

52nd Missouri 8-Ball Tournament Results

Singles - June 7-8, 2003 at Teachers
Team - June 28-29, 2003 at Planet 8 Ball



Here we go again. It's the beginning of another fiscal year and the first of three major All-Star and team events from the Missouri 8-Ball League. The first tournament to begin our 18th year got under way June 7th and 8th at Teachers, the sight of many past All-Star singles' events.

We're going to open this fiscal year a little differently. Example: Okay kiddies pull up a chair it's quiz time. Let's see who's been paying attention.

Question #1: Prior to beginning the 52nd Mo-8-Ball all-star event what did these three players have in common? Runout Rich Sager, Jeff Ayers and California Bob Strachan?

Question #2: What do these ladies have in common besides being attractive and playing Mo-8-Ball? Julia Gabriel, Rhonda Bartram, Mary Stillwell, Mona Vichard, Julie Brooks and Kathy Arens?

Question #3: What do these persons have in common? (This is almost a no-brainer): Elmo Lincoln, Buster Crabbe, Johnny Weissmuller, Ron Ely, Batman, Lex Barker, and one other I can't think of.

Answers below.

Rich Sager

Basic and conventional are words you don't associate with Rich Sager. Ordinary, normal and traditional are others. Take note – we are talking about his game now, his talent, his comprehension, his reasoning, not his noted quirks. Sager never does things the way you think he should. He goes about business his way. Dances to his own beat; pounds his own drum. Don't try to out guess him; you won't come close. You're thinking zig, he's gonna zag. You're thinking go left, he goes right or down the middle or backwards. And makes it look so very easy.

Sager's 'break and run' game have not many equals. Sager has the ability to recognize run-out patterns that 99% of other players don't see. He's unequalled and unparalleled. And he sees them so fast. The next time you watch the big guns in a game pay attention to how long their match takes. How long between shots? The time it takes to make a decision can be several seconds between some players and even up to two minutes for others. Why? There's really no reason for it. Even the pros have a 30-second shot clock. Some tournaments go as high as 45-seconds. It's like Rich has radar. His computer-like brain is tuned in, on the same wave-length. And isn't it amazing how the cue ball practically lands in the exact spot he needs it to rest for a breakout as though it had a mind of its own.

Several top-notch players have admitted that Sager is somewhat of an enigma. How can a person maintain such high level concentration, employ a side of waggish wit and still run the rack in 30 seconds?

There's no question that Rich Sager is a drawing card. Once his name has been called to play the railbirds follow him to the table where he's to perform and jockey for the best look-see spots. Get there late and it's standing room only.

Sure people watch Ed Libby. Jerry Terbrock, California Bob, Jeff Ayers, John Ragusa, Johnny Neels, Kenny Vaughn all deserve special attention. But Rich Sager is magic, a crowd pleaser. Seems the only people who want him to fail are his opponents. Watchers root for him. Sweaters root for him. You hear things like – "Did you see that shot?" Or "How's he going to get out of this?" Or "What's he going to do now?" Or "God couldn't have gotten out from there, but Sager did." Or "Incredible." And that word about sums it up – incredible.

Of course he does break and run a lot – thus the moniker 'Runout Rich'. I was present several years ago when Sager was a star in the now defunct Miller Lite League before it was changed to the Great Midwest.

If you played back then you will recall that the loser of the game broke the following game. In theory that rule was incorporated to stop heavy-weight players from stringing racks. By having the loser break at least he got one shot.

This particular league night Rich was strokin' and smokin'. It wasn't long before he had seven wins on the wire needing only one more to wrap it up. And he would have closed out the match had he not an ulterior motive not to do so. He wanted to show off in front of his lady friend. (What?) I know it's hard to believe; but what he wanted to do was break the last rack and run them off for the finale. (His motivation? to impress) But, as mentioned, according to the rules he can't do that because he won the previous game. So Rich Sager, cunning as a den of foxes, throws the next game. Now he can break. But he didn't make a ball on the break – so, he throws that game too. Now he gets to break the next game. And he did. And he ran the rack. And he showed off in front of his lady friend. And he massacred his opponent to the tune of 8 to 2. And all was right with the universe.

