



# WISCONSIN HORSESHOES



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## WHPA Fall Meeting

Smiles, fist pumps, conversations about horseshoes, covid, hunting, new looks, campaigning—impressive presentations for the 2022 State Tournament—snacks, refreshments, masks, sanitizer, social distances, even hugs were in abundance at the Lake Delton Sportsmens Club, October 17. To have missed this event was missing a MAJOR social event!



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Sept 26	Earl Paulson Classic	Beloit	54	\$20	No	Sept 16	Dan Newkirk
Sept 27	Don Goldsmith Dbls	Beloit		\$22	No	Sept 16	Dan Newkirk
Oct 3	Junction City Singles	Junction City	24	\$20	Yes	Sept 26	James Wicklander
Oct 3-4	Oct Fall Singles	Beloit	72	\$20	No	Sept 23	Dan Newkirk
Oct 10	Summit Ridge Fall Singles	Wonewoc	18	\$11	No	Oct 3	Dave Volz
Oct 17	WHPA Fall Meeting	Delton Sportsmen's Club					
Oct 24-25	Deansville Singles	Deansville	40	\$20	No	Oct 17	Gary Volz
Nov 7-8	Doubles at the Barrell	Deansville	32			Oct 31	Gary Volz
Nov 14-15	Autumn Harvest	Beloit	72	\$20	No	Nov 4	Dan Newkirk
Dec 5-6	Deansville Open	Deansville	40	\$20	No	Nov 28	Gary Volz
Dec 12-13	Snowflake	Beloit	72	\$20	No	Dec 2	Dan Newkirk

Jr Class Yes or No (Yes = They will have their own class if enough entries. No = They will be in mixed classes)

Partial 2021 WHPA Sanctioned Tournament Schedule

Date	Tournament	Location	Max	Entry	Jr Class	Deadline	Contact
Jan 9-10	001 Tournament	Beloit	72	\$20	No	Jan 1	Dan Newkirk
Jan 16-17	Dance with Dobie	Deansville	40	\$20	No	Jan 9	Gary Volz
Jan 23-24	Summit Ridge Freezeroo	Wonewoc	30	\$11	No	Jan 16	Dave Volz
Feb 6-7	Deansville Memorial	Deansville	40	\$20	No	Jan 30	Gary Volz
Feb 13-14	Valentine Tournament	Beloit	72	\$20	No	Feb 3	Dan Newkirk
Feb 20	Deansville/Beloit Challenge	Deansville					
Feb 27	Bring a Junior Dbls	Beloit		\$10		Feb 17	Dan Newkirk
Mar 6-7	Klash with Kerry	Deansville	40	\$20	No	Feb 27	Gary Volz
Mar 27-28	Birthday Bash	Wonewoc	30	\$11	No	Mar 20	Dave Volz

**2021 NHPA/WHPA Membership & Renewal Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

If new member, referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle your Division:

Men-\$35    Women-\$35    Elder Men-\$35 (70+)    Jr. Boys-\$5  
 Jr. Girls-\$5    Med/Exempt-\$35    Cadet Boys-\$5    Cadet Girls-\$5

If renewal is after June 30th 2021, \$2 is added to dues

I would like to donate to the electronic scoring upgrade fund .

Just add \$2    \$5    \$10    Other \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the total

Send to: **WHPA W6868 Brown Rd. Fond du Lac, WI 54937**

(Note: If you want a printed membership card you can go to [www.nhpa-eShoe.com](http://www.nhpa-eShoe.com) to print one or include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to have one mailed to you.)

**WHNL Renewal Form**  
 \$15 Black / White copy per year  
 Mail the subscription fee to  
 WHNL  
 1483 180th Ave,  
 Balsam Lake, 54810

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

The WHNL is also available at no cost on our Web Page:  
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## A Friend Missed



### Mark Stevens

Mark Stevens, 66 years young, passed away November 10 losing his battle with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.

