

43rd Missouri 8-Ball Shootout - Results and Thoughts

Firstly and to the forefront major kudos are ordered up to Rusty Brandmeyer and Rich Schenck for getting together to have the Missouri 8-Ball All-Star Singles and Team Tournaments at Teachers. This was discussed several times over the last twelve months. To everyone's benefit it became reality.

The weekend of June 10th and 11th 245 participants (many for the first time) moseyed in and quickly realized what Teachers' regulars already knew. The salubrious sports venue offered many amenities. In no particular order: Many brought up the fact that the AC worked. That alone made for a more comfortable setting. The use of 21 tables for the event proved to be another major asset. Players didn't have to wait as long for their next match... definitely a big plus. AC. Roomier. The spacious surroundings added to a more relaxed atmosphere not only for teammates but for friends and family who came to watch. AC. There were 9-foot practice tables. AC. Other amusements and darts were available. AC. For those who needed a break between matches there are shopping centers close by. Oh, did I mention that the AC worked?

One more thing about the location of the playing tables; I know that everyone missed the pedestrian traffic walking in front and beside the tables as you were shooting your games. Enough said.

Lastly but certainly not least, enough can't be said about the amicable crew and staff at Teachers. These well trained employees were kept busy throughout both weekends and were always very friendly, courteous and helpful to all.

Come now Jay, you may intone. Thus far all you've done is expound upon the positive features at Teachers. Surely there must have been a negative in there somewhere! Well... table 8 did roll off a tad.

Part 2

Okay you mystery buffs out there, pull up a chair, relax, smoke if you wish, pop the top on another brewski and in those immoral... oops... make that immortal words of Ed Gardner from Duffy's Tavern fame... "Leave us play the 'Whatever Happened To' game."

Examples: "Whatever happened to Baby Jane?" Or, "Whatever happened to the real killers in the O. J. Simpson case?" Or more importantly, "Whatever Happened to the 'Pro', 'AA' and 'A' players in Mo 8-Ball?" Experts are at this very moment pondering this and other baffling enigmas that took place in this past All-Star Singles tournament. Riiiiighhttt!

Case in point: No one can remember the last time an 'A' player or higher didn't finish in the top 4, or top 6 or even in the top 8. You read it right. The highest the last 'A' player landed in this shootout was 9th thru 12th. Tied for 9th! What's going on here! Tis a Chinese conundrum for sure.

Have the days of the 'Pro', 'AA' and 'A' players gone by way of Disco? Hardly, but let's give some credit where credit is due. When 60% of the field is 'C' and 'CC' skill level players the percentages had to go their way sooner or later. This just happened to be the right time.

Let's revue: From the total field of 245 men and women who made up the 43rd Missouri All-Stars, 60% were 'C' and 'CC' shooters. Next in line were 'B' and 'BB' who made up 23%. Third was 'D' and 'DD' at 10%, then lastly the Pro 0% (or .004-not enough to notice) the 'A' and 'AA' board showed only 7%. It only stands to reason that the lower skill level players are finally getting their just due, landing the big dough.

It was a rare sight indeed not to see a Rich Sager, a Jeff Ayers or a California Bob, who have each won this tournament three times, shooting for the gold. Sager and Ayers didn't get past Saturday and Bob didn't show up at all. Maybe he knows things the rest of us don't know about these 'C' guys?

I think the tide began to turn about two years back when two very good, let me underline very good 'CC' shooters did just that. One, an upright straightforward virtuous gentleman from the Cahokia area who goes by the moniker Mean Gene Bergan (whom I have known 40 years) won the event. Two tournaments later a first took place. The only female to date, Jumpin' Julia Gabriel, another Cahokia/Granite City 'CC' player, won. And she did it with plenty of style and grace. The spirited southpaw schemed and systematically smoked her last 7 opponents 2-zip for a run of 15 consecutive games. And she (ready for this?) lost only 2 games, repeat, 2 games all weekend. Forget fluttering the feathers of this fabulous feisty female. She doesn't fluster, buster.

Is this the new wave for Mo 8-Ball tournaments? Could be. If there is a moral to be learned it would be that if the lesser skilled players stick around long enough, who knows, you could be the next Mean Gene or Jumpin' Julia, or like June 2000 King of the Hill, Tenacious Tim Smith. Hey, wait a minute. Isn't Tim from Granite City too? (Do we detect a pattern forming here?) Like the lottery, you gotta be in it to win it.

