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quality

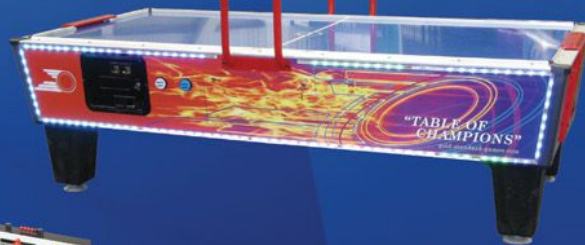
Bowl Expo:
Strong
coin-op
presence

State Meetings:
Illinois,
Ohio,
Wisconsin

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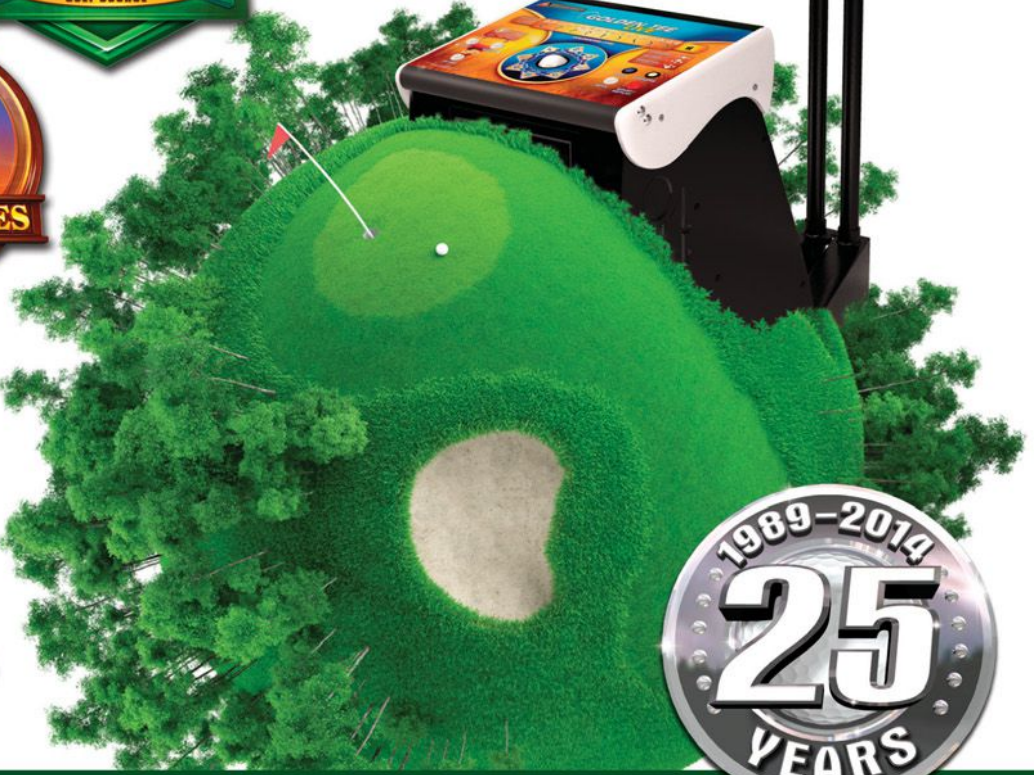
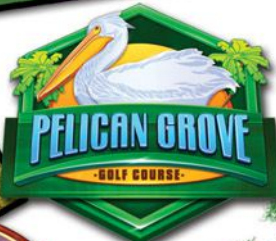
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On the Cover

Three years ago Mark Robbins, an air hockey champion and game designer, purchased Shelti Inc., which became Gold Standard Games/Shelti. The company recently introduced its Premium model and Gold Flare model air hockey tables and the Dual Pool Table licensed through Horizon Games Inc. and built by Gold Standard as a Shelti brand product. *Play Meter* spoke with Robbins about developments over the past three years and where the company is headed in the future.

27 Trade Show: Bowl Expo

Coin-op companies had a major presence at this year's Bowl Expo in Las Vegas. In the American Amusement Machine Association's (AAMA's) "Arcade Pavilion," and on the rest of the show floor, manufacturers met with bowling center operators to share the newest equipment for these locations.

58 State Meetings

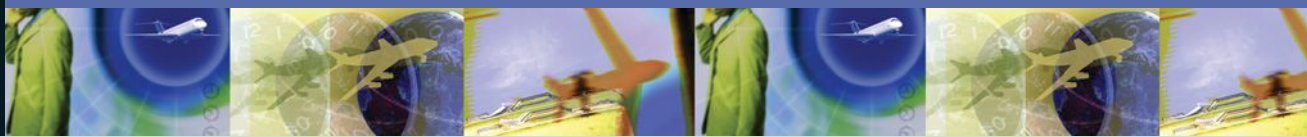
Several states held association meetings this month including Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Check this issue for full coverage of each of these events.

52 Trade Show: Clean Show

Familiar faces speckled the aisles at this year's Clean Show, held in New Orleans. *Play Meter* was on hand to catch up with coin-op companies with products that crossover to the laundry industry.

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August 6-9

AAMA Annual Meeting and Distributor Gala

Lisle, Ill.
Hilton Lisle
tel: (847)290-9088
e-mail: information@coin-op.org
web: www.coin-op.org

August 12

MCMOA Annual Meeting

Plymouth, Mich.
Fox Hills Golf & Banquet Center
tel: (517)708-2916
e-mail: administrator@mcmoa.com
web: www.mcmoa.com

August 23-24

MO-AMOA Annual Meeting

Columbia, Mo.
Hilton Garden Inn
tel: (417)831-0405
fax: (417)831-5479
e-mail: kinney@kinneyamusement.com

September 6-9

AMOA Mid-Year Meeting

Jersey City, N.J.
Hyatt Regency Jersey City on the Hudson
tel: (800)937-2662
e-mail: amoa@amoa.com
web www.amoa.com

September 17-20

Las Vegas Souvenir & Resort Gift Show

Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (678)285-3976
e-mail: lglosson@urban-expo.com
web: www.urbaon-expo.com

September 18-20

Euro Attractions Expo

Paris, France
Porte de Versailles
tel: (703)836-4800
e-mail: iaapa@iaapa.org
web: www.iaapa.org/eas

September 23-26

G2E

Las Vegas, Nev.
Sands Expo and Convention Center
tel: (888)314-1378
e-mail: inquiry@globalgamingexpo.com
web: www.globalgamingexpo.com

September 30-October 3

WWA Symposium & Trade Show

West Palm Beach, Fla.
Marriott Palm Beach County Convention Center
tel: (913)599-0300
e-mail: patty@waterparks.org
web: www.waterparks.org

October 12-14

ENADA Rome

Rome, Italy
New Rome Trade Fair
tel: 39(0)541-744214
e-mail: s.bodellini@riminifera.it
web: www.fierarimini.it

October 12-15

National Association of Convenience Stores Expo

Atlanta, Ga.
Georgia World Congress Convention Center
tel: (877)684-3600
e-mail: show@nacsonline.com
web: www.nacsonline.com

October 16-20

Pinball Expo

Wheeling, Ill.
Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel
tel:(800)323-3547
e-mail: brkpinball@hotmail.com
web: www.pinballexpo.net

October 17-18

Surexpo

Warsaw, Poland
Centrum Expo
tel: 48-71-359-6271
e-mail: office@wigor.wroc.pl
web: www.wigor-targi.com

November 12-14

NAMA CoffeeTea&Water

Nashville, Tenn.
Opryland Hotel
tel: (312)346-0370
fax: (312)704-4140
web: www.vending.org

November 18-22 **PM**

IAAPA Attractions Expo

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BONNIE THEARD
Editor

We want to hear from you about any of the articles in this issue or topics you'd like to see.
E-mail:
(editorial@playmeter.net)

It's the middle of 2013; time to take stock and look forward to the second half of the year. Thoughts naturally turn to what new products and innovations will be available to freshen entertainment options.

The first hint of new product introductions on the horizon comes this month at the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) 10th Distributor Gala, a fitting finale to AAMA's Annual Meeting, to be held in Lisle, Ill., Aug 6-8. The Distributor Gala is the ideal venue for distributors around the country to get a firsthand look at prototypes and newly completed games for the marketplace.

At the Distributor Gala in 2012, Mark Struhs of Raw Thrills said, "The Distributor Gala is important because the business has consolidated. This is an opportunity to show distributors what we've got coming so they know how to plan for their market. When they know what's coming, they can build excitement in the market. And it's our job to deliver that excitement."

Tony Shamma of American Vending Sales (AVS) concurred: "This is an opportunity to see new product earlier than most, and be able to test the games before they are released to the field."

