

CHAPTER II

EQUIPMENT

WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN how this game requires a specially prepared "Court," marked in accordance with the official diagram shown in Fig. 1, the maximum width of the lines to be $1\frac{1}{2}$," the minimum $\frac{3}{4}$." All dimensions to be measured from line center to line center.

One end of court shall be designated as "HEAD of COURT," the opposite end as "FOOT of COURT." The scoreboard is placed behind the starting platform **ABJI** at the Head-End, i.e., outside of line **AB** (Fig. 1).

One specification for the construction of the court, as given in a bulletin issued by the Orlando Shuffleboard Club, is as follows:

"Over a bed of crushed rock or cinder to a depth below frost line, place a 4" layer of concrete (1 part Portland cement, 2 parts sharp sand, $3\frac{1}{2}$ parts $\frac{3}{4}$ " rock or gravel, 6 gallons water per bag of cement). Over this place immediately a layer of 60 lb. wire mesh or expanded metal, or $\frac{1}{2}$ " steel rods, crossed every 12 inches. Within 45 minutes after lower layer of concrete is poured apply a top layer of cement, 2" thick, mixed: 1 part cement, 2 parts sharp sand and 2 quarts best grade lampblack, well floated and troweled until perfectly smooth and level. Maximum tolerance: $\frac{1}{16}$ " per 6-foot straight edge. Cover the following day with clean sand and keep wet for six to ten days. Allow five days thereafter for drying. Then paint on diagram with good grade white lead or zinc paint. A stop made of 1"X3" boards bolted down flatwise at extreme ends of court is advantageous. The above can be varied to suit local conditions."

DISCS¹. Next we need for each court, four red and

¹ Obtainable from: The Plastic Moldings Corp., 859 Hathaway St., Cincinnati, Ohio; General Sportcraft Co., Ltd., 215 Fourth Ave., New York 3, N. Y.

To help you in remembering the good shooting habits contained herein, for the first three or four times that you play friendly games keep saying to yourself, short right, long left and then shoot. If you are left handed it is just the opposite — short left, long right (foot, of course) and then shoot. Most of the experts shoot using the two step method expounded herein. There are some fine experts who use one step and also a few who have a unique way of their own in shooting. The percentage of those experts who do not use the two step is so small that it is best never to think about any other way than the two step system.

Every time you shoot, you should be aiming at a target whether it be an actual disc, line, or an imaginary object. In this manner, your disc will stop on the exact spot you aim at in a great majority of times. You might call this spot shooting. Of course, the speed of the court and the condition of the discs have a lot to do with the amount of push from your body and/or your wrist action. Your follow-thru will become automatic if you constantly shoot in this manner. In one word, by doing this, you will have great FINESSE. If you master finesse, you will have greater success in dumping your opponent into the kitchen when you need kitchens the most.

Shuffleboard Courts

Construction and Maintenance

compiled by Omero C. Catan (6-1-66)

- SECTIONS: A. General measurements
 B. Construction of new courts
 C. Finishing touches
 D. Painting the diagram
 E. Backstop installation
 F. Repairing & relining old courts
 G. Court Dimensions
 H. Scoreboard Specifications

A.—In the construction of a single court, the main or center section is 6' wide by 52' long. Adjacent to and along the length of each side of this section are concrete strips 2' wide by 52' long, the center of these two strips (39' of it) are depressed to form gutters. This depression is at least 4" below the center of the court level where a tile drain is installed. These depressions — gutters — rise gradually from the center of the court 19½ feet toward each end of the court to the base line — which is at the end of the triangle. It rises at the rate of one inch in the final 6", where, of course, it would meet the entire level of the back area. An additional 4' of concrete is constructed at both ends of the court of which the extreme ends (all but 2" of the front) are raised to form a platform 46" deep.

In other words 46" of the additional concrete construction of 4' is raised 2" at both ends of the court. Finally, a 4" curb by 52' long is installed alongside the gutters and embankments of the court. Where there are two or more

courts, only one set of curbs are needed since the inner courts act as curbs for the courts adjacent to them. It is important to note that shuffleboard courts should be built in a minimum battery of four courts. It is almost impossible to carry out any sports program on anything less since it generally takes three days to conduct a 32 bracket tournament. The minimum overall space required:

NUMBER OF COURTS	WIDTH	LENGTH
1	10'8"	60'
2	18'8"	60'
3	26'8"	60'
4	34'8"	60'
5	42'8"	60'
6	50'8"	60' etc.

