

POOL & BILLIARD

MAGAZINE

October 2020



Kelly Fisher

Wins WPBA Ghost
Ball Tournament
of Champions!

PLUS
Fall Cue
Showcase

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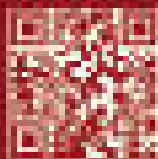


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POOL & BILLIARD MAGAZINE

Volume 37 - Number 10 - October 2020

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|---|---------------|----|--------------------|
| 6 | Editor's Desk | 32 | P&B Mall |
| 8 | Pool Town | 34 | Cool Pool Calendar |

COVER STORY:

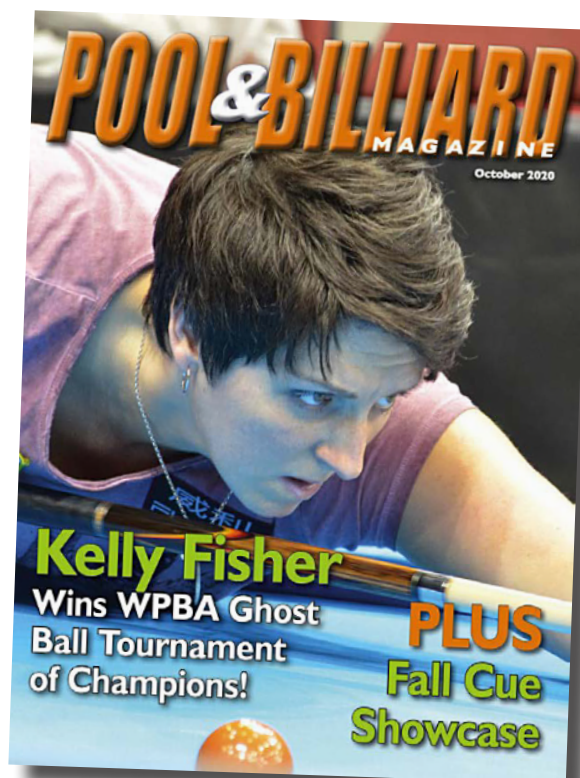
Kelly Fisher did it again! After winning three of the four WPBA Ghost Ball Challenges she caps it off with the Tournament of Champions!.

INSTRUCTION

- | | | |
|----|--|------------------|
| 16 | Play Your Best Pool: Knowns & Unknowns | Phil Capelle |
| 18 | Drill Instructor: Master Rail Shots Part 3 | Dominic Esposito |
| 20 | Hill-Hill: The Good Old Days | TJ & Tommy Hill |
| 22 | Striking Viking: Change Your Style | Ewa Laurance |
| 24 | Nick's Quick Tricks: Reistance Stroke | Nick Nikolaidis |

FEATURES:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 8 | Your 2020 Mosconi Cup Teams | Matchroom |
| 26 | Fabulous Fall Cue Showcase | P&B Staff |
| 30 | Kelly Fisher Wins Again! | P&B Staff |



SNEAK PEEK:
NOVEMBER 2020
HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS!

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Thanks for the Memories...

This month's entry from TJ and Tommy Hill isn't exactly instructive, or is it? Their "Good Old Days" article is mostly a reflection on pool days gone by... which a LOT of us are doing right now, especially if our local poolroom or watering hole is still keeping players at a safe distance.

Their article sparked so many of my own pool memories, and expect it will for you, too. In fact, I laughed out loud reading it when Tommy Hill mentioned some of his former heroes. I have a few years on Tommy so I grew up with many of the same names. He mentioned Jim Rempé (aka King James) and it reminded me of the days I played as a kid back in dad's pool hall. As I've mentioned before in these pages, my very first cue was a Rempé Helmstetter, sporting his signature and a funny little figure of Jim with



a BIG head of hair branded into the bottom. I loved that cue.

And that got me to thinking of other pool memories. This being the fall cue showcase issue, I first tried conjuring up memories of all my favorite cues. I couldn't remember them all and had to go wading through and dusting off some faves, but of course my personal favorite would have to be the cue Dan Joss of Joss Cues made for me back in the late 80s, with my name in the points! People used to ask me if Joss made the cue for me (seriously?!) and eventually I started joking with them that no, I'd gotten it at a carnival and that

you could pick any name you wanted.

I had to stop that joke; too many people believed me. Sigh.

But the pool memories continued to waft on by. Like when a guy in the pool room told my dad he wanted to give me lessons and (I was thirteen years old) I kinda' blew him off, thinking it was another of dad's well-meaning friends putting in their two cents when I just wanted to hit balls in the back corner and be left alone, presumably after a "hard day" of chores and homework. Turned out that guy was Dallas West... color me embarrassed.

So yeah, I felt for Tommy when he said he wished he'd sat with Steve Mizerak in that Vegas steakhouse. For the record, Tommy, Steve was a big ol' marshmallow, you definitely should have sat down, LOL.

Well, I could go on (like us aging players do) about the endless pool memories. But with nearly forty years of 'em, I'm guessing you might get bored, and you've got your own reminiscing to do. Suffice to say it's nice to reflect back on pool days gone by sometimes. It makes us remember what, or who, made us fall in love with this crazy sport in the first place. And if that makes you pull out your old cue or drill book or practice routine and dust 'em off to take another spin, that can be just as invigorating as a pool lesson...

Plenty more to learn and see in this month's issue, so get on it! And a big congratulations to Kelly Fisher on yet another ghost ball challenge victory. It's obvious Kelly has found her game!

We'll be back in November with our Holiday Gift Ideas issue; can't wait to see you there.

Til next month, shoot straight, and play safe!



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USA and Europe's Mosconi Cup Teams Complete!

Here are the final updates to the Mosconi Cup teams playing in December this year!

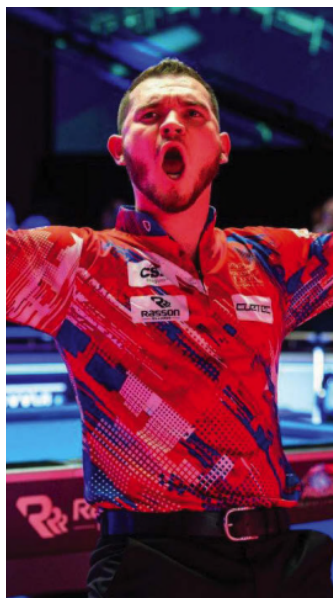


Shane Van Boening will play his 14th consecutive partypoker Mosconi Cup this December 1-4 after being chosen as one of captain Jeremy Jones' wildcard selections. Sjoins Justin Bergman and Skyler Woodward on the team, with captain Jeremy Jones commenting, "He might be our third selection but we all know he is number one."

The South Dakota kid has been ever-present for Team USA since 2007 and has enjoyed his most fruitful partypoker Mosconi Cups in the last two years; first

making the winning 1/9 combo to win the Cup in London in 2018, and then helping to lead America to a famous repeat in Las Vegas last thanksgiving.

"The last two years, we did pretty well, so I am very proud of the team and I am looking forward to number three," said Shane. "If we can do the same things we did in the last two years, there won't be any problems. They are going to have a hard time competing with us for sure.



