

Stefano Pelinga Captures 2007 Trick Shot Magic!

The 2007 ESPN Zone Billiards Shootout was held October 4 in Las Vegas. Stefano Pelinga defeated Tom Rossman for the TRICK SHOT MAGIC title and the lion's share of the \$50,000 purse. ESPN Zone Las Vegas was host to the event which was taped for three 1-hour telecasts on ESPN.

The Eighth Annual TRICK SHOT MAGIC featured a stellar international cast vying for \$30,000 first prize in the \$50,000 event. The matches required each player to execute 10 Artistic shots in a challenge format. Players challenged their opponents with shots of their choice, with each player forced to make the shot to score a point. In the event of a tied score, the tiebreaker was an 8-rail bank shot onto the face of a \$100 bill. The player who came closest to the center of the bill won the match.

Pelinga and Rossman displayed their brilliance to emerge as the top trick shot artists. The Championship Match was poetry on green felt, with Pelinga defeating Rossman by a score of 12 - 8 to take the crown and \$30,000. Rossman, who otherwise played to top form in the event,

claimed \$8,000 second prize. The match was all the more remarkable in that it was former champion versus former champion, with Rossman having won the Trick Shot Magic title in 2002 and Pelinga taking the crown in 2005.

In semifinal action, Rossman prevailed over Sal Conti in a close match by a score of 16 - 14. Even though he lost, Conti established a record by making all of his own challenge shots in a match, the first player to achieve that goal in the eight year history of the event. The other semifinal was an even tighter match between Pelinga and Nick Nicolaidis, with a tied score of 5 - 5. They then went to a sudden death tiebreaker, in which each player had one try at an 8-rail bank shot onto the face of a \$100 bill. Pelinga, with superb skill, banked the cue ball onto the exact face of the bill to win the tiebreaker and the match.

International trick shot stars that were bumped off in single elimination included Nicolaidis and Conti, who won \$3,000 each, and Mike Massey, the 2006 Trick Shot Magic Champion, Andy Segal, Matt MacPhail and Sebastain Giumelli who

won \$1,500 each. In the quarterfinals, Conti defeated Segal, Pelinga edged out MacPhail in sudden death tiebreaker, Rossman slipped past Giumelli, and Nicolaidis overcame defeating champion Massey.

The standing-room-only crowd gave Pelinga a spirited ovation at the conclusion of the final match. The winners check was presented by ESPN Zone and Connelly Billiards, and Cuetec Cues presented a one-of-a-kind cue to the 2007 TRICK SHOT MAGIC Champion. The presentation brought another round of cheers from the audience.

In addition to the fine tournament site at ESPN Zone Las Vegas at the New York New York Hotel & Casino, the event was sponsored by Connelly Billiards, Cuetec Cues, Aramith Super Pro Balls, Simonis Cloth, The Association for P.O.O.L., L.E.A.N.I. Italian Slate, Ozone Billiards, AcCue Shot Training Device and Silver Cup Chalk. The WPA sanctioned event was produced by Billiards International, Ltd. in association with Allen Hopkins.