B.—Excavate the entire area needed (except for solid rock boulders where depressed enough) to build court according to schedule area above to a depth of at least 6" or more, making certain that you are well below the frost line. Here install main tile drain. Then pack and firmly solidify a bed of crushed rock or cinders in the excavated area. Now install the electrical conduits that are needed for night play, electronic score boards, water fountain etc.. Then construct framework for the main section, the inside measurements should be 6' wide by 52' long. This form should be about 6" in height. In the framework pour a 4" layer of concrete — 3000 psi or better grade — consisting of 1 part cement, 2 parts sharp sand and $3\frac{1}{2}$ parts of $\frac{3}{4}$ " rock or gravel. Use about 6 gallons of water to a bag of cement. Over this place immediately seven $\frac{1}{2}$ " concrete steel reinforcing bars lengthwise and $\frac{3}{8}$ " steel rods placed crosswise on 12" centers. Or, if you wish, in place of the rods you can implant wire meshing weighing at least 60 lbs per 100 sq. ft. — the heavier the better. The base slab should, in about 45 minutes time, be set enough to receive the top layer of concrete of about 2" in thickness that should bring it up level to the top of the framework which should have been very carefully placed so as to be level

longitudinally and especially checked to assure that both sides are on the same plane.

Allowable surface tolerance from level should be plus or minus $\frac{1}{32}$ " in six feet. This 2" concrete top layer should consist of 1 part cement, 1 part sharp sand and $1\frac{3}{4}$ part of coarse. The coarse aggregate to be $\frac{1}{8}$ " to $\frac{3}{8}$ " in size. In warmer climates the 2" layer mix could be 1 part cement and 2 parts sharp sand. Again, the 2" top layer should have had included in its mixture about 2 quarts of the best grade cement color, either green or black — green is best on the eyes.

C.—In either of the methods used above, the top layer should be well floated and carefully brought to grade with a straight edge. A long aluminum bar worked back and forth across the framework together with hand troweling until perfectly smooth and level will bring good results. When this has been accomplished then carpet float to a sand finish. A sponge is often used for this. It is at this point that extreme attention should be paid to the hardening of the concrete for it is now that you can get best sand finished results.

The following day start curing the concrete for about 5 days to a week by either using wet sand and/or wet burlap. Then allow to air dry for about another week. Then carefully go over the surface with a carborundum stone just sufficiently to remove sharpness and grit. The gutters, the side curbs and the back section may be concreted while the main section is curing and drying. Remember, for any and all sections of the court concrete only will be acceptable. Anything else that is substituted for concrete will be positively worthless to the sport of shuffleboard.

D.—When surface of the court is dry and clean then the diagram may be painted on it being careful to obtain straight lines with razor sharp edges. Lines should not be more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide. Be sure that all measurements are from CENTER to CENTER of lines. Measuring must start from center of court backwards to each end. There

are four ways that are generally acceptable to paint lines on courts:

1. A piece of felt, such as a strip of a conventional black-board eraser, is attached to a steel or wooden improvised handle and dipped into black shoe dye. This together with a straight edge as a guide does a good job on very smooth courts.

2. Masking tape is laid down completely outlining the diagram and a good grade of lacquer is hand brushed between the tape. This method produces sharp edges but is tedious and time consuming.

3. A frame is used covering the complete diagram and a good lacquer is sprayed. This method is fast and fairly good. However, it is not apt to do as perfect a job as step No. 4 because the frame of necessity is large and unavoidably there will be found small segments here and there of minute drippings or oozing from the line. It must be noted that whenever a frame or a partial frame,—template—is used only spraying will work.

4. By far the most popular method used is the single double-boarded 10 foot frame with flanged metal edges. When used with a good quality lacquer and a good sprayer it will produce the most satisfactory results.

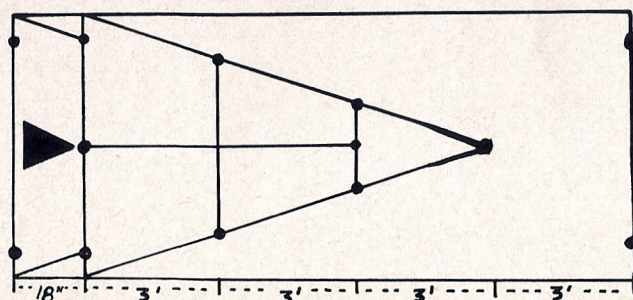
E.—Backstops installations, are not only part of the rules, but are of the essence to a shuffleboard court. The ideal backstop is made by a 2" by 2" by 7' 11" piece of lumber mounted to the platform. A 5/16" hole is drilled clear thru the 2" x 2", one foot from each of the ends. From the side that will be facing the platform, drill to a depth of about an inch and a quarter, a 1/2" hole, using the 5/16" holes as a center guide for the 1/2" bit. The 2 holes being complete, place the board flush against the platform and thru the holes mark a spot on the platform with either a small pencil or a small bit of a drill. Remove the board and drill two 1/2" holes in which you will install two lead shields preparatory to receiving two 1/4" lag type bolts. Now insert two sturdy springs — about 2 1/2"

long with a diameter of not less than 3/8" to 7/16"—into the 1/2" holes in the board. Place the board, with the springs (and larger holes) against the platform and insert the 1/4" bolt thru the holes, after first having made a RECESS to receive a washer and ROUND HEAD of the bolt, and screw it into the lead shield. The 1/4" bolt will be about 2 1/2" to 2 3/4" long, depending on the type of lead shield used.