Billy Thorpe will make his fourth consecutive appearance on Team USA having been selected as the penultimate player to join Jeremy Jones' team. The Ohio man, famed for this excellent banking

ability, made his Mosconi bow in 2017 and has been a key member of the team as USA first regained and then retained the Cup over the last two years.

"It sucks the way everything went down this year, but at least we have the biggest tournament, the one we all drive for all year," said Thorpe. "I am super stoked and excited to be able to come back out there and compete again; I can't wait."

Captain Jones added: "Billy brings a lot of personality and is probably the one guy who is always ready. Even if he comes off a tough loss, he is ready to get back out there. He has a huge heart and is one hell of a player."



And finally, **Chris Robison** will make his

Team USA debut at this year's partypoker Mosconi Cup after being selected by Jeremy Jones as his fifth and final player to travel to London to defend the title against Team Europe this December 1-4, live on Sky Sports and DAZN.

The 22-year-old from California enjoyed a fifth-place finish at the Diamond Las Vegas Open before the Covid-19 pandemic put a halt to professional tournaments in March. Robinson has since impressed Captain Jones and Vice-Captain Joey Gray in training camps ahead of this year's partypoker Mosconi Cup.

Robinson will join Shane van Boening, Skyler Woodward, Justin Bergman and Billy Thorpe on the team, with America looking to make it a partypoker Mosconi Cup three-peat having first regained the title after an eight-year drought in London in 2018 before successfully defending it in Las Vegas last Thanksgiving.

"I am so happy," said Robison. "I will be working my tail off from now until December. I felt like I left

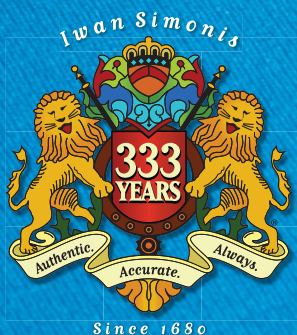
Continued on p. 10

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USA and Europe's Mosconi Cup Teams Complete!

Continued from p. 8

my best game on the table when I was training with JJ and that is the best you can do. I think I have evolved as a player and probably improved more over the last few months than I have in quite a while.

Captain Jones added: "There are many positives with Chris. He is a guy I have seen heading in the right direction, he is a grinder, plays hard, practices hard, trains hard and has a great frame of mind for this type of setting. He is also a player who I think is going to reap the rewards of being around the rest of the team."



On the European side, **Albin Ouschan** has joined Team Europe for this

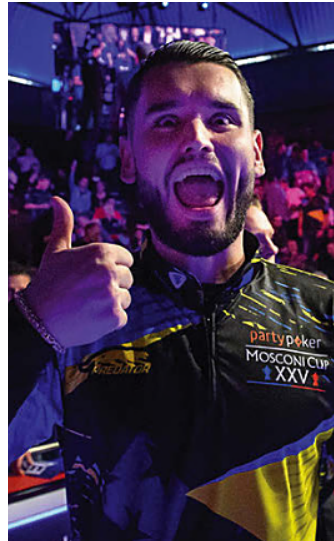
December's partypoker Mosconi Cup after being selected by captain Alex Lely as the fourth player to join the line-up.

The 30-year-old Austrian will be making his fourth appearance at the event and holds an individual record bettered only by Vice Captain Karl Boyes for matches won by players with more than one appearance.

Ouschan, a former World Champion and two-time World Cup of Pool winner, was exceptional for Europe in their 2018 defeat to USA but missed out on selection last year. "It is an incredible feeling to be back on the team," said Ouschan. "It is one of the nicest things when you get a call from the captain to say that you are in. This year has been tough, but I knew I probably had a better chance if there were four or five wildcards.

Captain Lely added: "He looked so good two years ago and it was just for one jump shot from Sklyer Woodward that he would have become MVP and would have played a decisive role for Team Europe."

Albania's **Eklent Kaci** is the fifth and final



player to be selected to represent Team Europe.

Kaci has played in each of the last two Cups, impressing particularly in singles play last year, despite being on the losing team. The 21-year-old became the youngest player to ever play at the partypoker Mosconi Cup when he debuted in London two years ago.

He joins Fedor Gorst, Jayson Shaw, Joshua Filler and Albin Ouschan on Alex Lely's team as Europe aim to strike back at the USA.

"The Mosconi Cup is the biggest goal of the year, for myself and I think all of the players," said Kaci. "It is a great event and if you have played in it, you know it. I am very happy that the captain picked me. We are a really strong

team and we are ready to take the trophy back."

Captain Lely said: "There aren't many people who shoot straighter than Eklent does. He has a big billiard brain on his shoulders, especially for his age. He has delivered, he has performed in the singles matches, so it is just about working on the team play. At the table it is about having communication and a protocol beforehand, knowing who plays what shot, who is making a decision. Away from the table it is about being able to discuss and give feedback and receive feedback."

Matchroom Pool staff are hopeful that the partypoker Mosconi Cup will take place this year and are in constant detailed discussions with the relevant organizations and personnel to stay up to date. "Our highest priority is the safety of everyone connected with the event, however we are working hard to explore every avenue to making this work and will continue to do so, if it is possible."

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Diamond Billiard Products Inc. and Aramith have made a long-term agreement to bring Aramith Billiard Balls back as the exclusive ball for all Diamond Billiards affiliated events.

Diamond and Simonis cloth have been collaborating on events and joint promotion of the sport for over three decades and now Aramith balls are back to complete the superior billiard playing experience!

"Simonis and Aramith are the types of precision billiard products that Diamond wants to offer to our players and

buyers as they complement our craftsmanship and detail of the Diamond tables," said Chad Scharlow, president of Diamond Billiards. "We share the same long-term values and visions that will help to keep the sport strong and growing into the future."

Ivan Lee, President of Iwan Simonis Inc., said, "I have worked with Diamond for many years and I have seen their commitment to the sport first-hand. Our shared passion for delivering unparalleled value and unbeatable performance to the players defines why we work so well together. I am pleased to

have the Aramith balls back with Diamond so that the players can enjoy the premium performance of the complete product."

Aramith Tournament Balls will be used at Diamond events including the revered Derby City Classic. These balls will be available to purchase with Diamond tables with other Aramith options available.

Diamond Billiard Products, located in Jeffersonville, Indiana is the manufacturer of Diamond Billiard Tables

Iwan Simonis, Inc., located in Libertyville, Illinois

is the North American subsidiary of Iwan Simonis S.A. of Belgium, maker of Simonis cloth and owner of Saluc S.A., manufacturer of ARAMITH billiard balls



Wei Tzu Chien on Team Predator



Predator has welcomed Wei Tzu Chien from Taiwan to the Predator Pro Team. She is currently 3rd in the WPBA rankings. Said Predator

of the announcement, "We are lucky to have her as part of the team and can't wait to see what she does!" Learn more at www.predatorcues.com

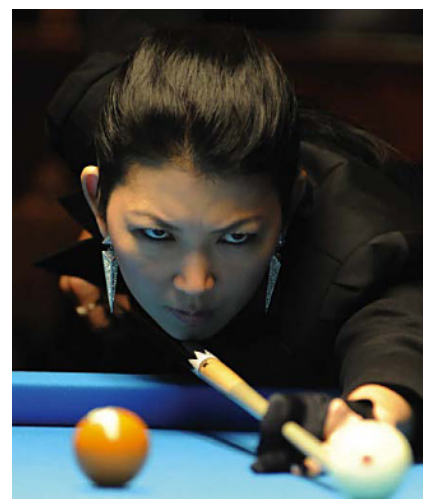
Cameo with Jeanette Lee!

