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Fats finds heaven in pinball game

By Jim Kay and Mike McCarthy

Walking up behind Fats Ladowski, you can tell he has been up to his old barroom antics. Pinball, you see, is Fats' forte.

He loves it, lives it, and loses quarters on it every night except Sundays. On Sundays, he recuperates and writes home to his parents to tell them where his savings are going.

So far, Fats writes, he has been robbed four times, has lent \$60 to a friend and has been having "a lot of dates." Fats' mother wants him to get married, so that's okay. In truth, the last encounter Fats had with a female was when he was a senior in high school in 1975. It was a blind date with a pimple-faced redhead.

the pressure from his belt buckle which has rarely been seen. With a grunt and a foot shuffle, Fats is ready for action. Silver is punched into the lit-up robber and for the next three or four hours, Fats is in flipper heaven.

"I remember the time a couple of months ago when I racked up 85,234 points on the first ball," Fats seriously recalled. "I was hotter-an-hell. They couldn't stop me.

"But the next ball bounced off the 300-point wall and went straight down the middle. An impossible ball to hit." (Fats is getting excited now. The sweat is rolling down his spongy cheeks).

"After that, I knew what I had to do," Fats said tersely. "I needed about 14,000 for a free game. The last ball went through the bonus. Only 900 more to go, I said to myself. It then came shooting toward my right wing and I knocked it through the 200-point tunnel, but it headed for the side alley."

Fats saved the ball from going out with the help of his best friend—his gut. He shifted all his weight, or at least some of the heavier layers, to his left foot, causing the ball to careen back into play.

Fats had won a free game. "I tell 'ya," says Fats. "That's what life's all about. Playing under pressure."

jim kay / mike mccarthy

About 9 p.m., Fats got his face dented with a 7 ounce beer glass for making an improper pass at her in the bar. Actually, Fats was just reaching for some peanuts, he says.

Dejected—and relieved—Fats roamed over to pinball haven, lost four quarters and quit. He climaxed the night with four greasy cheeseburgers and two bottles of cheap beer. So much for fleeting love.

Once, Fats wrote home that he gave \$150 to a charity and, in effect, Fats wasn't really lying. He is a prime candidate for charity.

Being, at a minimum, 50 pounds overweight, Fats boasts admirably of his ever-increasing gut.

"Yep, been working on it since eighth grade," Fats says as he grabs a couple rolls of blubber and strokes them like a magic lamp.

"But I almost lost them one time," he continues. "It was at summer camp. I still sweat when I think about how close it was. (Fats has a lot of person to sweat). They tried to make me go horseback riding."

Fats, it seems, developed intense stomach pain when he heard about the trip and the worried camp leader insisted that Fats would have to miss all the fun and not go riding.

Fats started to feel better. When the camp leader returned with a gallon of chocolate ice cream to relieve the pain, Fats was on his way to a miraculous recovery. Sixty-eight minutes and one gallon of ice cream later, Fats was cured.

Instead of riding horses that summer, Fats rode a bed mattress most of the days, getting up only to take miracle medicine—food.

Yet, Fats is quite an athlete behind the flipper machine. His stubby fingers man the control buttons on each side. He hoists his belly onto the glass top, relieving



