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BEST BILLIARD SITES OF 2007

BY MERYL K. EVANS

THE Internet is vast, and vastly important for billiards. A recent consumer survey conducted by the Billiard Congress of America shows that nearly all consumers go online when they're interested in making a major purchase — like a pool table — to learn more about the product, and perhaps to buy as well. That just shows how the sport, its audience and the consumer model have changed. You can't get much lower-tech than pool (one of its many charms), but the Internet is still the first stop for many with interest in the game.

For the past six years, *Billiards Digest* has honored outstanding industry Internet sites that exemplify excellence in innovation, design, navigation and salesmanship. The industry's ability to market itself over the Web is more important than ever, and we're here to showcase the best and the brightest in hopes that they can improve everyone's game.

A couple caveats: Winners from the 2005 and 2006 awards were not eligible this year, so don't fret if you don't see a favorite on the list. And,

while we do our best to review the majority of billiard sites, the Internet is, well, vast, and we might have overlooked a potential winner. Let us know if you have a site you'd like us to nominate.

BEST FEMALE PLAYER SITE

LIZ FORD
www.lizford.net

Simple, clean and warm describes the welcoming personality of Liz Ford's home on the Web. We appreciated the site's use of black text on a white background (except on the home page), as opposed to gray text on a light background that many sites use. Ford's site has everything you need from a player site: bio, photos, press information, an updated schedule and contact information.

Ford, a WPBA pro and one of the most charming players in the game, goes the

extra mile in adding a blog to open dialogue between her and fans. We hope she continues to keep her site and blog updated, a problem for sites in all the categories. Her site uses the sans-serif font Arial, one of the recommended fonts for online text. The text size could stand to go up a notch, but Ford's text still knocks out most of the sites, which use small and lightly colored text. A few also have the text in images or Flash, making it impossible to change using Firefox.