There's no question that Sager is skilled in execution and performance. A little pretentious at times, somewhat camp at times, but always, always, great theater. When the curtain rings down on the final act you have been entertained by one of the best. Congratulations Rich on your fourth championship win. Oh, by the way, last seen Rich was headed to the boat. No news as yet on how long the thousand lasted.

PL	Player		Winnings		PL	Player	Winnings
1.	Rich Sager	'A'	1,000	& Trophy	9-12.	Mike Withers	'B' 150
2.	Jay Akcay	'C'	700	& Trophy	9-12.	Josh Carroll	'CC' 150
3.	Rich Norris	'CC'	550	& Trophy	9-12.	Ray Ritenour	'C' 150
4.	Tyler Jones	'CC'	400		9-12.	George Janssen	'DD' 150
5-6.	Ed Libby	'A'	300		13-16.	Mark Montgomery	'B' 100
5-6.	Dave Hasekamp	'CC'	300		13-16.	Matt Auclair	'CC' 100
7-8.	Sam Martin	'B'	200		13-16.	Wayne Mistler	'CC' 100
7-8.	David Lehner	'DD'	200		13-16.	Kathy Arens	'C' 100 ***

Total payout for All-Star singles tournament - \$4,650.

Congratulations to Kathy Arens. It was the first time she cashed and the only female this time around.

Runner-up Jay Akcay deserves a few words. Jay is from the country Turkey. Says he has been here seven years. Although they don't have pool leagues where he is from they do play billiards, etc. It didn't take Jay long to pick up the game of '8' ball. His 'C' ranking will be going up in the near future – bet on it.

Another honorable mention goes out to Georgia Moss, the little gal from Cactus Inn that totes a big stick. Georgia has been in the pool leagues for at least 20 years and could be the best player of all her teammates [who are all men by the way]. Georgia not only had the best record of all female participants in this tournament but beat out all her teammates for the best team record. She won three games in each of their only two matches for a 6-1 record.

We should let Sean Moore (Shenanigan's) know that his efforts didn't go unnoticed. Sean was a 3-game winner in his team's only match. Not so unusual about that except that the rest of the team managed only one win. They went down 11-4.

5-Player team results from Planet 8 Ball

For the first time the team event was held at Planet 8 Ball. Our host and hostess were Buddy and Susan Evans. They have been open about a year and we are happy to report that business is doing well. There will be many more Missouri 8-Ball events here in the future.

Brief rundowns from the four flights go this way

Flight #1— (27 to 32 points) Penalty Box, a perennial bunch that are in the running every session, opened up against Al's 520. Al's received 3 games on the wire and fired off a fast 2 games in round one for an early 5-0 lead. At 6-2 after round one it looked like the Box Bombers might come unglued for a fast stage left exit. Not so 8-ball breath. The lead was short lived as the gang from Penalty Box unloaded their big guns and took all 5

games in round two for a 7-6 lead. Five wins from the next seven games for Penalty Box proved too much for Al's 520 and they went down, 12-8.

Like a big train the Boxers were on a big roll. They blew up Bridge Inn 12-4, gave the guys from Memoreze some bad memories to the tune of 11-4, and wreaked havoc on Hazzards, 11-6.

Flight #2 – (25 to 27 points) There were some scary moments for Hillsboro Billiards. After the bye, Hillsboro squeaked by Fucifinos 11-9, made it even closer against Bartman's, 11-10 (this is the match that produced one of our 'quotes'), and fell into a solid groove by downing Keith's, 11-2.

Flight #3 – (22 to 24 points) Cruzers started on a rocky cruise en route to the final four. It all began as J.P.'s Corner took them to the limit. Cruzers prevailed 11-10 thanks in part to the only time in history that Dave Collins produced a 4-win match. Just kidding Dave, keep smiling.

