

**NATIONAL HORSESHOE
PITCHERS ASSOCIATION**

**PITCH
AND WIN**

A "SPECIAL PROGRAM" FOR COUNTY FAIRS

By

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FORMER WORLD HORSESHOE PITCHING CHAMPION

Pitch and Win Program

A special program for county fairs

1. What is Pitch and Win?

- A. It's a free horseshoe pitching event
- B. Pitch two (2) regulation shoes

If one or more shoes land in the colored circle, you'll win a soda and an "I Scored at the Fair"

If a ringer is made with either of your two shoes, you win a free pizza at -----

2. What happens next?

- A. If you have won any of the above or are interested in the game of horseshoes you may want to qualify for an upcoming amateur tournament.
- B. Your local horseshoe club will sign you up and make you an honorary club member

3. How do I find out if I'm one of the top eight in my class?

- A. One of the local club officers will contact you.

4. Okay! I'm one of the top eight in my class, now what?

- A. We want you to come back and pitch in the upcoming amateur tournament

5. What will each winner receive?

- A. The top winner will receive a trophy

Pitch and Win Program – Getting Started

This event can effectively be held just about anywhere there is a large festive assembly of people. County fairs provide an ideal setting, but the "pitch and win program" can also be held at any large outdoor city function.

One of the most successful pitch and win programs was held at the Santa Clara County Fair in 1991. Thousands of folks of all ages pitched, and many signed up for the amateur tournament. Forty-one participated in the first amateur tournament with 17 signing up as new members of the San Jose Horseshoe Club. Those who could not make the first tournament were called to pitch in a second amateur tournament the following month.

With the tremendous success this program has experienced, it is important to share the information with other clubs, in hopes that they too will make use of this very effective avenue of promoting the sport of horseshoe pitching.

Contact your fair manager or other event representative

1. Set up a meeting with your fair manager normally in January, February, or March at the latest. Have one, two, or three members of your club present. It's impressive if you wear your club shirts to this meeting. A letter, on club stationary, to the fair manager listing club activities, community involvement, court location, and other tournaments is a nice way of letting them know that your club is alive and working to fulfill several basic recreation needs of the local citizens.
2. Discussion Items
 - A. Basic outline of the pitch and win program as an added activity to the local fair.
 - B. Indicate that the club has secured local sponsors such as Subway, Round Table Pizza, Pepsi, and any other sponsors that will make donations to the pitch and win program.
 - C. Discuss the items listed on the program checklist as to how the County can contribute in terms of equipment, personnel, publicity, and money to help insure the success of the pitch and win program.
3. At the Fair the program consists of an invitation through verbal communication and posted signs to the public to pitch two horseshoes free, each from a comfortable distance. Small children should stand as close to the peg as necessary. If they get a ringer they receive a coupon for a small pizza or sandwich given by your local sponsor. A soft drink could be given away for within six inches of the stake, a point. To claim their prize, the participant must visit the location of the sponsor, thus the sponsor receives a residual for their contribution and efforts.

PITCH AND WIN – PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Club members wearing club shirts should take turns at the Pitch and Win area. During this time you can discuss the sport of horseshoe pitching with the public. It would be most helpful to have on hand literature about club activities, maps, contact persons, and upcoming local tournaments.

General set up for the pitch and win

The location is crucial and should be where there is a lot of foot traffic. An area no less than 50 X 100 ft. is needed for two 30 foot courts for women and children and one 40 foot court for men. This area should be enclosed with a semi-permanent or temporary snow fence. Additionally 12 bales of hay are needed for safety and aesthetic reason for each court. A sign-up booth or table should be set up near the entrance in shade if possible. Two gates are needed at the same end - one for the public to enter and one for exit. The fence area can be effectively used as a billboard for sponsor's signs, and for signs advertising your club and future activities and tournaments.

Operation of the Pitch and Win

Before the program begins have everything and everyone in place, one person at the sign-in table and one at the entrance and exit gates. Have two or three club members on the courts to greet each participant.