He graduated from Ashland High school and spent most of his life as a Security Guard at Columbia Forest Products in Mellen. He was a Champion horse-shoe pitcher winning the

WI State event 3 times – 86. 87. 88. He also pitched in

many World Horseshoe tournaments since 1987; bringing home Class Champion trophies. He began pitching the flip shoe, changing to a 1 ¼ quarter turn. He Was inducted to the WI Hall of Fame in 2011. He pitched in many open horseshoe tournaments in MN, WI and MI as well as pitching in his local Range Horseshoe league. Darts was another favorite activity. Mark is survived by 3 sisters and horseshoe pitching brother Steve and nephew Rick Poppe. Our WHPA will miss his warm welcoming smile, awesome gentleman manners and his very quiet presence at horseshoe events. Sending prayers of peace and comfort to Mark's family. We have yet another star in the sky!



THANKFUL! Well, as I sit down to write this we are less than 2 weeks away from Thanksgiving and my immediate thought was “we have had such a crappy year, what is there to be thankful for?” Luckily, I kept thinking about it. It’s been hard to stay positive hasn’t it? Between the Covid-19 pandemic and the seemingly endless presidential election, we have all been struggling. We miss our family, we miss our friends. Nothing is the same and it appears as though we just may have to prepare for a “new normal” (another expression I have grown very tired of). Hard to stay positive when we realize we cannot gather for the holidays as we had all hoped or planned. Watching tournaments get cancelled and missing our horseshoe family has been just another reason to really want 2020 over with already.

Did your candidate for president win or lose? Now that you have that answer, let me ask you something else, does it really matter in the grand scheme of things? Many people passionately supported Present Trump and many others passionately supported Mr. Biden. To those of you whose support was so passionate, I have to wonder, was it worth losing friendships, or family relations because of your belief? I hope not. I hope that all of us can move past this election and love and support our friends regardless of their sex, religion, race, sexual orientation or political beliefs. I can’t help but think that if we can’t do that, our future is doomed regardless of who the president is. I am so very thankful that I have not lost any relationships over my beliefs and that I have (hopefully) not made anyone feel as though they may lose my friendship based on their beliefs. Life is too short my friends.

Life is too short for regrets isn’t it? In the past 3 weeks both my younger brother, and my father have had strokes. I admit I was not feeling very “thankful” about it, until I looked at it through other eyes. I was scared, both my brother and my father had strokes. But, on the other hand, both my father and brother had minor strokes and given some time to rest and heal, we will likely not see any difference in the long term. I am thankful and I am blessed. All depends on how you look at it doesn’t it?

As the dreaded 2020 comes to a close and we move into 2021, I can only hope that the new normal is much like the old one. That we laugh, love and live with purpose. That when we are pitching, we laugh like Rich Conrad, that we love like Jane Smith and that we live our lives the best way we can.

Happy Thanksgiving my friends. I cherish and am thankful for each and every one of you reading this.



### Behind the Mask ... With NHPA Chaplain Ken Heinritz

I’ve been told that I must have known something about the Covid virus years ago when I began my article ‘Behind the Mask’. My lips are sealed. But I would like to tell you that there was a man in the Bible who had to cover his face with a veil. The man’s name was Moses. Exodus 34:30 & 33 says “So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him . . . he put a veil on his face.” And whenever Moses came near the Lord, he took it off but had to put the ‘mask’ back on whenever he came near the Israelites because his face shone so brightly. Imagine that!! Moses’ face reflected a radiance associated with being in the presence of the Lord.

What a lesson for horseshoe pitchers everywhere. You never know how a splendid countenance may shine off your face after spending time with the Lord Himself. You may not notice it but others will.

*“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” II Cor. 3:18*

## 2020 WHPA Fall Meeting Write up - October 17, 2020 - Lake Delton

Kevin Brekke

Call to order by President Dobie at 1pm with a thank you to Al and Dave for setting up the Sportsmen Club building so everyone could be spaced out. Thank you. There were 47 people in attendance. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Chaplin Ken Heinritz gave the opening prayer. Secretary John Secord read the minutes of the 2019 Fall Meeting since we had no Spring meeting and were accepted as read. John also gave the treasurer's report. The beginning balance was 3,502.16 and ending balance was 3,986.83. Dave Volz, 1<sup>st</sup> VP, reported the Player of the Year (POY) is on the website now, and is updated so pitchers can see where they stand. Dave also maintains the group email and pushed pitchers to sign up for that email list.

