

**May 10<sup>th</sup>**

## **A Standing Decision...**

Decide how hard you will stroke the cue before bending over the table. Make it while you can see the entire table and the layout.

The practice strokes aren't used to figure out how hard to hit the cue ball. You should already know that before you bend down. Also, since the speed used will affect the position play, it should be decided before bending down to the shot. See the shot, know the stroke, and shoot the shot.

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**May 17<sup>th</sup>**

## **Chalk Your cue and...**

Chalk your cue well before taking any shot. Make it part of your pre-shot routine. The act of locating the chalk, walking to it and applying it to the tip gives you the time you need to set your shot in your mind.

Check the line your cue ball must take to pocket the object ball; determine the aim point and contact point to achieve that line and determine your stance position. This is very important because the chalk actually helps with your shot. With the right amount of chalk on the end of your cue-tip you will get more action because the tip won't slide off the ball as fast. This will allow you to push more spin on the cue ball.

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**May 24<sup>th</sup>**

## **Stay Down; wait for sound**

Stay down after the shot, you can admire your work just as well staying down as standing up.

Many of us bring the cue to a jarring halt after the hit. Follow-through is important to accuracy. It encourages accelerating through the ball. A quick stop brings on the opposite, an actual slowdown at impact.

Most people tend to jump up, too early after taking their shots. If you are starting to move your body up before the shot is finished your aim will be off and it could affect the contact you make on the cue ball.

Stay down until you hear the sound of the cue ball hitting the object ball, hold this position until you hear the ball drop in the pocket.

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**May 31<sup>st</sup>**

## **Stay in the game**

If you miss a shot, don't get distracted by friends, the TV, or other events around you, stay focused.

Don't just sit down and go to sleep waiting for your next turn. Watch and learn from your opponent. Pretend that you are at the table and compare what you would do with what your opponent actually does. If what he does gets the job done, you've learned something.

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**June 7<sup>th</sup>**

## **The Four Strokes of Pool**

- **You must master the four strokes of pool because the stroke determines the track line.**
- **You must master the four strokes of pool because the stroke determines the speed of the cue ball.**
- **You must master the four strokes before you can master cue ball speed or position play.**

1. ***The Punch Stroke.*** This is by far the most popular stroke in pool. Willie Mosconie used it over eighty per cent of the time. To master this stroke, line up a shot straight in the side pocket. The cue ball should be a couple of feet away. Deliver a "pop" sound with one sixteenth below center. If the cue ball stops dead in its tracks, you have discovered your punch stroke.

What ever it takes to stop the cue ball dead, is a punch stroke. If the cue ball drifts back towards you, you have added a little draw into your punch stroke. If the cue ball drifts forward you have allowed a little follow in your punch stroke. You must stop the ball dead.

When you do, pay attention to that sound. Pay attention to how it feels. How you deliver the cue tip to the cue ball determines if you have delivered the proper stroke or not. You will want to master this stroke.

The Punch gives you natural track lines. If you do not possess a good solid reliable punch stroke, you will never find the consistency you seek. The Punch stroke, don't leave home with out it.

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**June14<sup>th</sup>**

2. ***The Follow Stroke.*** Many of us shoot high on the cue ball and call it a follow stroke.

The essence of any stroke is in how you deliver the cue tip to the cue ball. I want you to set up a shot straight in the side pocket. The cue ball should be a couple of feet from the object ball. Place your cue tip one-sixteenth below center. Deliver a follow stroke and make the cue ball follow the object ball.

There is only one way you will see the cue ball follow the object ball and that is if you deliver a fine follow stroke. Flow through the cue ball. Your shooting hand should almost be limp. Float through and allow the cue ball to roll towards its target.

A follow stroke is vital to your game. There are many ways to use a follow stroke to gain favorable position and control the cue ball.

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### **June21st**

3. ***The Spin Stroke.*** There are times in a match that the spin stroke is the difference between winning and losing.

