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IN THIS EDITION – IMPROVE YOUR GAME / TIPS

From TONY RONDOW – 5 TIME MENS 40FT BC PROVINCIAL CHAMP

1. Why they should join a club

Joining a club provides you with players to practice with as well as informs you of tournament information. There is so much more to horseshoes than just playing the game. Traveling to tournaments as a group or helping out around your home club courts.)

2. Advise you would give to a beginner, should they throw a turn or flip

Being a 40ft player I'd have to say it all matters on what your comfortable with when you start playing.

Records show as you gain % most players are more successful with a turn shoe at 60 % and up.

3. When they should start playing in a tournament

When you feel you would like too. Every person has a different level of competitiveness. There are so many levels of players as well as divisions, some are more serious than others etc.

4. Anything else

It's all up to you as to what the game means to you. You want to get better then practice as much as possible to become consistent. If you're less serious just enjoy the game, the people and the good times

FROM LINDSAY HODGINS – 5 TIMES LADIES BC CHAMP / 2019 LADIES WORLD CHAMP

1. I joined a club to start pitching in tournaments and register in the BCHA originally with my gramps. He was originally the one that introduced me to everyone. If I had it my way I'd would've just sat in a corner and not talked to anyone.

Joining the club is probably one of the best ways to meet people and make friends. I started as a junior

back when Vivian and Bruce Bodnaruk were in charge of the junior program in Victoria and they are still watching me and cheering me on whenever they can. When I started moving up in the ranks in the juniors and would benefit more from pitching with the ladies teams in league Brenda Arnold and her team invited me into their team for 3 years. When I joined Ladysmith the last couple of years, I'm pretty sure they were more excited about my accomplishments than I was. Joining a club becomes a second family that you can't wait to see every year, and gives you so many more heads to help you improve your game and cheer you on.

2. Advice I would give a beginner would be to relax, don't over think and overcorrect and just pitch like you were pitching in your backyard. It really does not matter what your opponent is doing, all that matters is where you put your own shoe. Anybody could beat anybody if they have the right mindset. You are your own worse enemy (I'm still learning this).

I'm not an expert on turn shoes or 40ft but it makes sense to me that a turn shoe at 40ft would be less likely to bounce of than a flip shoe. I'd have to stick to flip shoes at 30ft; it just makes more sense to me. But it really is just whatever you are comfortable with, sometimes it's a combination of the flip and turn shoe and that's fine too.

3. Pitch in tournaments as soon as possible I found incredibly helpful, sometimes different people catch different things to improve your game. I know a lot of pitchers have the fear that they are not good enough to pitch in tournaments, but the tournaments are set up in different classes, so everyone pitches someone at their level. I started pitching in tournaments before I started pitching at clubs and leagues and everyone tries to help new pitchers the way they would help their own club member. The first tournament I travelled to off the island to Burnaby, I met Sam and Wendy and the ladies working in the kitchen, all incredibly friendly. As well as Robin and Cheryl Degraaf which seemed to know everything about Burnaby club so I thought that was there home club for a couple years. I remember Robin at one point during the tournament mentioning that I should step forward with the opposite foot than the arm I pitch with (left handed pitchers step forward with their right foot). Never even heard this mentioned before but have been doing it since, so it definitely is a benefit to pitch in tournaments and meet as many people as possible. You might make a friend and might learn something new about the game. Every club has a pitcher that wants to help people.

JERRY MELISSA 2 TIMES BC 40FT PROVINCIAL MENS CHAMP / 5 TIMES ELDERS CHAMP

The game of Horseshoes has long been a 'backyard' activity for many families. Family reunions and corporate picnics have often included friendly games to see who can throw a horseshoe closest to the peg. For many it was the start of a lifetime activity that brought them much joy. Today, family get-togethers and Sunday picnics are fast becoming a thing of the past. They have been replaced by sports fully organized and regulated. The day of impromptu gatherings is gone. Children waiting too long to join or pursue a sport never catch up to their peers. For those, who feel they were never given the opportunity when young: horseshoes is for them. For others, its a game that will offer challenges like no other. You are never too old to begin the game. The game presents both individual and team participation. You can practice on your own at any time (many set up backyard courts in their yards) and there is no need for an opponent. It's just you and the 'peg'!