Allow me to put it in proper perspective. To fully appreciate the performances of the top twelve money winners is to see their placing, skill level and reward:

1st Tim Smith 'CC' \$1,000.00 & Trophy As can be quickly recognized, nine (75%)
2nd Don Millfelt 'CC' 800.00 & Trophy of the top twelve winners pocketed a grand total
3rd Brandon Jordan 'CC' 600.00 & Trophy \$3,600.00 while the two 'B's and only 'A' made off
4th Joe Lombardozi 'B' 500.00 & Trophy with one thousand between them.
5/6th Steve Lowrey 'C' 350.00 Big difference than in days gone by.
5/6th Calvin Wallace 'B' 350.00 Remember the first 30 or so tournaments when it
7/8th Ross Hammond 'CC' 200.00 was totally luck of the draw and many 'C' players
7/8th Mike Massmann 'C' 200.00 were force to play 'B' players and higher? It was
9/12 Floyd Dooley 'CC' 150.00 obvious who ruled in those days. Not so today.
9/12 Glen Schaefer 'CC' 150.00 Most agree it makes for a better setting and
9/12 Sam Noto 'C' 150.00 between 80 and 90% of entrants have a legitimate
9/12 Jody Zeni 'A' 150.00 shot in the race to two format.
The following players finished 13th thru 16th and took out a hundred bucks: Bill Thompson 'B', Chris Taylor 'CC', Walt Taylor 'CC' and John Wilson 'DD'.

To finish out the field 17th thru 24th the following won half a hundred: Ken Pruett 'B', Gary Heffernan 'B', Wayne Kreder 'CC', Jason Waggener 'CC', John O'Farrell 'CC', Steve Mitchell 'CC', Sean Randall 'C' and who can forget the only lady to cash in this event, the blond bombshell, Julie Brooks 'C'. The total payout for the event was \$5,400.00.

Once again congratulations to the new champ Tenacious Tim Smith. Great shooting and we're sure to see Tim again to defend his number one spot next session. Also congrats are in order not only to all who cashed but to the entire field of 245 who helped make this another memorable 8-ball event.

As for yours truly, believe it or not I actually did manage to make it to Sunday. Well, a new rule had to be introduced to allow it, but hey, it also benefitted 24 others. As everyone is aware each division has a list of players who qualify for the All-Star singles blowout at the end of each session. The incorporation of first past the post now allows a free ride to Sunday's finals. No more having to wade through the field on Saturdays spending countless hours waiting to play three or more matches. No sir, now all you have to do is be your division's champ. No sweat, right! Of course you must qualify as usual by playing the allotted amount of games needed and sport the highest won-lost percentage. Just remember what the Mayor said as the water was receding, "...there will be no sandbagging here."

Anyway, as I was saying, after five.. long.. hard sessions, I finally get to play on Sunday. What'da'ya think, I went my usual two and out. Okay, okay... so it was my usual four and out. But how can that be, you say. Easy, I say. I lost 2-zip to Wayne Turner then turned right around and lose 2-zip to Kenny Vaughn.

Let's do the math shall we: That's six tournaments times two matches per equals 12 matches. Twelve matches times two games per match equals 24 straight games without a win. What's wrong with this picture??? Um-m-m-m, possibly a reduction to 'B' is in the future... NOT!!! Stop crying Mike, it'll never happen.

So, I lose to Wayne Turner, who loses to Jody Zeni, who loses to Joe Lombardozi, who loses to Tim Smith who only goes all the way. Gee, if I could have only held out another 8 matches.

Part 3

We were back at it two weeks later on June 23rd, 24th and 25th for the team events. There were 56 teams competing from the 5-player rotation board which opened up Friday night at 8 o'clock. The 12 teams from the 4-player rotation board would begin play Sunday. Whoever said that repeating as champs of this tournament was about as easy as finding Jimmy Hoffa's remains wasn't far off the mark. Last session's tourney winners Penalty Box had to give their opponents, Players Pub, 4 on the wire in a race to 11. In actuality, playing heads up Players Pub won 7 games to Penalty Box's 5.