Look for coverage of the Distributor Gala in the September issue along with a special Fall Product Preview that will provide a complete picture of product offerings.

The next major event to showcase new coin-op products is the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo set for Nov. 18-22 in Orlando, Fla. Coin-op presence has been growing at this mega event, making it well worth the trip. Not only is there a Coin-Op Pavilion sponsored by AAMA, but additional coin-op companies not in the Pavilion secure exhibit space as well.

Speaking of expos, this month's issue includes coverage of the Bowl Expo and the Clean Show. The Bowl Expo drew a larger number of participants (exhibitors and attendees) than in 2012—a good sign for the industry. The Clean Show was larger than expected and featured products by a number of familiar coin-op names in the areas of vending and payment systems.

Attendance was also high at a number of recent state association events. Check out the Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association (ICMOA) Annual Meeting, the Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) Annual Meeting, and the Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) Conference to see what's going on at the state level.

Operators preparing for their league season, or looking to start leagues, will want to read the "7 Ways to Grow Your League Program" provided by the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) National Dart Association (NDA). The NDA focuses on several best practices to incorporate into your promotional strategies to be successful. A must read!

In addition, Sporting Edge highlights the Valley National Eight-Ball Association (VNEA) International Championships and Junior Championships that attest to the power of leagues.

Rounding out the issue are our regular features, news, and interviews with the presidents of both AAMA and AMOA. The summer may be considered a slow time for some, but there is always something interesting going on in the industry and *Play Meter* will be sure you know about it. ▲

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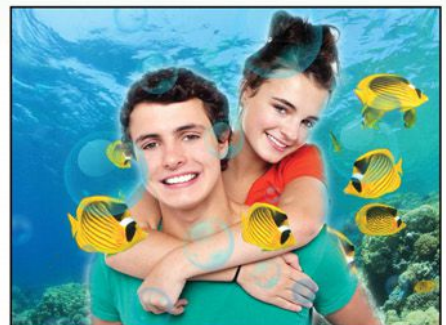


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Standard Height



Bar Height

LAI Games

LAI Games is now shipping two versions of its new redemption game, Ghost Town. The four-player game originally shipped with a cabinet that accommodated standard, table-height chairs. The new version features a taller cabinet height suitable for bar stools. The new height is perfect for locations catering to teens through adults, and locations who wish to use their existing bar stools with the game. The original cabinet is great for family entertainment centers (FECs) with a mix of younger and adult patrons. (www.laigames.com).



Speedy's One Stop

The newest Coin Hopper Mounting System from Speedy's dispenses tokens at the player station. Integrated components make for an easy installation. The kit includes a 3D installation template.

Features of Speedy's Custom Hopper Kit include: +12V DC operation and less than two amp current draw, low profile design for ease of installation in any game, hopper angle adjustable to 30 degrees, durable powder coat finish, light illuminates when high capacity hopper is low, light flashes when hopper is empty, hopper holds 1,500 tokens, automatically dispenses unfulfilled tokens on reset, and compatible with any card reader or device that sends a pulse. The Custom Interface Board has simplified wiring for easy integration, reset switch with remote capability, test dispense button, power LED, status LED, and programmable coin payout. (www.sosrepair.com). ▲

AMI Entertainment

AMI Entertainment Network announced a major update to the iOS version of its popular AMI Bar Link mobile app. The update gives AMI Bar Link for iOS a greatly improved user interface and a variety of new features, including automatic check-ins, better search capabilities, and a more secure purchasing process.

A new user interface that makes it easier than ever to find the music you love. Improved location search and automatic location check-in make it a snap to get connected to your favorite AMI location, while the sleeker and more responsive interface lets users easily navigate AMI's extensive library of music, find more music from the artist currently playing on the jukebox, and view how many credits are left in the App Wallet. (www.amientertainment.com)



Sega Amusements

Sega's newest redemption game Pirates of Monster Island tells the story of a group of monsters living peacefully on Monster Island among piles of treasure. A group of dastardly pirates sneaks onto Monster Island in the night and steals the monster's treasure. The monsters wake up just in time to see the pirate ships set sail and escape. The monsters man the cannons to blast their treasure off the decks of the pirate ships into the sea so they can swim out and re-claim what's theirs. (www.segaarcade.com)



INTERNATIONAL BOWL EXPO[®]

strikes again

The International Bowl Expo (IBE) Convention and Trade Show was held June 23-28 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. IBE is the premier bowling industry event, hosting thousands of bowling center owners/operators and industry leaders from around the world each year.

Committee meetings and seminars were dedicated to the first three days of the event and were conducted at the The Paris, The Orleans Hotel, and Bally's. Show

floor exhibits were open to attendees for the last two days of the trade show.

PepsiCo has served as the official beverage provider of the bowling industry since 2002 and this year PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi was the keynote speaker.

Many familiar faces from the coin-op

world were in attendance, as arcades are now a mainstay in many bowling centers. The American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) was on hand to promote the coin-op amusement industry through its Location Trade Show Program's "Arcade Pavilion."

The area was buzzing with new product and excitement, offering a 1,500-square foot game room layout for bowling proprietors. The pavilion showcased the following equipment manufacturers: American Changer, AMI Entertainment, Andamiro USA, Bay Tek Games, Coast to Coast Entertainment, Family Fun Companies, Gold Standard Games/Shelti, LAI Games, Namco America, Sega Amusements, and Firestone Financial.

Game Exchange of Colorado's Rich Babich was in attendance to answer questions and help proprietors with the process of getting equipment into their location.



Betson Enterprises booth.

BOWL EXPO

SEMINARS

The coin-op and family entertainment center (FEC) industries were well represented in seminars given at the show. Trainertainment's Beth Standlee gave a seminar on "The CPQC's of Selling (Connect, Quality, Present, Close)," which focused on understanding and developing a set of skills for the art of "selling."

Sheryl Bindelglass of Sheryl Golf presented "Follow the Money-Employee Rewards Do Increase Revenue." Increasing and building your bottom-line by rewarding your staff is an important key to building loyalty and motivating employees. Bindelglass gave various examples of low-cost, high-value employee reward programs that work.

Frank Price of Birthday University moderated "Service Super Charged....When Guest Service Becomes a Weapon!" Service basics are used to inspire new customers, increase revenue, and generate more return visits. By utilizing your staff's personality and assets you can change the way you do business.

George McAuliffe of Pinnacle Entertainment Advisors by Redemption Plus offered his expertise in a seminar titled "Advanced Merchandising for a BEC Game Room." The seminar was dedicated to the importance of upgrading your game room and adding redemption to your bowling facility.

"Laser Tag 201," presented by Erik Guthrie of Zone Laser Tag, was intended for proprietors looking to re-energize their laser tag sector through best practices in marketing.

Events and contests were prevalent. The Bowling Proprietors' Association of America (BPAA) announced at the show that Choptank Bowling Center in Cambridge, Md., won a once-in-a-lifetime \$100,000 prize to upgrade their facility through the "Extreme Bowling Center Makeover," which was only open to bowling proprietors who attended the IBE. Choptank is set to receive a physical bowling center makeover as well as an operations and training overhaul.



Stephanie Darby of QubicaAMF.



Balta Garcia (l) of Toy Barn shows the company's quality plush to Jacqueline and Scott Deviers of Mike Aulby's Arrowhead Bowl.



Anna Heck of Bay Tek Games in front of the Hybrid Prize Hub.



From left: Brian Duke, consultant for Sacoa Playcard Systems, discusses business ideas with Victoria Mochkovsky, Sebastian Mochkovsky, Maria Rosa Mochkovsky, and Ezequiel Mochkovsky of Sacoa.



Tom Tessitore (l) and Jay Willis of National Ticket.



Mike McWilliams (l) of Specialty Coin and Vince Moreno of Sega Amusements in front of Sega's Pirates of Monster Island video redemption game.



Anna Zykina Bacorn (l) and Gregory Bacorn of Barron Games show attendees the Quad Air Jr.



Beth Standlee (l) of Trainertainment explains her sales training technique to an attendee.



Carol Ann Lally (l) of Play Meter and AAMA Chairman John Margold.



Judi Heston (l) and Evie Theisen of Theisen Vending showed products for bulk vending equipment.



Rich Babich (l) of Game Exchange of Colorado enjoys visiting with Wayne Snihur of American Changer.



Long time Play Meter readers Brian Smith (l) and Connie Smith of Alley Cats.



Carol Ann Lally (l) of Play Meter and Chris Brady of LAI Games International in front of the prize vendor Balloon Buster.



Firestone Financial's Spencer Norton with seminar speaker Sheryl Bindelglass of Sheryl Golf.