F.—To avoid the tedious and repetitious remeasuring of the court, drill thirteen (13) 1/4" holes in each half of the court as per diagram Pg. 62. Drill all 26 holes deep enough that they will always be discernible when looking for them. Use a carborundum stone to remove all sharpness and grit plus whatever old paint that will come off without doing damage to the court, such as adding drifts or low spots thereto. Then clean off as much more paint as you can with a paint remover. It is not of the essence that all old paint be removed because in relining you will use another color. However, layers of paint per se cannot be tolerated. These layers of paint on the lines will stop a disc in the evenings when there is dampness or dew in the air as though a bulldozer got in front of it. Therefore, when layers of paint are noticeable on lines it makes a tournament match thereon prohibitive. Before painting new lines on the court, wash the entire court with Oxalic Acid or Tri-Sodium crystals mixed with water at 1/2 to 1/2 proportion. Now the court being ready to be lined or rather relined you will use the single line 10' frame (see D-4) using the holes as line guide centers. Again, spray with a good lacquer.

If you should want to STAIN the entire surface of a court (*NEVER PAINT IT*) you can obtain wonderful results by using SILICONE ACRYLIC STAIN — PATIO GREEN. You apply it with a short haired mohair roller. It takes about 3/4 gallon to one court, using one quart of D solvent to each gallon.

On new courts, repaired courts and old courts it is necessary to apply one or two coats of a good cement sealer



Dots
are
holes.

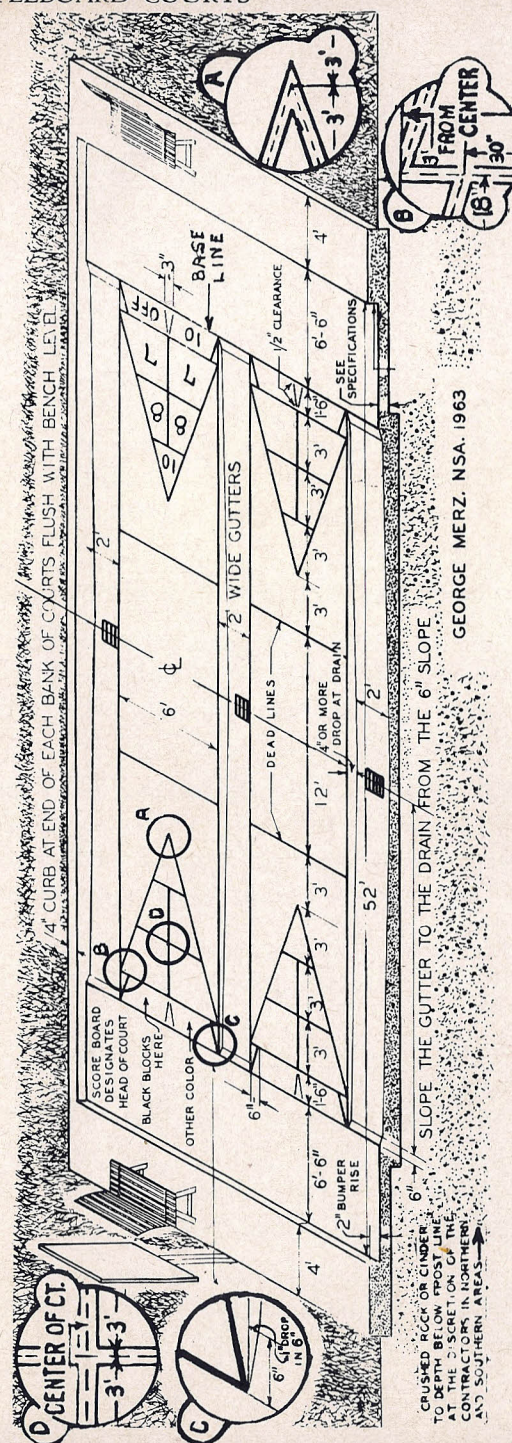
See
pg. 61.

every year. NEMAR and THORO-GLAZE are very good. An application of a liquid wax, with a mop, several times a year produces good results. BUTCHERS WAX is very popular. For slower courts, glass beads and/or an application in a few horizontal strips of silicone (from a mop-like dispenser) is wonderful.

CANOPIES should be constructed over the players' benches for shade.

