

# The American Cueist

Volume 5, Number 6

Cover, Page 2

May 1997

## Josey Custom Cues

Keith Josey's father was a machinist for 17 1/2 years before he went into the custom home building business. He earned a reputation as a perfectionist at custom woodworking. Keith grew up in his father's wood shop, and began helping out as a kid. When they were through working, Keith, his father, and four brothers would often go play pool at a local room.

Keith had his own cue, and one day he had to have a ferrule replaced. He was very disappointed with the work. It was nowhere near the quality of work that he was used to in his father's custom woodworking business. So, Keith set out to do cue repairs to the standard of work to which he was accustomed. With the help of his father-in-law, he bought the necessary equipment, and was working on cues in 1988.

Local players were so impressed with the quality of his work that they urged him to make his own cues. In 1992, Keith started making Josey cues. He has since

continued making cues one at a time, by hand, in his one-man shop. All of Keith's cues have been hand-signed "Josey," sometimes followed by the year, for easy identification. Keith went to a slimmer joint and butt diameter in 1994, to improve playability, which is the most important aspect of his cues. Keith makes every component of his cues except for the tips, bumpers, and screws. Inlays are done on a small pantograph, as opposed to a C.N.C. machine. He likes to use exotic woods and stones such as turquoise and malchite for inlays. Keith used to cut up phenolic resin cue balls to make his capped ferrules, but now he buys the same raw material in rods. He likes phenolic resin because of the hit, and because chalk stains wipe away easily. Ferrules, collars, and butt caps all thread on for more secure construction. Keith likes a forward balanced cue, with a solid stiff hit. He turns his shafts six different times over a six-month period

clipping them in a wood stabilizer after each turning. Spliced cues often sit for a month or more, to ensure against warpage.

Keith is close to several military bases in Georgia, and Josey cues have become popular with local servicemen. They have taken cues with them on different tours, generating orders for Josey cues from around the world. Keith currently specializes in one-of-a-kind custom cues, and will make cues based on customers' specifications.

"The Dreamcatcher" The Josey Custom cue featured on the cover has a Birdseye Maple Front with three long Ebony Points with Ebony Concave Points in top and three short Ebony Points with Ebony Diamonds in top. It also has six Mother of Pearl Shields above wrap. Ebony, Micarta and Silver Dash Rings throughout cue. Wrap is Bocote Wood with six Ivory Diamonds and six Turquoise Diamonds inlaid inside two Black Phenolic Rings. Butt Sleeve is

Ebony with sixteen Ivory Points and eight Turquoise Diamond Inlays. Buttcap is Black Phenolic with eight Mother of Pearl Diamonds. This cue has Ivory Ferrules on both shafts and is priced at \$3100.00

Keith crafts each Josey Cue by hand from start to finish, with uncanny attention to detail. It makes no difference if the order is for a Sneaky Pete or an elaborate \$1,200 model, Keith builds every cue with the same devotion to detail and perfection. In this sense, each cue he delivers becomes an extension of himself.

At a cue show in Baltimore, Keith received high praise from his peers for his expertise in cue building. This experience, coupled with his love for the art of cue construction, reinforced Keith's dedication to becoming one of the world's great cue makers.

Keith's unique philosophy not only includes great attention to the desires of his customers, it demands a constant effort to build the best cue possible in any price range. His willingness to discuss every detail with the customer goes beyond that of many other cue builders and because he never wants a Josey Cue to be seen as less than perfect, Keith stands behind every cue he builds.