



POOL and VIDEO—In the Parkview Convenience Store, two video enthusiasts take on the flashing lights

and weird sounds. In the "Tin City" pool room, two pool "sharks" hang away at the balls. Photos by Silas Mayfield

Pool And Video Games Battle For Quarters, Computer Is Winning

By Elson Armstrong, Jr. It was not many years ago that a smooth bank shot on the eight ball in the side pocket measured a youngster's entrance into manhood. But most of the crowded, smokey pool parlors, with the "sharks" circling the tables, pool cues poised, have bitten the dust. For the most part, they've been replaced by air-conditioned, dimly lit game parlors, lined with more than a dozen different types of video games with flashing lights and weird sounds. One exception to the general trend is Durham's Touchdown

Billiard Parlor, a family-oriented game room that successfully blends the traditional pool hall with the modern video scene.

"I've been around pool halls for 22 years," said Don McCollough, who owns Touchdown Billiards, "and I know what kind of image and clientel most of them have. This place is for the entire family. Undesirable types are not welcomed."

The old pool halls could not exactly be called family spots. The old hangouts were easy to recognize. They were usually housed in rickety old buildings with painted windows to prevent anyone from seeing inside from the street. Inside the large, smoke-filled rooms, the constant clackety-clack of balls dominated the environment. Boasts flew hot and heavy, both from players and those fellows lining the walls waiting their turns on the tables.

The crowd was all men. Women were not allowed in these bastions of macho chauvinism.

Durham, like almost any other city its size, had a sizable number of these pool halls, and Hayti, that bustling black neighborhood, hunkered down south of the tracks from downtown, was billiards haven.

Sharks from all over town came to Hayti to chalk up with some of the best pool players in the business. It was poetry in motion, as the players circled the tables, skillfully placing high top or bottom "english" on the cue ball, making it line up behind the next ball to be played like "the cue ball had eyes."

But the bulldozers of urban renewal swept through Hayti in the 60s, burying almost all of the pool rooms in their wake.

And so today's youngsters have to find something else to usher

them into manhood. The video games are not quite as macho, mostly because playing "Pac Man," or one of those space shootout games, doesn't cheapen a woman's reputation.

So all over town, they queue up to the video machines, drop in a quarter, and take on a computer.

The video rage swept across the nation, starting in the 70s with the popular pinball machines, and growing ever more complicated, "out of this worldish," and challenging as their

popularity grew. Unlike pool, which emphasizes methodical skill, video games reflect the hectic, fast-paced lifestyle of the 80s.

But as popular as these games are, everyone doesn't like them.

Some small towns and cities have passed ordinances banning the video games that range from blasting battleships to vaporizing space ships as they dive at your space station from hyperspace.

Many adults dislike the games because they

seem to consume larger and larger chunks of their children's lives. Some psychologists warn against the games because, according to the "mind-watchers," these flashing, electronic challengers encourage aggressive, even war-like behavior.

But like them or dislike them, it seems that video games are here to stay. There's almost no way to duck them. They are in grocery stores, shopping malls, and yes, even in the few remaining pool rooms.

"We have videos in

our place," said one pool room attendant, "and it's hard to tell just how many people come here for pool, video or both."

Pretty much the same is true at Touchdown Billiards, at 2825 N. Roxboro Rd. McCollough, the owner, says the atmosphere of his place is by design.

"I want to run a place that I would be proud to bring my parents," he said, "and they do come here often, though neither of them plays pool, drinks or plays

darts. They just come to watch others play."

And so, as far as games go, the pool-video matchup is like the clashing of two eras: the olden days when pool was king, and today with the upstart video coming on fast.

The only question is which will win.

One pool enthusiast said: "Pool has always been around, and it always will. These video games will be just like disco, it'll hang on for awhile and then it will fade away."