Kevin Brekke, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, gave a plug for Team World in 2021, to start thinking about helping. We had a good amount of people helping the last time, and it would be great to see that help again. Kevin also mentioned to remember the sanction league tournament next October for all those pitchers that pitch in a sanctioned league. It is a three-person tournament and you get to pitch others from different states at the National Hall of Fame building. Kevin also mentioned the upcoming world sites and tournament dates:

2021 – Winnemucca, Nevada July 19-31.

2022 – Lansing, Michigan

2023 – Monroe, La (was given to them because no World there this year)

2024 – bids by January 1, 2022

Sonia Cook, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP, reported on the Junior Scholarship Fund – Beginning balance was 11,871 and ending balance was 11,621.45 this fall. Current balance now is 12,670.45. Liabilities are now 4,200. She thanked all who donated prizes to the raffle and made monetary contributions this year.

Hall of Fame committee chairman Jeff Secord mentioned how the presentation at state is a special event and the one for Dave Forseth, and a group of Sandbagger pitchers were there to support him. I was great seeing them and catching up with them. He mentioned that the vote is just before the spring meeting and nominations are always welcome. To see current nominee's, you can go to [whpahorseshoes.com](http://whpahorseshoes.com) and click the HOF link.

Dave Volz, regional director, said a big thank you to all tournament directors for all the hard work they do

to put on their tournaments. He is working on the the tournament schedule for 2021. Dave also mentioned that he went to Kewaskum to sanction the 10 clay courts they have there that have not been used for years. They are planning on having a sanctioned tournament there in 2021 on May 22, and Ken Heinritz would be the tournament director. Dave also mentioned the new patches for 2021 will have a new design. There was also mentioned of a new online pitching group SHOP, where you need to pitch on sanctioned courts, started by Walter Ray Williams Jr. Dave also gave an update on how to use ESHOE and can update your sanctioned card for renewal. There is a user fee of 1.32. ESHOE will be updated with HSMaster, so they will be one, and can see percentages in ESHOE. It would be updated right away, which would be a good thing. This is not ready yet but is coming. Dave also mentioned that those who sent money in for this years World Tournament, that was canceled, need to contact Jim Kinney, NHPA secretary, to designate whether you want a refund, or apply to next year's world tournament.

Jane Smith – Newsletter Editor, enjoys being the editor and does get correspondence from those who get paper copies.

State Teams competition results. Jane read off the nine teams that signed up for the state contest among teams. Their position from 1<sup>st</sup> to last.

Close Doesn't Count and Muskego - 8 pitchers and a 6.5 average

Stevens Point – 18 pitchers and 5.72 average

Summit Ridge – 11 pitchers and a 5.54 average

Marshfield – 6 pitchers and a 5.5 average

Deansville – 7 pitchers and a 5.14 average

Little Bulls Falls – 6 pitchers and a 5.0 average

Arkdale - 6 pitchers and a 5.0 average

Eau Claire – 7 pitchers and a 4.85 average

Beloit – 16 pitchers and a 3.1 average

2020 State Tournament recap – a big thank you to the Beloit Club. Special thank you from Kevin Brekke, Penny Steinke and others who recognized the Beloit club, and others who just pitched in and helped to make this state tournament special, when many states around our country canceled theirs. Thank you to all.

John Secord did the drawing for the Each One Reach One contest. We had 48 new members this year and we give out two 25.00 awards and five 10.00 awards. They went to in order: Aleena Lepak, Fred Lane, Dave Volz, James Wicklander, Dave Quiksilver, Beloit Horseshoe Club, Arkdale Horseshoe Club.

*Continued on page 7*

*State meeting continued from page 6*

Paul Weise represented the Eau Claire club that will be hosting the State Tournament in 2021. He mentioned there will be no beer sales during the tournament. Bring your own. Like in years past, there will be a Buckshot run at the park in the morning, and Paul will let everyone know in advance what the times will be to enter and exit the park. The 4H Club again will be doing the food.

Jeff Secord, Tournament director of Team World, spoke on this tournament. Started in 1985. He has done a lot of research and has posted at the Beloit club some interesting stats on the pitchers. There have been 125 pitchers from Wisconsin compete in this tournament, and 605 different pitchers have pitched in this special tournament. He mentioned that in 2021, Juniors will be able to pitch with limitations. Jeff also introduced that Team World would go from 5 teams bracket finals to 7 teams bracket finals. This gives two more teams a chance to be champion.