Match two saw Cruzers getting 3 games on the wire and not needing them as they beat Fucifinos heads up 9-8. The 3 freebees showed a final, 12-8. Next, not to be out done, Joe Curlee recorded his 4-win match as Cruzers knocked off Brothers, 11-6. This brought them together with Action Billiards. Everything was going right for Action the first 3 rounds. With a 9-6 lead it looked as if the boat was about to be capsized bringing the cruise to an abrupt halt. But the pilot shoveled another load in the furnace, turned up the heat in round four and took the action out of Action Billiards by taking all 5 games in round 4 closing out the match, 11-9. The boat was back on an even keel.

Flight #4 – (21 points and under) It was tough but Partners got there. First they knocked out Dellwood 11-7, following that up by squeaking out an 11-9 victory over J.P.'s [Eureka]. The 11-7 win over Players put Partners in the money and the 11-6 dismissal of Woody's got them more \$\$\$ and into the top four.

The final four fracas began with former champs Penalty Box allowing last session champs Hillsboro Billiards 3 on the wire. The Box boys came out throwing punches. They leveled the playing field by taking 4 in the first round for a fast even-up 4-4. That kept the adrenaline pumping into round two. Penalty Box ran off all 5 games for a 9-4 lead. Those 7 in a row plus the first two in round three (for 9 straight) put them on the hill 11-4. Hillsboro tried desperately to make a comeback. They won the next 3 games but were too far down the road to apply any real pressure. The boxers floated their way to a relatively easy 12-7 victory. Hillsboro tied for third place and took away \$2,000.

The second semi-final match saw Cruzers still cruising. Partners offered no real threat as Big Steve's lineup fired off 4 salvos in round one and came back with another 4 in round two for a commanding 8-2 lead. And they weren't through yet. Cruzers put the final touches on the match by deep-sixing Partners bombarding them with 3 shots in the third round for an 11-3 drowning.

This brought up the grand-final between Penalty Box and Cruzers. Usually when payoff time comes both teams offer up their best lineups. Penalty Box captain Paul Verhulst was on a 9-game winning streak but elected to sit out this final match. Why? That's a very good question. But look at the reasoning and it becomes obviously clear. With Paul in the lineup Cruzers would get 8 or 9 games on the wire. A bit much you say, a bit much I say. So Paul sits out and now Cruzers receives only [and we underline the only part] 7 games head start.

Doing the best they could do the Box gang opened up with 4 wins in the first round and followed that up with 3 in the second. That made the score a little more respectable however Cruzers was still on top 10-7.

Cruzers managed two tallies in round three to get on the bubble, 12-10. One win apiece from round four ended the contest at 13-11.

For Penalty Box the odds were just too overwhelming. Let's do the math. I do believe that this is the only time in the 18-year history of the Missouri 8-Ball league that the championship team got more games on the wire than they actually had to win.

PL	Team	Winnings	Team Winning Records
1.	Cruzers	\$ 7,000 & Trophy	1. Penalty Box 69 42
2.	Penalty Box	4,000	2. Cruzers 59 47
3-4.	Hillsboro Billiards	2,000	3. Partners 47 40
3-4.	Partners	2,000	4. Hillsboro Billiards 40 33
5-8.	Action Billiards	1,000	5. Action Billiards 31 29
5-8.	Hazzards	1,000	
5-8.	Keiths	1,000	
5-8.	Woodys	1,000	

Players with 4 wins in a match

Ray Greenfield (Nuts), Paul Brown and Keith Kreder (Action Billiards), Bob Chudy and Bill Ludwinski (Night Sky), Jack Harvey (Fucifinos), Dave Collins and Joe Curlee (Cruzers), Larry Lammert (Bartmans), Donnie Martin (Keiths), Bob Hudson (Woodys), Paul Verhulst (Penalty Box).

Same Match: David Frazier (Wedge), Duane Coberly (Blarney Stone) and Gene Miller (Woodys).

Gene Miller was the only 4-game winner from two matches.

Johnny Neels (Hillsboro Billiards) was the only player to go 5 for 5 for a single match.