Club Instruction, record keeping, and social activities are all designed to increase your enjoyment of the game. And, if you should want to become involved in club chores, there is always room for you! The game of Horseshoes is the best bang for your buck, bar none. There is not another sporting activity that offers so much for so little expenditure. Equipment costs are less than \$100 (for life) and a yearly membership in a sanctioned club, costs less than a dinner date at the Keg! All club members, new or old, should enter tournaments as often as they can. It doesn't matter what one's ability, there's a spot for everyone. The trick is to find the time and enjoy each and every experience. Entry fees are less than a dinner date at Macdonald's.

Once you join a club you will begin the process of improving your game. While landing a shoe close to the peg is admirable, the main goal for everyone should be to throw a ringer! And getting a shoe to open onto the peg is an open secret: the trick is to throw the shoe 40 or 30 feet using a proven test of time technique. To score ringers consistently you have to settle on one of two deliveries: a flip or a turn. A flip's success from 40 feet is not as good as a 'turn'! A turn's success from 30 feet is not as good as a 'flip'. In any case it is very important for a player to purchase an appropriate horseshoe. Personally I recommend the following: for those who want to throw a flip: EZ Flip. For those who want to throw a turn: 1 1/4=Ted Allans or 3/4=Alan Francis. (Keep in mind that there are variants: double flip; and 1 3/4 turn. Both are very difficult to throw). All begin with a designed standard grip that can be 'goggled'! Every club has someone that can show you by example each and every technique. Once you have decided on the type of delivery you wish to throw, stick with it. And practise, practise, practise.

Stance, steps, backswing and follow-through are personal preference. Ringer success will dictate what works! For me, I threw a 1 1/4 turn from 40 feet. My research showed that this turn garnered the most Championships. And the 'Ted Allen' was preferred by most of the top players. Took me 6 months, one hour a day to get the shoe to open. When I moved to a shorter distance, again my research showed me that the flip was preferred by most of the top players. And the 'Snyder EZ flip was the preferred shoe! Took me; 3 months to get the shoe to open.

Won my first Mens in 1978 throwing 1 1/4 Allens. The other in 2003, 1 3/4 throwing Imperials. My 5 Elder Championships were a flip: Sue Snyders.

When giving clinics I always emphasized starting with the proper 'Shoe', throwing from a very short distance and gradually increase the length. The player has to be able to follow the shoe's trajectory. You have to see what the shoe is doing!!!!

TOM GALLINA - ONTARIO

#1 join a club to learn the game and maybe it might take one to different level of the game. When they start playing in a league they will get to see the top players and they might influence them to push themselves to reach a higher level.

#2 I would see how they hold and pitch a shoe to begin with. I would suggest to them to pitch a turn if they are a beginner. I've seen many times this situation and they seem to like to pitch a flip after watching and consulting with other players. When they advance in avg I found they come for help to switch.

#3 They will want to play tournaments at their own club level to start and Ive found this gives them a lift especially if they position 1/2 pack or better and then they may want to move on to larger tournaments

as they gain confidence. Some get addicted to the game.

#4 Practices My best way was to -- Start out 1 shoe on 1 peg 25 % and try to beat it and count your points. Then 50%, 1 shoe on each peg and count your points, next 75%; 2 shoes on one 1 peg and 1 on the other. This is how I started my advancement to the level I used to be. I found it helps you to concentrate as you pitch each end because you are pushing yourself to beat that opponent at what level of % you are playing at. When I used to practise in my younger days I found I won more down to the wire Championship games at the A class level.

