



My name is Rosaire Biron. I am writing this open letter for the *Preview* in the hope that it will encourage other Hall of Fame members to write of themselves so that students of the history of shuffleboard can become acquainted with the person behind the name. More important, I have wanted to find a way to thank a great many friends, and apologize to many others. This sport has brought me great happiness, and some sorrow. It is very difficult for me to express my feelings, but there is much that needs to be said.

I was born on March 20, 1932, in the small town of St. Agapit in Quebec, Canada. I was the oldest of twelve children born to Gaudias Biron and Robéa Boucher. I am the father of six children and grandfather to five. Due to an inherited weakness that became disabling, farming became increasingly difficult for me. I began to spend the winter months in Daytona Beach, Florida. It was there, in 1978, that I discovered shuffleboard, and a wonderful new way of life was opened up for me. I won the State Amateur Singles in 1980; my good friend, Paul Gentry, won in 1979. After two years of amateur play, I became a Pro in 1980-81 and have accumulated 541 points to date. In 1983, Gordon Dodge and I won the National Doubles at Hendersonville. Tom Brown was my Ohio partner when we won at Lakeside in 1985, and Lary Faris was my partner when we took first place again in 1987. No one can be so successful without excellent partners, and I have been very fortunate. The following individuals have all helped me acquire Pro

points and this is my way of thanking them: Frank Berger; Roger Nadeau; Charles Madalone; Hans Streib; Bob Litts; Bob Jones; Ken Worden; Charles McGee; Jerry Anderson; Omero Catan; Paul Gentry; Jean Paul Brunet; Ray Larason; Glen Peltier; Austin MacDonald; Herb Holloway; Connie Tetu; Lee Jordan; Jean Biron; and Jacques Bergeron (who helped me qualify for the '94 Masters).

I have qualified to play in the Florida State Masters thirteen times, played ten, and placed first five times; second three times; and fourth once. But that is only nine. I withdrew from play in 1990, and that forfeit resulted in chaos at the Masters, hurt a great many people, and led to my disgrace.

An explanation cannot make up for all the trouble my withdrawal caused, but I need to try because I am so very sorry that I allowed pride to cloud my judgment. The Masters is a very grueling Walking Singles tournament that lasts three and a half days. No one should agree to play unless he/she feels reasonably certain of being able to finish. It really isn't fair to anyone. That is the reason I decided against competing in the 1994 Masters.. But I learned that lesson the hard way! Just before the 1990 Masters I had spent four days in a hospital in St. Petersburg. It was so important to me to participate that I ignored my physical problems. However, I became so exhausted and dizzy (from an inner ear infection), that all I could think of was that it was no longer possible for me to continue. Pride led me to play, and it was pride that kept me from complaining about how I was feeling. I just wanted to get home to Quebec where I could get medical attention. So I left - without saying anything to anyone. The trip was difficult, and I was hospitalized upon returning home. That same year, Herb Holloway had to withdraw when he became seriously ill. Herb's forfeit was forgivable; mine was not. It was obvious that Herb was much too ill to continue. The players were unaware of any written rules to cover forfeitures and many became quite upset over the decisions on handling wins and losses. The Director was faced with an almost impossible dilemma. But I believe the individual who was hurt the most may have been Win Craft. He won all three games from me and might have been the Masters Champion that year if I hadn't forfeited. I sincerely hope both of these fine men can forgive me and accept my apology.

The F.S.A. Board met in October of 1990 and, after hearing my letter of explanation and much discussion, voted to bar me from playing tournaments in the 1990-91 season. I should have attended, but I am French Canadian and have difficulty understanding English or being understood. Now I realize I should have at least tried to say how sorry I was, and still am, for causing so much trouble. Although some felt my punishment was extreme, I do not fault the Board. It was my pride that led to that devastating punishment.

In spite of my banishment from the sport I love, the F.S.A. Board voted me into the Hall of Fame in 1992. I was overwhelmed to receive such a high honor, particularly after my fall from grace.

As a member of the St. Petersburg club, I must offer one more apology for the unfortunate reception some F.S.A. officers and players have received in the past. We are proud of our club, where the first official meeting of the Florida Shuffleboard Association took place on Dec. 12, 1928. We all want to see our club return to its former days as the center of shuffleboard. We were pleased to learn that our bid for the 1995 Masters was accepted. We promise you a warm welcome, and hope to host a memorable Masters.

I cannot end this letter without thanking two very special friends. Lew Tansky has always been most helpful in keeping me informed about shuffleboard results and activity; and Pierre Latraverse has followed my career faithfully, both here and in Canada. No one is more fortunate in their friendships.

The 1993-94 F.S.A. Board did a great job, and I am sure that trend toward excellence in shuffleboard will continue. I was particularly pleased that they asked players to refrain from hard shooting and smoking while on the courts. They are to be respected for choosing to request consideration rather than adding more rules. I really love this sport, and anything we can do to make it more enjoyable for others is very important to its future.

ROSAIRE BIRON

Singles:

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	C/N
12	3	7	4	1

Doubles:

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	C/N
34	22	18	2	2

Total Points to Date: 541