Cameo, the first service enabling consumers to book personalized video messages from their favorite pop culture icons, has announced the acquisition of their first billiards celebrity, Jeanette Lee, "The Black Widow!" J-Lee is now available on demand for personalized video messages through her booking page at <https://www.cameo.com/5f3b7da5a38af7002966e658com/5f3b7da5a38af7002966e658>

Jeanette Lee rose meteorically to the World's number one ranking in only a year on tour. The combination of her very warm and approachable personality and her

competitive fire and desire instantly made her a fan favorite.

Cameo, in just over three years, has built a talent portfolio of 40,000 VIPs and fulfilled over 1 million requests ranging from birthday and good luck messages to prom invitations, marriage proposals, baby gender reveals and beyond.



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2021 International 9-Ball Open is Now Scheduled

It should be of no surprise to anyone that the 2020 International Open, like other major professional pool tournaments, is now officially cancelled.

Considering the risk that still exists of contracting COVID-19, it is not known if professional players from all over the world, as well as vendors and spectators, will be able to attend and be safe. Also, because of the restrictions

that may be in place by local governments through the end of this year, as well as the beginning of 2021, the 2020 event is unfortunately changed from "Postponed" to Cancelled." Entry fee refunds are now being processed.

The good news is that the 2021 International Open is booked once again at the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel in Norfolk, Virginia for October 22-30, 2021. The Sheraton, which has



always been an outstanding venue, is working with event producers and looking forward to a continued relationship.

Everyone will certainly look forward to a stellar event in 2021. Learn more at www.international9ballopen.com

Atlantic Challenge Cup Cancelled

The Billiard Congress of America (BCA) and European Pocket Billiard Federation (EPBF) today announced the Atlantic Challenge Cup (ACC) will not be held in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"While we are disappointed to announce the cancellation of the 2020 ACC, it is impossible for it to be held during this worldwide health crisis," said Billiard Congress of America CEO Rob Johnson. "The event has been a tremendous opportunity to showcase top junior players from both the United States and Europe.

"Although Europe has been on the winning side each year, you can sense the competition within the athletes to qualify to the team which shows how important of an event it has grown to be in quite of a short period of time," said EPBF Board Member Tommi Lamminaho.



"The spirit of competition from both sides has been wonderful and the atmosphere supportive and there definitely is a demand for such events in the sports calendars. The EPBF is looking at opportunities for cooperation with the BCA in the future and hope to keep the ACC in the sports calendar."

Launched in 2015 by the European Pocket Billiard Federation and the Billiard Congress of America, the governing bodies of pool in their respective regions and two of the founding members of the World Pool-Billiard Federation, the ACC was held five times, with the Europeans winning all five events. Three events took place in Europe, while two events took place in the United States.

Predator One Women's Cup

Congratulations to Margaret Fefilova for winning the Predator One Women's Cup after an exciting final match against Jasmin Ouschan!

From One Sports TV: "We want to thank all the players that participated, the viewers and the sponsors for collaborating

on making this exciting tournament. Thanks to all commentators that put their effort on the matches. Finally, special thanks to Predator Cues for sponsoring this great event!" Head to www.facebook.com/OnePoolSportsTV to see video of the tournament and to see upcoming events.

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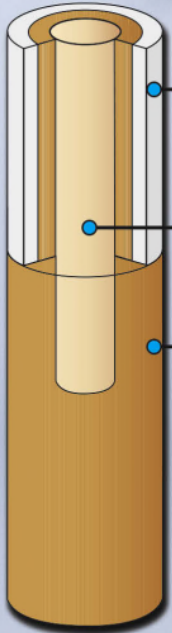
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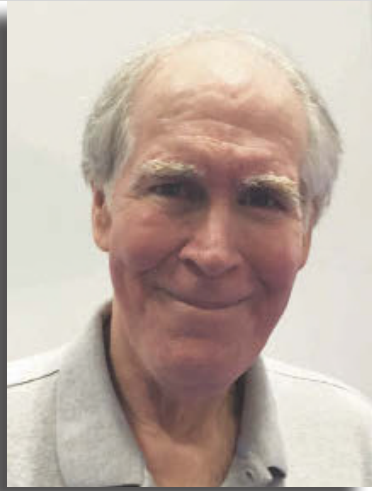
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Knowns and Unknowns

by Phil Capelle

CAPELLE 2.0

Over the 12 months that led up to my 20-year anniversary of writing for *Pool & Billiard* (May 2016) I talked about discoveries that have resulted from a now five year research project devoted mostly to pool's fundamentals. Look for more on these in an upcoming book on the fundamentals.

PHIL CAPELLE

Phil Capelle is billiard's most prolific author with 10 books that feature more than 3,600 pages of instruction on all facets of the game. He has been involved in the sport for over 47 years. Visit Phil's site at www.billiardspress.com and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pcapelle1

The well-known quote "Knowledge is power" has been attributed to many people. When it comes to our sport, "knowledge is mandatory" if you hope to play your best pool.

When it comes to knowledge, the problem that exists for all players is The Gap between what they know and what they need to know. Another ruinous problem is the gap between what so many players think they know and what they actually know. Indeed, overestimating one's knowledge is one of the biggest roadblocks to developing your game.

Now that we have established the importance of knowledge, let's take a look at some of the major categories of things we know, and don't know, yet. These categories were the brainchild of Donald Rumsfeld, a former Secretary of Defense.

The Knowns Knowns

These are book knowledge and the things we have come to know through experience. These knowns just seem right, and there is plenty of confirmation of their validity from the play of skilled amateurs and pros. Proof of their usefulness also comes from our play – these methods just work. My books are packed with Known Knowns.

Known Unknowns

Known Unknowns are things you may want to learn some day, but that are not yet known. Many

examples fall into the realm of science. These would include learning by virtual reality, learning the biomechanics of your stroke, or measuring the precise speed of the most commonly played shots. T

