

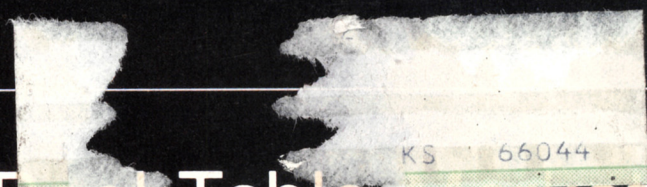
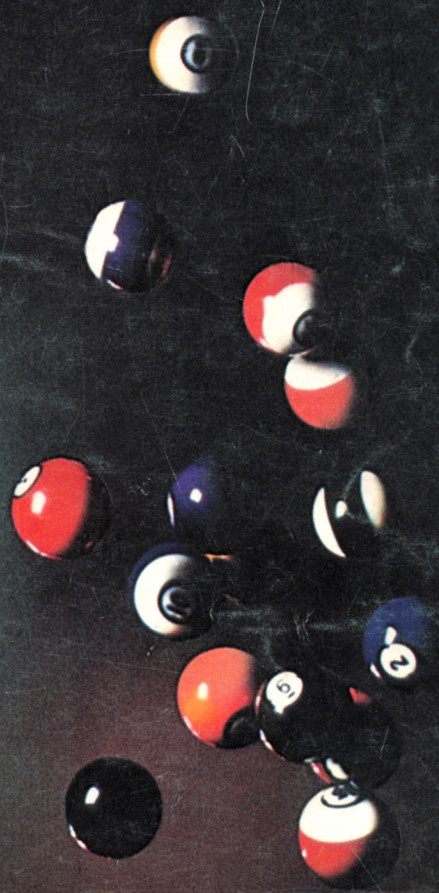
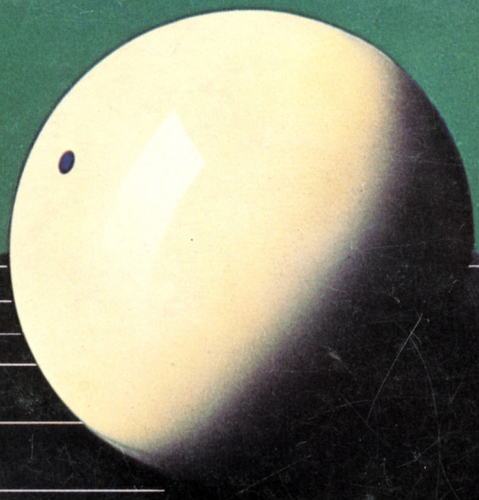
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Volume 5, Number 19

October 15, 1979



Taking Aim on the Pool Table Market



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Volume 5, Number 19
October 15, 1979

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COVER CREDIT:

Photograph courtesy of Brunswick Corporation, Briarwood Division, Skokie, Illinois.

FROM THE EDITOR

Once you've reached the point where birthdays begin sneaking up on you, the less you hear about birthdays the better. It's human nature for someone not to look forward to a birthday that is only a reminder that he's getting older. Yet, when we were all young and growing up, birthdays were something special, and they seemed to creep up slowly on us as we waited anxiously for them.

What's all this talk about birthdays? you're asking. Well, the fact of the matter is that on October 23, PLAY METER will have completed its fifth year of publication. On that date, PLAY METER Magazine, Volume One, Number One, was handed over to the U.S. Post Office and (eventually) found its way to thousands of operators all across the country. We're five years old now, and have been looking forward to our fifth birthday—like any five-year-old—so we could tell you about it.

Journalistically speaking, we'll be celebrating our official anniversary after we have completed this volume and we begin our sixth year of publication. By December we will have published sixty monthly issues (five volumes) and will be officially five years old. But, like any five-year-old, we are counting the days until we can blow out the candles.

While on the subject of dates and anniversaries, I thought this would be a good time to mention PLAY METER's mailing dates and delivery schedule and clear up something. There have been a lot of questions about our delivery time. Well, since we're a second-class publication—which means that people pay to read us—we have to print a full date on our cover, not just a month of issue. That date is the fifteenth of the month. This is the approximate date the magazine is mailed. And our Update editions are mailed on the first of the month—or thereabouts. The "thereabouts" comes from changes in the coin-industry's year, where it's essential that certain issues be mailed prior to the fifteenth or first of the month so that they'll give industry people advance information they need quickly.

Another reason for us to qualify the date as to when the magazine gets to you is that there are certain uncontrollable factors which we—well, just can't control. The printing process can vary, depending on the size of each issue. But the biggest hold up is the federal government—talk about uncontrollable factors. Sadly, the federal government has a monopoly on the postal system, and that leaves us magazines with a handful of problems. But despite these uncontrollable factors, PLAY METER is gauged to be there on time.

Yet once the magazine is mailed, it's like putting everything in God's hands because there's nothing you can do after that.

Then there are those who say they don't get their magazines within a timely basis. Our suggestion on this matter is this—invariably the subscriber who says this is getting the magazine mailed to him by second-class mail. Those of you who are not paying the extra money that would get the magazine to you on a more timely basis have to wait two—and in some cases, three—weeks before the magazine reaches you—it depends on how far away from our printing plant you are located.

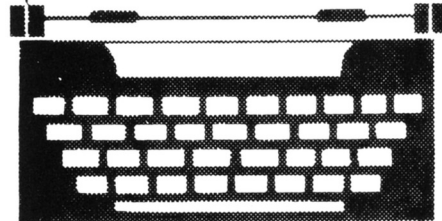
Why second-class mailing takes so long is still a mystery to us here at PLAY METER. The only reasonable explanation the U.S. Post Office has been able to offer us is that since PLAY METER is not a weekly publication, they refuse to move it faster. I guess it's sort of a discrimination in favor of the big guys like *Time* magazine and *Newsweek*.

So don't be overly concerned with the cover date on your issues. That's just something else manufactured by the federal government to give us small businessmen headaches. We insisted with them that it would create a confusion in our readers' minds as to when they're actually receiving their magazines if they required us to print an actual date. But if you've been in business more than thirty days you probably know that your chance of getting any sensible answer out of a federal employee is about the same as it is of snowing in New Orleans in the summertime.



Ralph C. Lally II
Editor and Publisher

Mailbox



Evaluation system

In your March 15, 1979 issue of PLAY METER I read your editorial pertaining to an evaluation and awarding system on all games produced by all manufacturers. I truly appreciate your idea; however there are many complicated matters to consider.

The substantial investment someone would have to make to set up a nationwide or worldwide system would be insurmountable. You and I know this idea is long overdue. It is quite obvious that you do care, and I'm sure that there are many operators that do care but cannot do anymore than I.

As a popular publication, I feel your position can be quite instrumental in helping develop an honest reliable system.

My suggestion would be to encourage a reputable group or persons to invest, manage, and operate a laboratory such as the Consumer Products Laboratory not only to evaluate, but literally to dissect every piece of gaming equipment that is produced and manufactured. A project of this magnitude would be beneficial to the industry because it would and should create more awareness involving technology and craftsmanship, and to expose the manufacturers that are trying to use faulty and unacceptable materials in the production of any equipment. During the last ten years, I've seen my share of unacceptable parts.

The benefits to the operators

would be insurmountable. I have thought of only a few reasons:

(1) To safeguard the operators from the high pressured salesman who is only interested in burning them with junk.

(2) To create a bigger demand for the best equipment thus resulting in a substantial savings to the operator and at the same time, creating more income for the participating operators.

The financial arrangements of a program of this magnitude truly scares the hell out of me, to be quite frank. I feel that the biggest companies would probably cooperate with at least one piece of equipment to this lab, however the inferior companies would not want to participate. Those are the companies that equipment would have to be purchased from.

It is my suggestion that an operator membership be established. Each participating operator would be charged a membership fee (ex. \$500 a year). For the \$500 paid, each operator would receive:

(1) A list of the best equipment produced.

(2) A list of the best equipment produced with specific defective parts.

(3) A list of the companies that will supply a better part for the best equipment thus saving the operator many hours of not only downtime, but also future service calls.

(4) A list of equipment through technology and craftsmanship that are not acceptable.

(5) Troubleshooting procedures on various types of equipment.

This would save operators many hours of needlessly looking for problems. Anyone could pick the best pieces of equipment and give them a rating A,B,C,D, or F; but if there isn't a group that gives solid facts as to why a specific machine is rated A or F, what makes you believe the operators will believe you?

Another thought I had was that I feel your publication shouldn't be used to release this information. The operators that are aggressive and conscientious about their industry and are willing to help finance the suggested lab should be the only ones made aware of the good and

bad equipment.

Thank you.

Michael F. Shaffer
American Vending Company
Clarksburg, West Virginia

Son of Sam revisited

In reply to Jack Guarnieri of Brooklyn (PLAY METER, July 15, 1979), his objections to my use of Son of Sam in a satirical context may be valid, and, as he requested, I apologize to anyone who found it inappropriate ma-

terial.

However, Jack, I don't like to share the rewards of my writing, good or bad, with others, and to assume from my article, as you did, that "operators in this business" have "typically (a) warped, moronic mentality" is a grave injustice to a lot of fine people who have never seen my typewriter.

How about an apology, Jack?

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Coinman of the Month



EMIL MARCET

The pool table, the silent earner, occupies a peculiar place in the coin industry. It's a game, but apparently isn't governed by many of the same principles that dictate the success of the other coin-op games such as pins and videos.

So—while the rest of the games business has been speeding along in a whirlwind with the latest technological advances—the pool table, at its own deliberate pace, keeps on earning day after day. And the only thing that seems to be holding back its earning potential is the reluctance of some operators and location owners to make an advance with their pricing for each game.

For that reason we thought we would interview Emil Marcet of Bay City, Michigan as our Coinman this month, in hopes of learning more about this silent earner.

Emil is 56; his wife's name is Marcella. He has two sons and has been in the industry for twelve years—spending all that time with Valley Manufacturing. Before coming into the coin-op industry, Emil was in the insurance business.

Presently he makes his home in Saginaw, Michigan, having moved there from Bay City. He

has "a whole raft" of hobbies, he told PLAY METER. And then we found out what he meant by raft had to do with water sports—including boating and fishing. He's also quite a competent do-it-yourselfer around the house.

Before moving to Saginaw, Emil was on the Civil Defense, the police reserve, and things of that nature. But since moving away from that area, he hasn't been active in too many other organizations other than his professional commitment to Valley and to the pool table industry in general.

Rather than focusing on the pool table from the operators' viewpoint, we wanted instead to have Emil provide some insight into the pool table market which has been described as a replacement market. We wanted to find out if a replacement market was a no-growth situation or if an industry could still be vital, even though it is dealing generally with replacement pieces.

According to Emil, the pool table market is alive and well, thank you, and he offers some interesting insight into such interesting questions as "whatever happened to bumper pool."

PLAY METER: How would you evaluate the pool table market today, from a manufacturer's point of view?

MARCET: Even though it's felt that the pool table market today is a replacement market, it doesn't mean, from a manufacturing and distributing viewpoint, that we can't do some real hard selling to move more tables. Of course, some people would look at the pool table market today and say it's a no-growth situation, but I don't think that's the case at all. Even though we may feel the pool table market is, generally speaking, a replacement market, we still feel there is something that perhaps we could do in the future which would help us turn this thing around.

PLAY METER: We have seen in the case of other coin-op games where innovations, such as the introduction of solid state technology, have helped open the doors to more locations for more games. Do you think it would take some innovations on the product itself to open more locations to pool tables?

MARCET: First of all, I think that pinball and so forth are just a little bit different from a pool table in this area. But that doesn't mean I think innovations won't come in the pool table market. I think those innovations will come; and they will, no doubt, help the whole market. But actually, with what we've seen so far—with the attempts to marry electronics to pool tables—hasn't really been all that impressive. Yet, still, I think the electronics field can offer some possibilities. One way in which I think it might help us is that it could give the operator a chance to price his pool games according to time play, rather than on each individual rack of fifteen balls. That is, electronics can make it so that a player could actually buy time on a pool table, let's say, something like fifty cents for ten minutes. During that ten-minute span, the table would return all the balls; but, after the time has elapsed, the rack would close and capture all further balls and players would have to buy more time. Exactly how well something like that would work out and whether or not it would actually increase earnings is something I really don't know about. But it would seem to be a genuine application of electronics. I can see where good players would look upon it as a bargain since they might be able to clear the table in a shorter time and get in more games for the same money than some rank beginner who fumbles around and takes quite a while to clear the table.

PLAY METER: What other types of innovations do you think might be able to open up more locations to pool tables?

MARCET: Maybe something that would change the size or format of the game. But I think actually you would find these new types of pool tables would end up going into the same types of locations that already have pool tables. So I don't know if we're really talking about opening up new types of locations, although in the case of bumper pool, I think you'll find that game opened the door for the future sale of pool tables. But now we see that bumper pool has been almost completely replaced by regular six-pocket pool. You see, bumper pool

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“I think that after bumper pool opened the doors for pool, people found out that bumper pool was a little bit harder game than pool because you couldn’t get lucky with a shot as you can do in regular pool”

was an innovation. It was one of the first kind of items that was out there, and it made money.

Then we experienced a transition period where pool tables replaced the bumper pool tables. I think the reason that happened was that after bumper pool opened the doors for pool, people found out that bumper pool was a little bit harder game than pool because you couldn’t get lucky with a shot as you can do in regular pool. You have to shoot gently, with a soft touch, and the fact that pool didn’t have all these refinements and that you can shoot harder—and with a certain degree of success—probably over the long haul showed bumper pool to be perhaps a more difficult game. But, all the same, I think it did its job. It opened the doors for new locations for pool tables. So, what I’m saying is, yes, there might be some innovation in the actual game design that might help the growth of the market, but after awhile I think you’ll always find that all things will return to six-pocket pool.

PLAY METER: A lot has been said about the pool table being the silent earner on the operator’s route. Do you have anything to add in this regard?

MARCET: Well, the pool table is a staple. It’s there, and it’s going to be there every day. It doesn’t ask for that much attention, and it gets to be a nice steady piece for the operator. There’s no flashiness to a pool table as there is to a pingame or video game. It’s just a steady, reliable, good-looking piece that doesn’t require much attention either. Its advantage is that it doesn’t require a lot of service attention like the other pieces.

Now, you’ve got to remember that we’re cognizant of the competition from other games, such as pinball; but, all in all, we feel the pool table is the backbone of an operator’s route because, day in and day out, it does a good job and give a good return on its investment. The other pieces on the route may have more flash. But the fact remains that a pool table is much easier to maintain.

PLAY METER: As you’ve just pointed out, the

pool table is an easy piece to maintain, but do you feel there’s a danger in all this—for the operator, I mean?

MARCET: Yes, exactly, I would say that’s true. Some operators have made pool table maintenance look too easy and, as a result, have ended up losing their pool table locations to other operators or, even worse yet, had their locations buying their own tables. The mistake these operators made was that they made pool table servicing look too simple. But, more than that, they really weren’t doing their job, taking care of the table the way they should have been taking care of it. You see, if an operator goes in there every week and just removes the money from the cash box, he’s leaving himself open to troubles.

There are some things he’s got to do if he wants to hold onto that location—such things as replacing the chalk, checking the cue sticks, making sure all the balls are there, checking to make sure the cloth is clean and serviceable and the table is level. If a table needs a new cloth, the operator should make sure the guy gets a new cloth. All this requires some effort on the operator’s part, but if an operator goes in there and makes it look like there’s no effort at all to servicing a pool table, the location owner is just naturally going to start thinking he could do that himself and get an extra fifty percent of the collections.

PLAY METER: What can be done to speed up the push to fifty cents?

MARCET: Something that can be done at the manufacturing level, and it’s something we’re doing right now, is to send out the tables from the plant with double quarter push chutes as standard. Hopefully, in this way, the operator would be able to keep the pricing that way because, he could explain, that’s the way the tables are coming from the manufacturers these days. Maybe by our acting as a third party here, we might be able to help the operator with this problem. And quarter-per-play pool is a problem. A good reliable pool table, which



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offers a good even game, is priced far too low at 25 cents per game. A coin-operated pool table offers a terrific ten-minute bargain for the entertainment of the customer. And this in itself is justification enough for any price increase an operator might make. Now, even if the operator goes to fifty cent play, he's still going to find himself playing catch-up just to keep pace with inflation.

PLAY METER: What else can an operator do to secure his locations?

MARCET: I think promotions such as tournaments and league play can certainly help here. An operator can probably do better if he formed leagues in his locations. But, actually, leagues and promotions of this sort are designed to make more money for the locations because they can be held on the location's slowest night and help the bar owner increase his business. Now, from this standpoint, the operator gains in two ways—he makes a little more money off his pool table because the players will play more and practice more on his tables. But, more importantly, it shows the location owner how the operator can help him out. Of course, it's already been proved that when an operator is able to get the players on a location involved, he gets their commitment. They'll play the games more often. But the most important thing is that his chances of losing the location—of the location actually going out and buying its own table—is practically nil. So, from that standpoint alone, promotions such as league play are a definite plus for the operator. It was for this reason that Valley was involved in the BCA league championships last year and why we're going to be supporters again this year. We feel everyone who took part in the event benefitted from the promotion.

PLAY METER: What is the most popular table on location today?

MARCET: Well, speaking just for ourselves, it would be the 93-inch table followed closely by the 101-inch table.

PLAY METER: What kind of space does an operator need to accommodate the varying sizes of pool tables?

MARCET: Well, for a seven-foot table, an operator probably needs an area about 12 feet by 15 feet, and for an eight-foot table he probably needs a space about 14 by 17 feet. You can't really get much less than that. Of course, the deciding factor is space. I might add, that some operators think there's an argument to go for an even smaller table—like a six-foot model—even if the space calls for a larger table, because the games would go faster. It would appear better because, if the table is smaller, the players would have a shorter span to shoot. And it follows that the shots would be easier and the game would be over quicker. But there's an argument against this reasoning, and what it is, is that the smaller table just doesn't seem to attract as well as the larger tables do.

PLAY METER: Obviously, from the manufacturer's viewpoint, you must feel an operator holds on

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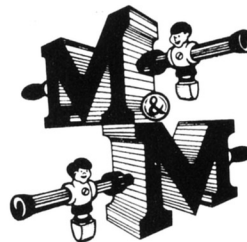
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to his table too long. Right?

MARCET: Yes, that's one of the problems we're having as manufacturers. We're trying to get this replacement thing off dead center. We feel that if an operator would move his tables a little bit quicker and sell them to the homes and purchase new tables more often, it would be another way to show his locations that he's working for them—looking out for their best interests. It would show them that he's not just interested in going in there and cleaning out the cashboxes. It would show a location owner that a pool table is an investment.

And the fact is that the resale value of coin-op pool tables to the home market is fantastic. I don't know what it is about a coin-op table but there's a certain aura about it that makes people want to put them in their basements. After three years of commercial life, an operator could probably recoup around fifty to sixty percent of his original investment by reselling to the home; so I think that's a natural if I ever saw one. And it's not a bad proposition at all. When you think of the resale value of some of the other coin-op pieces after three years time, you realize that a pool table is a good solid investment.

So I think the sale to home markets is a natural if I've ever seen one. I would estimate that about seventy-five percent of the tables are ending up going there right now. Now, I know many operators are getting by keeping their tables longer. They'll recover the tables and they don't look too bad, and the reason for that is that a pool table is made like a tank. But I think if an operator can turn right around and sell that table in a few

years into the home market and recoup much of his original investment—it would go a long way to insure the satisfaction of his locations.

PLAY METER: But with other types of games, when you bring in a new piece, you see your collections go up. Can an operator witness an increase in his collections if he buys a new pool table?

MARCET: Again, it's a different theory we're working with with pool tables. What happens is that with another type of game—such as a video or pingame—the players will play it for awhile and get tired of it. But this isn't the case with a pool table. Sure, a new table might increase play somewhat, but I don't think you can say it would double collections or anything like that. I feel the purchase of a pool table is more or less a psychological thing—it shows the location that you're looking out for him. It's a good answer to that always asked question: “What have you done for me lately?”

PLAY METER: What impact do you think the dollar coin will have on the pool table?

MARCET: It depends if the dollar coin idea ever gets off the ground. But, assuming that it does, there should be no problem for the operator in including that in his pricing of pool tables. This is an area where I think electronics could really help out because, with a dollar coin a player could buy more time on a pool table. We're looking into that area right now, but I'm afraid that unless the dollar coin's acceptance picks up, this may not turn out to be a reality.