Marketing and Publicity director Fred Lane mentioned 2021 sanctioned is available now for the end of 2020 and all of 2021. 2022 state tournament will be special with a lot of history of Wisconsin horseshoes for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary at state. He also plugged the NHPA Trading Cards coming that people can order now. There is a link on the NHPA website. They will be coming at the end of November, I know, I ordered all the sets available. Fred will be sending a group email to everyone on that list with a link to sign up for them.

Jeff Secord mentioned that Jeff Pagel went to the city council meeting and mentioned that he won the state men's championship, and that they might consider giving him a parade in his honor. This was mentioned in the local paper, and Jeff saw it. What a great way to promote horseshoes. It got people talking about horseshoes. Marketing.

Election of Officers – John Secord, Sonia Cook, and Dave Volz ran unopposed, and won another two-year term.

Bid for the 2022 State Tournament – Kevin Brekke made sure everyone signed in, and made sure everyone that was eligible had a ballot to vote. To be eligible, a voter needed to be a sanctioned member in 2019 and 2020. There were two clubs in the running, the Beloit Horseshoe club, and the Little Bulls Falls club. Kevin also opened the bid to the floor in case there was a bid from there. There was not. Randy Mitchell made the presentation, complete with a very well booklet with pictures of the proposed site, for the Little Bulls Falls club and Dan and Tammy Newkirk made the presentation for the Beloit Horseshoe Club. The vote was the Beloit Horseshoe club with 24 votes, and Little Bulls Falls club with 16 votes. The Beloit Horseshoe club will host our 2022 State Tournament, which is our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Dave Volz had a special drawing for Tournament directors – Mark Mauthe will have his 2021 membership paid for in appreciation for his work. Thank you all Tournament directors.

Next meeting will be April 17<sup>th</sup> at Lake Delton Sportsmen Club – 2021

## Pitcher of the Year

Dave Volz

2021 Pitcher of the Year! Yes, that's right, the points started all over after the first of August to determine next year's POY. The Pitcher of the Year award is determined by the number of points accumulated in tournaments from August 1st through July 31st. There are 3 Divisions which are determined by pitcher averages as of August 1<sup>st</sup> 2020. Division A is 45% and over, Division B is 30% - 44.99% and Division C is below 30%. Pitchers receive 15 points for a 1st place finish, 10 points for a 2nd place finish and 5 points for a 3rd place finish in open WHPA sanctioned tournaments. Bonus points are awarded for attending the WHPA Spring and Fall meetings in the amount of 15 points each. If you would like to see the current standings, go to the website at [www.whpahorseshoes.com/awards](http://www.whpahorseshoes.com/awards) The site is updated as the results come in from the tournament directors.

## Horseshoe Love

Fred Lane

In these times is always important to reflect on everything we have to be thankful for. After all, in a weeks time, many will be celebrating Thanksgiving. I wanted to share a brief story about how thankful I am to have such a caring horseshoe family. A month or so ago, our car broke down just as we pulled into Beloit for a horseshoe tournament. It didn't take but one phone call to the Beloit Clubhouse and love started pouring in. Special Thank you to these individuals for their help. We had our car hauled back to the clubhouse, help watching the girls while others turned wrenches. We even had someone borrow us their vehicle to get home safely while another rode back down with us to drop the car off and pick up the repaired one. Special thank you from my family to yours. Dan and Tammy Newkirk, Steve Mengelt, Gena and Dave Quaid, Jeff Gustafson and Ray Cayer.

Remember to smile and be kind. Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!



### Regional Directors Report By: Dave Volz

The 2021 tournament schedule is close to being completed and the new patches have been ordered. The winter schedule with tournaments through March is in this issue and the full 2021 schedule will be in the first issue of the new year. On the website, go to Tournaments/Calendar at the top of the home page and see the events month by month, if you click on an event you will see the event information as well as the directions to the courts.

There are a lot of changes taking place with membership, tournament and stat information. Most of you have probably seen the Eshoe icon on the website, as of the first of January there will no longer be Natstats, it will be completely taken over by Eshoe. All of the features of Natstats will be implemented into Eshoe. You can access it by clicking on the icon or go to <https://www.nhpa-eshoe.com>. There you can go to player search and enter any members name or sanction number. You will be able to renew memberships, print a sanction card and view the past calendar years detailed tournament results.