Satinder Bhutani of Andamiro shows the self redemption merchandiser i-Cube.



Tina Schwartz, AAMA Business and Finance Manager, oversees the Arcade Pavilion.



From left: Meg Bonnicksen, Mike Lynch, Rorie Keller, and Aaron Graves of Sureshot Redemption.



Debbie Gonzalez of Universal Space with the new redemption game Tubin' Twist.



Family Fun Companies' Lisa Chapman displays the Kiddy Kruisini driving game for youngsters.



From left: Dusty Cole of The Golf Bowl, Bernie Robinson and Jon W. Brady of Brady Distributing.



Rudy Garcia (l) of Garcia Enterprises visits with Gold Standard's Mick White.



Dave and Paula Palmer of Mountain Coin Machine Distributing walk the aisles.

BOWL EXPO



Eric Gilly (l) and Josh Pick of Namco enjoy their first Bowl Expo next to the video redemption game Pac-Man Ticket Mania.



Elizabeth Petty (l) and Charlie Werckle of Intercard showed the company's card and management system.



Rebecca's Debora Cherry showed attendees the latest novelty items.



Frank Seninsky (l) of Amusement Entertainment Management and Frank Price of Birthday University chat in the aisle.



Rhode Island Novelty's Sean Silvia.



Phil Masters (l) and Todd Hittenmiller of Fawn Vendors display their vending equipment for any size location.



From left: Roger Butterfield, John Bolton, and David Goldman of Ideal Software show facility owners their software solutions.



Team Lally enjoys a visit with Dave Schwartz of Bonita Marie.

COMMENTS

Bowling has come full circle from years past. "Bowling was just what we did as youngsters," said James Brewer of Coin Tech. "Our parents wanted to go bowling and we as kids just tagged along. That's all we could do if there was no one to babysit us."

Brewer continued, "I find that today parents are doing the exact same thing with their own kids. The bowling industry is thriving!"

Erik Gilly of Namco America said, "The IBE gave us a great opportunity to show off Pac-Man Ticket Mania, our newest ticket redemption piece, to bowling operators who hadn't seen or played the game."

"We have been busy and steady and we've seen lots of new faces," said Anna Zykina Bacorn of Barron Games.

Anna Heck of Bay Tek Games said, "We ran out of brochures on the first day!"

Exhibitor Betson Enterprises' Bob Boals was "happy with the interest of getting people to open up to redemption centers in their bowling facility."

Sheila Dellacona of Hoffman Mint attended the show for the first time and said she was very impressed with it.

"The show is much better than last year," said Darnelle Simmons of Coastal Amusements.

"We got a lot of new business," said Evie Theisen of Theisen Vending.

Stephanie Darby of QuibicaAMF said, "Our sales personnel are back to back with customers!"

"There were lots of new faces and customers," said Tony Orozco of Benchmark Games.

The 2014 International Bowl Expo show dates are June 22-27 at the Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando, Fla., and the Orange County Convention Center. For more information, visit (www.bowlexpo.com). ▲



Jim Chapman of Coast To Coast Entertainment shows the Twilight crane machine.



Santiago Barbero (l) and James Brewer of Coin Tech with their debit card system.



Paul Rosenbaum of Glow Machine shows the Eye Prize prize vendor to an attendee.



Jason Parrish of Embed shows a facility owner the company's point of sale software system.



Play Meter contributing writer Jerry Merola of Amusement Entertainment Management takes a break from walking the show floor.



Steve Loberg (l) and Andrew Vetock of Fun Express shows their latest redemption and novelty items.



Kent Larsen (l) of Specialty Coin and Chris Owens of AMI Entertainment Network by the NGX Face Place Jukebox.



Manny Cohen (l) of Coney Island Arcade and Carol Ann Lally of Play Meter duke it out with the Boxer.



From left: Tony Maniscalco, Frank Mauro, and Tony Orozco of Benchmark Games in front of the Explosive redemption game.



Marsha Brentlinger of Creative Theme Works Factory, a custom prop designer for FECs.



Sheila Dellacona of Hoffman Mint.



ATM Network's Jeremy Jones (l) and Guy Katopodis.



ATM Merchant Services' Mark Cumming.



Josh Bailey of MedTech Wristbands USA.



Carolina ATM's Jason Karr.

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strategies for league success

Strong league programs are an important part of any coin-op company's success. Building a league program takes effort and dedication. Whether you run dart leagues, pool, Big Buck, foosball, or Golden Tee, there are several best practices you should incorporate into your promotional strategies to be successful.

Through educational programs such as League SMART and online Webinars, the National Dart Association (NDA) has collected numerous best practices to help your leagues thrive.



By Kim Paugh,
CAE Associate
Executive Director/NDA

7 WAYS TO GROW YOUR LEAGUE PROGRAM

1. Create a vision for your league program.

It helps to have a goal in mind for your league program. Create a SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goal for your league program. For example, "I want to recruit 60 new players to my league system by the end of my fall league." Having a goal will help keep you and your staff focused when life gets busy. Be sure to revisit your goals often and celebrate your successes.

2. Work with location owners to promote leagues.

Schedule face-to-face meetings with location owners (on non-collection days) to build a stronger relationship. Make sure they understand the value of a strong league program and work with them to offer incentives to their staff to promote leagues. Create a "league central" area in the location to post important league information. This relationship with the location owner not only supports your leagues, but also reminds the location owner of the value you bring to his or her business.

3. Turn casual players into league players.

This may seem obvious, but there are people hanging out in your league locations that you can engage. Have a league sign-up party with free food and drinks to recruit new players and get everyone excited about league. Have a dual league to get pool players interested in darts or Golden Tee players in your pool leagues by having a combo league where you play two games types in one night.

Often people are too intimidated to play league because they don't think they are good enough. Make sure to remind people that league is for every skill level and hold clinics to teach basic skills of play. Work with your location owners to understand the reasons these players are not signing up. Modify your league formats to meet the needs of these players. Finally, approach local business in your area and start a corporate league.

4. Get organized and keep a good database.

Whether you utilize specialized league software or are managing your leagues in an Excel spreadsheet, make sure you keep detailed records on your players. Collect e-mail and mailing addresses, demographic information (age, gender) and league history. Keep this information in a secure location.

If you have multiple league coordinators, make sure that more than one person has access to the information so that if a coordinator leaves you retain the key league data. Having complete and accurate information on your league players will help you better communicate important league information and promote future leagues. Also, providing complete contact information to your national organization when you sanction ensures the players get information about national benefits.



A player concentrates at NDA Team Dart.



Competitors at NDA Team Dart.

5. Provide incentives for league play.

Make sure you have a strong incentive package for your players, which encourages play in your leagues. Even better, provide incentives for playing multiple leagues or seasons. Many national (Team Dart and VNEA Nationals) and state tournaments require local play in operator member leagues. Leverage this requirement to get players to play more games for you.

Work with locations to offer happy hour pricing to your league players. Give away a trip or prize for your summer league or enter players that play a certain number of games or multiple seasons in a raffle for a prize. Make sure you show appreciation to your players and make them feel special because they play in your leagues.

Don't just recognize winners, recognize loyalty as well. Finally, be sure to sanction your league players with your national organization. Sanctioning your players provides international recognition, added benefits and lends credibility to your leagues.

6. Utilize social media tools to promote your leagues.

Social media is a great avenue for creating excitement about your leagues. Post updates about your leagues on Facebook or Twitter and post pictures of your players. Be sure to like/follow other people in the coin-op industry. This will make you part of the group and others will be prompted to follow/like your pages. Keep your posts engaging and enthusiastic and post at least once a week. You can also post signage in your league locations asking your players to like/follow you.

7. Attract a new generation of players.

It is very important that you look to the future and

engage the next generation of league players. College age and young adults are looking for new fun social activities, but don't want the same level of commitment as their parents. Create "midnight madness" leagues that start later for young adults or kick up a college campus league. Shorten league seasons, but remember to provide incentives for playing multiple seasons.

Keep it social and fun and provide lots of recognition on social media. Don't forget about the younger kids. Start junior leagues or adult/junior leagues to get kids as young as five interested. The best place to start is with children of your avid adult league players and build your junior leagues from there.

If you need more incentive to start a junior program, the NDA is excited to announce the first national dart junior tournament to be held in 2014. The NDA Junior Dart Tournament will be held June 20-22 in Bloomington, Minn., and requires 48 games of local league play for an NDA Charter Holder member to qualify. For complete details, visit (www.NDAarts.com/junior).

Want more help with your adult or junior league programs, social media promotion or incentive programs? The NDA has many league resources including start-up guides, social media tips, educational videos, and best practices from other NDA operators.

