

Sometimes a starting point in researching a chip will turn into something unexpected. We had an ID on the CHT hub and nothing on the ACE Hi dots mold. IMO, that makes this a heck of an "Illegal Of The Day," <g> Plus, three new entries for TGT.

Enter our "Friend Of The Hobby."

Ace Hi

The two chips below were recently offered for sale by an eBay seller from Colorado who said the chips had been picked-up by his father who told him they were "from old gambling joints around the state." same on both sides:



Acehi1att2

front & back:

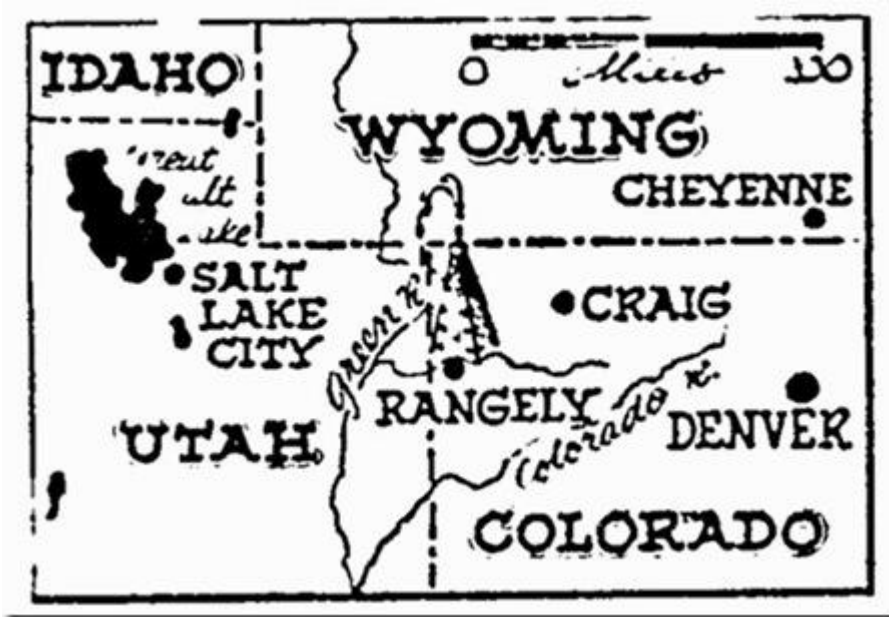


Acehi2att2

The CHT hub mold is identified through the Mason & Co. manufacturing records as having been delivered in 1945 to the Rangely Pool Hall in Rangely, Colorado. Unfortunately there are no known manufacturer records for the Ace Hi dots mold chip. However, there's a good chance that the Ace Hi chip is also from Rangely.

My note: To date nothing has been found on the CHT, Rangely Pool Hall chips. The following information popped on the Ace Hi while researching it. Until now the Ace Hi would have been listed as a UFC chip. Sometimes you get a "Bonus" while researching, <g> All the chips in the auction were not Colorado, Two were Deadwood, South Dakota and will have their own "Illegal Of The day" soon.

Rangely, Colorado is a small town located in the northwestern part of the state near the Utah border, about halfway between Denver and Salt Lake City. When the chips were delivered to Rangely the town was in the midst of an oil boom. World War II had increased the demand for oil exponentially and a large pool of oil which had been discovered in Rangely in the 1930's was brought under development to help fill the supply. Rangely went from being an isolated settlement of a few hundred people to a bustling boom town of several thousand.



Acehi3att2

Here's a description from 1945:

The town of Rangely was just a wide spot in the road that meanders across the basin, with a post office, school, general store and half a dozen scattered dwellings.

A few weeks later Rangely was going to town in typical oil boom fashion. As heavy oil field trucks churned the main street into a sea of mud, frame business buildings of every description sprang up overnight.

Visions of prosperity danced through the heads of promoters and 20-dollar bills flowed freely in the juke box joints where whisky is dispensed for 75 cents a shot and beer for 30 cents a bottle and one-armed bandits line the walls to grab off the change.

J. W. Hays came to Rangely to open a liquor store and "started doing a land-office business right away."

The lumber used in the flooring of his shop was green "and it kind of shrunk." Hays said. "I had to put linoleum on it so the boys wouldn't drop any thousand-dollar bills between the cracks. I never saw anything like this before."

Acehi4att2

Another club operator stated at the time: "I don't even have time to shave—but why shave when \$10 bills are floating around in the air."

My note: Rangely can be likened to the boom town days of the gold rush. Population several hundred to several thousand in a matter of weeks. Can you imagine several thousand "Rough Necks" with a high percentage of them "Red Necks," all with lots of money in their pockets, hitting a small town at the same time? <g> IMO, the town of Rangely could have changed their name to "Party City." <g>

One of the businesses that served the oil boom workers was the Ace Hi. Around June of 1946 Joseph Samuel "Joe" Rosa moved from Wyoming to Rangely and bought the Ace Hi from a guy named Ace Alberts (Rosa is said to have been associated with the Cowboy Bar in Jackson Hole prior to moving to Rangely). When Rosa bought the Ace Hi it was described as a "little café" and not much more than a "shack." Rosa spent several thousand dollars renovating and enlarging the place. The "JR" on the back of the Ace Hi chips could be the initials of Joe Rosa.