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three exciting new models: The Tempo high styled jukebox, the Tempo-Disco which has all the makings of a complete disco complete with flashing lights in about 18 cubic feet of space and the Prelude, combining the best of classic and contemporary styling in a jukebox that looks great everywhere.

New sound.

Here the story is even more dramatic. These jukeboxes deliver higher volume levels and better tone quality than any other units on the market. They do it via an incredible new speaker system, powered by more

true watts than any competitive system. This minimizes distortion, feedback, and other problems usually associated with high volume operation.

It all means that we do more than make it loud. We make it great.

The price is right.

But better looking and listening aren't the end of our new jukeboxes. We've also re-designed the pricing procedure. Gone are charts, switches and calculations. In their place are a brand-new Rowe innovation: Plug-in pricing chips. Just plug them in, and you're all set.



Control center.

The "brain" behind our new jukeboxes is an improved central microprocessor that controls all functions.

The benefits of this new arrangement are both numerous and astonishing. For one, the unit can now play both sides of a record (assuming both were selected), in succession.

In addition, we have enhanced the capabilities of our Memorec unit. Not only will it give you the most (or least) selected records, in descending order, it displays total selections since last reset, provides an instant display of the number of plays on any individual selection and also shows total money intake since last reset.

Increased play.

In order to maximize your income from these new Rowe

jukeboxes, we've designed them to stimulate play.

There's a new "Most Popular Record" flashing display that advertises that particular location's biggest hit. Put in your money, push the "Most Popular Record" button and the ma-



chine plays the location's biggest hits (from #1 on down) until credit runs out.

Big five-year guarantee.

Through all our improvement, we haven't lost sight of serviceability or reliability. Diagnostic LEDs help pinpoint problems. Support modules can be replaced in seconds. And we've kept all servicing up front, where it should be.

No wonder we've been able to continue to give these new jukeboxes a five-year guarantee on all moving parts. (The best in the business).

Sounds great.

Now that you've read this ad with your ears (and eyes), you'll have to agree that our new jukeboxes sound pretty good. Why not get all the details from your local distributor?

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AMOA triples JB Award categories

(But will the recording industry acknowledge the honors?)

By tripling the number of awards it gives to the performers of the year's top jukebox hits—the industry's national association, the AMOA, has developed a whole new JB (jukebox) Awards program.

The project of expanding the JB Awards categories to fifteen, together with the selection of the finalists in each of those categories, was undertaken by the national association's awards committee.

In the past, only five JB Awards were given annually; those included artist of the year, record of the year, pop, soul, and country records of the year.

The expansion of the categories appears to indicate an initiative on the AMOA's part to recognize the new and diverse talents emerging in the recording industry today.

With programs such as the JB Awards, the AMOA and member jukebox operators have apparently been trying to show their appreciation to the songwriters and performers of the jukebox hits. However, the response from the recording industry (which is entangled through the performing rights societies in copyright battles with the AMOA) has been less than enthusiastic. The winners of the JB Awards rarely appear to claim their awards but delegate instead a manager or recording studio executive to pick up the award, say "Thank You," apologize for the no-show, and explain that the performer would have attended except for "other commitments."

Maybe with the expansion of the categories, however, this streak of no-shows will somehow be broken.

The fifteen categories and finalists in each of those categories are as follows:

Most Promising New Talent of the Year

John Conlee (ABC Records)
Rickie Lee Jones (Warner Brothers)
Christy Lane (GRT)
David Naughton (NSO)
Anita Ward (Juana/TK)

Pop Record of the Year

"Three Times a Lady," Commodores (Motown)
"Music Box Dancer," Frank Mills (Polydor)
"Do You Think I'm Sexy," Rod Stewart (Warner Brothers)
"Hot Stuff," Donna Summer (Casablanca)

Pop Male Artist of the Year

Billy Joel (Columbia)
Kenny Rogers (United Artists)
Rod Stewart (Warner Brothers)

Pop Female Artist of the Year

Gloria Gaynor (Polydor)
Anne Murray (Capitol)
Olivia Newton-John (MCA)
Donna Summer (Casablanca)

Country Record of the Year

"Every Which Way But Loose," Eddie Rabbitt (Elektra)
"The Gambler," Kenny Rogers (United Artists)
"Don't Take It Away," Conway Twitty (MCA)

Country Male Artist of the Year

Willie Nelson (RCA)
Kenny Rogers (United Artists)
Mel Tillis (RCA)

Country Female Artist of the Year

Crystal Gayle (United Artists)
Barbara Mandrell (MCA)
Dolly Parton (RCA)

Rock Record of the Year

"Hearts of Glass," Blondie (Chrysalis)
"My Sharona," The Knack (Capitol)
"Miss You," Rolling Stones (Atlantic)
"Logical Song," Supertramp (A&M)

Rock Group of the Year

Bee Gees (RSO)
Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)
Kiss (Casablanca)
Rolling Stones (Atlantic)
Supertramp (A&M)

Soul Record of the Year

"Three Times a Lady," Commodores (Motown)
"Shame," Evelyn King (RCA)
"Reunited," Peaches & Herb (Polydor)
"YMCA," Village People (Casablanca)
"Ring My Bell," Anita Ward (Juana-TK)

Soul Male Artist of the Year

Rick James (Motown)
Teddy Pendergrass (Philadelphia International)

Soul Female Artist of the Year

Evelyn King (RCA)
Donna Summer (Casablanca)
Anita Ward (Juana/TK)

Record of the Year—All Categories

"Three Times a Lady," Commodores (Motown)
"The Gambler," Kenny Rogers (United Artists)
"She Believes in Me," Kenny Rogers (United Artists)
"YMCA," Village People (Casablanca)

Artist of the Year—All Categories

Eddie Rabbitt (Elektra)
Kenny Rogers (United Artists)
Donna Summer (Casablanca)

Disco Record of the Year

"Does Your Mother Know," ABBA (Atlantic)
"LE Freak," Chic (Atlantic)
"Hot Stuff," Donna Summer (Casablanca)
"YMCA," Village People (Casablanca)



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REWORK — REPAIR — TOOLING for ELECTRONICS

Economist scheduled to deliver keynote at AMOA convention

Dr. William C. Freund, senior vice president and chief economist for the New York Stock Exchange, will deliver the keynote speech at this year's AMOA convention.

The AMOA's exhibit prospectus for the November 9-11 show is most noticeable by its inclusion of a beefed up seminar offering. This year the show will present three seminar sessions in an effort "to embark on a program of more educational sessions for operators during the annual Exposition," said the AMOA newsletter.

The "All-Industry Seminar" is scheduled for the opening day of Expo '79, Friday from 9:00 a.m. till noon. Dr. Freund will speak during the first half of that seminar, and treat the topic "What lies ahead for American business?"

Following a coffee break, the second half of the seminar will feature a panel discussion with Freund, Russell Mawdeley, and John Trucano fielding questions.



Dr. William C. Freund

Two mini-seminars are set for Saturday and Sunday mornings before the exhibit floor opens. Topics for these seminars are still under consideration.

In addition to his duties with the

New York Stock Exchange, Freund sits on the governor's economic policy council in New Jersey and acts as a trustee for the Baruch School of the City University of New York and the New Jersey Council on economic education. He is also a professor of finance at Pace University. Freund serves on numerous other committees and yet has found time to author the book *Investment Fundamentals* and to write a series of professional articles, including regular contributions to the *Journal of Corporate Accounting and Finance*.

Prior to the opening of Expo '79, state association representatives will confer under the guidance of a three man committee—Melvin Pearlman of Cleveland will chair the committee and Raymond Schroth of Hermiston, Oregon and Kem Thom of Chicago will sit as committee members. State association members are being invited to exchange ideas on the development and function of the grass roots organizations.

Canadian operator plans to fight City Hall ... all the way to the Supreme Court

In Ontario, Canada, Domenico Martino is taking his case all the way to the Supreme Court.

Martino has opened an arcade on Main Street in Stouffville in the province of Ontario, and although the building which houses the arcade is zoned commercial and allowed to

contain places of entertainment and recreation, a bylaw passed just before Martino opened has prohibited him from getting a license to operate his business.

According to the Toronto Daily Star, Douglass Crane, Martino's attorney, contends that the bylaw

was slipped in in a direct attempt to halt Martino's opening. He wants the Supreme Court to quash the bylaw and direct the town to give Martino a license.

Crane's objections to the Supreme Court will ride on three points:

1. The Ontario Municipal Act won't support a zoning bylaw that is prohibitive.
2. A town can't prohibit a business unless it is given express power to do so.
3. A town can't discriminate between pinball arcades and other entertainment places.

The bylaw was voted into effect after the town council received a petition signed by thirteen area residents opposing the parlor. The petition states: "We feel that this type of establishment would disrupt the immediate area and be detrimental to the other businesses."

A former building inspector by the name of Fudge cooked up a report for the council urging more stringent control on pinball arcades.

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There's no ref in pool. Cue stick attacks on a coin mechanism generally put the table out of action. But the UBI drop chute can take it. We have operator reports of over 100,000 plays on a



NY Giant JON MENDENHALL is "slated" for a painful hand.

single energizer. There's no "pusher" to bend out of shape. All 15 balls release automatically. And if anything does go wrong, the entire mechanism is in a drawer that can be replaced in seconds without costly or time consuming service calls.

BUILT YES, PRETTY NO

Our all plywood bulk-headed construction means more on location than just good looks. Screws hold better. Glue penetrates and holds better. So when push comes to shove, heaven help pressed wood imitations. And while no one ever whistled at our chrome steel legs, UBI's solid construction will stay that way long after the beauty contest is over.



All Pro NY Giant JACK GREGORY proves plywood is stronger than man.

DEBRIS OR NOT DEBRIS

There's always some clown who sinks an empty beer can in the corner pocket. A lot of tables would have to

be dismantled to retrieve our friend's debris. Not the UBI table.

The runways have openings to allow chalk and small objects like bottle caps to fall through. There are four large access openings in the bottom of the table that allow easy removal of larger

objects—like beer cans.



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North Dakota operators form new association

Proclaiming an era of better communication between the state's operators, several North Dakota music and amusement businesses have organized a new state association, the North Dakota Coin Machine Operators Association.

Although the fledgling organization currently lists just fifteen members on its roll, that number represents nearly half of the state's operators and between 75 and 80 percent of the machines in North Dakota locations.

Tom Bennett, a Bismarck operator, told PLAY METER that too much in-fighting among operators in the state has been detrimental to the entire business there. "It has been difficult getting started, but we have the support of some of the largest operators in the state and they are helping others to realize that we need better communication," Bennett offered.

To protect the industry against restrictive state legislation, one of the first moves initiated by the new association was to retain the services of Tom Woodmansee, a lobbyist who already looks out for the beverage, food, and lodging interests in the North Dakota legislature.

Bennett and his associates were

spurred to form the association after observing the successes of their neighbors to the south. "The South Dakota state association is a very strong one," contends Bennett.

"Each year they sponsor an 8-ball tournament that gets tremendous participation, and only locations with operators' tables can participate. This leads to players insisting that locations hold such equipment.

"We'd like to accomplish something like that here in North Dakota, and we're very interested in a similar promotion with Tournament Soccer. When we talked with TS's Lee Peppard, he told us our first step was to 'get an association.'"

Such an association will also serve, Bennett hopes, to make it easier for operators to shuffle equipment back and forth to each other, and to provide the kinds of savings that can be realized through efforts like collective buying.

The North Dakota Association is commandeered by a seven man board of directors who recently appointed the association's first set of officers. Rolf Severinson will act as president, Cal Baeder as vice president, and Margo Bennett, Tom's wife, will undertake the duties of secretary-treasurer.

Ordinance violation hurts New Jersey operators

The breaking of an organized conspiracy in West New York, New Jersey might lead to the repeal of the pinball licensing statutes there, according to information in an article in the September 6 edition of the *Thursday Dispatch*.

In 1978, Bert Glaser and Irving Halpirin of Jersey Amusement both pleaded guilty to charges of attempting to bribe a West New York police officer to allow "illegal" machines to flow into the city.

The bribery attempts stemmed from the existence of a \$1500 license fee to operate amusement machines in the city. "Jersey Amusement secured a license and became a placement broker for about sixteen other companies who did not have licenses," according to the newspaper account. Patrolman Daniel Kelly discovered the activity, which reportedly had been going on for over ten years, when he took over

the licensing department in 1976. A two year investigation included Kelly's attendance at certain meetings with Glaser and Halpirin, one of which involved a payment to him of \$210 in cash and a promise of \$500 more if Kelly would keep quiet about the activity.

Now the city commission is looking into the possibility of changing the restrictive fee. Currently under consideration is a per machine tax of \$150. This is a reduction of an initial proposal to tax each game \$250. West New York operator Harold Silverstein testified before the commission that the \$250 fee would be inordinately excessive in light of the fact that some machines only make fifteen dollars a week. He also charged that the fee would be illegal because license fees could not be used to raise revenue, and enforcing the ordinance would not cost \$250 per amusement piece.

Vic Rye fired by AMOA board

The AMOA has released Vic Rye from his duties as assistant executive vice president. Rye had been with the Chicago staff for one year.

Rye had been intimately connected with all of the major developments within the organization recently and praised for his dedicated efforts.

"We made some changes and Vic wanted more responsibility than we could give him at this time," Fred Granger told PLAY METER.

Prior to his employment with the AMOA, Rye had served the Association of American Railroads for seventeen years. It is expected that he will stay in the field of association work, though he has made no decisive plans as yet.

Florida employers get a break

Florida's employers are pleased to hear that the Florida legislature has passed a new workers' compensation bill designed to reduce the state's high premiums.

Employers' payments will be reduced fifteen percent, or \$150 million from what this year's payments would have been had the measure not been passed. The billion dollars in state compensation premiums would have been absorbed by the state's 117,000 employers. Before passage of the new regulation, Florida's premiums were the fifth highest in the nation.

"What the legislators gave the state's 400,000 workers injured annually is a mixed bag of benefits that provides more for the seriously injured," reported the Florida Amusement and Vending Association. "And, if it works as planned, the system will almost eliminate the dependence on attorneys (by forcing a worker to pay all his legal fees if he sues for higher benefits) and reduce the subjectivity of impairment ratings given by doctors. Backers of the law say those two areas alone should save millions of dollars in excess benefits paid and result in lower premiums."

The bill's co-author, Senator MacKay, contends that the new law will "reduce benefits for seven percent of the cases and increase (benefits) for 93 percent of the cases...and by my arithmetic, that's a square deal."

BMI reports royalty increases for members, 'efficiency' and 'healthy licensing' are the reasons

Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) has announced that its affiliates enjoyed substantial royalty increases for the third and fourth quarters of 1978. Executives of the organization also indicated that continued good licensing income and operating efficiencies should combine to reflect these same increases for the first quarter of 1979.

Statements for the quarters indicated increases as follows:

All plateau performance monies increased by 35 percent; base rates for television theme and background performance monies increased an additional 30 percent, up from a previous 15 percent increase; a 50 percent increase in U.S. television prime time feature performance base rates remained in effect.

In addition, third quarter checks

awarded increased payments to TV themes of network prime time shows broadcast in excess of 26 weeks. Fourth quarter payments afforded these same increases to themes of such shows broadcast in excess of 13 weeks.

Based upon BMI's payment schedule, a song would normally have to attain 100,000 U.S. broadcast performances to qualify for a payment double the base rate. For these third and fourth quarters, however, this requirement was reduced to 50,000 performances. The requirement of 500,000 performances to qualify for payment at 2½ times the base rate was reduced to 300,000 performances.

BMI is the only licensing organization to guarantee the minimum rates it will pay for radio and television

performances of the works it licenses. BMI's most recent payment schedule, issued in June 1977, noted that as a non-profit making organization, BMI distributes "all available income from all sources by a voluntary increase in some or all of the rates described for commercial radio and television performances in any quarter in which additional income is available."

In discussing the increased royalties for the quarters in question, Theodora Zavin, BMI senior vice president, Performing Rights, noted that "these payments were made possible by healthy licensing income and a continued stress upon operating efficiency during these periods. All indications seem to point to similar increased payments for the first quarter of 1979.

Pinball art contest draws large response

The staff of *Starlog* magazine is afraid to come to work these days. If overburdened postmen don't throttle them, there's a good chance they'll be buried under falling stacks of amateur art work.

The problem is a contest *Starlog* is co-sponsoring with Bally Manufacturing Company—a contest to design a science fiction-themed pinball game. Top prize is Bally's new *Star Trek* machine and 200 other prizes consist of *Star Trek* merchandise tied into the release of the long-awaited motion picture, due in December.

"We knew there were artists

among our readers," says Kerry O'Quinn, who publishes the science fiction magazine along with Norman Jacobs, "but we were completely unprepared for this flood of entries." Packages of all shapes and sizes have been arriving at better than 100 a day—some crayon drawings, some full oil paintings on canvas.

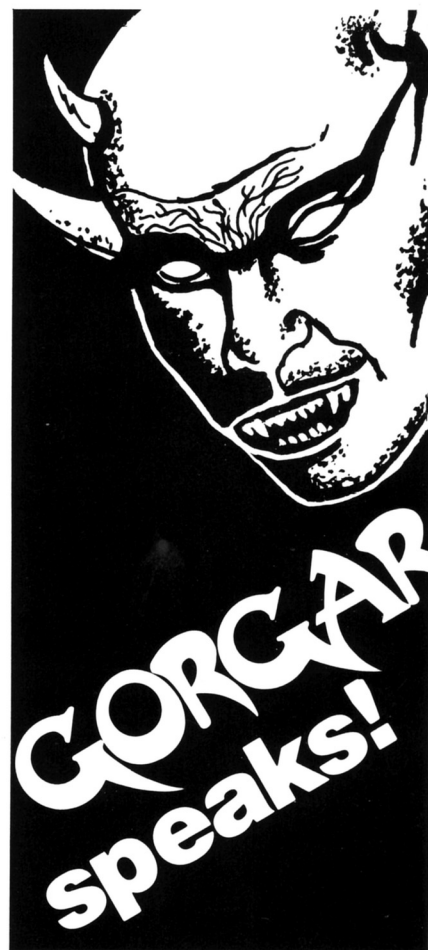
But relief was at hand; deadline for contest entries was September 14. Now the *Starlog* staff is sorting through thousands of designs to pick finalists; the Bally art staff will select the winners, and they will be featured in an article in the December issue of *Starlog*.

NAMA publishes directory

Some 2,400 companies and branches which are members of the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA), including vending and foodservice management firms, vending machine manufacturers, and suppliers of products and services, are listed in the 1979 Directory of Members which was published this month.

Organized by states and cities, the

operating company roster also includes the names and addresses of local headquarters of national and regional operating companies. Company name, address, and phone number are given for each listing. Operating company information includes the types of services and products offered by the firm and whether it maintains a food production commissary.



Play Meter Equipment Poll

Here are the October results of PLAY METER's subscriber survey ranking pinball and video games. Rankings are compared with games' standings in last month's poll.

Top Pins

OCTOBER	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	SEPTEMBER
1. FLASH/Williams.....	1	(tie) HOT HAND/Stern.....	9
2. KISS/Bally.....	4	(tie) PHOENIX/Williams.....	8
3. PARAGON/Bally.....	5	13. MATA HARI/Bally.....	10
4. PLAYBOY/Bally.....	3	14. STAR TREK/Bally.....	6
5. SUPERMAN/Atari.....	2	15. TOTOM/Gottlieb.....	—
6. COUNT-DOWN/Gottlieb.....	12	16. DRACULA/Stern.....	16
7. EIGHT BALL/Bally.....	14	17. PINBALL POOL/Gottlieb.....	20
8. LOST WORLD/Bally.....	11	18. SPACE RIDER/Atari.....	—
9. SUPERSONIC/Bally.....	7	19. (tie) HERCULES/Atari.....	16
10. (tie) SHARPSHOOTER/Game Plan.....	—	(tie) WORLD CUP/Williams.....	—

Top Videos

OCTOBER	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	SEPTEMBER
1. SPACE INVADERS/Midway.....	1	6. SPACE WARS/Cinematronics.....	6
2. FOOTBALL/Atari.....	2	7. BASKETBALL/Atari.....	10
3. SPRINT II/Atari.....	3	8. STAR HAWK/Cinematronics.....	8
4. (tie) STAR FIRE/Exidy.....	5	9. CRASH/Exidy.....	9
(tie) HEAD ON/Gremlin.....	4	10. SEA WOLF II/Midway.....	10

The PLAY METER subscriber survey of pinball and video games will be a regular feature in subsequent PLAY METER publications. If you would like to join readers currently participating in the survey, simply fill out the coupon below and return it to PLAY METER.