Members can login to (www.NDAarts.com) and go to the member resources tab for more information. Not a member? Contact Kim Paugh, (800)808-9884; e-mail (kim@NDAarts.com). ▲

Note: The 2014 League SMART conference is set for July 11-12, 2014, in St. Louis, Mo. For more information, visit (www.NDAarts.com)

Gold Standard Games/Shelti stands for quality

Love of the industry and the game of air hockey in particular are the motivating forces behind the career of Mark Robbins, Owner of Gold Standard Games/Shelti.

Three years ago Robbins, an air hockey champion and game designer, purchased Shelti Inc., a company founded in 2002 by Dick Shelton (former CEO of Valley Recreation), Todd Shelton, and a group of Bay City, Mich., investors, who later bought out the Sheltons.

Robbins said that thanks to industry veteran Mick White, now Sales Director for Gold Standard Games/Shelti, he found out the company was for sale and finalized the deal in April 2010.

The company is still located at the same Morton St. facility that Valley Recreation occupied and has some of the same employees. To reflect its high standards, the company name was changed to Gold Standard Games/Shelti.

Robbins said, "One of the reasons I bought this company is that the employees share my philosophy about this business. I believe in quality, service, and promotion.

"First, product quality: Our products are built to play right and built to last. Second, service: If you have a problem, we'll take care of you. Every customer is important! Third, promotion: Promotion builds the brand, builds the player base, and keeps them excited and motivated to keep playing. We are dedicated to promotion in the growth areas of the company, in particular darts and air hockey."

The company recently introduced its Premium model and Gold Flare

model air hockey tables and the Dual Pool Table licensed through Horizon Games Inc. and built by Gold Standard as a Shelti brand product.

Play Meter spoke with Robbins about developments over the past three years with added input from Randy Eigner, President; Adam Lipinski, Radikal Darts Promotion and Support; Cathy Scarbrough, Sales and Service Manager; and Jed Forman of Horizon Games.

When Shelti Inc. was purchased the development of a coin-op air hockey table was a top priority. What went into the development of a world-class air hockey game? What are the outstanding features?

Robbins: The most important thing for me was to develop a table that would provide the greatest play experience for all players, from master to beginner. We wanted a table that plays so well it motivates the player to play again and again. Based on my 30-plus years in designing tables, I knew what that required.

Besides playability, we also wanted to address some of the durability and maintenance issues we heard about from operators. And I think we have the best-built, most maintenance-free table out there. We have the most durable laminate surface on the market. Our goal end is unsurpassed in strength and durability. Pucks, mallets, legs, cabinet construction, everything is first-class.

Affordability is always an issue for coin operators so we tried to source quality materials at the best price. While our table isn't the cheapest, it is the best, and over the long term the



Radikal Touch



2013 Annual Meeting & Gala

August 6-8

Hilton Lisle ♦ Lisle, Illinois

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Tuesday, August 6

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 8:00am - 12:00pm | Steering Meeting (committee only) |
| 2:00pm - 3:30pm | Membership Committee |
| 3:45pm - 5:15pm | AAMCF Board of Directors |
| 6:00pm - 9:00pm | Bowling Tournament |

Wednesday, August 7

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 9:00am - 10:30am | Industry Promotion Committee |
| 10:45am - 12:15pm | Government Relations Committee |
| 2:00pm - 5:00pm | AAMA Board & Members Meeting |
| 6:00pm - 9:00pm | Welcome Dinner |

Thursday, August 8

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 8:00am - 11:30am | Manufacturer Presentations (subject to change) |
| 11:30am - 1:30pm | Government Relations Luncheon |
| 2:00pm - 4:45pm | Manufacturer Presentations (subject to change) |
| 5:30pm - 6:30pm | Gala - Dinner & Awards Ceremony |
| 6:30pm - 9:30pm | Gala - Ballroom Open |
| 8:00pm - 8:30pm | 60/40 Raffle & Live Auction |

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investment will provide tremendous return on investment (ROI) for our customers.

In addition, we also added some optional features that are unique to our table. One is the overhead score unit with player-activated black light/white light option. For the first time ever on a coin-op air hockey table, the player can choose white light (competition mode) or black light (cosmic mode). And our pucks glow brighter under black light than any others on the market.

Another optional feature is the video monitor for promotion and advertising. During game play, it shows the score for the benefit of spectators. In between games it serves as an attract mode, showing player information, Web site addresses, tournament details, etc.

Utilizing a digital photo frame, it is completely updateable and customizable by the operator, who can load tournament details, promotional messages, advertising, etc., all via a USB flash drive. Operators can go to (www.goldstandardairhockey.com) to download the latest promotional information, which can then be loaded onto the table's video monitor.

Finally, in addition to our more conservative-looking table, we are now stocking the new Gold Flare model, featuring colorful graphics and attractive LED lighting around the coin door side of the cabinet. It has, and will, attract lots of attention in a family entertainment center (FEC) setting. The Gold Flare has been very well received at trade shows and test locations.

We are building tables for operators of all kinds who are looking for maximum ROI from a durable, attractive product that will appeal to players for years and years.

Have you seen changes in the air hockey market?

Robbins: This brings me to a disturbing trend over the past few years in the air hockey market. While the price per play has generally risen over time, in air hockey as in everything



Premium Air Hockey Table



Dual Pool Table

else, the average weekly air hockey earnings (as reported in *Play Meter's* State of the Industry Report) have been going down. That just shouldn't be happening.

I explain it this way: The industry has gotten away from the basics that make air hockey one of the most consistent earning pieces of all time. It's not about bling and novelty and craziness; that may attract a player at first but it won't keep him/her playing. What keeps them pumping money into the machine is the fun and challenge of playing against their friend, spouse, or child.

To keep earnings high year after year, an attractive look, while important, is not enough. I believe it takes a quality product that plays well and holds up to wear and tear. Our goal is to offer that kind of quality product to the coin-op market.

How valuable is the feedback from operators, distributors, and players?

Robbins: We are constantly hearing from customers and product users and evaluating their feedback in order to make the appropriate tweaks or changes.

A perfect example is the Radikal Dart online system, which we license from Gaelco in Spain. We went through a long process of testing, which included feedback on developing league software for the U.S. market, which is now complete and working great.

One of our customer's employees, Dan Larson, loved the Radikal system so much that he joined us as a dart sales specialist.

Another example: We received feedback from several distributors that some of their customers wanted a very simple, cheaper overhead light system for their air hockey tables. So in addition to the current overhead system with black light/white light, we are developing a more compact overhead with simple white lighting that will sell at a lower price point.

We must be listening well because we hear from so many customers who have tried our products that we have the best pool table, the best air hockey

Gold Flare Air Hockey Table



The first production run of the Premium Model Air Hockey Table.

table, and the best online dart system.

Lipinski: Feedback is crucial to development and sales and we strive to provide a product that both operators and players want to have and use. With the debut of the new touch machine here in the U.S. at the New World Dart Series (NWDS) and the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) National Dart Association (NDA) Team Dart events this year, we spent numerous hours with players and operators listening to their likes, dislikes, etc., and we have to say we received rave reviews over the new touch screen model.

What are some of the most popular models in your library of games?

Eigner: Popular models are Shelti and Radical Electronic Darts, Shelti Bayside Coin Pool Tables, new Gold Standard Air Hockey, and Shelti Eye2 Darts.

Scarborough: Bayside Pool Tables are available in both Charcoal Matrix and Sovereign Cherry with and

without dollar bill acceptors in three sizes: 88-inches, 93-inches, and 101-inches.

Has Shelti RD Darts reinvigorated the game of darts with its ability for players to play live with others around the world?

Lipinski: Absolutely. With our Shelti RD and Radical Dart models, we firmly believe we have brought to the U.S. marketplace the most advanced dart system with capabilities years ahead of the industry as a whole.

The live online play gives the players and operators capabilities like never before. Casual play, leagues, and even tournaments can be played live with other players all over the world. However, there's one additional feature

that the Radical System provides that takes this world of online play one step further: the patented Remote Referee System©.

Videos are recorded during game play by the cameras and then sent to the servers and the event administrator where the Remote Referee System© allows him/her to view important matches and validate or invalidate the games. This allows operators to expand on what was traditionally offered in the game of darts while ensuring the integrity of the game.

Online game play is not the only thing that makes our system the most advanced. Operators have access to free league software, which allows

them to fully customize their own league structure as well as collaborate with other operators to run leagues.

We also have the most advanced tournament software available built right into the system: fully automated brackets and completely customizable formats with the ability to play matches face to face, online, or both in the same tournament.

