

Lone Star Billiards Tour Regional success of 2009

In late 2008, the national economy faltered and many billiards tours and independent events followed suit. Kim White, Women's Professional Billiard Association touring professional, viewed this economic decline as both a challenge and an opportunity for 2009. "Texas has always been a hotspot for pool," the native Houstonian says. "My objective was to form a regional tour that would feature a low entry fee, attract players of different calibers, and provide significant payouts to one quarter of the field."

Kim drew on her experience as a past president of the WPBA and on her prior success in conducting regional and junior tournaments. She held her first Lone Star Billiards Tour stop in early January 2009, and then worked tirelessly throughout the year to promote the tour and to gain player and sponsor support of her events.

The Lone Star Billiards Tour is unique in that it features *variety*. In 2009, five poolrooms hosted tour stops, and two more have already signed on for 2010. Tournaments are played on 9-foot professional, 8-foot standard, and 7-foot bar tables. This coming year, in addition to traditional 9-Ball tournaments, there also will be 8-Ball, 10-Ball, and One-Pocket events.



After just one year, the Lone Star Billiards Tour is recognized as one of the top regional tours in the nation. The 10 tour stops during 2009 attracted an average of 70 players. Nearly 200 different players participated, and half of those earned money in one or more tournaments. The total payout for the year exceeded \$90,000, half through prize money and half through player auctions.

The Lone Star Billiards Tour champion for 2009 was Charlie "Hillbilly" Bryant, who competed in 9 of the 10 events. Sylver Ochoa, who missed the first two tournaments, came on strong at the end of the year and finished in second place. Local standouts, Lanny Herrin and Denis Strickland played consistently throughout the year and finished third and fourth, respectively.

LSBT Top 10
Final Standings

1. Charlie Bryant
2. Sylver Ochoa
3. Lanny Herrin
4. Denis Strickland
5. Bobby Pacheco
6. Andy Jethwa
Zuid Thweib
7. Manuel Ayala
Jui-Lung Chen
Derek Fontenot
Nick Hood

2009 LSBT Champion
Charlie "Hillbilly" Bryant



Kim White says, "I have so many people to thank. First, the poolroom owners who took a chance on hosting a new tour and generously contributed to the prize money. And then the sponsors who came on board as the year progressed: Poison Cues, Delta 13 Rack, The Billiard Factory, and Diamond Tables. I'm also grateful to Cue & A Promotions, which broadcasted our events to the world via the Internet. And of course, no tour can be successful without the loyal support of its players."

"I look forward to the coming year, and I plan to do everything possible to build on our first year's success and make the Lone Star Billiards Tour even bigger and better in 2010."

Submitted by Carlos Ledson Miller,
author of pool novels *Stroke* and
French Quarter Danny