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## NICK CULIC – SUMMERLAND



We shall go way back when I was young, went to school for my welding diploma, plus worked in daytime .

Immigrated to Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1958, got married to Margaret in 1963.

Got a job welding, until 1970, my lungs got bad, Dr said I had to quit . Well, I had a family to

support by them, I had to work, so, in 70's until 90'S was owner operator furniture mover in Port Coquitlam .



Sort of semi retired in 1994 after buying a fishing Resort in the Cariboo. Nice place but long winters. We had some nice guests, lots of Americans who after talking to them I found out they played Horseshoes, so they asked me how come we did not have any pits, we had 6 acres so told them to put pits in if they wanted to show me how to play .Well, they kicked my butt that first summer .

In 1998 I retired in earnest and moved to Summerland. Found the Horseshoe club and met Tal Severson, Jean & Floyd Lewis, Bill Whitnack, Doug Wilton and Bert Allen. In 2003 they put me in charge as President of Club I had to learn a lot .

I played in the senior games and got many a medal .My last one was in Castlegar, my best award was in 2005 from Horseshoe Canada for most wins in B.C for the season . And my first tournament 2003 for then never looked back for 11 years.

Family, which now contains 4 kids, five grandsons, 4 great grand kids. Let us hope to hit those pits soon and see each other !! Love you all.

**Editorial Comment:** If you ever have a chance to taste Nick's homemade slivovitz, you will love it, burns all the way down your stomach, but, boy is it good. Slivovitz is a Croatian plum brandy.

## THE PROFESSIONAL HORSESHOE PITCHERS ASSOCIATION

The Professional Horseshoe Pitchers Association, similar to the Professional Bowling Association (PBA) and the Professional Golf Association (PGA) was organized in Anderson, Indiana on July 31, 1971.

The constitution and by-laws were drafted and signed by the 13 charter members on August 8, 1971 at the World Tournament in Middlesex, New Jersey.

The charter members are:

Clyde Martz, president  
Bob West, 1st vice-president  
Roger Vogel, 2<sup>nd</sup> vice-president;  
Danny Kuchcinski, secretary-treasurer;  
Curt Day,  
Ted Allen,  
**Elmer Hohl**,  
Ray Martin,  
Glen Henton,  
Jim Knisley,  
Frank Stinson,  
Sue Kuchcinski and Clair Bruce.

The objective of the association is to promote the highest caliber of horseshoe pitching throughout the world. A professional tour is being planned for this fall in Florida. Danny and Sue Kuchcinski – will be the tournament directors.

My research found this organization was active for a few years, nothing mentioned after 1973, noticed Big money was given out and a new car to the winner,

The following articles appeared in the NHPA newslines 1971-1972

### The PHA In Action

By ROGER N. VOGEL

Two tournaments have been scheduled for May — one near Pittsburgh and another near Indianapolis.

The following is an excerpt from a letter I recently received: "I think that the Professional Horseshoe Pitchers' Association will really give the game of horseshoes the recognition it deserves in the sport world. The 50 shoe cancellation game has made its mark. The pressure is on from the very start. You can not fool around. Every pitch has to be a potential ringer. It makes the game more exciting — sooner. The 50 shoe game will make the tourney games more uniform. This is a must for radio and TV coverage.

I look for several indoor courts to spring up all over and we will be pitching horseshoe the year round, (leagues and tournaments). This will make it easier for the NHPA to successfully promote the game of horseshoes."\*

\*Curt Day, World's Champion.

## A New Horizon For Horseshoe Pitchers

By Stewart M. Snyder

305 N. Pacific Avenue, Kelso, Washington 98626

Horseshoe pitching has come a long way out of the barnyard, where Dobbin no longer lives, and into the professional arena. Men and women of all ages in America today are finding this an enjoyable, healthful and inexpensive sport.

Horseshoe pitching always has been an outdoor game, but portable indoor courts are gaining popularity. As evidence that the art of horseshoe pitching can be mastered early in life, we witness the record of an eleven-year-old boy who pitched 86.3 per cent ringers to win the 1971 National Horseshoe Pitchers' Association Junior World Championship in Middlesex, New Jersey, while his adult counterpart scored with a tournament average of 85.0 per cent ringers to win the men's World Championship.

Twelve leading horseshoe pitchers met in Anderson, Indiana, on July 30, 1971, to compete for three days in the \$12,000 Saxon International Invitational Horseshoe Pitching Tournament held on the Saxon courts. Each of these men was capable of pitching 80 per cent or more ringers in tournament play.

