

EARL BALL STARTED THIS SUCCESSFUL DISCUSSION BY SAYING THIS:

TOURNAMENT PLAYERS NEEDED

I was at the FSA Tournament in Bradenton yesterday and before the draw President, Dave Kudro, told me the tournament was down 12 teams. I don't know if that's men's and women's combined or just men but that's 24 players. We've been taking a hit yearly for a long time but much more so this season. I know all the excuses but that's just what they are, excuses! We, the FSA, need to take action and I believe that we need to give an incentive to those that have stopped playing the tournaments. I know and you know that many players have stopped playing the tournaments because they realize they can't win anything. It's time we start giving a point for each match won starting with the round of 32; you must win the match by playing. Yes, we would be giving out more points but that is the incentive and yes, over time it may help some get to the Hall of Fame but that's not a bad thing when you look at it from the health of the game tournament wise. I wouldn't change consolation, after all you lost the 1st match; I'd also leave the payout alone except maybe giving something for the quarters in a large tournament, size would need to be determined. It seems we need to give an incentive to bring back our great players that have stopped playing. We all know many players stop playing some or all tournaments when they make the Hall of Fame; 200 points. It seems like we need to give some award for every couple hundred points so the carrot is out there.

It would require a program addition and the tournament director to fill out more spaces on the report form but the tournament director has time available after the initial rush the 1st morning.

This would also cure the small tournament point problem.

There's not a one of us that doesn't know that waiting cuts into our tournament fields significantly, I listened to all the gripping yesterday, and yet we don't do the simple things we can do to help the problem. I was VERY impressed with the lecture Delores Brown, the tournament director, gave before the tournament. She told us to get the score card in immediately after the match is completed. That we would have 20 minutes for lunch from the time the card is turned in. That if you are put on notice that you are next up for a court that that was when you needed to go to the bathroom and get everything ready that you need to play. We know that putting the byes at the top of the chart eliminates having a number of teams waiting and looking at each other, in frustration, with courts empty. In a large tournament, like we used to have, spreading the byes was OK because we didn't have enough courts anyway; that is rarely the problem anymore. Little things like a two block lag instead of four and 75 points difference is a game shows we recognize the situation and are trying to make changes that will help.

We have been on the verge of losing our game from a tournament point of view for some time. We must act or we will no longer be on the verge! If you don't like what I've said, fine, then you say something but don't stand by and watch it go down the drain while you were silent! Earl Ball.

Larry Brown Speaks: "I sat down at my computer this morning, as always I went to the Shuffler website. The lead story is Earl speaking his mind on tournament players needed. I read the article 3 times and I knew I had to respond. I've been involved with shuffleboard on the district board for a number of years and a State Representative for a number of years. This is the first

time that I have ever heard a shuffler of super star status address the biggest reason why state tournaments attendance is in decline.

Over the many years the State Board has tried many different venues, through advertising more, encouraging more prize money etc. Earl has hit it squarely on the button why a large number of shufflers do not play in many state tournaments.

I use myself as an example. I'm not a Hall of Famer, I'm not a super star, I'm an average player, to every once and awhile, a good player. I have quit going to State tournaments because I realize I have no chance of winning. Now, I know all the super stars will say "practice more, practice more". There are a large number of players, like myself, that could shoot a 1000 discs a day and probably would not improve over 5 percent.

Now please understand, I'm not taking a shot at the FSA, because the first time in a number of years our president, Dave Kudro, is working hard to come up with ways to help attendance. Earl has hit it squarely on the head. Until they find a way for average players like myself, and many others to get a point or two, attendance will continue to decline.

I congratulate Earl for speaking his mind on this topic. I, for one, believe he is right on.

Ruth and I wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Larry Brown, CD State Rep. 2017 12 29

6 Responses to *Earl Speaks His Mind!! We Offer You The To Speak*

Your Mind!!!



1. **Michael Zellner** says:

[2017-12-27 at 22:53 \(Edit\)](#)

I wholeheartedly agree. Points don't cost anything and the dividends by giving a few more out outweigh the dwindling participation.

Liked by you

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2. **Maureen Bryan** says:

[2017-12-28 at 10:58 \(Edit\)](#)

Hi Earl, do you really think giving more points will entice more people to play shuffleboard? This will only give those who play for the point system more available points to their already goal. A lot of shufflers play for the enjoyment of the game, getting more involved starts at the district levels. When you think of it how many top pros play with beginners? How many play at the district levels. I know some of the best players won't play district, how are the beginners ever to learn the strategies of the game if these great players won't play with them. Do you ask these other players why they have stopped playing these

high tournament games? Many do not like the long drives to the areas, tournaments can take 2-3 days, some have the expense of hotels, and many do not the long waits they have to endure at a tournament. Some have even said it feels more like a job. Tournaments are not for everyone of course, but putting more points into the system is not the answer in my opinion. I myself have backed off in the travelling this year, I may do more next year. I do like the competition and like seeing all the friends we make along the way. For right now I play a lot in my own district. Regards Maureen Bryan, Fort Myers.

