

Weston Charles sent me the EJC chips earlier this year. I am always happy to get a new to me Texas Illegal and even happier when there is a good story to go with them. This is the 17th "Illegal Of The Day" for Texas. Still a long way to go to catch up with 26 for Illinois but there are several more Texas chips in the loop.

Enough of that.
Texas:



EJC-1att2

Express Jockey Club
230 Ave. E
San Antonio, TX

12/5/35
680 red, 280 white, 160 blue, 100 pink, 40 yellow
Same both sides.

The EJC chips same both sides should not be confused with same exact EJC font with denominations on the back. The denominated ones went to Brookings, SD in 1961. So much for Mason's advertising of "Non Duplicate" chips. This is not the first time we have seen duplicated fonts on Mason chips.

EJC (also RJJ and KKK)

Richard Jefferson "Dick" Jones lived his whole life in San Antonio--born there in 1911 and died there in 1968 at the age of 56. At the age of 23 Jones ordered some hub chips with his initials RJJ and had them delivered to the Express Jockey Club which was located in the basement of a small hotel called the Lafayette.

Express Jockey Club,
 R.J. Jones, NOV 8 1935
 230 Ave. E,
 San Antonio, Texas.
 8-18-34: 40 Yellow, 160 Blue, 300 Red
 10-29-35: 300 Red Hub Checks
 "RJJ"
 Reg. Old Mono
 300 White Hubs
 K.O. 11/5/35



EJC-2att2



EJC-3att2

Scan courtesy of Ed Hertel. I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader.

The Lafayette was located at the corner of Avenue E and 3rd Street--across the street from the building which housed the San Antonio Express-News, one of San Antonio's major dailies. Presumably the Express Jockey Club got its name from the paper. It was originally named the Express Recreation Club but changed its name around the time San Antonio built a new horse race track called Alamo Downs which had its inaugural meet in April 1934.

ad from 1936:

EXPRESS JOCKEY CLUB
Information on All Sporting Events
230 Avenue E. Fannin 9165

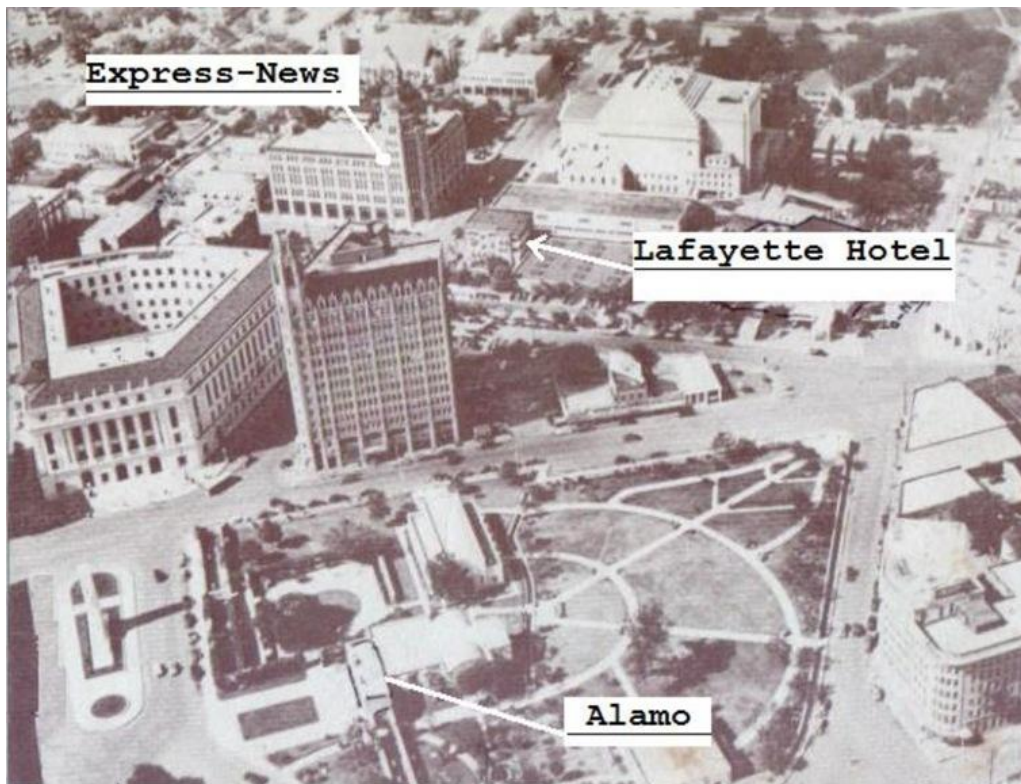
EJC-4att2

Here's a pic from 1927 looking down Avenue E at the Lafayette (the structure which housed the hotel no longer exists):



