

Going, Going, Gone

All around the country casinos are taking out their silver strike machines. Some, like Circus Circus in Reno reinstalled the silver strikes machines with a new set of six distinctive styled designs featuring Emmett Kelly.

Archie Black last quarter wrote about the few machines that are still in play in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Here in the Midwest we found that Prairie Meadows in Altoona, Iowa has just discontinued their quarter machines which put out the eight Hollywood Notables and the four animal strikes. They still have the \$1 machine featuring the set of five \$20 race horses and the \$5 machine where you can win the \$200 silver strike. We asked around to see if the machines would be brought back and no one seemed to have any answers.

Gary Stathatos was in the Lady Luck Casino at Bettendorf, Iowa this fall and discovered that they had taken all their machines out in August. They had around twelve different silver strikes. This will make it very difficult to try and get a full set from there.

The Winnevegas Casino in Sloan, Iowa discontinued their silver strike machines in 1996. In two years they had put out 20 different strikes.

Ray Moritz of Missouri told us about the sad state of affairs in the Kansas City, Missouri casinos. Harrah's is down to one machine in their North Star Casino. The Flamingo in Kansas City has also taken theirs out. Station Casino's machines are gone.

Mississippi has also pulled machines. Casino Magic of Biloxi no longer has the machines along with Bally's of Tunica.

In Minnesota, Shooting Star of Mahanomen, took out their silver strike machines sometime ago. Treasure Island at Redwing, Minnesota only removed them last year.

There are probably many more that are not listed. I would be interested in receiving e-mail or letters informing me of what is happening or has happened outside of Nevada.

The above is the problem, now how do we go about solving it?

My husband and I have talked about this situation to many of our collector friends. Here are some of the solutions we have discussed.

We go to the casinos whether they have the strikes or not and talk to whomever is in charge of getting new machines. We would need to take some of our literature from the Club, perhaps our lists of strikes that we do have. We have even found that some of the casino personnel have no idea what we are talking about so it is imperative that we have a silver strike to show them.

We need to know approximately how many people out there are collecting the strikes. The membership list that is put out by CC&TGCC is not informative enough. We

and our friends are telling everyone in the club to fill out their application by writing in their interest - Silver Strikes. According to the last membership list only about four persons listed SS. Hopefully the membership application can be changed to list Silver Strikes, but until that time all of us silver strikers need to write it in.

A big problem we have is that none of us are being consistent in what we call our hobby. Tokens have been interchangeable, so you don't always know for sure what a person is collecting. We all need to agree on what to call them. How about letting me know the best name for our strikes?

One of our trader friends estimated that there are 700 of us. We think there are many more. To have any clout with the casinos we need real numbers.

Another thing that we can do is to pick up some of the "How are we doing" forms that all casinos seem to have. We have filled them out and under comments have written to the effect that the casino was great except they do not have the silver strike(commemorative coins) machines. If they have the machines then it is most important to compliment the casinos and tell them that it is one of the reasons we chose to come to their casino. Everyone likes a pat on the back.

I feel very strongly that the Club needs to recognize the silver strikes as they do the chips and the tokens. Again, the casinos would be delighted to be singled out as having the best design, etc.

My husband and I each carry a silver strike with us and talk to anyone who will listen. Many people are not even aware of the strikes. Others have seen the machines and didn't understand what it was all about. Some have taken them home and not knowing what else to do with them has thrown them in a drawer. Most people are surprised to learn that we have an organization. We have sent out material and application blanks to whoever has asked for them.

I am sure there are many more constructive things that we could do and if you have some ideas, please send them to me and they will appear in this column as space permits. After all, the collecting of silver strikes is so unique as you cannot walk up to a table or cashier cage and buy them. They have to be won by playing the machines.

Mary Lou Waterbury
10284 Saratoga Street
Omaha, NE 68134-2541
(402) 493-8255

e-mail: MLWATERBRY@aol.com

For those of you who tried to contact me in regard to my last column, I ask your forgiveness for the dumb thing I did. I forgot the aol in my e-mail address.