1. Participant comes to the entrance booth for sign up.
2. An assistant greets and directs the participant to a horseshoe pit.
3. Club member greets and hands the participant two horseshoes and asks if he or she has ever pitched before and if they would like a few basic instructions.
4. If the participant is a small child, he or she is allowed to pitch as close as necessary, distance should be determined by ability.
5. After pitching two shoes, participant exits and receives something. For a ringer a coupon is given for a small pizza, sandwich, discount coupon, whatever your sponsor has donated. For close, (within six inches) a coupon for a small soda, all participants should receive a button that shows a horseshoe stating "I Scored at the Fair". Non-winners could receive a discount coupon from one of your sponsors.
6. All participants are urged to sign up for a local amateur tournament held at your club, and given information on local club activities, NHPA brochures, rules, and any other pertinent information.
7. Local club to host an amateur tournament for all those that signed up.
8. It's very important to get their names and phone numbers so a club representative can contact them to remind them of the upcoming amateur tournament.
9. A registration fee can be collected at the time they sign up, or you can wait till the amateur tournament to collect a small fee, and then pay all of it out in prize money to the winners of the amateur event.

CONDUCTING AN AMATEUR TOURNAMENT – A MUST!!!!

Conducting an amateur tournament for the pitch and win participants is critical to the promotion of the game. This tournament should be timed within a week or two of the pitch and win program, while you still have their interest. Be certain to conduct this tournament at your home courts and attempt to solicit local newspaper coverage. Be certain to call the results into the sports department of the local paper.

It is very important to phone each participant one-week prior to the tournament date. Let them know the following:

1. There is an entry fee of \$5. —and the tourney will take about four hours. That way they can come prepared. Let them know if the club will furnish coffee and donuts
2. Tell them to arrive thirty minutes early to sign in and practice.
3. If they haven't thrown 30 shoes to qualify (total points)-then they will need to qualify. Their honor system can be used.

For the initial amateur tournament total points when qualifying can be used to seat the players. Keep track of all games played and statistics for further tournaments. Make out nametags for each player and club members should wear their club shirts

Assign a club member to each group who acts as an advisor, taking his or her group through the process while explaining the rules, scoring, and court etiquette. Also some instructions should be given on maintaining the court both during play and after play. The Club tournament director should hold a meeting with the club member helpers briefing them as to their duties prior to the arrival of the participants.

A statistician should be assigned to post game results, wins and losses, and current standings. Following the tournament have a little ceremony to award trophies and/or other prizes. (Never money) If one of the club members wishes to give a little clinic on basic horseshoe pitching then this would be a good time.

Maybe the Club can have coffee and donuts before sign in and mingle with the new players. This is a good time to socialize and get to know them better as individuals.

Finally, announce other coming amateur tournaments. There should be at least two follow-up ones, one each month would be even more desirable. Discuss club league nights, club membership, horseshoe periodicals and newsletters, and future sanctioned tournaments.

Make sure they know the clubs practice times during the week and always extend an invitation to come out and pitch and bring their friends.

SPONSORS

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After the meeting and approval from the Fair Association or other City Organization, the club should get businesses to sponsor your Pitch and Win Program. Sponsors will be needed for prizes, signs, and possibly for various equipment items.

Radio stations and newspapers should be contacted with the information on the pitch and win program. The more publicity you can get the better public exposure for your club and horseshoe pitching. Make sure the Fair includes the Pitch and Win in their printed Fair Brochures and newspaper articles.

When approaching potential sponsors, it is a good idea to phone for an appointment thus respecting their time. Describe briefly the Pitch and Win Program at the local fair and the need for them as a sponsor. Let the Sponsor know that they will get a lot of publicity for their sponsorships plus all the winners will be coming to their establishment to cash in on the small pizza or drink prize.

Then when you obtain an appointment, have a letter about your club written on your club stationery, to use as your calling card. This should describe its location, how many people normally attend the fair and anything else you deem important. Keep the letter brief and to the point.



Helpful hints for pitch and win helpers

Pitch four shoes and win a prize (list prizes)

Have a 30-shoe tournament for fairgoers, with trophy in each category given out each day for high scores.

List the three categories on announcements Men Women Seniors Etc

Keep record of all contestants on scoresheet, score, name address, age, phone, etc and transfer to master sheet.

Print an honorary family membership card for all contestants. If possible have contestants give a deposit on a full club membership.

Preparation for presenting program to fair manager

Send of give literature to fair manager, and request to attend the meeting when decisions are made!

If possible set up a horseshoe-pitching exhibition by a top player in your area (trick pitching, if possible) or match games, etc. This is the only way to get extra moneys.

Someone who has had previous experience with the fair manager or who has been formally introduced to him/her should discuss negotiations.

Make sure these activities are listed in fair program, including the demonstrations.

Have a continuous tape made (your local radio station is a possible source). This tape will announce the pitch and win program, prizes, a free program for all and times of the demonstration. This tape will save you helpers from having to be on the microphone all day.

Have a display table where you can sign up fairgoers, have information regarding club.

Horseshoes courts and regulations, trophies, equipment etc.