G. See page 63 for general court dimensions.

H. See centerfold, pages 36 and 37 for scoreboard specifications.

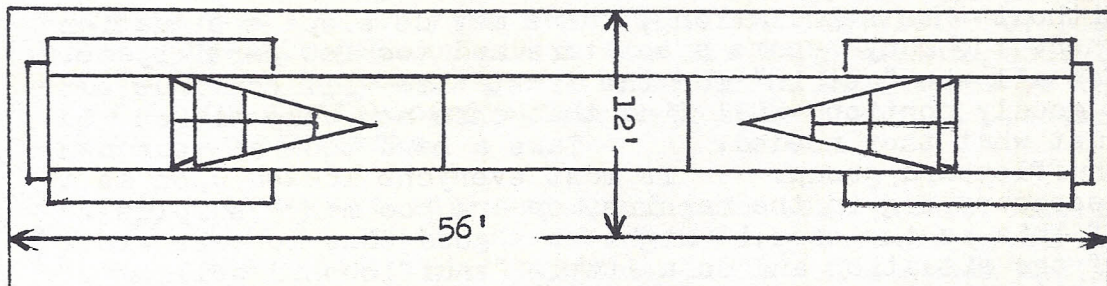


GENERAL COURT DIMENSIONS

SHUFFLEBOARD COURT CONSTRUCTION

.... Building your own court

The first consideration when planning to build your own shuffleboard court is of course, the location on your property. Assuming that you have ample space, try to locate the court so as to have it run north and south. This will minimize the sun glare problem, which can be very annoying. Allow ample space around the outside of the court for walking traffic.



Here is shown ... the minimum space needed (12' x 56'). More space is desirable, so as not to "squeeze" the action into a confined area. You will note that there are 4 added sections (2' x 12 1/2') one on each side of the starting areas. These are not a must, but for the small additional expense involved, they will add tremendously to the games enjoyment. They serve, both as standing area when shooting from outside positions and as "extra space" for played discs to stop upon.

By adding wood strip backstops fastened along the outside edge of these sections and also at the ends of the court, the discs do not scatter off the court into the dirt or sand. Also, no back bending effort is needed to gather them up.

If, for any reason, you need to cut down the job effort, you can eliminate the 4 outer sections and add them at a later time. Or, you can build only the 6' x 39' actual playing area first and then add the end aprons afterward.

After selecting the area for the court (this should be on high ground, if possible) remove about 2" off the top surface dirt and level the entire area. Pile up all the extra dirt out of the way, for later use.

continue on page 136

SHUFFLEBOARD COURT CONSTRUCTION

... Building your own court

LUMBER NEEDED for FRAME

4 pieces ... 13' 6"	} straight selected 2 x 6
4 pieces ... 12' 6"	
4 pieces ... 10'	
4 pieces ... 2'	
2 pieces ... 6' 1 x 6	
30 wood stakes ... 1 x 2, 18" long	
8 temporary braces ... 1 x 2	

5' x 52' wire mesh, 60 lb. size

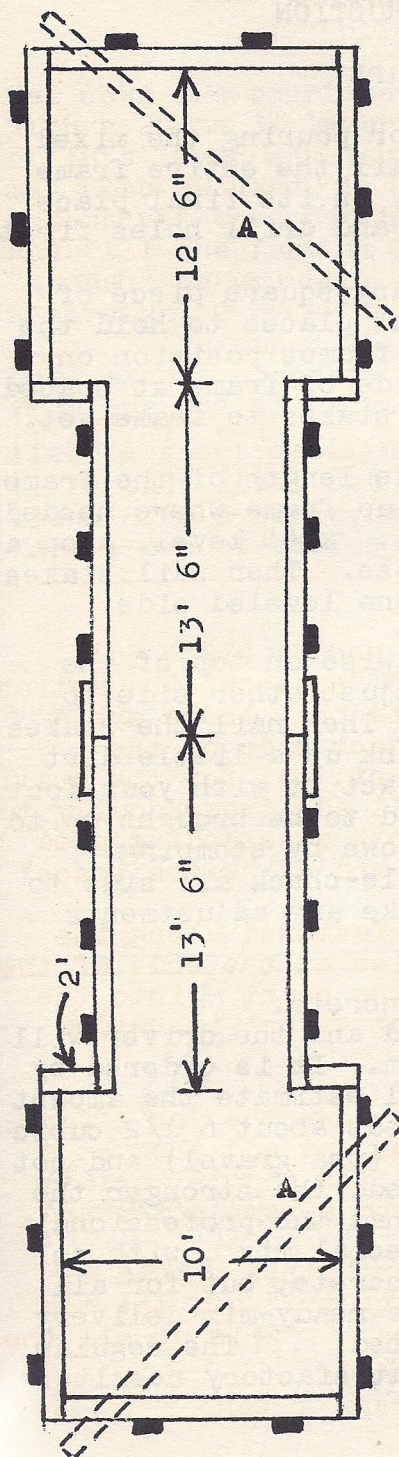
TOOLS NEEDED

straight shovel	rake
4' level	hammer
electric drill	#20 nails
hand saw	#8 nails
6' folding rule	hose
wood trowel	pails

These instructions are for building a single shuffleboard court. When building 2 or more courts adjacent to each other, the total job becomes less per court. As can be seen, the same 2 foot wide apron sections will serve adjacent courts, as will the common gutter space. The first court will establish general levels for any other added courts.

However, adjustments will have to be made in the apron measurements, as the 4" lower gutter between courts must be 39 feet in length and taper down at each end to allow all played discs to be slid up onto apron.

Some method of water drainage should be installed in the center of gutter.