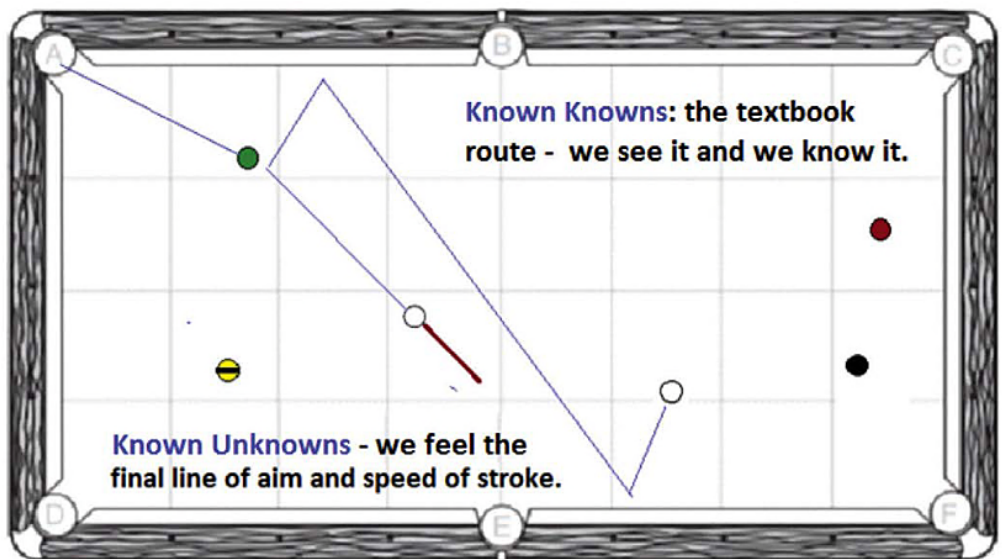
This big frontier of knowledge offers so much potential for our sport, both in the playing of it and in so many fresh new elements that could aide to our enjoyment of watching the pros on TV/streaming. To get a glimpse of the possibilities of coming spectator pleasures you need only watch a PGA tour telecast with its arc revealers, speed of swing numbers and so much more.

Unknown Knowns

Unknown Knowns (UK) are things that we "just know" but have no way of knowing how these methods work. There is no way of bypassing these UKs, so once a player advances to about the C level or above, it becomes apparent that they must make UKs a part of their game.

The proof that we know so many techniques at this level is that we can execute certain components of our shots without being able to explain how we do them. Elements that are performed best by trusting our subconscious include letting our Eye/Hand Coordination work its magic, and feeling the speed of our final forward stroke.

We can perform the unknowns, so we must know that we know them, even though,



Play Your Best Pool

at the conscious level, we cannot explain them. And there is no point in trying to learn these unknowns to the point where we can discuss them at a conscious level because it is just not going to happen.

But – we CAN set up the conditions for best enabling these UKs to be activated. For speed control, we can execute warm-up strokes and develop a sense of what feels just right, and then make a decision on the final speed of stroke. By doing this we are then prepared for the subconscious to deliver the speed we need without having to think about it.

Aiming is so complex, with so many factors to consider including the basic cut angle, allowing for contact induced throw (including the throw at various speeds), and allowing for deflection if english is being used. This includes taking into account the distance from the cue ball to the object ball, amount of cueing off the vertical axis, speed of stroke. And then there is throw, swerve and the condition of the

balls and cloth! It would take a high-speed computer to calculate the final line-of-aim, and fortunately we come equipped with one. It's called our well-trained subconscious.

Unknown Unknowns

These are the things that we don't even know that we don't know. At some point they may or will be uncovered, and when they are, the players and the industry could be in for a gamechanging development – pool's equivalent of the Model-T or the internet.

On a smaller scale, but still an important one, I come across ideas regularly – things that I had no clue that were there for the discovering until that moment when I did.

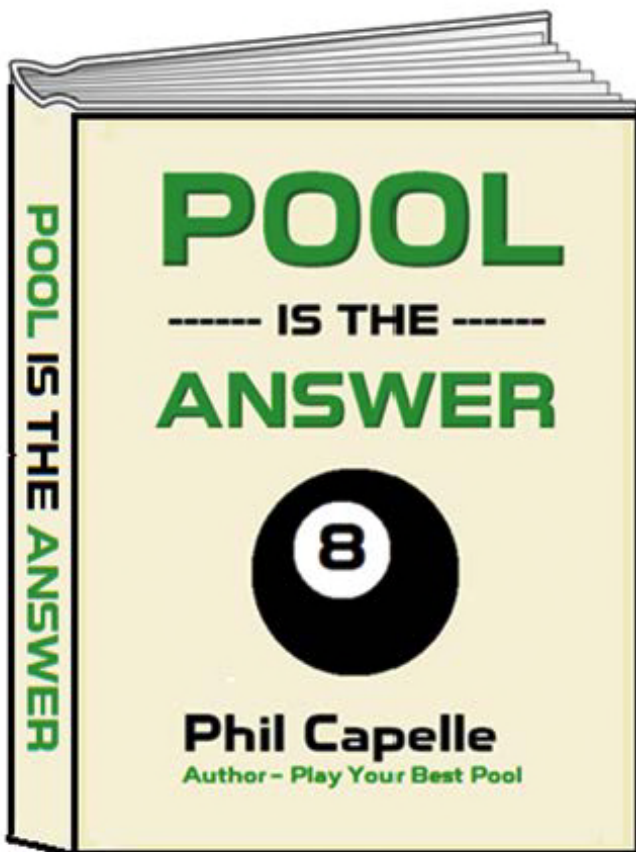
Known & Unknowns

Now we will see how the categories overlap, in this case The Knowns Knowns

and the Unknown Knowns. The textbook path is known. This may be the result of learning it in a textbook and/or your experience at playing the route, or a very similar one.

Then, when over the ball and in the execution mode we rely on our knowing of the unknowns! I talked about this above in the Unknown Knowns section. In our example we know the route that enables us to avoid Pocket E and keep from getting hooked behind the 8-Ball. When playing the shot our well-trained subconscious body of knowledge kicks in and we know (or hopefully do) where to strike the cue ball and at what speed.

When you are a skilled player you can get these various components right or nearly right most of the time. But, due to the inherent difficulty, mistakes will be made as players as talented as the pros are there to remind each of us. Keep practicing!



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Mastering Rail Shots, Part 3

by Dominic Esposito

The Drill Instructor, Dominic Esposito, is a world-ranked PBLA Master Instructor. Be sure and watch "The Clinic" LIVE on facebook.com/thedrillinstructor every Tuesday night 8:00 p.m. EST. Want to see it all? Visit: www.thedrillinstructor.us

Rail Shots should never be taken for granted. If you don't make rail shots a regular part of your weekly drills for keeping your skills sharp, in a competitive situation it could be a key factor that makes all the difference.

Remember to continue using the two critical parts of all the rail shot drills I've given you these past few months:

1. Shoot the drill with the balls frozen to the cushion.
2. Shoot the drill with the balls just off the cushion from 1/4" up to 2".

Now, the cue ball position control aspect becomes even more important to complete the entire drill.

As recommended, learn how cue ball English impacts the shot by using pure center, the center seven, and then up to one tip of inside and outside English (spin) to start controlling cue ball position. Notice how different shot speeds with varying amounts of English change the finishing cue ball position.

Find the best tip position until you are pocketing the object ball repeatedly and making shape for the next rotation ball in the drill. Remember, Inside English means to strike the cue ball with spin on the same side as the cut of the shot. For a left cut shot, apply top, middle or bottom left English on the cue ball.

While use of Inside English can make pocketing the object ball easier, I strongly recommend you become proficient at applying outside spin, to ensure you can pocket rail shots where making cue ball position may call for it.

Learn new tip positions slowly and don't start a new tip position on the cue ball until you've had repeated success with the first position. Eventually, you'll have the skill and confidence to play any ball on or just off the cushion with inside and outside tips of English.

If you really struggle with Rail

shots, follow this regimen and in time you'll become an accomplished rail shot player. If you won't do the work as I've laid out for you, you may find you'll struggle with these shots.