RUSS PHILLIPS – WASHINGTON STATE ELDERS CHAMP / FORMER WORLD CHAMP

1. **Why they should join a club.** A club provides a person the opportunity to meet other Pitchers and make great friends. Also helps, to improve your game. Some Clubs have leagues and this is another opportunity to learn.

2. **Advise you would give to a beginner, should they throw a turn or flip.** A turn is more difficult to pitch but has better staying power to stay on the peg, but, more difficult to learn at first

3. **When they should start playing in a tournament** - anytime, right away is good. There are different classes so another opportunity to learn and meet fellow pitchers. Your bracket will be with someone evenly matched

TOM MOFFAT – 8 TIMES BC MENS 40FT PROVINCIAL CHAMPION

1. Why you should join a club.

You can always play horseshoes by yourself or in someone's backyard or picnic, it's not till you join a club that you meet the most wonderful people around. You can join other activities like crib, dart, dances, parties, and work parties. It's all fun all the time. The other big reason is for the competition and again the fun of playing with people like yourself. It's as fun or competitive as you want. If you want to improve there are lots of people to ask for tips.

2. advice you would give to a beginner, should they throw a turn or flip

My advice would be to throw what comes naturally. If you don't know try the flip, it's the easiest and fastest to get consistent with. If you choose to throw a turn it will take you a long time but if you master it you will be very pleased with accomplishing something so difficult.

3. When they should start playing in a tournament

Play in a tournament as soon as you can. Don't worry that you don't feel that you are any good; you will be slotted in with others of the same caliber. Everyone is nervous their first tournament but it's like riding a bike, the more you do it the easier it gets. Don't miss out on the fun.

4. Anything else

Always try and help out around the club and tournaments. There is always something to do and who knows you might have that special talent that the club or tournament needs. Without people helping there would be no clubs and tournaments. And lastly, always help to recruit new members, grassroots recruitment is the blood of the sport.

STAN GRIGGS – 13 TIME MISSOURI STATE MENS CHAMP

1. Why you should join a club

Joining a club and pitching in a League is the greatest way to start up in the sport, it gives you a good foundation of what the game and the people are all about. Leagues are generally handicapped so everyone is on the same playing field and it takes the intimidation factor out of the game and you can focus on the game and not worry about someone that is a better pitcher. As a two fold it gives everyone the opportunity to pitch each other no matter if you are a A Class pitcher or a X Class pitcher. The Clubs are where a new pitcher will find out how great horseshoe pitchers are and the comrade of this sport, which is a spirit of friendship and community between each other.

2. Advise you would give to a beginner, should they throw a turn or flip

For someone new starting out in the game the style of your shoe really is not as important as getting the feel for pitching a horseshoe the distance from one side to the next. I have always said there is not a wrong way to pitch a horseshoe.

I feel a lot depends on the individual. For a 30ft pitcher a Flip shoe has proven to be a very successful style, as a 3/4 or 1 1/4 turn. For a 40ft pitcher a turn shoe has proven to be a much better shoe with the trajectory of the shoe to the stake, but for just starting out again that should not be the deciding factor. It is so important to get comfortable pitching the shoes and zooming in on your distance and alignment. After our have mastered that then the evolution of the shoe should follow.

3. When should they should start playing in a tournament

There is no magic date or time for one to enter there first tournament, each individual is different. I would say when one is comfortable with their pitching and understand the fundamentals of the game then they are ready to take the next step and enter the Tournament zone. Tournaments are very different then leagues, but I believe the tournaments are the one's that will really push an individual to become a better pitcher and see positives in their game.

4. Anything else

In closing remember there is not a wrong or right way to pitch horseshoes, what works for one may not work for another.

Here are a few TIPS that were passed down to me from some very good horseshoe pitchers;

#1 - When you are practicing, always try to get in the mental mindset of a tournament, stay focused and treat it like you are in a tournament game. If you are just out there pitching shoes to be pitching shoes you are not helping your game. At the moment you realize that you should stop at that point, If you can stay focused and really keep that mindset even for 50 shoes per practice session I feel that is better than just going out a throwing 300 shoes a day, if you are not pitching those 300 shoes the way you want in a tournament then you can start picking up bad habits which effects your delivery which is what creates muscle memory.

