

JUST REMINISCING

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When reviewing films of twenty years ago taken by Dr. Pettis, one of the mainstays of shuffleboard of that era, the writer recalls some of the refereeing practiced at that time, for that was when his interest blossomed in shuffleboard. He contrasts it with the refereeing of today.

It is not maintained that all referees were of the type about to be described, but there were those in State-wide and National tournaments who performed and made calls as though they were the center of attraction on the courts. For example, there was the fellow who would pound the end of his stick on the court next to the block just scored not once but at a staccato pace and yell rather loudly "7, 8, or 10" and the color, as the case may have been.

The tendency of calling numbers loud enough to be heard a number of courts away and by several at the same time, made it sound like a chorus, often confusing not only the audience but the players as well. Then there was the referee when the frame was completed, would call "7 red, 8 red, 8 black, 10 black and ten off black, etc." and end with a blast of "Final Score, play" simultaneously waving the stick high or wide to indicate for that side to commence play. Others would call "no score" while waving the stick over the court when no blocks were even near the scoring area. Most side remarks could be made but we'll let the foregoing suffice.

It is far more pleasant today to witness the contrasting smooth manner in which the referees call and indicate the score of the block. That is conducive to less noise on the courts and at the same time apprising the players and spectators of the score by prominently outstretched fingers held high over the court for all to see indicating 1, 2, 3 or more blocks as the case may be. How much simpler than "7 red, 8 red, 10 black," etc.!

True, some referees cannot be heard too well by the spectators, but at least the fingers indicating the number of blocks aid the players and audience in determining the score, as well as calling, say "15 yellow (or red) and 18 black" instead of each singular number as mentioned. The slight twirling of the stick for all to see helps indicate a kitchen block. On occasion a referee will point the stick to a good block that is close to another to show which is the good one.

Yes, there were some of these in the early days but now it seems to have become a universal way of refereeing and quite acceptable to the players and spectators.