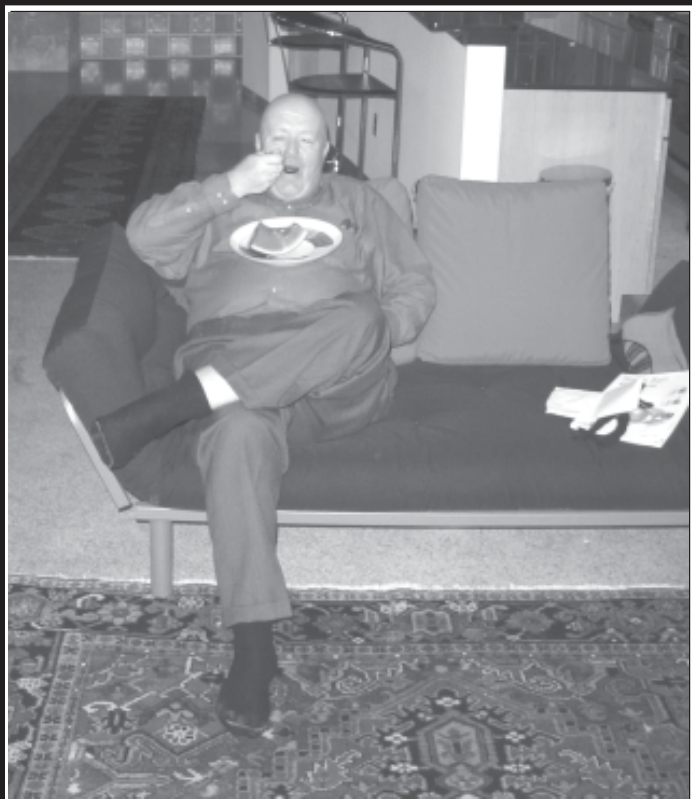


## *Shuffleboard For the Uninitiated ... Lamentations of an Unaccomplished Player*

"New Shuffleboard Player's Story" By: Robert L. Hoffman, Dallas, Texas (January 2005)



### **Editor's Note:**

*(above, Robert Hoffman getting with that watermelon, big time!)*

Robert L. Hoffman (above) is a Dallas, Texas bankruptcy lawyer and litigator who recently took up shuffleboard and is considered irreverent even by lawyer standards. He penned the following story in response to our (Editors) request that he write something from the standpoint of a "new player", in an effort to get "new player profiles", "league players profiles", "player profiles", etc. for publication in The Board Talk. Those of you that have been participating in our "beta test" are familiar with these extended efforts to acquire more player profiles, print them, and post them.

Shufflers who are offended or aspersed by the article may spam him at [hoff-law@swbell.net](mailto:hoff-law@swbell.net) or call him collect at 214-969-5400.

Robert, many thanks for a great "new player" profile story! [Note: See Page 10, column 2 for another mug shot of our up-and-coming pro "new player": Robert Hoffman of Big D.]

--T&L French, The Board Talk Editors

### **Gregg Hixon's Harbor Point Bar & Grill:**

Richardson, Texas had an excellent field for its' Bring Partner and Draw Partner tournament on November 26th and 27th.

I had a good week at the law office and cleared enough to put up the two \$25 entry fees. I also was excited because this was a handicap event and I fantasized that my "four" rating might even give me a chance.

### **First Event - The Draw Partner**

In the Draw Partner, I got a sweet lady named Laverne who had been playing all of two weeks and scratched the board with her bracelets and necklace when she shot. Laverne had a local "0" on her end of the board, so, in order to avoid embarrassing myself, I cagily moseyed to the other end to work over an unimpressive looking old man from Oklahoma named Melton.

I told Laverne to hit weights and let me handle Melton by trying the outlandish shots that 27 time world champion Billy Mays taught me by mopping me up for \$20 a game and playing only with his left little finger while spotting me 4 points positive and playing to 11 points. I had gained good experience from Billy and this one-fingered lesson cost me only a little more than I paid for my first car.

Melton seemed a little testy when I told him that he seemed to have potential and asked him if he knew how to shoot with his left hand just as his right hand started forward with a rail shot, but I'll be damned if the old man didn't have the dexterity to stop his stroke and tell me that my advising him on shuffleboard was about as useful as the "Neutered Eye for the Straight Guy" talking about procreation and that if I kept entering tournaments, I'd be the only lawyer in America with a net worth roughly equivalent to that of my hero Billy Mays.

But Melton doesn't stay mad long and even seemed to be proud of my suggestion that he has potential because he smiled and complemented me that my game shows about as much potential as the Horns have demonstrated against the Sooners in the last five years.

Even though Laverne played a lot better than I did, the match was over in four minutes so I had plenty of time to get back to the bar, eat two Macho Grande plates and regale complete strangers with my football stories from Slaton High School out on the high plains of West Texas. No one seemed particularly interested but at least I didn't get beer poured on me like I did the week before.

