

# Nor-Cal News & Views

Northern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association website address is: <http://www.nchpa.com>

## Secretary/Treasurer

Hi everyone here we are in 2023 can you believe it? As of January 1st, we had 38 members signed up for this year. Nine paid online and the rest through your clubs. I have had more since then so we are up and going. For those of you that paid online, please remember to pay your local club the dues they need \$\$ to help run the local tournaments and pay for fees and supplies. Thank You.

A reminder to club secretaries. This year we will be hosting the State Championships at Stockton, therefore please send me the \$25.00 to help support this endeavor. The cost of running the State tournament is going up as is everything else. Thank You...

In this Newsletter you will find the State entry and Trophy Sponsor forms. Please send your entry form along with your check to me. Hopefully some of you will sponsor trophies for this prestigious event. If

anyone finds extra \$\$ you don't know what to do with, you can always send it to me (NCHPA) and I will add it to the prize fund or if you know of any business that might want to sponsor a plaque or sponsor the event, please send me the business name and address along with their check, so we can make sure they get promoted at the event and in Newslines.

Casey has sent out a batch of schedules to each club and as I get dues in, I will return a few with the membership cards. Whatever I can send and keep within the regular postage stamp weight. *Gail Shuys*

## 1st VP

Like many of you, I'm indoors looking out the windows at wind and rain. The Holidays are over for another year, we're having one

of the wettest winters that we've had for a long time, and I'm longing for warmer weather and the horseshoe pitching season! For a long time I've wanted to pitch over in Arizona in the Valley of the Sun Tournament, and this year I'm going to make the trip to Mesa. Arizona has long been a Winter haven for golf, tennis, and baseball spring training. The beautiful sunny and warm days in Arizona contrast to the cold and snow that covers so much of the rest of the country. February in Arizona is also a perfect time to pitch horseshoes, which is why the Valley of the Sun Horseshoe Pitching Tournament has been one of the NHPA's longest-running, historic events. This year's Valley of the Sun Tournament (the "VOS" Tournament) will be held in Pioneer Park, in Mesa, Arizona, from February 14<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>. The tournament is often touted as "The NHPA's Oldest Sanctioned Tournament," which probably could be more accurately said to be the "longest running" sanctioned tournament in the NHPA. (*this article continued on page 23*)

## Hall of Fame:

Included in this issue of News and Views are the Hall of Fame induction presentations for this year's Hall of Fame Inductees: Nathan Williams in the Player Category, and Joe Summers in the Promoter/Organizer Category. Induction into the NCHPA Hall of Fame is the highest honor that a Northern California horseshoe pitcher can receive. Nominations for the Hall of Fame come from the Membership of the NCHPA. The

deadline for nominations for the Hall of Fame will be due this year on August 13, 2023. Joe and Nathan are very worthy members of the Hall of Fame, and reading their induction presentations is a good example of the caliber and quality of nominations we are seeking. The Hall of Fame is very important to our organization.

Beyond being a tremendous honor for the recipient, it honors and gives legitimacy to our sport, it helps grow our sport by inspiring individuals to the highest proficiency in pitching skills, or to dedicate themselves to promoting and organizing the sport by serving as local and charter officers, and working toward the betterment and growth of the sport and the NCHPA pitchers. The NCHPA Board has worked to revamp and revitalize the procedure for evaluating and voting on the Hall of Fame Nominees. After reading the stories of the new Hall of Fame members I hope you are inspired to achieve and to dedicate yourself to our sport.

Following the presentations will be the current method for nominating, voting on, and approving NCHPA Members as Hall of Fame Members. *George Davis*

## 2nd. VP

Hello everyone and Happy New Year! Soon a new season will be starting, and I am so excited. The website is currently in the process of being updated for the new season with the new sign up forms and schedule. The website seems to be prospering. I'm seeing more and site visits every month. We had a bit of a tail off towards the end of the year, but I suspect we'll see a jump again once the new season begins. Right now, we're averaging about 75% of site visits are from new visitors. It is excellent to see that we're getting the word out about the website more and more. I'm looking to put some

new photos on the website so it would be great to get any nice photos you might have captured last season, whether it was at the state, the world or just in your backyard. It's always nice to update the website with current folks. Thanks, *Jasmine Brady*

## 3rd.VP

The NCHPA Annual business meeting and awards lunch was held Sat. Nov. 12 at Joe and Mary Summer's home in Martinez. At the meeting the following NCHPA Awards for the 2021-2022 season were announced:

Richard Robbins      Player of the Year  
(based on points, 84)

Lisa Dicharry      Rookie of the Year  
(based on points, 21)

Pat Wiggins      co-winners tied on  
points 21 each

Wayne McGhee      Most Improved  
Pitcher (based on ringer percent  
increase, +14.67%)

Richard Robbins      Top Dog (most  
NCHPA tournaments pitched, 37)

no winner      Cadet Pitcher of the Year  
(based on points)

no Cadet pitched the required 5 or more  
NCHPA tournaments

no winner      Junior Pitcher of the Year  
(based on points)

no Junior pitched the required 5 or more  
NCHPA tournaments

80% and Over Games Pitched in 2021-22  
Season

Rick Bermingham – 2 games of 80% or  
over

9/25/2021 03-21-086LaneSummers-A.txt  
Vallejo  
85.0%, 34 ringers, 40 shoes, versus Steve  
Goodman

5/30/2022 03-22-050WilliamsOpen-A.txt  
McBean/Lincoln  
80.0%, 32 ringers, 40 shoes, versus Diane  
Luiz

Congratulations to all the award winners!  
And to everyone else, better luck next year.  
:) For those not present at the meeting your  
award was given to someone to deliver to  
you.

Below are some stats for NCHPA season  
2021-2022. If you need more information  
then please email me  
at [meanderson99@yahoo.com](mailto:meanderson99@yahoo.com) and I will try  
to help.

Note that NCHPA season 2021-2022 began  
immediately after the 2021 State  
Tournament and ended immediately after  
the 2022 State Tournament.

1336 total NCHPA pitchers in NCHPA  
club tournaments  
69 total NCHPA pitchers in California  
State Championships (hosted by SCHPA)  
37 NCHPA pitchers in NCHPA  
Championships  
24 NCHPA pitchers in NCHPA Doubles  
Championships  
1466 total NCHPA pitchers in NCHPA  
and State tournaments  
116 total Non-NCHPA pitchers in  
NCHPA tournaments  
1582 total NCHPA and Non-NCHPA  
pitchers in NCHPA tournaments  
98 NCHPA tournaments were pitched in  
season 2021-2022  
11 NCHPA tournaments were cancelled for  
various reasons (weather, COVID-19,

etc.) in season 2021-2022

As always you club statisticians can make  
my task pretty easy if you submit your  
results in a timely manner. I would like to  
have them within two days after your  
tournament is complete. Please email files  
created in HSMaster Version 1.1.232 or  
higher created as follows:

comma-separated-values Results file -  
Tournaments, Clean Up (yellow file  
cabinet icon), Post Results to Player Stats  
<tournament sanction number  
and name selected>, Post (visually check  
that the tournament pitchers are  
listed in the window), Results File, set  
destination location to desired  
folder (commonly C:\HSMasterData\),  
File Name <Results/sanction number/.txt>,  
Open.

Window should show:

Players Reported <number of players in  
tournament>

Players in Error <0>  
with "File has been created" at window  
bottom left.

example: For tournament 03-23-003  
LincolnOpen with destination location set  
to C:\HSMasterData\ and File Name set to  
Results03-23-003.txt then the file  
Results03-23-003.txt will be found in  
C:\HSMasterData\

Class Box Score files (one file per class) -  
Tournaments, Play Singles or Play  
Doubles, Results tab at lower left,  
Tournament<tournament sanction number  
and name>, Class <select desired class>,  
Load, Standings <checked>,  
Box Scores <checked>, Brief <NOT  
checked>, Path <C:\HSMasterData\ (is  
commonly used)>, File <sanction  
number/tourney name/-class.txt>, Preview (if

you care to) then Export should see "File has been created" in lower left;

If more than one class then change Class, Load, Export for each class.

example 03-23-003LincolnOpen-A.txt, Preview (if you care to) then

Export If Path was set to C:\HSMasterData\ and Class A was selected then the file 03-23-003LincolnOpen-A.txt will be found in C:\HSMasterData\

Tournament Standings file - Tournaments, Play Singles or Play Doubles Reports,

Tournament<tournament sanction number and name>, Format,

Results <selected, NOT Results (Brief)>, All Classes,

Path <C:\HSMasterData\ (is commonly used),

File <sanction number/tourney name/.txt, Preview (if you care to),

Text File. Should see "File has been created" at window bottom left.

example 03-23-003LincolnOpen.txt, Preview (if you care to) then

Text File If Path was set to C:\HSMasterData\ then the

file 03-23-003LincolnOpen.txt will be found in C:\HSMasterData\

Please email the files to me

at: [meanderson99@yahoo.com](mailto:meanderson99@yahoo.com). And please be sure that

the Class Box Score files and Tournament Standings file are generated in HSMaster with "Brief" NOT selected. This will insure that member numbers for all pitchers will be shown in every file that you send. Thanks for all your help.

Everyone stay safe and I hope to see you on the courts in 2023. *Mike Anderson*

## 5th. VP

Welcome to the 2023 horseshoe pitching season we hope you've all had a great holiday season, Please remember if you need score sheets or need the two free plaques for your club please give me enough time to get them to you. I hope to use a person that is going to your club to carry your score sheets and plaques. You can also direct a person to pick them up from me if they are coming my way? I really do not want to mail them as that gets expensive. If you all an ahead we can save our organization a lot in postage costs. Thanks and see you on the courts. *Dave Lane*

## Regional Director

If any clubs would like a certificate stating that your courts are sanctioned by the NHPA please let me know. Most of you have them from four years ago, but I can supply you with updated ones if you like them.