SHUFFLEBOARD COURT CONSTRUCTION

... Building your own court

Now, you will build your frame, for pouring the mixed concrete. Work on the ground and nail the entire frame together, while it lays approximately in its final place on the leveled area. Use #20 nails and drill holes first to avoid splitting.

Test frame with metal square (or any square piece of plywood) and nail strips "A" at various places to hold the frame in a squared position. Check frames position on property and drive stakes along outside of frame at spaced points (shown on drawing).. Don't nail stakes to frame yet.

Now, bring to level, one entire side length of the frame using small pieces of wood to raise up frame where needed or tap down with hammer where needed. A 4' level, atop a straight 2x4 is best for this purpose. Then nail stakes securely to the 2x6 frame on this one leveled side.

By using the level and 2x4, crosswise on top of the frame, go along entire length and adjust other side to match the level of the first side. Then nail the stakes to 2x6 frame, to secure level. Bank up a little dirt all around outside of frame and compact it with your foot.

Fill in any inside spots that need to be brought up to level of bottom of frame, and pack down by stomping. Remove all temporary braces and double-check all side to side levels, being very exact and make any adjustments that are necessary

You are now ready to "pour" the concrete. This comes trucked to you ready mixed and the driver will chute it directly into the frame form. It is ordered by the cubic yard, and the supplier will estimate the amount needed by you (the job shown here, needs about 6 1/2 cubic yards). Specify a small stone mix (pea gravel) and not too much water, as the less water used, the stronger the final job will be. (we are aware that the professional shuffleboard court builders use a special mix, with no gravel, for the very top layer of concrete, but for all practical purposes and because of the ready-mix delivery problems, this step has been eliminated) The regular small gravel mix will produce very satisfactory results.

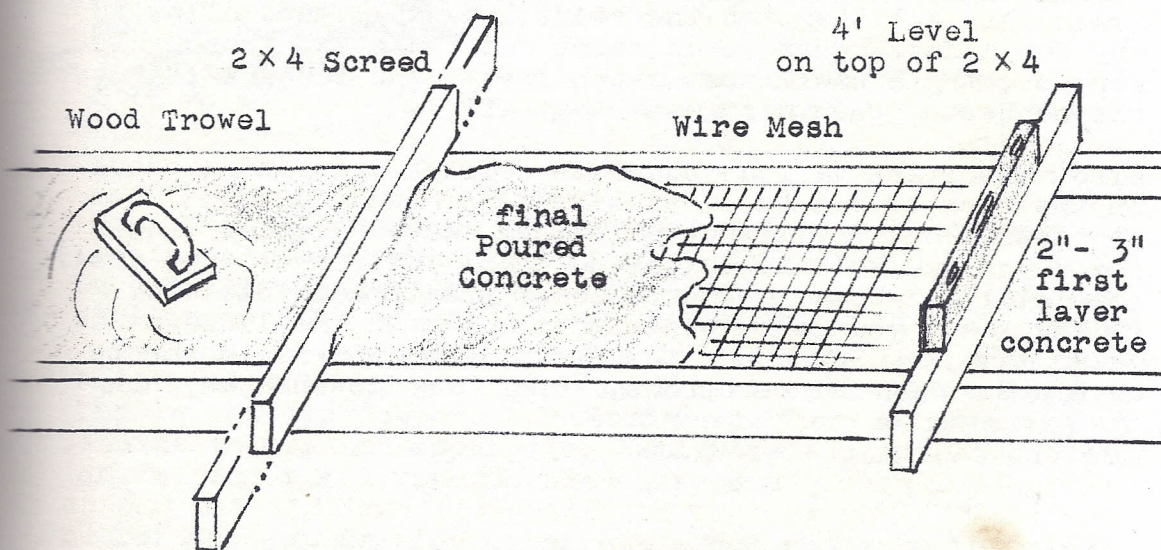
SHUFFLEBOARD COURT CONSTRUCTION

... Building your own court

Wet down the court before pouring. Pour entire court with a 2" to 3" layer of concrete. Place wire mesh on top of this layer and tap down to hold in place. Steel rods may also be used, if they are easily accessible.

Complete the pouring, thoroughly tamping as you go along and fill the form to the top. This time, you will need to "screed" as you pour along. This, is process of pushing a straight 2 by 4 back and forth crosswise, on top of the form. Together with a forward pressure to level off and push excess concrete ahead of screed. This will be done from one end of court right along to the other end.

After a short settling period, screed over a second time, to further level out the surface. Now, you will take a break for a while, allowing the concrete time to firm up. (have a cup of coffee and give your wife a big hug and kiss)



After a while, the surface will become stiffened enough to work upon. It is then troweled, or sort of circular rubbed with controlled pressure, that will both smooth it and level it at the same time. This is the only part of the project that requires a little "skill" but you should be able to get the hang of it in a relatively short time.

If a little more wetness is needed to help in easier working, dip trowel in pail of water, as you work along.