In addition, by utilizing the Remote Referee System© new types of competitions such as rankings, super rankings, and virtual leagues can be done. These types of competitions have unmatched flexibility and allow players to play when they choose.

As a result of the Radical central server system there is a deep integration of data between the machines and the player Web site. All competitions and statistics are updated in real time so operators and players have access to their data anytime, anywhere 24/7. League and tournament games can also be viewed through the Web site live in real time.

As a manufacturer we provide our operators and players with a complete support structure included when they



Randy Eigner, President/Chief Financial Officer



Bruce Allen, Vice President/Engineering and Purchasing



Mick White, Sales Director



Adam Lipinski, Radikal Dart Promotion and Support



Mark Robbins, Owner, and Cathy Scarbrough, Sales and Service Manager



Mike Pettis, Manufacturing Manager



Tina Grocholski, Home Product Sales



Lucy Keipinger, Sales/Administrative Assistant



Employees at the manufacturing plant in Bay City, Mich.

purchase machines. Rankings, tournaments, virtual leagues, and more are set up and managed by Gold Standard Games/Shelti and Radikal Darts for the operator and sent directly to their machines. No other dart machines can offer operators and players all of these features within the same system.

The new Dual Pool Table introduced this spring is a unique product. What are the features?

Forman: The Dual Pool Table is revolutionary for the pool table industry. It allows operators to offer different game options from each side of the table at

two different price levels and promotional features.

There are two sets of balls in the table. Players can choose to vend a standard set of balls for traditional games for two or four players or vend balls for three-player games such as 3Some, a 5-Ball game; and Cut Throat, a fast moving, last-person standing game.

The Dual Pool Table is new and exciting and gives operators so much more to offer their players. If an operator is going to buy a new pool table, especially an electronic one, it makes sense to invest in this table. If an opera-

tor is trying to secure locations, this table could be a big factor. It is the first and only billiard table made specifically for three players.

The company also has a line of non-coin products. What games are homeowners looking to place in a home game room?

Robbins: Although coin-op makes up a majority of our sales, the home market is an avenue of potential growth. Similar to coin-op, we look to offer the best quality product at any particular price point.

I'm quite proud of what we've done on the home air hockey side, offering products at two different price levels that are best in their class. We also move a number of foosball tables, including a lower-priced import that's very good for the price. And we sell a home dart game (but not the online system; that's strictly available to the coin-op market). Dome hockey is also popular, and we offer a high-end import at an affordable price.

What does the company see as a way to open up more locations for coin-op equipment?

Robbins: The Radikal Dart system with its online play, virtual tournaments, as well as league play, is attracting new business to locations and that provides an opportunity for operators.

I know of one bar location in the Dallas area that gets zero out of the cash box; the operator keeps 100 percent because the location is so happy with the crowds our boards bring in, and the increased food and drink sales.

On the air hockey side of things, we are reaching out to areas that are off the radar screen of the FEC-oriented market of today, places like sports bars and college game rooms where air hockey can provide steady returns year after year.

What's new ahead for air hockey?

Robbins: We are excited to be sponsoring and providing tables for the

upcoming Air Hockey World Championships Oct. 18-20 at the Brunswick Zone in Naperville, Ill.

Brunswick Zone is doing really well with our tables and we thank them for their part in making the event possible. The tournament is U.S. Air-Table-Hockey Association (USAA)-sanctioned and although just recently announced, we already have commitments from players in Spain and Venezuela, as well as from across the U.S.

What's the most important message you have for operators and distributors?

Robbins: I would like all the opera-

tors and distributors to take a special look again at the many smaller companies, like us, who are producing great products.

Sometimes it's easy to just go for the same old, same old when there are quality games from companies out there that can improve your bottom line via better earnings, fewer service calls, and more longevity. We hear that often from operators, that they appreciate the relatively maintenance-free quality of our products.

For more information, visit (www.gold-standard-games.com). ▲

Meet the staff

The Gold Standard Games/Shelti staff is comprised of many industry veterans, among them:

Mark Robbins, Owner: In 1973 Robbins fell in love with air hockey as a player and began organizing state tournaments and national events. He experienced first-hand the heyday of air hockey and the impact of the rise of video games on air hockey and other games in the late '70s and early '80s.

Robbins was determined to save air hockey not only for competitive players, but also for casual players. In 1985 he signed a deal with Dynamo Corp. to design, sell, market, and promote a new table. In 1994 he left the manufacturing business to do other things but kept a hand in the industry with his small parts company.

He also kept a keen eye on air hockey and felt there was a lot left to be done in terms of promoting the game, building a loyal player base, and improving product quality. When an opportunity to buy an existing manufacturer came along, he went for it.

The Robbins name is well-known in the industry. Mark's father, the late Joe Robbins, was a leading figure who built Empire Distributing in the '50s and '60s into one of the largest coin-op distributors in the country. It was then bought by Bally Distributing. He also served in executive positions with companies such as Kitcorp; Sunsoft; and Atari (as President). In addition, he brought manufacturers together in the early '80s to form what is now known as the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA).

Randy Eigner, President and Chief Financial Officer: Eigner has more than 25 years of experience in finance and business management with both public and corporate firms. He came on board at Shelti in 2006 as Chief Financial Officer and was promoted to President in early 2008. He has implemented new financial controls and management reporting that have resulted in significant cost savings to Shelti.

Cathy Scarbrough, Sales and Service Manager: Scarbrough is involved in parts sales, shipping, retail sales, and support of coin-op sales.

Scarbrough started in the coin-op industry in 1987 when Valley Recre-

ation began manufacturing electronic dart games in Sycamore, Ill. She was in charge of exporting the dart games that Valley manufactured and sold to Lowen Entertainment in Germany. Her duties grew and soon she was in charge of the parts department and shipping at Valley.

After Valley closed in 1999 she continued with Lowen Entertainment distributing Valley Cougar 8 machines and parts they manufactured for the U.S. In 2002 she began working for Shelti after the company purchased the dart plant from Lowen Entertainment.

Mick White, Sales Director: White has decades of experience on the coin-op side and the home side. He worked at Tornado for many years, and later at Valley-Dynamo, Merit, and Great American Recreation. Mick is a hard-working salesman who has extensive product knowledge and is well-liked and well-known in the industry.

Bruce Allen, Vice President of Engineering and Purchasing: Allen has been with Shelti since its inception. His experience goes back to 1981 when he started with Valley Recreation in Bay City, Mich.

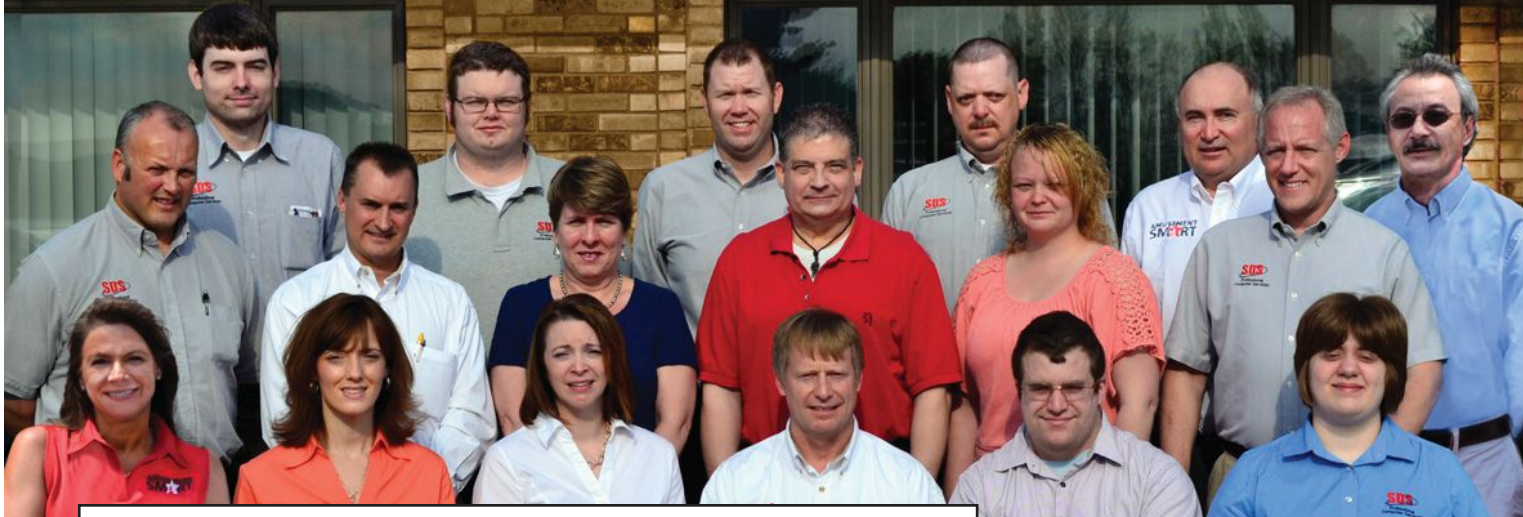
Adam Lipinski, Radikal Darts Promotion and Support: Lipinski began his coin-op career while in college, working part time in the summer of 2003 at the Shelti manufacturing plant. By early 2008 his work focused mainly on the electronic dart line in manufacturing.

