

# Pin-A-Go-Go

By Mark Birsching

Pin-A-Go-Go is held each year the weekend after Mother's Day (this year it was held on May 15-17, 2009) in Dixon, California at the Mayfair Fairgrounds, as it has been for many years. For the last two years it has been unseasonably warm over that weekend (over 100 degrees each day in 2008 and close to it in 2009).

While my enthusiasm was not dampened, my energy level was a different story, however! This year, at least, the swamp coolers were fixed and the hall was quite comfortable. Since I spend a lot of time during California Extreme running that show, I like to coming to this event because I don't have any responsibilities except to bring three or four games and have a great time playing pinball and catching up with many people in the hobby. The reins of the show were passed on to a new group in 2008.

Don Highley, who has run the show for years, along with Mark Zahner and Richard Conger, trained a couple of new people to take over, namely David Buchanan and Matt Christiano. The Boys and Girls Club were there as they are every year helping out the cause. Here are some of the highlights of the past couple of years.

There were quite a range of pinball (and related) machines present each year. There was one room with several very nice woodrails, electromechanicals and some pitch and bat games in 2008 and several 1980s Gottlieb System 80 games, head-to-head pinballs and some other rarer games in 2009. In the main hall were EMs and representa

tives of almost every year of solid state machines. There were some brand new,



*Steve Charland brought his Black Hole in 2008 and this year as well! But, did you notice the difference? It has 7-digit scoring! He also had LED's in the pop bumpers that flashed off and on every time the bumper was hit. Pretty cool!*



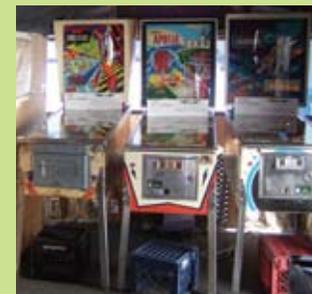
*Helmut Jordt and Michael Schiess work on fixing a Gottlieb Mustang. The problem turned out to be a flaky reset relay. Once they got it working, it was fine for the entire show.*



*The 2008 electromechanical room with several pitch-and-bats as well as several lines of EMs and woodrails. Several of the pitch-and-bats had the mechanical runner units. I had forgotten how much fun these are!*



*This Spot Bowler was in great shape and it was one of my favorites in 2008. It is a hard machine to do well on (like many early Gottlieb woodrails) which made it a great challenge to see how well I could do!*



*The inside of the Lucky JuJu's Lil' JuJu trailer showing some of the pins in 2008. Note the record player with the stack of 45s! It brought back the good ol' arcade days.*



*Steve Ritchie came in from Hollister in 2009 with some of his stuff to exhibit. Here we see a playfield layout from a Stern Spiderman that was brought for Steve to sign. Steve was very gracious in accommodating requests like this as well as answering questions about his games.*



One of the top pinballs at the 2009 show. At this end is a Spinball Jolly Park (made in Spain) which is not seen very often! To the right of Jolly Park is a Chicago Coin Cinema machine which was the pinball machine used for the silent auction this year. The silent auction also included several other goodies, like a reproduction backglass and other cool items. All proceeds went to the Boys and Girls Club.



A line up of solid state pinballs being enjoyed by early commers. By noon it was difficult to find an open game!



A couple of newer shuffle alleys. A lot of people tried to get the best score on these! With all the variety of pinballs and other mechanical games, there was something for everyone.



The nerve center of the show. Volunteers as well as members of the Boys and Girls Club pitch in to help with the show. The Boys and Girls Club also run a food booth for hungry show-goers.



out-of-the-box, Stern machines (Indiana Jones in 2008 and 24 in 2009) available for play. In both cases, the games were not scheduled for release until after the show! Needless to say, there was a long line for those machines. There were, of course many games for sale as well as those that were present for show and playing only. In 2008, Lucky Ju-Ju brought their Airstream trailer with seven electromechanicals inside to play. While in there playing pins, you get to listen to a stack of old 45s playing on a record player. Cool!

Around the outside walls of the hall were several vendors selling anything from new parts to old parts in boxes that you had to dig around in to see if you could find a treasure (which is fun to do!). Apparently many people thought that was fun because that activity was common. I managed to pick up some old original manuals and score cards I needed as well as some Hyperball parts (thanks, Mario) and playfield protectors for AFM (thanks, Cliffy)!

A silent auction was held for several items including a reproduction backglass, a pinball machine (Firepower II and Jacks Open in 2008 and Cinema in 2009) and other cool stuff. The proceeds are given to the Boys and Girls Club, which is the charity of the show. There was also a coloring contest for the children who had to color in backglass designs like the one for Game Show.

All in all, people enjoy this show very much and have a great time each year with all the machines, vendors and people to meet. I know I always do! Take a look at the pictures here and on the next page and see for yourself!

Happy  
flipping!

# Pin-A-Go-Go (cont.)



Challenger is a Gottlieb head-to-head EM pinball. The playfield is on a pivot and tilts back and forth towards the player that is up. Whoever is up scores points, but the other player can use his flippers to block shots. Once you lose the ball, the playfield tilts the other way. Not as easy as it looks! There were also two Joust head-to-head pinballs right next to Challenger.



This 2009 row of pins was in a separate room and included some cool Gottlieb System 80 machines and some other rarer machines, like Frontier. I played Frontier a lot as I haven't seen one in several years and it was one of my favorites when it first hit the arcades. There was also a Gottlieb Caveman which was a pinball with a video monitor built in to the upper playfield.

For More Information go to [pinagogo.com](http://pinagogo.com)

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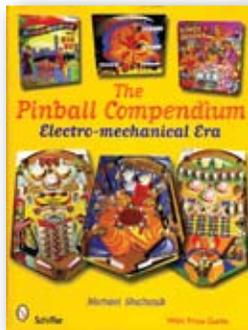


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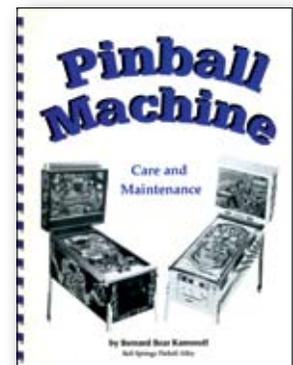
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