



Ronnie Pierce and Reed Pierce, owners

Photo by Gene Hamil

By **NANCY Y. STEVENS**
ADVERTISING WRITER

Reed Pierce has never been one to settle for less than the best.

The Jackson-native world-renowned professional pool player is now employing the same personal drive and savvy that catapulted him to the top in his sport in his new business venture -- an upscale sports bar and restaurant that bears his name. Although Pierce's new Byram establishment -- simply named Reed Pierce's -- is just five months old, it's already a proven winner. Drawing in patrons from every part of the metro area who've come to appreciate its blend of great food, leisure and entertainment options, Reed Pierce's has fast risen to more than just a contender in the greater-Jackson sports bar and restaur-

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rant scene.

Reed, 43, and older brother, Ronnie, 49, co-own and manage the business which Ronnie insisted on naming for his more-famous brother. Ronnie has for years managed Reed's professional career in pool -- the sport to which he introduced his younger brother as a pre-teen at the former Tall Man's pool hall on Gallatin St. The South Jackson natives, whose father also enjoyed the game, embarked on the professional pool circuit some 25 years ago, with Ronnie managing, as

his brother climbed to a ranking of third in the world. Reed realized his dream of reaching the pinnacle in the pool ranks, winning national and world acclaim by capturing some of the most coveted prizes in the field, including the prestigious U.S. Open 9 Ball Championship in 1995.

"I didn't have the talent he did," Ronnie said of Reed's gift. "For him to have become a world-class pool player, it's something he was born with. It's not something you can teach." A 1989 Jackson Daily News feature recounted Reed's meteoric rise to fame in the national and world pool circuit, but Reed's name, face and story have also graced the cov-

ers



of numerous other publications, including Pool & Billiard Magazine.

As a teen, Ronnie gave his little brother the nickname "The Kid" -- alluding to the "kid" most adult pool players in Jackson soon learned to avoid when playing him for money. It was not uncommon for the highly confident youngster to challenge much older players to a \$500 game, so willing opponents were hard to come by.

Although the pair low-keys the success they've earned, a display case at

their new business helps recount to local patrons the history behind the Reed Pierce name.

The brothers, both married to their Wingfield High-graduate wives, have made Brandon their home base in recent years. Although planning to re-enter the pool circuit in the future after a welcome break from constant travel, they are back home with the desire to fulfill another personal dream -- opening a business that uniquely combines an upscale restaurant and sports bar into a business unlike any other in the metro area.

Since its July opening, Reed Pierce's already has begun to experience the kind of success the brothers earned in the world of professional pool. Their weekday lunch buffet (11 a.m.-2 p.m.) is drawing a capacity crowd, their nightly restaurant clientele appreciates the quality of the menu offerings, sports fans, including lots of new pool aficionados, have found a new favorite hangout, and music lovers reserve Friday nights to enjoy the live music of their favorite bands.

Monday-Friday "happy hour" from 4-7 p.m., Ladies' Night on Thursday and other nightly events, including Friday's live music, keep interest high for nightlife fans.

Ronnie says of the early success of the business, "I attribute it to hard work, great food, entertainment and a great staff."

"It's been more than we ever hoped for," Reed said of his new joint venture with Ronnie, a homebuilder who also has experience in the food industry. "The people from here and the entire Jackson metropolitan area have been great to us, and we appreciate them. We've got a lot of good customers and have made a lot of new friends" as well as reconnected with old ones.

"Our concept," Ronnie added,

Reed Pierce's combo of upscale restaurant and sports bar unique

"was that there wasn't anything like this in the Jackson area, where you could shoot pool, sit at the bar and also have a good steak. And, I can promise you this -- it's all good."

The 6,000-sq.ft. Reed Pierce's is located in a growing commercial area of Byram -- some two miles off I-55 S. at the Byram exit -- in a spacious renovated area of a strip center. The billiard room boasts eight professional-grade Diamond pool tables, some costing \$9,000-plus each. This room is joined, through an informal eating bar, with the roomy main dining room and bar area. TVs broadcast prime channels such as ESPN's Game Plan and NFL Sunday Ticket, with computer games, a jukebox and stage among other amenities for patrons. A large outdoor patio further expands the "eat, drink, play" options Reed Pierce's promotes.

Alluding to Reed's high standards as a pool player, Reed Pierce's also promises to transform "that same edge into culinary specialties."

The restaurant earns rave reviews for its tender, juicy ribeyes and filets, which the brothers describe as "the best you'll find anywhere." The fried

shrimp are another specialty, whether fried and served on a platter or as the main ingredient in a po-boy.

Bobby Houston of Byram, 54, and his daughter Brianna, 12, enjoy their frequent visits.

"It has great food and a great atmosphere," Bobby said. "And it's a neat, clean bar, not like anything else in the metro area. Their steaks are fine and their lunch buffet is excellent. Byram hasn't ever had anything like this before. It's unique."

"It's so comfortable and fun," Brianna added, as she and her dad finished their shrimp po-boys. "I also like the pool tables and computer games."

Waitress Amy Bullock estimates she knows 90 per cent of the customers by name, since most quickly become "regulars." She agreed with the Houston that the Pierce brothers are "very nice" to work with and know.

"We want to thank all the good people from all over the metro area who've been so supportive of our concept and made our dream happen," Reed said.

But, keep in mind, the Pierce brothers are no strangers to turning dreams into reality.



Address: 6791 Siwell Rd. (Byram exit off I-55 S.)

Phone: 601-376-0777

Owners/managers: Reed Pierce, Ronnie Pierce

Open: 11 a.m.-midnight Sunday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-2 a.m. Friday-Saturday

Price range: Lunch buffet, \$5.95 including tea; menu entrees, \$6-29; burgers/po-boys, \$7-8; appetizers/salads, \$4-10.

Specialties: filet, ribeye, fried shrimp, shrimp po-boy, burgers, wings, sampler appetizer platter

Take-out: yes **Reservations:** yes **Catering:** no

Capacity: 200 **Smoking area:** yes

Kids' menu: yes **Beer/wine/mixed drinks:** yes

Special events/bands: Read Weekend for upcoming events, including the New Year's Eve Party featuring The Rainmakers from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. (reservations accepted).

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