

## The World Championships Balkline 45/1 and 47/1

At the end of the 19th century there were games in balkline 45/1, but no tournaments are known.

In the beginning, only professionals played balkline 45/1, and it was they who ensured its recognition as an independent discipline with the first championship in New York in 1897. The outstanding player at that time was the American Frank Ives with an general average of 14,95 (best game with 30,25 and maximum series of 140), even if he only finished third behind his compatriots George F. Slosson and Jacob Schaefer. There was another tournament for the title in 1901, otherwise it was limited to challenge matches.

Official world championships in Balkline 45/1 were not held until 1927, and Francis S. Appleby from the USA was particularly active in promoting this discipline at the UIFAB (Union Internationale des Fédérations des Amateurs de Billard). In the first tournament in 1927 in Vichy (FR), he came last in his special discipline, but placed in the medal ranks one and two years later.

Before the Second World War, the tournament was held regularly, but then there was a major break until 1967. In the next 20 years, the balkline 47/1 - it replaced the balkline 45/1 from 1949 - played a rather subordinate role in the world federation. Only seven world championships took place during this period and after 1987 it was finally over.

The games in balkline 45/1 as well as in balkline 47/1 were mainly played over 300 points. Only in the last championship in 1987 the distance was reduced to 250 points.

The record for the general average in world championships is held by Francis Connesson (FR) with 51,81. Only once did a player manage to finish a game in one inning. Hans Vultink (NL) achieved this best game of 300,00 in Rotterdam in 1975. Accordingly, he also holds the record for the highest series with 300, which was held before him by Dutchman Henk Scholte with 299.

The Egyptian Edmond Soussa and the Belgian René Gabriels collected the most titles. They were successful three times each, while Francis Connesson (FR) made it to the top of the podium twice. All other world champions in balkline 45/1 or 47/1 triumphed only once.

In 1980 in Bottrop (DE) and in 1982 in Duisburg (DE) the highest tournament averages with 27,75 and 27,62 were achieved with 8 participants in the round robin mode.