



Table Shuffleboard Association, Inc.

TABLE SHUFFLEBOARD ASSOCIATION, INC

November 5, 2010

The Table Shuffleboard Association's Board of Directors,
TSA Associate shuffleboard community, friends and family
proudly present the Hall of Fame Induction Award to
Tommy Workman on this 5th day of November 2010.

TSA Board of Directors & Associate Members

Table Shuffleboard Association, Inc.

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Debbie Sexton, TSA Secretary

11765 West Avenue Box 345

Cell (210) 287-3792

davedebsexton@att.net

Special thanks to Dave Shewbridge for making this booklet possible.

Also, special thanks to Troy Tolbert for nominating Tommy and Jim Martin for the testimonials and interviews. Thanks Troy and Jim!

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Tommy Workman

"Mexican Tommy"

Table Shuffleboard Association

Hall of Fame Induction

November 5, 2010



**Table Shuffleboard Association
Hall of Fame Inductee**



"Mexican Tommy" Workman

Tommy was born in Riverside California on September 28, 1932. He worked as a Longshoreman from 1967 to 1994. Tommy has seven children, several grandchildren and great grandchildren. He still resides in California.

Tommy has played shuffleboard since 1950. During a recent interview with Jimmy Martin, Tommy said; *"I learned about shuffleboard by watching. I shined shoes at the age of 10, and every bar I went into had a shuffleboard. I was observing the money transactions. In 1950 when I was 18, I started playing. My future brother-in-law who was older than me played at the Birdcage in Wilmington (California) and they let me play with him"*

Tommy learned a lot more about the game at the Homeport Bar, also in Wilmington. *"I beat everyone at the Homeport. John Snow was one of the top players years ago. We played for beers and I decided to take the cash instead; a quarter, 15 cents, whatever was the cost of what he was drinking. I won 11 times in a row. I was on top of the world."* Tommy entered his first tournament in 1953, but he lost to the great Bob Miles who was his idol.

From the mid-50's to about 1967, Tommy went on road trips with Long Beach Jim McDonald as his backer. *"I thought I'd be going for one day, but I'd be gone a week. I needed to make rent money and to feed the kids. As long as I was hungry, I was a hell of a player. Jim took me out to Washington, Oregon, California, New Mexico, Arizona and the mid-West. it was tough."*

In 1975, Tommy suffered his first stroke. He had to take a year off from work and spent time at the PM Tavern. *"My hands were paralyzed, so I started forcing myself to play. I found I could still play but not as well as before. I could still beat most people, though."*

Despite health issues and accidents, Tommy started playing shuffleboard tournaments again in 1986 and embarked on a winning record.



Congratulations Tommy!



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Troy Tolbert

I first met Tommy in the early or mid 60's. I was his backer on my \$37 disability check for a short time before becoming a player myself. At that time, Tommy was the best around. He could always beat Billy Mays, Bob Miles, Jerry Gregory, KC Chuck or Bill Fovry.

Tommy didn't like to go on the road, but he did go to Visalia with me and Jim McDonald and we had no problem in those days of winning. Probably the best he ever did was when he went to New Mexico and beat Felix on his own board. Tommy and I only played each other once and that was after Tommy's best years. I have often wondered how it would have ended if we had played when we were both playing our best games. The boys from Texas, the East or the West coast could not beat Tommy when he was in his prime years.

It's been a pleasure to know him.

Jim Martin

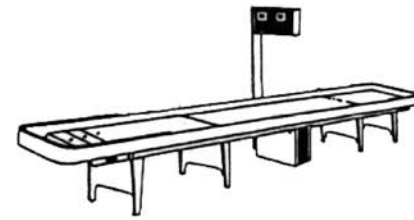
Tommy is widely considered one of the best players of the 1950's and 1960's. He traveled up and down the West Coast, earning a living with his play. He was perfecting the short game and the finesse aspects of the game back when most players just hit weights and lagged. He has also helped many new players learn the game, even in the days when that was frowned upon.

Jim interviewed Tommy in August 2007. Among Jim's observations about Tommy ... "Tommy was also known for telling players how they could have beaten him - once the match had ended. "Gentleman" is a term used predominately when people describe Tommy."