ABOVE ALL DON'T BE AFRAID TO WORK THE FRONT OF THE BOOTH. MEET, GREET, AND TALK TO FAIRGOERS. BE YOUR GRACIOUS SELF, AND SELL THIS GREAT GAME OF OURS.

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PITCHING IN PROFESSIONAL COMPETITIVE TOURNAMENTS IS OPTIONAL.
SPECIAL CLINICS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE.

CONTACT YOUR FAIR MANAGER OR OTHER EVENT REPRESENTATIVE

1. Set up a meeting with your Fair Manager normally in January, February, or early March at the latest. Have one, two or three members of the club present at the meeting. A letter to the Fair Manager listing club activities, community involvement, court location, and other tournaments is a nice way of letting them know that the club is alive and working to fulfill severe basic recreation needs of the local citizens.

2. *Discussion Items:*
 - A. Basic outline of the free pitch and win program as an added activity to the local fair.
 - B. Indicate that the club has secured local sponsors like Round Table Pizza, Pepsi, and any other sponsors that will make donations to the pitch and win winners.
 - C. Discuss the items listed on the Program checklist as to how the County can contribute in terms of equipment, personnel, publicity, and money to help insure the success of the pitch and win program.

3. At the Fair the program consists of an invitation through verbal and posted signs to the public to pitch two horseshoes free, each from a comfortable distance. Small children should stand as close to the peg as necessary. If they get a ringer they receive a coupon for a small pizza given by a Local Pizza Parlor Sponsor. A soft drink could be given away for a point, a shoe within 6” of the peg. To claim their prize, the participant must visit the location of the Pizza Parlor or sponsor; thus the sponsor receives a residual for their contribution and efforts.

PITCH AND WIN CHECKLIST

ITEM	FAIR	HORSESHOE CLUB
1. Pitching Area – Min of 30x50 ft	_____	_____
2. Fencing surround the pitching area	_____	_____
3. Bales of Hay-Min of 12 per court	_____	_____
4. Horseshoe pegs, shoes, gloves, and file	_____	_____
5. PA system	_____	_____
6. Table, chairs, and umbrella for shade	_____	_____
7. Shovel, Broom, and Yellow spray paint	_____	_____
8. Clipboard, scoresheets, pencils, scoreboard	_____	_____

SIGNS

1. 4-20x48 inch signs – “Free” Pitch & Win	_____	_____
2. Sponsor Signs	_____	_____
3. Local club information sign	_____	_____
4. Sign for the coming amateur tournament	_____	_____
5. Entrance and Exit signs as needed	_____	_____
6. Sign up sign for entrance booth	_____	_____
7. Sign advertising horseshoe exhibition	_____	_____

PROMOTION

1. Local newspaper “fair” articles	_____	_____
2. Announcements during the Fair	_____	_____
3. Local Radio announcements	_____	_____
4. Fair passes for working Club members	_____	_____
5. Trophies on display for Amateur tourney	_____	_____
6. Club membership cards for those interested	_____	_____
7. Promotional materials – equipment, etc.	_____	_____
8. Sign up form for all entrants, name, address etc.	_____	_____
9. Form to list all winners for publicity etc	_____	_____
10. Someone to take pictures and videotape	_____	_____
11. Follow up letter to Fair Manager & Board	_____	_____

PERSONNEL SCHEDULE

1. Detailed list of all workers, times and assignments	_____	_____
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SAMPLE BUDGET PROPOSAL (OPTIONAL)

1. Printing	\$ 250.00
A. Temporary membership cards, sign up sheets, scorecards & decals	
2. Trick Horseshoe Pitching Demonstration	\$ 1,250.00
A. 2 Exhibitions/day x 10 days	
 TOTAL	 \$ 1,500.00*

*OR each contestant would be charged 25 cents to pitch 2 horseshoes for a chance to win a free pizza or Pepsi drink. Pizza and drinks would be redeemed outside the Fair. It is best if the program to the public is **“FREE”**.

- 3 Round Table Pizza – Provide one free single topping personal pizza to each winner
- 4 Pepsi Corporation – Provide one free Pepsi drink to each winner
- 5 Area Club – furnish all manpower for the 5 day event
- 6 County Fair to provide the following:
 - a. Fencing and 24 bales of hay (safety)
 - b. Loud speaking system and cassette tape player
 - c. Periodic announcements for the horseshoe demo and pitch & win program
 - d. Signs as outlined in the Pitch and Win Program outline
 - e. Parking passes-12 per day (3 shifts at 4 hours per shift)