

Radical Change of Piste

By Tussant Movet

There is a rumor of big changes at the Rancho Park sports complex. So, as a tenacious reporter, I went there and found out it is not a rumor anymore, but that the story is true. The golf course will expand the driving range in 2010, to bring a bigger income to the city. To be able to extend, they have to change the entire course, and that will take over the archery area and the pétanque court. The whole thing has been kept a secret from the pétanque club, and the archery club. We are playing now on what will be the new hole number 15.

The displacement of the pétanque club by the City of Los Angeles will bring a new location for the players, and we are in negotiations for one acre of land. The new location is said to be on the parking lot of the city-owned golf course in Van Nuys, on Victory Blvd., in the San Fernando Valley.

New Boules Line Will Be Released Soon

Out of frustration at the ever-present seed pods littering the terrain at the Los Angeles Pétanque Club courts, a contract has been established with *La Maison de la Pétanque*, of Vallauris, France, to manufacture a new line of boules and target jacks.

The new boules will be made of the finest quality aircraft steel, and will be filled with either a measure of mercury, or sand, providing a range of prices and playing characteristics. The *cochonnets* will be made to a single technical specification, based upon the FIPJP standards, but will encase a very powerful magnet, to help connect with boules that have been misdirected by the fallen pods. The magnets will come from United Nuclear (<http://www.unitednuclear.com/magnets.htm>). "We anticipate a high demand for the new line of equipment, especially from regions where the terrain is difficult, or where the players feel the need to win every game" said a company spokesperson. For more information, contact www.lesboulesdumerde.fr.

Training Opportunity

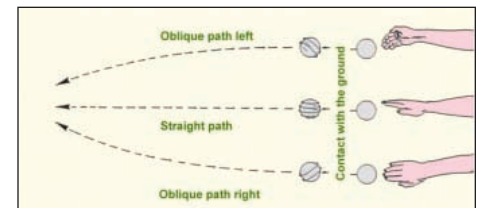


Longtime LAPC member, Maurice Spring, sent us this note of a training opportunity, to share with all members who might be interested. In his own words:

There I was, on a Tuesday at noon playing pétanque on my first week of vacation all by myself, when I see a brand-new Ferrari car parking on the red zone, next to the pétanque court, and a middle-aged man, a bit portly and wearing a red beard, came to me and said, "Hi, what kind of game is that?" "Pétanque" I said and I did show the

plaque against the wall. "Pe! What?" "Pétanque" I repeated and "how do you play the game?" I didn't want to converse so I thought, well I am a professional pétanqueur, and said, "If you are interested, I'll teach you the game. But, I will have to charge you the \$30 an hour I charge other students." Being a waiter all my life, I was thinking this guy will leave me alone now, and I will keep having fun by myself.

Suddenly, he said "Let me park my car and I want to learn this game." I was astonished to find somebody who would



believe me and pay me, but he came back after parking the Ferrari and, giving me \$30 cash, said "My name is Herman and I come every Tuesday morning to learn to play golf at the club next door, so maybe for the next few weeks you could teach me the game of "petank" on Tuesdays at noon?" Thinking to myself 'for \$30 why not!' During the last three weeks, Herman has been learning the game. My vacation is now over. So, if one of you wants to make an easy 30 bucks for one hour, be at the Rancho Park piste, on Tuesdays at noon, and see Herman, the red-haired man, and teach him to play pétanque.

Il ne faut jamais sousestimer le dommage qu'un homme peut faire avec ses couilles.

—Diana Jacobs

Our Annual Sponsors:



PLAYER SPOTLIGHT — *Barbara Tawil and Rachel Tarses*

In their own words

Rachel and Barbara were born on a stormy night in France, the 13th, and 13th and-one-half, children of gypsies. As lightning and thunder crashed around the tent where they were born, their father looked at them and exclaimed, “*Sacre Bleu*,” for they were identical twins joined at the fingertips. “This will be good for the family business,” said their father, twirling his moustache.

