

# POOR richard's ALMANACK 29

is published, edited and written solely by rich brown, the man who wanted to be King. (It is not hard to be King when it is in you and in the situation.) The Castle has been moved to 410 - 61st Street, Apt. D4, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220. Distributed thru the Fantasy Amateur Press Society (or something like that), and to as many friends as the limited pressrun (about 90) allows. There shall be no beans in FAPA.

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MINIATURE GOLF DEPT.: As Ted White will no doubt tell All and Sundry, and more besides, rich brown has Lost his Touch as the Fanoclast's Ace Golfer. Back on Sunday, August 3, Ted, Robin, Arnie Katz, Colleen and myself and our daughter, Alicia Kim, made a trek in Ted's Snazzy Lincoln to the outlands of Long Island to play a round or two of miniature golf.

Alicia, who likes to dip her pickles in ice cream and has ridden in cabs, on subways, ferries and busses, without so much as a belch, threw up all over Colleen and myself and the back seat of Ted White's Snazzy Lincoln.

I am not given to a belief in Omens, so while Colleen kept score, I battled by way to two successive defeats: the first to Arnie and Ted, and the second to Ted -- who, it should be mentioned, scored his second hole-in-one of the game (and his third of the day) on the very last hole.

Do not believe Ted when he tells you he's "really not too good at it." Ted White lies a lot.

The Sure Hand and Keen Eye which had procured for the team of Brown and Katz (Ltd.) a stunning victory at the MidWestCon of 1965 (or, as we have sometimes referred to it, the '65 MidWestCon Open) held its own on the first nine holes of the outland course.

On the "back" nine (as we miniature golfers call them, in our own unique little way), years of desk-work and the resulting extra poundage (a gain of 30 pounds in the past two years) plus no doubt the strains of Fatherhood, took their inevitable toll as putt after putt sent ball after ball bouncing away from the hole, like so many slings and arrows of outraged misfortune.

The Final Hole of the second game, mentioned above, was the unkindest cut of all.

Until that hole, the Sure Hand and Keen Eye (referred to herein after as the S.H. and K.E.) had me leading Ted by a couple or three points; we had been close in the first nine, and both of us had maintained scores close to par for the rest of the game, save that Ted had fluffed one shot. Then he sank his hole-in-one.

Well, now.

I knew I couldn't match it, unless luck unexpectedly tapped me on the shoulder. But as far as the game-score went I had a few points to play with; using proper pragmatism, I could afford to lose the hole to win the game, or the battle to win the war. The hole was a

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relatively simple one, with a par of two. With the exercise of a little skill, it should have been relatively easy for me to beat, or at least tie, Ted's total score.

My first shot was a good one: it placed my ball closer to the cup than either Arnie's or Robin's.

I went to my ball thinking, "This game is mine, baby." Not just because I knew it was an easy shot to make; it was much more than that. My faculties were attuned to making it; sighting along the ball, I could feel the way it should be played.

It was like....like when I was in the Air Force, and suddenly, playing pool, all this jass about English, Reverse English, back-spin, etc., started making sense. You hit the white ball thus, it hits the other ball and makes it go so.

Twice I stood, not so much understanding as feeling the "flow" of the ball; vector, speed, English, Reverse-English, back-spin, torque all a part of the intuitive process: like Jommy Cross, I had discovered these powers within myself.

Twice I took my stand over the ball. My putter was firmly held, but not too tight. My left elbow was straight but not locked. I stopped twice to check my stance and my swing. And twice the head of my putter hit my ball at an angle and, of course, twice the ball completely missed (to say nothing, save this, of overshoot) its mark.

My chances for even a tie being completely screwed up, I blew my cool completely and ended up with either a 5 or a 6 for the hole.

Robin and Arnie both then sank their harder shots.

Tennis, anyone?