While their names read like a list of "Who's Who" in the game of horseshoe, these twelve men represented but a few of the outstanding pitchers of the game in the United States and Canada: Roger Vogel, current Arizona State Champion; Glen Henton, current Iowa State Champion; Clyde Martz, 1970 Pennsylvania State Champion; Danny Kuchcinski, World Champion 1967 at age 19, 1969 and 1970; Clair Bruce, placed in top ten in world tournaments; Ted Allen, ten times World Champion, member Horseshoe Pitching Hall of Fame; Curt Day, World Champion 1966 and 1971, sixteen times Indiana State Champion, member Horseshoe Pitching Hall of Fame; Frank Stinson, current Minnesota State Champion; Jim Knisley, 1968 Ohio State Champion; Ray Martin, current Illinois State Champion; Elmer Hohl, World Champion 1965 and 1968, thirteen times Canadian Champion, member Horseshoe Pitching Hall of Fame; and Bob West, three times North Dakota State Champion, eleven times Oregon State Champion and current champion.

During the Saxon tournament these twelve pitchers, plus Sue Kuchcinski (Danny's wife, winner of three women's World Championships in 1962, 1964 and 1965), met to discuss formation of a professional horseshoe pitching organization. From this meeting came the constitution and by-laws that formed the PROFESSIONAL HORSESHOE PITCHERS' ASSOCIATION.

With full-hearted support of these twelve charter members, the new organization is off to a strong start in a sport that almost is as old as recorded history itself. Ottie Reno in his new book, "Pitching Championship Horseshoes," says, "The origin of horseshoe pitching is shrouded in mystery. The most likely origin of the game is that it started in the pre-Christian era as a substitute for the Olympic game of discus throwing." Evolution of the game has brought it from metal platters thrown for distance to metal rings thrown with greater accuracy over target-pegs in the ground. Then came the use of crude horseshoes discarded by Greek and Roman armies in lieu of rings, and eventually the professionally designed pitching-shoes used today. The game followed the migration of people west across Europe, and then to America. After 2,000 years of playing, it has emerged into a scientific game. Not until about 1920 was a deliberate attempt made to throw an open shoe (forks open toward the peg) and from that time to the present, improvement of the game has come from acquiring greater skill in directing the flight of an open shoe onto the target-peg.

The PHA was formed to promote professionalism in the sport of horseshoes and to bring before the public in tournament play the best performers in the



world. The two forms of membership that are offered are Participating and Associate. Prerequisite to both classifications is that players belong to their national parent organization. In the United States this is the National Horseshoe Pitchers' Association. In Canada it is the Canadian National Horseshoe Pitchers' Association. Both parent organizations accommodate tournament pitchers of all caliber, but these are separated into competitive classes. Tournament games are played as "singles" between two contestants. No one is barred from joining the PHA because of sex, race or age, but the prospect must meet qualifications by pitching 80 per cent or more ringers the regulation 40-foot distance with standard shoes in NHPA or CNHPA tournament play.

To insure control by competent horseshoe pitchers, all officers of the PHA must hold Participating memberships. Clyde Martz was elected president, Bob West first vice-president, Roger Vogel second vice-president, and Danny Kuchcinski secretary-treasurer. Headquarters for the PHA are in Bryant, Indiana.

A 50-shoe cancellation game was adopted by the PHA as opposed to a 50-point cancellation game which is standard play under National Horseshoe Pitchers' Association rules. In case of a tie game at the end of 50 shoes, a four-shoe pitch-off is used. The standard professional shoe, weighing two and one-half pounds, is pitched 40 feet to an iron target-peg one inch in diameter and 14 inches high. Ringers count three points and the closest shoe within six inches of the peg counts one. Opposing ringers cancel each other, therefore not counting in the score, but each counts in ringer-percentage of the thrower. All other features of the game are the same as under NHPA rules, except that women and juniors who enter PHA competition must pitch 40 feet instead of 30 feet, which is optional under NHPA rules.

Adoption of the 50-shoe cancellation rule was necessary to get radio and TV coverage of PHA games because of time limitation imposed by the broadcasting schedule. Under the long-customary NHPA 50-point system, a game could take an hour or more with its many ringer cancellations, but a 50-shoe game can be scheduled to meet broadcasting requirements and takes only about twenty-three minutes of playing time. The shortened game allows the tournament to move quickly and is more exciting to competitors and spectators alike. When the local radio station at Anderson, Indiana, covered part of the tournament games "live," it was found that phasing of the 50-shoe game easily met time requirements, establishing the suitability of this game for broadcasting.