The latest feature is the Event Search, click on it and it will show all upcoming Nhpa sanction events throughout the United States. You have a choice of viewing Wisconsin only or any other charter that you wish. You can also enter a date range to search. There will be two icons in the first column, an information button which will give you all of the tournament information and a trophy cup which will give you the tournament results once they are reported. There is a Status column which will say scheduled, reported (if the results have been reported) and cancelled if the event had to be cancelled for some reason. The tournament schedules for all of the charters are currently being entered into the system by the Regional Directors

Starting the first of January, Tournament Directors will be sending their tournament results in directly through an updated HSMaster program. Once the results are sent, they will automatically show up on the results page and on the players statistics page. I will be contacting Tournament Directors when the updated HSMaster program is available and I will be reviewing it with them, it's just a matter of entering a token number and sending in the results. There will be procedures set up to send tournament results for those not using HSMaster but I highly recommend that all Tournament Directors start using HSMaster. There will be a Tournament Director video coming out soon and I will get that to the directors when it becomes available.

### Jr Raffle / Director Report

Sonia Cook

Our Junior Program is sitting pretty with our liabilities \$4,200 and Account Balance \$12,670. State Junior Boys and Girls Champions are awarded \$300; Second place winner receive \$150. These awards are kept in an account until the Junior shows proof of enrollment in a post secondary opportunity.

The 2020 Raffle was very successful thanks to the donations from Kevin Aarstad, Linda Roebver, Ricj Conrad, Mel & Sonia Cook, Tava Cook, Craig and Kari David, Dobie Gutweiler, Don Elgin family, Jane Smith, Lonny Trangasrud, Beloit Horseshoe Club, Deansville horseshoe club and the WHPA.

Thank you to everyone for this successful adventure. I am accepting donations anytime.

### GoFundMe — Gary Volz

We set up a fundraiser through GoFundMe to help raise funds for updating Beloit's computers used for our State Tournament scoring. We wanted to help them since they have generously supplied all the computers free of charge for our major tournaments. I know times are tough and no one should feel obligated to donate. This is just a way for us to show our appreciation to the Beloit Club for all the work they have done over the years to set up and manage electronic scoring for the WHPA.

After one week we have now raised enough funds to get Beloit 12 computers and will have a little left-over to give them for any other equipment they may need. Your generosity is amazing. Thank you all so much for contributing. I would also like to thank Dan, Jimmy, and all the Beloit members that have put so much work in over the years to give us such a great system to use at all our tournaments.

Fred also was instrumental in finding a great deal on some laptops and driving all over the state to get them. Trust me it was not easy. Our horseshoe family is always supportive and willing to help.

Thank you again for a great campaign and hope you all have a Happy Thanksgiving.





**Arkdale Doubles**

Ray Groskinsky

Class A

Eugene Pribnow / Jill Peterson	6.5	.5	44.29
Ray Groskinski / Kerry Morris	6	1	46.43
Veronica Groshek / Dean Groshek	5.5	1.5	40

Class B

Ray Cayer / Fred Lane	8	0	28.54
Jerry Schroeder / Jim Schraulfnagel	6	2	22.5
Greg Smith / Melani Kasum	5	3	27.92



