

THE INFORMATION BOOTH

Michael Knapp

Welcome to another installment of "The Information Booth." For those of you who are reading the column for the first time, I try to provide some information about unidentified flying chips (UFC's) submitted by members for identification, and to answer questions about casino history, chip history, or related subjects.

As I always do, I'll begin with some answers to previous UFC questions. Also, I repeat my request for participation by club members. This column is only of value if you take time to write to me with identifications of chips you recognize here in the column, and if you send *legible* photocopies (full size is a must; black and white is preferred, and please *do not send enlarged copies or color copies*) or samples of chips you'd like identified. Please don't assume that if you recognize a chip, someone else will. Don't assume that "everyone knows what that chip is." If you have information which may be of help to other members, please share it through this column.

There are always far more unidentified chips than there are members who write to me with answers. The purpose of this column is to try to identify chips that our members ask about. It's important to share your knowledge of chips that your fellow members may not know about. Come on, collectors: help!

You will notice that very few of the chips which appear in the column are simply photocopied. That's because many older chips do not have enough contrast to photocopy well, and if they will not photocopy once, they certainly will not photocopy a second time when the magazine is published. As a result, I hand-illustrate most of the chips pictured here. It's a painstaking process, because I make every effort to make sure that each chip illustration is as close as possible to its original version. That way, recognition and identification may be possible.

Please follow the following simple rules when submitting chips or copies for inclusion in "The Information Booth:

☞ If you have a chip that will not photocopy well, please send it, packed carefully. If you'd like me to

return it, please enclose return postage.

☞ Black and white photocopies only, please! Believe it or not, it's actually more difficult to work with color photocopies than with black and white, even though they look prettier when you copy them!

☞ No electronic scans, please! Scans are virtually impossible to work with, because they're almost never actual size. If you have a scanner, I know you like to show off the results, and electronic transmission is certainly faster and easier than (gasp!) taking pen in hand and writing a note, but please, *if you want your UFC to appear in this column, don't send me scans!*

☞ Legibility is the key: *Please realize that if you cannot read what is printed on a chip clearly after you photocopy it for the column, neither can I, and illustrating it will be impossible.* In such a case, you may send the chip to me, *with return postage* if you would like the chip sent back to you.

Also, please realize that if you recognize a chip published here as a UFC, you have information that your fellow collectors do not have. Please share. That's the whole point of this column. What is common knowledge in one area of collecting is completely unknown in others. For those of you with answers or questions, please share your information by writing to me at P. O. Box 340345, Columbus, Ohio 43234.

As usual, we'll begin with some identifications of previously-published UFC's. The volume and issue number of the magazine where the chip first appeared is shown in parentheses so you can see the illustration if you wish.

UFC 1028 (10/2): Ed Hertel and Gene Trimble have been able to verify that this chip was used at two different clubs in Seguin, TX: the **Red Mill** and the **Orange Bowl Club**, both open from 1946 to 1948, when the Texas Rangers closed them down. The owner of the clubs was Martin Weldon Roberts; hence the initials **MWR**. Great detective job, Ed and Gene!

UFC 1192 (11/4): T. R. King has confirmed that this chip was delivered to the **Horseshoe Club** in Las Vegas in 1954, three years after it opened.

UFC 1193 (11/4): There are two possibilities for this small crown chip depicting a **paddlewheel steamboat**, according to manufacturer T. R. King. It could have been shipped to the Tahoe Tavern in 1951 or it could have been shipped to **Ken Stegall** in Van Nuys, CA in 1968. According to *The Gaming Table*, Tahoe Tavern was open from 1901-1940, so we have to assume that the chip was made for Stegall. Who he is and what the chips were used for, we don't know.

UFC 1195 (11/4): We finally have the definitive word on the **Edgewater** chip, from research which Jim Episale has conducted. Jim found the chips in Biloxi, MS three years ago and bought them from a slot route serviceman who had seen the chips in use. He confirmed with Howard Herz, who has the records of the Mason Co., that the chips were shipped to Clay Reeves in Gulfport, MS. Jim's concluded that the chips were used at the Edgewater Hotel in Biloxi. Actually, Jim's learned that gambling at the Edgewater was not conducted in the hotel itself, but in an outbuilding which still stands on the property. The hotel itself was destroyed in a hurricane in 1969.

UFC 1198 (11/4): Jim Rauzy tells us that the **OWL** chip was used in the card room at the Owl Club Cafe in Tulare, CA.

