

Your Guide to the Ultimate Home Game Room

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AMOA 2006

The Coin-Op Industry's Premiere Trade Show

The Many Incarnations of Pac-Man

The Evolution of a Gaming Icon

Buying Your First Slot Machine

What to Watch Out For

Rob Craig's

Tales of the Silverball

FREE PLAY.



The 2006 Heartland Pinball & Arcade Supershow

After months of planning, the action finally kicked off with a liftgate Ryder truck backing up to my house. As one of four show organizers, we all must be committed to selflessly share our prized possessions with the attendees of our upcoming show. And my commitment ran a bit deeper this year as I verbally agreed to bring my *Lord of the Rings* machine for the second year to the show. When you're promoting a show live on the air, you tend to be a bit more generous than you plan. Our local radio morning show celebrity Pat Benton likes *Lord of the Rings* pinball, and so I jot this one down as yet another machine to uproot from the basement game room.

24 long hours later and everyone behind the scenes was buzzing with excitement. We had a mega collection of pinball machines, from the 50's to the latest off the Stern production line in *Pirates of the Caribbean*. It was as if we all had combined our collections with other people, bringing in their heartfelt donations 1, 2, and 3 at a time.

I found myself walking around the perim-

eter of the Herrin Civic Center in Southern Illinois with an ear to ear smile. The ingredients were combining to make this one a show focused on pinball players—a response to our feedback from the 2005 debut of the SuperShow. This second year we were in a

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new home; a warmer environment with a facility staff of friendly faces behind their charismatic leader.

For this year's two-day event, the doors officially opened on Friday afternoon at 3pm. A typical gamer is stamped with the official SIPPA seal on their hand and then offered an opportunity to register for a door prize.

From here you get a teaser view of the quality door prizes donated by Marco Specialties, Stern Pinball, our own GameRoom Magazine, and Twin Galaxies. Turning the corner revealed a double lineup of dot-matrix pinball machines, gleaming with home collector shine. Some worthy examples included *Whitewater*, *Corvette*, *Congo*, *Rocky & Bullwinkle*, and amazingly 3 *Twilight Zone* machines. Nearing the end of the row reveals the "T" shaped wings of the large room. To one side we had a few older solid state machines including show favorites *Lights*, *Camera*, *Action* and *TX Sector*. On the other side was the EM corner, dominated with Gottlieb wedge heads donated by Ken Hall's collection. Turning back towards the front of the room was a large section of Brian Saunders EM collection. Some others that lugged fine machines into the show include Mike Inman, Derek Fugate, Bob Whitely, and Dave Prater. Derek's immaculate and rare Gottlieb *Pyramid* EM won "Best of Show".

A player's show must have a tournament and this year hosted the unique Showdown



at Sundown contest that strains the best pinball players in the world to compete on four very different machines from very different eras of pinball history. Steve Rothschild produced a fantastic lineup which included a 1955 Gottlieb *Tournament* woodrail with 2 reverse flippers, a Gottlieb *King Pin* EM machine covering the 70's, Gottlieb's *Black Hole* in all its ball-drawing glory making the 80's era, and the dot-matrix widebody *Indiana Jones* topping off the more current pinball experience. We decided to offer a progressive champion payout this year. What that means is that our winner earns a piece of the total tournament proceeds, guaranteed to be at least \$250.

As the tournament buzzed, so did the champion payout, which ended at \$365 by the end of qualifying. Youth division competition was fierce with serious activity among those requiring step stools. Our women's division produced scores that branded themselves on the overall qualifying chart. And as usual, the men's division produced the most activity. Overall, the tournament produced the first ever scores for *Twin Galaxies* with the 1955 Gottlieb *Tournament* machine. Our top 10 scores on *King Pin* shattered all previously recorded TG scores. *Black Hole* (extra balls allowed) beat all recorded top 10 TG scores except 1st place, and *Indiana Jones* scoring produced a #2 highest score of all time by John Miller (2,060,842,100).

Video gamers weren't completely left out either. *Breakout*, *Ms. Pac-Man / Galaga*, *Smash TV*, *Skins Game*, *Die Hard arcade*, *World Series 99*, and three separate touch screen games all stayed busy. But one game was pushed to the front desk and reserved for the most adrenalinized players. *Robotron*, set on skill level 10 (the highest setting), stood



daring anyone insane enough to post up a score for charity. I stuck out my own neck (and wallet) tempting anyone to beat my top score on the machine at this skill level. \$100 of my hard earned cash to the top scorer and all the entry fees to our own local Shawnee Crisis Pregnancy Center. Thankfully luck and at least some skill was on my side as Trent Augustine, Laura Whitely, and others couldn't top my highest score.

Just as quickly as it started, it ended. The tournament Final Showdown was weeding away players, my last threat on Robotron fell short, machines slowly walked out the doors, and old and new friends exchanged temporary farewells. This year's Supershow was indeed different. It was financially successful enough to earn itself a 3rd year in the same



facility for 2007. But even more than that, it brought people together in the context of pure fun. Dozens of young children were introduced to the silverball, perhaps for the first time. Families had their own mini-tour-

naments on single machines. The pinball fan community was more involved this time, with people from all over the mid-West in attendance. All had a chance to win a game in the SuperShow raffle, which turned out a very special winner after all.

The SuperShow invites Big Brothers Big Sisters to bring their "littles" to our show for gaming fun. We allow their "littles" in free when the "biggs" buy their own ticket. One area man brought his "little brother" to the show and bought a raffle ticket for him. At the end of the night, this youngster was picked as the recipient of a nicely restored *Spanish Eyes* pinball machine. Understand that this youngster lives in a tiny home with his grandmother and would otherwise have no opportunity to own such a non-essential item. Yet through the willingness of this Big Brother to give of himself to another, this pre-teen is now the coolest kid in the neighborhood—introducing pinball to a generation that otherwise might never see one.

Make plans now to join us in 2007 as we come back with an even bigger and better Super Show! www.supershow.popbumper.com contains more pictures & scoring results and developing information for 2007. **GR**

Tournament Winners	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place
Youth Division	Dillon Young	Joe Zoller	Ryan Dawson
Women's Division	Carol Walker	Kris Cunningham	Amanda Brooks
Men's Division	Derek Fugate	John Miller	Mike Kassak

Final Showdown Winner: John Miller (2 seed) beat out Showdown Finalists that included: Derek Fugate (1), Trent Augustine (3), Adam McKinnie (4), Mike Kassak (5), Kris Cunningham (5), Steve Walker (5), Tim Zollner (5), Richard Hammond (9), Connie Ezell (10), Carol Walker (11), and Dillon Young (12).