As for sanctioning certificates for your tournaments let me know if you want a hard copy I'll send you one email and you can print it for whoever the tournament is named after. Sometimes it's a nice gesture to hand an individual or a sponsor the certificate.

We printed 500 hard copies of the 2023 pitching schedule. You can thank Jasmine Brady for them as the company she works for did them for free! I offered them a 1/4 page advertisement in our News & Views for at least a year. The company is:

[www.ChromaGraphics.com](http://www.ChromaGraphics.com) in Santa Rosa  
Please check with them for all your printing needs. Perhaps we can repay them for their generosity by supplying them with some business.

Look at your pretty pink schedule and make a line through tournament #80 please. I will still put it in eShoe, but immediately pencil it cancelled so as not to mess up this number system that all seem to love on the hard copies of the schedule.

Look closely at the tournament codes on the event you want to attend. All Tri-Valley is **pre-register** as is the McBean/Lincoln Club as are Lindsay and Exeter. If in doubt call the contact person. Don't drive 80 miles to find out its cancelled. Thanks, *Casey Sluys*

## Madera

Harlen Rippetoe moved to Madera, CA 22 years ago and since then, he has helped grow the sport he loves. In 2000 Harlen found 2 sets of horseshoe pits at the local bowling alley. After some negotiations, another set of pits were added and the Big Valley Horseshoe League was formed. While Harlen began working at the transportation agency in Madera, he found out the City received a grant and suggested money for installing horseshoe pits in Rotary Park. The city agreed and 10 state of the art lighted horseshoe pits were installed with 2 more pits added later making 12 total. Harlen has partnered with the City of Madera for over 20 years maintaining any horseshoe pit in the county at no cost to the department. Harlen and the league have built 10-12 new horseshoe pits in Madera and have refurbished many more including the ones at Pan America and Town and County

Park. They also built courts in Coarsegold and at the American Legion. The rest, as they say is history. Because of his dedication to horseshoe pitching, the Mayor and City Council members from the City of Madera honored Harlen and Sharon Rippetoe with a monument outside the horseshoe pits at Rotary Park November 9th , 2022 for their service and dedication to the community by establishing the Big Valley Horseshoe Club (BVHC) and Big Valley Horseshoe League (BVHL).

Harlen has played over 40 years in organized horseshoes and served as president and has been inducted into 2 horseshoe Hall of Fames. He has also recently honored back in October for being a California legend receiving the California Bear for all that he has done for the sport of horseshoes, from promoting the game, to leading on the courts with his sportsmanship and integrity. Harlen built a community where pitchers from all walks of life can come together to pitch shoes. The back side of the story is many years ago Sharon gave Harlen the nick-name "Harlen Horseshoe Pit" just like Johnny Appleseed wherever they moved he built horseshoe pits. From their 1st move to Crescent City, CA to several later taking them to Madera, CA where Harlen worked with the County Supervisor John Silva to build the horseshoe pits at Rotary Park, Madera, CA. These pits are sanctioned by the National Horseshoe Pitchers Association (NHPA) and will host Northern California Horseshoe Pitching Association (NCHPA) tournaments throughout the year plus the Big Valley Horseshoe League (BVHL) where over 120 players enjoy the game of horseshoes every Wednesday night. So just like Johnny Appleseed he planted the seed and watched it grow into a magnificent tree. Congratulations on a job well done, Harlen!



## Nick & Dee Balderama



## Vallejo

We at the Vallejo Horseshoe Club hope that everyone had a great holiday season and wish you a very safe 2023. It's been a horrible start to 2023 though. Passing away of friends and great horseshoe pitchers, and the worst part was losing my father. With all this hard rain it's hard to think about pitching horseshoes but our season is upon us. Personally I would like to wish everyone safe travels and good luck to all those going to tournaments and coming the Valley of the Sun in AZ. Wishing all those pitchers from the NCHPA good luck and many ringers. They are Gary and Steven Nakamoto from the San Jose Club, Paul Machado from the Sonoma County Club, George Davis from the Stockton club, and myself Dave Lane from the Vallejo Club. We hope to get more

NCHPA participation in this event next year.

We're excited about 2023. We have had a few meant with the GVRD of Vallejo and everything will stay the same as last year. That was good news, no price increases. Please remember when you come to pitch in Vallejo bring a few extra dollars for the donation bucket to help us with the park fees.

The Vallejo Club will host 6 tournaments. Our first one will be March 11th the Spring Warmup. Before going to any tournaments check the website for the latest change or update. Thanks, *Dave Lane*

## San Jose

Happy New Year from San Jose!

Mike Anderson represented the San Jose Horseshoe Club at the NCHPA Annual business meeting and awards lunch on Sat. Nov. 12 at Joe and Mary Summer's home in Martinez. The meeting went well with several people attending in person and several attending via a Zoom meeting. Business was taken care of, the meeting was adjourned, and pizza was enjoyed by all.

The San Jose Horseshoe Club again did not hold its usual December business meeting/Christmas party and again it was decided to not elect new officers, but to have the 2022 officers continue again in their positions through 2023.

Therefore the 2023 San Jose Horseshoe Club officers are:

Mike Anderson - President, Statistician, and club contact at 408-738-4661

Leon Moore - 1st Vice President

Russell Zelmar - 2nd Vice President and Groundsman

Marisela Mauricio - 3rd Vice President

Nancy Cloutier - Secretary-Treasurer

San Jose Horseshoe Club hosted 5 successful Saturday tournaments in 2022 at Half Moon Bay (thank you HMB!). The demolition and rebuilding (and renaming as well) of Columbus Park has not yet begun and we have not been told when to expect to hold tournaments at the new park. Therefore San Jose will be holding all its 2023 tournaments again at Half Moon Bay. And again thank you HMB!

Happy New Year to all and we look forward to pitching with you in 2023. Stay safe.

**Mike Anderson**

## **Stockton**

I went down to Louis Park this afternoon to assess the storm damage (1-12-23.) I'm glad to report that there are no major trees down or damage to the fencing. The pits of course are completely flooded and there is a lot of storm debris on the courts. We do have time to pull things together for our first tournament in early April. I met Wayne McGhee at the courts and we are making plans to spend the pitching season getting ready to host the State Tournament over Labor Day. High on the to-do list is some new clay for some of the courts, painting the pitching platforms, getting all 38 stakes well-positioned and in good shape, getting new carpet coverings for the pits, and getting new paint on the backboards as necessary. We really want to present a pitching facility that is worthy of a State Championship, and that our entire NCHPA can be proud of. It will soon be time to start the new season and we look forward to having weekly practices that allow us all to get in some competition to sharpen our games. We hope that you will plan to attend our first tournament on Saturday, April 8,

the Stockton Park and Recreation Tournament. I hope you are all looking forward as much as I am to the 2023 Pitching Season. Pray for Richard Robbins to get healthy and back on the courts, he is a treasure! Richard is in Arizona, I look forward to visiting him during the Valley of the Sun Tournament. **George Davis**,

## **Sonoma County in Santa Rosa**

It's with regret that I have to inform you that Kevin Smith lost his battle with cancer. He passed away on December 9th of last year. The club will miss his gregarious mannerisms, his off color jokes & comments and all his hard work. He could turn 3 pits to another pitchers one. Kevin is responsible for all the concrete walkways we have as he headed up the cement crew during our rebuild. He'd tell everybody that the work he did with concrete came with 3 guarantees; *guaranteed to get hard, guaranteed no one will steal it and guaranteed to crack*. That last one is being assisted by the earthquake fault that runs through the park. Unfortunately his brother Brian Smith passed away some months ago also, same dreaded disease...cancer.

The names of our tournaments are unique this year. We are able to thank Sue Lichau for her sense of humor and creative ability to come up with the names. Be sure to visit us here in the heart of wine country in 2023.

**Casey Shuys**

# McBean/Lincoln

McBean/Lincoln Horseshoe Pitching Club NCHPA Tournament Prize Money payout with a \$20.00 entry fee.

4 pitcher group \$60 in prize money & \$20 to club = \$80

1st = \$40.00

2nd = \$20.00

=====

5 pitcher group \$80 in prize money & \$20 to club = \$100

1st = \$60.00

2nd = \$20.00

=====

6 pitcher group \$100 in prize money & \$20 to club = \$120

1st = \$70.00

2nd = \$30.00

=====

7 pitcher group \$115 in prize money & 25 to club = \$140

1st = \$70.00

2nd = \$30.00

3rd = \$15.00

=====

8 pitcher group \$135 in prize money & \$25 to club = \$160

1st = \$80.00

2nd = \$35.00

3rd = \$20.00

=====

9 pitcher group \$150 in prize money & \$30 to club = \$180

1st = \$90.00

2nd = \$40.00

3rd = \$20.00

=====

10 pitcher group \$170 in prize money & \$30 to club = \$200

1st = \$100.00

2nd = \$50.00

3rd = \$20.00

=====

11 pitcher group \$190 in prize money & \$30 to club = \$220

1st = \$110.00

2nd = \$50.00

3rd = \$20.00

4th = \$10.00

=====

12 pitcher group \$210 in prize money & \$30 to club = \$240

1st = \$120.00

2nd = \$50.00

3rd = \$25.00

4th = \$15.00

McBean/Lincoln Horseshoe Pitching Club

Tournament Finishes 1st & 2nd

2022 Year, Plates for NCHPA Plaques

Date	Tournament Name	Grp/Place	Pitchers Name
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Nov 6 2021	End of the Season	1 / 1st	Nathan Williams
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		1/ 2nd	Wayne Lockhart
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		2/ 1st	Fred Trujillo Jr.
--	--	--------	-------------------