SHUFFLEBOARD COURT CONSTRUCTION

... Building your own court

After the court surface is all well troweled, your work is done until the concrete is fully dried(cured). This will take about a week (more time is better). After the first day, keep the concrete constantly wet, by sprinkling with a hose, periodically. The preferred way is to cover the court with old blankets,rugs, or anything that can be kept wet soaked all the time. When the curing period is over remove all covers and let the court dry out.

Then, rub over the entire court with a "carborundum block" which will remove sharp spots and roughness. Also, round off all outside edges of the court.

As a precaution against surface powdering, the new court can be treated with a solution of zinc sulphate and water. Brush this solution on the court liberally and allow to dry for a day. Then scrub court and flush off thoroughly. However, try a small test patch first, and if this stains the concrete, then don't use it at all.

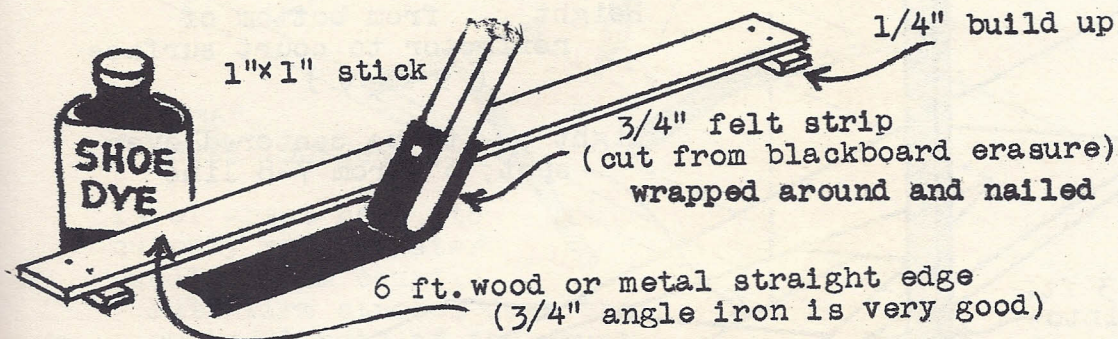
Also, there are various concrete sealers and conditioners on the market, but in my experience I have not found them necessary, but I will not rule them out. A good liquid wax,which you will apply to the court after the lines are completely striped, seems to do a pretty complete.job. In any case, you can expect to trace over the lines at a later time. For about the first year, the new concrete develops chemical reactions, which tend to shed anything that is applied to the surface.

And here is a WARNING Be prepared for an invasion of enthusiasts, who will quickly be attracted to this sociable game, and most likely try to crowd you off your own courts. You will have the "most popular backyard" in the neighborhood and also about the happiest.

SHUFFLEBOARD COURT CONSTRUCTION

... Building your own court

The next step is to mark the diagram lines, with a straight edge and felt marker (using black shoe dye). First, lay out all lines very carefully with a lead pencil, using correct measurements (shown on page 12). Double check this, because if any mistakes are made, the shoe dye is almost impossible to remove and correct.

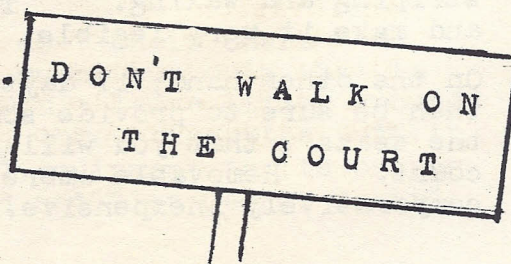


Pour a small quantity of the shoe dye into a low tin can (such as a tuna fish can) and carry this around the court in a shallow cake tin, as a precaution against accidental spilling on the court. Point up corners with small brush.

Wait a few hours for the dye to "set dry" and then apply a liberal coat of good quality liquid wax. Use a long handle wax applicator. Pour the wax into a container wide enough to dip the applicator head into. Start at one end of the court and work to the other end.

Let the wax dry for an hour. Then round up the "gang" and have a " GRAND OPENING "

Oh, before you do this,
put up a sign



RELEASE DATE: 7-12-94
(Please do not publish before this date)

PLANNING A NEW COURT

I'm not an expert on building shuffleboard courts. I'm not even an amateur on building shuffleboard courts. In fact, I'm hardly a beginner on building shuffleboard courts.

Yet despite this lack of knowledge and experience, I was appointed to a club committee to oversee building of two new courts. I was glad to be on this committee because, as a player, I longed for perfect courts. Yet, I had hardly the slightest notion on how to accomplish my dream of courts with no drifts.

The others on the committee had little more construction knowledge than I did. One member was a retired postmaster, another was a retired high school principal, a third an organist. What we had was a love of playing shuffleboard, but not the slightest idea of how to build good courts.