A MODEST PROPOSAL: I've heard it said that the Purpose of a Convention Committee can be counted on the fingers of two thumbs: namely, that they must provide a hotel to house the convention activities, and that they must provide for the making, voting and distributing of the Hugos. (In the case of the most recent WorldCon, the first purpose should be revised to read "provide a hotel or three to house..." etc.)

Most everything else can be and usually is skulled out on a rainy afternoon.

This may be vastly over-simplified, but for some reason these two functions seem to be among the most indispensable responsibilities of the convention committees'.

That's why I propose we dispense with one of them.

By "we" I don't mean FAPA, of course; I mean fandom, of which FAPA is a small, if influential, part.

The Hugos may have served some purpose before the advent of the Nebula: one might find oneself hard-pressed to describe just what this purpose was, but my meager guess is that the underlying reason was to attract pros to conventions. All other explanations (including the idea that we're picking the "best" stuff of the year) is purely Charles B. Frothingay riding a horse of a strange hue.



I say this because it is quite obvious to me that the Hugo has seldom been awarded to the "best" anything of the year, and it should be just as obvious to you. Committees have been appointed and set up by Convention Committees to report back as to why this should be so: why have so many Hugos been awarded to so many lack-lustre candidates?

It shouldn't take a Committee. The answer is obvious. The Hugo is the top prize in the egoboo poll of condom...er, convention fandom. Period. The judges of what is "best" for a particular year are those who have paid their money to become convention members and who also desire to cast a vote.

I don't have to cite the instances of a Tolkien losing to an Edgar Rice Burroughs or EESmith, or of an Innuendo losing to a Fantasy Times, to make my case; they are so frequent as to be exasperating, and listing them all would only make my blood pressure rise. And for no good reason. The quality of the Hugo is reflected in the quality of the voter which, unfortunately, is not very high. The flow of awards to undistinguished magazines, artists and works of science fiction is surely a result of the undistinguished voter.

On the professional side of the fence, I find no justification for the Hugo as an award. The fact that the Hugo and the Nebula have been awarded, in some instances, to the same works is really irrelevant: it's all the difference between SCREEN GEMS' magazine poll saying "I Dreamed I Was A Teen-Age Lady-Bug With The Atomic Brain From Outer Space That Conquered The World Almost In My Maiden-Form Bra" was the best picture of the year, and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts saying the same thing. (Neither would change the quality of the work awarded, it must be admitted.) The difference, really, lies in the quality of the voter, which in turn reflects on the quality of the award. One is an award of professionals and craftsmen to professionals and craftsmen, the other is an award of those fans who care to cast a vote, for whatever reason.

On the fannish side . . . what do I need to say? My argument is already won for me. We can't honestly castigate convention fandom as being a notoriously poor judge of fanzines (the only category until the NYCon); rather, they've not seen enough good fanzines to be able to judge. The real factor in winning fanzine Hugos is not quality but circulation. To be completely fair with those who have voted, I might say that circulation is the first necessity; after that, quality certainly helps, and has often been a factor in selecting fanzines for a Hugo. Has a fanzine with a circulation under 200 ever won a Hugo? No. So it seems to me (and to others as well) that the award is really pretty meaningless.

Isn't it really about time we considered whether or not the Hugo is really worth all the time, money and trouble that has been put into it?

I'm not suggesting the immediate abolition of the Hugo; merely that we give this question some thought.



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CONVENTION REPORT: While a number of fans gathered in a number of hotels in California to celebrate the pagan rites associated with the World Science Fiction Convention, I stayed at home and watched, on TV, quite another kind of convention.

What I saw both sickened and revolted me, and completely destroyed the last vestiges of my already shaken belief in this country's democratic processes.

I saw hundreds of "yippies" -- kids of draft age and less -- brutally beaten by Chicago police. I saw two cops holding the arms of one kid (could he have been more than 16?) while another cop hit him with a billy-club, not once but many times. I saw a girl tackled, clubbed, then dragged by her feet, with her head bouncing on the pavement, to the waiting paddy-wagon. I saw phalanxes of laughing cops charging unarmed crowds of kids, who ran, who scattered, but many of whom were brought down by tackles, by kicks, by the maddeningly insane use of night-sticks.

