

THE RED BARON SPEAKS

My attempted trip to Houston turned into a disaster. I spent all day Friday the 26th watching five airplanes depart full without me. So much for space available the day after Christmas. Next year I will do like I did in 07 and that is buy a ticket to Hobby and bum a ride home. I found the new Indianapolis terminal wheel chair compliant but not to compatible. When I went sight seeing from terminal A to B there was a down slope which I gained so much speed I almost went thru a window to a floor so slick I could not get enough traction to go up. On Saturday I ventured to a local event in Indiana and had to almost crawl to my RV. It was Tuesday before my legs rested up. There was one good point about failure as I was able to go with my wife to dinner and celebrate our 36th anniversary.



The local events have started the new season slowly with marginal attendance. As much as Indiana has resisted rated events they are the ones that bring out the players and that is what we all want. For lack of a better term we call them Amateur and Pro Am events. I do not like the terminology but since every one understands the terms we stick with the terms.

The idea is to even out the competition. There are two methods of evening up the playing field and that is spotting points and the second by establishing a number which the players must use to be eligible to play. This discussion will stick to the second method since it is most played here in Indiana.

There our two ways to establish an eligibility number. One is to say that pro's must play with a 1.5 or greater. What is a pro? Does this mean a 1.49 must play with a 1.50 and also a minus one can play with a 1.50? The second is to have and add up to number such as 1.5. This seems a little low to me and it should be approximately 1.8, but this is up to the event promoter or director. The second method seems to be in the best interest of shuffleboard.

This brings us back to what started this writing to start with, the rating system. How do we handle unrated players? Now to me it makes no sense to have a national book with 10,000 names if less than 3,000 of them ever go to a national event. How can a player enter if he or she does not know their rating? We start with the Bowers system and all players that are rated stay there. Unrated players could contact the event promoter or if the promoter hears they are going to play, the promoter could call three or four players together who understand the system and establish a rating. Once a rating is established it should be published for future use. Also if the player moves on to national events they would have a starting point.

Someone needs to keep the Indiana book of ratings and they need to receive compensation for the effort. A fee could be charged the player for the registration or with so many events charging registration fees it could come from there. I have never seen an accounting of where the money goes anyway.

I know a lot of this is going to raise controversy, but to improve our events and improve attendance I think it is necessary to approach the issues.