The following drill regimen will build your RUN-OUT Rail Shot skills:

A-1. Set up the balls along the cushions as shown on the table diagram with the nine ball at center table.

A-2. Begin with cue ball in hand.

A-3. Pocket the one ball and make position for the two ball.

A-4. Repeat this first shot until you can make the desired position on the two ball repeatedly.

B-1. From the repeated landed cue ball position, pocket the two ball and make position to the three ball.

B-2. Repeat pocketing the two ball shot until you can make position on the three ball each time.

C-1. From the repeated landed cue ball position, pocket the three ball and make position to the four ball.

C-2. Repeat pocketing the three ball shot until you can make position on the four ball each time.

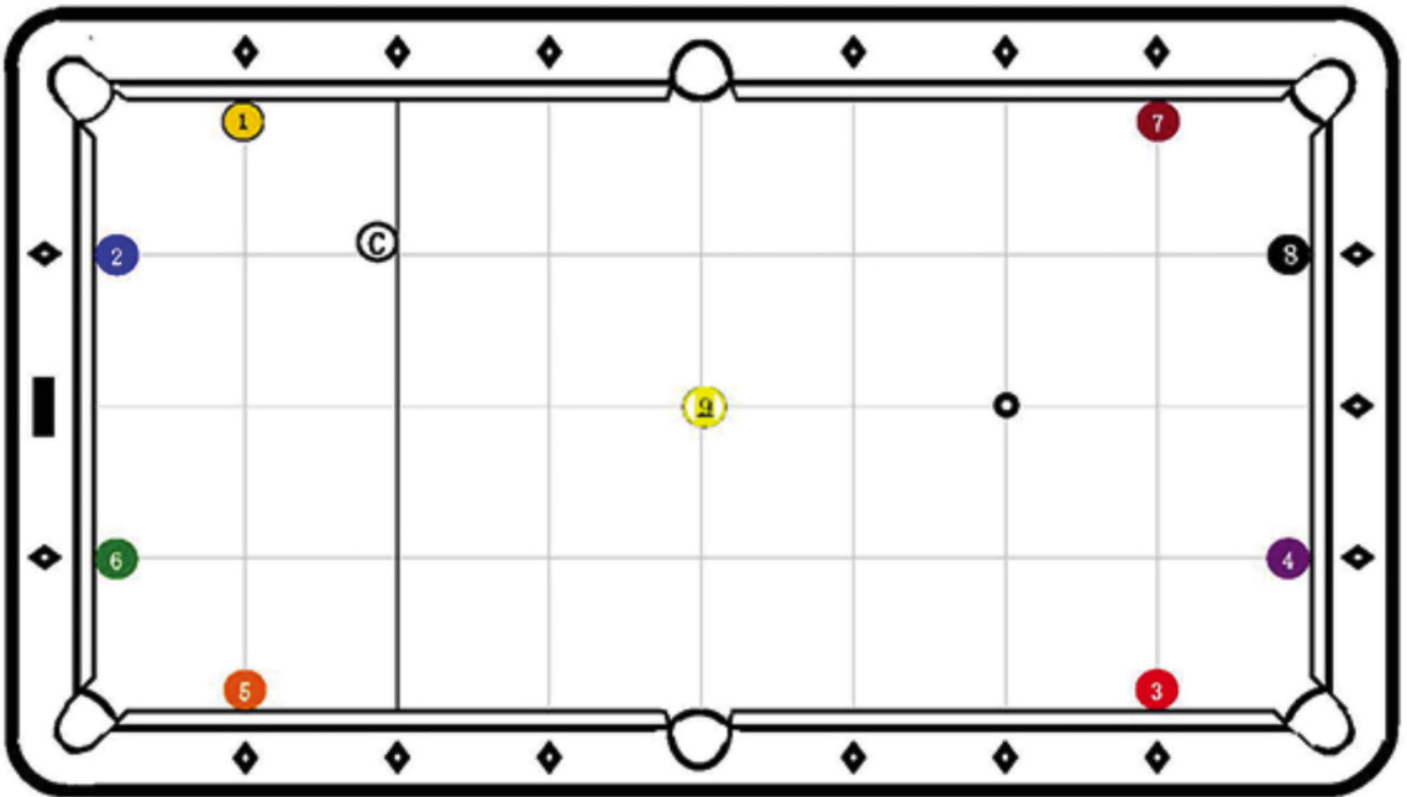
D-1 Continue the same steps for pocketing the four, five, six, seven and eight balls. Allow yourself to learn and memorize the cue ball English, Speed, and Finishing Position for each shot with balls frozen and not frozen to the cushions.

E-1. For the final key ball shot to the desired landed cue ball position, pocket the nine ball. BUT FIRST - make position to a ghost ten ball.

E-2. Repeat pocketing the nine ball shot until you can make position on the GHOST ten ball successfully ten times.

NOTE: Don't rush this runout series of drill shots. Focus on pocketing the rail shot and making the correct cue ball position successfully at least ten times.

Strive to make each of the



individual cue ball positions ten times BEFORE working on all nine balls as a complete runout.

If you are having trouble pocketing the balls frozen to the cushions,

move the object balls away from the cushions one to three inches.

If you still struggle pocketing the balls and making good position, move the cue ball closer until you can pocket the

ball and make position on the next object ball in the rotation. After you build-up this shot success, move the cue ball starting position away in half diamond increments and continue.

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The Good Old Days

by Tommy Hill and T.J. Hill

Tommy Hill is a former touring professional player. He played on both the Professional Billiards Tour and the Camel Pro Tour from the late eighties through the nineties. Tommy retired from playing pool and settled down in 2000 when his oldest son TJ was born. Tommy is now an advanced level instructor with the PBLA and still enjoys playing competitively.

TJ Hill an up and coming California pool player. He competes regularly on the Mezz west coast tour and he also competes in other local and regional tournaments. TJ's goals include becoming a touring professional pool player. TJ enjoys sharing his skills and knowledge with others, and in 2019 he became the youngest player to ever become a PBLA instructor.

I have said many times that I am happy I came up when I did. I grew up in a small pool room in Fresno, California. I walked into The Rack for the first time when I was 13 years old. Now, 50 years old, I can still be found there most nights either playing, giving lessons or just hanging out with friends.

When TJ and I will pick a topic to write about, usually one of us –if not both– have some kind of ties to the topic. It could be a tournament we played in, or a certain shot, or a product. But this month I would like to take you back to a time in my life where pool was thriving. Road players were revered as gods and we actually had a real professional pool tour where guys could make a living through tournament prize money and sponsorships.

My very first job, or maybe the word position would be better, was as what was known as a rack boy. I didn't get paid as an employee and heck I was only 13 years old, but what I did was when two players were matched up they would pay me to rack the balls between games for them. I got paid 25 cents per rack. This was the early eighties; 9-Ball was the flavor of the day and the game was fast. If the guys were playing a race to six, which was kind of the norm for whatever reason, I was guaranteed a buck and a half. If it went hill-hill I would make \$ 2.75. Heck, minimum wage back then was about three bucks an hour. I was a happy camper.

Rack boys, like so many other things from our sport's past have long since gone away. I would love to go to a junior Nationals tournament and ask every player if they know what a rack boy is, just to see what some of their answers would be.