Some 33 newsmen were badly beaten by Chicago policemen and their cameras were broken, presumably because they were filming something that the American public should not know about; many others were gassed or ruffed up in other ways. All were accredited journalists and wore their credential prominently. It was so bad that the Supreme Court did, in fact, issue an injunction against the Chicago police to enjoin them from further physical violence against the press.

Chicago citizens and elected delegates to the Democratic National convention were not exempt from these practices, either. A Chicago housewife who became concerned for the kids drove to Lincoln Park to try to get some of them out of the midst of the violence; when three kids got in her car, she was surrounded by some 10 or 15 National Guardsmen, one threatening her with a gas grenade launcher, another with a sub-machine gun, and a third with a bayonet, while yet a fourth was standing ready to put his bayonet in her tires. The kids were dragged out and she was then allowed to leave. Delegates from New York, California, New Hampshire, North Dakota and Vermont were arrested, and in some cases, beaten by Chicago police.

The final attack came in the early morning hours after the convention was officially over, when police determined that debris was being thrown from the 15th floor of the Hilton Hotel. This floor was singled out, although it seems to be true (at least from later news reports) that debris was being thrown from nearly all floors. The only other distinguishing factors about the 15th floor was that 1) it was the Headquarters of the supporters of Senator Eugene McCarthy, 2) a hospital to treat the injured yippies had been set up there the night before. The police made their crack-down on the 15th floor a little after 5 in the morning; again, it was



mostly teenagers who were told to vacate their rooms. One boy who asked why was clubbed; a girl who asked "On what grounds?" was answered with "Coffee grounds." Policemen arrived at the central headquarters without announcement, and without trying to make any arrests they proceeded to club the boys and girls and men and women who were there. An Episcopal priest (who was also an elected delegate; from Brooklyn, in fact -- his church is on 99th Street here) tried to convince one of the cops to stop beating one boy and, being unsuccessful at that, threw himself across the boy. The cops kept clubbing until Senator McCarthy arrived.

The priest mentioned above, by the way, had collected (mostly from the New York delegation) \$2500 to be used as bail bond for arrested yippies, but the police had refused to tell him (or, for that matter, anyone) where they were being held.

The carnage is over. And someone has remarked, and his point is well-taken, that with all the skull-cracking and gas and ruff stuff, it's indeed a miracle that no one was killed. The problem is, no real search has been conducted: if you look at it any way objectively, you'll find that Democracy itself was murdered on the bloody streets of Chicago.

The cry has gone out "The Police are innocent!" -- not from the rabid right-wing press, but from Vice President and Democratic Presidential Nominee Hubert Horatio Humphrey. McGovern and McCarthy condemned the action at the time, and as I've said above, the McCarthy people set up a temporary hospital to care for the injured. "Anarchists," Humphrey has called them -- and I assume he must mean, not just the yippies, but the Chicago housewife, the 33 plus newsmen, the delegates from New York, California, North Dakota and Vermont, and the McCarthy supporters. "If you could have heard the foul language they used," says Humphrey, "you would not be castigating the Chicago police."

How bloodied, how dirty and sullied have become the hands of the man who, 20 years ago, led the fight for civil rights! A hundred years of abuse, a hundred years of voicelessness in this country's affairs, a hundred years of inferior educations that qualify them only for inferior jobs which give them inferior salaries that keep them in inferior ghettos are not cause for the black man to spill one drop of blood in the streets of our cities. A hundred years of being abused, used, misused does not excuse them from going into the streets. Call them "nigger," treat them unjustly, use police force to "keep them in their place," pay them for the sacrifices they have made for this country with platitudes, promise them anything but give them garbage, laugh away a rat bill that could save hundreds of their children, and support the institutions that condone all of this, and yet maintain that they must never react with anger and violence.