At our first meeting we had to decide which of our existing courts to replace. Of our total of 26, courts 11 through 18 were the possibilities, eight candidates in all. Each of us had a hated court or two that we wanted destroyed, usually selected because we had been victimized by its vicious drifts in a critical game. For instance, even though the meeting was held in 1993, I remembered a curving shot on drifty number 11 that had cost me a match I had badly wanted to win. I could still see the bending shot in my mind -- a shot I had made in 1975, a full 18 years earlier but still vivid in my mind.

Our first decision was a sound one. We decided to replace just two courts, no more. We wanted to see if the new ones would be better than the old before we spent all our money. To rebuild all eight at once and have them come out bad would be a disaster. We had courts 11 and 12 at the top of our hit list and decided to do them first.

Our second decision seemed sound also. For our contractor, we decided to go with a local concrete man, Bill, who had built 12 of our 26 courts. Those 12 weren't perfect, but they were OK and we felt we could work with Bill on improvements. His previous courts had been relatively straight, but his surface was rougher than we wanted. Courts need not be smooth, but his were a little like corduroy with hills and valleys running crosswise. Yet two of his 12 were much smoother than the others and we planned to tell him to simply match those.

So we had our plans and set a meeting with contractor Bill. His first question stunned us. "Do I have to use that awful grout? I can do better for you without it." We couldn't handle that question, in our ignorance, because we first had to ask, "What is grout?" How embarrassing to show Bill our inexperience so quickly.

Well, grout is a special topping mix of sand and concrete without stone. Most courts are poured six inches deep with five inches of standard concrete mix. Then one inch of grout mix is poured on top. This keeps the stone far below the surface and prevents pebble pop from pock-marking the surface.

We talked about this for a long time and concluded that since Bill had used grout on the previous 12 he'd better use it on these new ones. We stuck with a winner, at least we thought so.

We then toured our courts with Bill and discussed key dimensions and showed him what we liked about his previous courts and what we didn't like so much. He asked us a few questions and we had a good meeting of the minds.

I highly recommend such a field tour. Some folks have a notion that a written specification will tie down all the details. It would be great if that could be done and if the spec could be followed. It would seem simple to have everything in a spec and then have contractors bid. That's the way cities and counties are required to proceed and it just doesn't work. There are far too many fine points and there's far too much craftsmanship required. Courts are much more of a work of art than a city sidewalk is. We simply said "Build them like these over here."

A final agreement we made was that Bill himself would be on site 100% of the time during construction. He was not to delegate the work to his helpers and then leave. He was our expert and we wanted him there.

We felt we had done our preliminary work well. We were confident we were going to replace two of our worst courts with two new perfect ones. For the rest of the story, watch for next weeks column.

Lary Faris has played shuffleboard 57 years, has won 11 National championships, and is a member of the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. Questions and comments are invited and can be sent to Lary Faris, at this paper, 223 Jasmine, Lakeside, Ohio, 43440.

RELEASE DATE: 7-19-94
(Please do not publish before this date)

POURING A NEW COURT

As I rode my bike past our shuffleboard courts on my way to buy the morning paper, I could hear the noise of a jack hammer. My head turned and I quickly forgot my newspaper and headed into the park. After all, the start of our shuffleboard court construction project was far more significant than the President's latest statement on world affairs, or the stock market report, or even the ball scores. At least it was for me.

Bill, the contractor for our new courts, had a heavy piece of machinery that was pounding holes in court 11 and crumbling that six inch deep slab to bits and chunks. It was noisy and dusty -- and it was exciting. Our project to replace our worst courts, 11 and 12, was now underway.

It took about 12 hours to crumble the courts and lug the heavy rubble away. (I saved a few pieces as souvenirs.) This was heavy, dirty work that had to be done without damage to courts 10 and 13 and without destroying the park area around the courts. Bill did it well and gone were three gutters and two courts.

Next, Bill prepared the bed of gravel and stone that the six inch thick courts would rest on. He used some of the old gravel and some fresh fine gravel. He compacted it. Here's one of many key points where all locations call for different treatment depending on the soil, bedrock, temperature (it freezes up north in the winter), and materials available. We stayed with what had been done in the past even though we were tempted to experiment.

Next came drainage. Each gutter has a drain in the center and these are, of course, connected by a drain pipe that takes the water away. Bill had to carefully lay these out and measure them so they were located very precisely so that when the concrete came, all was perfect.

Next Bill set his forms. He used heavy metal forms so they wouldn't move under the coming tons of concrete. He setup a transit to get all points on the forms at exactly the same height. After all, the tops of the forms would establish the surface of the court. Bill was careful, he knew this had to be perfect. He then added his massive steel reinforcing mesh.

Then one dry morning at 7:00 a.m. Bill had the huge concrete truck arrive carrying almost six cubic yards of concrete. The truck pulled close and one poor soul had to wheelbarrow all that weight the last few yards. Gradually, the space between the frames filled as Bill and his helper used a notched straight edge to smooth, or screed, the concrete to a level surface about one inch below the top of the forms. Stones in the mix pocked the surface.

That truck left and another truck arrived. This one had the grout which was quickly put on top of the previous pour, filling the last inch and forming a stone free court top. Bill said timing was key because the grout has to bond and unite with the base concrete.

