

Billiards Legend Buddy Hall, "The Rifleman," Passes Away at 79

Star of recent documentary had a rich and interesting life

AUSTIN, TX, UNITED STATES, May 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The billiards world is mourning the loss of one of its most iconic figures. Cecil P. "Buddy" Hall, widely regarded as one of the greatest nine-ball players in history, passed away on May 22, 2025, just one week shy of his 80th birthday.

Known throughout the pool community as "The Rifleman" for his pinpoint accuracy, Hall's career spanned over two decades of dominance in professional pool. His unmatched cue ball control and consistency in high-stakes "money matches" earned him a legendary status among players and fans alike.



Buddy Hall on The Tale of Texas Pool set

“

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Hall recently starred in the [acclaimed billiards documentary](#) *The Tale of Texas Pool*, which premiered on December 25, 2024. The film, which chronicles the history of pool in Texas and the long-running Texas Open tournament, features Hall both as a storyteller and a subject. Hall, who won the Texas Open in 1998 and competed in the event for many years, played a central role in capturing the spirit and evolution of the game.

“Buddy brought so much character and color to pool,” said Kevin Welling, director of the documentary. “I’m grateful for the time we spent together making the film. He had a huge heart, was a straight shooter on and off the table, and just told it like it was. There just wasn't many better than [Buddy Hall](#). Any [billiards movie](#) wouldn't be complete without his stories.”

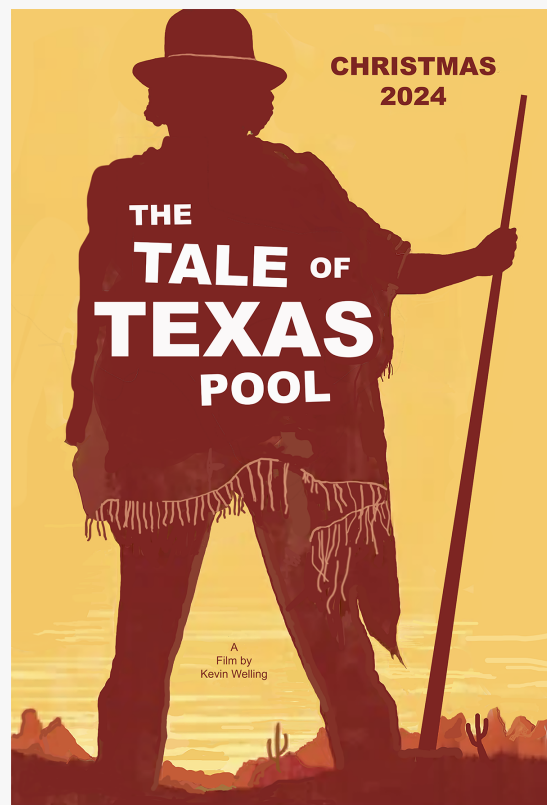
Born May 29, 1945, Hall grew up along the river as the son of a riverboat captain. He discovered pool at the age of 14 in a soda shop in his hometown of Metropolis, Illinois, where he learned to play on a bumper pool table. When local pool halls refused to admit him because of his age, Hall famously secured a falsified birth certificate from a local judge to gain entry and begin his career in earnest. He honed his skills at Herbie Lynn's pool room and quickly began dominating local talent before taking his game on the road.

During his many years living in Houston, Hall built strong relationships with other pool legends, including Red Walling of Red's Pool Hall, hustler U.J. Puckett, and Jersey Red (Jack Briet). He often reflected on his Texas years as some of the most meaningful of his life.

Although nine-ball was his specialty, Hall was proficient in all pool disciplines. To this day, players and pundits alike hail his fundamentals, particularly his cue ball control, as among the best the game has ever seen.

Hall's charisma, authenticity, and love for the sport left an indelible mark on the billiards community. His legacy as both a competitor and a gentleman of the game will live on in pool halls around the world.

Kevin Welling
Great Slate Production Group



The Tale of Texas Pool Movie Poster

+1 512-948-1474

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