

MOSCONI AND HOPPE WILL RISK TITLES

Event to Open

Feb. 4

BY DICK JOINER

A field of contestants headed with former national and world champions will compete for a shot at the world three cushion and pocket billiard titles as a feature of The Chicago Tribune Charities' Outdoor show on Navy pier Feb. 4 thru 13.

Twelve pocket billiard experts will open round robin competition for the national title and the right to meet Willie Mosconi for the world championship.

Eight three cushion competitors will compete for the honor of attempting to wrest the world title from that perpetual champion, Willie Hoppe.

Three Will Qualify

The three finalists in both events will enter a double, round robin competition with the defending world champions Feb. 11, following completion of the national tourney, which runs from Feb. 4 thru Feb. 10.

The return of the Argentina sharp shooting brothers, Ezequiel and Juan Navarra, is expected to give an international flavor to the Navy pier event. Ezequiel won the national three cushion title at the 1948 show, and gave Willie Hoppe excellent competition before losing for the world title.

The complete entry list in the three cushion section has not been filled yet. However, four sectional champions will compete, with the other four to be named soon. Established winners are Danny McGoorty, Los Angeles; Sol Lurie, Chicago; Frank Davis, Detroit and Louis Elkan, New York.

Former Winners To Compete

The 12 contestants in the pocket billiard field will include four former champions. They are headed by Andy Ponzi, 1948 national champion and loser to Mosconi for the world title; Irving Crane, Jimmy Caras, and Benny Allen.

Arthur Cranfield, runner-up for the national championship on Navy pier last year, also will compete.

The eight sectional winners are Benny Allen, Kansas City; Joe Procita, San Francisco; Howard Lindley, Minneapolis; Joe Diehl, Chicago; George Chenier, Cleveland; Jack Dean, Philadelphia; Joe Canton, New York, and Howard Spittler, Lexington, Ky.

Event Will Be Free

A special section of the north wing of the pier is being set aside for the billiard competitions, with bleachers to be erected to accommodate the audiences. Last year's cue attendance totaled more than 50,000. No admission is charged for the billiard events.

The championship meets are being sponsored by the Billiard Congress of America, under the direction of Walter M. Hall of New York, president of the congress and program director of the Boys' Clubs of America.