The Draw Partner was won by Evelyn Harris, the wildest of Billy Mays' nine siblings, who carried C.W. Walker up from the losers' bracket to double dip a big nosed banker

*("New Player's Story"... Con't. from page 12)*

pro from Ft. Worth named Bobby and his brother's "other" Sally. Evelyn is playing lots better now that she has that newer, lighter oxygen tank and can stand up straighter when she shoots. Given that Evelyn's 2 handicap has credibility roughly equivalent to the 0 handicap of her brother, Billy, the result surprised no one.

The game drew lots of attention because Sally is a drop dead gorgeous blonde and a gaggle of men and bi curious ladies gathered behind her to watch her reach way out over the board and shoot. That was the highlight of the tournament for me.

### Second Day Event - The Bring Partner:

Sally's other, a pinassed little fender bender fixer pro from Ft. Worth named David, Sr., became number one on my hit list because I paid the highest price in the sponsor sale to buy him and Sally in the Bring Partner and they got dusted early on by other players of suspicious consanguinity and affinity. My lawyer's instinct told me that the result suggested that the woodpile was not entirely unoccupied and that the Calvinist shuffleboard concept of preordination may be alive and well, especially since they haven't lost by ten points since Lassie was a pup. Big David's gonna learn how dangerous crossing lawyers is because I'm sending in 1099s for all his wins this year following which I'm going to scavenge the body shop and maybe Sally at the IRS foreclosure sale and fix him from sucking eggs.

I did better in the Bring Partner event with my own play because I got to drink up the \$25 entry fee instead of entering.

I had been assured by that prevaricating Greg Hixon said that if I'd show up early, lots of people would be delighted to be my partner. I followed his advice and even believed him until just before play started.

About three hours before the event, I was delighted to learn that a good player named Carol also had no partner, but when I asked her, she hesitated and then said she did not plan to play. I am sure that this had nothing to do with my ability, hygiene or personality, but five minutes later she exercised the feminine prerogative to change her mind and signed up with Hixon's girlfriend, Penny, who walked in the door right after our conversation. This brought to mind Betty Davis' comment that "I'd love to kiss you but I have to do my nails." But I felt flattered that Carol at least hesitated nearly as long as my ex-wife endured me and this experience was a lot cheaper.

Then I asked a one rated Ft. Worth machinist named Iggy whose partner no-showed if he'd like to join me bein' as how this was a handicap event and I'd be playing as a big 'ole 4. He said he'd really like to partner up with me some time, but he only drove over to say hello and needed to get home in time to watch his favorite tee vee show, Mr. Ed.

So I wound up giving a pretty good imitation of the fat girl at my 8th grade dance who spent the evening sitting against the wall and looking pitiful. I remember exactly what she looked like because I stared hard at her

after she turned me down when I finally mustered the courage to ask her for a dance. Because I was and still am fatter than she was and is, I guess I can't really blame her and I still admire her for thereby demonstrating that she nevertheless maintained some self respect.

Besides, she knew that I couldn't dance anyhow and the mental picture of our being unable to get ahold of each other even during the slow tunes because our arms were short relative to our bellies would have been inelegant and she knew I only asked her because her daddy had a 20,000 acre ranch nearby with quail and oil all over it.

I am a little bitter because I never got to hunt that ranch except a few times when my buddies and I poached and because I damn near ripped off my left testicle when I slipped on the bob war (pedants say barbed wire) fence as the Garza county sheriff was chasing us and I wound up leaving all 24 quail which I had already cleaned right there on the ground. At least I had the presence of mind to put my shotgun in one hand and my left nut in the other and high tail it in to the mesquite bushes where I spent the night huddled against a 40 mile hour West Texas wind at about 35 degrees.

The good news is that her daddy is tight as Dick's hat band, has a personality about like that of a soon-to-be pro from Ft. Worth known as Little David and at age 95 shows no signs of slowing down so I'd had no chance to get her to support me anyhow. **Note:** I'm a careful lawyer and took pains to use the word "personality" and not "common sense" so as not to slander the litigious old man and would note that if he instead had little David's maturity level, the ranch would have been gone long before his daughter hit puberty which would have been sad because I was not out of law school then and didn't know how to steal it yet.

I was a bit miffed at Carol at first and told Billy Mays I considered telling her off but he cautioned me not to start a fist fight I had no chance of winning. Because Billy used to live with her and has been married 10 times, I figured he oughta know so I'll instead honor Carol not only as an outstanding shuffler, but also as one who has developed her body so well that, given a sturdy teeter totter, she could send that West Texas girl to the moon.

Lest I be accused of digression I'll get back on the subject and conclude my report by telling you how the Harbor tournament ended for me: While my inability to get a partner was a little embarrassing, fortunately I enjoy talking and playing with myself so I just amused myself that way before Hixon threw me out. (No, dear reader, I was playing shuffleboard with myself on the extra board and they wound up needing the board. Shame on you!)

I did manage on the way out to show the players how I felt about them when I put \$20 in the juke box and played, in absentia, all 60 of Dimebag Darrell Abbott's Greatest Heavy Metal Hits which I understand was loudly and appropriately received by all. Rumor has it that, while I was sleeping it off and hiding in my car, Tammy Morgan wound up carrying that old white haired geriatric who lucked out against me and they won the Bring Partner event at 2:30 a.m. -- *By: Robert L. Hoffman, Dallas, Texas*