Nov 6 2021 End of the Season 2/ 2nd Cody Mcneely  
3/ 1st Fay Dumont  
3/ 2nd Mona Larian

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Jan 29 2022 McBean Open 1/ 1st Dave Lane  
1/ 2nd John DeMello  
2/ 1st Wayne McGhee

Jan 29 2022 McBean Open 2/ 2nd Tony Bodiford

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Mar 20 2022 Spring Open 1/ 1st Bobby Bartell  
1/ 2nd John DeMello  
2/ 1st Gene Washoe

Mar 20 2022 Spring Open 2/ 2nd Jeff Szczesny  
3/ 1st Stephen Sharp  
3/ 2nd Lisa Dicharry

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Mar 26 2022 Lincoln Open 1/ 1st Dave Lane  
1/ 2nd Bobby Bartell  
2/ 1st Stephen Sharp

Mar 26 2022 Lincoln Open 2/ 2nd Jeff Williams

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May 29 2022 Williams Open 1/ 1st Coy Halsted  
1/ 2nd John DeMello  
2/ 1st Cody Mcneely

May 29 2022 Williams Open 2/ 2nd Josie Tellers

---

July 2 2022 Independence 1/ 1st Bobby Bartell  
1/ 2nd Nathan Williams  
2/ 1st Gene Washoe  
2/ 2nd Josie Tellers

July 2 2022 Independence 3/ 1st Stephen Sharp  
3/ 2nd Rudy Bambico

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Aug 27 2022 State Warm-Up 1/ 1st Coy Halsted  
1/ 2nd Nathan Williams  
2/ 1st Jeff Szczesny

Aug 27 2022 State Warm-Up 2/ 2nd Josie Tellers  
3/ 1st Louie Manes  
3/ 2nd Lisa Dicharry

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Sept 24 2022 Autumn Open 1/ 1st Foster Kenton Jr.  
1/ 2nd Carol Lanfair  
2/ 1st Jeff Williams

Sept 24 2022 Autumn Open 2/ 2nd Stephen Sharp

---

Oct 29 2022 Halloween Open 1/ 1st Wayne McGhee  
1/ 2nd Dave Lane  
2/ 1st Stephen Sharp

Oct 29 2022 Halloween Open 2/ 2nd Bobby Wright

Nov 26 2022 Turkey Open 1/ 1st Rick Bermingham

1/ 2nd Coy Halsted

2/ 1st Jeff Szczesny

Nov 26 2022 Turkey Open 2/ 2nd Stan Cummings

Jan 1 2023 New Year Open 1/ 1st Nathan Williams

1/ 2nd Bobby Bartell

1/ 3rd Wayne Lockhart

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## NATHAN WILLIAMS

November 12, 2022

Our first Hall of Fame Inductee was born on August 10, 1965. He has a twin brother who is also a horseshoe pitcher that lives in Southern California. Our inductee is a member of the most renowned and successful horseshoe pitching family in the history of the sport. Members of our honoree's family have served our sport in National, State, and Local offices, they have been honored in National and State Halls of Fame, and they have won so many World and State Pitching Championships that it would be hard to list them all. If it is not already obvious who our Hall of Fame Member is, he is the son of Walter Ray Williams, Sr., and Esther Williams. He has sisters Deborah, Cynthia, and Barbara....and brothers Walter Ray, Jr., Jeff, and his twin brother Jonathan.

Nathan Williams' has been a member of the NHPA for 44 years; he has been a horseshoe pitcher practically his whole life. Nathan is a fierce competitor! When you pitch Nathan, you are in a battle, he is a warrior! He can be demanding, opinionated, tactless, rude, and even downright surly. Nathan throws a Reverse Turn and a Quarter, and he is a devoted pitcher of Deadeye Original horseshoes. Nathan Williams is a great horseshoe pitcher, and a champion!

Nathan Williams is long overdue to be included in the Northern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association Hall of Fame. I will describe for you his horseshoe pitching achievements, in what has truly been a remarkable career!

Nathan competed in the Junior Boys Division from 1973 to 1982. He started with a ringer percentage of 11.30% as a 7-year-old, but by his final two years in the Boys Division he was pitching right at 70%. Nathan won the California State Junior Boys Championship in 1980 at age 14. In his final year in the Junior Division in 1982 he finished in 8th place in the Junior Boys' Championship Class at the World Tournament in Huntsville, Alabama, a group that was won by a youngster from Missouri named Alan Francis. Moving from the Junior Ranks to the Men's Division, from the 30 ft. pitching distance to the full 40 ft. regulation distance, is a well-known challenge for even the best of Junior Pitchers. Nathan handled the transition to the men's division remarkably well, averaging around 60% in Class Competition in the World Tournaments from 1983 to 1986.

Up to this point in his Career, Nathan had represented California. In 1987-1988 life took Nathan to Arizona where he would win five Arizona Men's State Championships!

In 1995 saw Nathan return to California. The California Men's Championship that year went to Nathan's brother Walter Ray who pitched 79.1% to win the title. Nathan finished 2nd, just one game behind Walter Ray, with a great ringer percentage of 75.1.

In the 1996 State Tournament Nathan finished 2nd to Walter Ray, and in 1997 finished 3rd to Walter Ray.

In 1998, Walter Ray had left for Florida, and Gus Martin Jr. would be the Men's State Champion. Nathan was 2nd but pitched the highest ringer percentage in the Championship Group!

In 1999 was the year that Nathan broke through to win his first California Men's Championship. In second place was the great Jesse Gonzalez.

In 2001 Nathan went undefeated to win his 2nd State Title. Jesse Gonzales again was second.

In 2004 Nathan was back on top of the California Men's Horseshoe World for a third time, with a perfect 11-0 record. In 2006 at Bakersfield Nathan won his 4th California Men's Title, with only one loss.

Nathan has made 4 appearances in the Men's Championship Group at the World Tournament. In 1988 at Pleasanton, CA he finished in 13th place with wins over 23-time Kansas State Champion Merlin Potts, Jesse Gonzalez, 3-time World Champion Dale Lipovsky of Minnesota, and Kevin Cone of Iowa who would be the World Champion in 1992

Nathan's second appearance in the Men's Championship Group was in 1989 in Spearfish, South Dakota. This World Tournament had television coverage on ESPN. The Championship Group had the normal round-robin competition with the top 4 finishers going into a "ladder" type of competition to facilitate the television coverage. Nathan finished 4th place in the tournament, losing to his brother Walter Ray in the opening game of the "ladder" finish. Nathan was fourth in the World, quite an accomplishment! Nathan had notable wins over 8-time New York Champion Art Tyson, 2-time World Champion Mark Seibold of Indiana, 1960 World Champion Don Titcomb, his brother Walter Ray, and a 40-35 win over Alan Francis who would go on to win the tournament, his first World Championship.

In 1990 at Stone Mountain, Georgia Nathan was in the Championship Group for a 3rd time. That year he finished in 20th place. One of Nathan's best performances of the tournament was in a game he lost. Nathan pitched 80.2% against Jim Knisley of Ohio, the eventual tournament winner, and it took Knisley 86 shoes to beat Nathan. In only one other game did Knisley need more than 86 shoes to beat his opponent when he used 88 shoes to beat Mark Seibold of Indiana. In contrast Knisley only needed 84 shoes to beat Alan Francis and 76 shoes to beat Walter Ray! I make these comparisons to show what a competitor Nathan is and how he raises his game in the face of a challenge such as a game against 3-time World Champion Knisley!

Nathan was in his 4th Championship Group when the World Tournament was in Bakersfield, CA in 2005. Nathan finished in 10th place. This was Nathan's second top-ten finish in World Tournament play.

Nathan Williams has had a simply outstanding horseshoe pitching career! He has clearly established himself as one of the top Northern California pitchers of his generation. Nathan will join his father, mother, and two brothers Walter Ray, and Jeff as members of the Northern California Horseshoe Pitching Hall of Fame. It is an honor that is well-deserved, and long overdue.

It is my honor to announce NATHAN WILLIAMS of the LINCOLN/MCBEAN CLUB as a member in the PLAYER CATEGORY of the NCHPA Hall of Fame Class of 2022 Congratulations, NATHAN NCHPA Hall of Fame Induction

JOE SUMMERS

November 12, 2022

Our second inductee was born on July 1, 1955 in East Orange, New Jersey. His family relocated to Walnut Creek, California in hopes of improving his brother's allergies and asthma. He grew up in the Bay Area, and graduated from Monte Vista High School. Our Hall of Fame Honoree started pitching horseshoes in his backyard as a kid. As he got older, he pitched horseshoes with 3 buddies at a local park on sand pits. They gambled a dollar a game, except on Tuesdays when they had "\$2-dollar Tuesdays." There was a frog figure next to the courts, so before each game they each put a dollar under the frog figure for betting purposes. They asked one another if they had "fed the frog?" before the games started. They played games to 21 points, and kept score with washers. He and his buddies also played in some informal Danville leagues.

Our Hall of Fame Inductee, let's call him Joe, became aware of the NHPA when he went to the Fair at the Fairgrounds in Tri-Valley. The horseshoe courts were on the fairgrounds, not in the present Tri-Valley Club Location. When Joe was at the Fair, they were holding an Invitational Horseshoe Tournament for the NHPA "A- Level" pitchers. Joe was amazed at how well the players pitched, and he decided he wanted to pitch in the NHPA.

Bill Brown was in charge of the club there at the fairgrounds and was very helpful and encouraging to Joe about becoming involved in horseshoe pitching with the NHPA. Joe lived in Martinez so he was about half-way between the Tri-Valley Club and the Vallejo Club. The Tri-Valley Club practiced from 1-5pm on Tuesdays so Joe couldn't make it to their practice because of work. The Vallejo Club practiced on Thursdays from 4pm to dark so that's where Joe became a member! Ben Yost and Vern Gosney, both NCHPA Hall of Fame members, were running the Vallejo Club at that time.