**Summit Ridge Fall Singles**

Dave Volz

Class A

Bun Carley	4	1	55.5
Ray Groskinsky	3.5	1.5	44.5
Kerry Morris	2.5	2.5	47.5

Class B

Al Holloway	4	1	45
Jill Peterson	3	2	41.5
Rick Weller	3	2	39

Class C

Gary Volz	4	1	26
Greg Smith	3	2	39
Jim Menzel	3	2	30

Class D

Les Karpel	5	0	35.5
Ralph Marthaler	3	2	31
Edwin Pulsfus	3	2	28.5

Class E

Chad Volz	5	0	25.5
Russ Brockway	4	1	20
Sandy Anderson	3	2	24



**Deansville Singles**

Gary Volz

Class A

John Meyer	7	0	68.93
Tammy Newkirk	5	2	56.43
Ray Groskinsky	5	2	54.29

Class B

George Dorn	6	1	38.93
Bob Klingaman	5	2	40.43
Jill Peterson	4	3	40.36

Class C

Justin Schultz	5	0	35.5
Gary Volz	3	2	27
Edwin Pulsfus	2	3	28

Class D

Gerald Harris	6	1	21.79
Sandy Anderson	5	2	23.21
D. Palmersheim	4.5	2.5	18.21



**Doubles at the Barrel**

Gary Volz

Class A

Glenn / Kerry	7	0	52.68
Rich / Jill	5	2	47.02
John / Dobie	5	2	44.05

Class B

Bob / Dan	7	0	29.76
Justin / Ed	5	2	32.14

**Earl Pauson Classic**

Dan Newkirk

Class A

Eugene Pribmow	5	0	61.50
Robert bowser	3	2	45.5
Tammy Newkirk	2.5	2.5	53

Class B

Mona Lane	5	0	52
Rowen Swick	3.5	1.5	50
Bob Klingaman	2.5	2.5	42.5

Class C

Jill Peterson	4	1	43.5
George Dorn	3	2	41
Jeff Gustafson	3	2	39

Class D

Tom Steinke	5	0	34
Dave Quaid	3	2	35
Greg Smith	3	2	33.5

Class E

Kevin Brekke	4	1	31
Rayna Bauer	3	2	23.5
Jason Goldsmith	3	2	22.4

**Don Goldsmith Doubles**

Class A

Zack Swartz	4	1	53
Cliff Shave			57
Roger Ehlers	4	1	34
Ken Posmer			48
Mona Lane	3	2	58
P Schwerdtfeger			41

Class B

Tammy Newkirk	4	1	38
Rayna Bauer			23
Rowen Swick	3	2	47
Dave Quaid			22
Jeff Gustafson	3	2	40
Fred Lane			27

Class C

Don Goldsmith	4	1	32
Jason Goldsmith			17
Tom Steinke	4	1	28
Carol Zervic			1
Jillian Goldsmith	3	2	8
Aaron Jordan			5



**What's New?**

Jane Smith

There is not much mind-boggling or earth shattering news happening in our world. The basics—we always need prayers of thanks, comfort, peace, patience, well being.... The list is endless. Our horseshoe family is strong, caring and AWESOME. It seems whenever a challenge—be it health, loss, or whatever, our family is there in spirit, thoughts, cards, FB, Messenger, cards. We are blessed. STAY SAFE!!!

**October Fall Singles**  
Dan Newkirk

Class A

Penny Stienke	4.5	.5	64.5
Tammy Newkirk	3.5	1.5	57
Eugene Pribnow	3	2	51.5

Class B

Rowen Swick	4	1	53.5
Ken Posmer	4	1	48.5
Cliff Shave	3	2	48

Class C

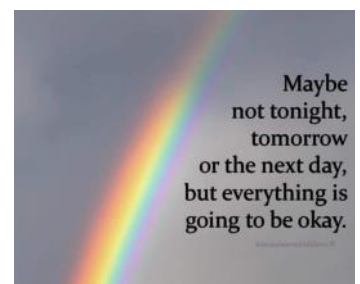
Jim Tollefson	4	1	36
Roger Anderson	4	1	32
Paul Henning	3	2	30.5

Class D

Jim Huckabee	4	1	43
Jeff Gustafson	4	1	39
Tom Steinke	3	2	27

Class E

Glenn Hanson	4	1	32
Joe Koch	4	1	29.5
Kevin Brekke	3	2	33.5



**Junction City Singles**  
James Wicklander

Class A

Ray Groskinsky	6	1	61.43
Cliff Erickson	5.5	.15	57.14
Lonny Trangsrud	4.5	2.5	53.93

Class B

Heather Sowatzke	4	1	40.5
Kent Frailing	4	1	36
Greg Smith	3	2	30

Class C

Melanie Kasun	6	1	38.93
Fred Lane	5	2	35
Mike Ezell	5	2	24.29

Class D

Josh Gibson	5	1	35
Wally Schmidt	5	1	26.43
Randy Mitchell	5	2	19.54



Happiness starts with YOU. Not with your relationships, not  
With your job, not with your money, not with your circumstances,  
But with YOU!