Another thing. Remember last session when Paul Verhulst, the MVP won 14 consecutive games. He went 0-3 against the Pub. It goes to prove once again that anything can happen in a one game shot.

I don't believe any team played under more pressure this tournament than Greg Martin's Hot Shots. By that I'm referring to the scores of their matches. It all began noon Saturday. Their first match was against Mr. T's, like Hot Shots a very tough and formidable 'BB' division team. Both played even at 31 points.

'A' players Martin and Johnny Pedrolie and 'CC' Jim Mayer each won three games on their way to an 11-4 romp. This was to be their only easy (?) match. Their 4pm opponents was Chuck Lenceski's Crooked Cue team. Playing 29 points to Hot Shots 31, the Cue got one game on the wire. The match went back and forth until it reached double hill. Captain Martin pulled out his third win of the match for the tough 11-10 victory.

At 8pm they were back at it again. And it was another Crooked Cue team led by Wayne Turner. Hot Shots at 31 points to Cue's 27 allowed the Cue a head start with 3 on the wire raising the match to a 12 to 9 race. Cue took three the first round hammering out a 6-2 lead. But Hot

Shots came roaring back with 5 of 6 making it 7-6 to the Cue after two. Hot shots evened the score at 9-9 after three rounds setting up the finale.

Crooked Cue's James Taylor and Wayne Turner opened with wins putting their team on the hill 11-9; but fate wasn't with them. Jim Mayer, Greg Martin (4-0) and Johnny Pedrolie pooled their talents again taking the last three games pulling out a miraculous 12-11 come from behind thriller.

While all this was taking place Airport Billiards was having their own problems. They opened against one of Bartman's teams which proved to be a battle, 11-7. Don Johnson's 4-0 shooting was the main reason AB prevailed. Feeling confident, going into their 4pm match against Pat & Roses, AB got strong support from Johnny 'B. Goode' Johnson (3-0) and Charles Somerville (3-0). One thing that should never be taken for granted is a large lead, or really, a lead of any size. The 8pm match between Airport Billiards and Chilsters proved once again it's never over until the fat lady sings. It was an even race to 11 as AB played 29 points to Chilsters 30. AB began by running off 4 of 5 in round one and added more hurt in round two with another 4 out of 5.

An 8-2 lead over Chilsters brought spectators. This was unheard of. One bookmaker was going around trying to unload. This was totally unexpected. But then the boys from St. Peters shot back. They eeked out 3 in round three but still found themselves down 10-5. When Chilsters ran off the very first 4 in round four, AB must have thought the way of Chicken Little; like man, the sky's falling, or at the very least, the roof caved in.

Chilsters tightened up the match considerably, 10-9. But there would be no joy in Mudville. Mighty Monty did not strike out. Instead he ran out. Monty Caldwell upped his personal match record to a perfect 4-0 allowing Airport Billiards to escape the hard hitting Chilsters team and pulled out an 11-9 squeaker.

Now it is noon Sunday; and the two teams that battled so hard to get here would oppose each other. Hot Shots (31 points) was going to give Airport Billiards (29 points) one game on the wire. AB began strong winning 4 in round one grabbing an early 5-1 lead. (Think we've seen this movie before?) But Hot Shots rallied in the second round with 4 of their own making it 6-5, then adding another 3 from round three knotting it 8-8.

Round four was no different. Hot shots jumped out in front, 9-8, only to have AB tie it, 9-9. Then AB recovered the lead, 10-9, only to see Hot Shots again come back to tie it, 10-10. A few minutes later Charles Somerville put it to bed, 11-10, and Airport Billiards moved up another notch on the board. That single game was worth a grand bringing Airport Billiards total to \$1,500.00 for the weekend.

One team that many predicted would go far was the Starlite team, b.k.a., 'N Hot Water. That's because it is a very good solid middle of the road team. They always play right at 25/26 points and can compete with any legitimate team playing comparable skill level personal. The operative word here being legitimate.

They were never in hot water, pardon the pun, in their noon encounter. It was a total blowout over Side Pocket. On paper it wasn't suppose to be that way because Side Pocket has a couple of real good 'B' players in Tim Goodwin and Jim Phillips. However, when the smoke cleared Charles Burrage and Victor Day each posted a 3-0 record on their way to the 11-3 lop-sided victory.