Pic of Rosa from the early 1950's:



Acehi5att2

pic of Rangely in 1946, looking west down Main Street (no paved roads in Rangely at the time—you had to drive 20 miles on dirt to reach a paved highway)



Acehi6att2

Rosa sold the Ace Hi in October 1947 and shortly thereafter moved to Glenwood Springs, Colorado where he opened a place called the Riviera Lounge and next door the Peppo-Nino Italian Restaurant. (both still there doing business).

My note: I called Anthony Rosa, Joe's son who is still running the Peppo-Nino Italian Restaurant, He was busy at the place and said he would call me back. To date he has not called. Since Joe had gambling at the Cowboy Bar and The Ace Hi there is a good chance he had gambling at the Riviera Lounge at least in the early days.

I did get a call back from Joe's son in law. I sent him the Ace Hi info. It has been 2 weeks so I decided to go ahead with the post. Will update it if I hear back.

In the 1950's Rosa was a witness at a Federal income tax evasion trial and was asked about the Ace Hi:

(Testimony of Joe Rosa.)

Q. And was gambling carried on in the premises, Mr. Rosa?

A. I refuse to answer that question, on the ground it might tend to incriminate myself.

Acehi7att2

Ummm....I'll take that as a yes.

The income tax evasion trial was for the guy to whom Rosa had sold the Ace Hi: Raymond Samuel Percifield. When Percifield bought the Ace Hi he was also the owner of the Nevada Club in Wendover, Nevada (Percifield had been deputy sheriff of Elko County and chief of police at Wendover in 1946).

My note: There is an interesting bit of info. Owner of a licensed casino in Nevada and owner of an illegal gambling joint in Colorado. I doubt this could happen after 1955 as the Nevada Gaming Control board, the investigative arm of the Nevada Gaming Commission came into being. Larry Hollibaugh and I copied the 1st 5 years of minutes from their meetings. They are posted on Preserving Gaming History.

<http://www.preservinggaminghistory.com/>

pic of Nevada Club in Wendover:



Acehi8att2

From Percifield's income tax trial:

During the years 1948 and 1949 the appellant, Raymond Percifield, was the owner and operator of an illegal gambling casino at Rangely, Colorado, known as the Ace-High Club. (R. 196.) The business establishment, which was on the main street of a small town temporarily overpopulated by an oil boom, contained a bar, a lounge, a cafe, and a casino room where it was conclusively established any of the usual games of chance could be played, including blackjack or "21", poker, craps, or dice, as well as slot machines. (R. 118.) Percifield had purchased this club from Joe Rosa in October 1947 (R. 58) for \$70,000, including \$3,500 worth of inventory (R. 59).

Acehi9att2

The Ace Hi dots mold chips probably stayed with the club—but, whether they did or didn't, in 1949 Percifield purchased new gaming equipment from the Salt Lake Card Company, 76 West 2nd South, Salt Lake City, Utah. According to testimony of the owner of the company at Percifield's trial, his company had two invoices on file for Percifield. One invoice had two items: a craps layout and a black jack layout. The other invoice:

Q. Now, with reference to the second invoice, would you explain to the Court and the jury what was the sale for? What was the date of that invoice? A. September 6, 1949.

Q. And what was the first item?

A. One hundred fifty green square edge chips.

Q. What was the denomination of those chips?

A. Denomination of 50 cents.

Q. What was the cost? A. \$28.25.

Q. And the second item, sir?

A. Two thousand white square edge chips.

Q. And the denomination?

A. One dollar.

Q. And the cost? A. \$270.00.

Q. And the third item?

A. Three hundred yellow square edge chips.

Q. The denomination? A. Five dollars.

Q. And the cost? A. \$40.50.

Q. And the last item?

A. Two hundred dark blue square edge chips.

Q. The denomination?

A. Twenty-five dollars.

Q. And the cost? A. \$27.00.

Q. And the total? A. \$357.78.

Q. Now, there is attached to that invoice a bill of lading? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What does that reflect?

A. Well, it reflects the COD of \$357.78.

Q. Consignor?

A. Salt Lake City Card Company.

Q. And it was consigned to Mr. Raymond Percifield, was it not?

A. It was sent to him, yes, sir.

Q. Where? A. At Rangely, Colorado.

Q. What place? A. Care of Ace High.

Acehi10att2

Unfortunately there is no mention of what was on the chips other than denominations. Also, not sure if the Salt Lake Card Co. had its own mold or if they sub-contracted with another gaming supply house like Mason or T.R.King.