Most unusual quote of the tournament goes to a member from one of the Bartman's team. With Bartmans and Hillsboro Billiards in a double-hill shoot-off the pills were rolled out for the 21st and final game. Johnny Neels 'A', the captain from Hillsboro, got the call for his team. Going into this final game for the match John had already tallied 4 of his team's 10 wins. John ran the rack down to the '8' ball. After making his seventh ball the cue ball rolled across the table and married up with his opponents '5' ball.

Shooting over a ball is tough enough and the only pocket open was at the far-left end of the table. Johnny called the pocket and missed it by a half diamond. This prompted the Bartman's player to turn to me and announce "this 'A' player hasn't shown me much."

A few minutes later Johnny got another shot on the '8' and dropped it for his 5th win of the match sending Hillsboro Billiards (11-10) to the next level on the tournament board. Maybe John did struggle a bit in this last game but going 5 for 5 isn't too shabby.

Once in a great while we find an honest man. Unlike Lot who searched throughout the city and never found one, we may have discovered one in the Missouri 8-Ball Pool League. This is a quote from one Joe Curlee who played with both winning teams in this 52nd event. While celebrating his \$7,000 victory from the 5-Player division Joe said: "We didn't deserve it but we'll take it."

We aren't sure exactly what Joe was referring to but it could be about his team getting 7 games on the wire for the championship match. The final score was 13-11 for Cruzers as you have just read. Of course he may have been thinking about something other than that.

However, this brings up an interesting situation. Instead of being placed in 'point flights' should the team tournaments be 'luck of the draw?' Many players think it should. Their reasoning is that teams have been complaining for years about playing the same teams over and over in the opening rounds. Teams want to play other teams. If this format is incorporated in the near future the opening rounds could possibly produce several matches where the lower point teams get 5, 6, or 7 games on the wire. How would you as a captain like to draw a team that opens up with a 10 game head start? It could happen. 15 to 5 is not unusual. The Missouri 8-Ball league is looking for feedback on this. What are your thoughts? Should the format remain the same or change to 'luck of the draw' for two or three tournaments to see how it goes?

10 or more wins

1. Joe Curlee 21 7

Consecutive Wins

9 Paul Verhulst (9-1) won last 9 (Penalty Box)

	(Cruzers)	13	5	9	Johnny Neels (11-5)	(Hillsboro Billiards)
	(Blarney Stone)	8	2	7	David Frazier (7-0)	(Wedge Tavern)
2.	Dave Collins	19	9	7	Paul Brown (7-1)	(Action Billiards)
	(Cruzers)	15	5			
	(Blarney Stone)	4	4			
3.	Andy Hurwitz (P. Box)	15	2			
4.	Brian Kroeger (P. Box)	14	4			
5.	Keith Grob (P. Box)	14	6			
6.	John Light (Cruzers)	12	9			
7.	Gene Miller (Woodys)	11	2			
8.	John Neels (Hillsboro)	11	5			
9.	Rolla Hoffman (P. Box)	10	8			

Total Payout

5-Player Divisions	\$19,000	44 teams
4-Player Divisions	3,360	12 teams
All-Star Singles	<u>4,650</u>	<u>200 players</u>
	\$27,010	***

4-Player Division Results

1. Blarney Stone	\$2,360	& Trophy
2. Fucifinos	<u>1,000</u>	
	\$3,360	

*** At this point we would like to share with our players who have been participating in the singles and team contests over the years that just the last two tournaments alone over \$3,000 has been added. Imagine how high the numbers would be once we get the teams back up to where they used to be. Forget about the two or three thousand; we're talking 5, 6 or even 7 thousand dollars added per event. And there's no reason to believe that it won't get there again. One or two extra divisions join each session.

Missouri 8-Ball is still the largest league in the metro area outnumbering all other leagues combined in total players and total teams. We have three major events both singles and team each year. No other league can make that statement. At the present rate that new teams are signing and older teams re-signing we will soon double all other leagues.

4-Player Division Results

There were 12 Happy Hour teams signed up from the 4-player divisions. After getting a bye for their first match Fucifinos eliminated New Classic's 9-5, then Airport Billiards 9-2. Their opponents, Blarney Stone, also received a bye for their first match. From there they knocked out Classics 9-5, and then My Place by the same score. This set the stage for the grand-final. It had been awhile since Blarney Stone took this event and all indications proved that they were the team to beat.

