

BCA Nationals Las Vegas



Cover Photo Credit: (l to r) Noel Campos (David Thomson), Tim Joseph (Don "Cheese" Akerlow), Donald Harp (David Thomson)

Article and photos courtesy of David Thomson ©mediumpool.com

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

The 32nd BCA National 8-Ball Championships, May 9-17, 2008 - "The Greatest Pool Tournament in the World!"

Year after year the BCA National 8-Ball Championships is touted as "The Greatest Pool Tournament in the World!" and for good reason.

The BCA National 8-Ball Championships is the longest running, amateur tournament presented by a national pool league. The first championships were staged at the Dayton Convention Center in Ohio in 1977. The tournament's growth has required larger and larger venues and The Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, provides over 100,000 feet of ballroom and meeting space. Pavilions overflow with an ocean of Tour Blue Simonis Cloth, dotted with Super Aramith Pro balls on Diamond "Smart Tables." The hotel's room quota quickly sold out to ardent pool fans, and their families, 60 days before the event.

Predator has joined forces as a Platinum Sponsor and added a selection of their POISON CUES as prizes for the amateur players.

The billiard industry recognizes the BCA National 8-Ball Championships as the place to be in the month of May. No other tournament unites more amateurs, professionals, league operators, referees, vendors, and spectators in a shared experience that commands the title of "The Greatest Pool Tournament in the World!"

This year, the playbca.com production surpassed member's wildest dreams.

More than 7100 players, from 17 countries, competed in 20+ events in the hunt for \$750,000 in prize money. And, if that's not enough, the BCA Pool League members, men and women alike, love pro pool. Hence, the long-standing tradition of bringing the world's elite players to Las Vegas. This year, BCA National 8-Ball Championships hosted the biggest field of back to back pro action in its history.

Matchroom Sports delivered its World Pool Masters tournament. Dragon Promotions, in association with Diamond Billiard Products and Playbca.com, relocated the Predator 10-Ball Championships, and The Action Report, sponsored by OB Cues, drew record crowds with their big money, one-on-one TAR Pit marathons.

The league, also, offers pros a place to play. Says CEO Mark Griffin, "You can't get so good in our league that you don't have a place to play. Your membership doesn't become invalid"

So, it was no surprise when WPBA champion Kelly Fisher won the

Women's Grand Master Singles, or that Diamond Derby City Classic winner Jason Kirkwood is the 2008 Men's Grand Master, but what about Noel Campos? Noel, from Modesto, California, won the Women's Open Singles, and \$6000...from a wheel chair... and, she's legally blind!

Griffin's new bride, Sunny, showed joy as she captured the Women's Player Member Singles title. Had Sunny gotten a few pointers from her new hubby? Before he took reins of the league, Mark actually had time to hit a few competitive balls himself and had achieved Master status in the league system.

Mike Williams and Susan Williams Chandler overpowered Mary Rakin & Colin Mazaikain in the Open Scotch Doubles. Mary, surely, had one of the most memorable days of her life; she had also secured second against Noel in the Women's Grand Master Singles.

Randy Goettlicher, who had been freely educating league members at the Cue-Tech Pool School all week, finished runner up against Don Harp in the Super Senior Singles. Randy, obviously, practiced what he preached.

Men's Open Singles titlist Danny Barnes pocketed \$11,000, while Sam Kirby got \$8,000, and Shayne Morrow \$6,000. Hey, that's \$25,000 right there, and more than most Pro events. Who says pool doesn't pay?

Canada's Tyler Edie exacted revenge on being last year's runner-up as he won the BCA Pool League 9-Ball Challenge. Demi Jelatis from Brooklyn Park, MN took second.

Laura Smith corralled Efren, Bustey, Mexico's Rafael Martinez, Allison, Gerda, and a slew of other pool celebs at The Billiard Education Foundation's annual Challenge of the Stars. Members had too much fun as the fundraiser lasted into the wee small hours.

Dr. Cue, Tom Rossman, served as instructor, entertainer, and judge of the 16th Annual BCAPL National Artistic Pool Championship. Standing room only crowds swelled into the lobby as Members got to compete against other members as Tom held court. Jason Kane, from New York City, outtricked Los Angelesian Josh Ulrich in the finals.

The Speed Break contest was nailed at 32.7 mph by Jared Bailey. These are just a few of the more memorable moments. Space limits us. Please visit playbca.com and check the results of the more than 3,000 members who cashed in this year's 32nd BCA National 8-Ball Championships. You're bound to know, at least, one person. And next time you see them, ask "What's the greatest pool tournament in the world?"