Things heated up slightly in their 4pm match against one of their sister teams also out of Starlite. Victor Day continued his superb shooting with a 4-0 match running his 2-game totals to 7-0. Tom Blair (3-0) didn't get much support as Starlite went down, 11-7.

The water was getting warmer at 8pm. Playing heads up with Final Destination, the score was 8-7 as the pills were rolled for round four. 'N Hot Water was doing everything they could to put their opponents in hot water and succeeded when they reached the hill first then closed it out, 11-9. This time it was Captain Waddell Whitehead leading the charge with his own 4-0 match. Take some of that, Victor Day.

Sunday's noon match showed a change in 'N Hot Water's rotation. After winning three straight matches shooting 25 points, they changed their strategy. For this match they decided to go up a point, to 26. That little change forced them to give their opponents, who posted 24, a game on the wire. That single game entered into play big time. The final was 11-9 to the team that would eventually win it all, Olde Bridge Inn.

Overland Moose Lodge played under a slight handicap. A couple of their heavy hitters couldn't make it. In their match against Players Pub, where they received a game on the wire, the Moose gang ran off 6 in a row jumping out to a fast 7-0 lead. To the railbirds watching it seemed a blowout was inevitable. But then the Lowrey gang, Wayne Sr., Wayne Jr., Jim and Steve, along with Brandon Jordan (how'd he get here?) buckled down and found their stroke. Winning 7 of the next 9 put them back in contention bringing the score to a more respectable 9-7. The Pub continued their onslaught with 3 of the next 4 taking the contest to double hill. But it wasn't in the cards. A.J. Miller put a damper on things by winning his second game of the match and bringing home an 11-10 victory for Overland Moose Lodge.

In the 8pm match the absence of Moose players unquestionably hurt their chances. They went down in flames to the tune of 11-4 to Timothy's behind the hard shooting of Fred Werner (3-0) and Tony Arizzi (3-0). In this match Tom Gordon won his 9th straight game.

John O'Farrell's team, Pat & Roses, put together a good run. Their 11-9 opener over Crystal Room showed a run of 6 out of 7 in the middle with John going 4-0 with teammate John Legens at 3-1. It was too bad that only four players could make it for Big A's. As a result Pat & Roses received one forfeit win per round and had an easy win of 11-4. Their 8pm match with Kremer's started off favorably taking 4 of 5 in round one. But Kremer's took 8 of the next 12 grabbing the lead, 9-8. When it looked like an upset was in the making, P&R rallied with the last 3 and took the victory 11-9. For the second time John O'Farrell turned the 4-0 trick. That gave him an 8-game winning streak. John Legens was 3-1 as was Kevin Clark. But it was Fran Archer's win that pushed them over the hump. Show'em how it's done Fran.

The noon battle Sunday was with another Crooked Cue team. Tied 5-5 after two, Cue broke out of it in round three taking 4 of 5 putting the Cue sticks in the driver's seat 9-6. P&R couldn't regroup and managed only two more wins for an 11-8 set back. Bob Frazier led the attack with his 4-0 sharp shooting.

Anthony's made their presence felt on opening night. They drew the always tough B&B Tavern from Bowling Green captained by Fred Hurd. They matched up at 23 points making it a race to 11 which forced Fred, a very good 'AA' player to sit out. It was a see-saw battle from the start. Anthony's took 3 the first round. But B&B came back hard and fast in round two with all 5 wins taking a 7-3 lead.

Round three saw Anthony's fight their way back in business with 4 of 5, now being down only one, 8-7.

When they took 3 of 5 in round four it suddenly became a double hill situation. Mark Dickherber drew pill one for Anthony's while John Golian got the call for B&B. After some maneuvering between the two competitors Mark Dickherber came out on top for an 11-10 victory.

Occasionally something happens that prevents a team from fielding the required three players to begin their match. Such was the case of Chesterfield Billiards. Only two players answered the bell and Anthony's got a free ride to the next level. Their 8pm match against Bar Double M had its moments. They were rolling along with a 6-4 lead after two rounds, and 8-7 after three. But Anthony's wasn't done yet. Turning on with 7 of the last 9, and all four played in round four, they held off Bar Double M, 11-8.