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Kill them by thousands in wars, by the hundreds in lynchings, & murder individually their leaders from Medgar Evers to Martin Luther King Jr. and tell me there is "no excuse" for their rioting.

Then justify the beatings of young American citizens because, for two days, some of them called the police who had gassed them and administered the beatings, "pigs."

After Humphrey's statement to this effect, there can be no doubt that the onus lies clearly with the Vice President and such portions of the Democratic party that he now controls. His sentiments are clearly with Mayor Daley and his Chicago Gestapo. Unlike McCarthy and McGovern, who were sickened by this senseless display of armed force, Humphrey's reaction was

one of dismay that these "anarchists" should detract from his nomination by shamelessly sticking their heads in front of billy-club swinging cops.

None of this was necessary. Nor was the heavy-handedness at the Democratic National Convention. Day by day as the Humphrey forces circulated around, maintaining how wonderful it was that this was an "open" convention, incident after incident left the Democrats with their rigging showing. Threats made to delegates; a New York delegate surrounded by goons and forced from the floor by Chicago police, despite the fact that he was recognized and identified by the New York Delegation; the packing of the galleries, first with Humphrey supporters and then with Daley supporters; the refusal to allow posters or signs to McCarthy or McGovern, followed by allowing Humphrey and Daley forces to do so (one reporter summed up the whole convention with this word-picture: policemen hammering "We Love Daley" signs on the floor of the convention with their gun-butts); the arrest and subsequent beating of the chairman of the New Hampshire delegation who discovered that the computer system for recognizing delegates credentials were a fraud (a fact known by Daley, and hence the ease with which he could pack the floor and galleries) and tried to tell it to a newsman; the refusal, at first, to give the seated Julian Bond delegation a microphone; the refusal, later, to allow a seconding speech to be made for Julian Bond's vice presidential nomination; the refusal by the chair to recognize two recess motions made by McCarthy delegates, and immediately after one such refusal, recognizing Mayor Daley to make the same motion. And so it went.

It will be interesting to see Dick Eney's survey determine -- as I'm sure it will -- that there is little or no brutal violence perpetrated by the Establishment on the people it pretends to serve. And you can believe it if you want. But if you go to Chicago, and you disagree even slightly with the Establishment point of view, I offer this suggestion: bow low to the police. Keep your opinions to yourself. Be sure you know how to conform to their standards of normality. Say nothing they might not agree with.

Your life may depend on it.



# MAILING COMMENTS

BUT NOT TOO MANY

HOWARD DEVORE: If I disturb you by writing about LSD (and related subjects), I am sorry. But not sorry enough to stop writing about them in what is, after all, my fanzine, Myer. To paraphrase Gary Deindorfer, with articles on the subject appearing in the READERS' DIGEST, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, and other such humdrum magazines, I hardly consider it "daring" that I -- or anyone else -- write about drug experiences they have had. :: Your more, ah, personal comments are more difficult to deal with, partly because I didn't save your fapazine and can't remember specifically what you said, but also because they were built on a number of false premises which I don't consider worth the trouble of untangling for you. A couple of years ago, Howard, I would have made the effort to be as unpleasant to you in this, my reply, as you were in your comment to me. Nowadays I just have to laugh at the idea of wasting my time by arguing with a fat, bald-headed old coot from (fercrysake) Dearborn, Michigan, whose opinions have never mattered to me anyway, about a character judgment he has made on the basis of three paragraphs I wrote in a FAPAZINE sometime last year. TED WHITE: I'm disturbed by a number of things you've said in your last few fapazines. On the problem of violence in our cities, i.e., black riots, I find both your over-all and personal solutions lacking in sound judgment, at least insofar as I understand them. Your personal solution seems to be to stick your head in the sand, or "move to Pennsylvania." Which removes you from the problem and leaves those with considerably less mental acumen to deal with it. But the problem will catch up to you. Eventually. There's only a very slight chance that there is, right now, enough time to deal with the problem before it tears this country apart: since you will be isolated, the time for constructive change will have probably run out by the time it catches up to you. Dumbfounding. Almost equally dumbfounding is your over-all solution: a "combination" of liberal and conservative solutions. If you've done more than skim the Kerner report, you should realize the idiocy of what you are saying: from Newark to Detroit, the use of "beefed up" police forces and the National Guard almost invariably increased the intensity of the rioting and resulted in more outright destruction and caused more innocent deaths than the rioters themselves. :: I am similarly disappointed in your "pragmatic" approach to the Vietnam situation. Like Calvin Demmon, I've tired of arguing on the subject, but I'll try this one more time with you. It has been this perpetual refusal to accept facts as they are, disguised as pragmatism, which has led us from 500 military advisors to committing well over half a million American men to a ground war in Asia. Ask any truly pragmatic military man what he thinks of that, Ted. If you will not accept the moral wrongness of this war, at least accept that it's a war we cannot win.