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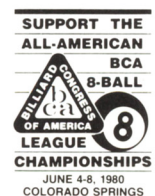
- PUSH CHUTE COIN MECHANISM
50¢ play standard;
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United Coin Machine of Brisbane is not giving away the plane but a trip on one to the AMOA Show this year.

AMOA trip offered as grand prize

United Coin Machine Company of Brisbane in Australia has devised a promotion that will result in a lucky couple getting a paid trip to the AMOA convention.

United has been joined in the promotion by Qantas Airlines. The airline is hopeful that operators will travel to Chicago for the show as a group.

Entitled "The USA Coin Machine Tour," the promotion is available to

those who have purchased a Bally pin from United Coin. One chance is earned each time a qualified operator buys a new flipper game from the distributor. Half and quarter chances can be earned on the purchase of used games.

The winning operator will receive two round trip tickets to Chicago from Australia and all accommodations will also be paid for the lucky couple.

Legal action fund climbing slowly

The AMOA Legal Action Fund has issued its latest update. Monies raised now reach nearly \$80,000, nearly half of which has already been spent on legal fees in AMOA's suit against the Copyright Royalty Tribunal over the location list ruling. The AMOA goal is \$250,000.

In an effort to spur more contributions, the AMOA has offered

a list of contributors for publication. The list includes some 240 operators and a sample of distributors. Joining the operators' efforts to grapple successfully with the CRT, some manufacturers have begun to make contributions. To date Rock-Ola, Rowe International, Valley, Gottlieb, and Sunbird corporations have all given to the fund.

Australian tariff under fire

Editorializing that "the monster of protectionism is now loose in our industry and could run amuck like the proverbial bull in a china shop," the Australian Amusement Machine Operators Association magazine *Muse* unleashed its attack on a new tariff structure that will add 41 percent to the cost of imported American machines.

The tariff is intended to protect the Australian manufacturing industry, but the association is objecting that no proper look was given the pingame production industry in Australia before the tariff rate was set. It contends that local production runs of machines are insignificant and that such production is only a duplication of American efforts.

Suggestions that the operators could afford the increased prices were also ballyhooed by the journal:

"Ideas that a \$1,000 price hike is O.K. need no comment—they are just too silly for words. Hints about a hidden know-how deserve only skepticism."

The suggestion to increase the tariff is the essence of a report compiled by Australia's Industries Assistance Commission in December, 1978. The IAC reportedly has heard evidence from operators and manufacturers since the release of that initial report and is preparing a final report on the subject to be submitted to the government later this year.



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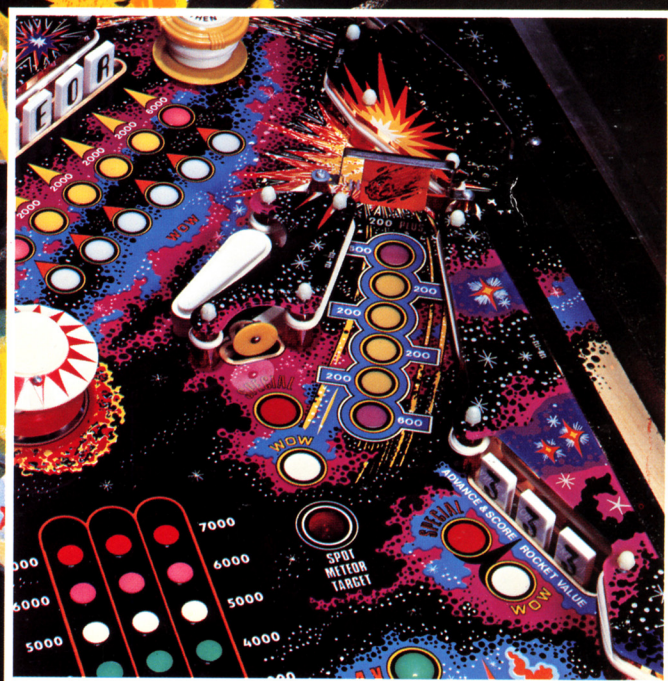
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Some thoughts on operating a pool table

By Mike Shaw

**It all boils down
to keeping the
locations from
thinking "Why don't
I just go ahead
and buy one?"**

Although the pool table has been revered as one of the best collection amusement pieces in the industry, it remains the most neglected item in the operator's repertoire. The only reasonable assumption to make about that enigmatic circumstance is that the pool table is so sturdy a piece it lends itself to being ignored.

The problem with allowing a pool table to sit in a location for an extended period of time without attention is twofold.

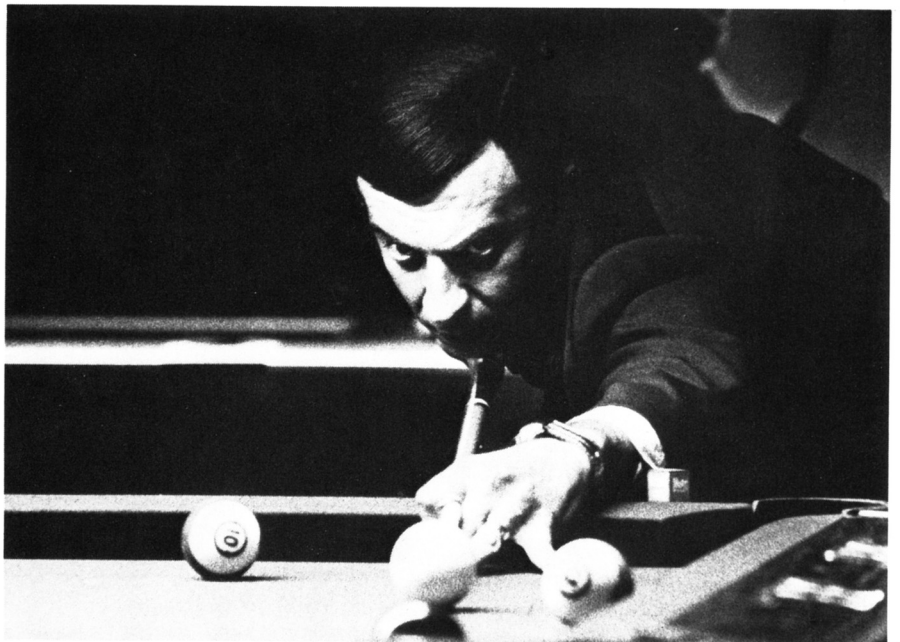
First, the actual appearance of an operator's machines is a significant matter of public relations. A location owner identifies the character of your business by the appearance of your machines. Pool tables—or indeed any of the machines you place in a location—that are dirty or scuffed present a bad image for your operation. And it is the most immediate and consistent image with

which the owner identifies you. He may see you as much as once a week, but he sees that table every time he walks through his place of business.

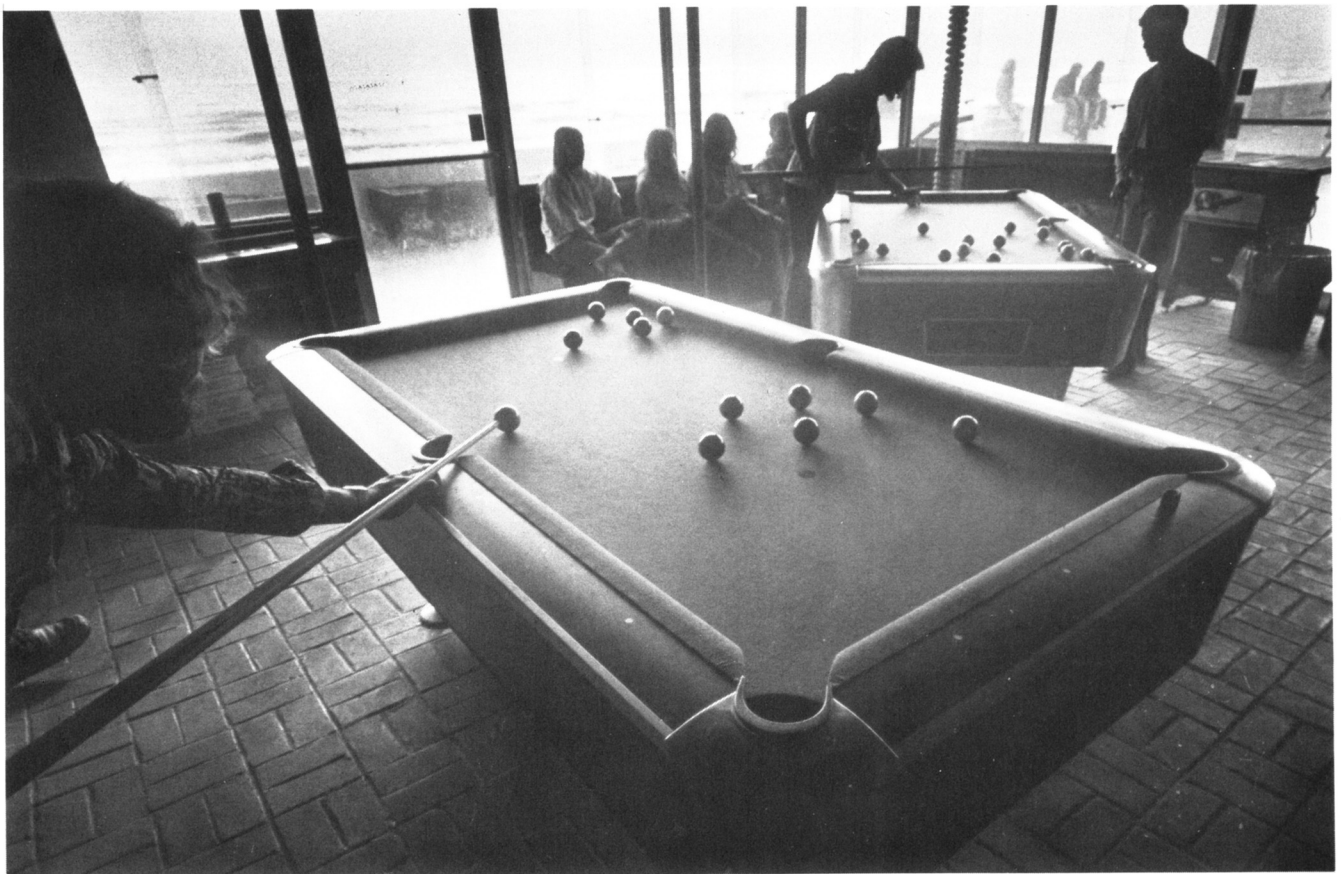
And unkempt pieces do not attract player attention like well cared for tables do. A nicely brushed and cleaned cloth supported by a polished table body draws the attention of a pool fanatic like a Christmas tree.

Secondly, an unattended pool table puts unholy thoughts in the mind of a location owner. "If that thing is so easy to operate," he'll eventually reason, "why don't I just buy one?" And perhaps he should.

On the other hand, if an operator takes a little time to adopt some of the following suggested procedures on table set up and maintenance, he can actually demonstrate his value to the location. To take it one step



Serious players expect tables to be in near perfect condition.



Creative spacing can provide for a more appealing look and better playing conditions.

further, operators who extend this kind of service report that they rarely, if ever, lose a location.

Getting it there

When it comes time for Laurel and Hardy to get your tables from one place to another, you probably hold your breath and get ready to record another deduction. But a few simple suggestions might help alleviate some of the destruction.

In order to best transport pool tables, the operator should have the following equipment: some hydraulic lift mechanism (preferably attached to the unloading area of the transport vehicle), a dolly (large and sturdy enough to easily support the weight and size of a pool table), and skids (two steel tracks on which the dolly can travel over curbs, steps, etc.).

Rest the table on its side on the dolly and elevate it into the truck via the lift. When disembarking, utilize the same procedure in reverse. The skids can be laid to adjoin the lift bed with the floor of the location. The lift should be positioned in as level a posture as possible with the surface the table is to be rolled to. The rails, of course, are set to accommodate the distance between the wheels on the dolly.

There are probably almost as many ways of moving pool tables as there are operators who move them.

For instance, one creative operator, Bill Poland of Forest City, Arkansas, has created what he calls an Easy Mover pool table handling device. The Easy Mover is a durable frame that weighs less than a hundred pounds and completely protects the table while it is being moved. It is fitted to a table while the table is in normal, set up position. When holding rods and sliding panels are strapped into place, the table is turned on its side where it rides six wheels to wherever it is pushed or pulled. The device was specifically designed by Poland to protect the table as it caroms off walls, squeezes through doorways, bounces down stairs, or bumps across the city in the back of a truck.

Setting it up

Once the table is safely in the location, you must decide where you will place it. The definitive rule here is to place the machine in a position where it will get the most play. An area of heavy traffic, where customers must travel from time to time (like en route to the bathrooms) is a must. Of course, many location owners will already have a designated spot for the table, but it is to your and his best interest to have the table in prominent display.

To enhance the positioning, and appeal, of the table, an attractive

lighting set-up is recommended. You can use some creativity here, but it is essential to remember that proper lighting is required by players who take the game seriously, the players that will put the most money into the table. So use a hanging lamp that has some character (a bare bulb dangling from the ceiling is both detracting and dangerous), and yet provides between 100 and 150 watts of direct illumination. Remember also that lighting fixtures that hang closely over the table are likely to get slapped from time to time by slashing cue sticks, so choose a protective lamp that is unbreakable.

You might think of your table as a stage. Your stage lights should highlight the play and enhance the action.

Setting up the table also requires a consideration of distances. Ideally, a table should be the length of a standard cue (57 inches) plus six inches from a wall, bar, or other restrictive impediment. Again, ideally, the distance should also be maintained between tables.

Unfortunately, the ideal is a rarity. Limitations in available space within the location, or a desire to cram more tables into a given area often call for some hedging in spacing. An operator can cut corners by furnishing the location with smaller cue sticks in tighter areas, or he might

consider using a slightly smaller table. But it is important not to get too greedy. Most serious players prefer standard size tables (44 inches by 88 inches). So, as a general rule, it is best, whenever possible, to use the standard table and cheat a bit on the spacing. But never cheat more than fifteen inches. That is, always maintain at least four feet between tables or from table to wall.

Getting it straight

Levelling the table can be accomplished more or less scientifically, depending on the experience of the leveler.

The most secure way to level a table is by employing a carpenter's level. Use the level on the floor to coordinate the adjustments for the ends of the table first. Then level the sides. When floor levelling is satisfactory, use the level like the hand of a clock at the center of the top of the table. Start with the level aiming at twelve o'clock and rotate the level clockwise to determine any irregularities. The table can then be readjusted to suit the lie of the playing surface. This will upset your floor levelling, but the playfield is of course the significant consideration.

A less scientific way to level pool tables is employed by some of the more experienced pool table operators. As is often the case, the old "manual" way of doing things is much more impressive to the fans who admiringly attend your set up.

Hold an object ball (not the cue ball: the magnet could be off center and make it roll funny) about six to eight inches above the rail at either end of the table. Drop the ball onto the rail and watch it roll in a direct line to the other end of the table and return in its track. If it does this, you can forget the carpenter's level and spend the rest of your free time explaining what you just did to your appreciative fans.

Maintain thy tables and keep thy location

Although this part of the procedure falls last chronologically, it is really first in importance. Consistent attention to the table will be the single most important factor in keeping the location owner from getting the idea that he should buy his own table. Also, the maintenance and care of the product is that element which, in reality, makes the presence of the operator in this scheme of things valid. And in most instances, the attention required to keep things in shape is minimal.

Always allow some time to deal with the equipment when you make your collection calls. Check the basics first. There should be sufficient

chalk and powder on hand and the area those condiments occupy should be clean and well ordered.

Continue to check the other peripheral equipment. Cues should be inspected for breaks and bad or worn tips. Replace any cues that can't be used effectively and always be sure that the location has two or three spares (in addition to a six cue rack for each table) that are kept in a back office. Examine the cue ball. It will probably need to be cleaned (chalk marks are the predominant problem), and you can either do that or, more impressively, replace the ball with a shiny substitute you brought for the occasion.


Use a cleaner to spruce up the looks and playability of things. Cleaning the cloth should be preceded and followed by brushing the entire cloth surface including the rails and crevices. A suggested ball and cloth cleaner is made by D&R Industries, is called Ball and Cloth Cleaner, and works as a spray, foaming when dispersed to restore color and remove chalk marked.

Keeping a shop

The foregoing suggestions require little time or investment and provide for the kind of service that will enable any operator to keep his locations in his corner. But, for the operator who deals extensively with these high profit pieces, it is often advisable that he maintain a repair shop. Bill Nemgar of D&R Star of Rochester, Minnesota says that in his shop "two men can recondition a table, inside and out, in about an hour and a half." Nemgar uses, almost strictly, Valley tables, so that he can replace tables that need work with the same model. As he runs his tables through the reconditioning process, he always has one or two ready as replacement pieces.

These suggestions of course are just that. Ideas that can be used as a basis for your own methods of providing your caretaking service to your locations.

Whether or not you find it useful to maintain a repair shop, it is proven that the pool table operator must provide the kind of service we have talked about here to keep his location. True, the table is nearly maintenance free, and needs, most often, only cosmetic care. But without it, the table's reggedness can be, paradoxically, the operator's worst enemy, a fact elucidated by the statistic that the pool table reigns as the one piece of equipment that is most often purchased by a location. In light of that statistic, it is truly amazing that the pool table is also the most neglected piece of equipment on location.



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GORGAR
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A step-by-step approach to recovering your pool table

By Mike Shaw



Your finished product [above] should be tight and even across the slate, neither bunched nor doubled at the pocket and rails. [Opposite page, from top to bottom] Prepare the slate for its new cover by washing it with a soap and water solution. After laying the felt, you must cut the felt so it will lie easily and smoothly around the edge of the circular pocket. And while you have the chance, with the slate lifted, clean the ball pathways and make sure the pockets are unscarred.

*Here's to the pool table,
Sturdiest of pieces;
The length of its life
Makes for profit from its leases.*

The pool table may be virtually indestructable, but to keep the table playable, and profitable, it has to be maintained; and the most demanding aspect of that maintenance is recovering the slate bed and rails.

The art of recovering is a skillful effort, and certain precepts need to be followed to insure a successful recovering job, one that leaves the felt tight and even across the slate, neither bunched nor doubled at the points of most difficult application, the pockets and rails.

Slate beds can be removed and recovered on location, but the work is more easily accomplished at the operator's shop. Rails are ordinarily much too difficult to handle with manual tools on location, and if an operator is intent on changing the felt on the table bed on location, he should bring a set of rails already recovered.

Once the rails are removed and the slate bed is lifted from the body of the table, it can be placed across the top of the table or, in the shop, across wooden horses, to be worked on.

Remove the old felt and prepare the slate for its new cover by washing it with a soap and water solution. Nicks or gashes in the slate should be filled with Bondo to insure the surface to be completely smooth. Do not use plaster of paris or other

substances that might crack or powder later. Any old glue remaining where previous felt was held down should be sprayed with a solvent and removed.

When the slate bed is clean, pull the new felt over the slab and cut it so that there are about six inches of felt extending over each end and side of the slate. The felt should be set so that only one side and one end has to be cut. If the felt is rolled from its bolt, only the felt on the side to be cut that extends past the six inches desired extension will be left over. This felt can, most often, be used for covering rails.

Act first to secure the cloth at one end of the table. To do so, fold back the cloth to reveal about two inches of slate. Spray the exposed slate and the turned back, underneath portion of the felt with contact-type spray glue. A light film of glue is sufficient. Be sure to spray the edge or side of the slate. Roll down the felt over the slate and secure the glued portions of smoothing your hand across the felt. Again, be sure to attend the edge of the board.