Joe Summers has been a Vallejo Club member and an NHPA member for 29 years. Ben Yost and Vern Gosney took Joe under their wings. Ben always told Joe that 98% of the people in the world were "takers," and 2% were "workers." It didn't take Ben long to see that Joe was a "worker." Ben was really fond of Joe and started calling Joe "Corporal." When someone asked Ben why he called Joe "Corporal," Ben said it was because "Joe does all the work around here." Someone else wanted to know why "Corporal," why not a higher rank? Ben said, "Just look at him, do you think he'll rise any higher in rank?" Ben and Vern taught Joe all there was to know about running the club, particularly about maintaining the clay and courts. Both had their own ideas about how to do things; Joe told me "In those days there was the right way, the wrong way, and Vern and Ben's Way, and they didn't agree all the time!" So, Joe was exposed to a lot of different ways to manage and deal with horseshoe club operation. When it came time for Ben Yost to step down, he passed the club onto Joe. Joe and Dave Lane have been doing a great job keeping the venerable Vallejo Club going in recent years.

Joe Summers has been one of the most colorful, memorable personalities to be involved in horseshoes in Northern California in the last three decades! Joe is loud, boisterous, out-spoken, opinionated, irreverent, and when you first meet him, he CAN be a little "off-putting," but it doesn't take long to see that he loves horseshoe pitching, has a great sense of humor, would do anything for you, and beneath the rough exterior has a "heart of gold." Joe's love for the sport goes beyond just the pitching of the shoes and making ringers; he loves all the give and take, the bragging, the put-downs that goes with the game. He loves to tease and give his fellow players the "business," but he also loves to get it back from them. In Joe's 30 years of horseshoe pitching, he's helped make a lot of good memories for pitchers, and there has been a lot of laughter heard and smiles seen by Joe's good-natured antics on the courts. Put Joe on a horseshoe court and he becomes "larger than life!"

Joe loves to create "Summers-isms," which are terms Joe coins to describe various horseshoe pitching situations. Years ago, when our tournaments were larger, there was an A Group, a B Group, all the way down to an F Group; today you seldom see a local tournament that has beyond a D Group. Well, the F Group was the beginning, low-percentage pitchers, and Joe started calling the F Group the "F Troop," after the 1960's Sitcom "F Troop," which was about a bumbling

group of US Calvary Men set in the 1860's. I first met Joe when he and I pitched in "F-Troop" back in the 1990's; Joe was the Loud one! And to this day Joe still refers to the low group in a tournament as "F Troop." Another "Summers-ism" is "right-it is". Most right-handed pitchers have a tendency to push the shoe to the right of the stake at times; when this problem strikes Joe he says he has a bad case of



“right-itis.” Certainly, Joe’s most famous “Summer-isms” have to do with score calls which originated in “F Troop.” As an example; when neither player throws a shoe close enough to be a point the F-Troop call is “Four Spread” which is, of course, a take-off on all four shoes on the stake, which is “Four Dead.” “Two dead-no score” becomes “two-hung none” in F-Troop. There’s a couple of others that are so “colorful” that they don’t belong in a Hall of Fame Presentation. The “Summers-isms” are just Joe enjoying the sport, trying to insert a little fun and laughter!

A good example of the way Joe enjoys the interaction between players that our sport provides is the “I Beat Joe” button. Several years ago, Joe’s friend Danny Thompson had buttons made up that said, “I Beat Joe” on them. The players in “F Troop” all felt that no matter how they pitched on a given day, if they beat Joe, it would be the highlight of their day. The buttons were even given out at the State and World Tournaments. All in good spirit, all in fun, it shows the affection that the other pitchers had for Joe! To this day Joe still has an “I Beat Joe” button on his horseshoe bag.

Joe has always thrown a low hard-driving shoe with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  turn. His favorite horseshoe has always been a Deadeye Clydesdale. Joe claims to have broken 19 Clydesdales! Joe is as strong as a bull so he throws a shoe with a lot of force. I can just hear Joe telling someone he breaks a lot of shoes because his shoe comes in so fast and hard on the stake, and I can also hear his pitching buddy telling him that he breaks a lot of shoes because no shoe can stand up to landing on the concrete all the time! I still laugh when I think of the time in Santa Rosa where Travis and Hayden told Joe that, “there’s not much white paint left to spray the stake, but don’t worry Joe, you won’t need any paint because you never hit the stake to knock the paint off!”

With Joe’s background in construction and concrete he has done a lot of work on horseshoe courts during his years in the NCHPA. He has built several home horseshoe courts for people, and he has a court he has installed in his back yard that is one of the nicest courts I have ever seen! He has a reputation for changing out broken stakes. Often when he jumps off of his motorcycle upon arriving at a tournament, the first thing he hears is that “there is a stake loose or broken on Court 5.” I’ve seen him gather a crew, then start making shovels, clay, and pry-bars fly, then extracting broken stakes and buckets filled with concrete out of the ground, then throwing the new bucket and stake into the ground, getting the correct height and angle on the new stake in what seems like an instant, then packing dirt around the bucket and replacing the clay, all in time to start the tournament right on time as though nothing had happened. Joe is legendary for emergency stake changes at the State Tournament. His ability to quickly and accurately change a stake is amazing. Joe runs the operation just like a NASCAR pit crew changes a set of tires. Many a State Tournament schedule has been saved by a Summers Stake Change! One year in Stockton Joe got word that the Cadet pitchers were going to have to pitch their 20 foot distance from the grass. Joe was out there in the mid-August Stockton heat removing sod, placing concrete forms and re-bar, dealing with a temperamental cement mixer, pouring and finishing concrete, and marking the 20-foot foul lines, all in one afternoon. There was a lot of hard work and sweat that day, but the Cadets pitched on concrete pads in the State Tournament! Joe’s work ethic is as big as his personality! In the last few years, when we’ve had the State Tournament in Stockton, Joe has been involved in hours of work in support of getting ready for the tournament. He has been involved in bringing new clay to the pits, cement work, stake replacement work, constructing scoreboards, hanging boards on the wall, and turning endless amounts of clay. So many people when asked to help on a project start in on an endless list of problems they see, and reasons they can’t do what needs to be done. Joe has a mental outlook and an attitude of just getting in there and doing what needs to be done. If the clay is too wet, Joe takes a Propane Torch to it. If work needs to be done around the horseshoe courts Joe will find a way to get that work done. The NCHPA has benefited greatly from Joe’s work ethic.

One time when Joe was at the World Tournament Jerry Smith was running a shift and was in desperate need of a Judge. Jerry knew Joe from his Northern California Days, and when he saw Joe, he knew that “all he would have to do is ask,” and sure enough Joe didn’t hesitate to put on the judge’s vest and judge the shift for Jerry. A Judging career started that saw Joe Judge many State and World Tournaments. I asked Joe if he took the Judging Seminar at the World Tournament, and as you might guess he answered, “Take it? I could give a Judging Seminar!” Always ready with the comeback.

Joe is always willing to take the time to teach new pitchers about turning clay and keeping score. He’s well known for advising the use of square shovels, because “pointed shovels are for planting roses.” He advises the use of a pen to keep score, because you “can’t erase the triplicate forms anyway,” and after lecturing the new scorekeeper on completely and exactly filling out the top part of the score sheet, he tells them if they can’t remember the day’s date to just put “today” in the space.

Joe Summers has served the NCHPA as an Officer and Board Member. From 2013-2017 Joe was the 1st Vice President. From 2017 to the present, Joe has served as the President of the NHPA. Joe’s term as President has been solid. We have enjoyed a time without meaningless controversy, nitpicking or horseshoe politics. Joe has been very supportive of the clubs; there are very few weekends where he has not attended tournaments on both Saturday and Sunday. He has put a lot of miles on that motorcycle.

Joe Summers has been an important and memorable figure in the NCHPA for the last nearly 30 years. He has put a tremendous amount of work into the Vallejo Club and into the NCHPA and to the betterment of horseshoe pitching in Northern California.

Joe has loved horseshoe pitching and has worked hard to support his fellow pitchers. He is well deserving of a place in the NCHPA Hall of Fame. Joe will join Vallejo Club members Vern Gosney, Marion Hawley, Ben Yost, and Kim Stockli as members of the Hall of Fame. Ben Yost would be PROUD and HAPPY for the “Corporal.”

It is my honor to present JOE SUMMERS of the Vallejo Club as a member in the PROMOTER /ORGANIZER CATEGORY of the NCHPA Hall of Fame Class of 2022 Congratulations JOE

# NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HORSESHOE PITCHER'S HALL OF FAME GUIDELINES

## **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Northern California Horseshoe Pitcher's Association (NCHPA) Hall of Fame is to recognize deserving members who have made significant contributions to the sport of horseshoe pitching at the state level.

## **Mission Statement:**

To seek out worthy people who have set aside years of their personal time to build, organize, promote, fund, and better the sport of horseshoe pitching within the Charter of Northern California whether through their pitching abilities, organizational skills, or promotional efforts.

## **Committee: \***

A Hall of Fame Committee shall consist of a committee chairperson along with four other adults chosen by the chairperson and approved by the Executive Board who are active members of the NCHPA in good standing with a minimum of ten years of membership in the NCHPA. The committee chairperson is appointed by the NCHPA Executive Board. The committee chairperson and committee members shall be appointed to terms of three years. There is no limit to the number of terms the committee chairperson or the committee members may serve.