What momentum Anthony's picked up against Bar Double M was lost just as fast against the hard hitting Timothy's. It was rather anti-climatic as Timothy's took 4 in the first, 4 in the second and closed it out with 3 in the third. The 11-4 drilling put a thousand in Timothy's coffers and Anthony's went home with \$500.

The last of the Crooked Cue teams, led by Shawn Korte (3-0), romped to an 11-4 victory in their first round. Tammy Lalumondiere was undefeated 2-0. Their second match was over Lyles. The contest took a turn when Cue took all 5 in round two and coasted to an easy 11-5 victory.

Pat & Roses was Cue's third victims. Tied 5-5 after two, the Cue sticks took 4 in round three then closed it out 11-8 in round four. This is where Bob Frazier added his name to the 4-0 club. In spite of that the 4pm match proved too much for Cue. Even with two games on the wire, Timothy's won easily, 11-7.

Timothy's began their run Friday night against Joe's Dellwood Lounge. The see-saw battle began in round one and continued throughout the match until it reached 10-10. Double hill in the first match wasn't surprising as both teams were evenly matched. The one pill rolled out for Colonel Tom Gordon from Timothy's while Ralph Caldwell got the call for Joe's. A tough game ensued but Tommy G. pulled it out 11-10 to send Timothy's to the next round. Tom became the first player in over a year to go 5-0 in a single match. Not to be completely out done, teammate Fred Werner was 4-0.

Riding on the heels of that 11-10 squeaker, the guys from Timothy's were on an emotional high. Against Fucifino's, down 2-1 in the first round, they turned it up a notch and ran away with the next 9 straight games, the most of the weekend, for a 10-2 lead. After dropping the next two, Shauna Williams decided enough was enough. If the guys couldn't shut'em down she'd take matters in her own capable hands. The deciding blow was her third win of the match.

Timothy's kept riding that high throughout their next match and gave Overland Moose Lodge a good thumping, 11-4. After losing the opening game, Timothy's ran off 6 of the next 7 and ended the affair with 5 of 6. In that match Tony Arizzi and Fred Werner were 3-0 and Colonel Tom stroked his 9th consecutive win.

The lop-sided scores of 11-4 was beginning to be Timothy's trademark. Against Anthony's, they kicked off with 4 in the first, back with another 4 in the second then topped it off with 3 in the third round for their third straight run-over. Colonel Tom and Fearless Fred Werner continued their serge for top team honors. Gordon was now 12-2 and Fred was 11-1.

Their next adversaries was Crooked Cue. Spotting them 2, Timothy's simply went about business as usual. They put together another streak by slamming out the first 7 games for an early 7-2 lead. This time it was Tony Arizzi's turn to get his name up with the big guns. His 4-0 record not only joined an elite group but turned out to be the deciding factor in the 11-7 contest. The victory put them in the final match for the gold. While Timothy's was running over everyone from their end of the board, Olde Bridge Inn wasn't exactly resting on their padded cushions. They jumped all over Francesco's in their opening match taking the first 8 of 10 games. Francesco's made a gallant effort trying to make a comeback by putting together their own winning streak of 4. It wasn't enough however as Olde Bridge Inn closed it out with the last three for an 11-6 victory. In their second contest OB Inn showed a ton of fire power. Playing 23 points to Bert's Place's 26, Olde Bridge Inn was forced to accept two games on the wire. Twenty minutes later Bert's Place was history. What followed next would be

talked about for, well... at least the next hour. Bert's Place could feel the heavy gale winds as OB Inn literally blew them away faster than a stage 7 tornado. They took 4 in the first, another 4 in the second finding themselves on the hill after only two rounds, 10-2. Only a single game was needed in round three for an 11-2 bloodbath. It was ugly... UGLY! And the onslaught wasn't over by a long shot. Francesco's was their next victims. They were completely out maneuvered, 11-6. Enough said.

"Step right up folks... don't be bashful. Step right up and form a single line off to the right." That was the invitation Olde Bridge Inn offered to all comers. Starlite's 'N Hot Water thought they had a chance. Silly kids! OB Inn, playing 24 points to Starlite's 26, got another game head start. 'N Hot Water's name was very prophetic indeed. Basically, that's where they found themselves throughout the entire match. At no time were they ever ahead. The closest was after the first round tied, 3-3. From there OB Inn took charge. They gained 6 in the next two rounds for a 9-7 lead. Two of four in the fourth gave Olde Bridge Inn their closest match of the tournament, 11-9.