EJC-5att2

Here's an aerial view from the late 1930's showing the Lafayette's location relative to the Express-News and the Alamo:



EJC-6

Jones' RJJ hub order from 1934 was supplemented with more RJJ chips sent to the Express Jockey Club on October 29th and November 5th 1935. A few weeks later on November 21st the Express Jockey Club was raided. Jones was described as the operator and chips were confiscated:

STATE POLICE RAID DOWNTOWN PLACE

Eight Admit Gambling, Pay Fines After Visit to Ave- nue E Resort

The Texas Department of Public Safety Thursday began operations to close gambling establishments in San Antonio by calling on a jockey club Avenue E and Third Street. Eight persons paid fines.

A score or more patrons were in the place when John E. England and Fred Holland of the ranger division, co-operating with Inspector Lee Miller, arrived on the scene.

Worried looks appeared on the customers' faces and remained there while England talked with Richard J. Jones, operator of the place. It was finally agreed that charges would be filed against eight employes providing the gambling department of the place was closed permanently.

Placing of bets at the bookie windows was stopped, but the boards operated until the last race of the day was run while England and Holland were taking an inventory of supplies and equipment in the poker room.

Dice, poker chips and a crap table, which had not been in operation but were considered as a gambling device, were loaded on a truck for transfer to a warehouse.

Two weeks after the raid the EJC hubs were delivered to the Express Jockey Club in colors and quantities almost identical to the RJJ hubs:

My note: I guess the "permanently closed" in the article meant permanently closed for "2 weeks." <g>

Early in the morning of New Year's Day 1936 (a few weeks after the EJC order) Jones was at the Express Jockey Club counting the money taken in at the club during New Years Eve when a man in a trench coat walked in and, pointing what appeared to be a gun through the pocket of his coat, demanded that Jones hand over the money. Jones lunged at the man and in the ensuing struggle the robber shot Jones twice before his gun jammed. A club bartender leveled a shotgun at the perp's head but the gun misfired. At the same moment another man took aim with his pistol—but it also misfired. Several men then pounced on the robber and pummeled him with beer bottles.

My note: What are the odds of 3 different Texas boys in one room, all carrying guns, that all misfired in a span of a couple minutes. But like all bar fights if the gun doesn't work, use the handy beer bottles. I bet Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett would roll over in their graves if they could read this. <g>

pic of Jones around the time of the shooting:



EJC-8att2

Jones, with bullet wounds in the lung and kidney, was given a 50-50 chance to survive. After several operations, he did, and went back to work at the Express. In the late 1930's he poured several thousand dollars into the construction of a new club just outside the city limits on Fredericksburg Road called the Kit Kat Klub. It had its grand opening in May 1939.

Kit Kat Club Opens

The Kit Kat klub, San Antonio's newest dinner club, located on Fredericksburg road, a mile outside the city limits, had its gala opening Saturday night, with a capacity crowd attending.

The new club, with accommodations for a thousand patrons, has both charm and modernistic distinctiveness. Dance lovers may have their choice of three excellent "softly-lighted" floors, including a beautiful open-air terrace.

Luncheons and dinners will be featured at reasonable prices, according to R. J. ("Dick") Jones, owner of the rendezvous. Clubs and organizations will find the Kit Kat klub an ideal and convenient spot for their gatherings.

Don Hall is manager and will act as host at all activities of the club.



EJC-10att2

In August 1940 Jones ordered these KKK hubs for the Kit Kat Klub: 2,000 chips in 4 colors.



EJC-11att2

Scan courtesy of Ed Hertel. I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader.

Jones was associated with the place into the 1960's. Today the location is the site of American Legion, Alamo Post No.2:



EJC-12

My note: I get lots of emails asking for chip ID's. I enjoying helping collectors but keep in mind, I need a scan of the chips. Initials in an email will not work. Example: I just got my 13th ID on a BC hub mold chip. There are different fonts of the BC, some with same fonts but colors are different on the orders, and only a scan can tell the difference between red, brown, and vermillion. If a 2 sided chip I need scans of both sides.