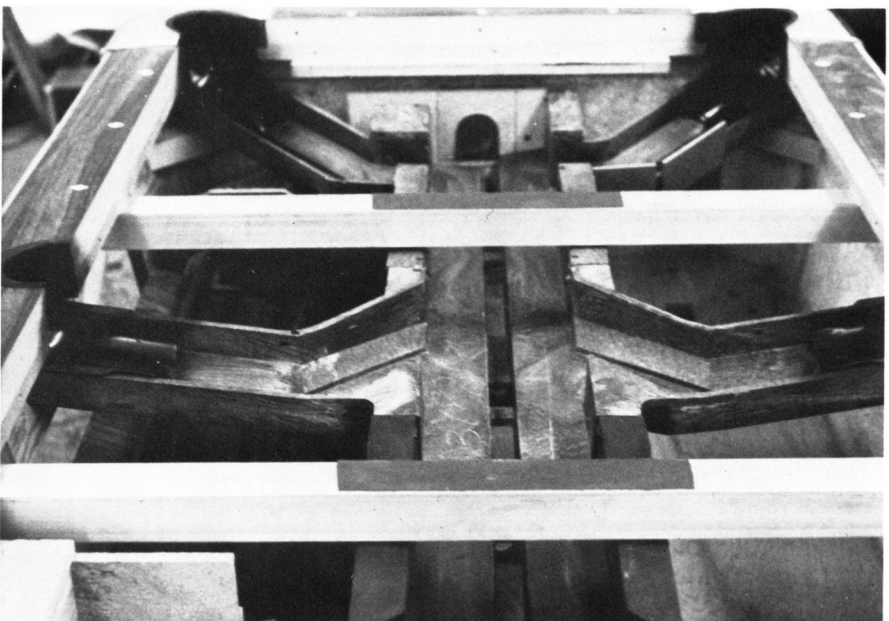
When the felt is secure and smooth on one end, apply a similar treatment to both sides of the table, and then to the other end. As each small section of the final end is being glued to the board, it should be pulled tight, so tight the cloth can not be lifted, even slightly, from the table.

Now you can approach the pockets, with the realization that these are difficult to cover correctly and that the real artistry of covering the table begins here.

Take a razor blade and slit the felt at the edge of the pockets. Start the cut slightly below the part of the felt that will cover the edge of the slate board (so as not to have the cut in the felt reveal any slate). Slant the cut toward the center of the table end. When both edges of the pockets are cut on one end of the table, you can spray underneath the slate and secure the cut piece of felt to the bottom of the board. Perform a similar operation to the rest of the felt that surrounds the table and you will be left with only the narrow pieces of felt that will cover the pockets hanging in place.

Now you must cut the felt so that it will lie easily and smoothly around the edge of the circular pocket. To accomplish this, begin by cutting the felt at the edge of the pockets in an angle opposite to the one used earlier with the idea of having a diamond shaped piece of felt hanging in front of the pocket. Again be sure to start your cut below the part of the felt that will cover the edge of the slate.

You can now take your diamond





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shaped piece of felt and inflict two or three more cuttings—these should be vertical—in it. These cuts too should start below the part of the felt that will cover the slate edge. Then simply lay each strip straight back to the underneath of the table. (As a precaution against players who might reach in the pocket and pull the felt away from the slate, apply some duct tape across the felt pieces underneath the pockets.)

When you have applied this procedure to each pocket—center pockets are more difficult to deal with and require more slits than corner pockets—your slate should be successfully covered and cosmetically perfect. Always keep in mind that the felt should be pulled tight before it is secured and that a light film of glue is sufficient to maintain adhesiveness.

Rails can be successfully covered only after they are thoroughly checked for separations between the rubber and wood. Then, felt six inches in width can be stretched over the rails and stapled to the flat side of the rail that receives the securing bolts.

Start stapling from the center of the rails and staple to each end, pulling the cloth over the rail so that it wraps around the rail smoothly. Do not cover the side of the rail that receives the staples (and the bolts).

Again, use your razor blade on the felt at the edges of the rail where the pads are to be covered. Use the blade so that there is no doubling of the cloth at these spots. The doubling destroys the normal action of the pocket rail.

In addition to recovering the slate bed and rails, tables can be kept looking like new and working like new. Cigarette burns can be rubbed out, lightly, with steel wool. Metal frame parts can be cleaned simply. Chips in the slate can be filled in with Bondo. Chips in the cabinet can also be filled in with Bondo and painted over to match the grain patterns of the formica.

When the slate is lifted from the table, the insides should be given some attention. Clean the ball pathways and make certain that the pockets are unscarred (black spray paint will effectively cover the marks). And test the braces to keep the bottom of the table where it should be. It might even be wise to add a brace here and there to strengthen the body and keep it secure from rough transportation and angry players.

Under normal conditions, a table will need to be resurfaced and conditioned about twice a year. Such proper treatment will insure a long life for this rugged piece.

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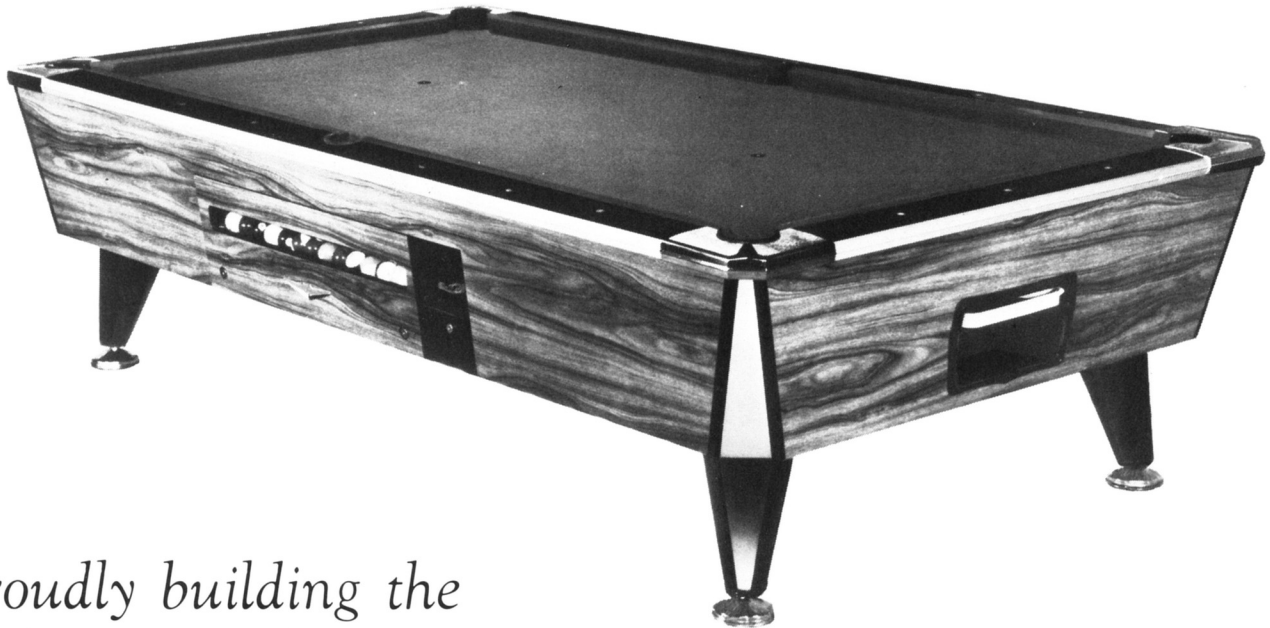
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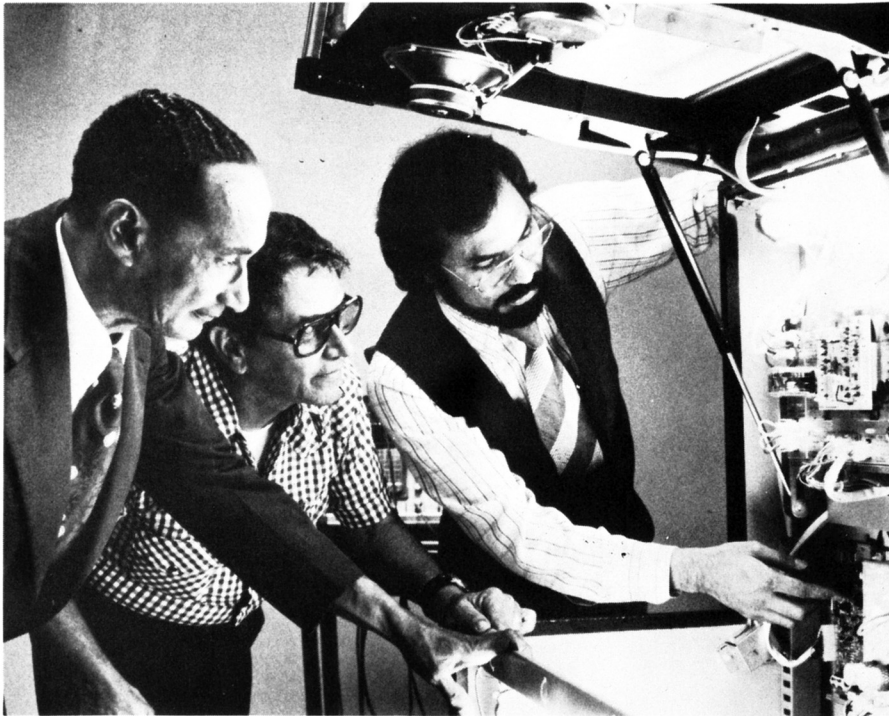
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Shuja Haque, Rock-Ola's Quality Control Manager, points out some of the functions of Rock-Ola's new microprocessor to service personnel from Barbados and Puerto Rico.

Rock-Ola conducts training course at its plant

Rock-Ola distributor service personnel from fifteen states, plus Puerto Rico and St. Lucy, Barbados, W.I., recently completed a special three day microprocessor and mini-computer service training course conducted at the Rock-Ola plant in Chicago.

Under the direction of Shuja Haque, Rock-Ola quality control manager, the distributor servicemen learned how Rock-Ola's new "hit tracker," "profit setter," and logic board use the latest in electronic technology to control and operate the features of Rock-Ola's new phonographs.

"The introduction of microprocessors and mini-computers on Rock-Ola's phonographs produced two significant advancements," according to Executive Vice President Edward G. Doris. "Exciting new features that stimulate added phonograph play and profit was the first advantage. Rock-Ola's "top 3 location hits," "bonus play," and "random complimentary play" have proven their ability to promote profits."

"The new electronic marvels also

make it much simpler to operate, maintain, and service Rock-Ola phonographs," Doris continued. "Thanks to these new innovations servicemen can adapt, in a matter of seconds, the price, bonus, and random complimentary play sequence to meet changes in a location. If a problem develops, the source can be determined and corrected in a fraction of the time formerly taken."

During the three-day course, Rock-Ola engineers discussed the theory of microprocessors and mini-computers and how they are put to use in the new phonographs. Each component part utilizing the new electronic devices was explained. At the completion of each phase, the students went through "hands on" training to gain personal experience in the operation, maintenance, and service of electronic components.

Also discussed was the test equipment now available to Rock-Ola distributor service departments, and a new audio/visual service training program to be announced shortly.

InSport making aggressive push

InSport, Inc., which has been in business as a parts house for about a year, is pursuing an aggressive sales campaign and, in connection with that, will be displaying its product line in booth C13 at this year's AMOA Show.

Doug Stewart, president of the Seattle, Washington-based firm, told PLAY METER that, in addition to offering top quality parts and extremely good discounts, InSport was also offering same-day service. The company is presently sending out monthly mailers which feature "specials" on such items as pool balls, tips, pocket liners, and coils.

Though InSport specializes in billiard supplies, the company's catalog also includes a varied line of game-related products such as phonograph needles, speakers shuffle alley weights, and fuses.

InSport is a member of the state associations of Washington, Oregon, and Montana, as well as a member in the national organizations of BBIA, BCA, and the AMOA.

For operators who want to get on the InSport mailing list, they can use the company's toll-free number 1-800-426-4740. For operators in the state of Washington, the toll-free number is 1-800-562-4710.

T.W. Hughes passes away

All of Louisiana's industry personnel and many of his contacts across the world were shocked recently by the untimely death of T.W. Hughes of S&H Distributing of Shreveport.

Gerald Goudeau of Gerald's Amusement Machines in Lafayette wrote of Hughes: "This man added a new dimension to the industry with his sincerity and fair dealings. He had the ability to add that personal touch that made you know you were dealing with a friend and not just a cold business statistic. He helped raise the image of the coin machine business in his dealings with operators, bankers, and manufacturers. He set an example for me and others to strive for. He will be sadly missed."

Mr. Hughes began to develop S&H with Mr. and Mrs. H.H. Singly as early as 1938. He was 62 years old.



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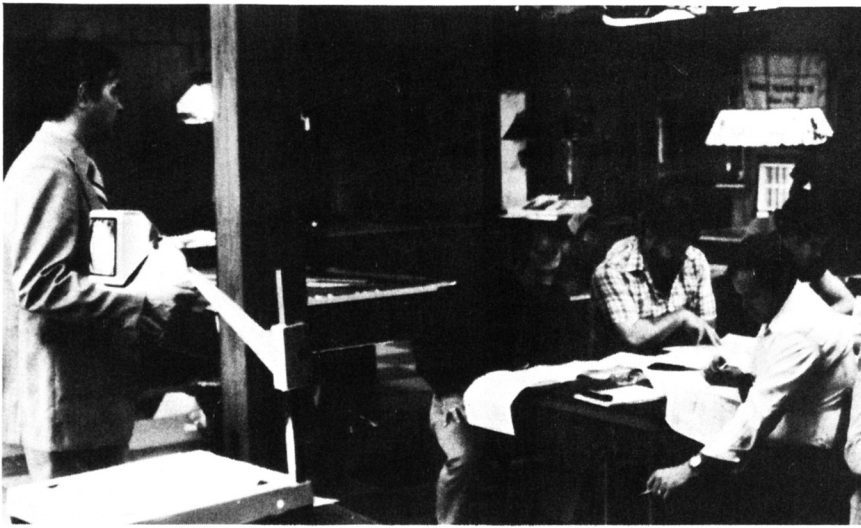


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Neal Smithweck recently conducted a service school for Williams Electronics at Sammons Pennington, Nashville.

Sircoma offering video machines

Si Redd has formulated a new distributing and manufacturing body which he has named Sircoma. It is in effect a marriage of former companies A-1 Supply of Nevada and Nutting Associates of California.

Sircoma's approach to the video amusement machine industry is demonstrated in its move to produce the popular games blackjack, poker, keno, and bingo as electronic pieces.

Along with its new name, Sircoma has taken some moves to accentuate its presence in the vital games industry.

Don Hutmier, formerly of Ramtek, has joined Sircoma as a sales representative for new addition *Crompton's Penny Falls*, a worldwide distributed piece for which Sircoma has become the sole United States agent. Les Wiegand has also joined the Sircoma staff and will serve as east coast representative for customer service.

Additionally, Sircoma has introduced a new piece, *Dawg Race*, a video that emulates the excitement of the race track.

'Meteor' the movie and 'Meteor' the pin

Stern Electronics, Inc. and American International Pictures, Inc. have joined forces with TRG Communications, Inc. in a major promotion for Stern's new pinball machine, *Meteor* and the movie of the same name.

"We've put together one of the largest and most exciting merchandising campaigns our industry has ever seen," stated Larry Siegel, vice president of sales for Stern.

The total package includes radio station contests in at least fifteen major markets, a national magazine contest, and distribution of educational kits to schools and libraries. In addition, Siegel said there will be a variety of movie theater and distributor/operator tie-ins, *Meteor* pinball tournaments, posters shipped with every game, and the usual variety of items such as belt buckles, T-shirts, and souvenir books. A special novelization of "Meteor" by Warner

Books will also be available.

The movie "Meteor," starring Sean Connery, Natalie Wood, Karl Malden, Martin Landau, Brian Keith, Joseph Campanella, Trevor Howard and Henry Fonda, will be released by A.I.P. to selected theaters beginning October 19. Pre-opening premiere galas were planned for Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, the week prior to opening.

The *Meteor* pinball game features a backglass painting by Robert T. McCall, described by Isaac Asimov as "the nearest thing to an artist-in-residence of outer space." His dramatic painting of the Meteor on its path of destruction was combined with a sophisticated sound effects system and several revolutionary new playfield features.

The game itself was designed by Steve Kirk, who also designed Stern's first outer space game, *Stars*.



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Texans to avoid oil spill beaches

The Music Operators of Texas have decided to abandon the potentially oil damaged beaches of Galveston for their 1980 state convention. "We were concerned that the problems left by the oil might ruin our convention," Jo Ann Westerman told PLAY METER.

Additionally, the MOT had encountered some difficulties in obtaining appropriate hotel accommodations in Galveston. The Flagship Hotel has reportedly lost its charm since new operators there have allowed it to deteriorate, and the Galvez Hotel, which has also chang-

ed hands recently, is undergoing renovation, and will not be completed on time.

As a result, the MOT has decided to switch their 1980 convention site to El Paso, where they will meet June 5-7.

This year's convention was termed the "most successful yet, financially" by Westerman. The MOT did away with exhibitioning this past year in favor of added emphases on leisure activities. That philosophy resulted in a convention take of \$8,000 over the association's expenses.



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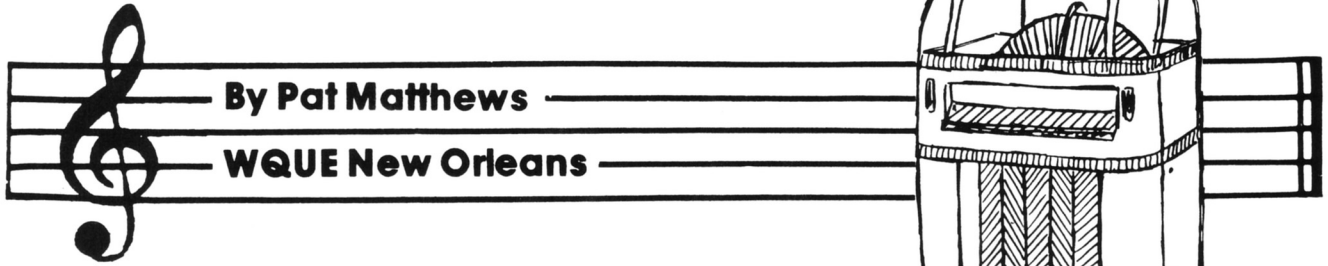
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America-- no longer united, but we can stand it

It seems like only yesterday that the Beatles invaded our shores with their powerful sound and infectious charm. The four guys from Liverpool brought not only a beat, but a realization to our lives that would extend far beyond vinyl.

Today there seems to be a renaissance of that sound of 1964. It's now called New Wave which is a lot kinder than terming it "Punk." One only has to glance at the charts to see what was once dominated by disco is now under a new command—a New Wave is billowing in.

PASSING LANE b/w **MISSISSIPPI**—The Charlie Daniels Band—Epic 9-50768

Let's examine the ballad first. "Mississippi" is a tender love ode to the state. It's obvious more than just a state of mind, so to speak. The tune is more like a "Georgia On My Mind"—with Spanish moss hanging from the oaks, this song is quite a tribute to the Magnolia State by a group that is currently hot. Should do well...at least in Mississippi.

Now the flip side takes us to the opposite extreme. It's a funky southern boogie, but no "Devil Went Down To Georgia." If this disc is to make it, it will be on the strength of "Mississippi." Lots of luck. 8 out of 10 C&W.

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE—

Dan Peek—Songbird (MCA) MCA

I guess it's official. America has split up. A group of some of the finest balladeers to grace the radio waves has parted ways. And it comes as no surprise that the lead singer, Dan Peek, would be the first to release an album and single.

It's a nice sweet sounding song that just makes you feel good all over. I think of snow (and believe me, that's pretty hard to do in New Orleans) and a pretty girl when hearing it. Peek's voice moves along in perfect harmony with the lush string section and he may have a hit along in perfect harmony with the lush string section and he may have a hit first time out of the box. I give it a 7 out of 10.

IF YOU REMEMBER ME—Chris Thompson—Planet P-45904-A

First of all, it's penned by Carole Bayer Sager and Marvin Hamlisch. And, secondly, it's produced by Richard Perry. Not bad for starters. Now that it has the basic ingredients, it's safe to say this is a tender love song about an affair that has ended. Thompson's voice is strong and melodic and accomplishes the "feel" of the lyric which the writer intended. Strong female demos. 8 out of 10.