## **Committee Chairperson and Committee Duties:**

The committee and the chairperson shall have the following responsibilities:

- 1) To appoint an additional 4 members of the committee,
- 2) To communicate candidate information in a timely manner,
- 3) To coordinate any discussions
- 4) To distribute the ballots for voting on nominees,
- 5) To collect and count the ballots and communicate the results to the committee,
- 6) To assume leadership in the preparation of any awards and/or certificates and perform the induction into the Hall of Fame,
- 7) To ensure all recognitions are conducted in a fair and impartial manner,
- 8) To solicit each club in the charter for their prospective candidates,
- 9) To submit the NCHPA HoF nomination form for publication to the Charter's newsletter editor for the 2nd and 3rd issue of a particular year, and to,
- 10) Obtain additional information from the person submitting a name for clarification and enhancing the nominees qualifications.
- 11) To select qualified candidates for the Hall of Fame on an annual basis.

## **Hall of Fame Nominations:**

**Membership:** Anyone may nominate another person by completing a nomination form, which is available upon request from the committee chairperson. The nominee must have been a member in good standing of the NCHPA for a minimum of 10 years. His/her attitude and initiative should uphold and enhance the image of the NCHPA.

### **Hall of Fame Categories:**

**Player** – Anyone who has won multiple State Championship titles while pitching in the Men's, Women's, or Elder's Championship Divisions while displaying good sportsmanship and bringing prestige to the sport.

**Player/Organizer** – Anyone who has won a minimum of one State Championship title while pitching in the Men's, Women's, or Elder's Championship Divisions and has become a worthy and respected Tournament Director, Promoter, Organizer, or Officer at the state level.

**Promoter/Organizer** – Anyone who through his or her devotion to the sport has made a significant contribution through time and effort to the advancement of the sport of Horseshoe Pitching in an administrative capacity such as Promoter or Organizer of events or as an Officer at the state level.

All nominees MUST meet the criteria listed above in the Membership category and also the criteria requirements in a Hall of Fame category.

### **Soliciting Nominations:**

Each spring issue of the state newsletter will have an announcement of the Hall of Fame nomination process inviting nominations through the use of the nomination form.

### **Frequency of Inductions into the Hall of Fame:**

Inductions of qualified members into the Hall of Fame shall occur at least annually, with frequency at the discretion of the committee chairperson.

### **Voting Procedures are as Follows:**

Each completed nomination form is to be sent to the committee chairperson as soon as possible. Once received by the chairperson, he/she will distribute the nomination information by way of email to the other committee members for review, discussion, and a vote.

Each committee member has a total of 15 points they can use for voting on a 5-4-3-2-1 basis, with a "5" indicating the strongest candidate. No candidate can receive more than 5 points from a single committee member. One's first choice does not have to be a "5" if the nominee is not a strong candidate. The highest score a candidate can receive is 5 points from each committee member for a total value of 25 points. Then we take 51% of the 25 points. Thus, it will take a minimum of 13 points for the candidate to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. In the event of one individual not receiving enough point a re-vote will occur until a member receives the minimum votes. It is possible to induct 2 (two) candidates a year into the Hall of Fame, though under special circumstances more than two may be inducted during one year. The Hall of Fame committee will attempt to induct a minimum of one person regardless of the category, into the Hall of Fame every year at the Charters' annual meeting.

\* This committee is not implemented yet, but the NCHPA Executive Council hopes to have this committee in place by mid 2023. In the meantime the Executive Council has assumed the duties of the HoF committee.

# Northern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association **Hall of Fame**

## Nomination form

Any member in good standing may nominate any NCHPA member for consideration to be inducted into the NCHPA Hall of Fame. Nominees must have ten years of consecutive membership and may be nominated as a Pitcher or Promoter.

This form must accompany any and all supporting documentation concerning your nomination. Tell us all you can about the person that you are nominating so as to assist the selection committee in considering your nomination for induction. You may use the back of this page and/or include as many additional pages as needed for you to justify why your nominated person should qualify for induction. All submitted documentation must be type written to be considered. Provide copies as materials will not be returned.

**Return form:** Joe Summers 231 Escondido Dr. Martinez, CA 94553 (925) 260-0915 [40ftforever@gmail.com](mailto:40ftforever@gmail.com) **By 8/13/23**

Nominee Name:		# of yrs. member (min 10):	
Address:		City:	Zip:
Phone:	Email:	Nominated By:	
Nominated as a Pitcher or Promoter:			

### Highlights of Pitching Career

Tournaments Won	Where	Date	Average

### NCHPA or Club Offices Held

Office Held	Where	Date

**Provide example of promotional efforts, write them up, use the examples in News & Views issue 26-1, it can be found on the website. [www.nchpa.com](http://www.nchpa.com)**



Intentional blank page..... for your candidates achievements.

# 2023 California State Championships

**Sponsor: Northern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association (NCHPA)**

**Host Club: Stockton Horseshoe Club**

**Sept. 2-3, 2023**

**Louis Park 3121 Monte Diablo Ave**

**Stockton, California**

## 2023 State Championships Entry Form

NHPA #: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ CA ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

How do you want your pitching schedule sent? Please circle one: E-Mail US Postal Service

**Select Your Entry Division (circle one)**

Open Men (40ft)    Sr. Men (60+)(40ft)    Elders or Med Exempt (30ft)    Open Women    Sr. Women (60+)  
Jr. Boys    Jr. Girls    Cadets (20ft)

**PARTICIPANTS LIABILITY RELEASE:** In consideration of participating in such activity, I hereby, waive, release and forever discharge the Northern CA Horseshoe Pitchers Association, all officers, employees, agents and servants of the afore stated organization, and all fellow participants of this event, for any and all action, cause of action, damage, loss or injury, which I may suffer as a consequence of participating in the California State Horseshoe Pitching Tournament. In addition, it is understood that the NCHPA has sole rights to any and all pictures and/or articles for publication.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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(Keep this section for future reference – Calif. State Championships, Stockton, 9/2-3, 2023)

Adult entrants **MUST** have participated in at least 3 sanctioned California tournaments during the 12 months prior to the below entry deadline date; for junior entrants, at least 1 sanctioned California tournament.

For a division with less than six entries, the tournament committee reserves the right to combine the division with another division with the same pitching distance.

Entrants must wear shirts with their name professionally printed on the back; do not rely on purchased shirts at the tournament because the vendor cannot guarantee timely deliveries.

Entry fee is **\$40.00** for adults. No refunds after the entry deadline date. Adult and Junior prize money based on entry fees & any sponsor funds received.

**Entry deadline** date (or post mark date): **1 August 2023** (Late entries require an additional **\$10** entry fee and will be used on a standby basis only.)

Make checks payable to: **NCHPA**

Send entries to: Gail Sluys (707-538-3128 or 707-486-0594 nchpagail@gmail.com)  
1721 San Ramon Wy  
Santa Rosa CA 95409

If you must drop out, please immediately **notify** Gail Sluys (707-538-3128 nchpagail@gmail.com).

# 2023 CALIFORNIA STATE HORSESHOE PITCHING CHAMPIONSHIPS



## Awards Sponsorship Form

### *Northern California*

### Horseshoe Pitcher's Association



The Northern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association (NCHPA) will host the 2023 California State Horseshoe Pitching Championships tournament in Stockton, CA Louis Park 3121 Monte Diablo Ave Stockton; over the Labor Day weekend Saturday Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> & Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023. Please consider sponsoring an award for this prestigious event! Both plaques and cash are awarded to the winners of 20-30 groups of players from throughout the state. This tournament establishes California State Champions for both men and women of all ages plus boys and girls under 19 years old. If you wish to sponsor a first or second place plaque award, each plaque costs about \$50. If we receive your plaque sponsorship by August 15<sup>th</sup>, the award plaque will reflect your support, and if you have a specific group you wish to sponsor please let us know, we will do our best to accommodate your request based on first come – first served.

Sponsor's Name (business, club, or person): \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's phone and/or E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Division/Class requested \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount: \$50.00 (make check payable to **NCHPA**)

Please send this completed form with your check to the NCHPA awards coordinator:

Gail Sluys  
1721 San Ramon Wy  
Santa Rosa CA 95409



# NCHPA CHAMPIONSHIPS

## ENTRY FORM

September 30, 2023



HOST CLUB – Vallejo Horseshoe Cub

**PRE-REGISTER - \$ PRIZE MONEY & PLAQUES**

**ENTRY DEADLINE POSTMARKED September 17, 2022**

***Takes just one sanctioned event to enter!***

***Participants must have pitched in (1) NHPA sanctioned tournaments before September 11, 2023. New members who joined after August 1, 2023 and Junior/ Cadet Entrants need a minimum of one (1) NHPA sanctioned tournament before September 17, 2023.***

TOURNAMENT is open to all NHPA Members with Natstats Average  
ENTRY FEE \$20.00 per pitcher

Mail Entries to: Gail Sluys, 1721 San Ramon Way, Santa Rosa, CA. 95409

**NO EXCEPTIONS TO NUMBER OF TOURNAMENTS WILL BE MADE.**

**NO REFUNDS AFTER SCHEDULE IS COMPLETED.**

-----CUT HERE----- CUT HERE-----

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

NHPA Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the Group you are entering.

