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LEARNING SHUFFLEBOARDS ORGANIZATIONS!

For those of you who are relatively new to the sport I think you will be astounded by how many different Shuffleboard organizations there are and for those of you that the game is old hat to will wonder why I don't talk about some of the other shuffleboard organizations. Well! It's because I'm still learning just as I was when I discovered these organizations. I'm sure by now some of you wish I would cease and desist, because you know all about everything I've written about and would like to hear about some things I don't know! Well, I'd like you to write a story about some of those things and sent them along to Chuck. Maybe he will print them and I will learn some new things and by chance there may be others out there that would learn something too.

I think we all start at the "club" level and learn to play the organized games offered such as round robin, turkey shoot and "Hoss" Collar. If we are lucky our club belongs to a "league" and that gets us involved playing with other people around town. We get to visit their courts and soon learn there are many different playing conditions. Next we may progress to the "Area" tournament level when one of the experienced players invites us to be their partner, if we win something we are really hooked and we move to the "District" tournament level where we get a chance to travel to clubs outside our area and meet even more people and the experience really begins to become fun! It's during this stage that we become aware that there is a "State" organization that offers tournaments for amateurs. We decide to try one and find that we meet people from an even larger area than our district. As we progress and move up the ranks we decide to try a "State Pro" tournament and we travel far enough to stay over night if we win. Now we are beginning to see places and meet people we didn't even know about, some of them "Legends". I must stop and say at this point that Jac Bergeron was the best to meet. He would seek out new players, stick his hand out and say I'm Jac Bergeron, what's your name? What a thrill, someone forgot to tell Jac he was a "Legend" I guess. I know I'll never forget the way he treated me.

It's while playing State Tournaments that we become aware that there is a "National" organization because one of the State tournaments doubles as a National tournament. Now we find that we can take a vacation and play a "National" tournament in another State. After awhile we learn that "International" tournaments are played in various countries with a number of countries taking part and think "wow" wouldn't that be neat, so we ask around to find out how to get on the team, we write our letter and imagine our amazement when we are accepted to join the team.

What a Game, what an experience, what a life! Shuffleboard can give it all to you, too bad more people don't know about it.

Earl Ball