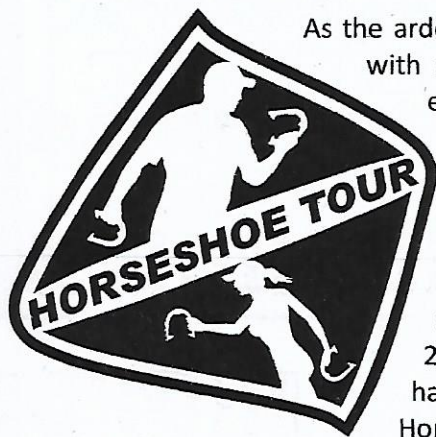


# A Horseshoe Tour History

The Horseshoe Pitching Tour was designed from the start to be something different from the average horseshoe tournament and that it is!

Once the original team of organizers was assembled, it was about two solid years of planning before the first shoe was pitched in a Tour tournament in 2009. This team basically dissected and analyzed every aspect of the sport of horseshoe pitching to come up with an all new game format and a totally unique tournament format that appealed to a much wider spectator audience in addition to highly competitive horseshoe pitchers. Ringers-only and shorter 30-shoe games proved to be keys to increasing interest from spectators and players alike. With these format elements, just about anything can happen at a Tour tournament. Lower ranked players can get hot and higher ranked players can go cold for a spell, and when you get them together, well, you just never know what to expect! The system has proven to really, really work.

Originally the Tour was intended to be only for the "best of the best" players in the world of horseshoe pitching, at both pitching distances of 40 and 30 feet. And that's basically how it started. Tour members were enlisted from the elite over-60%-ringer-average group of NHPA players. The Tour became known as the "HP Pro Tour", a horseshoe pitching tour for the top caliber "professionals" in the sport. Yet, right from the start it became obvious that interest in competing in these Pro Tour events was growing at all skill levels and that it would be necessary for the tour to quickly evolve into a system of divisions based on ability level to accommodate all interested players. So, the Pro Tour expanded into multiple levels and divisions at both pitching distances, eventually including a junior division as well. A "Big Game Challenge," that rewarded players for pitching over their average, further piqued interest resulting in continued to growth at all levels. The 5 to 6 annual tour sites began to broaden geographically, from what had been largely an east coast presence, to include south-central US sites in Louisiana and Texas.



As the ardent following of dedicated players from all skill levels continued to increase, with more players across the US being exposed to the format, the tour again embraced the its ongoing evolution. The levels and divisions of play were simplified and the tour rebranded into a true national tour that not only allows all skill levels to participate, but has also maintained the initial goal of rewarding excellence in the sport by bringing in the "best of the best" to Tour tournaments. Now officially known as "The Horseshoe Tour", the tour is drawing the attention of players from all across the US and in late 2016 scheduled its first Western states tournament in St. George Utah, site of the 2013 and 2017 NHPA World Tournament. One of the tour's greatest assets is has been its ability to evolve and adapt, ensuring a bright future yet for Horseshoe Pitching's national Tour.

The Horseshoe Tour tournaments are spread over at least two days and the host cities, who bid for Tour events, always have a lot to offer the players and their attending families. One thing that makes this Tour so attractive, if not addictive, is that it seems to have brought back that "family feel" to this sport in a huge way. At every Tour tournament, you see large groups of players congregating between rounds at various restaurants, in hotel lobbies, around the pool, the pool table or maybe in the host hotel lounge. It's so nice to see this happening again in horseshoes and it's so nice to see this Tour family grow with every event. We hope you'll join us someday soon... all are welcome!

All Horseshoe Tour tournaments are sanctioned by the National Horseshoe Pitchers Association (NHPA).