#2 - Many pitchers set a goal during a practice session on how to end their session, many will think I will keep pitching until I miss a ringer or point, I always say try to never end a session with an open or miss, that is like ending a game with an open or a miss. End your session as you would like to end the game, with a point, ringer or double ringer whatever your goals are at that time.

Most importantly, Have fun and remember this sport can be very humbling, The Highs can be very exiting and the Lows can really get you down. If you have a bad day on the courts, try not to dwell on all what if's clear your mind for a day or two and start fresh the next time out... Best of Luck to Everyone,

RON WEISS – PENNISLVANIA

Pitchers should join a club to get info from established pitchers in that club. Pitchers should keep pitching the turn or flip shoe until the feel a change should be made New pitchers should start pitching in tournaments as soon as they could so they get the feel of tournament action

JIM BALL 7 TIMES BCHA MENS 40FT PROVINCIAL CHAMPION

Why should I join a club - To use their pits and Club House for friendship and help in learning to throw.

Should I throw a turn or a flip; Do what feels comfortable. Try different holds. If forty feet player, recommend a one and a quarter turn.

When should I play in tournaments; That depends. Are they competitive, or just for fun. Explain the handicap system and that they don't need to be good players.

BERNIE LEPPER

The Basic and proven way to pitch Horseshoes

When I started to pitch horseshoes in 1958 at the Stanley Park Horseshoe Club in Vancouver It was strongly emphasized to me at that time NOT to throw a Flip shoe. The only two grips that were taught were 1 1/4 and the 1 3/4 grips and no one heard of a 3/4 turn at that time.

Most of the information about a Turn Shoe is based on pitching at the 40 ft. distance. At a shorter distance there may not be enough Air Time to get the Turn shoe to turn as intended and result in a ringer.

With the Flip shoe the grip is easy to look through before pitching and easy to learn to throw. Many beginners take up this grip than any other because a shoe flipped has a 50/50 chance to go on the stake because it is open half the time, but a shoe turned on a level plane has only one chance in four.

No mater which grip you choose, it will be necessary to do a great deal of experimenting or feeling out the best and natural turn that works best for you.

One of the earmarks of a good pitcher is the ability to detect the errors and get back on track. One of the most frequent problems is tightening up, and the hardest to conquer.

One of the problems of a beginner is the shoe landing on edge. This means that you have not leveled it up at the point of release.

The recognized way to deliver a shoe is on the backward swing the body naturally will lean forward and the knees should bend slightly and the arm should bend slightly. The arm should be let to fall at full length, and should be swung back until a slight pressure can be felt in the muscles of the forearm. It then should be brought forward in a straight line, retracting the path of the backward swing. As the shoe starts forward, you step forward toward the stake. Your step should be your regular walking step. The left foot should leave the platform as you start your forward swing and touch it near the foul line about the time the shoe is even with the right leg for a right hand pitcher. As the shoe swings upward, the knees straighten out and gives the shoe the boost it needs to carry it to the stake. As the shoe reaches eye level it should be released, and the follow through completed. The whole motion should be natural and easy. The average height of a shoe should reach at its highest point is about eight feet.

You must control yourself, if you are to control your game. Be patient. The first few practices are the hardest. If you have the courage to practice until the shoe starts to open and see some improvement then it encourages you to continue with more practice time.

JOAN ELMORE – 9 TIME WORLD CHAMPION – MULTI TIME TENNESSEE CHAMP

1. **Joining a club** gives you a whole different experience than you get in regular tournament play. You get to experience handicapping as well as being a member of the team atmosphere.
2. **Advise** them to try both turn and flip and let them pick the one that works best.
3. **I think leagues** work better in the winter months when regular play is not an option.
4. **I encourage** everyone to go to a tournament and give it a try. Hopefully they will get hooked like I did.