The Saxon tournament was the first played under PHA rules, however it was not a sanctioned PHA tournament as the new association had not yet been legally formed. This was a starter-tournament, one to initiate the proposed system of play that was to become standard under the new rules. Spectator enthusiasm was overwhelming. Admission was free, and more than twenty-five hundred fans attended each of the three days and overflowed the bleachers' accommodation. An innovation at this tournament was the use of a public address system over which up-to-the-minute information was given on the game in progress. Attention was focused on various skills of pitchers to enhance spectator knowledge of the game.

Elmer Hohl of Wellesley, Ontario, pitched 86.0 per cent ringers to win first place over Ray Martin and take back across the border \$1,300 in cash, a new 1971 compact car worth \$1,700, and a five-foot trophy. Danny Kuchcinski placed third, Bob West fourth, Curt Day fifth and Clair Bruce sixth. The last six-place finishers each won approximately \$150 for their efforts. Bill Saxon, who sponsored this event, also offered a new \$7,000 Oldsmobile to anyone who pitched a perfect game (50 ringers in a row) during the tournament, but no one won it.

World tournaments in the past have been attended by pitchers from the

United States and Canada, but it is hoped that the sport, now enjoying true professional status under the PHA, and with substantial cash prizes, will attract leading horseshoe pitchers from many countries around the world. Bob West, pitching in an Oregon tournament, paused between games and mused, "It would be tremendous if this (PHA) should grow internationally and include countries from all over the world — to have a true WORLD Championship."

Horseshoe pitching is not just a men's sport. Women and junior divisions (boys and girls) have many enthusiastic and talented participants. As in other sports, the junior group produces the champions of tomorrow and with the lure of professionalism on the horizon, many more youngsters will strive to gain a spot for themselves on a tournament roster. In 1971, eleven-year-old Walter Ray Williams from Eureka, California, became the youngest Junior NHPA Champion in World Tournament history. In gaining this title, he set a record for junior play with a ringer percentage of 86.3 as he swept through a long list of competent opponents.

What was once a picnic pastime has become a scientific sport. Youth gives the game glamor, old standbys lend stability, and professionalism marks the age of maturity.

FROM NEWSLINE JANUARY 1973

The PHA In Action **BY CLAIR BRUCE**

Roger Vogel, the new president of PHA, has been busy in Colorado recently "practicing what he preaches" with some impressive results. Roger feels very strongly that in order for the sport of horseshoe pitching to achieve the status it deserves it must be publicized, not as a pastime, not as an oddity, but as a genuine and highly competitive sport.

With the prime objective, publicity in mind, he has had several in depth articles on horseshoe pitching published in The Denver Post and other newspapers. Schedules of events have been given on television and radio. Roger and Gerry Labbe, five times Colorado State Champ, were enlisted by the largest shopping center in the Denver area, Cinderella City, to give a series of exhibitions in conjunction with a sports show at which the Denver Rockets professional basketball team and the Denver Spurs professional hockey team also appeared. Arrangements are also being made for exhibitions at several other shopping centers.

Roger is working very closely with state and local club officers and members and the increased interest among the pitchers in Colorado is very encouraging. Plans are under way for an indoor pitching facility and winter league activity.

The PHA president emphasizes that if this type of publicity is provided all over the country, horseshoe pitching will certainly climb by leaps and bounds toward its proper place in the world of athletics.

COVER PICTURE . . . . This month's picture (April 1971 newsline) shows the crowd that was in attendance at the first full-professional tournament held on the Saxon courts last summer in Anderson, Indiana.





### DAN KUCHCINSKI – SECRETARY - TREASURER

. Here is a brief statement about the PHA. It may still exist for all I know. I would consider it success during the year or so with our involvement. There were only a small group of us that ran the tournaments. I don't know that it is dissolved. I know that as secretary treasure a major sponsor for each tournament was set in place: **Anderson Indiana Olds and Cadillac dealership in which Elmer Hohl won.**



**Erie, Pa Ford Dealership Porreco** ;in which Dan Kuchcinski won.  
**Sharon, Pa Truck fleet owner.** Not sure who won that one perhaps Curt Day, .Roger Vogel may know.  
**Naples, Florida, Real Estate Sponsor.** Not sure of winner maybe Ray Martin. It was not hard to acquire these sponsors.

However the NHPA I believe who had the financial means did not support the PHA in any fashion. If I remember correctly we existed with very little financial backing. People need to look at this success closely and get rid of their pride and see that people outside of the NHPA supported our Sport and showed the public that Horseshoes is a viable spectator sport and that accomplished players can be exciting to watch. Also, without a doubt these top performers should be paid. To say you cannot be a family and be reimbursed for your efforts is a complete fabrication. That makes no sense.