OPEN MEN

OPEN WOMEN

ELDERS MEN

JUNIOR GIRL/BOY

CADET 12 & UNDER

SR.MEN

SR.WOMEN

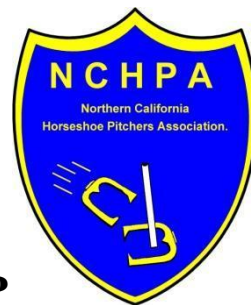
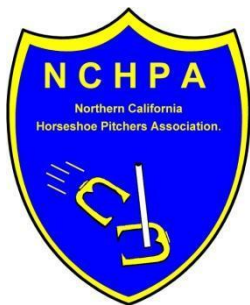
**\*SENIOR GROUPS NOT HAVING A MINIMUM OF 6 PLAYERS WILL BE MIXED WITH OPEN CLASSES.**

ENTRY FEE

\$20.00

\$ \_\_\_\_\_





## 2023 NCHPA DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP

Held in conjunction with the NCHPA Championships at the Vallejo Horseshoe Courts

**Entry Fee \$50.00 per team. Team Cap = 110% closing date September 17<sup>th</sup>.  
The 2023 NCHPA Doubles Championship Tournament will be held at the  
Vallejo Horseshoe Club on October 1, 2023.**

Pick your partner from any NCHPA, SCHPA, NEVADA Member. Send \$50.00 per team plus completed entry form in by September 17th. Each team will pay the scorekeeper \$2.00 per game (\$1.00 per player). The cap on a team is 110% combined. (Example player A is 65% player B cannot be more 45%) These are Championships – No Handicapping. Groups will be formed based on the number of entries, with a minimum of two (2) groups. Prize money and awards in each group will depend on number of entries.

Send entry form and entry fee to Gail Sluys 1721 San Ramon Way Santa Rosa CA 95409. Phone 707-538-3128.

More information to follow as the tournament nears. **This tournament is subject to move, location and date, depending on the amount of entrants we receive for the NCHPA Championships.**

Player A \_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_ Charter \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Player B \_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_ Charter \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



Bob Dunn, the late NHPA Historian wrote a book entitled Horseshoe Pitching Tournaments to Be Remembered, which was about premiere long running horseshoe tournaments of the NHPA. The book has a nice section on the Valley of the Sun Tournament, which Dunn described as, “one of the most prestigious tournaments on record, one of the largest tournaments and one of the longest running tournaments; therefore named as one of the all-time Top Six events.” He went on to say, “There are few tournaments played on courts lined with palm trees and for players living in the northern states and Canada attending a tournament held in February and still being played outdoors; that is special.” Dunn wrote, “For many years one of the treats of attending the Valley of the Sun Tournament in the 1980’s was to witness on the sidelines, Frank Stinson, a National Hall of Fame horseshoe pitcher sitting alongside Carl Hubbell, known as the “Meal Ticket,” one of the all-time great pitchers of baseball and a member of Baseball’s Hall of Fame and the two chatting and taking in the games. Stinson was a snowbird from Minnesota, Hubbell was now retired and living in Mesa and the two enjoyed getting together each year to take in the great tournament.”

I will use Bob Dunn’s great writings on the tournament, and look at the history of the event through the perspective of California Pitchers. Hopefully, I’ll provide some interesting reading for Northern California horseshoe pitchers, and give them a little warm and sunny “Arizona Dreaming” to brighten-up their likely cold, overcast, rainy, ringer-less day in Norcal.

California horseshoe pitchers have played a significant role in the history of the Valley of the Sun tournament including last year’s 2022 edition. Top California pitchers Bobby Bartell and Dave Lane finished 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Men’s Championship, and top California women, Sandra Johnson, and Diane Luiz finished 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> in their Championship Division. Non-stepping flip pitcher Jacob Fimbres of Arizona, and Washington’s Cindy Clausen were the tournament winners.

The Valley of the Sun Tournament started in 1958, some 65 years ago. A writer in a horseshoe publication wrote of that first “VOS” Tournament, “Sub-zero temperatures, snow and ice were plaguing many sections of the nation on February 15 and 16; but in Mesa, Arizona, natives, winter visitors, and six ringer artists from neighboring California, invaded Rendezvous Park [the original tournament site near the current Mesa Convention Center] and pitched horseshoes under sunny skies and 80-degree temperatures. The best horseshoe tournament held in Arizona in years thrilled a crowd of spectators as they witnessed some close, exciting and well-pitched games.” The winner of the inaugural event was Arthur Kamman of Arizona who had just won his first State Championship the year before in 1957. The 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher was Arizona pitcher Stanley DeLeary who had preceded Kamman as the State Champion from 1949 to 1956. Interestingly DeLeary (10-time Arizona Champ) would take the State Crown back from Kamman in 1958 and 1959, but then Kamman would go on to win a total of 18 Arizona Titles the last in 1979. The early years of Arizona horseshoe pitching were dominated by three pitchers. James O. Lecky won 22 Arizona Championships in the years 1927 to 1948 leading up to aforementioned DeLeary and Kamman eras. The final standings of the first VOS tournament:

VALLEY OF THE SUN OPEN TOURNAMENT					
FEBRUARY 15-16, MESA, ARIZONA					
	Won	Lost	R	S.P.	Pet.
Arthur Kamman, Mesa, Arizona .....	14	1	573	902	63.5
Stan DeLeary, Phoenix, Arizona .....	13	2	594	836	71.0
Homer Moefield, Long Beach, California....	13	2	551	804	68.5
Russ Shaffer, Phoenix, Arizona .....	12	3	490	737	66.4
Jim Weeks, Norwalk, California .....	12	3	541	819	66.0
Roy Hearn, Ontario, California .....	9	6	463	872	53.0
Elmer Beller, Bellflower, California .....	7	8	433	824	52.5
Waldo Hagy, Long Beach, California .....	7	8	443	874	50.6
Archie Martin, Vinton, Iowa .....	7	8	400	826	48.5
Charley Carson, Mesa, Arizona .....	7	8	347	768	45.0
Tony Cederburg, North Dakota .....	5	10	404	828	48.7
Gifford Thompson, Tempe, Arizona .....	5	10	410	840	48.8
Alfred Teigland, Mesa, Arizona .....	4	11	354	798	44.5
Charley Palm, Albin, Wyoming .....	4	11	336	820	40.9
Walter Stearns, Mesa, Arizona .....	1	14	250	744	33.6

As mentioned, 6 California pitchers participated in the event. Homer Moefield of Long Beach, CA finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, however Moefield gave winner Kamman his only loss of the tournament, and Homer pitched the high game of the tournament, 93.2%. Elmer Beller the NHPA Secretary was in 7<sup>th</sup> place. On a nostalgic note, a potluck chicken dinner was served in the park clubhouse served by the wives of the Arizona players with the California

player and wives as guests. Likely, today the wives would be pitching in the tournament, and the group would go for Pizza after the tournament.

A California pitcher won the Valley of the Sun in the second tournament in 1959. Jim Weeks of Norwalk, CA won the event going undefeated with a 73.5%. “Genial Jim” was the long-time Secretary of the Southern California Charter, and would go on that coming Labor Day to win the California State Men’s Championship. Arizonians DeLeary and Kamman finished 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The tournament was well attended with pitchers from 9 States represented.

Jim Weeks would win again in 1960, winning \$50 and a trophy. Kamman was 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In 1961 Ira Allen (Ted Allen’s brother) playing out of Fresno, CA was the VOS champ. Kansas NHPA Hall of Famer Marines Tamboer (love that name) was 2<sup>nd</sup>. Weeks was 3<sup>rd</sup>. Jerry Schneider, eventual many-time California Champ made his first VOS appearance in 4<sup>th</sup> place. The tournament was won when Allen, “had an almost impossible-looking shoe leaning on the peg...with his second shoe he pulled it on for a double [and the game win over Tamboer]” The members and their wives put out a nice dinner on Saturday when they cooked up a ten-gallon combination of chili and beans and mulligan stew.

Homer Moefield of Long Beach, CA won the 1962 event, and won again in 1964

In 1965 Marines Tamboer won with horseshoe immortal Ted Allen finishing 2<sup>nd</sup>. Tamboer must have loved getting out of Kansas for the Arizona sunshine because he would win 5 Valley of the Sun tournaments over the years. Look at the picture on the next page of Marines Tamboer. This is a picture I always liked. Doesn’t he look like a tough old raw-boned Kansas Prairie Farmer? How would you like to have to “out mentally-tough” an old pitcher like that? “Pop” Tamboer was an 11-time Kansas State Men’s Champion and represented Kansas in the World Tournament Championship Class 15 times, including a third-place finish in 1951 and fourth place in 1952. Marines was amazing in his ability to pitch at a high level, using either a 1¼ turn or a 1¾ turn depending on how he felt on that particular day. If he was struggling throwing one way, he would just switch his turn.



### **Marines “Pop” Tamboer**

Jerry Schneider from Southern California won his first VOS in 1969 followed by another one in 1973. Jerry would win 5 California State Championships and be inducted into the NHPA Hall of Fame in 2000.

John Walker of Chula Vista, California won the 1975 Valley of the Sun. “Big John,” as Fred Lavett used to call him, was a 4-time California State Champion including this year 1975.

The 1976 Valley of the Sun was won by all-time great Jesse Gonzalez of Los Osos, CA. Jesse, 2-time California Champ and NHPA Hall of Fame Member, was 10-1 with his only loss to 14-year old Ken Fraser who was at the time a young California rising star who would move to New York. Ken as of today carries a 64% average and is the reigning New York State Champion.

The 1977 tournament cost \$5 to enter, and was held for the first time in the present location of Pioneer Park in Mesa. The 1977 tournament had 114 pitchers, the largest at that time. The 1977 Champion was Walter Ray Williams, Jr., then just 17 years old and the defending California State Champion. Bob Dunn called Walter Ray, "one of the biggest names ever in our sport, and also the greatest professional bowler." Walter Ray won 5 Valley of the Sun Titles, the most along with Marines Tamboer and Art Kamman. Walter Ray, however, won his 5 *in a row*.

The 1978 tournament saw an appearance by Carl Steinfeldt, the New York NHPA Hall of Famer, and 1976 World Champ. Carl finished 2<sup>nd</sup> place to Walter Ray.

The big news in 1979 was the addition of a Women's Division. Walter Ray won his third straight VOS Title with his younger brother Jeff Williams finishing in 2<sup>nd</sup> place. The tournament had 166 pitchers, 149 men and 17 women. Sigrid Jones of Oregon with 41.7% was the first Women's VOS Champion.