The following contest was against the team, Airport Billiards, most thought would be there at the end. After defeating a very tough Hot Shots team 11-10, most railbirds were putting some coin down on these guys. Old Bridge Inn had other intentions. Dropping their point count from 24 to 22 for this match, they showed 7 points lower than Airport Billiards' 29. That called for a resounding 5 game spot. It's not that Captain Norm Chapman brought his crystal ball with him or even that he owns a crystal ball, or knows something the rest of us don't. His only 'B' player, Ed Dawdy (9-4), was forced to leave because of an emergency. John Nueman, 'C' (1-3) was pressed into action. There was no choice. John stepped into some very big shoes and did an excellent job. Now the race would be to 12 and Old Bridge Inn just got 5 on the wire. Like Starlite, suddenly Airport Billiards found themselves in hot water.

Taking 3 the first round put OB Inn up 8-2. Norm was reading the tea leaves right. Airport Billiards pulled themselves together long enough to make a mild comeback winning 5 of the next 6 for a 9-7 score. That comeback lasted about as long as Freddy and The Dreamers. OB Inn slashed out with 3 of the last 4 for a 12-8 shocker. What was more revealing was: heads up, Airport Billiards could manage only one game more than OB Inn, 8 to 7. An incredible display of shooting by the guys from Illinois. Norm sure pulled all the right strings.

If the railbirds thought they'd seen it all they quickly got their thinking repaired. The grand final between Olde Bridge Inn and Timothy's was anything but a contest. It was even only on paper. Paper and the playing surface of the pool table are separate entities and skill separates fantasy from reality.

Norm played the same lineup. It would be their 22 points to Timothy's 23. It was suppose to be an even race to 11. Somewhere along the way, say in round two, Olde Bridge Inn decided to make it a one horse race. They pretended to be Man o' War while making Timothy's look like an old plug plowing up the south 40. Leading 3-2 after one, OB Inn kicked it into overdrive by clean sweeping the second round. It was now 8-2 and just a matter of minutes. With 3 of 4 in round three (again?) the big gal yodeled. It was an 11-3 cream job. Why not, this single match was worth an extra \$4,348.00. Don't want to hold back at this point in time. Add that to the four grand already in the bank it turned out to be a very profitable weekend as Olde Bridge Inn took home a grand total of \$8,348.00.

No question about it, going into the 56-team contest over the three day weekend not many odds makers put Olde Bridge Inn or Timothy's on their most serious contender list. They surprised more than a few sceptics.

Congrats on exceptional playing abilities from the gang from Illinois. Likewise, kudos to the gang from St. Peters, Timothy's, who played very well finishing in the runnersup spot and waltzing off with 4 G's.

Following is a complete list of those teams that cashed and order they finished:

1. Olde Bridge Inn \$8,348.00 9/14 Final Destination \$150.00
2. Timothy's 4,000.00 9/14 Francesco's 150.00
3. Airport Billiards 1,500.00 9/14 Bar Double M 150.00
4. Crooked Cue 1,350.00 9/14 Kremer's 150.00
- 5/8 Hot Shots 500.00 9/14 Lyles 150.00
- 5/8 Anthony's 500.00 9/14 Chilster's 150.00
- 5/8 Pat & Roses 500.00
- 5/8 Starlite ('N Hot Water) 500.00

A total of \$21,569.00 was paid out to the 17 teams that cashed, (14 from the 5-player board and 3 from the 4-player board).

As usual there were many teams and players who turned in fine performances. Their efforts put forth and the dedication to the sport should be recognized. And there's always a chance we missed someone. If that's the case we apologize.

