

From the Desk of John Martin
WHATS FAIR IS FAIR

Most pitchers agree it is correct to let elderly men who are losing strength and coordination, to move up, thus making it possible for them to continue pitching. As there is no way to actually determine if, or to what degree a mans abilities have declined, the 30 foot rule for men at 70 was introduced, but is optional. Some men prefer to continue at 40 feet. A doctor's certificate for men under 70 who have health issues is also appropriate.

What is not right, as far as I am concerned, is that women do not receive the same consideration.

According to the National Strength and Conditioning Association, women generally produce from about two thirds to three quarters of the total strength and applied force that men produce. In our game of horseshoes, women pitch from 30 feet, which compensates them at about the right percentage.

Why then, are they not given the same benefits as men and allowed a move up at age 70, or receive a health "move up" opportunity with a doctors certificate, at an earlier age?

Do our fearless leaders actually believe that unlike men, women do not begin to lose strength and ability as they age? It seems those in charge do, because this matter has never been given any degree of consideration. Jo Ann Douglass presented it to the Eastern Pennsylvania Horseshoe Pitchers Association and it was soundly shot down.

This is obvious discrimination against the ladies. It is a logical "no brainier" for them to have the option to move up at age seventy. Men move up 10 feet which is 25%, the same percentage would allow women to move up 7.5 feet.

Here is an actual example: Marge Kozik pitched horseshoes for many years at the Southern Tier Horseshoe Club and at tournaments in NY and Pa. In her late 70's she wasn't able to reach the pit from 30 feet and was about to quit the league. Charlie Reigles the league director allowed her to move up 5 feet. Marge was then able to pitch respectfully and did so for several more years. Certainly there are many other ladies who would continue to pitch, if the move up rule was available for women.

What is the argument against this proposal? It's time to bring this suggestion up to the rules committee. Who will do it? Let me know and I will help.... Jm