In 2010 he moved to an office position to work on developing the partnership with Radikal Darts and the U.S.-based version of the Radikal system. Lipinski has extensive Internet and Web experience, which made it easy to transition to work with online dart technology.

Tony Torres, Technical Support: Torres joined Valley Recreation Products in Sycamore, Ill., in 1987. Beginning as a technician in Quality Control, he worked on every model of dart game produced by Valley. Later transitioning to the Engineering Department, he was involved in software and hardware development.

He joined Shelti in 2002 and began working in Customer Support in addition to providing repair services for the Valley line of Cougar Darts. He continues to provide technical support and software testing for the Radikal and Shelti RD online dart games. ▲

COMPANY PROFILE



AMUSEMENT SMART

Service Management & Amusement Route Tracking

SMART products for your amusement route

Amusement SMART, located in Effingham, Ill., understands the coin-op industry. A joint effort between JJ Ventures, a licensed terminal operator that's been in business since 1929, and System Development Services (SDS), a programming and software developing company, Amusement SMART combines a "perfect storm" of industry experience to create a route management system that works.

Play Meter spoke with Sam Westgate, Sales and Development for Amusement SMART, to find out a little more about this company that's changing the way operators manage their routes.

Before the company first launched the product in 2009, they were using several different software products and

none of them were keeping up with the way the industry was evolving and all the "back-end" money from credit cards, etc. This combined with the potential for other revenue streams like pull-tabs, supplies, burglar alarms, etc., made a new software management system absolutely necessary.

Westgate said, "We made the decision to design our own product. We said if we were going to reinvent the wheel, let's look at all aspects. We had meetings with service personnel, mid and high level executives, and designed the product from the ground up. We decided what it had to do, what it would be nice if it did, and incorporated a lot of that. We made a product

that allows the operator to keep track of deals, fees, and more opportunities for amusement operators to make more money off of their amusement routes."

In the olden days, if a vendor requested something, like extra lighting attached to the jukebox, the thought process was to try to talk them out of it. With the Amusement SMART product, an operator can simply tell them what it's going to cost and charge them a fee. Amusement Track can track how much it will cost and charge them an amount per-day for this item.

On the uniqueness of this product, Westgate said, "With many other route management software products you have to adapt your route to the program but this program adapts to the way an operator runs his business."

Another huge selling point is the fact that the program is Windows-based and not proprietary. Westgate added, "We're constantly doing updates as we get new users on the system. In earlier versions, the service-tracking module was a separate module, now its incorporated. We have customer relationship management and sales management features as well."

Customer Tracking features include: Instantly and easily find a customer or contact; create unlimited customers and unlimited contacts for a customer sales and service history on one screen; create and manage customer contracts and agreements; link to interfaces such as Microsoft Word and e-mail; open



previously saved customer files or quotes with one click; use templates for quotes, fax forms, letters, contracts, etc. with customer information in the appropriate fields; and create custom mail merge documents.

Sales Tracking features include: develop new opportunities while logging an interaction with your customer; "single click" creation of follow up calls; mark interactions as private when there is sensitive information; view team or individual opportunities and see upcoming scheduled follow ups; record specific sales-related comments for your customer or contact; opportunity tracking and reporting; and team assignments of sales opportunities and meetings.

Service features include: send automated notifications to field service personnel on new work requests; assign priority levels to aid with scheduling; sort open requests by customer, region, or assigned technicians; set up reminders or pop-up notices per customer; set up security levels based on job duties; call center interface to allow third party call center (optional module); know what work is being done and status of that work; know which machines have constant problems; and automated notification of work order completion.

A module is available to support the core machine revenue management needs of video lottery terminal (VLT) operators. The current setup of VLT machines' available output and collection information is much the same as an advanced amusement machine. The Gaming module offers the ability to separate gaming and amusement machines and locations with various internal designations to help manage, identify, and report the information separately. The service part of Amusement SMART easily provides the required service tracking of gaming machines.

As of Version 4.2, a new module is available for league and tournament player tracking and reporting. Features

of this module include: unlimited numbers of players, events, and seasons; points system is flexible and specific to your needs; can be used for any type of loyalty needs; use of point templates to make setup easy; events can be connected directly to a location; multiple

seasons can be active; optional direct interface to external Web site for reporting of scores; can be imbedded in your Web site; and player ranking reports.

For more information, visit (www.AmusementSMART.com). ▲

AMUSEMENT SMART

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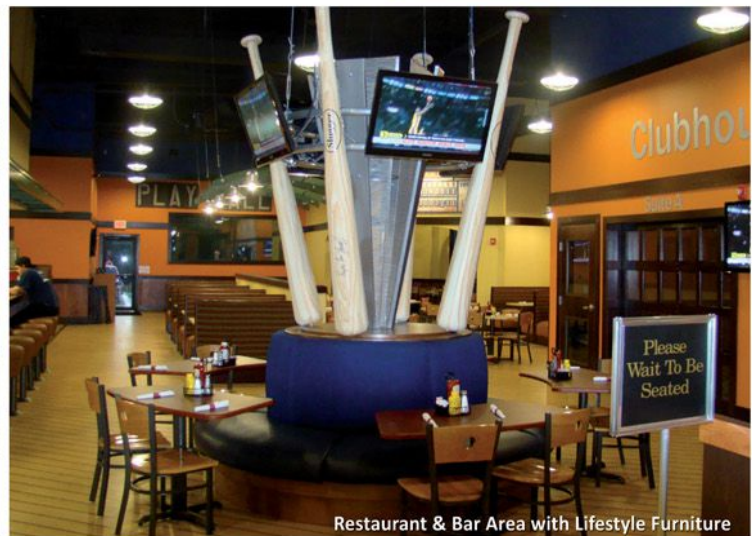
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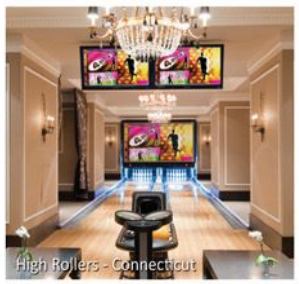
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Vibrant cabinets and game play



Josh and Zach Sharpe

Challenging redemption games from companies with solid track records are designed to keep players coming back for more.

This will be quite the meaty intro since there's a lot to cover, but let's first start off with how much the city of Chicago has been on fire lately. Not literally of course, but in the sports sense.

After winning one of the craziest series and decisive games in Stanley Cup finals history, the Blackhawks emerged as one of the greatest hockey teams of all time with their stellar play throughout the entire season, creating much joy in the Sharpe households.

Additionally, *Play Meter's* very own Zach Sharpe has been on quite a roll on the competitive pinball scene. After recently getting second place at the International Flipper Pinball Association (IFPA) 10 World Pinball Championship in Germany and completing a sweep at the Northwest Pinball Championships held in Seattle, he has joined a very exclusive and prestigious club of being able to say he is the number one top ranked pinball player in the world! Not to worry, Critic's Corner Too! isn't going anywhere; we'll keep his ego in check.

Speaking of the IFPA10 World Pinball Championship, many things to report on from the very successful tournament held overseas. The winner of this year's tournament was first time champion and a fantastic overall player out of Sweden, Jorgen Holm. That wasn't his only victory from the weekend, Jorgen also helped Team Europe defeat

Team USA in the first ever Epstein Cup.

Last, and certainly not least, IFPA10 marked the return of the Charity Challenge at the championship. Through entry fees, player donations, and the gracious matching of funds raised from both Stern Pinball and Jersey Jack Pinball, we were able to raise \$1,695 for Kids Fight Cancer! We look forward to continuing all of these traditions at next year's IFPA11 World Pinball Championship, which will be celebrated in Denver, at the Game Exchange of Colorado warehouse. Mark your calendars for May 23-25, 2014.

If you're still with us after all of those updates, we've got a few games to check out for you in this month's column: Andamiro's Color Boyz and Jennison Entertainment Technologies' Snow Down.

