

Big Dawg's



Corner

THE SERIOUS SIDE OF HANDICAPS

It's Tuesday night TAP pool league, and as Big Dawg walks into the bar, the room quiets to a complete hush. The only audible sound was one coming from the local drunk muttering "he's just too damn good looking if you ask me"

Yeah baby!! I'm cool, I'm hip, numero uno!!

I'm ICE!!

After what seemed like ages, the room started focusing on pool rather than Big Dawg's charming smile, did our 3 handicap approach to explain to me, that the team we were playing had a player that was playing well below their handicap. Of course you have to remember that this bodacious beauty that was all of a 2 speed last session, had probably overheard this remark from someone.

How do you figure I ask? "Well that team over there" she explains, says he just went up to a 6 in some other league, how come he's still a 4 in our league?

It's that time of year I explain, when the good old boy system happens. Just like April showers bring May flowers, so does the ritual of move em up split em up take place.

The crux of handicaps is to even out the playing field for all players.

A handicap system should be geared towards the middle-low handicaps to really even things out, rather than the other way of making it easy for the stronger players.

When Big Dawg was talking to one of our higher 7's in the TAP league I asked this player if on any given day he thought he could win when giving a 1 game spot to another mid-high level player, just not as good or talented as him in a race to 5 his answer was "of course".

I then asked him if he gave a 2 game spot would he still feel the same. His answer now was "maybe".

One last time I asked him if he gave a 3 game spot did he think he could still win, and his answer was "I'm not sure, it could go either way, depending on how I'm shooting" "If my opponent had an unusually hot match, the outcome would be far from guaranteed".

You could tell by the wide eyes and red cheeks this impressionable lady was overcome by being in Big Dawg's presence this long (or maybe it was my cheap cologne)

I'm not sure.

As if on cue, one of the players from "that team over there" approaches Big Dawg and acknowledges the fact that the player in question didn't move up because his game had improved, but because some committee in their perception, (or more likely because he beat someone on this committee) felt the system had missed him and he should be moved up a handicap.

Handicaps should show some resemblance to being accurate. The game of golf as an example learned from their mistakes and now have a slope rating in their course system. In doing so it helped create a much more accurate system, one that didn't cater to the stronger players, but in fact helped the low-mid players become more competitive.

Any league that can give control to a committee of players, with their prejudices and perspectives on handicaps, does nothing but undermine the system it represents. Big Dawg's thoughts are this, if you've spent all this time and money creating a system that according to its makers is the best there is, then why do you need a committee to do its job?

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