STAY WITH ME—Dave & Sugar—RCA JH-11654

Here's the latest offering from that dynamic C&W group. It's a bouncy

little singalong number featuring the separate and together voices of the singers. "Stay With Me" is a cutesy acoustic toe-tapper and proves that even simple songs can make it big. In the C&W vein—9 out of 10.

HIGHER—Chi-Lites—Inphasion Records INPX-7205

Remember "Have You Seen Her?" Well, we have the same group here, but they seem to have gone astray. They have gone looking for "her" and ended up on the Disco Gravy Train—a train, that incidentally seems to be heading straight into oblivion. At least there's some evidence of R&B with some horn flavoring. It seems to be a direct descendent of Sly Stone's "...Higher" of many moons ago. All matters considered, this record could do real well on R&B radio and in the discos—if there's anyone in them today. 8 out of 10 R&B.

TUSK—Fleetwood Mac—Warner Brothers WBS 49077

Is it a bad dream? Am I really awake? Can this be Fleetwood Mac on my turntable? Hardly seems like the same group that garnered so many new fans with the release of their last two lps since 1976. But it is. It's been nearly two years since the fabulous "Rumours" album. You know, the one that sold so many copies the manufacturer had trouble keeping step.

The records are rated as follows: 10 out of 10 = Top 10 peak; 9 out of 10 = Top 20 peak; 8 out of 10 = Top 30 peak; 7 out of 10 = Top 40 peak; 5 or 6 out of 10 = Somewhere in Top 100; 4 or less = Forget it, loser, break in half.

Well, "Tusk," the album, is said to have twenty-two tunes on it. So why pick this particular exercise in futility as a preview single? The song is "jungle" music. There's all sorts of weird groaning going on; and, in one point in the song where it finally seems like there's about to be some direction, it breaks off into a novice drummer type drum solo.

I've got to hand it to the group. They've got guts! However, even if everyone agrees with me and hates it, it'll still sell. That's why I'll give it an 8 out of 10—just to be on the safe side.

I DO BELIEVE IN YOU—Pages—Epic 9-50769

This group has been trying for quite some time. But this should be a new chapter in the career of Pages. It's a strong driving tune that's definitely what you would call a rocker. The arrangement is excellent and the individual singing and playing talents of these super musicians is definitely in evidence. Here's hoping this will be the one Pages needs to get some attention. 6 out of 10 or better.

BLIND FAITH—Pointer Sisters—Planet P-45906

The song was written by Gerry Rafferty and Joe Egan back in the Stealers Wheel days and is a movin' three-chord basic rock and roll tune. But that's exactly what seems to be making it these days. The Pointer Sisters have combined the old with the new and come up with a winner. 9 out of 10.

COME WITH ME—Waylon Jennings—RCA JH-11723

You know it must be nice when you become so world famous that you can be recognized by your first name only. Like Ringo, George, Mick, etc. Well, that's precisely what we have here. A record by Waylon. That's what it says on the label. Good thing I was familiar with his music and his label or I would never have known. Enough of that. The song is a good song with an atypical slow steady beat. Nothing to really get excited about. Except that it's *Waylon*. C&W 10 out of 10.

WORTH A LISTEN:

Never Had A Lady Before—Tom Jones—MCA

The lady in the Blue Mercedes—Johnny Duncan—Columbia

I Just Love What You're Doing—Hot Chocolate—Infinity

Catch Me Now I'm Falling—The Kinks—Arista

(In alphabetical order according to artists)

PLAY METER "HOT25"

RISE—HERB ALPERT—A&M

SPOOKY—ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION—Polydor

SAIL ON—THE COMMODORES—Motown***

THE DEVIL WENT DOWN TO GEORGIA—

THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND—Epic***

DEPENDIN' ON YOU—DOOBIE BROTHERS—Warner Brothers***

AFTER THE LOVE IS GONE—EARTH, WIND & FIRE—Columbia***

BORN TO BE ALIVE—PATRICK HERNANDEZ—Columbia

DON'T STOP 'TIL YOU GET ENOUGH—

MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic

SAD EYES—ROBERT JOHN—EMI

LOVIN', TOUCHIN', SQUEEZIN'—JOURNEY—Columbia***

GOOD GIRLS DON'T—THE KNACK***

MY SHARONA—THE KNACK—Capitol***

LONESOME LOSER—THE LITTLE RIVER BAND—Capitol

CRUEL TO BE KIND—NICK LOWE—Columbia***

POP MUZIK—M—Sire

DIFFERENT WORLDS—MAUREEN MCGOVERN—

Warner Brothers***

WHAT CHA GONNA DO WITH MY LOVIN'—

STEPHANIE MILLS—20th Century Fox***

BAD CASE OF LOVIN' YOU—ROBERT PALMER—Island***

HEAVEN MUST HAVE SENT YOU—BONNIE POINTER—Motown

GET IT RIGHT NEXT TIME—GERRY RAFFERTY—United Artists***

YOU DECORATED MY LIFE—KENNY ROGERS—United Artists

THE BOSS—DIANA ROSS—Motown***

DRIVERS SEAT—SNIFF N' THE TEARS—Atlantic***

DIM ALL THE LIGHTS—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca

I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN—

DIONNE WARWICK—Arista***

ARROW THROUGH ME—WINGS—Columbia***

PLAY METER PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

JUST GOOD OL' BOYS—MOE BANDY &

JOE STAMPLEY—Columbia***

FOOLS—JIM ED BROWN & HELEN CORNELIUS—RCA

ALL THE GOLD IN CALIFORNIA—LARRY GATLIN &

THE GATLIN BROS. BAND—Columbia***

HALF THE WAY—CRYSTAL GAYLE—Columbia***

MY SILVER LINING—MICKEY GILLEY—Epic

LOVE ME NOW—RONNIE MCDOWELL—Epic***

FOOLED BY A FEELING—BARBARA MANDRELL—MCA

IN NO TIME AT ALL—RONNIE MILSAP—RCA

SWEET SUMMER LOVIN'/GREAT BALLS OF FIRE—

DOLLY PARTON—RCA

LAST CHEATER'S WALTZ—T.G. SHEPPARD—Warner/Curb

BABY MY BABY—MARGO SMITH—Warner Brothers

IT MUST BE LOVE—DON WILLIAMS—MCA

PLAY METER FUNKIFIED

FOUND A CURE—ASHFORD & SIMPSON—Warner Brothers***

STRATEGY—ARCHIE BELL AND THE DRELLS—Phila. Int'l.

SAIL ON—THE COMMODORES—Motown***

LOVE ON YOUR MIND—CON FUNK SHUN—Mercury

AFTER THE LOVE HAS GONE—EARTH, WIND &

FIRE—ARC (Columbia)***

KNEE DEEP—FUNKADELIC—Warner Brothers

DON'T STOP 'TIL YOU GET ENOUGH—MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic

FIRECRACKER—MASS PRODUCTION—Cotillion

SING A HAPPY SONG—O'JAYS—Philadelphia International***

COME GO WITH ME—TEDDY PENDERGRASS—Phila. Int'l.

BREAK MY HEART—DAVID RUFFIN—Warner Brothers

DIM ALL THE LIGHTS—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca

***Denotes records previously reviewed by PLAY METER

What's happening to the pool table?

(For one thing, it needs more attention)

For the last quarter century or so, the coin-operated pool table has been one of the staple pieces of equipment on a coin operator's route. Its role has, however, changed significantly over the years.

When coin-op pool became popular, the varieties of other equipment available to the operator were somewhat limited. He, of course, had his jukebox which provided a steady income and excellent return on his investment, but not without somewhat regular service and, of course, a constant change of records.

He also had some novelty-type games available, whose application was limited to arcade situations or street locations for a limited period.

Along came the coin-op pool table, and an operator had a piece of equipment he could place on location and recover whenever necessary. So without much other maintenance, the operator had a very stable income generator whose revenues could be counted on, week after week, year after year, without much fluctuation.

This, unfortunately, bred an era of self-assurance in which the operator did not stress the maintenance and rotation of his equipment. The same table stayed in the same location year after year, and the locations became aware of the minimum necessary maintenance. It was this development which set the stage for the beginnings of location-owned pool tables.

As the operators' route of pool tables began to require replacements, demands were placed on the manu-

facturers to provide better and longer-lasting equipment, and the industry then undertook another era of change while manufacturers loaded their equipment with features and gimmicks to meet the new demand.

Through it all, some manufacturers survived and some didn't. New machines have replaced some of the old ones, and the industry is now looking at the best crop of products ever harvested for sale. While it is not the intention of this article to compare equipment, it seems important to point out that before buying any replacement equipment (jukeboxes and games included), all available brands should be checked out to determine which would best suit each specific operator's needs.

The situation the operator faces today is different from that of just eight or ten years ago. Today there is such an abundance of games available on which the operator can spend that precious capital equipment dollar that the pool tables are staying out one more year and being recovered a few more times. While the operator stays busy moving his high priced games around in order to keep them generating enough revenue to pay for themselves (and, hopefully, return a profit), the location sellers are having a field day. In some areas, the operators have even sold the table to the location to obtain a concession from the location on his contract.

Where an operator used to be able to count on 35 to 40 percent of his net profit coming from his pool

tables, route structures today indicate a much lower percentage. Where did all the profit go? Surely, location-owned tables have accounted for a certain percentage; but, even more importantly, the cost per play has not increased at anywhere near the same rate as the increases realized by their companion pieces, the jukebox and pin.

Income from pins is at an all-time high, but as with any novelty, this is a peak and ebb situation. When those incomes drop, where does the operator find the revenues to pay off that equipment? Where does he find the income to continue to maintain the lifestyle he's worked so hard to achieve?

It all reverts to the tremendous return on investment provided by the pool table. Not only does it repay the investment as quick as any other piece of equipment, but it continues to generate good income years after the other types of equipment have been scrapped.

Closer attention needs to be paid to your pool tables. It isn't enough to cycle your best locations every year; swap tables in your good locations annually too, and feed the newer-used pieces into your secondary locations. A newer, cleaner, better playing table will generate more revenue; and, even if one location is prevented from buying its own because the operator was diligent in his rotation, all that equipment-moving becomes worthwhile. And finally, put all new equipment out on fifty-cent play and convert as many existing pieces as possible after recovering and moving.

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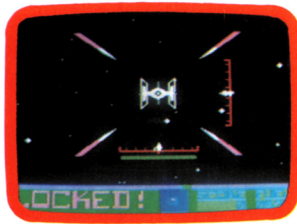
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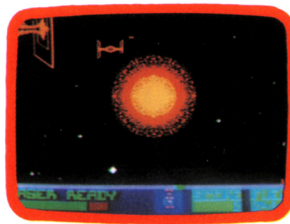
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Those recently promoted at Atari are [from left] Frank Ballouz, Howie Rubin, Don Osborne, Tom Petit, and [seated] Sue Elliott.

Ballouz, Osborne, Rubin, Elliott promoted at Atari

Gene Lipkin, president of Atari's coin-operated games division, announced the promotions of Frank Ballouz, Don Osborne, Howie Rubin, and Sue Elliott. "These changes in Atari's sales organization will further strengthen the marketing efforts at Atari," said Lipkin.

Ballouz, formerly national sales manager, has been promoted to marketing director. Osborne, formerly western regional sales manager, moves into the national sales man-

ager position. Elliott as the international sales administrator. Rubin, the east coast manager, has taken on a newly created responsibility of special markets. Tom Petit, sales representative, will also be increasing his sales territory, taking on additional distributor accounts.

In their new positions, each of these individuals will be expanding their functions within the marketing group. Ballouz will take total responsibility for all domestic coin-op

sales. Don will be working closely with all the United States and Canadian distributors. In addition, both customer service and field service will report to Don. Petit, formerly western regional sales representative, will continue to work with Don to assure optimum sales support to the Atari distributor network throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Ms. Elliott will have responsibility for international sales and shall work closely with the facility in Ireland and international accounts in over forty countries outside the U.S. and Canada.

Rubin, in taking the challenge of special markets, will explore the business outside of the traditional distributor network. In an attempt to expand the business, Howie will be establishing additional avenues for the use of coin-operated amusement games. "This is a very exciting opportunity because it represents, in my opinion, untapped growth for the division," commented Lipkin.

"I am very proud of these individuals. In the past they have all performed quite successfully."

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Programming your jukebox when you're working from nothing

It's always good to have a formula, especially if you're working from scratch. Your formula may be completely different from everyone else's, but if you don't have a plan when it comes to certain areas of your music programming, you're in trouble.

Last month, we spilled a lot of ink talking about how you could improve your intra-office communications and, thereby, hit a little closer to home your first time out when programming for a new music stop.

But what happens if you don't have any information about a stop except that it's "a truck stop," or it's "a mid-city lounge?" Of course, that's too little to work with, but the fact is that you have to work around such shortcomings and be able to come up with an adequate music program the first time out so that at least you're in the ballpark. This is where formulas are necessary.

If you're working with a minimum of information and don't have the time or the opportunity to check out the location before you send the box out for the first time—you'll probably have to resort to some sort of formula. A formula is a generalized stab at programming the box, and would probably go over just as well at a hundred other stops in the city. Now, even though it's not refined, fine-tuned to the point where it has its own peculiar character, you have to resort to this method sometimes so that the jukebox you send out there has half a chance of coming back with something other than dust in the cashbox.

Formula programming isn't really that difficult, and it's not all that foreign to the music programmer. In fact, all programmers at one time or another resort to it—even with their best stops. It's something you go to when you truly don't know where to turn. It's a time when you're playing percentages—or better yet, looking

very closely at the percentages and there's a gray area in the jukebox's programming.

As was said before, nearly everyone will have a different formula as far as programming a new music stop. For some operators—that may mean dropping in maybe twenty oldies that reach back into the fifties, programming in about ten or fifteen country and western selections, putting in a few soul hits and middle of the roaders, and then rounding off the box with songs right off the Top 100.

Of course, whatever specific information you have—for example, the stop caters to a black crowd or to truckers or teenagers—should be able to make your job just a little bit easier.

The thing to remember is to give your jukebox in that location as wide a selection as possible. The reason? Let's say you omit middle of the road songs completely, you may be eliminating a certain percentage of the clientele that would play the jukebox if you had programmed MOR.

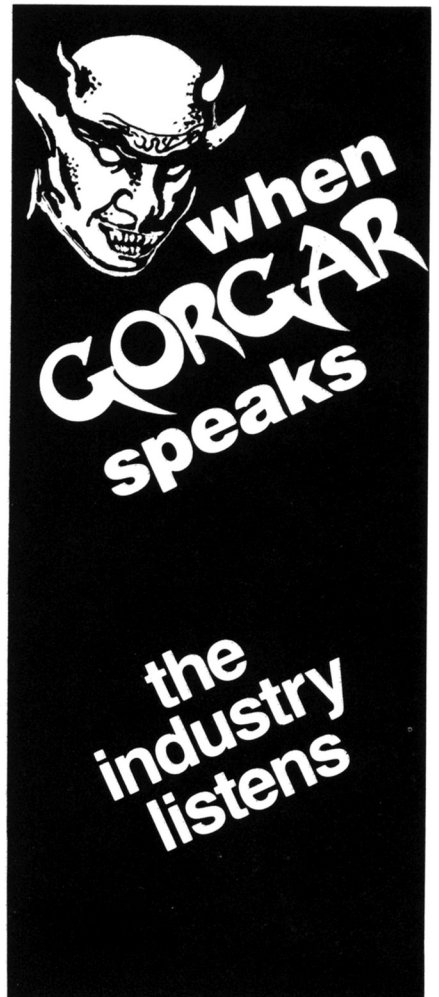
If the location can't support middle of the road or soul or fifties gold, let the weekly collection results give you that information.

Don't judge the location before you have some information to work with. Remember, you're programming the box for the first time, and you're working with a minimum amount of information. You are starting from the ground level, where you have already admitted to yourself when you were programming it that you didn't know too much about this location's taste in music.

So be sure to give the location a chance to decide for itself that it doesn't want soul or fifties gold or whatever—don't decide it for them. Pre-judging can cost you record plays.

Think of the formula method of programming as a system of self-reliance where you need a minimum amount of assistance from others to do your job.

As one music programmer put it: "When it comes to my new stops, I give it my best, and then I wait for the verdict to come in. If I get a flock of requests I've missed it. But I don't always have the time to get these things pinpointed. I may miss it, but I've got to give it a stab."



The second-to-last North Carolina Trade Show



David and Tom Stroud gather with Jon Brady [top] in front of Vectorbeam's latest game, Warriors. And [bottom] Tom Siemieniec of Brady Distributing and Larry Berke pose with this year's video phenomenon, Space Invaders.

With nearly 300 people attending, the sixth annual North Carolina Coin Operators Association (NCCOA) trade show, September 14-16 at the Sheraton Center in Charlotte, North Carolina broke all records. But, strangely, with all that success, it still spelled a change, since this was apparently the second-to-last North Carolina trade show.

Although the North Carolina show has continued to grow steadily since it was first instituted six years ago, the officers of the North Carolina and South Carolina state associations met formally during the weekend in Charlotte and agreed to hold their shows jointly, beginning in 1981.

The state associations' leadership reportedly agreed to appoint a trade show committee to set up the first joint trade show in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, probably during the third week of September, 1981.

According to the plan apparently worked out between the North and South Carolina operators, the show would then go to Charlotte in 1982 and alternate back and forth between those two sites.

As for the North Carolina show, though the registered attendance was 293 (last year it was 249), the actual figure is believed to have climbed slightly over the 300 mark. Operators from South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Virginia joined the North Carolina operators for the three-day event. And seventeen exhibitors, with about 45 exhibitor personnel, were among those attending.

Said N.C.C.O.A. Secretary Milton Hobb, who handles most of the trade show duties, "We were extremely pleased with the show. The show has grown steadily over the years. In fact, we've already gotten commitments from just about all of the exhibitors for next year's show."

At the general membership meeting September 14, Howie Rubin of Atari was the featured speaker. He told the audience of about fifty that Atari had recently taken "a good,

(And then it's off to South Carolina)

By David Pierson

long, hard look at its business and with whom it does business." He said the video game manufacturing firm had come to the conclusion that it had to expand, and to do so it would have to open avenues of dialogue between itself and operators.

The second speaker was Fred Granger, executive vice president of the AMOA. Speaking on the matter of collections for the legal action fund to fight the infamous location list ruling by the Copyright Royalty Tribunal, he said the collections of \$79,061.66 were "far too low at this stage" to the \$250,000 he said is needed to fight the ruling. He sounded a note of alarm when he said, "I think the success of the fight will depend on the collections we receive.

Later during the show, Granger told PLAY METER that "people should be taking the matter of collections more seriously than they have." He also released a list of contributors to date which included three game manufacturers—Gottlieb, Sunbird, and Valley.

Concerning another matter in which he is involved with—the recent dismissal of the AMOA's assistant executive vice president, Vic Rye—Granger said the AMOA's board of directors is still looking for a replacement for him who would be his eventual replacement.

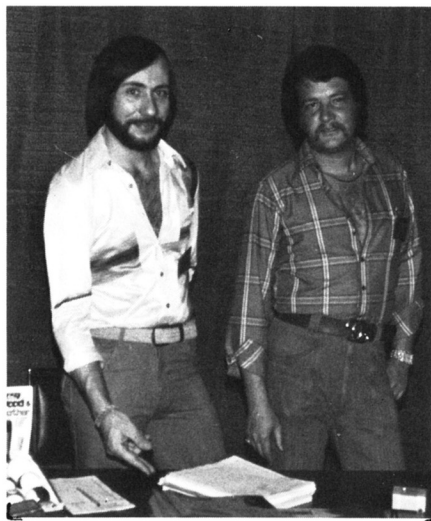
Granger told PLAY METER the AMOA is looking for someone with a trade association background and hopefully someone who has had experience as being the chief paid executive of another national association.

The third speaker at the general membership meeting was Wayne Hesch who, in speaking briefly on the fight against the CRT, said, "I don't think they ever gave us a fair hearing on the location list matter." Hesch then outlined for the audience the threat forced disclosures of location list could pose to operators.

As for the trade show itself, Brady Distributing was once again the

largest exhibitor—displaying a full line of videos, pins, phonos, arcade pieces, and foosball tables.