Joe Curlee was still in stroke. He just completed the 5-player championship match. Even though Joe went 3-0, it was Duane Coberly's turn to be in the spotlight. Duane went 4-0. The final was 9-5 and once again Blarney Stone's Irish lads took home the pot o'gold at the end of the Mo-8-Ball rainbow.

Answer to #1: Going into the 52nd Missouri 8-Ball singles All-Stars tournament these three gentlemen have won the championship three times each. But as you have just read Runout Rich Sager took the lead by winning his 4th. Rich is now one ahead of J-Lo.

Answer to #2: All of these girls have won more money than I have won. Julia won the event three years ago. Rhonda finished second about ten years ago. Mary is the only female to cash in the top ten twice, 3rd and 7th.

Answer to #3: All of these men were actors and portrayed Tarzan. I was just kidding about Batman. There may be other things but I don't get involved in their private lives.

What's New for 2004?

Many players like to race. That has been brought up many times over the years. We are currently talking about bringing back the 'race to skill-level' format to see how it goes. Since the Great Midwest league went out of business that kind-a left a void that has to be filled. Yes, there are leagues that do race. But for various reasons their formats aren't what the majority is looking for.

This 'race' format will be played in pool halls only. And take note – will begin on two tables. From the outset -- two tables. There is very sound reasoning for this. Over the years players have complained about having to sit around and wait too long for their match. And when they finally did complete their match it would be after midnight. Many times matches were not over at closing time in the bars. By beginning on two tables we can assure that unless you are the slowest player on the planet you will get out long before midnight. Also, there would be no objection if three matches began at once but that would have to be agreed upon by the two captains and another table would have to be available. But two tables for sure.

Also: What is your opinion about bringing back the '9' Ball divisions? Here's what is being kicked around. The 9-Ball teams will basically play the same format as several years ago. Each player will play two games with each draw and the race to 17 will be the format. It will be a handicap league and divisions will be formed according to each team's point level. This of course will go into effect as soon as there are enough divisions to accommodate. Until that is possible all teams will be in the same division. Play will probably be Monday nights.

Not Texas Express. We're thinking 2-shot roll out. What do you think? Your thoughts and opinions are welcome. Let us know. The sooner we get input from you, the players who really want to 'race' and play '9-Ball', the sooner we'll know when to send out flyers and form divisions.

Questions or comments contact Rusty or Jay at 636-940-9091 or fax us at 636-724-4540.

Bob Bohn

By now I am sure that you heard that our good friend Bob Bohn passed away July 10th. He celebrated his 61st birthday a couple of weeks ago. Bob was a mainstay in Missouri 8-Ball since it began operating in the St. Louis area. For eight of those years he worked for Rusty and the league in many ways. Bob delivered and picked up results daily; he ran the tournament boards; he played several nights each week on many 5-player division teams, plus the 4-player Happy Hour and day divisions. And more than any other person (with the exception of Rusty) Bob put together and started more teams that filled out divisions than anyone else in the 18-year history.

As a friend of Bob Bohn's for 20 years I can assure you, as those who knew Bob would agree, he was a fine person. We were teammates for three years and opponents for at least 12. Bob was the type of person who hated to lose and one of the hardest competitors in the game. He always gave his best.

Bob was considerate, kind, loyal and a good friend. At the time of his passing Bob was employed part time at Action Café and Billiards.

A full military funeral took place at Jefferson Barracks. Bob served in the U.S. Air Force.

From those of us who really knew Bob Bohn he truly will be missed.

As we have entered our 18th year of operation we hope you continue to support Missouri 8-Ball. We know there is no possible way to please everyone, as there are a myriad of problems to deal with. We do our best to make this a fun league so everyone can enjoy friendly competition.

Congratulations to all the All-Stars and the teams that cashed and to all that gave it their best shot. We appreciate you participating last session and hope to see you again at the next get together in September.

League Operator – Rusty Brandmeyer

On line and Internet coordinator – Roger Pheasant

And as always – yours truly, Jay L. Carlton