The NHPA has died a slow death. Without VISION their will be no success in this sport or any other. Folks it would not be hard to pick up where the PHA left off and move past the way the NHPA operates. You then will see actual growth in the organized sport. I personally have had more success outside the NHPA in this sport. Folks if you want to see growth and success go out and get it. Do not depend on others who say they support but in truth they don't.

Sam I have a strong passion for our sport and will continue to be active in bringing youth and families together through Safe Pitch. Take care God Bless.

**EDITORIAL COMMENT -** Makes one wonder with a little promotion why this would not work today.

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## BETTY BLACKLOCK – POWELL RIVER



My husband Archie and I were the owner operators of a convenience store in Powell River. This was a 9AM to 11 PM job that left us with very little spare time, but there were still a few hours for fishing. We retired in 1991 and in 1992 we enjoyed a trip across Canada. By the time 1995 rolled around we were tired of painting and gardening so our good



friends Len and Marion Williams talked us into trying the game of horseshoe pitching. Needless to say it was love at first pitch so our next step was to join the Powell River Horseshoe Pitching Club.



I became involved in the operation of our club one Sunday when I was asked to help out with the Paper work involved with Sunday drop in play. Next it was to help with the organization of our twice yearly open tournaments. I enjoyed working with the club so when the League Director Position came up I volunteered to run the league play, a position I have held off and on during my 26 years as a member of the PRHPC. Around the year 2004 I became Tournament Director and held that position for about 10 years.

Sadly we did not have the opportunity to travel outside of BC to take part in tournaments but we did enjoy playing in Victoria, Ladysmith, Port Alberni, Cumberland and of course Powell River.

In 2016 I along with so many of our great players from Powell River made the trip to Victoria to play in the Canadians. As far as titles I may have won they were mostly here in Powell River except for the 2015 Island /Powell River ladies C class held in Victoria where I won first place.

I am widowed now, my husband Archie passed away in 2014 from heart failure but between us we had 7 children, 13 grandchildren, 12 Great grandchildren





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## WHERE ARE THEY NOW – MUNJ MANHAS - VICTORIA



Hi everyone, just saying a little hello from Victoria. It was 1979 I leaned over a fence at Glanford Park while playing football to see what that clanking noise was. I was greeted by a nice man named Larry Westman who told me if I wanted to try playing there was some shoes in the shed I could use to play anytime. Almost 40 years later I look back at that moment and how it created years of wonderful memories, fun and great friendships.

In the Victoria Club I was a director for 10 years, vice president for 4 years and president for 2 years.



I helped create one of the largest junior memberships in 2004 with over 35 members.

I played in at least a dozen tournaments a year for over a 20 year span which sent me on the ferry by myself a lot to all the lower mainland tournaments to fight against the greats like Jim Ball and Lloyd Reyklin.

I took trains in Quebec at midnight to play in the Canadian Championships in Victoriaville Quebec and battled it out in the rain in Bellingham Washington, not for the money but for the love of the game.

I've won many tournaments battling it out with my buddies in Summer Games, B.C. Championships, B.C. Internationals, local and Island tournaments.

My good friend for over 40 years Fred Ormiston and I have Seahawks season tickets and have been to Vegas and Reno a dozen times.

Jerry Melissa, Gord Butts and Jon Meeres were a wonderful challenge to myself to play my best.

Married to my beautiful wife Joanna, we have 3 children and 4 grandchildren. I am about to retire after 32 years at Canada Post.

Motorhome is ready, horseshoes in the back, ready to hit a tournament on the road, cheers





## SPRING HAS SPRUNG ON LINE TOURNAMENT – SAM TOMASEVIC

Greetings one and all, think of doing a on line fun tournament for **BC PLAYERS ONLY SPRING HAS SPRUNG**

The event would run April 24-30  
you can start pitching April 24th

Pitch 5 games of 20 shoes, (I'll send you scoresheets to use) count all ringers and single points

Pitch at your club (provided you are permitted to) Pitch from your back yard  
Pitch from a park that has courts

average will be based on what i have on file as of JUNE 1, 2020

No fee to enter

Must be a 2021 paid up member - I'll take your word on this  
averages will not count for cANSTATS

LET YOUR CLUB MEMBERS KNOW

If interested please email me [santom@telus.net](mailto:santom@telus.net) by April 18th also the names of the members in your club that would be interested in case I don't have their email address.