When Jim asked Tommy if he had anything else to say at the end of the interview, Tommy replied; "*It's been a great life.*"



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Tommy's Shuffleboard Accomplishments

- 1963 - 2nd place Singles California State Championship tournament in Martinez, California
- 1967 - Tommy was mentioned in *Sports Illustrated* article "The Hustle of Texas Billy" By Gilbert Rogin September 4, 1967.
- 1986 - 2nd place doubles with Jimmy Kennedy Warehouse tournament Temecula California
- 1987 - 2nd place doubles with Louis Lusero at Stagger Inn Tournament.
- 1988 - *Board Talk* Article featuring "Mexican Tommy" Workman - From a series of articles on people who have made special contributions to The World of Shuffleboard.

Tommy Workman,
"Godfather of Shuffleboard"
Inducted into the California Table
Shuffleboard Hall of fame at the Dixie
Bell's Thanksgiving Tournament
November 28, 1998



Tommy is also credited with teaching numerous players. After he retired in 1994, he spent a lot of time at the PM Tavern instructing new players in the game. During his induction into the California Table Shuffleboard Hall of Fame, one of the speakers asked how many people there had been taught to play by Tommy. Between 20 to 30 people stood up.

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Chuck Kimbrough

"I met Tommy through Troy Tolbert, who was Tommy's backer, around 1960. After Troy's accident, he supported hi family by backing Tommy. he'd pick up Tommy Friday Night, Tommy would play, Troy would bet on him.

Tommy was always teaching young people how to play. Very few people would show anybody anything back then. It was an unwritten law that you didn't do that. If you gave anyone pointers everyone would get mad at you. They were supposed to pay to learn.

He was one of the better players of the 60's."

Billy Mays

"I first met him (Tommy) in 1962, at the Park Inn Diner in California. I played him more than 50 times after that up to 1968/69 when I moved back to Texas. He was the 2nd best player in California, after Bob Miles. He consistently beat everyone else in the state: Al Stewart, Porter White, Kansas City Chuck, Raggedy Don Anger, Jack Ahern and Mickey Mickens, to name a few.

Tommy had the most beautiful delivery you will ever see. It looked like poetry in motion. We went up to San Francisco and beat everyone up there. I took him to San Diego and Brawley and beat everyone. I tried to get him to come out to Texas but he wouldn't go.

The best players in the world would come to the old Dixie in Carbon Canyon. You came Friday night, played through the weekend until Monday morning when everyone would go to work. You would choose a partner and paly with him the whole weekend. Tommy and I partnered up 25 to 30 times and we never lost together.

Brawley, Ca was the biggest gambling place in the whole U.S. back then. There were 5 or 6 millionaires that would bet really high which made a lot of players nervous...Tommy won \$27,000 in one night which was a lot of money back in the 60's.

I went back in 1980/81 and played tommy again a few times. He beat me one night in Long Beach, before he got beat up.

I think it's a great idea (Tommy's induction), he deserves it as much as anybody! He was one of the greatest players in the California history, one of the top 10 in the world, maybe the top 5. He was just a great player."

Darrol Nelson

Tommy Workman is one of the finest gentlemen I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. The first time I saw Tommy play, I was a very young player. he came through Rosenberg, Oregon where I was living at the time. He played against the best player at the Tavern where I played. I thought, "What a smooth shooter!" Anyway, Tommy won handily. You could say he won in a very *workman* like fashion.

Many years passed before I met Tommy again. he was getting up in years and really didn't play much anymore. It was during this time that Tommy and I became friends. Tommy told me the story of his shuffleboard career. he was married and lived in Southern California. He would travel the west coast, playing until he made X amount of money, then go home until he had to go out and do it again. He did that for many years. He told me that when he quit traveling and took a regular job, his wife left him. To my mind, Tommy is more than deserving of induction into our National Hall of Fame. Though I had very little opportunity to witness Tommy playing in his prime, I saw enough to know that he is a great player. All of the older players that did play with Tommy agree and give him nothing but the highest praise and respect.

Hal Perry

I missed most of his playing days, but all the players of that time knew how great Tommy was. Not a bad thing, a great road player and person all in one body. There are more Tommys out there with only word-of-mouth to tell their story. If Tommy played today, he would be in the top 5 or 10 players in the country.