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3. **Bob Jones** says:

[2017-12-28 at 11:41 \(Edit\)](#)

I always appreciate Earl's comments and insights and agree. I hope major championships remain two out of three 75 point games. There are always some little things to increase efficiency such as shorter practice and lags. Enforcing length of time between matches. Engaging players with byes with activity to keep them feeling busy and appreciated. I am intrigued by the idea of ending a game with a 75 point differential, although I have seen such deficits reversed many times. Points for wins in early rounds will motivate some.

I am sure there are lots of smart people with ideas worth trying. It starts with listening to new players, friends, neighbors, and other sports. Non-championship events need to become incubators for change. Some innovation will succeed, some will not. In my opinion from Ohio, for elite level shuffleboard to thrive, we need to develop and grow a large base of recreational fun shuffleboard which might look very different from the tournaments we love.

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4. **douglas schmitt** says:

[2017-12-28 at 14:19 \(Edit\)](#)

since the 1 day play a certain number of frame games "tournaments" are so popular how about somehow using that format to reduce the field on the first day to top 8 singles or doubles teams and the second day quarters through finals played as traditional

tournament. players or teams with the most wins on first day advance to second day. maybe 5 games of 24 frames doubles switch colors in middle for first day as an example. break ties for advancement to second day with a playoff at end of first day would be pretty exciting. not for all tournaments but a good way to transition one type of player to the next level and still have the best players compete the second day for points and money.

Like

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o **Rosaire Cote** says:

[2017-12-29 at 10:14 \(Edit\)](#)

I disagree with Earl about changing the points system, but I agree about giving an award every 200 points !!!! like Gus Bondi told me one time "Points are hard to come by" Thank you. Rosaire Cote

Like

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5. **Sue Krynak** says:

[2017-12-29 at 15:29 \(Edit\)](#)

I totally agree with all Maureen Bryan's comments. I love the game of shuffleboard and thrive on tournament competition , but traveling long distance and fighting rush hour traffic is just too much. As she said, feels more like a job. I don't play for points. I play for love of the game.

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Glen Peltier Reacting to Earl's Proposal. 2017 12 30.

All my career I have heard, make changes. In the point system, in the 75 point game etc. I think the fsa have done a great job of keeping our game healthy for so many years. It is not the Hall of Fame, the green jacket etc that is as important as the wonderful game itself. The fsa is made up of 7 district complete with each having full boards. The entire fsa do what

they think is best for our game. Every sport has its ups and downs. Instead of complaining, there is much to be done in every club to help. Our Clearwater club has many members who give much to the club and work hard to make it a success. I get tired of hearing negative things regarding our game. If people think it is too hard, there are many who will fill your shoes. Shuffleboard will survive. I would like to see the PRO circuit to stay strong. There are many places to play shuffleboard at a lower level. We need one level that is strong and the envy of every other shuffleboard association. I am over the hill but will continue playing the game at the highest level I can. Clarence Wright said at his farewell speech, the toughest thing being president was dealing with all the newest players wanting changes only to change their minds once they become good. We have a great game, Someone made it great before we came along. Let's not be the one who make it an old mans game. Glen Peltier.

Henry Strong Speaks: I have read all the comments and really hesitate to get involved, but here I go. I will share my view on shuffleboard.

When I first started playing shuffleboard I played it because I loved the game and didn't know anything about points, district, state, national, international I played because I loved the game and believe it or not played more then, than now.

My wife and I would go to a dinner dance at our park with Don and Linda Raymont and after dinner Don and I would bring our ques along and play shuffleboard while our wives would line dance.

I know players who are close to getting into the H of F and are saying once I get in I will be cutting back playing tournaments(don't know it is because they are in the H of F or tired of travelling)

The FSA board should follow pro sports model when they brought in the salary cap in certainly levelled the playing field and made every team competitive.

I suggest the FSA board take a stand that if you are in the top eight players (qualify for the state masters) for three consecutive seasons you can only play a maximum of 5 tournaments together the following season.

This would force them to find another partner who other wise would never get the chance to play with the so called best players and would encourage the new partner to want to improve and also give him hope.

The worst thing that could happen to shuffleboard is to change the state pro tournaments, it

gives everyone wether am or pro a chance to play.

There is many different levels of shuffleboard where one can find his or her level of involvement.

I am one of those people who don't play many district tournaments because frame games and they are draws, I am not going to complain about it because it is what it is and just because I don't like it that doesn't mean it needs to change it means I need to find something else I want to do that I enjoy more.

Henry Strong