Bill and his helper then got on each side of the court and began to use a straight edge to screed, or smooth, the surface at the exact level of the top of the forms. They kind of sawed back and forth to keep the grout fluid as they progressed down the court. High spots were leveled and low spots were filled. All looked fine except there was a profound corduroy from the back and fourth movement from side to side during the screeding. I said, "Bill, that's not as smooth as courts 7 and 8. I'm afraid it won't be a good court." Bill said, "Well it's warm today and the screed hardened very fast." O.K. -- I learned temperature during the pour has a major effect.

Several of us got our heads together. Troweling of any sort had been prohibited by our committee. There are just too many courts where well-meaning contractors have troweled hills and valleys into courts -- imperfections that wouldn't get noticed on a sidewalk, but ones that are a disaster on a shuffleboard court.

We decided to bend our rule. Bill told us that, with the court already "set", troweling wouldn't change how level the court was but that it would smooth the surface. "O.K.," we said and gambled.

Then Bill got on one side of the court and his helper got on the other and down the court they traveled. I kept yelling, "Don't make the center high." This troweling would be lots easier if the courts were four feet wide or if the contractor had double length arms. It's a long reach to the center from the side.

I smiled. We had a new court. It did look good. Level, fairly smooth, it sat drying and curing. Whatever we had done, was done. There'd be no changing it now. But lots of work remained.

Lary Faris has played shuffleboard 57 years, has won 11 National championships, and is a member of the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. Questions and comments are invited and can be sent to Lary Faris, % this paper, 223 Jasmine, Lakeside, Ohio, 43440.

RELEASE DATE: 7-26-94
(Please do not publish before this date)

FINISHING THE COURT

Nothing politicians say is set in concrete. They can always change their words. I guess that means politicians wouldn't be comfortable making shuffleboard courts. Because once a shuffleboard court is poured, nothing can be changed. The surface and all the details are literally set in concrete.

Once our Lakeside court was poured and set, we couldn't change what had been done, but there remained many finishing jobs to get it ready for play. Here's how we went about doing this.

Our contractor said it was important to keep the courts wet as they cured, so we arranged to give them a good hosing frequently. Also, on the first night, when the surface wasn't firmly hardened, we arranged for a watchman. We knew there would be a temptation for young and old to scratch words into the surface. I myself, being from Cincinnati, considered scratching in "Go Reds."

On the second day the contractor returned to add expansion joints that would define the gutters. His helper did this and after he left we looked at his work and we were horrified to see that the gutters were going to rise to the court level at a point in the middle of the 10-off rather than the proper point about 4 inches behind the back line of the 10-off. This error would allow discs to glide out of the gutter at a point where they could disturb live discs in the 10-off and cause disastrous replays. We made a panic call to the contractor and he was disturbed that we were going to criticize his work. Yet when he saw what we had in mind he made a simple cut and all was well.

On the third day the contractor poured the gutters. As we had advised, he covered the adjacent courts with plastic to prevent the wet concrete from splattering. We suggested he trowel the gutters smooth to make them easy to sweep clean and to avoid scratching the bottoms of the discs.

On the fourth day we took a chance. Our courts manager had rented a big sander to get some of the paint off of the surface of our existing courts. While he was at it, he gambled and very lightly sanded the surface of our new courts. He went over them just once, trying simply to get rid of burrs and splatches. He didn't really do much to the surface. We're not sure if this was a good move, but it probably was.

Finally on the fifth day we decided to see what we had. The two new courts were swept and beaded. Out came the discs. We tried out the new courts. Our shots down the first court went straight and smooth. It only took 2 or 3 shots to conclude we had a great board. Shots down the center never moved left or right. There was no flutter as the disc traveled down the court. Then we tried the side. No problems there either. Every test we used gave a positive result.

On we went to the second court. There it took only two shots to see we had a drifter. At the head all shots went to the right. From the foot, all shots went to the left. Obviously, the yellow side was lower than the black side. We shot from all the spots to all areas of the court. The drift was always there, somewhere between 3 and 6 inches. We were disappointed, but at least the drift was an honest one, always there.

As I write this, the courts are just sitting. The concrete people call this curing, I call it waiting. We'll give it 30 days and then the courts manager will stain it green. Some say we should wait 60 days, but we don't have that much time (or that much patience.) After the staining, likely two coats, the white lines will be added. Then 2 coats of Nella-Seal will be applied. That should do it.

At that point we'll spread glass beads, get a good set of discs, and hold our breath, cross our fingers, and pray.

Building courts is a big job. I thought I could tell about it in one column but it has taken three to get it all described. Maybe this will be helpful to some of you. If any of you have comments and suggestions, please send them along to me. Thanks.

Lary Faris has played shuffleboard 57 years, has won 11 National championships, and is a member of the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. Questions and comments are invited and can be sent to Lary Faris, at this paper, 223 Jasmine, Lakeside, Ohio, 43440.