Team and player won-lost percentage based on 10 games won:

Team G W L PCT Player W L PCT Team

1. Olde Bridge Inn 94 59 35 .628 1. John O'Farrell 15 4 .789 Pat & Roses-1 (4-3)
2. Timothy's 96 58 38 .604 Pat & Roses-2 (11-1)
3. 'N Hot Water 71 42 29 .591 2. Tom Gordon 15 5 .750 Timothy's 4. Hot Shots 75 44 31 .587 3. Victor Day 11 3 .786 Starlite
5. Airport Billiards 88 51 37 .580 4/6 Fred Werner 13 5 .722 Timothy's
6. Crooked Cue 65 37 28 .569 4/6 Max Thayer 13 5 .722 Olde Bridge Inn
- 4/6 Don Johnson 13 5 .722 Airport Billiards
- 7/8 Jim Williams 10 6 .625 Timothy's

7/8 Greg Nueman 10 6 .625 Olde Bridge Inn
9/11 Charles Somerville 10 7 .588 Airport Billiards
9/11 Pernal Mozzie 10 7 .588 Airport Billiards
9/11 Tony Arizzi 10 7 .588 Timothy's

Consecutive game winning streaks, six or more:

1. John O'Farrell 10 Pat & Roses 9/12 Max Thayer 6 Olde Bridge Inn
2. Tom Gordon 9 Timothy's 9/12 Mike Freeman 6 Bar Double M
3. Fred Werner 8 Timothy's 9/12 Bob Frazier 6 Crooked Cue

4/8 Bob Wiedeman 7 Francesco's 9/12 Tom Gordon 6 Timothy's
4/8 Gene Rader 7 Chilsters
4/8 Dwayne Wafe 7 Anthony's
4/8 Victor Day 7 Starlite ('N Hot Water)
4/8 Paul Thompson 7 Bar Double M

Outstanding (24) Single Game Performances:

The following 23 players went 4-0 in one match: Monty Caldwell and Don Johnson (Airport Billiards), Greg Martin (Hot Shots), Waddell Whitehead and Victor Day (N' Hot Water), Jim Lowrey (Players Pub), Scott Brown (Final Destination), Ross Hammond (Starlite), Rich Sterling and Keith Orlick (Francesco's), Chuck Lenceski and Bob Frazier (Crooked Cue), Steve Martin (My Place), Paul Thompson (Bar Double M), Dave Gray (Filling Station), Donnie Smithers (Lyles), Mike Maraczi (KT's), Mike Hatley (Pat & Roses), Tony Arizzi and Fred Werner (Timothy's).

The only player to go 4-0 twice in this tournament was John O'Farrell (Pat & Roses).

And for the first time since Rhonda Bartram some many moons ago there was a lady who pulled off the 4-0 trick, Ms Wendy Douglas from Streiler's. Nice shooting Wendy.

But, for the first time in awhile we finally had a 5-0 game. From Timothy's congrats to Colonel Tom Gordon. And it couldn't have come at a better time. Stuck in a real battle with Joe's Dellwood Lounge, while Fred Werner was pulling off his four wins, teammate Tom did him one better. Between the two of them their 9-0 combination got them on the winning road to where they finished a very unexpected second. See the above list and you'll find Tom's name in other categories. His 9 straight wins was second longest then came right back with another string of 6. Colonel Tom's 15-5 record was second in overall won-lost percentage, .750.

Part 4

Last March Blarney Stone took out the 4-player team championship. We knew they'd be back trying their luck to repeat. Being the competitors that they are they gave it a good shot. But like Penalty Box from the 5-player team, they found it a very difficult task indeed. Blarney Stone was opposed by Players Pub in their first round. Playing a race to 9, they found themselves down 7-3 in the middle of the third round.

They started a great comeback by winning the last two in round three and taking 3 of 4 in round 4 tying the score at 8-8. The number one pill rolled out for Al Pruet from Players Pub and Joe Curlee got the call for Blarney Stone. I don't remember a time when either of these two fine players ever had this kind of bad day. Between the two of them they had only one win and 7 losses, and Al had four of them. Al managed to put it together in the double hill shootout giving Players Pub the first 9-8 squeaker of the day. The adage held true once again. It is hard to repeat as champions.

The 4-player teams that met in the finals were KT's and My Place. To get there My Place opened with a convincing 9-3 victory over Golden Greeks. Their second match was against Francesco's #3. This was anyone's match as they played even all the way to the end. Both teams won 8 games but the deciding factor was the one game advantage My Place received going into the match. Francesco's was actually on the hill first 8-7, but My Place pulled it out by winning the last two.