My note: As far as I know the Salt Lake Card Co did not have their own mold. IMO the chips were ordered from one of the old distributors.

I called Raymond Percifield's daughter and left several messages. She still lives in Rangely. No return calls to date. I was hoping she had some of the 1949 ordered chips or at least knew what was on them

Another pic, this time looking east down a recently paved Main Street in the 1950's; oil derricks visible in the background:



Acehi11att2

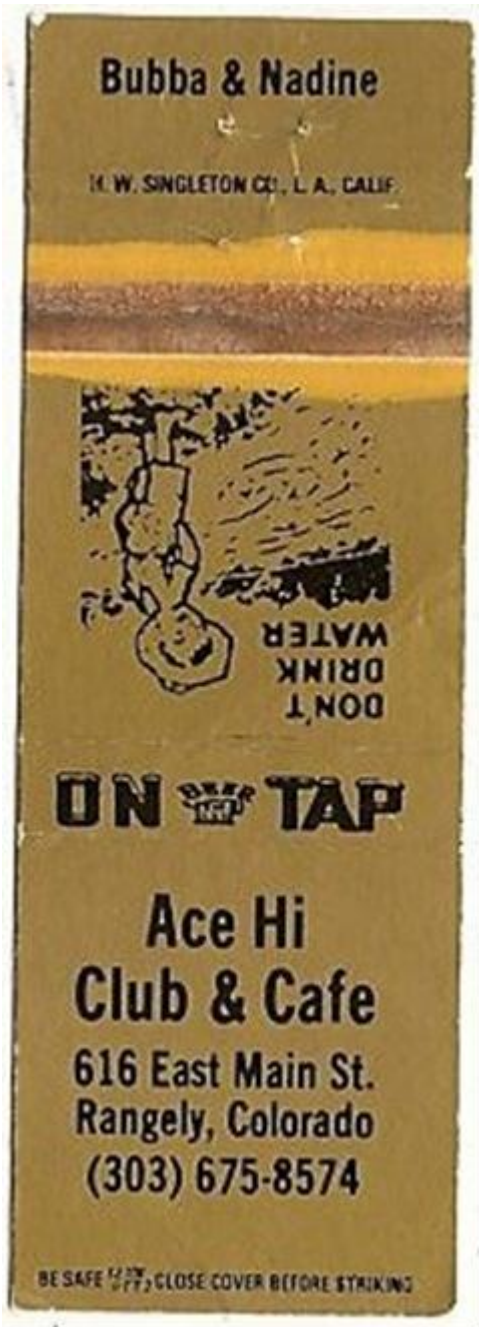
Percifield owned the Ace Hi until December 1973 when he sold it to Larry Miller and Walter Spetter. Percifield died at Ranglely in 1989 at the age of 78. The Ace Hi continued to operate until 2012 when it was sold and renamed Razz Tavern & Grill.

pic of the Ace Hi from a few years ago:



Acehi12att2

matchbook:



Acehi13att2

My note "Bubba?" I told you that oil boom brought Red Necks. <g>

Any idea why there is an "S" stamped on the back of the Ace Hi chip?



Acehi14att2

My note: Only 4 of these chips were found. The one I sent to our "Friend Of The Hobby" is the only one that has the rim "S" stamped on the rim. I never noticed it before I sent it. IMO, it is an after resale stamp done by someone in Colorado. Several of the old distributors could have sold the mold . Over the years I have tracked some "Dots" molds back to The Jack Todd Company in Kansas City and HC Evans in Chicago. We also know White's Club Room Equipment Company in Cincinnati had advertising chips on the mold.

I need one more Ace Hi chip. Cough it up if you have a trader. <g>

Also looking for both of the following chips.



1 Havana Clubatt2



1 HNatt2

=====
=====

Gene, here's some contact info for the Rosa and Percifield's if you want to follow-up.

Joe Rosa died in 1977 at Glenwood Springs. His son 59 year old son Tony still lives there and owns a restaurant his dad opened. I saw an article from a few years ago which said that Tony Rosa liked to sit at a table in the back of his restaurant and smoke cigarettes, drink coffee and play gin with his buddies.

Anthony P Rosa

Home (970) 945-5503

702 1/2 Grand Ave

Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

Acehi15att2

Raymond Percifield's wife Mossie appears to still be living at age 98 in Rangely (she was alive in 2011; no indication that she's died since)

Mossie Percifield

Home (970) 675-2823

PO Box 185

Rangely, CO 81648-0185

Acehi16att2

A 77 year old daughter Betty Hayden also resides in Rangely:

Betty Hayden

Home (970) 675-2441

218 Dakota Ave

Rangely, CO 81648-2804

Acehi17att2

Maybe they have some old Ace Hi chips from the Salt Lake Card Co., or even from the Nevada Club.