Not only is it a war in which we cannot achieve a military victory (since escalation to nuclear warfare means World War III), but it is a war in which none of our objectives whatsoever have been achieved. None of them have the possibility of being achieved in the next five years -- and this is already the longest war our country has ever been engaged in. If you want specifics on objectives we have not achieved, try these: We have not 'pacified' the countryside. We have not built up the South Vietnamese military to a point where it can stand up to the Viet Cong. We have not been able to introduce any meaningful land reform. We have not been able to give the South Vietnamese a representative form of government, or even a government that can win and hold the confidence of its people. And if 500,000 American fighting men, the best-equipped Army in the world, plus the South Vietnamese and hundreds of thousands of other allies cannot protect even the major cities from the raggle-taggle Viet Cong and a few divisions of North Vietnamese, then even if you justify this war by the domino theory, the reasoning falls to pieces: if the Red Chinese ever do get their hoards into the war, we won't be able to accomplish our objective making South Vietnam a 'wall of defense,' either. Despite what may have been high aims, we have accomplished fantastically little that is good and incredibly much that is bad. We have poured literally millions into feeding the unbelievably high rate of graft in the country and have engaged in a war of conquest for a series of corrupt governments -- a "war of conquest" because many of the provinces in which we have been fighting have never really been under the rule of the Saigon governments, but have had the Viet Cong as their de facto government ever since the French pulled out. We have burned innocent men, women and children, bombed entire villages, supposedly to kill Viet Cong in the vicinity, but actually in many cases to allow the South Vietnamese army to pillage, rape and loot. We have, through our bombing techniques, cut the food production capacity of the country and brought about the existence of over a million refugees, which neither we nor the Saigon government are doing much of anything to remedy. President Lyndon Johnson had to lie to the American public to get elected, promising no further escalation of the war while behind the scenes he plotted our further involvement with bombing; his Administration had to lie to Congress to get the Gulf of Tonkin resolution to "justify" the bombing in the North. If telling these lies, and then getting caught in them, makes Lyndon Johnson a "wise" politician, then I'm King Kong. If the American people have given every indication that they do not want the war (those representing the President's position won one -- count them, one -- primary), the South Vietnamese have indicated the same with the large number of votes that went to peace candidates and 10,000 Army desertions ~~xx~~ annually. Until and unless this country of ours becomes a technocracy, I can't accept the Papa Lyndon Knows More/Knows Best line you've passed out. Sure, Johnson says he has information that, if the common man were privy to it, would convince him. But Johnson is a proven liar. What he offers are simplistic lies; that we are