When I was fifteen or sixteen the Professional Billiards Tour (PBT) was going strong. Mike Sigel was my hero at the time. He was a fantastic player but at that time the players were all great. This was the age of Nick Varner, Keith McCready,

Buddy Hall, Earl Strickland, Jim Rempe, Johnny Archer and some Filipino fella named Caesar Morales (who as many of us know was later revealed to be the legendary Efen Reyes, now in the BCA Hall of Fame!).

Oh man I could name countless more. Pool was thriving. Tournaments were being held all over the country. I remember playing at The Sands Regency tournaments in Reno back in the late eighties and nineties when the room price was \$ 19 per night. You could walk across the street to The Comstock where they had a T-Bone steak dinner for \$4.99 and they would bring your potato and vegetable on separate plates because the steak would take up one whole plate by itself.

Now, you may think, what does the size of a T-Bone have to do with pool? Well, while the tournament was going everybody knew

issue.

tions and comm...
useful to the readers. And the exposure (we chose the word carefully) is great for the sport. Two full pages, and the video version on their web site ([HYPERLINK "http://www.maximonline.com"](http://www.maximonline.com) or www.maximonline.com). For all its flash, the article should get unknowing readers to realize there's more to a cue than they thought. That's a good thing. Hats (etc.) off to Lee!

• A KODAK MOMENT

Pictured here is future pool champion of the world (according to his proud parents). His name is **Thomas John Hill** a/k/a "T.J." (already has a pool name!). He loves the game so much he is drooling over it.

T.J. was 4 months old on 12/1/00 when the pic was taken. His dad, Tommy senior, is the house pro at *Bilcos Billiards* in Napa, California. Mom is Stephanie.

12 • P&B February 2001

The youngest player ever featured in the pages of P&B, now twenty years later a columnist?! We may long for the good old days but for TJ, we've come a long way, baby!

that was the place to go for some good food. I once walked over there by myself. The place was packed and they wanted to seat me with another guy who recently gotten there who was seated alone. This was not uncommon. I looked over and saw it was Steve Mizerak! I guess just out of being young and nervous I couldn't do it. I waited for a different table. I have regretted that decision my whole life.

A few years later I was eating at the café just outside of the tournament room there at the Sands. The hostess asked if they could seat someone with me and I said of course. A young Alex Pagulayan introduced himself as he sat down. It was a sort of fraternity, and everyone learned how to play (and where to eat!) from everyone else.

Somewhere in the mid-nineties I moved to San Francisco where I had taken a job as the Retail and Service manager at The Great Entertainer pool room on 8th & Bryant street. This was a wonderful pool room, filled with 51 nine foot Brunswick Gold Crowns, three twelve-foot snooker tables and a ten-foot billiard table. There were three private rooms, a restaurant and a dance floor. The Color of Money film had already been out since '86 and big upscale poolrooms had opened up everywhere. I called them "brass rail pool rooms" because they all seemed to have brass railing somewhere and lots more lighting; the days of the small dark pool rooms had ended. Some still existed but very few stood the test of time and are still with us today.

Top players embraced the Great Entertainer. We had an open tournament every Wednesday that looked like a tour event. Big name players everywhere, you

had to climb over the piles of cash on the line. I was in my mid-twenties and loving life. The owner wouldn't just give me time off to travel to tournaments; he would often pay my travel costs and give me some cash to play with. It was a write off for him as sponsorship. I loved my time in San Francisco. I once installed a pool table in the house that was used in the first season of MTV's Real World. I met so many great people and players that is also where I really came into my own as a player.

August 1st of 2000 my life changed when my son TJ joined the world. I had a small partnership in a poolroom in Napa, California and was serving as the house pro. I made a decision to move back to Fresno and quit playing pool. I got a job with a swimming pool builder and left the billiards world behind, at least for a while.

I always had a pool table at home. TJ was about six years old when he started taking an interest in playing pool. I got the old cues out and started working with him. I started playing again myself but my focus was on TJ. He is 20 years old now and is playing very strong. I believe he could have a future as a player but only time will tell. Now we just need the world to open back up so he can get out there and play.

TJ: Well I know I didn't get to write much

this month but I think my dad was going down memory lane and just wanted to share some of his life with you all. I guess he feels that sometimes you need to let people know where you have been so they can understand where you are now.

My pops played pool professionally for about eight years. He has owned a pool room and two billiard supply stores over the years. He still works on pool tables and cues and he loves writing this article every month. My father loves the game of pool and the people in this sport more than he loves to breath. He would be lost without it.

I can't thank you all enough for supporting Pool & Billiard Magazine and reading our articles every month. My dad gets so happy when someone emails us and lets us know you are reading our stuff. It always puts a smile on his face.

I'll leave you with a quick funny story. Dad told me once that when he was working as a rack boy he thought they called him that because the pool room he was at was called The Rack and that made him the Rack Boy. He said it wasn't until years later when he was reading a book where a young kid was racking the balls for a nickel a game and he was referred to as the rack boy that he figured it out. And all that time he thought he had cornered the market...LOL.

Folks, until next time stay safe and let's all

hope and pray for our country and pool rooms to get back to normal and back to those good old days of camaraderie. If anyone out there is feeling bad and needs to talk to someone about pool, or anything else for all that matter, give dad and I a shout at tommyntj@aol.com and most of all... keep your heads up and keep that cue ball rollin'...



At left, eight-year-old TJ Hill at a tournament. Below, Blue Fin Billiards, the place you can usually find TJ and Tommy honing their games as well as their students!



Change Your Style, Change Your Game

by Ewa Mataya Laurance

Ewa Mataya Laurance has been a top player on the WPBA tour for over twenty years and is one of the sport's most famous personalities. She is in both the BCA and WPBA Hall of Fame, is a former WPA World 9-Ball champion and the reigning women's world trick shot champion. Ewa is an ESPN color commentator, and co-author of the Complete Idiot's Guide to Pool & Billiards with former P&B managing editor Tom Shaw.

Each of us has a playing style. Unless you've seen a video of yourself playing, or have gotten a lot of comments ("Man, you play slower than a slug!") you may not be aware of how you play. And style covers a lot more than speed of play. Do you get down real low for every shot? Do you jump up as soon as your tip contacts the cue ball? (I hope not!) Do you skimp on the number of warm-up strokes or take twenty strokes each shot? Are you so mechanical that you shoot every single shot the exact same way?

Style often comes from the personality of the player. Fast talkers are fast shooters, people who don't plan for the future tend to not be good position players, etc.

Style can also come from a coach who hammered home the "right" way to play, or from picking a certain outstanding player and copying what they do. If something is successful for an expert it could be successful for you.

But not every style is good – meaning that not every aspect of a player's repeated technique (technique and style often being interchangeable) is really the best for pocketing balls and getting great position. True, with enough hours at the table a player can get even a bad style to work for them, but we don't all have that luxury.

You've seen players like that. They have an odd style, definitely not "by the book." Maybe they jab at the cue ball, or use the "one and hit" approach, taking only one prep stroke before striking the cue ball.