In addition to already-introduced pieces from Tournament Soccer (its Million Dollar table), Atari (*Lunar Landing, Basketball, and Baseball*), Exidy (*Star Fire and Crash*), Rock-Ola (the 477), Midway (*Space Invaders, 18-Wheeler, and Four-Player Bowling Alley*), Game Plan (*Sharpshooter*), Allied Leisure (*Clay Champ*), Gottlieb (*Totem*), Bally (*Paragon*), and Stern (*Magic*)—the Brady booth offered some very new pieces.



Gary Vosburgh and Steve Walko of Great Amusement Emporium show off their new parts catalog.

Vectorbeam took the opportunity to introduce to the industry its new video game, *Warrior*, which features two medieval swordsmen battling in the corridors of an ancient castle. Especially entertaining about the game is its enthralling sound effects.

There was also Cinematronics' recent release of *Sundance* where one or two players try to catch Novas in a nine-square grid.

Two new pingames were also at the show—Bally's newest celebrity tie-in, *Harlem Globetrotters*, and Stern's long-awaited *Meteor*, which

has a motion picture tie-in and was designed by Steve Kirk the creator of Stern's big hit of a year ago, *Stars*.

In the Palmetto Distributing booth, Bally's *Harlem Globetrotters* made a second appearance, along with its sister machines, *Paragon* and *Kiss*. The Williams assemblage included three new wide-bodies—*Stellar Wars, Time Warp*, and *Tri-Zone*. Also on display in the Palmetto was United's newest shuffle alley, *King Tut*, and Seeburg's disco phonograph.

A third distributor, Rowe of Columbia, exhibited—in addition to Stern's *Meteor* and Bally's *Harlem Globetrotters*—a new shuffle alley from Stern, *Genesis*; the Stern pingame, *Trident*; a sitdown version of Midway's ubiquitous *Space Invaders*; Gremlin's *Head On*; and Cinematronics' *Star Hawk*.

Rowe of Columbia also was showing the Rowe line, which included its latest cigarette vending machine, and Rowe's two 200-selection jukeboxes—*Disco 200* and *Camelot*.

Those exhibiting pool tables at the show included the following—Irving Kaye, Valley, UBI, ADI, U.S. Billiards, and Dynamo (which was shown by Eastern Distributing). All showed their top-of-the line models.

Coffee-Mat, which early this past summer entered into the sitdown pinball sweepstakes with *Star Battle*, introduced its new sitdown pin, *Cosmic Wars*.

Others exhibiting included—Great Amusement Emporium of Denver, Colorado, which was showing its new parts catalog; Vanguard of Overland Park, Kansas, which was showing its parts catalog and line of billiard supplies; J-S Sales Company of Mt. Vernon, New York, showing its line of billiard supplies; and Amusement Supply of Dallas, Texas, which was exhibiting its universal "B" cue ball.

For a second-to-last North Carolina trade show, it turned out to be well worth the effort.



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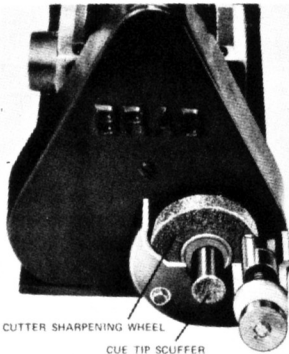


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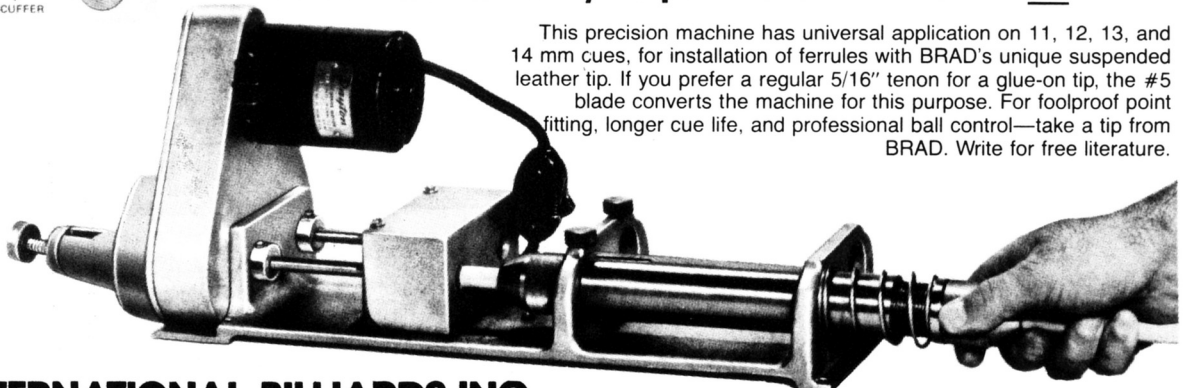


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Running your own foosball mini-tour

By Ralph C. Lally II



Operators who want to increase the play on their table soccer games and instill good rapport between themselves and their location owners should start exploring the possibility of staging their own table soccer mini-tours.

Not only is a well-executed mini-tour of, say ten foosball tournaments in a given geographic area, good for your business, it's also good for your location owners' businesses and good for the sport of table soccer as well. As an operator, you are the perfect starting point for a table soccer tournament in your area. It's something you can do that your locations won't be able to do because they don't have the geographical spread you have.

And you have the three main ingredients—equipment, players, and a place to play. And with your geographical spread, you should be able to advertise your tournament inside each of those participating locations.

With or without the support of a distributor and with or without the support of your fellow operators, you could hold a foosball mini-tour and award prizes with players competing for tournament points which, when totaled at the end of the mini-tour, would entitle players to win trophies, prizes, and cash.

And a soccer tournament increases the play on your equipment, with all those budding foosballers vying for the right to be the fastest and "bestest," you should do well. It means good business for your location owners because it increases the attendance at their locations, and that's good for you because the location owner is always keeping his own scorecard—as far as what

you've done for him lately. If you can pick up his business, especially on his slow nights, you've won yourself a faithful friend.

Formulating a soccer mini-tour may seem like a supreme hassle, but it really isn't. A successful mini-tour, of course, requires planning, work, and adequate financing, but the benefits for table soccer should make it worthwhile.

Financing a prospective mini-tour may be one of your biggest hurdles, if you're a small operator or you're new to the concept of holding tournaments. Financing is particularly important when you decide what kind of prizes you will award to your winners. Of course, awarding something like "tournament points" for each tournament instead of making an outlay of cash each time, would forestall this financial commitment until after the mini-tour is completed.

But you should be able to gauge how big a prize package you'll be able to award. That of course, will depend upon how many players and locations are involved. The actual cost of staging the tournaments may be nominal, especially if you can get some of the more reliable foosballers to take some of that work off your hands.

After you determine which locations want in on the action, you'll have to do a little legwork as far as finding some place for holding the final tournament. If you set aside \$1,000 for the entire promotion, and it takes only \$300 for the entire cost, you are left with \$700 in actual prize money. By the way, it's a bad idea to hold the final tournament in one of your hottest locations because it can create a lot of resentment among your other locations.

Of course, if you're going to try to

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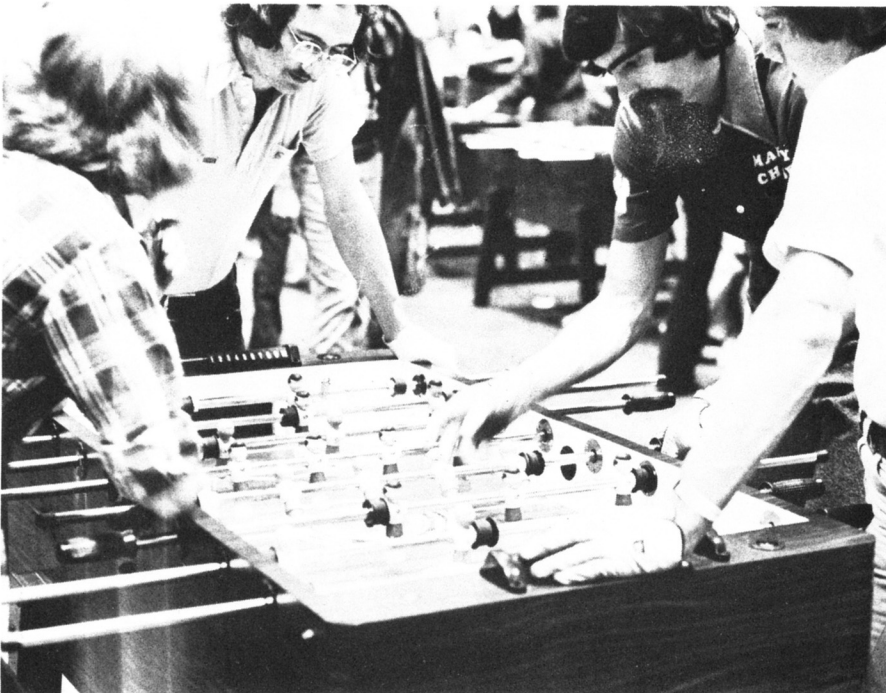
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You've got everything it takes to run a mini-tour—equipment, players, and a place to play.

run a mini-tour without the aid of a distributor or other area operators—you might consider charging individual entry fees. Also, by assessing a fee to your participating locations, you could have them help offset the expenses of running such an event.

To determine how much of an entry fee to charge, a general rule of thumb is to multiply what you would charge for a fee by the number of players you expect will participate; that amount should be equal to or greater than fifty percent of the total prize money you plan to offer.

Qualifying tournaments not only can help you defray expenses and raise the prize money, but they can also provide an opportunity to get your location owners involved in the tournament process, and that allows them to share the experience of promoting table soccer and their location to their and your mutual benefit.

These qualifying, or preliminary, tournaments can accommodate entry fees of one to three dollars per person, depending on how many locations are involved and how many

players are expected. Though it isn't necessary, the qualifying rounds can offer such prizes as T-shirts, small trophies, or credit bar tabs.

The real prize at the qualifying level, is, of course, those tournament points which players are trying to accrue in order to qualify for the prize money at the end of the tour.

The preliminary tournaments can really make you a hero in the eyes of your location owners, too; and this is the point of it all. If you can show them a way to pick up their businesses on their slow nights, you're going to have gone a long way to cementing a good relationship and getting your relationship with location owners on a more personal level.

Also, by the very nature of a mini-tour, the tournaments would attract sports aficionados from all over, thereby exposing the locations to newcomers who have the potential of becoming regular customers.

Of course, the key to successful tournaments in your mini-tour is promotion. Get your location owners talking about it before it actually happens. Get attractive posters printed and placed in the locations.

After the qualifying rounds yield individual or team winners—or leaders—you may be able to supply your local newspapers with current rankings. This obviously creates sustaining interest at the local level. And it promotes additional play.

You can also add to your prize kitty during the actual tournament by offering several different events other than the "open doubles." Other events which should draw players would include mixed doubles, singles, ladies' doubles, goalie wars, and four-man teams.

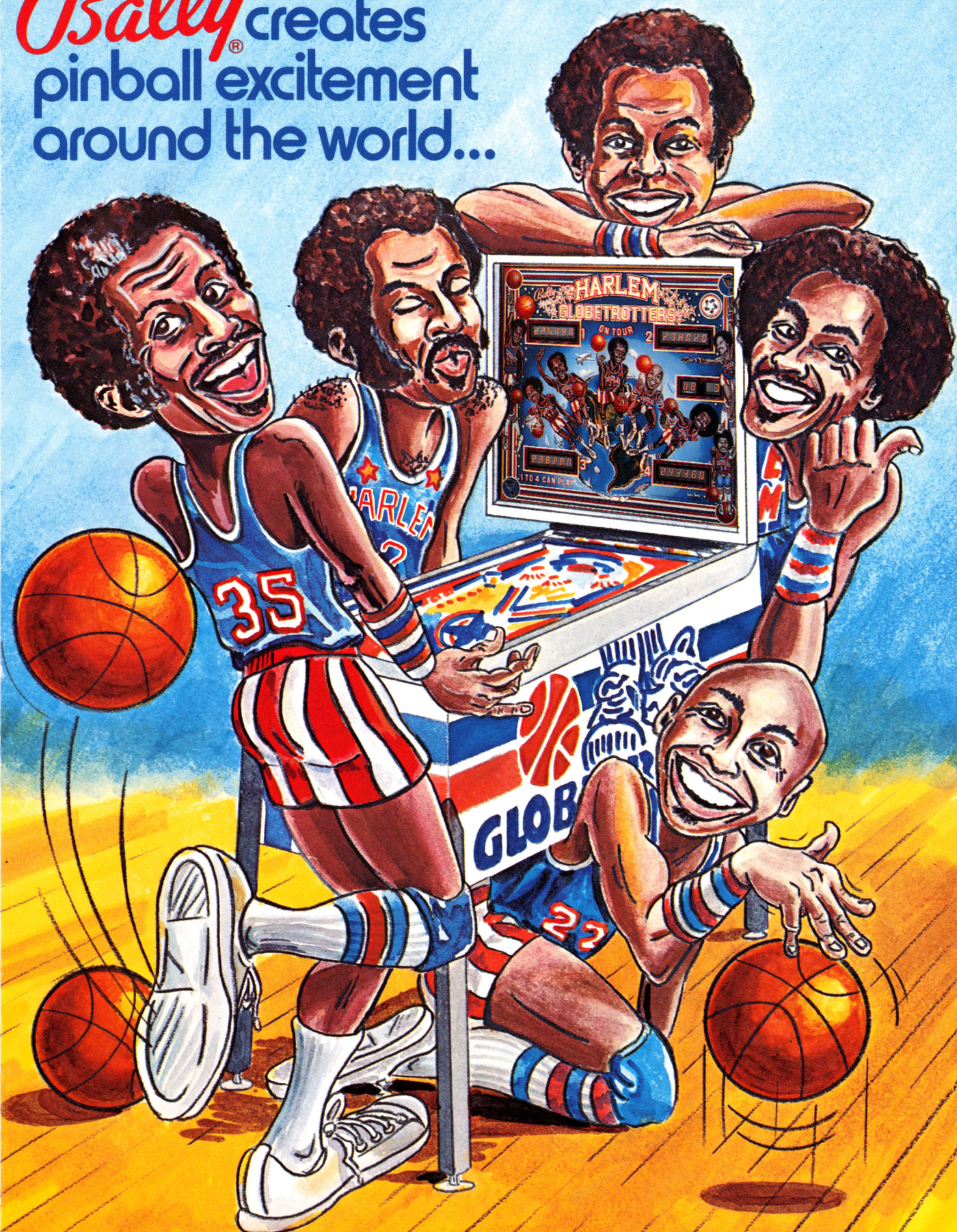
Tournament play at each of the locations in your mini-tour should probably follow the systematic double elimination process. Chance determines who plays whom in the early matches. You could stipulate that a match is the first team to win three games—a game consisting of nine balls. Of course, the first player to score five goals in a game wins.

It's generally a good idea to have teams or players in multiples of 8, such as 8, 16, 32, or 64. But more often than not, you will end up with an odd number of entries so that some teams will get "byes" to the next round.

Also, remember that you're just hurting yourself if you limit your tournament to single elimination.

Finally, don't forget to keep it fun for yourself. That's the key. If it's fun for you, you can be sure it's going to be fun for the players. And that's the best way to insure the success of any operator-run mini-tour.

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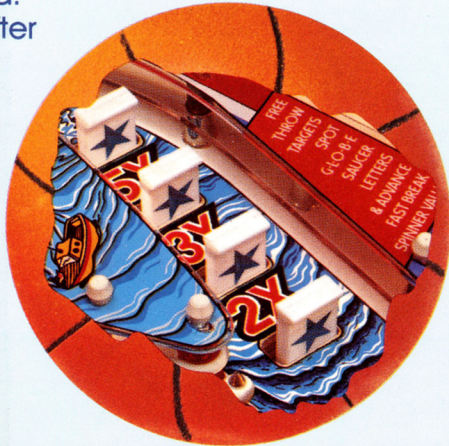
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It just goes to show you-- There's Always Something

By Roger C. Sharpe

An update to last month's story on the IRS and the taxing of pinball machines for the purposes of tournament or league play, is probably in order this time around due to the problems encountered by an operator in New York City who wanted to run a charity pinball tournament and finds out he can't.

Just when you think things are more relaxed and coming together better than they ever have, it takes an event like this to jolt you back to the reality of where pinball machines really are in this world.

As I stated last month, even though the IRS rulings as they stand now could stop you from running a tournament, when the rulings are up in the summer of '80, the fact still remains that you're going to be governed by the local legislation regarding the operation of pinball machines. Now, admittedly, in many ways (too numerous to mention) New York City is a unique case as to how pinball machines are viewed.

There hasn't been the growth of new locations in New York since the passage of the pinball bill over three years ago. Instead, some places have closed down, and many others continue to deteriorate despite the infusion of new equipment.

It's unfortunate since it's a viable market and one that could be lucratively tapped, but the willingness of the city council to free zoning restrictions for future growth isn't forthcoming. Along with this comes the fact that pinball machines in New York City fall under a gray area of common show licenses and gaming equipment legalese which is almost too hard to comprehend let alone understand in terms of changing the prevailing rulings.

Suffice it to say that with New York we're dealing with a situation where it's extra ball play, where free games can't be won since they're viewed as things of "value" rather than an achievement predicated on skill versus chance which is ultimately the bottom line.

Some of the legal rulings are so antiquated that many precedents are set back in the thirties and forties remain. And the worse that can happen is to open a Pandora's box, thinking that all you want to do is run a tournament or something and, instead, wind up jeopardizing your operating license or even the games themselves. So go slowly and become familiar with any loopholes which a trained legal counsel should be able to help you with.

Now, regarding the situation in New York with the operator wanting to run a charity tournament. The following steps were taken: letters were written to the IRS and the

Department of Consumer Affairs of New York City, which stipulated how the tournament was to be run, when and where it was planned to take place, and, lastly, why it was being run—which in this case was to benefit a local halfway house run by Franciscan priests.

All proceeds were to go to the organization in the form of entry fees. And that's where it stood; all outlined and just waiting for the favorable response.

Realistically, one would feel that such a planned undertaking is a fairly noble venture which was being done to help an organization that only gets funds from the private sector. But the bureaucracy (as evidenced by the replies) didn't feel this way.

One point to mention here is that even if the IRS were to tell you that you could go ahead, you still have to answer to the local magistrates who have the ultimate power to give you the okay or the negative "no way," which happened here. In fact, in subsequent conversations with the Deputy Commissioner of the city, what was found was that in order to run any type of tournament and award prizes, etc., one would have to get an entirely new ruling on pinball machines and go through the same process which took almost three decades to do before. That's great if you have the time to wait. But it doesn't help too much if you're looking for next week or next month or even next year.

As for the letters back which squashed the whole thing, the following excerpt from the Deputy Commissioner of the City of New York Department of Consumer Affairs, should give you an idea of what you could be up against if you're planning something yourself:

"As you know, our regulations require that the money for each play be collected at the time of each play. Also, the regulations prohibit the operator of a common show game from offering prizes.

"The regulation concerning prizes is, of course, the most important one at issue. Use of pinball machines for gambling is not legal. While it would be desirable to encourage fund raising for charity in any way possible, the tournament plan that you have presented seems to violate this regulation.

"I will continue to study your plan and also to seek clarification of the possible application of the statute and regulation. However, for the time being, I must state that the tournament as proposed in your letter would not comply with the law."

The big point to pick up on here is that second paragraph and the reference to gambling. As I mention-

ed earlier, many laws on the books still have pinball in a gray area of skill versus chance; which might not hinder the operating of pins in an arcade or bar, but would prevent them from being a part of a tournament.

And it falls back to the question of somehow getting a landmark decision on the whole area of pinball which would, once and for all, delineate the nature of the games and the inherent design and play that has been picked up by much of the media of late, but has yet to enter into the hallowed halls of justice where the policy makers are still reluctant to recognize the games as something other than a gambling machine.

Unfortunately, with all the press geared to casinos and slots and hotels and extra revenue being generated for Atlantic City, New York, Chicago, Florida and almost everywhere in the next decade, pinball will have to hold its growth or run the risk of being swallowed in a view of guilt by association which has plagued it for so long in its history.

And if you think that once slots come in pins will too—I hate to tell you that the two won't go hand in hand beyond the point that they're both coin-operated and are manufactured by companies in Chicago.

The education process still has to begin at the grassroots level and grow into something far more formidable than it ever has in the past, and no amount of little human interest stories and the like which have popped in the papers and on TV are going to help with some organized and solid support from a broad base that covers the entire industry and every facet of it.

