

TEN YEARS OF SHUFFLEBOARD

During the past summer, while not busy with the preparation of this issue of the PREVIEW, I spent considerable time studying those of the last ten years. Much information is to be found in them and I think that some of the facts can be brought out that will not only show us the trend of the past but will help us plot the future course of shuffleboard.

Ten years ago the PREVIEW consisted of 28 pages and there were 25 tournaments listed. All of these were open to any player wishing to enter, just as the expert tournaments are today. At that time we had 72 clubs with 30906 members playing on 1197 courts.

Pressure must have been brought on the officers of The Florida Shuffleboard Ass'n for it was at that time that the first tournament was scheduled that excluded all of the winners of the years gone by. This was the first Amateur Tournament, and they have grown in number until there were 25 during the past year. During that time the expert tournaments remained about the same even though we now have 202 clubs, 45,840 members and 2360 courts. This increase seems to be all amateur.

The amateur class has grown in size so that it is larger than the entire shuffleboard population was ten years ago, and we have the same condition that existed at that time. Some players remain as consistent winners in this division instead of going into the expert group. The officials in 1961 and again in 1963 made changes in the rules that should correct this situation. Move the top amateur players into a class where the play is a little better, thus giving them a chance to develop the best that is in them and at the same time make room for the many other amateur players that also like to have a chance to win.

Another idea that has received favorable backing in certain areas, is to permit the expert to return to the amateur class after playing a number of years without winning. I think that this has some merit and perhaps something can be done about it in the future.

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