The 1980 Valley of the Sun was RAINED OUT! As I write this on a rainy January Day in Lodi, a rainout at this year's tournament would be just UNTHINKABLE! Pray for NO RAIN at the 2023 Valley of the Sun! It's the Valley of the Sun, not the Valley of the Rain after all! What are you gonna' do?

In 1981 Deadeye won again with California Women's Champ Yvonne Mauzey taking the Women's Crown at 56.6%.

In 1982 Walter Ray was Men's Champ and Dorothy McAllister, also of California won the Women's Division.

California great Don Titcomb, the 1960 NHPA World Champion won the 1983 Valley of the Sun. Don had to beat Jesse Gonzalez in a playoff for the win. This was the Silver Anniversary of the tournament and had 200 participating pitchers.

Jesse Gonzalez won the 1984 tournament, his second VOS.

The 1985 tournament was the largest to that time with 228 pitchers. The California news was Yvonne Mauzey's second win in the VOS.

In 1986 Diane Lopez of Lompoc, CA set the Women's record for ringer percentage with 82.7% in winning the Women's Group at the Valley of the Sun. Diane was the NHPA Women's World Champion in 1988 at the Pleasanton World Tournament, and was a multiple-time California Women's Champion.

In 1989, Californian Myrna Missick took the Women's Group with 72.1%

1990 saw a California "clean sweep." The Men's Champion was our newly inducted NCHPA Hall of Famer Nathan Williams with 73.5%, the Women's Champ was Carol Webb, and Joe Zogman was the 30-foot Champion. Nathan won again in 1993. Now Nathan was actually living in Arizona during these years, but he is a California native so I'm counting him as a Californian! Nathan to say the least pitches well in Arizona...he was the Arizona Men's State Champion for 6 years in a row, from 1989 to 1994!

Steve Wyrill, the tall left-hander from San Diego County won the 1991 and 1995 VOS Men's Championship.

The years 1995 through the present have been a "dry spell" for California pitchers at the Valley of the Sun Tournament. It seems like in the last few years the top California pitchers have not made the trip to Mesa to compete, or have been beaten if they've gone! It is time for a resurgence of interest on the part of California pitchers in the historic Valley of the Sun Tournament! Of this year's 123 entries there is a total of 8 California (North and South) pitchers! One of the 3 Southern California pitchers lives in Havasu Lake, and does all his pitching in Arizona anyway!

We have 5 pitchers from Northern California competing in Mesa this year. Steven and Gary Nakamoto are representing San Jose. Paul Machado will represent Sonoma County Club, Dave Lane will represent the Vallejo Club, and I myself will carry the Stockton Club colors into battle. Dave Lane is in the top 40-foot Men's Group going against the likes of Don Davis from Washington, Jacob Fimbres of Arizona (the defending Champ,) Gary Oper from Idaho, and NHPA Officer Josh Olson. Dave, we're depending on you! There is a "Mixed" sort of "Super Group" including national pitching stars Maxine Griffith, Marlene Ray, and Matt Fuller which is a Group of 6 also including Tom Routh of Texas, Jim Bilderback of Wisconsin, and Mike Massari of Arizona. The "Champion" of the tournament may be considered to come out of that mixed group, since they are certainly the high percentage pitchers in the tournament. A 30-foot pitcher may be the Valley of the Sun Champion, interesting! There are no California women in the tournament this year!

Earlier in my article I mentioned an Arizona Pitcher who dominated the early era of state's horseshoe pitching by winning 22 State Championships in a row, **James O. Lecky**. Recently I saw a post on Facebook about James Lecky. It was posted by Ken Fraser, the same guy I wrote about that as a 14-year-old gave Jesse

Gonzalez his only loss in the 1976 Valley of the Sun Tournament. He posted a video from the old “You Asked For It” television show that aired from 1950 to 1959. The show was hosted by Jack Smith who only hosted it for 20 months in 1958 and 1959. So the film must have been broadcasted at that time. It is very good quality video and it is some great footage of James Lecky doing some “trick pitching.” If you haven’t seen it be sure to give it a look at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v\\_6l dn8spZU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_6l dn8spZU)

Lecky is throwing a nice 1 ¼ turn with the old-style Gordon Spin-on horseshoes of the 1950’s vintage. What is notable is his stepping forward with his right foot, which by norms is the “wrong” way to do it. My old friends in San Diego used to talk about “goofy foot” surfers who surfed with their “wrong” foot forward. Lecky is therefore a “goofy foot” horseshoe pitcher, but there is certainly nothing goofy about his putting the shoe around the peg time after time. Remarkable! I’ve always enjoyed reading *Science At the Stake*, an old book on horseshoe pitching that is available on the NHPA website to view. In the book, the author Roy W. Smith addresses pitching with the “wrong foot” forward and specifically references James Lecky! Smith writes, “Some rather good right-handed pitchers step to the foul line with their right foot but very few experts are developed using this form. As a rule, this method of footwork throws the body into a contortion at the peak of release. By affecting the nerves in the pelvic region, it works a physical hardship on the player and gradually deprives him of the endurance required for prolonged tournament play. In addition, this poor method of footwork creates the danger of fouling the shoe against the leg and often prevents a straight swing to the stake because it tends to twist the body to one side. This makes the task of aligning the shoe more difficult. It also causes the player to pitch with a lunging motion instead of the easy swing that is so essential. A close study of this form of footwork, before a full length mirror, will disclose its faults. A player using this poor form should, if possible, change over and work from the foot opposite his delivery arm. This way he can secure a longer swing and greatly decrease the effort in delivering. With but few exceptions, all the champions have developed a perfect coordination of the right arm and left leg, or vice versa, which enables them to get their shoes over in a smooth rhythmic manner. Frank Jackson, many times a world's champion, stands with his left foot forward and takes no step at all. **James Lecky, former Arizona champion and one of the best, pitched right-handed and stepped with his right foot forward.** However, this was due to an injury of his left leg and was not his natural style.”

In one of NHPA Historian Bob Dunn’s other books, **The Shoe** he writes about Gordon Horseshoes. “John Gordon designed his first shoe in 1931 and his innovation was the first inverted or concave ring breaker, hence the first “Spin On.” In the “You Asked For It” video Lecky is clearly using the old Gordon shoes which were much unchanged from the late 1930’s well into the 1950’s.



### **The 1958 Gordon Spin On**

Currently the Omega Horseshoe Company is marketing Gordon Horseshoes. The shoe that is styled after the 1958 Gordon (pictured above) is now called the “Legend”, and the shoe they call the “Spin On” is the Gordon shoe that Jesse Gonzalez pitches with no ringer breaker which at one time before all the specialty flip shoes like the “Snyder EZ Flips” was the go-to flip shoe. The current Gordon Spin Ons no longer have the inverted ringer breaker which gave them their name in the first place!

Dunn wrote, “The first name pitcher to endorse the Gordon shoe in an ad was Jimmie Lecky, Arizona State Champion.” Ted Allen also endorsed Gordon Horseshoes before he started making Ted Allen Horseshoes in 1937. Jimmy Risk also endorsed Gordons. An Ad from **The Shoe** shows Lecky in a Gordon advertisement in 1932. I like the horseshoe pitching uniform! Can you see Birmingham, Nathan, Bobby, or Dave Lane in one of those cute shirts and a bow-tie get-ups. It might just catch on. I’ll suggest it to Rick.



The Perfectly  
Balanced Horse Shoe

**GORDON**  
"SPIN-ON"  
**HORSE SHOES**

"There Is One Best  
In Everything"

**WHEN RECORDS ARE MADE  
Gordon "Spin-On" Shoes Are Used**

Pitching 101 ringers, 46 of them doubles, out of 118 shoes thrown was the record set by Jimmie Lecky, champion of Arizona, with Gordon "Spin-On" shoes in Los Angeles last summer. His opponent in this match, Fernando Isais, champion of California and Mexico, also a user of Gordon shoes, scored 97 ringers and 39 doubles for a percentage of 82.2%. Lecky's ringer percentage was 85.5%.

Lecky holds the following records: 100 shoes pitched, 94 ringers, 288 points; 50 shoes pitched, 49 ringers, 148 points.

50 Consecutive Ringers, October 27, 1931

**WE ARE RECEIVING THOUSANDS OF TESTIMONIALS FROM PITCHERS EVERYWHERE, ENDORSING THE "SPIN-ON" SHOE.**

When we began manufacturing pitching shoes, we decided that we would make improvements whenever we were convinced that an improvement could be made, regardless of cost. We are now offering to the pitchers of the United States and Canada, the finest pitching shoe we have ever made.

Because of the growing demand for the Gordon "Spin-On" shoes throughout the eastern section of the United States, we have made arrangements for the manufacture and distribution of our shoes from Cincinnati, for that territory, and will be ready to ship from Cincinnati after April first.

The western division of the United States will be supplied from Los Angeles, as heretofore.

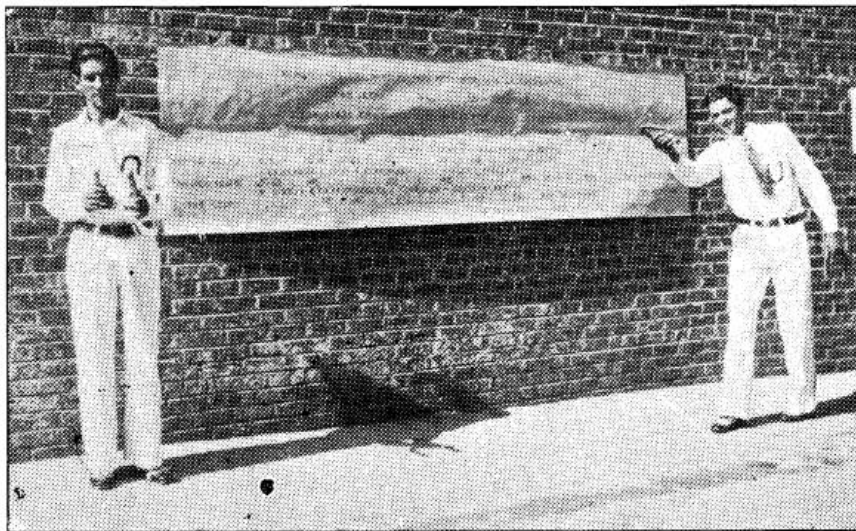
WRITE FOR OUR FOLDER GIVING OFFICIAL RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS IN CONSTRUCTING COURTS.