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Cops To

Stop Writing Tickets In Loading Zone

By Donald Alderman Last week, a young woman parked her car in a loading and unloading

Many Voters

(Continued From Front) Kathy Carpenter, 25, a local insurance official, who says she voted for Michaux in both primary elections. "Whether we win or lose, the Democrats and Republicans will know that we are not to be used."

In Warren County where blacks are the majority, and where election victories have blacks controlling the County Commission and school board, voters were said to be "rolling over in happiness." "People have been calling me expressing support of the write-in campaign," says Arthur Sutton, a disabled veteran who works to get blacks to register and to vote. "The wind of Michaux's campaign never calmed down and people are just caught in the current. It's Michaux all the way."

One lady who attended the meeting sums it up this way: "I'm a loyal Democrat, but I can't bring myself to vote for Valentine or Marin. I just don't see that much difference between them."

Jack Marin

(Continued from Front)

citizens, he added. Harrell disputed any accusation that Marin was from a wealthy background and could not adequately represent the people of the district who are both rural and urban.

"Jack is from a modest background," Harrell said, "his father is a retired school teacher and he has a brother that has a gas station in Detroit. He has a long association with the state of North Carolina and its people."

Finally, on the Congressional Club, Harrell said: "They are a conservative bi-partisan group that is against massive government control in our lives. They are not for a restriction of the rights of blacks or any other group in our society. Jack works well with them. Jack is totally comfortable with them. We deal with them over the phone mostly."

zone on Parrish Street, went into a local business to deliver some packages and returned to find a police officer writing her a ticket.

She argued that she was unloading, and therefore could park there. The officer argued that she couldn't park there because she was driving a private car and not a commercial vehicle, such as a truck. Following the long debate, the officer voided the ticket, but not before sternly warning the woman not to park in one of those zones again.

But after *The Carolina Times* looked into the matter, the officer got a warning of sorts himself. According to the Public Safety Department's legal advisor, Ralph Strickland, he sent all of that the city's loading and unloading zone ordinance does not prohibit any vehicle from parking in the zone, but merely restricts parking except to unload or load the vehicle.

After being contacted by a writer for *The Carolina Times* who saw the argument between the woman and the police officer, Strickland finally agreed with the newspaper's interpretation of the ordinance.

Ordinance No. 889, Section 12-152, governing parking in loading and unloading zones, says "...the parking of vehicles is restricted to parking for the purpose of loading and unloading passengers or property."

There is no reference in the ordinance to business truck or passenger car, and according to Strickland, the law's intent is to allow any driver, driving any type of vehicle, to park in one of these zones while actually loading or unloading.

Though police officials believe that Strickland's memo should help clear up the matter, they point out that the loading and unloading zones pose a special enforcement problem because motorists often park there illegally.

"Sometimes, they'll park in a no parking zone to run into the bank for a minute," explained Lt. W.F. Jolly, who supervises Durham's traffic cops. "Sometimes they'll run into the copy place for a minute, and the problem is that sometimes those are some long minutes."



Lt. Jolly said citizens are given a chance to explain why they're parked illegally if they come back to the car while the officer is writing the ticket. But, according to Lt. Jolly, if the officer knows the car has been parked there for a long time, the officer is instructed to issue the citation.

The fine for such an offense is \$2 for up to 10 days, and then the cost of the ticket increases to \$10. If there's no response from the motorist in three weeks, the police issue a warrant which can cost up to \$37.

To avoid a ticket, citizens have to make a good case for being parked in the loading and unloading zone, unless, of course, the officer saw the driver loading or unloading. According to Strickland, much of the argument's validity is based upon how long the motorist was away from the car.

But if you are given a parking ticket and you think it's unfair, you can appeal to Lt. Jolly. "We make mistakes like anybody else," Jolly

said. "But we do try to rectify our mistakes. Jolly, P.O. Box 649, when we're in the Durham Public Safety Department, Durham, N.C. 27701. Parking ticket appeals should be mailed to Lt. Jolly."

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