## “The Cruel Shoes”

by Justin Kern

### The Greatest Games That No One Else Saw, Vol. 1: Pueblo 2003

Bleary eyed across the cusp of the boundless American West, I woke up to the site of horseshoes left in their pits, victoriously, with empty beer cans around much of the rest of the residential backyard.

The sun peeked in almost indigo from behind yet another mountain range to reveal this recreational scene, finished just a few hours before, when night fought off summertime dawn. Yet we could plainly see, in this yard of a home where near strangers had hosted us and more, the confirmation of the final act of the previous night’s majesty: two of the greatest games of horseshoes in human history had, for certain, happened, here, in Pueblo, Colorado. Yet now all we could do was leave.

It was 2003 and I was in a some-time touring punk rock band. The five of us lived and went to school in Buffalo, N.Y. We were talented enough in a very specific genre of screaming and yelling music that people had us in their towns to play basements, clubs, bars, bowling alleys, art spaces, illegal lofts, and, one Halloween, a haunted psychiatric ward

That summer, we booked about five weeks of shows across thousands of miles, western New York to Madison, Denver to San Francisco, Los Angeles to Albuquerque, and, the cartographically challenged final stretch that included Little Rock, Columbus, western Massachusetts and New York City. What to expect? If history served, weirdoes with an affinity in musical styles but entire lifetimes apart, different, similar, in motion. That served for most every stop, including Pueblo, where none of us had been before. We played a sports bar to about 100 kids, a rousing success that almost tricked you into thinking that one could do this, each night, and it’d always be enough.

After the show, if the show wasn’t in someone’s home, there was a somewhat shy social game of asking if you could crash with someone, so as to save on the scant “band fund” (desperately earmarked for burritos and beer). This night, the promoters, Barkley and Jim, made it clear – they wanted to have us over. It was a beautiful night and they had a huge horseshoe pit in their backyard. In the short drive to their place, the trash talking ramped up exponentially. In those minutes of driving, the horseshoes matches had grown with such chest-puffing that they were



now billed as The Transnational Punk Rock Horseshoe Championship of 2003. It was on. Different throwing styles were scrutinized. Steps and oversteps were watched closely. Mothers may have been disparaged. An ideal excuse to sit outside near a fire with beer had become a clanking, tightly measured competition. One that was split, with myself and our drummer Steve taking the first game, then our bassist Eric and a vocalist Dave edged out of the second. (Kristen, our fifth member, was content to sip beer and rightly taunt us from the small peanut gallery of people who had joined us from the bar.)

In a journal, I notched the scores: 41-30 and 42-39. If you can figure out how we got those tallies, I’m all ears. (Yes, “Coors” is a valid and likely answer.) The final scores beg questions on what other rules were bent, made up, colloquial or forgotten. That we played, together, is part of this sport that remains so enchanting. Horseshoes provides us an easy entrance for an acquaintance, something basic to share with a stranger. Which is why, I suppose, that as fun as that show was to play and to watch people enjoying it – it was the actual reason we were in town – the memory that sticks with me is that backyard, bonding over horseshoes, with good friends for a night.

Not written in my journal but vaguely remembered was the actual end of the night, after the games settled down. A visit from the police, who had been up the street on another call but couldn’t help but hear/see our hootin’ ‘n’ hollerin’ into the early hours. This was not the type of trouble strangers, such as we were, wanted with our Dodge Caravan with out-of-state plates and a sardine pack-job with musical equipment and belongings. The same went for Barkley, Jim and crew, who calmly said our night was coming to an end, wrapping up the party portion of our time in Pueblo.

I slept in the minivan that night – a rotation for protection of our items, though I felt no threat from our new friends and sworn horseshoe rivals. Night was quick, as a few hours later, we woke to an ugly early alarm to make it in time to the next show in Salt Lake City (at a tiki lounge with anecdotes best shared in person at the bar).

Such is life on the road, more on it than you’d like, particularly after such generosity and camaraderie from people I haven’t heard from in the subsequent 17 years. In case you do, though, the next time you’re in Pueblo, please tell Barkley and the gang that I said I want a rematch. First one to 42 can claim the rightful championship of all the Coors they can drink.