The Spin Stroke is a great tool to measure speed of the cue ball off one or more rails. It is also a way to widen the natural track line off the rail.

The spin stroke is a close cousin to the punch stroke. Set up on the spot and sight straight down to the center diamond (7) on the bottom rail. Use center right and "pop" the ball so it is spinning on its way down table.

You should be able to control the spin so you can scratch in the right corner pocket near you.

You should be able to control the cue ball so you can hit the number two diamond on the right side of the table.

You should be able to control the cue ball so you can hit the right side pocket. With a great spin stroke, you will be able to control where the cue ball is going. You will develop an instinct with this wonderful stroke.

You can use the spin stroke when kicking for a ball or when you want to throw an object ball.

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### **June28th**

4. ***The Draw Strokes.*** There is more than one draw stroke. It is not enough to simply pull the cue ball back towards you with a sharp jabbing motion. There are four draw strokes.

- The follow through draw
- The snap back draw.
- The bounce back draw
- The snip draw.

The draw stroke calls for a snap delivery. You must push the cue tip through the cue ball faster than the cue ball leaves the tip. In other words, the tip is almost all the way through the cue ball before the cue ball takes off. Since the cue tip is faster than the cue ball, the cue ball will immediately spin backwards. This causes the cue ball to come back to you.

With the **follow through** draw, the cue tip is not spinning backwards until it has traveled a few feet. Your tip pushes through in a follow through motion. When the cue ball contacts the object ball, it will slide away and then begin to come back.

The **snap back** is dramatic. You snap through the cue ball in a quick jab. The cue ball will immediately pick up spin and come right back at you. You will tighten up the line it returns on.

The **snip draw** is the most popular draw strokes. You shoot down on the cue ball. The main purpose of the snip draw is not so much to draw the cue ball back to you but to kill the cue ball and throw the object ball. This is a vital stroke. You use right or left and snip the cue ball.

The **bounce back** draw. This is really a "stun" backwards. You are not trying to spin the cue ball back. You are trying to bounce it back from the object ball. There are times in a game when your command of this stroke is the difference between winning and losing.

The draw stroke calls for you to dramatically snap the cue tip through the cue ball. When you do that, this stroke imparts spin on the cue ball.

Once you get the cue ball coming back to you with this stroke, try the same stroke with one cue tip above center. Deliver your finest draw stroke and you will see what a **force follow** is. The force follow is really a draw stroke. The stroke determines the track line. The stroke determines the cue ball speed. The cue tip location has nothing to do with what stroke you are using.

If you want to be a consistent player you must possess the four strokes of pool. There are times when you mix them up. A shot may call for a little follow and a lot of punch. Or punch force follow.

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## July 5th

### Now Let's Step Back a Bit – Aiming the Shot

*(They say every player has a dominant eye.)*

Keep your head straight. Many players tilt their heads to favor their dominant eye. If you tilt your head, you're looking at a side ways view of the shot.

\*\*Determine which is your dominant eye. Pick an object about the size of a pie plate 10' to 15' away from you. Extend both arms and overlay fingers to form left and right sides of a triangle with your index fingers. Raise thumbs to provide base for the triangle.

Now sight through triangle with both eyes to target object, center in triangle. Close your right eye. If target stays centered, you are left eye dominant. If it jumps out of the triangle, you are right eye dominant.

\*\*This dominance issue means little unless you are "Cross dominant" (left-handed and right eye dominant, or visa versa). The cross dominant pool player has a challenge when it comes to aiming.

If she/he can't aim with both eyes (pool cue beneath chin), the dominant eye will have to be subdued.

The easy way is for those who wear contact lenses. Remove the contact from your dominant eye if you are shooting with the opposite hand. This will cause your less dominant eye to be superior and eliminate the need to try and shoot from a cross dominant position.