But they've been playing for years and take the game very seriously. They've overcome their bad style with repetition and the knowledge of exactly what will happen when they hit the ball their way. Some world-class players are famous for having "faulty" styles – and winning matches.

Repeating the same playing pattern over and over has strong advantages. It helps a whole lot with your consistency. It removes some distracting thoughts. It helps tremendously with insecurities and doubt.

But it can also lead to falling into the same old comfortable routine and

create a barrier to improvement.

Here's an idea that might give your game a little jolt. Change your style.

The idea behind this is that when a player is taken out of their rut they are forced to think. If circumstances are new, especially if what's new is something you physically have to do, then you switch off all your automatic movements. If you one-stroke, force yourself to use half a dozen preparatory (warm-up) strokes. And take advantage of them, refining your aim and learning the groove of the shot. If you're unsmiling and stern while you play, try lightening up a little. The opposite works, too, of course. If you use a lot of warm up strokes before launching your cue, try making each shot with just one or two preliminary strokes. If you kid around a lot while you play, try being a bit more subdued.

Whatever your style, change it.

Not only will this force you to think and



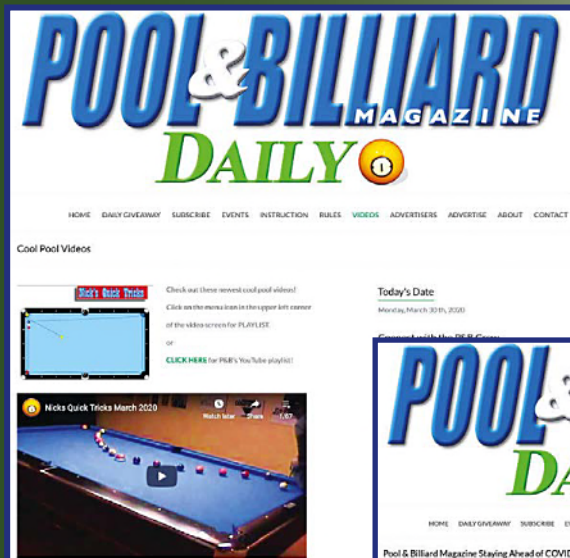
concentrate more, it can also enliven your game. New is exciting. New is interesting. New can be very helpful.

If you have the advantage of a table at home, or even if you can get away to a poolroom during quiet hours if one is open near you, you can try all of these reversals during practice instead of during a game. But if you have a playing partner, try explaining the idea to them, and then have a go.

Your style may have come to you fairly quickly, but it probably took a lot more time to develop your habits. Style and habit are closely related, and when you change one you're often changing both. That can be good for your game. It can open things up, not only in your shooting and position play, but also in your mental game.

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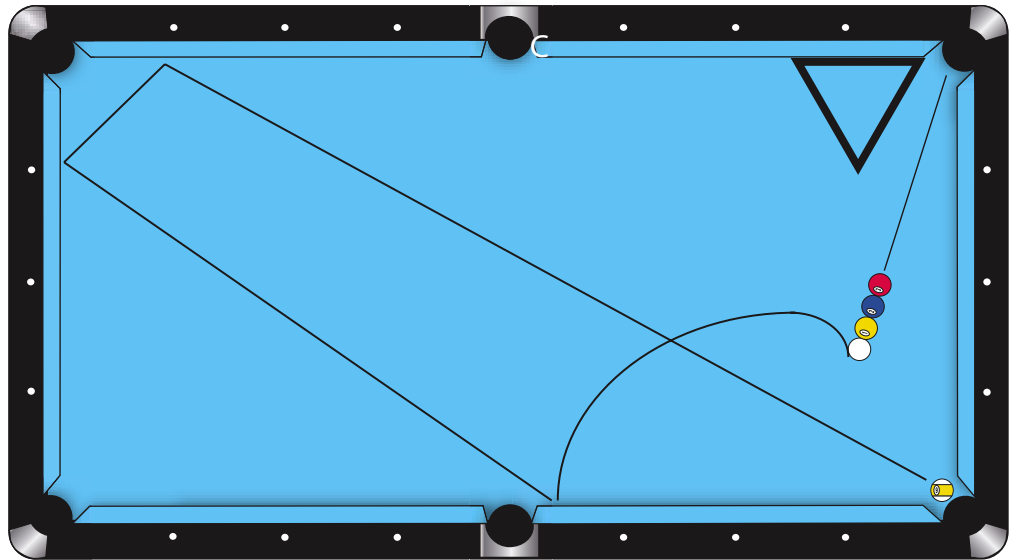
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Resistance Stroke

by Nick Nikolaidis

Want to see how Nick makes this shot? Log on to: poolmag.com, OR watch it HERE in your Ezine! If you have a shot you'd like Nick to try, send it to Nick's attention at: Poolmag@poolmag.com.



A controlled stroke is always the basis to great success. Remember, **trick shots are like a fantasy, we go to the extreme to demonstrate the unimaginable.** This month's shot will demonstrate what extreme english can do once you put your mind to it.

The Execution:

Begin by placing a row of three balls and the cue ball frozen to each other with the lead on the centerline as diagrammed. The

lead may be adjusted up or down table but must remain on the centerline. Last, place a triangle to help enlarge the corner pocket as shown. Set the nine ball as a hanger.

Using lower right-hand english, pocket all three balls with the help of the triangle and have the cue ball draw back and travel around the table as indicated to pocket the nine ball. Notice how the resistance amplifies the spin on the cue ball. You will have to try this several times as to adjust to your table's speed, size and rail bounce.

Best of Luck!!!

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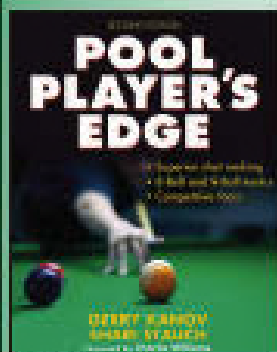
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Fall's Fabulous Cue Showcase

McDermott's Defy High-Performance Carbon Fiber Shaft (featured this issue p.5) uses state-of-the-art technologies to shatter its limitations. SmacWrap, originally designed for the aerospace industry, absorbs vibration and dampens noise resulting in a confident hit with a soft feel and quiet sound. The

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Voodoo



Voodoo

It's October, Halloween month, so what's not to love about some fabulous frightening cues? We love these economic (\$208 MSRP) choices from Cuestix International's Voodoo line! Visit www.cuestix.com to learn more about Cuestix Voodoo and all the Cuestix brands of fine cues.



Voodoo

With an MSRP of \$695, this beauty from Joss Cues has all the bells and whistles! The Joss 10-10 offers a highly figured hardwood front with Australian lacewood points. The design in the rear mimics the points with the Hoppe butt plate. The wrap shown is black

with a white spot. All their cues are made in the USA by Dan and his son, Stephen. These Master craftsmen have over 93 years of combined experience; not many can claim that! Visit <https://jossques.com/> – lots more cues to drool over!



New to the Predator Lineup, this Limited P3 REVO Mélange cue is described as "the world's most advanced shaft paired with our most advanced cue construction technology."