COLOR BOYZ/ ANDAMIRO

Analysis: The easiest way to describe Color Boyz is it's very similar to the Plinko game from Price is Right. Using the button at the front of the

cabinet, players can time the launch of their ball that will zig and zag its way down pegs to an appropriate colored column/hole at the bottom.

Before its inevitable descent, at the very top is a moving target, which players can pass through to double the value of their scoring. Each column and box is worth a varying amount of tickets with the two outside holes being "black holes". If a player can successfully light up all five lights in a column, they'll win the jackpot.

Pros: One thing we can always count on with Andamiro is its cute and quirky cabinet design. Color Boyz is no different, however there are a few new tricks up the company's sleeve. Most notably is the LED color-changing bulb in the main launch button, which creates a very eye catching effect.

That's not the only lighting that is effective, with LEDs throughout the entire cabinet on the columns/boxes and the variety of colors, Color Boyz is simply vibrant in any location. The sounds and call out effects also add a nice touch to the game play experience.

Cons: While some players might not like the simplicity of a "drop-the-ball" plinko-style game, our biggest gripe is when said plinko-style game is shifted off to one side. With the ball always being launched from the right side, we couldn't help but feel the game is a bit too right-side dependent.

I'm sure audits and stats would argue otherwise and maybe all





of the scoring holes are pretty even across historical game play, but we're simply going off of our experience while playing it that it felt a bit more out of control from a skill perspective to shoot the ball where we would like.

Overall: As we mentioned earlier, the game feels a little too right-side dependent. With plinko-style games in general, we know the skill level is slightly reduced due to the randomness of the pegs, but when all balls are being shot from the right side of the game, it feels like it reduces that element of skill even further.

Take for example, Space Ballz by Jennison Entertainment Technologies, there is a conveyor belt up top to let players choose where they'd like to drop the ball. Granted you can easily drop the ball on the far left and it winds up on the far right, but at least that initial element of "skill" is firmly within our grasp.

Needless to say, we're probably diving far deeper into this than necessary, but that's our job! Overall though, Andamiro has done a very solid job with Color Boyz.

It's extremely challenging trying to stack up an entire column for the jackpot without eventually falling into the "black hole," but that's what will keep players coming back for more. It doesn't hurt that with game time being so short from start to finish, the replay value and multiple games will be high, resulting in a happy operator's bottom line.

Overall Rating: ★★★ 1/4

SNOW DOWN/ JENNISON ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGIES

Analysis: We must put the disclaimer that the game we played and saw at the Amusement Expo in Vegas was a test game. Jennison Entertainment Technologies' (J.E.T.) Snow Down pits players against each other in trying to catch falling snow to fill up their respective vertical tube in the time allotted.

There is a one-time option for each player to hit a "snow down" button to

release their opposing player's snow they've collected up to that point in time. In addition, there's also the "blizzard" button, which causes an insane amount of snow to fly around, making it easier to fill up your tube faster.

Pros: While we give credit to some companies for creating consistent and beautiful cabinets and visuals, we feel that same statement would be a major disservice to J.E.T. because they consistently create SPECTACULAR cabinets. Look no further than their Space Ballz game, but Snow Down is no slouch either.

With the giant plastic encased game environment, this game would be impossible for players to ignore at any location. In addition, the game play is deceptively fun trying to fill up tubes of fake snow with the added pressure of hitting the "snow down" button and removing all progress of your opponent.

Cons: While this might not be a fair complaint since we saw test machines, we were a bit worried by some of the maintenance and downtime it seemed to have on the show floor. From a game play and strategy standpoint, we feel there could be more done with the "snow down" button.

Since that essentially releases your opponent's progress to date, it always seemed the appropriate time to hit that kill switch was right at the very end before time ran out, almost creating a wash of sorts (canceling out each other's wipe outs if that makes sense.)

Perhaps instead of releasing the bottom of the vertical tubes and simply releasing a player's progress there could be more strategy involved if say each player had two or three times to hit the "snow down" button, and it simply stalled the controls of the opposing players so they couldn't move their



tube for a few seconds, just an idea.

Overall: We think there's plenty of potential in J.E.T.'s latest giant of a redemption game with Snow Down. While what we played was only a test machine and things could certainly change in the near future, we more than liked what we saw at this stage of the game, enough to write a review as well as throw out some possible future ideas.

Unfortunately we're a bit worried that J.E.T. might have pulled the plug on this game since we can't seem to find any additional information on the Web site, but we're secretly holding out hope that a polished and final product will make its way down south at this year's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo in November. Ironically it would be perfect timing with winter fast approaching by that point, which we shudder to think about in the middle of summer. ▲

Overall Rating: ★★★ 1/2

With a father like Roger Sharpe, the original "Cornered Critic," it is probably no surprise that sons Josh and Zach share a true passion for the coin-op industry. Former pinball champions, both are recognized as being two of the finest players in the world. But their interest and skills have grown far beyond the silver ball to embrace video games and attractions of all types.



The first room guests see when visiting, but there's much more.



Tom and two of the four women in his life: wife Penny (l) and middle daughter Natalie.



The Space Mission backglass that hung in legendary designer Steve Kordek's office.



Tom has game memorabilia everywhere, even in the bathroom.

Hidden treasures

Most hobbies have their share of high achievers. In pinball, collections that number in the hundreds fit that bill. There are a few who have a thousand or more but “hundreds” is quite enough to comprehend for now.

These are pinball machines mind you, not matchbooks, stamps, or comic books, so where do you put them? If you happen to be a museum, that's easy. If you are someone who just got “a little” carried away, you build on to your house or dig out more of your basement. Or, as a last resort, you just pack them away in some type of storage. In this “Pinball Curious” I'd like to introduce you to someone who has managed to do parts of all three.

Tom Taylor owns a couple hundred fully restored vintage pinball machines and around 24 assorted classic arcade games situated in an industrial space just outside of Milwaukee, Wis. While Tom and his family couldn't bear to just lock all that cool stuff away in storage, they have no desire to make it into any kind of business either.

EARLY INTEREST

Tom became interested in pinball at the age of six when his 16-year-old brother often ditched him in the neighborhood bowling alley's arcade. “So there I was, perched up high on a bar stool with my arms outstretched as far as they could reach, playing pinball for hours upon hours,” he remembers. “I guess it was fate that my mother named me Tommy!”

He spent the next 12 years looking for a game room at every lodge, park, or campsite in and around his family's vacation spots until it was time for college. At the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee he “majored in accounting but minored in pinball.”

Soon after graduation, pinball chimes and buzzers were all but drowned out. All he could hear were wedding bells.

Luckily his honeymoon resort just happened to have a game room and the game room just happened to have a pinball: a brand new Williams Firepower (thank you, Steve Ritchie).

Tom must have had a knack for choosing wisely, for despite never having played a game of pinball in her life, newlywed Penny happily surrendered to the lure of the silver ball.

It was three months later, Jan. 11, 1982, to be exact, when an ad in the local paper signaled the start of Tom's pinball journey. “Penny wondered if I was nuts,” he remembers. “When I pulled up at home in my 1973 Buick with a non-working Gottlieb Card Trix sticking out the back, she KNEW it!”

Fortunately, Penny bought into Tom's dream and, taking advantage of her love and talent for art, she cleaned and restored the entire playfield. Meanwhile, Tom learned to read a schematic and make mechanical repairs. It took them three weeks to finish but the reward was much more than merely a renewed, working classic pinball machine. This was a project on which they both focused; learning to work together and having a lot of fun along the way.

It's been over 30 years and they have owned hundreds of games but they still have that Card Trix. They also have dabbled in arcade games, jukeboxes, slot machines, and trade stimulators.

They even found time for a different kind of collection: children. Their four kids, Charlie, Katie, Natalie, and Abbie grew up with pinball as a way of life. “They were surrounded by pinball,” Tom admits. “Early on, they didn't understand why everyone didn't have a living room full of pinball machines.”

MASSIVE COLLECTION

Eventually, Tom established the goal of collecting an example of every



LEFT: One of Tom's more recent acquisitions: a rare PIN-BOT neon sign.

RIGHT: Just a small part of Tom's immense collection.



It's not just a big room with games. The main

door opens into a low ceilinged, dimly lit, carpeted room with a desk and office in one corner, a bathroom in another, and a head-to-head Challenger pinball in the middle. Lining the walls are five classic mechanical games on one side and twice that number of late model solid state machines on the other. This is a perfectly nice game room for friends and family with a wide variety of games.

But walk out the other end and you will find yourself looking at a hundred or so classic electromechanical machines. In the next room are more, and in the next, many of Tom's arcade games. Add to that yet another space that is home to two dozen or so recent games and soda fountain seating for parties.