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July 12<sup>th</sup>

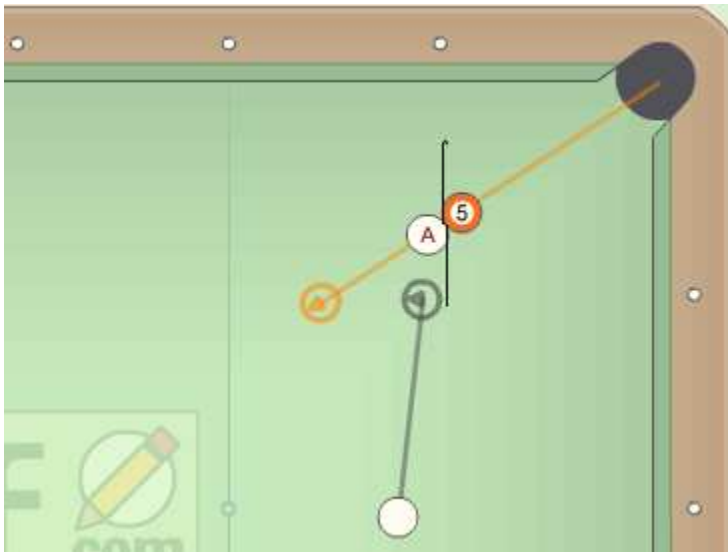
## *Billiard Shot Aiming Technique*

Anyone beginning to play billiards or snooker will attest that shot making, and more specifically **billiard shot aiming technique**, is one of the more difficult skills to master. The goal is to become consistent with your shot, and to master your shot aiming techniques so that you can make conscious shot decisions with some degree of accuracy. It is one thing to have a great game, but it takes a special skill to have great games consistently. It is said that consistency and shot aiming are two of the most important skills to master.

Three important aspects of improving your aim:

- imagining the shot paths and points of contact
- aiming the billiard shot with your dominant eye
- proper shooting posture

Once you have assessed the table and made your shot decision, you need to analyze it and aim the shot properly. To begin, imagine the straight line from the object ball to the middle of the opening to the pocket and extend that line through the object ball to the side opposite the pocket. Where this line intersects the edge of the object ball is where you must hit the ball in order to make it go in that exact direction. (See diagram 1)



Next, you must determine the exact point on the cue ball to match up with the point you have identified on the object ball. It may not be visible to you since you will be standing behind the cue ball, but you will learn to visualize it. The key point you must imagine is the cue ball contacting the object ball at such a point that during the exact moment of contact, the two balls will be perfectly lined up toward the pocket. Note that this should match the imaginary line that you visualized earlier.

Notice in the diagram that once the cue ball travels to the object ball, the cue ball and the object ball will be perfectly aligned with the pocket at the exact time they come in contact. Once you wrap your head around this concept, only practice at the table can help you get better.

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## **July 19<sup>th</sup>**

In the game of eight ball you will be exposed to many pitfalls. This is not an easy game. It is tough. You are required to make decisions while in the heat of battle. Unlike nine ball, where you go from one ball to the next, in the game of eight ball you have choices. To be successful, you must develop the ability to make your choice, and feel one hundred per cent certain. Here is the problem for most league players. They decide to play the twelve ball, and think about the fifteen ball. They make their decision, but still have reservations. This is not the way to stroke a shot. Remember, The stroke, minus the interference, equals the shot. Be sure you are fully committed to what you intend to do.

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## **July 26<sup>th</sup>**

Uncertainty....the roll.

You will be faced with shots where you are not sure what is going to happen to the cue ball. The cue ball is going for a ride and you cannot control it. In this situation, you are "playing for a roll". Make that commitment. I will pocket this ball. "I am playing for a roll". The best roll you can get, hopefully.

Then there's the long shot....

You should be very willing to shoot the long shot down into the far corner pocket. This will help you run more racks. You look at the long tough shot and tell yourself, you are shooting this shot because "You came to win".