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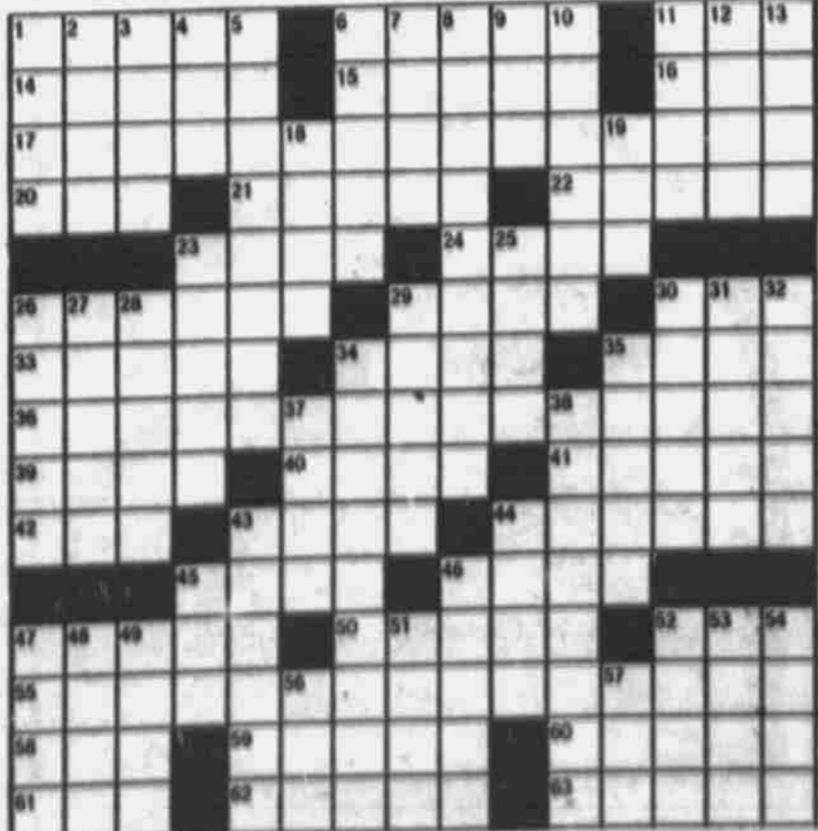
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puzzle crossword

Edited by Eugene T. Maleska



- ACROSS**
- Balbo, memorable aviator
 - Mother, to an Etonian
 - Pronoun for a ship
 - Equip for use
 - Allan—, of Robin Hood tales
 - Scuttle
 - Active
 - Impressionist
 - Beauty-shop treatment
 - Former Plains dwelling
 - -to-order
 - "... and pretty maids all in —"
 - Bernhardt and Vaughn
 - Affirm
 - canto
 - Center of action
 - Kind of hopper
 - Emanation
 - Have a wild time
 - MacLaine role
 - Prefix with foot or faced
 - In reserve
 - "— Kapital"
 - Sour
 - Julia and Ulysses
 - Ives
 - Sea birds
 - Erstwhile Manhattan hotel
 - Golf score
 - Bide a —
 - Indulge in youthful follies
 - Before la-la
 - Archangel
 - Available
- DOWN**
- all in the game!
 - Group of lions
 - Resembling a seine
 - Pahlavi's country
 - Mah-jongg piece
 - Money-exchange premium
 - Schisgal play: 1964
 - Collapsible chapeau
 - Shelly —, famed jazz drummer
 - Totals
 - Use a democratic process
 - Whitney
 - Clergyman or schoolman
 - Something not to "give up"
 - Sharpen
 - On — (irritable)
 - Helps
 - London suburb
 - Food described in Exodus
 - Change the décor
 - Flavorful
 - Macaw
 - Champagne center
 - Vigilant
 - Engraving tool
 - Construct
 - Weighs down
 - Loser to Cromwell: 1651
 - Karenina and Christie
 - Ski lift
 - Applied pressure
 - Appear
 - Cheat
 - Sound of disfavor
 - Nimble
 - Italian wine center
 - Arrange
 - "— the night before . . ."
 - Inspired reverence
 - Unit of power
 - State, to Lafayette
 - Spot
 - Go astray
 - Word with step or time



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sports shorts

The indoor tennis courts in the UNL Sports Complex will open Saturday, Jan. 21, from 1 to 5 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 22 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Student cost is \$2 an hour per court and faculty cost is \$4 an hour per court. Persons interested in reserving a court should register Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Room 125 of the Sports Complex. Contact Ray Huppert at 472-1147 to answer questions.

The UNL Rugby Club will hold a business and organizational meeting in the Nebraska Union, Thursday at 7 p.m. The room number will be posted.

The UNL women's basketball team will play in Kansas City's Kemper Arena tonight at 6 against Northwest Missouri State University. The team has a 7-10 record and returns home Friday for a 7:30 p.m. game with Iowa State University at the Coliseum.

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