

GREATEST BILLIARD PLAYERS WILL MEET

Hoppe, Schaefer, and Cochran Among Crack Cue Wielders in World's Title Tourney.

Much to the satisfaction of every billiard enthusiast, Jake Schaefer and Welker Cochran have reconsidered their determination not to enter the world's 18.2 balkline billiard championship tournament, and will compete in the event to be staged in the ballroom of the Hotel Astor from Oct. 20 to 25, inclusive. The names of those who have entered the first of what is to be an annual feature, were announced yesterday by R. B. Benjamin, who is managing the affair for the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company. They are William F. Hoppe, Jake Schaefer, Welker Cochran, George B. Sutton, George F. Slosson, Ora Morningstar, and Koji Yamada.

The winner of the tournament will be the recognized champion and will receive a prize emblematic of the title, as well as a cash prize of \$2,500. Second prize will be \$1,750; third, \$1,250, and fourth, \$750. The program calls for games of 400 points each. The winner will retain possession of the trophy for one year, and thereafter it will revert to the winner of the next annual tournament.

It was originally announced that the entries for the event would close on Sept. 20, but because of the failure of Cochran and Schaefer to enter at that time the list was kept open while negotiations with them were pending.

Their belated change of mind is indeed welcomed. Without them competing the play for the championship would have lost much of its lustre, but with them in the competition billiard fans in this section can look forward to one of the best tourneys ever held here. In spite of the form Hoppe is showing in his practice, there are many hereabout who are of the opinion that Schaefer will be able to force the long-standing champion to the limit in order to retain his laurels.

Are Leading Contenders.

For more than a year Schaefer and Cochran have been regarded as the leading contenders for the crown with which Hoppe has adorned his blond locks for so long. Schaefer in particular has been an insistent challenger, but until now it has been impossible to bring them together. Schaefer, Cochran, and Yamada have been playing billiards for the last several months in the Academy in San Francisco, and are reported to be in excellent stroke.

Some idea of the form Schaefer has attained can be gleaned from the fact that in a recent exhibition game with Cochran he ran 307 points. On the other hand, Hoppe seems to be rapidly recovering the form which has almost always featured his work at the table. While practicing recently in Brooklyn Willie is reported to have averaged more than 100 in a 700-point test.

Four of the players who have entered the tournament have held championships and the other three have been regarded as contenders for some time. Ora Morningstar, the veteran Indiana player, was a pupil of old Jake Schaefer, the wizard of the cue, and father of young Jake. Morningstar at different times in the past has held the 18.1 and 18.2 titles.

George Slosson of Boston is the "grand old man" of billiards. Known as the "Student," he has held three championships. It was he who first went abroad and gained billiard honors for America. He has played against the old school and the younger generation alike.

George Sutton of Chicago is also a former title holder. There are few players in the history of the sport who could compare with him as a nurse-shot player. Reports from the West state that he is displaying much of his old-time form. If this be true Sutton is likely to make things interesting for all in the tourney.

Rough Road for Hoppe.

Little need be said about Willie Hoppe. For so long that it seems almost forever he has been champion at all styles of balkline play. When only 18 years of age he went to Paris and there defeated Maurice Vignaux for the world's championship.

Schaefer, Cochran, and Yamada have never won titles, but they are among the best players the sport has produced in recent years. If Cochran were more consistent in his playing he would be one of the greatest of all time. But he has a tendency to play in streaks. At times he is a veritable wizard, while at other times he is decidedly off his game.

Koji Yamada, the Japanese champion, has one of the most delicate strokes in the game. When he first came to this country the reputation which preceded him gave the impression that he would dispense of all opposition. In the tournament that was held at the Astor several years ago Yamada did succeed in defeating Hoppe in one of the games played. Since then he has gained a great deal of experience, and must be rated as a contender to be reckoned with.