The family business was “begging” and soon Rachel and Barbara were on a street corner with their mother. Their father was right, and the coins piled up. Greed, however, made mother shout “oui” when a passing stranger offered to buy the twins and put them in the circus. They were trained as a high wire act and were known throughout Europe for their double loop with a back kick, made possible only because of their conjoined hands.

One evening as they were performing in Paris, as the crucial leap approached, Barbara became distracted. For an instant a vision of silver balls knocking together popped into her mind and she slipped. Rachel reached for her but it was too late. Barbara fell from the wire and as she did, Rachel pulled back and their hands snapped apart. Barbara fell to the ground and then looked up at Rachel still perched on the wire. They sadly waved goodbye.

Barbara wandered out of the tent in a daze and saw before her the world famous, fabulously wealthy, pétanque player, Moe Tawil! Moe had been furiously recruited by many pétanque teams and was now playing for the best – the L.A. Pétanque Club. They fell instantly in love and Barbara went with him to Los Angeles where he taught her to play *boules*. The money poured in and they purchased a fabulous mansion with a winding driveway lined with first-place trophies. They were often recognized and signed many autographs. It was a life of luxury, parties and amusements. But something was lacking. Barbara would think of her lost twin and depression would set in. Even her three children could not make her happy in these times. Everything was perfect except a part of her was missing.

The last time Rachel saw her sister Barbara was when she fell to the ground and suddenly she was just her twin, not her conjoined twin. Rachel feared she’d never see Barbara again. After Rachel climbed down from the wire, no longer circus material, she stumbled out to the street to look for a pharmacy to buy some bandages for her now very flat, wide, and bloody fingertips. On the way, she stopped in a *patisserie* to drown her sorrows in pastry. Fate guided her as a beautiful

young man came over to take her order. He was the baker’s son and his name was Jay. He noticed her bloody fingers, and too polite to draw attention to them, immediately brought her the creamiest pastry he could find and 10 extra-long band-aids. They started to talk and eventually Rachel blurted out her story. Jay told Rachel her fingers were perfect baking fingers; they were wide and smooth and could press cookies into perfect circles. She was very flattered and before she knew it she had accepted a job in the pastry shop alongside this lovely guy. Eventually marriage and babies occupied their lives and they inherited the bakery. She still haunted all the circuses and taught her children low wire tricks.

Eventually she and Jay began to play pétanque in the little village in which they lived, and her extra wide fingers seemed to give her some kind of advantage. Her husband was very proud of her and when there was talk of an international competition to be held in America, her club encouraged her to represent them there. Although they didn’t have a lot of money, Rachel and Jay flew to New York and with Rachel’s glorious thumbs, were able to hitchhike across the United States because no one could pass those thumbs without stopping. They finally reached California in the summer of 2003, just in time for the International Pétanque

Tournament.

It was a very hot day with a very dusty *piste*. Rachel’s husband, Jay, quite a champion player himself, was playing with some Americans of French pastry heritage. As Rachel competed she looked through the dust rising up from the *piste* and thought she saw her reflection mirrored in the specks floating around her head. All of a sudden there was shouting from the other teams. “Cheaters, they cried, there are two of you!” At first she didn’t know what they were talking about, but then she confronted her mirror image. It was Barbara. Barbara was competing as the American Champion. Moe and Barbara had gone back to France numerous times to search for Rachel, and failing, assumed she had fallen off the wire that fateful day so many years ago, and died. What a glorious reunion this was. Together they have continued to share their lives, families and pétanque games, although Rachel’s game never achieved the level of greatness Barbara celebrated throughout her career.

Moe and Jay have occasionally hitchhiked with the twins through Europe and Asia seeing the most beautiful places, and they have the L.A. Pétanque Club to thank. This story is the complete truth and, as Nicole says, “No *boule* shit!”

