

MATCH TIPS for New Collectors

by "Billboard Bill" Thomas

Returned from Thailand with very few matches—not only are they very stingy with them, but sampling the local foods got me sidetracked in bed for many days. But, on Malaysian Airlines the cute Japanese stewardess brought me a whole burp bag of their matches and then knelt beside me in the aisle to help me shuck them! My regrets to all of you who were looking forward to many matches from my trip.

Let's hope that 1998 is better for matches than the past few years. Keep an eye out for matches relating to the Nagano Olympics, even if they're not official Olympic ones. There are already some collectors' matches out touting AMCAL and the August RMS convention. AMCAL's theme this year is Irish; try to make it to Bakersfield in May—American flies there from Dallas. For RMS, Moline's Quad Cities airport doesn't take king-sized planes, but AirTran flies there from Des Moines and other places. You collectors out west should try hard to get to Moline, as it looks to me like the next 3 RMS conventions will be in the east.

For mailing quantities of covers/boxes, look into the free Priority Mail envelopes offered by the Postal Service. They now have a box that's 1 1/2x5 1/2 and the postage is only \$3 for up to 2 lbs. If you want to insure mail going to Canada, be sure to make it known that it's to Canada, as my Denver Strikers club lost some valuable stuff because of postal ineptness. If most of your trading mail is in the 1-3 oz. range go to Office Depot and buy a little weighted postal scale for about \$2; it is a worthwhile investment.

Displays...if you hurry you can make a fine, award-winning display for AMCAL and then bring it to RMS for yet another award. BUT——RMS has strict rules (published in the Jan. Bulletin) and some, like the one for Category 2 (Foreign) are senseless. We all agree that Canada

is NOT considered foreign, but why is Mexico treated so too? The requirement for "foreign address" is foolish, as few foreign covers/boxes have a full address. Does a cover need to say any more than "Tel Aviv Hilton" to be considered as foreign? RMS presently has NO ONE in charge of this important area since chairman Broadway resigned from the post, so please write or call RMS Prez. Linda to put someone onto this subject in time for the next convention. I'd volunteer, but I am too biased.

If you're coming to Florida's Walt Disney World this year, I have a 2-page gouge on where to get matches which I'll send you for a SASE and a few covers. I've seen a major trend away from matches in the past year, with many Disney places using a generic EPCOT matchbook or one from another activity in place of replenishing their own. Also, some matches from spots in the Disney-owned city of Celebration do not say Disney anywhere on the matches. Hey, did you notice how quickly Californians revolted after the state passed that no-smoking-in-bars law? So how did it get passed in the first place? Seems like some legislators will do whatever they like until they get a letter bomb in the mail!

If you have a relative or friend who served in a military unit during World War II, why not obtain a matchbook from that unit, frame it, and present it to the relative/friend for their birthday? This can be done for Christmas, too—lots of time left...

[Hey, I'm Bill Thomas of 222 S. Ranger Blvd., Winter Park, FL 32792. Phone/fax is 407-657-0222 and I welcome you questions, ideas, or complaints. I'm up until 11 PM EST]