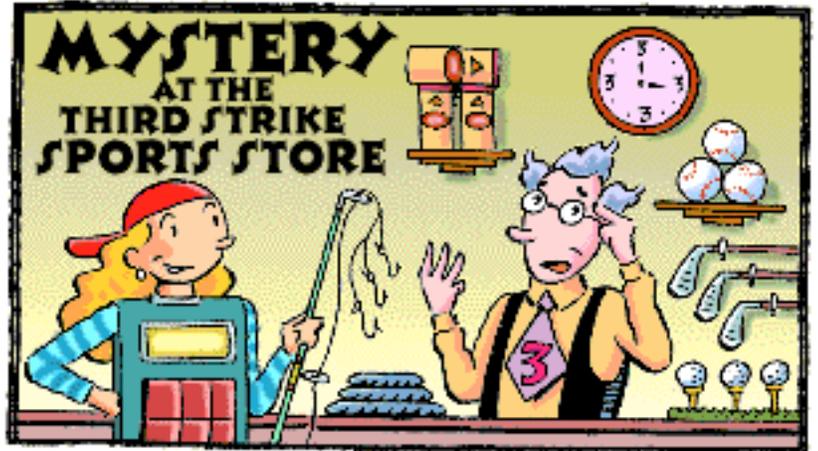


Mystery at the Third Strike Sports Store



Greetings, detectives! Today around lunch time, I stopped by the Third Strike Sports Store to buy a new fishing pole. I like to shop at Third Strike because the owner, Nathaniel Thatcher the 3rd, loves the number 3—and, as you know, I love numbers too!

I always make a point to stop there on the third day of the month because that's the day Nathaniel holds the Third Strike contest: the third customer to buy something wins a prize—three sports balls of their choice. Well, today is the third day of the month, and I was hoping to win!

“Hi, Nathaniel,” I said, entering the store. “I need a new fishing rod and reel. By the way, did I win the Third Strike contest?” I asked hopefully.

“Oh, drat!” he exclaimed. “Today's the third day of the month? I was so busy this morning, the contest completely slipped my mind. Oh no, I'm sure I've had more than three customers today. And I'd hate to gyp lucky customer #3 out of the prize!”

“Well, can you remember who the last customer before me was?”

“Hmmm . . . I do remember the last customer! It was a woman with a bright red jacket with a big diamond on the back. She bought three softballs.”

“I know that woman,” I replied. “That must have been Sally Swing, the star softball pitcher. Keep thinking, Nathaniel. Who else came in?”

“Well, my best friend, Tim Tackle, stopped in for three footballs this morning,” Nathaniel recalled. “And a very tall man came in before Tim. He bought three basketballs.”

“That must have been Dexter Dunk. He’s a local basketball star,” I replied. “Can you remember anyone else?”

“Wait,” he murmured, rubbing his chin. Suddenly he said, “Yes, a woman came in right after Dexter—she passed him on his way out. She was a blonde woman . . . bought three tennis balls.”

“Did she have really long hair?” I asked.

“Why, yes she did, Math Maven. I can’t believe you know her too!” laughed Nathaniel.

“Oh, I know just about everyone in Point Logos,” I answered. “That was Annie Ace. She lives right next to the public tennis courts. Can you remember any other customers?”

“Hold on, Math Maven. Now I remember!” exclaimed Nathaniel. “A man with really big muscles came in and bought three barbells.”

“That must have been Ivan the Ironman. He runs the new gym,” I explained. “He used to be a champion weight lifter.”

“Well, I bet Ivan could lift a truck with one arm!” he said. “Come to think of it, Ivan must have come in after Tim, because I wanted to ask Tim about him the next time I saw him.”

“Do you remember any other customers?” I asked.

“No, I’m sure that’s all of them,” he said with a nod.

“Good for you, Nathaniel. You just solved your own mystery!” I exclaimed.

“But how could I have? I still can’t remember who the third customer was!”

“Don’t worry, Nathaniel, my daring detectives will come to your rescue.

”Super sleuths, now you know the five people who came into the Third Strike Sports Store. Use the clues that Nathaniel Thatcher the 3rd gave you to figure out who the winner of the Third Strike Contest is.

To help you with this task, draw a logic line by writing the word first on the left side of the line and last on the right side. Then place the customers’ names on

the line in the order Nathaniel said they appeared in the Third Strike Sports Store. One last thing, detectives – remember to pay attention to words like before and after. Now good luck, and find that winner!

- A. Sally Swing
- B. Tim Tackle
- C. Dexter Dunk
- D. Annie Ace
- E. Ivan the Ironman