

The Meter Setter

3

March 2020

Fun, Games, and Serious Competition at AWWA ACE



In addition to visiting vendor booths, promoting products, and earning certification credits, ACE attendees can cheer on waterworks professionals as they compete against the clock and each other. The AWWA Operator Involvement Committee (OIC) organizes operator contests that promote teamwork and provide excitement at AWWA events such as the annual ACE Conference. Through OIC events, participants hone their skills and build lasting relationships across the entire association.

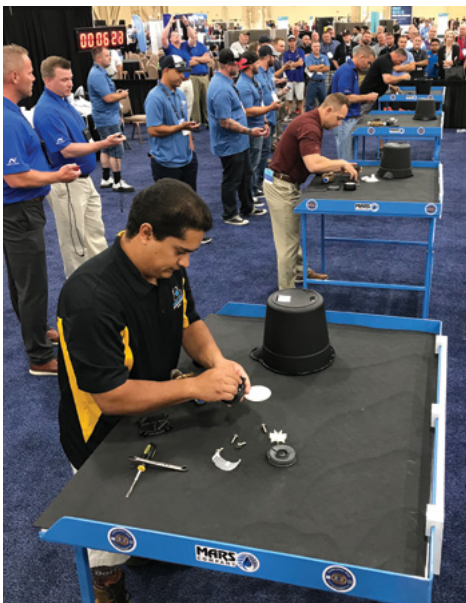
- **Pipe Tapping** – Introduced in 1986, pipe tapping is the oldest AWWA competition. In this event, teams seek to drill through pressurized ductile iron pipe and install taps in the shortest amount of time. Points are deducted for leaking connections or safety violations.

- **Meter Madness** – In this event, contestants race to assemble a water meter with speed and accuracy. Many state sections host Meter Madness competitions to determine who will represent their section at the national tournament.

- **Top Ops** – In Top Ops, teams of operators and lab technicians must answer questions under pressure in a “Jeopardy”-style contest. Questions are gathered from AWWA publications and vetted by the Association of Boards of Certification.

- **Hydrant Hysteria** – The most recent competition is Hydrant Hysteria. Two-person teams must correctly assemble a hydrant in the shortest amount of time.

Ford Meter Box is a proud sponsor of Meter Madness and supports all contestants. Stop by the competitions at ACE 20 in Orlando to cheer on the contenders! Or, contact your local AWWA section to join or start a competition team.



The top photo shows Hydrant Hysteria, where teams of two people compete to assemble fire hydrants in the shortest time. Meter Madness (photo above) pits contestants against the clock for the fastest meter assembly time. Shown at right is the Pipe Tapping competition. This is the oldest AWWA competition, first held in 1986.



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Still Pickin' Up Chicks
Watercolor on paper by Anne Maddox

APRIL 2020

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Baseball Weathers the War

Seventy-five years ago, in 1945, Major League Baseball was coming to the end of one of its greatest challenges. As World War II was winding down, hundreds of veterans who had been involved in professional baseball were coming home, travel restrictions were ending and fans were returning to ballparks in larger and larger numbers.



Joe DiMaggio in 1941, prior to entering the United States Army Air Corp in World War II. Photo credit: Library of Congress, ppmsca 18794 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.18794

When World War II began in 1941, the immediate future of professional sports was uncertain. Enlistments, and the draft, quickly drained major teams in all sports of many of their most promising players. To many it seemed that the baseball season of 1942 was particularly threatened.

In January 1942 President Franklin Roosevelt wrote to Kennesaw Mountain Landis, then commissioner of baseball, and expressed his opinion that professional baseball should continue. "There will be fewer people unemployed and everybody will be working longer hours," said the President. "And that means they ought to have a chance for recreation and for taking their minds off their work..." the President said.

Baseball did continue, even though the talent pool was greatly diminished. Before the war ended, some 500 major league players and 2,000 minor league

players went off to the military. In their places, for the most part, remained older players, many of whom were past the normal age of retirement from the diamonds.

Some of baseball's brightest stars were missing from the game during what might have been their best years in baseball.

Joe DiMaggio missed three seasons with the New York Yankees while serving in the Army Air Force from 1943 to September 1945. DiMaggio returned to the Yankees for six more seasons.

Ted Williams, one of baseball's great hitters, also missed three full seasons of play during World War II. Williams served with the Naval Air Force where he earned his wings and became a flight instructor.

But his service with the military was not confined to World War II. Williams was recalled to duty for most of two seasons during the Korean War. This time he flew nearly 40 combat missions.

Warren Spahn, an outstanding pitcher for the Boston Red Sox, was a rookie for the team in 1942. He appeared in only four games that season before joining the Army where he was assigned to the 276th Engineer Combat Battalion. He took part in the Battle of the Bulge and by war's end was the recipient of the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

The Red Sox welcomed Spahn back in 1946, and he went on to play the next 20 seasons for Boston.

Another baseball star who saw military service in World War II was Bob Feller, pitcher for the Cleveland Indians.

In 2006, four years before his death at the age of 92, Feller told a sports writer, "It was Dec. 7, 1941. I was driving to my meeting with my Cleveland Indians bosses to hash out my 1942 contract, and out it came on the radio: the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. The last thing on my mind was playing baseball. I immediately decided to enlist."

Feller was away from professional baseball for four seasons, but when he returned to the Indians, he became one of the sport's most celebrated pitchers.

by Pete Jones