Getting back to the second response to the proposed tournament which came back from the IRS Department of the Treasury, what was asked after an extensive letter was written to them detailing the undertaking, was an incredible, if not overwhelming listing of additional information pertaining to Title XII—Administrative Provisions.

To let you know what you're in store for, and how the government can make it almost impossible to get anything through, read some of these areas of "additional" information requested in order to rule on the propriety of the proposed tournament:

"(1) A copy of the ruling request and supporting documents showing, in brackets, those portions you suggest be deleted under Code section 6110 (c).

"(2) A statement, in a separate document, supporting the deletions

suggested, and indicating which specific exemption provided by Code section 6110 (c) applies to each bracketed portion.

"(3) A declaration in the following form: 'Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this request, including accompanying documents, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the facts presented in support of the requested ruling are true, correct, and complete.'

"(4) The names, addresses, and taxpayer identifying numbers of all parties interested in this ruling."

Eight other questions are also asked with detailed information needed before the determination can be made. It's almost like signing your life away and bears some close looking if you're contemplating trying to do anything before the IRS law expires at the end of June of next year.

So be careful and look before you leap. Hopefully you've gotten some insights from the retelling of this horror story. And to think, all this operator wanted to do was use his business, pinball machines, to help benefit a worthy organization and raise funds. It's enough to make you wonder about the shape of the world we live in...

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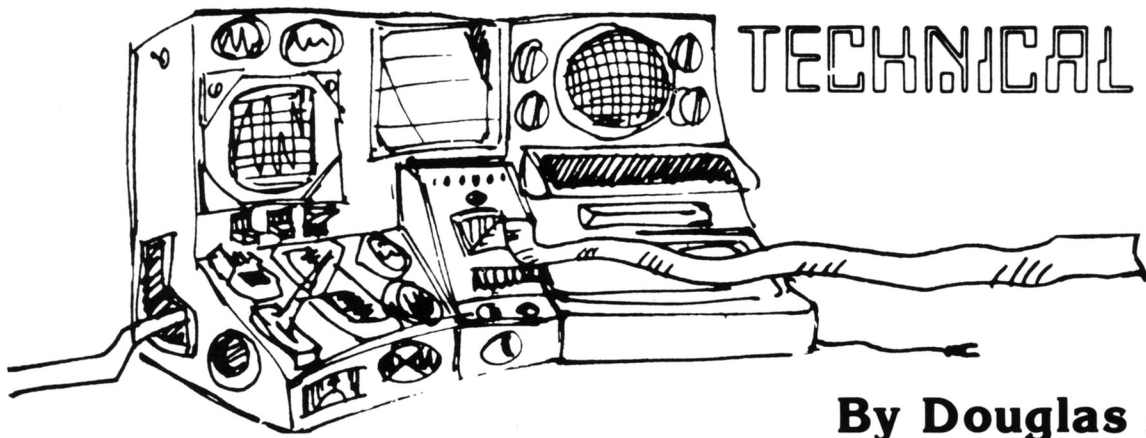
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By Douglas McCallum

Shocking though it may seem, sometimes you have to know if a transistor or something is O.K., and you're just nowhere near any fancy electronic test equipment. It's happened to me. Fortunately, there are easy ways to check these things. While not 100% reliable, these tests will seldom let you down.

Resistors

No problem here: simply connect an ohm meter to either end of the resistor and measure away. Make sure the circuit is depowered, or better yet disconnected altogether. Keep in mind that when resistors fail they either raise their resistance or open outright. Also, resistors don't often short out, so if they measure too low, unsolder one end from the circuit and try again—there's probably some other parallel circuit fouling up your reading.

Just in case some creative person has put a resistor in there other than what the schematic calls for, you'll need to know how to read the color codes on the parts themselves.

You will generally find the color bands on a resistor all clumped together at one end—that is the end you start from (see Fig. 1). If it has only one band, it's a diode, so quit while you're ahead. Reading the code is simple: the first two bands are the first two digits of the resistance value. The third band is how many zeros follow the first two digits.

Example: a ten thousand ohm resistor (10K) would have the following code—brown (1), black (0), orange (3)—thus 1-0-000, or 10,000. There will also usually be a fourth band indicating how much the value of resistance can vary from its nominal rating. This tolerance value is a percent of the total. A gold band means 5%; silver, 10%; and no band at all, 20%. Occasionally, you will find a fifth band. It tells how much the value of the resistor will change over time. This is probably more important to a space ship than a solenoid driver, so ignore it.

Capacitors

There are two kinds of capacitors for us to be concerned with: non-polarized or "regular" ones (usually flat discs), and electrolytics, the kind with plus and minus ends. Test the "regulars" for shorts with an ohm meter; that should be sufficient. Electrolytics are another story.

The job of an electrolytic capacitor, big or small, is to hold an electric charge...kinda like a battery. To test one of these "caps," disconnect it from the circuit, and then change it with a battery or some voltage supply (only takes a second). CAUTION: do not go over the cap's working voltage when charging—it's printed right on the part. Also, watch your polarity: plus side of battery to plus side of cap. Now the magic moment...hook your volt meter up to the now energized capacitor and see if it's holding a charge. If it *doesn't* hold the ole charge, it's either "leaky" (discharges fast) or open. Mind you, small capacitors, say two or three microfarads, lose their charge fairly soon, while large caps, like the 20,000 mfd. ones in power supplies, may hold it all day.

There's another test for the large power supply capacitors. It's called the screwdriver test. Charge the thing up as before, then short across the leads or terminals with a screwdriver. A good cap will show a spark and make a crack sound and probably melt away part of your screwdriver...so, use your volt meter instead.

Diodes

Diodes (also called rectifiers) are little semi-conductor devices that allow current to flow one way and not the other, rather like the way the valves work in your heart. To test these guys, hook a battery operated continuity light across it one way and then the other. The light should go on one way and not the opposite. An ohm meter works too: low resistance one way and high the other. It may be necessary to disconnect one end of the diode from the circuit, and, of

course, de-power the circuit.

Bridge Rectifiers

Four diodes hooked up as in Fig. 2 constitute a bridge rectifier. The encapsulated, all-in-one type are easy to check. Take them out of circuit (and you tell me how to get 'em off a Bally/Stern transformer board). With an ohm meter or continuity light, test between the plus and minus terminals in both directions. A good bridge will behave like one big diode. Now test between the AC terminals. A good bridge will show open in both directions. If it behaves like a diode across the AC terminals, one leg is shorted. The only way to test for an open (after you've checked for shorts), is to test each leg separately.

Zeners

These fellows are special diodes used as voltage regulators. Without going into the electronics of it all, zeners must be tested in a live circuit. Zener diodes always have a voltage rating associated with them, and this is what we must test. A volt meter hooked across a zener should measure close to the rated voltage. Bad zeners often show a low voltage. And, of course, they can short or open like almost everything else.

Transistors

Most of our transistors are used in switching applications. This means that in the circuit their job is to conduct collector to emitter when "turned on" at the base. Solenoid drivers are a perfect example. When the transistor is turned on, it conducts collector to emitter allowing current to flow through the solenoid—ZAP!

To test one, we need a voltage supply. A convenient and safe supply can be found in a battery operated continuity light, or in your ohm meter. (Ohm meters work by sending a small current through the circuit under test—usually only a few volts.) To test using the light, hook the negative end (usually the clip lead) to the transistor emitter and the positive end to the collector. This

What to do when you can't get your hands on some fancy electronic test equipment

arrangement is for NPN transistors. For PNP types, simply reverse the leads. So far, the light should NOT go on. If it does, the transistor is shorted. Now hook a 1000 ohm resistor from the collector to the base of the transistor. If the lamp now lights, the transistor is good! What you did was apply a positive voltage to the base to turn on the transistor. The ohm meter test is similar. Hook the common lead to the transistor emitter and the other lead to the collector. You should see an open or infinite resistance reading. By adding the base to collector resistor, you should see a low resistance, say a few hundred ohms or less.

SCRs

SCRs or silicon controlled rectifiers are similar to transistors. Actually they're more like diodes with on-off switches, but what of that... Test SCR's the same as transistors—negative lead to the SCR cathode and positive lead to the anode. There should be no light, or an infinite resistance reading. Now hook the gate up to the anode and the light should come on (low resistance). The one big difference between SCR's and transistors is that once you turn the SCR on, it stays on, even after you disconnect the gate! In fact, the only way to turn it back off is to disconnect the supply altogether.

Other Stuff

Some things, like a transformer, are easy enough to figure out—if it blows fuses even when it is not hooked up to anything, it's bad. Other items, like integrated circuits... well, I wish I had some trick, like clip your meter to the microprocessor and spit into the wind, but I'm afraid all that'll do is get your face wet. But if I think of anything, I'll pass it along, O.K.?

The simple tests I have described are especially useful in the field. You should try them on known good parts just to get the feel of how they work. The SCR test is my favorite—try it. It really, really works.

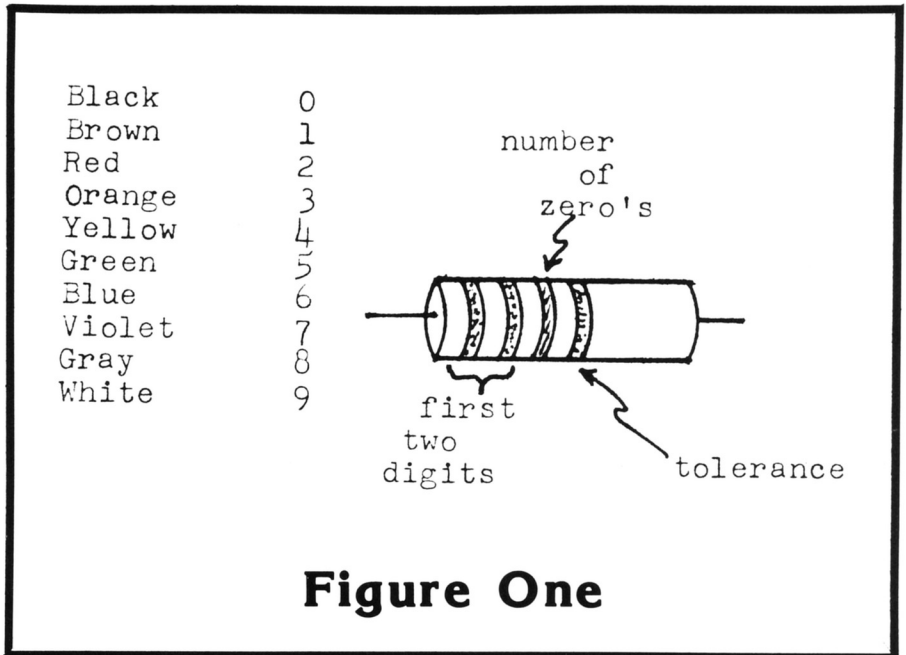


Figure One

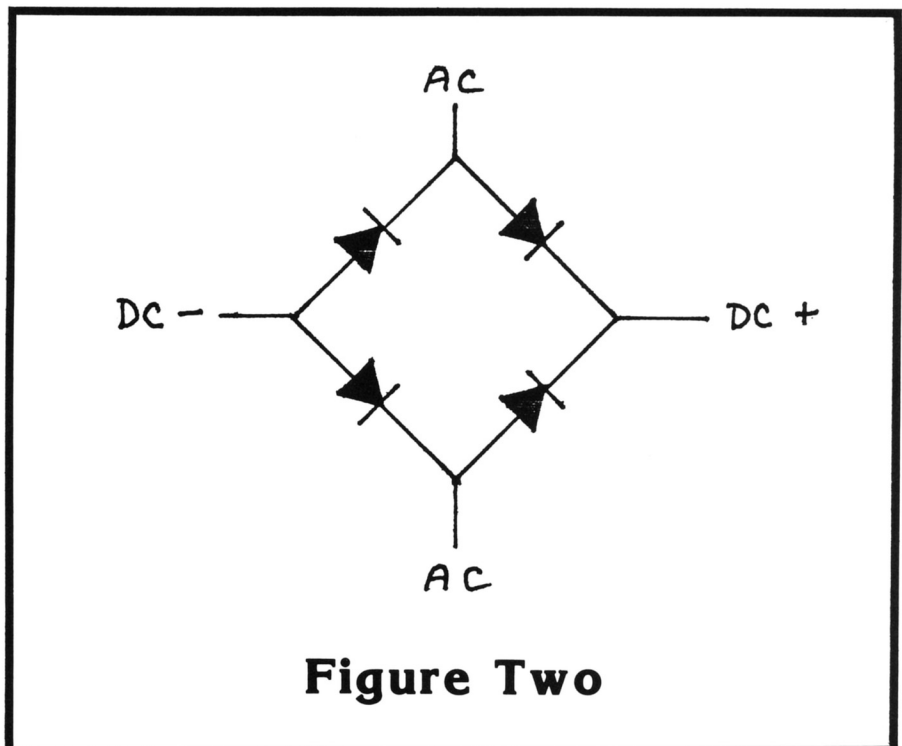


Figure Two



By Roger C. Sharpe

In a bottle, throughout history, and around the world

Although this is the October issue, for me it's still September and on the TV is a Mets/Chicago Cubs double-header which really doesn't matter too much anymore. But it was good for most of the season.

At least the August collapse didn't happen until September and the refrain, once again, can be wait until next year. Now, instead, thoughts can turn to the glory that might be: The Bears (who let me be tormented on national television with a loss to Dallas just a few days ago); the Bulls who have finally signed Greenwood and harken the return to form of Tom the Tree; and finally, those Black Hawks who probably won't get Bobby Hull, but then for those of you outside of Chicago, all of these things possibly don't matter, and maybe you're even skipping this paragraph to get to the good stuff. So will I.

Can you feel it in the air? The inevitable countdown to the show of shows? Rumors and promises abound with the glories of new machines yet to be seen and vaguely talked about. One thing is for sure: some of the models on the horizon are going to knock you out.

Although the glut of machinery hasn't abated, with more games out than one can count, most of this year's crop have been encouraging additions to any location, and the question only remains what to do with the not-so-old-stuff that's still earning money? Who knows what

the answer is. One thing is for sure, however, the turnover has been on this side of incredible.

The surprise, as reported in a previous issue, is the lack of foreign game on these shores and the rapid departure of Astro Games (remember *Warlords* and *Black Sheep Squadron*?), the absence of Atari in pins after only six models and a stab with *Monza* last year, and the lessening of the sitdown market with a greater emphasis instead on wide-body games.

There has been one entrant into the pinball sweepstakes with *Game Plan*, but for the most part, the majors have been jockeying for position and trying to firm up their market shares with an increasing array of machines. One after another they come, almost like lemmings heading to an eventual death in a sea of arcades and funlands.

The big four have indeed done themselves proud, and innovative design and the refinement of electronics has suddenly almost preordained the next big break, with conventionality. Wait, in less than a month and a half, I have a feeling you'll see what the immediate future will hold.

In fact, next month, as has become a ritual in this space, you'll get a sneak preview of what to be on the lookout for at the Hilton. Until then, suffice it to say that this month's lineup is a strong one with games

which will undoubtedly be on display in the manufacturer's booths. So let's take a look and see what's in store.

Gottlieb's GENIE

It's almost fitting that this is the leadoff machine for this month's reviews, since almost everyone has been waiting to see what this company would do with a wide-body game. And here it is, Gottlieb's first.

PLAYFIELD: The action begins with four top lanes (A-B-C-D) which are just off of center at the right. This leads down to two thumper bumpers and a right side kick-out hole (which also controls countdowning bonus) as well as a sliced lane that leads back down to the plunger.

Below this level, also to the center and right of center is a four drop target bank which controls bonus multiplier values, a center slightly angled spinner (Gottlieb's own wide variety), a target just to the left and two side targets at the right.

Taking a more moderate interpretation of Atari's *Middle Earth* two playfields in one concept, *Genie* also offers yet another level in design. Move over to the left side, and at the top is a seven drop target bank (four red and three white), an access wire to the right of this for getting back to those lanes, an opening from the left thumper bumper, a left side target that controls extra ball value and

Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

Gottlieb's GENIE.....#### William's TIME WARP.....###3/4

Bally's HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS.....####

three star rollover buttons along with two smaller flippers for some extra play, and a left side rollover lane down to a repeat performance of the A-B-C-D lanes.

Below this is yet another thumper bumper before one gets to the maze of lanes and openings for the three flipper, two kickers, a right side two lane and post and a left side short lane and post set up bottom.

ANALYSIS: What can one say except there's a helluva lot going on in *Genie*. It is a well designed and thought out playfield that offers numerous shot possibilities and fine play from all of the five flippers. One problem encountered has been the strength of the small top flippers and even flipper-tip strength, but the game plays and plays with adjustments from the player.

The bonus multiplier value pops up almost randomly with a yellow light just in front of the lower drop target bank, and all that's needed is to get down at least one target to gain the multiple before the light goes off. The top targets will reset once all the reds or whites are hit and then reset with a value of 5000 points for each and an extra ball popping up from the target at the right side, if memory serves correct.

Get the lanes out and there's also a lit target for the extra ball and get everything and the right side special light comes alive. Points and play abound by going for the center spinner for action back to the top and some good nudging. And once the bonus gets to the 20,000 point level, it's collect time if you can get to that top right kick-out hole. It is a remarkable game, a great wide-body and one of the stronger efforts from Gottlieb in recent vintage.

Some feel the play may be too slow and have tried to jack the back legs up, but this is ineffective and really takes away from an excellent piece of workmanship that makes *Genie* one of the more memorable wide-body games, with its reverses off the flippers and good long shots from side to side.

GRAPHICS: The magician/wizard weaves a spell for a couple of "genies" that might make Barbara Eden try for a comeback in a very visual treatment that uses some softer shades and a blending of tones in oranges, yellows, blues and greens. Along with these typically Gottlieb graphics is a sound system that is pretty much tied into the theme depending upon how you set it since I've run across two variations on the sound. (In fact, as an aside for those not necessarily enthralled with the music mode of *Totem*, you can change it to a second striking sound system that may breathe new life into

the game—check your distributor or instruction booklet inside the game.)

PLAY: Three-ball seems to be the choice with *Genie* and the play can sustain higher than normal limits due to the scoring potential and length of time a normal game takes. In extra ball areas try a 220,000 start followed by 440,000 and 660,000 points. On free play you might want to raise these levels by about 100,000 points each—depending, once again, on the caliber of your players.

RATING: ####

Williams' TIME WARP

Waiting in the wings to make its mark is the next "hot one" from the company that has really turned things around in 1979. And, although *Flash* is a tough act to follow in conventional sized pins, this four-player neatly complements *Stellar Wars* and *Tri Zone* as a worthy successor to the crown.

PLAYFIELD: Three lanes (A-B-C) and a vari-valued kick-out hole to the left start the action that leads down to a left side rectangular red target and five thumper bumpers. Get to center field, and it's a three drop target bank on the left and a five drop target bank on the right. Also on the right is a nice touch that is one of the things which makes this game.

A long lane leads up to a top right bulls-eye target, with a wire gate that blocks passage back down (normally, unless the shot is too hard) and, instead, leads the ball to a collect bonus kick-out hole which then kicks the ball out to the middle of the field. It's a great feature and works well here. The bottom is almost conventional with the wire lanes and flippers, except this time we're faced with blue banana flippers.

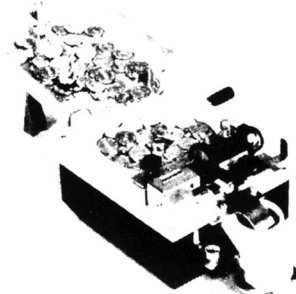
ANALYSIS: *Time Warp* has a lot going for it in the way of shots and continuation of play from one shot to another. This is especially true with the design and layout of the drop targets with rebounds going from one side to another to cop an extra target or two from a single flip. The problem is in controlling the banana flippers with more precise shots needed here than on the *Disco Fever* board.

It could cause players trouble in adjusting as it has me, but then I was spoiled playing the game as a whitewood when it had those old regular flippers and haven't been able to do as well since.