supposed to swallow whole because he is our Authority figure. Just listening to Lyndon Johnson talk about Vietnam is enough to convince me that he is, wheeler-dealer politician or no, a moral and philosophical myopic; how anyone can reach any other conclusion is utterly beyond me. If it's Authority figures who Know Best, I could cite a few with a damnsight more qualifications than Lyndon B. Johnson. Rear Admiral Arnold E. True: "I see no strategic or other reason for maintaining a base in Vietnam... Our anti-Communist adventures bring us no return, while social programs suffer at home and twenty million of our citizens are in such despair that there is rioting in the streets. . . General Ky is naturally willing to fight to the last American soldier and the last American dollar. It is about time that Americans should make their own decisions and stop blabbing about 'commitments' and saying 'it is up to Hanoi..'" General David Monroe Shoup, Congressional Medal of Honor winner and former Commandant of the Marine Corps: "I don't think the whole of Southeast Asia, as related to the present and future safety and freedom of the people of this country, is worth the life or limb of a single American... I believe that if we had and would keep our dirty, bloody, dollar-crooked fingers out of the business of these nations so full of depressed, exploited people, they will arrive at a solution of their own." Brg.Gen. Samuel Griffith II: "Bombing Vietnam back to the Stone Age is not going to stop the guerillas from operating... We can pour troops into Vietnam to fight conventional warfare and still have guerillas operating there fifty years from now." Brig.Gen. William W. Ford: "I think we should go back to the 1954 Geneva agreements and hold free elections. I have no doubt they would go Communist, but our own political morality demands that we abide by the results of free elections." Brig.Gen. Hugh B. Hester: "I agree with U Thant that this is a war of national independence, not a case of Communist aggression... I think we ought to get out the way we went in--unilaterally." Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, former Army Chief of Staff: "With no clear-cut limit to our immediate military objective, and no precise and pragmatic definition of our immediate and long-range political objectives, we commit ourselves to an upward spiraling course that may approach annihilation..." Und zo weiter. Actually, it's about time people started applying real pragmatism to what can be done. ...hmm. Y'know, Ted, almost all of the preceding was written shortly after I read your comments, with only a minor bit of up-dating being necessary up to this point. Now I come to the "real pragmatic" things that could be done...when our next President is going to be Richard Nixon, George Wallace or Hubert Humphrey. Ergo, there is nothing really pragmatic that I can do about it; the three hold (from where I set) only vaguely dissimilar views on that subject. My only hope would seem to lie in voting for the lesser of three evils: and the last time I sullied my vote thataway, I voted for Lyndon Johnson... In passing thru Pa., if you should find a place you don't like but with a built-in bomb shelter, or even a handy sand dune, keep me informed . . .



HARRY WARNER: Your comments about ways to alleviate the welfare load are a little more than sickening and betray a commonly held but nonetheless fantastic ignorance. I'm sure you wouldn't suggest that everyone in this country be treated like a criminal because a small percentage of the population commit crimes; so where do you get off suggesting that welfare recipients be treated subhumanly because a small percentage of them may use the money they receive in a manner that displeases you. More than half of the people who receive welfare are totally disabled or too old to work; the rest are women who've been housewives and who have children to support and an education that wouldn't get them a job that would support them and whose husbands have either died or left them. There are no able-bodied men on welfare; unemployment, yes, but not welfare. Nobody's getting rich on welfare, either; New York has one of the highest-paying welfare systems, but virtually all recipients are living in slums or worse. I find nothing incredible about the Maryland law that prohibits welfare caseworkers from spying on welfare recipients after 4 p.m. What I find incredible is your suggestion that they be deprived of driving privileges, be subjected to public shaming techniques, be subjected to harassment (you suggest the hours of midnight to 8 a.m.), and deprived of entertainment, liquor and sex. You have the gall to propose that these people be treated as if they were less than human because a few pennies of your tax money is given to them each year; that's what I find incredible. ::

ANDY MAIN: You sure are off your ass when you say what you said about Senator McCarthy; like, he did too attack the War in Vietnam on moral grounds. And, moot tho the point is now, he also advocated amnesty for those who went to Canada rather than give in to the draft. Hows about them apples?

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