Meanwhile, KT's was having their own troubles. Doing everything they could to stay ahead of Fucifino's was no cake walk. With the score 8-7, Scott Maraczi prevented a double hill confrontation by pulling out the 9th win over Fucifino's captain, a very tough competitor, Moe Teimoortagh. KT's second match was slightly easier knocking out Penalty Box, 9-4. This brought us to the Grand Final.

On paper the showdown between KT's and My Place was suppose to be close; no more than two maybe three games difference at most. It was anything but. It was more of a contrived clandestine operation... a sneak attack. KT's saddled up, rode into town, put on their masks and flat out bushwhacked their hapless opponents. Even after giving them a head start of three on the wire it still was no contest. They waited lurking in the bushes until they were ready to pounce. It was Ali against Bugner, Sitting Bull against Custer; Goliath against David, only this time Goliath won. It wasn't pretty. Hitler didn't have it this easy.

KT's smoked them to the tune of 10-1. Go figure. They began by hammering out the first 8 games, which ironically was the longest winning streak by any team this weekend from the 4-player rotation board. In spite of the three-game spot it was still a 10-4 spanking. For second place My Place earned \$650.00.

For their championship victory KT's earned \$2,671.00. Not bad for winning only three matches.
Question: Will KT's be able to repeat? Who knows. One of these days some team will.

Part 5

As a matter of record the margin of games between the winning and losing sides from the tournaments that took place at Teachers in June will surprise many people. No league, not Missouri 8-Ball nor any other league, has the perfect system for rating their players. All have a better than average system or many would be changing every time you blinked. Once again, none are perfect.

From the matches played we have broken down the percentages and found some surprising results you the players of Missouri 8-Ball might find interesting. For instance, 60 matches were played over the weekend. Ten of those matches were decided by only one game, 12 were decided by only two games and 7 were decided by only three games. That's 29 out of 60 for a 48% average, almost half.

To take it further let's add the next step. Four games difference. There were 6 of those making it 35 games out of 60 for a 58% average. People, the system is working.

Now let's talk about the other side of the coin, blowouts. One could define a blowout is where one team knocks off the other by 7 games or more. There were only 15 of the 60 or 25%. If you analyze the closeness of scores in these matches it's obvious to most experienced players that the current handicap system used in Missouri 8-Ball is overwhelmingly better than two years ago. Otherwise the matches wouldn't be as close as they are and teams wouldn't be as competitive in their respective divisions.

Speaking of being competitive. Let's discuss the spirit of playing competitive sports. It's sad to think that there are still some out there who are still complaining over the slightest little thing. I know some who wouldn't play unless they had the 'nuts' going in. They complain and complain and complain. And when they don't get their way they take their little pool stick and go home. Or how about those who threaten to take their team(s) to another league. Go ahead. Maybe they'll kiss your fanny. See how long it takes before they put you back up where you belong. I'm sure you'll win a couple million before that happens. Good luck. Good shooting. Gooooood bye.

Some people insist on being scheduled in weaker divisions. They can play the role of the bully. That way they get to run over the weaker teams. That's fun, beating up weaker players or new players and teams to the league. I mean, how cool is that!? Get a life. Where's the sportsmanship gone? But wait. When they find out they have to give up weight, and sometimes serious weight, guess what? they don't like that either. Some people you just can't please no matter how hard you try. Now what do they do? Easy enough. They seek out other leagues. There's plenty around.

They just don't get it. They don't fully understand what league play is all about. Those who do, those who got it, those who understand are the ones that succeed. They accept the rules, the challenges and have fun, to play competitively. The system works. Hang in there, your turn will come.

For you people who must journey on to find that perfect league where you always win, always come in first, good luck. All the best to you. And finally, from our Points to Ponder Department: This coming from noted Professor Keith Waymon who expounded profound thoughts over the weekend either between his 6th and 7th, or 7th and 8th longneck.

Quote: "Only the game of 8-ball can a player win without actually participating in the game." Unquote.

After some thought (about 20 seconds) I conceded that the erudite Professor Waymon has hit upon a true fact. The only other game I could think of is a variant of 8-ball so I won't count it. If you come up with another game please let us know. We'll pass it on next time.

Rusty Brandmeyer, Bob Bohn & Jay Carlton