Anyway, the top lanes offer some flashing lights once again with each lane needing to be made twice on one ball in order to light the special. The top kick-out hole gives some point values and also holds the key

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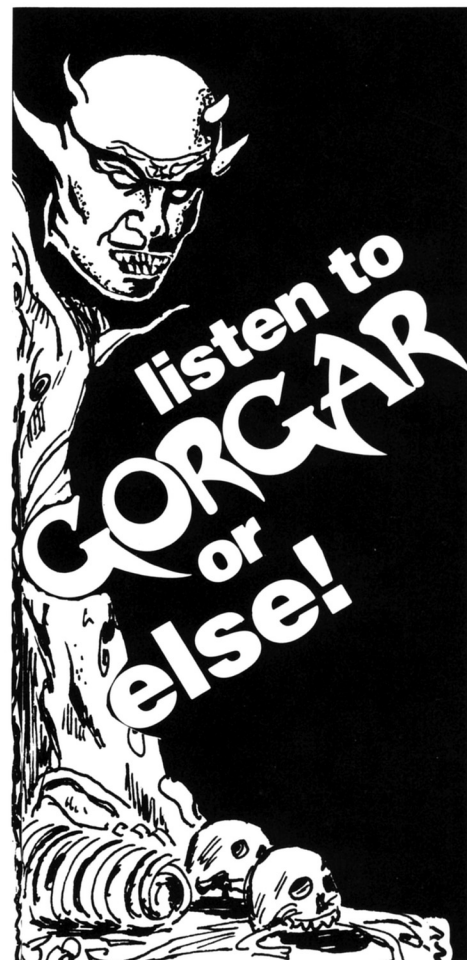
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for an extra-ball with its step up values and four long flashing arrows at the center of the field when it's extra ball time, but the big thing is that you can get bonus multiplier value here and the potential is 10X.

Yes, folks you read it right. Not since Playmatic's *Chance* has a game of recent time had such a high multiple value, although on *Time Warp* the maximum is 12,000 points times whatever value, which isn't too shabby since you can keep on collecting it from right side set up.

The left side targets bounce up in value from 5,000 to 30,000 points for getting the bank down, while the right side targets offer bonus multiplier values as well as lighting corresponding thumper bumpers on the board; so the scoring potential is there if you can master the flippers with their innumerable reverses as well as straightaway shots.

GRAPHICS: Take time and freeze it in one frame with an artist's touch that seems to bloom even more with each succeeding effort. That's what you have with *Time Warp* and *Connie* is its creator. There are good deep blues and other bold color highlights that indeed take the player

on "a pinball journey into the future and past." Visually, it is a delight with a backglass and carryover theme playfield, replete with pyramid and a fantasy of ideas, reality, and dreams rolled into one.

PLAY: Despite the bonus multiplier value that's possible and the carryover of features from ball to ball with the left side targets only, you'll really have to gauge the limits by how well the players are hitting it.

It's a three-ball format once again, although five-ball play won't hurt it. In extra ball land, go with a 150,000-point start followed by a 300,000- and 500,000-point limit for three-ball play. On free play with three-ball raise this by about 50,000 to 75,000 points per limit. On five-ball play you should be able to get away with an additional 100,000 points for each making it about 300,000 to start with 450,000 and 650,000 to follow.

RATING: ###3/4

Bally's HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS ON TOUR

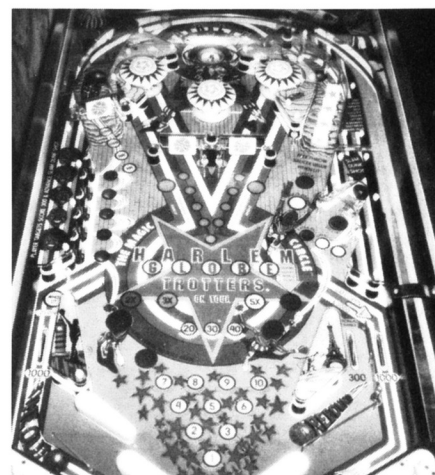
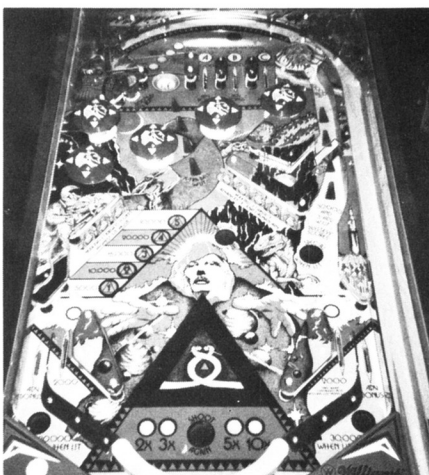
Sweet Georgia Brown was never sweeter as Bally adds to its long list of

celebrity pinball machines with yet another sure winner that hits from the top of the key and touches only net.

PLAYFIELD: The saucer kick-out hole begins the top with an ever-moving letter value (G-L-O-B-E). Down a bit and there's three thumper bumpers in a triangular configuration. A double spinner at the middle of the field follows with a post separating the two.

At the left is another spinner while on the right for a balance of action is that great innovation: the in-line drop target that gained its impact on *Paragon*, although the whitewood on this machine had been in the works for quite a while. There are four drop targets in the line with bonus multiplier values attached from 2X to 5X and a kick-out hole behind worth 25,000 points and then a special, and a ball that's kicked back up to the top. Go back to the sides of the game, and at the left is a flush line of five targets which are carried over in a memory and lead, once they're all hit, to an increase in a right side "slam dunk shot" that harkens to the one found on Williams' *Contact*.

The values here go from opening



Gottlieb's "GENIE"

Williams' "TIME WARP"

Bally's "HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS"

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a right side gate leading into the flipper to extra ball and specials. As for other memory the bonus build-up goes the route of 20,000—30,000—40,000 from one ball to the next for an over 200,000 point out-hole bonus capability on any given turn. The bottom offers a double left side flipper and a singleton on the right, with the two left flippers being complemented by only a kicker and no wire form.

ANALYSIS: On this signature post and backglass G.K. and G.F. effort, Bally has a winning combination with a variety of full court shots. In fact, *Harlem Globetrotters'* main appeal is going to be its center spinners and the accessibility and better use of the in-line targets. It's a neat package that returns to good basic pinball with left to right and top to bottom continuity that even allows for some excellent reverses from either side.

The recessed target at the right is trouble at times when you want it and a piece of cake when you don't, but the options for getting back to the top and away for a breather are many and spelling out G-L-O-B-E on top for its extra point value and ultimate special possibility, make the effort back to the top worth the try.

The left side, however, is going to be an alluring feature for players along with the in-lines on the right three spinner delight of build-up value with the left side spinner, something Stern has had good success with, and those center two spinners for getting out-hole bonus values increased.

GRAPHICS: The startup music is enough to get anyone whistling; and the likes of Curly Neal and the rest of the late Saperstein's wonders (who are recognizable the world over) is a tribute to Bally's insight into what is a marketable commodity in pinball tie-ins.

These goodwill ambassadors are stunningly represented here in a backglass that can only be described as being yet another marvel in the long line of artistic giants from this company. It looks super and the playfield is a star-studded extravaganza as well with the return of red, white, and blue, along with some yellow to keep that home court advantage.

PLAY: For three-ball, extra ball play you might want to try *Harlem Globetrotter* at a 150,000 point, 300,000, and 500,000 set-up. On free play, increase these limits by about 75,000 points depending upon your location. For five-ball play, which this machine can take—although with the carry over in super bonus values you're talking about some big score possibilities—you

might be able to get away with a 300,000 point start followed by 500,000 and 750,000 for free play areas, with a decrease of about 50,000 to each limit for extra ball play.

RATING: ####

That's a look at three biggies for this time around, games which have a lot going for them with sound, graphics, and play appeal—enough for anyone. But if you think these are good, wait until next time when you'll read about the likes of a comic book hero turned hit TV series pinball machine and an upcoming blockbuster movie/pinball tie-in topping the list. And if these efforts from Gottlieb and Stern aren't enough to whet the appetite, there'll be more as usual, plus my annual picks of places to go and where to eat in the one and only Windy City in the AMOA preview for November.

A final note is an update of the *Sharpshooter* ratings game and comment feedback report which continues to please me on a personal level. The response has been great with few negatives thrown my way regarding the design of the game and its play appeal as well as earning potential. Some negatives have been regarding the absence of a knocker for specials and the dynamite explosion in its place.

Another area of response has been to the speed of the game and the fact that some players are just finding it too tough to beat. On the brighter side, and in the majority, some comments include the following from an East Coast operator who told me that he had only doubled up on one other machine, *Flash*, but felt he would also get a second *Sharpshooter* since it was so successful in his location.

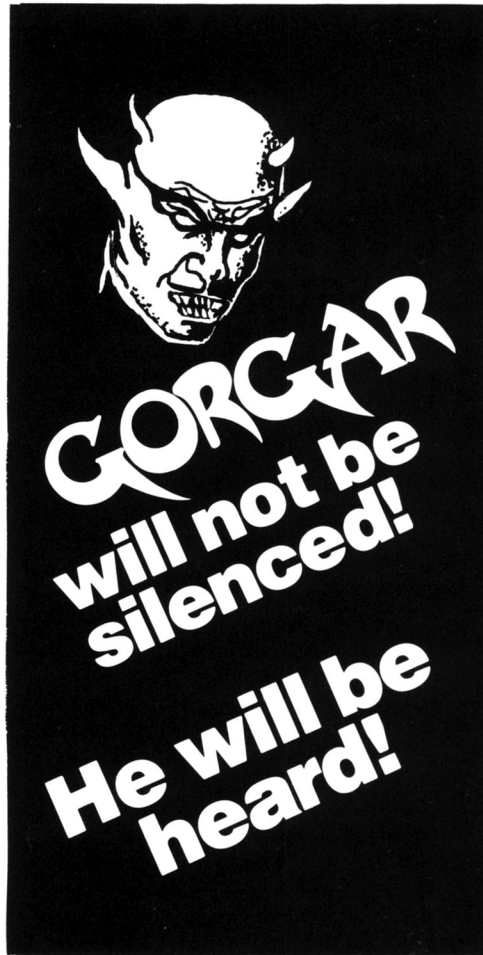
Almost everyone has given favorable responses as to how well the game is holding up and the fact that the sound is simply great with its tie-in to the theme: the gun shots and galloping hooves seem to be making this game something special.

For the second installment, the ratings read as follows:

####	33
###	12
##	6
#	4

And that folks is it for this time around. Keep your games clean, talk to your players to see what they like or don't like about certain machines, and check out the games before you put them on location and, as always, be well and prosper.

P.S. For what it's worth, the Cubs won a doubleheader.



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"The Lunar has landed"

Declaring a "new generation" of video games, Atari introduces *Lunar Lander* and its technical vehicle, the Quadrascan display system. Quadrascan is a random scan display system intended to allow more realistic animation and three-dimensional effects. The new system permits complete control of the beam from the main PCB rather than internal control by the monitor.

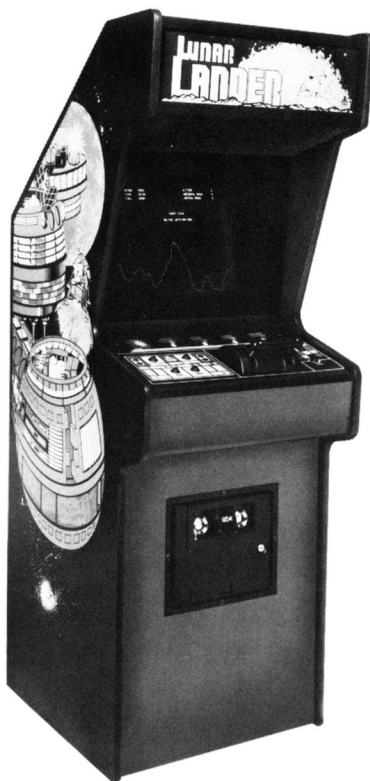
The system also brags of a simplified construction. There are fewer hardware components on the monitor boards than similar systems, and three boards for the Quadrascan display: power supply, deflection, and high voltage.

The overall visual advantages of the Quadrascan display result in a picture with finer detail, greater resolution, and smoother movement.

Lunar Lander also provides a four level selection of difficulty in deference to gravity, friction, and rotation features. Using thruster and rotation buttons, the player controls the altitude, horizontal speed, and vertical speed of his craft to attempt a perfect touchdown. The player can select bonus score touchdown spots on the monitor while trying to conserve fuel units by not using the abort button.

Fuel units are bought according to the add-a-coin feature, to which the player is alerted by a warning signal when his fuel is running low.

The touchdown is enhanced by picture magnification on the monitor, messages from the control center notify the player of his landing status, and imperfect landings in visually spectacular crashes with explosions and debris hurling into outer space.



Aladdin's girlfriend

The release of *Genie*, Gottlieb's first wide-body, 4-player flipper, has been announced by the company's marketing group.

The game is based on an Arabian Nights story, the legend of Genie and the escape from the magic bottle. The theme lends itself beautifully to the backglass artwork that is almost classic in nature.

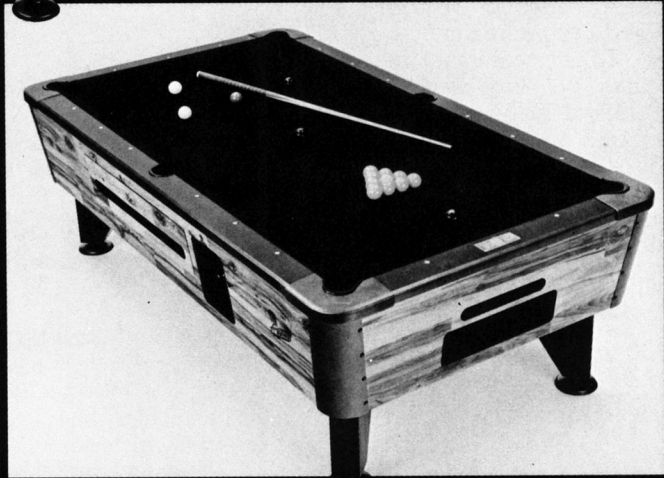
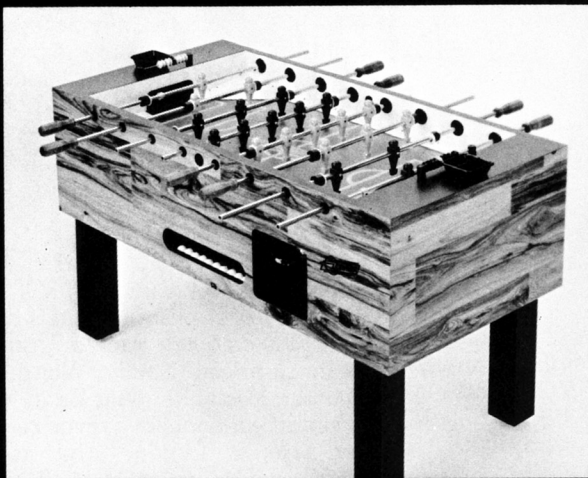
The arrangement of playfield elements is highlighted with the unit's "game-within-a-game," a feature wherein a section in the upper left hand corner of the playfield features its own flippers and drop targets.

These particular drop targets have alternate colors. Completing the reds lights the "special" target and scores 10,000 points. Completing the white drop targets lights the right "extra ball" target, resetting the red and white targets and scoring 10,000 points.

There are two sets of A,B,C,D rollovers which can score either 2,000 or 5,000 points when lit. This also lights the left "extra ball" target, which when lit resets the A,B,C,D rollovers.

Hole values are 10,000 points and rollover buttons and pop bumpers score 2,000 points each. Bonus can go as high as 29,000 points and can be multiplied 5 times by hitting certain drop targets when lit.

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A game you won't forget

With the introduction of a memory protection feature which locks in all game adjustments, *Tri Zone* opens the new fall production season for Williams Electronics. As part of the new system, all adjustments can be made without removing the glass, and once they are locked in, changes can't be made without opening the coin door. Thereupon, an operator is pleased to discover Williams "total front end programming."

Tri Zone features the usual attractive Williams backglass and playfield and includes the company's dual sound option.

The game scores according to bonus multipliers, up to 5X, made possible by accomplishing the A and B rollovers at either the top or bottom of the playfield. T-R rollover features build to extra ball and specials. The isolated Z-O-N-E drop targets score 10,000 when lit.

Tri Zone is available with the dollar coin slot.



Galactic dogfight

As a follow-up to the highly popular *Flash*, Williams Electronics, Inc., has introduced *Stellar Wars*, a spectacular new wide-body pinball game which is now in full production.

The new model has a dramatically illustrated backglass which depicts a galactic "dogfight" and a very exciting "Battlescope" feature which explodes into a display of frenzied flashing lights each time a bank of drop targets is knocked out.

Williams is introducing two industry innovations with *Stellar Wars*: triple scoring jet bumpers that score 100 points or 1000 when lit or 2000 when flashing, and an additional Sweep Sound. The Sweep-Sound increases in rate as the letters S-T-E-L-L-A-R W-A-R-S are lit, greatly increasing player excitement.

Total front-end programming is also featured on *Stellar Wars*, marking Williams' introduction of this concept on wide-body games.

A rock from heaven

A WOW Bonus, startling new visual animation, revolutionary memory drop targets, and a sophisticated new audio system highlight *Meteor*, the latest four-player solid-state pinball machine from Stern Electronics, Inc. *Meteor* is based on the science-fact movie of the same name which will be released by American International Pictures, Inc.

In addition to the new third coin shoot for the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin and doubled ROM capacity (from 4k to 8k), *Meteor* highlights include WOW Bonus tied to rocket alignment and Specials and new visual animation. When the coin is dropped, all lights and the sound system activate.

Also included are a sophisticated new audio system with background build-up sound taken from the movie sound track, revolutionary memory drop targets with remote trip action, and a variable value spinner scoring increment which increases and decreases with *Meteor* target bank position.

There are also M-E-T-E-O-R drop targets held in memory and restored prior to each player's next ball.

The *Meteor* pinball game is drawn from the movie "Meteor" starring Sean Connery, Natalie Wood, Karl Malden, Martin Landau, Brian Keith, Joseph Campanella, Trevor Howard and Henry Fonda. The motion picture will be released by A.I.P. to selected theaters beginning October 19.

The game, *Meteor*, was designed by Steve Kirk, who also designed Stern's first outer-space game, *Stars*.



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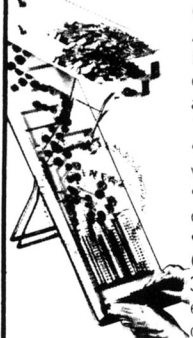
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News Briefs

.....Chuck Farmer, who had been with Shaffer Distributing for fourteen years, has left that company to take up a marketing position with Tournament Soccer. Tom Kindlar, Shaffer's Cleveland area manager for the past four years, will replace Farmer. Dale Larcey, Shaffer's assistant manager in Cleveland, now becomes the manager of the Cleveland area branch office. Farmer, who left Shaffer September 20, had conducted several Tournament Soccer promotions in recent years.....

.....The whole coin industry is saddened by the death of T.W. Hughes, the president of S&H Distributing in Shreveport, Louisiana, September 10. Mr. Hughes, who was reported to be in good health, died of a cerebral hemorrhage. He was 62. He had been in the industry for more than forty years and is survived by his wife, Annie Elizabeth; a daughter, Betty Ann; and two sons, Tony Williams III and George Robert. He was buried at Forest Park Cemetery in Shreveport.....

.....This past weekend, October 12-14, the West Virginia operators association held its 25th annual trade show. The association, which is spearheaded by Leoma Ballard, is one of the longest running trade shows you'll find.....

.....On the wings of its success with "Sharpshooter," Game Plan held its first distributors meeting September 27-29. The purpose of the event was to introduce Game Plan distributors to Game Plan's facilities, outline the company's long-range plans, and acquaint the distributors with Game Plan's warranty program, parts program, and service program. Reportedly, it was to have served as the occasion for the unveiling of Game Plan's next conventional pinball, as well as another sitdown model.

.....The AMOA is reportedly looking for someone with a wider range of association experience. That's the word following the recent dismissal of Vic Rye who was hired last year as an assistant to Fred Granger, the executive vice president for the national association. According to Granger, the AMOA is already interviewing applicants for the position of assistant executive vice president. The man filling the slot, said Granger, would probably replace him (Granger) when he retires in a few years.....

.....Over 75 percent of the exhibition area has already been reserved for the IMA Exhibition which is scheduled for January 17-19 in Frankfurt, West Germany. Over 100 companies are expected to be represented at the international show.....

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