They typically host an annual open house on the Friday night before the Midwest Gaming Classic held in a hotel nearby. They also open it up for youth and church group outings a half dozen times a year. And their close group of friends and family who enjoy the games get together there as often as possible.

"It is important to us to be able to set up and enjoy each game and share

the collection we love with others who feel the same," Tom explains. While the entire complex sits idle most of the time, when it IS opened, it is wonderful.

Tom knows that people tend to collect the things that take them back to their youth and he sees that the '90s games are the hot thing now. He looks to a time when some of the classic games from the '50s and '60s "will get another turn, this time as relics rather than remembrances."

He urges experienced collectors to spend time with new fans and help them along. He invites all to get involved as much as possible by joining or starting groups, leagues, and clubs, and by supporting hobby publications.

He also has a warning! This cautionary pearl of wisdom should be heeded by any collector, but especially those just starting in the pinball hobby. To paraphrase Dr. P.C. Lay: "Always remember, pinball machines are like potato chips—you can never stop with just one!"

Readers may check out a video tour on *PinGame Journal's* YouTube Channel. ▲

Gottlieb wedge head produced between 1960 and 1978: Flipper to TKO. He expanded his focus to include all the Williams reverse wedge head games as well, so he would feel the collection was complete. The last game, TKO, was never produced commercially but they found one of the dozen or so made just a few years ago.

You can't JUST collect pinball machines and Tom is always on the lookout for some unique part of pinball history. Recently, he acquired one of only two neon signs made for the industry trade show where Williams introduced Barry Oursler's classic PIN-BOT.

"Also, one of the coolest things I own," he explains, "is the actual Space Mission backglass that hung in Steve Kordek's office at Williams on California Ave. I bought it at a Pinball Expo charity auction and was lucky enough to have Steve sign it!"

As the collection grew, loaning to friends and relatives or using multiple storage units became unworkable. While most collectors would take this as a sign to downsize, Tom and Penny forged ahead and in 2002 purchased and moved into a 3,000-square-foot building made up of three contiguous commercial units.

They added 1,500 square feet both in 2007 and 2009 and yet another 3,000 recently. Their "Pinball Warehouse" is currently a whopping 9,000 square feet in size and houses 250 pinball machines, about 40 arcade games, and a wide variety of related stuff.



Jim Schelberg, always curious about pinball, has been publishing the *PinGame Journal* for more than 20 years. Jim has about 40 games of his own but spends most of his pinball time attending events, snapping photos, and talking to people about pinball. He can be reached at (jims@pingamejournal.com); Web (www.pingamejournal.com).



MERCHANDISE MARKET

Courtney McDuff

Fun Express



Fun Express has many new items that have just arrived: Neon Zipper Bracelets, Mario Jumbo Pencils Hello Kitty Lollipop Rings, Monster High Messenger Bag, Remote Controlled Helicopter, and Hello Kitty Plush with Fleece Throw. (www.funexpress.com)



Sureshot Redemption

Sureshot Redemption is now carrying Hasbro's My Little Pony merchandise including My Little Pony tattoos; memo pads, both mini and jumbo size; mini memo pad in three assorted styles; jumbo memo pad; My Little Pony playing cards standard size and heart shaped; and My Little Pony Figurines. Also available: 5.5-inch jumbo lollipop and a candy pinwheel. (www.sureshotredemption.com)

A&A Global Industries

A&A Global Industries now has Tiny Tatts, 12 glitter tattoos for girls that offer delicate designs for ankles or behind the ears. For boys, Fierce Ink Tattoos consist of 15 designs with bright colors and classic tattoo detail. Add a fun sticker to your flat vending line up with Smiley Stickers, 15 animated faces with wacky expressions. Customers receive three stickers per sheet: one large smiley and two bonus mini smiles.

Two new jewelry products for 1.1-inch and 2-inch capsules are Glow Rings and Karma Bands. Glow Rings are available in four neon colors and vend as one ring and one glow stick per capsule. Karma Bands are trendy spirit symbol bracelets in a variety of colors.

Adventure Time and Regular Show Figures is a collection of nine designs inspired by two of Cartoon Network's hit animated series. Available mixed with Adventure Time tattoos, these detailed figures are a premium item for two-inch capsules. Oh No! Aliens! Figurines are pastel aliens in a collection of nine that come in 2-inch capsules. iGotz Feetz is another 2-inch item for all audiences. Funny feet characters that are also pencil toppers, iGotz Feetz features a variety of six feet personalities in six wacky colors for a collection of 36.

Crane Topperz™ are high value prizes strategically placed in a machine to attract players' attention and increase game play. The newest additions to this category are Sound Topperz, a variety of DJ style, stereo headphones, and audio speakers in an assortment of trendy designs. Available for sale individually or as kits for jumbo cranes, these electronic accessories are available boxed and pre-strapped for claw use. (www.aaglobal.com)



Allstar

Zombie Tattoo series from Allstar Vending features 10 designs in various ghoulish poses. Double display cards are also available. Allstar's got the exclusive license for Trash Pack stickers. Allstar also has Super Paws Stickers featuring various animal superheroes. All stickers come packed in 300 count boxes. Double-sided displays are available. (www.allstarvending.com)



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Bonita Marie International



Bonita Marie International (BMI) recently introduced an array of Duck Dynasty combo packs. Duck Commander T-shirts, LED flashlights, duck blind

lanterns, collectible cups, koozies, and more round out the collection. BMI's Duck Dynasty combos are better-than-retail grade.

"Our Duck Dynasty T-shirts and combos come in the highest quality acrylic cubes, with Duck Dynasty artwork along the header and back of the box, and official Duck Dynasty hangtags prominently displayed," said Dave Schwartz, BMI's Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

BMI has embraced Duck Dynasty, in part, because it reaches the 18-49 year-old demographic. "While low-point value, high mark-up products proliferate across many redemption counters, these counters often lack the kind of quality, branded merchandise that drives game revenue from older players. Duck Dynasty is the most recent example of BMI's use of topical merchandise to expand a location's appeal to a wider player age range," Schwartz continued.

Duck Dynasty combos are ideal for redemption counters/rooms, self-serve redemption kiosks, and direct pay games. (www.bonitamarie-intl.com)

Prizes!

Football season is almost here. Prizes! is the number one licensed sports supplier with items for all NFL teams plus 100 college teams. Baseball season is still going strong as well. Keep your crane revenue up with individual items or sports assortments for your cranes. (www.prizes1.com)



Rhode Island Novelty

Rhode Island Novelty recently released five-inch Zombie Vinyl Balls. These ghoulishly delightful balls will be a hit for Halloween. (www.rinovelty.com)



HMS Monaco

With the summer release of the movie "Despicable Me 2," HMS Monaco is offering a line of licensed Despicable Me novelties, including rubber key chains, buttons, can coolers, magnets, and car magnets. They can be bought individually or in kits for cranes, hanging prize machines, rotaries, etc. (www.hmsmonaco.com) ▲



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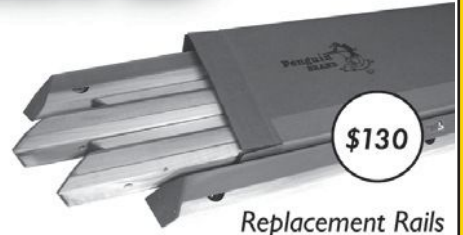
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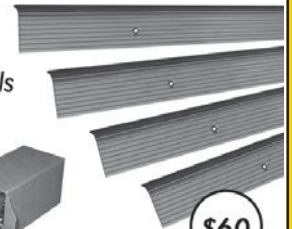
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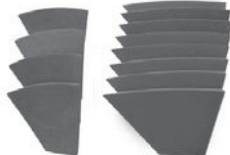


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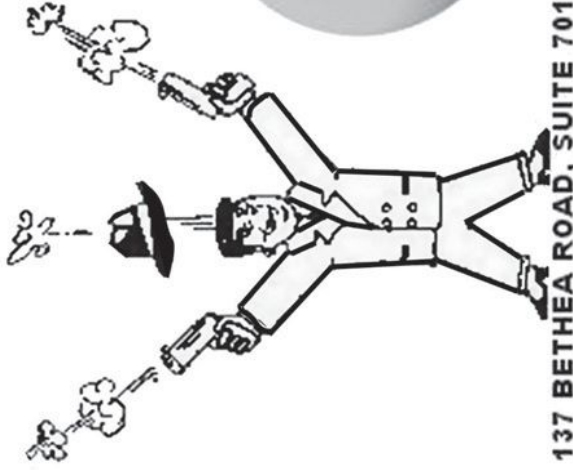
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