to present a personal opinion on a subject vitally important to each of us.

There can be no doubt that professionals are artists in their own rights just as much as the prize-fighter, or the man who wields a brush on canvas. They deserve the highest praises and I for one would not wish to steal any of their glory.

Yet, let us not forget our little man. The beginner—the man on his way up. He needs every bit of help and encouragement that we can give him. It is from these ranks that the new champions and new records are born. May we suggest that the top notch pitchers in every club in the National association and others devote a part of their time each week to the instruction of the newcomers and those desirous of improving their game. Make him feel welcome and that he is necessary and essential to our organization.

Just a few years ago when I was struggling to master those mis-aligned, demagnetized stubborn horseshoes, a very fine pitcher known to many of you—Alvin Gandy—gave of his time to instruct and encourage newcomers at each of our meetings until finally we were able to stand on our own feet, and that was to be able to compete in that championship bracket in tournament play. We thus realized a long standing ambition.

It is the spirit of giving of ones' self that will build our organization bigger and better. Let us remember that the newest member of our clubs are the most important members both locally and in our National association.

Sincerely,

Paul Hauserman
Topeka, Kansas

* * * * *

FORT GEORGE CLUB TO HOLD ANNUAL SPRING TOURNAMENT OVER MEMORIAL DAY WEEK-END

By TOM O'GARA

The annual spring horseshoe pitching tournament of the Fort George Horseshoe Club will be held at the Fort George Park courts on Saturday, May 31st starting at 1 o'clock. In case of rain the meet will be held Sunday, June 1st. Tom O'Gara, club president will direct the activities.

This three-day week-end will afford ample time to attend and participate in this outstanding horseshoe pitching classic of the East. It is hoped that all pitchers throughout the eastern section of the country and all others from other parts of the country will be on hand to give their support to this annual event.

Trophies will be awarded in Classes A, B, and C.

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