

# THE RED BARON SPEAKS

March 2010 – Larry Creakbaum

I returned from Texas and could have added this at the end of February but I would have had to hurry and I would have had too many errors. Along with spell check, I reread at least three times to catch all I can.

What a trip. It started uneventfully but between West Memphis and Little Rock at two in the morning while making a pit stop, I discovered my brakes were not too solid. An hour later when making a rest stop I discovered my brakes were really weak. After a short nap I did some testing upon departing the rest stop I discovered one rear dual would grab and stop the vehicle. So I made the only sensible decision. I continued on. West of Texarkana I encountered snow and what I found out later was a record 12" snowfall for Dallas. I continued on. Going thru downtown Dallas on the freeway, I was driving about as fast as I dared even if I had full braking and every car on the road was passing me and throwing snow and slush everywhere. I continued on. I figured we were all on even ground at this point. I arrived at the event site sometime between mid morning and mid afternoon, called AAA, and had the vehicle towed to and address given to me by the tournament director. By Saturday morning it was back in my possession. I found another couple from Indiana was there and got a hotel room at the same place and had a ride to and from after the days events.



Now, what I came for. The first event was the draw partner which started on time and on the afternoon of my arrival. Considering that was the day of the record 12" snow fall, the 74 players that were there was remarkable although most of the snow fell as we assembled and started. With a 5:00 start the event went into the next day but finished in plenty of time for the scheduled 2:00 four-person draft start. The event started pretty much on time except for a slight delay to lasso a few players to make it come out even. The fact that 104 players entered was remarkable because the television reporters were having a field day with the snowfall and the fact they used a special expensive chemical on the "high five". In the mid-west it is used routinely. For a non-local like me, I soon learned that the high five was an interstate interchange with five elevated bridges. The event ran into the next day but finished in plenty of time for the 2:00 singles.

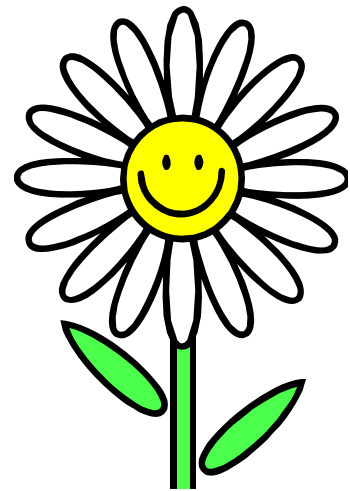
The following is from my memory and I could be totally wrong but here goes. The singles sponsor sale started slightly late but routinely late. There was 97 players in three divisions and they were very efficiently sold and play began. By the end of the day, six players remained in the pro division. Starting at 8:00 the next morning it seemed reasonable to think at two hours for a three game match that by the 2:00 doubles start there would only be two players left. They could play during the sponsor sale and if there was still a match to go, then consider a split. But it was between 3:00 and 4:00 when this point was reached where the first match of the finals could be played. The winner of the winner's bracket had to except a split as the way it was going they would have been lucky to finish the second day.



The doubles started way late and after watching a couple of games and not being able to understand the score as the timers kept going off and the players keeping score in there heads, I set sail for home. Also I could see it would be late Monday before the end.

I can see somewhat why no one wants to post the rules as the shot clock rule along with the conference rule are unenforceable without a referee for each board. The conference rule should be scrapped and the shot clock rewritten as follows:

“The bracket person shall post the time a game or match is called. When the winner/loser is reported or the first or second game of a three game match is finished the bracket person will check to see if the game took longer than 45 minutes from the posted time to the reported time. If so they shall inform the tournament director and that person will make the decision whether to assign a referee with an appropriate watch to time the shots of the player’s next game. When a weight is delivered the person making the shot would have ten seconds to vacate the shot box marked on the floor after the weight has stopped. The shot clock will start on the next player when the player vacates the shot box or when the weight has stopped moving, including spinning, which ever is later. The next player shall shoot within twenty five seconds. The referee will advise when there our ten seconds and five seconds remaining. A shot shall be considered started when a player has a weight on the board and is stroking for delivery or when a player is in his normal release pattern such as holding a weight in his hand and going back forth from waist to board before shooting. If the player then backs away from the board, a warning or penalty will be issued. The referee should become familiar with the delivery of all players in the game to know when to start and stop the time for shot clock timing. The penalty shall be one warning for every five points of the game the player or team has scored and one point penalty per violation there after. Any continued actions such as intentional delays in not vacating the shot box or arguing a referee decision, or actions which delay the game, both the referee and the tournament director shall have the authority to forfeit the game by the offending player. This does not mean the whole match in case of two out of three. The warning and penalty may be called on the player for not vacating the shot box or the shooting player or both. A player may call a one minute time out for every five points they or there team have scored. A player may call a timeout whenever the opposing team has the winning weights on the board. Personal needs timeouts may be called at any time as long as they are within reason and this is totally in the opinion of the referee. This also applies to the referee. Time outs may not be carried over from one five point section to the next.”

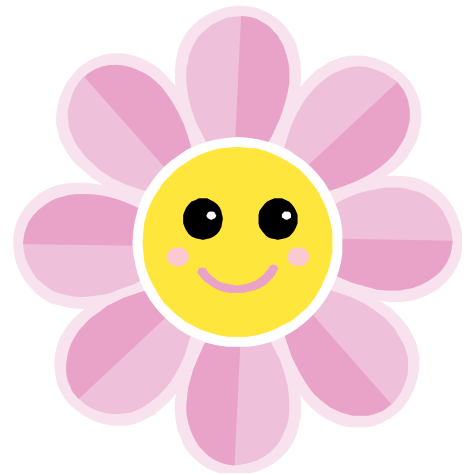


This is going to be very controversial but it can not be any worse then what we have now. Note, that the decision to have a referee is optional and totally the decision of the director. I tried to cover everything but I am sure I missed something. The referee would have to use a lot of desecration when calling the game. They do it in baseball, tennis, football and other sports and they have arguments. Let us try it in shuffleboard and keep them to a minimum. The referees would have to be volunteers or serve under the compensation they now receive as staff members. With the use of cell phones very few players have a watch so the tournament director would have to see that an appropriate timer is available and to have tape available to mark the shot box. Depending on the board layout there could be a general agreement of where a player needs to be to clear the shot box. So tournament directors, start posting rules either the TSA rules, Federation 08, or Federation 09 and then make your changes by addendum. Also it would be nice if the TSA

and the federation could agree on one set of rules. If this does not happen I would hope the 2010 Reno rules could be made by striking out items removed and adding by italics new paragraphs or words. There are very few players that will have the previous year's rules to compare the changes.

Back in Indiana the last Saturday of February, a location held a negative handicap spot maximum of three event. Twenty teams or forty players entered with three players from Michigan, two from Ohio, and one from Florida. The highest rated player had a rating of 2.25 except for two unrated players from Noblesville. There were no three's and a lot of upper two's who did not come and play. Would a four or five spot increased participation? At what point does it become unfair to the better rated players? The promoter must have guessed right as twenty teams is a good showing for a bi-weekly event. This is the advantage of the large events as there are enough players and time to establish a division for all levels. By the way, the above was won by two zero's, a two and a one were second, a zero and one third, and zero and one fourth.

Without the Bowers rating system the above event could not have been held. I checked e-shuffleboard and in January, February and March there are 49 events listed with 19 stating on the flyer they use the Bowers rating system or having an event scheduled which the only way they can take entries is to it. Are the players who participate in these events or promoters contributing anything towards keeping it going? Either contribute or don't use the ratings. Quit being a freeloader. At the above event one beverage per player would have been \$100. If that is too steep try one half of a beverage per player and contribute \$50. Players take up a collection of \$1 per player and some one send the collection in. Make it \$2 a player and send the additional \$1 to eshuffleboard which brought the flyer so you knew where to go, will publish the results, and brings you these writings.



The first week of March an open singles was held at the Eagles in Noblesville. Twenty four players entered, a great showing for a city that has a past history of good shuffleboard but has been down the past few years. They marked three until the placing rounds just to finish at an unreasonable hour.

This is long enough. I will now go to Bourbon this week and have that reporting April.