**GORDON Horseshoe Co.**  
Los Angeles, California  
8524 Compton Ave.

**Jimmie Lecky**  
A gentleman on and off the courts, holder of all pitching records, demonstrating his famous One-and-a-Quarter grip.

Here is an article from the Horseshoe World featuring Jimmy and the legendary Fernando Isais.

## THEY PITCH "WICKED" GAME



Fernando Isais, left, champion of Mexico, Los Angeles and Los Angeles County, California, and Jimmy Lecky, right, Arizona state champ, holding huge scoresheet of what is reputed to be the world's greatest game. The figures probably cannot be seen in this reproduction, but the score was: Lecky—50 points, 101 ringers, 46 doubles; Isais, 42 points, 97 ringers and 39 doubles. Lecky threw 101 ringers out of 118 tries in the match to set a new world's record.

The following is an article that calls Jimmy a "Pitching Fool" and describes more fully his record breaking performance in Los Angeles against the great Fernando. It is from November of 1931.



SETS NEW RECORD

Los Angeles, July 17—Jimmie Lecky, of Glendale, Ariz., has been dubbed the "Pitching Fool," by horseshoe enthusiasts who have watched him trim the best on the coast and incidentally set a new world's record in tournament play. His latest accomplishment was to defeat the California state champion 11 straight games.

Lecky, who began hurling horseshoes in Arizona and annexed the Arizona state title in a tournament conducted under the auspices of the Arizona Republic, set the world record in a match with Fernando Isais, champion of Mexico, Los Angeles and Los Angeles county, July 14.

In scoring 50 points against Isais' 42 he threw 101 ringers and 46 times he rang the post with both shoes. Isais threw 97 ringers and had 39 double ringers. During the match the two men hung all four shoes on the posts 31 times. Lecky threw 101 ringers out of 118 tries in the match to set the new world mark.

When Lecky defeated the California state champion he annexed the South Pacific states title. In the 11 games he had a ringer average of 78.4 per cent.

Lecky also established another record for the Los Angeles courts in an exhibition throwing 47 ringers out of 50 shoes.

Much interest is being centered here in another match between Isais and Lecky which is scheduled for tomorrow night. The two will clash in a five-game match on the courts in South Park.

Lecky has trimmed about everything the coast has to offer and has declared himself ready to meet the world's champion or any of the ex-champs.

Jimmy, in addition to his 22 Arizona Titles, pitched in two World Tournaments in 1933 and 1934.

The 1933 World Tournament was held in Chicago where the 1933 World's Fair was held. The horseshoe pitching took place in Soldier Field, home of the Chicago Bears. This was the first World Tournament where 100-shoe Qualifying was used to determine the 24-man field. Jimmy Lecky qualified with a 74%. John Gordon the shoe designer failed to qualify! Guy H. Marshbanks became the first black man to enter the World Tournament, but he failed to qualify. This was Ted Allen's first World Championship of his eventual 10, he was 24 years old. Jimmy finished a very respectable 6<sup>th</sup> place at 16-7 and 66.2%. All five men that finished ahead of Jimmy are in the NHPA Hall of Fame. Second was C.C. Davis, 5-time World Champion, 3<sup>rd</sup> was Fernando Isais, 8-time World Champion, 3<sup>rd</sup> was Indiana superstar Jimmy Risk, and 4<sup>th</sup> was Blair Nunamaker, the defending World Champion!

Ted Allen won his second World Championship in the 1934 World Tournament that was played on Goodyear Athletic Field in Los Angeles. Jimmy Lecky would finish in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, runnerup to the great Ted Allen! Jimmy finished ahead of Fernando Isais who finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, Frank Jackson, the "grand old man" of horseshoes who won the first World Championship ever held in 1909, and is said to have won the World Title

13 times, Dean Brown NHPA Hall of Famer and California Champion 4-times, and Guy Zimmerman 1954 World Champion and 10-time California Champ! The real excitement at the 1934 Tournament started when the tournament ended. John Gordon, the designer of the Gordon shoe was the individual that sponsored the tournament. When the tournament was over the players were waiting around to get their share of the promised \$1,600 purse. John Gordon confessed that gate receipts were only \$319 and tournament expenses were \$400, and there was no money to pay the players! The players of course were mad, but became outraged when Gordon suggested they split the \$319 on a percentage basis. Police in two squad cars had to be called to quite the near riotous crowd. Ted Allen took Gordon to court. The Judge ruled in Allen's favor, but also ruled that Gordon didn't have the means to pay! There never has been a lot of money in horseshoes.

For some reason Jimmy Lecky never competed in the World Tournament again. He was on a trajectory to seriously compete for the World Title, but we'll just never know what could have been.



Here is Lecky as he appeared on the "You Asked For It" tv show in 1958 or 1959. "Jimmy" was born in Apple Creek Ohio in 1911. In 1912 the family moved to Chandler, Arizona where they had an ostrich farm. Jimmy would have been just 16 years old when he won his first Arizona State Championship in 1927, and was 37 when he won his last in 1948. Lecky would have been about 48 years old at the time of his appearance on the tv show. In 1948 James began a 4-year stint as a Maricopa County Supervisor, and after that had a career as a Real Estate Broker. Jimmy coached softball for Phoenix Park and Recreation, and he pitched horseshoes for benefits and charity groups probably doing the very act that we saw him perform on the Youtube clip. 8 or 9 years after he appeared on "You Asked For It," Lecky died of a heart attack in 1967, at the age of 56. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Phoenix. When I'm in town for the horseshoe tournament, I may have to put a flower and a golden horseshoe on his grave out of respect. It seems that Lecky's horseshoe pitching career was over when the Valley of the Sun Tournament started in 1958, but I can't imagine that at some point he wouldn't have been there as a spectator.

I hope you have enjoyed my look at the Valley of the Sun Tournament, and at the interesting pitching career and life of James O. Lecky (the "O" middle name might just stand for the "live ringer" mark on the scorecard, but it actually stands for Oscar.) See you on the courts! **George Davis, NCHPA 1<sup>st</sup> VP**

# RULES

## Where do I stand after delivering my shoes?

### Section D - *Position of Contestants During Delivery*

When not pitching, any contestant shall stand quietly and stationary, at least two (2) feet behind their opponent, on their court's opposite pitching platform, or behind any pitcher on an adjacent platform.

### Section E - *Crossing Over*

If both contestants use the same pitching platform to deliver their shoes, the contestant pitching first should cross over (in front of the pit) to the other pitching platform and then move back to the position described in Section D, above. As the first contestant is crossing over in front, the second contestant should be crossing over and onto the same pitching platform, from the rear. If the contestants use opposite pitching platforms, the contestant 12 who pitches first should step directly back, to the position described in Section D, above.

[www.nchpa.com](http://www.nchpa.com)

#### **President**

Joe Summers  
231 Escondido Drive  
Martinez, CA 94553  
(925) 260-0915  
[40ftforever@gmail.com](mailto:40ftforever@gmail.com)

#### **1<sup>st</sup> VP (New Member Welcome Packages)**

George Davis  
1435 W. Vine St.  
Lodi, CA 95242-3861  
(209) 310-4176  
[guydavis@comcast.net](mailto:guydavis@comcast.net)

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> VP (Club Welfare, Website)**

Jasmine Brady  
3637 Sonoma Ave. Apt 120  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
707-483-0070  
[jasminebrady7@gmail.com](mailto:jasminebrady7@gmail.com)

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> VP (Statistician)**

Mike Anderson  
1614 Longspur Ave.  
Sunnyvale, CA 94087  
(408) 738-4661  
[meanderson99@yahoo.com](mailto:meanderson99@yahoo.com)

#### **4<sup>th</sup> VP (Bylaws)**

Jeff Williams  
743 Violet Lane  
Lincoln, CA 95648  
(530) 786-1646  
[ringerjeff@outlook.com](mailto:ringerjeff@outlook.com)

#### **5<sup>th</sup> VP (Paper Supplies)**

Dave Lane  
500 Poppy Circle  
Benicia, CA 94510-3714  
(707) 208-4649  
[movingdave@yahoo.com](mailto:movingdave@yahoo.com)

#### **Secretary/Treasurer**

Gail Sluys  
1721 San Ramon Way  
Santa Rosa, CA 95409  
[nchpagail@gmail.com](mailto:nchpagail@gmail.com)  
(707) 538-3128, (707) 486-0594  
Send tournament fees to Gail.

#### **Send Tournament Statistics to: NCHPA Statistician**

Mike Anderson  
1614 Longspur Ave.  
Sunnyvale, CA 94087  
(408) 738-4661  
[meanderson99@yahoo.com](mailto:meanderson99@yahoo.com)

#### **Regional Director, Charter Communications Liaison, Newsletter Editor, NHPF Director**

Casey Sluys (707) 477-8893  
[kcslushhorseshoe@gmail.com](mailto:kcslushhorseshoe@gmail.com)  
NHPF [www.nhpf.info](http://www.nhpf.info)  
Buy a brick and support the NHPF!