UFC 1204 (11/4): Sometimes we not only receive an identification of a UFC, but a great story as well. That's the case with the **Higgins Smoke Shop** chip, which Bill Rouleau has identified for us. Maurice Higgins owned and operated the small club (which we believe was a poker room) in the basement of 700 Main Street in Rapid City, SD in the 1950's and 1960's. The main floor was occupied by the Orchard Room lounge and bar. Gambling being illegal, the sign outside the card room actually said "Pastime Smoke Shop." Confused yet?

Now for some new UFC's sent in by members for this issue. As always, I use a \$ next to the chip illustration to indicate that there is a denomination on the reverse side. If you see no \$ or other notation, you may safely assume that both sides of the chip are identical.

UFC 1218: Hmmm...**Log Cabin**, eh? We turn to our trusty dog-eared copy of *The Gaming Table*, and we find no fewer than 11 different Log Cabin entries. Now what?! Well, the large crown mold, we know, was mostly used in the west: especially California and Nevada. So we'll eliminate the two possibilities from IN and MT. Far more large crown mold chips are from CA than anywhere else, so without specific and

reliable proof, we'll eliminate the 7 NV entries as well. We're talking educated guesswork here, not reliable identification, mind you, because several of the NV entries are for clubs old enough to have used large crown chips, and it's possible that this Log Cabin chip was used in NV. Without specific proof, though, I always hesitate to attribute a chip to NV, especially when the mold is most often seen elsewhere.

So what are we left with? A "location unknown" entry and a closed Log Cabin card room in Yreka, CA. That's the one that has my vote! Without further specific proof, I'd put this chip in my album for California.

1218



1219



UFC 1219: Doc Finstuen, who spends his free time doing individual personal research for those of us who are a lot lazier and whose spouses have better things for them to do on weekends, managed to take a trip to Kansas City, MO to visit the old Jack Todd location. Todd was one of the most prolific chip distributors in the country. Like most chip distributors, Todd's chips were actually manufactured by The Burt Company in Portland, ME. Todd did the hotstamping and distribution after receiving blank chips from Burt. Doc found the building that used to be occupied by the Jack Todd Co., and which now houses a delicatessen. He also found this chip, along with two pairs of dice bearing the same EOS initials. Does anyone have any idea where the chips were used?

UFC 1220: This chip was used in the **Rex Club** card room, Salinas, CA, 1959-1986.

UFC 1121: Clinton Boyle, who sent us the copy of this CC chip, believes it was used at the illegal Crescent Club in Biloxi, MS. Can anyone confirm?

UFC 1122: Tom Hitselberger sent us this one. Now I know that Tom lives in Northern Virginia, the D.C. suburbs. Seems pretty likely to me that this **F.E.A.** chip was used in the underground casino operated by the Federal Energy Administration across the Potomac River from where Tom lives. Sound reasonable? Yeah, right! Anyone have a clue?

UFC 1123: Here's another unknown. I doubt that OPM stands for Other People's Money, but anything's possible!

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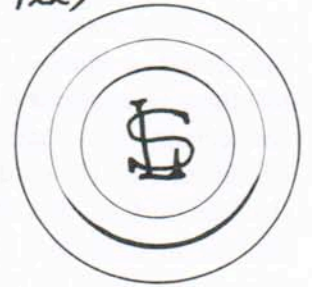
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UFC 1124: This GBL chip exists in at least three denominations: \$1, \$5 and \$25. That leads me to believe that it was a casino chip, not a personal chip. Does anyone know where it's from?

UFC 1125: This certainly seems to be an address, which would lead to the conclusion that the chip was used in an illegal club. **610 East Broadway** could be almost anywhere, but we have the additional hint of what I assume to be the name of the town: Midway. Does anyone recognize the chip?

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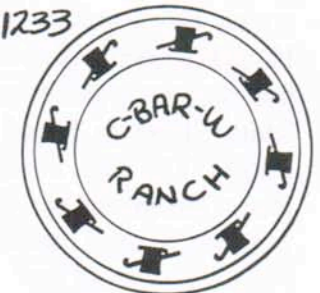
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The remaining chips are completely unidentified. If you know them, let me know and your information will appear in the next issue's column!

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In addition to the members whose names are mentioned specifically above, the following members also provided information or new UFC's for this column: Ted Brown, Bob Ginsburg, Steve Goodrich and Bill Miller.