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This gorgeous Spartan cue from Cuestix Int'l with an MSRP of \$895, is just one of many brands in the Cuestix cue corral. Coming soon (see ad back cover this issue), Spartan's fully customizable low-deflection carbon shaft. Visit www.cuestix.com

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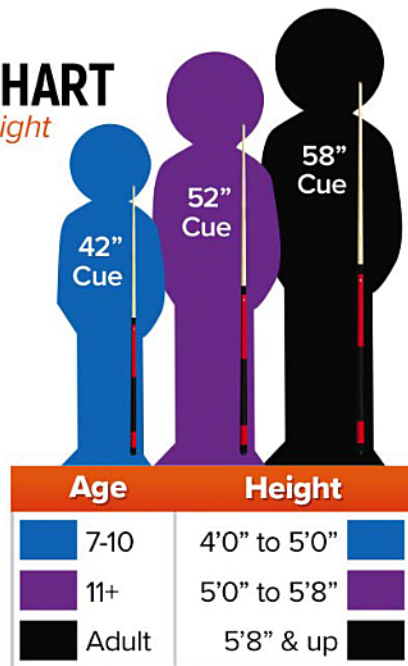


This custom Joss Cue® is made for the Joss Northeast 9-ball Tour (Joss has been a sponsor for over ten years). High Curly Maple with 5 black and white points with a

pearl center. The wrap is the hand-select purple heart and the rear is loaded with intricate pearl inlays. MSRP \$1,600. Visit www.josscues.com

SIZING CHART

By Age & Height



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11+	5'0" to 5'8"	52"	52"
Adult	5'8" & up	58"	58"

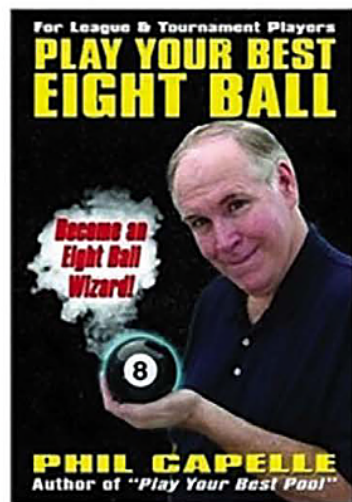
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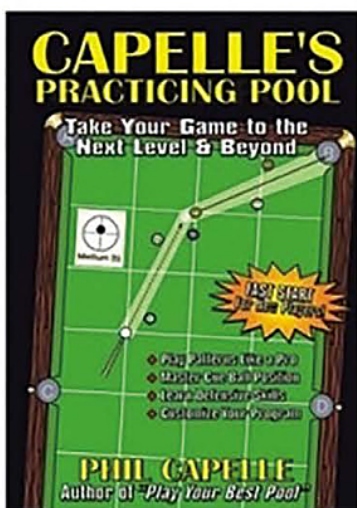
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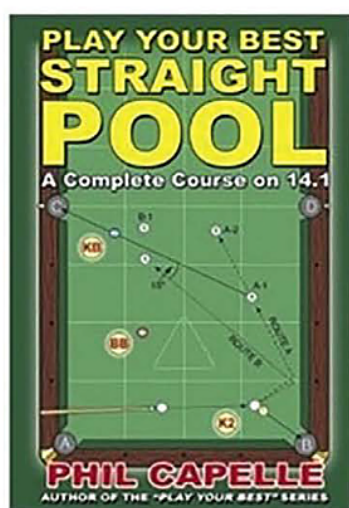




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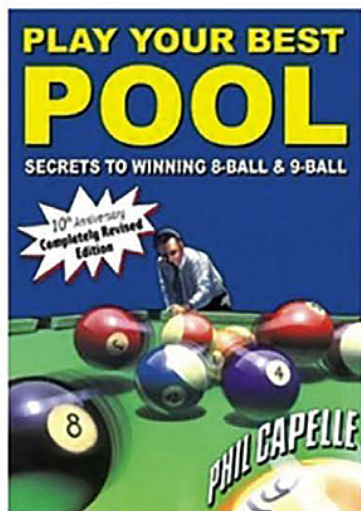
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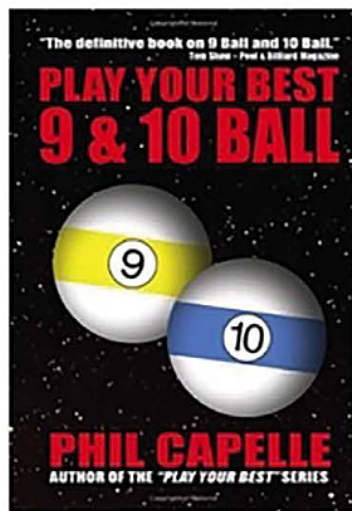
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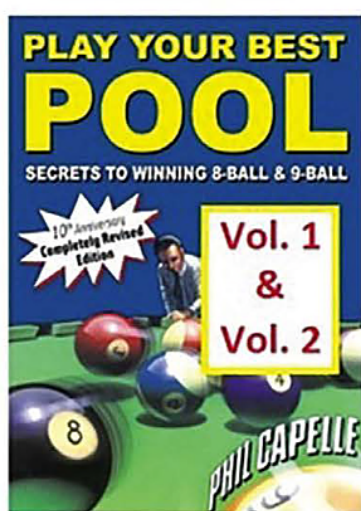
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Kelly Fisher Wins Again: Ghost Challenge Tournament of Champions

Congratulations to Kelly Fisher for taking 1st place in the WPBA 9-ball Ghost Challenge Tournament of Champions! Held online September 1-5, the WPBA changed up the double elimination format of the four previous 9-Ball Ghost Challenge events (three won by Fisher, one by Chien) to Round Robin. This format assigned points to each player upon completion of a series of head-to-head ghost challenge matches of 10 games each.

Though originally planned for eight competitors, only five competed, Wei Tzu Chien, Kelly Fisher, Dawn Hopkins, Jeannie Seaver and Monica Webb. Like the previous ghost challenge events, a player could score a maximum of 10 or 15 points per rack; 10 points if they ran out with ball in hand after



the break, or 15 points without taking ball in hand. A miss in any rack awarded the player the number of balls they

successfully downed in the rack.

The highest score of the five-day event was chalked up by Fisher on Friday, defeating Monica Webb 107-75. Wei Tzu-Chien defeated Dawn Hopkins 106-59 the same day for the second highest match score.

After four days of competition Kelly Fisher was the clear winner with 23 points, followed by runner-up Wei Tzu-Chien claiming 20 points, Jeannie Seaver in third with 19, Monica Webb taking fourth with 18 points and Dawn Hopkins in fifth with 17 points.

"I'm really, really pleased," said Fisher of her victory. "We're all very competitive," she added, "trying to play the perfect game and be as consistent as we can. That's what we practice for and all try to do."

"I really enjoy playing the ghost," Kelly said. "It's been a part of my practice routine for years. It suits my game because I'm not very good at safety play."

You can check out the action on the WPBA's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/WPBATour> as well as keep up with future live-streamed events!

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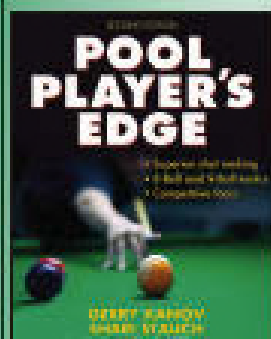
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